

Meeting Minutes



Meeting Information

Objective: May 2019 SCSCSAG Meeting

Date: 20/05/2019 **Location:** The Glasshouse, The Pyramids

Time: 18:30 – 20:30 **Meeting Type:** Stakeholder Advisory Group

Called By: SCS

Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Amy Conway	ESCP Project Support
Angela Page	Spice Island Association
Bob Comlay	Solent Protection Society
David Surr	The Portsmouth Society
Deniz Beck	Southsea Seafront Campaign
Francis Graves	University of Portsmouth
Graeme Swinburne	Friends of Old Portsmouth Association
Graham Newcombe	Canoe Lake Park Support Group
John Cass	Tipner and Stamshaw Neighbourhood Forum
Leon Reis	East Southsea Neighbourhood Forum
Linda Mills	Milton Neighbourhood Forum
Linda Symes	Eastney & Craneswater Councillor
Peter Mills	Milton Neighbourhood Forum
Robert Johnson	PCC Major Projects Communications Officer
Roger Inkpen	Portsmouth Cycle Forum
Steve Pitt	Deputy Leader PCC
Zane Gunton	Project Sponsor/ESCP Capital Delivery Team Leader

Apologies: The People's Plan for Southsea, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Strong Island, Southsea Parkrun, Portsmouth Friends of the Earth, Friends of Southsea Rock Gardens, Federation of Small Business and Self Employed, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust, Palmerston Forts Society, Portsmouth Disability Forum, Portsmouth Friends of the Earth, PCC Chief Executive Officer

Summary of discussion

Points raised from last meeting minutes:

Historic England representative – are unable to attend but we are very busy working with them to finalise all planning drawings. Going forward we will look to invite them when we have themed meetings/workshops on historic assets.

A workshop was held looking at the cycling provision and access, and materials and street furniture.

Design has been refined further prior to planning submission, which has meant that planning submission has been delayed.

Project Update

The Southsea Coastal Scheme has reached a significant milestone with completion of the principle design phase which will culminate in the submission of a full planning application shortly.

Over the past two years an Integrated Delivery Team, consisting of Portsmouth City Council, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership, Balfour Beatty, Ove Arup and Ramboll have been working up plans for the next generation of coastal defences for Southsea. Through use of the SCAPE Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Framework this collaborative team was brought together at an early stage and has seen the project reap the benefits of each partners' extensive experience and expertise to address the many complex technical, environmental and public realm challenges facing a major scheme of this nature.

This phase of the project has been a huge success, overcoming significant technical and architectural challenges, resulting in a proposal that will deliver both robust flood protection and improvements to the public realm. Extensive and meticulously executed stakeholder engagement has turned initial concerns into a widely supported and aesthetically inspiring scheme. Through the close collaboration of all parties the project has realised many opportunities that will benefit the scheme going forward.

Having successfully completed the early design stage, Portsmouth City Council are now looking to procure suppliers to help them deliver the next phases of this landmark project, starting with detailed design and then construction."

The timeline for these are as follows; a Designer will be appointed in June 2019, and a Contractor will be appointed in September 2019. The Designer will begin the Detailed Engineering Design of Frontage 1 following a period of mobilisation after the contract commences in June 2019. When the Contractor is appointed in September, they will provide Early Contractor Involvement to the Designer, providing buildability advice. Both contracts will be managed separately through ESCP. The Scheme will be on site in Spring 2020.

The planning application is based on the design which is the worst case engineering scenario. Through Detailed Engineering Design of each frontage, the design will be further refined, and it is hoped that the height requirements of the defences can be reduced further. This will also involve looking at the volume requirements, such as the volume of rock armour and volume of shingle required for the beaches, and refining these further. Materials and other finishes will be conditioned through planning, and street furniture is permissive as it is a Council scheme.

It was asked whether there would be a delay to the previously suggested start date for construction of March 2019. There is a commitment with the EA for the Scheme to be on site at this date so that EA targets for houses protected from flooding can be met.

The planning application has been delayed since the last public consultation due to the desire for a cycleway to be incorporated into Frontage 3 (Southsea Common). This has now been added through further design of the bund on the seaward edge of Southsea Common and the highway.

The Scheme has also had extensive consultation with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission regarding the design of the interface with the Naval War Memorial. Previously, this design included ramps down the memorial on the eastern and western sides of the Memorial. However, these have now been removed at the request of CWGC, and the current design mirrors the design that is currently there. This will be seen in the Scheme's planning application. The design is more sensitive to the monument and in keeping with the original design.

Frontage 1 – Long Curtain Moat

There was a question regarding which parts of the original moat wall will still be visible. The landward side of the wall will still be visible from King's Bastion as you look out to sea, the seaward side will be covered by the new wall, which will physically protect the old wall from storm conditions. The Caponier will still be exposed.

Throughout Detailed Engineering Design and discharge of planning conditions, the materials, finishes and rock berm will be refined in conjunction with engagement with Historic England. There were concerns that if a high maintenance finish is used, it will have to be ensured that the Council keep up maintenance and that it is not just patched up with concrete.

Frontage 2 – Clarence Pier

A reminder of the design proposal, prompted no discussion.

Frontage 3 – Southsea Common

An eastbound contra-flow cycleway has been added to the Scheme here. This has taken some land from the Common to accommodate the width of a cycleway. There were requests on whether this would be segregated further than just a painted line.

There has also been the change in interface design around the Naval War Memorial as mentioned earlier in these minutes. The Commonwealth War Graves' architects have designed this interface.

The bund along the seaward edge of the Common has also been regraded to be a 1:10 slope rather than a 1:3, this will better mirror what is there now.

The businesses along this frontage continue to be engaged with. Currently, the design leaves the buildings where they are and builds around them as this is what the Flood Defence Grant in Aid funding allows. Should there be different guidance and funding from the wider Council where a different solution is more suitable, this can be incorporated to the plans through planning amendments. This must be done before construction of the frontage.

There was a question raised regarding the change in the beach to the east of the Naval War Memorial which shows where the design changes to rock armour. Here, the beach will be seeded on top of this rock armour, which means that the rock armour will be covered mostly by shingle. This seeding will slow down the transport of sediment westward. There will be a beach management plan in place here to collect the shingle from around Hover Travel to re-seed.

Frontage 4 – Southsea Castle

A reminder of the design proposal, prompted no discussion.

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Frontage 5 – The Pyramids and South Parade Pier

The way-marker access points were identified as areas that could be influenced by local artists and designers to ensure each one is individual. The landward side of the secondary defence wall was also identified as a feature which could be designed with the help of local artists and designers. This will be further looked at in the Detailed Engineering Design of this frontage.

The entrance to the Pier will remain at the same level as it is now, and the promenade will ramp down to this level. The promenade may be resurfaced through here.

The material finish for the promenade has not been decided, but the current recommended finish has been exposed aggregate. The colouring of the exposed aggregate can be varied slightly depending on what aggregate is used.

Frontage 6 – Canoe Lake Park

There were questions raised about the interface between the pedestrian crossings and the bund at the landward side of the road. There will be ramps over the bund in these areas. The Scheme is looking to reduce the height of the bund in the Detailed Engineering Design.

There will be an ongoing beach management plan which has been calculated by ABPmer. It was noted that the widening of the beach width should make the beach here even more popular.

The Scheme has been engaged with the Seafront Masterplan team and are continuing to work to ensure that the sea defences do not hinder the future plans.

Frontage 7 - Eastney

The vegetated shingle will remain as it is now, and there were questions whether this would be able to be extended further. As the beach will be widened, the sea cabbage and other vegetation may naturally extend to the parts of the beach that will become more stable.

AoB

The Scheme has the funding for the Detailed Engineering Design to start, but not the rest of the construction. To release this, a Full Business Case must be submitted to Defra and HM Treasury (HMT). So far, enough funding has been released to ensure we are submitting a design which is acceptable to planning. There is currently a funding gap which the team and the wider Council are looking to close. This must be proved that it is achievable prior to release of the funding from the EA, as if this is not proved, then the EA will not release the Flood Defence Grant in Aid moneys.

The planning application is being submitted as one whole planning application rather than being split frontage-by-frontage. This is because the project is classed as a Major Project by HMT, and as part of the funding they require planning certainty for the entire Scheme prior to construction.

A question was asked regarding the main risks on the risk register for planning. If the planning is

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called in to Secretary of State, it could delay the Scheme 12+ months. This will force the Scheme through a route that we do not want to go through as it is a route that forces a decision to be made. However, this is not considered high risk as the Scheme has worked very hard with Statutory Stakeholders. The main risk is funding.

It was voiced that there is a belief that the PCC planning system is flawed in making decisions where Schemes just do not happen. It was suggested that external planners should be bought in to advise on the planning. The Scheme has been working very closely with the Case Officer at PCC, as well as working with Paris Smith, an independent planning consultancy to ensure that the Scheme's planning submission is sound. The Scheme also has an ESCP internal planner who is coordinating the submission of the planning application. Throughout the development of the Scheme, the internal ESCP planner has held ongoing pre-application meetings with the Case Officer, Conservation Officer, and other statutory stakeholders to ensure that the Scheme has developed with input from all of them. It is expected that the planning application will take a minimum of 16 weeks to decide. The application will be available for public consultation on PCC's planning portal.

There was a question regarding where the cross-party working group comes into the development of the Scheme. Steve Pitt said that the cross-party working group runs in parallel to this SCSCSAG to ensure that it remains politically neutral and that any questions can be answered.

It was agreed that in future workshops it would be good to focus in detail frontage-by-frontage in parallel with the Detailed Engineering Design of each frontage.

There was understanding that a 1:1 scale mock-up of the new defences would be hard to execute as it would involve road closures, pedestrian diversions and would only be representative of that specific section of the seafront. There was suggestion to use a smaller scale model to understand the new defences.