

Broomhill Sands sea defences

This is the third newsletter for the Broomhill Sands sea defences scheme. It provides an update on the work we have done so far during this stage of the scheme development. We also outline the main activities which will be taking place over the next three months. Newsletters will be published quarterly, with news of the scheme development.

Outline Design & Scheme Development

We have nearly completed the outline design phase and we are ready to present these designs to the public and statutory stakeholders. We plan to start our feedback programme on 21 May 2010 and it will run for one month. We will hold a public exhibition in Camber on Friday 21 May 2010. Whilst developing our outline designs we have considered design guidance and standards, ground investigation data, modelling, habitat and ecological surveys, lessons learned from similar schemes and detail associated with sourcing of materials and costs. Towards the end of this process we carried out a thorough 'value engineering' exercise on the main building blocks of the scheme, where we managed to refine the design further and identify potential savings.

Access

One of our long term aims is that everyone will have the opportunity to enjoy our environment now and in the future. We are committed to improving access for recreational purposes. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 (amended in 2005) and Disabled Equality Duty, we provide improved access where possible. To help us do this we commissioned a specialist consultant to prepare a DDA Strategic Access Statement (SAS). This involved the consultant visiting the site with members of our project team, and looking at the current access along the frontage. The SAS also made recommendations about how access can be improved through the construction of the proposed sea defences. This advice has been incorporated into the scheme development where appropriate. We have also considered access for our operations staff who will be responsible for maintaining the defences.



Maintaining the existing defences

About the scheme

Broomhill Sands is the first scheme to come out of the Folkestone to Cliff End Flood and Erosion Management Strategy. The improved sea defences will be a rock revetment along most of the frontage with a timber groyne and shingle beach in the western end.

We are in the 'Business Case' stage of the project. This involves tasks such as site surveys, environmental assessment, modelling and outline design, to support the approval for funding.

We are working with specialists from outside the Environment Agency to undertake this work. The largest input is provided by Halcrow. Westminster, Dean & Dyball are providing advice on the construction phase of the project.

Once we receive approval, the scheme moves to the detailed design and planning permission stage before progressing to construction.

For more information contact the project team

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(National Customer Contact Centre)

Environmental Assessment

In addition to the engineering design, we have been assessing the potential impacts of the scheme upon the environment. This covers aspects including bird interests, coastal processes and water quality, landscape and recreation. We have completed the fieldwork for the wintering birds survey and are in the process of preparing a report that summarises the observed bird activity at the site. This will highlight any issues that we need to consider when we build the scheme.

Information from our environmental impact assessment will be recorded in an Environmental Scoping Consultation Document. This document is produced to support our consultation with statutory consultees (see below). The Environmental Scoping Consultation Document will identify proposed mitigation for the environmental impacts predicted. It will also identify potential enhancements that can be taken forward to the detailed design stage, once funding is approved. We will amend this Consultation Document following feedback from the public and statutory consultation.

Feedback Programme

We have been continuing our informal discussions with Natural England about the potential impacts of the scheme. We have also been in contact with Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council and Defend Our Coast. Much of our efforts in the next few months will be focussed on presenting the outline design to the public and to statutory stakeholders.

We plan to start a feedback programme on **21 May 2010**. The programme will run until 16 June 2010. We will hold a public exhibition in Camber on **Friday 21 May 2010 from 2 to 8pm**. At this event you can review the proposed scheme design and provide us with your feedback.

Statutory consultees, such as Natural England, English Heritage and local councils will be consulted on the scheme using the Environmental Scoping Consultation Document discussed above.

We have also met with the Design Board and Interest Group to discuss key issues and how they have been resolved within the scheme and to explore potential scheme enhancements.

Responses to this feedback programme will be summarised in a brief report. We will then advertise the scheme under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999.

Next steps?

We will do a final review of the proposed scheme layout, incorporating additional information and ideas from the feedback programme where appropriate. We will then start the tendering process for the contract to build the works. We are planning to seek funding approval for the scheme in December 2010.

Once we have funding approval, work will begin on the detailed design, Environmental Statement and planning application.

How you can comment

During the feedback programme you will be able find out about the scheme and add your comments here:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/>

You will also be able to fill out a paper comments form which will be available on request.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or have information that you think will be useful, please contact us. Our contact details are on the front page of this newsletter.

