

**RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS**  
**[ PUBLIC ]**

A Special Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held at the Town Hall, Ramsey, on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

**Present:** Mrs J. Wedgwood, Messrs A. G. Cowie, Messrs', Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood (part of meeting), J. McGuinness, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

The Town Clerk was in attendance.

**(2020/21:357) Ramsey Quayside Proposals:**

The Chairman welcomed Members and explained that the meeting was a pre-meeting requested by Members in advance of a meeting with the Hon. T. Baker, Minister for Infrastructure to discuss the proposals for the Quayside in Ramsey.

The meeting noted the Town Clerk's Report which had been circulated electronically, copies of which were also provided at the meeting.

The meeting noted that there were a number of areas of concern in regard to the proposals which had been raised by the Commission in previous discussions which included:

- Parking
- Glass wall maintenance
- Materials
- Bin stores

Members were in agreement that there is an urgent need for flood protection to be provided to the Quayside and that such should be along the line of the existing post and chain fence and not at the edge of the harbour side. Members noted that the scheme addressed the flood protection wall together with the dilapidated state of the Quayside roadway which is used as the HGV route from the working harbour. Mr. Cowie expressed the opinion that it would be unfortunately of the scheme were not to proceed and the Commission were seen as responsible in blocking the flood protection proposals in the event that a serious flood event occurred.

Members questioned why the flood protection wall needed to be so high, commenting that consideration should be given to a lower height wall with the addition of a coping at a later date in the event that flood water heights increased.

In relation to the parking loss and options for replacement Mr. McGuinness did not see why the ratepayers should be burdened with the cost of providing replacement off-street parking for parking taken away by the DoI scheme. The Town Clerk commented that the Commission had been critical of the chevron parking since it was initially installed, having been provided to offset the loss of parking during the regeneration scheme contract works and had always been understood to have been temporary.

Members noted that DoI had advised that parking spaces needed to alight onto a footpath and that risk assessments would no longer permit persons using parking spaces to cross the carriageway before reaching a pedestrian area. As such if chevron parking were retained there would still be a necessity to provide a footpath on the roadside of the proposed flood wall and doing so with chevron parking would reduce the carriageway width.

The Town Clerk drew attention to the study referenced in the Department's Draft Planning Statement, which had been undertaken in 2019, which showed that parking capacity exists overall within the town, Mr McGuinness felt that the issue is convenient parking to maximise town centre footfall at peak times.

Mrs. Wedgwood expressed the view that the Island has environmental responsibilities and an obligation to accord with international agreements. Mrs. Wedgwood felt that the issue of parking was in fact a "red herring" being an insoluble problem, the Island needs to find other ways of managing vehicle usage to reduce particulate pollution whether it be by active travel encouraging walking and cycling, park and ride schemes or town shuttle buses.

Mr. Young felt that the quayside road was not in need of substantive reconstruction, he would prefer to see repairs undertaken alongside a lower flood wall and retention of the chevron parking.

It was noted that the Department had initially proposed to provide parking at the Albert Road Site acquiring the site either by lease or purchase but that it had subsequently withdrawn that offer.

Mr. Cowie stated that there were three clear options: -

- Accept the scheme;
- Reject the scheme with the consequence of potential increased flooding impact; or
- Compromise by removing the environment improvements in favour of more parking.

Mrs. Wedgwood and Mr. Williams felt that the Town would like to see improvements around the quayside area, Mr. McGuinness stated that he would prefer to find ways of getting more parking as opposed to providing harbourside seating areas to which Mr. Cowie reluctantly agreed. Mr. McGuinness clarified that he liked the environmental improvements but did not think they could be justified against the loss of parking.

Mr. Cowie suggested that an option may exist to improve the car park area at Tower Street seek its transfer to the Commission to provide a small increase in town centre parking and offset the loss on the Quayside.



Mr. Young restated his view that he felt the scheme was not needed. After discussion Members, except for Mr Young who remained opposed to the proposals, agreed that they could be-grudgingly accept the loss of parking but felt that the Commission look for any other opportunity for parking within the town, Mr. McGuinness stating that his agreement was in the context of the meeting being held to provide the Ramsey Town Commission's view in order to make the meeting with the DOI useful rather than having opposing views expressed by disparate groups.

Canon Greenwood expressed a preference to see the scheme proceed, he commented that as he was not a car user, he had no issue with the reduction in parking, overall, he was generally supportive of the proposals. He left the meeting at 7. 25 p.m. to attend a prior engagement.

Members commented on the provision of bin stores and noted that there are numerous bins left out along the quayside, which look unsightly, where other storage options do not exist.

Members discussed the choice of materials for the scheme. Members were in agreement that for the road surfaces, and the footpaths to the west of the Swing Bridge, black tarmac was an acceptable finish, experience of coloured tarmac was not good. In relation to the other areas Mr. Cowie commented that the granite blocks do stain but so do other materials. Mr. McGuinness questioned how the raised area would be accessed for cleaning and whether fixed seating would allow for ease of cleaning. Members felt that they might prefer to see grey pavements as an alternative to granite.

In respect of the flood protection wall Members were agreed that some form of decorative embellishment was needed, possible in the form of slate panels, Members noted that there is a conservation area and slate is a main feature on the registered building at the junction where Christian Street meets the Quayside. Members were concerned that the height of flood wall, which appears to be 1350mm, was unnecessary and suggested that a reduced height of 900mm be sought with a future option of increasing the height with a coping if needed.

Mr. Cowie summarised the feeling of the meeting: -

- That Commission would reluctantly accept the reduction in quayside parking and seek the DOI to have the parking spaces at Tower Street improved by resurfacing and lining and transferred to RTC to provide some limited town centre parking.
- That any glass flood protection should remain the responsibility of the Department and be kept clean – it is understood self-cleaning glass is specified.
- That concrete wall be embellished in some form with slate – i.e., panels or pillars
- That the flood wall be sought to be reduced to 1200mm maximum height being the indicative height of the flood barriers with reduced height in relation to tidal heights at the top end of the harbour.

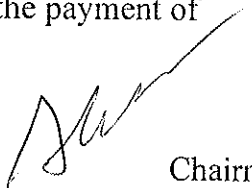
Members, with the exception of Mr. Young, agreed with the summary. Mr. McGuinness and Mr. Cowie felt that priority should be given to the need for flood protection and were otherwise open to compromise. Members agreed that they should also seek reassurance that the Department has liaised and received agreement of the fishermen to the landing area.

Members also agreed that a clear programme for works should be obtained, that it was of vital importance that scheme communication is properly undertaken with all stakeholders and affected property owners and occupiers, with an accountable project manager as contact throughout.

**(2020/21:358) Ramsey RUFC 24 Hour Event:**

Members agreed to the principle of Ramsey RUFC to hold a 24-hour fund-raising event at the Mooragh.

The meeting closed at 8:00 p.m. giving a time of 1 ½ hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.