

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

A Special Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held at the Town Hall, Ramsey, on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. A. G. Cowie, Mesdames M. D. Quayle and J. Wedgwood and Messrs' Rev'd Canon N. D. Greenwood, N. Howard (part of meeting) J. McGuinness, A. J. Oldham, L. Parker, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Technical Services Manager were in attendance.

The meeting was joined at 6:30 p.m. by the Hon. T. Baker, M.H.K., Minister for Infrastructure, Mr. J. Robinson, Director of Highways, and Mr. L. L. Hooper, M.H.K., to discuss the proposals for the Quayside in Ramsey. Dr. A. J. Allinson, M.H.K., had given apologies due to being off island.

**(2021/22:001) Ramsey Quayside Proposals:**

The Chairman welcomed the Minister and Director of Highways, thanking them for agreeing to meet again and advised that the Commission held a number of concerns about the proposals, being :-

- Loss of parking
- Maintenance of the Glass Wall
- Materials Choices
- The Bin stores; and
- Liaison with the Manx Fish Producers

Mr. Robinson responded advising that:-

- The glass wall was supplied as being self-cleansing, there may be some need for some washing but that this would fall within harbour keepers' duties.
- The Department had provided links to granite samples, this was the most non-absorbent stone available, other materials would still stain and the Department felt that granite was best available option.
- The Department understood that the bins stores would need to be provided with drop kerbs, this is a design matter and would be provided for.
- the Department had met with Mr. Beard of the Manx Fish Producers Organization [MFPO] and had agreed to provide an extra berth, so that 2 boats could discharge at once. The Department understood that agreement had been received.



**(2021/22:001) Ramsey Quayside Proposals Continued:**

In regard to the parking Mr. Robinson explained that the scheme would result in the loss of approximately 50 plus parking places on the Quayside. The Department had investigated the Albert Street Car park site, however the Department had been unsuccessful in its application to acquire funding. An alternative proposal of acquisition and lease to the Commissioners for a commercial rent over ten years was offered, likely to be in the region of £16,000 per year based on capital investment, the Minister advised that Treasury consent would be needed to any arrangement.

Mr. Young advised that Mr. D. Beard had contacted him and advised that the fishermen needed 6 berths in addition to a discharge point by the Swing Bridge for lobster potters. He maintained that MFPO had not seen any plans and were not in agreement. Mr. Robinson reiterated that Mr. Beard was the party with whom the Department had consulted with, if 6 berths are needed then the Quayside will not be able to be updated. The question of the lobster potters had not been raised before but it may be as simple as providing sections of removable flood barrier wall in the area by the Swing Bridge.

Mr. Williams stated that he had also been in contact with Mr. Beard who had advised that the MFPO were not opposed to the scheme but maintained the need for landing berths and lobster pot access. Concern had also been raised about the width of the harbourside pathway if public access was maintained, Mr. Robinson advised that it was likely that the harbourside path was likely to be restricted as an alternative was being provided within the scheme.

In response to questions raised by the Chairman, Mr. Robinson confirmed that :-

- The glass wall would remain the responsibility of the Department, it came with a 20-year guarantee
- It would be possible to include some feature stone or cladding to the flood wall and the Department was happy to liaise on the detail.
- The wall height of 1350mm provided freeboard for overlapping, Mr. Cowie felt a 1200mm height might be more acceptable.
- Parking – the potential of Tower Street was linked to other future options and Albert Road was the preferred solution.

The Minister advised that the Department was very keen to proceed with the overall scheme but not against the Commissioners' views, the Department would not wish to proceed to planning if Ramsey Town Commissioners were going to object.

The Town Clerk enquired whether, given the loss of parking, the scheme would still proceed if the Commission chose not to enter into an agreement in relation to parking at the former Albert Road School Site. The Minister advised that the scheme could proceed without additional parking being provided at Albert Road so long as it retained the support of the Commissioners.



**(2021/22:001) Ramsey Quayside Proposals Continued:**

Mr. Hooper, noting that the former Albert Road School site had been sold for £380,000 asked why Government could not buy the site back and sell to RTC for the difference expended which was understood to be in the region of £20,000. The Minister indicated that this was unlikely to achieve Treasury support, a proposal to acquire the site for £400,000 and enter into a commercial lease at a value of around £16,000 per annum for 10 years had been indicated.

Mr Howard joined at 6:55 p.m.

Mr. Young stated that in his view parking was critical, he would prefer to see the chevron parking retained and, if possible, even more parking provided.

Mr. Parker felt that the lease option was attractive as capital and maintenance costs would fall to Government, noting that it would provide around 50-57 additional town centre parking spaces at Albert Road.

The Chairman expressed concern regarding the use granite, especially around the harbourside, as experienced had shown it to be susceptible to staining. Mr. Robinson advised that the harbour side walkway would be concrete. The Department was willing to consider other materials, however pointed out that granite was the least absorbent option, and that the subject would have to be addressed within the planning application. The Minister confirmed this position and pointed out that the scheme would need to marry with the existing regeneration and that planning officers would undoubtedly have a view on the finishes.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman, Mr. Robinson confirmed that relining of parking spaces in Parliament Street had been programmed to be undertaken during May 2021.

The Chairman extended the Commission's thanks to the Minister and Mr. Robinson for the meeting, who left at 7:10 p.m.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman Mr. Hooper felt that the options for Government acquisition and lease of the Albert Road School site should be investigated, perhaps with a restrictive covenant. Mr Hooper hoped the scheme would however find support as there remains a high risk of flooding to the town.

Mr. Hooper was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

The Chairman invited members to comment on the discussion.

Mr. Parker felt that the option of leasing the Albert Road site was attractive and that the income from the Station Road car park could be applied to such. Mrs. Quayle felt that the introduction of parking charges would not detract from the town's attraction to shoppers. Members expressed concern about the potential introduction of parking charges citing a well-documented link between parking charges and reductions in retail footfall.

**(2021/22:001) Ramsey Quayside Proposals Continued:**

Mrs. Wedgwood suggested that consideration be given only to charging for all day parking, i.e., only for those who travel out of town, and question how many spaces are used by persons who commute [by bus or car-share]. Members noted that only a small amount of on-street parking within Ramsey is regulated and that the introduction of charging could displace parking into other non-regulated areas.

A proposal was put by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Young, that the Commission does not accept the offer to lease additional parking at the Albert Road from the Department.

Members felt that better management of the existing Albert Road Car Park might provide more benefit, Mr. Parker commented that the loss of 50 spaces would have an impact.

The Town Clerk drew members attention to the impact of the construction phase of the work during which there would be a loss of parking. Mr Parker suggested that in the event of a lease being considered the construction period might be sought to be rent free.

Mrs. Wedgwood questioned the extent to which the Commission felt more parking was needed and whether it would justify the expense.

There being no other comments the Chairman put Mr McGuinness's resolution to the vote.

Resolved: the proposal put by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Young, that the Commission does not accept the offer to lease additional parking at Albert Road from the Department, was approved by 6 votes to 4, Mesdames Quayle and Wedgwood, and Messrs Cowie and Parker voting against.

The Chairman put the question of agreement to the overall scheme to the meeting, suggesting that support might be given subject to caveats, and that the position reflect the position agreed at the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Resolved: proposed by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Commission support the Quayside road and flood defence scheme as proposed by the Department of Infrastructure subject to the glass wall being the responsibility for DoI, the flood wall being restricted to 1200mm height with decorative embellishment to be agreed, and the position of the fish producers being resolved, was agreed by 8 votes for and 2 against, Messrs McGuinness and Young voting against.



**(2021/22:002) Defibrillator - Ramsey Courthouse:**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that an approach had been received from “Craig’s Heart Strong Foundation” to site a defibrillator at Ramsey Courthouse. Members noted that the phone box at the Courthouse was identified for de-commissioning and that suggestions had been received from the public that it might be used for a defibrillator location.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Parker, and agreed unanimously that the Commission adopt the decommissioned phone box at Ramsey Courthouse as a location for a defibrillator.

**(2021/22:003) Auldyn House:**

At 7.45 p.m. the meeting welcomed Mr. Burrows, Managing Director Ardlui Limited, owner of Auldyn House and Mr. D. Clarkson of CCJ Limited, contractor, to discuss Auldyn House.

Mr. Burrows explained that having acquired the building his original plan was to develop the existing building and add an upper floor to which planning was obtained after considerable discussion, the lockdown had slowed the acquisition of building regulation consent, and there had subsequently been problems with pigeons and the roof. Some work had commenced with stripping out of internal stud partitions etc to expose the internal structure.

The roof had been found to be in appalling condition, the overall structure was poor, however there is no intention to leave the site empty as there would be no financial return on the investment already made. Having reviewed the position, it was felt the building was impractical to repair. Following the more recent discovery and removal of loose fenestration he would now wish to explore building in modern materials on the site similar to the current design. In simple terms it was felt to be quicker, cleaner and safer to remove the existing structure and build new. Mr. Clarkson advised that the Structural Engineer believes front elevation is dangerous.

The Chairman enquired as to the future uses of the building, Mr. Burrows confirmed that it was intended to maintain retail use to the ground floor, planning has been obtained for offices but residential was also being considered for the upper floors.

Mr. Burrows reiterated that construction in new materials would still seek to respect the conservation status of location. A methodology for demolition was being looked at and liaison would be undertaken with adjacent property owners and surrounding neighbours. Mr Burrows explained that he intended to arrange an early meeting with planning officers and thereafter he may need to apply for a demolition order. Mr Burrows thanked the Commission for agreeing to meet and undertook to keep the Board informed of progress.

Messrs Burrows and Clerkson were thanked for attending and left the meeting at 8:15pm.

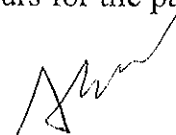
**(2021/22:003) Auldyn House continued:**

Members noted the position and agreed that demolition could be supported especially as there is a concern that the building may be unsafe.

**(2021/22:004) Section 13 Agreement Development at Auldyn Walk:**

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. McGuinness, and agreed unanimously to enter into a Section 13 Agreement for the provision of a play areas and public open space in association with development at Auldyn Walk under PA 20/01367/B.

The meeting closed at 8:20 p.m. giving a time of 2 hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.