

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council - 13 December 2011

Works to the flood wall, Goodland Gardens, Taunton

Report of the Strategic Director, Joy Wislade

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Norman Cavill)

1. Executive Summary

During the works to improve Goodland Gardens the removal of a substantial tree has revealed a large crack in the wall of the Mill Stream that runs through Goodland Gardens which acts as part of the flood defence scheme. The wall is in the ownership of the Borough Council. The Environment Agency requires the Council to rectify this as soon as possible.

The rebuild of this part of the wall will be carried out by the contractor currently on site, with the agreement of the Environment Agency. This report requests an addition of £10,000 to be added to the Council's Capital Programme in 2011/2012 to carry out these works. This funding to come from the unallocated Growth Points Capital Reserve. This allocation of funding requires a decision of Full Council and as these works are urgent, this report is being written to meet the Council meeting deadlines but prior to the full survey work being completed. A further update will be provided at the meeting on 13 December 2011.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Goodland Gardens re-design, agreement was given to remove the three large existing Cypress tree opposite the toilet block and immediately behind the Mill Stream wall. This agreement was based on:-
- a) they were too big for their location and reaching their natural maturity;
 - b) they were totally shading out the planting area underneath;
 - c) the large bole and roots of the tree in the corner of the wall was believed to be contributing to a crack in the wall; and
 - d) needle and debris drop into the stream from overhanging branches was not helpful for maintenance.
- 2.2 Deane DLO was the contractor appointed to remove the trees. Due to their situation a method was agreed that the trees would be dismantled and not felled to avoid any leverage or ground disturbance. For the same

- reasons it was agreed to cut the trunks close to ground level, but leave the roots in the ground.
- 2.3 No other works in this area have taken place apart from placing topsoil for the new planting area now possible due to the removal of the trees.
 - 2.4 Inspection has shown that the crack in the wall is historic and not new and there have clearly been previous attempts to fill the crack with mortar. This is further confirmed by the fact of the crack not being obvious when viewed from the bridge, but only apparent from the west side of the stream where the crack is angled behind the patch up mortar fill.
 - 2.5 It can be seen that in the past, presumably at the same time as the riverside wall, the Mill Stream wall has been raised by additional stonework approaching 1m and the weight of this may have contributed to the crack. It can be noted that there is some washing out of the foundation at the waterline, which may also have exacerbated the crack.

3. Details

- 3.1 The ownership of the wall has been checked and is confirmed as being part of the Council's estate. The Environment Agency requires the relevant repairs to be made as soon as possible, particularly as the time of year with the highest flood risk is approaching.
- 3.2 At the time of writing this report, structural engineers are examining the crack to determine the correct method of repair / rebuild. The Environment Agency has agreed that the current contractor on site at Goodland Gardens can carry out the works, once the method has been agreed. Again, at the time of writing this report the estimate of cost is not finalised, but should be within the budget proposed of £10,000.
- 3.3 A further update will be provided at the meeting on the 13 December 2011.

4. Finance Comments

- 4.1 The works are therefore capital works and the Council will need to approve a Supplementary Estimate to increase the Capital Programme Budget for 2011/2012 for the capital expenditure of £10,000. This funding will come from the Growth Points Capital Reserve.

5. Legal Comments

- 5.1 The Council has a duty to maintain areas within its ownership.

6. Links to Corporate Aims

- 6.1 This scheme links to the Regeneration Corporate Aim.

7. Environmental and Community Safety Implications

- 7.1 The repair of this piece of flood wall is required for the integrity of the flood defences within Goodland GardenS to be maintained.

8. Equalities Impact

- 8.1 No equalities issues have been identified.

9. Risk Management

- 9.1 The design will be subject to a risk management approach.

10. Partnership Implications

- 10.1 The approval of the Environment Agency to the design and method of the works will be sought prior to the works commencing, to ensure that correct standards are met.

11. Recommendation

It is recommended that a supplementary budget is approved to increase the Council's 2011/2012 Capital Programme by £10,000 for the additional expenditure described in this report and that this funding be taken from the unallocated Growth Points Capital Reserve.

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