

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 10 July 2017

Portfolio:	Planning and Development
Subject:	River Wallington Gabion Replacement Works
Report of:	Director of Planning and Regulation
Strategy/Policy:	Fareham Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2011-2017
Corporate Objective:	Protect and enhance the environment, Safe and Healthy place to live and work.

Purpose:

To seek funding approval to undertake works to replace the existing failing gabion retaining wall owned by Fareham Borough Council, that prevents erosion of the river bank adjacent to Wallington Shore Road and potential flooding to the village.

Executive summary:

The failing structure in need of replacement forms part of an erosion barrier which protects FBC owned land from erosion by the River Wallington.

The erosion barrier is formed of a gabion basket retaining wall 41m long. At its closest, Wallington Shore Road is within 4m of the erosion barrier. The structure has already begun to fail in places. The structure has previously been maintained by FBC, but has now reached the end of its serviceable life and is no longer maintainable.

There is a high risk that a complete failure of sections of the FBC owned wall could occur under high river flow conditions, putting FBC owned land and Wallington village at increased flood risk.

It is proposed to replace the failing sections with a new gabion retaining wall in 2017 with funds from the FBC Capital Programme.

The details set out in this report have been developed in collaboration with FBC Finance, Estates and Legal teams.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Executive:-

- (a) approves funding for the replacement of the gabion basket retaining wall on the River Wallington, as outlined in confidential Appendix B; and

(b) delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Regulation to procure and deliver the works, subject to the award of contract being made through an Individual Decision of the Executive Member for Planning and Development.

Reason:

The current erosion barrier, the lifespan of which is estimated to be less than 1 year, has reached the end of its serviceable life and has already begun to fail in places. There is a high risk of complete failure of sections of the erosion barrier under high river flow conditions, leading to erosion of FBC owned land and increased flood risk to Wallington village.

Replacing the gabion baskets will reinstate the erosion barrier on this section of the River Wallington for the next 20 years.

Cost of proposals:

The total estimated budget cost of proposals is indicated in the confidential Appendix B.

Appendices:

A: Location Plan

B: Estimated Cost of Proposals - Confidential

C: Project Timeline

Background papers: None.

Reference papers: None.

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Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	10 July 2017
Subject:	River Wallington Gabion Replacement Works
Briefing by:	Director of Planning and Regulation
Portfolio:	Planning and Development

INTRODUCTION

1. Fareham Borough Council's (FBC) coastal team, the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP), propose to replace the existing failing erosion barrier on the River Wallington adjacent to Wallington Shore Road.

LOCATION

2. The FBC owned and maintained erosion barrier is located adjacent to Wallington Shore Road on the River Wallington, a location plan is provided at Appendix A.

BACKGROUND

3. FBC is the land owner and therefore has responsibilities under the Land Drainage Act to maintain and replace flood and erosion assets. FBC has previously carried out maintenance works, but the structure has now reached the end of its serviceable life. It is FBC's responsibility, as landowner, to replace the failed structure, reducing the risk of erosion and to manage the flood risk further upstream at Wallington village.
4. The erosion barrier constitutes a 41m long gabion basket retaining wall which protects FBC owned land and a section of the adjacent Wallington Shore Road from erosion by the River Wallington.
5. The erosion barrier is on the outside bend of the River Wallington, thus is exposed to higher currents and subject to increased erosion risk. The gabion stone has already begun to be washed out onto the river bed and there is a high risk that, at times of high river flow, a complete failure may occur to sections of the erosion barrier.
6. The main function of the erosion barrier is to protect FBC owned land and a section of Wallington Shore Road. At its closest, the road is within 4m of the gabion basket retaining wall and would also be a risk of erosion following retaining wall failure. This would prevent access to Wallington village from the south, and require a significant highway diversion

7. Given the extent of the damage and condition of the gabion baskets the residual lifespan of the structure is estimated to be less than 1 year.

LINKS TO STRATEGIES

8. The proposed works fall under the Fareham Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2011-2017. Specifically, the Corporate Objective to: Protect and Enhance the Environment; and to ensure Fareham is a Safe and Healthy place to live and work. These objectives will be realised replacing the failing erosion barrier, to protect FBC land, maintain road access to Wallington village and manage flood risk to the village.

OPTIONS

9. **Do Nothing** – River currents shall continue to attack the already damaged gabion basket retaining wall and continue to wash out the gabion stone fill. Under high river flow events this can be expected to accelerate and eventually lead to complete failure of the gabion basket retaining wall.
10. Assets at risk from failure of the erosion barrier are FBC owned land, access to Wallington village via Wallington Shore Road. Any failure of the erosion barrier is likely to require an immediate response to prevent erosion and to remove any obstruction in the river course to prevent potential flooding upstream in Wallington Village.
11. FBC as the land owner and maintainer has a Health & Safety duty of care to the public. Therefore, FBC would be required to remove any hazards through potentially closing Wallington Shore Road to the public and fencing off this area to public access.
12. **Do Minimum** – Continue reactive maintenance approach. The erosion barrier has reached the end of its serviceable life and no reactive maintenance is possible.
13. **Do Something** – Utilising powers under the Land Drainage Act, implement works to replace the failing erosion barrier on a like-for-like basis. The works would be designed, procured and supervised by the ESCP on behalf of FBC, including all consents and licenses.

BENEFITS

14. With the erosion barrier replaced; the risk of damage to FBC owned land, flood risk to Wallington village and the loss of a section of Wallington Shore Road is removed. These risks will be managed over the 20 year estimated lifespan of the replacement scheme.
15. Safety, security and well-being for residents who use the area are paramount. The potential for failures can affect public enjoyment of the area.
16. The uncertainty regarding the current retaining wall condition can cause risk-related anxiety for local residents. Those who rely on the Wallington Shore Road for highway access may also be similarly affected. The preferred option is therefore likely to have a beneficial impact on human health in this respect.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. FBC as a designated Land Drainage Body under the Land Drainage Act 1991 has permitted development rights conferred by part 13 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. The works are therefore a Permitted Development, whereby under the permitted development rights, planning consent is not required. FBC will also need to comply with the appropriate legislation including, but not limited to, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
18. FBC is the land owner, however as this section of the River Wallington is defined as a 'main river', FBC's Land Drainage Powers are not available to it, and is instead using its powers under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to undertake these flood and erosion works.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

19. The River Wallington forms part of a Marine Conservation Zone, terminating just north of the erosion barrier. Downstream of the erosion barrier, in Portsmouth Harbour, are inshore SPA, Ramsar and SSSI sites. Although these designations are not directly part of the work area, any disturbance to the water quality may affect these areas.
20. The River Wallington is a migration route for protected fish species which shall require consideration.
21. Potential impacts on these sites shall be assessed so that the impacts of the replacement works do not adversely affect the natural environment. This will be assessed through the consenting process in consultation with the relevant environmental bodies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. The erosion barrier is owned and maintained by FBC and the costs associated with this project will be funded through the Capital Programme. The budget cost to Fareham Borough Council for these proposals are included in the confidential Appendix B.
23. The budgets cost is based on minibid tender returns from suppliers seeking to join the ESCP Minor Works Framework. The minibids are currently under evaluation for Price and Quality as part of the overall framework evaluation. Following due diligence on the selected framework suppliers and award, a preferred supplier can be awarded the contract for these works, subject to an Individual Decision by the Executive Member for Planning and Development.
24. Funding for Land Drainage Works is allocated nationally by the Environment Agency through Grant-in-Aid. Priority is given to schemes protecting risk to life, followed by large numbers of residences and businesses where flooding will likely cause significant damage. The Wallington Gabions Replacement Works do not comply with the current funding mechanism.
25. Wallington Shore Road is maintained by Hampshire Highways, but they have declined to contribute financially as FBC are the landowner and therefore responsible for maintenance of these defences. However, as part of working collaboratively, Hampshire Highways have contributed all service drawings within the area of works to FBC, providing a cost saving to the project.

PROJECT TIMELINE AND FUTURE COMMUNICATIONS

26. The construction programme for implementation of the River Wallington Gabion Replacement Works is August/September 2017, when river levels are at their lowest. See Appendix C for project timeline.
27. A communications strategy will be planned and implemented to ensure the local residents are aware of the project timings. Particular focus will be given to communicating with local residences directly adjacent and opposite to the works and the Wallington Village Community Association

CONCLUSIONS

28. The erosion barrier has reached the end of its serviceable life and is at high risk of significant failure during future high river flow events. The wall has already begun to degrade and has an estimated residual life of less than 1 year.
29. The approval of the Wallington Gabion Replacement Works by the Executive will address the high erosion risks present on site, protecting FBC owned land, Wallington Shore Road and reducing flood risk to Wallington village.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Head of Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership, Lyall Cairns (023 9244 6453).