

APPENDIX 1

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHITEHAVEN COAST PROJECT

1st March 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Whitehaven Coast, from Whitehaven Harbour to St Bees, is recognised as being of national significance for its combination of landscape, historic and nature conservation significance. The Whitehaven Coast has the potential to contribute to the regeneration of Whitehaven, and west Cumbria, by providing a resource to the local community and visitors to the area and by projecting a positive image of Whitehaven. The Whitehaven Coast Project will enable this potential to be realised by developing a clear vision, and specific proposals for the enhancement and subsequent management of the coast, based upon a process of community and partner engagement

BACKGROUND

Haig

Haig Colliery closed in 1985 and was added to the National Coalfield Programme, managed by English Partnerships, in 2002. The site extends to 37 hectares and includes the former pithead buildings, now grade II listed and designated as a scheduled ancient monument, and managed as a museum by the Haig Mining Museum Trust. The site also includes the remains of the Saltom pithead, also a scheduled ancient monument, and extensive areas of open grassland, and a rugby pitch. Funding of £4.08 m has now been approved for the site, which includes:

- Landscaping improvements and associated works to the cliff top area.
- Match funding for an appropriate level of restoration works to the Haig Mining Museum,

Copeland Borough Council is the project delivery agency for the landscaping improvement works. Copeland Borough Council, in partnership with English Partnerships, will appoint a project manager in spring 2006 with the aim of completing site works by the end of 2007. Copeland Borough Council will lead on the implementation of the landscaping improvements and associated works to the cliff top area including procuring the lead design consultant and quantity surveyor to design the scope of works and, alongside the project manager, deal with any health and safety and warranty issues arising with contracts of such nature and procure and manage a contractor to deliver the works. Upon completion of the works the site will then be transferred to the Land Restoration Trust for long-term management by the end of 2007.

Once a funding agreement is in place with English Partnerships and an end user agreement is in place with the Land Restoration Trust, Copeland Borough Council will ensure it has the legal ability to transfer ownership of the Haig site to the Land Restoration Trust once the works have been completed. Copeland Borough Council will ensure that any complications with the Coal Authority concerning a first option to repurchase are resolved as far as possible.

Rhodia

The Rhodia site comprises of c160 acres of chemical works, and associated former industrial activities, surrounded by c210 acres of agricultural land. Previously the site was also a coal mine and a tar works. At its most productive the site was the major supplier of detergent products to the UK "soapers".and employed over 2,500 staff. Profitable operations have however now ceased.

Rhodia and the Land Restoration Trust have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and are working together to develop proposals for the restoration and long-term management of the entire landholding, including the former chemical works, as new public open space. As part of this Memorandum of Understanding the Land Restoration Trust have agreed to initiate a process of community and partner engagement to develop a vision for the future use of the site and seek additional support from third parties, over and above any investment from Rhodia. Specifically it is intended to submit a funding application to the Newlands II programme, managed by the Forestry Commission and funded by the North West Development Agency, to enable the site to be developed as new public open space.

It is hoped to agree a development agreement, complete restoration of the Rhodia site, and transfer ownership to the Land Restoration Trust by late 2007.

Other Sites

In addition to Haig and Rhodia, three other sites will be considered as part of the project. These are the areas known as South Beach, the area of open grassland below the candlestick and next to the harbour, the residential property known locally as Jonathan Swift House, a grade II listed structure on the headland above the candlestick, and the site of the former fuel depot, to the south of Haig Mining Museum. None of these three sites will receive funding from English Partnerships but they will be included in the project so that they can form part of the long-term vision for the Whitehaven coast.

The boundary of the project area is defined on the plan found in appendix 1.

PARTNERS TO THE PROJECT

The **National Trust** will take responsibility for the delivery and day-to-day management of the project including the employment of a community link project officer and acting as the first point of contact with the local community.

The **Land Restoration Trust** will take responsibility for the co-ordination of the Whitehaven Coast Project through its role as chair of the Whitehaven Coastal Fringe Task Group.

English Partnerships are responsible for funding the delivery of the regeneration project at Haig, as part of the National Coalfields Programme, including both the restoration of the wider site and investment in Haig Museum.

Copeland Borough Council is the local authority for the Haig and Rhodia sites, the landowner of the Haig site, excluding the museum, and also the delivery body for the landscaping improvements and associated works at the Haig Site.

West Lakes Renaissance is the Urban Regeneration Company for West Cumbria and has provided funding to the Whitehaven Coast project as part of its objectives to regenerate Whitehaven.

The parties are committed to working in partnership to realise:

- The potential they believe is greater in partnership than would otherwise be by working alone;
- The opportunity to share knowledge and experience with a view to developing best practice;
- The opportunity to share resources and skills;
- The ability to work together to access funding;
- And maximise efficiency savings;
- Project a positive image to the local community, and other interested stakeholders.

OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE WHITEHAVEN COASTAL PARK PROJECT

The Outcome of the project will be a more informed approach to the restoration and sustainable long-term management of the Haig and Rhodia sites based upon a clear vision for the Whitehaven coast supported by the local community and partner organisations. The Whitehaven Coast Project will take account of previous studies undertaken as part of securing funding approval for the restoration of Haig and will build upon the previous masterplan, and associated consultation. It will also take account of the previous masterplan exercise undertaken by Atkins for Rhodia.

Specific Outputs will include

- A programme of community engagement
- An integrated vision for the coastline
- A report detailing the natural and cultural significance of the coastline
- An interpretation strategy for the coastline
- A marketing strategy based upon the vision and the interpretation strategy
- A management plan
- Identification and confirmation of third party funding opportunities and submission of funding bids

The vision, supporting strategies and plans, produced by the National Trust as part of the Whitehaven Coast Project are provided in good faith and intended as guidance to enable the partners to deliver the restoration and future management of the Whitehaven Coast. As such none of the partners are legally committed to deliver the recommendations and the National Trust accepts no liability arising from the implementation of the recommendations unless it has direct responsibility.

COMMUNICATION AND CO-ORDINATION

All parties agree to work in a spirit of openness and trust and share appropriate and relevant information with the other parties and agree to maintain the confidentiality of any information when requested. All parties will work together to agree opportunities to publicise the project and the benefits of the partnership.

All parties agreed to work with, and co-operate fully, with the South Whitehaven Regeneration Steering Group (chaired by Copeland Borough Council) and the Coastal Fringe Task Group (chaired by the Land Restoration Trust) and to utilise these Groups as the forum for co-ordinating and reviewing the delivery of the project.

The National Trust will manage all communication with the local community and partners on a day-to-day basis with support from the Land Restoration Trust. Any publicity relating to the project will credit all the partners and will be discussed and agreed at the Task Group unless agreed otherwise.

SIGNATURES

Jeremy Barlow

National Trust

David Beuzeval

Land Restoration Trust

Brian Kirkbride

Copeland Borough Council

Nicola Wooding

English Partnerships

Paul Crooks

West Lakes Renaissance

