

GILLFOOT PARK MINE SHAFT NO.2 – URGENT ACTION IN RELATION TO THE COLLAPSE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Gill Troughton, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources.
LEAD OFFICER: Darienne Law, Head of Corporate Resources.
REPORT AUTHOR: Martyn Morton, Property Programme Manager

WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

These proposals will ensure the safe treatment of the collapsed Gillfoot Park mine shaft No.2. The benefits to the residents will include; the re-opening of the recreational area and reoccupation of the 9 evacuated residents from 24 – 32 Howbank.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO COUNCIL?

(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council, etc.)

This report has come to Council for information following the urgent action decision taken by the Chief Executive on the 20th November 2012 in accordance with chapter 20 of the constitution.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2011 members of the public reported issues of subsidence in a piece of recreational land to the rear of Howbank Road, Egremont. The land is owned and maintained by the council. The council as land owner has a responsibility based on avoidance of public nuisance to provide support to adjacent land.
- 1.2 Following these initial reports the Property Management Services department carried out a desktop study of the area which included reviewing historic information from the archives. The mine abandonment plan identified 2 potential issues which included shallow mine workings which could lead to subsidence and a mine shaft (Gillfoot Park shaft No.2) located on the land.
- 1.3 Atkins was appointed in August 2011 to carry out a further review and initial assessment. The review recommended further investigation. The council instructed Atkins to carry out the investigations on our behalf. This included the completion of a geophysical survey and monthly monitoring of the site topography.
- 1.4 The results of this further work identified that the potential for subsidence on the site was very minimal with no changes being noted in the topography over

the 12 month monitoring period. Concerns however were raised with the mine shaft which was located on the 2D resistivity survey. Although the shaft had been located, it could not be confirmed if the shaft had been treated correctly.

- 1.5 On the advice of Atkins the council commenced a project in November 2012 to identify the location of the shaft, confirm the treatment and if required, treat the shaft to make it safe. Following a tender exercise Forkers Ltd were appointed by the council to carry out this work.
- 1.6 The identification of the shaft and treatment was done by drilling a series of bore holes in the suspected area. When the shaft was located it was confirmed that the depth of the shaft is 76m and whilst it had been backfilled with loose material it had not been capped.
- 1.7 One Wednesday 14th November 2012 the contractor had identified the location and extent of the shaft. The shaft is located on the boundary of the councils land and number 28 Howbank Road. Work commenced on treating the shaft and approximately 2 hours into the work the operative heard a cracking noise and the upper layers of strata collapsed into the shaft forming a crater of approximately 15m wide by 5m deep. The contractors drilling rig was lost in the opening along with a large area of the councils and neighbouring land.
- 1.8 With the assistance of Atkins and the councils in-house Property Management Services and Building Control teams the decision to evacuate 8 houses was made, the houses were evacuated by 6pm on the 14th November 2012. A further house was evacuated on Friday 16th November 2012 following a further assessment of the Zone of Influence. The Zone of influence is the area directly above the shaft which is vulnerable to subsidence should a collapse of the substrate occur. The assessment was carried out by Atkins Ltd with support from WDS Ltd.(The council's appointed independent engineer).
- 1.9 Initial emergency works were carried out over the weekend which included the creation of a temporary access to the rear of the site and in filling the void with stone. The work was carried out in an attempt to stabilise the area.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 The council have 2 options for the treatment of the shaft. The options include:
 - 2.1.1 Option 1 - Borehole treatment from stable land around the zone of influence, this would involve drilling holes at angles into the shaft and pumping grout in sections.

- 2.1.2 Option 2 - Providing a sectional bridge to support the drilling rig. For the option a bridge will be constructed across the zone of influence and the rig will be suspended and drilling will continue.
- 2.2 The estimated costs of options 1 and 2 are £272,000 and £317,000 respectively, which when added to the estimated costs of the remedial action and work undertaken to date will result in total estimated costs of £310,000 for the cheapest option. These costs exceed the original allocated budget for the work of £140,000. The council's insurers have confirmed that the council does not have cover for this type of issue
- 2.3 Approval has been sought from the Chief Executive to proceed with the 1st option and given the urgent need to address the site issues the decision was taken under chapter 20 of the constitution as "exceptional urgent business".
- 2.4 With regard to the funding we anticipate that the additional required budget will be £310,000.00 for the site works. This is based on the initial estimate provided by Forkers Ltd, the need to employ a CDMc for the site given the new H+S risks and some additional support for Atkins to carry out QA & S roles and also consultation design advice. It is proposed that as this is Capital works we fund this from within the capital programme.
- 2.5 There may be some on-going revenue cost as the relocation cost for tenant displacement and should we require additional funds it will be considered from the on-going revenue budget monitoring and therefore has not been included in this urgent action..
- 2.6 Following consultation with the councils section 151 officer we have been advised that there is £1.1m of residual right to buy left which could be utilized to temporarily fund the present need, until we either get Capital receipt or we reallocate our programme .
- 2.7 This is allowable as Council approve the following on 23 February 2012 :

"Authorise use of Preserved Rights to Buy/Residual rights to Buy reserves (both of which currently have approval to fund housing only) to gap fund until receipt (then repay).

The reason for this decision was given in paragraph 4.3 of this report and was as follows:

The timing of capital receipts is critical to the funding of the proposed Capital programme. Members are reminded that the receipts detailed in tables 2-4 above are the best forecast prediction as of January 2012. The assets

(predominantly land) will be placed on the market when conditions are favourable and this is kept under constant review by the property department. It may be the case that some assets will be placed on the market sooner than currently anticipated, with resulting receipts ahead of those detailed in tables 2-4 above. It is not anticipated as at January 2012, that the assets will be offered for sale at later dates, however if sales do not progress as scheduled, there will be insufficient funding within the "AUTHORISED for use on non housing element" of Useable Capital Receipts Reserve (UCRR) (Appendix C), to fund the forecast capital programme."

- 2.7 Whilst we will be able to fund the remedial work using capital, any costs attributable to rehousing people etc. will not be eligible for capital funding as they are not enhancing our asset.
- 2.8 It is anticipated that the work will take approximately 6 week to complete. This is however provisional at this stage and will be confirmed with the residents as the project progresses.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 There is a third option in any situation like this which would be to compulsory purchase and subsequently demolition of the properties, which in this case would need to be all the houses on the Zone of influence which would include the full Terrance as they are laid on a strip foundation preventing us to separate the development.
- 3.2 This in effect would constitute a total of 9 properties, which even if the Value were to be 50K or less would prove more expensive than the two treatment options identified above.
- 3.3 It is not advised that we proceed with the alternative option.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 An unforeseen incident has occurred which requires financial commitment and commitment from the council to make the area safe and fulfil our responsibility as land owners to provide support to adjacent land.
- 4.2 Originally £140,000 was allocated for the treatment of the shaft. It is currently anticipated that a further £310,000 is required to remediate the collapse and return the area to a safe condition.
- 4.3 The additional £160,000 required is considered to be capital works and approval has been given by the Chief Executive on the 20th November 2012 to proceed

with these works. It is recommended that the work is funded from the council's residual right to buy reserve. The use of the reserve for gap funding was approved by council on 23rd February 2012.

5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: Procedure under Chapter 20 of the Constitution has been followed and requires report to Council for information.
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: Contained within the report
- 5.3 EIA Comments: No equality issues arise from the report.
- 5.4 Policy Framework:
- 5.5 Other consultee comments, if any: None.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 6.1 The project will be managed by the councils Property Management Services department with support from the following parties:
Geotechnical & Structural Engineering – Atkins Ltd
Quantity Surveying – Faithful+Gould
CDM – Atkins Ltd
Independent engineering advice – WDS Ltd
- 6.2 The project risks will be managed by the Property Management Services using project management techniques.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 7.1 The shaft will be remediated and the area can be safely reoccupied.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Email of approval from Paul Walker (20th November 2012)

List of Background Documents:

Documents Provided by Atkins:
Initial Desktop study
Geophysical Survey

Site Monitoring Records
Tender documentation
Zone of influence diagram
Tender report

Documents provided by Forkers Ltd:
Risk assessments and method statements
Statement of fact – Incident report
Budget costing for the remedial work.

From: Paul Walker
Sent: 20 November 2012 19:03
To: Martyn Morton
Cc: Darienne Law; Pat Graham
Subject: RE: Howbank Road, Egremont : F288

Martyn

Thank you for the progress report – I authorise the urgent action required as detailed in your report.

Regards

Paul

Paul Walker

Chief Executive

Copeland Borough Council