

## Chester Terrace Working Group

Friday 7 January 2022 12:00

Held Remotely Via Microsoft Teams

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Attendance: Allan Murray Jones, Chair  
Loretta Balfour  
Richard Loftus

Also Attending: Nick Packard, Director  
Flora Lickiss, Surveyor  
Jessica Mills, Minutes

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The meeting commenced with a discussion over comments raised by Richard Loftus in response to the previously circulated draft letter and attached document intended to be sent to ratepayers. He expressed that while Option 4 and Option 1b should be discussed, the other scheme proposals should be removed, to limit confusion among ratepayers. It was suggested Option 5, the complete replacement of the foundations and balustrade in three phases, may not be favoured due to the time the works would take and potential increased cost compared with Option 4. It was advised Option 5 came from Ramboll, who had suggested a minimum monitoring period of 1 year. It was suggested in practice the monitoring and works might be undertaken over 3 to 5 years. It was noted Richard does not have feedback or views from his neighbours in the terrace. The Director advised he is prepared to have conversations with residents over the different options presented, to clear up any complications. There was discussion over if this is just added work for staff and whether the Commissioners might not approve some of the options presented.

Regarding Option 1b, there was some disagreement over the analysis of this option, querying if the design of the balustrade could account for movement. It was suggested a flexible balustrade could be explored with Ramboll. Option 4 details the complete replacement of the foundations and balustrade, however, there was concern that this approach could put significant financial pressure on the Commission's finances. In this regard, it was noted that the Paving Rate cap is 12.5 p/£ with the most recent rate at 1.45 p/£. It would damage the gardens within 4 metres of the wall and HP+M have quoted 40 weeks on site. The group questioned how long the balustrade works took at Cumberland Terrace and if it was longer than 40 weeks.

**It was agreed to check the length of time the balustrade works took place at Cumberland Terrace.**

The Working Group were in agreement that the Commissioners may not agree to the cosmetic only repairs outlined in Options 1 and 1a. Option 4a also might not be chosen, but can be useful as a comparison to show the cost of repairing the existing balustrade verses a

new one. It was suggested that Option 1b, Option 4 and Option 5 are the scheme proposals the Working Group might be comfortable with recommending to the Commissioners.

The letter to ratepayers is to show the various options that have been considered plus ask for their views on the project. Following consideration of their comments, the Board would be able to make a decision on the design approach. There was discussion over removing the other options not suitable, since option 2 and 3 had already been ruled out. A compromise was suggested to explain in the letter which options are being focused on; Option 1b, Option 4 and Option 5; and which Options have been discounted and why.

It was suggested that we had not explored the flexible balustrade approach with Ramboll and whether Hurst Pierce + Malcolm's arrangement for the demountable balustrade is the most suitable. It was questioned if a flexible balustrade could have movement joints more sophisticated than mortar, able to adjust without dismantling. It was also suggested that Ramboll could be asked for their view on the costs associated with dismantling and reassembling a demountable balustrade. In waiting for their input, the Working Group discussed whether the letter to residents should be postponed. While the Group understood the Director will have priorities over the coming weeks and months, it was noted there is some flexibility this month to see if Ramboll are available. The Working Group noted a second opinion is useful in the circumstance of such a large scale/high cost project in the history of the organisation.

**It was agreed for Richard Loftus and Nick Packard to virtually meet with Ramboll for a discussion over a potential flexible balustrade.**

**In the meantime, the letter to the ratepayers will be delayed. The Director agreed to review suggested amendments to letter to include which options are being focused on and why.**