



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
16 March 2022
Agenda Item 12

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected: All Worthing

Worthing Lido Structural Investigations and Proposed Next Steps

Report by the Director for the Economy

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To update members on work being undertaken to ensure that the Lido remains an integral part of our seafront and to protect this important piece of architectural heritage in Worthing.
- 1.2. Inform members of the Committee of current measures being taken to ensure that the Lido is kept safe and is able to continue to operate.
- 1.3. Present a 'concept ideas report' for the Lido based on architectural experiences of similar heritage buildings elsewhere.
- 1.4. To propose public consultation and community engagement with our local communities to inform the Council's approach to delivering the restoration and improvement of the Lido as well as explore funding options.

2. Recommendations

The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1. Note the ongoing structural investigations being undertaken for the Substructure and the [Lido Feasibility report](#) produced by Marshall & Kendon on concept ideas for the Superstructure.
- 2.2. Agree that officers undertake public consultation with the local community and stakeholders to help shape the Council's approach for protecting and renovating the facility, including exploring how this could be funded.
- 2.3. That a further Joint Strategic Committee be presented with a report on the following:
 - Key findings from the Mott Macdonald and Historic England workstreams
 - Results from the public consultation
 - Financial Strategy
 - Proposed Next Steps

3. Context

- 3.1. Following the pandemic town centres are reimagining themselves and are fast becoming hubs for cultural and civic activity; drivers of research and innovation, attractive leisure destinations and compelling places to live and work. There is now a strong narrative as to the importance of regional towns, and how they contribute to the national economy.
- 3.2. Achieving such a change requires a concerted effort across the public and private sector. The delivery of new homes, offices and industrial premises, and the provision of leisure, cultural and retail facilities have diversified their offer and brought new life to town centres. The provision of new public spaces and significant investment in infrastructure underpins the creation of more attractive and accessible destinations. The towns that are embracing regeneration are finding renewed activity and purpose, resulting in positive changes for their economies.
- 3.3. Regeneration is happening in the context of a changing retail sector, stretched budgets (for both the public sector and private companies), and environmental and political imperatives for change. Securing a town's competitiveness and expressing its unique identity is challenging. The market place is becoming crowded and places need to utilise their heritage and cultural identity to create compelling narratives for their future. Successful places are responding to these challenges and taking the opportunities that are presented to them.

- 3.4. No less important but harder to quantify are the perceptions of a town. These can be just as important to those looking to visit, live or run a business. Aligned to this is the need to create relationships and engage with diverse communities. These are as much a part of successful regeneration as the physical plans and investment.
- 3.5. One of the key regeneration opportunities that sets Worthing apart from other towns is the seafront's rich opportunities. A number of listed buildings such as Worthing Pier, The Dome, the Steyne give it a distinctive historical character. While restaurants and concessions such as the Crab Shack, Coast Café and Bayside Social add vibrancy. Added to this the new businesses forthcoming at the Pier's Southern Pavilion and West Buildings Shelter will ensure that a new offer will come available to draw people back to visit again.
- 3.6. Nonetheless there are significant opportunities to add to this offer which are identified in the Worthing Seafront Investment Plan 2017. Worthing Lido is a key opportunity for heritage and culture led regeneration that reinforces the town's distinctive identity.
- 3.7. The paragraphs below set out the nature of the opportunity available, and set out some pragmatic steps to address the challenges to deliver the Lido's reinvigoration. Moreover, it sets out an approach to regenerating the asset in an inclusive, sustainable and financially grounded manner, to meet the aspirations of residents and visitors alike.

4. Worthing Lido - Background

- 4.1. Worthing Lido is owned by Worthing Borough Council. The Lido is situated in a key location on the seafront, adjacent to the promenade and opposite a main visitor car park. It is clearly an important destination that contributes to Worthing's attraction as a place to live and visit.
- 4.2. The Lido is a Grade II listed structure originally built as a bandstand enclosure in 1925 on the site of the old 'bird cage' band stand from 1897. The current 'D' shaped superstructure enclosure was built on an extended elevated substructure over the foreshore. The swimming pool was added in 1957, which is when the structure became known as the "The Lido", the pool being subsequently decommissioned in 1989/90. A rectangle shell and retaining wall are the only features remaining of the pool hidden underneath an ageing concrete slab surface. Given the structure was designed as a band stand the additional weight on the structure of a swimming pool has meant that the building needed additional inspection and repair to maintain it.
- 4.3. The Lido superstructure (buildings above ground) has undergone significant modification in its use since its original function as a bandstand and more

recently consisted of an amusement arcade, stage area, fun fair rides, retail shops and a café.

- 4.4. The building is leased to a tenant who sublets sections within the facility. This lease runs until 2026. However, in recognition of the opportunity that is available through investment, the tenant has agreed to a break clause in the lease to enable the Lido's rejuvenation.

5. Understanding the Challenge

5.1. Substructure

- 5.1.1. A significant amount of information has been gathered over the past year to inform a development approach founded on restoring and improving the Lido. The substructure is the area below the deck and consists of a reinforced concrete slab on concrete encased steel beams supported on solid steel piles. The substructure has been subject to frequent and regular studies undertaken by the Council's marine structural engineers Hemsley Orrell Partnership to understand its current state of repair. These studies have identified that the substructure has deteriorated and needed to be significantly repaired or replaced.
- 5.1.2. These studies came to the fore on receipt of a Risk Assessment and Load Mitigation Plan which was produced in April 2020. The report proposed reducing loads on the substructure and led to a number of areas being reduced for public access and some heavy load items being removed.
- 5.1.3. To identify what can be done to properly address these issues, Mott MacDonald, Engineering and Management Consultancy Services have been appointed by the council to test the robustness of options (proposed by Hops Consulting) and to prepare a costed report on how best to protect and support the substructure for the benefit of the next generation. A key factor in this report will be in understanding the cost of repairing the structure to a level that could allow the Lido to reopen with a swimming pool type facility.

5.2. Superstructure

- 5.2.1. The Superstructure (operating facility on top) will ostensibly be impacted by any necessary structural works required underneath. Some areas of the facility are currently closed to public access and the Mott MacDonald report will guide us on how to get these areas reopened. This impacts on the operation of the superstructure in terms of any changes to its layout, the number and type of activities, when the work has to take place and how the building functions.

- 5.2.2. Investigations into the concrete slab that currently sits over the old swimming pool shell suggest it can no longer support heavy loads which limits activities that take place from above it. Furthermore, the shops on the northern section oversail a section of this slab. Reinforcement of the slab will be required to enable suitable public access to this area. This may be considered a timely opportunity for the council to review all operational aspects of the facility as this slab covers a large proportion of open space and any reinforcement to the slab may impact the ability to reinstate a new swimming pool should it ever be proposed.
- 5.2.3. From the work undertaken to date it is clear that the fabric of the building needs investment to ensure it's historic character is preserved and enhanced. Nonetheless, on visiting the site, the opportunity for new or different uses can easily be imagined. There is an opportunity through the proposed public consultation and engagement to build a consensus around what should be achieved in the building for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

5.3. Listed Building Status

- 5.3.1. The Lido is a Grade II listed structure originally built as a bandstand enclosure in 1925 on the site of the old 'bird cage' band stand from 1897. The listed status of the structure presents complexities to how the structure is treated and what is renovated or refurbished. The council have undertaken consultation with Historic England through a site visit to the Lido in February 2022 to set out the proposed remedial options (being prepared by Motts Macdonald) and to understand the associated heritage implications more clearly. Historic England are currently reviewing this information and will be providing the council with their views and guidance on the proposed options.
- 5.3.2. As an historic building it is important that the building's character and appearance is preserved and enhanced and that any harm caused by repair and revitalisation is justified by the public benefits of any development.
- 5.3.3. The listed building status means that any refurbishment and development on the site will have to be of the highest quality and protects the historical integrity of the building. A key element of the consultation and engagement exercise will be working with stakeholders to establish opportunities for its future use that can be delivered in a sensitive manner within the Lido, and balancing the demand for expression and imagination with the historic importance of the building. .

5.4. Energy Performance and Sustainability

- 5.4.1. Adur & Worthing was one of the first councils to declare climate and biodiversity emergencies and commit to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. As an existing building the project will be undertaken using the Circular Economy

Principles. The approach will focus on providing practical solutions for designing out waste and pollution by reusing, repairing and recycling existing resources within the building.

- 5.4.2. Improving energy efficiency of the building, within the listed building constraint will be a key workstream for the design team. The use of resources will prioritise social, environmental and economic value by prioritising the use of resources and products that are renewable, do not contain any hazardous chemicals, are biodegradable, or do not contain a lot of packaging.

5.5. Viability

- 5.5.1. To rectify structural implications and repairs to ensure a fully operational Lido that is protected for the future in terms of climate change will be costly and potentially achieved through a phased, longer term planned strategy. The challenge will be to develop a viable business plan and/or funding model that secures the long term future of the Lido.
- 5.5.2. It is likely that the cost of the works required to protect and enhance the building cannot be recouped by any income driven by a new use. The financial approach will therefore require a creative approach involving grant funding, disposal of other assets, income generation, and other sources of funding either through crowd funding or subscription to help fund the works. While the capital costs are significant, the wider opportunity that the site presents as part of heritage and culture lead regeneration will be significant.

6. **Options considered for Community Engagement and Consultation**

- 6.1. To explore how the council might go about maximising the viability of the Lido. The council has appointed Marshall & Kendon Architects (M&K) who have significant experience in working on Grade II Listed Lidos structures such as the Thames Lido in Reading and Clifton Lido in Bristol.
- 6.2. M&K have investigated the feasibility of a number of high level design options to inform the council of what might be achievable. This piece of work reviewed the facilities existing use, and set out to prepare concept (Block form) design ideas. This piece of work will help the council to form the basis of establishing the key components necessary to aid the consultation process and to understand the public's view on what might be possible, please see [Marshall & Kendon Report](#).
- 6.3. Mindful of the required works and the assessments underway, there is an excellent opportunity to undertake community consultation on the future of the Lido and to examine potential funding routes to secure its restoration and improvement. The council proposes to seek the views of residents, stakeholders and visitors through public consultation. This will be achieved by

face to face consultation, stakeholder engagement and on-line surveys and the findings will in turn help determine the councils' future approach.

- 6.4. Following the consultation process a report will be prepared to present back to JSC setting out the key findings and proposed next steps.

7. Development of a Financial Strategy and Approach

- 7.1. To secure the full restoration of the Lido the council will need to develop a sustainable financial strategy that is subsidised by capital funding. There are a number of options that can be explored further.
- 7.2. The council are likely to qualify to apply Grant Funding support from the 'Heritage Lottery fund' which may be one source of capital funding to pursue. This will require a high level of community engagement and officer resources to develop the bidding process.
- 7.3. The council will be applying to the 'Levelling Up Fund' to see if the Lido as part of a wider town centre bid can qualify for capital funding.
- 7.4. To support the necessary preparation work to develop the designs the council will bid to the Local Enterprise Partnerships as funding becomes available.
- 7.5. Sustainability grants may be available to support the council commitment to Carbon Neutrality. With the likely route of the Ground Source Heat Network being along the seafront it is likely that the Lido can benefit from this technology to heat the facility.
- 7.6. To seek capital funding from the Council Capital Programme to support on-going maintenance requirements.
- 7.7. The Lido is a community asset which may present opportunities for interested parties to donate time, experience, skills or talent to help generate funding opportunities. Crowdfunding is an option the council will explore further.
- 7.8. Normal prudential borrowing is not likely to be considered a viable proposition and an approach towards innovation maybe more appropriate.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. Ensure on-going maintenance and remedial work is undertaken to continue the on-going operation of the Lido. Working closely with the existing tenant.
- 8.2. Review of Mott MacDonald and Historic England Reports to establish key findings.

- 8.3. Prepare and undertake Consultation with Key Stakeholders and the Public. Review consultation responses and prepare a report.
- 8.4. Investigation funding opportunities and prepare a financial strategy.
- 8.5. To present a further report back to JSC setting out findings from these investigations and proposed recommendations and next steps.

9. Finance Implications

- 9.1. Worthing Borough Council currently only have modest maintenance budgets associated with reactive maintenance at the Lido site which is currently rented out to a local operator, although any planned maintenance is funded from the overall planned maintenance programme.
- 9.2. However in recognition of the current condition of the site, the 2022/23 revenue budget included provision for debt charges of £80,000 which should be sufficient to support borrowing of £2,000,000 . This was included to allow for capital works to the sub structure, although the costs for these works have yet to be fully established.
- 9.3. The cost of the full restoration of the Lido is likely to be substantial and in excess of £10 million, and consequently a funding strategy needs to be devised that will minimise any potential revenue consequences arising from the restoration project. As identified above, this will include:
 - Maximising external funding;
 - Seeking public donations towards the project;
 - Disposal of other Council owned assets to reduce down any borrowing requirements.
- 9.4. Any options considered for the restoration of the site should be the subject of a full financial evaluation to ensure that the option chosen both reflects the outcome of consultation but is also financially sustainable for the future.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

- 10.2. s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available of assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority
- 10.3. In the event that grant funding is obtained in support of this project the Council will need to comply with any terms and conditions contained in the grant funding agreement.
- 10.4. The procurement of the professional consultancies referred to in this report must comply with the procedures set out in the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

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Appendices

Appendix1. - [Marshall & Kendon Feasibility Study](#)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

The project is strategically interlinked with a planned wider investment programme connected with future developments at other key sites in Worthing.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Development on the Lido would send a positive message to the community, visitors, commuters and business, that change is taking place in Worthing and improvements to our visitor attractions will be realised in the near future.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified.

Works will be managed under the Construction Design & Management (CDM) Regulations 2015.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

It is intended that redevelopment will bring forward a health centre in a sustainable town centre location and will enable released sites to come forward for suitable redevelopment. Noise, dust and highway obstructions will be kept to a minimum using industry standard techniques, and monitored by the Council throughout the Works.

The project aligned to the council's strategic approach to Climate Emergency.

4. Governance

A dedicated project board will oversee the governance of the project ensuring:

- 1) Due diligence
- 2) Alignment with Council policies and priorities
- 3) Legal issues and compliance with legislation
- 4) Risk management including health and safety

- 5) Statutory approvals
- 6) Stakeholder management and engagement
- 7) Change control

5. Sustainability & Risk Assessment

All implications associated with any impacts on sustainability are considered through the council's BREEAM assessment which is required to be of an excellent standard to fulfil the requirements of a NHS occupied facility.

A Risk Register is assessed through the Project Board. Any associated risks are delegated to the Project Team in the form of a risk assessment. This organic document is assessed on a monthly basis.