

Lymington Harbour Commissioners

Stakeholder Update – Harbour Protection Project

The Commissioners are very pleased to announce the signing of contract for phase one of this vital project.

After many years of hard work and much appreciated public support we have today signed a contract with Trant Construction Limited to build the first phase of the harbour protection breakwater at a cost of £1.4m. This will be built on the western side of the channel at 'Cocked Hat'. It will form one arm of protection for the river and serve to retain the viability of the harbour as the outer salt marsh erodes over the years ahead.

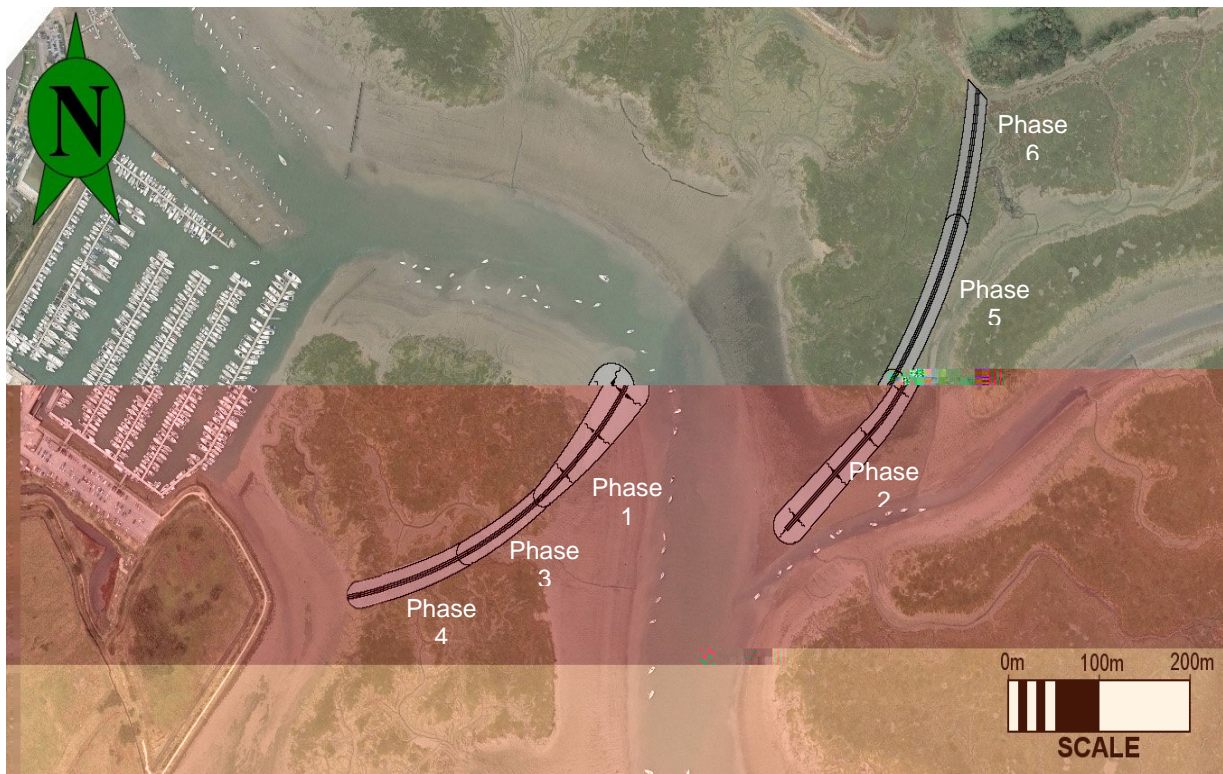
Construction will start at the beginning of May and be completed by mid to late September.

The next phase, to be built in five years time, will be of similar construction on the east bank at the entrance to Pylewell Lake. This will complete the overlap required to protect the upper river.

This project is vital to retain the viability of the harbour retaining both leisure and commercial facilities. The Harbour makes a very significant contribution to the economy of Lymington, contributing an estimated £98 million annually.

It will take another 25 to 30 years to complete the project as further work will be phased to match future salt marsh loss.

Plan showing location of breakwaters and phasing of works



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Update

In December 2008 we finally received approval from the environmental and regulatory authorities to proceed with Phases 1 and 2. Unfortunately, tenders for the construction of Phase 1 were higher than expected and as reported in our stakeholder update of the 6th April 2009, the Commissioners decided to delay the project by one year in order to take advantage of predicted market conditions going forward and to critically review the detailed design and construction methods to identify areas where costs could be reduced.

Subsequent work on 'value-engineering' has moderated the costs following a second tender exercise and we expect to award a construction contract in January 2010 for the Phase 1 construction of a single 100m long breakwater on the western side of the channel at 'Cocked Hat' at a cost of about £1.4m. Works are expected to commence on the 1st May 2010 and will be completed by September.

As previously explained, the funds to pay for the project will continue to come from river users in the form of harbour dues. Based on our cash flow projections, all river users (mooring holders, marina berth holders, ferry operators, visitors, etc) face further significant increases in the Harbour Protection element of the dues to cover the costs for Phase 1 and subsequent phases. From April 2010 the annual harbour protection levy for all boats moored in the river/marinas will increase by 10% from £8.63 to £9.49 per meter (excluding VAT).

It is appreciated that this increase cannot be popular in the present climate, but it is unavoidable if we are to be in time to protect the harbour. This is a long term project (approx 30 years) and the Commissioners will remain alive to the possibilities of trying to secure grant funding / assisted finance facilities from new and previously explored sources albeit without a high expectation of success.

A Big Thank You!

The Commissioners would like to place on record their thanks for the considerable level of local support that we have received for this scheme over the last three years. We would also like to place on record our thanks to the local officers from Natural England, the Environment Agency and the New Forest National Park Authority for working with us to find a sustainable solution that will safeguard the harbour for generations to come.