

Email from Parish Council to HBC Planning, 28th April 2021

Thank you very much for your time on Monday.

You mentioned that the document explaining the revised planning application is lodged on the planning portal under the 'listed building' planning application. (20/02721/LB)

I've had a really good search today and I really can't find anything that explains the content of the revised planning application.

The 'Options Study' from Mason Clark was posted again on 26th February 2021, which concludes that using soil nails are the best option - so the implication was that this option was still being considered.

The note the Parish Council received to comment on said 'PROPOSAL: Repair and rebuild of a retaining wall', which was the same phrasing as the original application in August 2020.

I am wondering how anyone could have known that the revised application planned to replace the advised soil nails with monitoring.

If there is any document explaining what was being discussed in the revised planning application, please may you forward it to me?

Email from HBC Planning to Parish Council, 4th May 2021

Sorry for the delay in responding I was on annual leave at the end of last week.

The revised scheme can be clearly seen on the elevational and sectional drawings submitted on 26th February. These show the area to be rebuilt in green and there are annotated positions for the soil nails etc which are shown only within the area shown as green. This also annotates the areas that they propose to do some repointing work to in relation to the remaining wall which is not to be rebuilt and shows areas of repacking to be completed behind the retained area of wall.

It no longer shows any rebuild works or pattresses or soil nails to the retained area of wall which was not part of the area of collapse.

The submitted options study does show all the options and highlights the preferred option to the surveyors but this is a supporting document and is not the works that have been applied for under the revised drawings.

I do not believe that monitoring is explicitly mentioned in the revised scheme as this does not require planning or listed building consent and therefore does not form part of the application, although it is considered advisable by both the applicant and Historic England, and was discussed verbally as part of the proposal. The use of monitoring was considered appropriate to support any future application for works to the area of wall which is presently still standing.

Email from Parish Council to HBC Planning

Thank you for your explanation of information on the revised scheme.

I attach comments, in red, to your letter. These comments have been seen by other members of the Parish Council and are an expression of our concerns.

In particular, this letter addresses the point that the significant change made when the plan was revised, ie to no longer support or restrain the remaining wall, was not made clear to either the Parish Council or to members of the public.

If we have misunderstood some parts of the process, we apologise, but the comments attached outline what we understand at the moment:

This letter will be made public as a link on our community website.

Attached letter - HBC email in black, Parish Council comments in red:

4th May 2021

Sorry for the delay in responding I was on annual leave at the end of last week.

The revised scheme can be clearly seen on the elevational and sectional drawings submitted on 26th February. These show the area to be rebuilt in green and there are annotated positions for the soil nails etc which are shown only within the area shown as green. This also annotates the areas that they propose to do some repointing work to in relation to the remaining wall which is not to be rebuilt and shows areas of repacking to be completed behind the retained area of wall.

The elevational drawing shows the area to rebuilt and the other areas of concern, marked with 'hazard' notices: the 'bulge in wall and loose pointing (2), the area where a tree was growing through the wall (4), vegetation and loose pointing, past repair (5), loose and hollow stonework (6), (cracking and bulging at low level and ivy at high level (7) isn't shown on this plan).

These areas of concern had a plan of action to support and restrain these areas with soil nails in the plan discussed in October 2020. I understand it is now the case that the revised plan makes no provision for support and restraint to these areas.

It no longer shows any rebuild works or pattresses or soil nails to the retained area of wall which was not part of the area of collapse.

The assumption, from this omission, could be that there is no longer a plan to work on the remaining wall. But the fact that the Options Study was also posted on the Planning Portal on 26th February 2021 suggests that the plans to support and restrain the wall are still active. The Options Study states, under the section 'Remaining intact stone wall - strengthening options', "... our proposal is to continue the soil nailing from the new construction along the remaining intact wall to the point where minimal historic movement has been observed".

This implies that plans to support and restrain the remaining wall still stand.

It is disrespectful to residents here and to people who are passing by the wall on a daily basis, in particular the parents and children who use the primary school, to not share your decision to shelve plans to support the wall.

The submitted options study does show all the options and highlights the preferred option to the surveyors but this is a supporting document and is not the works that have been applied for under the revised drawings.

I do not believe that monitoring is explicitly mentioned in the revised scheme as this does not require planning or listed building consent and therefore does not form part of the application, although it is considered advisable by both the applicant and Historic England, and was discussed verbally as part of the proposal. The use of monitoring was considered appropriate to support any future application for works to the area of wall which is presently still standing.

I understand that monitoring was not mentioned in the Options Study because the consultant engineers do not consider monitoring would flag a further collapse. They have stated repeatedly in our conversations with them that they believe the wall could suffer a sudden collapse. This view is further evidenced by the fact that the wall that did collapse was being monitored at the time.

I would like to check that we have understood this properly: We understand that the consultant engineers recommended supporting and restraining 30m of remaining wall with soil nails because they consider it is vulnerable to sudden collapse. For this reason, monitoring would be a waste of time. The revised decision, made by you as the responsible planning officer, is to reconstruct and support the collapsed wall and to leave the remaining part unsupported but under a monitoring scheme, the length of which is yet to be specified.