

REPORT

Second Millport Coastal Flood Protection Scheme, Community Consultation Questionnaire

Summary of Results

Client: North Ayrshire Council

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1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the second Millport Coastal Flood Protection Scheme (FPS) Community Consultation Questionnaire. Empowering communities is a core policy of both North Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Government. Engagement and consultation with the people of Millport is an essential part of the scheme development process.

The aim of this questionnaire was to collect the opinions of the community on the different options and elements of the proposed Millport Coastal FPS. The associated questionnaire relating to Marine Tourism will be reported separately by the Council's Tourism and Coastal Economy team.

This report first provides details of the community consultation undertaken to date (Section 2). Section 3 outlines the methodology of the survey and analysis and summarises the scheme options, before going on to set out the survey results (Section 4). Only brief conclusions are provided in this report (Section 5) because the survey is part of an ongoing process of planning and design.

2 Summary of consultation

Community consultation undertaken to date for the Millport Coastal FPS has taken a variety of formats. Initial information about the plans for development of a coastal flood protection scheme was provided via a newsletter. Feedback on this newsletter led to development of a Frequently Asked Questions document (available on the NAC website), a further newsletter and a meeting with community representatives with a particular interest in the harbour area.

Community engagement workshops were held from 29th November to 1st December 2016, with 245 visits recorded. Workshops were also held with 39 students from local schools. The consultation questionnaire issued alongside the workshops received 155 responses plus 39 responses from students. This first questionnaire focussed on how the seafront is used and the important aspects to be considered in development of the scheme. The exhibition materials from these workshops and the report on the findings of the first questionnaire is available on the NAC website.

A third newsletter was issued to all Millport addresses in February 2017 to provide an update on work that had been undertaken since the winter 2016 workshops to address questions raised. The newsletter also provided an introduction to the ongoing work by the Council's Tourism and Coastal Economy team to develop the Ayrshire Growth Deal for Marine Tourism and the associated potential for development of Millport as a key tourism destination on the Firth of Clyde.

The third newsletter included an invitation to a second community engagement event, to be held jointly with the Council's Tourism and Coastal Economy team on 21st and 22nd March 2017. The aim of this exhibition and Design Charrette was to provide feedback on the scheme development since the winter 2016 workshops, and to explore the community's wider ambitions for the town (led by the Tourism and Coastal Economy team).

The March 2017 event was publicised in the local newspaper, on local radio and on the NAC website, as well as in the February newsletter. Between 150 and 200 visits were made to the consultation workshops. The exhibition materials from the March 2017 event are available on the North Ayrshire Council website.

Questionnaires were developed for both the Coastal Flood Protection Scheme and the Marine Tourism proposals and were available at the workshops. The questionnaires were also posted to all Millport addresses, and an online version of the questionnaire could be accessed from the NAC website.

Consultation with statutory stakeholders and other organisations with a potential interest in the Millport CFPS is ongoing, following the statutory processes required for approval of a flood protection scheme. A request for EIA Screening Opinion has been issued to Marine Scotland and North Ayrshire Council Planning. An Environmental Scoping Report has been completed and issued to stakeholder organisations. Comments on this report are currently being collated to inform subsequent environmental assessment work.

3 Methodology

As for the previous consultation questionnaire for the Millport Coastal FPS, two survey methods were used as follows:

1. Online using Survey Monkey, through a link on North Ayrshire Council's website; and
2. Printed questionnaire provided during the consultation workshops and issued by post to all Millport addresses.

Ten questions were asked ranging from identification through to satisfaction with the engagement process. To ensure anonymity identification results have been omitted from this report. Questions were as follows:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Telephone
4. Email
5. Are you willing for North Ayrshire Council to retain your contact details in order to contact you regarding this response and/or the flood protection scheme proposals? Contact details will not be used for any other purpose.
6. What is your particular interest in Millport seafront?
7. Was the consultation adequately advertised?
8. Has enough information been provided to explain the proposals?
9. Have you had an adequate opportunity to obtain further information and express your views?
10. Do you have any comments on the consultation process?

Following the initial identification questions eight options were presented. For each option the following two questions were asked:

- Please indicate whether you approve of these proposals or not:
 - Completely disapprove;
 - Partially disapprove;
 - Neither approve nor disapprove;
 - Partially approve; or
 - Completely approve.

This question was intended to gauge opinion on which element of the scheme the public particularly approved or disapproved off. The following question was intended to identify "why" in a manner that could be used for comparison.

- Please indicate your main concerns about this proposal (pick as many as you like).
 - It will negatively affect the view;
 - It will not look good;
 - It will reduce access to the seafront;
 - It will have a negative impact on tourism; or
 - It is not needed.

In the last section, participants were asked to provide any comments on specific elements of the scheme.

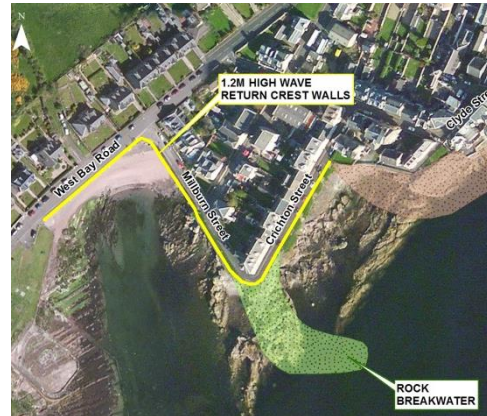
3.1 Flood Protection Scheme Options

The elements and options for the scheme were presented as follows.

3.1.1 West Bay Road to Millburn Street

Proposed solution

A 1.2m (3ft 11in) high concrete wave return crest wall and a shore-connected rock armour breakwater extending south east from Crichton Street.



3.1.2 Crichton Street



3.1.3 Clyde Street

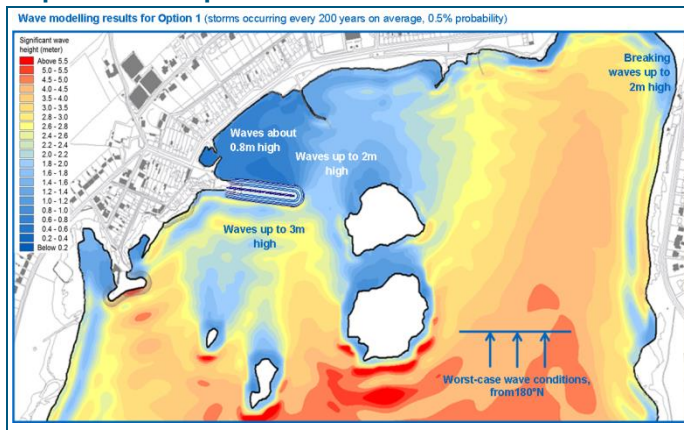


Proposed solution

A rock revetment is proposed, which would be built over the natural rock outcrops. Rocks that look similar to the natural rocks on the beach would be used. The crest level of the boundary walls to properties would not be raised.

3.1.4 Stuart Street Options

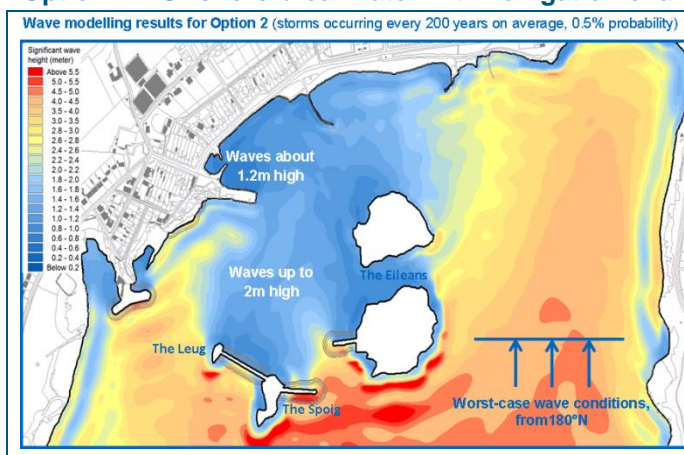
Option 1 – Millport Pier Extension



Proposed solution

- 150m rock armour extension to Millport Pier
- Estimated cost: £4,000,000

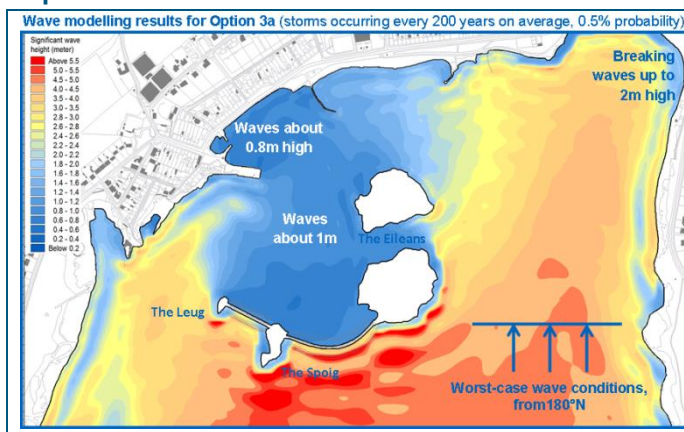
Option 2 – Offshore breakwater with navigation channel



Proposed solution

- Breakwaters between the Leug, the Spoig and the Eileans
- Navigation channel between the breakwaters
- Replacement of Stuart Street crest wall and drainage improvements
- Estimated cost: £11,589,000

Option 3 – Continuous offshore breakwater




Proposed solution

- Continuous breakwater between the Leug, the Spoig and the southern Eilean.
- Estimated cost: £12,639,000

3.1.5 Glasgow Street and Cross House

 <p>Flood Wall along the landward side of the promenade</p>	<p>Proposed solution</p> <p>A wave return wall is required to the rear of the promenade and seaward of Cross House. The height of the wall along Glasgow Street will be either 0.8m or 1m depending on which offshore option is chosen. The height of the wall at Cross House will be 1.2m.</p>
<p>The visualisation is scaled to show a wave return crest wall approximately 1.2m (3ft 11in) high adjacent to Cross House.</p> 	

3.1.6 Kames Bay and Marine Parade

	<p>Proposed solution</p> <p>A 1.2m high wave return wall is needed along Marine Parade. To the southern half of Marine Parade, a higher defence level could be achieved by raising the level of the grass bank.</p> <p>For Kames Bay, a 0.8m high wall is required around the landward side of the promenade, plus drainage improvements to the grass area to deal with residual overtopping.</p>
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4 Questionnaire findings

4.1 General information

There were between 150 and 200 visits made to the March 2017 consultation workshops. One hundred and sixty two (162) people responded to the questionnaire. This compares to an estimated resident population of Millport of 1280 (2011 census), i.e. response rate of 13% of all residents .

The majority of respondents were local residents (69%, Figure 4.1), and they were generally satisfied with the way in which the consultation has been undertaken (Figure 4.2)

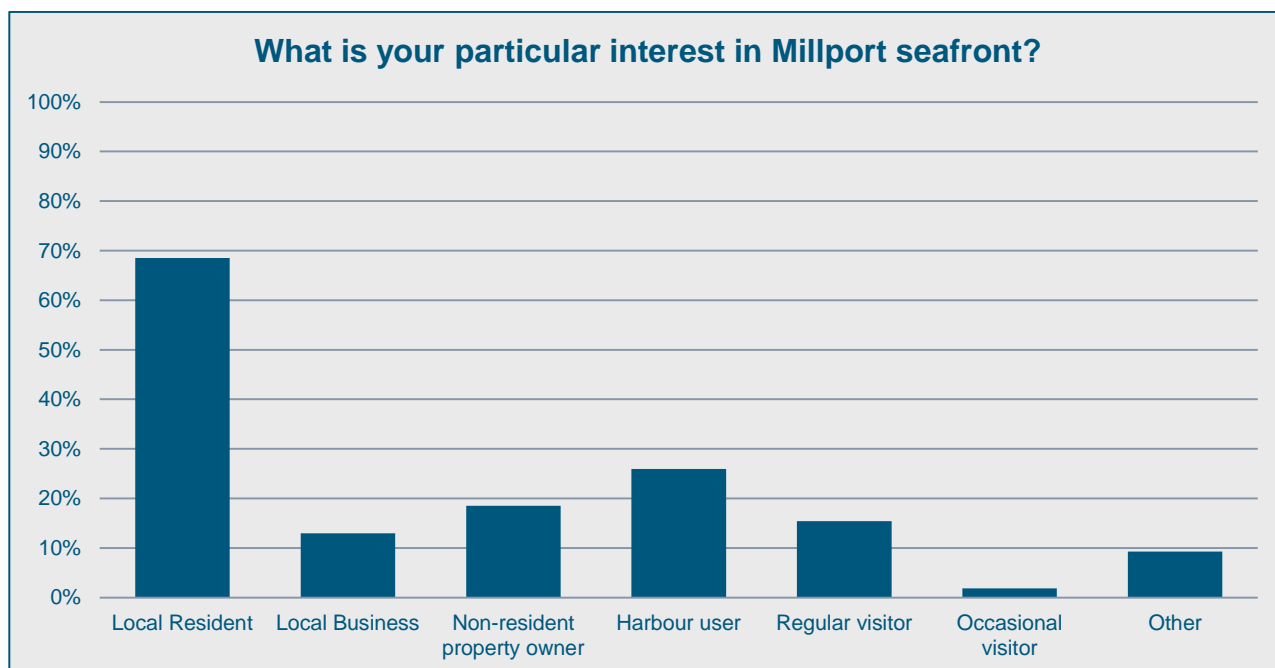


Figure 4.1: Showing the connection of respondents to Millport

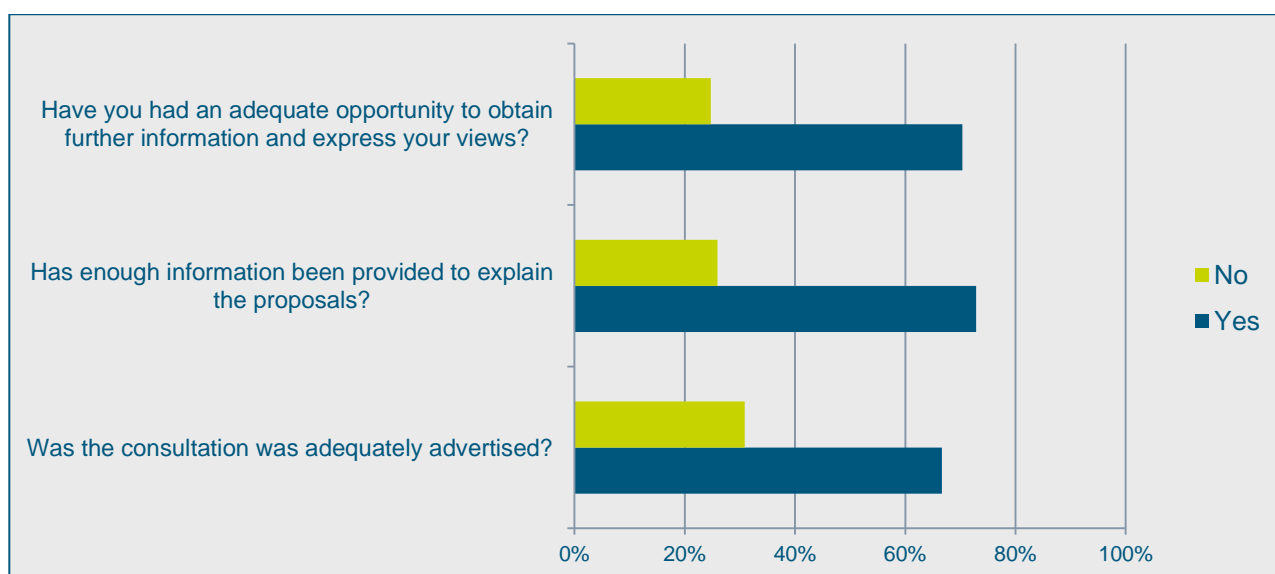


Figure 4.2: Showing opinions on the consultation process

When asked to comment on the consultation process the majority response was positive. However, some concerns were raised about the timing of the public exhibitions and how this effected people's engagement (18 comments). It was pointed out that many people concerned with the scheme proposals couldn't attend for the following reasons:

- They were at work and as the exhibition was during the day they couldn't attend;
- They were immobile due to age or disability and couldn't attend;
- They were unaware of the event taking place as they had not seen advertisements and/or did not have internet access; and
- The event was held outside of tourist season so holiday home owners were not in the area.

Concerns were expressed (7 comments) about the format of the online survey, which required a 'concern' to be selected for a proposal even if the respondent had previously indicated that they fully approved of the proposal.

4.2 Opinions about the scheme proposals

The Questionnaire responses demonstrated quite clear preferences in the potential solutions presented (Figure 4.3).

- The majority of respondents agree with the proposals to protect the Old Town (West Bay Road to Clyde Street), but with some concerns expressed.
- A number of issues have been raised in relation to the proposals to protect Glasgow Street, Kames Bay and Marine Parade.
- There is strong opposition to Option 1 (extension of Millport Pier using rock armour), with greater preference for an offshore breakwater solution (Options 2 and 3).

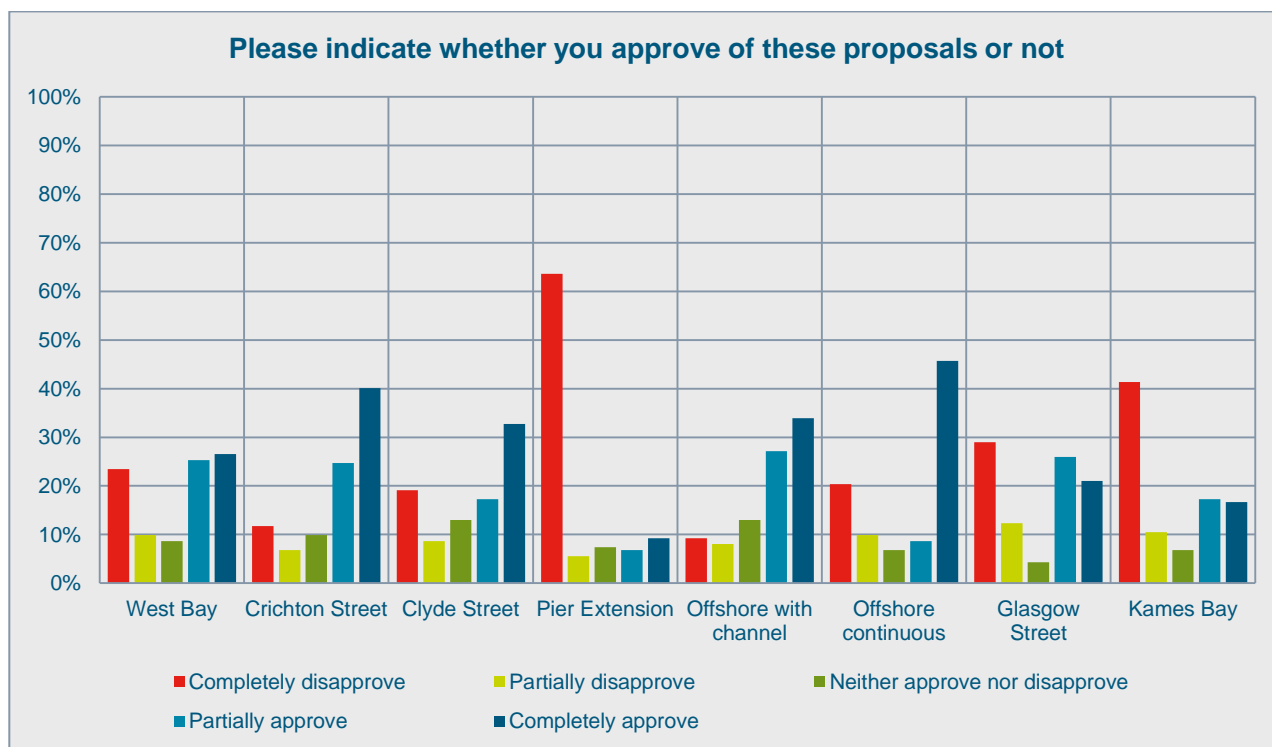


Figure 4.3: Opinions on the potential solutions

4.3 Concerns about the scheme

Respondents had the opportunity to select as many of the “concerns” as were relevant for each option. This gives an indication of the strength of concern for each potential solution (Figure 4.4). In correlation with Figure 4.3 the greatest concern is with the option to extend the pier.

In general respondents are concerned about the effect that the scheme will have on beach access, visual appearance, and subsequent impacts on the tourism industry.

For all options and locations, there were responses giving the opinion that a scheme is not needed. In particular, there is a strong belief that the proposed scheme is not needed for Kames Bay and Marine Parade (>40% of responses).

In correlation with the general approval of offshore coast protection options for Stuart Street, respondents showed the least concern about these proposals.

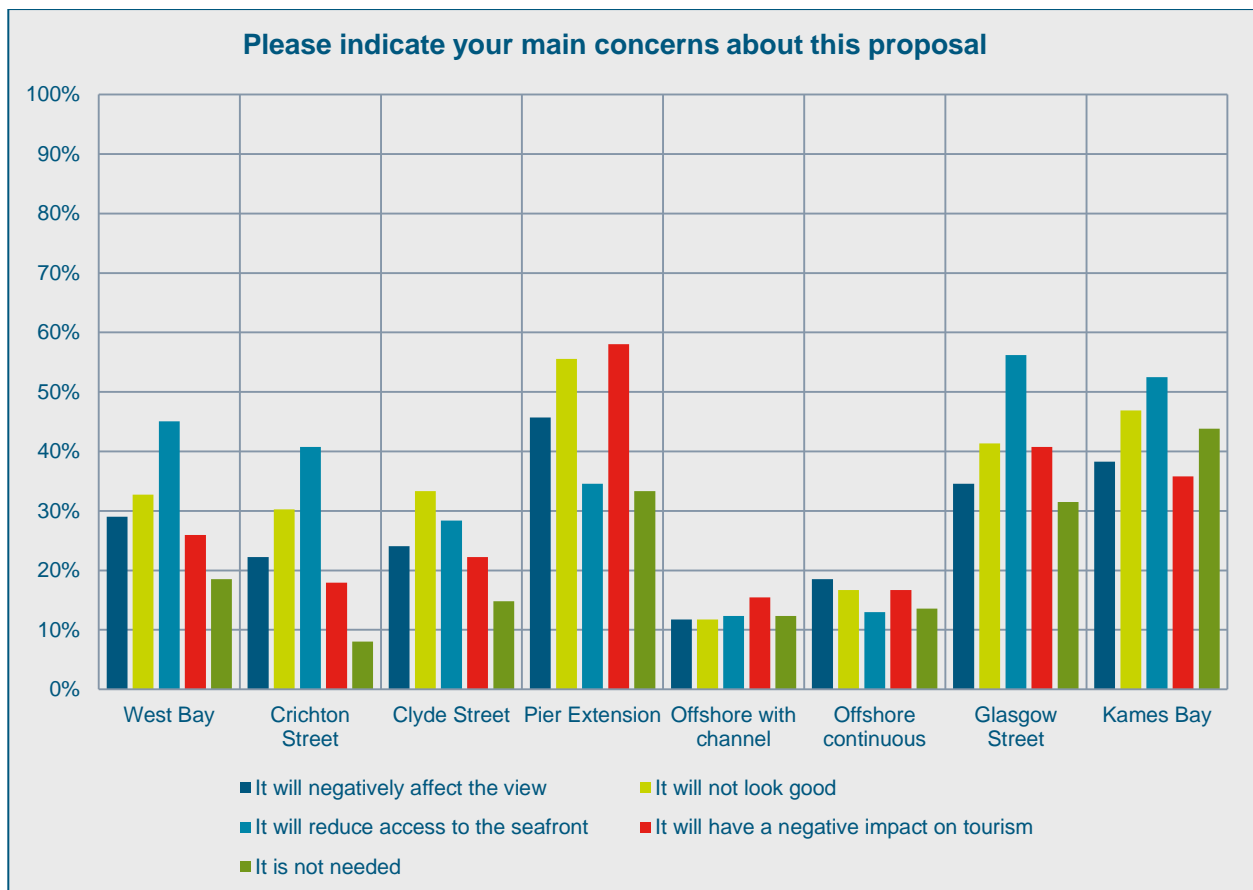


Figure 4.4: Concerns about each potential solution

4.4 Comments on the scheme proposals

West Bay Road and Millburn Street

The comments on the proposals for this area related to the need for the scheme, concern about the appearance of flood walls and the need to maintain access. Comments recognised that Millburn Street was vulnerable (8 comments) but other comments considered the flood risk to West Bay Road to be limited (14 comments).

Crichton Street

Comments generally recognised a need for flood protection in this area (26 specific comments on the need for protection to this area). Concerns were raised about the height and appearance of flood walls, including the impact on views from properties (15 comments). The need to maintain access to the foreshore is a key issue here (7 comments), as is a requirement for adequate drainage through any walls (3 comments)..

Clyde Street

Conflicting views were stated in relation to the flood risk in this area, with most responses recognising a flood risk (17 comments) here but with 6 comments stating that the proposed revetment was not necessary or wouldn't work. Two comments on this option referred to the proposed offshore breakwaters, considering that those proposals would mean that a rock revetment would not be necessary. Concerns were raised that access to Knox Port would be affected (4 comments). The potential negative impact on natural habitats was also noted (4 comments).

Stuart Street

Strong opinion was voiced (50 comments) about the potential negative impact of extending the pier (Option 1). Comments expressed a strong desire to maintain the function currently provided by the timber part of the pier. Issues raised about the proposed rock armour extension included visual impact, navigation constraints and harbour access, potential risk of sediment loss from Newtown beach, impact on natural environment.

Four respondents preferred this option over the offshore breakwaters, and 9 comments recognised that this option could potentially be acceptable if there was berthing for boats on the inshore side of the breakwater.

Comments preferring Option 2 (offshore breakwaters with navigation channel) mainly referred to a preference to maintain the existing navigation channel. Comments preferring Option 3 (continuous breakwater) recognised the increased shelter provided for vessels. However, negative comments on Option 3 highlighted the impacts on navigation, particularly for larger vessels (16 comments).

A few comments were made about the visual impact of offshore breakwaters, with more negative comments about Option 3 (6 comments) than Option 2 (3 comments).

For all of the Stuart Street options there were comments made about whether the extent of the proposed works was necessary in relation to the level of flood risk. This issue was raised most often in relation to Option 3 (6 comments).

Glasgow Street

Comments recognised the need for a flood wall near to the Cross House (19 comments). However, many comments questioned whether a flood wall was necessary to other parts of Glasgow Street (23 comments). Concerns were raised about the reduction in access along this part of the seafront and the appearance of flood walls. The need to maintain drainage through any walls was highlighted.

Kames Bay

The proposed flood wall was considered to be unnecessary in this area (39 comments), with the grass area recognised as mitigating against the risk of flooding to properties and the road. Concerns were raised about the potential impact on the SSSI, flood walls creating a barrier to the beach, and the visual impact of walls.

Marine Parade

A flooding risk was recognised for the northern part of Marine Parade (9 comments). However, 10 comments highlighted that properties are not at risk of flooding. Drainage through any walls was noted as a concern.

General comments and issues

Comments on the proposals for West Bay Road, Crichton Street, Clyde Street and Glasgow Street suggest that the proposed works would not be needed if an offshore breakwater solutions was implemented. This highlights that more communication is needed regarding the performance of an offshore breakwater.

Varying opinion was voiced about the level of flooding experienced at different points in Millport Bay. Opinions stated were often contradictory, with as many people claiming flooding was a problem in certain areas as commented the contrary. Some respondents questioned the need for walls if drainage was not improved at the same time.

Various comments noted a lack of maintenance of the existing coastal structures and the promenade.

Strong concerns about access to and views of the seafront were as evident as they were in the previous survey. It is noted that access elements of the scheme have not yet been developed or communicated to the public, and recognised that these concerns will continue until this issue is addressed through consultation.

5 Conclusions

The questionnaire respondents were predominantly local residents. Whilst flood risk and a need for flood protection was recognised for parts of Millport, many residents question the need for the scheme and have significant concerns about certain scheme elements. In particular, the need for flood walls at Kames Bay was questioned by many respondents.

Particular opposition was voiced against the proposal for extending Millport Pier with rock armour and relatively stronger support was voiced in favour of an offshore breakwater, but without a very clear preference for either Option 2 or Option 3.

It is noted that the higher level of support for Options 2 or 3 may be influenced by discussions about the potential for marine development inshore of an offshore breakwater. However, these proposals have not yet been clarified. The project team is working to clarify this issue and other assumptions about the potential solutions before the next consultation event.

Strong concerns persist regarding access, visual impact, and impact on the view. These concerns feed in to wider concerns about impacts on tourism and about how the flood protection scheme will connect with parallel issues relating to investments in drainage and tourism.