



North Devon Council

Report Date: Monday, 5 June 2023

Topic: Ilfracombe Harbour Sea Water Pool

Report by: Ilfracombe Harbour Master

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In 1999 a new Pier was built in Ilfracombe Harbour replacing the old, dilapidated wooden Pier. An area was left enclosed but derelict between the end of the Pier Car Park and the new East Face Quay. Two drain holes were built into the East Face Quay to enable this area to be drained on the Tide.
- 1.2. The Sea Water Pool project is to convert this derelict area into a retained sea water pool with the installation of penstock valves over the 2 drain holes, clearing the floor of the old left over Pier construction debris and to excavate an area to a deeper depth.
- 1.3. Please see Appendices B&C for the Sea Water Pool Overview and the proposed changes.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Members approve the outlined project to convert the identified area into a retained Sea Water Pool to be funded as outlined in section 5.2

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. This would enable the identified area to be regenerated for a wider range of activities and enhance the asset of the Harbour Authority

4. REPORT

- 4.1. In 1999 a new Pier was built in Ilfracombe Harbour replacing the old, dilapidated wooden Pier. An area was left enclosed but derelict between the end of the Pier Car Park and the new East Face Quay. Two drain holes were built into the East Face Quay to enable this area to be drained on the Tide.
- 4.2. The Sea Water Pool project is to convert this derelict area into a retained sea water pool with the installation of penstock valves over the 2 drain holes, clearing the floor of the old left over Pier construction debris and to excavate an area to a deeper depth. We would install safe access/egress, provide life saving devices, implement clear and concise signage; creating a retained deeper sea pool.
- 4.3. Creating this facility would be of benefit to cold water swimming clubs, local diving clubs and commercial dive training providers, the local and wider community within North Devon and our valued visitors to the area.

Key Business sector Development opportunities –

Blue Marine

4.4. Celtic Energy is developing a key sector opportunity in offshore wind farms within the Bristol Channel and will require a range of Marine qualifications such as STCW95 maritime safety qualification and PADI open water / dive master. Ilfracombe and North Devon Council have identified this opportunity as a key skills and employment opportunity to create year round and high quality Jobs. In order to achieve this we wish to develop a range of Training opportunities which will fulfil the needs of the Blue Marine sector, utilising the Sea Water Pool to conduct the Sea Survival element of the STCW 95 training requirements and our local Commercial Dive training centres to provide the PADI requirements.

Marine Sports

4.5. By building this deeper sea pool it will enable the local Dive businesses and Clubs to deliver introductory / intermediate controlled dive training here and put Ilfracombe on the Map as a key diving venue in the South West. These activities would be pre booked so the Harbour Team can limit numbers for safety reasons and the businesses would be licenced to use the Sea Water Pool to ensure they hold separate and appropriate insurance and their own Risk Assessments to conduct these activities. Currently the closest venue to deliver this is Bristol. Alongside this we would be able to deliver sea survival courses and there is the potential to also run Sea Fish training course that would enable our local fishermen to train here as well and provide a safe environment for a range of water sports activities to take place – which will further encourage growth in that sector.

4.6. All Commercial Operations, for either Diving or Training within the Harbour pay the Harbour Authority a fee and this would be the case with the Sea Water Pool as well.

4.7. All Clubs would be licenced with insurances and Risk Assessments checked before using the Pool but in consideration to the fact they are clubs the fee would be waived for all official clubs

Tourism

4.8. The sea water pool would be open to all Harbour Users as a safer area to swim when visiting the Harbour which would greatly enhance the green tourism on offer within the locality and enable the Harbour Authority to better manage the whole harbour area as this would give an alternative to swimming in the actual Harbour which is not only against the Harbour Bye

laws, swimming within the Harbour also causes a safety concern when swimmers are amongst the moored vessels or swim out into the path of moving vessels especially in the Outer Harbour and around Old Quay Head. Where the commercial day trip boats are manoeuvring, the Harbour has 12 home commercial vessels running ½ hourly to 2 hourly trips and we have a number of visiting commercials during the season all using the Quays at any given state of tide The Harbour Team consists of 3 full time employees working a 7 day rota and as such there is only 1 day a week all 3 are on the Harbour together Policing the Harbour area has always been a demanding task and being able to offer an alternative location to these swimmers would greatly aid the Harbour Teams efforts in enforcing the Harbour Byelaws.

Management Plan.

- 4.9. Advice has been sought from NDDCs insurance underwriters UK Zurich who have confirmed the liability cover would operate as long as the area has been fully risk assessed, regularly inspected and managed. The Sea Water Pool, if approved, would be incorporated within the Harbours Marine Safety Management System and show that the Pools infrastructure is included on the daily safety rounds, the area is covered by CCTV, which is accessed from all the Harbour Teams mobile phones when not in the Office, emergency lifesaving equipment will be provided within close proximity of the Sea Water Pool.
- 4.10. Please see Appendix A for the Risk Assessment carried out.
- 4.11. Closing of the Sea Water Pool, due to the tidal range this area would be unusable once the sea water over tops the wall and signage will be in place to this effect. For all other times the access ladders will be chained across and signage posted to state the Sea Water Pool is closed. Please see appendix D for visuals of overtopping.
- 4.12. Jumping from height (Tombstoning) is not and will not be condoned within the Harbours jurisdiction, which includes the proposed Sea Water Pool, at any time and clear signage will be in place at the Sea Water Pool to convey this.

Licences Required

- 4.13. Ashford's LLP have confirmed that no Harbour Revision Order is required for this project, however a works licence for the installation of the access ladders is required and has been granted by the Marine Management Organisation.

Installation

- 4.14. If approved, Teignmouth Maritime Services, a specialist marine contractor with considerable experience of installations of this nature, would be the approved supplier and installer of the required infrastructure.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. No additional personnel resources required to those already in place on the Harbour.
- 5.2. Funding is in place for this project and set aside within the Ilfracombe Harbour Repairs Fund; the estimated cost of the works to create the Sea Water Pool is £24,130. This being majority grant funded by the Urban Renewal Quick Win project from Devon County Council and a small amount of budget match funding from additional revenue generated in 2022/23 within the Harbour budget.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at equality@northdevon.gov.uk.
- 6.2. There are no equality implications with the proposed project.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. Please undertake an Environmental Assessment and complete the checklist (EAC) form available on Insite. If there are no environmental implications arising from your proposals please state that there are none. If after completion of the assessment there are environmental implications please provide a brief summary. If you require any further information please contact the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer. Email completed EACs to donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk
- 7.2. Comment received from Donna Sibley: *'EAC shows this project will have relatively little impact on the environment, and offers a sustainable way to increase swimming, diving and training opportunities in the area.'*

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:
- 8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda: Potential Positive
- 8.1.2. Improving customer focus and/or : Positive
- 8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development : Positive



9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article of Part 3 Annex 1 paragraph:1

9.2. Delegated power

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers:

Capt. Georgina Carlo-Paat MBE, Ilfracombe Harbour Master