

The Ness Working Group – 30 October 2023

Present: Cllrs Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger and Elise Youngman

In Attendance: Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

### **1. The Coastal Garden**

One site meeting had already been conducted with a landscape designer, who suggested a phased approach. A site visit with a second designer was due to take place once the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) approved the consultation visit fee at its next meeting. A third designer had been approached but no response had been received.

The coastal garden was intended to cover the entire stretch in front of the sea wall from the play area to the Bird's Eye factory.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust had clarified from their report that the areas marked in pink on the contamination map were safer to use for the garden and have the non-native plants growing.

Once three quotes have been obtained the project would move to procurement phase. If the quotes are received in time they would be addressed by Full Council in November, then the project could be budgeted and progressed by Christmas 2023 with £26,000 in the capital budget for Parks and Open Spaces in 2023-2024.

The Project and Committee Clerk was asked to check if the designers could provide drafts of their designs or a portfolio of their previous work for Councillors to review and make suggestions before paying the full design quote.

### **2. Herring Lassies sculpture**

The members agreed that if there was to be a statue to the Herring Lassies, then there should be ones for the local Beetsters and Ransackers. These statues could be separate or joined on one large plinth to show the different aspects of the fishing industry with the local and seasonal people integral to the industry, and an accompanying information panel.

One location suggested for the sculptures was the Ness Park side of the grassy mound that runs alongside Whapload Road.

The Committee Clerk suggested a meeting be scheduled with the newly formalised Heritage Focus Group to discuss and construct the heritage plan for the area. This was agreed with a relevant item to be on the AID agenda to receive approval for this approach.

The materials for the sculpture would need to be durable and resistant to the elements, and the annual maintenance costs would need to be considered, for example the sculpture being added to the grounds maintenance cleaning rota.

Grant funding would be explored, as would partnerships. The members suggested Bird's Eye be approached to gauge their interest in partnering on the drying racks and sculpture projects, particularly the former as they were involved in the original installation of the racks as a mitigation measure for the expansion of their factory.

### **3. Sea Wall**

It was agreed that the sea mural should have a competition with local people involved in the competition and judging. The design and medium should be kept flexible so as not to restrict the competition entries.

Concerns were raised regarding the location and how durable the mural would be exposed to the elements, and it was suggested to have durability part of the specification of the competition and evidenced in the design submissions. Technical advice should be sought from local artists on the medium and transfer method for the mural. The local authority at Sheringham could also be contacted for information as they also have a sea wall mural. These contacts should be made first, then the materials, medium and budget would be considered for the competition and inform the specification.

A proposal for the sea wall had been received from a member of the public and the group agreed to arrange a zoom meeting to discuss the proposal.

Telescopes would also be installed in the area (one by Ness Park and one by Ness Point) and information would be sought on their durability, the cost of installation and measures taken to ensure the telescopes are water and salt resistant.

### **4. Drying Racks**

It was agreed to arrange a site visit with the International Boatbuilding Training College to receive their advice on the two possibilities of maintaining the existing racks and full or partial replacement.

The Excelsior Trust had also indicated they would be happy to conduct a site visit and offer advice on the drying racks. Officers would contact the Trust for a follow up conversation, either via zoom or in person.

It was noted that the results of the public survey on the racks indicated a desire for the racks to be preserved or replaced, and for the former to ensure that as many racks as possible can be conserved. The cost for restoration and conservation would need to be considered.

### **5. Plans for the next meetings (dates, which topics to be discussed at which meeting)**

A meeting would be arranged for the end of November for an update.

These proposals would also be considered as part of the next Five-Year Plans meeting and whilst the projects discussed in this Working Group may not be covered in the current financial year, budgets could be ring-fenced in 2024-2025. These ring-fenced amounts would not only be in the Parks and Open Spaces budget, the Arts and Heritage budget could also be used. Grants would also be sought for the heritage aspect.

*The meeting was closed at 12:08*