

From: [Amy Lanodon](#)

To:

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Subject:

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Dear All

Re: Bryher Sea Defence works consultation event, Friday 24th March 2023

I attended the consultation event at Bryher Community Centre on Friday hosted by Stephen Swabey; and was shocked and appalled to hear that delivery of rock armour and its distribution around Bryher could start as early as mid April 2023 (in 3 weeks time!) and that this would be ongoing throughout the peak summer months until at least September. The consultation information given on the Council website states:

“As a result of delays to getting licences in place, we are now seeking views on the possibility of deliveries and works taking place over the summer season.”

It certainly did not feel like a ‘consultation’, more that we were simply being told on Friday that this would be the case, which is completely unacceptable, and with no consideration given to the tourism businesses on the island. This is also the first we had heard that barges (3-6 barges per week, dependent on the weather) would be unloading 14,000 tonnes of rock armour in Great Par from 8am – 6pm (and possibly later, tides permitting), potentially 7 days per week; and that 30 tonne dumper trucks would be driving around the island through the summer months, distributing said rock armour to Popplestones and Stinking Porth.

We have 2 self-catering cottages at Glenhope, next to Great Par, which are fully booked every week from now until the beginning of November; and Alex Bagnall has the Moorings at Bank Cottage, which again is fully booked through the whole season. And of course, the Hell Bay Hotel is right there, situated next door to Glenhope. While of course we were aware that work on the sea defences would be starting, we had been given no further detailed information and no intended start date. The information in the planning application seems to be mainly design and environment based, with no detailed Method Statement or mitigations to potential business disruption.

The vast majority of our bookings were made a year in advance and confirmed in November and December of 2022, with all bookings made in good faith by mostly regular guests expecting their usual peaceful holiday on Bryher, enjoying quiet lie-ins and sitting in the garden, with views over Great Par. If we had comprehensive information on the proposed works with an acceptable lead time, we could have informed our guests before they confirmed and paid a deposit. Now, if works go ahead as we were told they would yesterday, we have to inform all guests as soon as possible – with very little detailed information – and risk cancellations that we will likely be unable to fill, as well as having to field numerous complaints from those guests that do still choose to come. The cottages are not a ‘side hustle’ – they are my only income.

In the FAQ section of the Climate Adaption Scilly webpages (<https://www.scilly.gov.uk/environment-transport/adaptive-scilly/frequently-asked-questions>), there is a very clear question and answer about the timing of works:

“What time of year will you be carrying out the work?”

As much as possible we'll work outside the main tourist season – so working

between September and May.”

A detailed Method Statement MUST be provided in order for the Council to approve the start of the works. This Method Statement is also vital for all residents of Bryher to see, in order that we can give all guests as much information as possible. This will not affect just the guests on the Great Par side of the island, but will have a knock on effect for all businesses on Bryher, and risks reducing the number of day visitors from other islands, too, if they have to avoid massive dumpers as they walk around the island.

I urge all Councillors to demand a Method Statement giving more detailed information regarding the process of deliveries and works, and that deliveries and works are delayed to avoid the main summer season (while not the end of our season, I would consider September to be acceptable as we would then be able to give our guests an acceptable amount of notice), considering the huge economic impact that undertaking major works through the summer months could have on the island. The exact location of the temporary access ramp at Great Par must also be agreed in advance – this was discussed at some length at the site visit but we were told that working boundaries etc needed to be clarified. Looking at the plans provided on Friday, and in the planning application online, it seems clear to me that the location suggested by us - ie not at the closest point to Glenhope’s garden but more towards The Old Schoolhouse, where the access ramp was located for the sea defence work in the 1990’s - does fall within the working boundary.

I would like to add that in no way am I opposed to the vital sea defence work, especially given the location of Glenhope (and, understanding potential weather constraints, I would also consider accepting summer deliveries if a suitable location away from housing and businesses could be agreed, providing no rock armour is transported across the island until later in the year). However I am very disappointed and concerned at the general lack of regard given to Bryher businesses and residents; I left the site visit at Great Par on Friday feeling patronised, and my guests (and therefore my income) insignificant.

Regards,

Amy Langdon

Castle Bryher, Bryher, Isles of Scilly, TR23 OPR

