

It is an arrogant and out of touch Council which questions the validity of the petition signatories. The petition simply states save our views of the sands and keep the car parking . If the Council had a similar number of people in favour of their proposals they would be shouting about it from the rooftops.

At the original so called public consultation in 2012 (the charrettes) there were no detailed plans shown . It was two years later at a meeting in St.

George's Hall

that members of the public realised the scale of the project and how the views of the river would be destroyed, the parking arrangements turned upside down leading to chaos for residents and visitors alike, putting at risk the livelihoods of the traders on the sands. At this meeting, the Chair, Provost Thomson refused to take a show of hands from the floor to gauge the measure of support for the Council's plans. I am sure he refused because he feared a negative response.

The Council says the display at the Baker's Oven of the plans was well attended and much feedback was received. It does not say such feedback was positive !

After viewing the display locals were flocking in droves to sign the SOS petition! When the council set up the full scale model of a 5m section of the proposed embankment , it really brought home the enormity of the Project and showed how visually intrusive it would be, resulting in many more signatories to the petition.

The SOS campaign held a meeting showing an alternative to the Council project. UK Flood Barriers gave a talk and slide show showing their self rising barrier which was received with great enthusiasm by over 150 people. One solitary person preferred the Council option. The council have stated in their response to the SOS petition that they will continue to engage with companies which offer alternatives to their one which they have chosen. I do not believe them.

After an FOI request the Council have stated and I quote from their reply

“ The Council had an existing contract which was able to be used for this purpose without the Requirement of a further competitive process”.

Why are the Council using a landscape architecture solution instead of an flood prevention engineering one? It is obvious that the Council had no intention of using any other contractor and that their talk of being open minded to various solutions was misleading.

Project costs and value for money. These figures are mere speculation and cannot be accepted as having any validity whatsoever.

I and the thousands of other signatories of the petition do not want thousands of tons of earth dumped in Whitesands , blocking the views of the river, turning the car parking arrangements into a nightmare for residents and visitors, disrupting and potentially threatening the closure of existing businesses. We do not want the integrity of the Devorgilla Bridge (a grade A listed structure) compromised by a ramp from the embankment. The river floods two or three times a year. It is not a problem which needs three years of major disruption and £15 million to

solve.

There is no consensus for the Council project in Dumfries . There has been no proper consultation and when objections were raised the objectors have not been listened to , indeed they have been slandered by politicians and told by the Council they do not understand their proposals. The town of Dumfries is on it's knees, if this project is built, it will be the coup de grace. I ask the Scottish Government not to fund it.

Alex Girdwood

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