

PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSIONS
 Tuesday 19th November 2013

INTRODUCTION

The Isle of Luing Community Trust held two public information sessions on Tuesday 19 November 2013 to explain the agreed way forward for the Atlantic Islands Centre following a rockslip on the quarry face at the end of September. Over the course of the two events, an Open Afternoon and an evening Public Meeting, around 50 people heard a presentation from the Project Development Manager and had the opportunity to put questions to him, the project architect and structural engineer. This factsheet summarises the information presented and covers the main issues raised in the question and answer sessions.

THE PRESENTATION



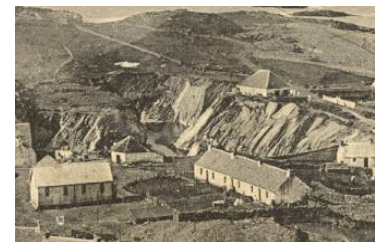
SAFETY

Safety was highlighted as a prime consideration for the Trust, the design team and main contractor. It is a matter that all take extremely seriously and in dealing with the situation caused by the rockslip the priority had been to ensure the safety of those constructing the building, the safety of the building itself, and the safety of the public and anyone else using the building.. As a responsible contractor, MacLeod Construction Ltd had provided an assurance to the Trust that at no time do they expose their personnel to risk or danger and all machine operations on site are supervised by qualified personnel.

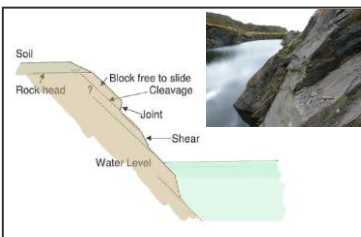


GEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

When the rockslip occurred the main concern was to understand what had happened and establish what caused it so that appropriate precautions could be taken. Work was suspended on site and a specialist Engineering Geologist was commissioned to undertake a comprehensive survey of the rockface. This involved taking measurements and detailed photographs and assessing the condition of the rock at regular intervals along its face.



Old photographs of the site were consulted and a bathymetric survey undertaken to check the slope of the quarry face underwater and eliminate concerns that there might be risks from possible undercutting. The full report of the engineering geologist's survey is available on request.



A layman's explanation of the geological structure of the rockface was given. The natural cleavage planes of the slate slope down into the water at approx 60 degrees and extend to the bottom of the quarry. At intervals there are joints and shears that break up the quarry face into blocks. These blocks are effectively held in place by friction and in particular

conditions will slide on the layer below. It was stated that it was difficult to prove if any actions of the contractor had caused the incident as rockslips are known to occur naturally throughout the quarries on the island. It was also stated that the most recent level of site investigation had not been possible prior to work starting on site because of a condition attached to the planning consent that prevented any demolition of existing structures in advance of a contractor being appointed.

MOVING TO AN ALTERNATIVE SITE

The presentation addressed the issues that the Trust Board would have to consider were it to move the Atlantic Islands Centre to an alternative site. Abandoning the current site would require negotiations to terminate the legal agreements relating to grants for both the purchase of the site and the construction of the Centre. The construction contract would be terminated resulting in a compensation claim from the contractor, and costs for making the site safe would be incurred. As over £100k has already been spent on developing the current site, liability for this cost would need to be agreed. Were an alternative site to be formally offered, the Trust would need to carry out a feasibility study to assess its suitability, undertake site investigations, carry out due diligence and negotiate a formal legal transfer, all of which would require new sources of funding. Even if the above could be successfully funded and completed, it would not be practical to transfer the current building design to a new site so all the design development, approval and tendering processes would need to be repeated. In relation to funding, the Big Lottery had given an opinion that a move to an alternative site would involve a new grant application. Current ERDF funding of over £300k would be lost as it relates to a funding programme that expires in early 2015.

<p>ABANDONING THE CURRENT SITE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal issues of Standard Security over site • Legal issues of current grant agreements • Termination of main contract + compensation • Making site safe • £100k already spent on developing site + cost of purchase <p>PURCHASING A NEW SITE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study and site investigation • Due diligence and purchase negotiations • Funds to cover purchase and associated costs <p>DEVELOPING A NEW SITE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-applying for funding • Design development • Planning, Building Standards and other approvals • Detail design and tendering for a contractor

Considering all these factors, a move to an alternative site was not feasible as it presented too many risks for the Trust, would require a significant amount of new funding that could not be guaranteed, and would delay the project by upwards of 2 years.

DESIGN SOLUTION FOR CURRENT SITE

The key factors driving the deliberations to find a viable solution that allowed development of the existing site to continue were:

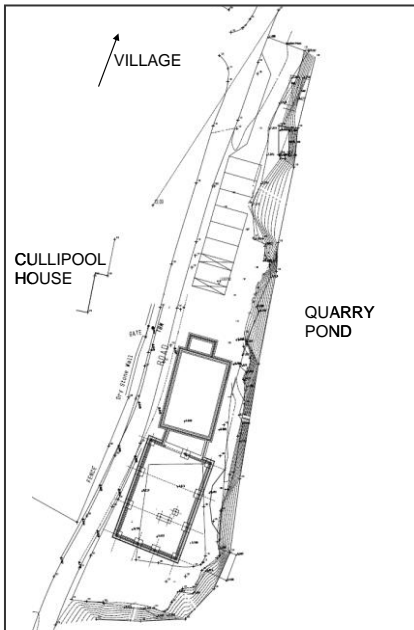
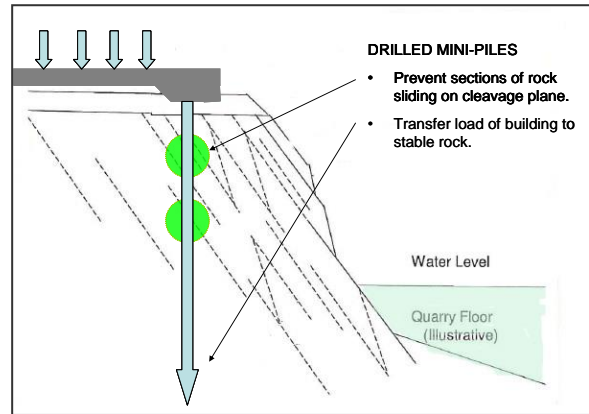
- SAFETY
- TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY
- COST

Various options were explored, but the solution adopted and agreed by all parties involves three amendments to the design:

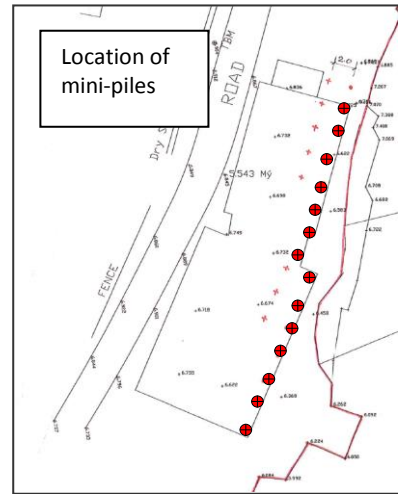
- alteration to the foundation design
- adjustment of the building footprint on the site
- elimination of the quarry side public access balcony.

The new foundation design involves the introduction of drilled mini-piles to stabilise the quarry face and support the building.

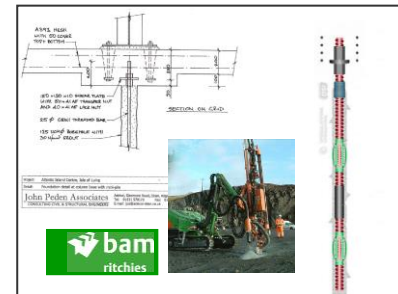
The mini-piles are formed by drilling a 125mm hole vertically into the rock to a depth of approximately 6m, inserting a steel bar and grouting it into place. The floor slab, with a thickened edge, is cast around the top of these dowels. The mini-piles perform two functions – they act to prevent blocks of rock slipping on the cleavage plane and they transfer the loads of the building to lower levels of sound rock, avoiding any weight from the building putting pressure on the quarry edge.



The building footprint has been adjusted to re-align the two blocks and draw the building back as far as practical from the quarry edge. The block to the south, designed to replicate the old engine shed, remains the same while the north block is made narrower but longer so that the floor area remains the same. The main entrance is now located between the two blocks.



BAM Ritchies have been appointed as sub-contractors to MacLeod Construction Ltd to carry out the installation of the mini-piles. They are an experienced rock stabilisation contractor and their technical experts have been closely involved in developing this solution. They have visited the site twice to assess the conditions and plan the work. The drilling rig will be mounted on the telehandler already on site. Some noise will be associated with the process and it is possible there may be further minor rock slippage but this will not affect the integrity of the rock face or the stability of the building.



COST
The costs associated with the amendments to the design are estimated at £84,000. The Big Lottery has approved an uplift to the project's capital grant to cover this amount. The total capital budget for the project is now £1.1m

STATUTORY APPROVALS
Throughout the current design development process, regular contact with Argyll & Bute Council Planning, Building Standards and Roads Departments has been maintained. The architect confirmed that further meetings will be taking place shortly to agree the necessary documentation to formalise the changes being made.

PROGRAMME
Drilling of the mini-piles will commence in early December and will be completed by year end. Approximately 3 months has been lost on the original construction programme, meaning the Centre should now open in the summer of 2014. It is anticipated that the main structural work and building shell can be complete by Easter 2014.

SUMMARY

- A viable solution that stabilises the rock and provides a sound foundation for the building.
- Construction work can be carried out safely.
- Costs are reasonable and are covered by additional funds from the Big Lottery.
- Work can proceed without further delay.

The Atlantic Islands Centre is funded by

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