



## **Cemetery Boundary Wall – Update Report**

Report Prepared by Michelle Paxton - Clerk

### **Background**

The deterioration of the cemetery boundary wall adjacent to the access road and 164 Highfield Road was previously discussed at the Council meeting held on 23 April 2025 (Agenda Item 206). At that meeting, it was resolved:

- That quotations would be sought for the replacement of the wall.
- That temporary barriers would be erected around the damaged area and pedestrian gate access to the cemetery would remain closed until further notice.

Council also requested that Officers seek clarification on the appropriate procurement approach, taking into account the revised Financial Regulations, which are due to be presented at the Council meeting on 28 May 2025.

### **Indicative Costings and Procurement Approach**

Initial indicative costings have been sought to determine the most appropriate procurement method for the repair or replacement of the wall alongside Clipstone Cemetery. These costings suggest that the total project cost, including VAT, is expected to remain under £60,000.

Expert advice, including input from Councillors with engineering backgrounds, indicates that a structural engineer's report is essential prior to proceeding with any works.

### **Financial Regulations Update**

Draft revised Financial Regulations, based on the updated Model Financial Regulations issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) on 5 March 2025, will be presented at the Council meeting on 28 May 2025.

Key changes include updates to **Section 5 – Procurement**, in line with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024. Specifically, Section 5.6 states: "For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1."

As the current estimated cost is below £60,000, this procurement will not require a formal tender under the new regulations but will still follow best practice in obtaining multiple quotes.

## Structural Engineer Quotations

Three companies have been contacted to provide quotations for the following structural engineering services:

- Review of the existing wall and preparation of sketch options for potential reconstruction methods to support pricing decisions.
- Detailed construction drawings for the selected method once agreed.

Quote A	£2,380.00 plus VAT
Quote B	£3,150.00 plus VAT
Quote C	Quote not received

### Quote A

Set out below is our initial fee offer. Should this be of interest to you we will follow up this offer with a formal fee proposal (including Edge Structural Designs standard terms of business), that will require your written instruction for us to proceed.

We understand the works are to include the replacement of an existing double brick retaining wall from 0.8m up to 1.3m high within a private property.

For the provision of the structural engineering work, our fee would be as follows:

- Initial review of 4x potential options and provide a drawing for the purpose of pricing - £840 + VAT.
  - Options include gabion type, block masonry type, interlocking precast concrete type and precast concrete panel type
- Set of preliminary drawings based only on the chosen retaining wall type - £940 + VAT.
- Final construction drawings and calculations for submission to Building Control – £600 + VAT.
- Excludes reinforcement detailing and scheduling which will be at an additional fee if required.

Our current turnaround of work following acceptance, and assuming we have all of the relevant information listed below to allow us to proceed with the design work, is approximately 1-2 weeks for each stage. Timescales will be confirmed upon acceptance.

Relevant information that we will require to commence our design:

- Topographical survey in AutoCAD format – we understand this is not available, but measurements have been taken on site and more can be provided by the client as needed

- Ground investigation information (ideally a site investigation, but as a minimum, confirmation of the ground conditions on site)
  - It is difficult to provide a fee estimate on this because we don't personally undertake these
  - We would expect 2-3 trial pits to be investigated along the length of the wall
  - Ideally, we want to understand the ground material that is likely under the proposed foundations to ensure we provide an economic foundation, rather than the retained material but this is also helpful

We hope you find our offer of interest. If you would like us to provide a formal fee quote, please let me know.

### **Quote B**

For a fee of **£3,150 + VAT** I propose the following scope of services:

1. Visit site to assess the condition of the existing wall, site context and briefing
2. Undertake a preliminary design of retaining wall options including those noted in your email below and present in a summary report for budget costing and client consideration
3. Produce construction information for the preferred solution incorporating

I appreciate this is a brief proposal but hopefully this is sufficient for you to consider this.

We would propose to invoice £1,950 on issue of the initial design and report and the remainder on completion of the construction information. Our payment terms are 30 days from invoice date. I propose a limit of liability of £1M for this service.

### **Quote C**

Company C have been unable to provide a quotation

### **Additional Considerations – Tree Works**

Before any repair or construction work can proceed, some tree works will be necessary. These works may be subject to seasonal restrictions, particularly in relation to the bird nesting season. Quotations for the required tree works will be obtained over the coming months, with scheduling dependent on ecological considerations.

### **Recommendation**

In order to progress the necessary repair and replacement works to the cemetery boundary wall, it is recommended that the Council:

1. **Approve the appointment of the preferred structural engineering company** as set out in the above quotations

2. **Note that the indicative project cost** remains under the £60,000 threshold (including VAT), and that procurement will continue in line with best practice and the forthcoming revised Financial Regulations.
3. **Acknowledge that tree works** will be required in advance of wall repairs, and that officers will obtain quotations and schedule works with due regard to ecological constraints, including the bird nesting season.
4. **Delegate authority to the Clerk**, in consultation with the Chair, to progress preparatory works and associated procurement in line with Council policy, and to report back to Council with updates as required.
5. **To continue dialogue with the adjacent land owners**
6. **To review the need for licences to enable access to the adjacent land allowing wall repair / constriction works**