

The Lido (from the 3Ps Committee, 2007)

The future of the old Lido is obviously a special case warranting very careful consideration, but needing resolution. This facility, which had been in popular use for 60 years, was closed in 1993 due to escalating running costs and deterioration of the structure. Initially the site was offered for sale, but without success. Following this, an investigation was undertaken by the District Council to ascertain the feasibility of establishing an interpretation centre on the site, by commissioning a study by Jeff Lonsdale Consultancy who reported in January 1995.

There was also continued concern over the condition of the structure so Geotechnics Ltd. was asked to investigate and produced a report in August 1995. This concluded 'the overall condition of the various elements to the swimming pool is highly variable. The main areas of concern are the terracing and concrete elements subjected to saturation by sea water'. The report indicated that considerable work and funds would be needed to repair the structure so an alternative suggestion was made to demolish the existing buildings and infill the pool and sea tanks.

No action was taken, but in 1997 the Grange Town Council commissioned an Architect to put forward ideas for the site. The District Council resolved not to follow up the Town Council's suggestions but instructed officers to seek proposals from the private sector.

No success was achieved so in October 1998 officers were instructed to enquire as to the cost of demolishing the redundant buildings, ensuring adequate sea defences and reinstating the site to open promenade. It was reported in April 1999 that the estimated cost of this work would be £250,000. However, the decision to proceed was deferred pending further investigation into potential uses of the site.

A conditional offer was obtained by EcoArc of York to develop an Eco Centre on the site, but eventually the proposal did not come to fruition. No further opportunities became available so the decision was taken in 2001 to form the 3P's Group, one of whose objectives was to resolve the problem of the Lido.

Since then, careful consideration has been given to its future, bearing in mind the efforts made in the past and the subsequent failure to produce a viable economic outcome.

The suggestion made in 1995 for an interpretation centre was reviewed and an outline proposal was put forward in 2006 to establish a 'Bay Discovery Centre' in a section of the existing buildings which could be partly self-financing. However future development of the remainder of the complex would have to be done in a way which would provide sufficient income for maintenance and underwriting of the interpretation centre.

After due consideration, and being aware of the views of residents and visitors that the Lido had been boarded up for 14 years, the 3Ps Committee's view was that there was no option but to implement the proposal made in 1998 to demolish the structure.

Currently [sic 2007] the Lido has been included in the Grange Regeneration Study being undertaken by Douglas Wheeler Associates who have suggested options for the site. It is the intention of the District Council to invite expressions of interest from private firms for redevelopment of Council Property in the area, including the Lido. The outcome of this offer will either confirm the decision of the Committee or provide a solution.

