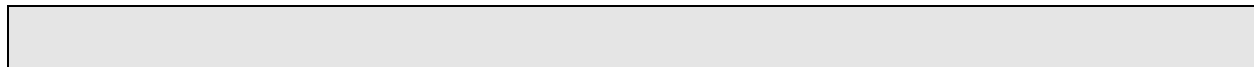


Appendix 2: Officers responses to comments made during the Public Consultation

Comment/Feedback		Officer Response
1	All schemes are unnecessary	Flood risk to Shoeburyness has been identified by an assessment process which is defined by Environment Agency and has been accepted by them.
2	Build a marina	Because of the flat foreshore, a marina would dry out at low tide without massive works to build locks and maintain a channel out to deep water. Impacts on the protected environmental habitats offshore and on the Common would be enormous. Costs would be an order of magnitude higher than for a flood protection scheme.
3	The project is only being proposed as a method of disposing of the cliff slip soil	Completely untrue. The scheme is necessary for flood risk management. The embankment solution had been in prospect before the cliff slip occurred and it emerges as the preferred option with or without the availability of the free soil. For this comment to be true would require the collusion of the Council and EA in a gross deception. What benefit is there for anybody to spend several million pounds in order to save half a million?
4	Build the “Friends of Shoebury Common” scheme	Appraisal of this proposal indicates that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The existing wall cannot be raised to use as a retaining wall for raising the promenade – it is structurally inadequate, so would have to be replaced. b) The beach huts would not survive being lifted off their bases, stored and replaced on raised bases. Public money cannot be legally spent on assets for private individuals, so community contributions would have to be forthcoming to fund replacement of the huts. 100% of the beach hut owners would have to agree to the move. c) It does not provide any level access to the promenade from the car

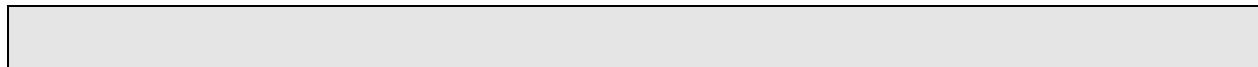
		<p>parks for disabled users.</p> <p>d) It still involves construction of an embankment on the Common to support the raised promenade, despite FoSC's apparently adamant opposition to this.</p> <p>e) It raises the skyline of beach hut roofs by about 900mm and so would impact on the views from the Common, Shoebury Common Road, Lodwick and Leitrim Avenue.</p> <p>f) It would cost substantially more, without attracting any more grant support.</p>
5	Secondary defence walls are never used in this country	They are commonly used. You only have to go to Chalkwell to see one in Southend, built in the late 70's, on existing garden areas.
6	The preferred option would be the most expensive in the long run	The project appraisal, which has to be approved by EA, has to consider whole life costs as well as immediate construction costs. The preferred option has the lowest whole life cost, including all future maintenance and rebuilding requirements.
7	Floating or automatic barriers, glass sea defences, or, lagoons would all be better than the proposed wall	<p>It is assumed that "lagoons" refers to offshore breakwaters. See comment 21.</p> <p>Automatic barriers as used at Cockermouth are very expensive, and were only used there as a last resort for a small element of that scheme. They would introduce high maintenance costs and risk of failure over such a long frontage.</p> <p>Glass would require substantial framing and support against wave action which the existing wall cannot provide. It would also be vulnerable to vandalism.</p>
8	The flood risk is from Gunners Park only. Build an embankment, wall and flood gates to seal off the park	The main flood risk, now that the Gunners Park defences have been raised, is overtopping of the wall at the Common, due to extreme events and sea level rise.



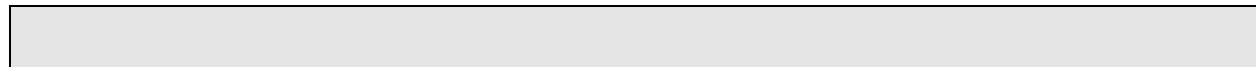
9	Why not use beach recharge as at Southchurch?	<p>The crest wall at Southchurch was already 700mm higher above tide levels than at Shoebury Common, so that recharging the beach, on its own, increased the Standard of Protection of those defences to a satisfactory level without the need to rebuild the wall. At Shoebury Common the wall would still need to be reconstructed to make recharge work.</p> <p>Recharge is very expensive; the Southchurch project cost £6.5m back in 2002. It was justified at Southchurch because 3,000+ properties were at risk. It could not be financially justified at Shoebury.</p>
10	Build a lower wall alongside the Cycle track	<p>The most important feature of the required wall is the level of its crest above tide levels. Ground levels at the Common fall from the promenade towards the road, so that any wall set back to the road area would be very much higher, not lower, to achieve the same crest level. The wall would have to be about 10 – 12 feet high to provide the necessary flood protection.</p>
11	The wall is to allow the development of 450 new houses in Gunners Park	<p>The wall is required to protect up to 500 homes and businesses which are already in existence, and which fully justify the costs of building it. As it would also remove an objection to further development in Gunners Park on flood risk grounds, it is appropriate that the proposed developer has offered a large contribution (£970k) towards the cost.</p>
12	Shoebury Common forms a natural flood plain	<p>It is true that a natural “bowl” is formed by the low ground around the road area north of the sea wall. Unfortunately, there are properties within the circumference of the bowl which could be at risk in a moderate overtopping event. However, the project which we are considering, is to protect against extreme events, which although infrequent, would have devastating impacts on homes in the flood risk area in Shoebury. This is because such an event would drive far more water over the sea wall than can be contained in the low area alone.</p>



13	There are areas with lower flood defences than Shoebury Common which should be dealt with first	<p>The two prominent areas where the flood defences are lower are Western Esplanade and New Ranges, Shoeburyness.</p> <p>At Western Esplanade, there are plans to raise a flood defence, but not until some time in the future. This is because the properties at risk of flooding are sparse and are commercial rather than residential, and so considered less vulnerable. It is considered reasonable to accept occasional flooding of the road.</p> <p>The New Ranges area is outside the Council's ownership and work can only be done there with the co-operation and substantial financial contribution from the Ministry of Defence. We are in communication with the MoD, but do not have the freedom to act unilaterally on their site.</p> <p>The timing of our proposal at Shoebury Common has been triggered by the coincidence of the availability of the Cliff Slip spoil and of the contribution from the developer.</p> <p>There is a misconception that the land levels at Shoebury East Beach are also low and should be raised. In fact they were raised in the 1990's with material excavated from the underpass at Rayleigh Weir junction.</p>
14	Building an embankment on the Common will destroy it	<p>The judgement that the proposed work will destroy the Common is purely subjective, and is not necessarily shared. The Council would not be promoting this work if they considered that to be the case, as they are as concerned as anybody else to support the fundamentally important tourist trade in the town.</p> <p>The work will certainly change the area to some degree, as will any flood defence option, but with careful landscaping, it does not follow that it will become less appealing, or its use decline.</p>
15	Why are the gardens of the Lodwick properties being protected with a separate wall in options 2 and 3?	<p>If it were the case that just the gardens of those houses are at risk, the wall around them would not be proposed. However, the houses all have lower ground floors at the level of Shoebury Common Road, which</p>



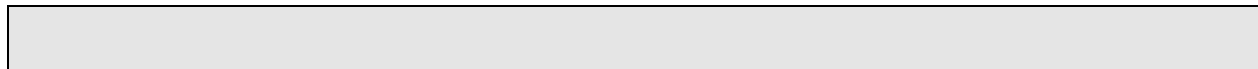
		could be vulnerable to substantial depths of flooding. Property level protection is not easily available to deal with the depths of water potentially threatening these houses, and a single wall at the boundary is considered more economic.
16	Walls will attract graffiti	It is a risk that the walls would be attacked in this way. However, it can be deterred by careful choice of finishes/cladding materials. It is worthy of note that the mile and a half of concrete wall between Adventure Island and Lynton Road are never graffiti'd, on either face.
17	A 1 in 200 year event is not worth the expense of defending against	This is not the view of the Government or EA. Experience is that it is well worth the expense of avoiding the cost and devastation to people's lives caused by events of this nature. It is general guidance that urban areas should be defended to a standard between 1 in 100 and 1 in 300 years.
18	Just improve the existing wall	Any improvement would require raising the height of the wall to the level proposed for the embankment; this would obliterate the views from the promenade. In addition the foundations of the wall are not considered capable of carrying the additional load and the increase in wave loading that a higher wall would attract. Piling at the toe of the wall would not deal with these concerns.
19	No harm to environment, or views from beach huts or road	The preferred scheme is less environmentally damaging than any proposal requiring beach recharge, or work to the existing wall. The views to sea from the beach huts will be unchanged, except at the far east end, where they face towards the common. From the road the view will be of a grassed embankment with the roofs of the beach huts visible above, instead of the backs of the beach huts.
20	How would the grass on the embankment be cut?	The proposal is that the embankment would not be steeper than 1 in 3, which can be cut by pedestrian machine, and would be kept neat.



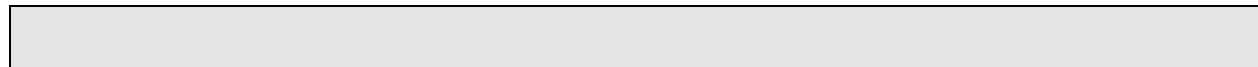
21	Construct a lagoon out to sea	It is presumed that this means building breakwaters offshore. The cost of this would be enormous, it would not protect against rising sea levels and would probably not be permitted because of damage to protected offshore natural habitats.
22	Replace trees in Gunners Park. Raise the wall by the small amount needed rather than “a 2m high monstrosity inland”	Trees would be ineffective against rapid wave overtopping. The amount of wall raising proposed is what is required to provide the optimum degree of protection over the assumed 50 year life of the wall. The general height of the proposed wall is 1.5m on the Common area.
23	Spread the soil from the cliffs over the hollows and boggy areas in Gunners Park	Gunners Park is a privately owned site. The Council cannot unilaterally interfere with ground levels. Any of the stored soil which is not used for flood defence purposes will have to be used in some way or disposed of off-site.
24	The area of land to be protected never flooded in 1953. The sea defences erected after 1953 along the River Thames give protection for 1 in 1000 year event	The 1953 flood was not the worst which could be experienced. In addition, sea levels have risen, and will continue rising, so that flood risk is increasing. The 1 in 1000 year defences did not continue to Shoeburyness – they stop at Lynton Road.
25	As the anticipated floods are not expected for decades work could be stretched over several years	The timing of the occurrence of flood events is random and cannot be determined from descriptions such as 1 in 200 years. That expresses the probability of a certain severity of flood, but the probability could be realised at any time. Extending the works over several years would increase the disruption and cost of them.
26	Would be nice to have defences that protect the beach huts as well	Improving the flood defence standard on an alignment that includes the beach huts would involve reconstructing the existing wall to a level which would obliterate the sea views from the promenade and the



		beach huts.
27	What happens to water trapped between the two lines of defence	The scheme will incorporate a drainage design and the water will probably be pumped away.
28	B&V should produce a proper scale re the flooding for Shoebury not Southend	The flood risk map displayed with this consultation was for the area of Shoebury which would be protected from flooding by this scheme.
29	Confirm that no other parts of Shoeburyness, including East Beach, will suffer from flooding	There are two distinct areas at risk from flooding in Shoeburyness, divided from one another by a ridge of higher ground. This project completely deals with protection to one of these areas. The Council is in liaison with the MoD to attempt to progress work on land owned privately by them, to deal with the other area. Ground levels at East Beach were raised in the 1990's to reduce the flood risk to that area. Despite all the work done nationally on flood defences, complete security is never practicable because of the risk of ever more extreme events.
30	Surely searches at the time of building the houses in Lodwick would have shown a serious flood risk	Unfortunately, flood risk was, until recently, an issue of much lower priority in determining planning applications. This was the situation nationally, not just in Southend. We have a widespread situation where a wide range of property is at risk of flooding because of this situation, and the risk has to be dealt with, albeit retrospectively.
31	The fill material is not required for the stability of the wall	It is true that a wall could be designed to be capable of withstanding the design loadings from wave impact. It was considered, however, that a freestanding wall would be unacceptably intrusive and the embankment should remain on the north side of the wall to soften its appearance. The "half embankment" does provide support to the wall and much greater resilience.



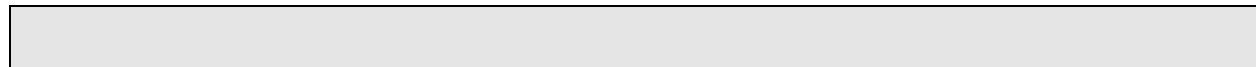
32	The terrace of Uncle Tom's Cabin will be overshadowed by the proposed wall	The terrace is already largely overshadowed by the backs of the beach huts and the public shelter. The typical eye-line view to the top of the wall from the terrace will still be lower than the beach hut roofs. The view through the open space occupied by the shelter will remain open, because it is the location of the sliding gate which will be kept open except at times of flood risk.
33	The wall will not withstand a catastrophic flood which may engulf the country in the next millennium	The design life of the structure is fifty years, and it has been designed to provide protection against a surge with an annual probability of occurrence of 0.5% (! in 200 years). See comment in 29 above.
34	The wall will shield anti-social behaviour from the road and lead to vandalism of the huts	There is a risk that anti-social behaviour could increase. However the virtually continuous line of beach huts already provides substantial cover for activity on the promenade, and the proposed scheme includes lighting and CCTV as a deterrent.
35	The Council's proposals breach the covenants attached to the transfer of Shoebury Common to public ownership	<p>The Covenants impose requirements to keep the Common open for recreational use, and for the benefit of the residents of Shoebury, and to provide flood defences, among other things which are not affected by the proposals.</p> <p>The Council do not believe that their proposals breach these requirements. The land will still be available for recreation (it does not have to be flat for that purpose), the work is definitely for the benefit of the residents of Shoebury, and it discharges the Council's duty to provide suitable flood defences.</p>
36	The Council has been secretive and devious in handling this project	The Council has gone through the normal consultative processes in developing this scheme. In fact, the early public awareness of it was triggered by the desire to include the owner of Uncle Tom's in the scoping of an environmental study, which went beyond the normal circulation of such a document.



37	Why will water run uphill to Lodwick Road and Ness Road?	<p>Obviously, it will not. It is not the carriageway of Lodwick which will be affected by flooding, but the lower ground floors of the properties on the south side, which are set at the level of the Common.</p> <p>Water does not need to flow uphill to Ness Road as it is at a low level. The slope of the Common, and the low levels of Shoebury Common Road and Ness Road form a “bowl” which would retain a certain amount of the water which could flood over the wall. However, Ness Road undulates and once the “rim” of the “bowl” is reached it would overflow and run along the road into the heart of Shoebury.</p>
38	What will be done to protect against flooding from Gunners park and the River Shoe?	<p>As part of the development agreement at Gunners Park, the developer produced a drainage strategy which included creating a new drainage channel along the western edge of the site which takes the flow from the catchment extending into North Shoebury up to St Mary’s Church.</p> <p>Because of the risk that the outfall to the sea for this drainage could be blocked at high water, a storage area for surface water and wave overtopping was created at the south end of the site. This has capacity to store the run-off from a 1 in 100 year rainfall event, plus overtopping from a 1 in 200 year tidal event, until the water can flow away as tides recede.</p> <p>The flood defences around the park have been raised to provide a 1 in 200 year Standard of Protection.</p> <p>There is a need to desilt some of the watercourses on the site, and an ecological survey is underway to identify any factors which may influence the methods and timing of such works, with a view to completing them as soon as possible.</p>
39	Listen to residents, not financially motivated developers	<p>The works are required to protect existing homes. Neither the Council nor the EA would contemplate spending public money if it was not fully justified by addressing existing public flood risk.</p>



40	Have the contingency sums applied to the estimates for the options been exaggerated to the benefit of option 1?	No, the contingency that has been applied is the same percentage of estimated cost for all the options.
41	The high level walkway in the preferred option gives opportunity to overlook the gardens of Lodwick.	This could be excluded or shielded by planting.
42	The case for the works has too many “holes” and data has been manipulated to justify the project.	The evidence required by EA to gain their support is extensive and must be robust. They would not support a project which is not properly justified. Black & Veatch are a highly competent company providing services in this field to the highest standards of technical expertise and professional probity.
43	The survey is vague and lacks information on the location and nature of the proposals.	The location and extent of the project were clearly illustrated in the on-line survey and the exhibition at the library.
44	Various comments and complaints against the prospect of further development at Gunners Park	Any proposals and the process of assessing them would have to satisfy the statutory planning system. They would have to stand or fall on their own merits. The Council is seeking to provide protection to people at present flood risk, and that is the subject of this survey.
45	The proposed wall would reduce the desirability of the houses overlooking the Common, turning the area into “another Canvey”	The view of the defences from the houses in question would be of a wall, mostly landscaped by the embankment. The beach huts would still be visible over the top of it, and would still form the sky-line. The top of the concrete wall at Canvey Island is in many places higher than the roofs of adjacent houses. To compare the Council’s proposals to this situation is to hugely exaggerate the impact of this project.
46	Where on the noticeboards were the counter arguments and ideas put forward by SBHOA?	Option 1 incorporated solutions to many of the issues raised by SBHOA, for which they have expressed appreciation. Options 2 and 3 included the practical development of some other



		options suggested by individuals of the association.
47	Why do Black & Veatch only give tide figures up to 1983?	They have taken figures for the past century, up to the present and projected into the future as the basis for the scheme. FoSC pointed out that records from the Pier tide gauge stopped at 1983, and wrongly concluded that this meant that sea level rise at the Pier ended then.
48	The EA flood maps indicate a low risk of flooding to the risk area covered by this scheme.	The EA have agreed that their maps for this area may need to be revised. They have taken B&V's assessments very seriously.
49	Will the Council prioritise the flood risk area at Southchurch along with Shoebury Common?	The flood risk at Southchurch has been addressed by the same processes which have been applied at Shoebury. The defences at Southchurch are assessed at better than 1 in 500 years at present. Future improvements are planned there as needed to counter whatever sea level rise is observed to occur.
50	Environment Agency reviewed figures should be available for public inspection before further decisions are made.	Once the final Project appraisal report is approved by the EA, it will be placed in the public domain.
51	Who are the private developers, and what interest do they have in the project?	They are a company called Garrison Developments, who have acquired some of the currently undeveloped areas of Gunners Park. They hope that the provision of the flood defences will enable the EA to remove their standing objection to development on their site.
52	Water levels would have to rise five feet above present levels of high tide and waves before the wall at TBYC was overtopped	The comment overlooks the possibility of tidal surges which are created by adverse meteorological conditions. Surges of up to three metres are possible.

