



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Environment and Tourism
Joshua Hassan House
Secretary's Lane
Gibraltar

PRESS RELEASE

No. 55/2009

Date: 26th March 2009

Harbour Views Promenade

As is known, in October last year, Gibraltar and its surrounding region were hit by one of the worst storms in recent history. Extensive structural damage and undermining was caused to structures around the Bay and in Gibraltar, including to the Harbour View Promenade. It was only the rapid intervention of the Government that averted potentially very serious consequences to nearby roads and buildings during and immediately after the storm itself.

The issue is that the stone revetment that protects the shoreline of the Westside Reclamation (i.e. below the Promenade) were designed and built in 1989 to withstand the known wave regimes and wave heights in the Bay of Gibraltar and the harbour at that time. Since then, massive reclamation and new port facilities in Algeciras have radically altered the wave regime in the Bay, to the point of increasing wave heights by 50% inside some parts of our harbour.

For this reason, and following studies and reports commissioned by the Government, the adjoining new reclamation for the Government's Rental housing scheme was designed and built to withstand the current, more adverse wave regime and heights that now prevail in the Bay and Harbour. That reclamation accordingly withstood the October storms, whereas the Harbour View Promenade (designed and built to withstand the pre-Algeciras reclamations 1989 wave regimes) did not.

The problem is therefore structural and extensive. It is not just a question of filling in, and patching up the existing promenade and revetment (which by itself could cost several millions of pounds). It is also necessary, in order to avoid repetition and future risks to nearby roads and buildings, to assess the extent to which the Promenade and revetments now need to be rebuilt and upgrade to the current much higher wave threshold and specifications to withstand the existing wave regimes and heights.

Given that the rebuilding to higher specifications will cost many millions of pounds more, the Government has commissioned studies of the various technical options available, including options that will deliver additional new leisure amenities for the same or similar expenditure, in addition to fixing the Promenade. One option under consideration is building a breakwater further out from the Promenade, and thus creating another sheltered basin within the harbour to accommodate more small boat berths.

Government expects to receive the reports in early April, and to make decisions and commission works sometime thereafter. It is therefore unlikely that the Promenade will be restored in time for this summer.