I can not comment on the technical aspects of the groynes as I don't have that expertise but I feel confident that if we could create some way of retaining a small but high shingle bank near the sea wall, and maximise the sand left uncovered then it would be good for tourism.

A jumble of stones covered or interspersed with pebbles, which then trapped sand and small debris might create this, but I bow to expert opinion. When the pebbles were moved along the beach over the Bedford groyne a couple of years ago the effect was quite noticeable.

The proposed splash wall is something which, as a retired designer, I am much more qualified to comment upon. I understand all the arguments about unlocking funding by meeting flood defence targets but feel that there is little point in protecting the town from death by drowning only to create a slow economic death. We have to consider the 'Splash Wall' as a feature which will have a considerable effect on the attractiveness of Sidmouth as a tourist destination.

There are two main tourist groups as far as I can see from the people visible in town during the season. One group is the old with limited mobility who value the fact that there is a wide and easily navigable Esplanade and an easily accessed town centre. They appreciate the old fashioned look of the town as it reminds them of how seasides were in their youth and therefore feels comfortable and familiar. The other group are those with small children. Again ease of movement and a welcoming aspect for people who view things from a low perspective is very important; as it is for older people in wheel chairs and the disabled who also seem to visit in groups. Children and their parents also appreciate things which provide simple pleasures like having low walls for children to walk along.

The current low splash wall provides many functional benefits to visitors as well as for flood prevention. It is a convenient height for sitting on, walking on and climbing over if you want to or need to. These functions would still exist if the height was raised to 18 inches/45 cm above the level of the Esplanade sea walk, any higher and these things would be lost.

It must also be considered that, due to the town being lower than the Esplanade, any wall would have a greater presence when approached from the town. As the town is to the north of such a wall it is unavoidable that the wall will be perceived as dark due to it being in shadow during most of the day. It will also cast a considerable shadow on the road. It will cut the town off from the sea and any effects to mitigate the stark effect will only serve to make the wall higher, a wavy top or flowers surmounting it would have to be in addition to the height proposed as an effective splash wall.

I am sure many others will have talked about the effect on motorists, safety concerns, the impact of flood gates remaining closed for long periods after the storm has passed, etc but I want to limit myself from now on to demonstrating the visual intrusion of a 1 metre high splash wall.

I have taken the line from that given on the RHDHV poster, and demonstrated that it will be just a little lower than the height of the railings. I have then used the height of the railings to calculate the wall height in all photographs. I have purposely slightly underestimated the height in order not to seem too harsh. I have also not included

the effect of cast shadow on the road. I have taken the colour for the extended height from the colour displayed on the current wall. I am therefore confident that these images do not overstate the effect.

RHDHV image from the BMP exhibition.

Using their given line the height against the railings was determined. (NB. their line was not equal distances above bench backs so a mean was taken)


THE
Ashleigh
Bishop
GALLERY
SIDMOUTH WINES


THE
Ashleigh
Bishop
GALLERY
SIDMOUTH WINES


COASTAL
COFFEE
LOUNGE
barnet.


COASTAL
COFFEE
LOUNGE
barnet.


AHEAD
ONL Y


AHEAD
ONL Y


Seaview Terrace
THE ESPLANADE SIDMOUTH


Seaview Terrace
THE ESPLANADE SIDMOUTH

As can be seen, all sight of the sea is lost from ground level all along the Esplanade. When the flood gates are closed the effect will be even stronger.

These images are available in larger format if required to estimate the full effect.

May 5th 2018