



Newsletter 03

June 2023



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council



OPW
Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

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INTRODUCTION

Since the issue of Newsletter No. 2 in December 2022, there has been significant further progress on Stage 1 of the Bantry Flood Relief Scheme. Ecology surveys, topographical surveys and geotechnical investigations have been carried out over the last six months. Hydraulic modelling is progressing to identify the likely extent of flooding for different storm events.

DATA COLLECTION

GROUND (GEOTECHNICAL) INVESTIGATION

In recent months, locals will have noticed investigation works being carried out for the scheme around the town and its outskirts. Works, which involved boreholes and open trenches, were completed in April and samples obtained during the works are being tested and results are expected shortly. Geotechnical engineers for the project will assess the results to determine the geotechnical characteristics of the area and this will inform the design of potential flood relief measures.



ECOLOGY SURVEYS

Less obvious to the public are ecological surveys which took place recently. Ecologists have been observing birds and mammals. The bird population has been monitored over the last 12 months in the harbour area. In April 2023, surveys to identify habitats for mammals such as badger, fox, otter, mink, pine martin and stoat were carried out. The surveys were undertaken to help identify the locations of dens, breeding areas and feeding sites of any mammals present. An initial aquatic ecological survey was also carried out in May 2023 in areas which potentially may be impacted by works. An electro-fishing survey to determine fish species and populations will be undertaken at a later date.

Further surveys for lamprey, otter and kingfisher are scheduled for later in 2023. Bat surveys may also be required.

The full extent of surveys to be carried out cannot be identified until options for flood defences have been identified.

An invasive species management plan has been in place over recent years and will continue during this project. A specialist contractor regularly surveys the scheme area for Japanese Knotweed and other invasive species and carries out treatment as required.

MODELLING

Hydrological analysis of the study area is largely complete and hydraulic modelling is progressing. The flood extents predicted through the modelling process will form the baseline against which potential flood mitigation measures will be assessed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DAY

A Public Participation Day (PPD) is planned to take place towards the end of 2023. The outcome of the modelling exercise and preliminary options development will be shared with members of the public and other interested parties at the PPD. Attendees will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Flood Relief Scheme by offering comments and feedback on the flood mitigation options that have been developed based on the extensive investigations, analysis and modelling conducted over the preceding months.

MILL CULVERT UPGRADE PROJECT (MCUP)

In addition to the Bantry Flood Relief Scheme, Cork County Council is currently progressing a separate project to upgrade the existing Mill River Culvert. This project involves the replacement of the existing culvert in the town, due to asset degradation.

Though separate from the Bantry Flood Relief Scheme, a holistic approach is important and the two project teams are continuing to work closely together, collaborating, and sharing information to ensure the objectives of both projects align. In the spirit of this co-operation, the site investigation works for the two projects were undertaken under a single contract, thereby reducing overhead costs and minimising disruption to members of the public.

NEXT STEPS

The list below indicates significant activities that will be undertaken in 2023:

- Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement
- Structural/ Condition Asset Surveys
- Complete the Hydraulic Modelling
- Options Development
- Hold the Options Public Participation Day

PROJECT STAGES

The project comprises of five stages as set out below and is currently in Stage 1.



Stage 1 is programmed to be completed in 2024.

CONTACT US

You can keep in touch with the project through our website, where we will be posting updates on progress and details of works that are ongoing.

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