

In partnership with:



Irwell Vale, Strongstry & Chatterton Flooding Update Newsletter

July 2022

Newsletter: #10

Dear Resident,

Please see below an update on the Irwell Vale, Strongstry and Chatterton Flood Risk Management Scheme (FRMS).

Environment Agency update

Appraisal & Design Update

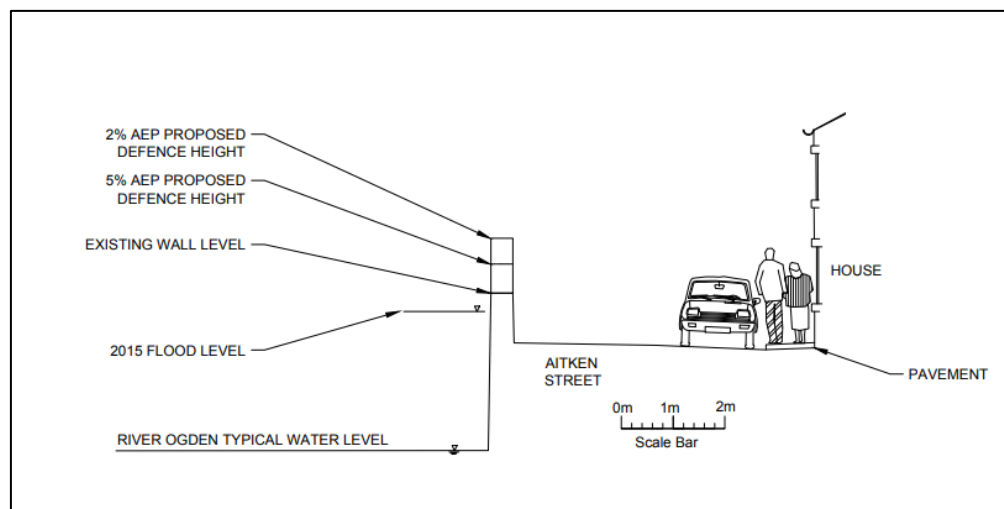
In line with government guidelines, the Environment Agency (EA) is appraising the feasibility of providing additional flood protection to the communities of Irwell Vale, Strongstry and Chatterton. We have understood the flood risk to the communities in addition to the Climate Change guidance released by the Government in 2021. We have developed a long list of potential options for reducing the flood risk, narrowed these down through an assessment and produced a short list of options. These shortlisted options have been further evaluated and concluded the most feasible option for the area is linear defences generally along the bank of the river Irwell to help contain high river water levels.

We completed site surveys such as a tree survey, topographic survey and ground investigation in summer to winter 2021, and our Framework Consultant (Jacobs) along with the EA have been collating the information gained to inform how the design progresses. We have completed the Concept designs and are now developing these in what we call the 'Outline Design' stage. This stage of design adds more detail to what we have designed and, in some cases, the alignment and / or type of proposed flood defense may change following the understanding of the survey information. These surveys are intended to confirm whether our original assumptions at the early project stage were correct and if not, correct these via changes to the design. For example, the ground investigations have concluded the ground in Irwell Vale adjacent to Meadow Park Road is not suitable for sheet piles and we are likely to be requiring a reinforced concrete defence clad with local stone to be in-keeping with the local surroundings.

Additionally, we have reduced the extent of the flood embankment in Chatterton following door threshold surveys and have included the removal of the existing embankment in the Playing Field. This embankment was constructed following the 2012 flood event and its removal has benefits to the wider scheme when reviewing flood risk holistically.

Once the Outline Designs have been concluded, our consultant will be consolidating the designs and findings into a Design Report. This then allows our Framework Contractor (VolkerStevin) to estimate the cost of materials and construction more accurately. Once we have this, we can feed this information into the 'Outline Business Case' (OBC) which will then be submitted to an assurance body within the EA. This assurance body will review the business case and determine whether the scheme should proceed to the next stage (Full Business Case - Detailed Design) or not. Key factors in the assurance body making their decision are whether the funding for the project has been sought (or very likely to be sought) and the financial benefits of the scheme in protecting the communities outweigh the financial cost of delivering the scheme. OBC is a go/no-go stage, and we currently plan to submit the OBC to the assurance body in January 2023 and a decision from them will likely be made by the end of April 2023.

Please see below an example of a cross section in Aitken Street in Irwell Vale showing the proposed defence height. The heights of the defence change depending on location:



Programme / Timeline Update

We are working towards the following programme / timeline milestones:

- Outline Business Case (OBC) approval – April 2023
- Procurement of Consultant for next stage – Spring 2023 to Summer 2023
- Detailed Design – Summer 2023 to Spring 2024
- Planning Application – Spring 2024 to Autumn 2024
- Full Business Case (FBC) Approved – February 2025
- Construction – Spring 2025 to Spring 2026

The dates have moved back since our last Newsletter, and this is mainly due to:

- Delays in concluding the Ground Investigations and producing the report.
- Time has been spent investigating an alternative option of re-aligning the River Ogden to understand whether this would help with the constraints in Irwell Vale. This concluded the re-alignment is feasible from a hydraulic (water flow) perspective and we will be discussing this with our assurance body.
- Revised the planning application time based on experience from other schemes.

Cost Update

To date, we have been leading with a total scheme estimated cost of £14.7m. However, we are aware of increased costs which will impact the scheme and have carried out an internal review to provide greater clarity on what we estimate the scheme costs to be.

Following this cost review, the estimated total scheme cost is £19.6m. We understand this is a significant increase and are really disappointed this has further increased the funding gap. The main drivers for this cost increase are increases in construction costs (labour and in particular materials), new legislation meaning greater Biodiversity needs to be delivered as part of the scheme (Biodiversity Net Gain) and greater duration for the scheme resulting in prolonged Consultant and Contractor costs.

Funding Update

To date, we have confirmed £10.85m in funding for the scheme as outlined below. Based on an estimated total scheme cost of £19.6m, this leaves a funding gap of £8.75m. We are exploring every possible avenue for further funding including from the county and borough councils. Jake Berry MP has also raised the profile of the scheme in Parliament with a clear ask to the government for additional funding (more about this in the stakeholder update below).

Type	Organisation	Value (Confirmed)
Grant in Aid (GiA)	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	£4,000,000
Asset Replacement Fund (ARF)	Environment Agency (EA)	£4,650,000
Local Levy	Regional Flood and Coastal Communities (RFCC)	£2,200,000
Total		£10,850,000

Wider Communications

We conducted community drop-in sessions at Irwell Vale on the 3rd March 22 and Chatterton on the 24th March 22. We have also had follow up meetings with specific residents where the proposed defence alignment either runs through their land or adjacent to it.

There have been some communications from residents to Jake Berry MP which we are very grateful for as these lobby for additional government support, in trying to close the finding gap. It is pleasing to see this lobbying has helped and Jake Berry MP raised this specific scheme at a parliament debate on the 29th of June 22. His speech outlined the flood risk to the communities and the challenges we face in seeking a solution that improves the flood protection. He made specific comment on the funding gap and requested the government seek to help source additional funding. The link to the debate is below and his debate was from 16:01hrs. It is likely we will have a senior visit to your communities following this debate. Many thanks to those individuals who keep lobbying in the background.

<https://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/8bce075d-227f-4a57-8435-dcc4f4069798>

We are also engaging with Lancashire County Council, Rossendale Borough Council and United Utilities. We have monthly meetings to run through updates on the scheme and to ensure all Risk Management Authorities (RMA's) are aligned and can seek any opportunities from one another to push this scheme forward.

Rossendale Borough Council have confirmed they have included for operational support in deploying flood gates once the scheme is built. This is a real positive as flood gates have proved a challenge due to the distance of EA operational teams and 'flashy' nature of the flood risk in your communities.

Please use the 'Flood Hub' website for further information on the scheme. The Flood Hub is your one stop shop for flood advice and information. It is funded by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and has been developed by Newground and other partner agencies to support communities at risk of flooding across the North West. You can find all the up-to-date Scheme information along with advice for planning and preparing for floods to protect homes, businesses, land and wildlife. Follow this link for further information:
<https://thefloodhub.co.uk/irwell-vale-strongstry-and-chatterton/>

If you or any other residents who do not currently receive communications from the Environment Agency would like to receive future updates and newsletters regarding the flood scheme, please e-mail FloodResilienceGMMC@environment-agency.gov.uk

<https://thefloodhub.co.uk/irwell-vale-strongstry-and-chatterton/>

Next Steps

Over the next month, we will be concluding the Outline Designs, and these will then be given to our Contractor to carry out a detailed estimate of materials and cost. In parallel, we are updating the business case ready for submission in January 2023 to the assurance body.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) update

Irwell Vale

The surface water pumps located in Meadow Park are planned to have their annual service carried out on the 28th July 22. The pumps have not had any major issues to deal with over the past year. There was a power outage to the area recently and the pumps reset themselves with no issues. This was a good test for the telemetry as everything worked as it should.

Chatterton

LCC Highways has recently brought in a specialist drainage survey company to check the condition of the highway drainage systems under Chatterton Road. The results of that investigation are now under review, taking account of the experience and knowledge of local residents, and we are planning to carry out a number of improvements to the highway drainage later this year, in advance of a major resurfacing scheme currently planned for next year. These improvements will help improve the resilience of the community to future flooding risks from surface water.



Topic for future editions of this newsletter

If you think there are any flood-related issues that you would like exploring or explaining, please pass your requests to your local Councillors for them to forward to our local teams who will provide the next updates.

Advice on flooding incident

To report flooding or a blockage please contact the Environment Agency 24hrs incident hotline on **0800 807060**.

Further information and help is available at the **FloodHub**: <https://thefloodhub.co.uk/>

FloodHub (Irwell Vale, Strongstry & Chatterton):
<https://thefloodhub.co.uk/irwell-vale-strongstry-and-chatterton/>

For help and information during a flood, call Floodline on **0345 988 1188**. Advice on preparing for a flood, what to do during flooding conditions and what to do after a flood subsides, can be found on Lancashire County Council's website:
www.lancashire.gov.uk/flooding