

The Highland Council
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee

Agenda Item	18
Report No	PDI 52/16

17 August 2016

Flood Prevention Schemes Update

Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

Summary

This report presents an update on the progress being made on the development of flood protection schemes and studies funded through the Major Flood Schemes capital programme.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Planning Development and Infrastructure approved in June 2015 (PDI 31/15) the funding of a number of flood protection schemes and studies within the Capital Programme.
- 1.2 These recommendations were based on the outcome of the first ever National Flood Risk Management Strategy developed by SEPA in cooperation with The Highland Council's Flood Risk Management Team. The Strategy concluded, after having appraised the flood risk within 40 Potentially Vulnerable Areas within the Highlands, that 24 new Flood Protection Studies should be developed along with 3 Flood Protection Schemes (or works) within the Highland & Argyll Local Plan District.
- 1.3 The May 2016 PDI committee approved the publication and adoption of the first ever 'Highland & Argyll Local Flood Risk Management Plan' (H&A LFRMP) (PDI 33/16). This Plan identifies when the recommended action to tackle flood risk (outlined above) will be delivered, and how they will be funded. Due to the scale of work ahead, it was determined that 11 Flood Protection Studies would be progressed to outline design in the first flood risk management cycle (2016-2022) as well as 4 schemes.

1.4 These include:

	Flood Protection Study (FPS)	Flood Protection Works (FPW)
Caol		x
River Gynack, Kingussie	x	
River Peffery, Dingwall	x	
Tarbet Ness (incl. Rockfield, Balintore, Portmahomack, Inver and Skinnerton)	x	
River Nairn, Nairn	x	
Smithton & Culloden		x
Auldearn Burn, Nairn	x	
Golspie	x	
Mill Burn, Inverness		x
River Enrick, Drumnadrochit		x
Upper River Ness	x	
Fort William	x	
River Spey, Aviemore	x	
River Thurso, Thurso	x	
South Kessock, Inverness	x	

2. Progress on Flood Protection Studies

2.1 River Gynack, Kingussie

The Highland Council has been working with Pitmain Estate to develop one of a number of measures that are needed to alleviate flooding in Kingussie. This involves the diversion of peak flood flows to Loch Gynack, and will reduce peak flows (reducing the frequency of over-topping in the town centre) by approximately one third. All necessary consents (including Planning Permission and CAR license) have been obtained and a tender has been carried out for these works. These works are being funded 50% by the Pitmain Estate (as it contributes to their hydro-electric scheme) and 50% by the Highland Council. The works are expected to be constructed this financial year. Whilst this scheme will make a significant contribution to the reduction of flood risk it will not resolve it entirely. Therefore a consultant is in the process of being appointed to begin studying other measures (such as direct defences and/or sediment management) that may be feasible. This study is expected to begin in October 2016, with completion in approximately 2 years (in line with the commitment in the H&A LFRMP).

2.2 River Peffery, Dingwall

Consultants CH2M were appointed in March 2016 to develop the study to alleviate flood risk in Dingwall and Blairninich. We are currently carrying out surveys that will help develop a detailed hydraulic model and improve our understanding of the flood risk. The study is expected to be complete in 2018.

2.3 Tarbet Ness

The study for Tarbet Ness (including an assessment of the risk and potential options for flood alleviation in the coastal villages of Rockfield, Inver, Skinnerton, Balintore and Portmahomack) is programmed to commence in 2018.

2.4 River Nairn (including Auldearn Burn), Nairn

The study assessing the flood risk from the sea and River Nairn is programmed to commence in 2016. The scope of this study has not yet been developed in detail by the Flood Risk Management Team. This will be progressed towards the end of this year with appointment of a consultant expected to be within the financial year. This study will be combined with the proposed study for the Auldearn Burn (also in Nairn).

2.5 Golspie and River Thurso

The scope of the study to assess the flood risk in Golspie centre from the sea is being developed. It is expected this will be tendered and awarded to consultants in the next 3 months (in line with the commitment in the H&A LFRMP). This appointment will also include the River Thurso (also in development).

2.6 Upper River Ness

The study to assess the risk and potential options for flood alleviation in the upper (fluvial) section of the River Ness (downstream of Ness Islands) is programmed to commence in 2018.

2.7 Fort William

The study assessing the flood risk from Loch Linnhe and River Nevis is programmed to commence in 2016. This scope of this study has not yet been developed in detail by the Flood Risk Management Team. This will be progressed towards the end of this year with appointment of a consultant expected to be within the financial year.

2.8 River Spey, Aviemore

The study to assess the risk and potential options for flood alleviation in the Dalfaber Road area of Aviemore is programmed to commence in 2019.

2.9 South Kessock, Inverness

A study to assess the residual risk of flooding to South Kessock from Kessock Road and along the sea wall is programmed to commence in 2016. This has not yet been procured. However, a number of studies have been progressed through Housing as part of consideration of housing aspirations in the area. Options to alleviate the risk in this area are being considered.

3. Progress on Flood Protection Schemes

3.1 Mill Burn Flood Protection Scheme

It is expected that consultants will be appointed within the next 3 months (in line with the commitment in the H&A LFRMP) to develop existing scheme designs, and take these through to formal notification in 2017. Detailed design

of the various elements will be developed over the course of 2017/18. The scheme is planned to be constructed in the first cycle (2016-2022) and is on-target, with construction expected to commence in 2019/20.

3.2 River Enrick, Drumnadrochit Flood Protection Scheme

The appointment of consultants WSP to develop existing outline designs to alleviate flooding to Drumnadrochit and Kilmichael has now been made. Over coming months, WSP will work with the Highland Council to develop detailed designs and progress the necessary permissions throughout 2016-2018. The scheme is planned to be constructed in the first cycle (2016-2022) and is on-target, with construction expected to commence in 2020/21. In the short term, a license has been obtained from SEPA to remove sediment from the river upstream of the A82 bridge which will alleviate frequent flooding to the road at Kilmichael. These works are expected to commence in September 2016.

3.3 Caol Flood Protection Scheme

The Caol scheme is well defined and has been consulted on widely. Following recent meetings, concerns have been raised by the local community and aspects relating to the form of the flood bund are being re-designed prior to formal notification of the scheme. This is now expected to take place early 2017, with detailed design following thereafter. The scheme is planned to be constructed in the first cycle (2016-2022) and is on-target, with construction expected to commence in 2018.

3.4 Smithton & Culloden Flood Protection Scheme

3.4.1 The Smithton & Culloden FPS is well defined following a number of informal consultations and public meetings. In April 2016, The Highland Council's intention to promote the above scheme was formally notified in accordance with the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act (2009). All relevant stakeholders, including statutory bodies, utilities, relevant private organisations and the general public were notified of the scheme and over 2000 letters were posted in the vicinity of the proposed works. After a 28-day period, only 1 valid objection was received.

3.4.2 The objection related to the proposed loss of trees lining the Culloden Burn West (outwith the objectors own land) as it approaches Culloden Park, parallel to Keppoch Road. The objector was concerned that the loss of some mature trees along the road-side would de-value his property, increase noise and reduce his privacy.

3.4.3 Officers considered this objection and reviewed the scheme proposals in this area. The majority of tree loss in this area was considered to be unavoidable due to the flood structure being classified and protected as a reservoir. However, some concessions were able to be made as some of the proposed tree removal was considered to be necessary to facilitate construction methods which could be changed.

3.4.4 After presenting these concessions to the objector and suggesting additional mitigation planting in the area (to replace lost screening) the objection was

formally removed in writing (subject to the agreed concessions and mitigation planting being implemented).

- 3.4.5 Since the above objection and resolution were of a minor nature (not affecting the nature of the flood defence being consulted on), it is considered that a formal modification of the flood protection scheme is not required.
- 3.4.6 The approval process for this scenario is not clearly laid out within the legislation and officers are seeking further guidance from Scottish Government to ensure the recommendation for confirmation is correct. A further report will be brought to this committee in November to seek approval and confirmation of the preferred scheme as notified.

4. Implications

4.1 Resource

The Capital Programme, approved by Council on 17 December 2015, is fully funded and the above studies/ schemes are budgeted for. Scottish Government confirmed on the 18 July 2016, that an additional £2.297m would be allocated to The Highland Council in the general capital grant allocation for 2016/17. This equates to 80% of the sunk and present financial year scheme costs for Smithton/ Culloden, Caol and Drumnadrochit. Further contributions from Scottish Government are expected in future financial years as per the funding profile of these schemes.

4.2 Legal

Legal advice has been sought in the process of developing the Smithton & Culloden Flood Protection Scheme documents, notification process and next steps.

4.3 Equalities

No related issues.

4.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

All flood schemes make an allowance for the predicted impact of climate change on flood flows and sea level rises.

4.5 Risk

No related issues.

4.6 Gaelic

No related issues.

4.7 Rural

No related issues.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the progress to date on the development of flood protection schemes and studies.

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Background Papers: PDI 31/15 & 33/16