Stephenson Street flood scheme

Frequently asked questions about the scheme

# Flood risk in Liswerry

### Why do we need flood defences in this area?

Homes and businesses in Liswerry are vulnerable to flooding from the River Usk during periods of heavy rainfall and high tides. There is an existing flood bund along the River Usk between Stephenson Street and Corporation Road, but this is old and no longer fit for purpose.

Many of the businesses in the industrial estate which runs alongside the river already experience small scale flooding from low points along the river bank – most recently during Storm Dennis in February 2020. Our evidence and investigations tell us that if we don’t take action here in Liswerry, there’s a real risk of a significant flood affecting the community in the near future.

### How many properties will benefit from the scheme?

The plans would reduce flood risk to approximately 1,100 homes and 1,000 non-residential properties, as well as key infrastructure such as the A48 trunk road and leisure amenities such as Newport International Sports Village, Newport Stadium and Dragon Park.

# The proposed scheme

### What do the current proposals involve?

The current proposals involve raising parts of the existing earth embankment along Stephenson Street and the construction of new flood walls.

A new flood gate is also proposed for Corporation Road, along with a new 450m stretch of highway to improve access to the industrial estate when flood gate is closed.

### Were any other options considered?

A long list of engineering solutions were developed and appraised at a workshop attended by the project team and Newport City Council.

These were screened by identifying residual risks, technical and environmental constraints, viability and ability to meet key objectives.

We produced a detailed assessment for each option against multiple criteria including constructability, cost, environmental impact, maintenance and delivery risks.

### When could work start to build the scheme?

We hope to be in a position to apply for planning permission to Newport City Council in the New Year. Depending on the outcome of this, construction work could begin as early as spring 2021.

We are currently running a public consultation on our plans, and the results of this could influence the project timescales.

### How long would construction last?

At this stage in the project the construction timescales are still being developed. We will keep people updated as the project progresses.

### How much would the scheme cost?

It is estimated that the scheme would cost £10m. The scheme is funded by the Welsh Government.

### Who is NRW working with on the project?

We have been working with engineering consultants Arup since 2016 to investigate options and develop design proposals.

We’ve have consulted with Newport City Council on many areas of the proposed scheme including highways, drainage, ecology, parks, landscape and public rights of way.

We have had extensive engagement with many of the local businesses directly impacted by the construction of the scheme before reaching this point and their collaborative input has helped to shape the proposals.

# Environmental considerations

### How are you considering the ecological sensitivity of the area?

The bund is next to the River Usk and within designations of European importance for nature.  We have undertaken ecology surveys over many years to inform the scheme design and methods of construction. Sympathetic solutions have been developed that aim to enhance the environment. We will continue to consult closely with Newport City Council, our teams responsible for the protected sites affected, and other key stakeholders to ensure that the scheme is delivered in an appropriate manner, minimising its impact on the environment.

### How will you minimise the impact on the environment?

Extensive species-specific surveys within a study area have confirmed that the protected species are not likely to be found or breeding within the affected works area. Construction of the scheme would aim to minimise the impact on any sensitive species and ensure there is no permanent loss to protected habitats.

### Will access to the Wales Coast Path be affected?

During the construction period, it will be inevitable that we will need to temporarily divert the Wales Coast Path for some periods. We would not be able to work safely to install the flood defences with people walking along the footpath. Once the scheme is built, our aim is that there will be an improved path, with better surfacing and accessibility.

### How are you considering the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act?

We want our work to provide benefits for the local community and the local area. We are working with Newport City Council to develop plans that will improve accessibility to parts of the Wales Coast Path and also the experience for visitors to Coronation Park.

### Will the works affect access to the Transporter Bridge?

We need to do some minor works near the base of the Transporter bridge to increase the height of the road surface. However, these works are small scale in nature and therefore access to the Transporter Bridge will be maintained throughout construction.

## Involving local people

### How are you consulting with the community?

We have already had extensive engagement with many of the local businesses directly impacted by the construction of the scheme before reaching this point and their collaborative input has helped to shape the proposals.

However, we feel it’s important to make sure everyone gets the opportunity to view our proposals and have their say before we proceed with a planning application. This includes people who live in the residential areas who will benefit from increased flood protection, those who use Coronation Park and who use the affected area of the Wales Coast Path.

Our public consultation is running online between 7th September – 18 October. We will also be offering one-to-one zoom sessions for anyone who wishes to discuss the proposals in more detail. Details will be shared on the project website in the near future.

**How will you keep people informed of developments?**

We will continue to provide updates through press releases, our social media channels and letter drops at key milestones throughout the project.

As the project progresses, we will also likely establish an e-newsletter to keep local businesses and residents informed.

If you’d like us to keep you up to date with progress on the scheme, please email your details to stephensonstreet@naturalresources.wales