Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Natural Resources Wales

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# Ammanford Flood Scheme News

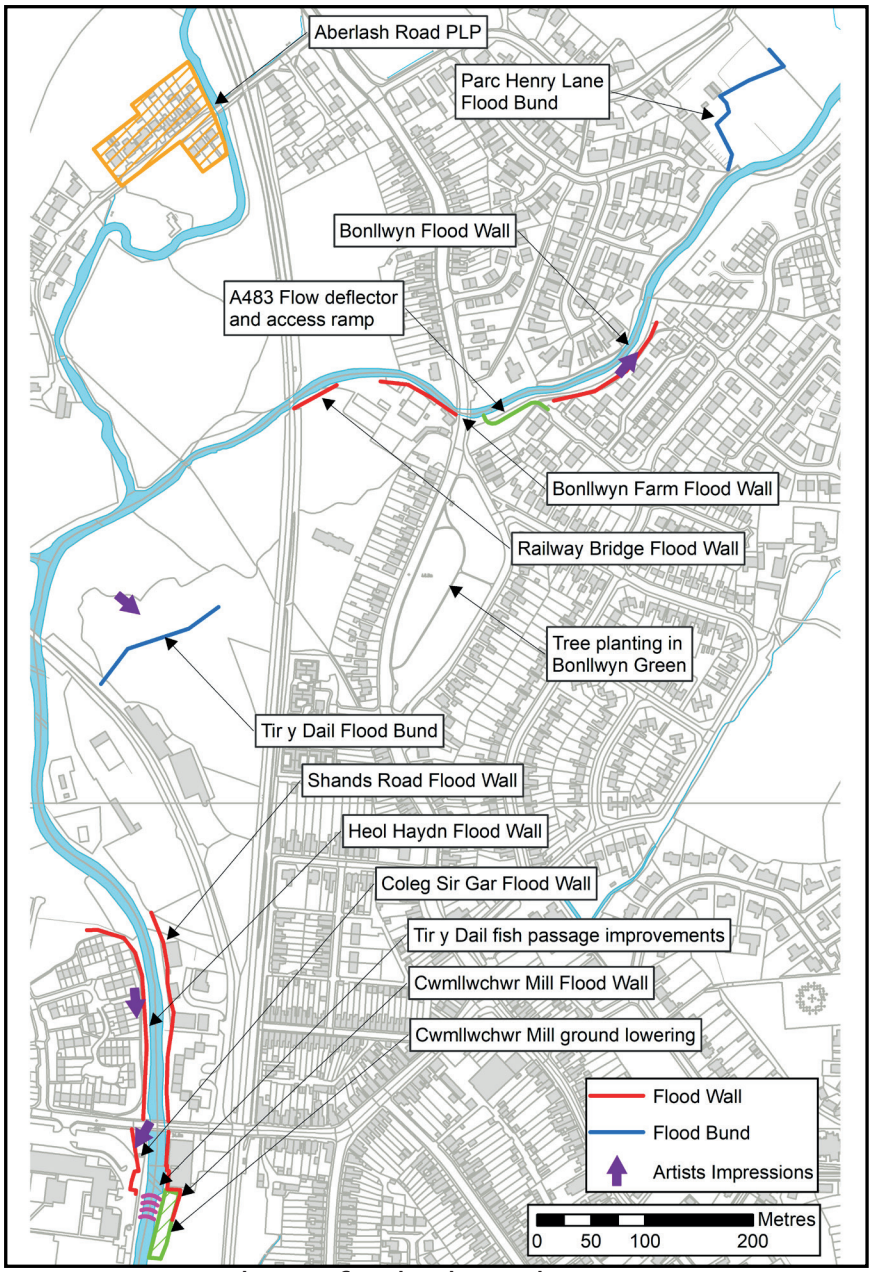
## Welcome to our second newsletter

We're moving forward with a scheme in Ammanford to manage flood risk from the rivers Loughor, Marlas and Lash. We predict that more than 250 properties in the town are currently at risk of flooding with a 1% chance of this happening each year during an extreme flood event.

The effects of climate change see this number rise to more than 450 properties at risk of flooding. The areas of the town most at risk are Bonllwyn, Aberlash Road, Tir-y-dail, Gwyn Fryn and Shands Road.

Natural Resources Wales has powers and responsibilities to manage flood risk from main rivers. Ammanford is one of the top 5 communities in West Wales predicted to see an increase in future flood risk due to climate change.

Our investigations have shown that the cause of flooding in Ammanford is complex, with flood water spilling into the town at several locations. A combination of measures is needed to reduce the risk of flooding. We believe that the best option is to construct a series of flood defence bunds and walls in several areas in the town to contain flood water in the River Loughor.




Plan of whole scheme

## How much will this flood risk management scheme reduce the risk of flooding?

Our preferred scheme will reduce the risk of flooding to approximately 380 properties in Ammanford during an extreme flood event (a flood with a 1% probability of happening each year), taking into consideration the impacts of future climate change.

## Consultation – your opportunity to comment on our proposals

This newsletter provides you with more information on the flood risk management scheme we are proposing for Ammanford. This is your opportunity to comment directly to us on our proposals by completing a questionnaire. You can access the questionnaire at https://bit.ly/AmmanfordSurvey If you would prefer a paper copy of the questionnaire, please ring 0300 065 3000 or email: ammanford@naturalresources.wales

If you would like more information on the scheme we are holding online presentations on the following days:

Friday 8th January 2021 2.0pm and Tuesday 12th January 2021 5.30pm
Email: ammanford@naturalresources.wales to request further details.

You will also have another opportunity to comment during the Planning Consent Pre-Application Consultation, before we submit the planning application to Carmarthenshire Council. A draft copy of the planning application, including the Environmental Constraints and Opportunities Record, will be made available online on the project website: https://bit.ly/AmmanfordFloodRiskManagement

The pre-application consultation will start in mid-January 2021 and run for 28 days.

# Our Proposals

## Gwyn Fryn Estate, Coleg Sir Gar and Shands Road

Upstream and downstream of Dyffryn Bridge, in extreme flood events water flows out of bank causing flooding to adjacent properties. This flood risk will be decreased by construction of flood walls at the College, Gwyn Fryn Estate and Cwmllwchwr Mill and Shands Road industrial units.

We propose to construct a concrete wall next to the River Loughor in Gwyn Fryn Estate, starting at Dyffryn Road and finishing near the river, curving around the houses to the north. The river footpath will remain unaffected. The wall height will vary between 0.5m and 1m and will be clad with brick to match the houses.

This option will require felling of the large trees (mostly Austrian Pines from the Ty Dyffryn Estate grounds) between the houses and the river in Gwyn Fryn Estate.

We have looked carefully at alternative options that could retain the trees, but because the space between the houses and the river is so restricted and the tree roots extend over a large area, there is no other feasible option that won't cause damage to the roots or the trees.

The drawing shows the replacement planting we are proposing, to compensate for the loss of the large trees and improve the landscape in Gwyn Fryn Estate. The replacement trees chosen will provide improved habitat and food for wildlife.

The native trees and vegetation on the riverbank will mostly be retained, as will the Austrian Pines to the north of the houses. We are also proposing adding features for the community such as benches, garden hedges and other landscape improvements.

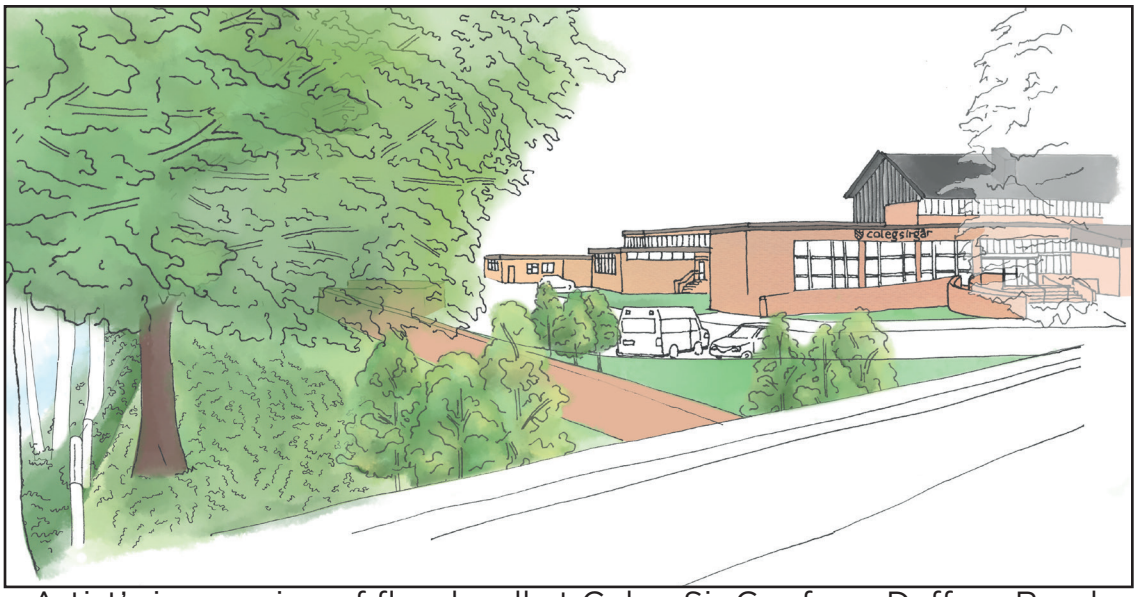
Current photo at Gwyn Fryn Estate from the north looking towards Dyffryn Road

Artist's impression of flood wall at Gwyn Fryn Estate from the north looking towards Dyffryn Road

The industrial units on Shands Road are built on land that is more low-lying than the surrounding area. The preferred option here is to build a flood defence wall between the Council owned industrial units and the river. The wall will be between 1.5m and 0.5m high. The wall will connect to several of the industrial units to the north and these buildings will also be fitted with Property Level Protection measures to increase resilience to flooding.  The area behind the industrial units will be planted with trees to improve the landscape, increase habitat for wildlife and to help mitigate for the loss of trees elsewhere on the scheme.

In the grounds of Coleg Sir Gar, the flood wall will continue south of Dyffryn Road for 80 metres along the river bank, gradually reducing in height until it reaches ground level. We have been able to design the route of the wall so it avoids two large (Category A) trees – a beech tree by the road and a large oak tree in the grounds. We are also going to plant an area near the road with native trees and vegetation to increase wildlife habitat.


Current photo of Coleg Sir Gar from Dyffryn Road.




Artist's impression of flood wall at Coleg Sir Gar from Dyffryn Road.

On the opposite side to the college at Cwmllwchwr Mill, a flood wall and ground raising will be constructed between the industrial units and the river. This wall will continue south and link up with improvements we are making to the weir in the river channel. These improvements will decrease flood risk and also allow fish to pass over the weir for the first time since it was constructed. This will open up the river to the north for fish, giving them access to 20km of habitat for spawning.

# Tir y Dail field Bund

In an extreme flood, when the River Loughor overtops its banks in this field, water could flow down the field and along the railway line. This causes flooding to properties on Shands Road, Station Road and Harold Street. We propose to construct a large earth bund across the field between Shands Road and the railway line to stop this flow path. The bund will be around 130m long and will have a maximum height of 2.5m at Shands Road, sloping gently down to ground level in the field.

The bund will be set back from the river so that the field continues to act as a floodplain during a flood. It has been designed to blend into the landscape as much as possible. A small number of trees will need to be removed to enable construction of the embankment, but we will plant new trees across the project site so that there is an overall increase in the number of trees on completion of the project.

Current photo of Tir y Dail field looking south

Artist's impression of Tir y Dail field bund looking south

## Ffordd yr Afon, Bonllwyn

We propose to construct a low flood defence wall along the south bank of the River Loughor in the Bonllwyn area, off Ffordd yr Afon. This will be around 90cm high, running on the river side of the existing footpath.

Current photo off Ffordd yr Avon looking east along the river

Artist's impression of flood wall off Ffordd yr Avon looking east along the river

There is also gravel accumulating under the Llandybie Road bridge that will restrict flow under the bridge in an extreme event. We are looking at measures to prevent gravel building up and to ensure the free flow of water. A vehicle ramp will be built down to the river at this bridge for future maintenance. Some trees along the river will need to be felled to enable construction, but we will plant new trees in this area and elsewhere in Ammanford to compensate for any trees removed.

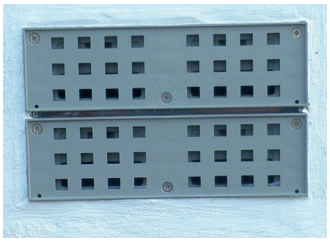
## Parc Henry Lane

At the top of Parc Henry Lane, behind the new housing development, we propose to construct a bund to reduce the risk of flooding to properties around Llwyn-Y-Bryn. In extreme floods, water comes out of the river above the new housing development and flows through the estate, causing flooding to properties. The ground raising we propose will block this flood route and reduce the risk of flooding.

## Aberlash Road

Some properties on Aberlash Road have a 20% chance of flooding each year. We looked at increasing the opening under the Aberlash Road bridge to increase the amount of water that can flow under it and reduce flooding to properties. Although water depths were reduced, the frequency of flooding was not. Options to store flood water upstream of Aberlash Road and to construct bunds to protect houses were also considered. However, these options were not viable due to a lack of available space and because the floodwater bypassed the defences.

Property Level Protection (PLP) was identified as the most suitable option to reduce the flood risk for 13 houses on Aberlash Road, increasing resilience during flooding. PLP measures can include the fitting of "flood doors", demountable barriers and similar products which form a temporary barrier to floodwaters in short duration flood events. We completed surveys of the houses in March 2020 to ensure they are suitable for PLP. We will source suitable PLP products to install during construction of the flood scheme, for the property owners that agree to have them.


Examples of PLP measures

## Potential environmental impacts and how we will manage them

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been integrated into development of the scheme design. The EIA provides a systematic and transparent way of managing the environmental risks. It ensures that we avoid, reduce or mitigate environmental impacts and identifies opportunities for delivery of multiple benefits.

Potential impact upon trees, protected species (e.g. bats, otter), people (e.g. noise), historic features, local landscape are some of the many impacts that have been assessed. An Environmental Constraints and Opportunities Record has been produced to document the EIA, which will be made available to the public and key stakeholders for consideration as part of the Planning Consent Pre-Application Consultation.

Common Pipistrelle Bat

## Environmental enhancements

Under the Environment Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, NRW is required to pursue the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and to demonstrate the application of the principles of SMNR and Sustainable Development (SD). Part of this will be achieved by delivering environmental and well-being enhancements in the Ammanford area, around the River Loughor catchment.

Otter

The enhancements that we will deliver as part of the scheme include:

- Improvements to fish passage over the Tir y Dail weir at Dyffryn Bridge, opening up 20km of habitat to fish such as Salmon, Sea Trout, Brown Trout, Eels, Lamprey;
- Working in partnership with Carmarthenshire Council to deliver native woodland planting with public access (this is additional to the planting required to replace trees felled as part of the scheme);
- Ha bitat enhancements for species such as otters, birds and bats, including bat and bird boxes along the river;
- Improvements to garden boundaries and seating in Gwyn Fryn Estate;
- Information boards to provide the community and visitors with information about local features that may otherwise remain hidden – e.g Tir y Dail motte and bailey castle;
- Treatment of non-native invasive plant species such as Japanese Knotweed.

Further information in relation to these enhancements will be made available with the Environmental Constraints and Opportunities Record during the Planning Consent Pre Application Consultation. We would welcome your views on these proposed enhancements through the questionnaire or during the Pre Application Consultation.

## Flood Warning Service

Natural Resources Wales forecasts floods and warns the public. Our staff are on standby 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are ready to warn of and respond to flood events. We provide a free flood warning service by phone, email or text message if your home or business is at risk of flooding. The aim of the service is to allow individuals, communities and emergency services time to prepare.

Properties in this risk area are serviced by Flood Warning Area 125A, River Loughor at Ammanford and Llandybie.

To find out more call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 Type talk: 0345 602 6340 or visit our website: www.naturalresources.wales/flooding