

Ely Bridge Flood Risk Management Scheme - Frequently Asked Questions

What consultation has occurred to date?

A letter drop to all residential properties on Wroughton Place was completed on 21 January 2020. The flyer document was provided to elected representatives on 24 January 2020. The flyer provided details of the scheme proposals, details of planning and permitted development applications alongside a consultation deadline of 31 January 2020. The local planning authority conducted separate consultation.

No objections were raised; either directly to the planning authority or to the NRW project-specific contact address provided.

Contractors issued a pre-construction flyer to all residents on Wroughton Place on 26 June 2020 informing of the scheme proposals, the intended construction start date (29 June 2020) and public liaison contacts.

A virtual surgery was conducted by the appointed designers, Arup, on 10 July 2020 with residents of Wroughton Place and elected representatives.

Further consultation is planned in advance of remobilisation on site. Remobilisation is currently planned to be late-May 2021.

Are there more effective solutions available to prevent damaging the river, local area and create locations of anti-social behaviour in the area?

A detailed appraisal of flood risk management measures has been completed, including modifications to the bridge, dredging and raised defences (walls/embankments). These were all found not to be feasible. The key residual issue was to reduce the risk of debris blockages at the bridge.

The proposals will mitigate any localised impact on the river and riverbank. The design includes:

- Rock armour is proposed around the piles to prevent erosion of the riverbed.
- The riverbed level upstream and downstream of the structure will match the existing levels.
- Areas cleared for construction will be planted with native species.

- Fixed CCTV is proposed to monitor the structure and prompt post-event debris removal.

The proposals consider and address increasing the risk of anti-social behaviour:

- The tree poles position, finishing and form discourage climbing.
- The site will be fenced off with 1.8 metre high security fencing and gate. Access to the Ely Bridge site will also be discouraged by fencing and gate.
- Once established, planting will partly obscure the view of the structure from surrounding properties and the footpath.

Will the Tree Poles create a dam as debris amasses?

The tree poles design draws on a range of design guidance and examples. The layout and spacing of the piles has been designed to reduce the likelihood of accumulation of smaller debris that would not usually be trapped at Ely Bridge;

- A staggered tree catcher alignment consisting of two rows of circular piles with an equidistant triangle pattern has been selected for targeted larger debris capture.
- The pile spacing of 4 metres is designed to attract debris sufficiently large to initiate a partial blockage of the Ely Bridge.
- CCTV will monitor the build-up of debris at the structure and periodic maintenance is planned. Unfortunately, knotweed is rife along the Ely river corridor in this area. During the works, our contractor will be responsible for the management of knotweed within the site area they occupy. Their working methods have been detailed within their 'Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Management Plan' which has since been accepted by NRW.

Prior to NRW accessing site, the management of knotweed was the responsibility of the landowner. However, as NRW are continuing dialogue with the landowner with the intention of entering into a lease agreement it is possible that NRW will take on the future knotweed management/eradication within the area of the proposed tree catcher.

Would regular clearing of debris, cleaning of the river, dredging and flood walls be more effective?

Several studies since 2008 have assessed the case for flood risk management in the area of Cowbridge Road, Ely. Flood risk management options appraised include;

- Options to slow the flow upstream.
- Containing flood levels with various forms of raised defences.
- Measures to convey flooding through channel widening.
- Property flood resilience measures.

As part of the Ely Mill development channel widening and removal of the remnants of the Arjo Wiggins weir were implemented by the developer in 2017, benefiting upstream existing flood risk. The structure created an impoundment which has now been removed.

The constraint of Cowbridge Road bridge remains and options to modify this restriction were found infeasible. There is no way to clear debris accumulations at the bridge during flood events due to the high river flows.

Dredging has a limited benefit on the conveyance of water in a flood. However, dredging has the potential to cause erosion which may undermine structures such as bridge and riverbank walls.

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