

Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA) Ecology Mitigation and Flood Defence Project

South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and the Environment Agency are working together to improve flood defences and create new habitats for important wildlife species. This project will help to ensure that economic development can continue within the designated Enterprise Area without harming the environment. In addition, improving the flood defences and biodiversity will also have benefits for the local community.

Our first newsletter, issued in September 2016, described the study area and the background to the project. It can be viewed [here](#). This newsletter provides an update on our recent work and the next steps.

Tidal Flood Defences

Overall aim

Our vision is to improve flood defences to protect against a 1 in 200 year tidal flood event, allowing for predicted sea level rise due to climate change. This standard of flood protection will help encourage businesses to locate in the Enterprise Area and protect existing communities from flooding.

What work has been done so far?

Over the last few months we have:

- Developed computer models to help understand how high the tidal flood defences need to be and examined options for raising their height.
- Assessed the capacity of the large tidal outfalls.
- Discussed the options with stakeholders.
- Started to develop a Business Case, which will be the basis of funding bids.
- Drafted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion which we will send to South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol City Council for comment. This is the start of the process for how we will assess the environmental impacts of any construction works required.

Please keep an eye on our webpage for details of future drop-in sessions and more details of our proposals.



What are we likely to propose?

Our studies have supported previously agreed plans which show that the best option is to reinforce the flood defences on, or close to, their current position. In some places only a relatively small height increase will be needed to achieve the required standard of defence. In other areas, where the existing structures are currently low, the height increase required could be more significant.

The works required differ from area to area and may include a variety of methods, such as:

- Building up the existing flood banks.
- Adding structures to the top of the existing sea wall.
- Using reinforced concrete or metal sheet piled walls.

We will be working up proposals over the spring and this will include confirming the height of the defences. We will also develop a programme for when construction will likely take place.

Ecology Mitigation

Overall aim

We are looking to create a minimum of 80 hectares of new wetland habitat in the Hallen Marsh and Northwick areas. This will help replace habitat affected by development within the Enterprise Area. This ecological mitigation is required to ensure the area can continue to fulfil its economic potential without impacting on the wildlife of the Severn Estuary.

What work has been done so far?

Over the last few months we have:

- Undertaken surveys to understand how the land is drained and assess its suitability for wetland habitat.
- Liaised with landowners and tenant farmers.
- Looked at different options for wetting the land and discussed these with stakeholders.
- Drafted an EIA Screening Opinion.

What are we likely to propose?

We propose to create new areas of wet grassland to encourage wading birds and open water to encourage wildfowl. These will include new ponds and areas of shallow water over the winter months called scrapes. We are looking at ways of wetting the land, including trapping rainwater.

We will be working up proposals and a programme over the spring.

Next steps

What else needs to be done?

Key next steps are to:

- Develop detailed designs, costings and a programme for construction.
- Share these proposals with stakeholders and the communities (see below).
- Submit planning applications. We plan to do this in September 2017.
- Secure funding. We plan to submit funding bids to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership at the end of 2017.

Further information...

In the summer we will share more information on:

- The location, height and type of the flood defences.
- How and where we intend to create the wetland habitat areas.
- The benefits these measures will bring to local communities.
- How we will ensure works do not impact upon the sensitive habitats.
- What will be included in our planning application.
- When we intend to do the works.

We will be holding drop-in sessions to explain the proposals in more detail and answer your questions. If you would like to be notified of the dates of these sessions directly, please drop us an email and we will add you to our mailing list. Please also keep an eye on our webpage for further details.

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(Enterprise Areas – Avonmouth Severnside – Flood and Ecology)