

Managing Flood Risk in Northwich

Newsletter 5 – September 2014

Welcome to our fifth newsletter keeping you up to date with the plans to reduce the risk of flooding from rivers in Northwich.

The Environment Agency and Cheshire West & Chester Council have secured £4million to design and build a sustainable flood risk management scheme in Northwich. The scheme will seek to reduce the risk of flooding from the Rivers Dane and Weaver to around 700 local homes and businesses.

Half of the money was secured from a special growth fund set up by the government following extensive flooding across the UK in 2012. This was made available for the construction of flood defences that would encourage economic growth. The bid for funding in Northwich was successful because, by reducing the risk of flooding in the town, we will protect existing investment and encourage further development that will generate employment.

Progress Update

Since the last newsletter, issued in April 2014, we have completed additional site investigation, and have developed the detail of our plans for defences in the town centre having confirmed that other options were not feasible. We have worked hard with the local community, planners and development officers to ensure our proposals complement the regeneration vision for Northwich, which is to reconnect the town centre with the river.

We are currently consulting with those directly affected by our plans and we are holding another public consultation session on the 17th and 18th September at Northwich Marina to show the latest detail of our plans. We aim to submit a planning proposal by the end of September.

As our plans for raised defences have developed and we have explored the strengths and weaknesses of each option, we are moving towards solutions that incorporate glass panels which maintain connectivity to the river. These will also help to improve the quality of the riverside environment. In some locations we will need to use gates and defences that will require manual installation, and we have tested the robustness of these combined solutions to ensure we have a strong and integrated defence for the town centre.

We have now appointed a consultant and a contractor to develop the detailed design and construct the works. We have to commence construction by March 2015 to qualify for the additional government funding.

Supporting economic growth

We meet regularly with Cheshire West and Chester Council to ensure our plans dovetail with the wider capital investment programme in Northwich, including the Barons Quay and the Memorial Hall developments and the Gyratory works. We are working with the Canal and

Rivers Trust and all the locally affected stakeholders to ensure that we maximise any opportunities of working together and look to minimise any disruption during construction.

Find out more and have your say

We have already consulted with the majority of the businesses and properties directly affected by the proposed scheme works and shared the latest details of our plans.

We will be at the Northwich Marina between 10am and 6 pm on Wednesday the 17th of September, and between 10 am and 7 pm on Thursday the 18th of September. We will have more details on the proposal for each location which we will invite people to comment on.

Once finalised, we will submit the plans to Cheshire West and Chester Council for approval. We hope to begin construction early in 2015 following planning approval.

Project timeline

The following dates are indicative only at this stage, but show the steps we need to take to finalise the plans and begin construction of the flood defences:

Autumn 2014: Prepare, consult and submit final designs for planning approval.

Winter 2014: Obtain planning approval and other consents.

Spring 2015: Construction begins.

Summer 2016: Construction complete.

How can I find out more?

We plan to continue our regular newsletters to keep the local community updated on progress and will be hosting drop-in sessions and meetings for the local community to attend so they can meet the team, ask questions, raise concerns and have input into the final designs. We will publicise dates and venues once they have been arranged.

We will be working closely with various agencies including Cheshire West & Chester Council, Northwich Town Council, United Utilities, The Canal & Rivers Trust, the Northwich Independent Retail Association (NIRA), Northwich BID, the Northwich Neighbourhood Planners and the River Weaver Navigation Society, so you will also be able to get in touch with these agencies to represent your views.

If you would like further information, please contact the Environment Agency direct:

- Call David Brown at the Environment Agency, on 01925 542269 or email him at david.j.brown@environment-agency.gov.uk

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
0845 988 1188

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

- Write to the Environment Agency at Richard Fairclough House, Knutsford Road, Warrington, WA4 1HG.
- Follow us on Twitter @EnvAgencyNW
- Find us online by visiting www.gov.uk and searching for 'Northwich Flood Risk Management Scheme'.

Be prepared for flooding

Even with flood defences in place, you can never entirely remove the risk of flooding. It is important that you prepare for this by phoning our Floodline, on **0845 988 1188**, to find out if you can sign up for free flood warnings. You can also get information on developing a flood plan, putting together a flood kit and other ways of preparing for flooding by visit our website at: www.gov.uk and searching for 'prepare for a flood'.

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