

Newsletter

Tralee Flood Relief Scheme



Tralee to Fenit Greenway



OPW Óifig na nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works



Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council



Tralee Flood Relief Scheme



Flood signage on Kearney's Road August 2024

What stage is the Project at?

The Tralee Flood Relief Scheme (FRS) is currently in Stage 1 of development. This stage involves identifying and considering various flood defence design options to determine the most effective solution for the area.

Since the previous newsletter, the project team has progressed the development of the flood defence designs (referred to as defence options) for the Tralee FRS. This included assessing the various defence options through a detailed Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) process. The MCA is a collaborative process whereby the various defence options are assessed against various criteria that include social, technical, cost benefit and environmental. The purpose of the MCA is to identify the most suitable flood defences that will make up the emerging preferred scheme. The emerging preferred defence options for the scheme will be presented at the upcoming Public Consultation Day (PCD) in early 2026 to allow public input into the FRS's flood defence development.

Current Progress

Hydraulic Modelling: The hydraulic modelling for the project has been completed; this is a simulation of projected flooding in the Tralee FRS area. Since our last update, the project team has been working on finalising the hydraulic reports based on feedback from key stakeholders. The report has been finalised and will be uploaded to the project website in due course. The report outlines the findings from the hydraulic model and includes updated flood mapping for Tralee town. The hydraulic team continues to play a key role in helping develop and refine defence options for the project.

Geotechnical Investigations: Ground Investigations (GI) were undertaken by IGSL Ltd in areas where flood defences are being considered as part of the FRS, these works were completed in January 2025. As part of this GI work, ground water monitoring of key areas has been undertaken over the past year. The information gathered has allowed the project team to assess the effects that ground water may have on the emerging preferred option. The geotechnical team was instrumental in supporting the development of project defence options and provided inputs into the MCA process.



Drilling in Tralee 2024



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Ecology Surveys: A variety of specialist surveys have been carried out to understand how the flood relief scheme might impact on wildlife and habitats in the area. These surveys have been conducted by experts appointed by Kerry County Council and include –

- Large Mammal Surveys – MWP Ltd.
- Bat Surveys – Southern Scientific Services Ltd.
- Amphibian & Reptile Surveys – Southern Scientific Services Ltd.
- Terrestrial Habitat Surveys – Southern Scientific Services Ltd.
- Freshwater & Floating River Vegetation Surveys – Envirico Ltd.
- Marine & Estuarine Ecology Surveys – Aquafact Ltd.
- Ornithological surveys – MKO Ireland

The outcomes of the ecological surveys were considered in the MCA process. Additional ecological surveys will be undertaken during 2026. These surveys will include the continuation of the surveys mentioned above as well as additional surveys including Tree and Noise surveys. These additional surveys are required to support the project and inform the Environment Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Ornithological surveys are ongoing and continue to monitor bird populations within the scheme area.



Otter spotted by the Tralee Bay Wetlands
2025

Ongoing seasonal monitoring and treatment of Japanese Knotweed by Envirico Ltd. will be carried out in 2026 to ensure the ongoing management of Japanese Knotweed within the scheme area. This is being carried out to mitigate the impacts that invasive alien plant species may have on the emerging preferred option and on the construction of proposed flood defences.

Flood Defence Design Options Development: The design team has been working diligently to develop effective flood defence solutions for both coastal, fluvial (river) and selected pluvial (surface water) flooding within the scheme area. Various defence options were developed using the outputs from the hydraulic model. These defence options were assessed through the MCA process based on social, technical, economic and environmental criteria. The emerging preferred option includes a combination of flood walls, embankments, channel diversions, flow control structures and culverts. These combined measures aim to provide the best protection for the community and environment.

The design team is currently progressing the Options Report for the scheme, this report summarises the findings from the MCA and presents the emerging preferred option for the scheme. This report is being progressed in conjunction with a Buildability report which considers how the flood defences will be constructed. Together, these reports will illustrate the viability of the preferred option to meet the objectives of the scheme. These reports will continue to be updated as the scheme progresses.

Nature Based Solutions (NbS)

The opportunities for implementing NbS within the Tralee Catchment to mitigate flood risk in Tralee Town has been considered by the design team and will be reported upon within the Options Report. NbS are not currently proposed as part of the emerging preferred option but opportunities to incorporate NbS will remain active throughout the project lifecycle.

Public Consultation Day (PCD)

The next PCD will present the emerging preferred option as well as the non-preferred options considered in the MCA and will provide an opportunity for public participation and feedback. All responses received during the PCD will be reviewed by Kerry County Council (KCC), the Office of Public Works (OPW), and RPS, and will be considered in the development of the Preferred Option for design and planning.



