

Lower Lee (Cork City) Flood Relief Scheme

Protecting Cork from future flooding



Long History of Flooding in Cork City

There is a long history of flooding in Cork City and the River Lee valley. A number of severe floods have affected the city with devastating consequences for homes and businesses. It has been estimated that the damages caused in the 2009 river flood and 2014 tidal flood amounted to €90m and €40m respectively. The Office of Public Works has commissioned the preparation of a flood relief scheme for Cork in close co-operation with Cork City Council, Cork County Council and the ESB.

Benefits of the Proposed Flood Relief Scheme

The proposed scheme will run from Inniscarra Dam to the city centre protecting over 2,100 properties against tidal and river flooding. It will be the largest flood relief investment project ever proposed in Ireland and will provide flood protection from the River Lee and from the tide. It is adaptable to provide greater protection in the future in response to climate change. Protection from flooding will encourage future private investment, reinvigorate the city centre and its environs and provide significant local employment during construction.



Protecting Cork's cultural heritage and improving the landscape of the city

Consideration of Cork's cultural heritage has been at the forefront of the design of the Scheme which includes;

- Investment of €20m for the repair of historic quay walls which could otherwise be at serious risk of collapse;
- Defence walls, the vast majority of which, will be no higher than knee height;
- Protection from flooding for 400 protected structures and 20 structures on the Record of Monuments;
- Almost 1km of new river walkways, enhancing connectivity to the river and making the city more attractive for local communities and tourists alike.

Alternative schemes not viable

A long list of potential measures was considered in the development of this scheme. Detailed consideration and analysis of a proposed tidal barrier found it was neither viable nor cost beneficial at an estimated cost of €1bn. Similarly, Natural Flood Management Measures, Dam Modification and River Diversion proposals have been found to be non-viable.



Extensive public engagement has shaped the scheme

The OPW has engaged extensively with the public on the proposed scheme and this feedback has significantly shaped the final proposed scheme for Cork. A detailed Report on the Public Exhibition process has been completed and is available on the project website

A Public Realm Project with integrated flood defences at Morrison's Island

Cork City Council and the OPW will co-fund a new project which will deliver a high quality public amenity space with integrated flood defences at Morrison's Island, regenerating this historic area. The flood defence elements of this project will be a huge 'quick win' for the city in terms of flood risk reduction.

Next Steps

- The OPW will respond to over 1,100 submissions made on the Scheme over the coming weeks.
- The Scheme will be prepared for approval by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in the second half of 2018.
- The first phase of the Scheme will be contained in a public realm improvement project on Morrison's Island, which will be submitted for planning by Cork City Council in January 2018.



For all the latest news and project information, please visit the project website | www.lowerleefrs.ie.

