



**Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council**



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OPW Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works



Kenmare Flood Relief Scheme

**Newsletter
March 2025**



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Project Overview

This issue (Issue 11) of the Kenmare Flood Relief Scheme newsletter describes the progress which has been made in the development of the Kenmare Flood Relief Scheme from the beginning of January 2025 to the end of March 2025. The progress which has been made during this period includes the progression of environmental surveys and the progression of preliminary scheme options assessment.

Project Overview

Outline of the project progress since the previous issue of the newsletter

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Recent Progress

A summary of the various items of work which have been progressed recently as part of the flood relief scheme.

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What's Next?

A summary of the tasks which the project team will be prioritising over the coming months.

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Recent Progress

Engineering Works

Options Development: Since the beginning of 2025, the design team have continued options development work to identify the flood defence measures which will result in the most effective and practical flood relief scheme for Kenmare.

Hydraulic simulations have been completed to assess the effectiveness of different flood defence measures. Some flood defence measures considered include the following.

- Upstream flood volume storage (on both the River Finnihy and Kealnagower stream)
- Diversion of either or both the River Finnihy and Kealnagower Stream.
- Raised defences such as flood defence walls, embankments or demountable defences.
- Natural water retention measures.
- Early flood warning systems.
- Modification or removal of structures such as bridges or pipes which cross watercourses.

Initial analysis has been completed to assess the viability of the above measures independently. Now the design team are assessing various measures in combination with one another.

The various measures are being assessed in relation to their technical, social, environmental and economic benefits to identify the best flood defence scheme to be implemented.

Hydraulics Modeling: In addition to the modelling various options simulations described above, the project hydraulics report has been updated during March 2025. The revised report will be finalised in April 2025.

Additional modeling simulations will be carried out in the coming months to refine the results and identify the preferred scheme options.

Ground Investigations: The on-site ground investigation field work began in early 2024 and were completed in September 2024. Since the field works were completed, the ground investigation contractor has revisited each area where works were carried out to ensure that the area has been reinstated to its original condition.

The flood relief scheme has developed further since the completion of the ground investigation works in September 2024. As such additional ground investigation works will be carried out in April/May 2025.

The additional ground investigation work will consist of boreholes and trial pits which will be carried out on both public and private lands. Any landowners who will be impacted by the ground investigation work will be contacted in advance to discuss the work and agree preferred access routes, timing of the work and exact locations of the work.

The image below shows a standpipe which was installed in a borehole in Kenmare during the initial ground investigation works in 2024. Standpipes are installed in boreholes to measure water pressures in soil and rock. This data can then be used to determine whether the soil will effectively resist seepage (the passing of water through porous material).



Environmental Surveys & Reports

Below is a summary of the environmental surveys which have been progressed since the beginning of 2025 as well as a description of additional survey work which will be progressed in Spring / Summer 2025.

Current Surveys

Wintering Bird Surveys: The wintering bird survey is underway currently. This is the second year of wintering bird surveys in Kenmare following the initial survey during winter 2023/2024.

The purpose of the bird surveys is to identify any bird species and habitats within the Kenmare flood relief scheme area so that the flood relief scheme is designed to avoid impacting on these species and habitats wherever possible.

So far, the winter 2024/2025 wintering bird survey has identified a total of 61 no different species of birds in Kenmare including Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*), Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) and Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*).

The image below shows a Grey Heron, Black-headed Gull and a Curlew which were recorded in the Kenmare Bay area during the 2024 survey.



Invasive Alien Species Survey: Invasive alien plant species (IAS) survey and treatment works have been carried out by a specialist contractor in and around Kenmare town during Summer 2023 and 2024.

The third year of IAS monitoring and treatment work will be carried out in 2025 with an initial round of treatment to be carried out in early Summer with follow-up treatment to be carried out in late Summer.

Invasive species such as *Japanese Knotweed*, *Rhododendron* and *Giant Rhubarb* have been identified and treated in various locations relevant to the flood relief scheme since treatment works began in 2023. Both mechanical and herbicidal treatment methods are used to reduce the volumes of IAS within the scheme area.

Upcoming Surveys

Breeding Bird Survey: Following completion of the wintering bird survey work, it is anticipated that a breeding bird survey will be carried out during Summer 2025.

Mammal Survey: A mammal survey will be carried out in Kenmare during Summer 2025 following an initial round of mammal survey work which was completed during Summer 2023. The purpose of the mammal survey was to confirm the presence/absence of mammal habitats and species within the scheme area of the proposed flood relief scheme. Mammal species which are protected under the EU Habitats Directive, and which are relatively common in Ireland include all bat species, otters (*Lutra lutra*), badgers (*Meles meles*), hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*), pine marten (*Martes martes*) and red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*).

Additional Specialist Environmental Surveys:

Various additional environmental surveys will be conducted in the future including the following.

- ➔ Landscape and Visual
- ➔ Air Quality and Climate
- ➔ Noise and Vibration
- ➔ Architectural and Archaeological Survey

What’s Next

A high-level project programme is shown below.

Stage	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
I										
II										
III										
IV										
V										

As indicated above, we are currently in Stage 1 of the Flood Relief Scheme, this is the Scheme Development and Preliminary Design stage. This stage commenced in June 2022 and is expected to run until early 2026. Further information on the Projects Timeline and Stages are found on the Scheme website, link provided below:

<https://www.floodinfo.ie/frs/en/kenmare/home/>

Over the next few months, the Project Team will be working on the following:

- ➔ Management of Ground Investigation contract
- ➔ Finalisation of the Hydraulics Report.
- ➔ Continuation of the optioneering work.
- ➔ Continuation of various environmental surveys
- ➔ Architectural surveys (Including cultural heritage).



Contact Us

If you would like to contact our Project Team about any matter relating to the Kenmare Flood Relief Scheme you can do so through the following:

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If you would like any further information on the scheme, please visit our website:

www.floodinfo.ie/frs/en/kenmare/home/