

CURRENT POSITION OF THE PROJECT

The Project Team is nearing completion of Stage I and has identified the Preferred Scheme for Burnfoot.

Extensive surveys and investigations have been undertaken in Burnfoot. These have supported detailed hydrological and hydraulic analysis of the Burnfoot and Skeoge Rivers as well as the Carnashannagh Stream. Options to alleviate flood risk were comprehensively analysed. A collaborative workshop was held in April 2022 with a view to developing the preferred option. The workshop was attended by the Burnfoot FRS Steering Group and other relevant public sector stakeholders. A wide range of potential measures were assessed under various technical, social, environmental, and economic criteria before the Preferred Scheme was identified.

Crucial to option development have been environmental considerations which were identified in an Environmental Constraints Study. The study was informed by the submissions made during the Opening Public Consultation (November 2020), as well as a detailed desktop review of available environmental data and field surveys. The report produced can be viewed on the project website. This early consideration of constraints ensured that the Preferred Scheme was shaped with environmental factors in mind. Extensive environmental baseline surveys have been undertaken to provide the data needed for Environmental Impact Assessment and for appropriate Assessment of the Preferred Scheme on Natura 2000 sites.

BURNFOOT FRS PREFERRED SCHEME

The Preferred Scheme will provide a 1 in 200 year return period Standard of Protection (SoP) which is also described as a 0.5% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) in other words protection against a flood event that has a 0.5% chance of occurring in any given year.

The scheme consists of 400m of flood wall and 890m of embankment along the Burnfoot River with an average defence height of 1.1m (approximately 3.5 feet) above ground level. These defences will provide direct protection to properties at risk of flooding in Burnfoot. The R238 bridge would be replaced with a new single span bridge. This will improve the flow of flood waters through Burnfoot and reduce the required height of the defences.

The first 185m of the Office of Public Works' Arterial Drainage embankment downstream of the bridge on the left bank of the Burnfoot River would be removed and a new embankment constructed along the back of the old mart. 510m of embankment would be removed from the right bank of the Skeoge River. These changes to the embankments downstream of Burnfoot will reconnect the river to its historical floodplain in this area and, combined with the replacement bridge, will reduce flood levels in the Burnfoot River through the village, as well as reducing the impacts of flooding on wildlife (ground nesting birds) around Inch Lough.

A low earthen embankment with an average height of 0.6m (approximately 2 feet) above ground level would be constructed around three properties adjacent to the Skeoge River in the Slab (west of E+I car park) to provide protection from extreme flood events.

On the Carnashannagh Stream which flows from Scalp Mountain through Burnfoot, a field access culvert located in the upper reaches would be upgraded to a 1.5m diameter culvert with headwall and outlet structures. The inlet to the culvert crossing under the Monreagh Road (Brae Road), located in the lower reaches, will be upgraded to have longer wing walls. These measures will provide protection from flooding coming from this watercourse.

PUBLIC INFORMATION DAY

A Public Information Day was held on 9th November 2022 where the Preferred Scheme was presented to the public. Representatives from the Project Team consisting of Donegal County Council, the OPW and their consultants, RPS, were in attendance. There was good attendance by the public and useful engagement and discussion with the Project Team. The feedback was generally positive and constructive, and the opportunity was beneficial to all to understand better the Preferred Scheme and the needs of the community.

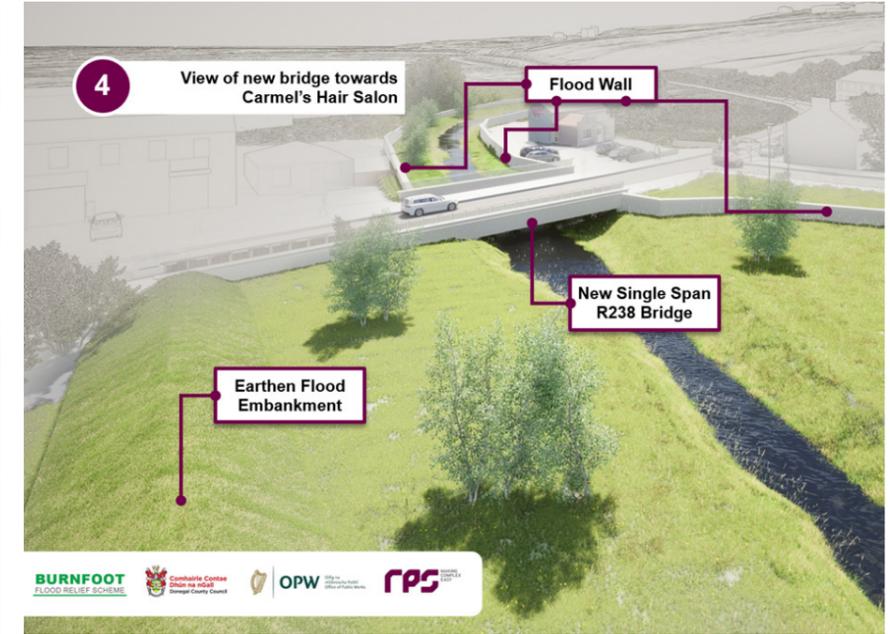
Details of the Preferred Scheme are available on the Burnfoot FRS Project website at:

<https://countydonegalfrs.ie/burnfootfrs/index.php/public-information-day>

You can still provide feedback by contacting the project team as detailed in the 'Contact Us' section of this newsletter. By receiving feedback now, we hope to resolve any concerns that the local community may have before the project proceeds to the formal Planning Permission submission in June 2023.



Photo taken at Public Information Day



Extract from 3D Visualisation Model (artists impression)

GROUND INVESTIGATION

The Project Team have developed a specification and issued a public tender for the provision of Ground Investigation to support the outline (planning) design of the scheme. It is envisaged that the Ground Investigation contract will be awarded this year and will commence on site early in 2023.

OUTLINE SCHEME PROGRAMME

	Activity	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Stage 1	Data Collection and surveys	█						
	Hydrological Analysis		█					
	Hydraulic Analysis		█					
	Scheme analysis & development		█		█			
Stage 2	Planning				█			
Stage 3	Detailed design of Scheme					█		
Stage 4	Construction works						█	
Stage 5	Scheme Operational							█

Timelines provided as current best estimate but are subject to revision. The Project Team are working hard to mitigate programme delay by assessing potential opportunities to accelerate project tasks.

NEXT STEPS

Stage I of the Project will conclude in the coming months with completion of the following:

- Report on the Preferred Scheme, including the latest feedback from the public information day;
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report; and
- Natura Impact Statement.

Environmental surveys to assess protected species such as bats, badgers and otters are due to take place in early December to contribute to these reports.

A comprehensive Stage I report will include details of all of the technical tasks carried out in support of arriving at the Preferred Scheme.

Following approval in Stage I of the Flood Relief Scheme, the Project will move to Stage II Planning, where permission will be sought from the relevant Planning Authority.