

CONTACT US

You can keep in touch with the project through our website where we will be posting updates on progress and details of works that are ongoing. For further enquiries feel free to contact us via email or post at:

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RELEVANT LINKS

Website: <https://countydonegalfrs.ie/castlefinnfrs/>

COUNTY DONEGAL
FLOOD RELIEF SCHEMES



Tionscaldal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

OPW
Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

CASTLEFINN

Flood Relief Scheme

Newsletter No.8
August 2022

<https://countydonegalfrs.ie/castlefinnfrs>



WHAT STAGE IS THE PROJECT AT?

The project team have collected all available data relating to past flood events, the local environment, river catchments, topography, culverts, rainfall and river flow. This data has been analysed extensively and used to produce a detailed computer model of the River Finn and its tributaries. The model has been calibrated against past flood events to ensure it is correctly simulating and mapping flood risk in the area. A range of design flood events have been tested in the model to cover all eventualities including the risk of more severe flooding due to climate change.

Having defined the areas of flood risk, the model was then used to test the effectiveness of various types of flood relief options. This body of work has enabled the team to narrow down the list of potential Scheme options and assess those that are technically feasible against a range of other factors including cost, benefit, environmental and social impact.

We are now refining the preferred option as outlined below.

Development of Preferred Option

Various flood risk management options were considered and modelled to evaluate the most effective scheme for Castlefinn. All types of potential measures have been looked at in detail, including but not limited to those in the North Western Flood Risk Management Plan (www.floodinfo.ie). This is important to ensure all possibilities are considered and based on best available data so that a robust preferred option is identified. A technical workshop to discuss the development of options was held in early November 2021. Ongoing discussions with the Castlefinn FRS Steering Group have taken place since then as various options were assessed against a range of criteria and screened in or out.

Each option was subject to a costing exercise to determine the whole life cost across the design life. The team are currently refining these costs based on the best available current market data.

A property economic damage assessment has been completed for the Castlefinn FRS. This provides estimates of the monetary impacts/ damages caused by flooding, from which the potential benefits of the flood scheme can be calculated across its design life. The ratio of whole life cost against monetary benefit determines economic viability and score (Benefit Cost Ratio) which informs selection of the preferred option.

A Multi-Criteria Analysis is being undertaken to assess the performance of each option against a range of technical, environmental, social and economic factors. This also informs the selection of the preferred option and ensures that benefits beyond economic viability are considered.

This process of option development, analysis and screening has resulted in the following measures remaining under consideration:

- [Hard defences \(earthen embankments and flood walls\)](#)
- [Culvert upgrades](#)
- [Flood storage](#)
- [Relocation of properties](#)

A collaborative workshop was held in April 2022 with a view to developing the preferred option. The workshop was attended by the Castlefinn FRS Steering Group and other relevant public sector stakeholders. Since then, RPS has been considering the feedback and refining the emerging preferred option based on buildability, operation and maintenance, adaptability to climate and other future changes.

Environmental Assessment and Invasive Species Management

The emerging preferred option has been assessed to determine the level of environmental assessment required. RPS have determined that the Scheme will require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and an Appropriate Assessment (AA) with Natura Impact Statement under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. No. 94 of 1997) under Regulation 31 (Annex 1.2). The scope of these assessments is currently being established and will be completed when the preferred option is selected.

Further specialist environmental surveys, such as bat surveys, will be required to further inform the environmental impact of the emerging preferred option.

The treatment of invasive species is ongoing as part of the management plan for invasive species in advance of the construction period. The first round of treatment for 2022 occurred in July for Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed with a second application for Japanese Knotweed scheduled for late September/ early October.



Giant Hogweed at Castlefinn

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 programme has been extended by approximately one (1) month due to increasing complexity in the analysis. The Project Team are working hard to mitigate programme delay by assessing potential opportunities to accelerate project tasks.

NEXT STEPS

Surveys: The detailed surveys have been completed and final data has been provided to the Project Team. RPS are currently looking at further surveys to inform the preliminary design of a scheme, including ground investigation and services.

Hydrological and Hydraulic Analysis: Hydrological analysis is complete and RPS are in the process of finalising the hydraulic analysis.

Scheme Analysis and Development: RPS are working to identify the preferred option in conjunction with the Steering Group. RPS are developing Scheme Analysis and Development reporting including supplementary reporting on the application of nature-based catchment measures, buildability, operation and maintenance and climate change adaptation.

Environmental Assessment: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment is ongoing. Specialist environmental surveys to inform the EIA are scheduled for autumn 2022.

Public Information Day: A public information day is planned for November 2022 to present the preferred Scheme Option.

Planning Application: A further statutory public consultation will be held early next year as part of the planning process. Following this documentation for the scheme will be prepared and submitted for planning later in 2023.