

Rising Brook Rugeley Flood Risk Management Scheme

Progress Update

This is an update on progress of the Rising Brook Rugeley Flood Risk Management Scheme.

Background

The Rising Brook rises in Hednesford before flowing through Cannock Chase and into Rugeley. The Brook is culverted in Rugeley before entering the River Trent to the east of the town centre. Flooding from the brook occurs when the culvert is full and from overtopping upstream of Hagley playing fields. This causes water to back up and then flow over land through the town. In addition, surface water can't drain into the culvert and backs up on highways. Historical records show flooding in 1845, 1950s 1960s, 1980s. Flooding in 2012 was thought to be solely due to intensity of rainfall. The extent of the flooding for the 1 in 100 year flood event can be shown in figure 1 below. This is a constraint to the planned redevelopment of Rugeley Town Centre. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2012) produced by Cannock Chase District Council for the local plan recommends a flood storage area upstream of the town centre to enable development. There are 114 residential properties and 159 commercial properties currently at risk from flooding from Rising Brook.

Recent Activity

During May the first phase of sheet piling finished. This was just before SATs started so the local primary school was not affected by noise. The earth embankment which is the main visual feature of the scheme has started to take shape as the photograph shows. This has meant importation of clay so more lorries coming into site. The embankment extends from the houses behind Burnthill Lane to about 100 metres short of its intended end point. This embankment will be finished in August after other activities have been completed. There have been two complaints about mud on the road. We have responded to these complaints and made sure the road sweeper is working as we need them.



The water main diversion is now complete so we can now move on and deliver the project without this constraint.

Vandalism has been rife. We have had a number of break-ins where vandals have caused various bits of damage. This has cost time and money.

Future activity

During June we will be starting the construction of the pedestrian footbridge. The former bridge collapsed entirely when the rock armour was removed, which was not foreseen. This meant that rebuilding the old bridge would take too long and was too expensive. Originally it was thought that the base of the abutments would be present but they were too badly eroded. A new design has been agreed with Cannock Chase District Council Officers, costs are still to be confirmed before we proceed. The bridge will be formed of precast concrete. The final bridge design has been driven by time constraints and costs as the District Council have to operate within a budget and we cannot tolerate a bridge design that will extend the delivery of the project as this will add more cost.

We will continue to construct the embankment so more importation of material will take place during June. We will also start to construct the spillway. This is required on all reservoir embankments and acts to control the flow of water in the unlikely event that it fills up and then over tops.

Once the bridge and spillway are constructed we can then finish off the embankment. This will involve more sheet piling which will be noisy and affect the residents of **Bank Top**, a small cul-de-sac. We will write to them before this work starts, which is likely to be early to mid August.

Timescales

Delays to the water main diversion mean that we will be constructing the scheme until late November/ early December. This will not impact upon the re-seeding of the playing field, which is planned for autumn. The reopening of the playing fields will depend on how the seed takes, which is determined by the growing conditions and will be some time in 2018. It may be possible to open the heritage trail sooner than the rest of the field. This will depend on how secure we can make the field.

Communications

There has been no communication from us to the general public since the general election was announced. Once a government is formed, we will communicate to the public through the Express and Star and social media to keep people informed.

We have a site visit for Councillors planned on 16 June.

Information for the public

We have had very few enquiries from the general public during May. Monica Stonham can still be contacted at rugeleyfasprojectea@gmail.com or telephoned on 07577 470803 throughout the project. If at any point members of the public raise concern about activities relating to the project please contact Monica.

We have a web page at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rugeley-flood-defence-scheme> and a Flickr page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/environment-agency/albums/72157665136209309> and we will put up photos of the scheme as the scheme progresses.

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