

Position Statement December 2024: Flooding at Stoney Stanton

Statutory Duty of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

The statutory duty placed on an LLFA when flooding occurs, and the threshold to be met to trigger a formal flood investigation, have been published online at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

The role of the LLFA is to coordinate the management of local flood risk. The LLFA has five key statutory functions as follows:

1. Maintaining and applying the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
2. Investigating significant flooding incidences which trigger a locally agreed threshold.
3. Maintaining a register of structures and features which are likely to have a significant effect on flood risk in their area.
4. Being a statutory consultee for the planning process; to be consulted on major development with surface water drainage matters.
5. Leading consent body for works affecting ordinary watercourses.

More details regarding the role of the LLFA can be found by viewing the County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy online at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

LLFAs **do not** have a statutory duty to resolve flooding, nor do they have a direct budget to carry out any works relating to flood mitigation. The LLFA's duty is to investigate when certain thresholds have been met and to identify the responsible parties that have a role in addressing the issues. More details can be found by viewing the Leicestershire Formal Flood Investigation Policy online at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

However, it is important to note that the County Council is committed to delivering projects where possible by obtaining funding from external sources such as national flood funding from the Environment Agency (EA) in the form of Local Levy or Grant in Aid and the County Council is committed to delivering a project in Stoney Stanton.

The County Council does not have a ringfenced capital budget for flood alleviation projects and relies on external funding to facilitate flood risk management project delivery. Such projects are also not a statutory function of the LLFA.

Background

Stoney Stanton suffered significant internal flooding in October 2019 to multiple parts of the village. Upon receiving reports of flooding in October 2019, the County Council

in its role of the LLFA, brought together all Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to better understand what happened and identify responsible bodies.

Multi-agency meetings were coordinated by the LLFA after the 2019 flooding and attended by all RMAs. The local flood action group was also invited to attend some of the meetings to facilitate a transparent approach of actions and discussion items between RMAs. Updates were provided to the local flood action group and the Parish Council.

A formal flood investigation

The October 2019 flooding triggered a formal flood investigation, and the report of this investigation was published in April 2021. All RMAs were involved in the creation of this report as was the flood action group who provided photographic evidence and real time accounts of what happened. For more information, please refer to the formal investigation report which can be found at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

A conclusion of the formal flood investigation was that the understanding of the local drainage infrastructure was limited. A number of actions were identified within the formal investigation, and it was proposed that an integrated flood modelling study was undertaken to assess flood risk from all sources in order to gain a greater understanding of the nature and mechanisms of flooding in Stoney Stanton. It was also proposed that detailed surveys of drainage infrastructure were undertaken to inform this modelling study.

The formal investigation report is intended to act as a snap shot summary of the position at the time and is based on the best available data at the time. The County Council makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the report but occasionally, inaccuracies may occur and therefore, the report should not be used as a definitive assessment of all factors.

Highway drainage

The County Council as Local Highways Authority is responsible for maintaining drainage infrastructure which is there to manage water that falls directly onto the highway only. Highway drainage is not designed to cope with extreme rainfall events and is not designed to take third-party water such as surface water runoff from adjacent land.

Following the formal flood investigation, and recognising the identified constraints of the drainage network at the junction of Station Road and the Foxbank Industrial Estate, the County Council invested £90,000 on the implementation of a drainage scheme to direct highway water in the opposite direction to the west of the village and away from the affected properties.

Flood model and optioneering

Following a detailed administration process, the County Council secured national flood funding from the EA (the body who governs and administers national flood funding) to undertake the detailed drainage surveys and build a detailed flood model. Evidence was supplied and used by the local flood action group to quality assess the model and sense check the output compared to what happened in October 2019. The flood model included the updated highway drainage design, and a range of potential flood mitigation options were then tested.

Monthly updates were provided to the EA on the progress of the flood model and a cost-proportionate potential solution was worked up that helped to mitigate flooding.

The proposed cost-effective option was subsequently presented to the community via a public meeting in December 2021 and no negative feedback was received. The option included:

- Re-routing of the minor tributary stream (currently culverted/ artificial) which presently flows to the rear of Mountsorrel Cottages on Station Road into an adjacent agricultural field (*this would benefit Station Road properties but not those elsewhere*);
- Provision of floodplain storage through habitat creation (*this would benefit all properties*);
- Replacement of sub-standard trash screens at Fox Bank Industrial Estate and Meadow Close (*this would benefit properties downstream of Meadow Close*);
- A retrofitted sustainable drainage scheme at Manorfield Church of England Primary School (*this would benefit the school and reduce inflows to the sewer network*);
- Highway works at Station Road to improve conveyance of excess surface water and direct it away from properties (*benefitting Mountsorrel Cottages*); and
- Provision of a water level gauge to enable proactive community level response, inform screen maintenance and provide long-term gauging to aid future flood risk reductions in the upper catchment (natural flood management).

Outline Business Case for a flood alleviation scheme

Following the public presentation of options, the County Council began the detailed administration process to work up a viable bid for funding to deliver the detailed design and construction of a flood scheme for the community. This process is known as the Outline Business Case (OBC) stage, and it required extensive expenditure of team resources on the following:

- Exploration of all possible sources of partnership funding.
- Detailed administrative forms.
- Regular discussions and updates to the EA.
- Detailed and extensive discussion with landowners.

- Detailed legal discussions which required external legal counsel advice.
- Detailed optioneering and extensive economic analysis in line with the HM Treasury's Green Book and the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management manual for flood risk management to ensure that what is proposed represents good value for money.
- A detailed bid for funding from the Department of Education for the Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) for school element of the project which forms a crucial part of the overall partnership funding score of the project.
- Presentation of funding bid requests to the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.
- The creation of the OBC report which was in line with the Treasury's Green Book.

The OBC was then discussed internally via the County Council's project management processes for approval and submitted to the EA on 26th November 2024 for its final consideration and approval. The County Council is awaiting a formal decision on this submission, which will be confirmed by the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee after its meeting on 24 January 2025. It is at these meetings where financial decisions are made.

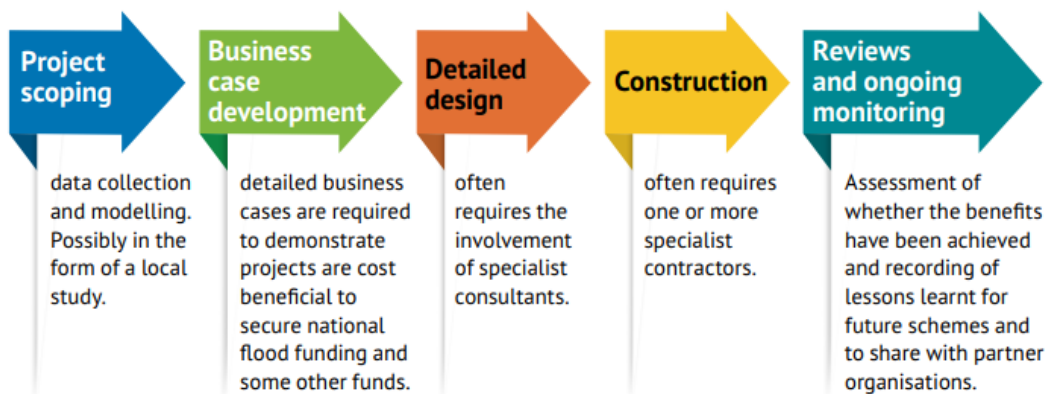
It has taken five years to achieve OBC status and reasons for this delay are explained above. In addition to them, in the time since the 2019 flood event, a number of significant flood events have devastated parts of the County including in February 2020, January 2021, June 2023, October 2023 (Storm Babet) and January 2024 (Storm Henk). Since October 2019, there have been 20 formal flood investigations triggered which has absorbed a significant staff resource and diverted it away from project delivery (which is a non-statutory function of the LLFA).

The County Council expects to receive approval for the OBC following extensive engagement and iterative review with the EA during the creation of the OBC.

Next steps for the flood alleviation scheme

Project delivery can be complex and resource intensive and can end at any point if it becomes unviable such as the cost becomes so high that it outweighs the benefits of implementing it. More details about how projects are designed, delivered and funded can be found by viewing the County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy online at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

Upon approval of the OBC, the County Council will start the detailed design of the final option and then construction as soon as possible. It is currently estimated that subject to no significant issues, the project will be completed by March 2028. Again, this process is anticipated to take a significant amount of time accounting for further landownership negotiation, tendering of works, construction time etc.



The current total project cost is estimated to be £994,000.

The project management of the detailed design and construction of the project is resource intensive and will require the County Council to:

- Provide monthly updates to the EA.
- Submit any necessary paperwork linked to any exceptions through the project management process.
- Provide monthly updates via the County Council's internal project management board.
- Provide monthly capital updates on project progress via the County Council's capital monitoring process.
- Liaise between landowners and secure agreements to complete the work.

Further flood events and flood preparedness

Since the flooding in 2019, the LLFA, and the technical consultants appointed to do the detailed surveys and flood model, have been on site to Stoney Stanton on multiple occasions and met with representatives from the local flood action group, the Parish Council, the local school, affected members of the community, other RMAs.

The County Council is aware of further flood events to the community since the 2019 flood event and sympathises with those affected. This information has been logged and shared with the technical consultant who is building the flood model and also the EA in support of the OBC submission.

The County Council will only attend further site visits where it is necessary such as when new data or concerns have come to light or data capture is required and where resources allow. The County Council cannot commit to attending site to each report of flooding and prioritises site visits to communities that were not previously known to the County Council.

Anyone affected by flooding is encouraged to be "Flood Ready" and do what they can to protect themselves from flooding. The County Council therefore strongly encourages residents to think about what they can do to be prepared if flooding should happen again before any flood scheme can be delivered. This is the exact

approach residents in other parts of the County are taking who have similarly been affected by flooding.

The County Council has hosted a number of public drop-in events across the County, including two events held specifically in the Blaby District area. These sessions were arranged to encourage communities to learn how they can become prepared for future flood events. It also provided affected residents and/or businesses the opportunity to speak directly with the responsible agencies and hear first-hand what is being done in their community. The County Council is looking to arrange further sessions in the future.

In addition to the public drop-in events, the Resilience Partnership with Local Resilience Forum partner agencies have developed a scheme for recruiting local flood wardens. This scheme involves providing training and resources to help wardens support local communities in a flooding emergency and help communities be prepared for flooding. Anyone who is interested in becoming a flood warden can email the Resilience Partnership at llrprepared@leics.gov.uk.

The County Council is aware of a number of sections of watercourse which are in land owned by a third party. To date, the County Council has engaged with various landowners raising awareness of riparian responsibilities. The County Council is aware of an obstruction along a section of culverted watercourse adjacent to the Foxbank Industrial Estate. This culvert is privately owned and the owner has been made aware of their responsibilities to resolve the obstruction. Any flooding that can be directly linked to this obstruction can be linked back to the responsibility of this landowner. The County Council remains committed to work with this landowner to resolve the issue in line with the Leicestershire Ordinary Watercourse Regulation and Culvert Policy.

Highway gullies in Stoney Stanton are on the County Council's Priority (P)1 frequency which is the highest level of intervention and are cleansed every 10 months. Since April 2021, the gullies on Station Road have been attended to on the following dates: 16/04/21, 17/01/22, 16/01/23, 13/10/23, 12/08/24. If during the intervening periods residents notice a problem with gullies, then this can be reported to the County Council via its Customer Service Centre. Cleansing gullies periodically can never be taken as a guarantee that problems will not arise between visits and therefore, members of the public are encouraged to report any concerns to the County Council directly.