

## Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA) Ecology Mitigation and Flood Defence Project

South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and the Environment Agency are working together to improve flood defences and create new habitats for important wildlife species. This project will help to ensure that economic development can continue within the Local Enterprise Partnership's designated Enterprise Area without harming the environment. In addition, this work will also have benefits for the local community.

**Thank you to everyone who took the time to come along to our recent presentations and public exhibitions and to all those who submitted feedback. Your comments are valuable and we are using them to help us evolve our proposals.**

**This newsletter provides an update following the engagement activities and outlines the next steps.**

### Background to the project

This project is focussing on:

- Delivering new and improved **flood defences between Avonmouth and Aust** to reduce the risk of flooding now and into the future.
- Providing **new wetland habitat** in the Hallen Marsh and Northwick areas to offset the likely impact of development on the nationally and internationally recognised wildlife of the River Severn.

Further information can be found on our webpage:

[www.insouthglos.co.uk](http://www.insouthglos.co.uk)

(Enterprise Areas – Avonmouth Severnside – Flood and Ecology)

### Engagement activities

Earlier this year, we published details of our proposals including information on:

- How high the flood defences need to be.
- The type of flood defence we envisage for each area.
- How we intend to create a minimum of 80 hectares of new wetland habitat.

To explain the proposals we:

- Held two public exhibitions – one at Severn Beach and one at Avonmouth
- Attended a range of community, parish and forum meetings.
- Held small group and one-to-one meetings with local residents and landowners.

We invited feedback via a feedback form and emails.

### Report now available...

We have published a report summarising all of the feedback received and setting out how we are responding to this.

Please see our webpage for details:

[www.insouthglos.co.uk](http://www.insouthglos.co.uk)

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### Feedback on flood defences

Overall the feedback received indicated that people are in support of improving the flood defences. However, there were concerns and questions around some aspects of the proposals.

The proposals to install a sheet pile flood wall in the New Passage area were the subject of the greatest number of comments. Residents expressed concern that the proposals would:

- Be unacceptably visually intrusive.
- Significantly impact on views out to the estuary.
- Have negative impact on wildlife and habitats.

As a result of this feedback a meeting was held with residents to listen to their concerns and discuss potential changes to the proposed design.

Other feedback on the flood defence proposals related to:

- Impact on the landscape, trees, hedgerows and wildlife, in particular to the poplar trees adjacent to the landfill site at Cake Pill.
- The visual impact and appearance of the proposed flood wall at Avonmouth.
- Volume and routing of construction traffic.
- Detailed issues, for example relating to drainage and accessibility.

### Feedback on wetland areas

The proposals for the creation of wetland areas attracted fewer comments overall. There was clear support for the principle of improving habitats and supporting the bird species of the Severn Estuary. Some respondents raised questions about the proposed location of the wetland areas and a number of residents were concerned about the impact of construction traffic and the movement of materials.



*Artists' impression of flood defences*

### Response to overall feedback

In response to the feedback a number of amendments have been made to the proposals to help ensure they address issues and concerns. These include a redesign of the flood defence proposals for New Passage, introducing glass panels above a dwarf wall to reduce the visual/landscape impact and ensure that views out to the estuary are retained.

In addition, as part of ongoing work we are:

- Reviewing the proposed colour and materials for the concrete flood walls.
- Ensuring the proposals provide access for all.
- Investigating how we can minimise the impacts of construction traffic.
- Looking at steps we can take to minimise impact on wildlife and habitats.

In response to concerns about the removal of the poplar trees at Cake Pill we have undertaken further work to explore alternative options and re-assess the constraints. However, at this time and based on current information, the proposal we published in the summer remains our preferred option. We have published a technical note summarising our work [here](#).

### Next steps

We aim to submit planning applications to Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council early in 2018. Everyone will have another opportunity to comment if they wish, as part of the normal planning application process. Once a planning consent is in place we hope that works can be delivered in phases, with the earliest work starting on site in 2019.