Newsletter

Tralee Flood Relief Scheme

Project Newsletter No. 01 | November 2021

OPW Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí Office of Public Works

Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council

MAKING COMPLEX EASY

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Tralee Flood Relief Scheme

Scheme Background

Tralee is situated in the Tralee bay – Feale river basin which is within the Shannon River Basin District. The OPW, working in partnership with Kerry County Council and other Local Authorities, have completed the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study in 2018. The Shannon CFRAM Study Area identified Tralee as an Area of Further Assessment (AFA) and concluded that a flood relief scheme is to be undertaken.

Tralee is subject to coastal and fluvial (stream/river) flooding. Documented flood events in Tralee date back to the early 20th century. Records as early as 1916 describe serious flood events that inundated major roads and numerous houses. More recently, in September 2015 and December 2016 heavy rainfall in the region caused a flood event which caused significant damage to properties and roads throughout the area. The main sources of coastal flooding are extreme storm surges and wave overtopping of coastal defences. The main sources of fluvial flooding are rainfall events causing the overflow of the River Lee subcatchments and other river bodies in the area.

There are lengths of up to 10km of existing embankments within the scheme area, primarily located adjacent to the River Lee south of Tralee Town. The existing embankments were predominantly constructed over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries for various purposes and cannot be considered to be engineered. Some of these embankments were constructed in the 1990's as part of a flood relief scheme to defend against fluvial or tidal water inundation. Other embankment's primary function is that of a towpath or walkway with flood defence being a secondary function.

The flood relief measures identified in the CFRAM assessment for Tralee include the construction of flood walls, embankments, diversion channels, flapped outfalls, floodgates, the raising of an existing road, and the widening and/or deepening of channels along the Caherweesheen, Cloghers, Ballydunlea and Ballyvelly watercourses.

RPS were appointed in August 2021 to advance and implement a Flood Relief Scheme for Tralee. The

objective of the project is the identification, design, and submission (for planning consent) of a flood relief scheme, that is technically, socially, environmentally, and economically acceptable, to alleviate the risk of flooding to the community of Tralee, and to procure, manage and oversee the construction of that Scheme.

The entire scheme will be implemented in five different stages. Stage I is currently ongoing having commenced in August 2021.

Flooding on Ballyard Road at the entrance to Tralee Rugby Club (11/09/2015)

Car struggles to drive through flood water in Tralee (11/09/2015)

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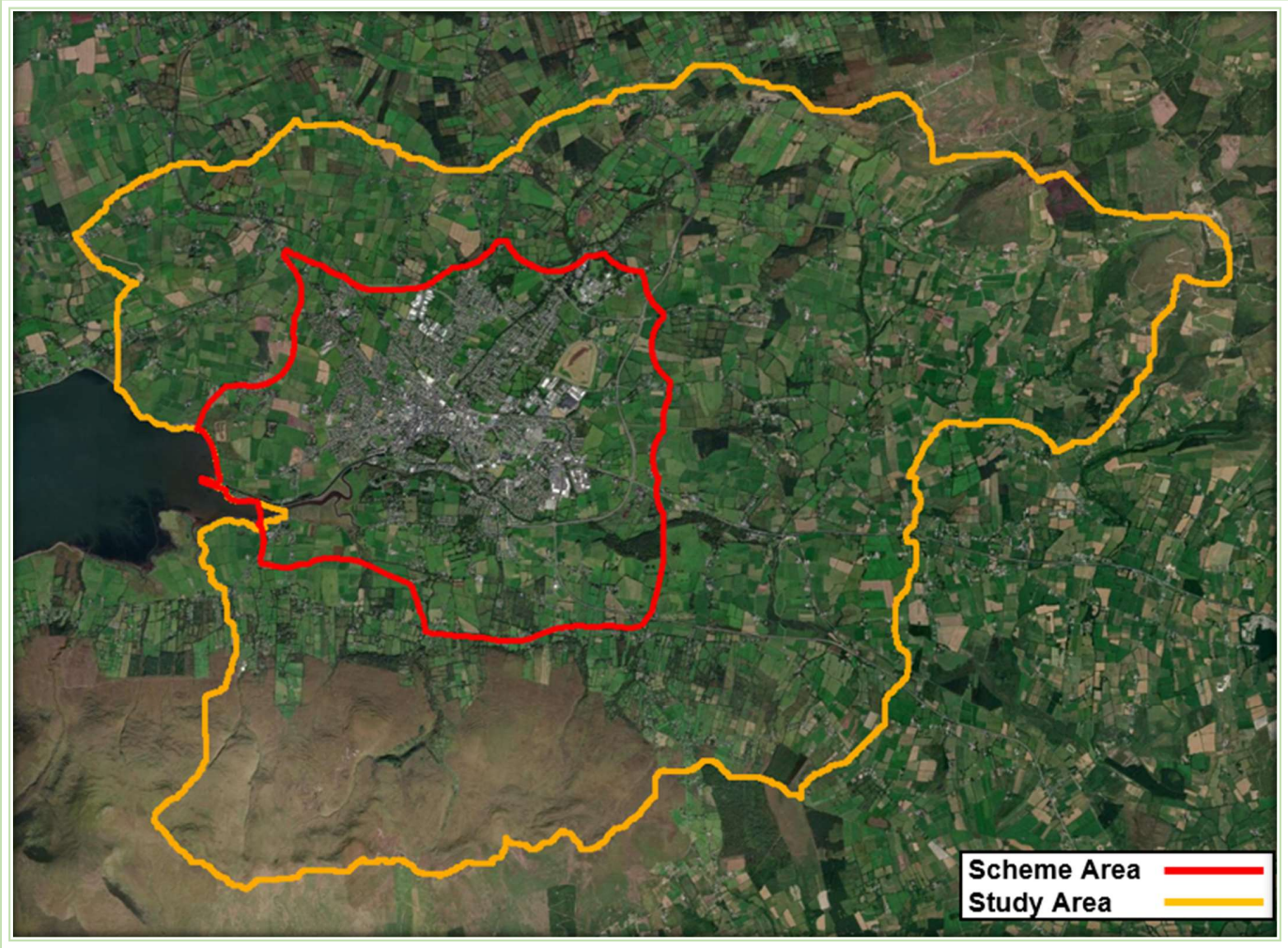
Scheme Area



Flood Relief Scheme Stages

Stage I: **Identification and Development of a Preferred Scheme**

- Data Gathering / Embankment Geotechnical study / Baseline Environmental Surveys
- Hydrological Analysis & Hydraulic Modelling
- Option Assessments & Preferred Option Selection
- Natura Impact Statement (NIS) / Environmental Assessment (EIAR)

Stage II: **Planning / Development Consent**

Stage III: **Detailed Construction Design, Work Packages and Tenders for Contracts**

Stage IV: **Construction**

Stage V: **Handover of Works**

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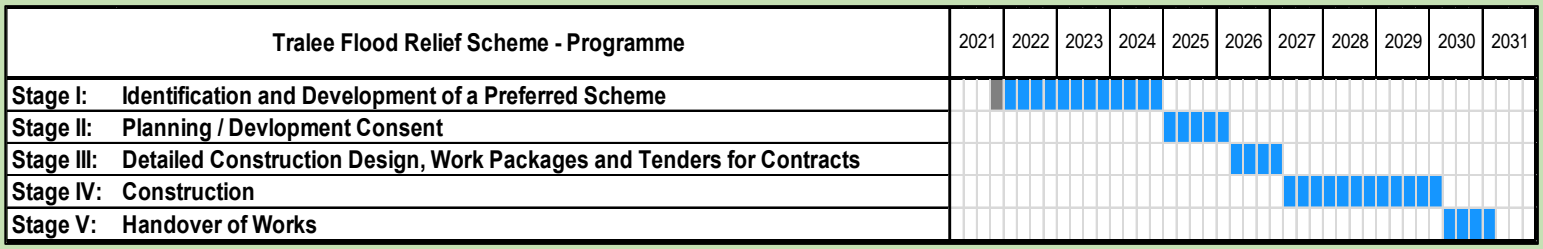
Outline Project Programme



What Stage is the study at?

Since the appointment of engineering and environmental consultants for the project in August 2021, the project steering group has been working to ensure that the development of the scheme is based on the most accurate and up to date information. The Tralee FRS Steering Group (comprising RPS, OPW and Kerry County Council) have continued to meet via video conferencing facilities to comply with government guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

RPS has been reviewing all relevant sources of information and procuring third party contractors to undertake detailed surveys and investigations of the existing drainage network and flood defences. These surveys and investigations will be used to support analysis of how the drainage network, rivers/streams and flood defences react to rainfall and flooding events in the area.

RPS Environmental Team are also currently undertaking the Environmental Constraints Study. The study assesses constraints relating to a range of environmental aspects as required by the relevant Environmental Directives and Legislation. Information to inform this study will be gathered through field surveys and local stakeholder consultation. Letters inviting consultation on the scheme were issued in early March 2021 to local stakeholder groups and statutory bodies.

The **Opening Public Consultation Day (PCD) will begin on Friday 26th November 2021** to further inform the Environmental Constraints Study. Due to current public health restrictions this will be an online event (in the form of a virtual room), running for a **2-week period** on the scheme website *www.floodinfo.ie/traleefrs*. The purpose of this opening public consultation is to get your view on the key issues that the Constraints Study should address and highlight points of local importance that may aid in the design of potential flood alleviation measures.

What Happens Next?

- Opening Virtual Public Consultation Event
- Specialist survey/investigation Contracts
- Baseline Environmental Surveys
- Hydrological and hydraulic Analysis

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