

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	RIVER ITCHEN FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME - PRELIMINARY STUDY FUNDING		
DATE OF DECISION:	17 SEPTEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND SUSTAINABILITY		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name: Bernadine Maguire	Tel: 023 8083 2403	
	E-mail: bernadine.maguire@southampton.gov.uk		
Director	Name: John Tunney	Tel: 023 8091 7713	
	E-mail: john.tunney@southampton.gov.uk		

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

NOT APPLICABLE

BRIEF SUMMARY

This report seeks approval, subject to written confirmation of the grant funding approval from the Environment Agency, to increase the Housing and Sustainability revenue budget to allow the commissioning of work to undertake the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme preliminary study. The study has received preliminary approval from the Environment Agency for full grant funding but awaiting formal written confirmation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To accept a grant from the Environment Agency, totalling £457,000, to carry out the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme preliminary study.
- (ii) To approve, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, the addition of £221,000 to the Housing and Sustainability Portfolio revenue budget in 2013/14 to commence work on the study, subject to formal written confirmation from the Environment Agency of the grant funding approval, and to note that a further addition of £236,000 to the 2014/15 revenue budget will be formally made as part of the preparation of that financial years' budget.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The current revenue budget does not have provision for this work and the acceptance of the Environment Agency grant and subsequent increase in budget will fully fund the development of the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme preliminary study which will identify a feasible flood defence scheme to reduce flood risk to the susceptible areas along the River Itchen frontage within the Bevois and Bargate wards.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. The alternative of not providing funding for this study would prevent the identification of a feasible flood defence scheme recommended as a priority scheme within the Southampton Coastal Flood & Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2012), which would adversely affect the ability to reduce the risk of tidal flooding along this frontage.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. The Southampton Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2012) (hereafter referred to as the 'Coastal Strategy') identified the preferred options for reducing tidal flood risk through a phased implementation approach based on the progression of risk over time due to projected sea level rise. The west bank of the River Itchen frontage from Mount Pleasant Industrial Estate to Ocean Village was one of the areas identified within the Coastal Strategy that should be prioritised for a scheme (see Appendix 1 – Figure 1).
4. At present the assets at risk of flooding from a 1 in 200 year (extreme) tidal flood event along this frontage include 654 residential properties (of which 240 are within the lowest 20% most deprived communities), 499 commercial properties, a B road and a number of aggregate wharves. By 2060 this increases to 860 residential properties (of which 272 are within the lowest 20% most deprived communities) at risk. There are currently no formal raised flood defences along this frontage and the majority of existing quay walls and erosion defences have been privately constructed in an ad hoc manner which provides a very limited standard of protection from flooding.
5. The preferred scheme option identified within the Coastal Strategy for this frontage is to introduce an interim height floodwall (providing a 1 in 200 year standard of protection up to 2060) integrated with land raising (to provide a 1 in 200 year standard of protection up to 2110) on the areas available for imminent redevelopment.
6. The aim of the preliminary study is to gain greater certainty on the risks, mitigation and costs of the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme, to identify a feasible scheme that can be taken forward for detailed design and construction (subject to future funding). The following elements will be investigated and/or assessed as part of the preliminary study:
 - Technical:
 - Suitability of existing ground conditions
 - Suitability of existing structures
 - Mitigation of potential drainage impacts
 - Access requirements
 - Confirm scheme alignment
 - Social:
 - Continued landowner/operator liaison
 - Public consultation

- Environmental:
 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements
 - Designated sites within close proximity
 - Archaeology
 - Contaminated land
 - Water quality impacts
 - Economic:
 - Whole life cost of a feasible scheme
 - Potential scheme funding sources
7. The preferred scheme option presents a significant technical challenge and would require support and co-operation from land owners and operators along the frontage. Discussions and site visits were held with approximately 90% of the land owners / operators along this frontage during the final stage of strategy development and the preferred option was met with a positive response. During these discussions a number of potential technical issues were highlighted, including potential unfavourable ground conditions, lack of structural information on existing quay structures and historic infill and development of parts of the existing frontage which may not structurally lend themselves to enable siting of a floodwall. These issues require further detailed investigation as part of the preliminary study to enable confirmation of a feasible scheme alignment.
8. Due to the industries and operations currently present along this frontage, provisions for access will be required. The preference is for passive measures, such as ramping over defences (see Appendix 1 – Figure 2), where possible to accommodate access; however flood gates are likely to be required at some sites, dependent on the feasible scheme alignment. As part of the preliminary study, identification of passive measures would be undertaken to reduce to an absolute minimum the number of flood gates required and where they are necessary the potential to use telemetry to monitor their status will need to be explored and/or use of more innovative solutions.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

9. Housing and Sustainability portfolio revenue budget will be increased by £221,000 in 2013/14 and £236,000 in 2014/15, funded by a grant from the Environment Agency.
10. This study will be managed to ensure that there are no financial commitments beyond the funding available from the Environment Agency. Any identified feasible flood defence scheme will be the subject of future funding bids and spending approvals, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules.
11. There are no capital implications arising from this proposal.

Property/Other

12. There are no immediate property implications arising from development of the preliminary study but reduction of flood risk to existing and future developments would be anticipated if a feasible flood defence scheme can be identified.
13. The preliminary study may help to enhance the viability of future development proposals on Council owned land at Town Depot as further investigations will be undertaken to develop a feasible approach for managing tidal flood risk on this site as part of the wider scheme. Liaison with the relevant City Development Managers and senior officers was undertaken throughout development of the Coastal Strategy and will continue throughout development of the preliminary study.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

14. The statutory power to undertake proposals to manage flood and erosion risks are held by Southampton City Council under the Coast Protection Act 1949, the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, although these are permissive powers only.

Other Legal Implications:

15. Legal issues may arise throughout the project but these will be addressed during development of the study.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no policy framework implications as a result of the recommendations of this report.

KEY DECISION?

Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Bevois & Bargate
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Figures
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. Southampton Coastal Flood & Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2012)	Available to view/download at www.southampton.gov.uk/flooding