Bradford District Initial Assessments

Background

Together, the Environment Agency and City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council have identified priority locations for further work or detailed investigations following the flood event of December 2015, the resulting reports produced are known as Initial Assessments (IAs).

The locations were broadly grouped within:

1) Silsden

- Silsden Beck

2) Keighley and Stockbridge

- Worth Village

3) Bingley and Airedale

- Castlefields Lane, Bingley
- Old Main Street, Bingley
- Wagon Lane & Ash Grove, Bingley
- Branksome Drive, Cottingley
- Hirst Mill, Saltaire

4) Baildon and Shipley

- Masons Mill, Shipley
- Aire Close, Baildon
- Baildon Bridge, Otley Road
- Glenaire Court, Baildon
- Lower Holme, Baildon

5) Esholt and Apperley Bridge

- Apperley Bridge
- Esholt

6) Ilkley

- Denton Road

What are Initial Assessments?

Initial Assessments (IAs) are reports that set out a summary for each location and enable us to determine whether further resource expenditure on appraisal work is justified.

They are exercises to avoid excessive expenditure and establish whether a practical, sustainable and economic solution is achievable, or whether a project should take a different course or be stopped altogether.

In summary the IAs allow partners to better understand the reasons for flooding and the costs of tackling the sources of flooding. This means partners will be in a better position to progress particular projects in the future should funding become available.

Consideration is given to all sources of flood risk and whether it is appropriate to apportion benefits to more than one source. Similar consideration is also given to the number of properties that would benefit from a scheme or associated project at each location and this is key to deriving the Partnership Funding score.

The Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership Funding system works by giving each project a percent score, representing the proportion of costs that Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) would be eligible to contribute. If the score is lower than 100% then other public and private sector funding sources needs to be secured before a project can be taken forward.

How and what evidence was gathered to produce the IAs?

- A desk study review of all existing information and data partners have to confirm the preliminary understanding of the issues and associated opportunities/constraints.
- Interpretation of policy intent from the Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)
- Review, consultation and environmental screening
- Presentation of a final report.

Understanding data quality and how this can influence the partnership funding score is essential for identifying meaningful 'sensitivity tests'. The following factors that may affect the successful delivery of the outputs are considered.

- **Problem Definition/Hydraulic Modelling:**

How reliable is the knowledge of flooding in this area? How much is known about the flood risk in the area? Is there a history of flooding? What confidence is there in any existing hydraulic modelling? What sources of flooding affect the area? Can a solution be found to reduce the risk from all sources?

- **Economic Case and Appraisal:**

How robust is the economic case? An outline assessment should be made, in sufficient detail, to determine whether proceeding with, adjusting or stopping the project is justifiable. The standard basic benefit cost calculator and Partnership Funding Calculator (PFC) has been produced for each location.

- **Funding Case:**

How significant will external contributions be in this project?
Where a PFC score is likely to be less than 100% what opportunities are there for generating additional funding? The ability of local business development and growth areas to contribute to the scheme should be considered.

- **Engineering Case:**

How feasible is any solution in terms of construction? Could the probable solution cause temporary or permanent issues for adjacent land use? Does the probable solution have construction and operational risks?

- **Development Permit and Other Permissions:**

What external development permits or authorisations are likely to be required?
(Permitted Development, Planning, Habitat Regulations Assessment, etc.). **How complicated will gaining relevant permits be?** Is the permit/authorisation authority likely to support the project? How many permitting and authorising authorities will be affected? Are there particular landowners who are likely to cause problems obtaining planning permission? Identify the particular risks that make obtaining consent difficult.

- **Environmental Constraints:**

How much will environmental factors affect project development?

i. Physical Environment: How challenging is the working environment? How close is the community to the scheme, might it be in back gardens? Will it affect landowners not benefitting from the reduced flood risk? Are there key local heritage and landscape features that will /might

affect the project? Are there any other external factors we know about the environment that will influence the project?

ii. Environmental Sensitivities: How sensitive is the environment? What designated sites are there? Include all significant designated sites (natural and built). Are we likely to affect them (alone or in combination with other potential package projects)? We can lose our permitted development powers when working close to Habitats Directive Sites, is that likely?

Under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) how is the water body status likely to affect the project?

Are there likely to be key seasonal constraints like no winter working due to over wintering birds? Other seasonal constraints would be related to surveying for protected species and then seasonal windows for trans-locating them.

- **Opportunities:**

As well as reducing flood risk all partners have duties to conserve and enhance the environment. We should therefore look for the potential to work with natural processes to reduce flood risk and ensure these opportunities are considered. The Government also expects the Environment Agency to deliver more than just flood risk reduction. Therefore an assessment of the potential for a project to deliver more than just flood risk benefits, including consideration of WFD Objectives and how these can be incorporated into schemes, is recommended. Opportunities for habitat creation contributing to Outcome Measure 4 and other improvements to environment, landscape or recreation opportunities were considered.

Potential partners who can contribute to the scheme, or who have wider plans/vision for the area and may work as partners to deliver wider outcomes are identified; particularly where local authority regeneration plans could have a major impact on the viability of a scheme.