

Severn Stoke Flood Alleviation Scheme – June 2023

This update provides the latest information on the delivery of the Severn Stoke Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Recent work

Over the winter we have been working with J Prosser's & Sons to import material for the embankment. We have imported two types of material. The majority of the imported material is to form the embankment. There is also material that has been brought to site to form temporary access routes for the main construction phase. All material is tested before it arrives on site to ensure that it is suitable and safe in compliance with our duties as the Environment Agency and the planning conditions.

Archaeological work started in February 2023. The first round of the archaeology progressed well with some finds but nothing major that will impact the scheme. Following a health and safety audit we had to pause the archaeological work on the 3rd of March 2023 while we reviewed the ways of working to ensure a safe environment for both the community and those working on the site.

We have now completed this review, and this will allow the archaeology and other activities to resume later this month.

Upcoming work

The Environment Agency remains committed to completing the scheme. We must ensure that we get the best value within the limited budget we have to spend on the scheme, and we continue to work in partnership with Worcestershire County Council (WCC), Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC) and J Prosser and Son Ltd. making challenging decisions to ensure that the scheme remains viable.

Over the next couple of months, we have the following work planned:

- The archaeological work will restart from early June 2023 and is likely to take 4 to 6 weeks.
- At around the same time in June, Jackson Civil Engineering will start testing the material currently stockpiled to confirm its grading characteristics. This is done so they can develop the appropriate construction methodology to place and compact it within the embankment in accordance with the design specification.
- Fencing of the whole site working area will be completed along with the installation of newt fencing along the site boundary to exclude Great Crested Newts.
- Following the installation of the newt fencing, an exercise to trap and relocate any newts found in the working area will be undertaken. This is to ensure we comply with environmental legislation. Newt trapping will take upwards of 30 days and will commence soon after we have received a licence to trap from Natural England, which we expect to receive in the next 4 to 8 weeks.
- In advance of construction of the flood embankment, construction of associated culverts, toe drainage and drainage diversions will be undertaken. This will commence after newt fencing, and trapping is complete.

- Following the material testing an initial length of embankment will be constructed using the material on site. This is to test the proposed construction methodology to ensure we can meet the design specification. When this is proved this will then allow the rest of the embankment works to progress.

Our ambition is to complete two sections of the flood embankment either side of Ham Lane this year. We will import and stockpile material for the realignment of Ham Lane over the embankment during the winter ready for construction in spring 2024. We are aiming for the new realigned road surface to be complete during summer 2024. We will continue to work closely with WCC Highways on this area of the scheme.

To give assurance around the 'gap' that will be in place between the flood embankments over the winter period of 2023/24, we will have in place a contingency plan to seal this area to protect the community from flood waters, until the highways work, and scheme is fully completed.

Future updates

We will continue to keep you updated with the progress of the scheme via future newsletters and updates to the Parish Council and the Flood Action Group.

Contact us

If you have any queries or comments about the proposed scheme, please contact the Environment Agency Project Manager via email at paul.jones2@environment-agency.gov.uk or call 03708 506 506. Thank you for taking the time to read this update.