

BATH CITY RIVERSIDE ENTERPRISE AREA – COMPENSATORY UPSTREAM FLOOD STORAGE FACILITY

RIF BID : SCHEME OVERVIEW

Background

The River Avon passes through the Enterprise Area and is a major obstacle to the regeneration and redevelopment of key sites due to the flood risk that it poses. All sites are affected by flooding and to a varying degree either all or part each site falls within flood zone 3 (FZ3) where the Environment Agency will require compensatory storage to be provided before development can take place.

In discussions with the EA, a strategic solution has been agreed to provide upstream storage to mitigate the risk of flooding. The EA's preferred storage solution would be capable of delivery on Council owned land located upstream of Bath city centre. The solution will provide compensatory storage equivalent to the volume of future development within FZ3 in the Enterprise Area and will be brought online in 2 phases.

Strategic Fit

Without the initial upfront investment in upstream storage the development potential and viability of the Enterprise Area would be seriously compromised. Developers would be precluded from proceeding due to the complex and expensive nature of the pre-development on-site mitigation measures which would be needed, assuming a site specific solution were possible to achieve.

Consequently, upstream storage will facilitate and enable the regeneration of the 36ha of developable brownfield land in the Enterprise Area providing a series of strategic employment sites essential for the growth of the local economy.

The Enterprise Area is targeted to deliver up to 9,000 jobs and 3,400 new homes and will be a key component in achieving the objectives of the B&NES Core Strategy which requires an increase of 6,000 new homes and a net increase of 75,000 – 100,000 sq m of office space in the city. Delivery of the Enterprise Area is also fundamental to B&NES Economic Strategy objectives.

Deliverability

Concept studies have been completed and currently, Black & Veatch (flood engineers) are completing modelling work, which the EA will review. This will enable B&NES to move forward into the planning process with a planning application to be submitted post-consultation, early in 2013. The land is already within the ownership and control of the Council.

Outputs from Flood Mitigation Infrastructure

The flood compensation scheme is programmed to be delivered in 2 phases. Phase 1 will provide mitigation for a total of 24ha of land including key sites in Council ownership at Bath Quays North and South.

Altogether phase 1 of the Flood Mitigation scheme will provide flood compensation for sites at Manvers Street, Bath Quays North and South, BWR East, Green Park Station and Stable Yard which collectively can deliver 900+ houses, 113,000 sqm of office, creative & leisure space and 5,500 jobs.

Drawdown and Payback Mechanism

Each developable site in the Enterprise Area has been assessed for the required volume of flood mitigation required which, in turn, has been agreed with the EA. It is anticipated that each site will contribute to the overall cost of the flood storage facility for every cubic meter of storage required. These funds will be repaid through Section 106 obligations or Development Agreements as sites are brought forward.

It is proposed to draw down £3m of RIF funding in 2013/14 and 2014/15 to cover the costs of phase 1 of the Flood Mitigation scheme which it is programmed to repay starting in 2016/17 through to 2019/20.