



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

www.ccdhunnangall.ie

www.donegalcoco.ie

Burnfoot Flood Relief Scheme

Engineers Report

Introduction

Donegal County Council proposes to acquire lands for the Burnfoot Flood Relief Works in the Inishowen Municipal District.

The requirement for the works

EU Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (2007/60/EC): was transposed into Irish law in under SI No.122 of 2010, and it requires Member States to assess watercourses and coastlines at risk from flooding to map flood extent, assets and humans at risk, and to take adequate measures to reduce this flood risk.

The CFRAM Programme has been the principal vehicle to deliver on Ireland's commitments under the EU Floods Directive (2007/60/EC). The CFRAM Programme has examined the flood risk, and possible measures to address the risk, in communities throughout the country at potentially significant flood risk.

Burnfoot was identified as one of the communities at potentially significant flood risk. In November 2015 and August 2017 Burnfoot suffered severe flooding.

Burnfoot lies at the base of the Inishowen Peninsula east of the confluence of two small catchments: the Burnfoot River and Skeoge River discharge to Lough Swilly via a holding reservoir or impoundment located behind Inch Island (Inch Lough).

Following hydrological and hydraulic analysis, a flood risk to the village of Burnfoot and the surrounding area was identified; the flood risk emanates from fluvial driven water levels in the Burnfoot River.

The analysis identified properties, utilities and roads at risk from future flood events including up to 45 residential properties, 9 commercial properties, an electricity sub-station, a municipal wastewater treatment plant, regional roads and local roads including the R238 and R239.

The development proposed, to which the CPO relates, and for which an application for development consent has been submitted, will protect against flooding up to the 0.5% annual exceedance probability but also allows for increased flood levels expected as a result of climate change.

In addition to protecting properties from flood damage and reducing the safety risks associated with flooding it will reduce flood related disruption, disturbance and provide a basis for maintaining the river to manage future flood risk.

The development proposed will support the sustainability of Burnfoot and of the surrounding area in which it is situate.

Consideration of Options

An options assessment was carried out for the Burnfoot Flood Relief Works. The process identified possible flood relief measures which included 'do nothing'.

Following screening, measures to address flooding from the Burnfoot River and the Carnashannagh Watercourse were shortlisted. The shortlisted measures were considered and developed into three options.

The three options were appraised via Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) and a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The MCA considered four criteria: technical, social, economic and environmental.

The process identified a preferred option which is now being advanced as the proposed development, to which the CPO relates.

Planning

The National Development Plan, 2021-2030 underpins the National Planning Framework 2018-2040, and it sets a framework for investment priorities which includes expenditure commitments to secure a wider range of Strategic Investment Priorities. Under Strategic Outcome 8 (Transition to a Low Carbon & Climate Resilient Society) it allocated c.€940 million to Flood Defence and outlined several investment actions relating to flood risk management. The National Adaptation Framework (Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland) seeks to address current and future risks associated with climate change.

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 to 2032 included the following regional policy objectives:

- RPO 9.4 "Creating resilient places and Low-Carbon infrastructure by transitioning to a low carbon economy through a presumption against development in areas vulnerable to flooding and rising sea levels, continuing to assess the probability of risk from all sources of flooding and working with relevant stakeholders in both the assessment and delivery of any mitigation responses required."
- RPO 3.11 Local Authorities, DHPLG, OPW, and other relevant Departments and agencies to work together to implement the recommendation of the CFRAM programme to ensure that flood risk management policies and infrastructure are progressively implemented.

The County Donegal Development Plan 2024 – 2030 sets out key strategic objectives and policies including:

- S-O-5 To prioritise regeneration and renewal of the County's towns, villages and rural areas to support vibrant and strengthened communities and drivers of economic growth.
- F-P-3 To support the development of long and short-term flood remediation works including embankments, sea defences, drainage channels and attenuation ponds and wetlands, subject to environmental considerations including potential impact on designated shellfish water and freshwater pearl mussel catchment areas, compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, best practice in Coastal Zone Management and the Marine Resource and Coastal Management policies of this Plan.

The Climate (Amendment) Act 2021 specifically requires all local authorities in Ireland to prepare and make a Climate Action Plan, in consideration of wider national climate and energy targets, addressing both mitigation and adaptation measures. The Donegal County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 to 2029 was adopted on 21st February 2024. The plan contains the following goals and objectives:

- BE7 Support the Office of Public Works in providing resilience to the effects of flooding now and in the future.
- BE7.1 Support the OPW in implementing the EU Floods Directive through the Northwestern and Erne River Basin Flood Risk Management Plans.
- BE7.2 Collaborate with the OPW, and lead delivery of viable Flood Relief Schemes already launched for development.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement have been prepared together with related and supporting documentation.

An application for development consent has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála under Section 175(3) and Part XAB, of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

The proposed development has an interface with a road reservation corridor downstream of the village identified Chapter 21, Settlement Frameworks, Burnfoot Map 21.26 page 451 of the County Development Plan 2024 to 2030. The flood footprint interfacing with the corridor is unchanged by the implementation of the flood relief works, though it is expected to be up to 221mm deeper during the 0.5% annual exceedance event which is the design standard of the works. The proposed flood relief works will not change the need for flood risk considerations as part of any road in such a corridor nor will they in themselves prevent said corridor being used for a road.

The proposed development

The proposed development seeks to deliver works in Burnfoot to mitigate the flood risk during a 0.5%AEP flood event. The proposed works include:

1. Hard defences along / adjacent to the Burnfoot River with an average defence height of 1.1m above ground level:
 - a. 35m reinforced concrete wall with foundations to accommodate future climate change flood scenarios
 - b. 395m piled walls and
 - c. 630m of embankment
2. 315m of embankment, tying into raised laneways, around three properties to the south of the village near Slab Road (R239) with an average height of 0.79m.
3. 120m of embankment with an average height of 0.8m around the existing sewerage treatment works to the west of Grianan Park.

4. The R238 bridge replaced with a new single span bridge and road layout amended to tie into the existing roads, designed to DMURS standard.
5. 38m of reinforced concrete walls with foundations to accommodate future climate change flood scenarios on the Carnashannagh Stream, with a replacement shed to accommodate the construction.
6. Upgrade of lower culvert on the Carnashannagh Stream to a box culvert (1.2m height x 2.4m width), sized for future climate change flood flows, under Brae Road extending beyond the proposed embankment, with new headwall structures and debris screens as required.
7. Upgrade of upper culvert (box culvert of 1.2m height x 2.4m width), on the Carnashannagh Stream, sized for future climate change flood flows. To include new headwall structures and debris screens as required.
8. Surface water measures (road reprofiling / cambering, additional gullies and swale to discharge to watercourse) at:
 - a. R239/Fairview Manor
 - b. L1881 Brae Road / Monreagh Park.
9. The first 183m of the Burnfoot/Skeoge Arterial Drainage Scheme embankment, downstream of Burnfoot, removed to provide short term storage on a recurring basis to reduce flood levels in the town centre by reconnecting the existing floodplain.
10. 345m of embankment removed from the right bank of the Skeoge as well as localised drainage amendments as required, to reconnect the existing floodplain.
11. 145m of embankment removed from the right-hand bank of the Burnfoot River 168m upstream of the R238 bridge.
12. Existing land on the right-hand bank of the Burnfoot River upstream of the R238 bridge, to be utilised for construction and safeguarding of existing floodplain within the settlement framework, will be landscaped.
13. Land take to facilitate future operation and maintenance of flood embankments, including for embankment top ups and/or access to complete the same as well as general maintenance e.g. grass cutting and ad hoc repairs as necessary. Access to complete this work will be required on the defended side of embankments which are on benefiting lands, at the embankment on the left-hand bank immediately upstream of the bridge and at the embankment on the right-hand bank downstream of the bridge.

Land Requirements and Ownership

The lands required for the scheme are identified on deposit drawings:

- IBE2204_Bt_CPO_001 – Compulsory Purchase Order 2026, Lands to be Compulsory Acquired, Deposit Map Sheet 1 of 5.
- IBE2204_Bt_CPO_002 – Compulsory Purchase Order 2026, Lands to be Compulsory Acquired, Deposit Map Sheet 2 of 5.
- IBE2204_Bt_CPO_003 – Compulsory Purchase Order 2026, Lands to be Compulsory Acquired, Deposit Map Sheet 3 of 5.
- IBE2204_Bt_CPO_004 – Compulsory Purchase Order 2026, Lands to be Compulsory Acquired, Deposit Map Sheet 4 of 5.

A land registry search identified 28 separate folios which will be affected by the works. The total land take is 13.36ha, of which 6.98ha is permanent land take. In addition to the permanent land take, there is 0.03ha of wayleave, and a Right of Way has been applied to 0.90ha. Temporary land take which is to facilitate temporary deposition of material during the course of the works is 5.45ha.

There are 26 further parcels of land affected by the works which are unregistered. Local enquiries were carried out to ascertain the ownership of these lands and of anyone having an interest in them. Details of the plots, landowners, reputed landowners, lessees, reputed lessees, occupiers, reputed occupiers are in the Schedule to the CPO and on the CPO map, both of which are included in Appendix A.

Preliminary Land Negotiations

Donegal County Council have contacted and entered discussion with all identified landowners.

Avison Young Ltd. have been appointed to establish up to date valuations and to conduct negotiations with landowners on behalf of Donegal County Council.

While these negotiations are continuing, agreement has not yet been reached with any of the owners.

Donegal County Council is satisfied that the land identified is necessary, suitable and sufficient for the purpose for which it is required for the proposed development (the construction of the Burnfoot Flood Relief Scheme):

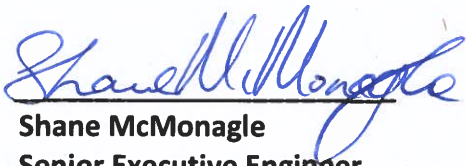
Therefore, it is considered necessary to purchase the lands required to facilitate and implement the construction of the proposed development of the Burnfoot Flood Relief Scheme and ancillary and consequential works using the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process. It is noted that there are no houses unfit for human habitation and not capable of being rendered fit for human habitation at reasonable expense affected by the proposed scheme.

Recommendation

I hereby recommend that the lands required for the development of the Burnfoot Flood Relief Works at Burnfoot in the Inishowen Municipal District be acquired by way of Compulsory Purchase Order.

Report prepared and recommended by:

Signed:



**Shane McMonagle
Senior Executive Engineer
Donegal County Council**

Date:

9/6/26

Approved by

Signed:



**Seamus Hopkins
A/Senior Engineer
Environment & Climate Action, Energy Management.**

Date:

9/6/26

Endorsed by:

Signed:



**Michael Mc Garvey
Director of Service
Environment & Climate, Property Management
& Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme.**

Date:

09/06/26