

REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS HELD ON
27 FEBRUARY AND 19 APRIL 2018

Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme

Prepared for

Falkirk Council

July 2018



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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report provides a review of the data and feedback obtained from attendees at the public consultation event for the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme (FPS). The events were programmed to be held at Carron & Carronshore Bowling on Tuesday 27 February 2018 and at Bowhouse Community Association Centre on 1 March 2018 from 11am until 7:30pm each day. Due to significant adverse weather conditions on 28 February and 1 March, the event on 1 March was cancelled and rearranged for 19 April 2018 at the same location and time as originally proposed.

The consultation events were held to provide the residents and business owners of Grangemouth and surrounding areas with an opportunity to comment on the option appraisal of the Scheme. The consultation events constitute part of the formal consultation required for publicly funded infrastructure projects in Scotland, and is in line with current guidance on Scottish Flood Protection Schemes, which views consultation at the option appraisal stage as a key aspect to developing the scheme.

Specifically, the report intends to:

- Show the geographic distribution of attendees to the event;
- Summarise attendees' degree of support for the scheme;
- Summarise initial comments on the scheme from those attendees who completed a feedback form;
- Summarise attendees' preferences with respect to options on the Grange Burn;
- Discuss the potential impacts (risks and opportunity) of the feedback received.



Figure 1: Overview of Public Exhibition on 19 April

2. Consultation Event Format

The events were staffed by the following project team members and related individuals:

Team Member	Title	Organisation
Sharon Agnew	Senior Flood Officer	Falkirk Council
Alan McGowan	Project Manager	CH2M / Jacobs
Richard Meeson	Project Engineer	CH2M / Jacobs
Kate Lucey	Graduate Engineer	CH2M / Jacobs
Danny McCluskey	Environmental Lead	CH2M / Jacobs

Table 1: Table of Exhibition Staff

The main scheme exhibit comprised of:

- 19 no. A1 size **display boards**, which depicted various aspects of the proposed flood protection scheme, including:
 - Sources of Flooding in Grangemouth,
 - Return Periods and Climate Change,
 - Grangemouth at Risk, Option Appraisal,
 - Key Scheme Stages,
 - Boards illustrating the options and likely defence alignments with estimated maximum heights,
 - Stakeholder Identification,
 - Types of Flood Defences,
 - Example Finishes of Flood Defences,
 - Flood Storage and Tidal Barriers,
 - Environmental Studies and Consents,
 - Next Stage –
 - Outline Design and Feedback Questionnaire.

Copies of these display boards are included in Appendix A.

In addition, further information was provided through the following:

- A table with a 1.8 m x 1.6 m **map of Grangemouth and the surrounding area**, displaying the proposed alignment of flood defences, flood extent and depth for the 200-year event and environmental designated areas;
- A 2.0 m high, **height indication board** depicting coloured values from the flood depth table plan;
- Computer-generated **fly-through models** of the scheme through Grangemouth and surrounding areas depicting an impression of the proposed flood defences. This was projected onto a large screen and programmed to play the videos on loop throughout the event. As part of the simulation, three of the proposed options designed to address flood risk along the Grange Burn were modelled to allow viewers to see the different proposals for each;

Additional supporting exhibits included:

- A display managed by **SEPA**, which included information regarding the SEPA Flood Warning system, FloodRE and Local Flood Risk Management Plans.

3. Feedback

3.1 Attendance

For both events the number of attendees was recorded by members of the project team. Attendees were also asked to complete feedback forms, which, in addition to recording their comments on the scheme and options, logged their postcodes to establish the geographical distribution of attendees.

Feedback information relating to where people live enables the project team to identify areas of lower attendance and to prepare more focused public engagement in the lead-up to publication of the scheme.

The percentage of the population who attended (based on the latest census data) was very low at less than 0.5%. When analysing the number of attendees compared to the number of properties who received a flyer about the event, the attendance was nearly 2% of notified properties. Over the coming months / years further events will be taking place and the attendance at these events can be monitored and compared. Due to the size of the scheme and large spatial area covered, it is very unlikely to get a high percentage of the population to attend. Various other methods of advertising will be considered, such as creating a scheme newsletter / flyer which could be distributed in public Falkirk Council buildings.

Following the event on 19 April, the project team decided that questionnaires handed into Falkirk Council Offices by 5:00pm on 4 May would be included in this consultation feedback report. Any questionnaires handed-in after this date, would be kept on file and comments noted.

Official Attendance at Grangemouth
FPS Public Consultation events:

Official Attendance on 27 February
2018:

63 people

Official Attendance on 19 April 2018:

114 people

Total Official Attendees at Combined
Events:

177 people

For the purposes of this report the feedback received from both events will be combined.

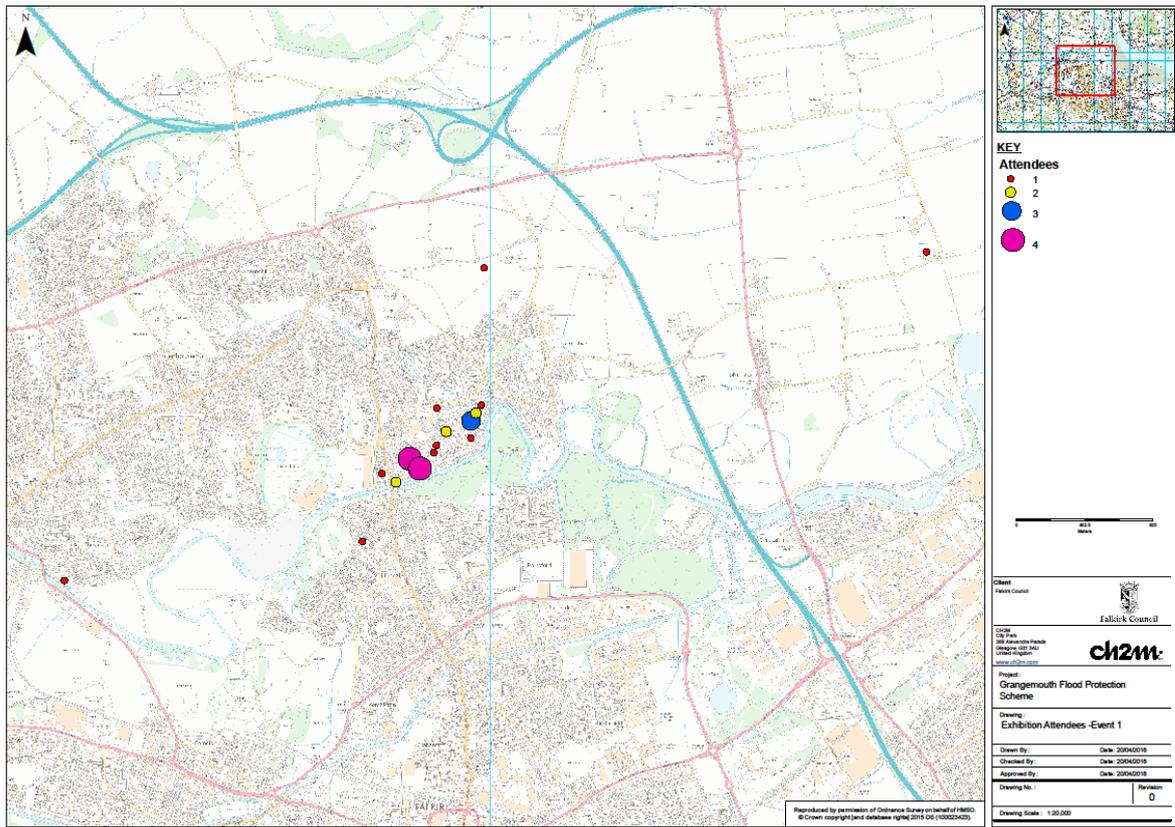


Figure 2: Distribution of Attendees from the Event on 27 February 2018.

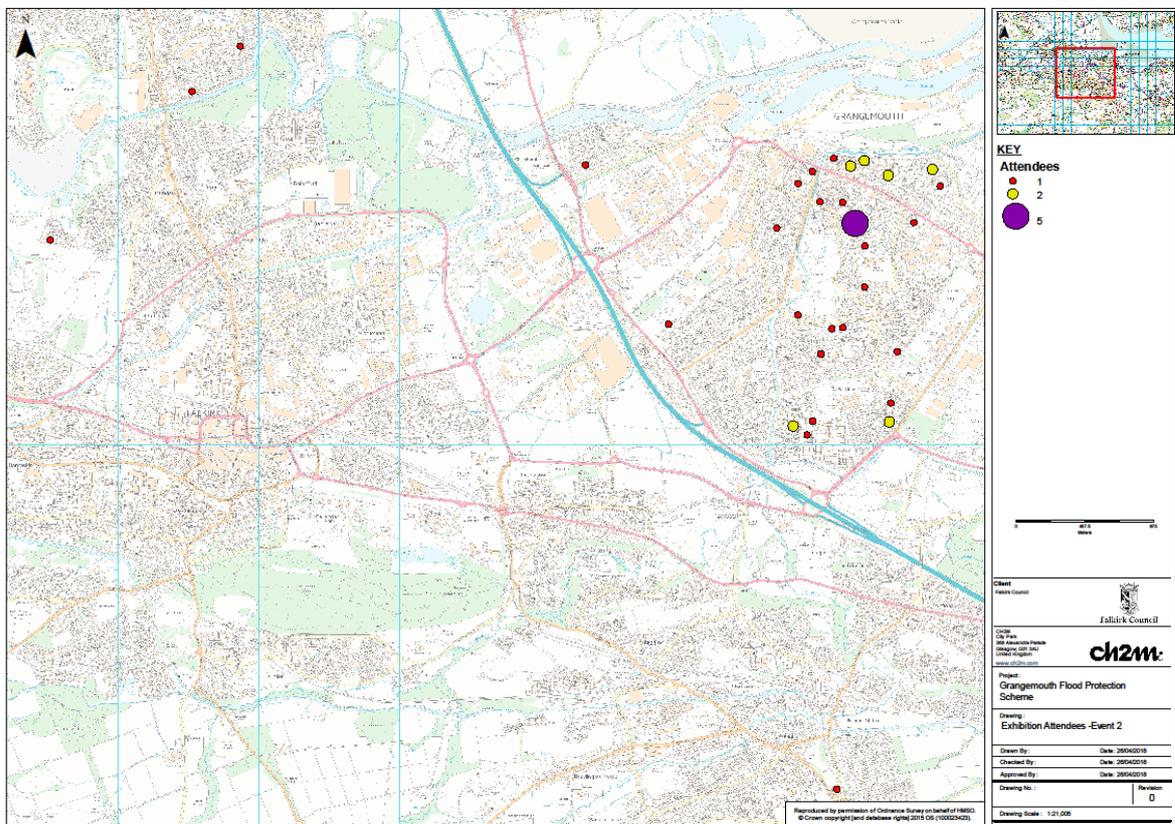


Figure 3: Distribution of Attendees from the Event on 19 April 2018.

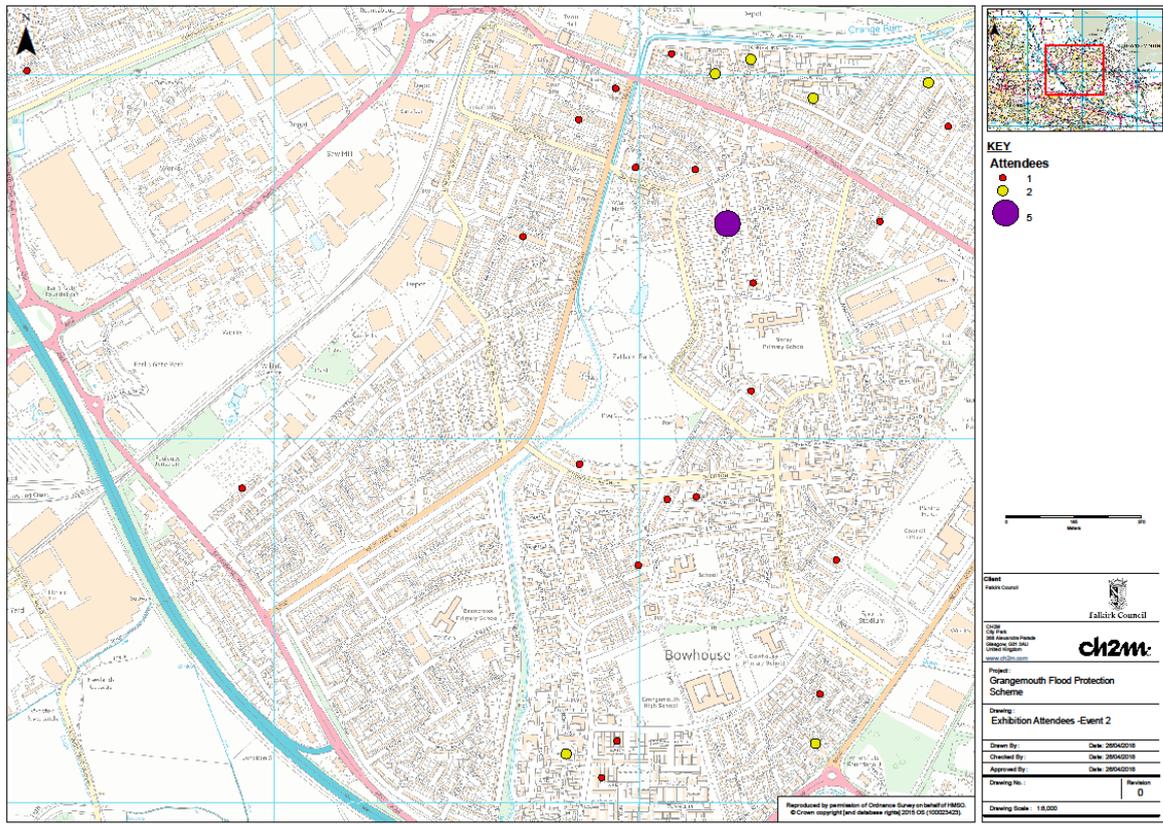


Figure 4: Distribution of Attendees within Grangemouth from the Event on 19 April 2018.

3.2 Support for the Scheme

Attendees were encouraged to complete feedback questionnaires at the event, with 22 returned at the event on 27 February and 40 returned at the event on 19 April. Some attendees took questionnaires away with them, with four returned to Falkirk Councils by 4 May 2018.

Of the 66 who completed a feedback questionnaire, 83% indicated that they support the scheme.

I support the scheme	I am Undecided	I do not support the scheme
55 (83%)	11 (17%)	0

3.3 Comments

Attendees were asked to identify the main reason for answering the question – ‘*What is your opinion of the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme – support the scheme, undecided or do not support the scheme*’. From the comments received from people who indicated their support for the scheme, several common themes existed, Figure 5 outlines these comment themes.

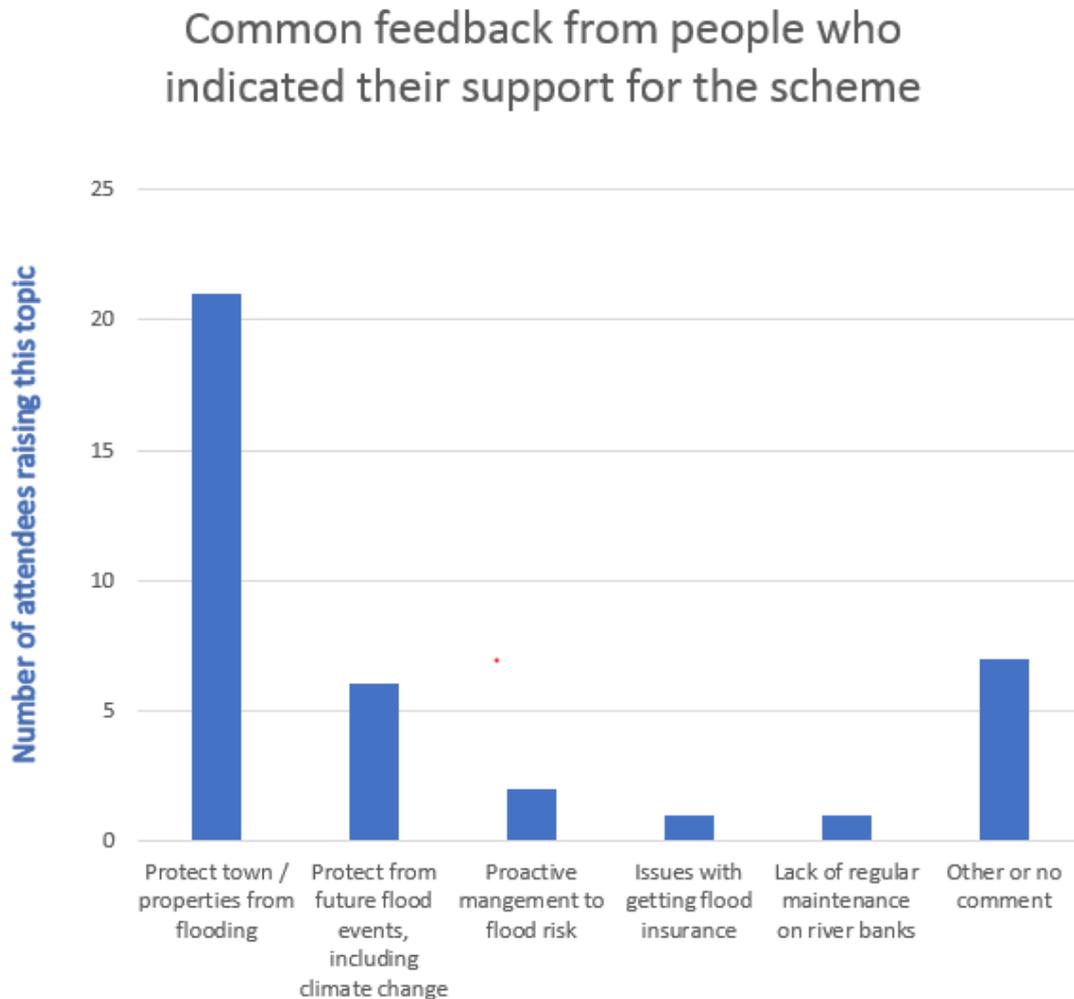


Figure 5: Common Feedback Topics Based on Attendees’ Comments who supported the scheme

These topics were likewise largely referenced in discussions between the project team and attendees.

Other Comments

Most attendees were supportive of the scheme, with a general view that the scheme would provide flood protection to the local area, which would be beneficial to the community. However, some concerns were raised by attendees relating to the density and height of vegetation on the banks of the Grange Burn: perception that this increases the current flood risk.

Regarding the comments from people who were undecided in their support for the scheme, a general theme existed with people wanting more information and details on what is being proposed and an opinion that Grangemouth is not at significant flood risk as a major flood event has not occurred in recent years.

3.4 Concern with possible options

One of the questions on the feedback questionnaire related to concerns people may have with any of the proposed possible options. Attendees were asked to identify the main reason for answering the question – ‘Are you concerned with any of the possible options – Yes or No’, see figure 6.

I am concerned about possible options	I am not concerned about possible options
38 (62%)	23 (38%)

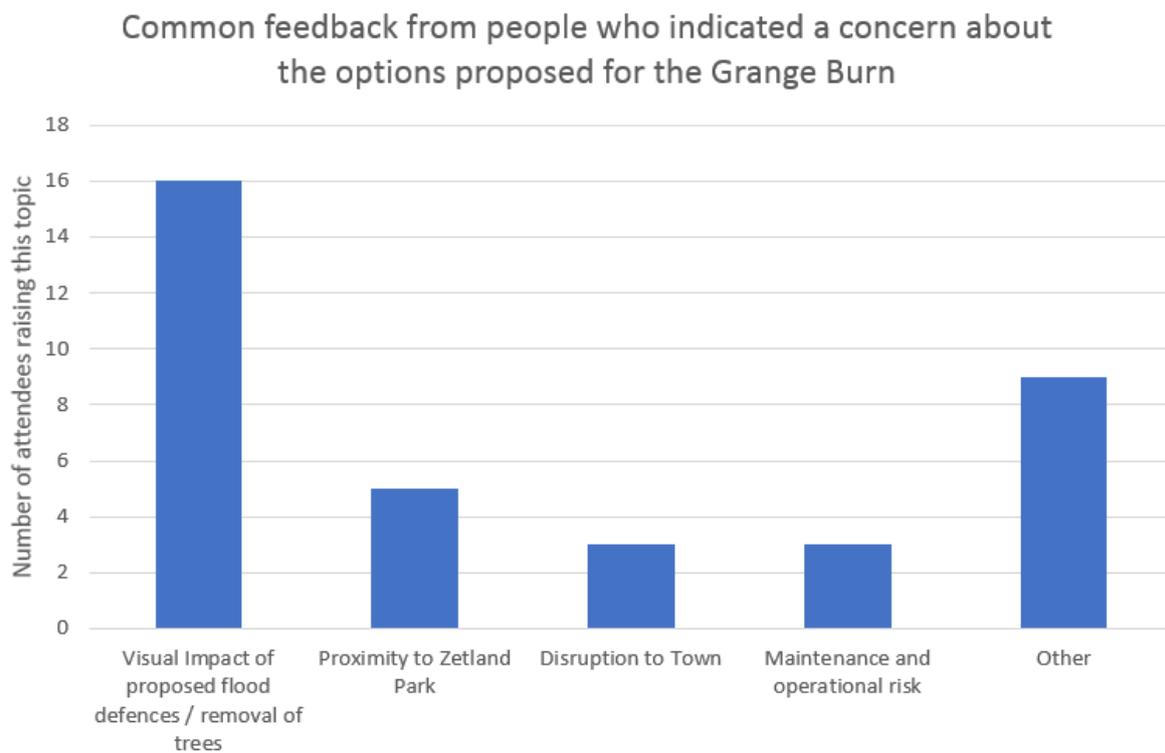


Figure 6: Common Feedback Topics Based on Attendees’ Comments who had concern about options on the Grange Burn

3.5 Design Options

In addition to their degree of support for the scheme and general comments, attendees were also asked to indicate their preference from a choice of three ‘design options’ on the Grange Burn. Whilst the outcome of this preference would not be used to directly decide which option to take forward, the result would give an indication of people’s preference and would be considered by the project team as part of the option appraisal process.

Option A - presented built direct defences on the banks of the burn;

Option B - showed slightly reduced defences and incorporated the use of Zetland Park as a flood storage area

Option C - showed a significant reduction in defences through the town, with a flood storage area on the Westquarter Burn, a tidal barrier and a flow control structure at the start of the flood relief channel.

Attendees were asked to indicate their preference regarding the options, this helped identify potential areas of concern from the public’s perspective and will be recorded in the option appraisal process. Figure 7 is a copy of the board that outlined the three design options on the Grange Burn.

Grangemouth FPS Questionnaire and Grange Burn Options

Please fill out a questionnaire with any feedback you have on the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme. The feedback you provide will be considered during the outline design stage.

There is also a question about which option you would prefer to see on the Grange Burn. The three options are shown on this board.

Option A

Flood defences on most of the banks of the Grange Burn and flood relief channel (8.1 km)

Option B

Flood defences on the banks of the Grange Burn and flood relief channel and around Zetland Park (7.6 km)

Option C

Flood storage area with few flood defences on the Grange Burn. Slightly increase in length of defences on the flood relief channel (4.4 km)

More information can be found at: www.grangemouthfloodscheme.com

Falkirk Council | Please note: The proposals on display at this event are still under development and may be subject to change. Images and visualisations are indicative only, and the completed Scheme may differ. | ch2m

Figure 7: Grange Burn Options Board

Out of a total of 66 feedback questionnaires returned, 51 people (77%) identified a preferred option on the Grange Burn, with 15 people not answering or selecting ‘*none of the proposed options*’.

Option A – Direct Defences on the banks of the Grange Burn	Option B – Direct Defences on the banks of the Grange Burn and around Zetland Park	Option C – Flood Storage Area on the Westquarter Burn	None of the proposed options or no answer given
11 (17%)	8 (12%)	32 (48%)	15 (23%)

Figure 8 identifies the options along with the number of people’s preference. From analysis of this data, 48% of people selected Option C – Flood Storage Area as the preferred option. 17% of people selected Option A – Direct Defences, 12% of people selected Option B – Direct Defences around Zetland Park. 23% of people selected ‘none of the proposed options’ as their preferred options for the Grange Burn or did not put an answer.

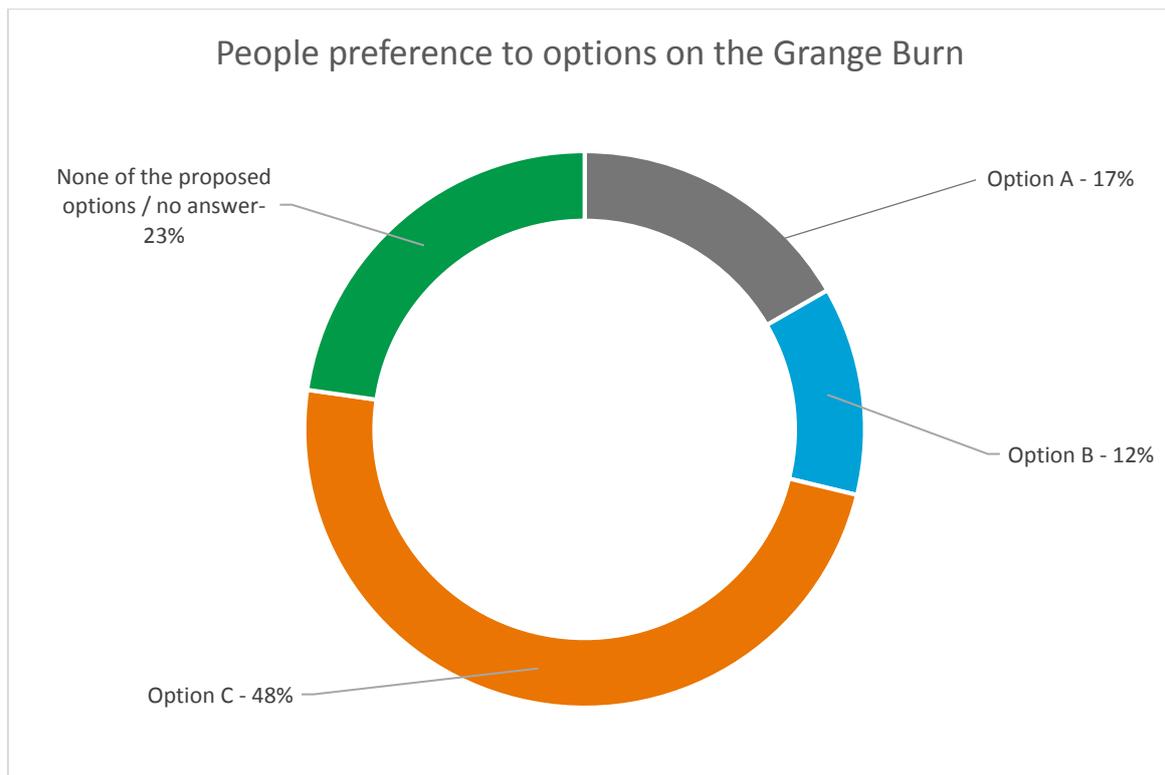


Figure 8: Peoples preference to options on the Grange Burn

Some residents expressed concern with the options that required extensive direct defences through the town, with the impact on views (at various locations), removal of trees and the length of time the town centre would be subject to disruption as the main concerns. As a result, most expressed a preference for Option C. However, some attendees did express a preference for defences through the town as it provided more direct assurance to them that they would be protected from an extreme flood event. Other attendees expressed concerns about the long-term maintenance and operation burden a tidal barrier and flow control mechanism would bring upon Falkirk Council, and questioned whether the risk of mechanical failure was significant.

3.6 Potential Impacts of Feedback

The comments received illustrate several common concerns people have with the proposed scheme design. If these concerns are not resolved, at the scheme publication process, objections could be raised, which could delay the scheme becoming operational.

While the above points represent a risk to the scheme, the awareness of those risks presents an opportunity. Equipped with knowledge of what the key concerns are, the project team can focus future further public engagement on addressing identified concerns.

Following the consultation events, the project team became aware that more detail was required relating to Option B – flood defences around the perimeter of Zetland Park. The perception that the height of the proposed flood defences would act as a barrier to the park was raised by some people. Therefore, the project team provided more detail on the height and possible appearance of flood defences around Zetland Park, (see Figure 9). It should be noted that some of the existing vegetation and features around the perimeter park are higher than the proposed flood defences.

Clarification on Grange Burn Option B - Zetland Park

Following the consultation event on 19 April, the project team would like to confirm the following:

- All existing access points to the park will be maintained with ramped or gated access. The existing path network would be modified where affected by the flood defences but the overall connectivity within the park would be retained.
- Where possible the inner line of trees, next to the footpath parallel to Abbotsgrange Road and Drummond Place will be maintained.
- Along Abbotsgrange Road and Drummond Place, the proposed flood defence height would be up to 1.3m above existing ground levels with most of the flood defences less than 1.0m above existing ground level.
- The existing hedge next to Abbotsgrange Road would be retained
- At Kingseat Avenue, the flood defence is likely to be an embankment retaining some of the existing trees where possible and planting new trees.
- At Bowhouse Road, the flood defence is likely to be an embankment retaining the existing trees where possible, and planting new trees,
- At Abbotsgrange Road and Drummond Place, the flood defence could be: a wall with the inner line of trees remaining and a hedge planted in front of the wall; or an embankment with new trees planted, this would require both lines of existing trees to be removed.
- At the Grange Burn the flood defences could be: an embankment; or a wall next to the existing path. Both options would require the line of trees furthest away from the watercourse to be removed.
- Where possible additional trees would be planted in the park.
- None of the proposed flood defences would affect the central area of the park.
- Potential for interpretation boards and signage for path network within the park to be installed.
- Embankment slopes could be planted with wildflowers grass mix.
- The finish to the walls inside the park is to be agreed but could be clad in stonework.
- The park would only be inundated with flood water during an extreme event, under normal conditions the park would remain in its current condition. Many public parks are used for this purpose.
- If option B is identified as part of the preferred scheme, the project team are committed to working with local community groups including Friends of Zetland Park on the proposed layout of flood defences and the design of any modifications to the park.

Figure 9: Extract from Grangemouth flood protection scheme following the Consultation Event on 19 April 2018.

4. Response to Feedback

4.1 Response to General Feedback

It should be noted that many of the concerns raised originated from attendees who also indicated that they supported the scheme. The project team believe some concerns can be resolved by helping the public develop a greater understanding on the following issues:

- why the proposed solutions were selected rather than alternatives;
- how effective the 'perceived' alternatives would be; and
- impact of proposed flood defences on property and town.

To address general feedback received and potential impacts of that feedback, the following responses have been prepared.

4.1.1 Extent of Scheme

General opinion: Not protecting north bank of the River Carron at Skinflats and Bothkennar

Response: This area has not been identified in the Local Flood Risk Management Plan as being part of the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme. The area is covered by SEPA's Flood Warning System, which does provide advanced warning of extreme tidal levels. These areas are subject to review by Falkirk Council's Flood Risk Management team.

4.1.2 Appearance / Height of proposed Flood Defences

General opinion: Concern about the height and appearance of proposed flood defences.

Response: At the option appraisal stage of the project the appearance of proposed flood defences is to be confirmed and will be discussed at separate workshops. Various Stakeholder Groups (including members of the local community) will be invited to attend workshops to discuss this. The proposed flood defence heights identified at the consultation event are the likely maximum proposed defence heights. Through consultation with various community stakeholder groups, the height of proposed defences may change due to alterations to the alignment of flood defences and existing ground levels.

From feedback received at the consultation events, additional information has been provided on the scheme website on the Grange Burn Option B (defences around the perimeter of Zetland Park).

4.1.3 Communication

General opinion: Communicating information about the scheme to stakeholders.

Response: Further consultation and public exhibition events will take place over the coming months and years. Additionally, it is likely that several community stakeholder workshops will take place in the future (the community stakeholder groups will include members of the local community). There is a scheme website which has information relating to the scheme and will be used as the principal mechanism to communicate information about the scheme to members of the public. Additionally, posters and flyers will be distributed to local communities advertising further public exhibition / consultation events.

Over the coming months more detailed plans will be produced which will be uploaded to the scheme website in due course.

4.1.4 Why no action has been previously taken

General opinion: Why has no action been previously taken to provide a flood protection scheme to Grangemouth?

Response: The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 is a crucial piece of legislation in Scotland which addresses flood risk, by identifying areas at potential flood risk before a flood event occurs. This allows areas classified as being at high flood risk to be prioritised and studies undertaken to identify appropriate methods to address flood risk.

A consequence of flooding in Grangemouth during the late 1950's, was the construction of a flood relief channel to divert flows from the Grange Burn into the River Avon. Studies to date have identified the capacity of the flood relief channel as not sufficient to stop Grangemouth flooding from extreme flood events.

4.1.5 Erosion of River Banks

General opinion: Is consideration given to river bank erosion, as flood water may overtop the banks if the bank is eroded?

Response: A survey of all existing banks was undertaken in 2012, with all banks categorised by their condition. An assessment of predicted flow velocities associated with extreme floor events has been undertaken. During the Outline Design Stage, a further assessment of bank conditions will be undertaken with appropriate actions identified to ensure river banks are not undermined / eroded by flood water.

4.1.6 Tree Removal

General opinion: Removal of trees from the banks of the Grange Burn will significantly change the visual appearance.

Response: An assessment of existing trees on the banks will be undertaken to determine their condition and possible action. Wherever possible trees will either be retained or replaced by replanting on the banks.

4.1.7 General Flood Risk to property

General opinion: General concern about the current flood risk to properties.

Response: Through the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, a proactive approach to flood risk management has taken place, with national and local flood risk assessments undertaken to identify the risk to people and properties from flooding. From the flood risk assessments, areas of flood risk were prioritised by SEPA, with the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme being identified as the no. 1 priority scheme by SEPA and the Scottish Government.

4.1.8 Property Insurance after the flood defence are built

General opinion: What will be the impact on Property Insurance after the flood defences are built.

Response: Once the scheme is complete over 3,000 residential properties will be protected from flooding. It should be noted that Insurance companies use their own methods to assess flood risk

and it is up to individual insurance companies to acknowledge the flood protection afforded to residents by a flood protection scheme. On other schemes in Scotland, the local authority has provided written evidence (to home owners which can be passed on to their insurance company) that flood defences are in place and provide a higher standard level of protection than currently exists.

4.1.9 Responsibility for flood defences

General opinion: Who will be responsible for managing and maintaining the flood defence?

Response: Falkirk Council are the local authority promoting the scheme and will be responsible for managing and maintaining the scheme. A maintenance schedule for the scheme will be developed in due course. Depending on the type of flood defence selected an appropriate inspection and maintenance regime will be implemented by Falkirk Council.

4.1.10 Scheme Programme / Engagement with local community

General opinion: Information requested on the proposed timescale for the scheme.

Response: At present the scheme programme outlines various key milestone stages in the scheme development. The current estimated construction phase of the scheme is programmed to commence in late 2022 and last for 5-10 years. Over the coming months more details will be outlined for the various key stages, this will include a programme of further consultation / public exhibition events for the year ahead and provisional workshop dates with various stakeholder groups. It should be noted that the stakeholder groups identified at present, have been developed for the option appraisal stage and further stakeholder groups will be formed in the coming months / years as the scheme design progresses.

4.1.11 Industry Contributions

General opinion: Will industrial stakeholders be contributing to the cost of the scheme, as the flood defences protect a significant proportion of the industrial area in Grangemouth?

Response: The scheme is being 80% funded by Capital Grant funding from the Scottish Government, with the remaining 20% coming from Falkirk Council and other contributors. Falkirk Council is working with industrial stakeholders to develop the design of flood defences in the industrial area of Grangemouth and will develop and agree a funding strategy with industrial stakeholders.

4.1.12 Volume of upstream development – lack of substantial green spaces

General opinion: Concern relating to upstream development, reduction in green spaces.

Response: Falkirk Council as Planning Authority are responsible for granting planning permission in the Falkirk Council area. The Local Development Plan (LDP) for Falkirk, is currently being reviewed in preparation for Local Development Plan 2, this document will outline Falkirk Council's Planning Strategy for the next 5 to 10 years.

4.1.13 Use of Carron Dams site for flood storage

General opinion: Could the Carron Dams site be used for flood storage?

Response: Through modelling of the River Carron catchment, and calculating the potential storage volume at the Carron Dams site, there is insufficient storage capacity at the Carron Dams site to

reduce the flood level for extreme flood events to a level that would reduce the length and height of flood defences downstream to make this option viable.

4.1.14 Dredging the water courses

General opinion: Has dredging of the water courses been considered as an option?

Response: The project team have investigated the potential impact of dredging the water courses and how this would affect flood levels. Dredging the water courses would lower the water level in the channel and reduce the length and height of some flood defences, however, a significant length of direct defences would still be required. Dredging offers no reduction to water levels on the tidal reaches of the water courses. Dredging is not a sustainable activity and would require regular (annual) work, over the long term (100-year design life) this cumulatively would incur significantly higher costs to Falkirk Council than other options. Additionally, the impact of dredging on the local environment is likely to be significant, along with logistical issues such as access and disposal of dredged material. The project team do not consider dredging a viable option.

4.1.15 Current condition of the Grange Burn banks

General opinion: The current condition of vegetation on the banks of the Grange Burn, there was some concern that the vegetation cover on the banks was increasing water level in the channel.

Response: Falkirk Council has a regular programme of maintenance on the Grange Burn. Increased vegetation cover will potentially reduce the velocity in the channel and water level downstream during an extreme event. If all vegetation from the banks of the Grange Burn was removed, it is likely that velocities in the channel would be high which would increase the risk of bank erosion and potential flood risk downstream.

4.1.16 Why Falkirk Community Trust included in the Core Stakeholder Group?

General opinion: Why are Falkirk Community Trust included in the Core Stakeholder Group?

Response: Falkirk Community Trust were invited to join the Core Stakeholder Group, as part of the Trust's remit is the responsibility, management and operation of Heritage Services for Falkirk Council. At an early stage of the option appraisal, the interface with listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the World Heritage Site were identified as potential constraints that could influence the options being considered during the option appraisal process.

4.1.17 Impact on other projects

General opinion: How other projects in the area will interface with the scheme?

Response: The project team are liaising across Falkirk Council services to ensure there is continuity between the flood protection scheme and other projects. The project team are aware of the Heritage Lottery Fund for Zetland Park and the RSPB promoted '*managed realignment*' project near Skinflats. As the scheme progresses and more details are developed further engagement and co-ordination with individual projects will be required.

Regarding a specific issue relating to Option B (flood embankment around the perimeter of Zetland Park) the project team have produced further information on the scheme website on the proposed flood defence around Zetland Park.

5. Next Steps

The project team are committed to working with the local community on the development of the scheme and will be engaging with the local community as the scheme develops.

Whilst the public consultation event was positively received, the project team will continue to engage directly with the public through:

- local neighbourhood meetings;
- meetings with local community councils / groups; and
- meetings with local businesses

The purpose of these meetings will be to explain the scheme proposals to those unable to attend the consultation event, and address any concerns not covered by this document.

After the project team have identified a preferred scheme through the option appraisal, this will be progressed to outline design stage. Once a preferred scheme has been identified a public exhibition will take place, at present it is envisaged the public exhibition will be towards the end of 2018. After the public exhibition it is likely several Working Groups will be developed which will include members / groups from the local community who will provide input to the project team on the design of the flood protection scheme.

Overview of Scheme Confirmation Process

In summary, the scheme documentation will be published and this will begin the statutory consultation period. If no objections are received during this time then Falkirk Council will be able to confirm the scheme and secure funding from the Scottish Government.

If objections are received and are assessed as being relevant and valid, then Falkirk Council will engage with the objectors to address their concerns, such that objectors withdraw their objection or a reasonable modification to the scheme can be considered by the project team that addresses the objectors concerns. If this is not achieved then the scheme will be referred to the Scottish Ministers, who can initiate a Public Local Inquiry (PLI), which will determine whether the scheme should be confirmed with or without modification.

Appendix A – FPS Display Boards

See boards uploaded to website