

Comrie Flood Protection Scheme 2020 Summary of Objection

Two valid objections (both from residents) were received by the Council within the statutory 28-day period. Officers held further discussions with one of the objectors, who subsequently withdrew their objection to the Scheme on 27 March 2021.

A summary of the remaining objection and the Council's response is provided below. The full objection can be viewed on the Council's website at:

www.pkc.gov.uk/article/22115/Comrie-flood-protection-scheme-Local-hearing

The objector has noted that they are generally supportive of the flood scheme.

The objection was in relation to a part of the flood scheme proposed to be built in a resident's garden. The resident's main concern was the proposal for a disabled ramp and stairs to maintain access over the flood wall. The resident states that the comments they made at the time of the public consultation have been ignored as they had understood that the ramp and stairs would be removed from the proposed scheme. Their objection notes that access to the adjacent riverside should instead be taken from another location. If retained, the proposed access will encourage parking and possible blocking of a private road and access to other properties, as well as unsociable behaviour and dog fouling.

Their objection acknowledges the need for the flood scheme but states that this should not be at the expense of those whose ground the scheme will be built on. They raise concerns about vehicles passing by their property both on a temporary (during the proposed construction works) and permanent basis. The objection raises concern about the public consultation process and why others in the community have been consulted about proposed work on private ground.

Their objection also notes concern about the construction sequence of the proposed flood scheme and that this may temporarily increase flood risk to their property.

Perth & Kinross Council's Response

A summary of the Council's response to this objection is as follows:

The proposed disabled access ramp formed part of an earlier proposal and was deleted from the proposed flood scheme following public consultation; disabled access to the riverside will be provided from another location. However, as public access is currently available to the riverside at this particular location, the access steps remain as part of the proposed flood scheme.

The Council has carried out an extensive public consultation exercise and has published a public consultation report. In this case, the majority of consultees were in favour of maintaining an access to the riverside over the flood wall.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible for the Council to accommodate every viewpoint made during public consultation, particularly when there are conflicting views within the community. This was made clear to the resident during earlier consultation.

The Council has considered moving the access steps, but this would result in moving an existing public access onto private ground. The residents in the vicinity of the alternative location have already expressed concern about an earlier proposal for an access point in this area.

In summary, the residents, and wider community of Comrie, expect access to the riverside (or 'boulevard' area) to be maintained. Access at this location, and various other locations, was considered within the Environmental Impact Assessment. There is only one suitable location for this access, and it is at the end of Commercial Lane. We believe that we have identified the best arrangement for this access and that no suitable alternative locations can be found.

The issues noted around traffic movements, parking, unsociable behaviour and dog fouling are likely to be of an existing nature and will not be created, or made worse, by the proposed flood scheme. The Council's Planning Officer does not consider that any public concerns/criticisms regarding the proposed steps cannot be overcome and, in any case, would not constitute a material reason for refusal if it were presented as a planning application.

In relation to the concerns expressed regarding anti-social behaviour, Perth & Kinross Council has a longstanding anti-social behaviour strategy developed in association with Police Scotland and our other Community Safety partners. A copy both of the strategy and the reporting mechanisms in response to incidences of anti-social behaviour is found at www.pkc.gov.uk/article/15125/Report-antisocial-behaviour

A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared prior to the commencement of the site works setting out how construction traffic movements will be managed. This will include such measures as the provision of one-way traffic systems, parking restrictions, temporary road closures, speed limits, the use of marshals, etc. that would apply for the duration of the construction works. The flooding observed in Comrie to date has affected many in the community and the Council considers that the flood scheme is therefore a matter for the entire community to consider. The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act also requires the Council to notify all those who have an interest in any land on which the flood scheme is to be built and those who's land may be affected.

The flood scheme construction sequence is set out within the EIAR. The scheme documents therefore confirm that the flood defences would be constructed in such a way so as not to increase the risk of flooding to property in the area.