

Newcastleton Flood Study – 30th September 2019 – Community Questionnaire Responses

Newcastleton & District Community Council in partnership with SBC Flood Mgmt Team

No	Question	Responses	Yes	%	No	%
1	Do you think the level and extent of flood risk in Newcastleton is fairly shown? Do you have any specific reasons for your answer? – <i>See additional comments below</i>	103	91	88	12	12
2	Do you think the level and extent of flood risk in Newcastleton is fairly shown?	103	94	91	9	9
4	Based on the content of the exhibition material do you agree that Newcastleton requires a Flood Protection Scheme	100	90	90	10	10
5	Based on the flood risk shown and number of properties flooded, do you agree with the Community Council and Scottish Borders Council that Newcastleton should be afforded the highest level of flood protection possible (i.e. 1 in 200 year)?	102	89	87	13	13
6	Based on the selected option to provide flood protection are you generally in favour of the approach to provide this?	95	83	87	12	13
7	Subject to further investigation there is the potential, along with the flood mitigation options to re-landscape the Lakes area and re-route the Sikes, creating an amenity area, are you in favour of this?	92	88	96	4	4
8	Community involvement at an early stage is critical to the successful delivery of flood protection measures. If SBC was to further develop a flood protection scheme for Newcastleton, would you be interested in representing the village on a Community Working Group?	113	37	33	75	67

Additional comments received

1. Include grave removal in overall plan in order to approval.

Answer: Should the development of flood mitigation measures for Newcastleton proceed, there will be continued analysis and refinement of the options developed so far to determine their viability and sustainability further. Going forward this may include revisiting options that were discounted earlier in the process like gravel removal. Updating and developing the hydraulic model for the river will continue as the project develops to further refine the appropriate measure to protect Newcastleton from flooding. There may be the opportunity to re-run and update the gravel removal scenario that was done in August 2000 and November 2005.

2. What provision for planting and damming have been made upstream?

Answer: As part of the flood study commission an initial study into Natural Flood Management and River Basin Management planning was carried out. The study looked at what options could be considered under Natural Flood Management to provide some form of flood mitigation to Newcastleton. Our initial study found that Natural Flood Management potential across the catchment is high with a number of areas highlighted which could provide benefit in the long term. Options highlighted include, opportunity for runoff reduction measures including upland and felled forestry habitat restoration, upland drain blocking, leaky bunds along-contour and gully woodland planting as well as floodplain storage potential.

These types of options alone are not enough to mitigate flooding in Newcastleton and should be considered alongside in direct defence options proposed. We believe that the implementation of Natural Flood Management will be the main option to reduce the impacts of increased flows due to climate change (44%), in the future.

We are currently developing a method of modelling the Hawick Teviot Catchment for Natural Flood Management potential, if successful we hope that the same methods can be applied to the Liddel Water Catchment, which we hope will allow us to target the options that give the greatest flood risk mitigation potential

As part of the initial flood protection scheme proposal we hope to implement Natural Flood Management measures within the Lakes area of Newcastleton by re-meandering the Charlie Sike and utilizing the floodplain better for flood storage.

3. The idea to build a wall on this scale is silly, not only is it a waste of money but it also causes many issues such as ruining the view and preventing camping

Answer: Any options proposed will be subject to further scrutiny and development going forward whether it be a wall, embankments or Natural Flood Management. We hope to work with the community going forward to develop the best form of flood protection for Newcastleton that will allow the village to prosper. Whatever the option is will be subject to further economic appraisal and assessment in line with current national guideline to ensure value for money alongside other benefits that may arise.

Through development of the flood mitigation options to develop a flood scheme we will always endeavour that Newcastleton can continue to operate as it has done and ideally with a great deal of betterment. For example, if the consensus is that camping has to be retained on the river side we will work with the community to ensure that happens as we develop a flood scheme going forward e.g. wall rather than embankment due to footprint size and appropriate number of flood gates to provide access.

4. We must have it for the village to go forward

Answer: If the effects of climate change, increased rainfall are realized a flood scheme in Newcastleton and associated catchment wide measures will be paramount to ensure the future sustainability of the village.

5. Needs to happen to safeguard the future of the village

Answer: As above

6. I fully support the construction of the flood wall it is really long overdue, also dredging the river would surely help

Answer: Please refer to question 1

7. Total waste of money, dredge the river

Answer: Dredging alone will not solve the flooding issues to Newcastleton, our investigations over the years have shown that dredging parts of the Liddel Water only reduce flood levels between 50-100mm (2-4 inches) at the point the last machine bucket of dredged material is removed, the river naturally fill the bed up again and during a flood event any benefit is lost very quickly. The purpose of flood risk management will be to develop a suite of options to ensure the most sustainable way to manage flood risk into the future, whether it be through direct defences, natural flood management, planning policies, property level protection etc.

8. Something badly needs to be done

Answer: The estimated flood risk to Newcastleton is significant particularly with climate change considered. This was why it was highlighted at a national level through the first Flood Risk Management Cycle 2016-2022 to be investigated further and flood risk management options developed.

9. Flood in the past - Trees above the village have been felled - my house has been flooded & is a low point in the road facing the river, flood risk is rising, Carlisle floods were unexpected!

Answer: Flooding is becoming worse and not just through what was once called the flood season of the winter months. Flooding is now looked at differently through the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. It takes a whole catchment approach and looks to instill flood risk management across a whole range of subject areas e.g. land management, planning, transport, economy, communities etc. A flood scheme for Newcastleton will look to assist in mitigating risk to a number of these sectors.

10. The river is not flowing through a built-up area, any scheme should look at the river being maintained and within the water banks that exist, landscape the ground to keep it there no wall

Answer: Walls or embankments are the most likely form of direct defence applicable for providing a good standard of protection for Newcastleton. This is still open to interpretation and

what would suit the community ongoing discussion is required. For example, in Question 3 there was reference to camping on the riverside, the formation of an embankment would likely limit the camping potential of the river side area. Rule of thumb in an engineering sense, is for an embankment 1m high you need a 7m footprint.

11. Since gravel excess was removed & new pipe laid there have been no major problems, we don't need or want a wall

Answer: *The drainage scheme constructed was to mitigate the frequent issue of surface water flooding. This scheme will provide no protection from river flooding.*

12. A wall would not solve the problem sort out the drainage first

Answer: *The flood risk management proposals would look to address both river flooding and surface water flooding*

13. Having lived in Union Street for 57 years and watched the river in all its moods in my opinion a wall would be futile as the drains from the streets mostly open on to the river bank so when the river rises they backwater and that's what causes the flooding on the streets. A storm drain was put in South Hermitage street a number of years ago which made big improvements but it stops at the lake bridge, we were promised it would be extended down to the Muchleknow. This never happened, why has this plan been abandoned? I agree with the proposed plan for the Lakes although the water from the Lakes should also be diverted down to the Muchleknow. The build-up of gravel at Whithaugh pool has got completely out of hand, no matter what SEPA says. The 1st flood since I have lived here was in the late 1960s long before the riverside was landscaped, it came along Union Street, so this is nothing new. Listen to the locals who have lived here for a long time, they know a lot more than the professionals think.

Answer: *The flood scheme preparation is still in its very early stages. At the moment the Council has only defined the flood risk and proposed a high level option with proposed alignment of where we believe a suite of direct defences will provide a good standard of protection for the village. There still has to be extensive ground investigation and additional hydraulic modelling work to be done to determine if these options are fully viable.*

As with many towns in the Borders direct defences are the only option available to provide a good standard of protection. If the Council does proceed with these options the drainage that discharges into the river would be picked up as part of the flood scheme and altered as appropriate to remove the issue of back watering up the drainage system (i.e using flap valves and introduction of pumping stations). This is common practice for flood schemes and the Council has extensive experience of doing this through the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme and soon through the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme.

The drainage improvement scheme was made up of 3 proposed phases. The first phase is complete and has reduced significantly the sewer flooding incidents that were common place in the village. Although there was a high level idea proposed for the remaining two phases of the drainage improvements to the village, these were never allocated any budget or

programmed for any such further investigation at the time. As per the exhibition material that has been presented to the community recently it is hoped that any future works in this area of the lakes (diverting the Charlie Sike & Short Sike), can be picked up through the formal Flood Risk Management Cycle and refined further which may allow this to be considered for 80% funding from the Scottish government as a wider Flood Protection Scheme for Newcastleton.

As mentioned previously dredging alone will not solve the flooding issues to Newcastleton. The Council will address this further going forward but our experience is that dredging has very little effect in rivers this size, in reducing flood levels for the size of events we try to provide protection from. At the last community council meeting this same question was raised, the Council does not advocate or promote dredging as a sustainable flood risk management measure due to the minimal and short term effect it has on reducing water levels. That said the Controlled Activities Regulations which SEPA regulate do not discriminate between local authorities and the public, the community of Newcastleton could in theory apply to dredge the river if they so wished.

The Council takes the opinions of the public very seriously and has a proven track record of working with the public throughout the process of developing and delivering Flood Protection Schemes. In essence the general public does have a huge say on if a Flood Protection Scheme should proceed for approval by the Council as formal Scheme under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. The responses to this questionnaire certainly point towards an appetite for the community to continue to work with the Council in progressing this, we develop a means to strengthen this working partnership.

14. No flood scheme form! Don't agree with the wall which can NEVER be made to look attractive on

Answer: *Going forward landscaping specialists will work with the public and working groups to flesh out and assess what sort of form and finish may be possible for any of the proposed options for a Flood Protection Scheme in Newcastleton.*

15. Our riverside which is an outstanding attraction and well used. Drainage/lakes burn could surely be used /adapted.

Answer: *Any future scheme would look to enhance the natural attractions of the river and the lakes and create an amenity area for the village. Our experience has shown that the presence of a Flood Protection Scheme encourages new walking routes and better access to nature as well as achieving wider multiple benefits.*

16. Anything that stops the village flooding in any way has got to be seen as positive

Answer: *The 2005 event which is what most people refer to had significant impacts on the village and saw a number of properties flooded. However in flooding terms this was small event circa 1 in 15 – 1 in 20 year event. The schemes aims to deliver a standard of protection*

of 1 in 200 year (large significant flood), we believe this is important for Newcastleton given the flood risk the village is currently at and the likelihood of the increasing risk to the village due to climate change. If we can manage to deliver a good standard of protection this can only benefit the village going forward.

17. The forecast prediction of 80% of village under water is frightening, something must be done to protect all our homes and businesses and to enable new investment to be attracted

Answer: Please refer to question 16.

18. I have an unobstructed view of the river, rapid rises of the river are more often than 20 years ago. Needs debating by all the village. Start the discussion now & continue till decision made

***Answer:** Ongoing consultation with the public is critical for the successful delivery and construction of flood risk management measures. We envisage continuing this over the coming years through working groups and further exhibitions. We will continue working closely with the community council and will look to set up a group which will assist with the early part of the project.*

19. This future problem IS very important & the research that has gone into it seems to be very thorough

***Answer:** The research and investigation to date for the flood study is critical to informing the current flood risk and potential mitigation options. As we progress through the process this will become more refined and detailed to ensure the flood model which is the basis for a flood scheme is as up to date and accurate as possible.*

20. Pipes leading from street into River are part of the reason for the flooding

***Answer:** Please refer to question 13 Answer, paragraphs 2 & 3 in relation to backwatering from the river, this will be picked up as part of any flood protection scheme. Direct defences would be required to prevent flooding direct from the river.*

21. Dredge the river, widen river at filter bed

Answer: Please refer to question 7.

22. Flood defences badly needed, water levels have come over 3 x in 20-25 yrs. Village is constrained by lack of flood scheme

Answer: Please refer to question 9.

23. We feel a rolling program of maintenance to the existing infrastructure would be better

Answer: In terms of infrastructure we assume this is related to the drainage network etc. If this is not the case please clarify and we can provide a fuller response.

Upgrades to the drainage network can be carried out through a flood protection scheme if it can be shown this will reduce flood risk. Other drainage maintenance/upgrades may be carried out by the relevant authorities while a flood scheme is being constructed, utilising site compounds contractors etc.

24. I've lived on Riverside for last 33yrs and my property names Riverside and have an unobstructed view of the river

Answer: If a wall or embankments are defined as the preferred option after more detailed analysis, we will continue to engage with the public and wider community to detail what is the best fit for the village.

25. Further upstream work and dredging is not considered therefore an incomplete proposal

Answer: Please refer to question 2 and 7

26. Newcastleton & surrounding area has been my home all my life. In 1985 we bought a house on the riverside where we continue to live. We have never flooded, although when the water has been very high there is a damp smell in the dining room which has a wooden floor. Our main risk comes at the back of the house which looks onto the park. The water runs down our drive and floods the garage, we can have 5inches of standing water at the back door. Also at the front are a row of mature beech trees which over the years have been undermined by heavy water exposing them to the risk of coming down and heading in our direction, plus the disaster down river at the bridge would be unthinkable. We feel a wall down the front would exacerbate the demise of these trees heightening the risk already apparent to us as the river would then be concentrated on that bank. I know dredging is a dirty word but when this was carried out before; 16 yrs ago, the difference to the river flow was immediate and very reassuring. The speed of flow was greatly increased at times of heightened water. Surely this idea should be given another chance before millions are spent on a plan that may not work for all of us. Please come and speak to local people of long standing, because if your wall is not successful we are the ones who will be doing the mopping up.

Answer: We take the investigation and development of flood protection schemes very seriously. All the work and detail we go through is to determine what is best for the area in question. We cannot and will not specify anything that has an adverse effect to properties in Newcastleton. This is particularly relevant to increasing flood risk, it is a fundamental guiding principle governed through the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 that any proposed flood schemes or flood works do not increase flood risk elsewhere.

It is interesting the comment regarding damp smells when the water is high. What we have found during larger flood events in most Borders towns which sit on the floodplain, is that properties begin to flood through the ground into their solums or through their floors, before water actually crosses the property threshold. This reinforces the need to undertake

the ground investigation to aid future design. In the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme and the Hawick Flood Protection the wall extend more below ground (10m) than above ground due to the severity of this risk.

A full tree assessment will be carried out as the scheme preparation progresses. As a rule of thumb based on the other flood schemes the Council has constructed we normally plant at least 2 trees for every tree removed, obviously this is space dependant but a full assessment would be undertaken.

In addition to the answer given for question 1 & 7 regarding dredging, it is worth reiterating that dredging generally has no real benefit in rivers this size. Although current perception is that flood risk in the village has improved since some dredging was done after the last flood event (1:15year event) in 2005, this should however be viewed with caution. The Liddel Water Catchment is one of three large river catchments in the Borders that has fortunately escaped some of the significant storm events we have had over the last 10 – 15 years and as such Newcastleton has not seen a flood event to the size of the 2005 event.

In Hawick we did undertake an exercise where we replicated the effects of dredged river bed through quite an extensive reach of the Teviot. We will consider if this is a worthwhile exercise to update the current dredging exercises that were completed in 2000 and 2005.

As reiterated in some of the previous question answers, there will be ongoing dialogue with the community over the coming years as we look to develop a scheme for Newcastleton.