
Helensburgh CHORD – Report on flooding at Wee Kelpie, West Clyde Street

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared to update Members following concerns expressed by the general public in relation to flooding on West Clyde Street adjacent to the Wee Kelpie. Following Scottish Water approval of the scheme design in November 2011, the Phase 1 CHORD works were completed in this area in November 2013. There has historically been an issue with flooding in this location as it sits in the natural low point on this section of West Clyde Street. The issue is both strategic i.e. within Scottish Water's area of responsibility as it relates to issues with their infrastructure and local i.e. within the responsibility of Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) who has responsibility for the management and maintenance of road and footways gullies. A resolution therefore needs to be worked through jointly by Scottish Water and ABC.

In light of the concerns raised a thorough site assessment was undertaken by the CHORD Design Team and independently reviewed by ABC Officers. This confirmed that the design has been constructed in accordance with the Scottish Water approved drawing A242S/036 Rev D and approval letter dated 17 November, 2011 – See Appendix A attached

The recent flooding event ultimately needs to be addressed at the strategic level by Scottish Water. The CHORD works, whilst built in accordance with the Scottish Water approved scheme, were not designed to address historical capacity issues, relating to Scottish Waters infrastructure.

A review by the CHORD Design Team and ABC Officers has identified additional works that could be undertaken to mitigate the situation but these, as with the improvements put in place under the original CHORD scheme are predicated on addressing issues within Scottish Water's infrastructure.

It is therefore recommended that officers are instructed to seek a detailed technical meeting to discuss and agree a way forward is set up between senior representatives from Scottish Water and ABC as a matter of urgency.

To help alleviate flooding to the Wee Kelpie and other affected properties on West Clyde Street; Members may wish to consider providing flood gates funded through CHORD, as a gesture of goodwill.

CHORD Helensburgh – Report on flooding at Wee Kelpie, West Clyde Street

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to update Members following concerns expressed by the general public in relation to flooding on West Clyde Street adjacent to the Wee Kelpie. Following Scottish Water approval of the scheme design in November 2011, the Phase 1 CHORD works were completed in this area in November 2013. There has historically been an issue with flooding in this location as it sits in the natural low point on this section of West Clyde Street. The issue is both strategic i.e. within Scottish Water's area of responsibility as it relates to issues with their infrastructure and local i.e. within the responsibility of Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) who has responsibility for the management and maintenance of road and footways gullies. A resolution therefore needs to be worked through jointly by Scottish Water and ABC.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and approve the recommendation that a detailed site review of infrastructure and local connections is undertaken jointly by Scottish Water and ABC. As part of this review both short term and long term resolutions should be identified and their delivery, within an agreed timeframe.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 In light of the concerns raised, a thorough site assessment was undertaken by the CHORD Design Team and independently reviewed by ABC Officers. This confirmed that the design has been constructed in accordance with the Scottish Water approved drawing A242S/036 Rev D. See attached letters from Scottish Water dated the 17th November, 2011 giving approval to the CHORD scheme and requesting payment of £312.60 for connection and infrastructure charge. This was subsequently paid by ABC on 14th December, 2011. – See Appendix A attached
- 4.2 The manhole covers were lifted and the system inspected to ensure that it was running freely and that the 'Hippo' gullies and 'WaStops', implemented as part of the approved CHORD scheme to increase flow and prevent foul sewage return

were functioning. The inspection of the system confirmed that the drainage system was operating freely.

- 4.3 The approved CHORD scheme has addressed the immediate local issues in accordance with the original project brief. This was to help surface water drain away more quickly after a flood event. Issues currently being experienced are being exacerbated by inherent constraints within Scottish Water's infrastructure itself. These issues relate to both the capacity and frequency of maintenance of the existing system. Scottish Water's system needs to be fully operational in order to accept the flow from the CHORD works.
- 4.4 Prior to commencement of the CHORD works on West Clyde Street there have been logged flooding events by the roads officers on West Clyde Street adjacent to the Wee Kelpie. The flooding prior to CHORD would have been more focussed on the carriageway rather than on the footway. During extreme weather events the Scottish water system is struggling to accept the flows as a result ponding of surface water will occur on the footway adjacent the Wee Kelpie, as this is the lowest point on West Clyde Street.
- 4.5 The CHORD works have not altered the road/footway finished levels, but the footways are now slightly wider with dedicated parking bays. In front of the Wee Kelpie the footways falls to a new drainage channel and footway gullies, which provided Scottish Waters infrastructure is not at capacity, works as designed.
- 4.6 The existing drainage network in the side streets to each side of the Wee Kelpie, John Street and Williams Street have limited capacity for capturing surface water and may also be contributing to flooding at the Wee Kelpie. These roads are outside the CHORD scheme and would benefit from further investigations between ABC and Scottish Water.
- 4.7 Although the flooding predominantly lies with Scottish Water, the CHORD designers in consultation with Roads have come up with a design solution to mitigate against the majority of flooding outside the Wee Kelpie. The capacity of the Scottish Waters infrastructure is the not the responsibility of CHORD/ABC This design solution is outlined in 4.8 below
- 4.8 It may be possible to connect the 2 Manhole either side of the existing culvert with emergency over flow pipes. This would mean that in severe weather conditions when the tide is out that any surface water that backs up in these 2 lines i.e. the footways and road could drain freely into the culvert when the Scottish Water network is backed up. WaStop's would also be installed into these 2 pipes to prevent sea water getting into the Scottish Water system when the tide is in. This could possible sort out the majority of the storm water backing up and being prevented from escaping the system and flooding outside the Wee Kelpie. Note this is in no way a solution that would prevent future flooding but would certainly reduce the risk of it.
- 4.9 To help alleviate flooding to the Wee Kelpie and other affected properties on West Clyde Street; Members may wish to consider providing flood gates funded through CHORD as a gesture of goodwill.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The recent flooding event ultimately needs to be addressed at the strategic level by Scottish Water. The CHORD works, whilst built in accordance with the Scottish Water approved scheme, were not designed to address historical capacity issues, relating to Scottish Waters infrastructure. The CHORD scheme is dependent on maintenance and clearing of the Scottish Water Infrastructure and by gully cleaning by ABC

The approved CHORD scheme has addressed the immediate local issues in accordance with the original project brief. This was to help surface water drain away more quickly after a flood event. Issues currently being experienced are being exacerbated by inherent constraints within Scottish Water's infrastructure. These issues relate to both the capacity and frequency of maintenance of the existing system. Scottish Water's system needs to be fully operational in order to accept the flow from the CHORD works.

A review by the CHORD Design Team and ABC Officers has identified additional works that could be undertaken to mitigate the situation but these, as with the improvements put in place under the original CHORD scheme are predicated on issues within Scottish Water's infrastructure being addressed.

It is therefore recommended that a detailed technical meeting to discuss and agree a way forward is set up between senior representatives from Scottish Water and ABC as a matter of urgency.

To help alleviate flooding to the Wee Kelpie and other affected properties on West Clyde Street; Members may wish to consider providing flood gates funded through CHORD as a gesture of goodwill.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

POLICY The delivery of this project fits with the Council's Corporate Plan. Single Outcome Agreement and approved Development Plan key actions and policy for safeguarding our built heritage and town centre regeneration. The economic outcomes from this project will contribute to the Councils' Economic Development Action Plan at a strategic and area based level.

FINANCIAL To be advised, this will be dependent on discussions between Scottish Water and ABC, and the agreed way forward.

LEGAL None

HR Personnel commitment from Roads and CHORD Design Team.

RISKS Reputational Risk to ABC in the event of further flooding at the Wee Kelpie and West Clyde Street, as this will be perceived to have been caused by CHORD works. Clear communication between ABC and Scottish Water is required to mitigate against risk occurring.

Pippa Milne Executive Director Development and Infrastructure Services
Policy Lead: Cllr Ellen Morton

For further information contact: Andrew Collins, Regeneration Project Manager,
Tel: 01436 657633

1 December 2014