ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL | **OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE**

ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES | **11 MARCH 2026**

OBAN PVA FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Oban has experienced numerous incidents of significant flooding, with the town being designated by SEPA as a "Potentially Vulnerable Area" ("PVA") in the Highland and Argyll Local Flood Risk Management Plan (2022 – 2028).

1.2 A number of short-medium and medium-long-term actions to mitigate flooding in Oban have been identified by Infrastructure Design's Flood Risk Management Team. These actions are being progressed where funding and resources allow.

1.3 There is currently no identified funding for the medium-long term actions to design and construct an Oban Flood Protection Scheme and to deliver the larger Surface Water Management Plan actions. These actions will be significant and are likely to run to tens of millions of pounds requiring attenuation/water storage and general climate change adaptation measures aimed at mitigating or minimising disruption from severe weather events.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee consider and note this report.

3.0 DETAIL

3.1 **COMPLETED ACTIONS:**

Infrastructure Design's Flood Risk Management Team:

a. Repair of existing pumping system at Lochavullin car park:
   i. Existing control unit replaced and relocated on a plinth to reduce risk of future water damage,
   ii. Existing pumps repaired,
   iii. Confirmed that the existing pump outfall cannot be moved further downstream.

b. Non-native invasive species:
   i. Survey completed,
   ii. Completed Survey passed to RIS Operations team who have secured funding to treat land within their area of responsibility,

3.2 **IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TAKEN DURING & AFTER A FLOOD EVENT:**
RIS Operations team actions taken during a flood event are likely to include:

a. assisting emergency services and others where possible to do so.
b. manage the safe operation of the public road network by providing the necessary signage, posting service disruption notices via the website and working closely with partners,
c. manage the pumping system for Lochavullin car park, ensuring this is operational during low and medium intensity flood events. until such time as it is overwhelmed during medium to high intensity flood events,
d. responding and assisting where possible.

Infrastructure Design's Flood Risk Management Team actions taken after a flood event:

e. engage with Elected Members, Oban Community Council, proposed "*Oban Flood Resilience Working Group*" (name TBC), members of the public, residents and businesses to collate and investigate reported flood incidents.

3.3 **SHORT-MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS:**
Infrastructure Design's Flood Risk Management Team:

a. Carry out Watercourse Inspections of Black Lynn Burn and its tributaries in accordance with Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 Section 18:
    i. Most recent inspection was carried out in 2024.
    ii. Next inspection programmed for 2026.

b. Carry out Clearance or Repair Works within Oban PVA in accordance with Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 Section 59 (where it considers that carrying out the works will contribute to the implementation of current measures described in any relevant local flood risk management plan)
    i. Most recent clearance works carried out following schedule following 2024 Watercourse Inspection,
    ii. Any works schedule resulting form 2026 Inspection is expected to be progressed within available funding resources,

c. Community Engagement:
    i. Arranged and hosted a session in Oban on 22nd January 2026 attended by a Councillor and two members of Oban Community Council.
    ii. Attend and provide updates to the proposed "*Oban Flood Resilience Working Group*" (name and arrangements TBC) on status of Oban PVA Flood Risk Management.

d. Watercourse outfalls investigation:
    i. The 2026 inspection of Black Lynn Burn is planned to include a survey of the watercourse from the railway culvert to the shore. This is to identify and record culverts and pipes which outfall into the watercourse, establish their capacity, and identify if the installation, repair or replacement of flap valves, or any clearance would substantially reduce the risk of flooding.

e. Review whether sediment removal / vegetation clearance would substantially reduce the risk of flooding:
   i. Hydrologic model was carried out in house for the Black Lynn Burn to inform the effectiveness of any clearance and repair works, Topographic and Bathymetric surveys were extracted from LiDAR data for the area immediately surrounding Black Lynn Burn.
   ii. explore if sediment clearance would have a beneficial effect on a more frequent flood event such as a 1 in 1 year event.

f. Funding constraints – attempt to mitigate:
   i. Investigate and progress any additional funding sources / routes available to allow larger, capital funded Actions to be progressed and to accelerate the delivery timescales for the Design & Construction of an Oban Flood Protection Scheme:
   ii. Make representations to Scottish Government seeking to make funding available – including a proposal to progress a scheme separately in smaller elements/stages. It should be noted that, currently, the Scottish Government are still to confirm whether this proposal would risk affecting their 80% funding,
   iii. Explore all opportunities for securing any available funding to accelerate flood protection works at Oban.
   iv. At the SCOTS Flooding Group meeting on Friday 27th February 2026, the Scottish Government informed that it is still unknown when and if funds for Cycle 2 schemes (under which Oban falls) would be announced.

g. Provide updates to EDI Committee on how Flood Risk Management Actions within the Oban PVA are progressing,

Argyll and Bute Council's RIS Operations team:

h. Treatment of non-native invasive species around Black Lynn Burn:
   i. Programmed to be carried out between June and September 2026,

3.4 **MEDIUM-LONG TERM ACTIONS INCLUDE:**
Infrastructure Design's Flood Risk Management Team:

- Design & construction of Oban Flood Protection Scheme, including large projects within the Oban Surface Water Management Plan:
  - progress once any funding is secured & allocated to project.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 This report provides the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee with an update on Flood Risk Management within the Oban PVA and the progress on proposed short-medium term and medium-long term Actions.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy - In line with existing Council policies and in line with the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

5.2 Financial - No funding identified for long term solution; this report proposes that lobbying is taken forward with a view to securing funding.

5.3 Legal - The Council has four key responsibilities under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009:

- Prepare maps of bodies of water etc
- Assess bodies of water
- Prepare local flood risk management plans and carry out the Actions identified in the LFRMP
- Carry out clearance and repair works.

5.4 HR - None known.

5.5 Customer Service - None known.

5.6 Risk - None known.

5.7 Climate Change - Due regard will be given to climate change with a view to minimising any climate change impact and these will be considered as and when they arise.

5.8 Fairer Scotland Duty - None known.

5.9 Equalities - protected characteristics - An EqSEIA will be required as and when long term solutions can be progressed.

5.10 Consumer Duty – None known.

5.11 Island Communities - None known.

5.12 Children's Rights and Wellbeing - None known.

Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure

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