

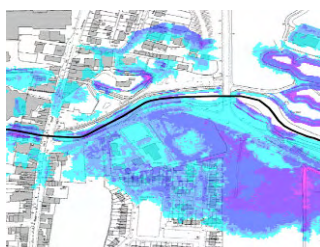


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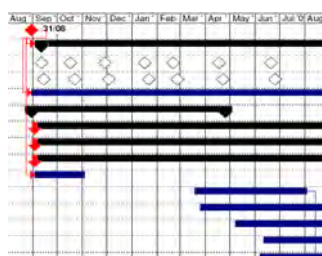
FINGAL EAST MEATH FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT STUDY

Newsletter – 01
August 2008

Included in this issue



Project background



Project activities

Introduction

Welcome to the first edition of the Fingal East-Meath Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (FEM-FRAMS) newsletter. The newsletter will be produced every three months to provide information on different aspects of the project and to keep you updated on project progress.

In this edition of the newsletter we provide background information on the FEM FRAM Study including the reasons behind the study and a description of the Fingal East Meath catchment. There is also a summary of the key project activities that will be carried out over the course of the study.

It is important that the knowledge and views of the general public are taken into consideration during the development of the Fingal East Meath Flood Risk Management Plan. Our website www.Fingaleastmeathframs.ie has a feedback form where you can submit information and views relevant to the study. We will also be holding public information days at key stages of the project. Further information on these events will be posted in the local press, future editions of the newsletter and on our website. Fingal County Council, Meath County Council and the OPW are seeking your cooperation to ensure the successful development of a Flood Risk Management Plan for the Fingal East Meath Catchment.

Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (FRAMS)



The Irish Government adopted a new Policy in 2004 to manage existing and future flood risk. It provides for an integrated and pro-active management of flood risk in line with the EU Floods Directive and integrates flood risk management and development planning to safeguard people property and the environment. The FRAM Studies are being carried out to meet the requirements of the EU Floods Directive which was introduced on the 26 November 2007.

The FEM-FRAM Study is the fourth FRAMS currently under way in Ireland. Other FRAMS include the Lee CFRAMS in Cork, the Suir CFRAMS in Tipperary, Kilkenny, Waterford & Limerick and the Dodder CFRAMS in Dublin.

The EU Floods Directive

The EU Floods Directive sets out how member states must plan for the management of flood risk. The purpose of the directive is "to establish a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community".



The European Commission proposed the floods directive to help Member States manage the risk associated with floods, including their damaging effects on human health, the environment, infrastructure and property. The principal requirements of the Directive are that Member States shall:

- Undertake a preliminary flood risk assessment (PFRA) to determine areas of existing or potential future 'significant' risk, and for those areas;
- Prepare flood hazard and risk maps; and
- Prepare flood risk management plans.

In Ireland, these latter two requirements of the Directive are being delivered through the CFRAM Studies. A further key requirement of the Directive is for co-operation and coordination with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Background to the FEM FRAMS

Fingal and Meath have suffered significant flooding over the last 12 years: August 1986 (Hurricane Charlie), November 2000 and November 2002 all resulted in considerable flood damage. The highest recorded tidal levels in Dublin Bay occurred in February 2002, resulting in tidal damage to properties along the Fingal and Meath coastline.

Fingal and Meath's populations are rising rapidly, with an increase of over a fifth for both counties between 2002 and 2006. Fingal is now considered Ireland's fastest growing county. Significant pressure now exists throughout Fingal and East Meath to develop marginal land.



Fingal County Council in conjunction with The Office of Public Works (OPW) and Meath County Council, have recognised these high levels of existing flood risk in the Fingal East Meath area and the development pressure associated with Ireland's fastest growing area. The FEM FRAM Study will address these issues through a catchment-based flood risk assessment and management study of nineteen rivers and streams and their catchments, including the Broad Meadow River, the Ward River and their tributaries.

The objectives of the FEM FRAMS are to:

- Identify and map the existing and potential future flood hazard and risk areas within the study area;
- Build the strategic information base necessary for making informed decisions in relation to managing flood risk;
- Identify viable structural and non-structural measures and options for managing the flood risks for localised high-risk areas and within the catchment as a whole; and

- Prepare a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) for the study area, and associating Strategic Environmental Assessment, that sets out the measures and policies, including guidance on appropriate future development, that should be pursued by the Local Authorities, the OPW and other Stakeholders.



Images of the Ward and Nanny Rivers



Map of the Fingal East Meath study area.

The Fingal East Meath catchment

The Fingal East Meath catchment covers an area approximately 771.69 sq km in size. The topography of the catchment is generally low undulating land intersected by a number of rivers and streams. These watercourses include the River Nanny, Delvin River, Broad Meadow River and Ward River, all of which drain to the Irish Sea. Some of the major towns and villages in the catchment include Ashbourne, Balbriggan, Ratoath, Skerries and Swords.

The region differs from other catchments in Ireland;

despite a low annual rainfall, small catchment areas and catchment slope, the region is highly susceptible to extreme flood events, as particularly demonstrated in recent years.

Our previous studies have indicated that major flood events in Fingal are often preceded by very wet periods (as occurred in November 2002), resulting in exceptional runoff. Radar plots at Dublin Airport also suggest that some extreme storms can stall over the south western catchments in the region resulting in intense prolonged rainfall. For more information on the most recent significant flood events in the catchment, please visit our website.



Newsletter maps

Throughout the duration of the project we will use maps to display information on different aspects of the project.

In this quarter's newsletter, the map shows the location of the study area for the Fingal East Meath FRAMS, together with the watercourses being studied and some of the main towns and villages in the study area.

In future editions of the newsletter we will use maps to display information from the different project activities as discussed on the back page.

Programme of Activities

Over the next two years, work will be carried out on a number of key project activities as listed below. Further information on these key activities will be available in future editions of this newsletter.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – summer '08 to summer '10

The SEA ensures that environmental constraints and opportunities are fully considered in the development of the Flood Risk Management Plan

Flood defence asset survey – summer '08 to winter '08

Information gathering procedure on the types and condition of existing flood defence structures along the rivers and coastline (i.e. flood walls, banks).

Topographical survey – summer '08 to winter '08

A site and aerial survey to examine the dimensions of the river systems and floodplains.

Hydrological assessment – summer '08 to spring '09

Analysis of river flows and rainfall together with an assessment of drivers that could influence future flood risk such as climate changes and urban growth.

Computer modelling of rivers – winter '08 to summer '09

Use of computer software to estimate water levels and flows in the rivers for flood events of varying magnitudes and timescales.

Flood mapping - summer '09

Mapping of significant flood risk areas using three flood mapping formats, namely: flood extent maps, flood hazard maps and flood risk maps.

Identification of potential flood risk management options – winter '08 to winter '09

Recommendation on potential flood risk management options to manage identified flood risk.

Identify preferred options – winter '08 to winter '09

Technical, economic and environmental assessment of all identified options to determine preferred options.

Development and publication of the draft and final FRMP – summer '10

Presentation of the results of the above activities and outline of the proposed strategic flood risk management options for the catchment.



If you have any questions or require any further information relating to this study or if you would like to be included on a distribution list for future issues of this newsletter please email ruth.woods@fingalcoco.ie.

If you would like to contact us by post, please send your request to Ms Ruth Woods, Water Services Department, Fingal County Council, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

In the next issue of the newsletter we will provide information on the following project activities:

- Flood defence asset survey; and
- The topographical survey.

We will also have information on the first round of our public consultation days.

Our project website www.fingaleastmeathframs.ie provides up to date information on the FEM FRAM Study, including project activities, project programme, public information days and project reports.

A feedback form on the website allows you to provide information you feel is relevant to the study.