

Report of Jonathan Moxon

Report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation)

Date: 11 February 2020

Subject: Approval for the assessment of flood management and remediation work to assets at Sheepscar Beck

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Little London & Woodhouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Meanwood Beck (also known as Lady Beck) runs through the north of Leeds from Golden Acre Park through the city centre meeting the River Aire at Crown Point Weir. Within the city centre this watercourse is known as Sheepscar Beck and is carried by a system of large culverts and canalised open channels.
- The channel walls in several areas are in poor condition and have been identified to be at risk of collapse. Collapse of these walls would cause a blockage in the watercourse significantly increasing flood risk.
- This project is to carry out repair of the existing assets to manage the risk of these failing. This study will assess the current condition of all assets and identify the most economical option to address any issues.
- £60,000 funding for appraisal of a scheme has been secured through local levy funding.
- There is £717,000 Grant in Aid funding allocated for the design and construction phases of the project within the Environment Agency medium term plan. The scheme was also included in a recent bid by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) for funding from central government.

- An investigation of the flood defences through Sheepscar is listed as S18 in the List of Measures (Schemes) in the Leeds Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The proposed works will reduce flood risk associated with an asset failure improving the resilience of the affected community and neighbourhood.
- The Council is meeting its responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority in reducing flood risk.

3. Resource Implications

- The total estimated cost of the Feasibility and Outline Design works necessary to reach Outline Business Case approval is £120,000 including LCC staff time.
- The costs of the appraisal and development of this outline business case will be funded from the £60,000 local levy funding paid by the Environment Agency.
- LCC staff time will be funded from the Leeds City Council capital funds, this has been estimated to be £60,000 to develop the outline business case.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:

- a) Give authority to incur expenditure of £120,000 for a capital scheme to carry out appraisal and develop an Outline Business Case for Capital Maintenance work at Sheepscar Beck including obtaining the necessary permits and approvals for the scheme.
- b) Note that a further report will be submitted for Highways Board review in 2021 to gain approval to submit the Outline Business Case to the Environment Agency and to give authority to incur expenditure associated with the work.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To note the flooding issues associated with a failure of assets within the Sheepscar and Meanwood areas to be addressed by the proposed work.
- 1.2 To request authority to incur expenditure of £120,000 to carry out the project appraisal and produce an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the project for submission to the Environment Agency.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Sheepscar Culvert system is a system of large culverts and heavily modified open channels carrying Meanwood Beck (Lady Beck) through the Sheepscar and Mabgate areas of Leeds City Centre to the River Aire downstream of Crown Point Weir. The system was constructed in sections to facilitate the development of the eastern city centre. The areas considered by this project are shown in Figure 1 at the end of this report.

- 2.2 Past investigation of sections of the open channel in 2013 identified that some areas of these walls are in poor condition and are at risk of failure. A failure of these damaged walls will lead to blockage of the channel and culverts reducing channel capacity and flooding properties along the watercourse route.
- 2.3 Culverts and bridges within the proposed study area are managed by LCC as major structures and no significant defects were identified following the most recent inspections.
- 2.4 The source of flooding is river flooding from Sheepscar Beck caused by an asset failure leading to blockage of the watercourse within the city centre. As this beck passes through the heavily urbanised area of the city centre a blockage here will significantly increase flood risk to a large number of properties and major routes into the city.
- 2.5 A hydraulic modelling study of Meanwood Beck was completed in 2017 by the Environment Agency. This model is available for LCC use and is to be further developed as part of this project to assess the impact of a blockage within the Sheepscar Beck area.
- 2.6 £60,000 of local levy funding has been allocated to carry out a study for these assets. This will investigate the condition of the assets, identify the required work and develop an OBC for this.
- 2.7 Funding for the design and construction of the scheme will be identified during the project appraisal. There is £717,000 of Grant in Aid allocated within the Environment Agency's Medium Term Plan, the scheme was also included in a recent bid from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) for funding from central government.
- 2.8 There is a separate project being proposed by LCC on this watercourse to develop a flood alleviation scheme for Meanwood Beck improving the standard of protection to at-risk properties throughout the catchment.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Some areas of the open channels along Sheepscar Beck are in poor condition and at risk of failure. A failure of these assets would cause a blockage significantly reducing the channel capacity and increasing flood risk.
- 3.2 The current programme summary can be found in the table below:

Key Project milestone Summary

Activity	Planned Finish Date (P2)
Start Feasibility Study	01/04/2020
Submit Outline Business Case	01/03/2021
Detailed Design	01/09/2021
Construction Start	01/04/2023
Construction finish	01/03/2024

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Regular consultation with the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water as other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) will continue throughout the project.
- 4.1.2 Ward members will be engaged throughout the project.
- 4.1.3 Landowners adjacent to the beck will be engaged throughout the development of this work. Any work carried out to the beck walls will have an impact on property close to the beck and this will require cooperation with these landowners. These landowners will also benefit from the works.
- 4.1.4 As the project progresses and potential options are identified, engagement with local residents and business affected by the work will be carried out through consultation events.
- 4.1.5 Depending on the options review and the works to be constructed the scheme may require planning permission with consultation required as part of this.
- 4.1.6 The project is included in the Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management for Leeds City Council.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An EDCI screening has been completed and is attached as Appendix A. This indicates that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required for what is being proposed.
- 4.2.2 By carrying out these works the Council will be ensuring the safety of the local community and in particular more vulnerable residents such as those who are elderly or have a disability and may struggle to get to safety if flooding occurred.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The proposed works will reduce the risk of flooding to the city centre by improving the condition of existing assets.
- 4.3.2 The Council is meeting its responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority in reducing flood risk.
- 4.3.3 This scheme is in accordance with the Councils Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.4 Responding to the threats posed by the predicted future impacts of climate change (such as the increased risk of local flooding) is an important issue for the city and can be seen through the development of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme which is aiming to achieve a 1 in 200 year standard of protection, to match that of the floods caused by Storm Eva.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The proposed flood alleviation study aims to mitigate flood risk to properties in the Sheepscar and Mabgate area by identifying remediation options for damaged areas of the Sheepscar Beck walls. This is consistent with the Council's statutory duty as the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority and the Council's policy as set out and approved in the Leeds CC Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The content of the report is not therefore subject to Call In.
- 4.5.2 LCC are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the canalised sections of watercourse through the city under the Leeds Improvement of Becks Act (1886). LCC are responsible for the original watercourse walls but not for additional walls constructed subsequently. This project will carry out repair of the walls in line with LCC's responsibilities but will not impact on future legal obligations.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The OBC and appraisal will identify the most suitable option for a scheme in the area. The information collected during this phase will reduce the risk associated with delivery of the scheme. There is a risk that the preferred option will not be affordable and the scheme will not progress until alternative funding can be secured.
- 4.6.2 Risk to the project will be managed through proactive monitoring and appropriate mitigation. A risk management workshop will be held in the initial phases of the project

5. Conclusions

- 5.1.1 This project will deliver remediation work to assets within the Sheepscar Beck area. The condition of the existing assets and options for remediation works need to be assessed and appraised in order to identify the most suitable solution.
- 5.1.2 Local levy and Grant in Aid funding provide an opportunity to manage future flood risk to the Sheepscar and Mabgate areas.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:

- Give authority to incur expenditure of £120,000 for a capital maintenance scheme to develop an Outline Business Case for a flood management scheme at Sheepscar Beck including obtaining the necessary permits and approvals for the scheme.
- Note that a further report will be submitted for Executive Board review in 2021 to gain approval to submit the Outline Business Case to the Environment Agency and to give authority to incur expenditure associated with design and construction of the works.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Figure 1: Location of Sheepscar Beck to be considered within the scheme

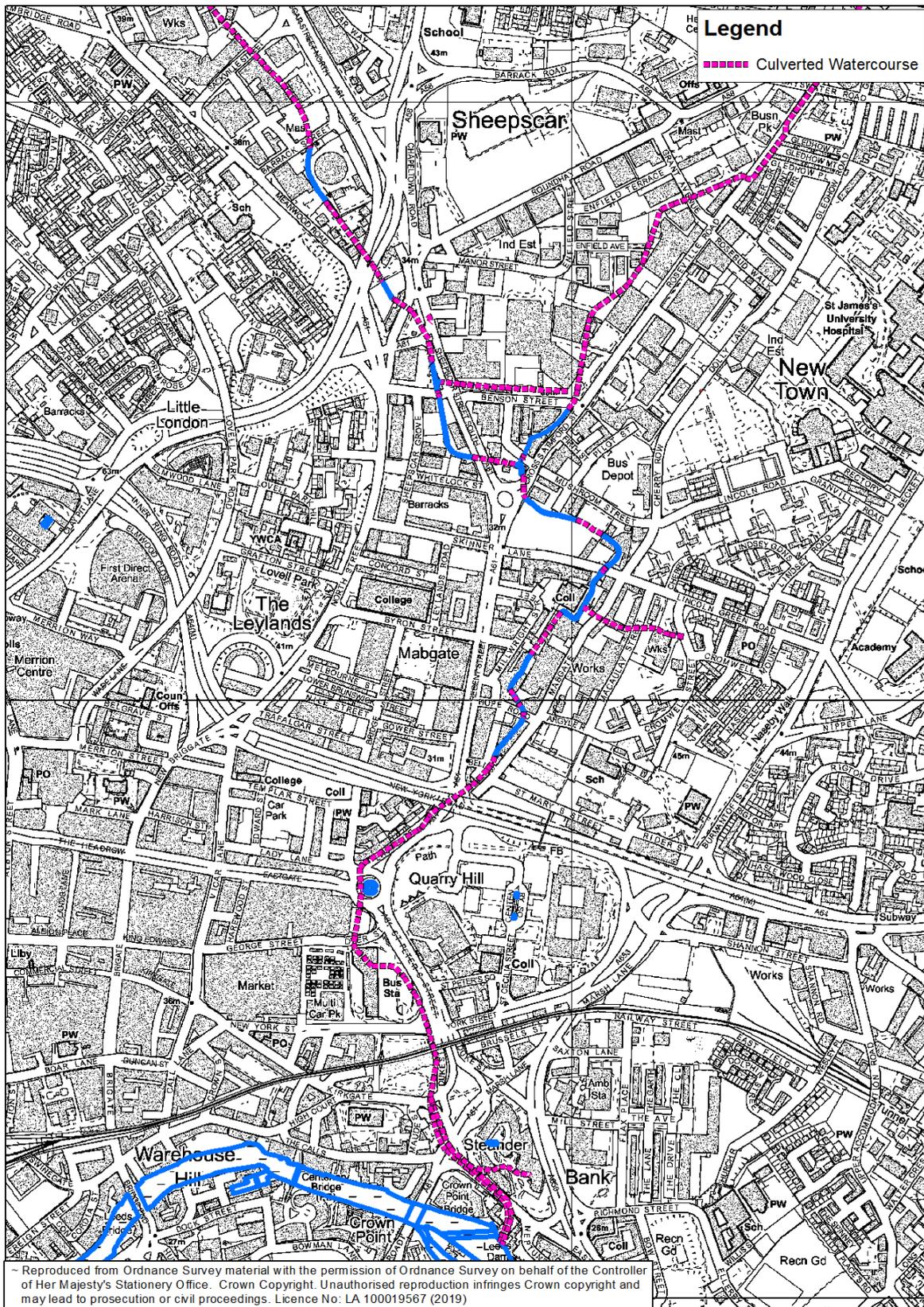


Figure 2: Examples of damaged assets along Sheepscar Beck



Appendix A

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Flood Risk Management
Lead person: Ian McCall	Contact number: 0113 378 8012

1. Title: Sheepscar Beck Flood Management and Remediation Works
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
This screening assessment is for the proposed flood management works at Sheepscar Beck in the Mabgate and Sheepscar areas

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		x
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		x
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 		x

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?**

(**think about** the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key findings <p>(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions <p>(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)</p>

5. If you are **not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you **will need to carry out an impact assessment.****

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Ian McCall	FRM Engineer	08/11/2019

7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

Please send a copy to the Equality Team for publishing

Date screening completed	08/11/2019
If relates to a Key Decision send to Corporate Governance	
Any other decision please send to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)	