

Lewisham and Catford flood alleviation scheme

January 2017

Over summer 2014 we talked to the community about our proposal to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses in Lewisham and Catford. This briefing provides a summary of our proposal, an update on our progress and describes our next steps.

Flood risk in Lewisham and Catford

The River Ravensbourne and its tributaries, the River Quaggy, River Pool and Honor Oak Stream (Chudleigh Brook), pass through the heart of the London Borough of Lewisham.

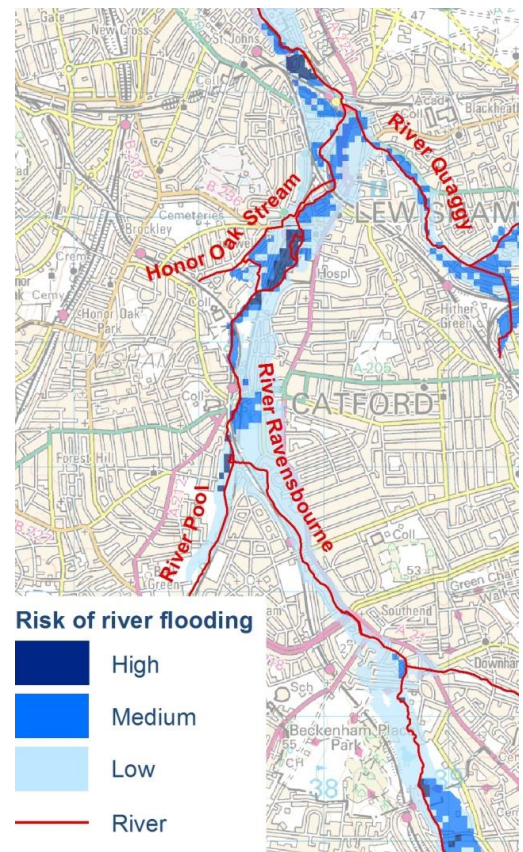
Flooding from the River Ravensbourne has been recorded in the Lewisham and Catford area since 1809. The last major flood was in September 1968 where heavy rainfall caused the river to burst its banks, flooding several hundred homes and businesses. Less severe river flooding has also been recorded, including in 1977, 1992 and 1993.

There are approximately 4,000 homes and businesses located within the floodplain of the River Ravensbourne and Honor Oak Stream between Catford, Lewisham and its confluence with the Thames at Deptford. Of those properties identified, 420 homes and 90 businesses are at a 'high' or 'medium' risk of flood water entering their property.

If the defences aren't maintained, these figures could increase to approximately 7,500 being within the floodplain, with 990 homes and 240 businesses at a 'high' or 'medium' risk of flood water entering their property. Climate change is also expected to increase the number of properties at risk.

Our outline proposals

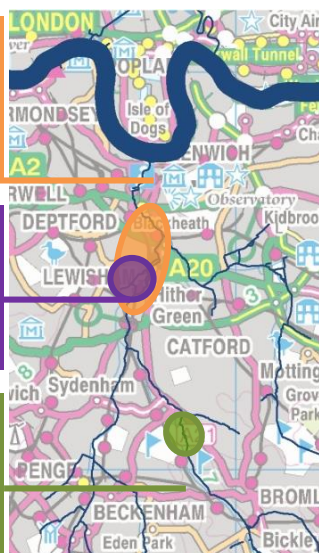
We are proposing a £17.7million flood alleviation scheme to help manage the risk of flooding to approximately 990 homes. The scheme is being delivered in partnership with Lewisham Council to ensure that the flood alleviation proposals in the eastern half of Beckenham Place Park form part of a joined up plan to rejuvenate the whole of the park. This will create a new space for the community to relax and play amongst nature and local heritage. The scheme is a combination of 3 elements:



Localised works to river walls, or ground raising

Floodwater storage for Honor Oak Stream

Floodwater storage at Beckenham Place Park



Floodwater storage at Beckenham Place Park

As one of the largest open riverside spaces in the area, the park provides an opportunity to temporarily store water in times of flood, keeping it away from homes and businesses. To do this we will need to re-landscape the park to the east of the railway line to include raised earth embankments. These would hold water safely within the park for a short period during times of flood.

This work will also provide an opportunity to enhance this side of the park for existing users and new visitors. The park will continue to be public green space, but with more diverse habitat and improved recreational facilities for the local community to enjoy. These attractions will include a new BMX track, an enhanced skatepark, a playground, a refreshment kiosk, toilets and improved walking, running and cycling routes.

Our plan includes making the river a key focal point on this side of the park, similar to sites such as Sutcliffe Park in Kidbrooke and Ladywell Fields. We plan to reinstate the historic wetland habitat within part of the park, similar to the successfully recreated wetland at Sutcliffe Park (photo opposite).

Works on the Honor Oak Stream in Ladywell

Following feedback from public consultation in 2014, we are proposing to temporarily store floodwater at Ladywell Green to reduce the risk of flooding from the Honor Oak Stream / Chudleigh Ditch.

To do this we would need to lower the park by up to 1.5m and re-landscape it so that it will stay as usable park space. We have updated our concept drawing for the park using the feedback we received, particularly the footpath routes.



Recreated wetland within part of the flood storage area at Sutcliffe Park, Kidbrooke. The park's 2.5m (8ft) high flood embankment can be seen in front of the trees.

Localised works to existing river walls

Even with the proposed flood storage at Beckenham Place Park, our river investigations have shown that there are nine low points in the defences downstream which will need to be raised to hold more water within the river channel. We have been developing concept drawings for these sites.

Once the scheme is complete, we will continue to work with local landowners to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to maintain their part of the river so that water flows freely.

Flood benefits

We estimate that by carrying out these works and our continuing our regular maintenance programme, a total of £270 million worth of flood damages could be avoided over the next fifty years. Approximately 990 homes and 240 businesses will benefit from a reduced risk of flooding. More than 6,000 further properties will have a reduced risk of flooding to their gardens and open space. Key community facilities will also benefit, including part of University Hospital Lewisham, Lewisham Police Station, 41 electrical substations, Deptford pumping station, critical roads, the Docklands Light Railway and National Rail lines.

Heritage Lottery Funding at Beckenham Place Park

We have received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund which helps the flood alleviation scheme in the eastern half of the park form part of a joined up plan to rejuvenate the whole area.

Next steps

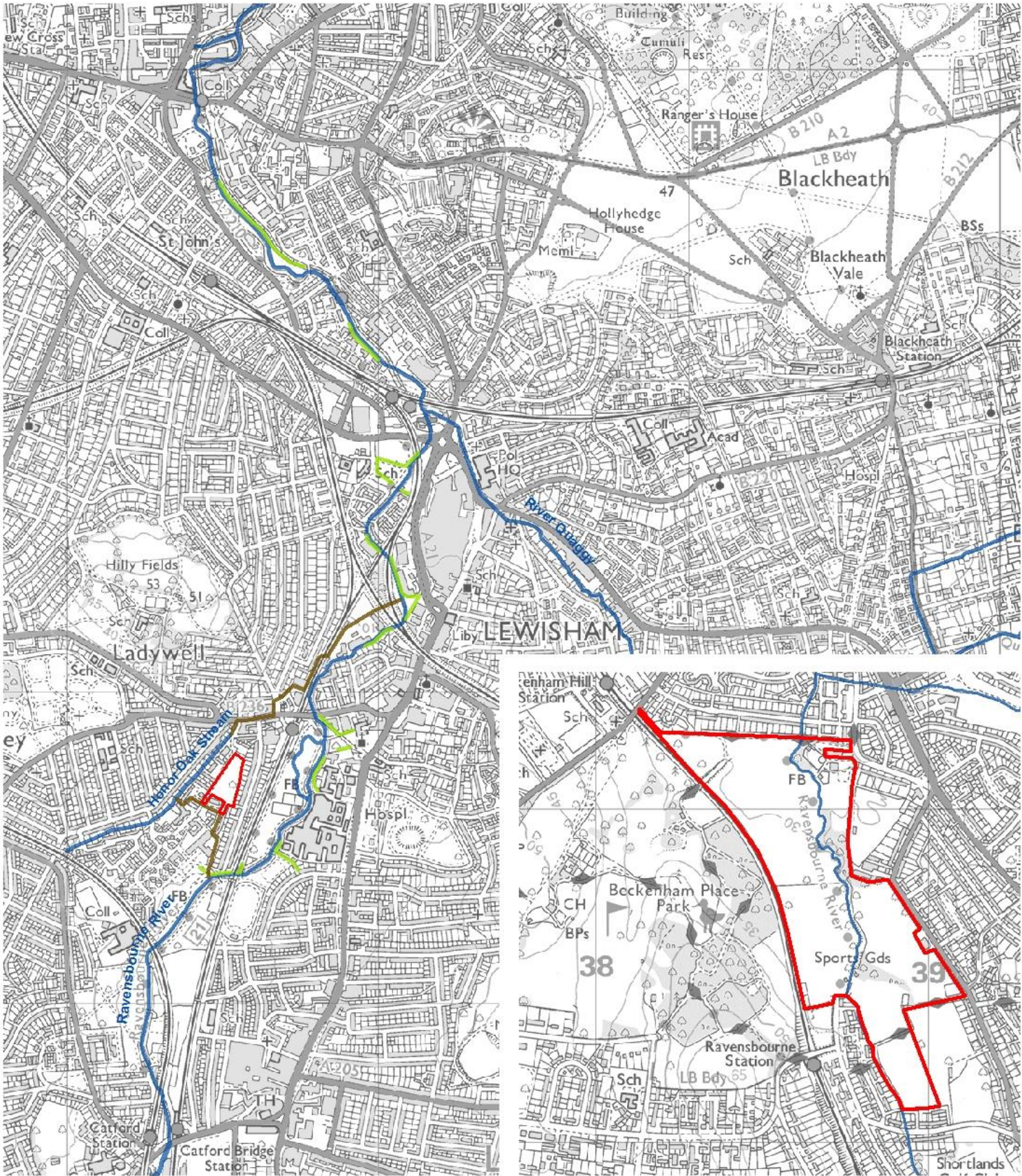
Having completed an outline design and business case, we are now working on the detailed design. We expect to start construction in 2018, with the works complete in Beckenham Place Park in 2019 and the whole scheme completed by 2020. The detailed design stage will include:





- carrying out further engagement with the community, land owners and user groups to seek your views
- carrying out investigation works on site
- submitting a planning application in 2017

As well as helping to inform the final proposal, these activities may mean we will need to change the estimated start date for construction.

If you would like more information about the project, you can contact Mike Wilkinson on 03708 506 506 or at psoselondon&nkent@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Lewisham and Catford flood alleviation scheme: Proposed location of works



-  Approximate locations of proposed re-landscaping works within the park to provide flood water storage
-  Proposed location of works for local flood defences
-  Watercourse
-  Existing piped watercourse