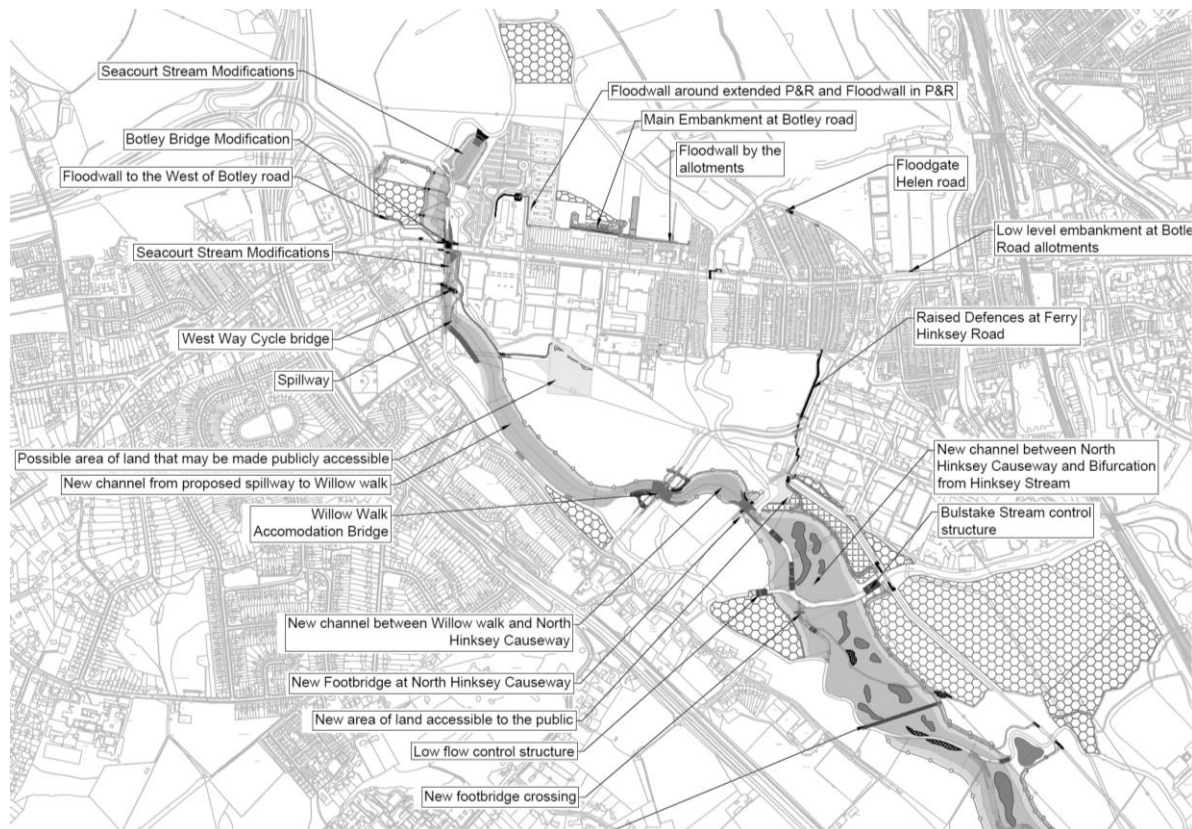


Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme – your views are needed!

The Environment Agency's £176 million Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme includes a 5km long flood channel from north of the Botley Road to north Kennington, together with flood embankments, culverts, bridge etc. It aims to reduce flooding in Oxford and "keep Oxford open for business". The figure shows the northern part of the scheme that affects Botley and North Hinksey. The scheme needs to go through two separate processes before it can go ahead:

1. A **Planning Application** to Oxfordshire County Council, and
2. **Compulsory Purchase Order** with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.



A **planning application** for the scheme was made last year. It is at myeplanning.oxfordshire.gov.uk, application no. MW.0027/22. At the time, 300 local residents wrote in. More than 90% opposed the **flood channel part of the scheme**,

The **flood channel** would:

- permanently damage biodiversity, notably at Hinksey Meadow;
- be poor value for money, protecting only 51 extra homes at £470,000 per home in a 1-in-50 year flood event, compared to the scheme with no channel;
- reduce access to a huge area of public space, especially during the 3-5 year construction period;
- and require 40mph restrictions on the A34 at South Hinksey to allow lorries carrying the scraped-out spoil from the channel to get onto the ring road.

In response, Oxfordshire County Council asked the Environment Agency for more information. That has now been delivered and is on the planning application website (totalling about 400 documents!). The additional information shows that, even without considering Hinksey Meadow, and despite the wetland habitats that the scheme would create, there would still be a loss of biodiversity on site. It also confirms (at Appendices Q and U for any keen planning application readers) that **the scheme**

without the channel would provide significant flood protection, be cheaper, and avoid almost all the damage and disruption.

Please comment on the planning application **by 20 April** to Matthew.Case@oxfordshire.gov.uk. The information about how to do this is on www.hinkseyandosney.org and www.oxfordfloodandenvironmentgroup.com, but just a brief email summarising your reasons for supporting/opposing the scheme would already be helpful.

There will be a meeting about the scheme at the Assembly Room at Oxford Town Hall on 17 April 7pm
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A **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)** allows an organisation to force people to sell their land to the organisation. Because CPOs are so drastic, removing people's rights to their own land, objections to a CPO often go to public inquiry. Land owners' objections carry more weight, but other users of the land, for example recreational users, can also object.

Normally, organisations serve CPOs only after they have received planning permission. However the Environment Agency has *already* served CPOs for the flood alleviation scheme, including for Hinksey Meadow and nearby fields, one owned by the Ferry Hinksey Trust and leased to the Scouts, Seacourt Nature Park, and the fields along the Electric Avenue from Osney Mead to South Hinksey.

If you use any CPO land, please send comments to FloodsCasework@defra.gov.uk **by 2 April (though they may well accept comments after that, so do write in regardless)**. Your comments should state the title of the order "Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme: compulsory purchase order 2023", the grounds for objection, your address, and your interest in the land (e.g. dog walking).

Professor Riki Therivel and Canon Dr Chris Sugden and the Hinksey and Osney Environment Group
www.hinkseyandosney.org