



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Dyddiad/ Date 5 September 2024
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Mr Gareth Price
Clerk of the Petitions Committee
Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1 SN

[Letter forwarded via email only to petitions@senedd.wales]

Dear Mr Price

Petition P-06-1428 - Caenant Terrace, Skewen

Thank you for your letter dated 17th July 2024, and for sharing your concerns regarding the future timeline for the flood alleviation scheme in Skewen, particularly for Caenant Terrace. I also apologise for the delay in response.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), this Council has been diligently working on the Skewen Flood Alleviation Scheme since 2020, and has successfully advanced through various stages of Welsh Government's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) process. It is important to note that the flooding at Caenant Terrace is just one of several locations being addressed; the project's scope also includes measures to protect properties on Old Road, New Road, Dynevor Road, and Drummau Road, all of which have experienced flooding in recent years.

We understand the desire to make progress as fast as possible, especially given the impact of recent flooding on the residents of Caenant Terrace and the wider community, but Skewen has not been the only location where there has been urgent need. It is noted the recent incident involving a collapse in a piped watercourse was a private matter, the Council stepping in to use its powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to resolve the immediate risk. The Council's scheme is expected to eliminate similar risk in that the piped watercourse for which landowners are responsible will be diverted into the new higher capacity flood alleviation scheme.

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The Council is fully committed to addressing the flood risk to Skewen long term and considers it a priority within our FCERM pipeline of works. We have allocated dedicated resources towards the detailed design and development of a comprehensive business case. Our commitment is evident in the progress our team and the Council's selected consultants have made, despite the numerous obstacles and constraints presented in the urban and densely populated areas involved.

Unfortunately, the development of a flood alleviation scheme is an inherently complex process and requires thorough planning, design, and consultation phases to ensure the effectiveness and safety of the proposed measures. Several statutory requirements must be met, including planning approvals, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) consents, license agreements, landowner negotiations, environmental consultations, and Network Rail consents etc. Each of these elements has its own timeline, and some processes cannot begin until others are completed.

Furthermore, there is a detailed and stepped process we need to go through to ensure Welsh Government funding can be secured. Even if we were given more funding tomorrow, we cannot advance the scheme any more than we already have. The situation remains that we anticipate completing the Full Business Case and Detailed Design in the Summer of 2025. Following this, the proposal will be reviewed by the Welsh Government Flood Branch to ensure compliance with their criteria for construction funding and to enable release of the much greater sum than has already been made available to undertake the works.

Please do not hesitate to make contact should you have any further queries or require further information.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Steve Hunt

Leader of Neath Port Talbot Council