Flood Risk Management in Scotland - 2018 consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas

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Background

Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs) are where significant flood risk exists now or is likely to occur in the future. They are identified as part of the National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA) process and help Scotland to understand and prioritise where work could be of most benefit. They are a vital part of protecting people, properties, businesses, communities, infrastructure and our environment.

Since 2011, when PVAs were first identified, SEPA and our partners have been working hard to improve data and methods of flood risk assessment. As a result we now have new information. This has resulted in changes to the PVAs which we are consulting on to make sure we have got it right.

PVAs are based on the NFRA which is updated and published every six years. This provides a clear picture of past, current and future flood risk. It considers flooding from rivers, the sea and from surface water. SEPA will publish the second NFRA in December 2018.

From 1 May a public consultation on PVAs will be available on SEPA’s website. This will enable members of the public and responsible authorities to provide us with feedback on these changes.

Key messages

SEPA helps Scotland prepare more powerfully for future increased flooding
- Climate change is one of the biggest flooding threats to Scotland
- Reducing that threat requires knowledge and action
- Identifying Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs) to flooding is a vital part of protecting people, properties, businesses, communities, infrastructure and the environment.
- PVAs help Scotland understand and prioritise where work could benefit the most.

Working together Scotland’s understanding of flood risk is better than it’s ever been
- Tackling flooding together is vital to reduce the impact of flooding on people’s lives
- Working with our partners we use the best available scientific data
- Using the best available data informs our National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA) to:
Identify areas at greatest risk from potential flooding, considering a wide range of impacts.
Help councils and other public bodies work with communities to focus activities on reducing the impact of flooding.

Your views count
- We’d like your opinion to help us check we’ve got it right.
- Although it’s a science and evidence led process, feedback is important to give us a true understanding as there may be local impacts that we are unaware of.
- From 1 May 2018 the consultation will be open until 31 July 2018.
- We’ll consider what you tell us and publish the results in December 2018.
- This will inform future Flood Risk Management Strategies and local Flood Risk Management Plans which will be published in 2021.

Public consultation
Effective partnership working between SEPA and the responsible authorities is central to the delivery of the Flood Risk Management (FRM) Act. The consultation on PVAs, and how this is delivered, is an example of how we can achieve successful partnership working while delivering an open, transparent and accessible consultation process:

- On 1 May 2018 the consultation will be published on the SEPA website: https://consultation.sepa.org.uk/evidence-and-flooding/pvas2018
- The preferred route for responses is through the online facility, or in writing to: SEPA, FRM Planning, Silvan House, 3rd Floor, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT.
- Printed copies will be available from the following SEPA offices: Edinburgh, Eurocentral and Aberdeen, please use the contact details below to make an appointment to view them.
- Enquiries relating to the consultation should be emailed to FloodActConsultation@sepa.org.uk or by calling 03000 99 66 99.
- The consultation closes on 31 July 2018.

What happens next?
- We will be engaging proactively with our stakeholders to communicate the responses from the consultation and the actions we will take next.
- PVAs will be submitted to ministers for approval in September 2018.
- The final version of the NFRA and PVAs will be published in December 2018.
- The NFRA will then go on to inform future Flood Risk Management Plans which will be published in 2021.