

Hebden Bridge Flood Alleviation Scheme

October 2025

The Environment Agency is working with Calderdale Council to design and build a Flood Alleviation Scheme for Hebden Bridge.

Planning Application – Information Update No.2

We are issuing this second update as we are aware of inaccuracies circulating on social media. We appreciate there is a lot of information to digest, and it can sometimes be misinterpreted. Our priority is to ensure everyone has access to clear, factual information so that people can form their views based on evidence rather than speculation.

All planning documentation is publicly available, and due to the technical nature of the project, it is appropriately detailed. Information about the scheme can also be found on www.eyeoncalderdale.com. The Flood Information Centre on Valley Road is also open every Monday and Friday between 10am–2pm, and every Thursday 3pm–7pm. Anyone wishing to speak to a member of the project team is very welcome to visit in person, or contact us via hebdenbridgeFAS@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Addressing Key Misunderstandings and Comments

Comment: “Contractors will be working weekends”

Construction will primarily take place Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm. Weekend work may occur only very occasionally and will be avoided where possible to minimise disruption and cost.

Comment: “Businesses have to wait until the end of the scheme to claim compensation”

Compensation can be claimed from the start of the scheme. Businesses will not need to wait until the end of the financial year or the completion of works. Please see our information leaflet on www.eyeoncalderdale.com for further information.

Comment: “The Wavy Steps will be destroyed”

The Wavy Steps will not be impacted by the scheme and will remain accessible when temporary flood barriers are not in use.

Comment: “The planning application doesn’t contain all the necessary economic information”

A planning application is primarily for development consent, demonstrating that the scheme is environmentally sound, well-designed, and aligned with planning policies. If planning is granted, a Full Business Case (FBC) will be submitted to secure investment approval from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). The FBC will include a detailed economic case with updated cost-benefit analysis, sensitivity and risk analysis, non-monetised benefits (e.g., amenity, biodiversity, health), and the Appraisal Summary Table (AST).

Comment: “Climate change has not been factored into the planning application”

The proposed scheme will significantly increase the standard of flood protection for Hebden Bridge and takes into consideration climate change impacts. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Environment Agency guidance, climate change allowances have been assessed, including projected increases in peak river flows and rainfall intensity. Design measures provide resilience under more extreme future weather events, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

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Comment: “There are three schemes combined as one”

There are three proposed flood alleviation schemes, but they are not combined. Each has its own business case and planning application:

- **Erringden Hillside:** Full business case approval is in place. Surface water reduction work is complete and property flood resilience measures are ongoing. Planning consent for the canal overflow was secured in 2024 and construction will be scheduled in accordance with the main flood alleviation scheme construction programme.

- **Stubbing Holme Road:** Work continues to identify an affordable solution. If successful, a separate planning application and business case will be submitted. Central Street School is not part of this scheme and is included in the Hebden Bridge FAS planning application.

- **Hebden Bridge FAS:** Has a standalone planning application and will submit its own full business case.

Comment: “St George's bridge never floods so why is money being spent on it?”

Due to the proposed increased containment of the river, the height of the river during high flow conditions will be higher, therefore increase the potential impact to St Georges bridge. New flood panels are to be provided at the lower end of the bridge to prevent over topping and structural work is required to resist increased flood loads.

Comment: “Calder Holmes Park will definitely be used for the site compound”

The planning application for the Hebden Bridge Flood Alleviation Scheme includes Calder Holmes Park as the proposed location for a site compound to accommodate the operatives and materials necessary to deliver the project. However, the project team continues to seek alternative locations for its compound requirements.

Suitable spaces for a compound of this scale are extremely limited in Hebden Bridge due to the town's geography and infrastructure. To avoid further delays to the planning process, we needed to submit the application with Calder Holmes Park as the identified option. This ensures the scheme can continue progressing while we pursue alternatives.

We fully recognise the importance of Calder Holmes Park to the local community and the potential impact its use could have. If we are successful in securing a different location, we would submit a **new planning application** for that site. We remain committed to working closely with the community to minimise disruption and will continue to keep you updated as discussions evolve.

We recognise many people feel anxious about the proposed works. That is entirely understandable. Our commitment is to be open, accountable and respectful - but also clear on the evidence behind decisions. If you have concerns, please come and talk to us directly or email us at HebdenBridgeFAS@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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