Welcome

Welcome to the sixth issue of our newsletter providing an update on progress for Bandon Flood Relief scheme.

As Contractor on the project, Wills Bros. Ltd would like to take this opportunity to thank the local and surrounding community as well as road users for their continued support and patience during the construction.

We are making every effort to minimise the disruption caused to residents, business owners and the general public.

➢ Works in Bandon have continued in October with the focus on land based works. The main instream works have now been completed for 2017 and will resume in May 2018. Land based works are advancing for elements such as drainage works, flood defence walls, the footbridge and embankments and these will be the focus of works over the coming winter.

➢ Bandon footbridge works are progressing very well, with the preparation of bridge piers and columns almost fully complete. The deck is currently being manufactured offsite and it is planned to complete service diversion of ESB and watermains in advance of the deck arriving onsite. The works are ahead of schedule and it is hoped to have an operating footbridge in place well in advance of the current September 2018 deadline. A road closure on McSwiney Quay is planned between November 20th and December 1st 2017 to facilitate preparatory works for the erection of the footbridge. The Contractor will reopen the roadway during this period when works allow in an effort to minimise disruption. A one-day closure on 6th December will be necessary to facilitate the installation of the deck.
Progress

There are a number of drainage outfalls that are programmed to be advanced shortly. Works are expected to commence at Bridge street carpark and Glasslinn Rd. Some site investigative works are programmed to be completed this year. Outfall pipework and headwall completion works are progressing at Ballylangley Road near Mill River.

A temporary fish passage has been installed at Mill River on the Mill River/Bandon River intersection. This is required to ensure adequate fish passage is available following the dredging works. IFI have been consulted on all matters concerning these works.

Works associated with the construction of the Kilbrittain Road Stream Culvert are almost completed, with reinstatement works underway, including topsoiling. Works on the Kilbrittain Road that complement the channel works will begin shortly and will entail the installation of fencing and crash barrier. The drainage lines to facilitate installation of new road gullies and the resurfacing of the section of road from Birchvale estate southwards to the Bypass Junction with Kilbrittain Road will take place in January and February 2018.

Culvert installation works are completed at Mill River within the grounds of the old distillery. Reinstatement works are advancing. The Contractor is in the process of completing some bank stabilisation works at the junction but further works on a retaining wall and new drainage line will take place in early 2018 at the junction of Distillery Road.

The Contractor is currently installing new drainage channels at Moanarone/Cork Marts opposite The Still Bar. These works will be ongoing and will be completed by end of November 2017. Traffic Management systems are implemented when necessary.
The construction of a new flood defence walls are ongoing at the following locations:

Graham Norton Walk – Sheet piling works are completed; stone cladding works are well advanced.

The Stretch – Sheet piling works are completed, reinforced concrete works are completed, stone cladding works are progressing, reinstatement works have commenced.

Watergate Street – Sheet piling work are completed. Stone cladding works are advancing.

Glasslinn Road Wall – Sheet piling works are substantially completed.

Mill Place Wall - Works are due to commence shortly to relocated major ESB cables. Piling works will begin shortly thereafter.

The Contractor is planning to commence with the construction of flood defence embankments in early 2018 to surround the Wastewater treatment plant and along the N71 Cork road at Ballylangley opposite Billy’s Drive Thru.
Environmental

Ecology and the environment plays a significant role within the flood relief project. Every effort is being made by Wills Bros Ltd to mitigate against the impacts of such a large infrastructure project on the local environment.

Since our last report, works have progressed well as our environmental team continue to monitor every component of the scheme. Dredging works have been completed from O’Driscoll’s Footbridge to the roundabout at Glasslinn Road. The end of the dredge was dominated by rock breaking activities as layers of gravel were minimal.

A vital component of our environmental team’s work includes capturing and re-locating fish away from the active dredge zone.

Encouragingly, fish species richness and abundance is healthy throughout all works areas. Preliminary works for the rock ramp at Bandon weir called for a planned fish removal operation to be undertaken. This resulted in adult salmon, in excess of 20 pounds, and sea trout, in excess of 3 pounds, being removed using nets and electrofishing equipment prior to safe release upstream of the weir.

A river rehabilitation works programme is also incorporated into the project. This involves recreating instream habitats suitable for all life stages of aquatic species, such as salmon and trout, plus protecting the river banks with rock armour. As part of this remediation project, 6 pools were constructed with associated deflectors and gravel shoals. A thalweg (channel) connects these pools and follows the original channel of the river. This will promote instream heterogeneity, benefiting the multitude of fish species which live within the Bandon River. A further number of pools will be completed before the end of the project.

All major instream works were completed prior to the September 30th deadline. A derogation was granted for vital instream works in October. One of the most important elements of this was providing fish passage to the Mill Stream. Access for fish into the Mill Stream, an important tributary which flows into the works area, has been provided on a temporary basis using a rock ramp. This will allow unimpeded upstream migration of salmon and trout to their natal spawning grounds.

Water quality was monitored at regular intervals to ensure water quality parameter limits were not exceeded. Where limits were excessive, operations were altered or stopped to prevent injury to aquatic species. Although storm conditions and high water levels hindered works for a large period of October, all elements were completed prior to the deadline. This will now allow salmonids to spawn in the river undisturbed and spawning activity will be closely monitored throughout the winter months.

Besides fish, another species of note which came to our attention is the osprey, observed on the 19th of September. This would have been migrating to Africa and was recorded at various locations in Cork around this time. Avian species which were prevalent across the works site of late include kingfishers, dippers, herons, egrets and cormorants. Terrestrial species which have been regularly recorded recently include otters as their paw prints have been noted on banks throughout the lower section of the works site.
Archaeological Finds

Wills Brothers are the Main Works Contractor on the Bandon Flood relief scheme in Bandon Town and through their Specialist Archaeologist are responsible for all archaeological investigations required to facilitate the successful development of this project. Bandon is a historic town and one of the first major plantation towns in Munster when it was taken over by the Elizabethans as a result of the 1588 Desmond rebellion. Town walls were built in the early 17th century and these fortified the area between Bandon Bridge in the east of the town to directly west of Bandon Weir, where some of the main construction works related to the scheme are taking place.

As a plantation town, Bandon dates to the late 16th/early 17th century. However, a major bridge called ‘Mahownes Bridge’ or O’Mahony’s Bridge existed just west of the present Bandon Bridge before the area was settled by the Elizabethan planters. Just to the west of Bandon Bridge, a stone structure that was probably associated with the 17th Century defensive elements of the town was discovered on the north side of the river. The remains of this structure were fully recorded and excavated prior to removal.

Also discovered at Bandon Bridge was a large wooden beam, which measures between 6 and 7 metres in length. It contains numerous notches which would have housed vertical timbers. This beam may have formed part of the pre-17th century bridge and as it is of oak, a sample is being prepared to be sent for dendro dating. Results of which will be included in a future edition of this newsletter.

Prior to the underpinning of the Bandon Bridge, over two hundred timbers were recorded and excavated prior to removal to a specialised wet storage area where further assessment of these timbers is taking place. Many of these timbers are known as starlings and would date to the construction of the bridge in the 18th Century being placed along the outside of the piers to protect them from erosion.

In the excavations under the bridge and of the structure to the west, a large amount of 17th century pottery, metal artefacts and coins were found.

A military button of 18th or 19th century date found during excavations under the bridge. A Charles 1st penny of 1682 also found under the bridge. Sgraffito Ware of early 17th date found during excavation in the area of Bandon Bridge.
Upcoming Works

Currently we envisage in the coming quarter to be undertaking the following sections of work:

- Moanarone Completion
- Mill River retaining wall (Fish pass May 2018)
- Mill River Reinstatement Completion
- Glasslinn Road drainage completion
- Glasslinn Road Design Completion
- Glasslinn Road wall completion
- Embankment site clearance
- Cluid House works
- Pedestrian Bridge and services completion
- The Stretch Wall completion
- Watergate St completion
- Graham Norton Wall completion
- M&E works Brady’s Lane
- Bridge St. outfall and gully completion
- Non-Return Valve installation
- Kilbrittain Road fencing and crash barrier

Consultations will be made again with all affected property owners before we commence any works in their property and advance notice given in accordance with the time periods specified in our contract.

Again, we would like to reiterate that if any property owners or members of the community have any queries or concerns relating to the construction works, we are available in the site office from 8 am – 6 pm Monday to Friday or on the telephone number provided.

Should you have any queries or concerns relating to construction activities, please do not hesitate to contact one of our representatives on site during normal working hours 8am - 6pm or alternatively the CLTMO (Mr. Tony Lowe, Liaison Officer) on 087 0657208 or 087 6784855. Email correspondence relating to construction activities can be directed to tonylowe@willsbros.com.

All queries relating to the Scheme itself should be directed to Ger Barry, Employer’s Representative who can be contacted at 087 2074810.

Email correspondence in relation to the scheme can be addressed to bandonfrs@byrnelooby.com.

Traffic Disruptions

McSwiney quay Road closure between November 20th and December 1st 2017 (Intermittent) to facilitate installation of Bridge deck. Closure on 6th December 2017

N71 roadworks through to December 22nd 2017

Moanarone/Cork Marts opposite The Still Bar till November 30th 2017

Bridge lane car park for a five-day period to facilitate the installation of an outfall pipe.

Bandon Bridge Glasslinn Road junction excavations to facilitate trial hole excavation.

A dedicated webpage has been set-up to communicate and provide updates to the public throughout the duration of the scheme. This can be found at www.bandonfrs.ie and will be updated regularly as the works progress and look forward to your continued cooperation during the construction of this contract.

PUBLIC INFORMATION CLINIC

Monthly public information clinics are being held on the last Tuesday of every month as part of the Communication Strategy for the Scheme. The clinic is open from 18.00 to 19.30 and members of the public who have an interest or queries in relation to the works are welcome to meet members of the team involved in the construction of the Scheme. No appointments are necessary. The next clinic will be held on 28th November.