Ouseburn catchment Steering Group

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Public Engagement

A report on the Public Engagement activities in the Upper Ouseburn Making Space for Water Project

Paul Quinn (Chairman of the OCSG) Newcastle University School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences
and
Sebastien Tellier (Coordinator of the OCSG) JBA consultant

Environment Agency

jba CONSULTING

Integrated Urban Drainage Pilots

Newcastle University

OCSG

Newcastle City Council

Contents

1. Background to the Proposal
2. The Ouseburn Catchment Steering Group
3. Lessons Learned
4. Public Meetings
5. The Message to the Public
6. Upper Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan
7. Conclusion

Appendices

1. Working wetlands, people and ponds - OCSG proposal for the Ouseburn catchment

1. Background to the proposal

Newcastle University (Paul Quinn) and JBA (Sebastien Tellier) drafted the proposal on behalf of the Ouseburn Catchment Steering Group (OCSG). It was a proposal to work with the local Environment Agency (EA) and the Making Space for Water Initiative (MS4W, see appendix 1). The proposal requested 37K of funding, to address a wide range of issues highlighted by the public and to address the needs of the MS4W goals (**http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/fcd/policy/strategy.htm**). The OCSG group was thus awarded 5K to:

1. Organise collaborative activities and workshops relating to the Upper Ouseburn, a review of existing structures and the role of new flood mitigation features **3K**

   This will include EA, NCC, NWL and other groups meeting during the life of the project, taking on board local views and demonstrating that the emerging development is shaped by local involvement and knowledge.

2. Funding to allow local activities, data collection and reporting **2K**

   This will include meetings during office hours between interested parties, payment of any expenses and subsidy of costs involved in data collection and to hold meetings.

The small amount of funding may reflect the general attitude to public engagement and how much it actually costs to create a realistic engagement process. Equally, the management may have felt that public engagement is 'free' as voluntary groups such as the OCSG group are ongoing organisations. The EA had already planned two public meetings and could have proceeded without any OCSG input. The OCSG group appreciates the funding given and perhaps with hindsight the input and importance of using proactive local groups will be given more credence in the future.

2. The Ouseburn Catchment Steering Group OCSG

The OSCG mission statement as reported in the draft Ouseburn Catchment Management Plan is

A commitment to continuously improve water quality and ecological status, lower flood risk, increase access, recreation and amenity value whilst optimising economic/business activity, using an active public participation process

or in more practical terms

- ***Water quality and ecological standards must improve,***
- ***Flood risk must reduce,***
- ***Partnerships should be forged between academic, public and private bodies – with close links to business and governance***

In partnership with Newcastle City Council (NCC), Newcastle University (UNEW) helped draft a report looking into the issue facing the Ouseburn catchment. The report was written at the end of the PURE project (**http://www.purenorthsea.com/**) in 2006. At the end of the project it was felt that some entity should continue to debate the future of the Ouseburn and a number of the partners taking part in the PURE project agreed to carry the process on after the end of the project on a voluntary basis. UNEW chose to chair the group in order to push the 'catchment' scale agenda in organising the future management of the Ouseburn. Together NCC and UNEW produced a draft document discussing the public feelings about the Ouseburn catchment.

A copy of the draft catchment plan can be found at:
www.colinpercy.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/pure/pureouse_draft_jun06.pdf

THE OCSG has been running for almost 2 years and has held 9 meetings. The next major task was to create a viable constituency for the group. The following groups have attended the meetings:

Paul Quinn (University of Newcastle)
Sebastien Tellier (JBA Consulting)
Archie Ruggles-Brise, Ceri Gibson (Tyne Rivers Trust)
Graham Siddle and Richard Robinson (Environment Agency)
Howard Elcock and Bill Colwell (Campaign for Rural England - CPRE NE)
Colin Percy and Lara Baker (Newcastle City Council)
Allan Snape, Richard Woodhouse, Steve Gibson (Northumbrian Water Limited)
Steve Lowe (Northumbria Wildlife Trust),
Jessica Grinsted (Living Waterways Project)
Sarah French (Groundwork NE)
Helen Hawes (Newcastle City Airport)
Anna Newson (Friends of Jesmond Dene)
Peter Redpath (Red House Farm Residents Association)
Steve Barrett (Woolsington Resident Association)
Phil Bell (Melbury Park Resident Association)
Rick Anderson (Ouseburn Community Centre)
Brian Mark (Representing Jim Cousin)
Bob Wilkin (Resident Garden Village former Jesmond Dene Ranger)
Ken Heads (Ouseburn Projects)

The OCSG feels that it represents the natural conduit for the public understanding and stakeholder involvement, for the governance and development of the Ouseburn catchment. The Ouseburn Catchment Management Plan outlines the issues in the Ouseburn area but as yet it hasn't have any funded Action Plan. As such, we are proposing to both create and execute the Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan (OCAP). We see the creation of the OCAP as the opportunity to create a proactive series of steps

leading to the funding and resources needed to execute a multi-funded, multi-functioning sustainable landscape for all who live in the Ouseburn catchment.

The OCSG would like to propose a workable series of steps leading to the creation of the OCAP. In the first instance we need to create funds to complete the OCAP and allow its wider dissemination. By targeting a series of key issues in the Ouseburn we will demonstrate, through collaborative initiatives that a 'best practice' approach to development within any catchment can be achieved. Given the current funding situation we wish to target the flood risk management in the Upper Ouseburn as the initial catalyst to spark the longer term OCAP. The willingness of the EA to part fund this initiative could lead other partner organisations to contribute to the plan.

The innovative strategy of the OCSG group is to have both professional bodies and residents in the same room every few months, to meet and exchange ideas. The meetings are well attended (average of 15 people) and form a lively forum for debate. Experience has shown that the longer the group has existed, the more it has centred on the free and open exchange of information relating to the Ouseburn. The public understands the operation and limitations of professional bodies much better and in return most of the professional bodies improve their public engagement credentials.

The classical mode of 'meet the people' does have an important role to play. However, they are always a gamble and can be hit and miss in terms of attendance. Public meetings can sometimes be seen as 'token engagement' if 'things' do not change as a result of the meeting. Hence the idea in the MS4W was threefold.

1. To hold 2 public meetings, where the OCSG would use its existing knowledge gained from the project public engagement;

2. To use the OCSG meetings to invite key groups active in the Upper Ouseburn pilot study to meet and be 'interrogated' by the OCSG. Equally the Upper Ouseburn activities could then be fed into the whole catchment activities and a wider constituency of people were made aware of the Defra/EA strategy for MS4W;

3. An action plan for improvement in the Upper Ouseburn study area must be agreed.

The final outcome would be a workable future plan based on input from the professional bodies and the public. This was largely reflected in the final public meeting on March 27th 2008, where both scientific, socio-political implications of flood management and land use change where debated in full for the benefit for all. There is still need for an Action Plan!

The ongoing engagement process has helped to improve holistic thinking about the flood risk and general environmental management. The project may be in fact suggesting to Defra and EA several aspects of 'best practice' that

they should adopt, at least in terms of communicating a very complex and difficult issue to the public.

3. Lessons learned

The original concept for public engagement can be seen in figure 1. Here the need to tie groups and entities together is paramount. Whilst the goal of the diagram is good it still begs the question, who should be in the middle? In this project the EA was represented by one person who was given a difficult job to deliver the whole project. The lead entity may not be most appropriate person if they

- Are directly appointed by management;
- Are busy with many other tasks;
- Do not live or work actively in the area.

It may be better to have a larger group as the lead partner. This could range from local EA officers (who are actively working actively in that area) or it could be grouping such the OCSG.

Figure 1. The partnership process (Gill, 2007)

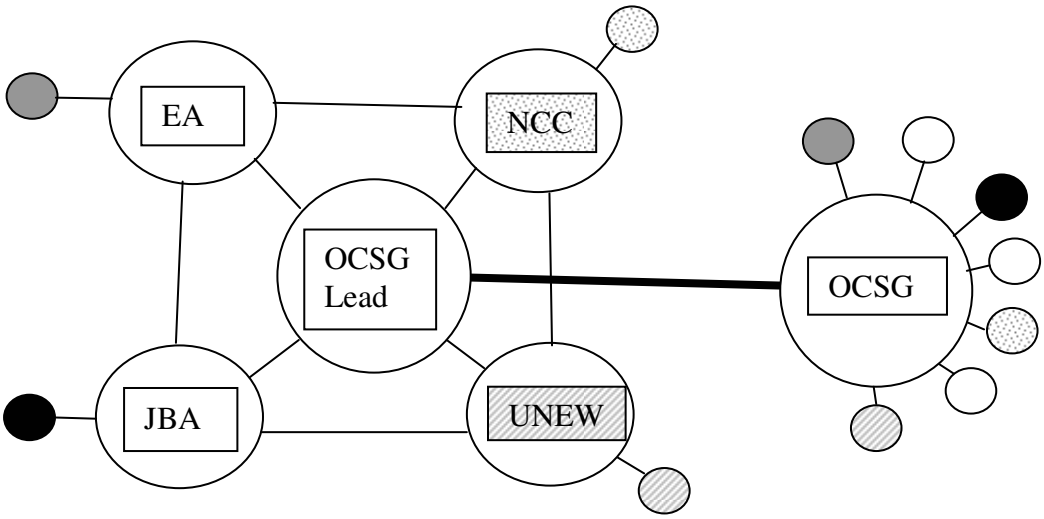


Figure 2. A representative and well networked, appropriate lead organisation

Hence, adopting best practice may require a very active local lead partner that has a public engagement strategy and a wide constituency of bodies and interests to fall back upon. Figure 2 suggests that the lead partner is already linked to all the organisations and public groups needed for the project.

A second lesson learned was that non attendance of groups at critical meetings can damage the process. The non attendance by the Newcastle Great Park (NGP) developers to ALL meetings has led to an 'us and them' mentality. Problems caused by developers, with large amount of litters found in the rivers by the residents and reported to the EA and the lack of contact with the public mean that progress has been and still is slow. NCC has acted as the conduit for reporting the developers' activities to the public. This is not an ideal situation and reflects badly on the Council in terms of lack of enforcement of its planning laws and its ongoing relation with the public.

Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) attended the August 2007 meeting but did not to attend the final meeting. This was poorly received by the public and all the MS4W partners. This reflects badly on the public image of the organisation and weakens the whole public engagement process for this project.
Still, the OCSG group would like to thank NWL for their frequent attendance at the OCSG meetings and the public presentation of the Red House Farm flood relief scheme to our group.

The OCSG did not receive invites to MS4W activities and often felt distant from the main MS4W programme. Fortunately members of the OCSG were on the MS4W project and so we were able to have an input at national level. Again, there may still be a poor understanding of the importance of the public engagement process. There must be a basic best practice imperative to give all those who want to have input to the process a fair chance to articulate their knowledge and concerns.

Finally, the Upper Ouseburn consultation should continue and a local action plan created. It would be sad to lose the momentum gained in this project. When the public were told that the MS4W project was almost finished they were asked if they would like another meeting in the future, the resounding answer was 'YES!'

4. Public Meetings

The first public meeting (attended by 90 people) was organised and led by the EA. The OCSG group did, however, mobilise its constituents and were able to present posters by Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Newcastle University, Tyne Rivers Trust, Red House Farm Resident Association and a poster on 'Otters in the Ouseburn' given by Bob Wilkin, an OCSG member. Paul Quinn (with both Newcastle University and OCSG group hats on) led two guided tours of the SuDs on cell I which was well attended and generally appreciated despite poor weather conditions. The feedbacks were collected by the EA and a summary was sent to all the partners. The feedbacks formed the bases of the

last six months of the project. A general comment on the meeting was that a certain degree of hostility and scepticism exists in the public toward the professional bodies. However, the meeting was greatly appreciated by those who attended. This reaction is typical of the public engagement process, where the speakers may be come under initial attack but their effort and concern is appreciated.

The second public meeting (attended by 70 people) included the key partners of the project (EA, NCC, UNEW and the OCSG), Tyne Rivers Trust and the A1 Consortium. The public meeting was held close to Newcastle Great Park development and the public were invited on a guided walk around the newly created ponds on Cell G. A number of posters relating to the project were made available during a drop in session. Several of the posters were directly project on onto the screen which included a short film made by Mark Wilkinson (hydrologist from Newcastle University), see www.youtube.com/proactivefarms)

Figure 3. The guided walk, which crossed Red House Farm and then under the A1 to look at the Ouseburn pollution and then onto Newcastle Great Park Cell G construction site.

Figure 4: The second public meeting held in the Northumbrian Piper, on Red House Farm Estate

In the meeting the OCSG attempted to summarise the findings of the MS4W project. In essence the talk tried to interpret the many technical issues that were addressed in the project. The overriding goals of the presentation were to allay the fears that:

1. The SuDs on Cell I are not operating properly;
2. The current and future NGP development is and will not cause an increase in flood risk for the downstream areas;
3. To reiterate the importance of the 'space' and function of the river and SuDs in the study area;
4. The issue of adopting and managing the SuDs (which was addressed in Newcastle City Council's presentation)

The second part of the talk tried to look at a range of possible future scenarios for the study area. It included features that could be constructed quite quickly, those features could then form part of later development and represent a vision for the long term functioning of the study area within the context of the whole catchment.

5. The Message to the Public

Below is the Powerpoint presentation given at the second MS4W public meeting. The OCSG and Newcastle University took the responsibility of communicating the purpose and the findings of the project to the public. The NWL logo was not added to the list of authors as we felt that had no input to these findings.

A copy of this presentation is also available on **ouseburnplan.blogspot.com**

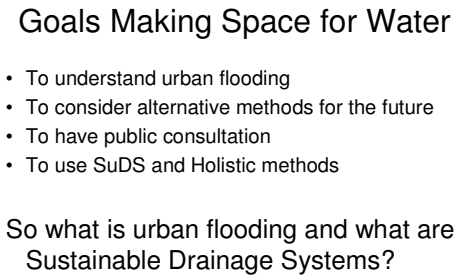


Figure 1 and 2. Introduction to the talk

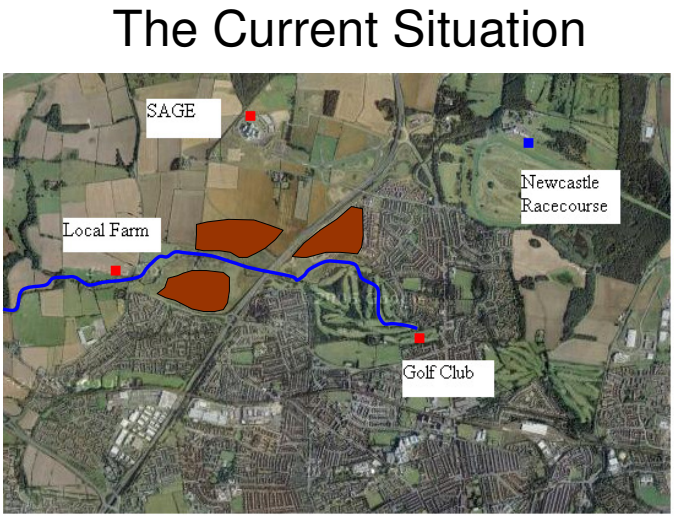


Figure 3. A review of the study area

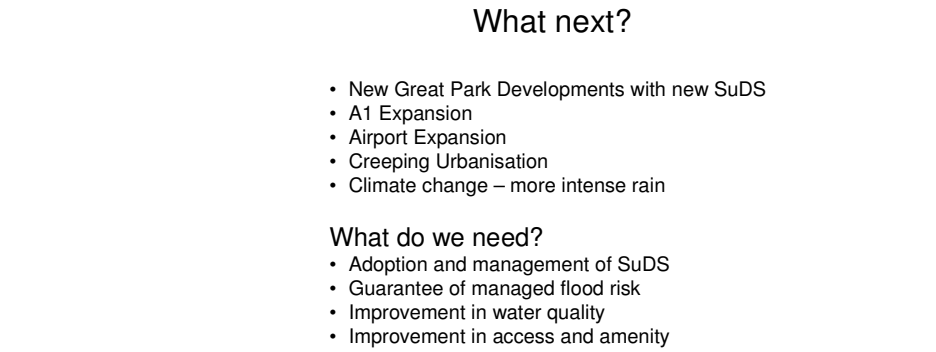


Figure 4. A reminder of the many things happening in the area

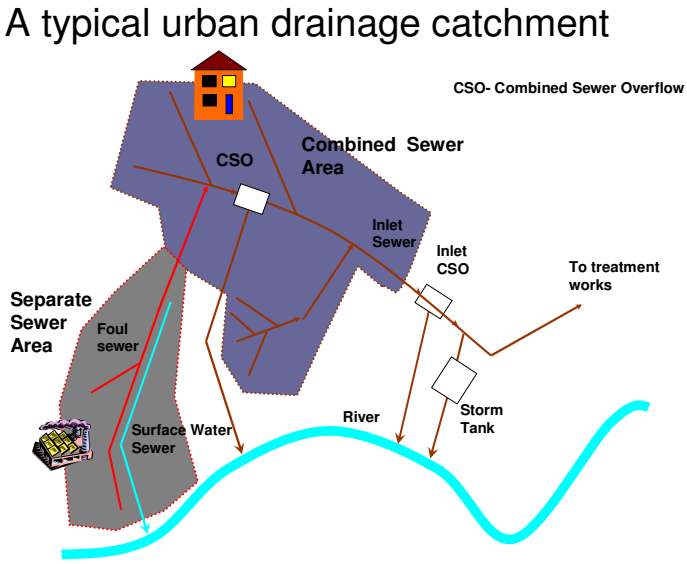


Figure 5. A review of typical sewer system in the area (taken from a MWH presentation)

SuDS Techniques

- Infiltration devices
- Pond, basins & wetlands

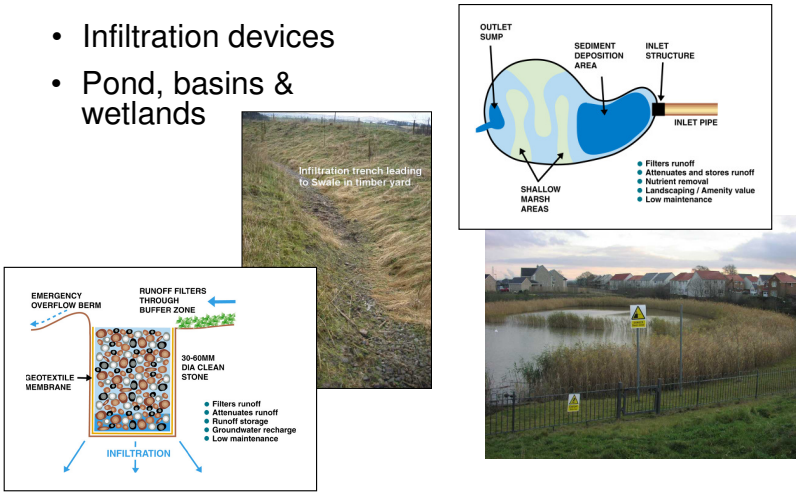


Figure 6 The overall concept of SuDs and examples

Sustainable Drainage Systems in the Upper Ouseburn

New roads and houses = new impermeable surface

To store all the flood flow for the new development we need to calculate the capacity of the storage pond

Impermeable area * depth of rainfall

Figure 7 . A review of the design criteria for the SuDs

Current operation of SuDS is to hold the new runoff only

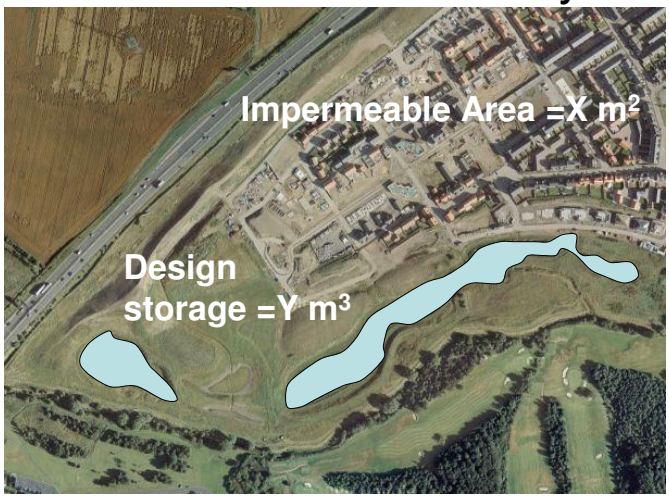


Figure 8. The actual SuDs as constructed in Cell I

It was stressed that there would be no increased flood risk from the Newcastle Great Park development, in fact there would be less flood risk and the reduction in rural inputs would have substantially decreased.

JBA Study - Conclusions

• Sewer networks are sensitive to shorter/intensive events (1-10 year) events e.g. summer storms. The impact of urban area runoff on river flows is lower in larger events (1-100 year)

• Red House Farm flood analysis event shows that the river level can block discharge from the sewer network

• The hydraulic model is sensitive to channel roughness coefficient – e.g. Vegetation etc...

• In longer larger events the rural area will have significant impact

• It may be worth storing water upstream of Brunton Bridge BUT not in the Woolsington area due to flood risk to properties

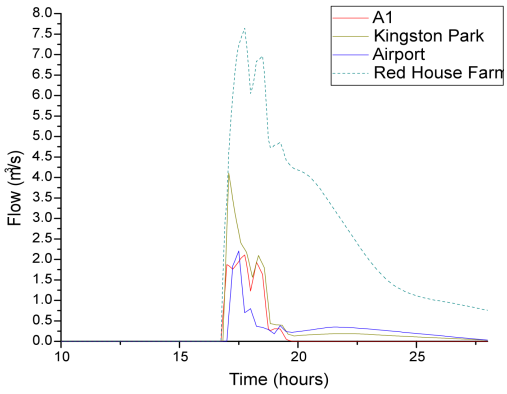
What have we learned?

- OCSG interpretation of the JBA study
  - River channel did contribute to RHF flood in 2005
  - Kingston Park outfall gives substantial runoff

Figure 9 and 10. A summary of the finding of the JBA report and then focussing on the two key finding of relevance to this study

June 2005 event

Ouseburn at Red House Farm during the June 2005 floods



Modelled Flows upstream of Red House Farm

Figure 11. The Ouseburn at Red House Farm during the 2005 flood event

The photo concurs with the findings of the JBA simulations that the river was high during the 2005 flood and would have suppressed the storm outfall on the Red House farm estate. A second finding from the simulation runs was that the major source of the storm runoff was arising from the Kingston Park estate outfall (50% of the total flow). This result was found using the data from the improved hydrometric network of the upper Ouseburn (four new flow gauges and three new rain gauges were installed in the last twelve month, see UNEW report).

Location of study

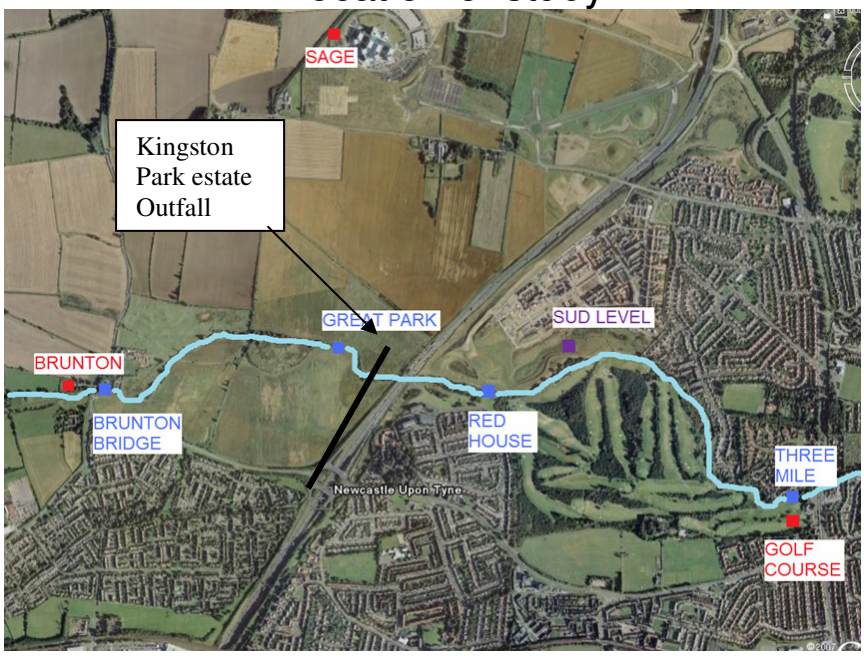


Figure 12, shows the location of the instruments contributed by the University to the project

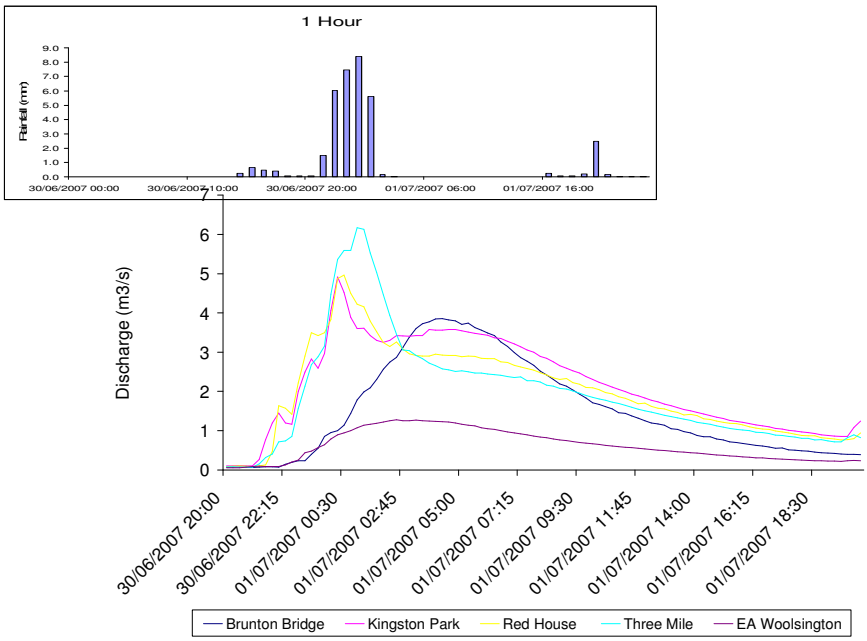


Figure 13. The observed rainfall and runoff for a typical summer storm event

A series of previous summer events had very little or no response from the rural area. It can be seen that the rural flow at Brunton Bridge is starting to rise. The time delay for flow arising from the rural area is now quite clear and does not coincide with the urban runoff peak. The result also reinforces the JBA simulations showing that the majority of runoff at Red House Farm has arisen from the Kingston Park outfall. It is important to stress that the future flood risk may be associated with the Kingston Park estate and not the Great Park development. The quality of water arising from Kingston Park is also a

major concern and we require a water quality survey to be carried out in this area. The question must be asked, what are we going to do about the quantity and quality of water arising from Kingston Park?

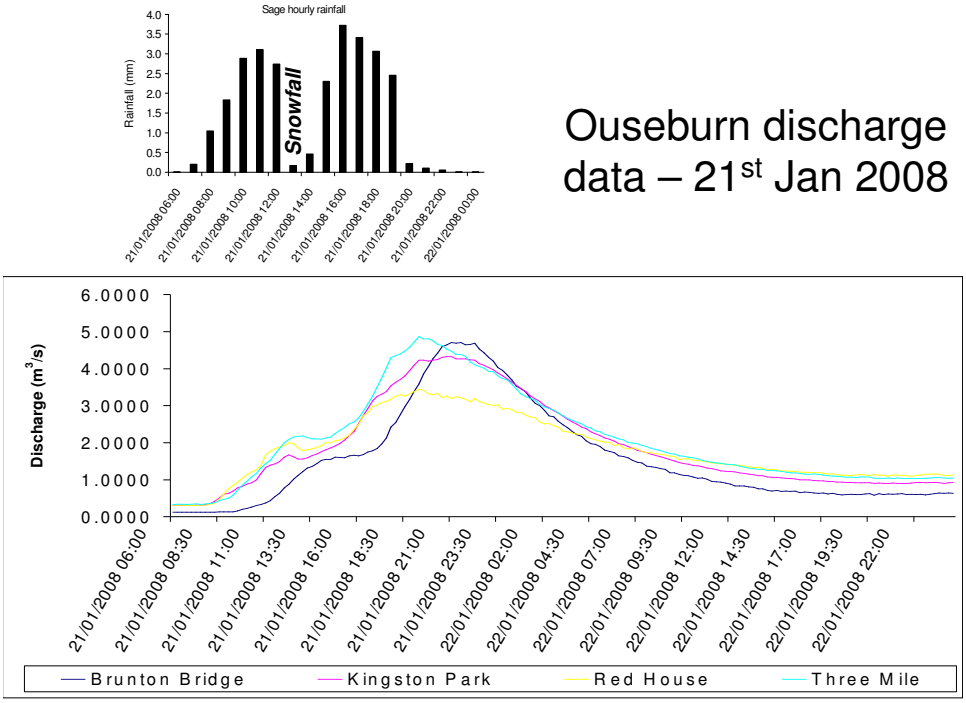


Figure 14. A typical winter runoff event

Clearly, in winter, the rural input is now dominating the whole runoff regime. Urban are less significant, though rainfall intensities are lower. The question asked is what if we had a typical long duration event winter event and high intensity short duration storm (similar to the summer event) was to occur? The threat of river flooding throughout the Ouseburn study area must be high.

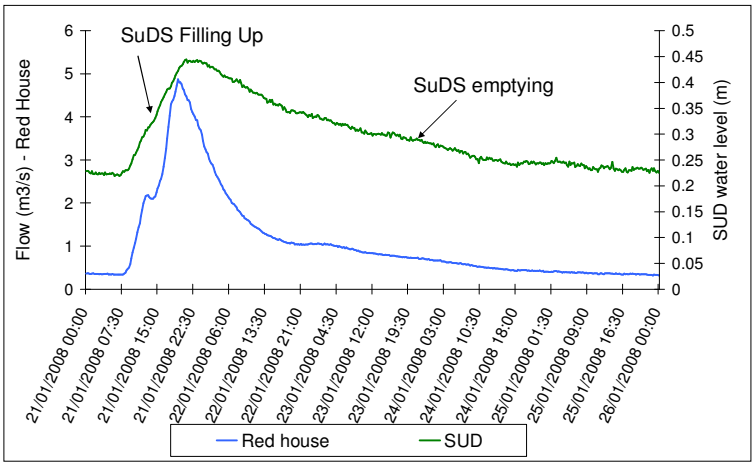


Figure 15. The operation of the large SuDs pond on Melbury estate (Cell I) of Great Park during a recent storm event

A number of members of public have stated that they did not think the SuDs were functioning properly therefore the EA commissioned UNEW to carry out a study. Here the figure shows the nearest flow gauge at Red House Farm with the typical storm event profile. The runoff from the Cell I is causing the SuDs level to rise, in total by almost 25cm. The subsequent draw down is slow taking up to 3 days to drain down. We conclude that the SuDs is functioning correctly.

The Future?

Making Space for What?

Full adoption and management of SuDS by NCC

- Address Visible Look of the SuDS
- Who to contact
- Dredging
- Access and Amenity

- The future Vision -- A PARK?

Figure 16 and 17. The introduction to the discussion on the future a planning for the study area

Figure 17 tried to remind the meeting that the issue of the adoption and management of the river and the SuDs was still a major concern. Also that the OCSG and the local community were looking forward to a high level of good quality management in the area. Perhaps the equivalent of a typical park.
We then moved on to series of future scenarios for the Upper Ouseburn. This was to try to describe the possible options and to show there are a number of option in the study area. The discussion considered future flood management that could address both water quality other public concerns issues. The key concept being the re-integration of the river with the SuDs, so that a number of flooding and water quality issue could be addressed at once.

The Capture of A1 Runoff

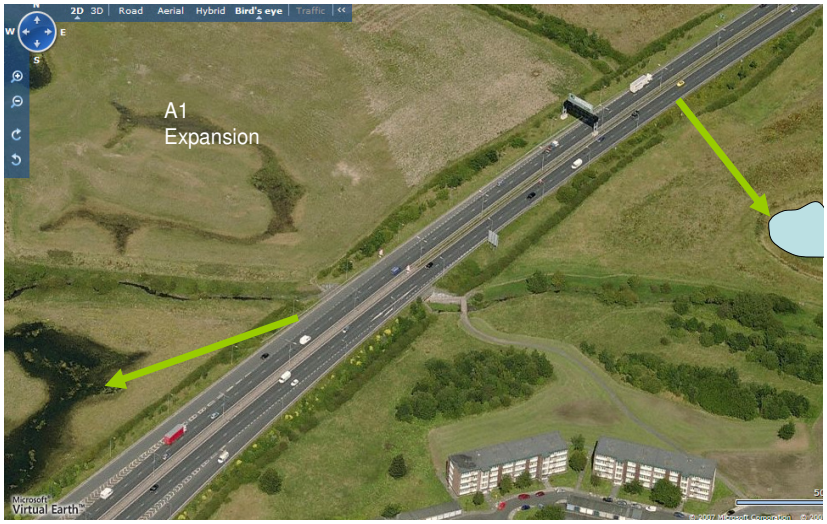


Figure 18. Is the plan to redirect runoff from the A1 to the Great Park SuDs

The capture of A1 road runoff will have immediate beneficial impacts on water quality in the Ouseburn. However the issue of dredging the SUDS will arise and should be planned for.

Integration of The River with the SuDS

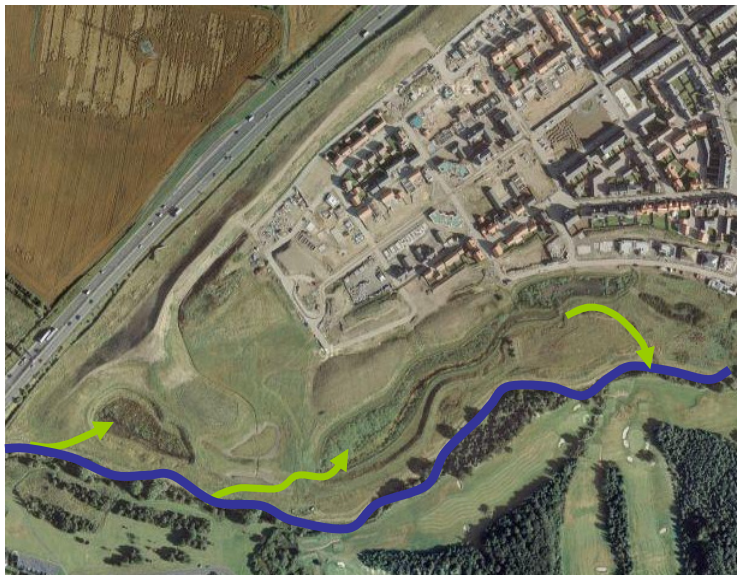


Figure 19. The potential to reintegrate the main river with the SuDs feature

Figure 19 shows a new concept where the main channel is allowed to flow back into the existing SuDs. Here we believe that as the SuDs are infrequently being called upon to hold flood flow, that they could serve purpose to treat the low quality flow from the channel. Depending on how the channel is designed to function some of the increased flood flow from either Kingston Park or the rural area could be held in the SuDs. Therefore we recommend a detailed feasibility study of the hydrology of whole area.

A New River Corridor

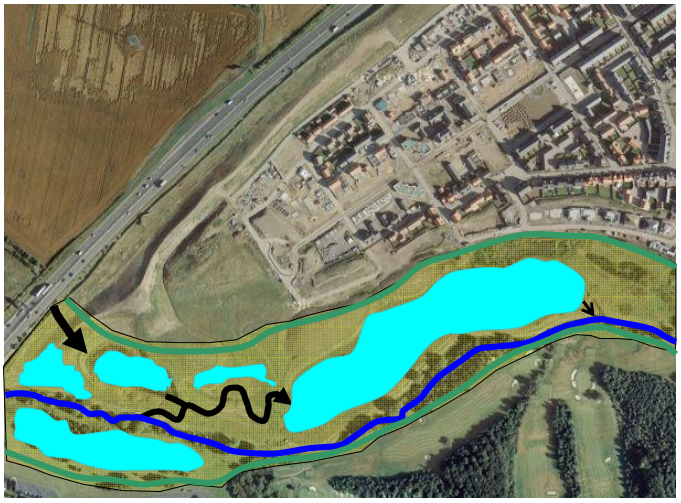


Figure 20. A complete river and flood plain restoration scheme

Figure 20 shows a more advanced concept, that is essentially a river and flood plain restoration scheme. The whole area is designed to flood and should be an asset to the Ouseburn and Newcastle. The need to retreat levees to the edge of the floodplain is also suggested. The residents of Red House Farm are not too happy with this suggestion as they think they will lose green space, but they were eager to suggest that there were sites (including derelict ground) that could to store flood flow. This is the ultimate holistic way of making space for water.

A Catchment Scale River Corridor

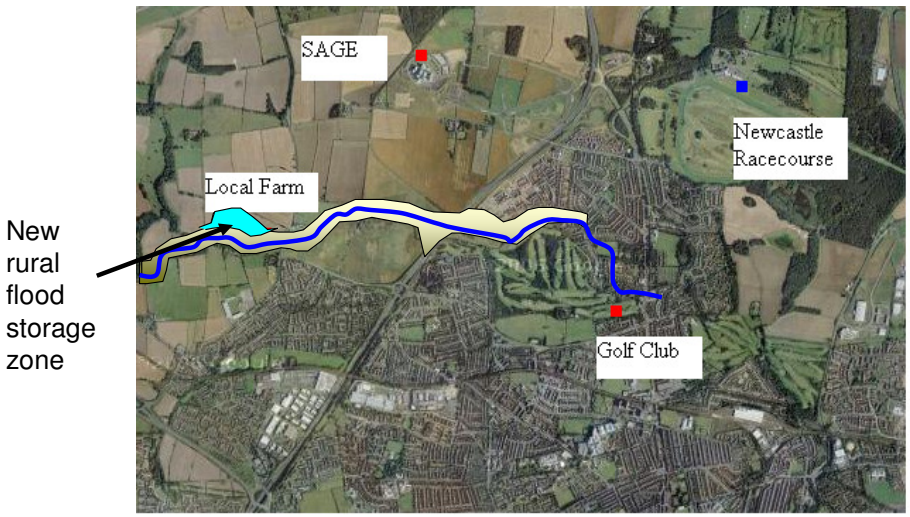


Figure 21. A more strategic catchment scale approach to flood and environmental management

Figure 21 advances upon figure 20 and suggest that a longer river corridor heading upstream is also possible. The potential to store flood flow at other sites has been considered. Mr Arthur of Brunton Bridge Farm has been approached about the potential to store flood flow arising from The Newcastle Falcons training fields.

Ongoing Problems

- What if the climate changes?
- What if we have another RHF flood?
- Are we looking at a future flash flood problem?
- Should we be doing things differently?

Red House Farm June 2005 Flooding and The Response

- Flooding event was caused by the sewer network being overwhelmed and the water backing up onto the Estate and flooding houses
- Northumbrian Water reacted quickly and improved its sewer system (combined and surface water network) in the area.
- This mean that the actual sewer network has a higher design standard (1 in 40 year storm capacity instead of 1 in 5 year storm)

Figure 22 and 23. A revisit the urban flash flood problem and the storm of 2005

Is there an ongoing problem to address regarding the flash flooding of typical urban estates? As the Red House had been flooded and NWL has invested £3 Million in flood relief scheme, we discussed the future of urban flooding on this estate. Firstly we reflected the improvements to the new sewer system, which should have substantially less surface flow entering the system (redesigned by NWL to an 1 in 40 year storm event instead of 1 in 5).

Urban Runoff - The Future

1. What if rainfall increases in the future?

What if a 1 in 50 year storm becomes a 1 in 40 year storm?

2. Creeping Urbanisation

- New blocked drives,
- New extensions
- Any impermeable surface connected to the surface sewer

What if you put both together?

Figure 24. Two reasons why typical urban areas are at still at threat from flooding

The Problem and our solution

- Sewer flooding is likely to increase.
- Solution: No more sewers!
  - Novel methods to collect and transport surface water.
  - Surface water collected and allowed to infiltrate slowly – mimics nature.
  - Improves aesthetics and environment of catchment

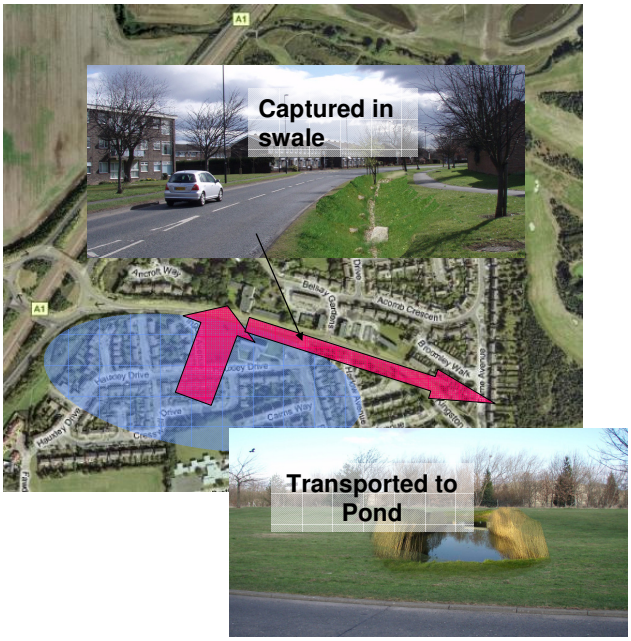


Figure 25. An alternative runoff scheme for Red House Farm, avoiding the overloading of the sewer system

Figure 25, shows the first concept we pondered 'could the Red House Farm scheme have been developed in a different way? The OCSG (with the help of Kevin Hickey a student at UNEW) has considered a SuDs approach alternative to the NWL scheme. Basically, instead of the flow being taken in the sewer to the Ouseburn directly, we proposed a large pond near the golf course woods and football pitches. Other possible surface ponds could be place in the available space by the Ouseburn. An estimate of 8500M^3 of flow would have to be captured in the ponds to hold all the flow from a 1-40 year flood. This is the equivalent of 3 Olympic sized swimming pools. In order to move water to the ponds, a series of surface features such as swales and raised curbs are envisaged to move the water through the estate. The concept of keeping clean rain water out of the sewers in larger events is seen

as urgent need in future urban runoff management. In figure 24 we alluded to two reasons why we feel urban flooding is a great risk in the future:

1. Climate change impacts. Kevin Hickey in consultation with leading experts at UNEW have suggested that a 1:50 storm is likely to become a 1:40 storm event and a 1:10 year storm will become a 1:8 year event. Using the Earwig climate scenario generator;

2. Estates similar to Red House Farm and Kingston Park are showing a rapid creeping urbanisation, with new impermeable area being created. The basic assumption is that a typical street has the equivalent of a 10m wide impermeable area entering the surface water sewer. This estimate may have to be raised to 11.5m width or maybe higher to account for the effects of creeping urbanisation.

Together climate change and creeping urbanisation will inevitable overload the existing sewer systems. There is generic issue for all urban areas, old and new, that we are being ignorant to the threat of urban flooding and that we must create a new approach to handing extreme rainfall events. There is an urgent need to address this issue, we conclude that alternative SuDs methods far outweigh the traditional approach. This includes the 3 million pound scheme carried out by NWL.

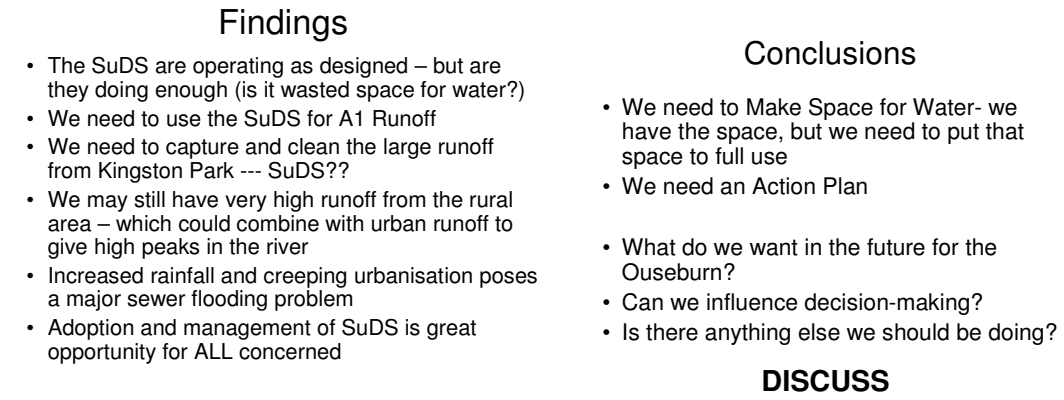


Figure 26 and 27 A summation of the talk and the prompt for the later discussion

6. Upper Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan

To conclude the MS4W project there is still an urgent need for the professional bodies to continue to cooperate and deliver a visionary, holistic, Upper Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan. Here the OCSG will try to create an initial 10 point action plan for work in the near future

1. Immediate adoption of the SuDs by NCC;
2. Creation of a task force to work with NCC to look at the best possible management plan for the Upper Ouseburn area;
3. A1 consortium to address runoff issues from the A1 and when runoff can be diverted into existing SuDs;

4. Convene a task force to look at the management and operation of the upper Ouseburn River itself. Proposal and costing for the improvement and management of the river and how it will work in harmony with the existing SuDs;
5. Expand the public engagement process to involve the Great Park developers and improve the liaison with NWL regarding many issues in the Ouseburn;
6. Commitment from EA/NCC to continue the monitoring operation of the Upper Ouseburn and the SuDs and communicate the results to the local population;
7. Establishment of a task force to address the combined threat of creeping urbanisation and climate change of urban flash flooding;
8. Discussion on how to fund an expansion of the hydrometry network in the Ouseburn and how to fund water quality sampling across the Ouseburn;
9. A commitment to attend OCSG meetings and to help the OCSG to run and deliver the task force findings;
10. Further integration of professional bodies to work together to deliver joined up holistic plans, where the Upper Ouseburn could be the key exemplary flood management and SuDs project in the UK.

7. Conclusion

The project, although slow in starting, has proved to be a good collaboration between scientists and local authorities' planners with the members of the public. The participating parties have all benefited from the process. The absentees from the public meetings and project meetings have missed an opportunity and have lowered the effectiveness of the overall project. The delivery of the action plan must now be refined and means of delivering the plan is now needed. Many of the tasks were originally outlined in the OCSG proposal (see appendix 1) and this project showed that they are even more urgent now, than at the start of the project.

Appendix 1

The original proposal document submitted to the MS4W project.

Working Wetlands, People and Ponds *OCSG*

A proposal to the Upper Ouseburn Making Space for Water Initiative
From The Ouseburn Catchment Steering Group

Background to the Proposal

Newcastle University (Paul Quinn) and JBA (Sebastien Tellier) have drafted this proposal on behalf of the Ouseburn Catchment Steering Group (OCSG). It is a proposal to work with the local EA and the Making Space for Water Initiative. Separate proposals to the EA will arise from the University and JBA but this proposal represents only the OCSG. The OSCG mission statement as reported in the draft Ouseburn Catchment Management Plan is…

A commitment to continuously improve water quality and ecological status, lower flood risk, increase access, recreation and amenity value whilst optimising economic/business activity, using an active public participation process

or in more practical terms

- ***Water quality and ecological standards must improve,***
- ***Flood risk must reduce,***
- ***Partnerships should be forged between academic, public and private bodies – with close links to business and governance***

A copy of the draft catchment plan can be found at:-
www.colinpercy**.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/pure/pureouse_draft_jun06.pdf**

THE OCSG has been running for almost 1 year and has already held 6 meetings. The following groups have attended the meetings and/or have contributed at the OCSG meetings: *Newcastle University, JBA, Red House Farm Residents Association, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Melbury Residents Association, Woolsington Village Residents association, The Environment Agency, Friends of Jesmond Dene, Newcastle City Council, Newcastle International Airport, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Ouseburn Trust, Newcastle Great Park Consortium, Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL), The Ouseburn Trust, Tyne Rivers Trust (TRT) and any other person interested in the processes.*

The OCSG feel that it represents the natural conduit for the public understanding and stakeholder involvement, for the governance and development of the Ouseburn catchment. The Ouseburn Catchment Management Plan outlines the issues the Ouseburn area but as yet it hasn't have any funded Action Plan. As such, we are proposing to both create and execute the Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan (OCAP). in the Ouseburn area

but as yet, it has no funded Action Plan. As such, we hope to both create and execute an Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan (OCAP). We see the creation of the OCAP as the opportunity to create a proactive series of steps leading to the funding and resources needed to execute a multi-funded, multi-functioning sustainable landscape for all who live in the Ouseburn.

The OCSG would like to propose a workable series of steps leading to the creation of the OCAP. In the first instance we need to create funds to complete the OCAP and allow its wider dissemination. By targeting a series of key issues in the Ouseburn we will demonstrate, through collaborative initiatives that a 'best practice' approach to catchment development can be achieved. Given the current funding situation we wish target to the flood risk management in the Upper Ouseburn as the initial catalyst to spark the longer term OCAP. The willingness of the EA to part fund this initiative will lead to other the partner organisations contributing to the OCAP.

Here we present an initial discussion document to request and exploit funding under the Making Space for Water Initiative for the short term. We thus envisage a two stage approach: the first one to be the creation and dissemination of the OCAP, with the Upper Ouseburn flood risk management issue as the first targeted activity (i.e. see the following proposal). Plus a longer term strategy will assess how to execute the longer term goals of OCAP, building upon the short term activities, and will be dependent on the availability of future funding.

The Longer Term OCAP

Below are the longer term actions that will arise from the initial investment from the Making Space for Water Initiative.

- Wider flood management issues and impacts in Ouseburn:

    1. The role of upstream rural inputs to the Ouseburn and the possible management of upstream runoff through land management strategies;
    2. Newcastle Airport Development and possible future management options;
    3. Lower Ouseburn impacts (in term of both water quantity and quality);

- A review of pollution sources in the Ouseburn;

- Multifunctional water and land management of issues across the Ouseburn, including:

    1. Water quality;
    2. Ecology;
    3. Access and amenity.

- Rural-urban fringe issues and development;

- Jesmond Dene development (Lottery funded);
- Lower Ouseburn development;
- The Ouseburn and Tyne (working with TRT and the Northumbria River Basin District);
- Science city, carbon neutral and renewable energy.

The Proposal

Working Wetlands, People and Ponds

A proposal to the Upper Ouseburn Making Space for Water Initiative

Resources and Timing

Over the period Jan 07 to Jan 08 the OCSG, through the active participation of its partner organisation and its members, will seek to execute the following activities.

A PLAN OF ACTION

The Creation of the Ouseburn Catchment Action Plan (OCAP) and the public role in the Upper Ouseburn Flood Management Strategy

5. Completion and dissemination of the OCAP **5K**

6. Raising more funds from government, industry and commerce **5K**

    - Involvement of Newcastle City Council(NCC)
    - Close collaboration with NWL
    - Approach TRT to propose joint activities in the Ouseburn (river Watch programme)
    - Use of University Business Officer to target local industry (SAGE, Northern Rock, Developers, large environmental consultancies)

The university is already committed to using student projects and university equipment to improve data collection and understanding in the Ouseburn

7. Data gathering, and reporting of the Upper Ouseburn development and the flood risk issue **4K**

Much of this information exists but it is not in a form that the public can readily use and understand. A key aspect of the project is to show the multiple benefits of wetlands and ponds, for water quality, ecology, access and amenity.

8. The Ouseburn: an historical perspective **3K**

It would be advantageous to exploit the abundance of local knowledge relating to the development and change that has occurred in the Ouseburn. This activity would be led by OCSG members and could produce excellent material of local interest and for use in schools. Moreover it will set most of the Ouseburn issues within context, including the nature of changes needed for the future.

9. Collaborative activities and workshops relating to the Upper Ouseburn, a review of existing structures and the role of new flood mitigation features **3K**

This will include EA, NCC, NWL and other groups meeting during the life of the project, taking on board local views and demonstrating that the emerging development is shaped by local involvement and knowledge.

10. Funding to allow local activities, data collection and reporting **4K**

This will include meetings during office hours between interested parties, payment of any expenses and subsidy of costs involved in data collection (e.g. to cover student costs, meetings and activities with local schools)

11. A series of trial public outreach activities at an existing wetland/ flood storage pond site – entitled 'working wetlands, people and ponds' **6K**

To be located in the area near Red House Farm and the Melbury wetland area. (though the exact location will be determined through the OCSG and public workshops).

12. Refinement of the OCAP, final reporting and dissemination **2K**

13. The production of a jointly authored short document entitled 'A best practice manual for holistic rural/urban development and sustainability' **4K**

Steps 10 and 11 may be beyond the scope of the first stage of the work and should arise from the completion of steps 1-9.

14. Further development of new multifunctional people friendly flood storage wetlands in the Upper Ouseburn **20K**

Essentially this is the OCSG working closely with the Making Space for Water Team, advising on design innovation and on the public understanding of risk. This could be achieved through the 'adoption' of one of the new proposed 'wetland/pond' structures by the OCSG. The multifunctional design of the structure will be used to address water quality, ecological, access and amenity issues. The adopted wetland/pond will be a clear demonstration of the benefits to all of a 'best practice' and holistic thinking approach. The final deliverable being new landscape features that will be an asset to the Ouseburn residents.

15. Further exploration for possible development of runoff storage at source in the Upper Ouseburn using low engineering, cost effective technology ponds **10K**

This activity will show that large amounts of flood storage can be achieved at low cost in the rural urban fringe and the benefits this has to the whole catchment and to the local farmers. This demonstration activity would attempt to link the making Space for water Activity to the Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative. Again stakeholder meetings would lead to the development of series of demonstration farms in the upper Ouseburn. We already have agreement from one farmer to install ponds close to Newcastle Falcons training ground.

Summary of Work

	Activity	**Deliverable**	**Cost**
1	Completion and dissemination of the OCAP	OCAP document, flyer and web site	**5K**
2	Raising more funds from government, industry and commerce	Commitment of organisation to contribute funds to the long term OCAP,	**5K**
3	Data gathering, and reporting of the Upper Ouseburn development and the flood risk issues	Public meetings and paper/web based documents,	**4K**
4	The Ouseburn: an historical perspective.	A short booklet and web site plus a presentation at one of the public meetings,	**3K**
5	Collaborative activities and workshops relating to the Upper Ouseburn, a review of existing structures and the role of new flood mitigation features.	Workshops and activities in the field. With supporting materials,	**4K**
6	Funding to allow local activities, data collection and reporting	Field demonstrations of data gathering equipment and help in river surveys	**4K**
7	A series of trial public outreach activities at an existing wetland/ flood storage pond site – entitled 'working wetlands, people and ponds'	The creation of a guided tour of a wetland why it there and what it is helping with. Plus the production of paper and web based materials	**6K**
8	Refinement of the OCAP, final reporting and dissemination	Final reports and their dissemination	**2K**
9	The production of a jointly authored short document entitled 'A best practice manual for holistic rural/urban development and sustainability'	A short monograph document	**4K**
		TOTAL(1-9)	**37K**
10	Further development of new multifunctional people friendly flood storage wetlands in the Upper Ouseburn.	Involvement in the design and execution of one of the new flood storage ponds	**20K**
11	Further exploration for possible development of runoff storage at source in the Upper Ouseburn using low engineering, cost effective technology ponds	Stakeholder meetings, the creation of demonstration farm and the completion of several runoff storage ponds	**10K**
		TOTAL (10+11)	**30K**