

**Technical Services
Major Projects**

TT7202

Selkirk FPS

**The St. Mary's Loch
(SML) Option**

**Record of the St. Mary's
Loch User's Meeting
(including the Questions
and Answers Session) held
on 23rd November 2010 at
Tibbie Shiels Inn**

4th February 2011

Issue No : 02

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Originator:

Conor Price (Project Manager)

Approval:

Paul Frankland (Project Executive)
David Green (Senior User)
John Drake (Senior Supplier)
Steven Vint (Design Manager)

Signature:

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Author
00	07-12-2010	First draft	Steven Vint
01	07-12-2010	Review by SBC	Conor Price
02	04-02-2011	Final draft for issue	Keith Robeson

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide a record of the Public Meeting, including the Questions and Answers Session held at the end of the presentation made by the Project Manager, Conor Price, at the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme (FPS) – St. Mary's Loch (SML) User's Meeting.

Background:

The Selkirk FPS is a major project that is being taken forward by Scottish Borders Council with Halcrow Group Limited acting as Design Consultant. The scheme commenced on 15th October 2009.

The scheme selected a Preferred Scheme in October 2010 and has now commenced on Stage 4 of the Project (Outline Design of the Preferred Scheme). The schedule for the project sees formal approval of the scheme being sought in August 2011.

The Selkirk FPS is being taken forward under the new flooding legislation; the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. In accordance with the ethos of this Act the flood protection scheme has embraced a 'Catchment' based approach to reducing flood risk, along with the concepts of Natural Flood Management and Sustainable Flood Management.

The St. Mary's Loch Option is one part of the Selkirk FPS Preferred Scheme. It is not the largest part of the scheme or the most important; however it has the potential to achieve multiple benefits. These including but are not limited to:

1. A reduction in the flood risk to Selkirk and at Lindean
2. A reduction in the flood risk all along the Yarrow Valley
3. It is a form of Sustainable Flood Management
4. It is a form of Natural Flood Management
5. It has a very high benefit to cost ratio
6. It is broadly acceptable to the local community

The Meeting:

The Meeting was a Public Meeting held at 19:00 on Tuesday 23rd November 2010 at Tibbie Shiels Inn by St. Mary's Loch.

The meeting was called by the Selkirk FPS Project Team to formally establish contact with and interact with the Users of SML.

The meeting consisted of a presentation followed by a questions & answers session.

Invitation was issued, from the Project Team, by phone and email where contact was previously known. Invitation was also issued through the Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council, Cllr. Vicky Davidson and through word of mouth.

Approximately 25 people were in attendance including the following members of the SMLWG:

- Conor Price (Selkirk FPS Project Manager & Scottish Borders Council)
- Steven Vint (Selkirk FPS Design Manager & Halcrow)
- David Green (Scottish Borders Council Flood Protection Programme Manager)
- Martin Andrews (Representative of the Riparian Owners on the SMLWG and Wemyss & March Estates)
- Keith Robeson (Representative of the SML Users on the SMLWG & Scottish Borders Council)
- Jim Bradshaw (Representative of the Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council on the SMLWG & Yarrow Valley resident)

The Presentation:

Conor Price, Project Manager for the Selkirk FPS, provided a presentation to the meeting. A copy of this presentation will be made available for review within the SML Pages of the Selkirk FPS website.

The purpose of the presentation was:

1. To provide an update on progress with the Selkirk FPS
2. To confirm what the SML Option is
3. To discuss the SML Option (and the Working Group – the SMLWG)

The presentation was a structured presentation, however it was informally delivered and attendees were invited to interrupt with questions where they deemed such questions sensible and appropriate.

Questions & Answers:

As identified in the last section questions were asked and dealt with throughout the presentation, and then again during the formal questions & answers session after the presentation.

There was nobody in the room formally recording the proceedings therefore this record is the best effort of Steven Vint (Design Manager) and Conor Price (Project Manager).

In most instances the person asking the question was not recorded therefore no record of names is given in this record.

These records are not considered to constitute a formal record of the meeting.

In almost all instances these recorded questions and answers provide an indication of the general discussion which took place and especially the topics that were discussed.

Question No. 1

Is the CAR licence associated with flows from or water levels in the Loch?

Answer No. 1

The current Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) Licence contains restrictions on the minimum flows to the Yarrow from SML and the levels that are permissible within the Loch.

There was a long discussion about the CAR Licence. Conor Price attempted to describe in lay-mans terms the terminology in the licence and the means through which it is operated by Scottish Water.

Question No. 2

What is the maximum drop available across the existing impounding structure at the bottom of St. Mary's Loch?

Answer No. 2

The Project Team currently understand it to be 1.8m from fish pass weir level to bottom of sluice gate minimum operating level.

One of the next tasks for the Project Team is to achieve a full understanding of the existing infrastructure. This is something that Halcrow will undertake with Scottish Water's assistance in the near future.

Question No. 3

Who will manage the CAR licence at the end of this (flood protection) process?

Answer No. 3

This is still to be determined and needs to be worked out through the SMLWG.

Question No. 4

How will the Loch levels vary in the event that the proposed modifications in the management are undertaken?

Answer No. 4

The overall philosophy of the SML Option (at this point in time) is to keep the levels within the Loch lower than they are at present thereby utilising a large volume of storage for the duration of a Flood Event.

The method by which this could be achieved is still to be determined. To date, we have looked at a realistic figure for loch drawdown of 500mm below fish pass weir level which virtually replicates the natural drawdown of the loch during dry spells (e.g. June 2010). This is only a starting point and the overall maximum drawdown level will require to be carefully evaluated.

There was a discussion about the possibility of having an operating regime to reflect the different seasons. This point was already understood by the Project Team but the point was taken on-board by Conor Price / Steven Vint and it will be conveyed back to the SMLWG and the Project Team staff.

Question No. 5

What was the level of the Loch before construction of the current impounding structure took place?

Answer No. 5

The project team are currently looking into this and acknowledge the presence of various forms of data, including bathymetry surveys and historical photos and paintings.

Various people at the meeting identified photos and other info that they were in possession of which the Project Team could take copies of.

NB → Could anyone with info or photos relating to the Outlet at the Bottom of St. Mary's Loch please pass it onto a Member of the SMLWG or Conor Price?

There was a general discussion about historical Loch levels and that the Loch has essentially been altered (in so far as we understand it) by human intervention since middle of the 19th century.

Question No. 6

Have Scottish National Heritage (SNH) been involved in the discussion process?

Answer No. 6

Yes. SNH are a member of the SMLWG and are fully involved in this process.

Question No. 7

Who let the Loch level reduce following the November 2009 flood event i.e. during the spring of 2010?

Answer No. 7

Aside: This question alludes to the locally held opinion that the water level in SML was generally lower this year than last year.

Conor Price confirmed that the Project Team are not aware of any such change in the outflow operating regime. The operation of the outlet is managed by Scottish Water and regulated by the CAR Licence as discussed in Question No. 1.

This question was not dealt with further but led into Question No. 8 & 9.

Question No. 8

Why does Scottish Water let the level in Megget Reservoir build up - surely if it was kept lower, it would offer major flood risk benefits?

Answer No. 8

Conor Price used the OS Map from the presentation to clarify the area of the Megget Catchment and to clarify that the Megget Catchment is entirely within the SML Catchment.

There is still the possibility of considering Megget within the SML Option of the Selkirk FPS, but the Project Team recognises that The Megget Reservoir is first and foremost the primary water supply for much of Edinburgh and the Lothian's.

Conor Price noted that at the onset of the rainstorm which created the November 2009 Flood Event, Megget was 1.5m lower than spill level, therefore it would have served to attenuate a large volume of water during that flood event.

Question No. 9

Is the 2nd phase of Megget's water supply to Edinburgh likely to go ahead (i.e. pumping from SML to Megget Reservoir)?

Answer No. 9

The 2nd phase of the Megget Scheme is not in Scottish Water's current Business Plan (2010 - 2015), nor is it currently in the 2015 - 2020 future plan. Scottish Water have identified (to the SMLWG) that it could still be a strategic possibility for future water supply, but the cost and environmental impact of pumping would be very high.

The SMLWG will clarify the likelihood of The Megget Scheme Phase 2 further as the SML Option is developed.

Question No. 10

Do we need to invite any additional groups or individuals to sit on the SMLWG?

Answer No. 10

An invitation for anyone who so wished to sit on the Working Group was put forward by Cllr. Vicky Davidson.

It was agreed that the current representatives of the SMLWG were suitable to represent the different stakeholders, and User's functions.

Nobody accepted the invitation to sit on the SMLWG.

There was a general discussion about how to transfer information both from the stakeholders / community to the SMLWG and from the SMLWG to the stakeholders / community. It was agreed that better dissemination of information arising from the Working Group Meetings was required.

Question No. 11

How will the information arising from the Working Group and other meetings be disseminated?

Answer No. 11

The Project Team are still developing the means of communications for the SMLWG e.g. a page is being developed within the Selkirk FPS Website.

It is proposed to generate a newsletter and possibly publish a record of the meetings on the Selkirk FPS Website.

Other public meetings will be held as appropriate (probably at Yarrowfeus Hall) once the proposals had been worked through in more detail (Spring 2011).

Question No. 12

Will anything be constructed at St Mary's Loch?

Answer No. 12

This is still to be decided by the SML Option through the SMLWG.

The current opinion is that no major construction works will be required - some minor improvement works possible at impounding structure and overflow sill, mostly mechanical, electrical and telemetry related may be involved.

Question No. 13

What about the functionality of the fish pass?

Answer No. 13

Scottish Water are currently looking at all of the requirements for fish passage associated with all their impounding structures. A review of the existing Fish Pass is currently being undertaken at St. Mary's Loch.

The ability to ensure fish passage will be looked at closely by the SML Option and it is assumed that nothing will be done to compromise fish movement.

Outcome:

The Project Team undertook to type up all questions and answers and to make the documentation available through the Selkirk FPS Project Website at www.selkirkfloodscheme.com.

The Project Team undertook to develop a Newsletter for distribution to all Stakeholders with key information on the SML Option.

The Project Team undertook to take on board all issues raised through the Questions and Answers Session as they continue to design the Selkirk FPS.

The meeting formally approved of the chosen representatives who will sit on the St. Mary's Loch Working Group.

Gratitude:

The Project Team would like to express their thanks to everyone who attended the St. Mary's Loch User's Meeting specifically those people who participated in the Questions & Answers Session.