Lower Otter Restoration Project

Developing our list of options

We have looked at a wide range of options, from “Do Nothing” to a full-scale restoration of the river and estuary. We have considered and expanded on the options presented in previous studies. We have also consulted with representatives on the Stakeholder Group to ensure we have not missed any **alternative, innovative solutions**.

Discarded options

Some of the options that we looked at were ruled out if they did not meet all of the key objectives, legal requirements or Environment Agency funding requirements:

Option	Reasons for rejecting
Do Nothing – stop spending money on maintaining embankments and other structures in the valley, even after flood events.	• This would lead to the likely failure of the embankments. • Severe negative impacts on nearby property, land and infrastructure.
Do Minimum, or a “continue as existing” scenario – carry out repairs to the embankments as and when required, continue dredging at outfalls	• Climate change is likely to cause more frequent overtopping of the embankments. • This means more frequent repairs will be needed to the embankments, which could be very costly and unsustainable. • Does not attract Environment Agency funding.
Creating **a freshwater reservoir** south of the landfill	• Could increase flood risk. • Does not attract Environment Agency funding. • Does not improve natural functioning of the River Otter.
Raising of existing embankments	• Does not attract Environment Agency funding. • Not sustainable in the long-term. • Does not improve natural functioning of the River Otter.
Dredging the River Otter and install **new flapped outfalls** in the embankments – perceived to provide greater capacity in the river channel and allow quicker drainage of flood waters from fields	• Maintenance of outfalls, dredging of the river channel and at the entrance of outfalls would be required at regular intervals and is unsustainable. • Does not attract Environment Agency funding. • Does not improve natural functioning of the River Otter.