

Flood Risk Management Update

Billington, Lancashire

October 2022

Background - Overview

- Billington flooded from the local rivers and surface water in December 2015 and February 2020.
- In the short term, a plan of utilising temporary defences to protect the residential properties was developed. This was revised following Storm Ciara in February 2020.
- Following instances of instability with temporary barrier defences in a small number of locations elsewhere in England, a national review of all plans was commissioned by the Environment Agency and undertaken by our framework consultants.
- This review recommended that all Temporary Defence Management Plans must now be compliant under the CDM (Construction Design Management) Regulations.
- Updated plans were produced by our framework consultants to comply with the CDM Regulations.
- In response to this, Cumbria and Lancashire Area have undertaken a comprehensive review of these updated plans.
- As a result of this review, a decision has been taken to withdraw the Temporary Defence Management Plan (TDMP) for Billington.
- A possible permanent flood defence scheme for Billington will be explored alongside identifying potential funding to design and construct.

Further information.

- There are several reasons why Cumbria and Lancashire Area have decided to withdraw the Temporary Defence Management Plan for Billington.
- As barrier deployment now needs to be compliant with CDM Regs, this places an additional duty of care on the Environment Agency. This makes the deployment of barriers unfeasible in Billington.
- The revised barrier deployment plan will require a greater number of staff to deploy an increased amount of equipment, including water-filled stability blocks and additional sandbags. This almost doubles the deployment time.
- The nature of the River Calder catchment means the flood warning lead-times needed to deploy the revised TDMP and additional equipment cannot be achieved.
- The safety of Environment Agency employees and members of the public is paramount. Due to the large increase in the volume of equipment on site, and time taken to deploy, we are unable to set up the barriers in a safe and timely manner.
- There are also logistical issues involved with the extra equipment needed on site which could cause further safety concerns.
- A number of enabling works would need to be carried out under the revised plan. This may prejudice any potential future flood defence scheme for the area, and the Flood Defence Grant in Aid (Government funding) available for these.
- The revised plan is reliant on a wall that is not designed for flood risk management purposes. This 3rd party wall is unlikely to be structurally able to hold back water.

Additional Information

- The initial review (after the 2015 flood event) for a permanent flood alleviation scheme did not find a suitably viable opportunity to develop further, in the context of flood risk management funding available to the Environment Agency at the time.
- Following the flooding in February 2020, a further review of possible schemes for both Billington and Whalley are ongoing, alongside identifying additional potential funding opportunities. This work will continue.
- All Risk Management Authorities have remained in contact with the Whalley and Billington Flood Action Group ("FLAG"). Whalley & Billington FLAG was set-up after the 2015 flooding. They are a very proactive group, who have been fantastic at sharing information with the wider community, planning for, and acting, during flood events, reporting issues and undertaking minor flood prevention works. The Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, United Utilities and Ribble Valley Borough Council have contact with the FLAG on a regular basis.

What communications have we done?

- Meeting with MP for Ribble Valley - 14/10/22.
- Meeting with County Councillors - 19/10/22.
- Community Drop-in session with Flood Action Group and Residents - 19/10/22.

Contacts and more information

- CMBLNC-PSO@environment-agency.gov.uk or 03708 506 506 (The General EA Enquiries number)
 - Report river flooding: 0345 988 1188 (Floodline - 24/7)
 - Report environment incident (e.g. pollution): 0800 80 70 60
 - Report highway issue: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/report-it/> (Lancs CC)
- Report public sewer flood issues: 0345 672 3723 (United Utilities)

