

Flood Risk Management Update

Ribchester, Lancashire

October 2022

Background - Overview

- Ribchester has a history of flooding from Boyces Brook, Duddell Brook, and the River Ribble.
- In the short term, after the flooding of 2015, a plan of utilising temporary defences to protect the residential properties on Greenside was developed.
- Following instances of instability with temporary barrier defences in a 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, which recently concluded, 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 Ribchester.
- The Environment Agency will be working with a local community group to explore potential further flood risk management options.

Further information.

- There are several reasons why Cumbria and Lancashire Area have decided to withdraw the Temporary Defence Management Plan for Ribchester.
- 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 Ribchester.
- The revised barrier deployment plan will require a greater number of staff to deploy an increased amount of equipment, including larger water-filled stability blocks and additional sandbags. This almost doubles the deployment time. The revised plan is 70m shorter and protects fewer homes to a lower standard of protection.
- The nature of the River Ribble 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.
- Due to the space constraints caused by the extra equipment, stretcher access in a medical emergency is not achievable to certain properties once the TDMP is deployed.

Additional Information

- The Environment Agency have developed proposals for permanent flood risk management schemes in the village several times over the last 20 years. These proposals have unfortunately been unable to meet the Flood Defence Grant in Aid cost-benefit and partnership funding criteria to secure funding to design and deliver a scheme. The Environment Agency will continue to bid for funding from other government sources that become available. We must stress at this time that the success of any further submission for permanent defences is far from certain, and further substantial partnership funding will likely be required.
- The Environment Agency are seeking to have greater community collaboration in Ribchester. We already work closely with neighbouring communities via the Whalley & Billington Flood Action Group Community and hope to develop similar partnership working approaches in Ribchester. We are aware of the Local Ecology and Flood Group and are keen to work with them going forwards. The aim of this collaborative work will be to increase flood resilience in the village, improve planning, preparation and communication, as well as seeking to deliver local flood management measures on Boyce's Brook and Duddel Brook.
- We are aware of further suggestions of potential flood risk management works that have been sent to the Environment Agency by the local community. We are currently reviewing these suggestions.

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 - 20/10/22.

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)

