

The Moors at Arne, Coastal Management Project

October 2017

What is the project all about?

The Environment Agency is working with the RSPB and Natural England to explore how to adapt approximately 150ha of The Moors at Arne into a diverse inter-tidal habitat. This will create a valuable protected place for birds and other wetland species to rest and feed. It is expected to include building a new tidal embankment closer to the Arne Road and creating gaps in the existing bank bordering the harbour to allow the low-lying land to be exposed to the tide. Lagoon areas may also be constructed within the site to create a variety of habitats that will attract numerous animal and plant species. The area is low lying, low grade agricultural land that is grazed for conservation purposes and owned by the RSPB.

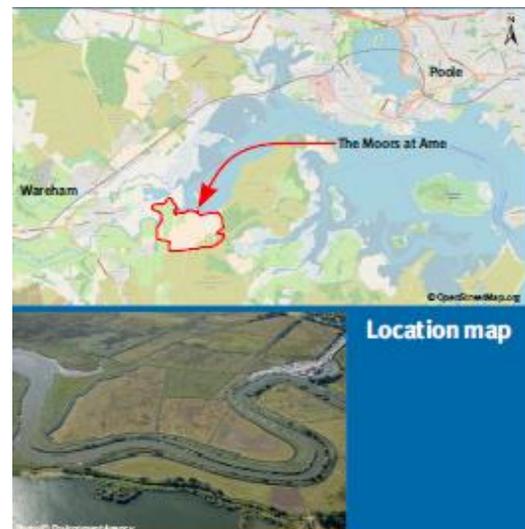
The scheme is necessary to compensate for the loss of inter-tidal habitats around Poole Harbour due to rising sea levels and the need to improve and maintain coastal defences. The loss of inter-tidal habitats through climate change and improved sea defences is known as 'coastal squeeze'. Compensatory habitats are needed to ensure birds and other wetland species are protected and the Environment Agency is responsible to Government for securing them.

When finished, the coastal change project will enable the Environment Agency and its local authority partners to continue to protect properties around Poole Harbour from the increased risk of flooding due to climate change. It is predicted up to 10,000 local properties could be at risk within 100 years.

The village of Ridge, important freshwater habitat and the Arne Road will continue to be protected from flooding as the options are developed and the course of the River Frome will not be changed by this project.

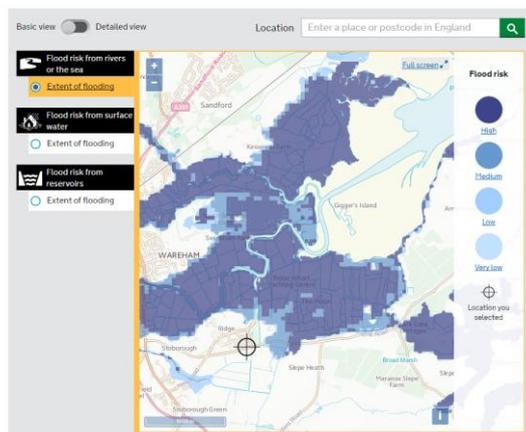
Ground Investigations and Survey

There will shortly be contractors and plant on the Moors project site to collect borehole samples and help establish the materials present, the water table, and groundwater flows. This studies combined with modelling and topographic survey will assist us to develop the project over the coming months and address some of the technical challenges we face in delivering a preferred option and to share in responses to any local concerns.

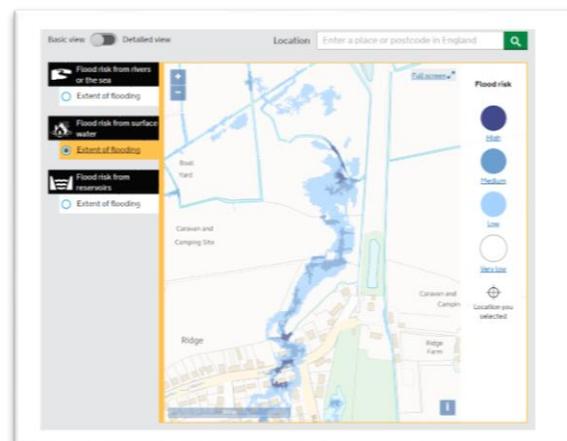


What is the current risk from flooding?

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/>



Risk of Flooding from rivers and the sea current information on Government website for Stoborough, Ridge



Surface water risk in Ridge example of current information on Government website

The current situation is complex, with flooding of low-lying areas possible from the River Frome, The sea and surface runoff/groundwater. We will be revisiting the maps once more detailed modelling linked to the project is complete.

What work are we doing now?

The project is in the early stages. We are collecting data from a variety of places including local residents, site surveys and historical records. Outline designs are being developed to give an idea of what might be possible and what the constraints are. This work includes gaining a better understanding of existing flooding and groundwater concerns in Ridge.

What happens next?

The project team, with their consultants, will continue to develop the outline designs. The Environment Agency has a rigorous approval process that as to be followed and this includes periodic project reviews to ensure it continues to offer value for money.

At this stage it is hard to estimate how long different stages will take as the constraints are not yet well defined. The timeline below shows our current indicative high level programme. There will be further public exhibitions as the project develops and we have new information to share. In due course we will be applying for Planning Permission and we hope that the construction will start in 2020.



We are committed to sharing information and listening to feedback throughout this project. We had our first public exhibition on 3rd October 2017 and we will continue throughout the project to share our proposals with the local community and other agencies and organisations in order to seek feedback.

The project has a webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-moors-at-arne-reducing-flood-risk-and-creating-habitat> where people can access the latest information on the project, and a dedicated email address TheMoorsatArne@environment-agency.gov.uk, please contact us any time with questions, queries and suggestions.

