

# Slowing the Flow, Pickering

## Flood Storage Area - Newsletter

November 2013

### Background

Pickering has a long history of flooding, with significant floods occurring in 1999, 2000, and 2002, when approximately 20 properties flooded in each case. The largest recent event occurred in June 2007, when the main A170 and 85 properties were flooded, causing an estimated £7 million of damage.

Because Pickering Beck flows through a steep sided valley for much of its length, the town is particularly vulnerable to 'flash flooding'. The Beck Isle area has less than a 1 in 10 chance of flooding in any given year, and other parts of the town have a 1 in 25 chance.

### What is being done?

In 2008, Defra set up a partnership project in Pickering called 'Slowing the Flow'. The partnership is about working with nature to try and store more water in the landscape and slow its passage downstream. Whilst this will not prevent all flooding, it is expected to reduce the frequency of future floods in Pickering, as well as deliver a range of other benefits to the local environment and community.

The project is led by Forest Research, closely supported by Forestry Commission England, The Environment Agency, The North York Moors National Park Authority, Natural England and the wider community. Measures carried out so far include:

- Construction of low level flood storage bunds
- Creation of woodland in the floodplain and by the river
- Installation of large 'woody debris dams'
- Farm scale measures and catchment sensitive farming techniques
- Targeted blocking of moorland drains
- Establishing no burn zones along moorland streams
- Restoring buffer zones along forest streams



Increased floodplain storage



Floodplain planting



Woody debris dams

### Flood storage area

The Environment Agency, as a key part of their involvement in the 'Slowing the Flow' project, is leading on the development, design and construction of a flood storage area in Newtondale, upstream of Pickering, on Pickering Beck.

The scheme is designed to hold back some 120,000 cubic metres of flood water in Newtondale, at times of peak flow down Pickering Beck. Whilst it will not prevent all floods – such as the extraordinary events in 2007 – the scheme will greatly improve the standard of protection for Pickering and move the town from currently having a 25% chance of flooding in any given year, to a 4% chance or less.

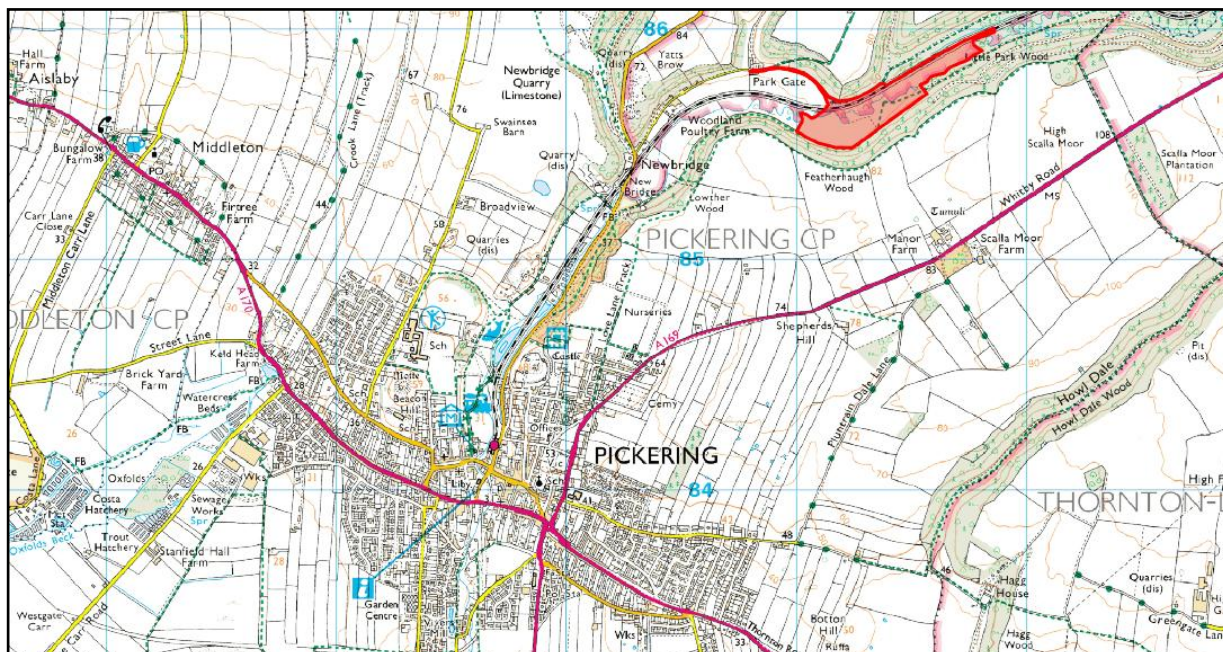


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### What's happening now?

Planning permission has been granted for the flood storage area, and final discussions are being held with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and the Duchy of Lancaster (the two main landowners at the site).

On site, work to improve Blansby Park Lane for construction traffic began on 28 October. In November, further archaeological investigations will take place, along with tree clearance and site set-up works, ready for the main scheme construction to begin in early 2014.

In January, during the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's closed period, the level crossing at Low Hunters Bridge will be upgraded. This work is needed so that the crossing is strong enough for the import of the embankment clay. In addition, erosion protection and seepage control works will be installed within the railway tracks, at the upstream and downstream extents of the reservoir.

### How will this affect me?

The work is taking place in woodland to the north of Pickering, and will be visible from the North Yorkshire Moors railway, which runs alongside the site. Some trees will have to be cut down to allow access to the site, but these will all be replanted when the scheme is complete.

In February/March 2014, clay for the project will be transported through the town by lorry. This will inevitably cause some disruption, but all efforts will be made to keep this to a minimum.

### How can I find out more?

For information about the 'Slowing the Flow' project, visit: [www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/NFD-7YML5R](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/NFD-7YML5R)

To find out about the Environment Agency led flood storage area, contact the project manager, Dean Hamblin at: [dean.hamblin@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:dean.hamblin@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Programme

- Access improvements – 28 Oct to 09 Nov 2013
- Site clearance & set-up – 11 to 29 Nov 2013
- North Yorkshire Moors Railway works – Jan 2014
- Main scheme construction start – Feb 2014
- Import of embankment material – Feb to Mar 2014
- Scheme construction completed – Jun 2014