



**Canal &
River Trust**

Making life better by water

Harthill Reservoir FAQs

Introduction

In January 2022, Canal & River Trust, the waterways and wellbeing charity that looks after Harthill Reservoir, held a public consultation on proposals to carry out works to upgrade Harthill Reservoir.

Planning permission was granted by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council in Summer 2022 and works began later that year.

The Trust is now bringing forward proposals to add 15 fishing platforms to the reservoir and invites any comments on the proposals as part of a public consultation being held between Friday 7 July and Thursday 3 August 2023.

This document includes answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the project.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with any questions or feedback by:

Visiting our website: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/harthill

Calling (Freephone): 0800 028 8141

Emailing: harthill@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Writing: Harthill Reservoir Consultation, 5th Floor, St James House, Sheffield, S1 2EX



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Harthill Reservoir fishing platforms consultation

Q : What is being proposed?

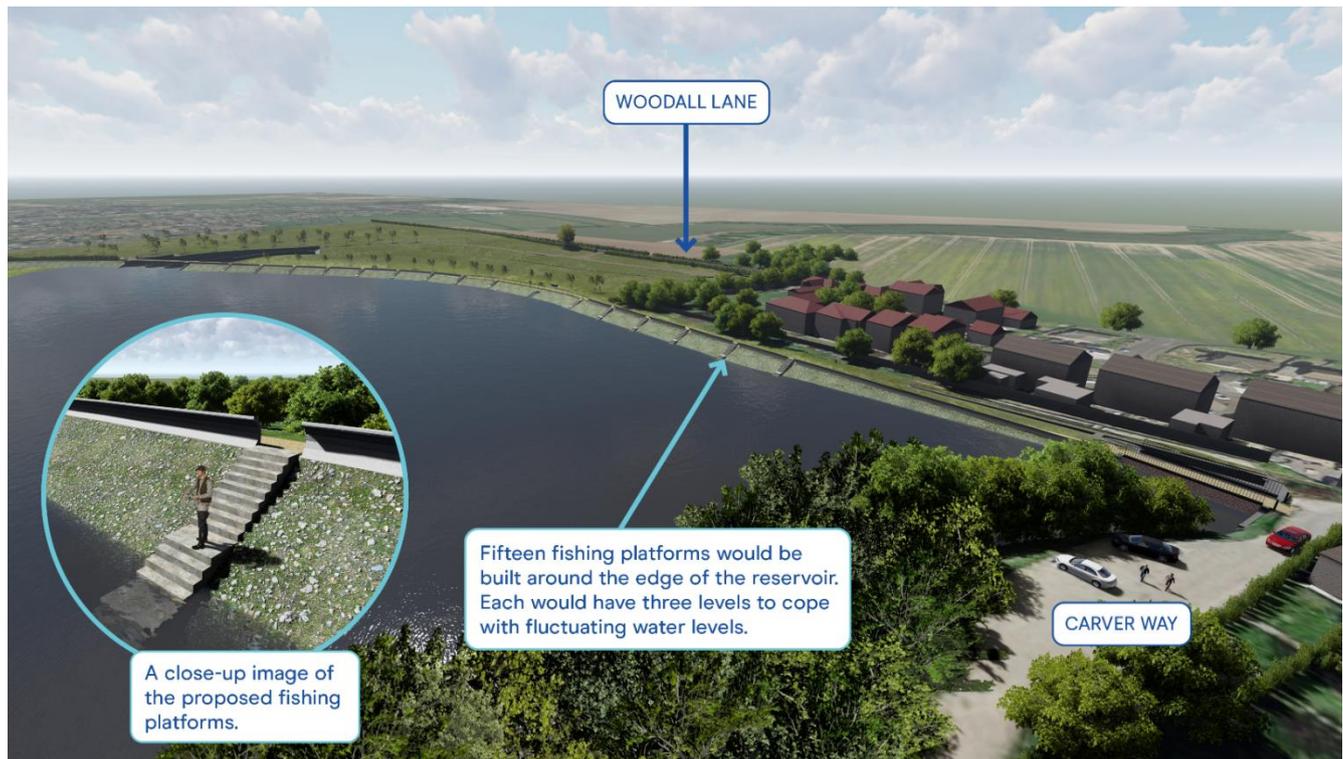
A : The Canal & River Trust charity is proposing to build 15 stepped fishing platforms around the reservoir.

Q : Why are you building these platforms?

A : We are building the fishing platforms to enhance the experience of people using the reservoir for fishing. The platforms will be used day-to-day by anglers, for both casual and competitive fishing. By adding purpose-built platforms we will be able to better preserve the reservoir.

Q : Where will the platforms be positioned around the reservoir?

A : The platforms will be evenly spaced out along a section of the reservoir as shown on the image below.



Q : When will the platforms be ready to be used?

A : The wider construction project will be completed by late 2023 / early 2024, and development of the platforms is not expected to prolong this. Works to build the platforms will begin towards the end of the project timeline.



Q : Are the platforms wheelchair accessible?

A : Unfortunately, due to the steep gradient of the slope of the bank where the platforms will be located, it was not possible to make them suitable for wheelchair access. There are, however, many other locations suitable for fishing along the banks of the reservoir that are accessible to all users. Alternatively, there are accessible fishing platforms at nearby Kiveton Waters.

Q : Why are you contacting me about this?

A : The addition of fishing platforms to the reservoir was not in our original planning application so we haven't yet shared these plans with the local community. We are keen to keep you updated as to how the project to upgrade the reservoir is progressing and would like to hear your views on this new proposal.

Q : Will the additional construction works further affect access to the reservoir?

A : The additional work required to build the fishing platforms will not further affect access to the reservoir. The existing restrictions will remain in place until all works are completed.

Q : Will the fishing platform construction mean that other activities on the reservoir will be restricted?

A : No, the new fishing platforms will provide a safer area for anglers and replace the existing platforms, which were difficult to access.

Q : How will the construction safeguard the fish stock in the reservoir, after what happened in February?

A : The loss of fish we suffered in February was a terrible tragedy. We are working to establish all the facts about the fish deaths, and will take all possible steps in our power to ensure that an incident like this is never repeated.

At the beginning of our public consultation, a full assessment of the impact on fish was carried out, and a report on this assessment accompanied the planning application sent to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. In response to feedback received during the public consultation, the upper part of the reservoir remained in water, which allowed some of the fish to be retained in that area during the works. Throughout the project, we have strived to protect wildlife and enhance their natural environments. We are conducting a thorough investigation into the events that took place in February, and will take strict measures to further protect wildlife on the site going forward.



Harthill Reservoir general FAQs

Q: Where is Harthill Reservoir and why is it important?

A: Harthill Reservoir, situated between Sheffield and Worksop, near to the village of Harthill, was constructed more than 200 years ago to supply water to the Chesterfield Canal, located approximately two miles to the north. It still retains this important function today.

The reservoir is also a popular attraction that hosts many health and wellbeing activities, from sailing and swimming clubs to angling and walking.

It is important to ensure the future of Harthill Reservoir so that it can continue to provide these functions for years to come.

Q: Is Harthill Reservoir safe?

A: Yes. We have reassurance from a detailed reservoir inspection in May 2020.

The development works which we are undertaking are to upgrade the reservoir, improving its future resilience and bringing it up to date with our modern 21st century standards.

The wider project: upgrading Harthill Reservoir

Q: What works are the Trust undertaking on Harthill Reservoir?

A: The upgrade works involve redesigning the overflow spillway to increase the resilience of Harthill Reservoir.

We are constructing a new spillway (weir) at the western end of the reservoir dam. This new structure will do the job of both of the current spillways: the concrete spillway in the middle of the dam and also the original narrow spillway near the car park. A new channel will take water from the new spillway across the field to the existing culverts under Woodall Lane. From there, the water will feed the canal in the same way as it does currently.

We will be decommissioning the two existing spillways once the new spillway is built. The 1960s concrete spillway will be removed and the dam reinstated to grass. The original masonry spillway will be blocked off where the current footbridge is. This will be a concrete and brick clad structure to continue the dam so that the spillway no longer carries water from the reservoir.

New buried syphon pipes will upgrade the operation of the reservoir replacing the existing original submerged pipes.



The footpath across the dam will be resurfaced and a new footbridge will cross the new spillway.

Q: How were the proposals developed?

In 2021, the project team worked on feasibility, options and designs for the proposals, and undertook environmental impact assessments. Surveys to assess wildlife, marine life, habitat, trees, landscape and visual impact were all undertaken to fully understand the potential impacts of the project upon the site, and to identify ways in which the works could mitigate these impacts and also enhance the natural environment around the site. The Trust worked closely with engineering and consultancy firm Arcadis to prepare the detailed plans.

Q: When will these works finish?

A: We anticipate the main works to finish by late 2023 / early 2024.

Q: Why is the Trust undertaking this project?

A: A detailed inspection of Harthill Reservoir identified a number of upgrades and improvements to bring the reservoir up to our 21st century modern standards. This upgrade project will secure Harthill Reservoir's long term future and ensure people can continue to enjoy the important health and wellbeing benefits of being by water for many years to come.

Temporary disruption to Harthill Reservoir

Q: Why has the water level been lowered?

A: The water was temporarily lowered as part of the investigation works and will be below the normal level for the duration of the project.

We have been advised to keep reservoir water levels at least 750cm below full capacity and will need to account for the weather when maintaining this. We appreciate that fluctuations to the water level are not ideal for reservoir users and will continue to ensure as much water is in the reservoir as possible.

Q: Why has the reservoir been drained?

A: The reservoir has been drained so that we can carry out our upgrade works. Water passing through Harthill is from Pebley Reservoir and is used to feed into the Chesterfield canal where supply allows.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this is causing local people, and are committed to working closely with regular users who will be most affected, for example Yorkshire Outdoor Swimmers, Rotherham Sailing Club, model boaters, and anglers.



Q: Can the reservoir be used for sailing, swimming, and angling during the main works?

A: Fishing is continuing at Harthill top pond but the water levels in the reservoir and the presence of construction machinery means that it would not be safe for other leisure activities to continue during the main upgrade works. We will continue talking directly to groups most affected as the project progresses.

Q: Can the footpaths around the reservoir be used during the works?

A: It is great to see so many people enjoying the walks around Harthill Reservoir, and we are doing as much as possible to minimise disruption during the works.

Safety is our primary concern throughout the project. The footpath across the reservoir dam is closed during the construction works. Other footpaths around the reservoir will remain open during the works whenever possible. However, short closures may be necessary to facilitate the works.

Q: What impact is the project having on wildlife living on or near the reservoir?

A: There is some lovely countryside surrounding Harthill Reservoir and we know how much visitors enjoy spotting wildlife living in and around our waterways, with sightings of kingfishers and herons on the reservoir and deer in the surrounding woodlands. Looking after the wildlife that inhabits our waterways and the adjacent areas is important to us.

As part of the initial planning prior to the commencement of construction, we conducted a thorough environmental impact assessment. This included surveys for protected species such as otters, badgers, amphibians, reptiles and bats. The findings indicated that total biodiversity in the area would increase by over 10% as a result of the project, with a 97% net gain in habitat area.

In addition, the proposals were accompanied by a detailed landscape appraisal which included significant tree and hedgerow planting to compensate for the loss of existing habitats. This will provide a net increase in the number of trees and hedgerows across the site.

Q : Is Harthill Reservoir still easily accessible during the works?

A: In response to feedback received during our public consultation, a new access was created off Woodall Lane to serve all construction traffic, resulting in minimal impact on current public access or parking to the reservoir.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan is in place to manage construction activities throughout the duration of the works.



The public footpath across the dam is being resurfaced during these works to ensure everyone has safe access to the reservoir.

Although it doesn't form part of this project, we are reviewing whether existing footpaths elsewhere at the reservoir could be improved in the future.

Q : Where is the construction machinery being stored?

A construction compound has been created in the field with access off Woodall Lane, this ensures that all machinery is kept completely separate to the existing access to the reservoir.

Archaeological surveys

Q : Do you have an update on the archaeological surveys?

A : Archaeological surveys were carried out in 2022 by South Yorkshire Archaeological Service (SYAS), to look for any buried archaeological features on the reservoir site.

These surveys are now complete. In total, 16 small shards of pottery were found weighing a total of 157 grams. It is thought that the shards belong to no more than 14 separate pieces of pottery such as jars, dishes and bowls. The archaeologists estimate that some of these findings date back to the 13th and 14th centuries with others dating back to the 17th 18th and 19th centuries.

The collection of pottery will be archived in Clifton Park Museum.

In addition to the shards of pottery, two tiny fragments of clay tobacco pipe dating back to the 17th or 18th century were discovered along with a 16th or 17th century copper alloy buckle and a small iron nail of undetermined age.

The full archaeological report can be found on our website <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/yorkshire-and-north-east/harthill-reservoir-upgrade>.

Pebley Reservoir and Chesterfield Canal

Q: Do the upgrade works to Harthill Reservoir affect Pebley Reservoir?

A: Water levels at Pebley Reservoir also needed to be temporarily reduced until the upgrade works are completed at Harthill Reservoir. This is because Pebley Reservoir supplies water into Harthill Reservoir, and we need to carefully manage the flow of water to ensure no over-spilling occurs, even in a storm event.

We will minimise potential impact as far as possible but must also ensure that the work at the reservoir is undertaken safely.



Q: Will the upgrade works to Harthill Reservoir affect Chesterfield Canal?

A: We recognise the value that Chesterfield Canal provides and we are making efforts to ensure boating can carry on throughout the season. As such, the water at Harthill will continue to be used over the summer to feed the Chesterfield Canal with works programmed to allow for this.

This avoids any waste of water, and allows for the reservoir to continue to feed the canal during the summer period, supporting boating at the peak time of the year.

In addition, flood risk has been a key consideration in the design process and a flood risk assessment will accompany the application. The impact of the spillway on flood risk has been modelled, and there will be no change to discharge rates from the reservoir as a result of the works. This will help to mitigate flood risk.

We will continue to engage with the Chesterfield Canal Trust and users going forwards, sharing information as the project progresses.

Construction methodology

Q : When will the work be completed?

A : We expect work to be complete by late 2023 / early 2024. The additional work to build the fishing platforms will be completed within these timescales.

Q : When will the reservoir have water back in it?

A : Once the work is complete the reservoir will be allowed to fill up naturally. We expect this to be late 2023 / early 2024.

Q : Are noise levels being monitored?

A : It is a construction site so there will be unavoidable noise from machinery and construction vehicles. We are monitoring noise levels to ensure that they are within accepted limits.

Q : How do I get information about the project?

A : The Trust have a dedicated webpage (<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/yorkshire-and-north-east/harthill-reservoir-upgrade>) that is regularly updated along with an email address for queries (harthill@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

You can also contact Tess Smith, Kier's dedicated Stakeholder Manager for Harthill Reservoir, by phone or email:



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