

Harthill Reservoir: Responding to your comments

Summary of Feedback Received

In January 2022 we shared more information on our proposals for Harthill Reservoir. We gathered feedback on these proposals through a public consultation.

We are pleased to have received a significant volume of feedback and would like to thank everyone who engaged in our consultation. We received over 70 feedback responses through our online feedback form, project email address, phone and written correspondence.

All of the responses received during the pre-application consultation period have been logged and the comments we received helped to shape the proposals for Harthill Reservoir ahead of submission of our planning application.

Overall, 63% of respondents who submitted a feedback form indicated support the proposals for Harthill Reservoir, while 22% indicated opposition and 15% of respondents were unsure.

What we heard

The comments received through consultation helped us gain an understanding of the key areas to focus on as we refined and finalised our proposals. This includes potential issues to mitigate alongside potential opportunities to explore.

Below is a summary of the issues raised, alongside an account of how they have been considered and responded to by Canal & River Trust.

What we heard through consultation	How we are responding
Angling and fish stocks	
<p>Respondents asked about how existing fish stocks within the reservoir may be impacted during the construction works.</p> <p>Concern was expressed by local residents and anglers that the reservoir will lose the strong fish stocks that are currently present, as the reservoir will be re-stocked with smaller fish once construction works have been completed.</p>	<p>A full assessment of the impact on fish has been carried out, and a report on this assessment accompanies the planning application sent to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.</p> <p>In addition, the upper part of the reservoir will now remain in water, which allows some of the fish to be retained in that area during the works. This will help to preserve the larger fish on site as far as possible.</p> <p>A fish rescue will then be undertaken in accordance with all relevant procedures. This will involve assessing fish for disease before relocating to alternative Trust-owned reservoirs.</p>



What we heard through consultation	How we are responding
Access roads, car parking, and footpath accessibility	
<p>Several respondents expressed concerns regarding accessibility and the capacity of the car park at Harthill Reservoir.</p> <p>We received requests for a new access road to be constructed for the works away from residential roads that already experience congestion. In addition, we received requests to improve the current road infrastructure to ensure the reservoir is accessible for all.</p>	<p>A new access will be created off Woodall Lane to serve all construction traffic, resulting in minimal impact on current public access or parking to the reservoir.</p> <p>A Construction Traffic Management Plan accompanies the application which also details how construction activities will be managed throughout the duration of the works.</p> <p>The public footpath across the dam will be resurfaced during these works to ensure everyone has safe access to the reservoir.</p> <p>Although it doesn't form part of this project, we are also reviewing whether existing footpaths elsewhere at the reservoir can be improved in the future.</p>
Feeding the Chesterfield Canal	
<p>Respondents raised concerns regarding the level of supply that the Chesterfield Canal will receive during construction, and whether boating and other recreational activities on the canal will be able to continue. There were also enquiries regarding the management of flood risk.</p>	<p>The water at Harthill would be used over the summer to feed the Chesterfield Canal with works programmed to allow for this.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In addition, flood risk has been a key consideration in the design process and a flood risk assessment accompanies 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 helps to mitigate flood risk.</p>



What we heard through consultation	How we are responding
Public facilities	
<p>A common feedback theme was the request for improvements to be made to current facilities around the reservoir and the surrounding footpaths. Suggestions included a welfare block with toilet facilities, dog waste bins, or a café.</p>	<p>While this scheme is for the construction of the new spillway, which is required to upgrade the infrastructure of the reservoir, Canal & River Trust is open to further discussions with local residents over how improvements can be made to existing facilities moving forward.</p>
Wildlife and biodiversity	
<p>We received comments regarding biodiversity and how these works will improve and/or manage any potential impacts to biodiversity in and around the reservoir site.</p> <p>Respondents raised concerns about the potential impacts to wildlife, notably on nesting birds to ensure their nests are not damaged by construction works.</p>	<p>Canal & River Trust has fully investigated the potential impacts on wildlife and these assessments form part of the planning application submission.</p> <p>In addition, the proposals are accompanied by a detailed landscape appraisal which includes significant tree and hedgerow planting to compensate for the loss of existing habitats. This will provide an overall increase in the number of trees and hedgerows across the site. The application is also accompanied with a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment which demonstrates that the landscaping we have proposed would provide an overall biodiversity enhancement.</p> <p>The timing of any habitat removal will be considered in line with nesting seasons and best practice, to manage the impact of the construction works on wildlife.</p>



What we heard through consultation	How we are responding
Construction activities	
Respondents raised concerns as to whether construction machinery will be stored on site, and request for more details to be released on the construction programme.	A Construction Environmental Management Plan has been prepared to accompany the planning application. This provides details of construction activities and how the process will be managed throughout construction. A construction compound will be created in the field with access off Woodall Lane, this will keep construction works completely separate to the existing access to the reservoir.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with this project

All comments received during the pre-application consultation have been considered by the Canal & River Trust on an ongoing basis to ensure that the issues raised could be addressed during the development of the proposals.

The Canal & River Trust would like to thank the local residents and other consultees who have provided that feedback during the pre-application consultation and we look forward to further constructive dialogue throughout the development process.