

October 2022

Southlake Reservoir Improvement Scheme

The Environment Agency is undertaking improvement work to Southlake Moor. An area of low-lying farmland on the flood plain of the Rivers Parrett and Sowey, the Moor was classified as a 'large, raised reservoir' in 2006 under the Reservoirs Act 1975 because of the volume of water the Moor can hold above the adjacent natural ground level.

The Environment Agency has a legal responsibility to ensure the continued safety of the existing embankments and water control structures. The reservoir has been inspected in accordance with the Act by an All Reservoirs Panel Engineer (ARPE) and we're now in the process of ensuring that the necessary works are completed in accordance with their recommendations and within a specified timeframe.

Having gathered ground-level information across the reservoir, we have identified areas that require improvement along the northern, eastern, and southern embankments. A map showing the location of this work has been included.

The main site compound will be situated offsite but there will be a number of smaller mobile welfare units in use-as work progresses.

Northern embankment

The northern embankment, which runs parallel along the southern side of the Burrow Wall Rhyne, will be widened by approximately 15 metres to allow for safe maintenance access. It will also be given a shallower slope and raised to a uniform level along the embankment. There are also five existing crossing points along the northern embankment which will be replaced with culverts.

Eastern embankment

Along the eastern embankment, which runs along the Sowey, we'll be raising any low points to the same height as the northern embankment. We will also be creating a formal spillway to enable water to leave the reservoir and enter the Sowey in a controlled manner. This spillway will be constructed at the same level as the existing reach of the Sowey left bank to ensure current agricultural practices are maintained.

Southern embankment

Along the southern embankment, which runs along the northern edge of the River Parrett, we will be raising any low points to ensure consistency in level, allowing water to overtop the embankment evenly in extreme flood events and reduce the risk of damage. We will also be giving the western end of the southern embankment a shallower slope to improve its stability and make maintenance easier.

Construction timing

Some preparation work, including ground investigation, vegetation clearance, and tree removal, is scheduled to take place in October 2022, with the main construction work due to begin in late-spring 2023. Most work will take place in the spring and summer months in 2023 and 2024.

Keep up to date

If you have any questions or would like to sign up to receive scheme updates, please contact our engagement consultant Lindsay Farmer either by emailing her at southlakeservoir@environment-agency.gov.uk or calling her on 07718 785239.

Location map

The map below shows the embankment locations where the work will be taking place.

