

Trial embankment

Laying the groundwork for the Fens reservoir

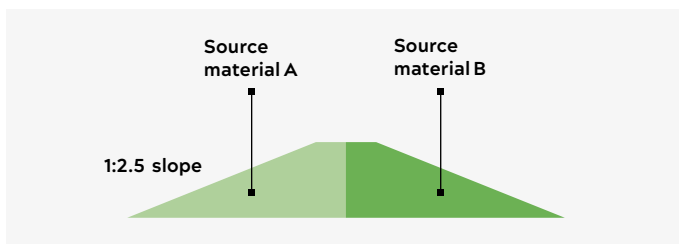
As part of our planning for the proposed reservoir in the Fens, we're taking a crucial step forward with plans for the construction of a trial embankment – a scaled down version of the final embankment that will help us better understand the ground conditions and construction methods needed for success. The trial embankments will help inform the design for our reservoir.

What is a trial embankment – and why does it matter?

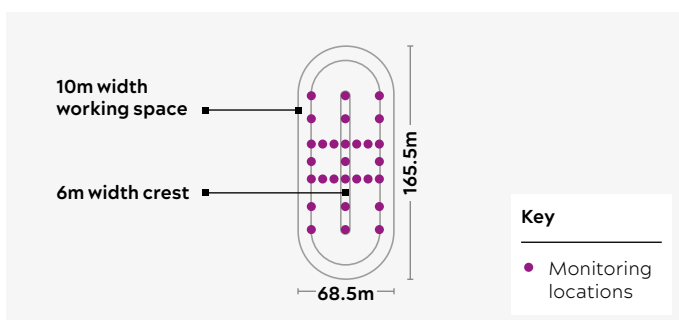
A trial embankment is essentially a pilot test: a temporary structure built to about two-thirds the height of the proposed reservoir embankment, with a steeper gradient. It allows us to:

- Model soil behaviour and monitor settlement over time
- Validate design parameters and construction techniques
- Assess risks and refine our overall construction programme
- Improves our understanding of on-site material and we expect this will help to bring the benefits of the reservoir more quickly and cost-effectively

This trial will be in place for around 12 months, giving us valuable data on how materials perform under load and over time. For example, we'll learn whether the soil needs wetting, how well it compacts, and whether slope gradients might need adjusting.



Cross section



Top view with monitoring locations and approximate dimensions

Technical insights and benefits

The trial embankment will be heavily monitored to measure pore water pressure, helping us assess the mass permeability of the ground. We'll also conduct a clay compaction trial to identify the most efficient and suitable methods for placing materials.

These insights will:

- Inform our construction timeline
- Allow for a more informed reservoir design
- Strengthen our design and engineering diligence

Next steps

Key planning steps include:

- Site selection
- Pre-application discussions, including those with stakeholders
- Environmental surveys and assessments
- Preparing a Town and Country Planning Act application for submission to Fenland District Council

During our next steps we will be providing more information to the community about our plans for the trial embankment.

Why it matters

Delays to our water supply date could increase pressure on existing sensitive water sources and limit regional growth. By investing in trial embankments now, we're proactively managing risks and setting ourselves up for a smoother, more confident delivery of the reservoir project.