

Written response to questions submitted regarding progress on the use of demountable flood defences in the Clementhorpe area

Environment Agency:

The defence work at Clementhorpe needs careful consideration and design. A demountable defence solution is complicated due to the presence of underground services and further understanding is needed of how adjacent riverside buildings will link in with the defences to provide a consistent and effective line of defence. The outline design is currently being developed and formal engagement will commence in November 2018; however, we welcome views from anyone at any time via yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The North Street hub will also be open in early November, providing an opportunity for further contact with anyone interested in our work across the city. Information will also be made available via newsletter and social media. The Clementhorpe business case will be finalised by March 2018 and construction will commence in autumn 2018.

City of York Council:

Regarding the existing flood defence procedures for the Clementhorpe area, a demountable flood defence has been placed at the end of Clementhorpe by City of York Council Highways operatives to prevent flood water passing into the Clementhorpe area. The defence is constructed from 1 tonne sandbags, which reduce the impact of flooding from all but the largest events. The defence is constructed when river levels are predicted to rise 4.0m or more above summer level. Work commences at 3.6m above summer level and pumping is needed behind the defence to ensure water does not build up from the surface water system. The pumps are removed and the defence is allowed to naturally overtop in any flood events of 4.6m above summer level or greater.

Flood warning and evacuation plans would be invoked to manage any escalating situation. A risk assessment carried out following the 2012 flood event informed this; the defence was constructed higher in 2012 and significant resource was needed to pump behind the defence. However, this presented unacceptable dangers to operatives and residents if the defence were to suddenly fail; a slow overtopping and ingress into the area behind the defence presents less risk. This

approach was communicated to residents at an event at Clementhorpe Community Hall in on the 4th November 2014.

The Clementhorpe area is not considered to be at high risk of flooding with the current temporary defence arrangement managing a wide array of flood events, though it is accepted that the overall frequency of severe flood events had increased in recent years.