Clifton Ings Flood Alleviation Scheme:

Reducing our environmental impacts

Here is a list of some of the actions we have taken to reduce the environmental impacts of construction of the new flood defences and protect wildlife

**Pre construction:**

* Baseline environmental surveys undertaken to inform potential impacts on heritage, landscape or ecology features.
* Informed the need for site specific surveys, e.g. bats, GCN, tansy, trees, vegetation, photographic records of heritage features etc.
* This information was used to inform the management and monitoring plans which were developed with the advisory group – made up of floodplain meadow and SSSI specialists from various sectors.
* These plans identified suitable mitigation to ensure that the SSSI was not harmed and enhanced wherever possible.

**During construction:**

* Continue or implement traditional floodplain meadow management.
* Translocation of rare MG4 grassland species.
* Control and manage invasive non-native species.
* Maintain grassy margins in the cornfield to provide habitat for insects such as butterflies, bees and beetles.
* Manage the bee bank and repair when necessary.
* Undertaking ongoing vegetation surveys to ensure to negative impacts throughout construction.
* Scything within Blue Beck flood basin to maintain traditional meadow management.
* Maintain tubular water dropwort and encourage the expansion of water vole and GCN in Blue Beck flood basin.
* Newt fencing around Blue Beck flood basin to protect the species and prevent them from entering the working area.
* Special tracking surfaces used in the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to protect underlying vegetation.
* ‘finger tip’ surveys for frogs, newts and toads carried out in the cornfield before the topsoil was removed.
* Ongoing archaeological monitoring wherever ground is broken.
* Contractors briefed on how to deal with site specific environmental features, including ecology, habitats, landscape and heritage.
* Rescued a family of orphaned ducklings from York Sports Club and took them to an animal rescue organisation.
* A compensatory bird feeding area set up in Rawcliffe Country Park to provide food for farmland birds throughout the year during construction.
* Tree surveys carried out before felling to ensure nesting birds were not present.
* Brush piles from felled trees checked for nesting birds and kept in situ to protect them (in response to information from the public).
* Embankment design altered to avoid felling several iconic veteran trees (the old oak in Rawcliffe Meadows and the ancient oaks in Homestead Park).
* Undertake annual tansy surveys.
* Tansy management in the New Meadow and Tansy Pond areas.
* Extent the tansy area in New Meadow.
* Copse management around the site.
* Reinstatement of floodplain meadow by implementing traditional floodplain meadow management, plus using restoration techniques such as green hay spreading and brush harvesting.

**Post construction, we will:**

* Install bird boxes.
* Plant additional tansy areas.
* Compensatory tree and hedge planting to be carried out after construction is completed, replacing all trees felled at a ratio of one to five and hedgerow on a minimum 1:1 basis.
* Restore the topsoil in the cornfield.
* A total of four ponds will be created in two locations (The Cornfield and Rawcliffe Country Park). These locations are on higher ground and at a reduced risk of flooding (unlike the Blue Beck Flood Basin ponds). This should help to establish a robust and larger GCN meta-population across the site. These new ponds are strategically located, creating a 'stepping stone' from the Blue Beck Flood Basin to the pond in Rawcliffe Country Park. A hibernacula will also be created adjacent to both new pond creation areas.