

Our approach to traffic and transport

A sustainable transport and traffic plan is a key part of how we would build and operate the reservoir.



We are committed to minimising and mitigating the impacts the reservoir could have on local roads, as much as we reasonably can. We will also consider whether any existing transport infrastructure local to the reservoir needs to change for when it is open. And we'll explore safe and sustainable travel opportunities to the reservoir for all.

Alongside these commitments, we are also following the requirements of the National Policy Statement for Water Resources Infrastructure¹, which provides the framework for how water resources such as reservoirs should be developed. It includes, among other things, a specific section on traffic and transport that we are considering as we develop our plans for the reservoir.

It directs us to assess how traffic and transport could affect local communities and amenities during both construction and operational phases. That includes the transport of materials, goods, and personnel to and from the site.

As the design for the reservoir and its associated water infrastructure is in the early stages of planning and not yet fully developed, it's not possible to know the exact travel requirements either during construction or operation.

At this stage, we have identified the indicative boundary of the proposed main reservoir site and approximately where its associated water infrastructure could be located. We know the typical types of equipment we could need for construction, the nature of materials needed for construction, and have an emerging design for how the reservoir could look after construction.

Our early work has highlighted that due to the type and size of equipment required and for access for construction staff, we will be at least partially reliant on road for the construction of the reservoir. At this stage we would anticipate mainly using main roads for this, primarily the A-roads closest to the reservoir and other sites, but some use of local roads may also be needed.

Rail and river links could also provide further transport options to support construction. From some very early work, we think these options could need local improvement works and we are engaging with stakeholders to explore them further. We will also consider if any potential changes to river or rail could have additional benefits for travel to the reservoir when built, or for the region more broadly.

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6437e3a2f4d42000cd4a1a7/E02879931_National_Policy_Statement_for_Water_Resources.pdf

In our ongoing design development we are:

Engaging with key stakeholders including the local community, local planning and highway authorities, Network Rail, National Highways, port authorities, the Environment Agency, and the internal drainage boards.

Undertaking work to explore options for a range of transport methods to be used during construction, such as existing railway networks, ports, and inland waterways, in addition to road transport.

Appraising existing travel routes and services near to the reservoirs, such as bus and rail travel to explore what could be needed during construction and operation.

Assessing options for access to the reservoir in the future including walking, cycling, horse riding, and considering opportunities to travel by bus, rail or waterways in addition to private vehicles.

Developing forecasts for potential visitor numbers and assessing sustainable travel options based on this information.

Our emerging design for the reservoir includes some early opportunities in line with these aims, such as paths for cycling, walking, horse riding and mobility access around and to the site. It also shows potential access routes to the reservoir for local communities and visitors, including proposals for car parking and other facilities.

Over the coming months, as well as seeking consultation feedback, we will be starting technical and environmental studies to inform the transport options.

During the next stages of our work, we'll:

Investigate options to maximise the use of locally sourced construction materials, as far as reasonably practicable.

Identify access routes to the reservoir site which would seek to minimise effects on local communities.

Assess potential impacts associated with traffic and transport on the local community and environment, and consider ways to manage these impacts.

Explore ways to integrate our proposals with wider transport infrastructure provision nearby.