DRAFT Exemption risk assessment

Installation of temporary working platforms in the flood plain

The Environment Agency produces risk assessments for all new and amended exemptions. These list the potential risks and specify the measures required to manage them.

The assessment of each risk comprises the following components:

- information about the source, pathway and receptors – and the potential harm to those receptors
- an assessment of the level of risk and justification of that assessment
- actions for managing the risk (through exemption limits and conditions) and a residual risk rating after managing it

Risk management involves breaking or limiting the source-pathway-receptor linkage to reduce the risk. If we set minimum distances we explain the basis of the distances, for example by modelling.

We control the residual risk (after risk management) through compliance assessment or the use of our enforcement powers.

If you need to check the meaning of any terms we have used in the context of this risk assessment, see the ‘Explanation of terms’ section.

This risk assessment is based on the scope of the exemption and associated limits and conditions:

Exemption limits and conditions

a. The temporary platform will be in place for no longer than 6 months.

b. The platform is constructed more than 8 metres from the banks of a non-tidal main river;

c. The platform is constructed more than 16 metres from the banks of a tidal main river

d. The platform is constructed at least 8 metres from any culvert, remote defence, flood defence structure or 16 metres from a sea defence

e. Temporary working platforms, including crane pads and temporary matting, must not exceed 300 millimetres above existing ground levels.

f. The excavation is no more than 500 millimetres deep at any point.

g. The temporary platform has dimensions of no greater than 10 metres x 10 metres.

h. There shall be no other temporary working platforms within 1 kilometre of this temporary working platform

i. The activity shall not be carried out within 200 metres radius of a European designated nature conservation site, SSSI or National Nature Reserve;

j. All materials and debris are removed from the site after use of the working platform has finished

k. The site is returned to its previous condition and ground level once the working platform has been removed.

1. Risks to local population and property

1.1 Flood risk

We have assessed the likelihood of increased flood risk on local people and businesses and damage to property and infrastructure.

Judgement of risk

We have judged the:

- likelihood of the hazard affecting receptors as medium
- overall severity of potential consequences as medium
- overall risk rating as medium

The reasons for giving the activity this rating are because:

These structures can direct water flow across the floodplain potentially increasing risk to 3rd parties who don't not currently flood or at lower levels. The longer the structure is in place the greater the risk of a flood event occurring becomes. Any structure can also reduce floodplain capacity, particularly in narrow floodplains.

During the installation damage could occur due to excavation close to flood risk assets and banks for rivers which could temporarily increase flood risk and require costly repairs to be undertaken.

Damage could also be caused to protected and priority species without assessment of the species and the method of works.

Managing the risk

The following limits and conditions will normally manage the risk, and we rate it as very low.

1. The platform is constructed more than 8 metres from the banks of a non-tidal main river;

2. The platform is constructed more than 16 metres from the banks of a tidal main river

3. The platform is constructed at least 8m from any culvert, remote defence, flood defence structure or 16m from a sea defence

4. All materials and debris are removed from the site after use of the working platform has finished

5. The site is returned to its previous condition and ground level once the working platform has been removed.

6. Temporary working platforms, including crane pads and temporary matting, must not exceed 300mm above existing ground levels.

7. The excavation is no more than 500mm deep at any point.

8. The temporary platform has dimensions of no greater than 10 metres x 10 metre.

9. The temporary platform will be in place for no longer than 6 months.

10. There shall be no other temporary working platforms within 1km

2. Risks to protected habitats, species and the historic environment

Protected habitats and the historic environment include:

- special areas of conservation
- special protection areas
- Ramsar wetland areas
- sites of special scientific interest
- Marine Conservation Zones
- Water Framework Directive status
- Scheduled Monuments

Protected habitats and species can be at risk from any source and by any pathway.

We have assessed the potential harm to protected habitats, species and the historic environment as:

- toxic contamination

- nutrient enrichment
- disturbance
- smothering
- loss or damage to habitat or species
- physical damage to designated sites
- ability of river to form and sustain habitat
- increased sediment load
- deterioration of ecological status
- deterioration of high morphology status

Judgement of risk

We have judged the:

- likelihood of the hazard affecting receptors to be medium
- the overall severity of potential consequence to be medium
- overall risk rating to be medium

The reason for giving the activity this rating is because emissions to air, water or deposition onto land may cause harm to and deterioration of protected habitat sites.

Managing the risk

The following conditions will normally manage the risk, and we rate it as very low.

1. The activities shall not be carried out within 200m radius of a European designated nature conservation site, SSSI or National Nature Reserve;

Explanation of terms

Likelihood of exposure

This is the likelihood of the receptors being exposed to the hazard. The meanings of the definitions are:

- high – exposure is probable – direct exposure is likely with no or few barriers between the hazard source and the receptor
- medium – exposure may be probable – feasible exposure is possible as the barriers to exposure are less controllable
- low – exposure is unlikely – several barriers exist between the hazard source and receptor to reduce exposure

- very low – exposure is very unlikely – effective, multiple barriers are in place to reduce exposure

Overall magnitude of potential consequence

This is the severity of the consequence if the hazard is realised and may cause actual or potential harm.

This will have a high, medium, low or very low rating using attributes and scaling to consider 'harm'.

Risk rating

We determine the risk rating by combining the likelihood of exposure with the magnitude of the potential consequences.

We assess these ratings to be:

- high risk – very likely to occur, severe consequences, requires additional assessment and active management
- medium risk – may occur, moderate consequences, requires additional assessment and may need active management or monitoring (or both)
- low and very low risks – unlikely to occur, minor consequences but will require periodic review