

Horsey Island River Bank Breach

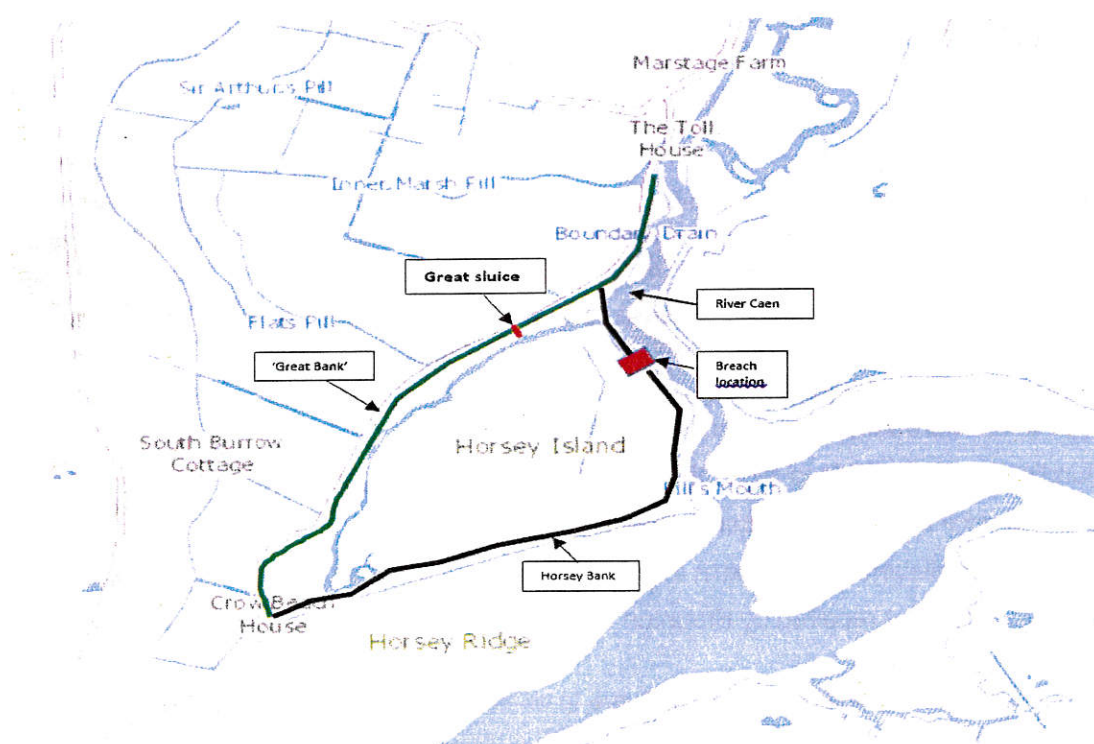


Introduction

09 October 2019

Sir Arthur's Pill drains Braunton Marsh, discharging through Horsey Island into the River Caen. Over a number of years, there has been progressive deterioration of the outfall through the River Caen bank to the point where it has now breached completely. Over the high spring tides in early November 2017 and over the Christmas period 2017, Horsey Island was substantially inundated. Salt water was also reported entering Braunton Marsh via the Great Sluice.

The gap in the bank was originally about 30m, but has increased significantly and is now approximately 70m wide as at October 2019.



Location map

Flood Risk and responsibility

- The inundation of Horsey Island does not flood any homes.
- Horsey Island, including its estuary facing bank, is privately owned. The responsibility for maintaining the bank and its associated structures rests with the owner.
- The inner, 'Great Bank', including the Great Sluice and toll road, is owned, operated and maintained by the Braunton Marsh Inspectors.
- The Great Bank appears to be in reasonable condition, however it has varying levels along its length and is at risk of overtopping during the Highest Astronomical Tides
- The village of Braunton is not at risk of flooding as a result of the breach of Horsey Bank, nor would it be at risk if the Great Bank were to fail or overtop.
- Houses at Velator are protected by our flood banks, walls and various road humps with a good standard of protection.

Photos



Horsey Bank breach as at 02 10 2019

Wrack mark as at 02 10 2019 inner bank

Repair works after overtopping on 01 10 2019

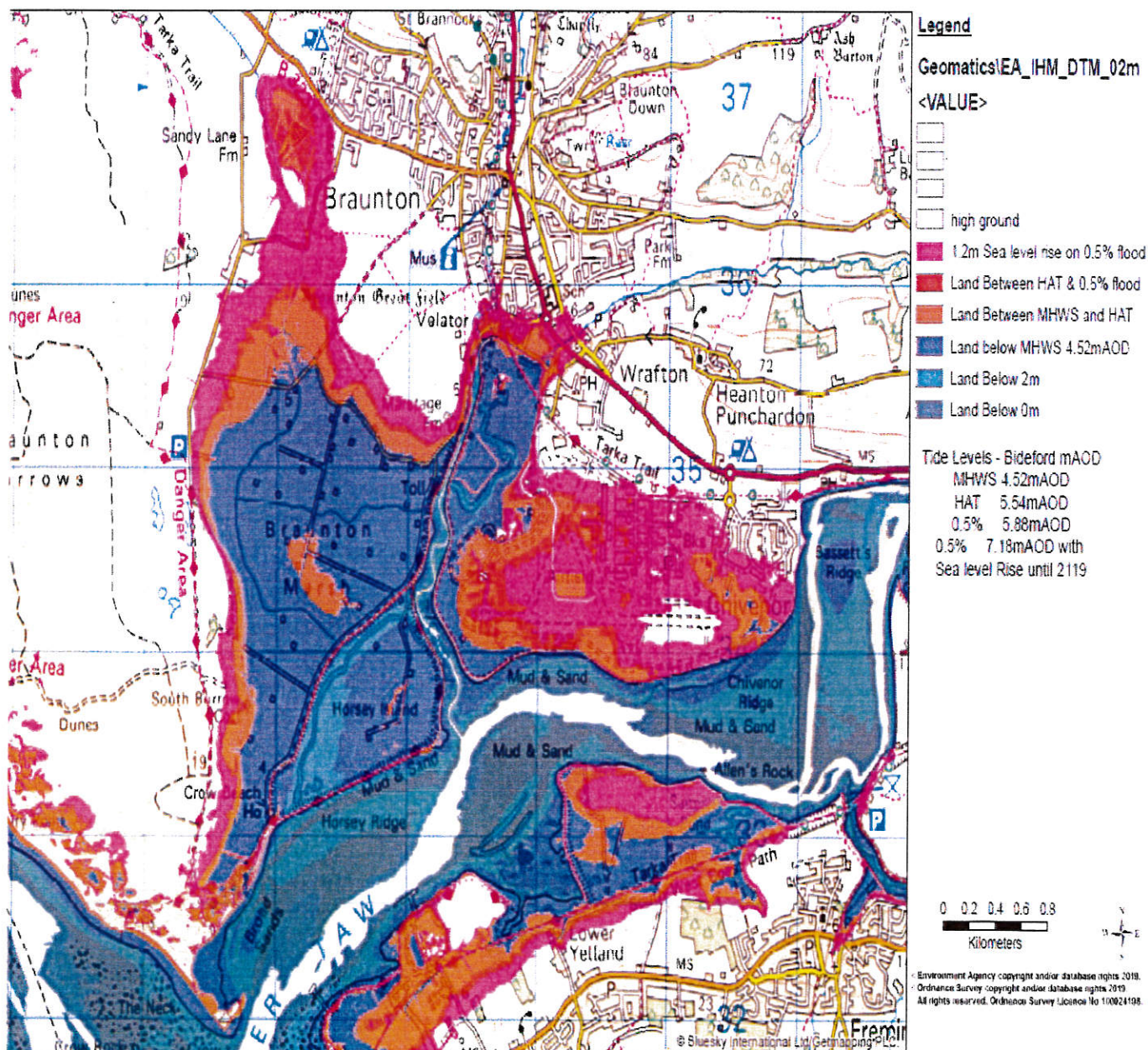
What has happened and what next?

- The Environment Agency has supplied Braunton Marsh Inspectors with a level survey of the Great Bank. An updated survey will be undertaken after the overtopping event of 01 Oct 2019 to help the Braunton Marsh Inspectors identify the low sections along the inner bank.
- Contact was made with us in October 2016 to discuss repair works to the Horsey Bank outfall structure and embankment. Despite this, no permit application was received by us.
- We did arrange emergency consent for the landowner at Horsey Island to carry out repairs to the river breach, these works were unsuccessful however.
- Flood defence funding is not available to repair the breach as no homes are protected by Horsey bank
- The MP and Parish Council are aware of situation and constraints on funding
- Professional partners will collaborate to maintain the condition of the Great Bank.
- The Great Sluice has now been repaired by Braunton Marsh Inspectors and Braunton Internal Drainage Board
- The Great Bank overtopped on Monday 01 Oct 2019 due to exceptionally high tides however no structural damage appears to have been caused to the embankment
- The overtopping on 01 October lasted for about 30 minutes only.



Map of location showing extent of tidal flooding in absence of defences

Braunton Marshes - approx flood area with NO defences
Land Levels to MAOD (not chart Datum)



For further information:

Please contact **Bryn Williams, Asset Performance Team (East), Advisor** or **Simon Dart, Partnership and Strategic Overview Officer, Devon Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Area**, on 03708 506 506 or email DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk if you have further questions or wish to discuss this issue.