



Action is to be taken to bring a neglected Darwen beauty spot back to its best.

Since the owner of Jack's Key Reservoir in the Whitehall area went into liquidation in 2005, there has been no one with a legal duty to make sure the structure is safe.

It has now fallen into a state of disrepair and has been drained to alleviate any risk of flooding.

Now, as the enforcement authority, the Environment Agency is looking into the site as a priority, and officers want to talk to the community about their long-term goals of managing the flood risk in Darwen and providing an amenity for local residents.

According to the agency, the tunnels and structures which form the reservoir are not up to modern standards.

Whitehall Councillor David Foster has met with the Environment Agency staff at the site.

He said: "We haven't done a formal consultation yet, but the residents I have spoken to in the area are keen that water is put back in, and we can have a lovely feature once again."

“We will never have it filled right to the top because of safety issues, but we could get something like a football pitch-sized area of water at the bottom.

“There’s lots of possibilities with the site, including improving footpaths, but funding needs to be found.”

Adam Walsh, area flood risk manager for the Environment Agency, said: “In the coming weeks and months the Environment Agency will be setting up and publicising meetings with local residents, as well as talking to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to ensure that they are kept up to date, and involved, in the Environment Agency’s plans for the reservoir.

“We hope by working in partnership with the community and council we can deliver a long term solution for the management of the reservoir for the benefit of all.”

Blackburn with Darwen Council will be working with the Environment Agency on the project to attract funding