

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992  
TRANSPORT AND WORKS (INQUIRIES PROCEDURE) RULES 2004  
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990  
BOSTON BARRIER ORDER**

**DOCUMENT EA/13/1  
PROOF OF EVIDENCE  
OF  
ANDREW JEE  
LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MARCH 2017**



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## 1 Introduction

1.1 I am Lincolnshire County Council's (**LCC**) Senior Flood Risk and Special Projects Officer. I have a background in Engineering, formerly working in the private sector and serving for 9 years in the Royal Air Force (RAF Marine Branch) before becoming a Local Government Officer in 2000. I have worked for LCC for 11 years as a project development officer. In my current role I take responsibility for LCC's Waterways Development Programme and provide support to the Floods Team to manage the floods infrastructure programme and represent LCC on strategic projects such as the Boston Barrier.

1.2 LCC fully supports the Boston Barrier Project and the methodology undertaken by the Environment Agency to develop and deliver it and this statement will justify that position. It will cover, from LCC's perspective:

- The background to the Boston Barrier project including its development methodology.
- Water Level Management including the rationale to its inclusion in the early stages of project development and its later separation from the project.
- The local economic benefits of flood risk management.
- The Haven Flood Banks project.
- A list of supporting documents.

## 2 Boston Barrier Project background and development methodology:

2.1 The risk of flooding from sea water in Boston is high and the potential impacts significant, this has been demonstrated through many historical instances of flooding, a summary of which is attached at **Appendix 1**. Approximately 14,300 residential properties and 900 commercial properties are at high flood risk, which provides the context for the Boston Barrier Project.

2.2 Options to add value to the Barrier were considered and appraised at the early stages of the project including, as well as using a tidal barrage to improve levels of flood protection; to impound water through the town to provide stable conditions for navigation. This resulted in the Boston Combined Strategy Report (**C/3/4**) which recommended the development of a combined flood risk management and navigation strategy for Boston.

2.3 The Combined Strategy Report recognised the opportunity to take a partnership based approach to the development of the project to explore using the barrier to impound water on the upstream side (known as Water Level Management (**WLM**) - to create stable conditions for navigation and moorings for boats in the town centre and to increase levels of boating activity. This in turn could improve the aesthetics of the river frontage and stimulate the visitor and tourist economy as well as increase levels of flood protection. The report recognised LCC as a potential funding partner and the project development thereafter has taken a partnership based approach with LCC engaged throughout.

2.4 LCC has been represented by me and others at Project Board level throughout the life of the project. My role in this project has been to ensure that project outcomes as captured in the

Combined Strategy are realised where possible and are enabled or at least not prejudiced where not. I believe that the Boston Barrier Project would deliver the flood risk management objectives of the Combined Strategy and would not prejudice the future delivery of WLM. LCC supports this project.

### **3 Water Level Management (WLM)**

3.1 In LCC's view, WLM that brings stable high levels of water throughout the town centre is the most likely stimulus to tourism based economic growth in Boston and All project partners (The Environment Agency, Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board, Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council) are joint signatories to a Common Vision for Water Management (attached at **Appendix 2**).

3.2 However, WLM has potentially wide ranging impacts on the waterways that discharge into the Haven, the environment (including BAP protected habitat and migratory fish populations), the fishing fleet and other commercial and leisure boats that pass through the proposed barrier location. LCC considers that these significant issues require further investigation and study work, so that all of the wider impacts can be identified and dealt with appropriately on an informed basis. In advance of this, and until all of these issues are fully investigated and understood, there are significant limitations on the maximum level and duration at which WLM could be operated. Further investigation and study work cannot begin until the future management of the Black Sluice catchment is confirmed and work to determine that remains ongoing to date.

3.3 Considering the WLM limitations, LCC commissioned further investigation work to evaluate the economic impacts of the limited WLM deliverable as part of the barrier project, this study produced the Richard Glen 'Boston WLM Economic Benefit Analysis' report (attached at **Appendix 3**) and the follow on 'Boston – Before WLM' report by the same author (attached at **Appendix 4**).

3.4 On the basis of these reports, I concluded that the levels and duration over which WLM can be operated are critical to those economic benefits being realised and that the limited WLM deliverable as part of the Boston Barrier project would not deliver significant economic benefits. I reported these findings to LCC's Executive and Scrutiny Committee in February 2015 (attached at **Appendix 5**) both of whom approved that further investigations should be undertaken before properly informed investment decisions could be made for Boston and that in order that the Boston Barrier Project be protected, the future development of WLM should be separated from it at this time.

### **4 The local economic benefits of flood risk management.**

4.1 The specific business case for the Boston Barrier has been determined by the Environment Agency, based on protecting existing homes and business. This has placed the Boston Barrier project at the highest level of national priority and attracted 100% DEFRA Flood Defence Grant in Aid funding. However there are wider benefits attributed to Flood Risk Management investment. These are captured in the DEFRA report 'Flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) and the local economy March 2014'. A summary of these is shown below; the full report is attached at **Appendix 6**.

- FCERM can alleviate the adverse impacts of flood risk on production efficiency, resource allocation and the dynamic efficiency (the efforts a business puts in to innovation and product development over time) – it can therefore deliver benefits to the local economy.
- Businesses might remain at a location for longer if the risks of flooding are reduced.
- FCERM reduces disruption to businesses, encouraging them to stay at a location when they might otherwise move or even cease trading.
- It is possible that FCERM can unlock investment where it lowers the risk of flooding to the extent that planning consent for new developments is granted. Such developments may also be more viable as the level of investment in property-level flood protection is reduced. This can attract direct investment from outside the area.
- FCERM can also generate spillover impacts:
  - Agglomeration: The emergence of clusters of businesses with shared interests
  - Infrastructure interdependencies where shared reliance on infrastructure enhances business efficiency and FCERM better protects that infrastructure.
  - Insurance cost reductions: Unlike domestic property businesses do not benefit from the Flood Re scheme that caps the costs of buildings and contents insurance
  - Incentivising business growth: FCERM can enhance business confidence, reduce uncertainty and lead to greater investment.
  - Land value increases in areas better protected from flooding.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 In my view the Boston Barrier Project is being taken forward in alignment with the Combined Strategy Report, it will significantly increase levels of flood protection in Boston and will not prejudice future WLM which would be taken forward separately. I have ensured that this has been reported to LCC Executive and Scrutiny Committees in a correct and timely way so that informed decisions can be made for future investment in Boston's waterways.
- 5.2 LCC therefore fully supports the Boston Barrier Project and the methodology with which it is being developed.

**6 Statement of Truth**

I hereby declare as follows:

- 6.1 Insofar as the facts stated in this Proof of Evidence are within my own knowledge I believe them to be true, and that the opinions I have expressed represent my true and complete professional opinion.
- 6.2 This Proof of Evidence includes all facts which I regard as being relevant to the opinions which I have expressed and that I have drawn the inquiry's attention to any matter which would affect the validity of those opinions.
- 6.3 I understand that my duty to the Inquiry is to help it to help it with matters within my expertise and I have complied with that duty.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AJ', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew Jee

16<sup>th</sup> March 2017