Transport and Works Act 1992

The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

Rule 10(2)(c)

The Boston Barrier Order

CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE AIMS OF THE PROPOSALS

Introduction

1. The Environment Agency, in association with Lincolnshire County Council, Boston Borough Council and Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board, is seeking to manage the risk of flooding from the tidal Haven in Boston, Lincolnshire.

2. In order to achieve this, the Environment Agency is seeking authorisation to construct, operate and maintain a new tidal barrier with a moveable gate across the river Witham (also known in this location as 'the Haven'), together with a new building to enable the operation of the proposed barrier (the Proposal). As part of the Proposal, authorisation is also being sought for the construction of new flood defence walls on both banks of the Haven, a replacement gate across, and a widening of, the existing entrance to the Wet Dock within the Port of Boston and to execute ancillary work, including dredging of the river.

3. This statement is intended to provide a brief overview of the background to and principal aims of the Proposal.

Background

4. The Proposal constitutes a key component of the Boston Combined Strategy (the BCS), a 100 year Flood Risk Management and Waterways Strategy for Boston, Lincolnshire which was approved in March 2008. Evidence of flood risk is derived from historical events and predictive modelling of future conditions. A number of historical flood events have affected Boston, including major events in 1953, 1976, 1978, 2001 and most recently, in December 2013. Existing flood defences in Boston provide a standard of protection of a 1 in 50 chance (or a 2% probability) of flooding in any given year and accordingly Boston was identified as a regional priority for flood risk management.

5. The BCS set a central strategic objective, namely to reduce the risk from flooding whilst enabling opportunities for regeneration in Boston. It considered how best to address the tidal flooding risk within Boston, alongside opportunities to improve navigation of the wider waterways network which surrounds Boston. It identified five separate stages of work as being required as follows:

   Stage 1: a new navigation link between the Haven and the South Forty Foot Drain at Black Sluice;

   Stage 2: refurbishment of the Haven river walls upstream of the proposed Barrier;

   Stage 3: the provision of a new multi-functional barrier;
Stage 4: waterways facility improvements; and

Stage 5: raising of the embankments downstream of the proposed new barrier.

6. Stage 1 of the BCS was completed in March 2009 whilst Stage 2 was completed in 2014. Stage 3 of the BCS provided for the delivery of a multi-functional barrier within a defined length of the Haven, together with associated works to tie the barrier into higher defences downstream of the town of Boston.

7. The BCS established four specific project objectives for the proposed new barrier. These were:

   - **Navigation:** to provide a safe and attractive navigation link between the River Witham and South Forty Foot Drain
   - **Flood Risk Management:** to reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding
   - **Economics:** to maximise amenity, social and economic opportunities
   - **Environment:** to minimise the adverse impacts on the natural and built environment of the area and to maximise opportunities for environmental enhancement

8. Following approval of the BCS, these objectives informed further project development. Options appraisal and consultation was undertaken and a preferred single solution, namely, a multi-functional tidal barrier to be located upstream of the Port of Boston, was identified.

9. The barrier was described as ‘multi-functional’ as it was proposed to be utilised for both flood risk management and water level management purposes. ‘Water level management’ refers to the operation of the barrier to regulate water levels, thereby giving rise to navigational benefits within those areas through which navigation is currently difficult due to the tidal range of the Haven.

10. In January 2015, following a review of the findings of a Lincolnshire County Council waterways economic study on the possible economic benefits of water level management, a decision was taken by Lincolnshire County Council to defer funding the delivery of water level management until further consideration of potential options for implementing water level management could take place.

11. In view of the urgent need to deliver improved flood risk management, particularly in light of the major flood event which occurred in Boston in December 2013, during which over 800 homes and businesses suffered flooding, the decision was taken to separate the delivery of navigation and flood risk management benefits and to continue to progress the proposed barrier as a flood risk management proposal.

12. The barrier would have a large moveable flood gate which when not in use would lie flat on the river bed. It would be raised when required to prevent flooding in Boston during tidal surges and for maintenance and inspection purposes.

13. Whilst the operation of the barrier for water level management purposes no longer forms part of the current Proposal, the Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council and Boston Borough Council remain committed to the delivery of water level management in the future.
The design of the Proposal would not preclude future measures to achieve this. However, further works would be necessary before the proposed barrier could be operated for water level management purposes and additional consents would be required.

Aims of the Proposal

14. Following deferral of the delivery of water level management, the objectives of the proposed barrier, as established within the BCS, were revisited. Accordingly, the objectives of the Proposal are as follows:

**Flood Risk Management:** to reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding

**Economics:** to maximise amenity, social and economic opportunities

**Environment:** to minimise the adverse impacts on the natural and built environment of the area and to maximise opportunities for environmental enhancement

15. The principal aim of the Proposal is to reduce the risk of flooding to approximately 900 commercial properties and 14,256 residential properties in Boston. Following construction of the proposed barrier, this risk would be reduced over the next 100 years to a 1 in 300 chance (or a 0.33% probability) of flooding in any given year.

16. The Proposal is fundamental to delivery of Phase 3 of the BCS and achieving the flood risk management objectives set by that strategy. Furthermore, the Proposal has been designed in a manner which would not preclude achievement of the navigation objective identified by the BCS, through the future delivery of water level management proposals.