



Barling Repair Works – 2020

Project Overview

The Lower River Witham catchment is a large area of drained marshland between Lincoln and Boston. Throughout history embankments have been created alongside watercourses, and drainage works undertaken in the catchment. These works have made the surrounding land highly productive for farming and allowed communities to develop.

Some of these embankments are now over 200 years old. The extent and frequency of flood incidents is putting these structures under increased pressure, and the local community and economy at risk.

The 1997 Lower Witham Strategy recommended reinforcement of key embankments, whilst allowing some areas to flood, to relieve pressure on the system. Continuous reviews of the strategy and a series of flood incidents have highlighted the need to develop a sustainable long-term plan to manage flood risk, and create a resilient catchment and community.

Did you know...

The River Witham has been an important navigable river since the Iron Age, and the Romans used the River Witham as a means of accessing Lincoln.

The meaning of the name Witham is unknown, although historians believe it is an exceedingly old word, perhaps even pre-dating the Celts.

Project Work Streams

The project will be delivered across 3 work streams. Work streams one and two are progressing concurrently.

Work stream one – Framework for action

A programme of the most urgent works to sustain current assets and continue to provide protection while we work on the long-term plan. We will be seeking approval to proceed with these sustain works via what the appraisal guidance calls a 'Framework for Action' that allows works to take place as a strategy is developed.

Work stream two – Strategy update

Updating our evidence base and understanding the current scale of the problem with regards to condition of defences, funding short falls and a much more in-depth assessment on what is at risk. Followed by work with stakeholders and partners to agree medium term change works and measures, such as storage areas and any further embankment improvements. Eventually we will work with these same stakeholders to establish an adaptive pathway that we can apply as climate change really starts to take hold and the environment changes.

Work stream Three – Works arising future phases

A programme of work to implement the medium-term options agreed with stakeholders, in the Strategy Update.



Project Progress Update

We are improving our understanding of the project baseline through hydrological, environmental, economic, and geotechnical assessments. Our focus is currently on updating the hydrology and hydraulic model for the catchment, and undertaking work to better understand the condition and importance of embankments and other flood risk management 'assets' throughout the project area.

Since our last update, surveys and desk-based studies have been carried out, alongside modelling. This has allowed us to gather the most up to date data and test it in a range of scenarios. We have continued to work with landowners, internal drainage boards and local authorities and would like to thank them for their continued input on support on the project.



Photograph 1: *Timberland Delph breach November 2019*

Engagement Update

Since our last newsletter in July we have continued to engage with members of the Environment Agency, the local community and other stakeholders.

In September 2022, we held a 'Welcome to the Project' presentation for internal stakeholders. The presentation, delivered by members of the project team, gave a brief overview of the context and purpose of the scheme. By involving internal stakeholders, we can draw on their expertise and ensure that known local issues are raised and addressed as part of the project.

Next Steps

- Our Citizen Space website is being updated and will be live in early 2023. The new website will feature links to our newsletters, regular updates, and information about our upcoming engagement events.
- We will be hosting a 'Welcome to the Project' introductory presentation for external stakeholders and publish a video which captures and explains the problems and impacts currently facing the Lower Witham Catchment and surrounding communities.
- We would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support throughout 2022 and look forward to sharing our progress with you throughout 2023.



Photograph 2: *Drone Image of Barlings Repairs 2020*

Contact us:

Email us at:

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Visit our Citizen Space website for project updates: [Lower Witham Flood Resilience Project - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](https://environment-agency.gov.uk)

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