



Managing the risk of flooding: Black Sluice Catchment

July 2015

This briefing note explains how we are working with partners and local communities to manage flood risk in the Black Sluice Catchment, also known as the South Forty Foot Catchment. We are carrying out a formal consultation between 17 August and 27 September 2015 about what could be done to help and we'd really like to know what you think.

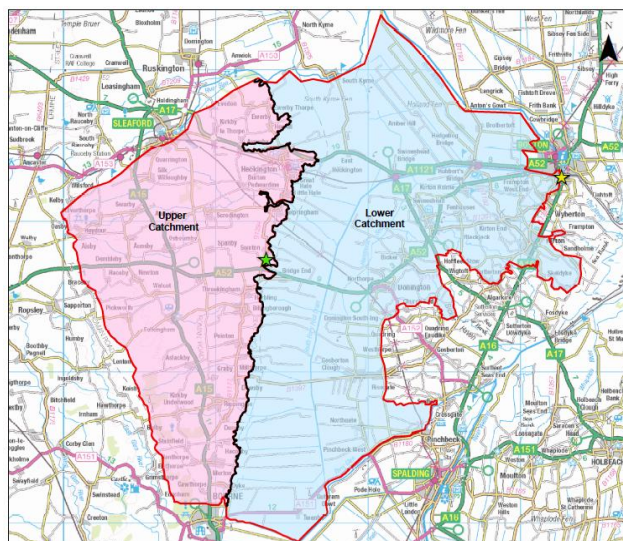
What is the background to this?

A study of this catchment started back in 2012 to review how flood risk is managed and to prepare a business case to refurbish the Black Sluice pumping station on London Road in Boston. After gathering evidence and running updated computer models, it became clear that the pumping station provides very little reduction in flood risk to people and their homes and offers only a small reduction in flood risk to agricultural land. This makes it difficult to attract government funding available to the Environment Agency.

The pumping station was built 69 years ago to pump water from the South Forty Foot Drain into the Witham Haven in Boston when the river is tide-locked. The pumps are used for hours totalling only around three days each year - because most of the water flows out naturally to the sea at low tide. The five pumps are at the end of their working life.

Sixteen homes were identified as potentially affected if the pumps did not operate, however detailed surveys have been carried out at all (updated in August from 13 properties) of the properties and it has been proven that they will not be at increased risk of flooding.

The study has looked at what additional activity might take place to help manage flood risk – on top of the regular maintenance that we carry out e.g. weed cutting and de-silting of the South Forty Foot Drain, and also land drainage activity by Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board (IDB). There are a number of opportunities that are emerging as 'options' that we would like to share with you. We feel these are likely to make the most difference to help manage the risk of flooding here in the future.



What are the options?

After holding a workshop with partners and sharing our initial list informally with communities to seek their views earlier this year we now have a short list of options. It is these options that we are now formally consulting people about.

There are different options for the upper and lower catchment - see reverse. It is likely that a combination of options would have the most additional impact. More details, including advantages and disadvantages, can be found in the consultation document.

Black Sluice Pumping Station Options	Lower Catchment Options	Upper Catchment Options
Do Nothing	Do Nothing	Do Nothing
Do Minimum – Removing the pumps	Do Minimum – Continue with current maintenance	Do Minimum – Continue with current maintenance
Replacing the pumps: - 2 pumps (current capacity: 30 cumecs) - 1 pump (15 cumecs) Updated to 2 options on 3 Aug	Make flood products (known as ‘property level flood protection’) available to homes most at risk	‘Slowing the flow’ upstream to hold water back
	Protecting low points along the raised embankments from erosion	Increased channel maintenance downstream of villages
		Make flood products (known as ‘property level flood protection’) available to homes most at risk
Transfer to Black Sluice IDB		

Who have you been working with?

The key partners we are working with are Black Sluice IDB and Lincolnshire County Council – the main organisations who have some responsibilities to help manage flood risk here. Other organisations have also been involved in a workshop with us e.g. Borough and District Councils, Forestry Commission, Natural England and Anglian Water.

How can I share my views with you?

The consultation is taking place between 17 August and 27 September. We would like to know which of the options you think would be most effective to improve how flood risk is managed and why, as well as any other thoughts you may have. Your views are important to us and will influence which of the options are progressed further. You can come and talk to us and officers from Black Sluice IDB between 1pm and 8pm at: Billingborough Village Hall on 25 August, Rippingale Village Hall on 10 September and Bicker Village Hall on 22 September. We will also be at the Black Sluice IDB offices, Station Road, Swineshead, PE20 3PW between 10am and 3pm on: 17 August, 1 September and 14 September.

The consultation document can be accessed online here from 17 August:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/>

You can also email your comments to:

BlackSluiceCatchment@environment-agency.gov.uk

There are also copies available for you to take away at your local district or borough council offices in Boston, Grantham, Sleaford and Spalding. Alternatively, please call 01522 785904 for a hard copy to be posted to you, along with a freepost envelope, for you to share your views.

What happens next?

The consultation responses will be analysed to help build a business case to apply for funding. Please let us know within your consultation response if you would like to be kept updated on progress by email.

How do I know if my property is at risk of flooding?

Find out if your property is at risk of flooding from the rivers or sea by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or look online www.gov.uk/flood. You may be able to register for free flood warnings to let you know when flooding is expected that could affect your home.

I have a question...

Please contact the Project Team by email BlackSluiceCatchment@environment-agency.gov.uk or call 01522 785904.