



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson - Executive Director of Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	25 October 2022
Subject:	Lincolnshire Reservoir - Consultation (Phase 1) on a proposed reservoir in Lincolnshire

Summary:

Anglian Water have commenced a (non-statutory) consultation on a proposed new reservoir in Lincolnshire. This report is to provide an overview of the plans and consultation exercise in advance of a response being provided by Lincolnshire County Council.

Actions Required:

Members of Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are asked to debate and discuss;

- 1) The strategic need for future water supply and
- 2) If a new reservoir is constructed in Lincolnshire what are the issues the authority need to take on board and therefore what considerations, including the need for any additional facilities, do Anglian Water need to take into account as part of this Phase 1 consultation.

Focus on these key areas will assist officers in shaping a response on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council in advance of the consultation deadline of 21st December 2022

1. Background

Anglian Water recognise that The East of England is one of the driest and fastest-growing regions in the country and is home to many unique and precious landscapes that rely on water. This summer's drought and heat wave are just some of the kinds of extreme weather challenges that are becoming more common. As part of identifying the need to secure future water supply Anglian Water are consulting on a proposed new reservoir in Lincolnshire, which will store more water, so it is available when needed and in doing so meet the challenges to supply, from population growth in our region and a changing

climate. To meet these challenges, it is also recognised that we all have to play our part in balancing the needs of society, business, and the environment to enable a sustainable future.

The proposed new reservoir in Lincolnshire has been identified as a large-scale investment in new water resources that is needed, and which will play a critical role in securing water supply long into the future. Alongside meeting these challenges, the project presents significant social, economic, and environmental opportunities. The vision is to create a place where water, people and nature come together, creating space for wildlife, such as wetlands, alongside enabling new recreational and educational activities and natural places for people to explore. It also means creating new jobs and providing opportunities for local businesses and tourism.

The proposed reservoir will be a strategic regional asset and due to its size and scale it qualifies as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Anglian Water therefore follow the process set out in the Planning Act 2008, which provides the framework for how NSIPs are developed and consented. Anglian Water will apply to the Planning Inspectorate, who act on behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for permission to build the reservoir. The permission is called a Development Consent Order (DCO).

Together with a panel of expert partners, Anglian Water have been undertaking a wide range of assessments to identify potential locations for the reservoir. That includes considering impacts on people and communities, the needs of the environment, landscape, existing water sources, engineering requirements, flood protection and many other factors. The work has also considered what opportunities the reservoir could create for local communities and the wider region.

A non-statutory consultation on the proposals for a new Lincolnshire reservoir commenced on 12 October. This consultation is the first in a multi-phase approach – at least two more consultations will follow, with the DCO planning application expected to be submitted towards the end of 2025.

The ongoing autumn 2022 consultation will run for ten weeks, concluding on 21 December. The consultation materials can be found online on the Anglian Water website at www.lincsreservoir.co.uk.

A proposed reservoir in Lincolnshire

When Anglian Water looked at where they might best build reservoirs across their broader region, they identified rivers in both Lincolnshire and the Fens areas as having enough water surplus in the winter. Providing two large new reservoirs, one in each area, would give sufficient water supply to enable resilience to future droughts, while protecting our most sensitive environments. Together, the two reservoirs will make the most of the available resources and provide water to local communities and businesses across their region, including in Lincolnshire.

A consultation on a Fens reservoir, which is being jointly led by Anglian Water and Cambridge Water, is running parallel to the consultation on the Lincolnshire reservoir proposals and will be following the same process. As neighbouring authority, Lincolnshire County Council will be consulted on these proposals, although as the proposed location is situated near Chatteris in Cambridgeshire there is no direct impact to the Lincolnshire County Council authority area. For information, further details on the Fens reservoir proposal can be found at www.fensreservoir.co.uk. This report will focus on the proposals in Lincolnshire.

The proposed location for the reservoir is southeast of Sleaford, near to Billingborough, Swaton, Scredington, and Helpringham. The area in question is shown in **Fig.1** below, with a more detailed plan attached to this report as **Appendix A**. The site selection process assessed the most suitable sites, and this location was found to be the most appropriate for building a new reservoir, and, on balance, performed best across a range of the key factors that were assessed. It also provides opportunities to deliver wider benefits to the regional economy and neighbouring communities

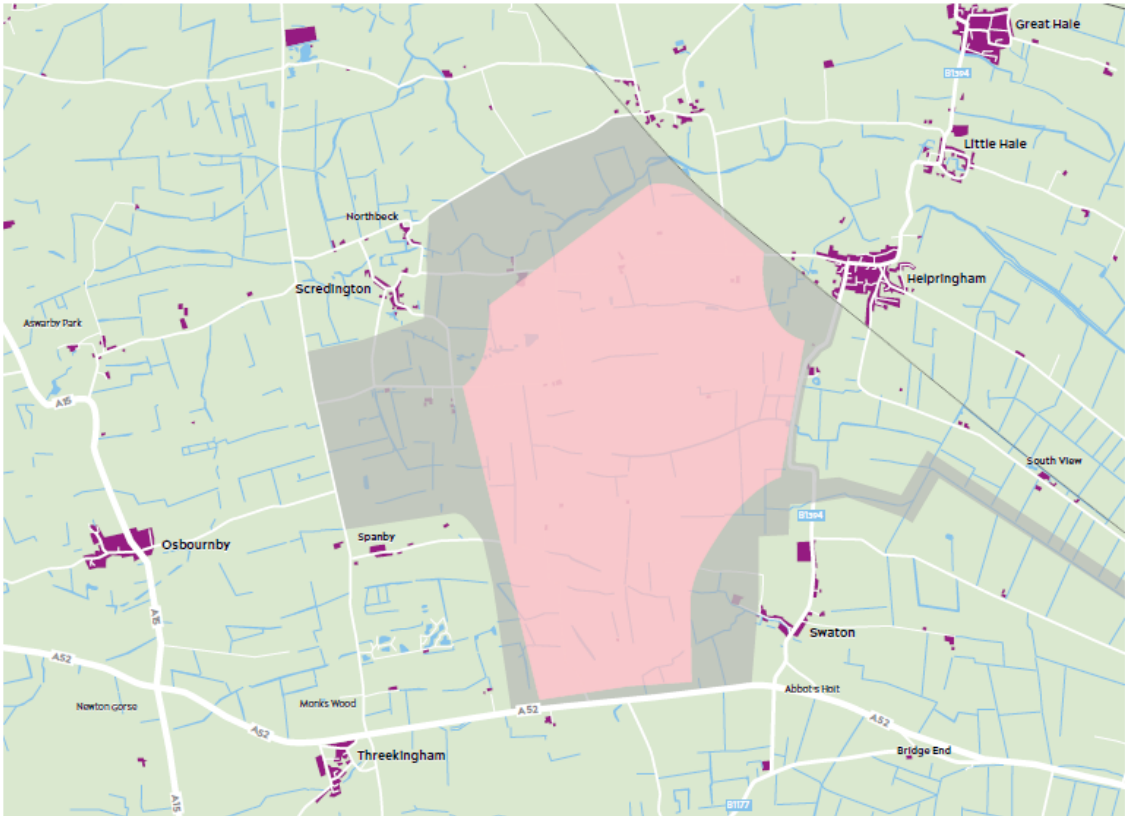


Figure 1. Location of proposed new reservoir in Lincolnshire.

Anglian Water also identified an initial wider area of land that could be needed for supporting infrastructure and during construction (grey area on the consultation maps). This is also where Anglian Water could include wildlife and environmental areas, spaces for leisure and recreation, education facilities and others. These are the additional developments that would help ensure the reservoir brings social and environmental

benefits, alongside water supply. This area is only indicative at this stage and is subject to change following consultation, and as proposals are developed further.

The non-statutory consultation process

Anglian Water have published the following supporting documents for the consultation, which can be viewed online at www.lincsreservoir.co.uk or can be obtained by contacting the Anglian Water project team.

- Site selection report:
an explanation of the process Anglian Water have followed to identify a proposed site for the reservoir.
- Consultation brochure:
an overview of Anglian Waters proposals for the reservoir and how to take part in the consultation (**attached to this report as Appendix B**).
- Approach to consultation:
an outline of Anglian Waters plans for consultation.

In advance of this consultation Anglian Water have now reached a point where they have either met with, or spoken to, almost all landowners, and those living on the proposed site. They have also written to all councillors and parish councils in Lincolnshire, signposting them to the same information online.

As part of the current consultation process which commenced on 12th October, Anglian Water are writing to all addresses within a defined consultation zone. These fall within an area represented by three of Lincolnshire County Council’s ward councillors. Anglian Water will be asking for feedback on these main points:

- the area they have identified for the reservoir and its embankments
- the area they have identified for supporting infrastructure and during construction
- the early concept design for the reservoir, and the features people would like to be considered in the design

In addition to consultation materials being available online there will also be a number of consultation events and selected information points with hard copy documents available to view at reference locations in Lincolnshire. The locations of all events, reference and information points can be found on the website, but for ease of reference are summarised below.

Community events	Date	Time
Scredington Community Centre, 30 Church Ln, Scredington, NG34 0AG	Tuesday 1 November	11:30am – 3pm
Helpringham Memorial Hall, 6 George St, Helpringham, NG34 0RS	Monday 7 November	5pm – 8pm
Billingborough Village Hall, Chapel St, Billingborough, NG34 0QH	Friday 11 November	3:30pm – 7pm
Heckington Village Hall, 9-11 High St, Heckington, NG34 9RA	Saturday 12 November	10:30am – 4pm
Community webinars	Date	Time
Register to attend on our website: www.lincsreservoir.co.uk	Monday 31 October, Wednesday 16 November	6pm – 7pm

It is also possible to pick up information at the following community venues:

Scredington Community Centre	30 Church Ln, Scredington, NG34 0AG
Helpringham Memorial Hall	6 George St, Helpringham, NG34 0RS
Billingborough Village Hall	Chapel St, Billingborough, NG34 0QH
Heckington Village Hall	9-11 High St, Heckington, NG34 9RA
The Source Riverside Church	Riverside Church, Southgate, Sleaford, NG34 7RY
Sleaford Library	13 - 16 Market Place, Sleaford, NG34 7SR
Donington Library	25 High St, Donington, Spalding, PE11 4TA

This consultation exercise is an opportunity for Lincolnshire County Council, along with other stakeholders, communities, and landowners to shape plans for the reservoir. As part of this exercise Anglian Water are seeking local intelligence and knowledge with opportunities to improve and reduce impacts. It is seeking comments on early concept design with opportunities to create benefits as well as seeking feedback on ideas and options. The responses provided will help Anglian Water to further understand any potential impacts and opportunities from the project and will help inform the development of the proposals.

For reference the Consultation Feedback Form is attached to this report as **Appendix C**. The key questions contained in the feedback form are summarised below.

- *Do you have any comments about the pink area we have identified or the effects of us using it?*
- *Are there ways you think we can improve or reduce any of these effects?*
- *Do you have any comments about the grey area we have identified or the effects of us using it?*
- *Are there ways you think we can improve or reduce any of these effects?*
- *Is there anything else you think we should know about the areas we have identified?*
- *Do you have any comments on the early concept design at this stage?*
- *Do you have any additional feedback about our proposals that you have not included above?*
- *Do you have any comments on your experience of the consultation overall, or things we could have done differently?*

In addition, the feedback form also highlights some of the features that could potentially be included as proposals for the reservoir are developed, with a request to highlight preferences. These are:

- *Wildlife enhancements and conservation (such as for birds and other species)*
- *Recreational water sports (such as sailing, angling and windsurfing)*
- *Ecological enhancements (such as wetland areas and woodlands)*
- *Education facilities (such as nature trails, visitor centres)*
- *Social and recreational facilities (such as picnic areas, playgrounds)*
- *Landscape enhancements (such as tree planting)*
- *Green infrastructure (including cycle paths, electrical vehicle charging and renewable energy generation)*
- *Creating a recognised visitor destination for local people and tourists*
- *Local enterprise and economic opportunities*
- *Water for wider sector uses (such as agriculture and commercial use)*
- *Other (please provide details)*

Next steps

The feedback Anglian Water receive during this consultation will help to develop the project design and understand what people would like to see. It will be reviewed, recorded and carefully considered alongside further technical work as Anglian Water refine the proposals.

Anglian Water will be publishing a Phase One Non-Statutory Consultation Report that details the feedback received and how it has been considered. This will influence the ongoing development of the project.

This autumn 2022 consultation is the first phase in a multi-phase approach – at least two more consultations will follow. Anglian Water are required to undertake at least one round of consultation that complies with the relevant statutory requirements of the Planning Act 2008. Details of the consultation phases are set out in the table below.

Consultation Phase One	Consultation Phase Two	Consultation Phase Three
Consultation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area identified for the reservoir and its embankments (pink area on the map) • The area identified for supporting infrastructure and during construction. This is also where Anglian Water could include wildlife and environmental areas, spaces for leisure and recreation, education facilities and others (grey 	Consultation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed proposals for the reservoir and proposed mitigation and enhancement opportunities • Options for associated infrastructure, including transfers, and confirmation of the source of the water transfer • Anticipated impacts including short-term and temporary construction impacts (such as traffic 	Consultation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final proposals for the reservoir and associated infrastructure that are planned to be the subject of the application for development consent • Developed mitigations and enhancement plans • Preliminary Environmental Information

Consultation Phase One	Consultation Phase Two	Consultation Phase Three
area on the map). • Early concept design for the reservoir and the features you would like to be considered in the design of the reservoir as it's developed	routes) and long-term operational impacts (such as landscape and flood risk)	

2. Conclusion

Anglian Water are consulting on a proposed new reservoir in Lincolnshire to meet the demand of future water supply. Opinion on potential wider benefits is also sought. Feedback received will help shape the project design and what people would like to see. Key points for consideration are linked to the following areas:

- the area they have identified for the reservoir and its embankments
- the area they have identified for supporting infrastructure and during construction, and
- the early concept design for the reservoir, and the features people would like to be considered in the design.

To aid officers in providing a response to the consultation on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council members are asked to debate and discuss:

- 1) The strategic need for future water supply, and
- 2) if a new reservoir is constructed in Lincolnshire what are the issues the authority needs to take on board and therefore what considerations, including the need for any additional facilities, do Anglian Water need to take into account as part of this Phase 1 consultation.

Focus on these key areas will assist officers in shaping a response on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council in advance of the consultation deadline of 21st December 2022. More information on this non-statutory consultation, including all supporting documentation can be found by visiting the Anglian Water website at www.lincsreservoir.co.uk.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

This is part of a public consultation being undertaken by Anglian Water for which Lincolnshire County Council will provide a response in its local authority role. There are no risks either financially or, at this stage, from outcomes resulting from this phase of the consultation exercise linked to the proposed new reservoir for Lincolnshire.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire reservoir proposed site detailed map - October 2022
Appendix B	Consultation brochure - Lincolnshire Reservoir phase one consultation
Appendix C	Consultation feedback form - Lincolnshire reservoir phase one consultation

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Matthew Harrison, Flood and Water Manager- Place, who can be contacted on 07771 837565 or matthew.harrison@lincolnshire.gov.uk.