



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

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	12 September 2023
Subject:	Sutton Bridge Place Making – Scheme Overview

Summary:

This item enables the Committee to consider and comment on the Sutton Bridge Place Making Scheme, which seeks to deliver a programme of integrated initiatives in Sutton Bridge to:

- (1) Create the conditions to increase footfall between the marina and local businesses and services and increase local spend and potentially small business growth; and,
- (2) add value to the scheme to extend the original 2012 moorings delivered in summer 2021, which was fully funded through the Sail the Wash initiative.

The Sutton Bridge Place Making Scheme aims to support the village by enhancing its appeal both to residents and visitors by improving the physical and visual links between the riverside, bridge, moorings, and the village centre.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- (1) review and comment on the contents of this report; and,
- (2) recommend any actions to the relevant Executive Councillor for their consideration

1. Background

This project seeks to enhance the village's major assets – the river, the historic Cross Keys bridge, the riverside moorings, and its position as the gateway to Lincolnshire – and to create the conditions to increase footfall between the marina and local businesses and services and increase local spend and potentially small business growth.

It also seeks to take advantage of the area's potential for tourism, with nearby attractions such as the Sir Peter Scott Lighthouse, St Matthew's Church (the only flintstone church in Lincolnshire) and the use of the area as a practice site for the 617 Squadron in preparation for the Dam Busters raid.

In addition, it would build on the area's potential for tourism now that it is on the route of the England Coast path.

Sutton Bridge is also near The Wash. This is an area of outstanding natural beauty and is a designated European Marine Site. It is England's largest bay and contains extensive sandflats and saltmarshes which are home to a diverse habitat of marine mammals, shellfish, wildfowl, and many other migratory birds.

The 'Sail The Wash' initiative, comprising Fenland District Council, Lincolnshire County Council and the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, and administered by the latter, promotes The Wash to water-based visitors. A project to extend the existing floating pontoons at Sutton Bridge, installed in 2012, was completed in 2021, delivering an additional 58 metre infill pontoon and a new 35 metre pontoon extension. This will provide further potential to stimulate activity in the area.

The proposed project has been developed with the local community, through their involvement in the project's visual design, helping them understand, appreciate, and build upon what makes the place unique. "Lessons learnt" from previous projects have been considered, such as the recent Louth Parklets scheme.

1.2 The Project

The proposed scheme consists of two inter-linked elements, supported by on-line promotional initiatives:

Pedestrian improvements – Improvements to the route for pedestrians from the riverside and moorings to the village centre. The improvements would include – new steps down from the riverbank near the bridge, a new ramp near the moorings and new dropped kerbs at all crossing points on the main road.

Public realm features – 'Perch Here'

The proposal is to create a series of features, such as perch seating, waymarkers and pedestrian signage, which aim to engage the audience with the riverside environment. These features would create a trail to encourage people to follow the route from the village centre to the riverside.

1.3 Budget

The project would require £100,000 of funding, of which a decision in principle is in place for up to £75,000 from the Council with a further £25,000 having been secured from the Sail The Wash initiative and the project has been designed to be delivered within the £100,000 limit.

1.4 Issues

LCC leases the riverbank from the Henry Smith Charity and would need its consent for any works in this area. The riverbank is also a flood defence so work in this area would require Environment Agency permission.

All permissions to carry out work in the area have been granted.

1.5 Progress

Pedestrian improvements

The Council's Technical Services Partnership (TSP) has been engaged to assist in delivering this element of the project, which would be fully funded by the Council.

TSP's initial feasibility work helped develop the details of the improvements within the indicative budget. TSP has also consulted with the local highway officer, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, The Environment Agency and National Grid. In addition, local disabled and access groups have been consulted.

Public realm features – 'Perch Here'

The Council is being supported by the University of Lincoln's Transported Arts team, to deliver public realm features to be created as part of a community participation process. This element would be fully funded by an external grant of £25,000 from the Sail the Wash project.

The Transported Arts team is overseen by the Centre of Culture and Creativity at the University of Lincoln and funded by the Creative People and Places Fund. The Transported programme delivers a strategic, community-focused programme which aims to get more people in Boston Borough and South Holland enjoying and participating in arts activities. The team has so far been engaged to deliver an initial programme of community consultation which included a series of public carving workshops during summer 2022 in the village centre. These events were very successful and attracted over 80 participants. The workshops provided 'taster sessions' which identified themes such as local history, river related subjects and wildlife.

The approach is intended to be carpentry based, not only to build on the experience enjoyed by participants of the first stage but to best capture the emerging, heritage-based themes. The proposal is to create a series of way markers and "Perch Here" seats from the initial workshops, whilst developing designs for one or more features which aim to engage the audience with the riverside environment. These features would create a trail to encourage people to follow the route from the village centre to the riverside.

The next stage of community participation would aim to re-engage previous participants as well as new ones, to be involved in fabricating elements of the final products. This is proposed to take place between January and March 2024.

The programme would then culminate in a festival-type celebration event centred around a theme unique to the area, to draw in visitors and engage local residents.

1.6 Member and public engagement

A meeting took place with Councillor J. Tyrrell on 29 March 2022 to appraise him of the project. A further meeting took place on 11 July 2022 with Councillors J. Tyrrell, C. Davie and T. Dyer to discuss progress with Cllr Tyrrell updated further on 18th August 2022. Cllr Tyrrell was provided with an email update on 17th August 2023.

1.7 Programme

Activity	Estimated date
TSP engaged to assist on the project	April 2022
Public engagement arts project begins in the village	July 2022
TSP complete feasibility work and start consultation	Feb/Mar 2023
LCC (TSP) detailed design and contract preparation for civils work	Feb/March 2023
Second phase of community engagement Fabrication of public realm features	Jan/Feb/Mar 2024
Construction phase start	Mar 2024
Construction phase completion	Apr 2024
Celebration event	May/Jun 2024

2. Conclusion

This project would deliver much needed improvements in a Lincolnshire village that is at the gateway to the county, enhancing the area for local businesses and services, visitors and residents.

The project would put the community at the heart of what will be delivered. This approach will ensure that the community take an active part in the scheme and have a strong sense of ownership for what is delivered.

Members of the Committee are invited to review and comment on the overview of this project and highlight any additional matters which could be considered in delivering this project within the indicative budget.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

The major risk to the project is in delivering improvements on land leased to but not owned by Lincolnshire County Council. To mitigate this risk early consultation has taken place with the landowner (The Henry Smith Charity) and The Environment Agency and National Grid who have assets in the area of the proposed work.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Plan - Footpath and roadway improvements

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 Hayley Redford, Project Officer, who can be contacted via email at hayley.redford@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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