

BROADLAND FLOOD ALLEVIATION PROJECT



PROTECTING BROADLAND

Flood alleviation improvements for Gillingham Marshes (Compartment 25)

Public Consultation August 2009

Site description

In May 2001 Broadland Environmental Services Limited (BESL) was awarded a long-term contract by the Environment Agency to improve and maintain flood defences in Broadland. The Agency's approach to flood alleviation in Broadland was adopted in the 1990's and is based on a strategy consisting mainly of bank strengthening and erosion protection in order to reduce the risk of banks breaching. BESL updated this strategy and is now carrying out improvement works throughout 40 individual flood compartments in Broadland.

The major improvement works will be undertaken during the first 10 years of the Project; thereafter the banks will be subject to regular condition monitoring and maintenance works as required.



Looking across to Beccles

Consultation

This leaflet has been prepared as part of an ongoing process of consultation to inform you about BESL's proposals and to seek your views on them.

The purpose of this consultation document is to:

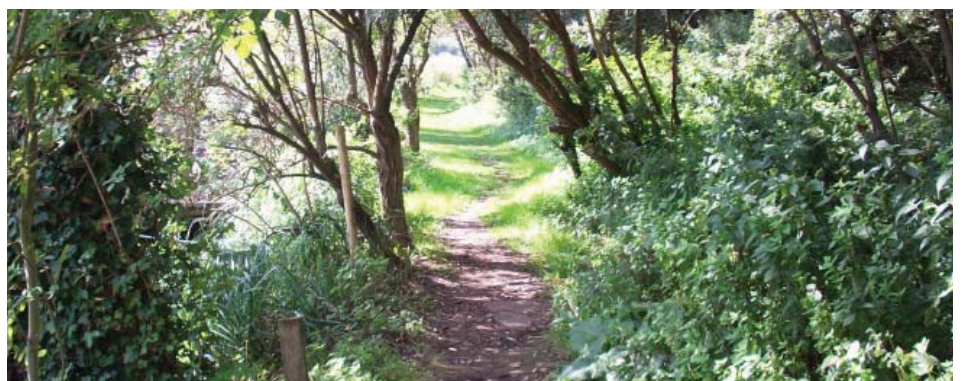
- Explain the range of flood defence options that BESL can consider;
- Outline our preferred flood defence proposals at this stage;
- Invite your views on these proposals; and
- Ensure, from the responses we receive, that we are aware of any specific local issues that ought to be considered as we go on to develop the proposals in greater detail.

BESL will carefully consider any comments it receives, seeking clarification and incorporating changes where necessary before finalising its plans. The results of this consultation will play an important part in BESL's planning application for the proposals. Feedback from this consultation will be contained in the planning application documents.

A questionnaire is provided with this leaflet. If you have not received one, or if you would like an electronic copy of the questionnaire by email, please contact Angela Rowe at the address given at the end of this document. Alternatively, all consultation documents produced by BESL can be downloaded from the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project (BFAP) website www.bfap.org.



The River Waveney



A footpath on the floodbank



Site description

Compartment 25 is located between Dunburgh Hill and Boathouse Hill on the left bank of the River Waveney opposite Beccles town. The defences comprise a 4.8km stretch of floodbank that provides protection to over 213 hectares of low-lying grazing marsh. The southern part of Gillingham village is located along the landward boundary of the compartment with residential properties, including farms, also present. The existing flood defences are mostly earth banks with erosion protection provided by reed rond or sections of piling.

Public footpaths run along the crest of the floodbank throughout most of the compartment providing a pleasant walk between Geldeston and Beccles, and beyond. There are free Broads Authority 24 hour moorings at the Beccles bypass bridge. In addition, there are many private mooring areas including boatyards between the bridges and upstream of the old bridge. There is little angling activity apart from those fishing from boats, however, Bungay Cherry Tree Angling Club lease a length of bank just upstream of the compartment at Dunburgh.

Known historical sites within the compartment include Gillingham Staithe; a former post medieval wind pump; a possible former medieval bridge and a few archaeological find spots. In 2006 an Iron Age causeway was uncovered whilst undertaking flood defence works on the opposite side of the river.

Need to improve existing flood defences

The standard of the flood defences in Broadland has progressively reduced over time due to bank settlement and the combined effects of erosion and deterioration of piling. Without improvement works the defences will become more vulnerable to overtopping and breach. Previous flood defence improvement works include bank strengthening and the construction of a concrete wall through 'Darby's Yard' in the 1980s. Additionally, in 2004 the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project (BFAP) carried out maintenance schemes to repair a short length of piling and raise the crest along 485m of bank downstream of the Beccles bypass bridge. The ongoing settlement and erosion of the banks means further work is required.

What options did BESL consider for improvement works in this compartment?

The range of flood alleviation solutions that we have considered for these works follows the Environment Agency's and BESL's overall strategy for flood alleviation in Broadland. Specific solutions are based on up-to-date survey data (assessing the condition of the existing floodbank and erosion protection), an evaluation of the level of the existing flood defence and local issues including environmental considerations.

The options BESL have considered are illustrated and explained in the enclosed flyer. A brief outline of some of the decision criteria used to select the preferred solution is also given.

What are BESL's specific proposals for Compartment 25?

The primary objective is to provide defences that will resist breach in a high level flood event. The defences will be raised in places in order to reinstate them to the level that existed in 1995. The overall design will take account of the requirement not to alter the pattern of overtopping water or levels elsewhere.

A summary of the proposed solutions is tabulated below and illustrated on the enclosed plan.

Proposed works	Length (m)
Strengthen floodbank	1995
Rollback floodbank	90
Setback floodbank	930
Maintain floodbank	1460
Install Erosion Protection to river edge (asphalt matting)	800

There will be a 90m section of rollback along the dyke behind Hippersons boatyard where the rond width is very narrow. Material for this will be imported as the marsh material is unsuitable. Material for the core of the setback bank at the downstream end of the compartment will come from a proposed runoff treatment pond to the north of the marshes (shown on map). All other material will be sourced by excavating new soke dykes on the marshes.

Alternatives BESL considered and discounted

The "do minimum" alternative would involve 'maintenance only' to both the floodbank and existing erosion protection. However, sections of the existing floodbank do not currently provide the level of protection required, as they are too low and/or have poor profile. Additionally, some of the erosion protection requires replacement. If the proposed works are not undertaken there would be an increased risk of overtopping and the banks breaching during a flood event.



Defences adjacent to private moorings

<p>Will the proposals have any impacts on flora and fauna?</p>	<p>Surveys for water voles, otters, bats, reptiles, scarce plants and dyke vegetation have been undertaken to identify measures needed to avoid or minimise impacts during construction. There are several areas of Japanese Knotweed in the compartment so a programme of measures to control and prevent the spread of the plant will be undertaken.</p> <p>Full details will be provided in the Environmental Statement that will be submitted with the planning application.</p>
<p>What changes to the local landscape will the work cause?</p>	<p>A number of changes to the view across the landscape are anticipated as a result of the proposed works. However the majority of these are temporary, such as the view of bare ground until vegetation re-establishes on the floodbank, folding and within the soke dykes. Completion of the flood alleviation works will provide long-term protection of the Broads landscape and its valuable habitats from the damaging effects of flooding.</p>
<p>To what extent will the proposed work affect navigation?</p>	<p>Any water-based work, such as re-piling and other erosion protection, will be completed in the winter months and a safe, navigable passage will be provided past all the works. Access to moorings will be maintained as far as possible during construction.</p>
<p>What impacts will there be on other informal recreation?</p>	<p>There is a public footpath that runs along the crest of the existing floodbank for the entire length of the compartment. For the duration of the works a temporary closure will be required, for Health and Safety purposes. Where possible alternative routes will be provided. Upon completion of the works the path will be reinstated along the crest of the floodbank, providing a wider and improved surface for walkers.</p>
<p>What are the implications for landowners and business as a result of the proposed improvement works?</p>	<p>During the works there will be some loss of land for grazing and access. BESL contacts landowners early in the design process to ensure their views are taken into account. Careful programming of works will seek to avoid impacts on the operation of the boatyards.</p>
<p>What other flood defence works are planned for this area? What is the proposed timing of these works?</p>	<p>Most of the improvement works in this part of the Waveney valley have already been completed; the only remaining area to be improved is compartment 25A (Geldeston Marshes), which is subject to a separate consultation exercise.</p>



What are the potential issues associated with this work?

The Strategic Environmental Framework (SEF) process, developed by BESL with extensive stakeholder input, sets out environmental standards for maintenance, flood defence improvements and first-time defences for undefended communities. The scheme details are consistent with these environmental standards. The table on the previous page identifies some of the key issues associated with these proposals. We would welcome your comments on these and any other issues that you think should be included.

What is the proposed timing of the works?

A planning application will be submitted in autumn 2009 with a view to the main construction earthworks beginning in spring 2010. Vegetation clearance will be required over the winter period 2009-2010.

What are the next steps?

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information leaflet and answering the associated questions in the accompanying questionnaire. BESL is keen to find out what you think of these proposals. We will collate your replies and consider all comments made; these will help to inform us as we develop the proposals in more detail. If you have any queries regarding either these proposals, or those elsewhere in Broadland, please phone Angela Rowe (BESL Project Administrator) on:

01603 226161

Contact us

If you wish to reply we would encourage you to email your reply to Angela Rowe at:

Halcrow@BAMnutall.co.uk

Please mark the subject line of your email with:

Compartment 25 Consultation



Japanese knotweed next to public footpath

Alternatively, our freepost address is:

**Broadland Environmental Services Limited
Freepost ANG20504
Norwich NR1 1ZW**

Both the consultation document and accompanying questionnaire can be downloaded from the project website at:

www.bfap.org

BESL would like to reduce the amount of paper we consume. In future can we email you the consultation document? If you are happy for us to do this please confirm, via email, the best address for us to send the document to.

Please try to ensure that all replies are received by:

21st September 2009

Replies can be considered after this date but please contact us first if you need an extension.

List of consultees

In addition to landowners/residents we will contact:

- Barsham and Shipmeadow Parish Council
- Beccles Amateur Sailing Club
- Beccles Town Council
- British Dragonfly Society
- Broads Angling Strategy Group
- Broads Authority
- Broads Hire Boat Federation
- Broads Society
- Bungay Cherry Tree Angling Club
- CPRE
- Ellingham Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Geldeston Parish Council
- Gillingham Parish Council
- National Association of Boat Owners
- Natural England
- Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association
- Norfolk Anglers Conservation Association
- Norfolk Area Ramblers
- Norfolk County Council
- Norfolk Landscape Archaeology
- Norfolk Wildlife Trust
- Norfolk Windmills Trust
- Open Spaces Society
- Reed and Sedge Cutters Association
- RSPB
- South Norfolk District Council
- Southwold and District Freshwater Angling Preservation Society
- Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland IDB
- Waveney Ramblers
- Waveney Valley Canoe Club