

27 February 2014

Boston Barrier update

This briefing is from the Boston Barrier partnership to explain that when the barrier and associated works are built flood risk will not increase downstream.

What would have happened if the Boston Barrier had been built prior to 5 December?

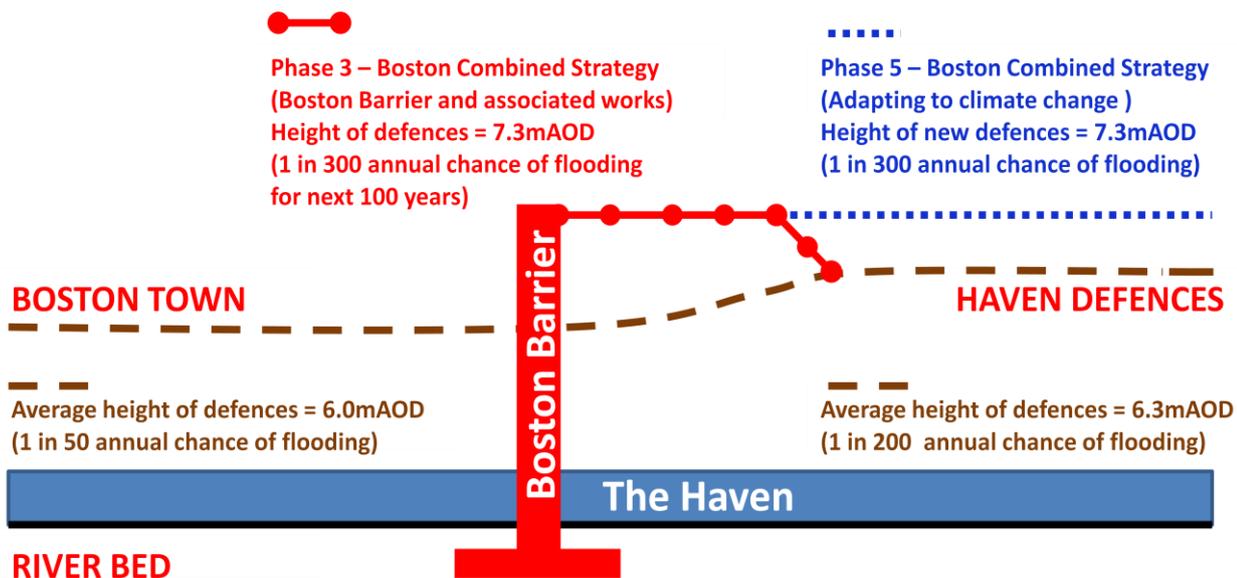
If the barrier and associated works had been in place prior to 5 December 2013, we would have been able to manage the tidal surge and prevent it from entering the town and overtopping flood defences. The current standard of protection for the town is from a flood with a two per cent (or 1 in 50) annual chance of happening. The current standard of defence for The Haven banks downstream of Boston is from a flood with a 0.5 per cent (or 1 in 200) annual chance of happening.

Will the barrier increase flood risk along The Haven?

No. Managing the tide at the barrier will not increase water levels downstream. During a tidal surge, it is the level of the North Sea (in combination with the effects of high tides, atmospheric pressure and wind direction) that determines what height The Haven will reach - so the standard of defence for The Haven banks will remain the same.

When will The Haven banks be raised?

Climate change is causing sea levels to rise. As rising sea levels reduce the defence standards along The Haven, we will introduce phase five of the Boston Combined Strategy. This will see all defences downstream of the barrier upgraded to 7.30m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum – this describes the historic benchmark set in Newlyn, Cornwall, against which sea levels in Great Britain are measured), which will improve the standard of defence along The Haven to 0.33 per cent (or 1 in 300) annual chance of flooding. Current predictions expect this to be in around 60 years time - but if climate change happens faster then we will review when this work needs to happen. The diagram below shows the how the barrier and associated works will reduce flood risk for Boston and the surrounding communities.



Nb. Diagram not to scale and for illustrative purposes only

Do you have any questions?

If you do have any questions about flooding or the Boston Barrier project then please email them to boston.barrier@environment-agency.gov.uk or call Dominic Burton on 07747 640663.