

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON RIVER PARRETT DREDGING PROPOSAL

A public consultation about proposals to dredge the River Parrett between Stathe and Burrowbridge begins on Wednesday, 1 May and continues until Saturday, 1 June.

The scheme is being led for Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) by the Parrett Internal Drainage Board (IDB), working closely with the Environment Agency and Natural England. The SRA is using Growth Deal funding from the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.

The aim of the proposed works is to help the SRA reduce flood risks across a large part of the Somerset Levels and Moors that were badly affected in winter 2013-14 and summer 2012.

This dredge is particularly important because it would supplement other dredges of the Parrett and Tone since 2014. It would also tie in with other projects, such as enhancing the River Sowey (also known as the Parrett Flood Relief Channel) and King's Sedgemoor Drain.

If it's approved, set-up works could start on-site in August, with dredging expected to begin in September. Further necessary works such as monitoring and ecological improvements would continue into 2020.

David Mitchell, SRA Senior Manager, said: "Around 16 months' hard work has gone into drawing up these plans for dredging between Stathe and Burrowbridge. We believe that the scheme we're now proposing is a good scheme that will help us to protect people and properties, and enhance the environment.

"This will be the biggest new dredge that we've done on the Parrett since the summer of 2016. To find out more, please go to one of the consultation sessions we're running this May, or look at the information that's available online, and let us know your views."

Two drop-in consultation events are being held, to give people chance to look at display boards and other materials, ask questions and fill in feedback forms:

- Tuesday, 14 May 2019 at Burrowbridge Coronation Hall, West Yeo Road, Burrowbridge, TA7 0RH between 12 noon and 7pm
- Wednesday, 15 May 2019 at Great Bow Wharf, Bow Street, Langport, TA10 9PN between 12 noon and 7pm

Copies of materials prepared for these consultation events are available online, and feedback forms can also be downloaded, at:

Somerset Rivers Authority: <https://www.somsetriversauthority.org.uk/news/>

Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium: <http://somsetdrainageboards.gov.uk/operations/projects>

Completed feedback forms can be emailed to admin@somsetdbs.co.uk or posted to

Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium
33-34 Market Street
Highbridge
Somerset
TA9 3BW

Alternatively, feedback forms can be filled in and submitted online at <https://arcg.is/1PjGbT>.

The process of statutory consultation required for improvement works such as dredging is set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999 (as amended). This summer will see an Environmental Statement produced with an opportunity for formal consultation on the document and final scheme. Following this formal consultation period, a view will be taken with regard to the commencement of works.

LEGAL BACKGROUND

The proposed dredging of the watercourse between Stathe and Burrowbridge is considered to be an instance of 'improvement works' as defined under Regulation 2 (1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations. These improvement works are in their turn considered to be a development activity that falls within the Environment Agency's permitted development rights under Class D of Part 13 (water and sewerage) of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

The proposed works would be carried out for Somerset Rivers Authority by the Parrett Internal Drainage Board (IDB) under powers delegated by the Environment Agency through a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA). Although the works are considered to be permitted development, the Parrett IDB also has to satisfy the formal process of examining the project in detail in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Hence this summer's consultation process.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an impartial and systematic process that ensures that the environmental effects of a proposed development are fully considered and taken into account before it proceeds. It draws upon a detailed understanding of current environmental effects (known as the baseline), information gathered during consultation, and from a detailed understanding of potential effects from the development itself. The findings of an EIA are reported in a document called an Environmental Statement (ES) which has to meet certain legal standards, broadly incorporating main headings, topics to be considered, organisations that need to be consulted, stages of the project, timescales, and types of effects and mitigation that need to be taken into account.

The final design of the project, and the conclusions of the ES, will also be informed by a separate Water Framework Directive Compliance Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2 Habitats Regulations Assessment) as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and governed by the requirements of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010.

DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY NOTICE

The Parrett Internal Drainage Board (the authority) is registered as a Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Johns Associates acting as a Data Processor under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on behalf of the authority for the personal data it gathers for the purpose of informing the development of an Environmental Statement to support the Oath to Burrowbridge Pioneer Dredge.

The authority and Johns Associates accept that you are providing your personal data on the basis of consent and are positively agreeing for the authority and Johns Associates to hold and further use it for the purpose of informing the development of an Environmental Statement to support the Oath to Burrowbridge Pioneer Dredge.

Any personal details that you provide the authority will be handled in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. As such your data will only be used for the purposes that you have given this information for and will only be shared where necessary to provide the service you are submitting information in support of. For further information on data protection and your rights please see the authority's website:

<http://somersestdrainageboards.gov.uk/privacy-policy/>

If you wish to contact the authority's Data Protection Officer, please write to:

Data Protection Officer
Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium
33-34 Market Street
Highbridge
Somerset
TA9 3BW

Or email: admin@somersestdbs.co.uk

I confirm that I have read and understood the above privacy statement and am happy to proceed

Yes No

Would you like to be kept informed on the development of this proposal?

Yes No

How would you like to be contacted?

Phone Email Post

Please enter your Title

Please enter your First Name(s):

Please enter your Surname(s):

Please enter the first line of your address:

Second line of your address:

Third line of your address:

Town:

County:

Please enter your Postcode:

Please enter your phone number:

Please enter your email address:

Do you have any comments to make about this consultation?

Do you have any comments to make about this consultation?