



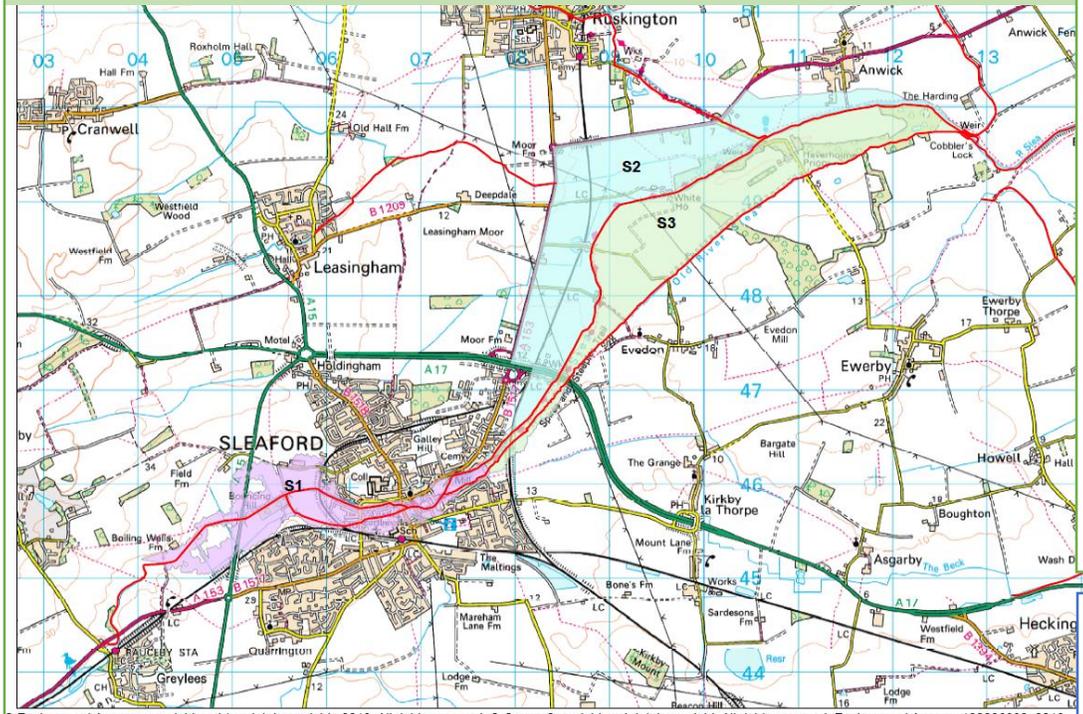
The River Slea Flood Resilience Project 2020

Summary

This project covers the River Slea main river which runs through the town of Sleaford to Cobblers Lock. In the east of the town the river splits to follow the Slea Navigation channel to the north and the original course of the Old River Slea to the south. The navigation follows the contours of the land, dropping the river level from around 13m above sea level in Sleaford, to around 3.5m above sea level via a series of historical locks (not all of which are operational). The Old River Slea follows a more natural course through the Slea valley before joining back with the navigation again at Cobblers Lock. As a river heavily influenced by groundwater flows, the Slea can suffer from low flows at times making abstractions for drinking water and irrigation a challenge. A flow augmentation scheme supports water levels in the river during dry periods.

Through the town itself, a series of movable structures maintain a water level for aesthetic reasons, although these do interfere with natural river processes, are a barrier to fish and eel migration and increase flood risk, which is why they have to open during high flows. These structures now require significant investment. Structures along the old navigation channel are also in a state of disrepair. With government funding to the EA dependent upon evidenced reductions in flood risk, securing sufficient funding to repair/replace assets with no flood risk benefit is not possible.

This project has been granted accelerated funding to undertake project appraisal in 2020/21/22. By working closely with all those organisations who have an interest in this river, we hope to develop options to achieve a flood and drought resilient watercourse and restore a more natural channel by removing unnecessary barriers to flows and fish that can secure the required funding.



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Stakeholders & engagement

From the outset, we plan to provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to express their views on the future plans to manage flood risk on the River Slea. We are ensuring that engagement with communities, land owners, businesses and potential partners is a large part of the project brief.

We hope that this project will be the catalyst for a much more collaborative and accessible approach to managing the current and future risks of flooding in this area, including partnership funding solutions. We welcome the input of all parties who have a stake in the sustainability of these watercourses. We feel that there is particular potential to join with those who have interests such as navigation, water supply and the visitor economy.

As the project gets going this year, we will seek to provide easy ways that you can get in touch with the project team. We also hope to invite key stakeholders to be a part of the project board. In the meantime, the box below contains key local contacts for the project.

Contacts

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 Project Manager: [tbc](#)
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Planned programme

