

Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

Policy No: 9

Structures Replacement Policy

Review Dates:

Board Approved	13 th June 2023
Reviewed by the Structures Committee	21 st March 2023

1. PURPOSE

This document sets out the policy of the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board concerning the repair or replacement of structures where the integrity of the structure deteriorates to such an extent that it is unable to convey the necessary flow in the drainage channel, or if it becomes unsafe for either vehicle or pedestrian traffic to cross the watercourse.

In the first instance, if a structure has deteriorated to such an extent that it is holding up the flow of water, then the obstruction shall be removed by the Board.

2. INTRODUCTION

The structures that will be included in this policy include:

- a) Clear span bridges constructed to take all types of vehicles.
- b) Clear span bridges for pedestrian use only.
- c) Culverts constructed to provide access across the watercourse.
- d) Culverts constructed for the purpose of maintaining the flow in watercourses where there is instability to the banks.

3. BLACK SLUICE POLICY

This policy is concerned with the replacement of existing structures only.

The Board has a separate policy which addresses applications to place new structures in/over watercourses.

4. REASONS FOR THE POLICY

The policy formalises the baseline conditions above and gives written guidelines for more specific instances. The benefits of the policy are:

- Fairness and uniformity in the Owner/Occupier contributing to the cost of reconstructing sub-standard structures.
- The provision of clear guidelines to the Owners/Occupier.
- Powers are delegated giving a more efficient and timely service.

However, this policy is not intended to cover every eventuality and the Board (in formal meeting) may waive the policy and make a determination on the basis of reasonable fairness to all parties.

5. DELEGATED POWERS

Delegated powers are given to the Chief Executive and the relevant Structures or Works Committee Chairpersons to reconstruct structures as long as the budgets are not exceeded, and the Owner/Occupier pays a contribution towards the cost in line with the guidelines in this policy.

In all other cases, the power to determine applications is delegated to the Structures Committee, the appropriate Works Committee or the Executive Committee, unless a Board meeting is more timely.

6. GUIDELINES

Guidelines are given below on the following types of structures:

- a) Structures carrying Highways maintained by LCC.
- b) Structures used by the Owner/Occupier.
- c) Structures used by both the Board and the Owner/Occupier.
- d) Structures constructed by the Board to allow free drainage of the land.

6.1 Structures Carrying Highways

It is generally the case that all clear span bridges and culverts carrying LCC highways are owned and maintained by LCC. If replacement is required because the structure is substandard then LCC will be responsible for the total cost of the reconstruction.

6.2 Clear Span Foot Bridges

It is generally the case that all clear span footbridges which carry footpaths over Board maintained watercourses are owned and maintained by LCC. If replacement is required because the structure is substandard, then LCC will be responsible for the total cost of the reconstruction.

6.3 Clear Span Access Bridges

These in general provide access for farm machinery to fields or to individual properties. They are mostly constructed in large watercourses.

If refurbishment or replacement is required because the structure is substandard, then the Owner/Occupier will be responsible for the total cost of the reconstruction.

These in general will not be used by Board's machinery to gain access to the opposite side of the watercourse.

However, if a substandard structure is infrequently used by the Board, and the Owner/Occupier of the structure proposes to refurbish or reconstruct the bridge, the Board may offer a contribution in line with clause 6.5 (b) towards the cost of this work.

6.4 Structures owned by the Board and Used for Access by the Owner/Occupier

These structures are required by the Board as well as the landowner to gain access for maintenance of watercourses.

The cost of any reconstruction of substandard structures in this category will be paid for by the Board and the structure will remain as a structure to be maintained by the Board.

6.5 Structure Used by all Parties

- a) These structures are required by the Owner/Occupier to gain access to their land and could be used by the Board for their maintenance activities.
- b) If a structure has been inspected and reported as substandard and in need of reconstruction the landowner will be notified in writing.
 - (i) Provided there is an accepted need for a structure at this location, the Owner/Occupier and Operations Manager will meet. A reconstruction quotation will be offered along with a benefit contribution in relation to the Board's use of the structure as a crossing point.
 - (ii) After the structure has been reconstructed, it will be deemed that the landowner will be responsible for its future maintenance.
 - (iii) If a benefit contribution cannot be agreed the Operations Manager will send all the relevant information to the Structures Committee for further review and determination.
- c) Before any consideration is given to the reconstruction of the structure, the Owner/Occupier should be approached to ascertain if there is a future need for the structure. Consideration should be given to removing two or more accesses into a field and the provision of one in the future.
- d) A culvert shall be constructed with a top width of 6.0 metres. If the Owner/Occupier requests a culvert with a wider top width, then they shall pay for the total extra cost of this work.
- e) After the culvert has been replaced, the Owner/Occupier will be responsible for any future maintenance, or reconstruction of the structure.
- f) If a structure has been constructed in a Board maintained watercourse, and there is clear evidence that the Board has written to the Owner/Occupier confirming the future maintenance arrangements, then the Owner/Occupier shall be totally responsible for the reconstruction of the structure.
- g) If a structure is removed by the Board because it is holding up the flow of water and has not been replaced by a new structure within a period of five years, then the offer of contribution will no longer be applicable, and the Owner/Occupier will be required to pay the full cost of the construction of a new structure at this location.
- h) If the Board undertake a watercourse improvement scheme which includes the reconstruction of a structure, the Board will pay the total cost of the reconstruction, but the Owner/Occupier will be required to be responsible for the future maintenance of the structure.

6.6 Culverts Used for Free Drainage

Examples of these lengths of culverts are:-

- Lengths of watercourse culverted instead of undertaking revetment works.
- Lengths of watercourse culverted to allow disposal of excavated soil.

These are the Board's responsibility, and any reconstruction required will be paid for by the Board. Responsibility for the future maintenance of the asset will remain with the Board.

6.7 Redundant Structures

If the Board agrees with the Owner/Occupier that a structure is redundant, the Board will remove the structure, and all backfill material and deposit any suitable materials on fields adjacent to the location of the culvert.

If agreed and required, the Board will dispose of the excavated material at an agreed cost with the Owner/Occupier.

6.8 Further Guidance

If the Owner/Occupier is unhappy about the circumstances of a particular structure designation, then this should be referred to the Structures Committee for final determination.

Contractors may be appointed by the Owner/Occupier to complete the works, the Board will set an invert level on site, offer specification suggestions and inspect the works during the construction phase, a set fee of £300 + VAT will be offset against any contribution made by the Board.

Inspection's frequencies to be completed by the Board, adequate notification time to be received from the contractor:

- when excavation to invert level and bases for headwalls is complete.
- when the pipe is laid prior to being backfilled, invert level checked and verified.
- when the headwalls are being constructed.

The next stage of construction should not go ahead until the previous stage has been inspected / approved by the Board.