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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT FOR
PROPOSED LANDSCAPING & ERECTION OF
FENCE WITH ASSOCIATED GATES AT
SUTTON BRIDGE PORT, WEST BANK,
SUTTON BRIDGE, SPALDING, LINCS, PE12 9QR

1.0 Introduction

The proposal is to submit a Full Planning Application to South Holland District Council for the erection of a fence, associated gates, bund and access within the site and landscaping.

Document with the application include a flood map, biodiversity checklist, location plan, Design & Access Statement, existing and proposed site plans, together with details of fencing and cross sections through the byway.

2.0 Flood Map

On reviewing the Environment Agency Flood Risk Extract Map, the location of the proposed fencing is just on the edge of Flood Zone 3 which also borders Flood Zone 1. Reference should be made to the flood map.

On further review, there is no flooding shown from surface water or reservoirs.

3.0 Biodiversity

The proposal is for a fence together with soft planting and gates.

There would be no detrimental effect on the existing biodiversity by setting the fence and gates, as this would not require any existing vegetation or buildings to be removed.

By setting soft planting back, this would increase/enhance the biodiversity at this site. There are large grassed areas either side of the port which are to remain as existing.

The planting will be native species which can be agreed as part of the Planning condition.

4.0 History of the Port

Sutton Bridge was an established port before the advent of the railways which reached Sutton Bridge in 1862.

In 1880, the Sutton Bridge Dock Company revived Sutton Bridge Dock which comprised 13 acres of water whilst constructed. The dock rapidly fell onto disuse.

Shipping traffic continued from the quayside at Sutton Bridge without the benefit of the deep water dock, with ships turning in the inlet left by the precious dock entrance. Scrap metal is one of the materials currently exported. Timber was also imported for a number of years and was taken from the dock by rail until the closure of the railway in approximately 1965.

The port was expanded by the creation of Port Sutton Bridge. The first piling operations were carried out in approximately 1987 and opened later the same year.

The existing road running through the port area is a public highway which is classed as a byway open to all traffic (BOAT) which was dedicated in 1986, the year before the Port of Sutton Bridge was opened.

During the 1980s the port expanded with various storage/industrial buildings being built to the west of the River Nene.

The port has approximately 349m of continuous quay and approximately 21,000m^2 of warehousing.

We understanding that operations were ceased in 2022 before it was then placed on the market for sale.

5.0 Marine Traffic

On reviewing the Marine Traffic website for Sutton Bridge, this is classed as a medium sized port and located UK coast and Atlantic, North Sea and United Kingdom. The official UN/LOCODE of the port is GBPSB.

6.0 Buildings

At present there is 21,000m^2 of buildings at the site. When the site was taken over the buildings were vacant. The buildings are generally steel framed industrial buildings used for industrial businesses, including storage.

All the buildings at the site are to be maintained.

Some buildings that were vacant now have tenants and there are now limited units to let.

7.0 Purchase of the Port

GSMT Holdings Ltd purchased the Port of Sutton Bridge Ltd in late October 2022.

The port was closed at this time. Since this time persons have been employed, units have been let, improvements made about the port itself and regular vessels are now using the port which supports the local economy.

8.0 Overall Site

At present there are 9No full/part time staff employed and this will increase as further usage of the port increases.

All of the sheds are let with two remaining but there are leases being assigned to these at present which brings the entire site back to use.

Once all the sheds are let, it is expected that there would be approximately 140 vehicle movements a day. We have been advised that this would be similar to the 2018/2019 tonnages at the site.

An example at the time of writing this statement, is the week commencing 17th July 2023 where there will be three incoming vessels at the port for discharging of approximately 9,000 metric tonnes of goods.

A typical heavy goods vehicle carries approximately 26 tonnes which would equate to approximately 346 loads of goods leaving the site.

This is a substantial amount of goods based only on three vessels entering the port per week, which over time will increase.

The business within the sheds are using the port services.

At present the port is open to the quayside which has been the case for a number of years and where there is a byway open to all traffic, this is not distinctly defined.

9.0 Planning Application Proposal

The proposal is for a palisade fence together with associated sliding gates and pedestrian gate to be set to define the BOAT.

This will clearly define the byway.

Within the palisade fence there will be sliding gates to allow access for vehicles and persons associated with the port only.

Passing places will also be set on the warehouse side of the BOAT to further assist vehicular traffic.

A further layby is also proposed on the warehouse side which will allow vehicles to park off the BOAT.

The advantage of the proposal is to ensure that the quay area is kept clear for the travelling crane, staff members, persons associated with the incoming and outgoing vessels, and any equipment/storage on the quay.

Users of the BOAT will have a defined access that provides passing places together with a layby.

Soft landscaping will be incorporated into the proposal as shown on the proposed site layout, types of plants can be agreed.

Behind the layby, a landscaped bund will be formed where the ground at present is naturally lower than the quay. The bund will then be landscaped over to provide an increase in biodiversity at the site but also a buffer to the existing warehouses behind.

A further landscaped area will also be set between passing places 3 & 4, as shown on the proposed site layout. This further gives an increase in biodiversity at the site and provides further landscape buffers against the warehouses. Overall the proposal is an improvement to that existing where the quay is open.

10.0 Anti-Terrorism

A key point with this proposal is as advised by the owner, it is essential that the quay is secured due to anti-terrorism laws from the remainder of the site/area.

The port has an anti-terrorism plan in place with various alert levels.

The setting of the security fence together with security gates all along the quay is essential to this plan and shutting off the area in the event of a terrorism alert.

There are three named persons on the plan.

If any other persons wish to view the anti-terrorism plan, they will need to apply to the Secretary of State for permission.

At present the quay is open and the BOAT is open which is not satisfactory.

This could be considered as an overriding factor to allow the proposal.

11.0 Health & Safety

At present the quay and BOAT are open.

There have been instances where members of the public have wandered onto the quay which is clearly not safe.

This proposal will allow the BOAT to be fenced off and given a defined route for the public, together with passing places and landscaping.

The port staff and traffic can then run on the quay without members of the public encroaching.

There are clear Health and Safety benefits for both the public and also the port to this proposal to allow a clear defined route.

12.0 Local Community

Sutton Bridge Port is a substantial part of the local community of Sutton Bridge, the port having been established a substantial amount of years previous.

The reopening of the port will bring investment into Sutton Bridge which also includes additional part and full time jobs.

With additional employs and persons visiting the port and letting of the warehouses, this would also increase persons visiting the central area of Sutton Bridge and hopefully bring trade to local businesses.

This proposal will allow a defined area of the BOAT together with associated passing places and laybys, and additional landscaping.

13.0 Planning Policy

Within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, the Sutton Bridge Port is shown as an existing restricted use site and reference should be made to Policy 7 of the Local Plan.

Under Policy 7, Sutton Bridge Port is referenced as SB003 with a gross site area of 24.6 hectares, referenced under employment classes B1, B2 & B8 which is not port related and has an employment provision of 9.6 hectares.

Subsection 4.2.9 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan states "to ensure the unique role of SB003 Sutton Bridge Port is maintained, uses that support its ongoing port operation such as manufacturing, logistics, distribution and waste management will be supported."

Policy LP7 encourages investment in port related and power generated related industries and the policy maps identify it as restricted use employment sites as listed below, which are reserved for employment uses directly associated with either Boston or Sutton Bridge ports, or Spalding or Wingland Power Station.

The purchasing of this port by the applicant allows the port to be brought back into use, bringing employment back to the port and bring existing industrial use buildings at the port back into use.

To assist the above fencing of the BOAT to clearly identify this would assist both port users and members of the public.

14.0 Conclusion

This proposal makes the BOAT and port safer and clearer for all users.

The proposal creates a balance for supporting and maintained the viability of the operational port and the BOAT which also respects the character of the area by adding soft landscaping and native species.