

CURF AND WIMBLINGTON COMBINED INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Curf and Wimblington Combined Internal Drainage Board
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Monday the 16th May 2016

PRESENT

M E Heading Esq (Chairman)	R E Mason Esq
R Gowler Esq (Vice Chairman)	Donald S Morris Esq
R J Angood Esq	Duncan S Morris Esq
Mrs M Davis	D G Nicholas Esq
C E Martin Esq	L A Nicholas Esq
D R Stokes Esq	

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Davis to her first meeting of the Board.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs A J Langley and C Gowler Esq

B.281 Inspection of the District

Prior to the Meeting those Members present, with the exception of Messrs Angood and Stokes, and together with Mr Malcom Downes (Middle Level Commissioners' Mechanical and Electrical Engineer) undertook an Inspection of the District which embraced (inter alia):-

1) Wimblington Common Pumping Station

Mr Downes explained the reasons for the pump failure and the repairs and overhaul carried out. He further explained the issues with the automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment and the proposals to attend to these repairs.

2) Bensons Pumping Station

Members viewed the recently installed automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment. Mr Downes operated the equipment to give a demonstration.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Downes explained there were two pumping units at the station which were now obsolete and would likely require replacing if they failed.

Mr Downes explained the operation of the syphon which was used for the drainage of approximately 100 acres to the east of the Sixteen Foot River

3) Curf Pumping Station

Members viewed the recently installed automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment. Mr Downes operated the equipment to give a demonstration.

4) Block Fen

Members viewed the section of watercourse at Point 52 which required piling this year and at Point 56 which had been piled the previous year.

B.282 Declarations of Interest

Mr Hill reminded Members of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any individual on the Board.

B.283 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 18th May 2015 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.284 Clerk to the Board

Mr Hill informed the Board that the Clerk intended to stand down from the office of Clerk of the Board at the end of 2016, that the Middle Level Commissioners would be taking appropriate steps to appoint his replacement and that the Clerk would keep the Board informed.

RESOLVED

That the Board's appreciation of the service the Clerk had given to the District be recorded in the Minutes.

B.285 Board Membership

Further to minute B.284, Mr Hill reported that Mr Stephen Edgley had accepted the invitation to join the Board.

The Chairman reported that when he had spoken to Mr Anthony Risely he considered himself not ready to accept the Board's invitation at this time but the Vice Chairman advised that he had subsequently spoken to Mr Risely and he had agreed to join the Board.

RESOLVED

That Mr Risely be co-opted to membership of the Board.

B.286 Land Drainage Act 1991
Board Membership - Fenland District Council

Mr Hill reported that Fenland District Council had appointed Councillor Mrs M Davis to be a Member of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.287 Inspection of District

Consideration was given to whether the Board should undertake an inspection of the District in 2017.

The Vice Chairman considered that having seen the new weedscreen cleaners generally there was nothing further to see.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to make any arrangements for an inspection as he considered appropriate in 2017.

B.288 Water Framework Directive

Further to minute B.258, Mr Hill reported that the Anglian River Basin Liaison Panel, of which the Clerk was a member, have considered the draft updated River Basin Management Plan revision and the regional programme of projects funded by Defra for Water Framework Directive. He reported that he had also been advised that the statutory Plan to be sent to Ministers would be a "high level" generalised document and not contain the list of local "measures" which appeared in the many schedules to the 2009 Plan. Whilst this made the 2009 Plan rather cumbersome, it did at least set out the measures expected in relation to a water body, whereas the present framework leaves the relevant measures to be discussed locally. Part of the ongoing work is to settle what "mitigation measures" are appropriate to the artificial and heavily modified water bodies of the Fens to ensure that they satisfy the requirement to reach Good Ecological Potential. The Middle Level Commissioners' Environmental Officer, Cliff Carson, is a member of a Group, looking at reasonable mitigation measures for such bodies, which are likely in fact to correspond with what was already in our Biodiversity Action Plans and therefore require, as previously advised, little additional work.

Mr Hill advised that the Clerk had commented on the revised plan but had to date received no feedback on either this or on the earlier flood risk management plans despite promises from the Environment Agency that this would occur.

Mr Hill reported that the Clerk had, however, continued discussions with the Environment Agency's local Water Framework Directive teams. For IDBs in the MLC area, it has been accepted that the Middle Level area will be designated as one water body for the purposes of the 2015 Plan and that, with the exception of Bury Brook, the whole of the "water body" will be designated as artificial; the exception being Bury Brook which is classed as heavily modified.

C.289 Water Transfer Licences

Mr Hill reported that Defra have advised that they propose to bring into force the changes to the water abstraction licensing system, which were outlined and enacted in the Water Act 2003. Successive proposed implementation dates have, however, come and gone. Most significant amongst these is the requirement that abstractions simply transferring water from one watercourse to another by IDBs become subject to licensing.

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency have however also now consulted on a proposed charging regime for transfer licences. This following correspondence with Rory Stewart MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, appears to be a "one off" charge of £1,500

imposed to "recover the Agency's costs of considering the grant of the Transfer Licence", rather than an annual charge but the Clerk had continued to object to it on the basis that, since water is transferred to serve licences granted to end user abstractors by the Agency, the costs of administering such licences should already be met. The Clerk had also taken the opportunity to raise this matter during the Ministerial Visit to Denver, as did representatives of the Downham and Ely IDB Groups. It was also pleasing to report that ADA, after inaction on the matter, appeared at last to be taking this up with Defra.

Mr Hill reported that the Defra consultation appeared in December but was then withdrawn hours later. It was however, formally reissued in January with a period for responding lasting until 8th April. Despite what had previously been stated, the consultation proposes that Transfer Licences may well have a volumetric quantity based on what has been taken in the previous 4 years. Members will be aware that the water transferred into IDBs in this area is mainly to serve irrigation licences granted by the Environment Agency and the costs in relation to which have already been recovered by the Environment Agency.

Mr Hill reported that it also appears from Defra that their longer term aim, as part of the Water Abstraction Review, would be for IDBs to be given the power to take over water resources management within their catchments, from the Environment Agency. This was an interesting concept and discussion proposals, which would enable IDBs to deliver the abstraction licensing system and recover costs, were awaited. Defra are therefore keen that nothing in this present consultation will prejudice such an outcome and may well be willing to discuss more fully, the effect of the Transfer Licence proposal.

Mr Hill reported that where a Board had more than one inlet, a separate licence would be required at a proposed "one off" charge of £1,500 imposed to recover the Agency's costs of considering the grant of the Transfer Licence, rather than an annual charge, where the abstraction took place from different watercourses.

Mr Hill reported that within the proposals was an exemption for ports abstracting below the tidal limit and that the Clerk had queried why this was not also an exemption for IDBs.

Following discussions with Defra, the Clerk felt it possible that this exemption could also be granted to IDBs.

B.290 Consulting Engineers' Report

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers, viz:-

Curf & Wimblington Combined I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2016

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the maintenance programme approved by the Board at its last annual meeting.

A Roundup herbicide application was applied to the Board's drains included within last year's phased machine cleansing programme, and also to other District drains to control sporadic growths of emergent aquatic vegetation.

Following reports from the pump attendant of large accumulations of *Filamentous algae (cott)* in the Finchams Farm Pump drain, reach 38-39, additional machine cleansing works were carried out to prevent the weed mass travelling downstream to the manually cleansed weedscreen, during winter pumping operations. Board members will be aware that reactive emergency machine cleansing has been required frequently now for several seasons. It is therefore recommended that the Finchams Farm pump, reach 38-39, be included in the phased programme of machine cleansing on an annual basis. In anticipation that Board members will be in agreement with the recommendation, a sum to allow for the cleansing work to be undertaken has been included within the Board's estimated costs.

A recent inspection of the Board's District drains has revealed that the majority are in a generally satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. The inspection indicates that many of the District drains that fall within this year's phased machine cleansing programme, will only require light machine cleansing to retain their good status.

The inspection highlighted an area of bank subsidence along the eastern bank of Gbant Drove drain, reach 7-31. Approximately 60m of failed timber piling will need replacing with timber piles and toe board revetment to return the bank to its original profile. It is recommended that the necessary works be undertaken during the phased machine cleansing, programed for this reach following this year's harvest. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for this item.



Gbant Drove, reach 7-31



Ghant Drove, reach 7-31

Another area of bank subsidence was identified on the western bank of the Board's drain along reach 51-52, in the Block Fen area. Approximately 25m of timber piling and toe board revetment will be required to prevent the channel bed from being completely closed by bank subsidence. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for this item.



Block Fen, reach 51-22

The previously reported bank subsidence at Jenny Grey's Farm, reach 26-27, has been monitored on a regular basis. Following further deterioration of the bankside, it is recommended that the affected area is returned to its original profile with timber piles and toe board revetment. A provisional sum to undertake this work has been included within the Board's estimated costs.



Jenny Grey's Farm, reach 26-27

It was also noted during the inspection that the Normoor drain reach 75-76-77-78-79 contained stands of sporadic reed and dense submerged aquatic vegetation. Board members will be aware that drains in the Normoor area of the Benson's catchment were omitted from the phased machine cleansing programme.



Normoor drain, reach 76-77

It is recommended that the affected reaches be included in this year's machine cleansing programme in order to return them to a satisfactory condition.

A sum has also been included within the estimate to allow for drains that fall within this year's phased machine cleansing programme, and any others that require a Roundup application to control aquatic weed growth to be treated later in the growing season.

The Board's flail mowing contractors, Messrs G Ashman, have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements this year. A sum for the completion of flail mowing of the Board's drains for the ensuing year has been included in the estimated costs.

A provisional sum has also been included within the Board's estimate to allow for any emergency cott clearance, culvert cleansing or bank slip reinstatement works that may be required later in the year.

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance programme is as follows. Please refer to the following site plan for locations.

Machine cleanse reaches within this year's Phased Cleansing Programme:

Bensons Pumping Catchment

1.	Reach 61-65-66	700	m	@	1.20	840.00
2.	Reach 76-66-67-68-69	1050	m	@	1.20	1260.00

Stonea Fen Pumping Catchment

1.	Ghant Drove Reach 34-33-7-31-32	2300	m	@	1.20	2760.00
2.	Reach 34-35-36-37	1050	m	@	1.20	1260.00

Finchams Farm Catchment

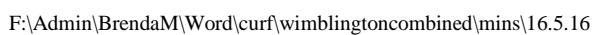
1.	Reach 38-39	800	m	@	1.00	800.00
----	-------------	-----	---	---	------	--------

Provisional Sum

Bank revetment and toe board and piling works

1.	Ghant Drove Reach 7-31	Item	Sum	2100.00
2.	Block Fen Reach 51-52	Item	Sum	1000.00
3.	Jenny Grey's Farm Reach 26-27	Item	Sum	<u>2800.00</u>

Carried forward £12820.00



		Brought forward	£12820.00
4.	Allow sum for Roundup application to District Drains	Item Sum	1000.00
5.	Flail mowing of District drains	Item Sum	7500.00
6.	<u>Provisional Item</u> Allow sum for emergency cott clearance, culvert clearance or bank slip repair works	Item Sum	1500.00
7.	Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement and supervision of herbicide application and maintenance works	Item Sum	2200.00
TOTAL			£ 25,020.00

Orders for the application of Roundup herbicide by the Middle Level Commissioners are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant, and they will not be held responsible for the efficacy or failure of any treatments.

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters previously reported or described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition

Bensons

The submersible pump motor insulation resistance, previously reported as low, currently remains at an acceptable level.

Curf & Bensons Automatic Weedscreen Cleaning Equipment

The new Metalcraft weedscreen cleaner was installed and commissioned at Curf pumping station during December 2015.

The machine for Bensons has been awaiting installation since early in the New Year, but has been delayed due to the poor access conditions and arranging with UK Power Networks for an overhead HV power line shutdown. This was arranged for 29 March, to allow the main structure of the weedscreen cleaner to be erected and the new weedscreen installed in conjunction with the machine.

Unfortunately UK Power Networks cancelled the planned shutdown of the overhead HV power line the day before due to storm damage elsewhere which required most of their linesmen to carry out emergency works in parts of the south east of the country.

Another shutdown was arranged for 21 April and the machine was installed on that day. A hydraulic excavator was required to remove a considerable amount of debris from the approach to and adjacent to the weedscreen. However problems were experienced in attempting to install the new weedscreen due to a large amount of debris between three existing stop logs (that had been left in the grooves at the time of the station's construction) and the existing weedscreen. Attempts were made to dam off and dewater the intake sump. However gaps in the existing stop logs prevented a seal and the sump could not be fully dewatered; being very old they were also bowing significantly under the water pressure and represented safety concerns. It therefore seemed that the only option was to dam off the pumping drain.

At the time of writing this work is ongoing.

The following three quotes were received for the supply and installation of; 54 metres of 2.1 metre high palisade fencing, 1no 1.2 metre wide x 2.1 metre high single leaf palisade gate and 1no 6 metre wide x 2.1 metre high double leaf palisade gate at Curf Pumping Station:

Fen Fencing.....£5180.00 + Vat
A1 Fencing.....£5565.00 + Vat
Ramsey Fencing£5996.00 + Vat

A quote of £3735.00 + VAT was also received for Bensons from Fen Fencing who, as can be seen, offered the lowest quote for Curf.

With the Chairman's approval an order for the fencing was placed with Fen Fencing.

Stonea Fen

The back flow from the inlet penstock has been investigated and found to be due to severe corrosion and hence a replacement stainless steel penstock will be obtained and fitted.

The winch cable on the outfall flap valve is disconnected below the water level and will be re-attached/replaced in conjunction with the above works.

Wimblington Common

Over the winter an intermittent fault occurred on the weedscreen cleaner. Connectors were checked for corrosion/failure but all were found to be satisfactory. Adjustments were made to the

valve block and the machine would operate for several cycles without issue, but then it would eventually fail.

Further cycles had the effect of warming the hydraulic oil up and with the increasing temperature the creep in the telescope ram could be seen in real time.

It has been concluded that failure occurs when “tele in” signal is lost before park is complete, this is due to either oil leaking back through the control valves or the telescope ram leaking inside. From observations on-site it is more likely the latter.

As the cleaner is showing other signs of general wear and tear (arm pivot bearings badly worn) it is recommended that an overhaul of the telescope ram/cylinder and valve block, together with a change of oil and filters be carried out and the bearing replaced.

Wimblington Common - Pump Failure August 2015

Following a report from the pump attendant that the pump had failed, an initial inspection of the pumping plant at the above installation was carried out on 4 August 2015 which revealed the pump to have seized.

In order to lower the drain water level to allow access to remove the pump and to maintain the drainage duty, a temporary overpump was installed.

The pumping plant was removed for inspection on 21 August 2015 and returned to the Middle Level Depot, where it was stripped down and the cause of the failure identified as a shaft sleeve which had broken up and seized within the delivery bend bearing.

The observations and works noted as being required to restore the pump to an operational condition were as detailed below:-

Pump Details

- i) Pump serial no: No.C489233
- ii) Pump type: Allen Gwynnes 18" Vertical Axial Flow
- iii) Installation date: 1972, last overhaul 2003

Pump Condition

- i) The pump shaft had seized to its delivery bend bearing, a replacement was therefore manufactured together with new Dyn metals Pan B water lubricated bearing bushes machined to suit the new shaft sleeves.
- ii) The pump body casing has suffered severely from cavitation and required to be bored out and fitted with a cast ni resist sleeve, and was machined to suit the impeller,
- iii) The bellmouth together with the impeller nose cone were in a reasonable condition and suitable for reuse.
- iv) The pump castings were satisfactory and were shot blasted and coated together with the pump-suspension tube to arrest corrosion.

Motor Details:

Mather & Platt 45 kW 6 pole squirrel cage No735628

A general overhaul was carried out which included remove drive coupling, dismantle motor clean and inspect all parts, test stator windings, test heater windings and apply 240 volt to heater bands to ensure heaters are working correctly, remove drive and non-drive end bearings, check bearing journals and housings for signs of damage or wear, Visually check rotor bar integrity onto shorting rings, inspect stator windings, insulations and exit leads, re-impregnate stator windings using class H resin, stove windings in oven to cure resin, fit new Bearings type N318E 18 S.D/N318.M1 18 S.D and 6318 C3, fit new double lip seals size 90-110-12 (2 off), Grease bearings, Spray Squirrel caged rotor with red anti-tracking varnish, spray inside of end housings with red anti-tracking varnish, assemble motor, refit fan impeller, re-fit drive coupling, test motor, spray paint

Dual Drive gearbox

The dual drive gearbox was generally satisfactory and was fitted with new seals and lubricant.

The total cost of the works was £12,851.77 + VAT of which some £7,892.05 (£8,892.05 less £1,000 excess) was recovered from an engineering insurance claim.

Pumping Hours

Bensons

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
21/4/15 -14/4/16	417 (7861)	513 (7444)	930
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	299 (7586)	55 (6931)	354
5/4/13 – 14/4/14	80 (7287)	361 (6876)	441
27/3/12 – 5/4/13	59	763	822
28/4/11 – 27/3/12	4	34	38
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	9	218	227

Curf

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
21/4/15 -14/4/16	201 (6556)	83 (6417)	284
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	240 (6355)	199 (6334)	439
5/4/13 – 14/4/14	129 (6115)	281 (6135)	410
14/3/12 – 5/4/13	378	339	717
28/4/11 – 14/3/12	2	4	6
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	193	2	195

Finchams Farm

Year	current hours counter reading since installation of replacement controls in 1986	Total Hours Run
21/4/15 -14/4/16	9902	314
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	9588	322
14/3/13 – 5/4/14	9266	284
17/2/12 – 24/4/13	-	567
28/4/11 – 17/2/12	-	10
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	-	273

Stonea Fen

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
21/4/15 -14/4/16	426 (3908)	130 (8603)	556
14/4/14 – 21/4/15	488 (3482)	152 (8473)	640
24/4/13 – 14/4/14	523 (2994)	191 (8321)	714
20/2/12 – 24/4/13	632	645	1277
28/4/11 – 20/2/12	24	38	62
26/4/10 – 28/4/11	288	83	371

Wimblington Common

Year	current hours counter reading since installation of replacement controls in 1986	Total Hours Run
21/4/15 -14/4/16	12717	751
14/4/14 – 21/4/15	11966	693
24/4/13 – 14/4/14	11273	299
8/2/12 – 24/4/13	-	550
21/4/11 – 8/2/12	-	26
26/4/10 – 21/4/11	-	200

Changes to Planning Procedures

Further to the introduction of the previously discussed pre-/post-application discussion process other procedures have been introduced, currently on a trial basis. These include, where relevant, a fixed fee basis for some services which has arisen from discussions and agreement with applicants, agents and engineering consultants.

These include the following:

- (a) In respect of relatively simple enquiries the Commissioners are currently offering a free Development Control and Consent “Surgery” on the third Tuesday of the month. Appointments are limited to 15 minutes during which applicants are able to discuss their proposals and at which it can be determined whether pre-/post-application discussion is required for Discharge/Byelaw Consent issues.

To date the up take has been limited, but the service has helped to improve consent applications and thus ensure that they can be processed smoothly and quickly.

- (b) A soakaway certification and checking service has been introduced. A number of enquirers have undertaken this service to ensure the acceptability of soakaways/infiltration devices in compliance with the Land Drainage Act and the Commissioners’/Boards’ byelaws where it can properly be shown to attenuate flows/volumes.

- (c) Completing the “Acceptability of Surface Water and Sewage Effluent Discharge” form. This is a simple form where responses are made to four questions related to surface water/treated effluent disposal.

Following an initial surge in requests for this procedure demand has recently slowed. We have had to advise some enquirers that this is not a consent document nor does it confirm agreement that a water level/flood risk management strategy has been agreed.

The responses from these procedures have been positive and will continue for the foreseeable future, to be reviewed at a later date.

Initial internal discussions concerning the introduction of fixed fees for some types and sizes of development covered by the pre-application procedure have commenced.

Responses to Planning Applications

One of the complaints aimed at the Commissioners relates to the failure to provide responses to planning applications in a timely manner. The main reason for this is because some LPAs, not only Fenland District Council, add planning applications to validation lists in week four or later. Unfortunately, the Middle Level Commissioners do not have the resources to check all the lists on a weekly basis (a potential total of 64 lists per week). Therefore, to maximise the number of planning applications captured the week 4 list is normally used.

Members will be aware that neither the Middle Level Commissioners nor the Board are statutory consultees and, therefore, do not actually have to provide a response to the planning authority, and receive no external funding to do so. The main reason for supplying responses is to protect the Board’s district and ensure that any byelaw consents are sought.

More timely responses would be of benefit to all parties and discussions have been held with the leading Planning Authorities including the County Council and Fenland District Council but none are prepared to contribute to funding to improve resources. The now former Head of Planning at Fenland District Council advised in a letter dated 7 December that “.....the Council is not in a position to consider providing additional resourcing”. As a result, the Middle Level Commissioners’ Planning Engineer has been instructed to concentrate on responding to pre-/post-application related issues and resultant planning applications as a priority with responses to other planning applications being dealt with when time permits, with greater reliance being placed upon our “Standing Advice”. This particular document may require further strengthening if this arrangement is to continue over the long term.

However, the Council's letter does advise that it "will continue to encourage applicants and agents to engage directly with yourselves at pre-application stage which clearly has benefits of providing at an early stage greater certainty to developers of your requirements". Whilst there has been an increase in enquiries concerning prior discussion these have, to date, primarily been just prior to or just following the submission of a formal planning application.

Despite the Planning Authorities' position the Middle Level Commissioners are requested to respond to planning applications that may potentially be contentious and informal requests have been received from Fenland's Planning Officers to reinstate the weekly surgery session that occurred between late 2009 and late 2013. However, as the Board is not a statutory consultee it is considered that whilst the comments provided by the Middle Level Commissioners on the Board's behalf would be of benefit to the Planning Authorities in making informed decisions, this request is not followed up.

Following the decision to "stand back" from the planning process standard letters are currently being sent to applicants to remind them of their responsibilities and duties under the Land Drainage Act and associated Byelaws.

Following several years of working closely with Peterborough City Council (PCC), Fenland District Council's planning team, from January 2016, provide a shared service to share resources and enable the delivery of an improved and more cost-effective service that will, reportedly, save Fenland £137,000 a year and a total of £446,000 by the end of the 2018/19 period.

In addition, PCC will be providing both Fenland District Council and the Borough Council with a consultancy service to meet its requirements under the Floods and Water Management Act. Whilst this will cover 'major' planning applications, informal concerns have been expressed within Fenland and the potential adverse impacts on meeting its "growth" targets given that much of the development is self-build and/or "minor" developments.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 32 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
378	F/YR14/0946/F	Mr N Bates	Residence	School Lane, Manea
379	F/YR14/0963/F	Mr T Knowles	Agriculture	Manea Road, Wimblington*
380	F/YR14/0989/F	Mr & Mrs R Broad	Residence	Benwick Road, Doddington
381	F/YR14/1014/O	Mr J Webb	Residential (4 plots)	Newgate Street, Doddington*
382	F/YR14/1017/F	Mr A Ripley	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea
383	F/YR15/0120/F	Mr & Mrs Underwood	Residence	Eastmoor Lane, Doddington
384	F/YR15/0222/O	Mr J Webb	Residential (2 plots)	Newgate Street, Doddington*
385	F/YR15/0313/F	RSPCA	Equine	Block Fen Drove, Wimblington
386	F/YR15/0343/F	Mrs J Tawiah	Residence	Church Lane, Doddington
387	F/YR15/0408/F	Mrs W Barber	Residence	Wimblington Road, Doddington
388	F/YR15/0443/F	Ms M Perry-Ellis	Residence	High Street, Doddington
389	F/YR15/0432/O	Mr M Barber	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea
390	F/YR15/0427/AG1	Mr S Raven	Agricultural	Manea Road, Wimblington
391	F/YR15/0425/F	Mr N Bates	Residence	School Lane, Manea
392	F/YR15/0414/O	Brand Associates	Residential (4 plots)	Turf Fen Lane, Doddington
393	F/YR15/0484/F	Postland Developments Ltd	Residence	Newgate Street, Doddington*
394	F/YR15/0518/F	Mr S Train	Residence	Doddington Road, Wimblington
395	F/YR15/0534/RM	Meadowson Properties Ltd	Residential (2 plots)	Fallow Corner Drove, Manea
396	F/YR15/0670/F	Mr & Mrs R Lepla	Residence	School Lane, Manea
397	F/YR15/0700/F	Ms S Raven	Residence (Vehicular access)	Manea Road, Wimblington*
398	F/YR15/0779/F	Mr & Mrs G Glowacki	Residential (4 plots)	Turf Fen Lane, Doddington
399	F/YR15/0829/FDL	Mr E Payne	Residence	Ancaster Way, Doddington
400	F/YR15/0923/F	Mr T Knowles	Agriculture	Manea Road, Wimblington*
401	F/YR15/0943/F	Surrey Overland Ltd	Residence	Sixteen Foot Bank, Chatteris
402	F/YR15/0942/F	Waterside Guest House	Holiday Chalets (2 plots)	Brickmakers Arms Lane, Doddington
403	F/YR15/0973/F	Mr R Purser	Residence	Orchard Way, Manea
404	F/YR15/0984/F	Matthew Homes Ltd	Residential (57 plots)	Teachers Close, Manea*
405	F/YR15/1002/F	Mr E Smith	Residential (3 plots)	New Road, Manea
406	Enquiry	R M A Environmental	AD Facility	A141, Wimblington
407	F/YR15/1028/F	Postland Developments Ltd	Residence	Newgate Street, Doddington*
408	F/YR15/1049/SC	Aardvark Environment Matters	Anaerobic digestion plant	Manea Road, Wimblington
409	F/YR15/1116/F	Postland Developments Ltd	Residence	Newgate Street, Doddington*

Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions

Planning applications ending 'SC' relate to screening/scoping opinions

Planning applications ending 'FDL?' related to land owned by FDC

Developments that propose direct discharge to the Board are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems. All the applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Residential development, off-site road improvements and associated works involving demolition of existing agricultural building on land east of Bevills Close and north of Eastmoor Lane, Doddington – Client of Woods Hardwick (MLC Ref Nos 177 & 182), Ashley King Developments (MLC Ref No 294) & Stafford Infrastructure Engineering (SIE) [Client of Lee Bevans] (MLC Ref No 314) & Whetstone Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 360)

An initial enquiry was dealt with, on the Board's behalf, in the autumn. The enquirer was advised of the Board's pre-application processes but to date no instruction to undertake any of these processes has been received.

Grain storage facility at the former Dalgety Arable Limited site, Manea Road, Wimblington - Executors of F Knowles Will Trust (A Knowles) (MLC Ref No 194) & Mr T Knowles (MLC Ref Nos 245, 254, 264, 379 & 400)

Since the last meeting this site has been the subject of two planning application submissions for a grain store. The first application was withdrawn by the applicant in March and the second was refused permission by the District Council in January due to issues related to highways, street scene, historic environment/heritage and surface water/flood risk issues. The flood risk issue was raised by the County Council in its capacity as the LLFA.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Further involvement will be required as development of the proposal is progressed and the Board's consent may be required.

Residential development on land south of 21 and 27 School Lane, Manea - Leigh Property Investments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 195 & 300) & – SSL (Fund) General Partnership (MLC Ref No 318) & Leigh Property Investments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 361 & 368)

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

The construction of 2 agricultural irrigation reservoirs, by the extraction and export off-site of approximately 685,000 tonnes of unprocessed sand and gravel at Lyons Farm, Wimblington Fen, Wimblington – Nicholas Farms (MLC Ref Nos 211, 244 & 269)

In the absence of any correspondence from either the applicant, the applicant's agents or the mineral operator concerned the current status of this project and any adverse impacts on the Board's system cannot be determined. No further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Erection of 6 dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling at 18 Westfield Road, Manea – Mr L Skinner (MLC Ref Nos 231, 235 & 321)

No further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agents concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Further involvement will be required as development of the proposal is progressed and the Board's consent may be required.

Erection of residential development on land west of Teachers Close, Manea – Mr P Jolley (MLC Ref No 285), Portman Developments (MLC Ref No 308) & Matthew Homes (MLC Ref No 404)

Further to the last meeting report a revised planning application was submitted to the District Council in October for the erection of 57 dwellings with garages and public open space, incorporating a balancing pond and pumping station.

The planning application was subsequently withdrawn in January.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Further involvement will be required as development of the proposal is progressed and the Board's consent may be required.

Erection of 38 x 2-storey dwellings comprising; 2 x 4-bed, 16 x 3-bed and 20 x 2-bed, with garden sheds and erection of 2.1 metre high fencing at land south west of Williams Way, Manea - Crestel Partnership Ltd (MLC Ref No 309)

With the exception of being advised that the contractor responsible for building this development has gone into administration, no further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agents and, therefore, the current status of this project is unknown. No further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Further involvement will be required as development of the proposal is progressed and the Board's consent may be required.

Erection of 32 dwellings at land north of 28-30 High Street, Manea – Primepower Properties Ltd (MLC Ref No 374)

No further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agents and, therefore, the current status of this project is not known. No further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

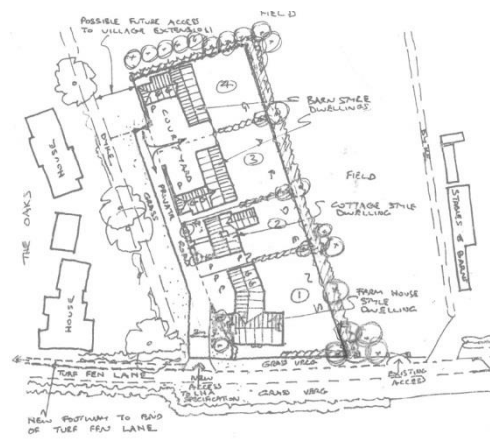
According to the District Council's Public Access web page a decision on this site remains pending. However, it is noted that a response in February from the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, generally agrees with those of the Board made in November 2014!

Further involvement will be required as development of the proposal is progressed and the Board's consent may be required.

Erection of 4no dwellings at land north of Cathedral View, Turf Fen Lane, Doddington – Brand Associates (MLC Ref No 392) & Erection of 4no dwellings at land north of Cathedral View, Turf Fen Lane, Doddington – Mr & Mrs G Glowacki (MLC Ref No 398)

As can be seen from the site plans overleaf these two planning applications relate to the plot of land to the south of The Oaks.

The planning application submitted by Brand Associates (MLC Ref No 392), as the applicant, was withdrawn in August. The planning application submitted by Mr & Mrs G Glowacki (MLC Ref No 398), for which Brand Associates are the applicant's agent, was refused by the District Council due to concerns about effects on character and appearance of the surrounding countryside, existing natural boundaries and need to retain biodiversity features and the loss of high grade agricultural land.

[illegible]

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicant's agents concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Proposed anaerobic digestion plant at Lavenham Fen Farms to the south-west of the B1093 Manea Road/A141 Isle of Ely Way junction, Wimblington – Client of RMA Environmental (MLC Ref No 406) and Aardvark Environment Matters (MLC Ref No 408)

F:\Admin\BrendaM\Word\curf\wimbingtoncombined\mins\16.5.16



Plan showing the proposed site's location

At a similar time the District Council processed a Screening Opinion request submitted by Aardvark Environment Matters on behalf of Mariana Capital Markets LLP.

NB. A Screening Opinion application is a planning process where the applicant asks the relevant Local Planning Authority for its formal opinion as to whether there are likely to be significant effects on the environment that would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The intention of this process is to enable developers to obtain a clear view from the LPA on its requirements before they reach the stage of lodging a formal planning application, thus minimising the possibility of delay or uncertainty.

Fenland District Council (FDC) Neighbourhood Strategy

Responses were made to the District Council, on the Board's behalf, in respect of:

1. *Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) Draft Update October 2015 – Public Consultation*

The IDP provides support to the District Council's Policy LP13 – Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and also complements its adopted SPD on Developer Contributions.

The IDP has been reviewed following the Council's decision in November 2014 not to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the time being and the Government's regulations regarding pooling restrictions for S106 contributions for new developments. All Parish and Town Councils and statutory and other providers were asked to identify their needs for the area earlier this year and these are set out in the Schedule to the IDP.

Generic responses were submitted to the Council relating to water supply (specifically water resources), waste water, Flood Risk Management Provision, Infrastructure Schedule (largely associated with the Towns) and Utilities and Flood Risk.

Following the public consultation the comments received were considered and reviewed. The subsequent “Changes made to the IDP following consultation” report was issued in early 2016.

Many of the comments submitted by the Middle Level Commissioners were advisory and, therefore, no changes were made. However, text was amended or added in the final document in respect of Utilities – both surface and waste water, Flood Risk Management Provision and potential schemes to serve southern Wisbech and the Gaul Road area in March.

The final report was considered and adopted by Full Council on 25 February.

2. Fenland District Council (FDC) District Wide Level 2 SFRA

Following concerns raised by local developers and agents in respect of Planning Inspectorate decisions concerning development within flood zones 2 and 3 shown on the Environment Agency’s Flood Mapping, the Council is considering whether to embark on a Level 2 SFRA for the whole district, with the exception of Wisbech for which one was prepared in 2012.

The key reason for the production of a Level 2 SFRA is to allow FDC to undertake further analysis that provides an evidence base to determine the Sequential and Exception Tests across its District. It will focus on areas where there are potential development pressures in zones of medium (Flood Zone 2) to high (Flood Zone 3) flood risk and where there are no other suitable reasonably available development sites at lower flood risk after applying the Sequential Test. Completion of the Level 2 SFRA will provide the Council with the necessary level of information for a better understanding of flood risk at the local level and give better consideration of flood risk issues when making planning decisions in accordance with both National and Local planning policies.

In the absence of funding no further progress has occurred with this project.

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Note. A *Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)* is a document that provides further details and/or guidance with reference to policies and proposals contained in a *Development Plan Document (DPD)* or *Local Plan*.

Further to the last meeting report, the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD was the subject of a public consultation from Friday 4 September to Friday 16 October 2015.

A response to the County, in respect of the SPD, was submitted on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners and, in addition to advising on some basic errors, identified the following:

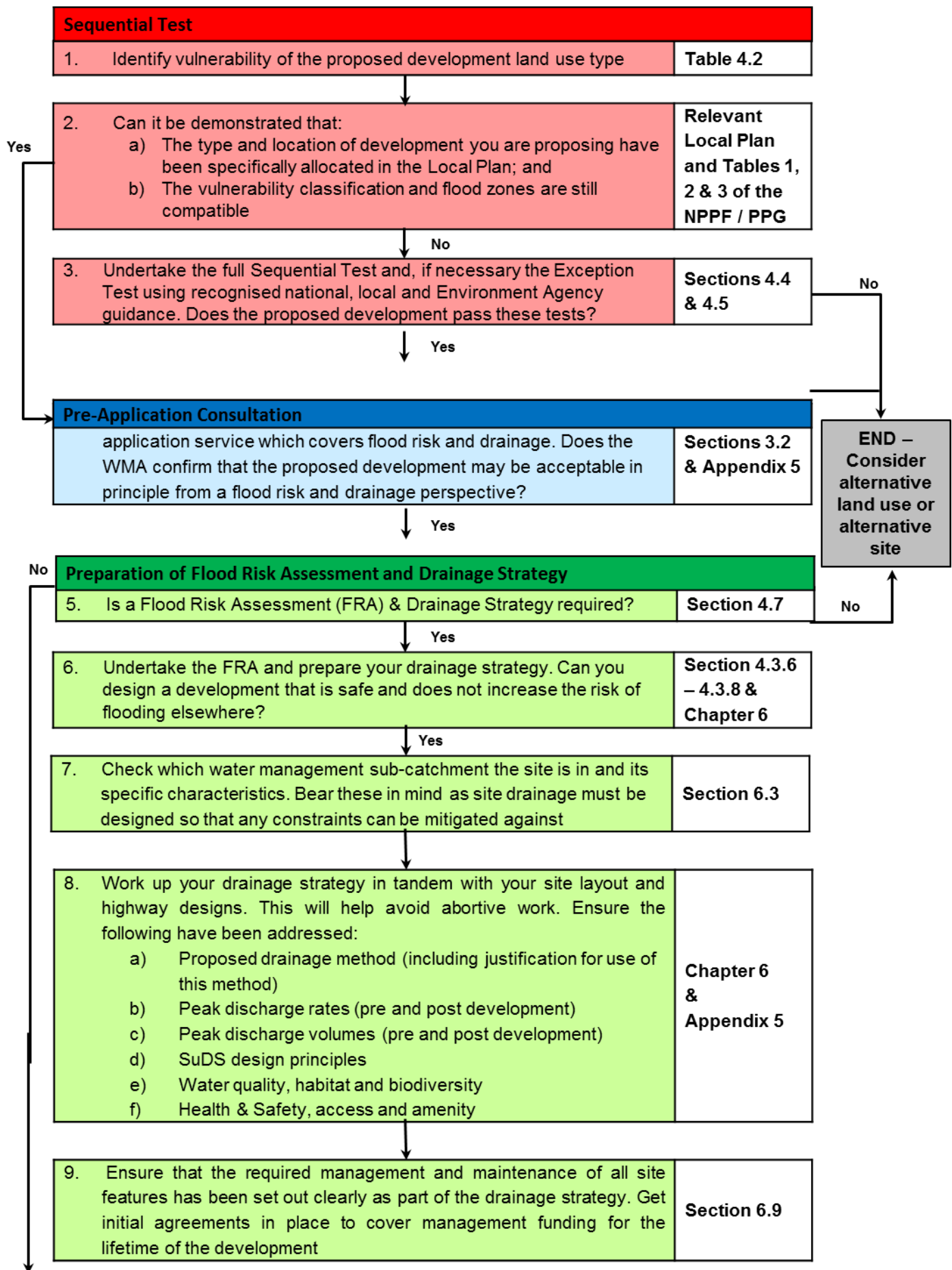
- Like the NPPF and PPS/G25, and the associated guidance documents, the SPD is generic and does not appreciate the special circumstances of water level/flood risk management within The Fens. Therefore, it is considered that further guidance is required to assist all parties involved within the planning process of the specific issues that are different to other parts of the Country, and must be considered when making planning decisions.
- The current document is “wordy” and is likely to become ineffective. A set of guidance notes for the target audience would assist and provide a more effective “journey” for users of the document.
- The document fails to readily identify the difference between the Environment Agency and the IDBs, our differing concerns and requirements and even differences between individual IDBs. The overriding impression given is one where the role, function and governance of the IDBs appear not to be clearly understood.
- Whilst the Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners appreciate that the use of SuDS does have a place within water level/flood risk management, particularly the discharge into managed watercourses, it is considered that, despite the significant emphasis placed on such facilities, the use of attenuation devices in The Fens is not always the correct or most appropriate solution. Therefore, care needs to be taken to ensure that resources and funds are not wasted by seeking to impose attenuation solutions when a direct discharge is acceptable to the local drainage authorities.
- The water resource issues raised predominantly refer solely to potable water supply but other water resource issues which exist within the study area, for example, agricultural use, navigation, amenity, biodiversity, were not fully considered, particularly if drought conditions, like those recently experienced, become more regular, and if the impact of climate change becomes a reality.

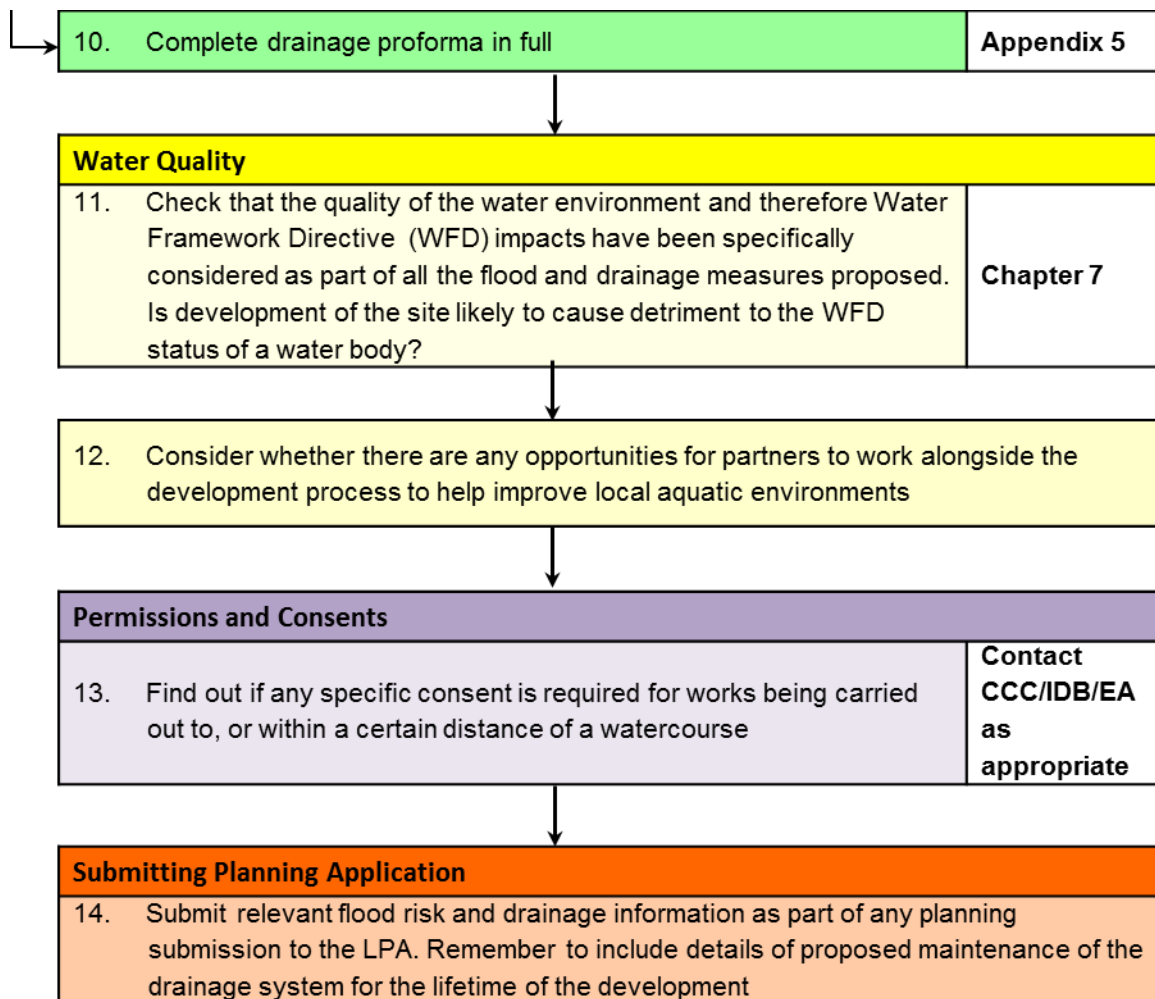
The response advised that IDBs may therefore not be able to accept the principles and policies which accommodate a County wide “broad brush” approach, which are not consistent with the more detailed requirements of their local areas, and went on to advise that:

- a. In the flood risk areas managed by IDBs, development proposals are too often granted subject to planning conditions to allow LPAs to reach their targets, without sufficient regard to IDB comments on flood risk.
- b. LPAs receive fees for dealing with planning applications, IDBs do not; unless the developer chooses to follow an IDB pre-application procedure. Too often our advice is ignored and we are expected to provide a subsidised service for planning authorities to enable them to meet their targets, which the Boards/Commissioners are not prepared to do.
- c. We wish to encourage LPAs to, in turn, encourage developers to adopt the pre-application procedure. In the absence of the developer doing so, we can give no guarantee that, under the present arrangements, we will be able to respond to the Council's request for advice on flood risk.
- d. When dealing with issues related to our byelaws and consent procedures the Middle Level Commissioners and associated/administered Boards/Commissioners will promote and require continued adoption of and compliance with the relevant principles contained within PPS25 and the associated Practice Guide together with the provision of a FRA that meets their own requirements ie detailed assessments on the impacts on the respective water level/flood risk management systems and the provision of adequate evidence to prove that a viable scheme for appropriate water level/flood risk management exists, and that it could be constructed and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

The responses received during the consultation were analysed and reviewed and a Steering Group meeting held in December to discuss the main issues raised.

Following the meeting a flow chart illustrating the process that it is considered that developers will need to complete when making a planning application was produced. This flow chart is considered to be overcomplicated but more importantly from the Commissioners' perspective the first contact with the RMA, that is likely to receive the discharge concerned, is in step 13 just prior to the submission of the planning application. The refusal by the Board/Commissioners to issue consent for either byelaw or discharge can, in the correct circumstances, be an obstacle to further progress. In addition, some of the answers required to complete steps 5-10 will require the RMAs involvement. Therefore, in order to ensure that the Board/Commissioners are involved at an early stage it is considered that any initial consultation with an RMA should be at least at step 4.





Sections of a revised draft document have been issued to the Steering Group for further consideration and comment and these are currently being considered.

In respect of SuDS the content disappointingly conforms to the generic contents of the NPPF rather than realising that this does not accommodate the special circumstances that occur within the Fenland situation.

In addition, emphasis is made to reducing flood risk but fails to consider other issues such as viability, sustainability, carbon footprint, land use, water resources etc all of which should also be considered. Failure to do so could have adverse impacts and actually reduce “growth” in the area.

The County Council currently hopes that the SPD will go before the County Committee on 9 June and subsequently be adopted by each of the Cambridgeshire local planning authorities.

Both the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer and Assistant Engineer have and will continue to represent both the Middle Level Commissioners' and associated Boards'/Commissioners' interests by attending meetings and considering the various draft documents.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. Thomas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Consulting Engineer

10 May 2016

Curf & Wimblington Combined (308)\Reports\May 2016

In response to Mr Mason, Mr Lakey confirmed that as part of the works contractors do routinely check culverts to make sure there were no blockages.

In response to Mr Angood, the Chairman confirmed that automatic weedscreen cleaners had been installed at Bensons and Curf pumping stations and that only the security fencing remained outstanding.

In response to the Vice Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that allowances had been made in the budget estimates for repairs to Wimblington Common Pumping Station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment and for the replacement penstock at Stonea Fen Pumping Station.

In response to Mr Duncan Morris, Mr Lakey explained it was sometimes difficult for excavator drivers if water levels were high or the banks had not been flail mowed. He agreed to discuss with all contractors problems that can be caused by banks being 'undermined' when slubbing works were carried out.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the recommended works be undertaken.

B.291 Pumping Station Insurance Valuation

Further to minute B.260, Mr Hill reported that the Chairman agreed that the Board's Pumping Stations should have their values increased to the figures recommended by the Consulting Engineer and that engineering breakdown insurance should also be taken out.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

B.292 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.293 Environmental Officer's Press Releases and BAP Report

- a) Mr Hill referred to the Environmental Officer's Press Releases dated December 2015 and April 2016, previously circulated to Members, and to the Repeat Water Vole Survey of Curf Fen and Ransonmoor District.
- b) Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.294 State-aided Schemes

Consideration was given to the desirability of undertaking further State-aided Schemes in the District and whether any future proposals should be included in the capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.295 Pumping Station duties

a) Agreements relating to pumping station duties

Further to minute B.264, Mr Hill reported that Messrs Carson, Gowler and Watson had duly signed the agreements.

b) Finchams Farm Pumping Station

Further to minute B.265(iii), the Chairman reported that this matter was still outstanding.

c) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties for 2016/2017.

The Chairman referred to the use of the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award indicator which was 0.5%.

d) The Board gave consideration to the fuel allowances payable to Messrs Watson and Carson.

RESOLVED

i) That the Chairman and Mrs Langley be authorised to deal with the request from Mr Cook at Finchams Farm pumping station.

ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £4,559.00 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2016/2017.

iii) That the Board agree that a £280.00 and £100.00 fuel allowance be allowed to Messrs Watson and Carson respectively.

iv) That the Clerk write to Mr Carson at Curf pumping station and Mr Watson at Bensons pumping Station explaining that, following the installation of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment, the Board would assess this impact during the year and revise the appropriate fee for each station at the next meeting.

B.296 Environment Agency – Precepts

a) Mr Hill reported that the precept for 2016/2017 would remain unchanged at £9,128.

b) Further to minute B.267, Mr Hill referred to the Environment Agency's newsletter dated April 2016 and reported that because of the appeals against the precept lodged some two years ago by the Board (and other Boards) the Agency had introduced a Local Choices Precept Programme which involved a far greater input from IDBs and IDBs being much more able to influence the Agency on the works on which the precept would be spent.

Mr Hill updated the Members on the recent Environment Agency/IDB Strategic Meeting.

B.297 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

a) Mr Hill reported that the sum of £5,364.57 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£6,229.19 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2015/16 less £864.62 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2014/15).

(b) Further to minute B.268(b), Mr Hill referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted and the situation kept under review.

B.298 Association of Drainage Authorities

Mr Hill reported:-

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities would be held in London on Thursday the 17th November 2016.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association if a Member wishes to attend.

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

On the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association held in Prickwillow, Ely on Tuesday the 8th March 2016.

c) Subscriptions

That it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 5% in 2016, viz:- from £580 to £609.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2016

d) Floodex 2016

That Floodex 2016 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 18th and 19th May 2016.

B.299 Health and Safety Audits

Mr Hill drew attention to the continuing need to ensure that the Board complied with Health and Safety Requirements and reminded the Board of the arrangements with Croner.

B.300 Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership Update

Further to minute B.272, Mr Hill reported that the main recent items discussed were the County Council's project to install more rain gauges in Cambridgeshire; the impact of the A14 Project; Surface Water Management Plans and the new Supplementary Planning Document on flood risk, which the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer was involved with. Mr Hill advised that the Planning Engineer did not feel that this document was yet in a suitable state commenting in particular, that it was too generic, did not really apply to the special needs of the Fens or properly set out the roles and functions of IDBs

B.301 Information regarding Asbestos

Mr Hill reported that the Board had a duty to provide details of any asbestos in their installations, especially pumping stations, to be recorded in a Register so that these were known and any contractors could be made aware.

RESOLVED

That the Register record "Unknown".

B.302 Banking Arrangements

a) Changes to the bank mandate

Mr Hill reported that, due to the Clerk's impending retirement relevant changes to bank mandates to name his successor would be required in due course.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Board's bank mandates.

c) Changes to the National Savings Accounts signatories

Mr Hill reported that it was necessary to update the signatories on the National Savings Accounts.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and the Clerk be the authorised signatories on the National Savings Accounts.

B.303 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2014/2015

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2015.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2015.

B.304 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Mr Hill referred to the recently issued Practitioners' guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory Annual Accounts and Governance Statements which will apply to Annual Returns commencing on or after 1st April 2016.

B.305 Budgeting

Mr Hill referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2016.

B.306 Review of Internal Controls

Members considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.

B.307 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered their current Risk Management system.

Mr Hill reported that the Board had in place a Risk Management Policy which was last reviewed in 2015.

He reported that the Board had in place operational, financial and governance policies and considered all of their key risks and how to mitigate against them at each scheduled meeting, at which operational and environmental risks were discussed, based upon engineer's reports, officer reports, budgets and costings covering the short/medium and longer term issues. Budgets were prepared and approved by the Board.

Mr Hill reported that insurances were in place that confirmed the cover was appropriate to the business. Budgets/year-end forecasts were reviewed at intervals by the Board. This was deemed adequate for the size of the business and the District system was monitored on a regular basis to identify new/emerging areas of risk.

The Board considered this current policy/strategy to be appropriate in between carrying out more substantial, periodic formalised reviews of risk assessment/management and met the requirements that they were assessed by.

- b) The Board reviewed and approved the insured value of their buildings.

B.308 Appointment of the External Auditor

Mr Hill reported that, as had been previously mentioned, the recent Local Audit and Accountability Act changes the audit requirements for smaller public bodies including IDBs and such bodies as the MLC and Parish Councils.

The Act abolished the Audit Commission from 1st April 2015 and, from that date, responsibility for external auditor appointments has transferred to a new body, Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. Most contracts with existing external auditors will however continue until they expire after completion of the 2016/2017 audits.

Mr Hill reported that from April 2017, smaller authorities will also be legally responsible for the appointment of their own external auditor and that this appointment must be made before the 31st December before the audited year, eg by 31/12/2016 for 2017/2018. Mr Hill advised that the Secretary of State can however, appoint a body with power to appoint auditors for such smaller bodies which must then opt out from an appointing body. This has now been proposed, with a body proposed to procure audit services "en bloc" for these bodies. The new body is also supported and being funded by DCLG. The new arrangements will operate for a period of 5 years initially but is likely to run on 5 year cycles. It is likely that the procedures for opting out of this sector led body arrangement and appointing an external auditor individually will not be worthwhile for smaller authorities since this will involve the authority establishing an auditor panel and following a statutory appointment process and it is also likely that audit fees will be higher than under the "en bloc" arrangement.

Mr Hill advised that all IDBs had to decide by 31st January 2016 whether they were going to opt out of the new sector body arrangements and that the position can be reviewed during the first five year cycle. The Chairman had, in view of this, agreed that the Board would opt in to the Sector Led body.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the actions of the Chairman to join the Sector Led Auditor Appointment body.

B.309 Exercise of Public Rights

Mr Hill referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

B.310 Annual Governance Statement – 2015/2016

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2016.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2016.

B.311 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £157,223.08 which had been made during the financial year 2015/2016.

In response to Mr Angood, the Chairman outlined the area of the District which benefited from utilising the Sears Brothers Private District.

(NB) – The Vice Chairman declared an interest in the payments made to R & J A Gowler.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.312 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2015/2016

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2016 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2016.

B.313 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2016/2017

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2016/2017 and were informed by Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by contributions would be 90.50% and by special levy on local billing authorities and by contribution would be 9.50%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £73,868 be raised by drainage rates and special levy and by way of contribution from the Middle Level Commissioners under the Wimblington 2nd District Drainage Order 1922.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy and contribution from the Middle Level Commissioners are £63,833, £6,497 and £3,538 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 18.00p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) That a Special levy of £6,497 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

vi) That a contribution of £3,538 be made by the Middle Level Commissioners in respect of Byall Fen in accordance with Wimblington 2nd District Drainage Order 1922.

vii) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).

viii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.314 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.315 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 16th May 2017 and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to make any further arrangements.