

CONINGTON AND HOLME INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Conington and Holme Internal Drainage Board
held at the Admiral Wells Inn, Holme on Tuesday the 13th June 2017

PRESENT

P A Davies Esq (Chairman)

D R Elmore Esq

R Elmore Esq

J Racey Esq

T R West Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Wilding, C P Bliss Esq, P J Davies Esq and T D Alban Esq.

B.899 Declarations of Interest

Miss McShane 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.900 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 14th June 2016 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.901 Catchwater Drain

Further to minute B.876, the Chairman reported that whilst undertaking work on the Catchwater Drain the District Officer's machine had got stuck on bank. He updated the Board on the tree that required moving and confirmed that instructions had now been given to the Board's Contractor to remove the tree.

B.902 Clerk to the Board

- a) Further to minute B.864, Miss McShane reported that Mr David Thomas had been appointed as Clerk to the Board and that she had been appointed Solicitor/Assistant Clerk.

Miss McShane reported that the Chairman had authorised a donation of £100 towards the gift to mark Iain Smith's retirement and that Mr Smith had asked that his thanks be passed on to the Board for their generous contribution towards his retirement gift and would like it recorded that it had been a pleasure for him to serve the Board and that he wished it all the best for the future.

b) Changes to Bank Mandate

Further to minute B.885, Miss McShane reported that, as most invoices raised came through the engineering department, the Internal Auditor had advised that David Thomas should not be named on the bank account and that the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer of the Middle Level Commissioners should be the officers authorised to make payments of authorised accounts and that in pursuance of minute B.885, the Chairman has authorised the appropriate changes to the mandate.

B.903 Appointment of Chairman

Mr Davies informed the Board that he wished to stand down as Chairman.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered to the District by Mr Davies be recorded in the Minutes.
- b) That Mr J Racey be appointed Chairman and that he be authorised to sign cheques and authorise payments on behalf of the Board.

B.904 Election of Members of the Board

Miss McShane reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (eight), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1st November 2016, viz:-

BLISS, Gregory Peter
DAVIES, Paul Andrew
DAVIES, Peter John
ELMORE, David Ralph

ELMORE, Ralph
RACEY, John
WEST, Timothy R
WILDING, Marja Ms

B.905 Land Drainage Act 1991
Huntingdonshire District Council

Miss McShane reported that Huntingdonshire District Council had appointed Councillor T D Alban to be a Member of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Miss McShane also reported that Messrs Allen, Mitchell and Watt were not re-appointed and referred to a letter dated the 9th August 2016 from Mr Mitchell.

RESOLVED

That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered to the District by Mr Mitchell be recorded in the Minutes.

B.906 Great Fen Project

Further to minute B.868, Miss McShane reported that at the Sawtry IDB meeting last week, Mr C Evans, Woodwalton Fen NNR Manager, had reported that the Great Fen capital works on drainage had been completed at Holme Fen. He also advised that funding for the next stage of the project was to be sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund and that they needed to review works which they funded.

B.907 Water Framework Directive

Further to minute B.869, Miss McShane reported that there had been no further developments, apart from Mr Paul Sharman being appointed as the IDB representative following the retirement of Mr Iain Smith, but advised that, due to the Environment Agency no longer being able to support it, the River Basin Liaison Panel had since been disbanded. She also reported that the Clerk was satisfied that there were other partnerships in place and would continue to update Members when required.

B.908 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.870, Miss McShane reported that ADA had met with Defra officials, including Sarah Hendry, on the 11th October to discuss the Water Transfer Licences and it appeared that the Minister was keen to avoid over regulation. ADA had proposed certain points to Defra, including that ADA would hold one licence for the industry or that the opportunity should first be given for the information which the Environment Agency allege that they do not have to be provided other by regulation but perhaps through a form similar to the present IDB1. Defra officials had, it was understood, agreed to consider these proposals.

Miss McShane gave a brief update on the current position in relation to proposed licensing changes and made it clear that unnecessary bureaucracy and unfair charging would be resisted.

B.909 East Coast Main Line Level Crossing Closure Programme

Further to minute B.871, the Chairman reported that the drains between Points 12-13 and 20-21 were under water and that the advice of the Consulting Engineers was required.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineers check the levels of water in the culvert under the railway at Points 12-13 and 20-21.

B.910 Network Rail

Further to minute B.876(iii), the Chairman confirmed that the pipe had been removed.

B.911 BT Poles to Conington Peterborough – Points 22-24

Further to minute B.876(iv), Miss McShane reported that the Clerk had written to BT but had received no response.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write again to BT asking for the poles to be removed at Points 22-24.

B.912 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

Conington & Holme I.D.B.

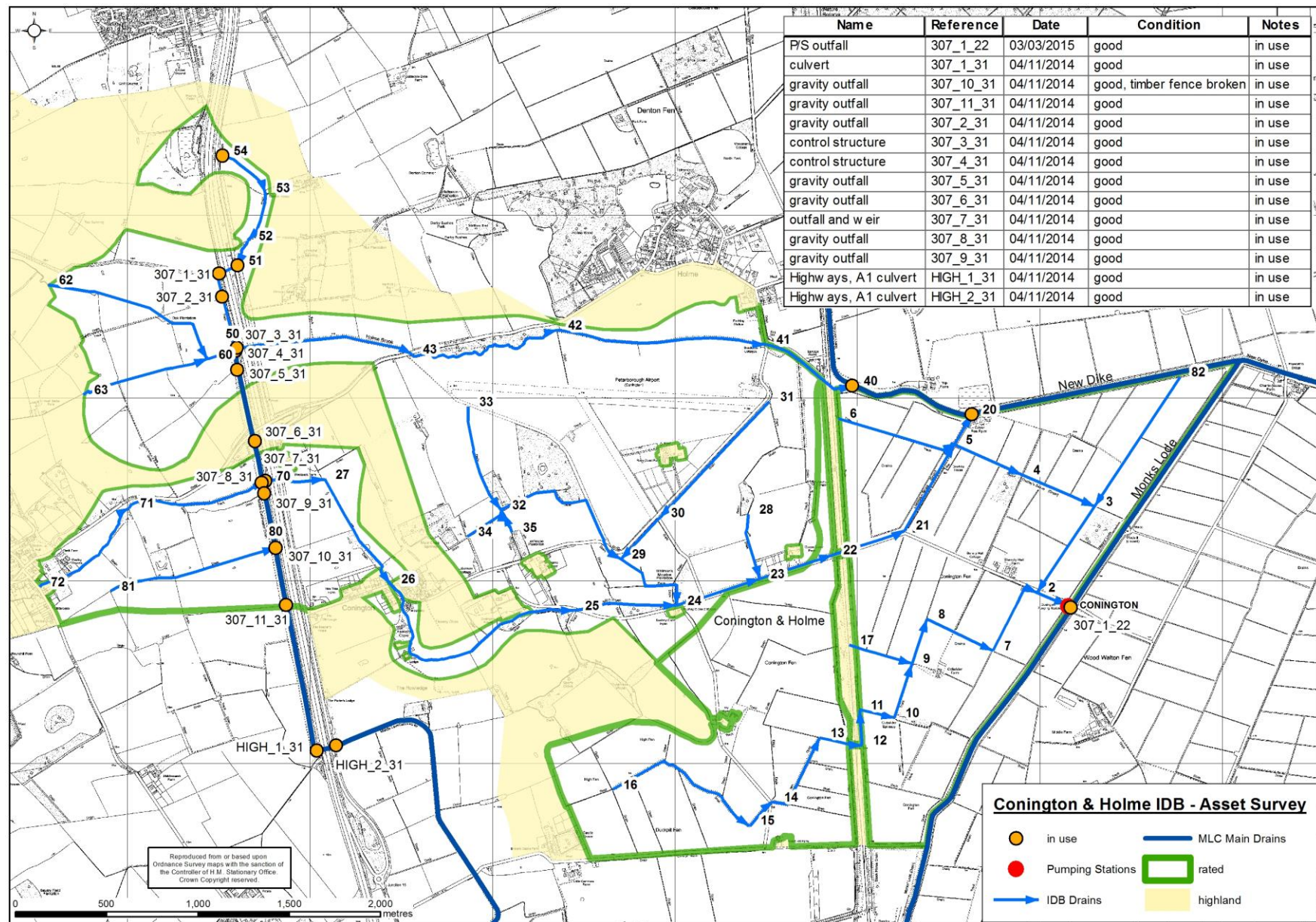
Consulting Engineers Report – June 2017

Health & Safety

A neighbouring IDB has recently had an occurrence in which a dog ended up trapped between a weedscreen and a pump. This happened at an unmanned pumping station. The dog's owner entered the pump intake area to secure the rescue of the dog and it was fortuitous that an automated pump start did not occur. However, this is perhaps an opportune reminder that members of the general public and even the emergency services are not necessarily aware of the risks posed at such installations. It is recommended that all such sites have reasonable protection from entry and also have signage indicating the risks and who should be contacted in an emergency. It is therefore recommended that the Board reviews its sites and the Middle Level Commissioners' engineers will be happy to assist if required, for example by supplying a sample draft signage template or by giving specific advice on what can be done at a particular site.

Asset Survey

As an essential part of our work in seeking to reduce flood risk, the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) have surveyed all MLC and third party owned penetrations through MLC river banks and embankments and recorded and uploaded these to our GIS (Geographical Information System). The condition and likely continuing use or otherwise of these penetrations (generally pipes or culverts) has been assessed. Below is a table of those recorded as being owned by or the responsibility of the Board. Where an asset's condition is recorded as requiring attention, an increased flood risk is likely to exist and the Board is asked to consider carrying out suitable remedial works. Where an asset is redundant but currently in a reasonable condition it is recommended that the Board consider putting plans into its future programme to remove it or otherwise carry out works that will ensure that there can be no future risk of a leak through the bank. **As part of the Board's system is also embanked, the Board should consider a like assessment of its own embankments to assure itself of their integrity and ascertain the need for any work, whether by the Board or a third party, which may be similarly required.** Should the Board wish for a similar exercise to be carried out on their own district assets this can also be arranged. Such a survey would assist the Board with future budgeting in ensuring that smaller but strategically/locally important assets such as culverts, slackers and adjustable and fixed weirs are not overlooked.



Pumping Station

Other than any matters described below or previously reported to the Board, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Replacement Weedscreen

At its last meeting, the Board agreed to go ahead with a new weedscreen at Conington Pumping Station, the following quotation was therefore obtained from Metalcraft in Chatteris who is currently and further instruction is awaited.

Scope of supply:

To supply materials and labour to manufacture, assemble and install 1off screen in accordance with supplied info and existing drawings

Removal of existing and install of new screen by Shoebridge Engineering

Total price £8,451.00 +VAT including delivery to site

Material of Construction

Galvanised mild steel screen

Finish

Welds as laid

Inspection/Testing

Visual & dimensional

Exclusions

CE marking,
Surface treatments, unless specified above

Certification/specification

Unit will be manufactured to Good Engineering Practice.

Certificate of Conformance supplied and Material Certs only, any further certification required may incur an additional cost. Documents will be supplied on completion of contract.

Payment Terms NMA

The quote was based on a drawing of the station that was located but this may not be as built, therefore it is recommended that a section of bar is removed as a pattern before any fabrication commences.

The quote also includes for installation but this would require the drain damming off, dewatering and the area in front of the screen being cleared of debris down to its invert.

Part of the screen has now collapsed as expected and its replacement is urgently required to prevent possible pump damage, see below:



Repair of the no 1 leaking lubrication pump has been completed.

Pumping Hours

Conington Pumping Station	Total hours run Mar 12-Apr 13	Total hours run Apr 13-Apr 14	Total hours run Apr 14-Apr 15	Total hours run Apr 15-Apr 16	Total hours run Apr 16-Apr 17
No 1	289	116	59	41	15
No 2	599	412	593	196	110

Eel Regulations

The latest guidance suggests that spending of FCRM money on schemes just to facilitate eel movements will not be required. However, plans for improvements, modifications or replacement of structures which have been identified as a barrier to movement should be seen as a trigger for considering such works. There is a further test to be included and that is one of proportionately, ie the additional cost of eel passage should not be disproportionate to the overall scheme cost.

The IDBs and ADA have been pushing for further research to better understand eel movement and explore all options in relation to providing methods which would allow the mature (silver) eels to escape closed systems and hence travel to their breeding sites in the most cost effective manner. ADA has asked if IDBs would join with the EA in funding this project and so far the response has been positive. The Board is therefore asked if it would wish to offer some financial support over one or two years. Other Boards have committed between £50 and £1000 for either one or two years.

Development within the Floodplain

The floodplain, its definition, derivation and extents have been an issue not only for the Commissioners and associated Boards but other IDBs since its introduction. This has become of more concern since the elevated importance of the Sequential Test in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The matter of development within the floodplain has been discussed at several sites within our areas of interest, and the Clerk to the Commissioners/Boards has advised that the definition and extents of a “floodplain” are matters for the planning authority to resolve with the relevant authority who prepared the hazard map, be it the Environment Agency (EA) for its various flood maps, the Local Planning Authority (LPA), for its SFRA, and/or the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for its SWMP. It is acknowledged that whilst there may be specific issues relating to future proposed aspects of development within our catchment we will not oppose it simply because it is within the floodplain. The Commissioners/Boards have policy statements, available on the Middle Level website, which set out the Standard of Protection (SoP) that they will seek to provide, floodplain or not.

In short, the Commissioners and associated Boards do not agree with the generic content of the NPPF and argue that “The Fens” is a special case and should be considered as such.

The main purpose of an IDB is to aim to manage flood risk up to an appropriate SoP. Above this SoP there will be a residual flood risk which must be accounted for.

Internal Consultation with the Board

To ensure that our limited resources are maximised and to enable more timely responses to pre-/post-application consultation and applications for byelaw consent, and occasionally discharge consent, we have introduced a defined process of “internal consultation” between the Commissioners and the Board, usually, but not always, with the Chairman and/or District Officer to seek the Board’s comments and thus aid the decision-making process.

Members are reminded that if a response, ideally in writing by post or email, has not been received within fourteen days from the request being issued then it is considered that the Board does not wish to comment and is content for the Commissioners’ staff to process and make a recommendation on the respective consent application/discussion procedure based upon information to hand.

Changes to Planning Procedures Update

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

Pre- and Post-Application Consultation

Despite an increase in the number of planning applications being processed and planning enquiries received it appears that the number of Pre- and Post- Application Consultation discussion requests has reduced over previous years. The reason for this is unknown but as detailed later in this report “developers” are failing to maximise the benefits of this procedure and Boards are failing to encourage its use and thus are incurring unnecessary additional costs which could be paid by the developer.

Notes/Informatives on planning decision notices

Following a concern raised by one of the Boards administered by the Commissioners, a brief review of a random, yet representative, sample of planning application Decision Notices made by the Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) that have primarily been granted in the last two years has been undertaken.

Many of the relevant decisions within HDC’s area made during 2016, and to a lesser degree during 2015, relate to the Prior Approval of agricultural building to dwellings or Prior Notification applications which, on the whole, do not include conditions or refer to notes/informatives possibly because of the nature of the application. In a similar manner most of the other decision notices found did not, with a few exceptions, include notes/informatives either.

As a result a letter was sent during December to all the planning authorities that the Commissioners deal with, both directly and on behalf of its administered Boards, requesting that the use of informatives could be (re-) introduced on future notices “in order to make applicants aware of other consents which may be required in addition to Planning Consent and prevent them being in breach of the Boards’ Byelaws”

It is understood that the principle of using notes/informatives on Planning Decision Notices is based on the Court of Appeal which remarked following the case of *Slough Borough Council v Secretary of State for the Environment and Oury* [1995] "The general rule is that, in construing a planning permission, regard may only be had to the permission itself, including the reasons stated for it."

The decision and its reason(s) is the primary document, with the informatives no more than non-binding additional information which lack a statutory basis. Planning Conditions, on the other hand,

may impose mandatory requirements for the carrying out of development and have statutory authority.

The purpose of a note in respect of a condition is to provide the applicant with further information and an informative is to provide relevant guidance to the applicant without having to impose relevant conditions. The Planning Circular 11/95: use of conditions in planning permission advises how these can be used to bring the applicants' attention to certain matters, such as, reminding an applicant to obtain further planning approvals and other consents but should not establish mandatory requirements with which an authorised development must comply.

However, it is further understood that there are a limited number of exceptions to this rule which could lead to a challenge to the permission which may result in a decision being "quashed" but this is outside of our interest on this occasion.

Local Land Charges Register (LLCR)

As previously advised requests are made to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), when relevant, to make an entry on the LLCR to highlight that the requirements of the relevant authority have not been met. This process is providing results, particularly within the Fenland District Council (FDC) area, but enquiries from other LPAs are low, however, these areas of interest are smaller than that of FDC and feature smaller urban areas.

Previously enquiries were only received from local Solicitors but more recently enquiries are also being sought from independent search providers who offer specialist conveyancing services, such as Index Property Information, who undertake local authority searches, drainage and water reports, environmental reports etc.

Whilst researching and processing such enquiries have cost and time implications it protects the parties involved and is believed to have been a significant contributing factor in moving forward a long-standing issue associated with the Cardea development at Stanground to the west of the Commissioners' catchment.

Treated effluent discharges from Anglian Water Services (AWS) Water Recycling Centres (WRC) or from the Public Sewerage System

Developers are becoming increasingly aware of the Supreme Court's decision that any connection to a public sewer under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991 or agreement to construct a public sewer under Section 104 of that Act also requires our consent where our systems would be affected. Therefore, in addition to any permission from the LPA, the EA and AWS, the consent of the Board/Commissioners is also required for the acceptance of any increased flows or volumes to

our system. Such consent will not be given unless we consider that the discharge can be properly dealt with within our system and the costs of accommodating that discharge are met.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 12 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
176	H/16/00912/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Carling	Residence (Extension)	Conington Lane, Conington
177	H/16/01181/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Juniper	Residence (Extension)	High Haden Road, Glatton
178	H/16/01440/FUL	T H Branson & Son	Residence (Agricultural)	Bullock Road, Glatton
179	H/16/01727/OUT	Miss T Belcher	Residence	The Green, Conington Lane, Conington
180	H/16/01920/HHFUL	Ms Jane Mammatt	Residence (Storage)	Old North Rd, Stilton Fen, Stilton
181	H/16/02010/HHFUL	Mr Varnham	Residence (Extension)	Sawtry Road, Glatton
182	H/16/02295/OUT	Mrs P Cooper	Residential (2 dwellings)	Conington Lane, Conington
183	H/16/02635/HHFUL	Mr J McLlelland	Residence (Extension)	Sawtry Road, Glatton
184	16/02561/HHFUL	Mr M Braid	Residence (Extension)	Church Lane, Conington
185	H/16/02556/FUL	Rochester Bridge Trust	Residential (2 dwellings)	Cooks Lane, Conington
187	H/17/00517/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Johnson	Residence (Extension)	Church Road, Conington
188	H/17/00729/FUL	Mr A Plant	Equestrian	High Haden Road, Glatton

From the information provided it is understood that all the developments propose to discharge surface water to soakaways, or similar infiltration systems.

The following applicants have chosen to use the soakaway self-certifying process and, in doing so, agreed that if the soakaway was to fail in the future they would be liable for discharge consent.

- a. *Residence (Extension) at High Haden Road, Glatton – Mr & Mrs Juniper (MLC Ref No 177)*
- b. *Residence (Extension) at Sawtry Road, Glatton – Mr J McLlelland (MLC Ref No 183)*

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

Further to the last meeting, the MLC have been consulted on a Wind Energy Developments document that was the subject of a Public Consultation held between November and January. A response was made on behalf of the Commissioners and the Boards within the District Councils area for whom it provides a planning consultancy service.

The content of this strategic document went into extensive detail concerning the provision of wind turbines and their associated sensitivity and cumulative impacts within the landscape but did not

consider the adverse impacts that this type of development and other related issues created, such as whether the infrastructure has the capacity to serve proposed turbines and wind farms or whether the uprating of existing or provision of new export cable routes, transport routes and associated remedial works is required. Any resultant adverse impacts on water level and flood risk management systems etc did not appear to have been considered.

Comments were also made by the Commissioners in respect of adverse impacts on navigable watercourses and The Great Fen Project.

The opportunity was taken to remind the Council that whilst a planning application may be acceptable to the Council it also needs to be appropriate to other parties if the development is to be viable and buildable with the minimum of delay yet maximising our respective limited resources.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA): Additional Sites Consultation

A public consultation on the Council's HELAA, formerly known as the Environmental Capacity Study, was held between 26 September and 7 November.

Our reply to this document, made on behalf of both the MLC and Board, provided responses on the Assessment of Broad Locations including statements on the NPPF Floodplain extents; treated effluent disposal; nature designations and our position concerning the provision of FRAs; Capacity calculations and illustrations; together with specific responses on 94 Great Whyte, Newtown Road and Biggin Lane. None of the specific sites are within the Board's area.

Huntingdonshire SFRA Update

The draft 2015 Huntingdonshire SFRA has recently been provided by the District Council's Flood & Water Management consultant, JBA Consulting and this document is currently being reviewed.

Huntingdonshire Design Guide 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.*

This SPD has been adopted by the District Council.

Copies of the respective Consultation Statement and Adoption Statements are available on the Council's website and at the Council's main office in Huntingdon

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.

The SPD was endorsed by the County Council and the completed document was circulated to the relevant planning authorities and risk management authorities (RMAs) for adoption where appropriate. The SPD was adopted by HDC on 17 April 2017. The document can be found at <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2609/cambridgeshire-flood-and-water-spd.pdf>

Cambridge Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) Pre-Consultation

Note A WRMP is a document required by Government of every water company which describes how it proposes to maintain the balance of supply and demand over the next 25 years allowing for the influences upon its operation. These include an increasing population, economic growth, the changing climate and the need to protect the environment.

Further to the last meeting, the MLC received correspondence from Cambridge Water seeking our views on a briefing note associated with its next WRMP. A response made on behalf of the Commissioners and the Boards within the company's area for whom we provide a planning consultancy service advised that:

“The document rightly identifies key issues and the need for a long term vision and strategy; however, we note that no references are made to the whole life funding, maintenance of the relevant infrastructure and implementation/monitoring processes.”

In an effort to assist further the opportunity was taken to provide some standard text that may be relevant to the document's production and/or the company's operations. These included the impacts of potable water supply on the Commissioners and the Boards within its catchment; watercourses protected under the Land Drainage Act 1991 (LDA) and associated Byelaws; hazard mapping and development within the floodplain; Flood risk and water level management; Water Resources and efficiency; river and waterside settings and corridors/Green Infrastructure; Biodiversity and protected habitats and species; treated effluent disposal/Dry Weather Flows and Partnership Working.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Deal

Members will be aware that all councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, as well as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), have signed up to the devolution deal with government.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (the Combined Authority), is a corporate legal body that is intended to facilitate collective decision-making on a Cambridgeshire & Peterborough basis, particularly in relation to large-scale strategic projects. This means a greater

number of important decisions can be made by local communities rather than by central government.

Each of the seven Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Councils has one seat on the Combined Authority, which is held by the respective Council Leader. The Mayor will join as its chair and eighth member.

The district councils will not lose any of their existing functions and will continue to be directly responsible for day-to-day services, like housing, rubbish collection and street cleaning. The Mayor and the Combined Authority do not replace nor can they overrule Cambridgeshire & Peterborough councils when they are exercising their own functions although the Combined Authority will be able to exercise certain functions concurrently with the district councils.

The devolution deal includes significant benefits for the communities of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, such as:

- A new £600million fund (£20 million annually for the next 30 years) to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs.
- Potential transport infrastructure improvements such as the A14/A142 junction and upgrades to the A10 and the A47 as well as the Ely North Railway Junction.
- A new £100million housing fund to build more homes including affordable, rent and shared ownership
- Deciding how a budget is spent to maintain roads

Central government will continue to lead on welfare, most forms of taxation and many other areas.

Consulting Engineer

1 June 2017

C&H(307)\Reports\June 2017

The Chairman referred to the quotation received for the replacement weedscreen at Conington Pumping Station and that another quotation had been received from Barry Gowler.

Miss McShane referred to the Consulting Engineer's report and to their recommendation that the Board should have appropriate signage in place for Health and Safety purposes. Members discussed the type and form of signage required and Miss McShane reported that some Boards were using external lockable cabinets to display Health & Safety notices and others were choosing to use laminated notice boards indicating the risks; providing contact details in an emergency, together with the grid reference to identify each location.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Chairman and Mr P A Davies obtain a further quotation for the weedscreen and contact Board members for a decision on which contractor to appoint.
- iii) That the Middle Level Commissioners be requested to supply and install an external display cabinets at the Board's pumping station to include notices indicating the risks, providing contact details in an emergency, together with the grid reference.

B.913 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.914 National Flood Resilience Review

Miss McShane referred to the publication of the above review by the Government in September 2016 and to the response from ADA and drew attention to the lack of reference to the SUDS issue, which still remained unsatisfactory.

B.915 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss McShane referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter dated December 2016, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.916 Report on maintenance work in the District

a) Gravity Area

Further to minute B.876(a), Mr D Elmore confirmed that he had given instructions to the local wood contractor to remove the trees at Glatton Brook.

Mr Racey reported that after speaking with the Network Rail contact regarding the fence which was preventing access this had now been removed.

Mr D Elmore reported on the silting up on the inside of the curve at Glatton Brook.

b) Pumped Area

Mr D Elmore reported that a branch of an ash tree had fallen into Glatton Brook which had the potential to block the drain in a flash flood.

c) Flail Mowing

The Board discussed flail mowing undertaken since the last meeting and considered the arrangements satisfactory.

RESOLVED

- i) That Messrs Davies and Elmore be authorised to undertake flail mowing operations for the Board and that the rate of £39 per hour be allowed for 2017/2018.
- ii) That the Board members be authorised to arrange for the removal of silt build up in Glatton Brook.
- iii) That Mr D Elmore be authorised to request the local wood contractor to remove the branch of an ash tree from Glatton Brook and that Mr P A Davies carry out a risk assessment on this work due to its proximity to the bank.

(NB) – Mr P A Davies and Messrs D and R Elmore declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.917 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 Defra.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.918 Environment Agency – Precepts

- a) Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2017/2018 in the sum of £1,923 (the precept for 2016/2017 being £1,894).
- b) Local Choices Precept

Further to minute B.878(b), Miss McShane referred to the Environment Agency's newsletter dated October 2016.

B.919 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Miss McShane reported that the sum of £1,894.82 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£2,110.62 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2016/2017 less £215.80 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2015/2016).

(b) Further to minute B.879(b), Miss McShane referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be kept under review.

B.920 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

Miss McShane reported that the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities would be held in London on Thursday the 16th November 2017.

RESOLVED

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

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

Miss McShane reported on the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association held in Prickwillow, Ely on Tuesday the 7th March 2017.

c) Subscriptions

Miss McShane referred to an e-mail received from ADA dated the 16th December 2016 and reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2017 will remain unchanged at £536.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2017 be paid.

d) Further Research on Eels

Miss McShane referred to an e-mail received from ADA dated the 15th November 2016 and the research specification from the Environment Agency regarding the eel research proposed over the next 2 years.

Members discussed the ongoing eel research and the request from ADA seeking contributions.

RESOLVED

That the Board contribute £50 per year over the next two years towards further research on eels.

e) General Election

Miss McShane referred to a copy letter sent by ADA to the Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in regard to policy on flood and water level management and the General Election.

B.921 Governance of Water Level Management in England

Miss McShane referred to the publication of the National Audit Office's (NAO) Report on Internal Drainage Boards, available on their website, www.nao.org.uk/report/internal-drainage-boards; to the Report Summary and to the response from ADA.

B.922 Health and Safety Audits

Miss McShane drew attention to the continuing need to ensure that the Board complied with Health and Safety Requirements and reminded Members of the arrangements with Croner and that if the Board had any issues they could seek advice from Croner via the Middle Level Commissioners.

Miss McShane reported that the Middle Level Commissioners had put together a pack consisting of a practical guide, templates and examples relating to health and safety requirements, which they hoped would assist Boards with their health and safety responsibilities.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk forward a copy of the templates for Risk Assessment to the new Chairman and advise as necessary regarding completion.

B.923 Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership Update

Further to minute B.883, Miss McShane reported that the main issues considered by the Partnership were:-

1. The proposal to extend the provision of rain gauges in catchment.
2. Discussions over the maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS).
3. The provision of Community flood kits. The LLFA are sourcing funds to provide kits to certain groups, i.e. March town council, but certain criteria are having to be met.
4. Work on the A14 project has now commenced.
5. The Supplementary Planning Document on flood risk has now been endorsed by Cambridgeshire County Council.
6. An update on the surface water management plan. Requesting quotes for surveys to be undertaken for property level protection (PLP).
7. Partner projects were discussed including Embankment raising in the Middle Level (MLC) and in the Ouse Washes (EA).

B.924 Authorisation to appear in court to obtain distress warrants

RESOLVED

That under the provisions of section 54 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, in addition to Mr R Hill and Miss S Ablett, Miss Lorna McShane be authorised generally to institute or defend on behalf of the Board proceedings in relation to a drainage rate or to appear on their behalf in any proceedings before a Magistrates' Court for the issue of a warrant of distress for failure to pay a drainage rate.

B.925 Potential Changes in Rating Valuation

Miss McShane reported the consideration presently being given by ADA and Defra to possible changes in the way in which drainage rates and special levies may be calculated in future. She advised that the present system, under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Internal Drainage Board (Finance) Regulations, provides for agricultural property to be valued at a notional rental value for that property as at 1st April 1988 with non-agricultural hereditaments being valued at the "average acre" rate, calculated by reference to pre-1988 development within the District of the individual Board. The current legislation does however require that properties that existed before 1st April 1988 are valued according to their old rateable values, records for which may no longer exist and this causes problems for IDBs which are looking to extend their boundaries and particularly where there are proposals to create new IDBs. Miss McShane understood however, that, at present, Defra are unlikely to progress the issue urgently and that some further consideration will have to take place before any change is proposed. In addition, as a change to primary legislation would be required, Parliamentary time would have to be found for this. At this stage Miss McShane wished therefore to simply alert the Board to these discussions and further reports will no doubt be made to the Board in the future should legislative amendment be proposed.

B.926 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2015/2016

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2016.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2016.

B.927 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Miss McShane 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 2017.

B.928 Budgeting

Miss McShane referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2017.

B.929 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.930 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management system.
- b) The Board reviewed and approved the insured value of their buildings.

B.931 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Miss McShane reported that from 2017/2018 smaller public bodies (Boards with income or expenditure less than £25,000) would not be required to undertake a formal audit but would need to have greater publication requirements in place. She advised that it would also be necessary to question the effect of “one off” payments such as development contributions taking the Board above the £25,000 limit, in a particular year.

B.932 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane 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.933 Annual Governance Statement – 2016/2017

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2017.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2017.

B.934 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £28,271.07 which had been made during the financial year 2016/2017.

(NB) – Mr P A Davies declared an interest in the payment made to Davies Contracting.

B.935 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2016/2017

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2017 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2017.

B.936 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2017/2018

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 Miss McShane that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be:-

	<u>Area 1 (Gravity Area)</u>	<u>Area 2 (Pumped Area)</u>
Drainage rates	54.10%	97.56%
Special levy	45.90%	2.44%

The members considered whether it would be appropriate for Area 2 to borrow from the Area 1 A1M Development fund to fund the replacement weedscreen. The Clerk reported that this could be done so long as the monies were borrowed for a period during which they would not be required by Area 1 and that an appropriate rate of interest was paid.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £16,805 be raised by drainage rates and special levy (Area 1 - £8,379; Area 2 - £ 8,426).
- 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 are:-

	<u>Area 1</u>	<u>Area 2</u>
Drainage rates	£4,533	£8,220
Special levy	£3,846	£206

- iv) That drainage rates be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District as follows:-

<u>Area 1</u>	<u>Area 2</u>
6.82p in the £	17.00p in the £

- v) That a Special levy of £4,052 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) 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).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.937 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.938 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 12th June 2018.

B.939 Attendance at Meetings

The Chairman drew attention to the non-attendance of the Savills' representative and that they consistently failed to attend meetings.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Savills to emphasis to them the importance of their representative attending meetings, as their non-attendance risks the meeting of the Board being inquorate.