

SUTTON AND MEPAL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Sutton and Mepal Internal Drainage Board
held at the Cricket Club, Chatteris on Thursday the 12th January 2017

PRESENT

M R R Latta Esq (Chairman)	R C Pearson Esq
A Allan Esq	R J Smith Esq
R J Angood Esq	J O Sole Esq
J Deamer Esq	P E Sole Esq
E F Veal Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance. Ms Lorna McShane observing.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P W Allpress Esq, S J Criswell Esq, H J Heading Esq, M Jackson Esq C P K Lee Esq, R J Lee Esq, T Scott Esq and S J Stearn Esq.

B.1945 Inspection of the District

Prior to the meeting those Members present, together with Councillor S J Criswell and Mr D J Stimson (District Officer) undertook an inspection of the District which embraced (inter alia):-

i) Mepal Pumping Station

The District Officer had lowered the water levels at the pumping station so that Members could inspect the leaking penstock door.

The Chairman explained that this door separated the Board's drain from Phillip Sole's land at the Northern end of the district and that, as the level in the Board's drain was higher than the low lying fields belonging to Mr Sole, the door had been installed to separate the two in order to control the water levels.

The motor and lifting gear, which operate the door had already been refurbished, but the door itself required attention to prevent it from leaking.

ii) Inspection of plant

The Chairman drew attention to the new Spearhead flailmower.

He reported that, due to deterioration, the old slubbing bucket needed replacing. He considered that a wider bucket with bars underneath would enable better extraction as less water would be lifted which would allow slubbing works to be carried out more efficiently. He advised that a new bucket would cost in the region of £2,600.

iii) Overhanging trees on Phillip Sole's land between points 14 and 15

Members inspected a Board's ditch over which trees on Phillip Sole's land were overhanging.

iv) Slip at Bottom Hall

The Chairman showed Members a bank slip that had arisen as the piles, which had reached the end of their useful life, had started to give way.

v) Slip at Point 52

Members inspected the new piling work that had carried out to repair the slip on the Board's drain at point 52, known as New System, which was on the Chairman's farm. The Chairman advised that this work had been carried out with the assistance of Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners and had been completed for approximately £1,500; a fraction of the £6,000 quoted by Fen Group.

The Chairman advised that there were various small slips throughout the District which the Board would now be able to repair themselves once the new equipment arrived.

vi) Cranbrook Drain

a) Members inspected the work which had been carried out on the Cranbrook Drain under a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement with the Environment Agency, with which the Environment Agency were very satisfied.

b) Members viewed the seepage from the Cranbrook Drain into the Board's drain.

vii) Boards syphon/pipes under road on the Chairman's land

Concerns were raised regarding the integrity of the Board's syphon/pipe running under the road on the Chairman's land in view of the volume of traffic using the road whilst his reservoir was under construction. It was agreed that the District Officer would inspect this at regular intervals and that, should any damage occur, the Chairman would pay for any repair.

B.1946 Declarations of Interest

Miss Ablett 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.1947 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 31st May 2016 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1948 Clerk to the Board

- a) Further to minute B.1906, Miss Ablett reported that Mr David Thomas had been appointed as Clerk to the Board and that Miss Lorna McShane had been appointed Solicitor/Assistant Clerk.

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had authorised a donation of £200 towards the gift to mark Iain Smith's retirement.

- b) Changes to bank mandate

Further to minute B.1931, Miss Ablett reported that, as most of the 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.1931, the Chairman had authorised the appropriate changes to the mandate.

RESOLVED

- i) That the action taken be approved.
- ii) That the donation to mark the retirement of the Clerk to the Board, authorised by the Chairman, be approved.

B.1949 Death of Mr Arthur Wilkinson

Miss Ablett referred to the death of Mr Arthur Wilkinson on Sunday the 3rd July 2016.

Miss Ablett reminded Members that Mr Wilkinson had been a member of the Board from 1973-2014 and that he had been Vice Chairman from 1985-1987 and Chairman from 1987-2013.

Members stood in silence as a mark of respect for Mr Wilkinson.

RESOLVED

That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered by Mr Wilkinson be recorded in the minutes.

B.1950 Land Drainage Act 1991 Huntingdonshire District Council

Miss Ablett reported that Huntingdonshire District Council had appointed Councillor S J Criswell to be a Member of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Miss Ablett also reported that Mr Lummis was not re-appointed.

B.1951 Water levels in the Counter Drain system

a) Further to minute B.1907(a), the Chairman reported that the Board's relationship with the Environment Agency was much improved since he had been in communication with Greg Murphy and that the Board were now in their third year of lowered levels and pumping hours had reduced.

The Chairman referred to the seepage from the Cranbrook Drain into the Board's Drain, as viewed on the inspection.

He suggested filling the drain with clay, which he would be happy to supply in view of its' availability whilst he was having a new reservoir made, and diverting the drain to the other end of the field, which would be on his land. Miss Ablett enquired who would be responsible for the new drain once it had been diverted onto the Chairman's land. The Chairman advised that as long as the cost of filling the old drain and digging the new one was at the Board's expense, he would be happy to take on its maintenance. In view of the good relationship the Board now had with the Environment Agency he would approach them to ascertain whether they would be willing to make a contribution towards any necessary work.

Mr Allan enquired whether piling would resolve the issue with any seepage.

The Chairman advised that piling would not stop the seepage, although it would slow it down.

He also stated that as the field was higher than the drain and due to the flow of water, the drain would have to be deeper.

Mr Angood considered it a good idea but the Board would require some idea of the costs involved.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman investigate further, obtain costings and report back at the next meeting

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest when this item was discussed.

b) Public Sector Co-operation Agreement

Further to minute B.1907(b), the Chairman reported that the Board had entered into a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement with the Environment Agency involving a small amount of flail mowing and cleaning out of a dyke.

He advised that as this work had taken the Environment Agency approximately 3 weeks to carry out last year, they were very satisfied with the Board's work in view of it only taking the District Officer 3½ days.

The Chairman reported that, although the work had been charged at £38 per hour, slightly above the Board's usual hourly rate, it was also a requirement to have Professional Indemnity Insurance in place which, as this amounted to £1,218 per annum and the value of the contract only amounted to approximately £1,500, meant a minimal profit would have been made.

However, due to the District Officer having carried out the work so efficiently the Professional Indemnity Insurance had not actually been put in place and was therefore not charged.

The Chairman explained the benefits of entering into a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement in that the Board would have control over cleansing, could take on additional flail mowing and could also carry out work on part of the Counter Drain, if safe to do so. However the downside was that the Professional Indemnity Insurance premium was high.

Mr Angood stated that the Board must recoup all costs and queried whether in this respect an admin fee could be charged.

Mr Allan stated that the Board should charge £60 per hour to include admin costs and that it would not be unreasonable for the Board to charge for delivery of plant, an admin charge and also the hourly rate.

Mr Smith stated that the Board could only enter into further Public Sector Co-operation Agreements if a profit could be made.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman's actions be approved
- ii) That the Chairman advise the Environment Agency that entering into additional contracts would only be beneficial to the Board if the Professional Indemnity Insurance could be absorbed into the hourly rate i.e. haulage and admin, or alternatively the Environment Agency cover the insurance costs themselves and if not, the Board could not carry out any further work.

B.1952 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.1909, Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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.1953 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Inspection

Further to minute B.1910, Miss Ablett referred to a briefing note from the Environment Agency dated July 2016.

B.1954 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

Sutton & Mepal I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – December 2016

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. Should the Board wish for a similar exercise to be carried out on their own district assets this can 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

At the time of writing this report the station including pumps, cleaner etc has run without issues over the period.

Main Pumps

All three pumps show a significant drop in winding resistance to earth suggesting moisture ingress into the motor housing.

No1 pump which is believed to be the newest, and has up until 2016 tested “as new”, is now showing signs of deterioration but not at a level for concern.

No2 pump which has been noted as very poor is unchanged.

No3 pump which has been showing signs of deterioration is now in a similar condition to that of pump 2.

Northern Area Pump

Whilst the new actuator is working well the District Officer has noted the penstock door is now leaking badly and is in need of inspection/overhaul.

Pumping hours

(note pumping hours are a close estimate derived from available data to show comparable pumping hrs for like periods)

Total Hours Run No 1 - Dec 15 to Nov 16 = 652

(Dec 14 to Nov 15 = 872)

(Dec 13 to Nov 14 = 1346)

Total Hours Run No 2 - Dec 15 to Nov 16 = 764

(Dec 14 to Nov 15 = 671)

(Dec 13 to Nov 14 = 1477)

Total Hours Run No 3 - Dec 15 to Nov 16 = 720

(Dec 16 to Nov 15 = 875)

(Dec 13 to Nov 14 = 1384)

Total Hours Run No 4 - Dec 15 to Nov 16 = 830

(Dec 14 to Nov 15 = 0)

(Dec 13 to Nov 14 = 171)

Agitation Dredging Group

There is no update on this, other than to advise that the trial has been set back for another year whilst Environment Agency (EA) staff attempt to obtain internal business case approval.

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.

Cranbrook Drain

For the EA to justify undertaking works to rebuild/repair the south west embankment of the Cranbrook Drain which would reduce inflow into the Board's drainage system, the value of benefits need to exceed the value of any works. In an attempt to quantify the benefits the cost to the Board of pumping 'Cranbrook Drain water' has been calculated by reviewing pumping hours over the last twenty years and comparing them to last year's pumping hours when the level in the Counter Drain/Cranbrook Drain was lowered to reduce the normal seepage inflow. It was evident

that pumping hours were less, and hence pumping costs were significantly reduced. If reduced pump maintenance is also taken into account; the total estimated cost to the Board, of pumping the inflow, could be as much as £10,000 per year. This could be considered to be a conservative estimate, as even at lower water levels some inflow was occurring and no costs for increased channel maintenance were added. This information has been passed to the EA.

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 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.

Planning Procedures Update

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-/post-application consultation discussion requests has reduced over previous years. The reason for this is unknown but “developers” are failing to maximise the benefits of this procedure.

Local Land Charges Register (LLCR)

As previously advised, requests are made to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), when appropriate, 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. Shortly after the introduction of this procedure Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) representative on the CFRMP expressed concerns and advised that the authority was unsure under what powers these were being requested. As a result there is concern that the Board's requests are being ignored and it may be appropriate for the position to be clarified. However it is appreciated that the areas of interest are generally smaller than that of FDC, feature smaller urban areas and that the solicitors concerned may not be undertaking a thorough search.

Previously enquiries were only received from local solicitors but more recently enquiries are also being sought from independent search providers who provide 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 on the officers concerned it protects the parties involved, including the Board, 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 systems. Such consent will not be given unless it is considered that the discharge can be properly dealt with within the receiving system and the costs of accommodating that discharge are met.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 9 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
272	F/2001/16/CM & F/YR16/2001/CCC	Aggregate Industries UK Ltd	Mineral Quarry	Block Fen, Chatteris*
273	Enquiry	Client of Off Mains Drainage Consultants Ltd	Sewage treatment plant	Sutton Gault, Sutton*
274	Enquiry	Client of Rossi Long	Residential (11 plots)	Hermitage Road, Earith

275	F/YR16/0343/F	Mrs A Jackson	Equestrian	Iretons Way, Chatteris
276	F/YR16/0349/PNH	Mr D Duxbury	Residence	Tithe Road, Chatteris
277	F/YR16/0463/PNC04	R A Latta Ltd	Residential (3 plots)	Chatteris Road, Somersham
278	F/YR16/0597/PNC04	Mr & Mrs Markwell	Residence	Block Fen Drove, Chatteris
279	E/16/01024/FUL	Mr P Osborn	Residential (Garden Store)	Engine Bank, Mepal
280	F/YR16/0955/F	Mr M Johnson	Residence (Extension)	Eastwood, Chatteris

***Planning applications ending CM & CCC relate to County Council Matters
Planning applications ending 'PNCO' relate to prior notification change of use issues***

Developments that propose direct discharge are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, disposal to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Waste transfer station and skip storage area – Mick George (Haulage) Ltd (MLC Ref No 156) & Variation of condition 1 of planning permission E/3015/07/CM & F/02010/07/CM to allow the importation of stable non-reactive hazardous waste – Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref No 207) & Extension to soils and mineral processing at Witcham Meadlands Quarry, Block Fen, Mepal/Chatteris – Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 211 & 213)

With the exception of an enquiry received from White Young Green (WYG) concerning pre-application advice for “amendments” to the site, which has not yet been taken up, no further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant’s agent concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board’s interests.

Mixed Use Development on land south east of London Road, Chatteris - Hallam Land Management Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 160,184 & 190)

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

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

Extension to Mepal Quarry at Block Fen Drove, Nr Chatteris – Aggregate Industries UK Limited (MLC Ref No 171 & 272)

A planning application for an extension to the existing facility was submitted to the County Council, in its capacity as the Mineral and Wastes planning authority, in April but its current status is not known.

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

Proposed extraction and processing of sand and gravel and construction of access onto Chatteris Road (B1050), in connection with the construction of agricultural reservoirs on land at Bridge Farm, Holme Fen Drove, Colne - R Latta (Farms) Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 179, 188, 199 & 258)

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

Issues and concerns, relating to both byelaw and discharge consents, remain outstanding.

Extraction of sand and gravel with restoration to agricultural use both at low level and existing level using waste silt and imported inert waste at land off Block Fen Drove, Mepal – Redland Aggregates Ltd (MLC Ref No 350/8) & First periodic review of mineral permissions F/01467/89 and F/00781/91 (as amended) at Block Fen Quarry, Block Fen Drove, Chatteris – LaFarge Aggregates Ltd (MLC Ref No 196)

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

Extraction and Processing of Sand and Gravel and Restoration to Agricultural use at Low Level and Block Fen, Langwood Drove, Chatteris - Hanson Quarry Products Europe Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 350/9A, 218 & 242)

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

Restoration of land at Colne Fen using imported inert waste to create conservation habitats at Colne Fen Quarry, Chatteris Road, Colne Fen – Mr D Newman (MLC Ref Nos 220 & 242)

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

Erection of an Anaerobic Digester (AD) plant with maize clamps involving the construction of a new access, and the formation of a surface water reservoir land east of Greys Farm, Iretons Way, Chatteris – Pretoria Energy Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 227, 231 & 240) & Installation of a Biomethane Injection pipeline (to inject into the National Grid) at Gas pipeline for anaerobic digester plant at Iretons Way, Chatteris - Little Green Consulting Ltd (MLC Ref No 245) & Pretoria Energy Ltd (MLC Ref No 246)

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.

It is understood that the site is at an advanced stage and the issues referred to in previous meeting reports remain unresolved. In order to resolve this situation the Board may require an advisory notice to be issued in the hope that this would initiate action to conclude the matter.

Erection of an agricultural crop store for potatoes at Lees Packhouse, The Gault, Sutton – P J Lee & Sons (MLC Ref Nos 236 & 237)

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.

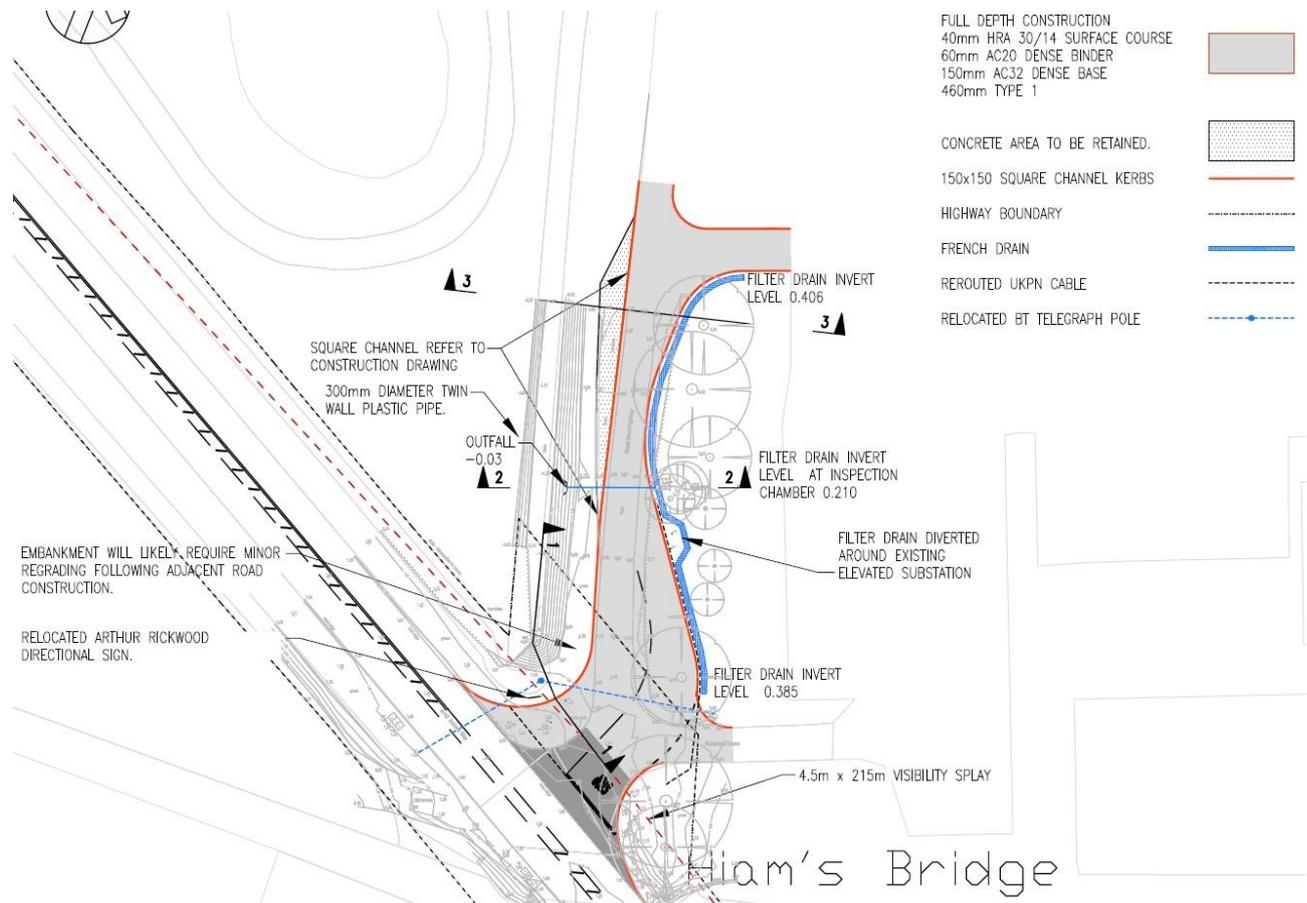
Change of use to Insect/reptile breeding centre, including new access arrangements, erection of storage buildings, reptile/insect breeding buildings, staff hostel, office/mess rooms, biomass boiler, solar panels plus refurbishment of residential dwellings and buildings at Arthur Rickwoods Farm, Iretons Way, Mepal – Monkfield Nutrition (MLC Ref Nos 249 & 261)

Whilst the junction with the A142 is not a known accident "black spot" and the trip generation for the previous use is not known it was considered unlikely to significantly

increase as a result of the site's re-development. However, the junction is constrained and does not currently facilitate the ready movement of two way working for HGVs and/or large machinery and, for this reason, it was proposed to amend the existing access permitting the free flow of traffic along Iretons Way during such movements and, thereby, improving highway safety.

When receiving the subsequent byelaw application it was anticipated that as there had been some previous discussion which had resolved many of the issues raised the application would be acceptable, but this was not the case and the application failed to meet the Board's minimum validation requirements requiring the provision of further information. The original proposal suggesting that the new surface was drained by grips and this required re-designing in order to protect the Board's system.

Following further discussion with the applicant's agent, JD Midwood, and the WSP Group UK Ltd, as part of an on-going pre-application discussion, consent was recommended for the improvement and widening of the adjacent highway junction and link road including the installation of an outfall for the surface water drainage system; the re-positioning of a telecom pole, road sign and sign posts together with temporary environmental fencing to protect the environmental buffer zone during the course of the Works.



Extract from the WSP Group Ltds Drawing No 9826 - D - 1002 Rev F - Kerbs and surfacing showing the extent of the new works including the revised drainage system and outfall

In respect of water disposal the site has been split into two areas, Area 1, the site of the former residential buildings, offices and other structures and Area 2, the former livestock buildings, near the Board's Point 2. A drainage assessment has been undertaken and our comments are:

Treated effluent disposal

Area 1

- (i) The existing BD Biodisc behind the existing bungalow is being retained.

It is anticipated that the previous discharge from this facility will increase in terms of volumetric flows but these are probably less than the unit was designed for. Given that this unit has been in place for several years and the point of discharge is unchanged any "real" increases in flows will have to be accepted.

- (ii) A new larger treatment plant is to replace the existing plant that served the "workshop" area. The existing plant is to be broken out and removed from site.

The volumetric flow rates used for the design were acceptable assuming that the site does not have a canteen.

The contribution associated with this is £242.50.

Area 2

A new larger treatment plant is required to replace the existing facility at the Bungalow, which is believed to have been formerly served by a septic tank.

The volumetric flow rates used for the design were acceptable assuming that the site does not have a canteen.

Using the figures supplied by the applicant's consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, and the rates applicable at the time of consideration the contribution associated with this is £315.25.

Surface Water Disposal

Several potential errors were identified and further clarification, concerning the extents of the impermeable areas concerned and means of surface water disposal, has been requested. However, some two months later, at the time of writing, this information remains outstanding and the associated application for discharge consent cannot be validated.

If this information has not been received by the Board's meeting it is suggested that the application for discharge consent is refused.

The Board's instruction is therefore requested in respect of this site.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

Neighbourhood Strategy

No further correspondence has been received from FDC concerning the Neighbourhood Strategy and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

District Wide Level 2 SFRA

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

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Development Scheme (LDS)

Further to the last meeting the MLC, on the Board's behalf, have been consulted on the following documents:

Housing & 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

Note. SFRA's are high level strategic documents and, as such, do not go into detail on an individual site-specific basis and are developed using the best available information at the time of preparation.

There are two levels of SFRA:

1. Level One: Where flooding is not a major issue in relation to potential site allocations and where development pressures are low. The assessment should be of sufficient detail to enable application of the Sequential Test.
2. Level Two: Where land outside Flood Zones 2 and 3 cannot appropriately accommodate all necessary development, creating the need to apply the NPPF's (National Planning Policy Framework) Exception Test. In these circumstances the assessment should consider the detailed nature of the flood characteristics within a Flood Zone and assessment of other sources of flooding.

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.

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) Local Development Framework (LDF)

Further to the last meeting the MLC, on the Board's behalf, have been consulted on the draft 2015 East Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which has recently been

provided by the District Council's Flood & Water Management consultant, JBA Consulting, and this document is currently being reviewed.

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.*

East Cambridgeshire District Council adopted the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 16 November 2016.

The SPD provides guidance for developers and applicants on managing flood risk and the water environment in and around new developments. The contents of the SPD expand upon the flood risk and water management policies contained within the adopted and emerging Local Plans.

General Advice

Assistance has been given, on the Board's behalf, in respect of the following:

- (a) Early discussions have taken place regarding Aggregate Industries Ltd installing a new conveyor system, together with watercourse crossings and controls, to extend their operations to the north east of the Board's watercourse between Points 5 to 14. An application for consent will need to be submitted for consideration.

Consulting Engineer

16 December 2016

S&M(350)\Reports\December 2016

With regards to an Asset Survey, Members enquired of the costs and benefits of such a survey. Miss Ablett confirmed she would ask the Consulting Engineers to contact the Chairman to provide a quote and explain the benefits of the survey.

Mr Smith enquired who would be responsible for the asset where it crossed a public highway. Miss Ablett confirmed she would enquire and report back to the Chairman.

Main Pumps

The Chairman referred to No. 2 and 3 pumps, which were getting towards the end of their useful life, and enquired whether Members were still in agreement with the previous resolution that the pumps be replaced as and when they fail.

With regards the leaking penstock door at Mepal Pumping Station, viewed on the inspection, the Board discussed what action should be taken. The Chairman advised that it would be more beneficial for any work to be carried out before the summer for irrigation purposes.

The Chairman referred to the trees on Phillip Sole's land between points 14 and 15, viewed on the inspection, which were overhanging the Board's drain and that when water levels were high the branches were actually in the water and thus prevented the District Officer from using the Board's boat to navigate the drain. He understood that the cutting of the trees would be a specialist job and although it was the landowner's responsibility the Board would be available to assist, if required.

The Chairman referred to the slip at Bottom Hall, viewed on the inspection, and advised that once the Board's new piling hammer was delivered the District Officer would be able to repair the slip with new wooden piles, which would be drilled with holes to alleviate the water pressure.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions therein be approved.
- ii) That pumps 2 and 3 should be maintained and repaired as necessary until they need replacement and then replaced.
- iii) That the Consulting Engineers be authorised to arrange for the penstock door at Mepal pumping station to be repaired.
- iv) That the Consulting Engineers furnish the Chairman with a quote for the cost of and detail the benefits of an Asset Survey to be considered at the next meeting of the Board.
- v) That the landowner be allowed 2 years in which to cut back all trees overhanging the Board's drain between points 14 and 15.
- vi) That the slip at Bottom Hall be repaired once the new piling hammer was delivered
- vii) That an advisory notice be issued in connection with the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos 227, 231, 240, 245 and 246) for Pretoria Energy Ltd and Little Green Consulting Ltd.
- viii) That discharge consent for the planning application (MLC Ref Nos 249 and 261) for Monkfield Nutrition be refused.
- viii) That approval be given for metering for the extension to Mepal Quarry

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 277) for R A Latta Ltd.

B.1955 Capital Improvement Programme

Further to minute B.1914(ii) and (iii), the Chairman referred to the purchase of the Spearhead flail mower, viewed earlier at the inspection, and enquired what action the Members wished to take with regards to the replacement of the slubbing bucket. He reported that, as approved at the last meeting, an order had been placed for a piling hammer at a cost of £10,000 and confirmed that replacing the tractor had been moved back in the programme. The Chairman enquired whether the Board were happy to continue with the Capital Improvement Programme.

RESOLVED

- i) That the actions of the Chairman be approved.
- ii) That a new slubbing bucket be purchased.

B.1956 National Flood Resilience Review

Miss Ablett referred to the publication of the above review by the Government in September 2016 and to the response from ADA.

Miss Ablett referred to the ADA response and drew attention to the lack of reference to the SUDS issue, which still remained unsatisfactory.

B.1957 Environmental Officer's Newsletter

Miss Ablett referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter dated December 2016, which had previously been circulated to members.

B.1958 Application for byelaw consent

Miss Ablett reported that the following application for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses had been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board, viz:-

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date consent granted</u>
Monkfield Nutrition Ltd	The improvement and widening of the adjacent highway junction and link road including the installation of an outfall for the surface water drainage system; the re-positioning of a telecom pole, road sign and sign posts together with temporary environmental fencing to protect the environmental buffer zone during the course of the Works – Mepal Long Highway/Ireton's Way, Mepal	6 th October 2016

RESOLVED

That the action taken be approved.

B.1959 Environment Agency – Precept

a) Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency's Regional Flood and Coastal Committee had recommended an increase of 1.5% on last year's precept of £102,008, and that this was likely to be approved by the Environment Agency Board.

b) Local Choices Update

Further to minute B.1923(b), Miss Ablett referred to the Environment Agency's newsletter dated October 2016.

B.1960 Determination of annual values for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendations for the determination of annual values for rating purposes, viz:-

RESOLVED

- i) That the determinations recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeals against the determinations.

(NB) – Mr Deamer declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.1961 Rate arrears

- a) Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £362.71.
- b) Further to minute B.1926(ii), and in the absence of the Vice Chairman, the Chairman reported that there had been some confusion as to the arrears of Mr Brown and it appeared that the arrears related to a Mr Smith whose whereabouts were unknown.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

(NB) – Mr Deamer declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.1962 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

Miss Ablett reported on the Annual Conference of the Association held in London on Thursday the 17th November 2016 and to the address given by the Minister Therese Coffey in which she expressed support for IDBs and ADA, recognised the importance of maintenance and confirmed that special levy funding from Local Authorities would continue. The Environment Agency Chairman, Emma Howard Boyd, explained that the Environment Agency had spent £40 million on 660 repair projects to restore and improve defences of flood hit areas impacted in 2015-2016 and cited a number of ongoing projects.

Minette Batters the Deputy President of the National Farmers Union, advised that the NFU Flood Manifesto would be published in early 2017 in which the NFU would set out the clear policy tasks and actions it would like to see the Government take to mitigate flood risk in the future. She commented that in setting its flood management policy the Government must not overlook the importance and contribution of our food and farming sectors to the economy.

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

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

c) Subscriptions

Miss Ablett referred to minute B.1896(c) and 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 £679.

d) Floodex 2017

Miss Ablett reported that Floodex 2017 would be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 17th and 18th May 2017.

e) Further Research on Eels

Miss Ablett 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.

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

RESOLVED

- i) That the requested ADA subscription for 2017 be paid.
- ii) That the Board contribute £100 per year over the next two years towards further research on eels.

B.1963 Tidal River Action Plan Scoping Workshop

Further to minute B.1928, Miss Ablett reported that there had been no developments regarding agitation dredging except to say that trial works were likely to be carried out next year.

B.1964 Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership Update

Further to minute B.1930, Miss Ablett reported that the main issues considered by the Partnership were:-

1. The proposal to extend the provision of rain gauges in that a feasibility study was being carried out.
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
7. Partner projects were discussed. The Embankment raising in the Middle Level with the Environment Agency was currently in the feasibility stage and firm costs are expected later in the year when funding sources would be looked into.

B.1965 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.1966 Potential Changes in Rating Valuation

Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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 Ablett 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.1967 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.1968 Expenditure/ Estimate Update

The Board considered the Estimate Update for 2016/2017.

RESOLVED

That the update be approved.

B.1969 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

Miss Ablett reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday the 31st May 2017.

B.1970 Bailey Bridge

Miss Ablett reported that, following Mr Smith's letter to Aggregate Industries requesting that they remove the spoil deposited under Bailey Bridge, the District Officer had been advised that the spoil had now been removed and he intended to inspect the site to confirm the work had been carried out satisfactorily.

B.1971 Health & Safety

Miss Ablett reminded the Board of the continued need to ensure that all health and safety requirements are complied with and of the arrangements in place with Croner.

Miss Ablett 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 and that once this been reviewed by Croners it would be issued to each Board.

Miss Ablett reported that Croners had recently inspected the district of another Board to carry out a health and safety review on their behalf and had produced a report of their findings. She advised that this service was available (subject to demand) as part of the subscription fee paid to Croners and that it may be useful for other Boards, where there may be potential areas of high risk, to consider having a similar review. Miss Ablett advised that should the Board wish for such a review to be carried out they should contact the Clerk who would make the necessary arrangements.