

## MANEA AND WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners  
held at the Lamb & Flag Public House, Welney on Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018

### PRESENT

J E Heading Esq (Chairman)	C F Hartley Esq
R M C Sears Esq (Vice Chairman)	P D Hawes Esq
C M Barnes Esq	M E Heading Esq
N Cook Esq	P Jolley Esq
C J Crofts Esq	Mrs A J Langley
M D R Fairey Esq	C W Sears Esq
W Sutton Esq	

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) was in attendance.

Mr Warren Allsopp (representing JPP Consulting) attended for part of the meeting.

### Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from M Buckton Esq, J H Hawes Esq, and N V M Walker Esq.

### C.763 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman and Messrs M Heading, Hartley and Sutton declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Sutton declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of Fenland District Council.

### C.764 Confirmation of Minutes

## RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

### C.765 Donation by Commissioners

The Chairman reported that a donation of £250.00 had been made on behalf of the Commissioners to Macmillan Cancer Care, Tapping House in memory of Brian Cobb, former Superintendent, who had died earlier in the year.

## RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

### C.766 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute C.728, Mr Hill referred to the fact that licencing of water transfers came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

He reported that only one licence is required per EA water body transferred from, even if multiple intakes exist, and that the cost per licence is £1,500 which would last for 12 years.

The Chairman reported that whilst the reasons to hold a register of water transfer points was understood and accepted, it was not acceptable for Drainage authorities to be charged for registration.

### C.767 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Inspection

Further to minute C.729, Mr Hill reported that the second year of the phased works had commenced.

The Chairman reported that although no works had been carried out over the winter, works were currently taking place and it was his intention to include these works as part of the Commissioners' Inspection next year.

### C.768 Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership Scheme

Further to minute C730, Mr Hill advised there was nothing further to report.

### C.769 Knyverton House, Wisbech Road, Manea

Further to minute C.732, the Chairman reported that the property had been purchased and was currently being refurbished. There is a District watercourse alongside the property and the new owner had been given a copy of the Commissioners' Byelaws, but there appeared to be some structures within the Byelaw distance.

In response to Mr Jolley, Mr Hill confirmed that there were some parts of the original development outside of the original byelaw distance but now inside the Commissioners 9 metre.

## RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to deal with the matter and take any actions they consider appropriate.

### C.770 Public Section Co-Operation Agreements

Further to minute C.734, the Chairman reported on the background to the Public Sector Co-operation Agreements and although the Commissioners had limited plant themselves, it was hoped that they could organise works more efficiently and cost effectively than the Environment Agency. The main area he planned to look at was the future maintenance of the Old Bedford River.

### C.771 District Superintendent's wages, pension contributions and Future Labour Requirements

Further to minute C.736, the Chairman reported that he had discussed the matter with the Commissioners' employee and agreed that his wages should be in line with those of the Middle Level Commissioners' for similar responsibilities and he had agreed to phase this increase, which the employee was satisfied with.

### RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

### C.772 Joint Maintenance of the Old Croft River – Upwell IDB

Further to minute C.740, the Chairman reported on the position regarding works to the Old Croft River to be carried out under the Joint Maintenance Agreement with Upwell IDB. He understood that contact had been made with the relevant landowner and that the Chairman of Upwell IDB was progressing the works.

### C.773 Presentation by Mr W Allsopp – JPP Consulting

#### Proposed residential development to the north west of The Grange and south east of New Road, Welney – client of JPP Consulting (MLC Ref No 559) and Mr R Boyd (MLC Ref No 567)

With reference to the above planning application, the Chairman introduced Mr Warren Allsopp from JPP Consulting who were representing the client for the development. Mr Hill distributed a revised proposal for the development. The Chairman explained the relationship between Manea and Welney DDC and the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Allsopp explained that they had originally approached the Manea and Welney DDC concerning the access culvert to the site to discuss the improvements required before progressing any plans. He further explained that a planning application had been made based on the plan as shown in the Consulting Engineer's report but, following comments received from the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer would be looking to submit the revised plan; as presented to the Commissioners. The plan had been revised to remove any structures from within the 9 metre byelaw width but, as part of the roadway and two private drives would be within the byelaw distance, he wished to gauge the Commissioners response before proceeding further. He informed the Commissioners that agreements would be put in place for the relevant properties to ensure the Commissioners access rights to the watercourse, both over the roadway and private drives/grassed areas would be retained. There would also be a consent application submitted to alter the profile of the bank slightly to accommodate the driveways.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Allsopp confirmed that he was aware of riparian ownership; that the river was within the developer's site boundary and that the property owners would be responsible for the maintenance of the section of watercourse and also of the Commissioners' byelaw width. He was unable to say exactly what the distance of the narrowest point was between the watercourse and any structure (excluding the road and private driveways) but confirmed that it was less than 9 metres.

Mr Fairey raised concerns over the possible future erection of fences and gates within the byelaw distance and Mr Allsopp confirmed that a requirement not to erect fences/gates would be a

condition as part of the sale of the properties. Mr Jolley considered that these requirements should then be lodged with the Land Registry.

Mr Jolley raised concerns over possible improvements required downstream of the development as a result of increased flows if there was to be a direct discharge to the District system. Mr Allsopp confirmed that the proposal for the access was an open box culvert across the width of the watercourse.

In response to Councillor Crofts, Mr Allsopp confirmed that the submission to the planning authority would be a full application which they hoped would go before the committee on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018.

Mr Allsopp enquired if any Commissioner had any knowledge of an existing watercourse on the northern side of the site as he had been informed of one but had been unable to locate it. The Chairman referred to the properties to the west of the site being constructed around the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and that originally there was a ditch along the frontage of these properties which had now been infilled by the residents. He considered there would have also been a ditch to the rear of the properties which should be taken into account when plans were being finalised for the site.

The Chairman thanked Mr Allsopp for his presentation which he considered helpful and while the Commissioners were required to ensure the proper and effective drainage of the District, they did not wish to place any unnecessary restrictions on Developers.

Mr Allsopp left the meeting.

Mr Jolley referred to the importance of a survey being undertaken should improvements be required to the receiving watercourse for additional flows and that the Developer should be made aware of these costs which he considered should be met by the Developer.

Mr M Heading queried if all the water is to discharge direct to the Old Croft River and Councillor Sutton queried if there should be some form of attenuation or on-site retention.

Mrs Langley considered it important for the Commissioners to retain their 9 metre byelaw distance.

Mr Fairey considered that the 9 metre distance should be from the watercourse to the far edge of the private driveways.

## RESOLVED

- i) That the Planning Engineer confirm whether the surface water will be a direct discharge to the District system or if there are proposals for on-site retention/attenuation.
- ii) That no buildings/structures be allowed within the 9 metre byelaw distance apart from part of the roadway and the two private drives.
- iii) That a survey of the Old Croft River be carried out to ascertain if any improvement works are required downstream of the development (in the case of a direct discharge) and if so, for the developer to pay for these works.
- iv) If a direct discharge for surface water is to be made, the Developer to pay the appropriate calculated development contribution to the Commissioners.

### C.774 Defra IDB1 Returns

Further to minute C.750, Mr Hill referred to a letter received from Defra dated the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

### C.775 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute C.751, Mr Hill reported that ADA have yet to issue a model Biosecurity Policy document. A draft was issued and commented on by the Middle Level Commissioners and others within the industry and it is hoped that ADA will take on board the changes suggested in the responses to ensure that a useable document is issued. Key concerns seemed to centre around the over prescriptive nature of the initial draft which could require Boards to act where no risk was evident.

### C.776 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

## Manea & Welney D.D.C.

### Consulting Engineers Report – May 2018

#### 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.

#### Pumping Hours

##### **Glenhouse**

<b>Hours Run</b>	<b>30 May 14 – 7 May 15</b>	<b>7 May 15 – 7 May 16</b>	<b>7 May 16 – 23 May 17</b>	<b>23 May 17 – 15 May 18</b>
No 1	243	211	119	270 (4599)
No 2	244	247	117	194 (4560)
No 3	266	231	92	254 (4570)
No 4	255	223	105	258 (4591)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1008</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>976</b>

##### **Purils Bridge**

<b>Hours Run</b>	<b>30 May 14 – 7 May 15</b>	<b>7 May 15 – 7 May 16</b>	<b>7 May 16 – 23 May 17</b>	<b>23 May 17 – 15 May 18</b>
No 1	210	123	91	314 (10434)
No 2	198	429	84	293 (9546)
<b>Total</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>607</b>

#### Insurance

The Commissioners' new insurer AXA/HSB does include Engineering Insurance cover for sudden and unforeseen breakdown of pumping plant, however two recent claims made by local IDBs were rejected as AXA/HSB considered that the pumps should have been removed for service on a 5 yearly frequency. This was contested by the MLC and the frequency extended to 10 years; however even this is considered unacceptable in most instances, hence an alternative insurer is being sought. In the interim there is no cover in place.

#### Eel Regulations

Following sustained pressure from the IDB sector, notification has been received that a paper was presented to the EA Executive Directors' Team proposing some changes to their current regulatory process. It is understood that Executive Directors supported the recommendations in the paper and that work is now underway to establish how the EA will transition the changes and what this means in the interim for operators such as IDBs.

In line with what IDBs have been calling for, there is to be a new approach identifying the best achievable eel protection (BAEP), in terms of what is technically feasible and generally affordable. The EA also proposes to change when and where it applies its eel cost benefit analysis tool; how it considers affordability of eel protection at individual sites; and how it balances costs with risk to eel at individual sites. The EA will also investigate where there are opportunities to revise its current programming approach to optimise outcomes for eel. Finally, it will work with sector leads in developing new guidance and processes.

However, it is important to note that the EA will not be in a position to introduce its new regulatory approach until it has developed all of the new, interdependent, components of the process which the EA advise will take up to 12 months.

## **Planning Procedures Update**

### ***Informatives on Decision Notices***

A review of the decisions that have recently been made, in respect of the table below, has identified that only one, had an informative advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Commissioners' Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

It is left to the Commissioners' discretion whether it wishes the Middle Level Commissioners to make a formal response to the Councils concerned directly on its behalf, or whether it requests that its Council representatives ensure that such informatives are requested.

## **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:

<b>MLC Ref.</b>	<b>Council Ref.</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Location</b>
566	F/YR18/0113/F	Mr G Tricker	Residence	High Street accessing Acorn Lane, Manea
567	18/00195/FM	Mr R Boyd	Residential (17 plots)	Main Street, Welney*
568	F/YR18/0148/F	Mr R Gibbons	Residence (Extensions)	Station Road, Manea
569	F/YR18/0136/F	Mr & Mrs Walker	Residence (Extension)	Westfield Road, Manea
570	F/YR18/0251/F	Mr D Cole	Residential (4 plots)	Park Road, Manea*
571	F/YR18/0297/F	Mr J Waters	Residence (Extension and temporary siting of a caravan)	Straight Drove, Manea
572	F/YR18/0294/F	Westfield Farms (Manea) Ltd	Residence	Fallow Corner Drove, Manea
573	Provision of information request	Client of Roy Lobley Consulting/ RM Associates	Anaerobic digestion facility	Fiftys Road, Manea
574	F/YR18/0333/F	Mr & Mrs Doggett	Domestic garden	Teachers Close, Manea

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge to the Commissioners' system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems, where applicable.

Some of the above are likely to discharge treated effluent into the Commissioners' system either via private treatment plants or Manea Water Recycling Centre (WRC).

Mr J Waters has chosen to use the soakaway self-certification process for an extension and temporary siting of a caravan at Straight Drove, Manea (MLC Ref No 571) and, in doing so, agreed that if the soakaway was to fail in the future he would be liable for discharge consent.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning the following developments and no further action has been taken in respect of the Commissioners' interests.

- *Erection of 4 dwellings with attached garages at land north east of 9 Park Road, Manea Road, Manea – Mr E Barnes (MLC Ref Nos 431, 438 & 485)*
- *Erection of 5 dwellings involving of existing dwelling and outbuildings at 35 Westfield Road, Manea – Mr S Wilson (MLC Ref Nos 474 & 479)*
- *Erection of a 3 storey 5 bed dwelling involving partial demolition of existing shed at land north of 55 Station Road, Manea – Mr G Wallis (MLC Ref Nos 481 & 486)*

**In view of the absence of recent correspondence and any subsequent instruction from the Commissioners it will be presumed, unless otherwise recorded, that the Commissioners are content with any development that has occurred and that no further action is required at this time.**

*Residential development (Delilah Close) involving demolition of existing buildings at International House, Station Road, Manea - Mr J Daniels (MLC Ref No 365) & Homestead Development Company Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 386 & 436)*

Further to item ii) of minute C.733 Consulting Engineers' Report made at the last meeting the matter has been referred to the Commissioners' Solicitor.

In order to guide further discussions in respect of future funding for the maintenance works it would be beneficial to confirm the frequency and timing of access required to the drain, spoil disposal and any subsequent additional costs involved.

**The Commissioners' opinion and further instruction on the above is requested.**



*Erection of 26 dwellings at land west of 49-49A High Street, Manea - Cole Properties (Manea) Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 415 & 471)*

Applications for the disposal of both surface water and treated foul effluent water for a subsequent phase of this development have been received and are currently being considered.

*Erection of 14 dwellings; comprising; 2 x 3 storey 5/6 bed, 1 x 3 storey 5 bed, 5 x 2 storey 4 bed and 6 x 2 storey 3 bed with associated garaging at Station Road, Manea – Mr Short and Mr Fox (MLC Ref Nos 446, 449, 482 & 511)*

Applications for byelaw consent to pipe and fill the roadside “swale” were submitted to the Commissioners for consideration. However, this feature is outside of the Commissioners’ rateable area and the applications were therefore returned to the applicants concerned.

Assistance has been given to the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, in respect of the applications and any adverse impacts on the Commissioners’ system, with particular reference to increased discharges, and the absence of a maintenance regime.

*Development at Knyverton House, Wisbech Road, Manea - Mr M Balaz (MLC Ref No. 516) & Ms A Kusynova (MLC Ref No. 524)*

Further to minute C.732 Knyverton House, Wisbech Road, Manea made at the last meeting, the applicant was advised of the Commissioners’ requirements in February in respect of the byelaw application. A response from the applicant has yet to be received.

*Erection of 15 dwellings on land east of 11 - 21 Park Road, Manea - Mr E Barnes (MLC Ref Nos 525 & 561)*

Planning permission for this proposal was granted by the District Council in late March. The permission includes a surface water condition requested by the LPA and includes informatives on the long-term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system and the applicant’s separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Commissioners’ Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

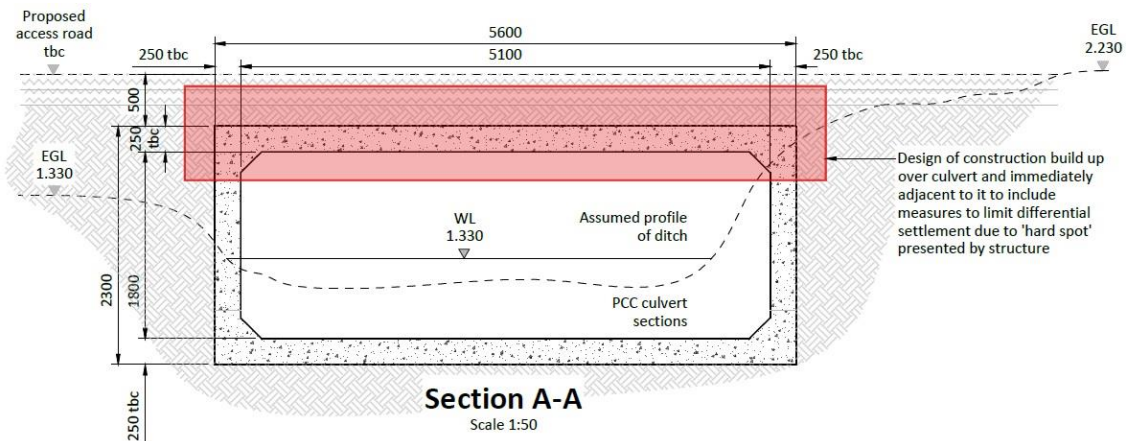
*Residential development, garages, associated parking, the formation of allotments, public open space, and a new access on land west of Teachers Close, Manea - Portman Developments (MLC Ref No 453), Client of Woods Hardwick (MLC Ref Nos 514 & 538) & Matthew Homes (MLC Ref Nos 545, 551 & 557)*

An application for the disposal of treated foul effluent for a subsequent phase of this development was received in January and subsequently recommended for approval in early February.

*Proposed residential development to the north west of The Grange and south east of New Road, Welney - Client of JPP Consulting (MLC Ref No 559) & Mr R Boyd (MLC Ref No 567)*

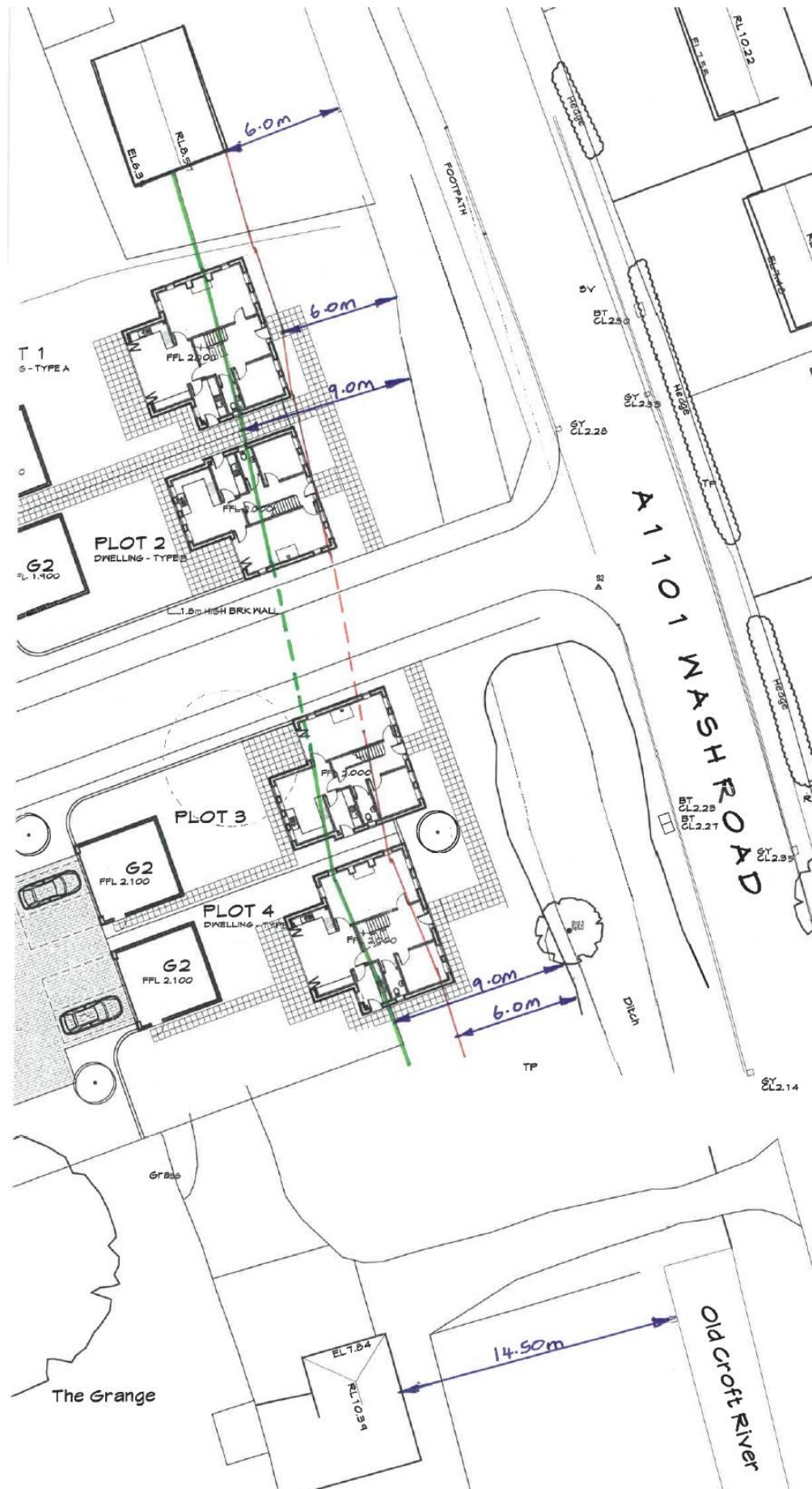
Further pre-application consultation discussions involving both the Commissioners' Chairman and the neighbouring Upwell IDB have continued with JPP Consulting, the landowners' engineering consultant, concerning this potential residential development.

A planning application was submitted to the Borough Council at the beginning of February and according to its Public Access webpage a decision is currently awaited.



Extract from JPP Consultings Drawing No. 9300R S01 illustrating the proposed box culvert access crossing

In respect of the site layout there is a question over the information supplied and whether the line given represents the actual brink of the channel. A copy of an indicative line illustrating the extent of a 6.0m wide and 9.0m wide access strip can be seen overleaf. This clearly shows encroachment within the access strip.



Amended extract from ABDS Ltds Drawing No. B/MW/17/005 Rev. C

Whilst there is a general agreement concerning the replacement of the existing access structure with a large box culvert, discussion concerning the maintenance access strip continues.

During the internal consultation process the Chairmen has been firm in stating the basic principles required. These are set out below:

- The byelaws state that a minimum maintenance strip must be kept completely clear at all times.
- That fencing, planting or parking of vehicles cannot be allowed.
- Any additional costs for cleaning out the Old Croft River should be met by the property owners at the time.
- With a long term change to this riverside about to take place the Drainage Authorities should undertake the necessary improvements to the River prior to any development taking place.

The applicant's consultant was advised that from an engineering perspective it should be possible to re-align the properties concerned but was advised by the consultant that:

“We are now too far down the line to change the site layout as the planning application is close to determination.”

It should be noted that an application for byelaw consent has not been sought and based on the current layout would not be recommended for approval.

Further information concerning the provision of topographical data of the Old Croft River and further details of the site have been requested and this is currently awaited.

### ***Development Contributions***

Contributions received in respect of discharge consent will be reported under the Agenda Item – *'Contributions from Developers.'*

### **Fenland District Council (FDC)**

No progress has occurred with the District Wide Level 2 SFRA.

### ***FDC Liaison Meeting***

The second meeting to be attended by representatives from the Middle Level Commissioners and FDC to improve working relations between the two authorities is due to be held soon.

### **Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)**

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards/Commissioners since the last meeting.

There are no significant new matters that may be of interest to the Commissioners.

### **Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-Group**

There are currently no issues within the Commissioners' catchment.

### **King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan**

#### ***Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Consultation***

Further to the last meeting the Middle Level Commissioners, on the Commissioners' behalf, have been consulted on and provided responses to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Consultation – Local Plan and planning applications.

This consultation document explained and sought comments upon the local planning system, the parties and processes involved, the method in which planning applications are made and considered and the means of consultation.

The response advised that the document was clear and succinct. However, the opportunity was taken to advise on the Commissioners' status as a Non-Statutory consultee. Consultation during the application process was in respect of both the flood risk and water level management and Biodiversity and protected habitats and species aspects. The use of the Commissioners' pre-/post-application process was encouraged.

Consulting Engineer

23 May 2018

Manea & Welney (317)\Reports\May 2018

Mr Hill referred to the Consulting Engineer's query in relation to the development at Delilah Close, Manea (MLC Ref Nos 386 & 436). The Chairman referred to the Commissioners' policy to carry out routine maintenance works annually on all channels to ensure the District system was kept in good order but did accept, however, that this was sometimes difficult to implement in the developed areas of the District.

In response to Mr Jolley, Mr Hill confirmed that because the land alongside the watercourse was developed, the Commissioners would not be able to deposit the spoil, as they would on agricultural land, and there would therefore be increased costs for removal of any spoil from the channel.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Planning Application – Delilah Close, Manea (MLC Ref Nos 386 & 436)
  - a) That flail mowing be carried out annually; normally 2-3 cuts per year.
  - b) That slubbing be carried out as and when necessary to maintain adequate flows and capacity within the channel.
  - c) That the Management Company pay any additional costs involved in carting the spoil from slubbing works.

#### C.777 District Superintendent's Report

The Commissioners considered the Report of the District Superintendent.

#### RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Superintendent be thanked for his services over the preceding year.

#### C.778 Environmental Officer's BAP Report

The Commissioners considered and approved the most recent BAP report, together with the information sheets on floating pennywort.

Mr Hill reported that Cliff Carson had recently filmed a piece on otters which was due to be shown on the BBC Spring Watch programme on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> June. He reported that Cliff was due to retire at the end of June and that his replacement had been appointed.

#### RESOLVED

That the Commissioners make a £100 contribution towards a gift for Cliff Carson's retirement.

### C.779 Maintenance Works in the District

Further to minute C.741, the Chairman reported that he would be continuing with the Commissioners' drain maintenance policy this year and if any Commissioner had any concerns with any particular area to contact him.

### C.780 Environment Agency – Precept

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £69,962 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £68,928).

### C.781 Development Discharges for the Commissioners between Highland and District Areas

Mr Hill reported that ADA were looking into new calculations for the valuation of agricultural land and developed areas as the current method was that stated in the Land Drainage Act and the valuations for property were no longer available.

### RESOLVED

That the Commissioners continue to look into extending boundaries to take in the current highland area and the Chairman be authorised to take any action he considers appropriate.

### C.782 Contribution from Developers

Mr Hill reported that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent had been received.

### C.783 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 Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

### RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Commissioner who 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 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and the fact that the administration of this branch has now been passed to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Hill advised that the new members elected to the Branch's Executive Committee included the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, Jonathan Fenn and the

Chairman, Marc Heading who was appointed Vice Chairman (with Harry Raby of the Bedford Group being appointed Chairman). He added that the agreed aim of this reworked branch will be to be more pro-active and accordingly it was expected that the Executive Committee will meet periodically to discuss catchment wide issues and will then report back to the Branch at its Annual Conference on what it has achieved over the year.

c) New Model Policy Statement

Mr Hill referred to the publication of the new model Policy Statement issued in late April by ADA.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft a new Policy Statement for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

d) Floodex 2019

That Floodex 2019 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

C.784 Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

Mr Hill reported that a meeting of the Chairmen of all of the Middle Level Commissioners' administered Boards met on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to discuss the challenges facing Boards. Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of ADA, spoke on the arrangements adopted by other Boards around the country.

Matters raised included:-

- 1) Advantages, disadvantages and barriers to amalgamation.
- 2) Future meetings and the opportunity for Boards to request items be added to the agenda.
- 3) Reviewing Board membership numbers.
- 4) Frequency of Board meetings.

C.785 Charging for Environmental Permits

Mr Hill reported on the consultation on charging for Environmental Permits which closed on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018. It is suggested within the consultation that charging should be designed to recover costs and as such there may be significant increases in the charges for obtaining Environment Agency permits for some IDB activities which require such consents. ADA have responded on behalf of the industry and their response is available on their website, [www.ada.org.uk/2018/01/ada-responds-environment-agency-charge-proposals-2018](http://www.ada.org.uk/2018/01/ada-responds-environment-agency-charge-proposals-2018).

C.786 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.



### C.787 Health and Safety Audits

Further to minute C.749, the Chairman reported that, following the last meeting and having discussed the matter further with both the Clerk and the District Superintendent, he had agreed to take on the role of Health and Safety Officer for the Commissioners and that he intended to hold annual meetings with the Clerk and District Superintendent concerning health and safety.

### C.788 Budgeting

Mr Hill referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### C.789 Risk Management Assessment

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

The Chairman confirmed that upon review, he had instructed that the old building at Glenhouse pumping station be insured separately and that it was his intention to ensure the building was maintained to a satisfactory standard.

### C.790 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.

### C.791 Annual Governance Statement – 2017/2018

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### C.792 Payments

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £145,293.36 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

(NB) – The Chairman and Messrs Hartley, M Heading and Sutton declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest (as a member of the ADA Board) in the payment made to the Association of Drainage Authorities.

### C.793 Annual Accounts of the Commissioners – 2017/2018

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 as required in the Audit Regulations.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- ii) That, for future years, no transfer is made from the Development Account to the General Fund for routine maintenance operations.

### C.794 Dates of next Meetings

#### RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Commissioners be held as follows in 2019, viz:-

- i) Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and
- ii) Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

### C.795 Inspection of the District

At the conclusion of the meeting those Commissioners present, with the exception of Mr M Fairey, travelled to Salters Lode for an inspection of the operation of the water control facilities operated by the Middle Level Commissioners and the Environment Agency. On arrival, they were met by Mr Paul Grodkiewicz, the Middle Level Commissioners' Lock-keeper, and as there were a number of boats, both exiting and entering the Well Creek to and from the Tidal River, Mr Grodkiewicz explained the locking process to the Commissioners and gave a brief history of the land drainage and navigation facilities at Salters Lode.

The Commissioners viewed the sluice gate on the Old Bedford River operated by the Environment Agency and Mr Grodkiewicz explained the procedure for checking the salinity of the water which is required before water is allowed into the Old Bedford River.

The Commissioners viewed the tidal Great Ouse River and Mr Grodkiewicz and the Chairman gave a brief history of the construction of the Old Bedford River in the 1600's and the subsequent need to cut a 'relief channel' that took place much later.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Grodkiewicz briefly explained how the overspill structure from the Old Bedford River to the Well Creek worked and confirmed that it had been in operation over the winter period.

The Commissioners thanked Mr Grodkiewicz for his time and for his informative presentation on the working of the various control structures at the site.