

SUTTON AND MEPAL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Sutton and Mepal Internal Drainage Board
held at Chatteris Cricket Club on Wednesday the 29th May 2019

PRESENT

M R R Latta Esq (Chairman)	J Deamer Esq
C P K Lee Esq (Vice Chairman)	R J Lee Esq
A Allan Esq	R H Smith Esq
R J Angood Esq	T Scott Esq

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P Allpress Esq, S J Criswell Esq, T Edgley Esq, M Jackson Esq, Messrs J and P Sole.

B.2105 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman declared interests in minutes B.2107, B.2112 and B.2118 and (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in any matters relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Vice Chairman declared interests in minute B.2118 and in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 227, 231, 240, 245, 246, 305 & 309) received for Pretoria Energy Ltd & Little Green Consulting Ltd.

B.2106 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 10th January 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2107 Water Levels in the Counter Drain

Further to minute B.2083, the Chairman referred to the report from the last meeting in which the Environment Agency had indicated that as no money was available they were not in a position to carry out any works to the Cranbrook Drain. Following this, the board had given consideration to proposals to move the Board's drain away from the Cranbrook Drain, and before progressing this further, the Chairman reported that he had been contacted by the Environment Agency to inform him that it was likely that there would be funding between £40,000-50,000 per annum for works to the Cranbrook Drain. The Environment Agency had proposed to identify the most critical sections of bank and to address these by sheet piling sections of approximately 30m and re-profile the bank of the Cranbrook Drain. The Chairman reported that he had given the Board's approval for these

works and that, if works were to proceed, the Board could consider piling sections between those addressed by the Environment Agency utilising the Board's machine and employee. He considered that the Board would need to purchase an adapter for the piling hammer and to engage additional labour to assist with these works if they were to proceed.

In response to Mr Smith, the Chairman confirmed that the Environment Agency would only re-profile the bank of the Cranbrook Drain to its original design and that the proposal was to commence works at the Somersham end of the watercourse.

Mr Smith considered that the works would be a long-term project and queried the capabilities of the Board's piling hammer.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the actions of the Chairman and authorised him to take any further actions concerning the matter as he considered appropriate.

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

B.2108 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Inspection Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank works

Further to minute B.2085, Mr Hill referred to the Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated May 2019.

B.2109 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.2086, the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

Mr Angood queried the 9m byelaw distance in that he was aware of a neighbouring Board who had previously had a 6m distance. Mr Hill detailed the position concerning the neighbouring Board and confirmed that when their Byelaws were updated their byelaw distance had been increased to 9m. The Chairman detailed the Boards' policy with regards to consent applications for works within the byelaw distance.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.2110 Discharge from Mepal Quarry – Aggregate Industries

Further to minute B.2099, Mr Hill reported that, following the last Board meeting in January, a letter had been sent in April together with a invoice for the final meter readings which had now been paid and there was no requirement in the consent for any final restoration works to the site.

B.2111 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a third Chair's Meeting was held on the 11th March 2019 and that discussions at this centred around :-

- 1) The provision of increased support to IDBs on Health and Safety management and control.
- 2) The Future investment planning for the Lower River Great Ouse catchment.
- 3) Future planning for IDBs and DDCs administered by the Middle Level Commissioners.
- 4) Member training.

One option for future Board arrangements discussed at the second and third meetings was the subject of a briefing paper.

Mr Hill reported on discussions at other IDB meetings concerning the time spent on administration, policies and duplications between Boards and that Members considered they should be spending more time on the operations and maintenance programmes for the Board. The Chairman outlined the responsibilities of Boards and that he did not consider that these matters would reduce as there was a responsibility on Members to ensure proper governance and compliance with regulations.

The Chairman outlined the position of the Board being outside of the Middle Level and there was therefore no natural alliance to the Boards within the Middle Level and he considered a more natural fit would be an amalgamation with the Boards that drain to the Old Bedford River. In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that there was an area of Upwell IDB which drained to the Old Bedford rather than the Middle Level.

Members gave consideration to the number of Members currently on the Board and the low turnout for today's meeting.

RESOLVED

i) That the Board did not consider it beneficial for them to become involved in a single board and did not wish to be part of any future discussions.

ii) That consideration also be given to a future 'Old Bedford Drainage Catchment Board' which the Board would be interested in.

iii) That the following item be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Board:-

To discuss the future membership of the Board

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 13th November 2019.

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

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held on Tuesday the 12th March 2019. The meeting format was changed this year and included a morning workshop session led by the EA. Topics covered were water resources, PSCAs and future planning of FRM. Robert Caudwell spoke for ADA in the afternoon followed by talks from Brian Stewart, the FRCC Chair, Paul Burrows, the FRM Area Manager and Claire Jouvray, the Operations Delivery Manager.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 3rd March 2020.

c) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. At least one member of this Board attended one of the two local workshops in the area and hence the Board will be able to record in the IDB1 Defra return that training has been provided on Governance. In addition to governance Defra appear to expect over time that training will be given for the following; Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare and Communications and engagement. The Board may wish to consider an order of priority for future training and a timetable for delivery.

d) Workstreams

That ADA annually review their workstreams and an update is included.

iii) The New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill

That this Bill has completed its Committee stage in the House of Commons and passed through its Third Reading. It has now started its progression through the House of Lords.

The Bill, which has been prepared by Defra, aims to put the Somerset Rivers Authority onto a statutory footing as a precepting body, but it would also enable the reform of IDB ratings annual value lists. It does this by recognising the need to ensure that the methodology through which IDBs calculate and collect drainage rates and special levy sits on a sound legal basis that can be periodically updated to contemporary values better reflecting current land and property valuation.

With the above in mind ADA has been working with Defra and a number of IDBs to test a new methodology using contemporary valuation and Council Tax lists that could be applied via this legislative change.

iv) Environment Agency consultation on changes to the Anglia (Central) RFCC

That a consultation is taking place on the constitution of three RFCCs following a formal proposal for two new unitary authorities to be formed in Northamptonshire (West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire) has been submitted to the Government for consideration. If approved these authorities would coming into existence on the 1 April 2020.

In Buckinghamshire the decision to create a single unitary authority replacing the existing five councils has been made by the Government, subject to Parliamentary approval. It would come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

Each new authority will be a unitary authority, delivering all local government services in their respective areas, including their functions as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFAs).

The membership of Thames RFCC, Anglian (Central) RFCC, and Anglian (Northern) RFCC currently includes representation from one or both of the existing county councils. To reflect the changes proposed the membership of all three RFCC will need to be varied before 1 December 2019.

At the same time to better reflect a catchment-based approach it is proposed to change the name of Anglian (Central) RFCC to Anglian (Great Ouse) RFCC. ADA has stated that it supports the naming revision.

B.2112 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Sutton & Mepal I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2019

Pumping Station

Since the last Board Meeting and the Board's decision to purchase a spare pump the Station has been operating on 2 pumps only. Pump 3 is in a critical condition and is unlikely to run for any significant time, hence an attempt to run it would only occur in an emergency.

Main Pumps

Pump 1 experienced failure of its bearing temperature sensors which have now been linked out leaving only winding temperature and seal leak monitoring, this is normal for a pump of this age and is unlikely to adversely affect the pump's operating life. Pump 2 condition remains unchanged, there is a weak winding resistance to earth but overall it is satisfactory. Pump 3 has not been used over the winter and will be replaced this autumn with the spare pump ordered on the 23rd April 2019. Pump 4 and the weedscreen cleaner have operated trouble free over the period and are in good condition.

Pumping hours

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

Total Hours Run	May 2018 – May 2019	April 17 – May 18	March 16 - April 17	May 15 – April 16	May 14 – April 15
No 1	395 (25833)	569 (25438)	1094	773	1065
No 2	608 (25938)	863 (25330)	808	762	1146
No 3	81 (25687)	1191 (25606)	699	668	1110
No 4	0 (2850)	38 (2850)	833	1	28

Agitation Dredging Group

The EA has provided assurances that the dredging pilot will commence later this year.

Cranbrook Drain

At a meeting held in January 2019 the Environment Agency confirmed it was looking to undertake works during this coming summer at selected locations along the Cranbrook Drain. This work, together with work the Board is proposing, of moving the watercourse away from the Cranbrook Drain, will reduce the inflow from Cranbrook Drain into the Board's drainage system and improve embankment stability.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 11 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
302	F/YR18/0974/O	Mrs J Smith	Residence	Iretons Way, Chatteris
303	F/2014/18/CM + E/18/03005/CCA	Mick George Ltd	Quarry (Extension)	Block Fen, Mepal*
304	F/YR18/1102/PNC04	Miss P Lee	Residence	Stocking Drove, Chatteris
305	F/YR18/1103/VOC	Pretoria Energy Company (Mepal) Ltd	Anaerobic digester plant	Iretons Way, Chatteris
306	E/18/01658/ARN	Mr G Brown	Residence	The Gault, Sutton
307	F/YR18/1126/O	Mrs J Smith	Residence	Iretons Way, Chatteris
308	H/19/00126/HHFUL	Mr Copeland	Residence (Extension)	Colnefields, Somersham
309	E/19/00197/VARM	Pretoria Energy Company (Mepal) Ltd	Anaerobic digester plant	Chatteris Road, Mepal
310	F/YR19/2003/CCC + F/2003/19/CC	Cambridgeshire County Council	Education (School)	Wenny Road, Chatteris
311	F/YR19/0177/PNH	Mr N Hennessey	Residence (Extension)	Wenny Estate, Chatteris
312	H/19/00275/PIP	Mr M Latta	Residence	Holme Fen Drove, Colne

Planning applications ending 'CCA' relate to County Council applications
Planning applications ending 'CM' relate to Full Application (Minerals)
Planning applications ending 'PNCO' relate to prior notification change of use issues
Planning applications ending 'VOC' relate to variation of condition
Planning applications ending 'ARN' relate to Agricultural to Residential Notification
Planning applications ending 'VARM' relate to Variation of condition Major application
Planning applications ending 'CCC' relate to Cambridgeshire County Council
Planning applications ending 'PNH' relate to household permitted regulations notification
Planning applications ending 'PIP' relate to Permission in Principle

A development that proposes a direct discharge is indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, disposal to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

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

Extraction and processing of sand and gravel and construction of access onto Chatteris Road (B1050), and associated works 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, 226, 228, 232 & 258) + Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 296, 297 & 300)

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

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), Aggregate Industries UK Ltd +

Larfarge Aggregates Ltd trading as Larfarge Tarmac (MLC Ref Nos 50, 87, 88, 192 & 196) & Tarmac Trading Ltd

Further to the meeting held in December at Shire Hall a jointly prepared Environment Agency (EA)/Sutton & Mepal IDB response was issued to Tarmac Trading Ltd in January. No further correspondence has been received and the current position is being clarified with the County Council and the EA.

See also the Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan entry below.

Soils and Mineral processing; plant washing and stock pile area etc at Witcham Meadlands Quarry, Block Fen Drove, Mepal – Mick George (Haulage) Ltd (MLC Ref No 156) + Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 207, 211, 213, 286, 289 & 303)

Highway improvement to upgrade Block Fen Drove (MLC Ref No 286)

No further correspondence has been received or contact made and the current position is being clarified with the applicant.

Formation of Temporary Access Road/Quickbridge (MLC Ref No 289)

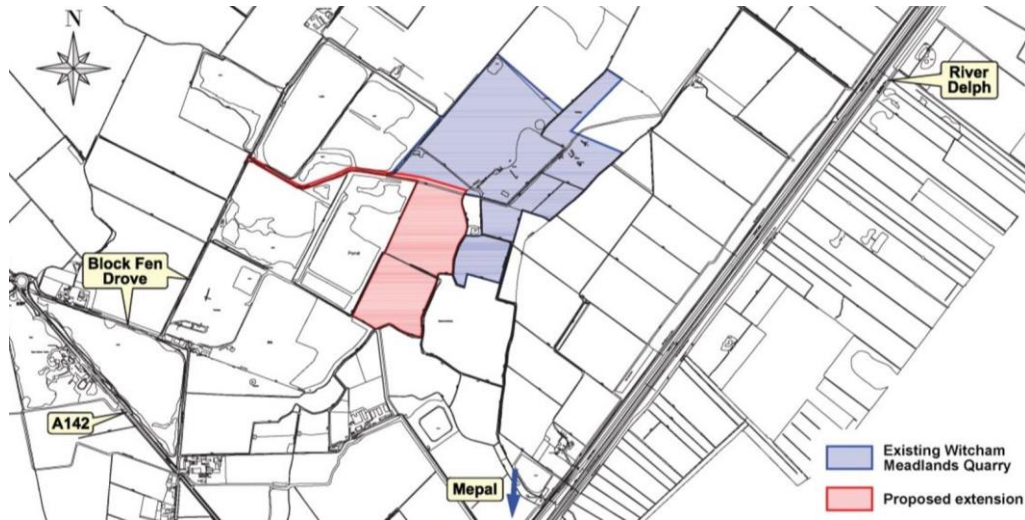
Further to the last meeting report a byelaw application for the erection of a temporary quickbridge together with the associated foundations and temporary haul road 880m south west of Point 14 has been received from Mick George Ltd has been approved.

Work on this structure is likely to commence in the next few weeks.

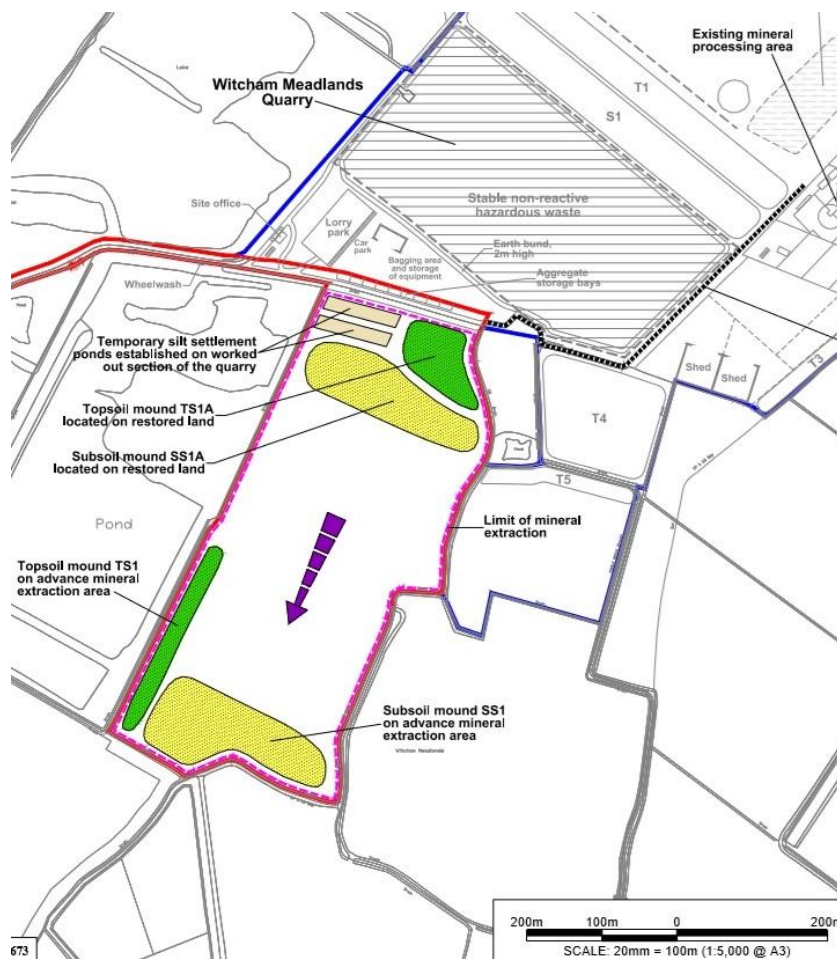
Extension of Witcham Meadlands Quarry (MLC Ref No 303)

A planning application has been submitted to the County Council, in its role as the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA), for a 20.1 ha extension to the Witcham Meadlands Quarry which will involve the extraction of 430,000 tonnes of sand and gravel and 180,000 m³ of clay. The sand and gravel extracted will then be processed within the established plant facility and the resultant graded product exported utilising Block Fen Drove.

The Witcham Meadlands Quarry has an extant planning consent which endures until 2031 and permits an unspecified volume of aggregate to be imported to the site for processing. The extension site is also situated partially within an area identified within the adopted Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan as an area suitable for mineral extraction.



Plan from Mick George Ltd's Planning Statement showing the location of the proposed extension



Extract from Mick George Ltd's Drawing No P4/18/03 Rev – showing the location of the proposed extension and working scheme

The planning application also seeks to extend the beneficial restoration proposed for the main quarry through the creation of lowland wet grassland consistent with the objectives within Cambridgeshire County Council's Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan.

In its response the County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), advised that the submitted documents:

“... demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of temporary lagoons in the quarry void, before being pumped into the existing settlement lagoon at greenfield equivalents. The lagoon discharges to the surrounding watercourses at a rate of 70 l/s (already agreed as part of an EA permit). Post mineral extraction, a new lagoon will be constructed to the south of the extraction site and surface water will discharge at a controlled rate to the surrounding watercourses”.

The Board is reminded that whilst the County Council and the LLFA may be content with the proposal it does not necessarily mean that the Board, who as a non-statutory consultee has yet to consider the proposals and is the authority which receives and processes any resultant flows, will be in agreement.

It is understood that a decision remains pending on the planning application.

The proposals involve several items that are of interest to the Board and may require its consent. To date, the applicant has not contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be consented should the proposal proceed.

In view of the above the Board may consider it appropriate to review this proposal and ensure that its requirements are currently being met and will be met in the future.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Boards’ opinion and further instruction.

See also the Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan entry below.

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

Discussions between the District Council and the applicant’s agent, Bidwells LLP, and respective legal teams continue but, according to Fenland District Council’s (FDC) Public Access web page, a decision on this site still remains pending.

The Board has yet to be formally contacted.

Developments at Cromwell Community College, Wenny Road, Chatteris – Cromwell Community College (MLC Ref Nos 173, 186 & 197)

Further to the Board's May 2014 meeting report a planning application has been submitted to the County Council for a further extension to the Cromwell Community College.

The proposed extension is partly within the highland catchments of both the Board and the neighbouring Nightlayers IDB.

It is understood that, should the proposal proceed, it will consist of the following:

- Phase 1; pre-school facility for 52 children aged 0-4, 1 form entry (210) pupil primary school classrooms.
- Phase 2; single storey extension to Phase 1 primary school to provide additional capacity for a further 1 form of entry (210) pupil classrooms and facilities with associated landscaping, new sports pitches and ancillary works, creating a 2 form entry 420 pupil primary school.

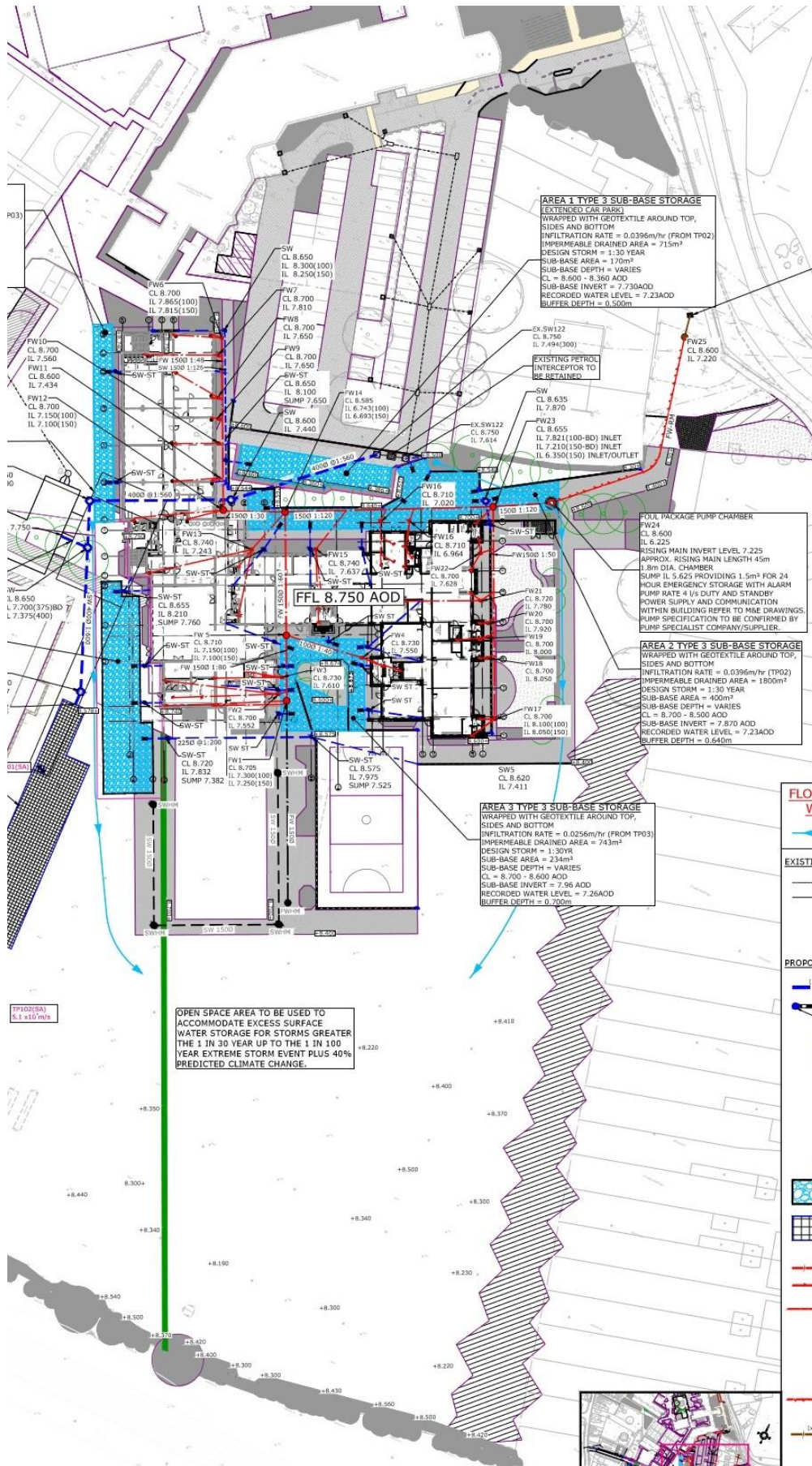
According to the submission documents the proposed means of surface water disposal is via infiltration but having undertaken a very brief review it appears that the ground water table is very high. The associated ground testing infers that infiltration rates are variable across the site from being reasonably acceptable to extremely poor.

The infiltration rate of 5.56×10^{-07} m/s is extremely poor and, comparing it against an example of good practice, is significantly lower than the 5×10^{-05} m/s minimum stated in Item 16.04 of the County Council's Highways Department Housing Estate Road Construction Specification April 2018 which can be found at:







<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-andpathways/highways-development/>.

To date, the applicant, its agent, Bidwells LLP, and its engineering consultant, the MLM Group, have not contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be approved should the proposal proceed.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Boards' opinion and further instruction.



Extract from MLM Group's Drawing No 669845-MLM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0101 Rev PO4

			Project: Cromwell Community College Project ID: 776601 Location: Chatteris			Method: TP Start: 19/02/2019 Finish: 19/02/2019		TP105 Sheet 1 of 1 Logged by: J. Gooch	
			Client: Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure Ltd Project Engineer: MLM			Level (mOD): 9.82 Co-ordinates: 539525.39E - 285324.07N			
INSITU TEST/SAMPLING			STRATA						
Depth (m)	Sample Ref.	Strength Shear (kPa)	Level (mAOD)	Depth (m)	Legend	Description of Strata	Thickness (m)	Water (m)	
			9.60	0.22		Brown slightly gravelly clayey SAND containing active rootlets. Gravel is fine to medium angular to sub rounded flint. TOPSOIL	0.22		
			9.28	0.54		Soft to firm slightly gravelly sandy CLAY containing brick rubble fragments. Gravel is fine to coarse angular to rounded flint. MADE GROUND	0.32		
			8.97	0.85		Orange brown very clayey SAND. HEAD DEPOSITS	0.31		
			8.52	1.30		Orange brown very gravelly SAND. Gravel is fine to coarse angular to rounded flint. MARCH GRAVELS MEMBER	0.45		
						End of trial pit at 1.30 m			

Extract from the MLM Group's Ground Investigation showing a typical trial pit log and ground water levels (indicated by the triangles on the right hand side)

Date: 5 March 2019
Document Reference: 776601-ZZ-XX-CO-J-0001
MLM Reference: JM/776601/WF
Name: Michael Cowan
Company Name: Morgan Sindall Construction and Infrastructure Ltd

Test Position	Depth Range	Infiltration Stratum	Infiltration rate (m/s)
TP101	1.58m*	Slightly gravelly sandy clay. (Head Deposits)	Test Failed
TP102	1.10m*	Very gravelly sand. (March Gravels)	Test 1: 5.14×10^{-6} Test 2: 4.63×10^{-6} Test 3: 5.50×10^{-6}
TP103	1.45m*	Slightly clayey sand overlying slightly gravelly clay. (Head Deposits)	Test 1: 5.56×10^{-7} Test 2: 4.68×10^{-7} Test 3: 4.63×10^{-7}
TP104	1.55m*	Very gravelly sand. (March Gravels)	Test 1: 2.01×10^{-5} Test 2: 2.28×10^{-5} Test 3: 1.63×10^{-5}
TP105	1.18m*	Very gravelly sand. (March Gravels)	Test 1: 9.36×10^{-6} Test 2: 1.52×10^{-5} Test 3: 1.52×10^{-5}

* Test depth taken as rest water level in pits

Extract from the MLM Group's Ground Investigation showing the infiltration rates attained at the respective trial pits

Formation of an irrigation reservoir involving extraction processing, the export of sand and gravel and other works at Short North Fen Drove/Blabys Drove, Sutton - P J Lee & Sons (MLC Ref Nos 177, 182, 298 & 301)

It is understood that a decision on this application has yet to be made by the County Council.

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) & Pretoria Energy Company (Mepal) Ltd (MLC Ref No 305 & 309)

Further to the Board's December 2017 report two variation of conditions applications have been submitted to both East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils for consideration.

The proposals involve several items that are of interest to the Board and may require its consent. To date, neither the applicant nor its agent, Plandescil Ltd, have contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be consented should the proposal proceed.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Boards' opinion and further instruction.

Local Plan Update and associated Consultations

East Cambridgeshire District Council

Withdrawal of emerging Local Plan

On 21 February, East Cambridgeshire District Council formally withdrew its emerging Local Plan. The Council has issued a statement providing formal notification of the plan's withdrawal which can be found at the following link: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/withdrawal-notice.pdf>.

Notice of Withdrawal of East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

The withdrawn Local Plan and related documents have been removed from the public domain, as per the legislative requirements.

Summary

The preparation of a new East Cambridgeshire Local Plan made good progress during 2016 and 2017. In October 2017, Full Council approved the Plan for its final round of consultation and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State for the purpose of independent examination. That consultation duly took place, and the Plan was formally 'submitted' on 16 February 2018.

In June and September 2018, public hearing sessions were held as part of the examination of the Local Plan. The Inspector concluded that the plan is capable of being found sound, subject to modifications.

A Council may withdraw a plan at any time, for any reason, prior to adoption. Following receipt of the Inspector's modifications, East Cambridgeshire District Council voted to withdraw the emerging Local Plan at its February Council meeting.

For the avoidance of doubt, the **East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015** will remain the adopted Local Plan for the district.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

Public examination hearings were held on the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Proposed Submission between 17-20 July and 10-27 September 2018. Following this, proposed main modifications were identified by the Planning Inspector as necessary to make the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 'sound' and 'legally compliant'. Consultation on the proposed main modifications and associated sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment ran from 10 December 2018 to 29 January 2019.

A generic response to the Planning Inspectorate's Main Modifications was submitted to the District Council on behalf of both the Commissioners and our associated Boards, for whom we provide a planning consultancy service.

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

Public Consultation on the Draft Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document

No further correspondence has been received in respect of this document.

Consultation on the proposed 2019 revision of the Local Validation Guidance List & Local Validation Check List for planning applications for the County Council's own development & for waste development

A Public Consultation on the proposed 2019 revision of the Local Validation Guidance List and Local Validation Check List for planning applications for the County Council's own development and for waste development was held from 28 February until 11 April.

The consultation responses received as part of the consultation have been taken into consideration, by the County Council and some additional revisions made to the proposed Validation List and Guidance Notes, which will be presented to the Planning Committee meeting on Thursday 16 May 2019 to seek approval for the revisions.

A response was submitted to the County Council on behalf of both the Commissioners and our associated Boards, for whom we provide a planning consultancy service. It was pleasing to note the inclusion of the Middle Level Biodiversity Manual (2016) and the reference and a link to our "Planning Advice and Consent Documents" within the Guidance Notes.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C&P) Minerals and Waste Plan (M & WMP)

Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan

As members are aware the Block Fen and Witcham Meadlands Quarries form part of the larger County Council's Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan which, in turn, contributes to the EAs Cranbrook Drain/Counter Drain Flood Risk Management Strategy. However, concerns were raised during the consideration of the Tarmac Trading Ltd proposal as to how the strategy can be achieved, particularly on a bit-by-bit basis as individual quarries are worked out and restored. A process which could take decades to achieve.

In a similar manner the restoration of the worked-out quarries for providing environmental habitat is occurring without any Board involvement and when this issue was raised, again during the consideration of the Tarmac Trading Ltd proposal, the County Council advised that the officer concerned has considerable experience at Needingworth Quarry. However, this does not necessarily mean that the Board's interests are being considered.

The re-alignment of the Board's system, either to serve its own interests or for water resources for the wet grassland, would be extremely difficult particularly if the excavation of a new channel across a landfill site is required.

It has been suggested that in order to achieve the desired outcomes, and also avoid abortive work, that it may be beneficial for the quarry operators to consider working with each other to try and combine work on flood storage and habitat cells. This is likely to bring benefits to them as well as the Master Plan site as a whole.

It is in the interests of both the Board and the EA to resolve the issues associated with both the Block Fen and Witcham Meadlands Quarries and the strategic direction set out in the Master Plan, but considered that progressing these may need further discussion particularly concerning the retrieval of costs etc at a later stage. The EA and the Board, perhaps with the County Council, could look to facilitate these discussions to ensure that the Master Plan is being delivered as intended.

In respect of the Master plan, you will be aware that the issue of forming a forum or group with the relevant parties to discuss and manage the fine details in order to ensure that the final aim is delivered in a useable, and not dysfunctional manner, has been raised in the past. However, this request has, to date, been ignored and the Board may consider it a prudent time to raise this at a higher level within the County Council and the EA.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Commissioners' opinion and further instruction.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A follow up meeting was held on 28 March.

Planning Committee Decision at Estover Road, March

Members may be aware of the District Council's decision in relation to the outline planning application for a residential development at Estover Road, March. However, members may be interested in the principles established at the Committee Meeting in respect of the Board's interests.

The March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners requested that the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineers represented them at the Planning Committee's September meeting.

It was interesting to note that the Commissioners' presence was acknowledged with one Councillor stating that as the Commissioners have made the effort to attend the Committee should listen to them. Another comment made was that the Committee is concerned that Statutory Consultees do not attend the Planning Committee Meetings.

There was considerable support for the Drainage Boards particularly from Cllrs Bligh, Laws and Newell, but you will note the comments which were quite rightly made by Cllr Sutton and Nick Harding.

In view of this it appears that, within Fenland at least, the comments of the LLFA, as a Statutory Consultee, override that of the Commissioners, even though they have to receive and transfer any flows and deal with any resultant problems at their ratepayers' expense.

Relevant extracts from the minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 September are copied below:

"F/YR15/0668/O

LAND NORTH OF 75-127, ESTOVER ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

OUTLINE WITH ONE MATTER COMMITTED DETAILED AS ACCESS IN RELATION TO 95 NO DWELLINGS (MAX) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, DRAINAGE AND OPEN SPACES

Middle Level Commissioners strongly object to the application.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Mr Graham Moore (Middle Level commissioners), who was speaking on behalf of Middle Level Commissioners and March Fifth Internal Drainage Board [sic] and Mrs Liz Whitehouse, who were both speaking in objection to the Application.

It is the IDB not the Environment Agency, FDC, CCC or Anglian Water, which has to receive and transfer flows that emit from the site.

The site is located in flood zone 1 and the applicant has provided information to evidence that surface water from the development can be managed and there have been no objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority and Environment Agency who are statutory consultees. The Middle Level Commissioners are not statutory consultees; however the queries that have been raised by them have been looked at by the applicant but as this is an outline planning application and it would not be reasonable to supply the information requested currently and the details relating to the design of the scheme and details regarding the drainage scheme details are unknown. The condition that the LLFA have requested will put an appropriate safeguard in place to ensure a suitable strategy is established prior to the commencement of construction.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- *Councillor Mrs Laws stated that it is a windfall site but the drainage issue is an area of concern. With regard to viability, the site does not deliver what it should and although the Section 106 Officer has looked into this. The development is therefore less sustainable than it should be.*
- *Councillor Sutton stated that he believes the development is sustainable. It is in flood zone 1 and the Lead Local Flood Authority who is a Statutory Consultee has no objection to the proposal. The issues concerning the discharge raised by Middle Level Commissioners and the IDB can be reviewed at a later stage and do not need to be considered today. Planning Committee Members have to make decisions on material planning reasons. The proposal does not go against the Neighbourhood Plan; if it did then Officers would not be recommending it for approval.*
- *Councillor Sutton stated he can see no material planning reason to refuse the application.*
- *Nick Harding stated that in terms of the surface water issues which have been raised. The IDB have recognised that the LLFA is the authority that we should be going to in consideration of these matters and if the NPPF is referred to it does state that major development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and should take account of the advice of the LLFA. The advice from the LLFA is that this development proposal with conditions is acceptable.*
- *Nick Harding stated that he is very supportive of the IDB's they have a separate legal process which has to be complied with by persons who wish to discharge their surface water and just because planning permission is granted for a development it does not mean they are automatically going to get consent from the IDB's. The Developer still has to apply to the IDB and the detail for the scheme has to be agreed.*
- *Nick Harding stated that with regard to Anglian Water, they have raised no objection to this application. They have indicated that they will make necessary improvements to their network to ensure they can deal with the water and therefore as we do not have an objection from Anglian Water, and members should consider on what basis would we be able to defend a reason for refusal based on foul water capacity.*

Following the meeting the Planning Engineer advised the Clerk to the Commissioners that:

"Whilst I was concerned when we originally stood back and stopped making bespoke responses to the LPA in preference to writing to the applicant and/or agent, which does cause some problems, the planning decision confirmed that this choice was the correct one, as the Commissioners and associated Boards are not wasting their limited resources by issuing letters that will be ignored by the LPA. However, this procedure is, under the current circumstances, potentially wasteful as the developer, LPA and LLFA could put considerable effort into an application which may be granted planning permission but which a Board refuses to consent."

It is presumed that in similar circumstances Huntingdonshire District Council would have a similar view.

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the last Board meeting. The main matters that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

Quarterly Meetings

The most recent meeting was a joint meeting held with the Peterborough Flood & Water Management Partnership (PFLoW) of which the Middle Level Commissioners are also a partner. The number of meetings held each year may reduce from four to three.

County Council Public Sector Services

The Commissioners' Planning Engineer has raised concerns with the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Business Manager about the potential deterioration of service within Cambridgeshire as a result of the Flood & Water Team possibly extending its service to another County Council.

RMA support & the Delivery of projects

Following concerns raised by IDBs and other RMAs the EA Local Levy is funding two LLFA and IDB Flood Risk Advisors who have been recruited to assist in the delivery of projects. Based at Ely they are the Commissioners'/Boards' point of contact in respect of FDGiA funding.

Initial meetings with the relevant advisor and the MLC staff have occurred.

RMA's Medium Term Programmes (MTP)

The RFCC has expressed a keen interest in knowing more about the different projects that partners in Cambridgeshire have put forward to the MTP for FDGiA. This is in part because the RFCC wants us to all understand each other's projects better. They would particularly like it if the RFCC Member Councillors for each County were familiar with all of the projects in their area and were able to champion them, not just the ones from their own organisation.

Therefore, the various relevant RMAs will be making presentations at Partnership meetings. As a result, as the largest promoter of such projects within Cambridgeshire, a presentation on the MTP prepared by the Middle Level Commissioners and its associated Boards has been made to the Partnership.

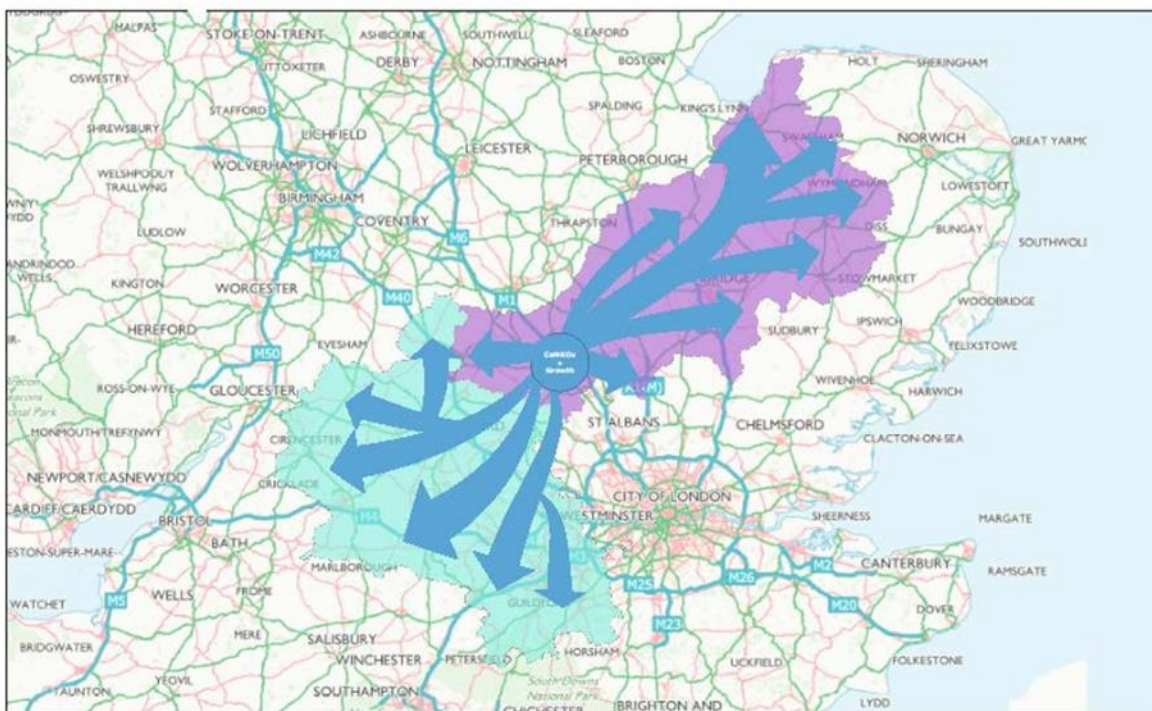
Update on RFCC's Growth Work

In order to accommodate the projected "growth", 500,000 new homes within the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford (CaMKOx) arc, within the Great Ouse Catchment five Local Choices

papers are currently being prepared on The Upstream Great Ouse Catchment, these will investigate the following:

- (i) Potential storage;
- (ii) Conveyance Study of the Main rivers to Denver Sluice, (this will investigate pinch points, silt deposition etc);
- (iii) A Modelling Workshop, (to use existing models as work needs to be completed now);
- (iv) An Economic Assessment, (this will include an assessment of Cost/Benefits and what it does to prevent flooding); and
- (v) The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Link, (which will investigate potential benefits, water transfer/resources of the proposed new waterway between Kempston and the Grand Union Canal).

Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford (CaMKOx) : Growth Corridor
Catchment of River Thames and River Great Ouse



The EA is looking for RMA involvement in the production of these papers.

Rain Gauges

The Rain Gauge Network Project is progressing with the installation of gauges being undertaken in the next financial year.

Flood Risk Management Trainees

One of the trainees wrote an article which was published in the Winter 2018 edition of the ADA Gazette. The article can be found at

<http://flickread.com/edition/html/index.php?pdf=5c101ead23d6e#13>

IDB Good Governance Guide/East Ridings of Yorkshire Council Guide

ADA has subsequently launched its Good Governance for IDB Members guide at the ADA Conference which is primarily aimed at new Board members. Five workshops were held during March and April.

Further details on the guide and the workshops can be found at the following link

<https://www.ada.org.uk/2018/11/ada-publishes-guide-to-good-governance-for-internal-drainage-board-members/>

The EA's 2018 Flood Action Campaign

Research undertaken by the EA in conjunction with the Red Cross reveals that most 18-34 year olds do not know what to do in a flood. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/young-people-most-at-risk-in-a-flood-warns-environment-agency-british-red-cross>

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

A meeting was held in early April. There are currently no flooding issues within the Boards District.

Highways England (HE) Environmental Designated Funds (Legacy funding)

This is one of five funds provided by HE associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc., the others being Cycling, safety and integration, Air Quality, Innovation and Growth and Housing.

The potential environmental funding is available for the following areas noise, water, carbon, landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage and, therefore, could include flooding, pollution, water framework directive and biodiversity projects associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/highways-england-designated-funds>

This method of funding is being utilised by the following RMAs on the projects below:

(a) Environment Agency

Beck Brook at Girton - Legacy Fund and Local Levy match funding is being used to assist a flood alleviation scheme that was unable to achieve GiA.

Borrow Pits at Fenstanton – A potential flood alleviation scheme may be able to use Legacy funding.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council

Bar Hill – Legacy funding for a potential £64k scheme.

Histon/Impington culvert replacement – The Legacy funding contribution is possible due to the site's close location to the A14.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

The final report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER), prepared by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission ([CPIEC](#)) was published in September.

Jointly funded by the CPCA and Cambridge Ahead the report sets out how the CPIEC considers the area can sustain its own economy and support the UK economy whilst providing a better and more fulfilling way of life for the people who live and work in this area and details how this should be achieved, with fourteen key recommendations, and another thirteen subsidiary recommendations. Some of the suggested actions will be difficult to implement requiring close collaboration between leading institutions in the area, this is likely to include the relevant RMAs including the Commissioners and associated Boards, who will be needed to deliver them effectively.

Issues considered relevant to our interests include the following:

General

- a) The success of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a project of national importance.
- b) The Government should recognise the benefits further devolution to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would bring

Flood Risk and Water Level Management

- a) The area has not been subject to dramatic flooding events in recent years, which can mean the issue is paid little attention.
- b) Flood risk infrastructure should be considered enabling infrastructure, in that it allows a great deal of economic activity to happen in the first place (land being the most fundamental of all the economic factors of production).

- c) In the fens, water has an especially significant effect on the local economy with much of the area classified by the EA as being in flood zone 3 and this presents challenges to local economic development. Finding solutions to this problem is likely to have to happen little by little, with the finer points of detail being worked through with the EA, Anglian Water, and others. Wisbech should be seen as a UK testbed for new flood-resistant approaches to development, and levels of investment in flood defence infrastructure should be substantially increased.
- d) It is estimated that during a serious drought scenario, England could face £1.3billion of lost economic activity every day.
- e) A requirement of 110l per person per day should be enforced in water stressed areas, and that in future councils should have the power to enforce 80l per person per day requirements for new developments where appropriate.

The Environment

NB. 'Natural capital' refers to the stock of living ('biodiversity') and non-living (eg minerals, water) resources that interact and provide a flow of services ('ecosystem services') upon which society depends. Some of these services are delivered locally, others may have national or international value. All other capitals (human, social, intellectual, manufactured, financial) are ultimately underpinned by natural capital.

- a) Climate change is already having a damaging effect on biodiversity and could put a strain on the water supply.
- b) Within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, most districts were put into the middle band for levels of natural capital, although fenland (perhaps unsurprisingly) scores highly on this measure.
- c) The fens must also be considered as one of the UK's greatest natural assets with a rich wetland ecosystem which affords great leisure opportunities. The value of this natural capital must not be overlooked.

Economic Growth

- a) The Commission reached the conclusion that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area is not one, but three economies, the Greater Cambridge area, which includes Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire, and parts of Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire; the Greater Peterborough area, the area around Peterborough; and the fens but should function significantly more as a single area than it does at present. This ought to be feasible whilst being compatible with each part of the Combined Authority area retaining its distinctive sense of place.

- b) A distinguishing feature of the whole area is how strongly it continues to grow outpacing both the East of England and UK over the last decade. This has been driven primarily, but not entirely, by rapid business creation and growth in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, where knowledge-intensive sectors are strongly clustered, densifying and highly dependent on their location.
- c) Evidence from the review identifies that both employment and turnover growth have been picking up right across the area. Employment growth has seen strong growth numbers in all districts but has been highest in East Cambridgeshire. Looking at growth rates in the global turnover of companies based in the area between 2010/11-2016/17 all six districts have seen turnover growth of over 2% per annum. In South Cambridgeshire this rises to over 10% per annum, which shows impressive company growth.
- d) Many very large firms, such as McCain and Del Monte, have plants in the north-east of the county and export from here around the world. Figures show that primary sectors constitute 24% of East Cambridgeshire's turnover, and 17% of Fenland's with Wholesale and Retail Distribution making up 33% of Fenland's turnover, and 28% of South Cambridgeshire's.
- e) The Netherlands, which has similar prevailing conditions to the fens but produces much higher-value agricultural goods, should be seen as an exemplar.
- f) Laws governing planning permission may impede business growth.
- g) It is very important to support the growth of market towns.
- h) There is a need for companies to invest in their employees.
- i) There is potential for greater commercial office development, particularly in Peterborough.

Housing

- a) To account for the fact that actual delivery of housing has been less than previously predicted and if employment growth continues to be significantly above what is forecast it might be necessary to build in the range of 6,000 – 8,000 houses per year over the next 20 years.

- b) In some areas, particularly in the north of Cambridgeshire, house prices are too low to make sufficient profit from development, rendering them unviable.
- c) There is positive evidence that ecological considerations are being taken seriously in new developments, with the new Eddington District in Cambridge being a notable example. Eddington reuses surface level water, reducing wastage and minimising flood risk.

Infrastructure

- a) Utilities underpin all economic activity, and there are areas of concern, particularly regarding electricity capacity. The government has committed to banning new diesel and petrol vehicles from 2040, but if it is envisioned that these will be replaced by electric vehicles, substantial levels of investment into upgrading the grid will be needed.
- b) The importance that flood defence infrastructure and the equally clear stresses upon water in one of the UK's driest counties are recognised.
- c) The level of the infrastructure of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been inadequate for too long. The growth seen in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire seems very unlikely to be sustained in the future without further and significant investment in infrastructure.
- d) A package of transport and other infrastructure projects to alleviate the growing pains of Greater Cambridge should be considered the single most important infrastructure priority facing the Combined Authority in the short to medium term. These should include the use of better digital technology to enable more efficient use of current transport resources.

Projects that seem likely to further this aim are the full dualling of the A47, better connecting the Peterborough economy to the Fenland economy; the A10, better connecting the Cambridge economy to the Fenland economy; and improvements to rail between Peterborough and Cambridge, particularly the Ely North junction thus better connecting all three economies.

- e) There should be greater awareness of potential supply chains and scope for collaboration within the region.
- f) It was suggested that several elements were needed to underpin the approach to financing infrastructure:

- An Investment Fund should be created to execute priorities which leverages third party resources, meaning a sustainable momentum can be achieved by the prudent use of public resources (from both local and central government)
- An Investment Pipeline should be established showing what is feasible to be delivered over a three, five, and ten-year period
- A Mayoral Development Platform (such as a development corporation) is needed to facilitate and support development in collaboration with the private sector (investors and developers) and wherever practicable the community in which development takes place.
- Relevant RMAs possibly including the Commissioners and associated Boards may be asked to contribute to these.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens Technical Group [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

A letter from the EA has been issued to the Chairman and a copy follows for your information. This included a copy of the “elevator pitch”, used by the EA to provide some background to the project. Please note that the extent of the geographical area shown has been amended.

15 May 2019

S&M(350)\Reports\May 2019

Consulting Engineer

creating a better place
for people and wildlife



Letter to Chairman
Internal Drainage Boards
Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambs
PE15 0AH

Our ref: ENV0000678C
Your ref
Date: 15 January 2019

Dear Chairman

Flood Risk Management for the Fens

Between Local Internal Drainage Boards and the Environment Agency, we are modern day custodians of arguably the richest legacies of flood risk and drainage management in the country. I am sure you and your Board are really proud, like I am, to have a responsibility for critical infrastructure within a landscape that is hugely important for the economy, communities, food, farming and the natural environment.

The future of the Great Ouse Fens is something I am passionate about and with IDB clerks and engineers we are starting a partnership and collaborative approach to their future flood management. This letter summarises where we are and some of the important steps ahead. We really need your ideas, enthusiasm, advocacy, support and knowledge about this fantastic part of the country.

In recent years flood and drainage management in the Fens has been undertaken in somewhat of a piecemeal approach and reactive manner. With climate change projections and many of our assets coming to the end of their design life, we now collectively need to take a more strategic and long term approach. This will enable us all to maximise financial leverage and present a stronger more considered investment case to funding bodies.

Flood risk management for the Fens is a project set up to consider what the future flood risk management choices for the Great Ouse Fens could look like. This will help us develop a strategic approach together that will underpin and frame all flood and coastal risk management investment in the Fens moving forward. This is a key requirement of Defra's partnership funding policy (see attached note).

The attached document provides further details about the project, including the details of those flood risk management organisations involved in the Technical Group. David will hopefully have already briefed you on this work and will be your primary engagement link as the project moves forward.

customer service line 03708 506 506
gov.uk/environment-agency

Supported by the Anglian (Central) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee and with the help of the Technical Group, we have recently secured a funding package and obtained financial approval for Phase 1 of the project. The main products of this phase includes:

- A baseline report to gain a shared understanding of all land drainage and flood risk management assets, the economics, government grant eligibility level and partnership funding challenge for all sources of flooding. *This will be presented in a similar way to the Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline Report (we can provide a copy if you don't already have one) Anticipated delivery date Feb 2020.*
- Visualisation tools to showcase the findings of the baseline report in a way that informs and excites a wide variety of audiences. *Anticipated delivery date late 2020 after the baseline report to share key messages from the report.*

For Phase 1 we have not sought financial contributions from individual IDBs within the Great Ouse Fens, however the success of the work and effective use of the funding we have secured is hugely dependent upon the timely provision of asset and financial data from all Risk Management Authorities. Since July 2018, we have been working as part of the Technical Group on the specification and provision of this data.

We are aiming to appoint consultants for Phase 1 by early February 2019 and we are keen to have this data before then. Therefore it is vital that we have your support in helping your clerks and engineers to provide this information in a timely manner and by the 21 January 2019.

This will enable the project to move forward efficiently avoiding abortive costs, and help us to continue to support your IDB in seeking FCRM Grant in Aid (GiA) for individual investments. If we have gaps or deficiencies in the data then we will not be developing a strategic approach and are unlikely to be successful in maximising FCRM GiA funding for future projects.

Alongside Phase 1 we also collectively need to start to plan for Phase 2 of this work. Phase 2 is likely to start in approximately 5 years' time and most likely be a strategic options appraisal, to identify the choices for medium and long term flood risk management in the Fens.

Amongst the many benefits of this work, it will help us all better inform, influence and justify the source, nature and levels of funding required to

creating a better place
for people and wildlife



evolve and manage flood and drainage infrastructure over the medium and long term. The scope and governance arrangements for Phase 2 will all need to be developed and agreed collaboratively and there is no presumption that the Environment Agency will lead.

Initial estimates from similar projects are that Phase 2 may cost in the region of £10 million to £15 million, and significant levels of partnership funding will be needed to be sourced to unlock and complement FCRM GiA. Therefore an investment strategy will be developed in parallel to Phase 1. Your Board may want to consider sooner rather than later how they choose to plan for this.

In the short term, whilst the strategic work is progressing, we all still need to continue to invest in the flood and drainage infrastructure within the Fens, without prejudicing any medium and long term choices. To frame this and support investment decision making in being as effective and efficient as possible, through the Technical Group we are also developing tactical plans for the Fens. These are looking at how we apportion benefits across respective infrastructure and apply these to upcoming investments. Once these are ready it may be useful to present to your Board.

It is a really interesting and exciting time with all this work. I hope you and your Board are supportive of the approach. If you have any questions or would like further information then please contact David, myself or our Project Executive, Claire Bell (Claire.Bell@Environment-Agency.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Paul Burrows", written over a faint horizontal line.

Flood & Coastal Risk Manager for East Anglia Area (Great Ouse catchment inc North West Norfolk coast)

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paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

customer service line 03708 506 506
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January 2019

The Strategic Approach for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Projects

Supplementary Local Guidance Version 1

In both Defra Policy Statements (Appraisal of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management June 2009 and Partnership Funding May 2011) demonstrating and evidencing a strategic approach to flood or coastal erosion risk is a requirement for every project, to ensure value for money for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCERM GiA).

Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs) and Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) form the large scale holistic view of risk management requirements at the catchment or coastal process scale, beneath which more detailed strategies, and the local scale risk management activities should be developed.

Primarily, all schemes seeking FCERM GiA allocation should be in line with or compliment any overarching strategic plan such, for example, the Great Ouse CFMP.

"SMPs or CFMPs will have collected information on the economic, environmental and social assets at risk, the defences or coast protection works that are in place and identified preferred policies. The SMP or CFMP will also have engaged with stakeholders and you may be able to draw some information from the results. Early links need to be made with SMPs or CFMPs and strategies (where applicable) as they may have already identified key issues and broad solutions (in CFMPs these are called generic responses). It is essential to link the problem back to the policy as defined in the SMP or CFMP (and for schemes, to the description of the strategy, where available) to ensure continuity is not lost. Any conflicts between the description of the problem for your project and the recommendation of the SMP or CFMP (or strategy) will need to be highlighted and reconciled before you can progress further." - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Appraisal Guidance, 2010.

The meaning of a 'strategic approach' is described throughout the FCERM Appraisal Guidance, March 2010, mainly in Chapter 3. It needs to include consideration of wider factors such as the economic, environmental, recreational and social factors that may affect or be affected by the proposed investment opportunity. These wider factors will then subsequently influence the selection of investment options to manage or mitigate the flood or coastal erosion risks. At the early stages of appraisal a wide range and broad portfolio of options should be identified, such as a change in pumping regimes, storage options and combining flood cells and assets for example. These options should be appropriate to the scale and type of project being undertaken.

Any strategic evaluation should be done as early as possible when planning a FCERM project. Findings should be evidenced within the business case, however, as this is produced much later than the initial project submission is submitted to the Environment Agency (through PAFS) it may be required that evidence of a strategic approach be made available to the Environment Agency on request in advance of the programme refresh. Failure to submit such evidence on request, will result in the maximum grant rate for the scheme being reduced to 45%.

"Where there is not a clear strategic approach setting out how benefits are apportioned to individual investments within a system of assets, the maximum grant rate allowable will be reduced to 45%. This means that all risk management authorities, including internal drainage boards, could receive up to 100% grant levels. The reduced grant rate, relevant for all risk management authorities, helps preserve value for money in cases where investments may only score well because benefits are being double-counted." – Partnership Funding Policy 2011

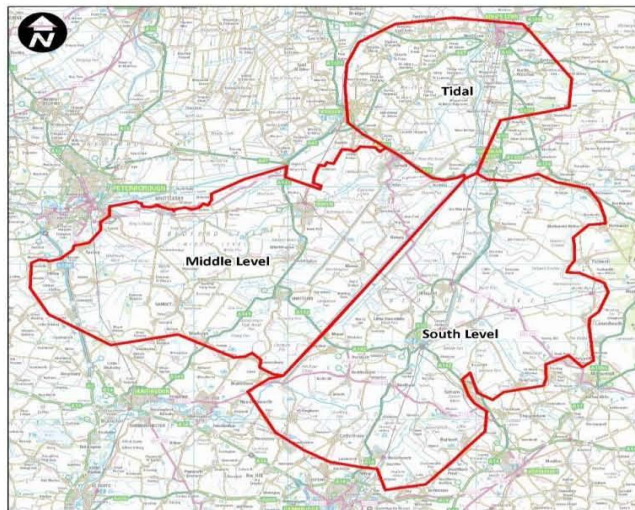
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes (affecting a lower number of outcome measures and/or seeking a smaller sum of funding) a discussion of how a scheme aligns with a strategic approach may suffice. This could be evidenced, for example in notes accompanying a PAFS submission or captured within meeting minutes held in the early planning stages. Similarly, a larger scheme will require a more substantial demonstration. Any such scheme should be able to include, or reference any strategic analysis prior to PAFS submission or annual programme refresh.

This guidance reinforces the Defra Policy Statements ([Appraisal of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management June 2009](#) and [Partnership Funding May 2011](#)), if these National policies change in the future, this guidance will be amended accordingly.

Flood risk management for the Fens – planning together for a sustainable flood risk future

‘Flood risk management for the Fens’ is a project that has been set up to plan the best way of managing future flood risk in the Great Ouse Fen Area. We are currently in the **first phase** of this project which is developing a shared understanding of the situation and challenges for managing flood risk (from all sources) in the Fens.

A Technical Group (TG) has been formed of organisations (see below) who have **flood risk assets**, or represent those with assets, in the geographical area that has been defined as the Great Ouse Fens.



We are **working together** to set out all the data about flood risk in the area outlined – defining who is managing flood risk, asset maintenance costs and potential available Flood Risk Management Grant in Aid (Government funding). This will identify any difference in **investment needs versus available funding**.

The most important outcome for the first phase of work is for the TG to have a **shared understanding** of the issues and challenges for managing flood risk in the Fens, and to have a **shared ownership** for taking action to overcome these issues.

Pressures on the Fens will come from many sources including, for example, climate change causing sea level rise affecting the Tidal River and the systems discharging into it, and catchment pressures from housing and infrastructure growth.

Following this initial data gathering phase, which we hope to complete in the next 18-24 months, we will produce a **joint project plan** for the next phase of work. The outcome of Phase 2 will be to produce a jointly owned strategic plan reviewing all options that could manage flood risk in the Fens, taking in to account climate change and sea level rise and recommending actions that will be the best/ most appropriate way of managing flood risk in the Fens over the next 50-100 years.

The TG will work closely with the Environment Agency’s Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team who are progressing a similar project for the Lincolnshire Fens, but at different timescales.

The TG understands that there are **many different areas of interest** within the Fens, and a lot of groups and individuals will be interested in the work of the project.

At this stage in the project, there is a very **strong focus on the flood risk management challenges** – specifically focusing on current flood risk management assets. We will keep interested stakeholders updated with the progress of this stage of the project and **our work will be overseen by the Anglian Central Regional Flood and Coastal Committee**.

The TG is aware of the importance of linking Phase 1 outputs to other projects shaping the future of the Fens landscape.



Mr Hill referred to the planning applications set out in the Consulting Engineers' report and to the Planning Engineer's comments.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers discuss with the Chairman and the Chairman be authorised to take any further action as he considers necessary with regards to:-
 - a) Extension of Witcham Meadlands Quarry (MLC Ref No. 303)
 - b) Developments at Cromwell Community College, Wenny Road, Chatteris (MLC Ref Nos. 173, 186 & 197)
 - c) Erection of an Aerobic Digester plant involving the construction of a new access and the formation of a surface water reservoir land east of Greys Farm, Iretons Way, Chatteris (MLC Ref Nos. 227, 231, 240, 245, 246, 305 & 309).

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 312) received for Mr M Latta.

(NB) - The Vice Chairman declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 227, 231, 240, 245, 246, 305 & 309) received for Pretoria Energy Ltd & Little Green Consulting Ltd.

B.2113 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

The Chairman reported on the position in relation to the back-up pump required and that an order had been placed.

Members discussed possible future pumping arrangements. The Chairman reported that the tractor was currently awaiting the flail mower to be fitted and that the Board's tractor had now been sold.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.
- ii) That the replacement pump be funded from existing balances.

B.2114 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The Chairman reported that the District Officer was keeping both the District and the Board's plant and equipment in good order.

In response to Mr Smith, the Chairman reported that the works to the pumping station bungalow ha been completed and were finished to the satisfaction of the District Officer.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

B.2115 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.2116 State-aided Schemes

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

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

Mr Hill reported that the EA undertook a 'refresh' of its grant allocation schedule and optimised it to increase the likelihood of meeting the government outcome measure targets. As part of this some schemes were deferred in favour of those which could be delivered within the next two years with certainty and the programme has, as a consequence, become financially oversubscribed. This effectively means that there will be little or no chance of receiving grant for any new schemes between now and 2021 (at the earliest). This date marks the end of the six-year funding commitment and whilst it is understood that the EA are pressing hard to have another six-year settlement and, if agreed to by treasury, for this to be larger than the previous one to help address the increasing investment required to tackle climate change driven impacts. At this point in time we do not know what will happen and changes could be made in any event to the funding model, what outcome targets are or the process of securing grant. What is clear is that the further ahead that IDBs collectively plan their investment needs the more likely whatever grant is available will be accessible by them.

Some members will recall that in 2009 asset surveys were carried out on all IDB pumping stations. As ten years has now passed it might be timely to revisit and update these to reflect any changes that might have occurred and for this updated information to be used to plan for future investment needs. Similarly, as it is five years since these assets were valued for insurance reasons, it is also considered worthwhile revising the rebuilding estimates to reflect construction cost inflation.

RESOLVED

- i) That no proposals be formulated at the present time.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to undertake an asset survey and to recalculate the pumping station valuations.

B.2117 District Labour District Officer's Salary

- a) Mr Hill reported that during the financial year 2018/2019 overtime and bonus payments had been made as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

b) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's salary for 2019.

c) NEST Pension Update

Further to minute B.2057(c), Mr Hill reported that the employer's Nest pension contribution rate had increased to 4% from the 1st April 2019.

Members discussed pension contribution increases and possible future arrangements for the Board.

RESOLVED

That the salary of the District Officer be increased by 1.5% from 1st October 2019 as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule and that this be reviewed annually at the summer meeting.

B.2118 Expenses Allowances

The Board gave consideration to the reimbursement of proper out of pocket expenses incurred by the Chairman and Vice Chairman on the Board's behalf.

RESOLVED

That the expenses allowances be increased annually by the same rate as applied to the District Officer's salary and that the sums of up to £1,725.00 and £1,511.00 be allowed to the Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Board for 2018/2019.

(NB) – The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

B.2119 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

The Board considered whether any revisions were necessary in their charges for hiring of plant for private work.

i) Atlas 140W Excavator

Present charge - £30 per hour in the District) (inclusive of operator's wages).
- £35 per hour outside the District)

ii) Flail mower

Present charge - £30 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

iii) Weed boat

Present charge - £30 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

iv) Piling Hammer

Present charge - £30 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

(NB) – Travelling time being charged in addition to working time.

RESOLVED

That all hire charges be increased by £5 per hour.

B.2120 Environment Agency – Precepts

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £110,345.21 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £105,091).

B.2121 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

- a) Mr Hill reported that the sum of £3,020.67 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£4,059.56 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019 less £1,038.89 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2017/2018).
- b) Further to minute B.2061, Mr Hill referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be monitored.

B.2122 Association of Drainage Authorities Future ADA Communications

Mr Hill referred to a letter received from ADA dated 18th October 2018 and to the form included with the agenda.

In order to continue to receive communications from ADA in 2019, ADA required a completed form from each Member. The form could also be completed and returned electronically via the link at www.ada.org.uk/communications.

B.2123 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2097, the Vice Chairman reported that following the last Board meeting he had met with the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, Jonathon Fenn, and Croner Consulting and it soon became apparent that Croner were not providing the service required by the Board and that his expectations were for a consultancy service to be able to provide risk assessment templates and help guide the Board through the health and safety requirements.

The Chairman reported that at the autumn Middle Level and Associated Drainage Board's Chairs meeting a presentation had been made by Cope Health and Safety Management who would provide health and safety consultancy to the administered Boards and be available to come out to individual Boards to assist in carrying out assessments and give guidance to Boards. He advised that consideration had also been given to the Middle Level Commissioners employing a Health and

Safety Officer to provide services to the administered Boards with similar re-charge arrangements as were in place for the Conservation Officer.

The Chairman further reported that it had been decided in favour of the consultancy option and to enter into a 3 year contract with Cope Safety Management with the annual payment being split between the Boards. Assuming all Boards joined the arrangement, he advised that the cost to the Board would be £600 per annum. However it was understood that particularly in the first year or so extra support may be needed and this could be provided at a day rate of £500 or at an hourly rate of £85 for part days.

RESOLVED

- i) That Cope Safety Management be appointed for a period of three years at a cost of £600 per annum, together with additional charges for any extra assistance requested.
- ii) That an additional 2 days consultancy be provided at a cost of £500 per day.
- iii) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any further actions that they consider appropriate.

B.2124 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.2125 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings and considered having a professional valuation of the Board's real estate assets, as required for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time and for the matter to be reviewed again at the next annual meeting.

B.2126 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.2127 Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.2128 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £247,977.05 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

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

B.2129 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2019 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 2019.

B.2130 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2019/2020

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2019/2020 and were informed by Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 81.32% and 18.68%.

The Chairman reported that most costs were reasonably fixed, the only variable being fuel costs in relation to pumping. Although there was now a new contract in place, he did not consider it necessary to increase the budget provision for this year, but it was likely that it and the rate would need to increase for subsequent years. Members agreed that if this were the case, they would be able to phase any possible increase.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £230,143 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- 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 £187,336 and £42,807 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 36.30p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

- v) a) That a Special levy of £18,863 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- b) That a Special levy of £15,639 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- c) That a Special levy of £8,305 be made and issued to East Cambridgeshire 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 levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.2131 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.2132 Dates of next Meetings

RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board be held as follows in 2020, viz:-

- i) Thursday the 16th January 2020 (prior to which the District Inspection will be held)
and
- ii) Tuesday the 2nd June 2020