

CONINGTON AND HOLME INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Conington and Holme Internal Drainage Board
held at the Admiral Wells Inn, Holme on Tuesday the 11th June 2019

PRESENT

J Racey Esq (Chairman)
G P Bliss Esq
P J Davies Esq

D Dudman Esq
D R Elmore Esq
R Elmore Esq

T R West Esq

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from T Alban Esq and P A Davies Esq.

B.981 Declarations of Interest

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

B.982 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 12th June 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.983 Election of Board Members

- a) Mr Hill reported that the term of office of the Members of the Board would expire on the 31st October 2019 and submitted the proposed Register of Electors applicable to the 2019 election.

RESOLVED

That the Register be approved.

- b) Board Membership

Mr Hill reported that there were 8 elected Members on the Board and currently there were no vacancies. The Chairman reported that Messrs Toby Simpson and James Davies had both expressed an interest in joining the Board. It was reported that it was unlikely that Mr P A Davies would stand for re-election.

B.984 Land Drainage Act 1991
Huntingdonshire District Council

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

B.985 Glatton Brook

Further to minute B.942, Mr D Elmore reported that the contractor had taken the trees out last autumn and the watercourse was now clear, although it would need to be monitored. He confirmed that there had been no charge to the Board for the work as the contractor had kept the wood for himself.

B.986 Great Fen Project

Further to minute B.944, Mr Hill informed Members that he was unable to provide a report as he had not been advised following the Sawtry IDB meeting the previous week.

Mr Elmore reported that works on alternative farming trials were to take place looking at growing wetland crops.

B.987 East Coast Main Line Level Crossing Closure Programme

Further to minute B.946, Mr Hill referred to the matter as discussed at last year's meeting and apologised as he had been unable to find any record of a letter having been sent, as had been requested.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that he would ensure a letter would be sent following the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Network Rail requesting that the vegetation and drainage channel at their culvert at Point 12 be maintained, together with the cleaning of the weedscreen, on a regular basis, as the restricted access to this area is preventing the Board from fulfilling its obligations to keep the water flowing.

B.988 BT Poles to Conington Peterborough – Points 22-24

Further to minute B.947, Mr Hill referred to the matter as discussed at last year's meeting and apologised as he had been unable to find any record of a letter having been sent, as had been requested.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that he would ensure a letter would be sent following the meeting.

RESOLVED

That, as a matter of urgency, the Clerk send a letter to BT requesting that the unused poles at points 22-24 be removed.

B.989 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.956(e), the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.990 Policy Statement

Further to minute B.956(f), the Board reviewed and approved their Policy Statement which had been updated following the publication of the National Audit Office (NAO) report on IDBs in March 2017.

RESOLVED

That the revised Policy Statement be adopted.

B.991 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.961, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.992 Catchwater Drain, upstream of Cooks Lane

Further to minute B.980, Mr Hill reported that he had discussed the matter with the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer who would be looking at options to remedy the problems. Mr R Elmore reported that he had previously spoken with the excavator driver who had told him that his instructions had been to leave certain sections. Members raised concerns over the loss of the compliance strip.

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer liaise with the Chairman concerning options in relation to bank stabilisation.

B.993 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised:-

- i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a second Chair's meeting was held on the 17th October 2018 and that discussions centred around meeting Health and Safety legislative requirements and the possible options for increased efficiency in delivery of IDB/DDC services. Outline detailed proposals on the latter are to be brought before the next Chair's meeting for consideration.

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.

The Chairman referred to the Chair's meeting where there were discussions concerning the repetition and duplication within the administered Boards and that consideration was given to one Board and advisory committees. Members discussed the possible liability for the advisory committees and if this could be covered by insurance as is currently the case for Board Members. Mr Bliss referred to the possible employment of staff for a new single Board and Mr R Elmore considered the proposals to be over-complicated.

Mr Hill referred to possible differential rating and in response to Mr West referred to possible ways in which individual Board's finances could be held within a new single Board. He also referred to the Board's financial position and how this might be affected by these proposed arrangements.

RESOLVED

That the matter be looked into further and discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

- ii) Association of Drainage Authorities
 - a) Annual Conference

That the 81st Annual Conference of the Association had been held at the ICE building in Westminster on Wednesday 14th November 2018 and had been well attended with the main speakers being Sue Hayman MP, Shadow Secretary for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Robert Hössen crisis management expert from the Netherlands, John Curtin, Executive Director of Flood and Coastal Risk Management at the Environment Agency and David Cooper Deputy, Director for Flood and Coastal Erosion Management at Defra.

Sue Hayman Affairs spoke about her first-hand experience of flooding in Cumbria, the impact of flooding on mental health, building on flood plains and river management without environmental change and funding.

Robert Hössen gave a presentation on how incident management is organised and dealt with in the Netherlands.

John Curtin gave a presentation on the effects of climate change and referred to the government's discussions regarding the likelihood, impact and severity of climate change.

David Cooper referred to the 25 year environment plan and to various Government publications made in 2018, which can be viewed online.

That the Officers had been re-elected, subscriptions would be increasing by 2% for the following year and the Conference marked the launch of the Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members.

That the Conference also marked the first presentation of the Chairman's award which were presented to Ian Russell from the Environment Agency for his work on Public Sector Co-operation Agreements and to Cliff Carson, former Environmental Officer of the Middle Level Commissioners and the Boards, for his work which was instrumental in changing views concerning conservation.

b) 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.

c) 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.

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

That, at the Annual Conference last November, ADA launched the publication of the Good Governance Guide for IDB Board Members. It provides Members with a comprehensive guide to their role as water managers servicing the local communities. The document has been produced with the financial support of Defra and will provide Members with knowledge to help expand their grasp of the role, and how best to execute their responsibilities on the Board.

That a copy of the Guide for each Member has been included with this agenda and can be downloaded from the ADA website.

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.

e) Workstreams

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

iii) External Bodies Conservation Initiatives

That there are two projects which may have an impact on the Board:-

a) The New Life on the Old West project being led by Cambs ACRE which aims to improve public understanding of the unique nature of biodiversity in the Fens and to deliver improvements on community green spaces and the ditch network. At the time of report the project has received a £100k grant to develop the project to the point at which a further £3/4 million grant bid will be made to support delivery.

b) The Cambridgeshire Fens Biosphere, Heritage Lottery have provided £10,000 of funding to research what would be necessary to bring Biosphere Reserve status to the Fens. This project is being led by the Wildlife Trust with support from Cambs ACRE. If successful, this would lead to a new UNESCO designation. This would be a non-statutory designation which records the unique nature of the area. Most recently, the project received £1m for field scale alternative farming trial works in the Great Fen area and to assist with the Biosphere bid.

iv) Catchment Strategy

That the EA, LLFA, IDBs and other partners are co-operating in a piece of work which is looking at the pressures on the catchment from a development and climate change perspective. The aim will be to develop proposals which will guide and inform discussion makers.

v) Water Resources East Group Meeting

That the Middle Level Commissioners are setting up a Committee to discuss how they can work more closely with Anglian Water and other partners to ensure that the management of water and the quantity taken from the River Nene can be maximized in stressed years.

The Vice Chairman reported that water intake into the Middle Level system was via one point at Stanground and current flows were very low and, in his opinion, unless there is reasonable rainfall there could be the possibility of shortages. He reported that part of the work of the group was to model the intake for Anglian Water which could hopefully lead to a better overall allocation for agricultural use.

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.975, Mr Hill advised that the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract had been monitored and was pleased to report that the service provided had improved.

In view of the significant increase in prices observed a utility specialist was approached and like for like prices at the time of tender, for a sample of meters, were requested in order that a comparison could be made with the prices obtained by Anglia Farmers. Although some savings may have been made, overall the prices obtained from Anglia Farmers were found to be generally competitive.

A verbal report was presented to the Middle Level Commissioners at their last Board meeting and, based on the results of the pricing comparison exercise and in view of the service provided by Anglia Farmers having improved, the Middle Level Commissioners resolved to remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2019.

The Clerk had recommended that the Board also remain with Anglia Farmers. However, should the Board wish to choose to end their current contract, notice was required to be given by late January/early February 2019 following which they would then be responsible for negotiating their own separate electricity contract thereafter.

Mr Hill reported that the Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved and the Board remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2019.

vii) 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.

viii) 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 come 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.994 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Conington & Holme I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2019

Pumping Station

It was noted that the pump construction fixings were becoming corroded, this is perhaps not surprising as the pumps have not been removed for inspection/overhaul for over 25 years. Therefore, during the winter a visual inspection of the pumps and associated parts was carried out to determine service life and the following observations made:



The top and discharge bend of the pump is in good condition largely protected by the excess grease from the grease pumps however the column pipe directly below the discharge bend has unusual signs of corrosion for a cast pipe (see photo below). Although the pipe material appears to be cast iron the flanges appear to be welded on, this may suggest an inferior quality hence the unusual amount of corrosion.

The pump assembly bolts are in a very poor condition and have a maximum of 3 years life left in them (see photos below)



The photo below shows the horizontal discharge pipes through the station wall. The pipes are clearly mild steel and are badly corroded and have de laminated.



The station piling is in a poor condition with areas that have little or no structural integrity at all. The area shown is under 2mm thick and deforms easily suggesting there is nothing but earth behind it.



The photo left is of the steel channel/capping beam, whilst not important structurally it does show the degree of corrosion within the wet well (webs which were once 10 or 12mm thick have now blown to over 35mm)

Recommendations:

It is understood that the station was built in 1970. Whilst the pumps were overhauled in excess of 25 years ago the station itself has not had any major overhaul since its construction. With the state of the pump assembly bolts being so bad it is recommended they be replaced when the water levels are lowered in the autumn. With this holding measure it is anticipated the pumps and the station will continue for a further 7 years around which point structural failure is a real possibility. With the apparent state of the pump column pipes there seems little point in removing and overhauling the pumps as they are relatively small pumps and it may be more cost effective to replace the pumps.

Pumping Hours**Conington Pumping Station**

Pump	Total hours run Apr 15-Apr 16	Total hours run Apr 16-Apr 17	Total hours run Apr 17-Apr 18	Total hours run Apr 18 – May 19
No 1	41	15	376	6
No 2	196	110	43	54
	Total hours run Mar 12-Apr 13	Total hours run Apr 13-Apr 14	Total hours run Apr 14-Apr 15	
No 1	289	116	59	
No 2	599	412	593	

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 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.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 13 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
205	H/18/00522/HHFUL	Mrs E Carling	Residential (Store/workshop/office)	Conington Lane, Conington*
206	H/18/01129/REM	Mr Angood	Residential (2 plots)	Conington Lane, Conington
207	H/18/00901/FUL	J H Simpson & Son	Agricultural (Grain store)	Old North Road, Stilton
208	H/18/01387/HHFUL	Mr J McLelland	Residence (Extensions)	Sawtry Road, Glatton
209	H/18/01736/HHFUL	Mr D Miller	Residence (Garage)	Mill Hill, Glatton
210	H/18/01872/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Braid	Residence (Extension)	Church Lane, Conington
211	H/18/02584/HHFUL	Mr G Milne	Residence (Extension)	Station Road, Holme
212	H/18/02631/PMBPA	J H Simpson & Son	Residence	Old North Road, Stilton
213	H/19/00073/PMBPA	Mr P Davies	Residence	Infield Road, Glatton
214	H/19/00479/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Irvine	Residence (Extension)	Church Street, Holme
215	H/19/00465/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Laughton	Residence (Extension)	High Haden Road, Glatton

216	H/19/00178/FUL	Ms T Cope	Equine (Paddocks, access road, stable block and manège)	Infield Road, Glatton
217	H/19/00696/PMBPA	Mr & Mrs Payne	Residence	Caldecote Road, Washingley

***Planning applications ending 'HHFUL' relate to Householder applications for Full Planning Permission
Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters
Planning applications ending 'PMBPA' relate to Prior Approval - Agricultural to Dwellings***

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

For his garage at *Mill Hill, Glatton* (MLC Ref No 209), *Mr D Miller* chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process and, in doing so, agreed that if the device 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 Board's interests.

Extensions and alterations to bungalow at 17 Infield Road, Glatton - Mr & Mrs Gordon
(MLC Ref No 197)

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.

Various developments at Glatton Hall, Glatton Ways, Glatton – Glatton Hall Estates Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 066, 070 & 120), Mr J. McClelland (MLC Ref No 079), Newton Chinneck Ltd operating as St Georges Care Home (MLC Ref Nos 127 & 142) and Berkley Care (Glatton) Ltd (MLC Ref No 204)

Further to the last Board Meeting Report the District Council refused planning permission for the re-development of the existing site with a purpose built 70-bed care home "for residents requiring nursing, dementia and residential care, car parking and landscaped gardens" in late October.

Reasons for refusal primarily refer to the impacts on the conservation area but drainage was also a reason quoted, as follows;

“3. Reason. Insufficient details in regards to the drainage of the site have been submitted, it has not been possible to fully assess the drainage implications of the proposal and therefore the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable in this regard, accordingly the proposal is considered contrary to the guidance contained within the NPPF, Local Plan (1995) Policy CS8 and Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 Policy LP16”.

The applicant has submitted an Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

Developments at D J C Produce, Pingle Bank, Holme - DJC Farms Ltd (MLC Ref No 084), NJC & Sons Farms (MLC Ref No 194) and Client of RAB Consultants (MLC Ref No 201)

This outline planning application for a twenty-five plot residential development, following the demolition of the existing buildings on site, was granted planning permission, subject to the imposition of conditions, by Huntingdonshire District Council in early May.

The Decision Notice does not appear to include the surface water condition suggested by the County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

To date, the applicant; its agent, SISCO Architecture Ltd; and its engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, have not contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be approved should the proposal proceed. An application for discharge consent, has not been received.

Members will be aware of the problems in the area and are reminded that no increase in rates or volumes of flow will be recommended for consent as this is likely to have detrimental consequences on the Board's system.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion, further instruction and approval to initially write to the parties concerned in order to resolve any potential issues.

Various developments at Yew Tree Cottage, 4 Conington Lane, Conington – Mr & Mrs Carling (MLC Ref Nos 122 & 176) + Mrs E Carling (MLC Ref No 205)

Further to previous reports this planning application was submitted to the District Council in March 2018. The proposal was for the erection of a structure intended to contain a workshop, materials and tool storage, and a first floor home office for sole use by the residents/owners of Yew Tree Cottage and supersedes the previously approved

workshop HDC Ref 0800567FUL (MLC Ref No 122). The structure will remain ancillary to Yew Tree Cottage unless otherwise approved via separate application.

The structure is proposed at the northern end of the site, on the northern side of an existing surface water watercourse that crosses the site from east to west, which is believed to be outside of the Board's rateable area and thus of interest to the LLFA and not the Board.



Campbell McCrae Ltd Drawing No. 2666_03 Proposed site layout plan

The applicants' land fronts Conington Brook, a Board's Drain, and is thus subject to its byelaws. In the absence of any suitable plans it is difficult to confirm its location but it is believed to be outside of the Board's 9.0m wide maintenance access strip.

The planning application form advises that surface water disposal will be to the “existing watercourse”. An application for discharge consent, has not been received.

Planning permission was granted by the District Council subject to the imposition of planning condition, none of which are of interest to the Board.

To date neither the applicants nor their agent, Campbell McCrae Ltd, have 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 Board’s opinion, further instruction and approval to initially write to the parties concerned in order to resolve any potential issues.

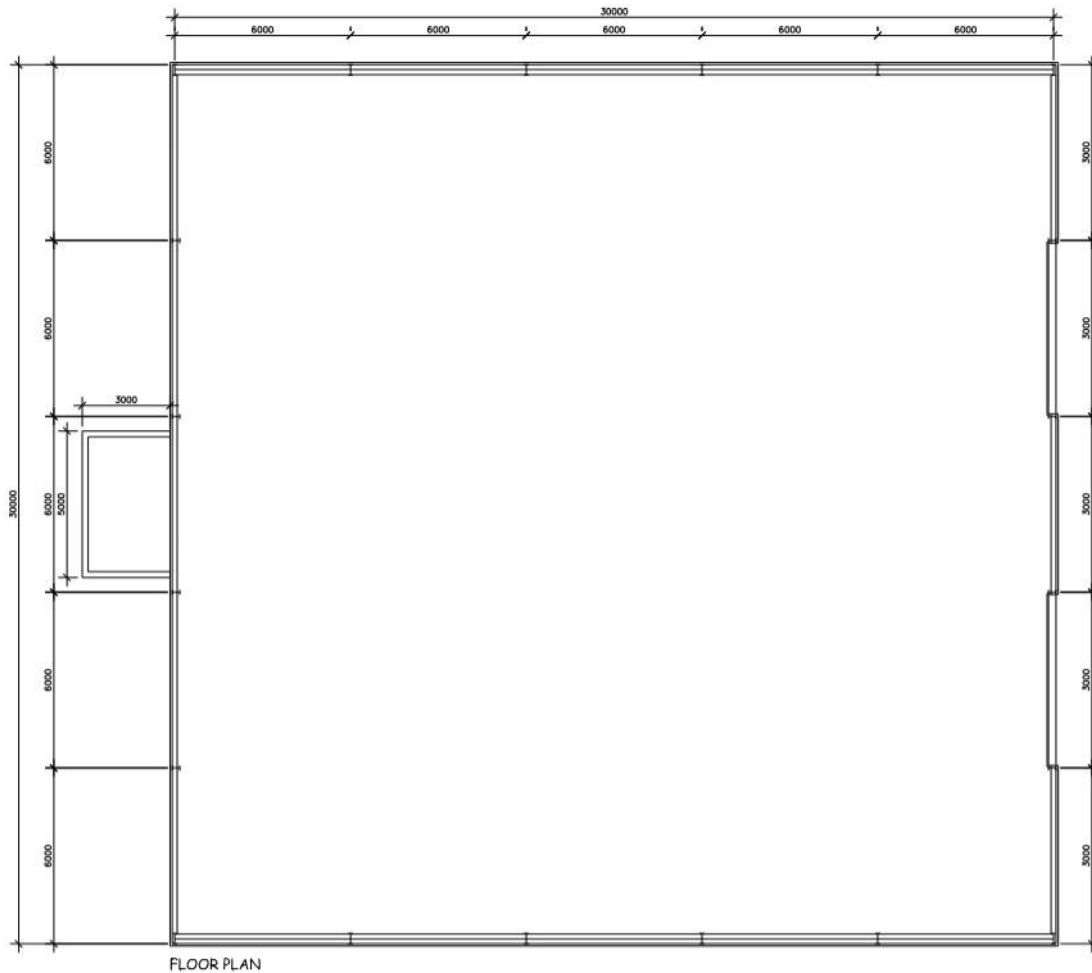
Various developments at Denton Lodge Farm, Old North Road, Stilton – J H Simpson & Son (MLC Ref Nos 207 & 212)

(a) Erection of grain store

A planning application for a 30m x 30m agricultural building was submitted to the District Council and subsequently granted planning permission in August 2018. None of the imposed conditions are relevant to the Board.

Despite the size of the development (900m² for the building alone), which is equivalent to several medium to large houses, this type of development is not classed as a “major development” and, therefore, the LLFA is not a statutory consultee for this type of application.

The means of surface water disposal have not been specified and may be via soakaways but no evidence to support this was supplied with the planning submission.



Extract from Partners in Planning and Architectures Drawing No. 17/77/GS1

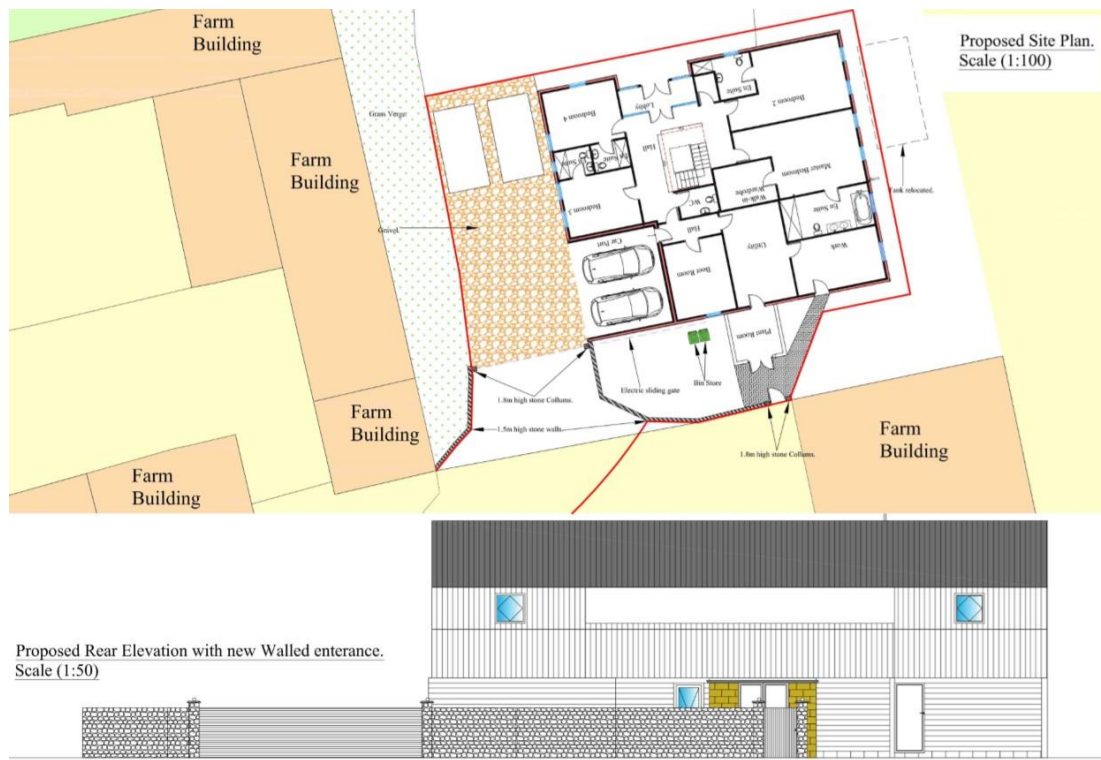
(b) Conversion of a grain store into a dwelling

A notification was submitted to the District Council in December to convert an agricultural building into one dwelling under Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2018.

Planning permission was approved by the District Council subject to the imposition of planning conditions none of which are of interest to the Board.

No reference was made in the submission documents, or appears to have been given consideration, to the disposal of treated foul effluent water.

Members will be aware of the problems in the area and are reminded that no increase in rates or volumes of flow will be recommended for consent as this is likely to have detrimental consequences on the Board's system.



Extract from DJ Designs UK Ltd Drawing No. 2169_05 Rev. A

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion, further instruction and approval to initially write to the parties concerned in order to resolve any potential issues.

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 have been taken into consideration by the County Council and some additional revisions made to the proposed Validation List and Guidance Notes will be presented to the Planning Committee meeting on Thursday 16 May 2019 to seek approval for them.

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 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 MLC are also a partner. The number of meetings held each year may reduce from four to three.

Flood risk activities: environmental permits (formerly flood defence consents)

The Environment Agency's (EA) new Environmental Permitting Charging Scheme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charging-scheme>. Early engagement with the EA is recommended as a slight redesign of the proposal may reduce the fees required.

Riparian Responsibilities

There has been discussion about issues concerning land owner's responsibilities on riparian "private" watercourses and the amount of time and resources that are taken up by various RMAs, including the Board, in dealing with riparian issues.

It was suggested that a recommendation be made to the RFCC. The options being considered are to do nothing; seek Government Support; or undertake an awareness campaign in the Public Domain with The Law Society, Local Government members etc. It is accepted by the partner members that some initial investment in time and resources may be required to progress these items further.

Discussions included the "Owning a watercourse" webpage, which replaced the Living on the Edge booklet, this is considered to be a backward step as the information that can be presented on the .gov.uk website is very limited.

The webpage can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>.

Hedge and Ditch Rule

Following a problem in the area covered by the Ely Group of IDBs this "common law" ruling that is mainly used to determine boundaries disputes and the requirements of the Land Drainage Act, notably Section 25, is currently being discussed with various parties including the former Commissioners' and Boards' Clerk, Iain Smith.

The latest ruling which dates to 2015 can be downloaded from the Mills and Reeve website, which can be found at <https://www.mills-reeve.com/boundaries-and-the-hedge-and-ditch-rule-12-07-2015/>

Bank Instability - Environment Agency (EA)/IDB approach

The EA and IDBs advised on their respective position in respect of reinstating channels that have failed. These are largely the same but due to cost constraints the EA now only stabilises channels where there are raised embankments.

For Award Drains the wording of the Award needs to be considered. Some refer to the landowner and not the Authority concerned.

IDB & LLFA Planning Process

An update was given on the LLFA's discussions with North Level and District IDB, the Ely Group and the Middle Level Commissioners in order to attain a collective approach where possible.

However, it was explained that all three authorities have different approaches to some items and that any discussions with the planning authorities and agents may be iterative.

The LLFA/AWSL/MLC Liaison meeting was briefly discussed. The EA expressed an interest in joining this group.

Emergency Planning & Response

A draft flooding newspaper article and a flood call questions template, for completion by reception staff when receiving a flooding related call, is currently being prepared by a member of the Flood & Water team.

Skills & Apprenticeships

The Government is promoting the use of Apprenticeships and it is noted that many authorities are using these in preference to other forms of training.

It is understood that the EA, together with other partners, is developing a new Apprenticeship Standard for Water Environment Workers in England. This aims to support the training and development of workers who carry out operational activities in organisations where there is a responsibility to manage the impact of water environments, natural or manmade, on the land and surrounding businesses and homes. The water environment includes rivers, coasts (the sea), lakes, wetlands, canals and reservoirs.

County Council Public Sector Services

In addition to undertaking its role the group was advised that the Flood & Water Team may be extending its service to another County Council. 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.

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.

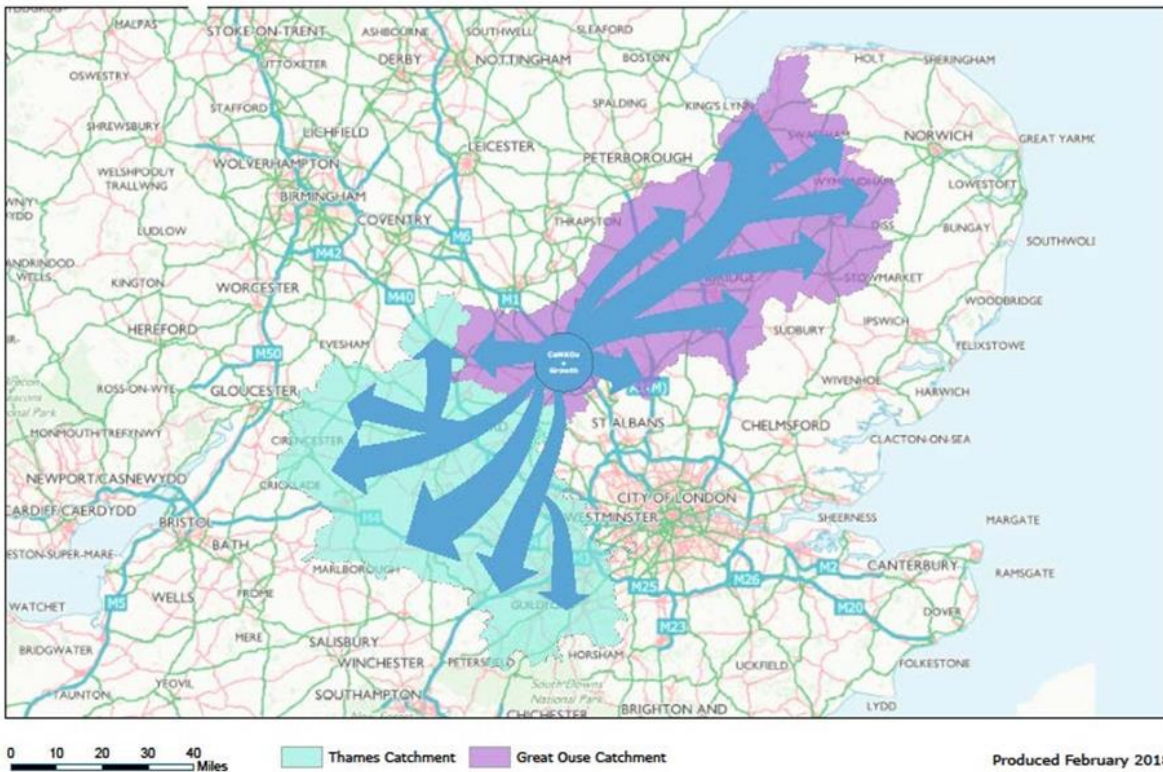
Rain Gauges

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

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).



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

Flood Risk Management Trainees

As part of closer partnership working, training has been given to junior members of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council staff and an undergraduate studying for a FRM degree under the EA foundation scheme. The main purpose of the training was to give the candidates a better and broader understanding of water level and flood risk management and also how the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners operate.

Feedback from both the candidates and internally has been positive and it is hoped that this opportunity can be offered again when the occasion arises.

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

Matters raised by the East Ridings of Yorkshire Council, who had governance concerns over IDBs within its area of jurisdiction, were briefly discussed.

It is understood that correspondence was copied to all LLFAs and that Cllr Steve Count (Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council) provided a response which advised that the County Council had good partnerships with IDBs in the County.

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>

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]

The EA has recently commenced the FRM for the Fens Project to determine the best way of managing future flood risk. As a result a technical group has been formed, including representation from the Middle Level Commissioners.

The project was discussed at the EAs Large Projects Review Group (LPRG) meeting in November. The LPRG stated that all partners who seek future Flood Risk Management Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funding but do not share its data for the Baseline Report are likely to be denied, or capped to 45%, as they will not be able to demonstrate a strategic approach.

The project is currently at the data collection stage and details of the Board's system and any hydraulic models are being collated to inform the successful consultant, who will be appointed to progress Phase 1 of the 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 recently been amended.

Consulting Engineer

31 May 2019

C&H(307)\Reports\May 2019

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

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



.....

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

Mobile: 07824 431597

paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

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

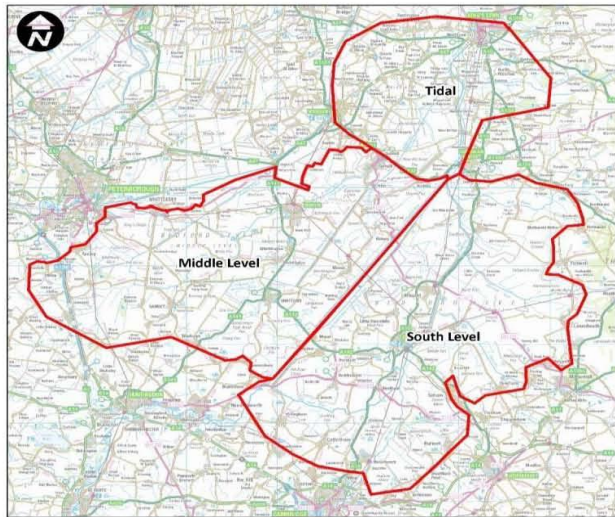
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes (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.



The Chairman referred to the Consulting Engineer's report on the pumping station and the recommendation to replace the wet well bolts. In response to the District Officer, Mr Hill informed Members that the Engineer had indicated that the cost of these works would be between £3,000-£3,500.

Members discussed the Engineer's recommendations. Mr Bliss queried if the sump and foundations would be able to be re-used should a new station be needed. The District Officer considered that the building was in reasonable condition and in response to Mr Bliss confirmed that there were two pumps at the station but generally only one was required to be used at any time. Mr Bliss considered that there was a lot of information that the Board required and wondered if a Board inspection at the pumping station with the Consulting Engineer would be beneficial.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers contact the Chairman to arrange a date for a Board inspection at the pumping station to discuss the current state of the station and review possible options.
- iii) That the Planning Engineer be authorised to contact relevant parties in order to resolve any outstanding issues.

B.995 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review and updated as more information becomes available concerning the pumping station.

B.996 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Mr Hill referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2018, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.997 Report on maintenance work in the District

a) Gravity Area

Mr D Elmore reported that there was a fallen tree in Conington Brook but that it was not currently holding water up. He wondered if the Board could get a contractor in to remove and take the tree away but considered it may need an excavator to assist with its' removal. He reported that there was more siltation in sections 33-32-35 which would require attention this year along with sections 34-32. Mr West agreed to walk the area to see if adjacent watercourses were in good order or if they required attention whilst the machine was in the area.

b) Pumped Area

The Chairman referred to sections 12-13 which would require de-silting this year.

c) Flail Mowing

Members considered the flail mowing undertaken last year and the arrangements to be made for this year.

RESOLVED

i) That de-silting works be organised for drain sections:

33-32-35

34-32

12-13

ii) That the contractor be contacted concerning the removal of the tree from Conington Brook and the Chairman be authorised to take any further action concerning this as he considers appropriate.

iii) That Messrs Davies and Elmore be authorised to undertake flail mowing operations for the Board for 2019/2020.

(NB) –Messrs D and R Elmore declared interests when this item was discussed.

B.998 State-aided Schemes

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

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, in view of the Board carrying out a full review of the pumping station, no action concerning the asset survey or valuation was relevant at this time.

B.999 Environment Agency – Precepts

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £2,049.02 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £1,951).

B.1000 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Mr Hill reported that the sum of £774.15 (£2,915.19 less £2,141.04 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2017/2018 together with the sum of £911.05 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019.

(b) Further to minute B.954(b), Mr Hill referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be kept under review.

B.1001 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2019, viz:- from £542 to £553.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2019.

b) 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.1002 Health and Safety

Mr Hill reported that at the autumn Middle Level and Associated Drainage Board's Chairs meeting, a request was made to seek to either take on an additional employee or employ a contractor to specifically support the Drainage Board's to help them meet their legal Health and Safety requirements and also deliver the specified requirements of the Board's insurers who are calling for evidence that appropriate measures are in place to manage Health and Safety.

The Chairman reported on the discussions at the Chair's meeting and the presentation made by Cope Safety Management and that he had received a letter dated the 25th April advising that it had been agreed at the Chairs meeting 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 arrangements, he advised that the cost to the Board would be £200 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.

Mr Bliss considered that it was likely that when the report was completed there would be some works and expenditure to attend to any issues raised.

RESOLVED

That Cope Safety Management be appointed for a period of three years at a cost of £200 per annum, together with additional charges for any extra assistance requested.

B.1003 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2017/2018

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

B.1004 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

B.1005 Budgeting

Mr Hill referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.1006 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1007 Risk Management Assessment

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

B.1008 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Mr Hill reported that, as resolved at its last meeting, the Board will continue with a limited assurance review and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

RESOLVED

To continue with a limited assurance review as has been carried out in previous years.

B.1009 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.1010 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.1010 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £34,438.72 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payments made to Davies Contracting.

B.1011 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.1012 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:-

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

Members discussed the cost of replacing the wet well bolts at the pumping station and possible future capital investment. Mr Hill confirmed that it would be possible for Area 2 to borrow the money from Area 1 to replace the wet well bolts but considered that this should be over a maximum period of 3 years.

Members approved to borrow the funds for the replacement of the wet well bolts at the pumping station and to review the position fully at the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £19,499 be raised by drainage rates and special levy (Area 1 - £9,091; Area 2 - £10,408).
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are:-

	<u>Area 1</u>	<u>Area 2</u>
Drainage rates	£4,918	£10,154
Special levy	£4,173	£254

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

<u>Area 1</u>	<u>Area 2</u>
7.40p in the £	21.0p in the £

- v) That a Special levy of £4,427 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1013 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.1014 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 9th June 2020.