

BENWICK INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Benwick Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Thursday the 15th June 2020

PRESENT

M Jackson Esq (Vice Chairman)	Mrs D Laws
M Fisher Esq	Mrs K Mayor
P N Fountain Esq	J M Palmer Esq
E Jackson Esq	G Wakeham Esq
R Wicks Esq	

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman was appointed as Chair of the meeting.

The Vice Chairman enquired whether ALL Board members were happy for the meeting to be recorded. All members were in agreement.

The Vice Chairman welcomed Councillors Mrs Dee Laws and Mrs Kay Mayor and Mr Edward Jackson who were attending their first meeting of the Board.

Apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from D R Stokes Esq.

B.1179 Standing Orders

Mr Hill reported that to allow the Board to modify the manner in which they hold meetings (for a temporary period) whilst special arrangements are in place to deal with COVID-19, Defra have agreed to the adoption of modified standing orders. Members considered the adapted set of the new model orders, as supplied by ADA, which include two extra clauses at the end of them which include a change to the way in which meetings are held to allow remote attendance.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve in principle.

B.1180 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.

Councillors Mrs Laws and Mrs Mayor declared interests in all planning matters as members of Fenland District Council's Planning Committee

Councillor Mrs Laws declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1181 Confirmation of Minutes

Mr Hill reported that Mr Thacker also declared a financial interest in minute B.1158

RESOLVED

That, subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 10th June 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1182 Election of Board Members

Further to minute B.1148, Mr Hill reported that Mr Edward Jackson had accepted the invitation to become a Member of the Board.

Mr Hill reported that the term of Office of the elected Members of the Board would expire on the 31st October 2020 and submitted the proposed Register of Electors applicable to the 2020 election.

Mr Hill also reported that the Chairman, David Stokes, had confirmed that due to his retirement he would be standing down as a member of the Board and therefore as Chairman and as this was an election year the new Board would appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman at its' next scheduled meeting.

The Vice Chairman reported that Mr Stokes had proposed Mr Michael Smalley be appointed to the Board.

Members considered that the position of Chairman could be filled following the election.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Register be approved.
- ii) That Mr Stokes' decision be received with regret and that the Board's appreciation of the manner in which Mr Stokes had undertaken his duties as Chairman be recorded in the minutes.
- iii) That the Vice Chairman stand in as Chairman until the next scheduled meeting of the Board.
- iv) That Mr Michael Smalley be invited to become a member of the Board, if willing to do so.

B.1183 Land Drainage Act 1991 Board Membership

Further to minute B.1149(a), Mr Hill reported that Fenland District Council had also appointed Councillor Mrs K Mayor to be a Member of the board under the provisions of the land Drainage Act 1991.

B.1184 Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute B.1112, Mr Hill reported that the relevant licences have been applied for for the MLC and associated Boards and that these were due to be validated before the end of December 2019 and then the EA have 3 further years to determine them. He also advised that it was worth noting that the EA have confirmed that only MLC system to IDB transfers do not require a separate licence.

B.1185 Land at Turf Fen, Chatteris

Further to minute B.1164, Mr Hill apologised to the Board in that he had not received an update on the position from the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor and could not therefore confirm if the relevant notice had been sent. Mr Wakeham considered that the Board could therefore look at issue of a notice for an October 2021 review but queried if this would be allowed under the terms of the agreement. Concerning the terms of the agreement, in response to Councillor Laws, Mr Hill reported that he did not have the agreement readily available so was unable to confirm the position.

RESOLVED

- i) That, having missed the 2020 opportunity, the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor check the terms of the agreement to establish if it would be possible to carry out a review in 2021.
- ii) That following this confirmation, if allowable, the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor take advice on the land value and initiate a rent review and serve notice for an October 2021 review, if appropriate.

B.1186 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised:-

i) COVID-19 Actions

That following the instructions given by government on 23rd March the following list of actions have been taken (this list is not exhaustive);

- Arrangements were made for all MLC staff to have the facility to work from home. This included access to email, and in most cases full remote access to work computers. This was implemented and fully operational by Wednesday 25th March.
- MLC operatives continue to attend work but in a more restricted manor following NHS guidelines.
- A skeleton rota to ensure that the office phones are manned has been put in place, post is received and processed and letters sent out where necessary.
- Other temporary arrangements have been implemented to help support the continued operation of the office whilst the COVID-19 government restrictions remain in place, this includes allowing more flexible hours of work, allowing access to the office as and when required to collect or deposit papers making arrangements for the post to be collected and delivered to a safe location outside the office.
- A licence to run video conferencing meeting was obtained and arrangements made to hold meetings by telephone and/or video. Chairmen were contacted at each stage as government advice emerged.

- A policy statement was issued via the MLC website stating the actions the MLC were taking.
- Consultation with ADA on more or less a daily basis were undertaken in the first few weeks encouraging them to take proactive action. Of value to us (and as called for) ADA have been able to secure IDBs 'Key Worker' status and have obtained approval from Defra to move to web/telephone conference meetings.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a fourth Chair's Meeting was held on the 26th November 2019.

The meeting commenced with a presentation with slides covering the lottery funded 'Fens Biosphere' bid. This UNESCO designation would have no statutory backing but instead aims to draw attention to the unique nature of the area. Good practice sharing would be facilitated and a framework of support for positive action developed. The idea is to frame the application around the Cambridgeshire peat lands and the IDB districts which provide a network of interconnecting watercourses. As this designation would not lead to a set of actions which would be enforced but could have a positive impact on the area the Board were asked (at this stage) to consider giving its approval in principle to the bid.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve support for the Biosphere bid in principle

Health and Safety discussions followed and it was agreed that the new arrangement with Cope Safety Management was working well.

The future vision for the MLC and IDBs was discussed and is covered as a separate agenda item.

On member training, after discussion, it was agreed that members would benefit from training on 'communications and engagement' as it was felt that Boards generally had challenges in getting messages across to the public.

The only other item covered in any detail was in relation to Board agendas and minutes. It was resolved that the Chairs supported the move to reducing the amount of paper leaving the MLC offices and it was also agreed, for reasons of efficiency, that Chairs be provided with an action points list as soon as practical after the meetings but in advance of issuing draft minutes.

That a fifth Chair's Meeting was held on the 10th March 2020.

Topics discussed included health and safety, effective communications with the public, the move to electronic agendas, consideration of the level of planning information included in reports, planning fees and the work of WRE.

Planning and Consenting

One of the agreed actions from the last Chair's meeting was that each Board be asked to consider the degree of delegation and reporting they require on planning and consenting matters. This was in response to several queries over the extent of detail being reported on such matters and the delays in issuing responses due to the number of people being consulted. I have outlined several possible options below to assist the Board but of course there are many other permutations and it is for the Board to decide which suits its interests best.

- a) Remain with the current arrangements.
- b) Continue to delegate all commenting on consent applications and relevant planning matters to the chairman and in his absence (or where he has an interest) to the Vice Chair. The Chair to have the power to decide if a matter should be raised at the board meeting for its consideration where legal timeframes permit this. All matters however to be reported generally more briefly within the Board report, ie number of applications responded to and number of consents issued or refused.
- c) As above but leaving the Clerk with the power to determine the appropriate responses to consent applications and planning matters without reference to the Chair or Vice Chair.

Councillor Laws reported that as a member of Fenland District Council’s Planning Committee there were numerous occasions when applications were being discussed and it was reported that no response had been received from the Middle Level Commissioners. With regards to planning application responses she enquired if the Board considered they were being properly served by the Middle Level Commissioners. In response to a query concerning fees, Mr Hill outlined how the Planning Engineer charged the Board for dealing with applications.

Mr Fisher reported that as the Board only met once a year these applications needed to be dealt with on an ongoing basis, which would normally be through the Chairman. Mr Wakeham considered that as the outgoing Chairman was not present it was difficult to currently review this matter fully. Councillor Laws wondered if it would provide better value for money to the Board if the applications were dealt with by a sub-committee of Board members. Councillor Mayor reported that she also sat on the Fenland District Council’s Planning Committee and fully supported the points raised by Councillor Laws and that all applications had a respond by date and therefore needed to be dealt with in a timely manner. Councillor Laws reported that she would be happy to discuss the matter further with officers at the Middle Level Commissioners.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board’s concerns over delays in responding to planning applications be raised with the Middle Level Commissioners’ Chief Executive.
- ii) That the current arrangements remain in place and the matter be reviewed further at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.
- iii) That the Middle Level Commissioners’ Chief Executive be requested to discuss the Commissioners’ current policy with regards to planning application responses with Councillor Laws.
- iii) Application for byelaw consent

That the following application for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses had been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board:-

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Consent Granted</u>
Mr N G Thacker	Installation of 14 no field underdrain outfalls between Points 44 and 46, Points 46 and 49 and Points 50 and 52 near Marley Farm, Benwick	30 th January 2020

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consent be approved.

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 82nd Annual Conference of the Association had been held at the ICE building in Westminster on Wednesday 13th November 2019.

The conference was very well attended and the speakers this year were:-

Stuart Roberts - Vice President National Farmers' Union – an arable and livestock farmer who has also worked for Defra and Flood Standards Agency – who shared his views on the need for more radical and bold thinking on flood risk management and the supply of water for agriculture.

Bryan Curtis – Chair Coastal Group Network – Chartered Engineer and a member of CIWEM and ICE.

Bryan is Chairman of the Coastal Group Network. This is a network of Councils, Ports, Government bodies who provide a collective voice for the coast and management of the shoreline.

Robin Price – Interim Managing Director – Water Resources East (WRE)

Water Resources East is a partnership from a wide range of industries including water energy, retail, the environment, land management and agriculture who are working in collaboration to manage the number of significant risks to the future supply of water in the East of England. The NFU and ADA (via the David Thomas) have membership on the Board of WRE.

The conference was introduced by Robert Caudwell who asked all present to mark their appreciation of the work being done in the north east of England to respond to and manage the impacts of the floods. He stated his opinion that warnings at previous ADA conferences over the lack of river maintenance had fallen on deaf ears and that the flooding taking place at the time was clear evidence of the need to better balance capital investment with maintenance spending. He then went on to outline ADA's intention to lobby all parties throughout the general election. This included sharing the 7-point plan detailed below;

1. Long term investment horizons in the face of climate change challenges

Flood risk management delivers enduring benefits and authorities involved need to be able to plan ahead financially over multiple years and need to receive a sensible balance of capital and revenue funding, spread across the river catchments, in order to find efficiencies through climate change adaptation and resilience, and attract business investment.

2. Promote co-operation and partnership working to manage the water environment and reduce flood risk

Close cooperation between flood risk management authorities, water companies, communities, business and land managers needs the continued strong support of government to deliver adaptive and resilient flood risk maintenance and similar activities more efficiently and affordably.

3. Total catchment management

Total catchment management is now the widely accepted approach to managing our water and now is the time to increase and empower local professionals and communities to manage and operate these catchments together.

4. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

The next government needs to fully implement Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, to ensure future development can keep pace with the challenges of the changing climate, by ensuring that SuDS are maintained over the lifetime of a development.

5. Support local governance in flood and water level management decision making

In some parts of England there is an appetite for greater local maintenance delivery on watercourses and flood defence assets than that currently afforded from national investment. This can be achieved via the careful transfer of some main river maintenance to local bodies or the expansion of areas maintained by those local bodies, such as Internal Drainage Boards, where there is local support and transitional funding.

6. Local Government Finances

It is vital that Special and Local Levy funding mechanisms for drainage, water level and flood risk management continue to be part of this funding landscape to maintain the democratic link with local communities affected.

7. Brexit: Ensuring a resilient regulatory framework for the water environment

The next government needs to provide clear policy messages about how they wish to make the delivery of environmental improvements to the water environment easier and more effective as we transition from European legislation such as the Water Framework Directive.

Unfortunately, because the conference was held during the pre-election period sometimes known as Purdah, which restricts certain communications during this time, there were no representatives available from the Environment Agency or Defra which significantly restricted the debate on flood risk management, funding and maintenance issues. However, there was considerable support from the floor of the conference for the view that lack of maintenance had significantly contributed to the recent problems with the River Don and the flooding of Fishlake village.

Officers of the Association were re-elected, including Lord De Ramsey as President and Robert Caudwell as Chairman.

Subscriptions to ADA would be increased by 2% for the following year.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 11th November 2020.

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 3rd March 2020.

The meeting format was as per the 2019 conference with a workshop in the morning and the Conference in the afternoon. Topics covered were control of invasive species, water resources, planning and effective communications with the wider public.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

d) Further Research on Eels

Further to minute B.1114, ADA have advised that the valuable research work being carried out by Hull University on eels and eel behaviour in pumped catchments will be continuing for at least another two years. ADA consider that the financial support to the project to date provided by the IDBs has been positive and noted by the regulator (EA), leading to positive engagement on finding practical solutions at pumping station sites. They therefore consider that it would be useful if IDBs could consider whether they would be willing to continue their annual contributions to this research over that period.

RESOLVED

That the Board contribute £100 per year for the next 2 years towards further research on eels.

e) Emergency Financial Assistance for Internal Drainage Boards

That whilst in East Anglia we have not had the unprecedented levels of rainfall which have occurred further north and in the west of the county in recent years this by no means equates to there being no risk of it occurring here. ADA have written to DEFRA seeking to formalise a mechanism for IDBs providing support to the EA in a major event to recover costs. An update will be given should there be any substantive movement from DEFRA on this matter as a result of this request.

v) Tactical Plans for the Fens Agreement

That the Environment Agency have set up a multi-partner group (FRM for the Fens) to steer work on developing strategic plans for managing flood risk in the lower Great Ouse catchment. This work is considered necessary to address the impacts of population growth and climate change, which are particularly relevant in this area. The EA is requesting approval to the approach being taken in principle and follows the letter sent in January 2019. The perceived value of this work is that it pre-apportions the benefits (land and property which would flood if not defended) so that applying for grant should be more straight forward and the amount of grant possible clearer. This should give increased certainty and clarity and resolves the issue of double counting benefits where for example a property is protected from flooding by both EA and IDB assets. Work on developing the strategy could take up to 15 years though and the proposal also therefore includes a mechanism for allowing grant-aided works to progress during this time on a hold-the-line basis.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve in principle

vi) Water Resources East (WRE)

That the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive has been appointed as ADA's area representative on the Board of WRE. He will act as spokesman for IDBs who have an

interest in the future management and provision of water in the East of England. This is particularly important as government consider plans to make the area more resilient and as the impacts of climate change start to bite in an area of rapid housing growth.

vii) Vision for the Future of Boards administered by the MLC

That Members will be aware that the Chair's meetings hosted by the MLC has had an item on the agenda for the last few meetings on future planning of administration and delivery of operations for the Board's collectively. As part of this process it has been agreed that members thoughts should be sought on what they envisage the collective future can and should look like to ensure the most resilient, delivery focused approach that can be achieved. Members should when developing their vision of water management in the fens in 2030 consider the challenges of maintaining representation, improving financial resilience, reducing duplication of work, the potential for cost savings, advantages and disadvantages of the various options available, the impacts of technology and sharing of resources and knowledge.

The general feeling of the Boards so far was that they recognised there could be problems with Boards and the need to amalgamate possibly ten years down the road but most seemed to be happy to continue with their current arrangements. However, this should remain under review and where appropriate amalgamations between Boards supported.

B.1187 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Benwick I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2020

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at the last Annual Meeting.

Advanced notices of this year's machine cleansing programme (approved by the Board at its 2007 meeting) have been sent out.

A recent inspection of the Board's system has been undertaken. The inspection revealed that most watercourses are generally in a satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. However, stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation are now prevalent and showing visual signs of active regrowth throughout the district. It is recommended that Roundup herbicide is applied to drains within this year's phased machine cleansing works, and to any other Board's drains where it is deemed necessary to control reed and emergent weed growth. A sum for the cost of Roundup treatment has been included within the estimated costs.

It was also noted from the inspection the semi-dry Lilyholt drains to the east of Benwick have evidence of emergent aquatic vegetation and willow sapling regrowth. Board members will be aware of the works carried out to control the willow trees with a contractor's heavy-duty forestry flail in 2018. It is recommended that the drain and saplings are included in this year's herbicide programme following the harvest of the adjacent crops.



Willow Saplings on Lilyholt Drain
Reach 92-94

Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator maximum visibility. The Board's flail mowing contractors, Messrs Ashman, have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements this year. A sum for the completion of this work has been included within the Board's estimated costs.

A provisional sum has also been included within the Board's estimated costs for any emergency cleansing, culvert clearance or bank reinstatement works that may be required later in the year.

The estimated costs of this year's recommended maintenance works are as follows:

1 **Machine Cleansing (Phased Programmed Works)**

Copalder Area

Reach 10-11-12	950	m	@	1.20	£1140.00
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Broadalls Area

Reach 60-61-69-84-83-85	2900	m	@	1.20	£3480.00
Reach 61-62-63-64-65-66-67	1200	m	@	1.10	£1320.00
Reach 54-55-67-68	950	m	@	1.10	£1045.00
Reach 47-84	450	m	@	1.10	£495.00

Bettys Nose Area

Reach 40-41	400	m	@	1.20	£480.00
Reach 42-43-44-45-46-47	1800	m	@	1.10	£1980.00
Reach 46-49-50-51	1400	m	@	1.10	£1540.00
Reach 50-52-53-54	750	m	@	1.10	£825.00
Reach 53-56	400	m	@	1.10	£440.00

Ibbersons Area

Reach 30-31-32-33	1000	m	@	1.10	£1100.00
Reach 31-34-35-36-37-38-39	1300	m	@	1.10	£1430.00

2	Allow sum for Roundup application to control reed and emergent aquatic weed growth	Item	Sum		£1250.00
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3	Flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing works	Item	Sum		£4000.00
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4	<u>Provisional Sum</u> Allow sum for emergency Machine cleansing, culvert Clearance or bank Reinstatement works	Item	Sum		£2000.00
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5	Fees for the inspection, Preparation & submission of report to the Board. Arrangement & supervision of herbicide applications & maintenance works	Item	Sum		£1900.00
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£24,425.00

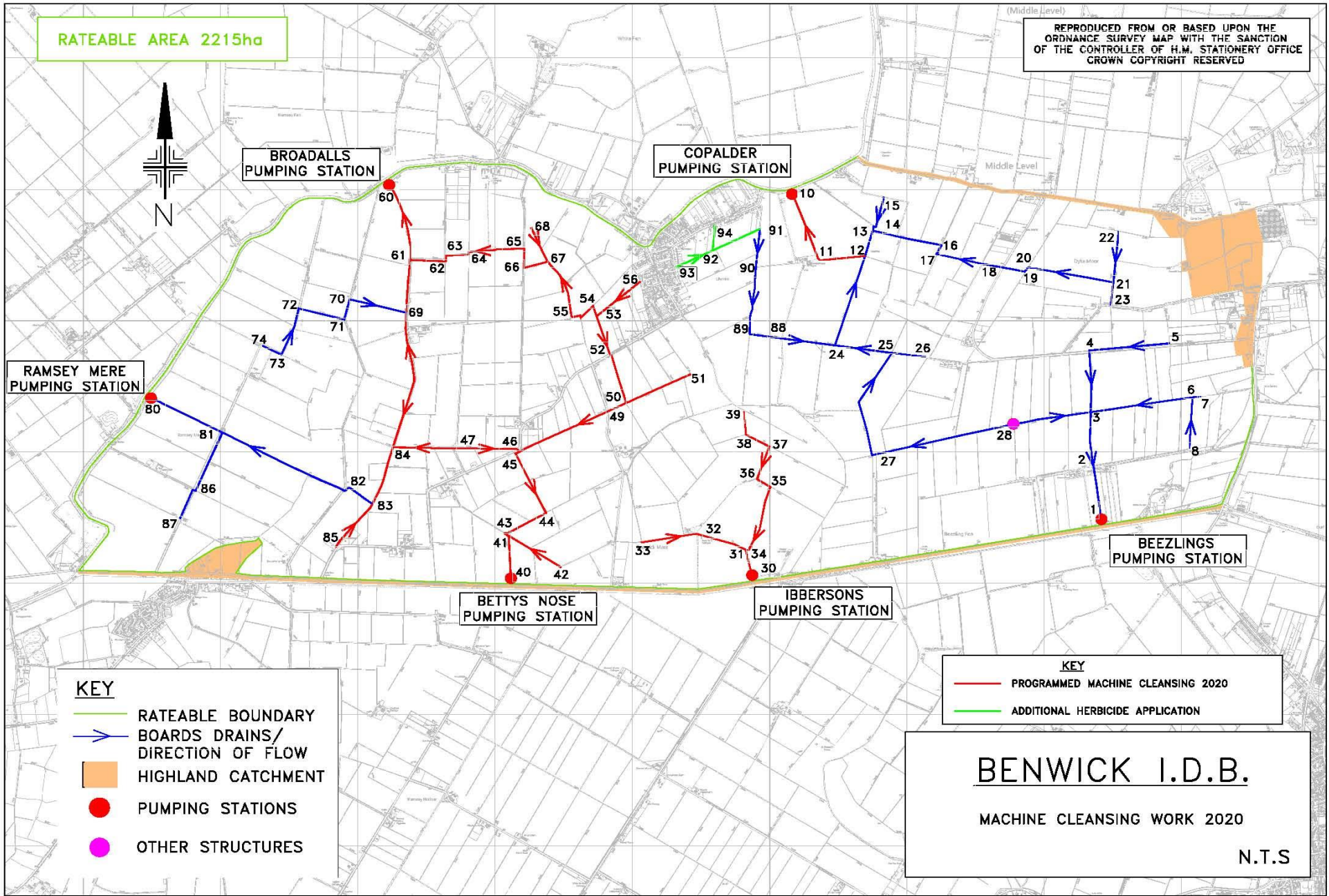
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Please refer to the following plan for locations.

Orders for the application of herbicides are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant and the Middle Level Commissioners will not be held responsible for the efficacy of any treatments.

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION
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RATEABLE AREA 2215ha



- KEY**
- RATEABLE BOUNDARY
 - ➔ BOARDS DRAINS/
DIRECTION OF FLOW
 - HIGHLAND CATCHMENT
 - PUMPING STATIONS
 - OTHER STRUCTURES

- KEY**
- PROGRAMMED MACHINE CLEANSING 2020
 - ADDITIONAL HERBICIDE APPLICATION

BENWICK I.D.B.
MACHINE CLEANSING WORK 2020
N.T.S

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Beezlings

The weedscreen cleaner was commissioned in summer 2019 and has now completed 105 hrs without issue.

Benwick Mere

Whilst the pump and station appear in good order the pump has not been inspected since 1987 and could well be seriously corroded. Due to the design of the station it will be necessary to dam off and enter the wet well via the weedscreen to inspect the pump, alternatively the pump could be removed for overhaul as a matter of course.

Bettys Nose

The station passed its 5 year electrical condition report in January with no remedial works required. The cleaner required minor repairs in January and is currently switched off due to birds nesting in the overhead gantry; the nests will be removed later in the year when they are no longer in use.

Broadalls

The last report highlighted the issue of the pump motor winding resistance to earth being below its minimum value and so in July 2019 the pump was removed for inspection. From close inspection it was evident that the moisture was getting into the cable junction box most likely via the instrument cable gland. A decision was taken to dry the motor windings out and re-gland the cable in house, as sending it back to the original equipment manufacturer was considered to offer poor value for money. The pump was reinstalled and commissioned in September 2019 with a healthy winding resistance to earth, since then the values have been dropping steadily and whilst still satisfactory it seems clear that water is still getting in. It is the recommendation of the engineer that no further monies be spent on this pump and inquiries be instead made into the purchasing of a replacement pump. This should be done as soon as possible, as the lead time from preparing an enquiry to delivery of a pump is likely to be in the region of 6 months. Note the replacement pump installed at present is not identical to the original and is consequently not an ideal arrangement and is also a very tight fit. Any replacement pump would need to be fish friendly and be likely to require significant changes at the station to accommodate it (some likely to be structural). This will require additional engineering time and cost to design and implement.

Ramsey Mere

During the winter months the weedscreen cleaner suffered a major infestation of rats which ate through most of the internal cabling. The cabling has since been replaced and measures taken to remove the vermin issue, and the cleaner is now operational again. The pump sounds and appears to be operating well, however the pump bolts are starting to show signs of significant corrosion and it is the engineer's recommendation that they be replaced no later than by 2023.

Inlet

The new inlet slacker has been installed and is working well.

Pumping Hours between 2017/2018 – 2022/2023

Pumping station	Total hours run 2017-2018	Total hours run 2018-2019	Total hours run 2019-2020	Total hours run 2020-2021	Total hours run 2021-2021	Total hours run 2022- 2023
Beezlings	335	53	413			
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	153	21	199			
Betty's Nose	220	76	270			
Broadalls	17	1	15*			
Copalder	111	64	275			
Ramsey Mere	31	4	212			

* Note: Hrs run counter is faulty and will be replaced.

Pumping Hours between 2011/2012 – 2016/2017

Pumping station	Total hours run 2011/2012	Total hours run 2012/2013	Total hours run 2013- 2014	Total hours run 2014- 2015	Total hours run 2015- 2016	Total hours run 2016- 2017
Beezlings	7	424	210	212	151	132
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	23	295	211	102	75	84
Betty's Nose	30	553	629	137	129	99
Broadalls	50	500	70	92	6	24
Copalder	8	324	205	169	87	87
Ramsey Mere	1	60	123	15	72	31

Pumping Hours between 2005/2006 – 2010/2011

Pumping station	Total hours run 2005/2006	Total hours run 2006/2007	Total hours run 2007/2008	Total hours run 2008/2009	Total hours run 2009/2010	Total hours run 2010/2011
Beezlings	78	305	43	225	171	3
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	30	133	77	217	220	209
Betty's Nose	133	70	134	44	424	186
Broadalls	44	140	47	243	437	170
Copalder	36	119	137	171	249	104
Ramsey Mere	3	186	191	152	100	157

At its June 2019 Board Meeting the Board requested that its Pumping Stations be revalued for insurance purposes, the following information has therefore been provided for the Board.

Pumping Station Valuations - Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name

Benwick IDB - Beezlings Pumping Stn.

Site Data

No. Pumps

1

Station Capacity

257 l/s at 5.6m Total Gauge Head

Station built

1964, new control building and controls installed 1992, new WSC installed 2019

Description of Station

1 no. Allen Gwynnes 14" Vertical Spindle Axial Flow, General Electric Company SC No. 70489, 22kW @ 970rpm. Carlton Controls Star Delta auto control equipment. Brick with tile effect metal sheet pitched roof

Valuation

Civils Works

£446,603

M&E

£164,917

Other

£43,000

Total

£654,520

Breakdown of valuation

Civils Works

Pump sump/pipework under road

£370,650

Hard standing **New**

£5,000

Fencing

£7,413

Outfall

£31,770

Pumphouse

£21,180

Other weedscreen

£10,590

M&E

Pump

£54,550

Control Equipment/cabling

£16,365

Power Supply

inc in public liability

Motor

£7,637

Installation

£16,365

Weedscreen cleaner **NEW**

£70,000

Other

Approvals

£10,750

Liaison and consultation

£5,375

Design

£16,125

Supervision

£10,750

Pumping Station Valuations-Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name	Benwick IDB - Benwick Mere Pumping Stn.
Site Data	
No. Pumps	1
Station Capacity	255 l/s at 5.1m Total Gauge Head
Station built	1954 (Pump overhauled & controls replaced 1987)
Description of Station	1 no. Allen Gwynnes 14" Vertical Spindle Axial Flow No.98706, Brook Crompton Parkinson Wound Rotor No. 2271072 (slip rings shorted) 22kW @ 960 rpm G E Childs DOL control equipment. Brick pumphouse with mineral felt covered concrete roof
Valuation	
Civils Works	£444,780.00
M&E	£94,917.00
Other	£43,000.00
Total	£582,697.00
Breakdown of valuation	
Civils Works	
Pump sump/pipework up	£370,650.00
Hard standing	
Fencing	
Outfall	£31,770.00
Pumphouse/crane	£31,770.00
Other weedscreen	£10,590.00
M&E	
Pump	£54,550.00
Control Equipment/cabli	£16,365.00
Power Supply	inc in public liability
Motor	£7,637.00
Installation	£16,365.00
Other	
Approvals	£10,750.00
Liaison and consultation	£5,375.00
Design	£16,125.00
Supervision	£10,750.00

Pumping Station Valuations-Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name	Benwick IDB - Bettys Nose Pumping Stn.
Site Data	
No. Pumps	1
Station Capacity	510 l/s at 5.5m Total Gauge Head
Station built	1943 (1977 Electrification-2009 new Bedford submersible pump)
Description of Station	1 no. Bedford Pumps SB.40.09.06 400 mm Submersible Bowl No P1734/1, Leroy Somer integral submersible 45kW @ 970 rpm British Pleuger Direct-on-line controls. Brick control building with pitched roof with corrugated sheeting. C W Engineering 5000 series automatic weedscreen cleaner
Valuation	
Civils Works	£452,193.00
M&E	£174,560.00
Other	£43,000.00
Total	£669,753.00
Breakdown of valuation	
Civils Works	
Pump sump/pipework under road	£370,650.00
Hard standing	
Fencing	£7,413.00
Outfall	£31,770.00
Pumphouse	£31,770.00
Other	£10,590.00
M&E	
Pump	£54,550.00
Control	
Equipment/cabling	£16,365.00
Power Supply	inc in public liability
Motor	inc subm
Installation	£16,365.00
Weedraker/screen	£87,280.00
Other	
Approvals	£10,750.00
Liaison and consultation	£5,375.00
Design	£16,125.00
Supervision	£10,750.00

Pumping Station Valuations-Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name	Benwick IDB - Broadalls Pumping Stn.
Site Data	
No. Pumps	1
Station Capacity	425 l/s at 4.9m Total Gauge Head
Station built	1943 (1974 Electrification-2004?? new Bedford submersible pump)
Description of Station	1 no. Bedford Pumps SB40.09.06 No 1203/1, Brook Integral Submersible 36kW @ 970 rpm British Pleuger Direct-on-line controls. Brick control building with pitched roof with corrugated sheeting. C W Engineering 5000 series automatic weedscreen cleaner
Valuation	
Civils Works	£399,243.00
M&E	£169,105.00
Other	£43,000.00
Total	£611,348.00
Breakdown of valuation	
Civils Works	
Pump sump/ pipework under road	£317,700.00
Hard standing	
Fencing	£7,413.00
Outfall	£31,770.00
Pumphouse	£31,770.00
Other	£10,590.00
M&E	
Pump	£49,095.00
Control Equipment/ cabling	£16,365.00
Power Supply	inc in public liability
Motor	inc subm
Installation	£16,365.00
Weeddraker/screen	£87,280.00
Other	
Approvals	£10,750.00
Liaison and consultation	£5,375.00
Design	£16,125.00
Supervision	£10,750.00

Pumping Station Valuations-Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name	Benwick IDB - Copalder Pumping Stn.	
Site Data		
No. Pumps	1	
Station Capacity	1500 l/s @ 3.2m Total Gauge Head Diesel-1200 l/s on electric	
Station built	1954 Original Ruston diesel)1982 (Electrified), 2006 (Motor/pump overhaul)	
Description of Station	1 no. Allen Gwynnes 30" Vertical Spindle Screw, BCP SC & Ruston 4VCB Newbrook dual drive gearbox gearbox, 75/101kW @ 1450/600 rpm Whippendell Star-Delta controls (1982). Bosker HD500 automatic weedscreen cleaner installed. Brick pumphouse with mineral felt covered concrete roof.	
Valuation		
Civils Works	£510,438.00	
M&E	£310,935.00	
Other	£40,750.00	
Total	£862,123.00	
Breakdown of valuation		
Civils Works		
Pump sumps/pipework under road	£370,650.00	
Hard standing	£5,295.00	
Fencing	£7,413.00	
Outfall	£31,770.00	
Pumphouse	£84,720.00	
Other weedscreens	£10,590.00	
M&E		
Pumps/gearbox	£87,280.00	
Control Equipment, cabling	£16,365.00	
Power Supply	incl in public liability	
Diesel powerpack fueltank/systems, Motor	£87,280.00	
Installation	£32,730.00	
Weedscreen raker	£87,280.00	
Other		
Approvals	£10,750.00	
Liaison and consultation	£5,000.00	
Design	£15,000.00	
Supervision	£10,000.00	
	Includes replacemnt cost of diesel powerpack etc-If diesel is not to be insured it would reduce the valuation by £87k	

Pumping Station Valuations-Benwick IDB

The following is an estimate of the maximum expected cost of rebuilding or replacing the pumping station on the same or an adjacent site following a catastrophic failure, eg a fire, a collapse or an explosion.

Site Name	Benwick IDB - Ramsey Mere Pumping Stn.
Site Data	
No. Pumps	1
Station Capacity	255 l/s at 5.2m Total Gauge Head
Station built	1969 pump overhauled 1997
Description of Station	1no. Allen Gwynnes 14" Vertical Spindle Axial Flow, LSE No M432137 22 kW @960 RPM Carlton Controls Star-Delta controls. Bosker Bandit automatic weedscreen cleaner installed 2000. Brick control building with felt covered flat roof.
Valuation	
Civils Works	£335,703.00
M&E	£164,012.00
Other	£43,000.00
Total	£542,715.00
Breakdown of valuation	
Civils Works	
Pump sump/pipework	£264,750.00
Hard standing	
Fencing	£7,413.00
Outfall	£31,770.00
Control Buiding	£21,180.00
Other	£10,590.00
M&E	
Pump	£54,550.00
Control Equipment/ cabling	£20,000.00
Power Supply	inc in public liability
Motor	£7,637.00
Installation	£16,365.00
Weedraker/screen	£65,460.00
Other	
Approvals	£10,750.00
Liaison and consultation	£5,375.00
Design	£16,125.00
Supervision	£10,750.00

Planning Procedures Update

Further to the last Board meeting the Clerk to the Board has received invitations and attended meetings held by both Fenland District and King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough (KL&WN) Councils' Developers Forum and the latter's Inter-Agency Flood Group.

The use of Infiltration Devices

At the last Inter-Agency Working on Flood & Water Group meeting the issue of minor developments (less than 10 houses) not having adequate safeguards in place where infiltration (soakaway) drainage is proposed was raised, as no authorities are prepared to accept responsibility for checking the adequacy of designs or to police their effective implementation. This matter has now been added to the agenda for future meetings.

Local Land Charges Register (LLCR)

A challenge to the legality of the requests by the Middle Level Commissioners to place notes on the Land Charges Registry was raised. This has resulted in KL&WN Council ceasing adding any such notes. Interestingly the stance being taken by Fenland District Council differs from this and it has advised that it holds notes on file which are passed on whenever a Land Charges Registry enquiry is made. In this way it can rightly assert that the notes are not on the Registry but are held separately.

The Board may consider that similar discussions with Huntingdonshire District Council may be of benefit.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 14 new development related matters 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>
313	F/YR19/0489/F	Mr D White	Residence	High Street, Benwick
314	F/YR19/0463/O	Mrs Mitchell	Residential (Up to 2no plots)	Doddington Road, Benwick*
315	Enquiry	Client of MTC	Residential (15 plots)	Doddington Road, Benwick*
316	H/19/01026/FUL	Mr M Irfan	Residence	Benwick Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
317	F/YR19/0681/F	Mr T Sharman	Residence	High Street, Benwick
318	H/19/01703/FUL	J A Caton & Sons	Agricultural (Grain store)	Whittlesey Road, Benwick
319	F/YR19/0784/F	Mr Caldwell	Residence	Doddington Road, Benwick*
320	F/YR19/0920/PNC04	Mrs Fosbueary & Mrs Walker	Residence	Benwick Road, Doddington
321	F/YR19/0919/F	Mrs Fosbueary & Mrs Walker	Residential (2 plots)	Benwick Road, Doddington
322	F/YR19/0918/F	Mrs Fosbueary & Mrs Walker	Residence	Benwick Road, Doddington

323	F/YR19/0989/F	Bank Farm Ltd	Agricultural	Doddington Road, Benwick*
324	F/YR19/1040/F	Mr D White	Residence	High Street, Benwick
325	F/YR19/1052/F	Mr & Mrs Webb	Residence (Annexe)	Dykemoor Drove, Doddington
326	F/YR19/0456/F	Mr J Doran	Travellers Site	Benwick Road, Doddington

Planning applications ending 'PNCO' relate to prior notification change of use issues

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

Further to general principles detailed in Minute B.1154 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters the current position is being ascertained in respect of the following developments:

- *Residential development on land north east of 13 Doddington Road, Benwick - Harnson Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 246 & 254) and Proway Building Ltd (MLC Ref No 302)*
- *Erection of a retail unit and 1 x 1-bed and 2 x 2-bed flats above involving demolition of existing building at land west of 40 Lilyholt Road, fronting High Street, Benwick – Mr B Sisodiya (MLC Ref Nos 249 & 259)*
- *Erection of up to 10 no dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) at land south of 16A Doddington Road, Benwick – Mrs Mitchell (MLC Ref No 301)*

Any inspection of the site to ascertain whether work has commenced and any subsequent discussion with the applicants' agent(s) will have to be delayed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Development at the Old Swan Bungalow, Benwick Road, Doddington – Mrs G Beecham (MLC Ref No 266) & Mr J Doran (MLC Ref No 326)

Note. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is an [Act](#) of Parliament that creates a statutory right for access to information in relation to bodies that exercise functions of a public nature. On receipt of a freedom of information claim a public authority has two corresponding duties. First, a duty to inform a member of the public whether or not it holds the information requested and second, if it does hold that information, to communicate it to the person making that request.

Further to the Board's 2015 Meeting Report, a part retrospective planning application (MLC Ref No 326) was submitted to Fenland District Council in June 2019 for the change of use of the existing dwelling to mixed use of the dwelling and a travellers' site.

Planning Permission was subsequently refused because the proposal would result in:

- An intensification of the use of the site and a proportionate increase in the number of vehicles travelling to and from it and was thus considered to be in an unsustainable location.
- Development of a highly vulnerable use within flood zone 3, as shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request was subsequently received from Ellingham Consulting Ltd requesting the provision of water level and flood risk management information for both the Commissioners' and Board's systems, for example, maximum design water levels, pump ranges, Standards of Protection etc.

Members will be aware that the Commissioners offer a "Provision of Flood Risk Information" service which, for a fee of £120.00 + VAT, provides answers to four relevant questions to the enquirer. However, the costs associated with a FOI request are borne by the public authority concerned. The Act states that public authorities do not have to comply with requests where it is estimated that the cost of compliance will exceed the "appropriate limit", which is £600 for central government departments and £450 for most other public authorities. Staff time must be calculated at £25 per hour, hence the common reference to 24/18 hour limits for FOI requests. As most of the information requested was reasonably available it is difficult to exceed the appropriate limit.

It is presumed that the information was requested in order to undertake the Sequential and Exception Tests required to provide an evidence base for enabling vulnerable development within the floodplain.

Erection of up to 15no dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving demolition of buildings at land north of 17 Doddington Road, Benwick - Mrs J Montgomery & Mrs F Perry (MLC Ref Nos 306 & 311) & Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 315)

Further to the last meeting report another planning application (MLC Ref No 311) was refused planning permission by Fenland District Council.

The Executive Summary of the Planning Committee Report advises that:

“.. the scale of the proposal is considered too great to that which the development plan intends....which results in a larger number of properties being unjustifiably exposed to flood risk.”

A subsequent enquiry was received from the applicants' engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, who was encouraged to undertake any further discussion as part of a post-application consultation. However, no further correspondence or instruction has been received.

Proposed grain store with additional lean to store and fan house at the Piggeries, Four Hundred Farm House, Whittlesey Road, Benwick - J A Caton and Sons (MLC Ref No 318)

A planning application for an agricultural grain store building together with a fan house, agricultural store and associated concrete hardstanding was submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council in August and was subsequently granted planning permission in December.

The planning application form advises that the floor space created is 1,338m², equivalent to several medium to large houses, but is on the site of existing farm buildings with a floor space of 575m².

The submission documents advise that surface water disposal will be via soakaways but no evidence to support this was supplied with the planning application.

Whilst conditions relating to flood proofing and biodiversity were imposed no conditions relating to surface water disposal were included. In addition, no informative or Drainage Advisory Note was included (as is normally included on relevant Decision Notices by Fenland District Council), referring to the need to meet the Board's requirements and advising that contact should be made at the earliest opportunity to discuss any such requirements.

To date, no further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning this site and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

In view of the size of the development and the ground conditions there are concerns that infiltration devices that meet the Board's requirements and provide an efficient means of surface water for the lifetime of the development may not be readily achievable at this location.

In view of the above, the Board’s instruction is requested on how it would wish us to proceed.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A meeting was held at the end of March. Issues discussed included navigation related matters, notes on the LLCR, the Wisbech Garden Town, the FRM for The Fens project, the Future High Street Fund bid for March etc.

Another meeting is currently being organised but will have to be delayed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Emerging Local Plan 2019-2040

Fenland District Council is preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2019-2040 which, when adopted, will replace the current Fenland Local Plan (May 2014). The Local Plan is an important document which will “determine what the district will look like in the future and how it will become an even better place to live, work and visit.”

‘Live’ Timetable for Production of the Fenland Local Plan (October 2019)

No.	Stage	Description	LDS Target	Actual dates
1	Consult on a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report	The SA scoping report sets out the sustainability objectives proposed to be used to appraise the economic, social and environmental effects of the emerging Local Plan policies. The SA scoping report is subject to consultation.	N/a	Consultation 11 th October to 21 st November 2019
2	Public participation (Regulation 18)	Opportunity for interested parties and statutory consultees to consider the options for the plan before the final document is produced. This stage may involve one or more public consultation rounds. We intend two rounds for the new Local Plan.	October 2019 & May 2020	Issues and Options Consultation Document Cabinet 18th September Consultation 11 th October to 21 st November 2019
3	Pre-Submission Publication (Regulation 19)	The Council publishes the Local Plan which is followed by a 6 week period when formal representations can be made on the Local Plan.	February 2021	
4	Submission (Regulation 22)	The Council submits the Local Plan to the Secretary of State together with the representations received at Regulation 19 stage.	May 2021	
5	Independent Examination Hearing	Held by a Planning Inspector into objections raised on the Local Plan.	From the day it is ‘submitted’	
6	Inspector’s Report	This will report whether if the Plan is ‘Sound’ or ‘Not Sound’. The Inspector may make recommendations to make the plan ‘Sound’.	January 2022 (estimate – could be earlier or later, and subject to the examination)	
7	Adoption of DPD (Local Plan)	Final stage, the Council will formally need to adopt the Local Plan and it will then be used in making planning decisions.	February 2022 (estimate - could be earlier or later, and subject to the examination)	

Issues & Options Consultation

Between 11 October and 21 November 2019, the Council undertook a Public Issues & Options Consultation, held a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise, requested nominations for Local Green Spaces, and invited views on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

The consultation was in a questionnaire type format most of the content of which did not directly relate to navigation, water level and flood risk management matters or questions are not relevant to our duties and functions.

Where the questions raised were not specifically relevant to us but may be related to issues upon which we would like to make a remark we made a “comment”.

Question 8: Renewable Energy

A comment was made concerning the location of the nearest appropriate grid connection and the potential detrimental effect that the export cable/main connecting into it may cause for example, channel crossings, transport routes and associated remedial works, the formation/uprating/reconstruction of access culverts/roads, and other works to accommodate specialist construction machinery and associated infrastructure the impacts of which are not generally considered as part of the planning process.

Question 11: Minimise Carbon Losses from Wider Activities

Should the Local Plan:

11a) Set out a specific policy on the loss of peat-based soils, and the carbon impacts of it?

Guidance was given concerning the Lowland Agricultural Peat Taskforce when launched by Defra and the East Anglian Fens peat pilot managed by Natural England.

Question 12: Other Proposals to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Question 22: Transport

12b) Should the Local Plan make provision of cycle and footways, which are designed in a way so that they become the natural choice to use for short journeys, rather than the car?

The response advised that, where possible, footpaths, cycleways, street lighting, and/or other street furniture should be positioned outside of any protected watercourse and the associated maintenance access strip.

Question 13: Design and Amenity

13c) Are there any specific local issues which need to be addressed through design policies?

Issues specifically referred to were the retention of on-site open watercourses and the provision of adequate maintenance strips beside water level and flood risk management systems, including protected watercourses, within the development’s design.

Question 14: Optional Standards

14a) Do you think the Local Plan should include any of the following optional standards (subject to need and viability testing)? If so why?

ii) Water efficiency of new homes

The implementation and management, including enforcement, of water efficiency measures for residential, business and other users of potable water. Proposals should include suitable schemes which minimise the need to abstract water from the Main River system to ensure that it is available for other potential water resource uses ie agricultural irrigation, biodiversity, navigation, leisure and tourism etc.

Question 16: Gypsy and Travellers & Question 17: Park Homes and Houseboats

16b) What other suitable locations for Gypsy and Traveller pitches are there?

17) Is there a need for moorings for houseboats or sites for caravans in Fenland? Any evidence to support your comments would be welcome, or suggestions as to how such need could be identified in Fenland

In respect of the Middle Level Commissioners' interests, comment was made that in addition to the normal caravans and "bricks and mortar" sites, suitable locations may need to be considered for "house boats".

Question 24: Natural Environment

How do you think the Local Plan should protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment?

The Conservation Officer advised that the Plan should include recreational and wildlife spaces being created as part of new residential developments and the incorporation of relevant biodiversity measures.

Question 26: Flood & Water Management

Do you have any views on how new development could reduce flood risk?

Our comments included but were not limited to the following:

- The extent of the Environment Agency's (EA) Indicative Floodplain and the constraint that this imposes on "growth" in the District.
- All relevant development proposals must be discussed with the relevant RMA including the appropriate Internal Drainage Board at the earliest opportunity, preferably at the pre-application stage.
- In addition to the requirements of the NPPF and associated technical guide, all applications for relevant developments must include a drainage strategy to demonstrate that:
 - (a) Suitable consideration has been given to the disposal of both surface and treated waste water flows and should detail any mitigation required;
 - (b) Appropriate arrangements have been made for developments adjacent to watercourses; and
 - (c) Issues of long-term ownership, funding and maintenance of the water level and flood risk management system are addressed.
- All proposals should have regard to the guidance and byelaws of the relevant RMA including the Internal Drainage Boards. Where appropriate the contents of hydraulic models and studies, such as the Middle Level Strategic Study must be considered.

Question 27: Any Other Issues

Is there anything else you would like to raise – has anything been missed, or are there any general comments you would like to make?

It was suggested that the retention and improvement of the rivers, their settings and associated corridors in the District for navigation, environmental, leisure and tourism through the provision of related facilities together with the provision of a Water Space Strategy should be considered.

Question 28: Your Priorities

28b) Please identify any other top priorities.

The response advised that the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards'/Commissioners' priorities were:

- To fund, maintain, protect and improve existing and make further provision of viable and appropriate water level and flood risk management infrastructure and systems to

reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society.

- The implementation and management including enforcement of water efficiency measures for residential, business and other users of potable water.
- The retention and improvement of the rivers, their settings and associated corridors in the District for navigation, environmental, leisure and tourism through the provision of related facilities.
- To maintain, protect and improve the existing and make further provision of net gains to achieve environmental benefits to the waterways in the district.

Question 29: Neighbourhood Planning

The Council was advised that the “Neighbourhood Area” designation should not unduly affect the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners adding that even though a neighbourhood area may have been designated, compliance with the provisions of the appropriate Acts and the relevant RMA's byelaws would still be required.

The comments received during the consultation have been reviewed and a Key Issues Report has been prepared which summarises the main issues and points of view raised. The report is accompanied by full transcripts of individual's comments. The views expressed in response to the Issues & Options Consultation Document will inform the preparation of the Draft Local Plan.

Level 1 SFRA & WCS documents

Royal Haskoning DHV has been appointed to update the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Water Cycle Study (WCS) for Fenland District Council as part of the evidence for the new Local Plan.

An Inception Meeting has been held and an information request is currently being processed.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

Infrastructure Planning and Delivery

In May 2019 the following was received from the District Council:

“I am writing with regards your continued input into the infrastructure needs for Huntingdonshire.

Thank you for your agency/company engagement over the last 18 month in the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This was used to support the new Local Plan to 2036 which was considered for adoption by Full Council on 15th May. Please visit the following link and specifically documents INF/01 – 03 to view the final documents again <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/new-local-plan-to-2036/local-plan-document-library/>”

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Huntingdonshire District Council is currently reviewing the 2011 Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). To inform the development of the SPD it needs to better understand current and future infrastructure requirements, what would trigger a developer contribution and how any Section 106 money that has previously been received has been spent. Also, what infrastructure has been delivered as a result thus enabling the District Council to test a revised Developer Contributions and CIL schedule against development viability and hence provide practical up-to-date guidance together with a schedule for land owners, developers and development management officers.

A Public Consultation (using a questionnaire format) was held between Tuesday 16 July and Friday 6 September but it was not considered appropriate to respond, primarily because the Commissioners and associated Boards do not currently have any infrastructure projects which are likely to require developer contributions through the planning process. However, the opportunity was taken to advise the District Council of the current and potential future funding processes in respect of our interests ie Grant-In-Aid funding, Green Infrastructure, Navigation and Partnership Working.

The response included the following summary:

“As discussed above, there are procedures in place for external funding which are available to the Commissioners and associated Boards and, therefore, they do not currently have any projects for the delivery of infrastructure that require developer contributions through the planning process. It is likely that this will remain the case in the short to medium term.

However, as the findings of the above projects and studies are completed and assessed, together with impacts as a result of changes to Government policy, seeking funding via the planning process may become necessary in the longer term. However, the extent, location and value of this is currently unknown and may take some time to determine.”

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document

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

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 report detailing the proposed revisions and the public responses which included responses from various interested parties including the Commissioners, several Parish and Town Councils, and various County Council departments went before the County Councils on 16 May.

A copy of the report can be found on the Council's webpage by using the following link and searching for "Review of the Local Information Requirements for the Validation of Planning Applications":

https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/232/Committee/8/Default.aspx

However, the relevant items, as far as the Commissioners and relevant associated Boards are concerned, are summarised below.

"3.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

3.10 Middle Level Commissioners – Middle Level Commissioners have made a number of comments:

1. The contents of the Middle Level Commissioner's response of 2017 remain relevant.
2. The Commissioners are pleased to note that the reference in the introduction on page 2 of the 2019 LVL Guidance notes to the use of relevant and competent technical specialists and encourage this.
3. The commissioners and associated boards promote meaningful preapplication advice and work with CCC colleagues to ensure that any issues concerning flood risk, water level management, navigation and environmental issues are dealt with prior to the planning application process, which offers more certainty in the decision making process. The Middle Level Commissioners would be pleased if applicants and/or agents could be advised to contact the Middle Level Commissioners for advice within their jurisdiction. A web site link is given to their pre- and post-application procedure: <https://middlelevel.gov.uk/consents/>.
4. The Commissioners request that applicants and/or agents are reminded that should planning approval be given by Cambridgeshire County Council, to remind the applicant(s) agent(s) that any matters requiring consent under the requirements of the Land Drainage Act, the Highways Act, the Water Industry Act, the Flood and Water Management Act and/or the Middle Level Act 2018, which relates to navigation related issues, must be complied with before any work is commenced on site.
5. It is requested that any drawings that are submitted to County Council be to a recognised engineering scale including a scale bar and advice on what size of paper the drawing should be printed on.
6. The Commissioners are pleased to note that the reference in the introduction on page 2 of the 2019 LVL Guidance notes to the use of relevant and competent technical specialists and encourage this.
7. The Biodiversity Survey and Report (Paragraph 4) includes reference to the Middle Level Biodiversity Manual (2016), on page 5 - this remains current on 10 April 2019.
8. The Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction (Paragraph 5) includes or the provision of both a foul drainage strategy and water conservation strategy, on pages 6 and 7. This is supported but it is suggested that the latter should be applied County wide and not just applied to the South Cambridgeshire District Council's area.
9. The Flood Risk Assessment (Paragraph 7) gives a list of application types that is appropriate to provide a Flood Risk Assessment for. The last bullet point (on page 8) refers to developments of: "Less than 1 hectare within flood zone 1 which has critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency." Unless the area is identified within a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment) the Environment Agency are unlikely to be involved. Drainage is the responsibility of several stakeholders, including Internal Drainage Boards and your Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team. The latter are more likely to be aware of and have to resolve "critical drainage problems". It is reassuring to note and we applaud the

inclusion of a reference and a link to our “Planning Advice and Consent Documents” webpage on page 9.

10. Additional Plans and Drawings (including cross-sections where required). (Paragraph 22), the inclusion of the section detailing other plans and drawings and suggesting suitable scales for these is noted and supported.”

“4.0 Consideration of the Consultation responses

4.10 Middle Level Commissioners –

1. Noted with thanks. No changes required.
2. Pre application advice - References to Middle Level guidance will be retained, so no changes required.
3. References to Middle Level guidance are retained and it is recommended that the Middle Level Commissioners are added to the list of other bodies who provide pre-application advice.
4. Consent under the requirements of the Land Drainage Act is covered when necessary by informative at decision stage.
5. Drawings - This is covered by national guidance, so no changes required.
6. Technical specialists’ reference - Noted with thanks. No changes required.
7. Biodiversity survey - Noted with thanks. No changes required.
8. Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction - This is already covered across all districts based on the relevant adopted policy guidance. The reference to South Cambridgeshire is only made as their requirements are stricter through adopted policy. Therefore no changes are required.
9. Flood Risk Assessment - Officers acknowledge that drainage is the responsibility of several stakeholders and have noted the acceptance to the Middle Level Commissioners planning advice pages. This will be retained on the new guidance and therefore no further changes are required.
10. Additional Plans and drawings - Noted with thanks. No changes required.”

A copy of the Planning Committee Minutes can be viewed via the following link by searching for “Minutes – 16th May 2019”:

https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/232/Committee/8/Default.aspx

The final published versions of both the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and the Local Validation List and Guidance Notes can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning-applications/submitting-a-planning-application/>

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood & Water (C& P FloW) Partnership

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:

Future Meetings

Following the successful “joint” approach future meetings will involve both the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP) and Peterborough Flood & Water Management Partnership (PFLoW). The MLC are stakeholders in both partnerships.

Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for England

A public consultation on the draft FCERM Strategy for England document was held between May and June 2019.

Members of the partnership generally considered that amongst other matters the consultation could have been more ambitious; sought greater RMA involvement; and that surface water flooding should have been included.

Following the consideration of the responses it is intended to publish the final national FCERM strategy for England in 2020.

Local FRM Strategy

Both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategies are due to be reviewed soon and may be a joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough response.

The Environment Agency’s Joint Assurance Group

This group provides support to the RMAs on the delivery of Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funded projects and meets on a monthly basis to discuss business cases.

Partnership members generally agreed that it would be beneficial to understand what the EA, in its role as the approval body, would like to see in business cases and requested suitable good examples that could be used as guidance.

The EA advised that:

- (i) The lack of sharing of suitable business case examples may be for GDPR/commercially sensitive/economic reasons and advised that whilst the EA cannot ‘circulate’ these, other RMAs can.
- (ii) Due to the specialist nature of projects within The Fens it may not be possible to find enough suitable projects.

Property Flood Resilience Pathfinder Project

A £700k grant bid was made by a consortium of LLFAs. Confirmation of a successful bid is awaited.

Further details on the project can be found in Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Evaluation Final Evaluation Report October 2015.

Further information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/29-million-extra-funding-to-boost-action-on-making-homes-more-resilient-to-floods>

Riparian Responsibilities

In order to raise awareness of and instigate discussion on an issue that causes difficulties for RMAs, including the Boards, primarily due to increased workload and costs, the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team prepared an "Issues and Options Briefing Note" seeking changes to current practices that are inefficient and create inconsistency across the county in the use of public resources to address the issues associated with riparian assets. The document is currently being considered by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

Cambs County Council Capitally Funded Highway Drainage Schemes

Schemes have been assessed and prioritised based upon level of flooding reported, ie high priority - is property flooding or risk to life or low priority - is highway only flooding, and will be developed to provide estimated costs and prioritised to be delivered to available budget. There is an annual highway drainage budget of £1m, which needs to cover all staff, investigation, design and construction costs and, therefore, not all the schemes will be delivered in the current financial year.

The majority of investigation and design is delivered through Skanska or its supply chain, and managed by the County's Highways Projects team. Priority and funding are confirmed by its Asset Management team.

There are currently 22 schemes ongoing within the County, six of which are within the Fenland district and three within the Huntingdonshire district. However, none are within the Board's area.

District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) & Water Cycle Study (WCS) documents

Most of the SFRA and WCS documents are considered old and have not been updated as initially intended. All will require reviewing as supporting evidence when the respective District Council's Local Plans are updated.

A 'joint' County-wide document was suggested but was not considered possible due to the differing states of the various Local Plans across the County.

No reference was made to the funding arrangements for the provision of the updated documents.

Good Governance for Internal Drainage Board Members

In March and April 2019 ADA ran a series of five Good Governance Workshops for IDB Members. The recordings from these events are available as a series of training modules via the ADA website.

A copy of the slides used at the presentation can be found at the following link:

https://www.ada.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Good_Governance_Workshop_Slides_2019.pdf

Public Sector Co-operation Agreements (PSCA)

Following a problem encountered within North Level District IDB which required close liaison with Peterborough City Council, in its role as the Highway Authority, the possibility of arranging PSCAs with IDBs and Councils was raised but has not yet been concluded.

Updates on Highways England (HE) Scheme

The former areas 6 and 8 now form the East Region and the new term contractor is Ringway. The previous short-term Asset Support Contracts (ASC) have been replaced by a 15-year Road Investment Strategy (RIS) contract in order to ensure a consistent long-term approach.

Anglian Water Services Limited (AWSL) Price Review 2019 (PR19)

OFWAT like what is being proposed but not the associated costs. AWSL contends that it is trying to be “proactive and not reactive”. **Note: In order to reduce charges on its customers AWSL currently appears reluctant to incur any unnecessary additional costs beyond what it is obliged to accept.**

Requests have been made for suitable applications to be submitted to its project funding programme. It is hoped that a meeting with AWSL’s Flood Partnership Manager will be arranged soon.

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

Meetings were held in April and October 2019. The meeting due to be held during April 2020 was postponed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Assistance has been given to a resident living near Benwick village concerning the high ground water table affecting the use of a Septic Tank. It is understood that the matter has been resolved.

No other “wet spots” have been identified within the Board’s district.

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

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards on the Technical Group since the last Board meeting.

An article detailing the project was included on page 16 of the Summer edition of the ADA Gazette. This can be found at <https://flickread.com/edition/html/index.php?pdf=5d1efbbc0a48b#16>

The project is further discussed under a separate Agenda item.

General Advice

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

- a) Nigel Gary Thacker – An application for byelaw consent was received in relation to 14 No field underdrains discharging into the Board's district drains between Points 44 and 45, Points 46 and 49, and Points 50 and 52 in the Benwick Mere area near Marley Farm, Benwick. The application has been recommended for approval.

Consulting Engineer

29 May 2020

Benwick(303)\Reports\May 2020

Mr Lakey, Middle Level Commissioners' Assistant Operations Engineer, reported on the works carried out last year. In response to Mr Wakeham, Mr Lakey reported that a forestry flail would be required to deal with the saplings on section 63-64.

Mr Lakey reported that having carried out a site inspection at Point 60 with the District Officer they had been unable to confirm the integrity of the structure but had agreed that, due to its' apparent condition, it was unlikely to be able to be used as an inlet without extensive works. They had therefore looked at installing a new structure at Broadalls pumping station and estimated that this could cost in the region of £12,000.00.

The Vice Chairman reported that currently water was let in at Broadalls pumping station by running the pump backwards which was not ideal and the estimated cost for the installation of a new structure was substantially less than a new pump which would be required sooner if the current arrangements were continued. Mr Wakeham considered that the site of the old inlet should be investigated further and if the costs of reinstating this were estimated to be substantially higher then the Board should proceed with the installation of a new structure at Broadalls pumping station. In response to Councillor Laws, Mr Hill outlined possible options to include these additional works within the 2020/2021 budget proposals.

With regards to the pumping unit at Broadalls pumping station, Mr Hill reported that the engineer had obtained a quotation for a replacement pump in the sum of £30,900 and had estimated that an additional £5,000 would be required for the installation. He confirmed that all the information had been sent to the previous Chairman who had agreed that the pump needed to be replaced but as he was standing down he considered this matter should be put before the Board. The Vice Chairman confirmed that he had seen the quotations and agreed the pump needed replacing and agreed with the recommendations of the Consulting Engineers.

Councillor Laws raised issue with the wording of the section on the use of Infiltration Devices and reported that Fenland District Council Planning Officers were not required to be qualified to certify infiltration devices and they could not justify the additional expenditure for the employment of a suitably qualified professional to carry this out. She reported that it was not therefore that Fenland District Council refused to accept responsibility for checking and policing the use of these devices but they did not have the required qualified staff to be able to properly review the proposed designs and subsequent policing of their use.

Mr Hill reported on the engineer's comments concerning the Local Land Charges Register and Councillor Laws reported that the next Fenland District Council meeting concerning this was scheduled for Wednesday the 8th July 2020.

RESOLVED

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

ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the works referred to in the Report be undertaken.

iii) That the Vice Chairman be authorised to liaise with the engineer concerning the possible inspection of the pump at Benwick Mere pumping station.

iv) That the pump at Broadalls pumping station be replaced and the engineer authorised to arrange the works in accordance with the quotation received and the Vice Chairman be authorised to take any further action as he considers necessary.

v) That the engineer investigate the reinstating of the inlet at Point 60 and be authorised to either reopen this structure or install a new inlet at Broadalls pumping station, whichever would provide the best value for money to the Board, and the Vice Chairman and District Officer be authorised to take any further action as they consider appropriate.

vi) That the engineer hold discussions with Huntingdonshire District Council concerning the Local Land Charges Register.

vii) Proposed grain store with additional lean to store and fan house at the Piggeries, Four Hundred Farm House, Whittlesey Road, Benwick (MLC Ref. No. 318)

That the Planning Engineer be authorised to contact the applicant to resolve any outstanding matters to the satisfaction of the Board.

B.1188 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.1189 District Officer's Report

The Vice Chairman reported that he had not received an update from the District Officer but considered all matters had been covered in the engineer's report.

RESOLVED

That the Officer be thanked for his services during the year.

B.1190 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Mr Hill referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2019, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

In response to Councillor Mayor, Mr Hill reported that the letter of December 2019 concerning mink traps would have been sent to all IDB Chairmen and the Conservation Officer was now following this up with a direct report to Boards at their meetings to ascertain if Members considered there was a specific problem in their District which needed addressing.

RESOLVED

That no action be taken concerning mink traps at this point.

B.1191 District Officer's Honorarium and Pumping Station duties

a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's Honorarium for 2020/2021.

b) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED

i) That Mr D Caton be appointed as District Officer and that the Board agree that the sum of £530.00 be allowed for the District Officer's honorarium for 2020/2021.

ii) That the Board agree that the District Officer be allowed the sum of £424.00 for undertaking health and safety duties for 2020/2021.

iii) That the Board agree that the sum of £3,180.00 (£530 per station) be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2020/2021.

B.1192 Maintenance work in the District

The Vice Chairman gave an update on the maintenance work to be carried out in the District.

B.1193 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.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1194 Environment Agency – Precepts

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2020/2021 in the sum of £8,421.00 (the precept for 2019/2020 being £8,215.41).

B.1195 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Mr Hill reported that the sum of £41.98 (£440.40 less £398.42 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 2018/2019 together with the sum of £399.82 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2019/2020.

B.1196 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2019, viz:- from £629 to £642.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2020.

B.1197 Health and Safety

a) Further to minute B.1166(b), the Vice Chairman referred to the reports received from Cope Safety Management following their visits to the District on the 20th September 2019 and the 25th February 2020 and reported that the District Officer was attending to the specific points raised.

Mr Wakeham considered that with 6 pumping stations the Board had received a very good report and was pleased that everything was in order and the few minor points raised were being dealt with.

Mr Hill reminded the Board that they are responsible for ensuring they are compliant with all Health and Safety legislation and are adequately insured. In view of this, all points for action raised by its' Health and Safety consultant must be implemented so as to avoid the Board's insurance policy from becoming invalid.

b) Mr Hill referred to the ADA Internal Drainage Boards' Health, Safety & Welfare Survey 2018.

B.1198 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2018/2019

a) The Board considered the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

RESOLVED

i) That, after fully considering the internal controls put in place by their appointed administrators and the checks carried out by their appointed internal auditors, the Board were satisfied that, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority.

ii) That the present policies concerning risk management, budget monitoring and insured value of properties are adequate for the size of the business and that they be continued.

iii) That the Clerk and responsible financial officer review the internal audit strategy with the internal auditor to ensure the most appropriate method is in place to ensure the Board continue to comply with the Internal control objectives to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority.

b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

B.1199 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2018/2019 and to the letter from the Minister and Annual report summary and analysis received from Defra dated August 2019.

B.1200 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 2020.

B.1201 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1202 Risk Management Assessment

a) Mr Hill reported that it was necessary every 4-5 years to consider the formal Risk Register and in between times to judge the risks when considering the Consulting Engineer's and other reports and when setting budgets and rates/special levies. He advised that these risks had been analysed by the use of the Risk Matrix and added that, although the risk registers for IDBs very rarely changed, they would/could change over time and it was important for Boards to consider formally and that consideration was due this year.

Members considered the Board's Risk Register.

RESOLVED

That the Risk Register be approved and kept under review and the policy to review risk between formal reviews be continued.

b) The Board considered the insured value of their buildings.

Mr Wakeham raised the point of variations in the valuations for the Board's pumping stations to those of other Boards he sits on. Mr Hill reported that the engineer used standard approved valuation methods which were consistent across all installations valued to take account of individual variances between installations.

RESOLVED

That, as per the Engineer's valuation, the insured value of the Board's' buildings be increased from 1st April 2020.

B.1203 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.1204 Annual Governance Statement – 2019/2020

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

RESOLVED

That the Vice Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

B.1205 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £163,807.86 which had been made during the financial year 2019/2020.

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

B.1206 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2019/2020

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2020 as required in the Audit Regulations.

In response to Councillor Laws, Mr Hill outlined how the engineering consultancy fees were allocated within the accounts. Councillor Laws considered that these should be shown separately.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Vice Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.
- ii) That, in future years, the fees for dealing with planning and development applications be shown separately in the accounts.

B.1207 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2020/2021

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2020/2021 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 68.79% and 31.21%.

Mr Hill detailed the budget proposals for 2020/2021 and the indicative forecast for future years. Mr Wakeham considered that on the basis of the indicative forecasts it should be possible to retain the rate this year and address balances in future years. These comments were supported by Mr Fisher.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved, subject to the sum of £12,000 being added for the installation of an inlet structure at Broadalls Pumping Station.
- ii) That a total sum of £85,295 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 £58,677 and £26,618 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 16.70p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £24,574 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £2,044 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 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.1208 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.1209 Date of next Meeting

Councillor Laws enquired if Members considered holding two meetings per year would be more appropriate than just one. Mr Wakeham considered there was already a lot of work being carried out throughout the year by officers of the Board and the staff at the Middle Level Commissioners which was reported and updated at the annual meeting.

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Monday the 7th June 2021 at Ramsey Golf Club.

B.1210 Remote access meetings

Mr Wakeham reported that due to the current circumstances he had been involved in a number of on-line meetings hosted on a variety of platforms and had found today's meeting difficult and of poor quality. Councillor Laws supported these comments and commented further that the platform did not give any additional facilities to allow Members to interact. Mr Hill reported on the process the Middle Level Commissioners had taken to enable remote access meetings to take place but agreed that, due to technical issues, today's meeting had proven to be more difficult than others he had attended. He further reported that it was intended to deliver meeting papers in an electronic format for future meetings and of the other options being considered.

Members generally considered the electronic format worked but could be refined further and that if remote access meetings were to continue the Middle Level Commissioners should give consideration to using a different platform to host the meetings on.