

MARCH THIRD DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the March Third District Drainage Commissioners
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Wednesday the 6th May 2020

PRESENT

R F Manchett Esq (Chairman)	D W Dunham Esq
M Cornwell Esq	Mrs G A M Siggee
M A Wilkinson Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

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

Apology for absence

An apology was received from F Yeulett Esq.

C.1098 Standing Orders

Miss Ablett reported that to allow the Commissioners 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. The Commissioners 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 Commissioners approve in principle.

C.1099 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr Wilkinson declared an interest in District Officer matters.

Mrs Siggee declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 375 & 376) received for Messrs Siggee & Mrs Sanderson

C.1100 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 15th May 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.1101 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That R F Manchett Esq be appointed Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.1102 Land Drainage Act 1991 Fenland District Council

Further to minute C.1067, Miss Ablett reported that Fenland District Council had also appointed Councillors Mrs J French, C Marks and F Yeulett to be Commissioners under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Miss Ablett also reported that Councillor Court had not been re-appointed.

C.1103 Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute C.1028, Miss Ablett 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. She 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.

C.1104 Rentals of Pillards Corner, March

Further to minute B.1070, Miss Ablett reported that Maxey Grounds had advised the rents relating to the Agricultural tenancies were definitely on the low side and so too was the Farm Business Tenancy letting to D H Deptford. She further reported that they had suggested the Commissioners consider serving notice this year to allow a review next year, when more information may become available regarding future agricultural policy which was, as yet, unclear. Miss Ablett added that Maxey Grounds had also advised the rents paid by Creek Farms Ltd and W Veal were still reasonable and their recommendation was that no notice should be served on these tenants this year.

Miss Ablett advised the Commissioners of the costs that would be payable to Maxey Grounds for the rent reviews and for sending out the rent notices.

Miss Ablett confirmed that the next rent review would be due again in October 2024.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Assistant Clerk serve rent notices ready for October 2021.

- ii) That the Assistant Clerk arrange for Maxey Grounds to carry out a rent review for the agricultural tenancies and the Farm Business Tenancy to D H Deptford in readiness for October 2020 which would be effective from October 2021

C.1105 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett 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 Commissioners 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.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners continue with the current arrangements.

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 Commissioners:-

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date Consent granted</u>
Cannon Kirk (UK) Limited	Removal of existing headwall and installation of pipe and culvert and three manhole chambers with headwall and revetment – Point 24	23 rd July 2019

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consents 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 Commissioner 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 C.1031, 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 Commissioners 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 principal 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 Commissioners 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.

C.1106 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters.

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

March Third D.D.C.

Consulting Engineers Report – April 2020

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Commissioners at their last annual meeting.



**Replacement slab in gateway
and new hand rail at Pumping Station**

Following a request from the Chairman, basic remedial works were carried out at the Pumping Station to ensure health & safety recommendations from the Commissioners' advisers, Cope, had been addressed. Concrete slabs and timber hand rails were replaced, along with additional safety signage for the automated machinery.

A Roundup herbicide application was made to reaches in advance of the programmed machine cleansing works, and to other district drains where it was required to control dense reed stands and emergent aquatic vegetation.

The Commissioners' flail mowing requirements were undertaken by Messrs Ashman last year. They have indicated they are available to undertake the Commissioners' flail mowing requirements again this year. A sum has been included within the estimated costs for flail mowing of district drains to be undertaken this year.

A recent inspection of the district drains has been undertaken, indicating that a majority of the Commissioners' drains are being maintained to a good standard and are in a generally satisfactory condition.

**Reed Stands and Bull Rushes, (Typha)
Reach 10-21**



Drains to the West of the Bypass

The inspection highlighted that the drains to the west of the bypass are in a satisfactory condition. At this early time in the growing season there are some sporadic stands of aquatic vegetation in reach 10-21 adjacent to the A141. It is recommended they are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide and included within this year's machine cleansing programme.

Further inspections will be carried out later in the year to identify any other areas that may need to be included in the machine cleansing programme. Historically late occurring algal blooms have been problematic and required clearing from the Commissioners' drains to the west of the bypass later in the season. A provisional sum has been included within the estimated costs to allow for any cott cleansing work that may be required.

Drains to the East of the Bypass

The district drains to the east of the bypass are in a satisfactory condition. However, as with previous years a mild winter has led to an early season growth of watercress and emergent aquatic weed within some of the Commissioners' drains in the Gaul Road area. It is recommended that an application of Roundup herbicide is carried out, followed by light machine cleansing, to prevent any further infestation.

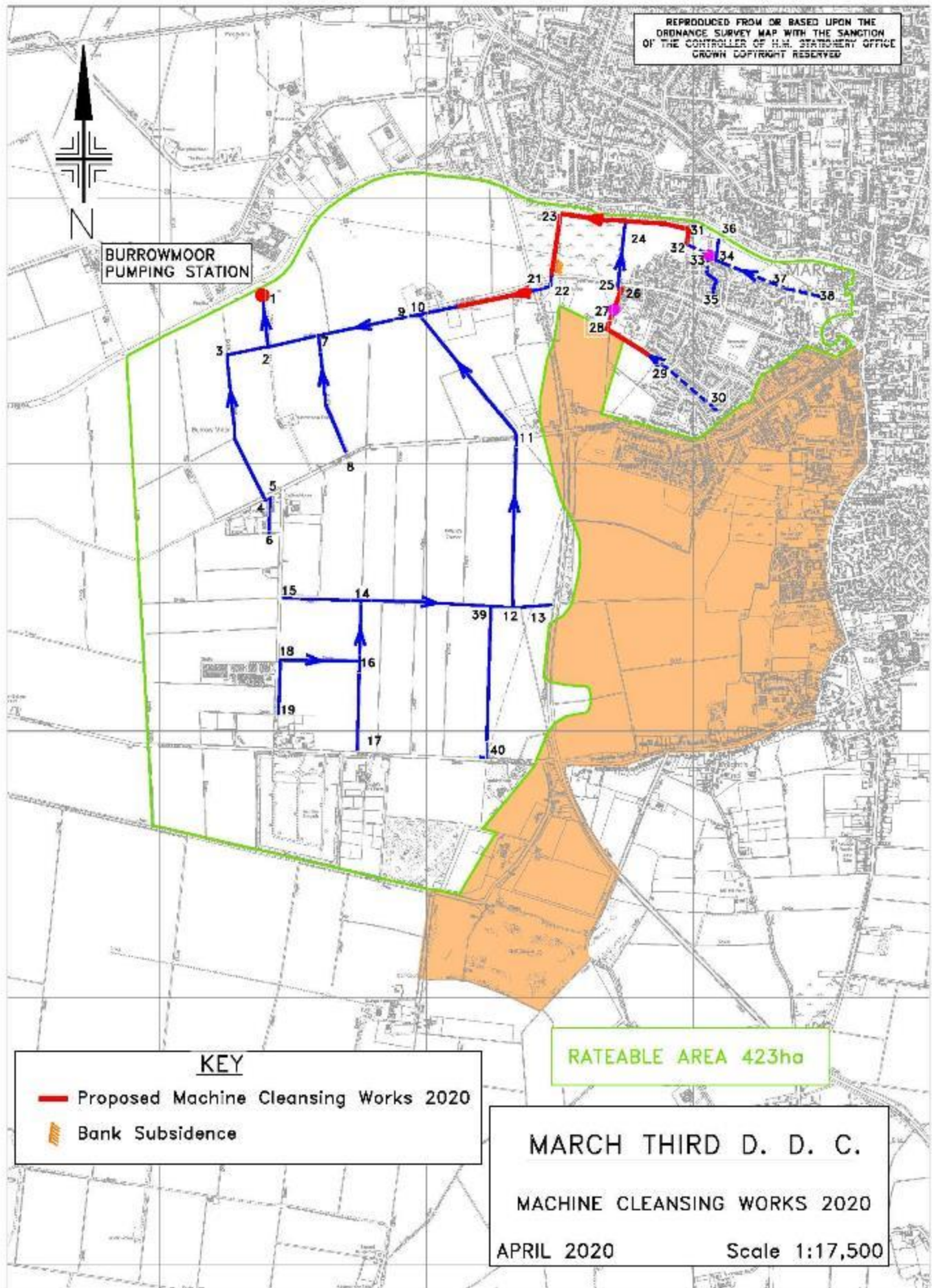


Watercress infestation in Reach 31-32



Bank Subsidence at Point 22

It was also noted that a small area of bank subsidence has occurred adjacent to the recent culvert works at Point 22. The material deposited in the drain is having little effect on water levels and would not have a detrimental effect on conveyance in a rainfall event as this reach is within the development area and falls within this year's proposed machine cleansing programme, the slumped material will be removed when the contractor's machine is on site cleansing the drain in early summer.



A provisional sum has also been included within this year's estimated costs to allow for any emergency bank repair, culvert clearance or debris removal and disposal works that may be necessary later in the year.

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works is as follows. Please refer to the site plan on the previous page for locations.

<u>Machine Cleansing</u>			£	£
1. Reach 10-21	300 m	@	1.20	360.00
2. Reaches 26-27-28-29	450 m	@	1.20	540.00
3. Reaches 22-23-24-31-32	800 m	@	1.20	960.00
4. <u>Provisional Sum</u>				
Allow sum for cott clearance or emergency machine cleansing works	Item	Sum		2000.00
5. Flail mowing district drains	Item	Sum		2000.00
6. <u>Provisional Sum</u>				
Allowance for emergency bank repair, culvert cleansing works or debris removal/disposal works	Item	Sum		750.00
7. Allow sum for Roundup application to reed and emergent weed	Item	Sum		500.00
8. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Commissioners, arrangement and supervision of chemical applications and maintenance works	Item	Sum		850.00
TOTAL				£ 7,960.00

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

Pumping Station

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant appears to be mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

The No. 2 pumpset motor winding resistance has stabilised over the winter at a satisfactory value and will continue to be monitored.

Pumping Hours

Pump	April 19 – April 20	April 18 – April 19	April 17 – April 18	April 16 – April 17	April 15 – April 16	April 14 – April 15	April 13 – April 14
No 1	227	180	69	63	140	113	235
No 2	223	109	206	126	127	505	173

Pumping Station Asset Appraisals

Further to the asset appraisal carried out in 2010 for the EA the Commissioners requested an update for 2020.

Burrowmoor



Station Details

District Drainage Commissioners	March 3 rd
Commissioned	1964
Refurbished	No 1 Pump 2005, No 6 Pump 2006
Pumps	2 no. Allen Gwynnes 15/18" Vertical Axial Flow No. 16859/60
Duty	318 l/s at 5.5m Total Gauge Head
Drive Motor	GEC SC 24kW @ 970 rpm
Gearbox	Newbrook Engineering SPL 26 Dual Drive fitted to No 1 Pump
Control Equipment	Lawtronic Star Delta
Automatic Level Control	Milltronics Multiranger Plus
Weedscreen Cleaner	Automatic CWE 5000 Gantry Type
Control Building	Precast Lightweight Concrete Panels with Flat Felt Roof
Telemetry	None
Fencing	2.1m high Galvanised Palisade

General Comments

The station drains a large mainly rural farmland catchment, but does also cater for an urban area to the southwest of March, which has increased since the last asset survey, and is set to increase again further. The station discharges into the Old Course of the River Nene. Upon examination and operation, the general condition of the plant appeared to be satisfactory although the motors are a little noisy and may need an overhaul in the next few years. At 56 years old the station should be nearing the end of its design life although the present condition is satisfactory. Nevertheless, consideration should be given in the next few years to commencing the planning for construction of a replacement station.

Weedscreen

The weedscreen is 15mm thick galvanised mild steel bars at 80mm centres and is in good condition. The screen was automated in 2002 when a CWE 5000 model automatic weedscreen was installed. The control panel for the weedscreen is located in the control building and was manufactured by Lawtronic Ltd. Whilst the cleaner is working satisfactorily it is likely to need a general overhaul in the next 5 years.



Control House

The control building is constructed with precast lightweight concrete panels and is in a poor condition with many signs of spalling externally and internally.



Control Equipment/Pumps



The original 1964 control equipment was replaced with new equipment manufactured by Lawtronic Ltd during 1994 and is in a good condition and spare parts are still readily available.

The No 1 pump was removed and overhauled in 2005, this also included the dual drive gearbox and drive motor. Pump No 2 and motor were refurbished in 2006.

The supporting steelwork for both pumps was replaced in conjunction with the overhauls. It is expected the pumps should last a further 5-10 years with only minimal associated maintenance costs.

The original manufacturer of the pumps - Allen Gwynnes Pumps – ceased trading over a decade ago and it is now unlikely spares parts will be available. That is not to say that the pumps cannot be successfully refurbished assuming the main components are not badly corroded, however the pumps are approaching 60 years old and consideration should be given to a more in-depth inspection of the pumps and/or replacing them.



The sump and pump submergence appears to be of adequate depth to serve the district for the foreseeable future.

Telemetry

The station was fitted with telemetry manufactured by Oriel Systems in 2017.

Fencing/Surrounds

The station is accessed off Burrowmoor Road and along a farm track. The compound is surrounded by a 2.1m high galvanised metal palisade fence and is in a satisfactory condition. The fence has a pedestrian and vehicular access gate. The compound is laid to grass and gravel.

In view of the poor access to this installation at certain times of the year, it is recommended that the Commissioners review the pumping station access, which should be suitable for use by heavy mobile cranes and emergency service vehicles.

Inlets/Outlets

The existing concrete capped steel sheet piles show some signs of corrosion above the water level, however they are in a reasonable condition for the age of the station.



The dual pumped outfall is through a concrete headwall direct into the Old River Nene via steel fabricated flapvalves which appear in a satisfactory condition but may well need minor repairs in the next 5 years.



Pumping Station Valuations - March Third DDC			
<p><i>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.</i></p>			
Site Name	March Third DDC-Burrowmoor Pumping Station		
Site Data			
No. Pumps	2		
Station Capacity	0.65 cumecs		
Station built	1964		
Description of Station	2 no. 24kW GEC motors with 2 no. 450mm VSAF pumps, dual drive gearbox, weedscreen cleaner & Lawtronic star delta auto control equipment. Pumps refurbished No1-2005, No2-2006		
Valuation			
Civils Works	£418,305.00		
M&E	£288,205.00		
Other	£40,000.00		
Total	£746,510.00		
Breakdown of valuation			
Civils Works			
Pump sump/pipework	£317,700.00		
Hard standing	£5,295.00		
Fencing	£10,590.00		
Outfall	£52,950.00		
Control building	£21,180.00		
Other inc weedscreen	£10,590.00		
M&E			
Pumps/gearbox	£109,100.00		
Control Equipment, cabling	£32,730.00		
Power Supply	inc in public liability		
Motors	£16,365.00		
Installation	£32,730.00		
Weedscreen raker	£87,280.00		
Telemetry	£10,000.00		
Other			
Approvals	£10,000.00		
Liaison and consultation	£5,000.00		
Design	£15,000.00		
Supervision	£10,000.00		

Pumping Station 20 Year Expenditure Forecast									
Pumping Station	Burrowmoor								
Internal Drainage Board	March 3rd								
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6 - 10	Year 11 - 15	Year 16 - 20
Function Category	Description	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025 - 2030	2030 - 2035	2035 - 2040
Total Refurbishment/Replacement							1M		
Pumping and Control Equipment			10K						
Weedscreen Cleaning Equipment						15K			
Control Building			5K						
Compound and Surroundings									
Telemetry									
Need									
1M: A complete pumping station refurbishment will be required in 10 - 15 years time.									
10K: Motor overhauls.									
15k Weedscreen cleaner overhaul.									
5K General repairs to the control building.									
Note - Costs are based on value of works at 2019 prices.									
These are estimated capital replacement figures and do not include routine maintenance costs.									

Planning Procedures Update

Further to the last meeting the Clerk to the Commissioners 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.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 23 new development related matters have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
361	Enquiry	Lovell Partnerships Limited	Residential (Not known)	Burrowmoor Road, March
362	F/YR19/0251/F	Lodge House Ltd	Residential (3 plots)	Church Street, March
363	F/YR19/3024/COND	Millfield Developments Ltd	Residential (7 plots)	Gaul Road, March*
364	F/YR19/0477/F	Mr R Purser	Residence	Gaul Road, March
365	F/YR19/0610/F	Mr L Shepherd	Residence (Extension)	Burrowmoor Road, March
366	F/YR19/0631/O	Mr & Mrs J Wallis	Residence	Causeway Close, March
367	F/YR19/0715/F	Mr s Campbell	Residence (Extension)	Grange Road, March
368	F/YR19/0695/F	Mr R Purser	Residence	Ravenhill Drive, March
369	F/YR19/3091/COND	Millfield Developments Ltd	Residential (7 plots)	Gaul Road, March*
370	F/YR19/0840/F	Mr K Harpham	Residence	Church Street, March*
371	F/YR19/0906/F	Mr & Mrs Grainger	Residence (Extension)	Ellingham Avenue, March
372	Enquiry	Client of Amazi Consulting Ltd	Residential (Not known)	Land to the west of March*

373	F/YR19/1002/F	Millfield Developments Ltd	Residence	Gaul Road, March*
374	F/YR19/1017/F	Mr R Munden	Residence	High Street/Chapel Street, March
375	F/YR19/1077/F	Messrs Sigee & Mrs Sanderson	Residence	Burrowmoor Road, March
376	F/YR19/1078/F	Messrs Sigee & Mrs Sanderson	Residence	Burrowmoor Road, March
377	F/YR19/1107/F	Lodge House Ltd	Residential (4 plots)	Heritage Way/Church Street, March
378	F/YR19/1098/F	Mr & Mrs Newman	Residence (Extension)	Richmond Avenue, March
379	F/YR19/0988/F	Mulberry March	Retail/Sui Generis	Gaul Road, March
380	F/YR20/0039/F	Mr & Mrs L Shepherd	Residence (Extensions)	Burrowmoor Road, March
381	F/YR20/0111/RM	Mr R Purser	Residence	Ravenhill Drive, March
382	F/YR20/0121/F	Mr & Mrs Hodson	Residence (Extension)	Ravenhill Drive, March
383	F/YR20/0129/RM	MHG Developments Ltd	Residence	Burrowmoor Road, March

Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions

Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters

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

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

Mr & Mrs Hodson chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process for surface water disposal from an extension at 1 Ravenhill Drive, March (MLC Ref No 382) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, they would be liable for discharge consent.

The following sites are believed to be either partly or wholly within the St Thomas' Cut or The Hythe catchments:

- (a) Lodge House Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 362 & 377)
- (b) Mr (& Mrs) L Shepherd (MLC Ref Nos 365 & 380)
- (c) Mr & Mrs J Wallis (MLC Ref No 366)
- (d) Mr K Harpham (MLC Ref No 370)
- (e) Mr R Munden (MLC Ref No 374)
- (f) MHG Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 383)

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

- *Proposed re-development of the former Old Dairy Buildings, Grange Road, March - HR Property Development (MLC Ref Nos 156 & 165); Mr B Sutton (MLC Ref Nos 170 & 178); Mr G Harradine (MLC Ref Nos 209 & 221) & Mr M Reynolds (MLC Ref Nos 251 & 253)*
- *Residential development on land west of 12 Knights End Road, March - Cannon Kirk Homes Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 204, 207 & 252), Construct Reason (MLC Ref No 291) and George Scarborough Ltd (MLC Ref No 349)*
- *Residential development to the north-west of Turnbull Road, off Gaul Road, March – Ashley King Developments (MLC Ref Nos 211, 226, 256 & 266)*
- *Erection of agricultural buildings at land to the south east of Clevely, Burrowmoor Road, March – Mr & Mrs Bayes (MLC Ref Nos 278, 285, 324, 327 & 330)*
- *Residential development on the southern side of Gaul Road to the east of York Lodge – Partner Construction (MLC Ref Nos 279, 308, 343 & 360)*

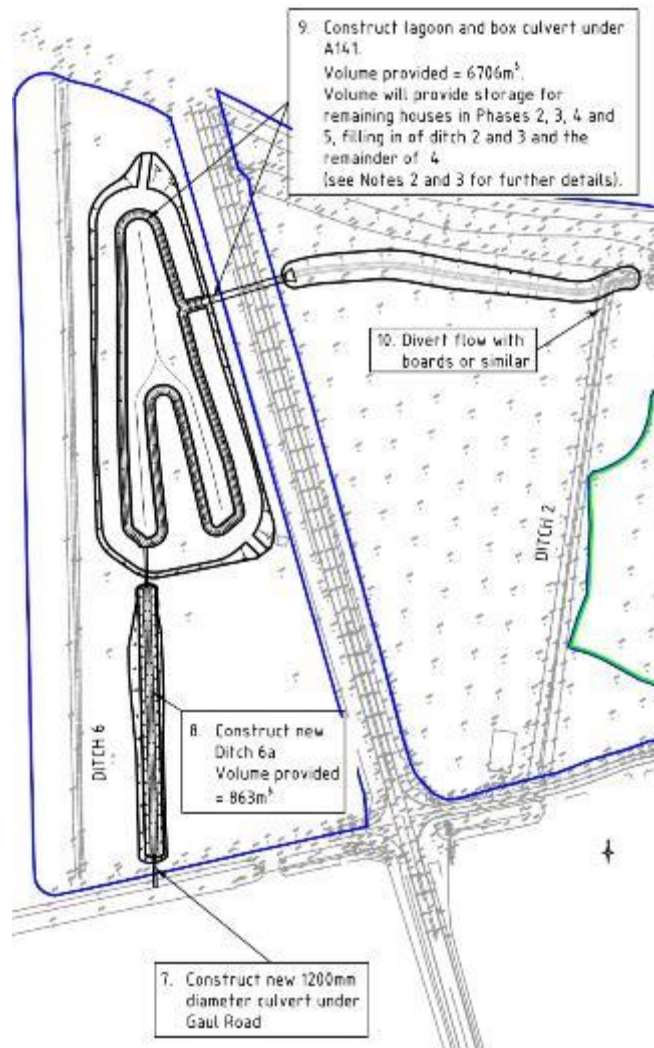
In view of the absence of recent correspondence and any subsequent instruction from the Commissioners it will be presumed, unless otherwise recorded, that the Commissioners are content with any development that has occurred and that no further action is required at this time.

Change of use of agricultural land to Riverside Park including pedestrian/cycle bridge, ponds, anglers' car park and landscaping on land south of River Nene, Gaul Road, March – Cannon Kirk UK Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 124 & 347) and residential development on land west of Old Council Depot, Gaul Road, March – Cannon Kirk UK Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 139, 193 & 296) & Signalised Junction Improvement Works to Gaul Road/A141 Junction - Cannon Kirk UK Ltd (MLC Ref No 193)

Further to the last meeting discussions have continued with the applicant and its consultants, Pick Everard, as part of the on-going post-application consultation process.

Culvert under the A141, storage lagoon and associated drain works

During May 2019 the developer confirmed that it will not be proceeding with the amended proposal but will be constructing the pond to the west of the A141, as shown overleaf, which has planning permission and was originally agreed "in principle".



Extract from Pick Everard's Drawing No 060053/C/259 Rev. E
as approved by the Commissioners at their 2015 meeting

Works affecting the Commissioners' Drain between Points 24-25

- (a) Application for byelaw consent for the piping and filling of the Commissioners' Drain

Issues associated with the application to pipe and fill part of the Commissioners' Drain between Points 24-25, "Ditch 3", were discussed at a Progress Meeting held during June.

This second "byelaw" Consent within Stage 5 will be laid in two Phases:

- Phase One had a total length of approximately 116 lin m and commenced 2m downstream of the existing AWSL foul water pumping station. It connects to the downstream end of the recently installed culvert under Gaul Road at Point 25.

This phase has been completed.

- Phase Two will involve the removal of a headwall installed during Phase One together with the installation of approximately 100m of 1.20m diameter concrete pipes and a manhole. The headwall and associated revetment will be installed at the downstream end – Point 24.

(b) Encroachment within the Commissioners' 9.0m wide maintenance access strip on the northern side of the Commissioners' Drain

Also discussed at the Progress Meeting was the provision of an application for encroachment within the Commissioners' 9.0m wide maintenance access strip. In the absence of a readily available consent application one was requested and subsequently received from the developer.

The extension to West End Park (Phase One) – Riverside Country Park

Further to the last meeting, planning application FDC Ref No F/YR18/0708/F (MLC Ref No 347) was granted planning permission by the District Council, subject to the imposition of planning conditions.

During March a request was received from Pick Everard, the applicant's engineering consultant, to attend a meeting concerning the location of an access culvert that was not included in the planning permission. This will now have to be delayed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Having considered the content of the planning application Decision Notice and noting that the land is the subject of a legal agreement between the District Council and Cannon Kirk, made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), it is suggested that the contents of these documents are considered by the Middle Level Commissioners' Conservation Officer, Solicitor, Planning Engineer and Works Department and that any issues raised are resolved before the above mentioned meeting, thus ensuring that the Commissioners' system or operations will not be detrimentally affected by either the planning conditions or the content of the Section 106 agreement.

In order to assist further discussion, the Commissioners are asked to consider the proposal and provide instruction on how they would wish us to proceed.

Residential development involving the demolition of existing outbuildings and sheds on land north of 33 Gaul Road fronting Oxbow Crescent, March - Mr F Grounds (MLC Ref Nos 168, 183 & 214), Gaul Developments LLP (MLC Ref No 240), Construct Reason Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 256, 306, 316 & 338), Wisbech Homes (MLC Ref Nos 270 & 276) and Millfield Developments (MLC Ref Nos 352 & 369)

Further to the last meeting a discharge of conditions planning application was validated by the District Council in August. The conditions relating to this included Condition 12 Highway details and drainage.

It appears from the plans supplied that a permeable pavement together with the use of a hydrobrake is to be utilised for highway drainage.

The conditions were discharged by the District Council in October.

To date no recent consultation has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agent concerning this development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Commissioners' interests.

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

In view of the above, the Commissioners may want to consider how they wish to resolve this on-going matter and their further instruction is requested on how they would wish to proceed.

Planning Application for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership at the site of the former Kingswood Park Care Home, Kingswood Road, March - Sanctuary Group (MLC Ref Nos 244, 249, 259, 341 & 344)

Further consultation with the applicant's contractor, Taylor French Developments Ltd, has taken place since the last meeting. Conscious that the surface water discharge is to be pumped, and having experienced problems with similar proposals elsewhere, one of the Middle Level Commissioners' M & E engineers was consulted on the proposals. The following advice was received:

"I understand the proposal is to discharge a maximum of 3 L/s, whilst the flows into the pump wet well are likely to be filtered it would be best practice to use a pump with a reasonable solids handling capacity (say 75mm plus). However with such a low flow the

likely pump selection will be a poor one and the outcome is either going to create trouble for the end user or result in a pump with a different duty being selected by the developer.

It would be better to choose a pump with a flow of 8 L/s (however this may require a wet well with a bigger capacity to prevent pumps from exceeding the maximum No of permitted starts per hour) this in turn will allow for a 100mm rising main to be used and still achieve a self cleaning velocity of 1.15m/s."

Taylor French Developments Ltd was advised of the situation in December but no subsequent correspondence has been received.

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

In order to assist further discussion, the Commissioners are asked to consider the proposal and provide instruction on how they would wish us to proceed.

Erection of up to 53no dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) involving demolition of existing dwelling at Brewin Oaks, City Road, March – Executors of Mrs P Brewin (MLC Ref No 342)

Following further consideration, the total number of units associated with this outline planning application has been reduced down from the originally proposed 53 to 41 flats and 4 dwellings, with all matters reserved for later approval.

Seventy-nine responses of objection were received by the District Council including reference to drainage and flood risk.

Although the planning application was recommended for approval in the Officer's Report to the Planning Committee it decided to refuse the application because:

"...the number of units proposed and its consequent scale, would represent an overdevelopment of the site and the application has failed to demonstrate that the development would have no adverse impact upon the character and visual amenity of the area and the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers."

A Planning Appeal has subsequently been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and a decision is currently awaited.

Residential development on land south west of 1 to 23 Springfield Avenue, March – Clarion Housing Group (MLC Ref No 353)

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

The District Council's Public Access webpage advises that an agreement to an "extension of time" ceased in September and a decision is pending on the planning application.

Erection of 11no industrial units (B1 & B2 use) and 2.0 metre high palisade fencing involving demolition of 6no existing units at Gaul Farm Industrial Units, Gaul Road, March - Millfield Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 357)

Further to Minute C.1075 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters (vi):

"That the Consulting Engineers write to the applicant regarding the access strip as some of the development was close to the Commissioners' drain and also that the Consulting Engineers look out the arrangements for surface water disposal."

It is confirmed that the current position is being ascertained with the applicant's agent, Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd.

The District Council's Public Access webpage advises that a decision is pending on the planning application.

Residential development bounded by the A141 Isle of Ely Way, to the south west of the 132KV Substation off Gaul Road and north east of Cherry Holt Farm, Burrowmoor Road, March – Lovell Partnerships Limited (MLC Ref No 361)

In late March 2019 a speculative generic enquiry was received for information on parcels of land for potential housing development, as indicated on the plan below. In response the enquirer was advised that any further discussion would need to be the subject of a detailed pre-application consultation procedure along with the provision of additional information in accordance with our set procedures.

No further correspondence or instruction has been received.



Plan provided by Lovell Partnerships Limited showing the extent of the enquiry area

Development to the south of Kingswood Park bounded by The Avenue, Knights End Road & the A141 Isle of Ely Way March Sustainable Urban Expansion (SUE) – Client of Amazi Consulting Ltd (MLC Ref No 372)

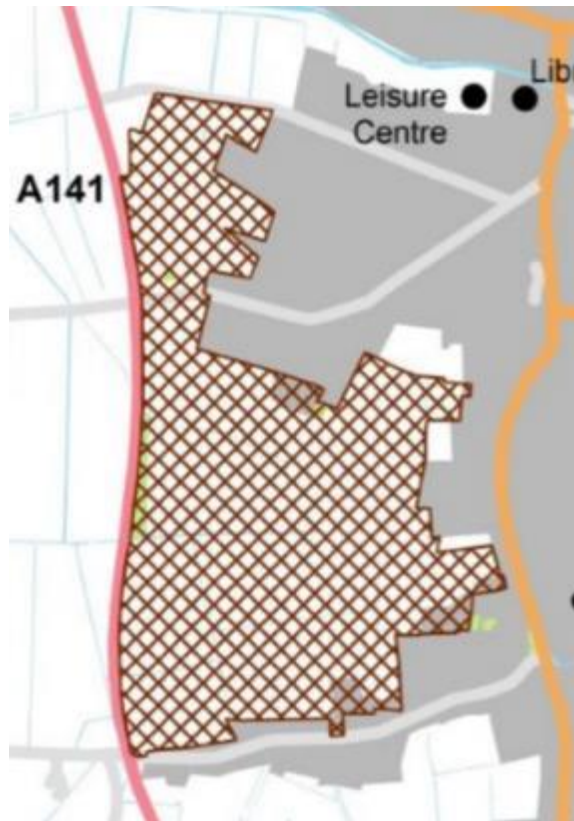
Further to the 2013 and 2015 meeting reports an enquiry has been received for an area of land at the southern end of the Strategic Allocation known as “March West” within the District Council's Adopted Local Plan.

The associated text contained within the Adopted Local Plan includes the following:

“It is expected the area will be predominantly residential (around 2,000 new dwellings) with potentially some business provision gaining access from the A141. The broad concept plan for the area should show how development will relate acceptably to the strategic and local highway network, including the town centre, as well as indicating direct sustainable transport links to the north of the town, the town centre and Neale Wade Academy.”

and

“Some fairly significant surface water attenuation features to mitigate local flood risk are likely to be necessary.”



**Extract from the District Council's Adopted Local
showing the extent of the March West strategic allocation**



Plan provided by Amazi Consulting Limited showing the extent of the enquiry area

A meeting attended by the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer together with representatives from Amazi Consulting Ltd and Infrastructure Design Ltd (iD Ltd) was held in January as part of a pre-application consultation procedure.

It is likely that the development will feature several forms of SuDS, potentially with a large attenuation pond on the eastern side of the A141, at Point 13, where any discharge into the Commissioners' system is likely to be made.

The discussions are currently at a preliminary stage with no definitive proposals to consider, and it may be many years into the future before work commences on site. However, it would, nonetheless, be beneficial to receive the Commissioners' thoughts on the proposal.

In order to assist further discussion, the Commissioners are asked to consider the proposal, advise on any requirements that they may have and provide instruction on how they would wish us to proceed.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A meeting was held at the end of March 2019. 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

'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)	

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.”

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.

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.

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 Council 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/Commissioners 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/ccclive/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 and Peterborough Flood and Water (C & P FloW) Partnership

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

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/Commissioners, 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 but none are within the Commissioners' 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 next meeting was due to be held during April but has been postponed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

With the exception of trying to resolve the longstanding problems in the vicinity of Butt Avenue/Brewin Avenue/Kingswood Road, which is outside of the Commissioners' rateable area, no issues or new "wet spots" have been identified within the Commissioners' catchment.

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/Commissioners 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.

Chief Engineer

20 April 2020

March Third (313)\Reports\April 2020

Planning

Miss Ablett reported there were several items within the Planning Officer's Report for which the Commissioners' instruction was sought.

a) Extension to West End Park (Phase One) – Riverside Country Park

Miss Ablett reported on the planning application for the extension to West End Park. She enquired whether the Commissioners wished for the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor, Planning Engineer, Conservation Officer and Operations department to review the planning application decision notice and legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 so that any issues raised were resolved before a meeting was rearranged. Councillor Cornwell considered this would be the best way forward so that when the Planning Officer was involved with the negotiations concerning the Section 106 agreement, he would be better prepared. He also considered the outcome of the review should be reported to the Chairman to ensure he was satisfied before another meeting was arranged with the applicant's engineering consultants. All Commissioners present were in agreement.

b) Residential development on land north of 33 Gaul Road, fronting Oxbrow Crescent

Miss Ablett reported that from the plans supplied it appeared that a permeable pavement together with the use of a hydrobrake was to be utilised for Highway drainage. She added that no recent consultation had been received from the applicants or their agents and no further action had been taken in respect of the Commissioners' interests.

c) Planning application for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership at the site of the former Kingswood Park Care Home

Miss Ablett reported on the planning application at the site of the former Kingwood Park Care Home and advised that no subsequent correspondence had been received since then.

Miss Ablett reported that due to COVID-19 an inspection of these two sites had not been possible and any subsequent discussion with the applicant's agent had been delayed.

Miss Ablett enquired whether any Commissioner was aware of the works having commenced and asked how they wished to proceed.

The Commissioners asked that, now the lockdown restrictions had been lifted a little, Mr Lakey inspect these sites and the Planning Officer continues to act on their behalf in relation to both applications.

d) Development to the south of Kingswood Park bounded by The Avenue, Knights End Road

Miss Ablett reported on the development to the south of Kingwood Park and that, as part of a pre-application consultation procedure, a meeting was held in January attended by the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer, together with representatives from Amazi Consulting Ltd and Infrastructure Design Ltd.

She advised that discussions were at a preliminary stage with no definitive proposals to consider and it may take many years into the future before work commenced on site.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners had any comments regarding the proposal and asked how they wished the Planning Officer to proceed.

Councillor Cornwell stated that the building of some 2,000 houses would be one of the largest developments in March for years to come and it was inevitable the surface water would make its way in to the District system. He added that it was important for the Commissioners to ensure that the disposal of surface water was dealt with as the Commissioners wished for it to be.

The Commissioners agreed that, as this is such a large site, the Planning Officer should continue to act on the Commissioners' behalf and to keep the Chairman informed. Councillor Cornwell felt that the Commissioners should also be kept informed and suggested it should be left to the Chairman's discretion whether in between meetings any important details/findings should be forwarded to them for their information.

RESOLVED

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

ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the recommended maintenance works be undertaken.

iii) That Messrs Ashman be appointed to undertake the Commissioners' flail mowing requirements.

iv) Planning

a) Extension to West End Park (Phase One) – Riverside Country Park

That the contents of the documents be considered by the Middle Level Commissioners' Conservation Officer, Solicitor, Planning Engineer and Operations department to ensure any issues raised are resolved and for the Chairman to be informed of the position before a meeting is arranged with the engineering consultant.

b) Residential development on land north of 33 Gaul Road, fronting Oxbrow Crescent & Planning application for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership at the site of the former Kingswood Park Care Home

That, now restrictions have been lifted, Mr Lakey inspects both sites for flood risk management and that the Planning Officer continue to act on the Commissioners' behalf in relation to both applications.

c) Development to the south of Kingswood Park bounded by The Avenue, Knights End Road

That the Planning Officer continue to act on the Commissioners' behalf, keep the Chairman informed and, if the Chairman considers it necessary, further details be forwarded to the Commissioners for their information in between meetings

(NB) – Mrs Siggee declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 375 & 376) received for Messrs Siggee & Mrs Sanderson.

C.1107 Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners considered their future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

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

C.1108 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported that, due to the wet weather encountered this year, there had been a lot of pumping and the pump had performed very well. He added that all works had gone well and as mentioned in the Consulting Engineer's report all the drains were in good order.

C.1109 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2019, previously circulated to the Commissioners.

The Commissioners considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

RESOLVED

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

C.1110 District Officer's Fee

The Commissioners gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners agree that the sum of £1,548.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2020/2021.

(NB) – The District Officer declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

C.1111 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.

C.1112 Environment Agency – Precept

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2020/2021 in the sum of £1,897 (the precept for 2019/2020 being £1,850.26).

C.1113 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £1.01 (£1,561.59 less £1,560.58 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Commissioners' actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2018/2019 together with the sum of £1,782.39 in respect of 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2019/2020.

C.1114 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Miss Ablett reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2020, viz:- from £553 to £565.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2020.

C.1115 Land off Burrowmoor Road and Knights End Road, March

Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from Cheffins dated 5th February 2020.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners were not interested in selling the land at this time.

C.1116 Contribution from Developer

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

C.1117 Health and Safety

a) Further to minute C.1085, the District Officer referred to the reports received from Cope Safety Management following their two visits to the District on the 30th September 2019 and the 24th February 2020 and confirmed that they had only highlighted a couple of minor points to be actioned.

He confirmed that metal railings had been installed to replace the wooden fence and barrier on site and also at the water's edge, to enable safe operation of the slacker equipment and to prevent anyone falling in.

He added that, as the contents in the First Aid Box kept in the pumping station were out of date, Cope Safety Management had advised that it would be more beneficial to keep a First Aid Box in the van instead of the pumping station.

The District Officer also advised that Cope considered the Middle Level Commissioners' paperwork kept at the pumping station containing instructions for running the pump were very good and there was nothing further to add.

Miss Ablett reminded the Commissioners 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 Commissioners' insurance policy from becoming invalid.

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

C.1118 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2018/2019

a) The Commissioners 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 Commissioners 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 Commissioners continue to comply with the Internal control objectives to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority.

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

C.1119 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett 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.

C.1120 Budgeting

Miss Ablett referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

C.1121 Review of Internal Controls

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

C.1122 Risk Management Assessment

a) Miss Ablett 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. She 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.

The Commissioners considered their 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 Commissioners reviewed the insured value of their buildings.

RESOLVED

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

C.1123 Exercise of Public Rights

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

C.1124 Annual Governance Statement – 2019/2020

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

RESOLVED

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

C.1125 Payments

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £47,469.89 which had been made during the financial year 2019/2020.

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payment made to him.

C.1126 Annual Accounts of the Commissioners – 2019/2020

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

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

C.1127 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2020/2021

The Commissioners considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2020/2021 and were informed by Miss Ablett 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 15.96% and 84.04%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £856 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 £137 and £719 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 0.25p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £719 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Commissioners be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

C.1128 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.

C.1129 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Commissioners be held on Wednesday the 5th May 2021.