

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Warboys Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Thursday the 4th June 2020

PRESENT

M P England Esq (Chairman)	I Johnson Esq
G J Bull Esq	G R Munns Esq
The Lord De Ramsey	Miss L C A Munns
D W England Esq	T E A Noble Esq
J German Esq	H W Whittome Esq
M E Heading Esq	S W Whittome Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board), Mr Malcolm Downes (representing the Consulting Engineers) and Mr Robert Wilmer (District Officer) were in attendance.

An apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from J M Short Esq.

B.1678 Standing Orders

Miss McShane 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.1679 Declarations of Interest

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

B.1680 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 21st November 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1681 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That M P England Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.1682 Appointment of Vice Chairman

Mr Charles Leadbetter was suggested as Vice Chairman of the Board but he was not present at the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the appointment of Vice Chairman be adjourned until the next meeting of the Board.

B.1683 Filling of vacancy

Further to minute B.1660, consideration was given to the filling of the vacancy on the Board.

RESOLVED

That Rupert Waters be invited to fill the vacancy on the Board, if willing to do so.

B.1684 Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute B.1662, Miss McShane 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.

B.1685 Flooding Incident – Red Tile Farm, Puddock Road

Further to minute B.1619, Miss McShane reported that, since the last meeting of the Board, a ‘Without Prejudice’ offer to settle the matter for £30,000 had been received. As AXA, the Board’s insurers were involved with the matter this matter was referred to them for consideration. However, in view of the denial of liability in this matter the insurers had rejected the offer to settle.

RESOLVED

That the Board note the current position with regard to this claim.

B.1686 Fenton Lode New Cut (Tesco Site)

Further to minute B.1661, Miss McShane reported that there had been requests from Howes Percival requesting the return of the next instalment of the deposit associated with the channel diversion works. The condition of the diversion channel was discussed with both the Board’s Chairman and District Officer. The District Officer had raised several issues including the

erosion at the ends of and movement of the revetment blockwork and erosion of the channel profile caused by land drains.

RESOLVED

That these points should be raised with the Cambridge Property Group with a view to holding a joint inspection in order to resolve the issue. However, because of the current COVID-19 working restrictions this site visit had yet to be arranged.

B.1687 Purchase of Land at Puddock Pumping Station

Further to minute B.1663, Miss McShane reported that she had made an offer to purchase the shorter section of land offered for sale in front the of the Board's current pumping station for the sum of £500 but this offer had not been accepted by the vendors.

RESOLVED

That no further action be taken regarding this matter.

B.1688 Replacement Excavator Machine

Further to minute 1664, the Chairman reported that, further to the Board's previous resolution, it had not been possible to locate a suitable second hand machine for up to £30,000 trade-in value.

RESOLVED

That as the machine was currently working well with no problems this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Board.

B.1689 Abandoned Sluice Structure – Point 157

Further to minute B.1665, the Chairman reported that the matter was still being reviewed and it was hoped that the matter could be resolved during the course of the next year.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and District Officer be authorised to have a site inspection to identify the most appropriate location for a new water control structure to be installed.

B.1690 Finance Committee

Members considered the minutes of the Meetings of the Finance Committee held on the 22nd May 2020.

RESOLVED

- i) That the minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on the 22nd May 2020 be approved.

- ii) That the actions taken by the Finance Committee be approved.
- iii) That the Board approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee save as to the rate as this would be considered later on the agenda.

B.1691 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Consideration was given to whether any revisions were necessary in the Board's charges for hiring of plant for private work (last reviewed – June 2019).

(i) Doosan DX 140W Excavator

Present charge - £35 per hour in the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)
£40 per hour outside the District)

(ii) Flail Mower

Present charge - £40 per hour inside the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)
£45 per hour outside the District)

The Finance Committee recommended to the Board that the hire charges remain as at present.

RESOLVED

That the recommendation of the Finance Committee be adopted

B.1692 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane 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.

RESOLVED

That the Board continue with the current arrangements.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 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 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) 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.

iv) 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.

v) 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.1693 Consulting Engineer's Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Warboys, Somersham & Pidley I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report May 2020

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 appears to be in a mechanically and electrically satisfactory condition.

High Fen

Automatic Weedscreen Cleaner, Replacement Weedscreen & Control Equipment (MCC)

In accordance with the instruction received at the Board's November 2019 meeting an order was placed with the C W Group for the manufacture and installation of; an automatic weedscreen cleaner, a replacement galvanized weedscreen and a motor control centre incorporating the weedscreen cleaner controls. The order placed was in the sum of £82,600.00 + VAT.

As previously reported the Board will also need to budget for other costs for the project ie damming off and dewatering if required; the use of a dive team (estimated at £3,000); MLC engineering fees, (approximately 10%); security fencing to enclose the machine and dump area (estimated cost of £6,000) and additional costs incurred owing to any unforeseen difficulties that may be encountered due to excessive debris build up at the weedscreen.

Manufacture of the machine and weedscreen was completed during March 2020 and a factory inspection carried out, a vesting certificate was subsequently issued.

The cleaner and weedscreen were delivered to site on 17 April and the machine erected. However due to the very high water level that was being maintained in the district at that time it was decided not to attempt to dam off and dewater the intake sump but to defer until later in the year.

Once the cleaner is operational it can be used to remove the large amount of debris at the base of the exiting screen, the drain water level can then be lowered which may allow the new screen to possibly be installed without damming off and dewatering.



The C W Group is currently still waiting for an MCC delivery from its sub-contractor. The factory has advised that COVID-19 has had a big impact on it and it is working with limited staff. Once delivered, some additional works to the power/lighting circuits within the control room will be required in order to allow for the installation of the MCC.

The C W Group anticipates that it will install the MCC as soon as it is delivered and anticipates completion by the end of June. However, this could of course move slightly given the present circumstances.

Pumps

During December 2019 it was found that the No 1 pump's motor insulation resistance had dropped to a quite low value, it was therefore set to be the duty pump in an attempt to improve the resistance but recent checks have revealed it to still be low.

It was then reported by the District Officer in January 2020 that Pump No 2 would not operate. Close inspection found that the pump No 2 motor windings had short circuited. With the Chairman's approval the pump was removed on 6 January by Fen Flow Ltd who stripped, inspected and reported its findings.

As the budget price for a new like-for-like replacement was £35K plus installation, with a 26 week delivery period, the existing unit was refurbished. This included a motor re-wind (chosen due to the lead time for a new stator pack being very long), together with new seals and bearings etc. It was re-installed and re-commissioned on 27 February 2020.

Unfortunately, recent checks have found the motor insulation resistance to have again dropped, indicating that water is getting into the motor, probably via the static sealed areas or the cable glands, original spares of which were not available for this obsolete pump. Fen Flow Ltd has been informed and will investigate if the resistance continues to drop.

The accepted design life of a submersible pump is around 25 years, pump No 2 is over 34 years old and Pump No 1 30 years old and both are now showing signs of deterioration. The Board should therefore urgently consider the replacement of one or both pumps with new as soon as possible. Delivery times are around 30 weeks from order, plus any affect the current lockdown may have. Compliance with the Eel Regulations has been considered with any replacement pumps and the Consulting Engineer confirms that in his opinion any replacement should be fish friendly.

We have discussed the matter with Bedford Pumps, who supplied the No 1 pumpset, and it has two options: traditional axial vertical suspended pump identical to the existing Bedford unit or a fish friendly version of the same size pump, the latter however will need a VFD to operate it which could be incorporated into the new control equipment,

Traditional Axial Vertical Suspended - Pump model number: SA.45.04.06

To meet the design head of 2.9m this would require a flow rate of 478 l/s, the budget outline price is £40,014.00. This includes 20m of submersible cable, 4m of rising main, 90 degree bend and mounting soleplate. Pump condition monitor with display is also included.

Fish friendly Axial Vertical Suspended - Pump model number: SAF.45.05.06

The pump design duty is 450 l/s @ 2.9m. The budget outline price is £41,637.00, this includes 20m of submersible cable 4m of rising main, 90 degree bend and mounting soleplate. Pump condition monitor with display is also included.

Both options do not include any installation costs.

Washways

The diesel engines have been serviced and new batteries fitted to the No 4 engine.

Puddock

Pump No 2 continues to operate with the Moisture Ingress Sensor (MSI) unit defeated and a recent test of the motor windings showed no further deterioration in its insulation resistance.

As requested, a Duty Selector Switch has been fitted to the control panel.

Westmoor

Modifications to the fencing will be carried out in conjunction with the fencing at High Fen.

Pumping Hours

This will be covered in the District Officer's report.

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 Matters

In addition to matters concerning previous planning matters, the following 26 new development related matters shown below have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
1065	H/19/01597/HHFUL	Mr I Sahar	Residence (Garage)	Heath Road, Warboys
1066	F/YR19/0834/O	Triman Developments Ltd & Robertson Strategic Asset Management Ltd	Residential (249 plots)	Doddington Road, Chatteris*
1067	H/19/01711/FUL	Mr Hopkins	Residence (Garage)	Fen Road, Pidley
1068	H/19/01962/PIP	Indigo Cariad Ltd	Residential (5 plots)	Station Road, Warboys
1069	H/19/01983/FUL	Mr & Mrs Pincott	Residential (2 plots)	Warboys Road, Pidley*
1070	F/YR19/0866/RM	FRW (UK) Ltd	Residential (2 plots)	Doddington Road, Chatteris
1071	H/19/02319/FUL	Mr J Nelson	Residence	High Street, Pidley
1072	F/YR19/1062/O	Rattlerow Farms Ltd	Residence (Agricultural)	First Furlong Drove Chatteris
1073	F/YR19/1031/O	Mr & Mrs P Guy	Residential (3 plots)	Wiley Terrace, Doddington Road, Chatteris
1074	H/19/02574/PIP	Mr D Hopkins	Residential (4 plots)	Pond Close, Pidley
1075	F/YR19/3137/COND	4 Real Developments Ltd	Residential (58 plots)	West Street, Chatteris*
1076	H/19/02566/FUL	Mr D Hopkins	Residence (Garage)	Field Road/Fen Road, Pidley
1077	H/20/00093/FUL	Mr Hopkins	Industrial	Fen Road, Pidley
1078	H/19/02595/FUL	Mr A Austin	Residence	Warboys Road, Pidley
1079	H/19/02215/OUT	Mr D Fabb	Residence (Agricultural)	Fenside Road, Warboys
1080	F/YR20/0081/O	Mrs R James	Residence	Station Road, Chatteris
1081	F/YR20/0124/F	Screwfix Direct Ltd	Retail/Storage	Fenland Way, Chatteris*
1082	F/YR20/0139/F	Mrs T Wickes	Residence	Doddington Road, Chatteris*
1083	H/20/00372/PIP	Mr Newman	Residential (4 plots)	Fen Road, Pidley
1084	Enquiry	Larkfleet Homes	Residential (124 plots)	The Bank, Somersham
1085	H/20/00323/FUL	C A Agriculture Ltd	Storage	Puddock Road, Warboys
1086	H/20/00419/OUT	Mr & Mrs Cornwell	Residence (Agricultural)	Warners Drove, Somersham*
1087	H/20/00478/AGDET	Mr J Armstrong	Agricultural	Puddock Road, Warboys
1088	H/20/00451/FUL	Mr & Mrs Spark	Residence (Outbuilding and extension)	Fen Road, Pidley
1089	H/19/80387/COND	Mr J Simons	Residential (2 plots)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1090	H/19/02620/PMBA	K R German & Son	Residence	Heath Road, Warboys

Planning applications ending 'HHFUL' relate to Householder applications for Full Planning Permission

Planning applications ending 'PIP' and 'IP' relate to Permission in Principle

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

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

Planning applications ending 'AGDET' relate to Agricultural Determination

Planning applications ending 'PMBPA' relate to Prior Approval - Agricultural to Dwellings

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.

C A Agriculture Ltd chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process for surface water disposal from Puddock Road, Warboys (MLC Ref No 1085) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, it would be liable for discharge consent.

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

- *Residential development on land east of Llanca, Huntingdon Road, Chatteris – Mr B Biggs & Mr J Biggs (MLC Ref No 468), Bexwell Tractors (MLC Ref Nos 607 & 739) and HB Villages Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 943, 973 & 977)*
- *Haulage yard; aggregates storage area & sales use; inert waste & soil recycling operations; and a lean-to extension to existing buildings accommodating an ancillary office, welfare facilities & storage uses at Furlong Farm, First Furlong Drove, Chatteris – Mandley Brothers (MLC Ref Nos 718, 944 & 981)*
- *Environmental Permit Application EPR/KB3199AV/A001 for treated effluent discharge at Hayden House, High Street, Pidley - Mr D Bird (MLC Ref No 966)*
- *Developments at Manchetts Transport, Heath Road, Warboys – Manchetts Transport (MLC Ref Nos 519, 540, 569, 684 & 1000)*
- *Erection of a garden centre (with restaurant area) with 2.2M (max height) fence and gates involving the demolition of existing sheds, greenhouses, and single-storey elements to 134 London Road, Chatteris – Miltons (Wallpapers) Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 888 & 969)*
- *Proposed pig rearing units and associated anaerobic digestion plant at 1 Colne Fen Farm, Chatteris Road, Somersham – Client of RM ASSOCIATES (MLC Ref No 961) and A & E G Heading Ltd (MLC Ref No 993)*
- *Erection of 6no single storey dwellings comprising of 2 x 2-bed and 4 x 3-bed; change of use of office building (LB) to 2-storey 5-bed dwelling involving part demolition of Listed Building and demolition of warehouse and buildings at 22 London Road, Chatteris – GKL Residential Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 1037)*

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

Mixed Use Development on land at Tithe Barn Farm and south east of London Road, Chatteris - Hallam Land Management Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 160, 184, 606 & 630)

According to Fenland District Council's (FDC's) Public Access web page, a decision on this site still remains pending.

Developments at Lower End Farm, Puddock Road, Warboys – P. K. Raynham (MLC Ref No 377) and C A Agriculture Ltd (MLC Ref No 980 & 1085)

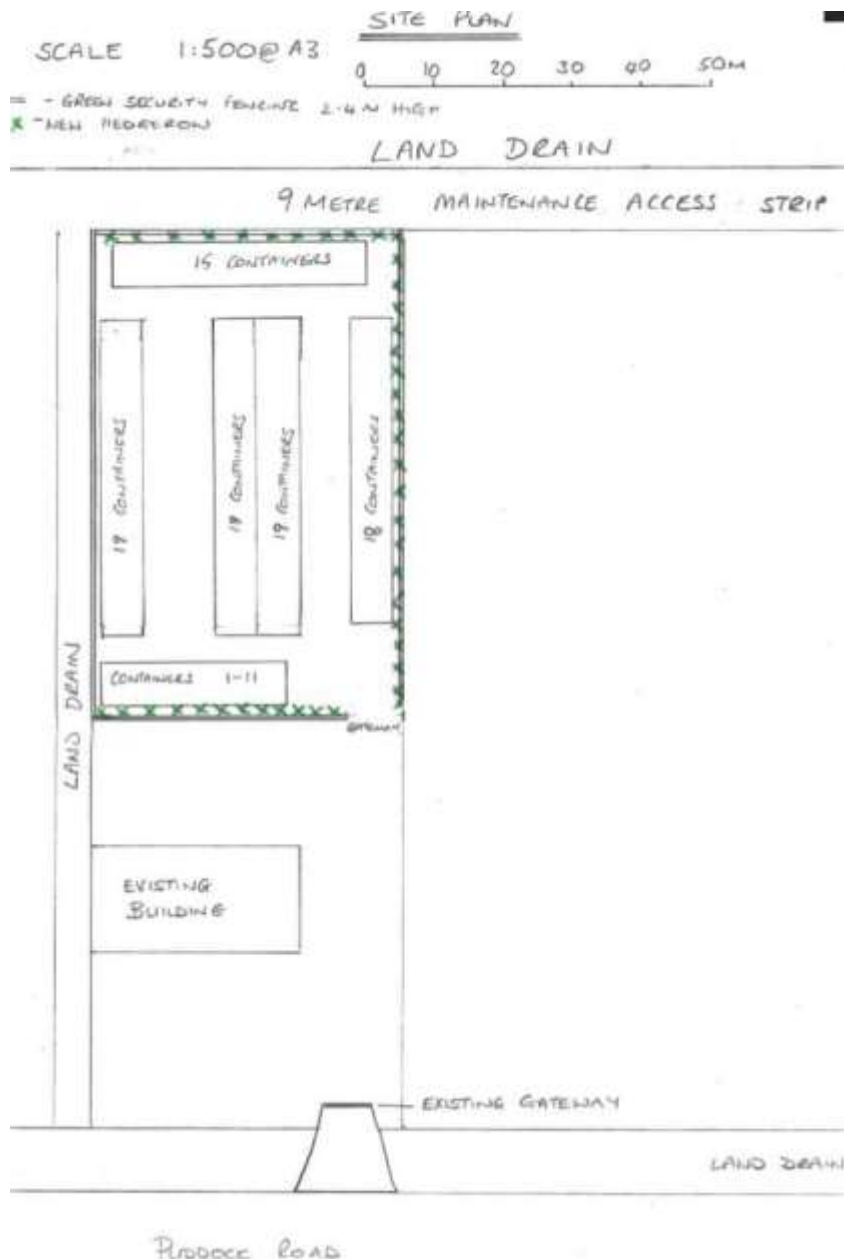
Further to previous Meeting Reports a planning application for the change of use of agricultural land, currently being used as grazing land, to storage of shipping containers for renting out to local businesses/homeowners was submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) in February. According to HDC's Simple Search webpage the application is "In progress".

Following concerns raised about encroachment within the Board's 9.0m wide maintenance access strip, alongside the Turf Fen Ten Foot Drain, the applicant advised that:

"...the boundary of the existing grazing land which is already set back 9m from the drain in question. We do not intend to move this boundary. The drainage board has successfully used this boundary (9m strip) this last year to complete their maintenance of the drain.

Please be advised that this maintenance strip will not be amended, lessened or altered in anyway with regards to this or any further planning applications. As we do not consider it to be any part of the land that we can use for our own purpose."

A revised Site Layout Plan was subsequently submitted by the applicant illustrating the location of the development in relation to the Board's Drain. An extract from the Plan follows for your information/use.



Extract from the revised Site Layout Plan provided by the applicant

Industrial/Haulage Yard at Fenton Way, Chatteris (MLC Ref No 529); Erection of a vegetable processing building and formation of balancing pond – Client of Grounds & Co (MLC Ref No 627); Allpress Farms Ltd (MLC Ref No 638);); Erection of warehouse with offices and business units on land west of Fenton Way, Chatteris - R W Simpson Ltd (MLC Ref No 644) & Produce World Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 770, 776, 777, 1097 & 1098)

Further to previous Board Reports, two Discharge of Conditions applications have been submitted to FDC. The initial application included the discharge of conditions related to surface water disposal and flood risk but this was not discharged. However, the subsequent application was discharged.

In its response, the LLFA advised that based on the submission documents it could:

“....recommend discharge of Condition 13 and 17 of planning permission F/YR15/0205/F. The above documents demonstrate that surface water can be drained from the site through the use of a large attenuation basin serving the wider site. This basin will grow in size as the phases are developed to ensure the basin provides the adequate volume of storage required for the impermeable areas from the plots, for all storm events up to and including the 1% AEP storm event including a 40% allowance for climate change.”

The response did include an informative but to date no contact has been made with the Board.

Retail development on land to the north of Honeysome Industrial Estate fronting Fenland Way, Chatteris - Harrier Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 567, 584, 585, 663 & 737) and Screwfix Direct Ltd (MLC Ref No 1081)

Screwfix Direct Ltd

In January a planning application was submitted to FDC for changes to the retail unit to the west of the “Jacks” store. Whilst this will not result in an increase in surface water disposal to the Board’s system the use of the unit will increase the volume of treated foul effluent water being discharged into the neighbouring Nightlayers IDB’s system.

The matter was raised with the applicant’s agent, Hybrid Planning & Development Limited, but as yet no application for consent has been received.

Diversion of Fenton Lode/Fillenham Drain, Chatteris (Dents Diversion)

As a result of a request from Howes Percival, requesting the return of the next instalment of the deposit associated with the above channel diversion works, the condition of the diverted channel was discussed with both the Board’s Chairman and District Officer. The District Officer raised several issues including the erosion at the ends of, and movement of, the revetment block work and erosion of the channel profile caused by land drains. From the conversation it was not clear where this was occurring but the latter may be on the “Triman Land” section at the northern end of the site. It was agreed that these points should be raised with the Cambridge Property Group with a view to holding a joint inspection in order to resolve the issue.

Unfortunately, the previously suggested site inspection was postponed and will now have to be re-organised when the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Residential Development involving demolition of existing storage building on land west and south of 74 West Street, Chatteris – Client of LK Consult Ltd (MLC Ref No 742), Land Planning Partnership Ltd (MLC Ref No 826), WS Sandbach Ltd (MLC Ref No 928) & 4 Real Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 1075)

Further to the Board's May 2018 Meeting Report, a Discharge of Conditions application (MLC Ref No 1075) was submitted to FDC in November and subsequently discharged in March.

The Conditions involved those related to surface water disposal and the Decision Notice refers to "...any consents required by Anglian Water and/or Middle Level IDB."

Discussion with the applicants' engineering consultant, Civic Engineers Limited, has recently commenced as part of a post-application consultation procedure.

Residential development on land south of 8 - 59 Fairbairn Way, Chatteris – Alan Barlett & Sons Ltd (Chatteris) (MLC Ref Nos 890 & 1020)

As previously advised the planning application associated with the provision of twenty-six dwellings has been granted planning permission subject to the imposition of planning conditions, including those related to surface water disposal and ecology, but a decision on the fifty dwelling application has not yet been made.

It is understood that there has been a delay to ensure the completion of the Section 106 agreement.

Development at Womb Farm to the south west of Doddington Road, Chatteris - Colliers CRE (MLC Ref No 524), Trimar Developments (UK) Ltd (MLC Ref No 528), Client of HaskoningDHV UK Ltd (MLC Ref No 1036), Barmach Ltd (MLC Ref No 1040) Trimar Developments (UK) Ltd & Robertson Strategic Asset Management Ltd (MLC Ref No 1066)

Further to Minute B.1669 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters item (iv) the guidance provided has been noted and will assist in further discussions in respect of this site.

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

According to FDC's Public Access webpage a decision remains pending concerning the latest planning application for up to 250 dwellings (MLC Ref No 1066)

A pair of dwellings on land adjacent to Copper Beeches, Warboys Road, Pidley - Mr J Simons (MLC Ref Nos 1008, 1050 & 1089)

Following a telephone conversation in relation to the above site, the applicant confirmed that the proposals for drainage at the site were via soakaways to deal with surface water and for dedicated private waste treatment plants for foul water, discharging to the private watercourse to the north of the site alongside Warboys Road towards Fenton Hill.

An initial response has been sent to the applicant outlining the requirement for appropriate site infiltration testing and design to be in accordance with BRE Digest 365 and to advise that it is the Board's policy to generally resist discharge of treated foul effluent water to the open drainage network. Internal consultation has been requested to seek confirmation of the Board's position in this regard and a response is still awaited at the time of writing.

The applicant has advised that the closest adopted foul water sewer connection is on the opposite side of the adjacent property, Copper Beeches, and the difference in levels would make connection challenging. The applicant has advised verbally that confirmation has been received from the Environment Agency for the discharge of treated effluent. This is likely to relate to water quality and pollution issues rather than the volume of water being discharged, which is a matter for the Board to consent.

The applicant has agreed to carry out the required infiltration testing and the results are currently awaited.

In order to guide further discussion and assess any submissions efficiently it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion and comments on the development of this site in particular regarding the discharge of treated foul effluent water into the adjacent watercourse.

Erection of 9 dwellings with garaging and parking following the demolition of the existing industrial buildings at land north east of The Laurels, Fenton Road, Fenton – Mr Augstein (MLC Ref No 1052)

According to HDC's Simple Search webpage this application is "In progress".

Application for outline planning permission for up to 145 dwellings and associated access, all other matters reserved on land north of the bank at land north of 16 the Bank, Somersham – Client of Waldeck Consulting (MLC Ref No 1045) and Larkfleet Homes (MLC Ref Nos 1058 & 1084)

A “Provision of Flood Risk Information” request, a pre-paid service provided by the Commissioners, has been received and is currently being processed.

Development Contributions

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

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

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

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.

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 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 are as follows:

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.

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

General Advice

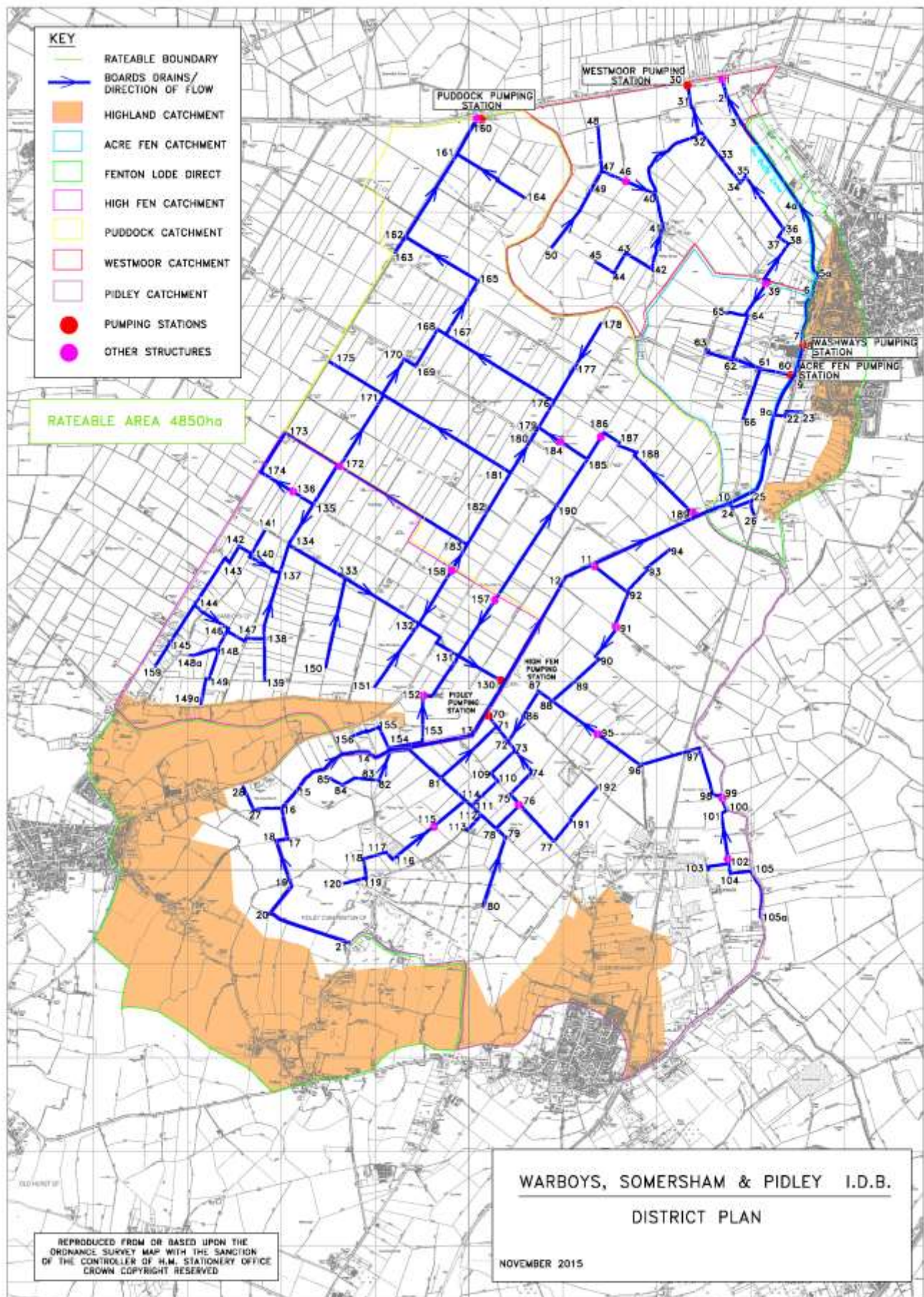
Assistance has been given, on the Board’s behalf, in respect of the following:

- a) A & E G Heading – An application for byelaw consent for the installation of 16 field underdrain outfalls into the district watercourse between Points 181 and 158 in the Warboys Tick Fen area was recommended for approval.

Consulting Engineer

20 May 2020

Warboys, Somersham & Pidley (333)\Reports\May 20



Mr Downes, Middle Level Commissioners' Mechanical and Electrical engineer, attended the meeting to report on the automatic weedscreen replacement, weedscreen and control equipment.

Mr Downes advised that in accordance with the instruction received at the Board's November 2019 meeting an order had been placed with the CW Group for the manufacture and installation of; an automatic weedscreen cleaner, a replacement galvanised weedscreen and a motor control centre incorporating the weedscreen cleaner controls. The order was placed in the sum of £82,600.00 + VAT. As he had previously reported the Board also needed to budget for other costs for the project including the damming off and de-watering if required, the use of a dive team, Middle Level Commissioners' engineering fees, security fencing to enclose the machine and dump area. The cleaner and weedscreen were now on site and erected. However, due to the very high water levels that were being maintained in the district it was decided not to attempt to dam off and dewater the intake sump but defer this until later in the year.

It was now anticipated that the automatic weedscreen cleaner and control panel would be fitted by mid July 2020.

Mr Downes reported that the pump had broken down in January and that steps had been taken to rewind the electric motor but it was not working properly. The pump would be taken out and repaired and if it was a warranty issue it would be repaired under warranty.

The Board noted the planning applications for development which had been received since the last meeting.

The Planning Engineer reported that no further correspondence had been received from the applicants or the applicant's agents on the following developments:-

- a) Residential development on land east of Llanca, Huntingdon Road, Chatteris (MLC Ref Nos. 468, 607, 739, 943, 973 & 977)
- b) Haulage yard; aggregates storage area & sales use; inert waste & soil recycling operations; and a lean-to extension to existing buildings accommodating an ancillary office, welfare facilities & storage uses at Furlong Farm, First Furlong Drove, Chatteris (MLC Ref Nos 718, 944 & 981)
- c) Environmental Permit Application EPR/KB3199AV/A001 for treated effluent discharge at Hayden House, High Street, Pidley (MLC Ref No 966)
- d) Developments at Manchetts Transport, Heath Road, Warboys (MLC Ref Nos 519, 540, 569, 684 & 1000)
- e) Erection of a garden centre (with restaurant area) with 2.2M (max height) fence and gates involving the demolition of existing sheds, greenhouses, and single-storey elements to 134 London Road, Chatteris (MLC Ref Nos 888 & 969)
- f) Proposed pig rearing units and associated anaerobic digestion plant at 1 Colne Fen Farm, Chatteris Road, Somersham (MLC Ref No 961 & 993)
- g) Erection of 6no single storey dwellings comprising of 2 x 2-bed and 4 x 3-bed; change of use of office building (LB) to 2-storey 5-bed dwelling involving part demolition of Listed Building and demolition of warehouse and buildings at 22 London Road, Chatteris (MLC Ref No 1037)

Development at Lower End Farm, Puddock Road, Warboys (MLC Ref. Nos 377, 980 & 1085)

The Planning Engineer reported that further to previous Meeting Reports a planning application for the change of use of agricultural land currently being used as grazing land, to store shipping containers for renting out to local business/homeowners had been submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council. Following concerns raised about encroachment within the Board's 9 metre wide maintenance access strip the applicant had now advised the Planning Engineer that the maintenance strip will not be amended, lessened or altered in anyway with regards to this or any further planning applications and the District Officer had confirmed that he had access to the 9 metre strip at this location.

Residential development involving demolition of existing storage building on land west and south of 74 West Street, Chatteris (MLC Ref. Nos. 742, 826, 928 & 1075)

The Planning Engineer advised that discussions with the applicants' engineering consultant, Civic Engineers Ltd, had recently commenced as part of a post-application procedure for this development and more information about the development had been received.

A pair of dwellings on land adjacent to Copper Beeches, Warboys Road, Pidley (MLC Ref Nos. 1008, 1050 & 1089)

The applicant advised that the closest adopted foul water sewer connection was on the opposite side of the adjacent property, Copper Beeches, and the difference in levels would make a connection challenging. The applicant had advised the engineer verbally that confirmation had been received from the Environment Agency for the discharge of treated effluent. This was likely to relate to water quality and pollution issues rather than the volume of water being discharged. However, the applicant had agreed to carry out the required infiltration testing and the results were currently awaited.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the recommendations of the Finance Committee be adopted.
- iii) That the Board approve the purchase a spare pump.
- iv) Planning applications marked a-g

That no further action was required by the Board on these planning applications.

- v) Development at Lower End Farm, Puddock Road, Warboys – P K Raynham & C A Agriculture Ltd (MLC Ref. Nos 377, 980 & 1085)

That the position with the retention of the Board's 9 metre maintenance strip be noted by the Board.

- vi) A pair of dwellings on land adjacent to Cooper Beeches, Warboys Road, Pidley (MLC Ref Nos. 1008, 1050 & 1089)

That a decision on this matter be deferred until the engineer had obtained further information from the infiltration testing.

(NB) - Mr D England declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref Nos. 337, 980 & 1085) received for P K Raynham and C A Agriculture Ltd.

(NB) – Mr German declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref Nos. 1008, 1050 & 1089) received for Mr J Simons

B.1694 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.1695 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported that all routine maintenance authorised by the Board had been carried out satisfactorily and notices for the current year's flail work had been sent out to landowners.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.
- ii) That K R German & Son be engaged to carry out the long reach maintenance works for 2020.

(NB) – Mr German declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.1696 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1697 Clerk's fee

Consideration was given to the fee of the Clerk.

RESOLVED

That there be no increase in the fee paid to the Clerk for the year 2020/2021

(NB) – The Lord De Ramsey and Messrs Heading, H and S Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) when this item was discussed.

B.1698 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.1699 District Labour District Officer's Salary

The Board considered the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the salary of the District Officer be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award, as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

RESOLVED

That the recommendation of the Finance Committee be adopted.

B.1700 Environment Agency – Precept

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2020/2021 in the sum of £21,877.00 (the precept for 2019/2020 being £21,343.25).

B.1701 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that the sum of £2,021.83 (£11,905.69 less £9,883.86 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 £9,893.09 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2019/2020.

B.1702 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Miss McShane reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2020, viz:- from £849 to £866.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2020.

B.1703 Proposal to relinquish section of District watercourse at Point 159

The Board considered a request from the landowner at Point 159 of the District drain to the Board to relinquish.

RESOLVED

That the request for relinquishment of the drain at this Point be refused and this section be retained as a Board's drain and maintained to the Board's standard.

B.1704 Contribution from Developer

Miss McShane 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.

B.1705 Health and Safety

- a) Further to minute B.1672, the Chairman referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 11th February 2020.

The Chairman reported on the visits to the Board by COPE Safety Management on the 13th September 2019 and the 11th February 2020. The report identified a number of low risk actions. The Chairman reported that a number of these had been carried out.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and District Officer be authorised to implement all outstanding actions in order to comply with the health and safety report.

Miss McShane 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.

- c) Miss McShane referred to the ADA Internal Drainage Boards' Health, Safety & Welfare Survey 2018.

B.1706 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1707 Risk Management Assessment

- a) Miss McShane 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.

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 and approved the insured value of their buildings and gave consideration to having a professional valuation of the Board's real estate assets, for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED

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

B.1708 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane 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.1709 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 Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

B.1710 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £217,073.77 which had been made during the financial year 2019/2020.

(NB) – Mr German declared an interest in the payments made to K R German and Sons.

(NB) – The Lord De Ramsey and Messrs Heading, H and S Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1711 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.

RESOLVED

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

B.1712 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 Miss McShane 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 89.24% and 10.76%.

Miss McShane reported that the Finance Committee had recommended a rate of 20.0p in the £ should be set with a Special levy of £4,541 on Fenland District Council and a Special levy of £13,434 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £167,088 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 £149,113 and £17,975 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 20.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £13,434 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £4,541 be made and issued to Fenland 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.1713 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.1714 Date of next Meeting

Miss McShane reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board would be held on Thursday the 3rd December 2020 at Lakeside Lodge, Pidley which would include an inspection of the District commencing at 9.30am.

B.1715 Request to lower water levels near Westmoor Farm

The Board considered a request from George Munns of Westmoor Farm to drop water levels in the drain near Westmoor Farm.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer undertake a desk top study to assess water levels near Westmoor Farm and this information be shared with the Chairman and District Officer to assess the impact on other ratepayers of lowering water levels at this point.

(NB) – Mr G Munns and Miss L Munns declared interests when this item was discussed.