

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Bluntisham Internal Drainage Board
held at Hanson's, Needingworth Quarry on Friday 23rd June 2023

PRESENT

P Burton Esq (Chairman)

J R Anderson Esq (Vice Chairman)

P Burgess Esq

A G R Holloway Esq

Cllr J Neish Esq

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

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from J Green Esq, C Hudson Esq and H Law Esq.

B.888 Declarations of Interest

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

P Burton declared an interest as a Contractor to the Board in any matters concerning maintenance works, and in the payments to Lattenbury Services Ltd.

J Anderson declared an interest in payments made to R&S Anderson & Son

B.889 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 1st February 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.890 Election of Board Members

The Clerk reported that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on the 31st October 2023. Members considered the proposed register of electors applicable to the 2023 election.

The Chairman reported that he would not be standing for election this year and therefore would not be eligible for Chairman. He also referred to Mr John Green not able to attend meetings any longer.

Members considered the likely vacancies that could be created and that Mr Chris Wisson had been considered for membership of the Board previously.

The Vice-Chairman enquired if it would be appropriate to approach Mr William Green to see if he would be interested in becoming a member of the Board.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Election register be approved
- ii) The Vice-Chairman discuss Board membership with Mr Chris Wisson and Mr William Green and to inform the office following these discussions.
- iii) That from this point, any information/paperwork that was required to be sent to the chairman be sent to Mr James Anderson, who was authorised to deal with any matters until the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

B.891 Member Training Update

The Clerk reported on the training undertaken by Members in the past year.

B.892 Changing to One Annual Meeting of the Board

Further to minute B.864, Members discussed the current arrangements and the needs of the Board. The Vice-Chairman reported that he had looking into the frequency of meetings for other Boards and that these were for larger Boards than Bluntisham, who were able to run their Boards effectively with an annual meeting. In response to Cllr Neish, Mr Hill reported that the two main governance points that needed to be considered were the setting of the rate and the approval of the accounts & AGAR, the latter being required to be approved by 30th June and updated members on the process for rate setting/approvals should the board decide on one meeting per year. He further considered that it was more important to have an effective operational structure within the Board to enable it to react to operational challenges at any time throughout the year. Members considered that the structure in place between officers/contractors was strong and allowed for effective operational management

RESOLVED

For the Board to move to an annual meeting only and for that scheduled meeting to be held in January.

B.893 Maintenance works in the District

Further to minute B.866, The Chairman reported that the majority of maintenance works for financial year 2022/2023 had been completed during March 2022, but as had been discussed at the June 2022 meeting, additional flail mowing/shrub-tree clearance works had been carried out during the year.

In response to the Vice-Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that on completion of these works and payment of the contractors account, all scheduled work and payments has been finalised in the accounts to 31st March 2023 and any works for 2023/2024 would be funded from the allowance made in the 2023/24 budget.

The Chairman referred to discussions with Hansons concerning the cutting back of hedges for which they were responsible and the Vice-Chairman agreed to mark the location of those hedges on a plan of the District which could be forwarded to Hansons.

The Vice-Chairman reported that he would carry out an inspection of the District with Mr Chris Wisson later in the year to establish a programme of works for 2023.

B.894 Hanson – Progress Report

There was no progress report as Mr Laws was not present at the meeting, and in response to the Chairman, Mr Hill reported that there had not been a report forwarded to be discussed at the meeting. Members considered it was important for them to be updated on the progress of works at the site.

B.895 Ouse Washes Newsletter

Further to minute B.868, Mr Hill referred to the Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated March 2023, viz;

Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir

Update

March 2023

Middle Level Barrier Bank

Following our update in January 2023.

During the autumn reservoir inspection, our engineers identified cracks in the embankment between Welney and the A142 Mepal, following the prolonged period of hot, dry weather.

We undertook repair work throughout January and February and has now been complete. We will continue monitoring of the repaired cracks monthly until December 2023.

Our contractor Jackson Civil Engineering will start demobilising from the site and compound area in Welney from Monday 6 March, this will take approximately 1 week.

We will continue to carry out regular inspections and maintenance of the bank and monitor the grass growth for the next 2 years until the reservoir engineer gives a final sign-off in autumn 2024. This will include regular grass cuts, surveys and repairs to damage that may happen over the winter months.

Public footpath

The Middle Level Barrier Bank will remain open.

Please continue to be careful when accessing and walking on the bank and stay away from the patches of grass that haven't grown fully yet.

Keeping your community up to date

We would like to thank you for your co-operation and patience, and we will continue to work with you and the community to minimise disruption.

Our Public Liaison Officers will continue to keep you updated during the maintenance period of the project. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Public Liaison Officers: Monica Stonham or Yazmin Parry via email ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com



Mr Hill advised:-

i) Annual Flood & Water Conference 2023

Invitation to ADA Flood & Water Conference 2023

Tuesday 21 November 2023 | 11:00 – 17:00 | One Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AA

ADA is delighted to invite you to join them for the ADA Flood & Water Conference on Tuesday 21 November 2023, as the conference returns to the magnificent venue of One Great George Street, Westminster, London. ADA will bring together a leading line-up of prominent political, policy, and technical speakers from across the United Kingdom to discuss key policy topics of the moment during the main conference session.

Following feedback from members, the format of this year's Conference has been developed to:

- maximise the time available for networking between delegates and suppliers to the sector,
- invite a greater variety of guest speakers, and
- provide more convenient timing for those travelling to and from London.

The Conference will open at 11.00 for networking with delegates and an expanded Exhibition of ADA's Associate Members in the Great Hall. A buffet lunch will be served from 12.00 before the conference presentations commence at 13.20 in the Thomas Telford Theatre. The Conference will close at 17.00.

Discussion forum

A discussion forum will form part of the day where delegates will be able to pose topical questions to the speakers/panellists via the conference chair. ADA wish to receive delegates questions in advance, which can be submitted as part of the ticket booking process on Eventbrite. Their aim is to consolidating key subjects for discussion and questioning and to maximise the value of this session.

Book your place

ADA has launched bookings for this year's conference early to give everyone plenty of advance notice of the revised date of Tuesday 21 November 2023 to make travel arrangements. They invite you to secure your place now via Eventbrite, via the link below. Tickets are non-refundable but can be transferred.

[ADA Flood & Water Conference 2023 Tickets, Tue 21 Nov 2023 at 11:00 | Eventbrite](#)

ii) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

The Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse ADA Branch was held on Tuesday 7th March 2023

Morning workshops were re-introduced for the first time since the COVID-19 outbreak and members who attended took part in an excellent discussion focussed on three topic areas; Fens2100; Water Resources East and Climate Change. Steven Trewhella (consultant to the EA on Fens2100) and Daniel Johns (Chief Exec, WRE) took away a wide range of ideas centred around how the two topics were connected by the work of IDBs.

Within the AGM, Marc Heading was re-appointed as Chairman and Doug McMurdo as Vice Chair with approval that the secretariat of the branch be transitioned from the Middle Level Commissioners to the Bedford Group of IDBs over the coming months. Ian Moodie (Technical Manager, ADA) gave an overview of ADA's activities, including their important inputs on behalf of IDBs into the long-awaited implementation of schedule 3 of the Floods & Water Management Act. Tom Pickover introduced himself ahead of starting as Operations Manager at the Environment Agency (covering the lower Great Ouse catchment) and was joined by Darren Trumper who between them gave an overview of Environment Agency flood management activities and budgets.

iii) Insurance

Historically the number of insurance companies willing to quote for the insurance requirements of the Middle Level Commissioners and administered Boards is limited.

Our insurance portfolio is complex and includes a range of policies that includes Commercial Combined (largest component), Motor Fleet, Engineering & Construction, Terrorism, Management Liability, Marine Craft and Professional Indemnity.

The overall cost of our insurance portfolio for 2023/24 will be £192,275 (£152,373 in 2022/23) a 26% increase, although increases will differ Board by Board depending on their individual insurance needs.

Key factors and changes are highlighted below:

- For Commercial Combined insurance, 2022/23 was the last year in our previous five-year agreement with AXA which included a 7% price reduction woven into the deal. For 2023/24 Towergate, our brokers, approached several companies and all bar AXA were not willing to quote given the size and complexity of our portfolio. Independently we also approached the NFU who declined to quote for the same reason.
- There has been an increase in fleet, property and marine assets included within our cover.
- In view of rising inflation most Boards agreed to index link their insured sums from 1st April 2023. AXA have increased insured sums by 15%, which has resulted in an increase within the overall premium.
- AXA have offered a 2-year stability deal, where any premium increases, subject to claims not exceeding 50% of the written premium, will be capped for 2024/25 at 2.5%. This excludes any increases in sums insured.
- AXA will not extend the stability deal as they plan a review of their whole IDB scheme in 2025.
- Commercial combined policy excess has increased from £350 to £2,500. None of our four 2022/23 claim values were above this new excess.
- Excesses are dictated by AXA's overall scheme for all IDBs and this is apparently now standard and has been imposed due to the number of lower value claims across the whole IDB industry. As other IDB/IDB Groups come out of their previous agreement with AXA the above will apply.

For future years Boards ought to consider index linking their valuations of properties and pumping stations every 3-5 years rather than annually, to mitigate annual premium increases and balancing having suitable cover without being over-insured.

It should also be noted that personal accident and sickness cover only covers employees or members up to 80 years of age. Boards may need to consider the implications of this.

iv) Delegation of signatory on consents

The Board was asked to note that under the Board's scheme of delegation, the Chief Executive has delegated the authority to sign consent on behalf of the Board to the Chief Engineer. As well as the Chief Engineer being better placed to technically assure individual consents, this will enable them to effectively take ownership over the whole planning and consenting service. This also creates a mechanism for escalation in case of any issues or complaints.

v) Service Delivery Frameworks

The Board were asked to resolve that the Clerk, on their behalf, be authorised to enter into user and/or access agreements for public sector delivery frameworks (For example, Environment Agency Delivery Frameworks and SCAPE). This will open up access to the fees, terms and conditions of these Frameworks so our Consulting Engineers can compare and choose the most suitable procurement route for delivery of the Board's future needs. This does not tie the Board to using any Framework they then have a user/access agreement with, and Frameworks are not the only procurement route for delivery that will be considered. Having this resolution from all the Boards we administer is key if we are to package work across Boards to exploit economies of scale and become more efficient and effective in the delivery of services.

vi) Local Government Support - Special Levies

Thanks to lobbying by the Association of Drainage Authorities and Local Authorities, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities announced an additional financial support package totalling £3m for 2023/24 to support the 15 Local Authorities most impacted by increases in special levies from Internal Drainage Boards driven by unprecedented increases in energy costs. We provided ADA with information to support this case and Fenland District Council have secured £177,281 and King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council £205,451. The Ministerial Statement is available [here](#). Disappointingly it is explicit that this is a one-off exceptional payment and clear that the government will not provide additional grant to Local Authorities to cover special levies on an ongoing basis.

With regards to the Clerking services, the Chairman reported that he had discussed the costs with the previous Clerk as he considered the overall costs to be excessive in comparison to the overall expenditure of the Board. He considered that the Board needed to be mindful of costs and that with this in mind, wondered if members considered it appropriate to consider other organisations to get a competitive quote for the administration of the Board.

In response Mr Hill reported that at the time of retirement of Mr David Noble, the Middle Level Commissioners had been requested to tender for the clerkship services of the Board and of the Manea & Welney District Commissioners and the Middle Level tender had been competitive for them to be awarded the clerkship of both Boards. He informed members that these were various administrative/governance components within the general administration charges and that the base Middle Level fee had not been increased in the last six years.

In response to the Vice-Chairman, Mr Hill reported that the new Clerk would be looking at the provision of clerkship services from both the viewpoints of capacity in the office and also of the expectations of the level of service required by individual Boards.

RESOLVED

- i) Insurance – that the Board noted the personal accident and sickness cover.
- ii) Delegation of signatory on consents – that the Board noted the scheme of delegation.

- iii) Service Delivery Frameworks – that the Board authorise the Clerk to enter into user and/or access agreements.
- iv) That no action be taken at the present time regarding the clerking services but the matter be kept under review.

B.897 Consulting Engineers' Report.

The Board considered the Reports of the Consulting Engineers, viz;

Enc 1

Bluntisham I.D.B.

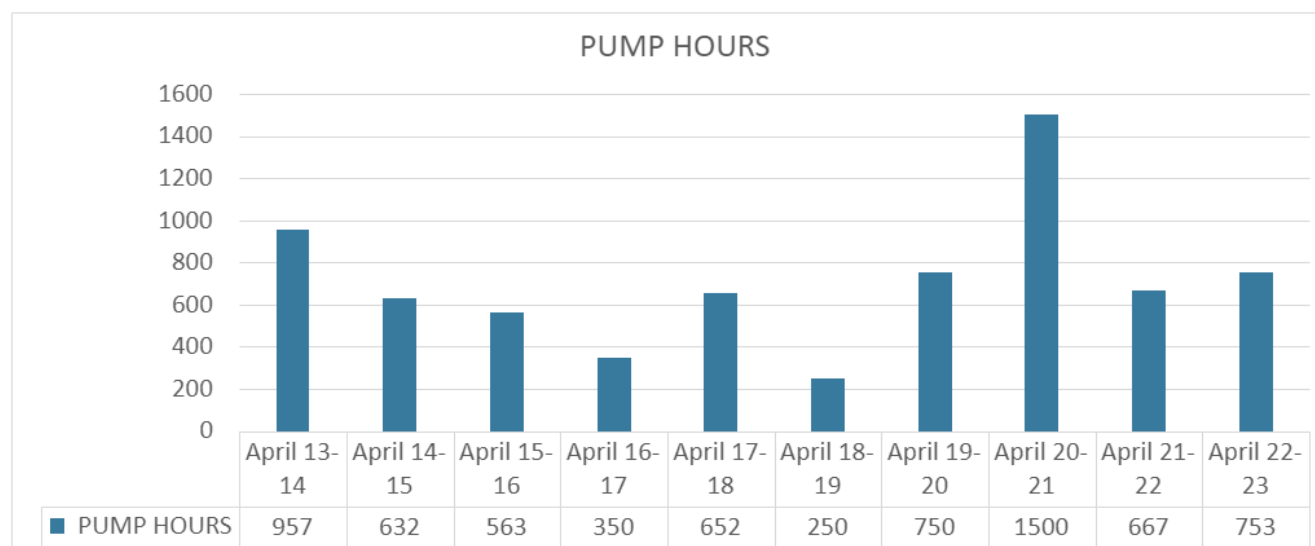
Consulting Engineers Report – June 2023

Pumping Station

Other than matters previously reported or detailed 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.

Total Pump Hours

19582 up to April 2023



Pump Replacement

The Board's request for the suitability of a screw type pump to be considered has shown that it is a viable option. Careful consideration needs to be given to the choice of pumps and energy source for pumping stations to ensure there is a balance between versatility, reliability, cost and environmental impact. The initial research has shown that a screw pump could be suitable in this application, and it will be considered as part of the project appraisal.

The Board is asked to note the Supplementary Report - Improving Capital Delivery 2023. As a part of this process, it is recommended that a full catchment study be undertaken prior to any non-urgent works being undertaken. This may mean that some of the works identified below will be assessed as part of the study rather than being delivered separately. This will have the benefit of maximising available Grant in Aid. A Project Brief is currently being prepared by the Chief Engineer and will be shared with the Board in due course.

The Board is asked to confirm if it wishes to undertake a civils inspection of the pumping station and proceed with a potential grant application and system study. The Board is asked to complete a Project Initiation Form to confirm their instructions (see Appendix).

Planning Applications

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

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
050	H/22/02286/FUL	Holy-Cum-Needingworth Parish Council	Village Hall (Extension)	Overcote Lane, Needingworth
051	H/22/02279/REM	Mr G & Mrs A Quinsee	Residence	Mill Way, Needingworth
052	H/23/00122/FUL	A Griffiths	Equine (Tack/drying room)	Overcote Lane, Needingworth
053	H/23/00462/HHFUL	Mr C Surbey	Residence (Extension)	Bedford Close Needingworth

*Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters
Planning applications ending 'HHFUL' relate to Householder applications for Full Planning Permission*

From the information provided it is understood that all the developments propose to discharge surface water to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or other Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Most of the above are likely to discharge treated foul effluent water into the Board's system via Needingworth Water Recycling Centre (WRC). See the entry on AWSL's Drainage and Water Management Plan (DWMP) later in this report.

Needingworth

Development to the north of Fairview and west of Enterprise Farm - (Bluntisham Farm/Turnpike Close), off Bluntisham Road, Needingworth - Client of RSK Land & Development Engineering Ltd (MLC Ref No 011), Gladman Developments (MLC Ref No 013) & David Wilson Homes (MLC Ref No 027)

Further to Minute B.865 Recovery of costs for processing consents, several Advisory letters have been sent to David Wilson Homes and its agents. A response has not yet been received and it is considered that the Commissioners' Solicitor should write to the developer and its agents advising of the contravention of the Board's Byelaws.

Dependent upon the confirmation of the occupancy figures and design discharge rates the average contribution fee could be in excess of £70.00/dwelling.

Residential development (Egret Close) on land adjacent to Fair View, Bluntisham Road, Needingworth - Luminus Homes (MLC Ref Nos 012 & 017)

An Advisory letter was sent to the applicants' agents in December. A response has not yet been received and it is considered that the Commissioners' Solicitor should write to the applicant, now known as Chorus Homes Group Ltd, and its agents advising of the contravention of the Board's Byelaws.

Residential development with associated landscaping, parking, cycle and refuse storage, sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) and vehicular access point off Mill Way at land north of Sunryl, Church Street, Needingworth – Innerspace Homes Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 022 & 032)

The District Council's Public Access planning portal advises that an appeal is in progress.

Change of use to form horse paddocks with menage and retrospective application for stable block at Bridge Farm, Overcote Lane, Needingworth - Mr A Griffiths (MLC Ref No 037 and 052)

The application for encroachment consent has not yet been received.

A planning application for the demolition of a former poultry office/toilet block and construction of tack/drying room HDC Ref No 23/00122/FUL (MLC Ref No 052) was approved by the District Council in mid-March.

The applicant chose to use the Infiltration Device Self-Certification Service for surface water disposal and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, the land owner would be liable for any remedial works to rectify the situation.

Provision of a marquee for wedding receptions, pergola and additional car parking space at Pike and Eel, Overcote Lane Needingworth – Mr Karania

Further to Minute B.887 Any other Business a review of the above planning application HDC Ref No 20/02527/FUL, which is outside of the Board's District area, has been undertaken.

The proposal is to provide a marquee with a floor area of 640m² and increase the car park from 67 to 165 spaces.

Run-off from the marquees does not normally feature a positive drainage system but discharges directly on to the ground. The car park is to be constructed with gravel using a permeable geogrid to allow "natural" drainage.

According to the District Council's Public Access planning portal a decision on this planning application, which was submitted in December 2020, is pending. However, it is noted that satellite imagery shows a marquee in place.

Therefore, based on this information, it is considered that the proposal will have minimal impacts on the Board's system apart from increased traffic generated crossing the culverts at Points 10a and 17 and beside the District Drains between 9a–10a–11 and 12–13.

Planning Updates & Consultations

Please note that this document, which was prepared for the previous reporting period, is no longer available on the website; an update is currently being prepared and will hopefully be available shortly.

All responses to consultation documents were made on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and its associated Boards.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036

A. Local Plan Update

On 24th January the District Council agreed to the preparation of a full update to the adopted Local Plan which will set out a plan for how the district will grow over future decades.

B. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Consultation

The SCI will set out how the District Council will engage with the community on planning matters and is an important part of the planning system as it enables residents and businesses to help shape their communities, the future of their district and provide input into proposed development in their area. Input from local communities helps the Council to understand the needs and aspirations of the district whilst also balancing the communities' needs with evidence, research, Government

requirements and legislation. This helps the Council to make decisions in the most informed way possible to create sustainable communities.

The SCI will approach consultation and engagement through the principles:

- **Representative** – Ensuring that there are opportunities for local residents, partners and businesses to get involved in consultation and engagement.
- **Inclusive** – Recognising that successful involvement cannot happen without a good understanding of the make-up, needs and interests of different people and their capacity to engage. An inclusive approach will enable different groups to have the opportunity to participate and help the Council to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act.
- **Effective** – Effective consultation and engagement means ensuring people's views are used to inform and shape the delivery of services and the Council is clear about how views have been taken into account.

and will cover the following planning matters:

- Involving the community in the production of planning policy documents;
- Neighbourhood planning;
- Involving the community in the planning application process;
- Brownfield Land Registers; and
- Monitoring and Review.

A response to the consultation, which opened at the end of March and ends on 7th June, included the following comments/requests:

Section 3 – Involving the community in production of planning documents

- a) Every effort needs to be taken, as is reasonably and economically possible to publicise planning applications and associated matters particularly in this “age of communication”. However, it is appreciated that people are generally not interested in such matters until it affects them directly which is often too late.
- b) It is important for the Council to acknowledge and accommodate the changes in information technology that may better assist in engaging with the difficult to reach people, for example, using social media accounts, issuing advisories and updates for press releases to be used on mobile phone news feeds, podcasts, etc.
- c) Whilst encouraging the use of IT, as discussed above, including the use of the Council's webpages, it needs to be acknowledged that there are still members of the public who are unfamiliar with such technology and this can deter many people from making responses.

It is noted that many local Government webpages do not include simple contact details such as departmental phone numbers or e-mail addresses, including these may increase responses to consultations.

- d) The Council may have to give consideration to the proposed implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. It primarily relates to the requirement for the inclusion of suitable drainage systems (SuDS) including the establishment of SuDS Approval Boards (SAB).

It may be prudent to include a suitably worded entry in the SCI to cover this matter.

- e) Habitat Regulations Assessment

It is considered that both the District Council and the applicant should make significant efforts to go beyond the simple requirement to consult with Natural England in respect of designated sites. There are many other protected sites within The Fens which are not SSSI, Ramsar, SPA or SACs but, nonetheless, are of local importance. Therefore, discussions should also be held with other relevant bodies with environmental interests including the County Council's Ecology team, the RSPB, The Wildlife Trust etc. Development may be delayed because of the relevant parties' failure to consult with all the relevant bodies.

Section 5 – Involving the community in the Planning Application Process

- a) Planning applications

Would it be possible to refer to the need to consult and where necessary seek the approval/consents of other RMA involved?

- b) Pre-Application – Page 19

The Commissioners and associated Boards offer the use of Pre-Application consultation as best practice and, therefore, encourage its use. Both paid and unpaid services are available dependent upon the size, type and location of the development concerned.

The Commissioners and associated Boards also offer a paid Post-Application process.

The Commissioners and associated Boards would be pleased if your Council would encourage the use of these procedures. Guidance on development proposals that are of interest and where consultation is likely to be beneficial can be provided.

c) Decision Making

A previous comment made by a member of the Planning Committee, for an adjacent authority, is that Statutory Consultees do not attend Planning Committees particularly when they are opposing the application. This may be because of their limited resources, it is often not viable for them to sacrifice several hours simply to have their “five minutes”. Whilst it is appreciated that there are certain guidelines to follow, the use of “hybrid” and “blended” meetings would permit officers to “attend” more easily and this should be encouraged.

d) Developer Contributions and Monitoring

The contributions required by your Council may be in addition to those required by other RMA, for example, when seeking a discharge consent from either the Commissioners or one of the associated Boards.

e) Planning Enforcement

Whilst it is appreciated that any planning enforcement refers to enforcement in respect of the Town & Country Planning (T & C P) Act, it may be beneficial if other stakeholders are aware of the Council’s processes in such circumstances, particularly if enforcement requires a “joint” approach with other stakeholders.

In addition, some generic items on planning related matters:

- a) It is noted that for several reasons, perhaps including the COVID-19 Pandemic, the result of changing working practices and the inability to recruit suitably qualified replacement staff, it has been noted that the method of consultation with the relevant parties has changed with individual, isolated and often ineffectual discussions occurring rather than integrated discussions with the relevant parties undertaken “around the table”.

As a result of this the names of the relevant officers dealing with planning applications is often unknown and/or they can be difficult to contact thus contributing to the delay in the relevant processes.

The Commissioners and associated Boards encourage the return of integrated discussion where all the RMAs can work together more closely to align the process of responding to relevant issues. A quick Teams Meeting, or similar, may be all that is required.

- b) Your Council is aware that the Commissioners and associated Boards continue to review, and comment upon strategic planning documents, for example, the Local Plans and supporting documents and, in this respect, wish to continue to be consulted on such public consultations. However, the Commissioners and associated Boards are not statutory consultees in respect of planning applications and, therefore, do not actually have to provide a response to the

planning authority and receive no external funding to do so. As a result, bespoke responses are no longer provided to your Council on planning applications unless we are requested to do so by the relevant RMA, the applicant has asked us to do so as part of a paid Pre-/Post-Application process or it is otherwise considered appropriate to do so.

Several RMA have complained and expressed concerns to the Commissioners about the lack of consultation and involvement by your Council when dealing with larger “strategic” sites including the retail and business park to the north west of the Tesco Store off St Marys Road, Ramsey; Oakwood Business Park, Old Great North Road, Sawtry and Eagle Business Park, Yaxley. Concerns have also been raised about your Council's failure to consider, as a competent authority under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended (the Habitats Regulations), the adverse impacts in respect of “Nutrient Neutrality” created by development.

- c) It is considered that it would be beneficial to the Commissioners and associated Boards if a Drainage Advisory Notice could be included on relevant Decision Notices. This has been of great benefit and assistance in the Fenland District Council area where such a notice is included.

In response the District Council has recently advised as follows:

“Thank you for your comments in relation to the Statement of Community Involvement. I have passed your comments on to our Development Management Team for consideration where they fall outside of the Statement of Community Involvement, but are relevant to signposting the work of external organisations such as yourselves. “

C. Call for Sites

This is an opportunity to provide details of sites that might be suitable for allocation in the next Local Plan. The sites should have potential for:

- Residential use (such as housing, specialist homes, moorings, care homes etc.)
- Commercial use (such as retail, leisure, industrial, logistics etc.)
- Infrastructure (such as health uses, community facilities, renewable energy etc.)
- Open Space use (such as sports & recreation, allotments, biodiversity net gain, flooding safeguarding etc.)

A request has been issued to all the associated IDB Chairs within the District Council area enquiring whether the Board has any land that it would like to put forward. The consultation ends on the 7th June and to date no response has been received despite a request to do so.

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident – December 2020

When attending meetings of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Flood and Water (FloW) Partnership, the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has raised concerns about the issues experienced within Cambridgeshire during or following high rainfall and/or exceptional circumstance type events and has enquired of other partners whether given the time that has elapsed any progress is being made to resolve some of the issues. To date the response has been limited.

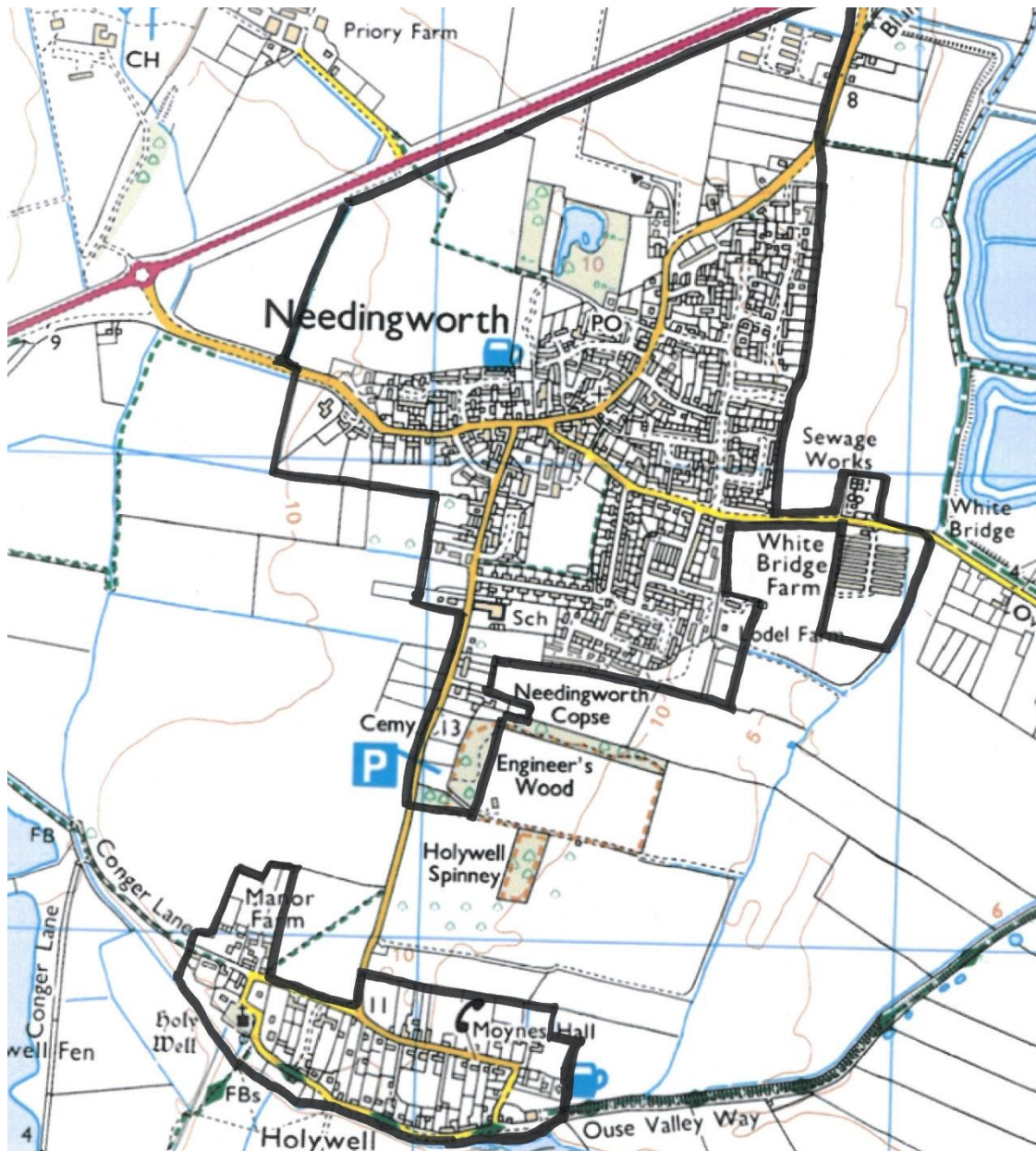
In view of the above it is considered appropriate to advise the appropriate RMA, where relevant, on areas which experience problems, particularly within the urban environment, and requires protection, intervention and/or investment.

Initially, three areas of designation are proposed:

- A. Business as usual - Areas where there are no known problems with the local water level and flood risk management systems that cannot be solved through the Boards "day-to-day activities".
- B. Areas of concern - An area served by a water level and flood risk management system that can approach capacity during rainfall events which has been the subject of or is at an increased risk of flooding that is unlikely to be solved through the Board's "day-to-day activities" and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).
- C. Acute drainage areas – A geographical area with multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk where there is a need for a higher standard of water level and flood risk management than normal to ensure that any new development will not increase flood risk that affects people, properties and local infrastructure and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).

Neither items B nor C are the same as a "critical drainage area" which has a specific meaning in flood risk terms i.e., "A Critical Drainage Area (CDA) is an area that has critical drainage problems and which has been notified to the local planning authority as such by the Environment Agency in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)."

A review of the potential extents of an "area of concern", edged in black has been undertaken and is shown on the following extract.



Plan extract showing the areas of concern for Needingworth and Holywell

The intention is to highlight this area to the relevant RMA e.g., planning authorities, LLFA, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency etc., as an area which requires more involved management and will assist in protecting the local flood and water management systems including the Board's system.

As a result, apart from in the most exceptional circumstances, an initial request is that all water discharges within this area must be attenuated to current volumes and/or greenfield rates of run off, where practicable.

Following discussions, colleagues within the Middle Level Commissioners' Works Department advise that following the December 2020 event the MLC system took up to ten days and IDB systems up to five days to return to normal.

It is also considered that current surface water design practices do not allow for the weather conditions experienced prior to the December 2020 event or the complex network of water level and flood risk management systems within the Fens. Therefore, consideration is being given to requiring designs to:

- A. Incorporate a higher Standard of Protection (SoP), possibly up to 0.5% AEP (1 in 200 year) event
- B. Include a greater allowance for Climate Change, in excess of 40%, and
- C. Be able to “store” water on site for several days until the peak flows have passed.

Strategic Drainage and Wastewater consultation and issues

A. The Right to Connect

Members will recall that during the passage of the Environment Act through the House of Lords an amendment was sought which aimed to minimise the impact of new housing development on levels of local flood risk and the likelihood of storm discharges of untreated sewerage effluent into the water environment. It aimed to ensure housing developers design systems according to a hierarchy of drainage options that seek to reduce to a minimum the volume of rainwater entering combined sewerage systems removing the current “right to connect” to public sewers.

On the basis that the various RMA involved could have been asked to consider taking the opportunity to write to the government and voice their concerns over the right to connect for new developments the views of the Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners were sought.

The amendment was not moved and the House of Lords were not invited to take a decision on it. The Environment Act received Royal Assent in November 2021.

However, the results of the Boards who provided a positive response is as follows:

For the removal of the Right To Connect	54%
Against the removal of the Right To Connect	23%
Neither for or against the Right To Connect	18%
Not an issue for the Board	5%

The discharge from sewers can cause several challenges including increased flood risk, pollution and water quality issues, the solution to which is often at the rate payers’ expense. Unsurprisingly the majority, but not all, of the Boards supporting the removal of the right either served or were detrimentally affected by areas of urban development.

Of those Boards against the removal some only served small urban areas with a limited number of sewers. Others served urban areas but only one received significant “benefit”.

The Board that neither opposes nor supports the removal served a significant urban area but the remainder served a limited number of, or have no, adopted sewers within their catchments.

Other comments received expressed:

- A. Concerns about the lack of investment and the need for improvement to the existing adopted infrastructure and;
- B. Suggested that the permission to connect should be on an approval basis so that it can be controlled and any impacts managed and;
- C. Required the Clerk to promote and lobby the Board’s position.

Some Boards are more rural whilst others feature a larger urban area. Similarly, a larger individual Board may be predominantly rural but include a sub-catchment(s) which is largely, and increasingly, an urban environment which has to accommodate the resultant flows.

Therefore, it is considered that it would be difficult to have a simple yes/no solution within a complex system such as The Fens.

B. Anglian Water Drainage & Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

Draft DWMP

A more detailed review of the DWMP will be included in the updated version of the Strategic Planning Consultation Responses document currently being prepared. However, it is considered appropriate to include specific entries for the relevant WRCs of interest in the local area.

1. Draft DWMP Consultation

The draft DWMP document has been the subject of a consultation which provided an opportunity to comment on the document and included the following specific points:

Groundwater infiltration & surface water removal

The problems associated with groundwater infiltration and surface water within the sewer system, particularly within combined systems, are known and are a problem for all RMAs involved. Particularly when the water table is high and/or during the winter months.

The removal of groundwater infiltration and surface water from the sewerage system, to reduce the number of flood events, pollutions and storm overflow spills is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The question that will need to be resolved in these situations is where will the surface water go instead? Most other surface water systems are approaching their finite capacity and will require the installation of significant infrastructure to deal with the flows. Who will pay and be responsible for this? Care will also need to be taken to ensure that flood risk is not being increased elsewhere within the WRCs catchment for another RMA to deal with as a result.

As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved **MUST** be undertaken and agreed **BEFORE** work commences.

(NB: In respect of this document, infiltration refers to groundwater entering the sewer system which **increases hydraulic loadings and threatens wastewater treatment efficiency.**)

Water level Management Solutions

The use of SuDS, wetlands and other green structures is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The management of SuDS and other water level management systems is an ongoing challenge for many RMAs. Without suitable arrangements being imposed these could simply become potential liabilities for the various rate/bill payers. Therefore, adequate arrangements **MUST** be made to ensure that the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance for the upkeep of any green infrastructure, whether on or off site, in perpetuity is achieved.

Consideration also needs to be given to any restrictions upon maintenance of the drainage “facility” due to the presence of protected habitats and species.

As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved **MUST** be undertaken and agreed **BEFORE** work commences.

Partnership Working

The Commissioners and associated Boards are prepared to work in partnership with the local community, private and public partners to contribute to and deliver schemes for conservation, navigation, water resources, water level & flood risk management where there is a mutual benefit to the partners concerned.

However, to what extent they are prepared to contribute would be the subject of a decision for the respective authority and this may vary dependent upon their views.

2. Programme outputs

Needingworth WRC



Extract from Anglian Water's Risk Based Catchment Screening (RBCS) Map showing the extent of the catchment served by Needingworth WRC

L3 water recycling catchment	2021 population	2035 population	2050 population	Passed RBCS	Resilience risk score
NEEDINGWORTH	2372	2274	2387	Yes	0

Extracts from Anglian Water's draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan showing the results and proposed plans for Needingworth WRC

Planning objective themes reviewed	Stakeholder concerns/ comments	Medium term strategy	2050 Strategy	Partnership opportunities identified
Escape from sewers WRC compliance Environment and wellbeing	Habitats. Flood risk implications.	Networks - mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS.	25% surface water removal.	-

The WRC currently serves a population of 2371 with an increase to 2387 by 2050 was used in the BRAVA/RBCS process. The reasoning behind this small increase is being questioned with AWSL.

Several concerns were raised during the process and a mixed strategy has been proposed for the medium term. This is likely to involve the removal of surface water from the sewer network by utilising SuDS facilities. However, it is not certain where these will be located or who will be responsible for these. The longer term strategy is to remove 25% of surface water by 2050.

WRC Compliance

The quality of the discharge does not appear to be a cause for concern. However, members will be aware of Natural England's concerns about nutrients affecting the aquatic environment.

3. Storm Overflow Consultation

A consultation exercise on Storm Overflow Discharges was held during February. In view of the concerns discussed above it was considered appropriate to consult all the administered Boards even though many would not be directly affected.

The main means of providing a response was to provide answers to five specific questions and, whilst responses were provided, in view of the nature of the matter; the responses received from the Boards consulted and given that the issue is rising up the political agenda it was considered that a more detailed and focused response was required.

The following are the headlines or a brief resume of the response:

A. Existing sewer systems and problems

1. The Right to Connect – As discussed elsewhere in this Report
2. Other issues – On going pollution problems, the surcharging of or high discharges during or following high rainfall events, the lack of capacity within WRCs.

B. General

It is considered that all the current targets are too vague and will take too long to achieve any meaningful results and that the consultation was not open and transparent as the locations of the points of discharge are not readily identified within the document, therefore making it difficult to provide a meaningful comment.

Advice was given that:

Most of our systems are pumped often remaining stationary for extended periods thus dilution may not occur as expected; water is abstracted for various purposes – see High Priority Sites – Public Health below; the adverse impact on areas of interest including designated environmental sites; and that no “compensation” is provided for having to receive, transfer and dispose of the discharges from the overflows.

C. Storm Flow Technical Overview

High Priority Sites

1. Ecology

a. *Environment targets*

It is considered that these targets should apply to **all** sites not just high priority ones, with solutions implemented much sooner than identified if the Government’s target of halting biodiversity decline is to be achieved and the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the 25 year environment plan are to be achieved.

b. *Sensitive Inland Water*

Reference was made to the proximity of trigger points.

2. Public Health

The document refers to Designated Shellfish Water and Designated Bathing Water as trigger points which is understood, but it is not appreciated that vast quantities of water are abstracted from Fenland water level management systems for agricultural use, whether this is washing or irrigating crops for consumption within the food chain.

It was suggested that it would be prudent for the trigger points to be reviewed to include those other items which could affect public health on a wider scale.

Potable Water

Reference was made concerning the use of excess water from both the Commissioners' and surrounding systems to fill the proposed Fens Reservoir and the potential benefits of improving water quality from the discharges into these watercourses.

3. Amenity

Emphasis is given to bathing waters but no reference is made to other wider but perhaps smaller benefits on the Commissioners' largely navigable systems and the disposal of sewage into these watercourses may have an adverse impact on wider issues, for example, tourism, angling etc or if these wider "costs" are considered when assessing the adverse impacts of overflows on the local area.

4. Assessing spill frequency

Event data Monitors

- a. From a closer review it was identified that some of the discharges of interest including Doddington, Nightlayers and Ramsey WRCs are not fitted with Event Data Monitors. Therefore, it is not known how the number of spills can be fully assessed.

Event Duration Monitors will be installed on all of Anglian Water's overflows during Asset Management Plan (AMP) period 7 (2020-2025) and this will, hopefully, reduce the level of uncertainty during AMP 8 (2025-2030) and AMP 9 (2030-2035) by producing "real" data.

- b. Rainfall target: Storm overflows will not be permitted to discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year by 2050 but this target should be more defined including restriction on the duration of spills and the volume discharged. This may be difficult to achieve. The Standard of Protection (SoP) provided, the use of "typical" rather than excessive rainfall events and modelling of the various systems to identify potential problem overflows rather than actual data – the number of spills, duration of the spills etc was questioned.

Growth

The growth that has occurred in the last fifty years has contributed to the increased number and length of spills and this will only become more severe as further growth continues unless adequate steps are taken now to resolve these as a matter of urgency.

Climate Change

It would be appropriate for all RMAs to prepare for the worst-case scenario and there is an aspiration to achieve this but this could be expensive, may prove unnecessary and wasteful

leading to criticism. It was suggested that the most economic and environmentally acceptable standard should be achieved.

Screening

It would be beneficial to know where these initial overflows are located.

D. Storm Overflow Consultation

Performance Guide

It appears that priority is given to the number of spills rather than the length of time of the discharge, the volume of flow being discharged or the cumulative effects of the overflows due to their close proximity to each other.

Preferred Plan

It would be beneficial if the “headlines” from assessments and guidance on suggested solutions could be provided to identify and instigate any early engagement with the parties concerned, for example, land owners, developers etc.

Customer Support

Reference was made in the document to continual engagement with customers but there appears to be limited engagement with those RMA who have to receive the flows from the storm overflows.

It was suggested that such engagement commences and both the Commissioners and associated Boards look forward to continual engagement and transparency on storm overflows and networks in the future.

E. Consultation Questionnaire

The answers to the questionnaire were generally included in the response, but in reply to the question *How confident are you that this strategy aligns with our Purpose?* A very low confidence comment was provided adding that some of the systems cannot be managed without significant investment and improvement works being required on several networks.

F. Summary

Whilst it is pleasing that the issue of sewage overflows is being progressed this appears to be primarily due to political pressure rather than at the instigation of the water industry.

There are concerns that priority will be given to resolving issues associated with storm overflows rather than those existing problems associated with WRCs and associated systems.

Greater transparency, early engagement and further discussions should be undertaken to any issues related to adoptable sewer systems and storm overflows if the current problems are to be resolved.

The final DWMP document is currently being prepared and is due to be published this spring.

C. Review for implementation of Schedule 3 to The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA)

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) details the provision of comprehensive flood management to protect people, homes, and businesses. It is written to protect water supplies to the consumer and helps safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges. The Act introduces into law the concept of flood risk management as the preferred approach rather than reliance on flood defences (existing or proposed) for protection of sites.

1. Schedule 3

Schedule 3 of the FWMA was introduced to establish a SuDS approving body (SAB) at the county/unitary level for the regulation of new development and compliance with The Act. It was intended that this Schedule would be introduced into law around 2015/2016, following the original Act that achieved royal ascent in 2010 but this did not happen and Schedule 3 did not achieve approval due to concerns that it would restrict housing delivery and growth.

Instead, the government made amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to stipulate those decisions on planning applications relating to major developments (over 10 dwellings, or equivalent non-residential developments) should ensure that SuDS are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) currently need to approve drainage schemes and ensure they are appropriately maintained.

Currently the maintenance of a development typically falls under the responsibility of a Private Maintenance Company (PMC) which is usually paid for using service charge agreements with the owners of the new properties and often selling residential properties as leasehold rather than freehold.

2. Review

In early December industry experts sent an open letter to the Prime Minister which “strongly urged” the implementation of Schedule 3.

Following a review, DEFRA announced in January 2023, the government’s decision to implement Schedule 3 which will provide a framework for the approval and adoption of high

quality SuDS and is expected to occur at a yet to be determined date in 2024. As a result, the Government is giving consideration to how this will be implemented subject to final decisions on scope, threshold and process whilst being mindful of the cumulative impact of new regulatory burdens on the development sector and water industry. Defra recently undertook a consultation survey with LPAs and LLFAs but not with IDBs and other relevant parties. However, there are several issues and challenges that require resolution before progressing further.

3. Changes to existing laws

The implementation of Schedule 3 will introduce some small changes to three existing laws.

a) Building Act 1984

Section 59 which gives local authorities the power to request that sustainable drainage systems in an unsatisfactory condition be renewed, repaired or cleansed is to be amended.

Section 84 which stipulates that local authorities withhold the right to request that impermeable surfaces around a building which do not allow for the satisfactory drainage of its surface or subsoil be remedied requires amendment to specify that surfaces need to remove water in a satisfactory manner.

b) New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

Section 63 will include a small change should Schedule 3 be enacted.

c) Water Industry Act 1991

Section 106 to remove the right to connect. Following Schedule 3's commencement, a person may only exercise this right if their drainage system was approved by an SAB before construction and if a proposal for their drainage system to communicate with a sewer was included in their application for approval.

The NPPF and the associated PPG will require amending to reflect any changes.

4. Implementation

Whilst there will be some changes to current procedures it is considered that there are several potential benefits including better working practices, better integration with other RMA, the removal of the automatic right to connect, potential revenue streams etc but there are several potential problems that need to be resolved including funding mechanisms; potential increased costs on the rate payer; lack of resources, skills and capabilities; the need for more timely responses possibly taking staff members from other work.

The proposal is the subject of on-going discussions and a meeting with the LLFAs and other partners has been requested to discuss the issues in order to maximise any opportunities and minimise any adverse impacts on both the Middle Level Commissioners and the Boards to whom it provides a planning consultancy service.

These discussions will include, as a minimum:

- a) The suggested change in surface water design practice, as discussed elsewhere in this report.
- b) Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for long term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangements for the upkeep of any water level and flood risk management system, whether on or off site, in perpetuity including details of the works to be carried out by the occupier/land owner, adopting authority, the Management Company or other responsible person/authority, together with the costs attached, are included in the “Homeowners Pack” and the Deed of Sale.
- c) The right to connect needs to be on an approval basis to ensure that it can be controlled and any adverse impacts managed.
- d) That any incurred costs on the rate payer are kept to a minimum.

5 June 2023

Bluntisham(357)\Reports\June 2023



Consulting Engineer

Project Initiation Form

Board name	Bluntisham IDB
Project name	System Study
Project no.	[To be inserted by Consulting Engineer]
Doc Ref.	[To be inserted by Consulting Engineer]
Report/MA reference	Consulting Engineer report in Board minutes

Description of requirements

Project details			
Description of the problem			
The Board previously requested for the suitability of a screw type pump to be considered and it is concluded that it is a viable option. Careful consideration needs to be given to the choice of pumps and energy source for pumping stations to ensure there is a balance between versatility, reliability, cost and environmental impact. The initial research has shown that a screw pump could be suitable in this application, and it will be considered as part of the project appraisal. The civils structure is in poor condition and needs a full condition survey. This could be packaged for efficiency to be completed ahead of the study. A study/appraisal will confirm benefits and maximise available GiA.			
Timescales/Priority	Study/appraisal start 2025		
Dependencies			
Constraints			
Governance and key contacts			
Delegated Board Member	[Who the Board has delegated decision making to and who is the Board's key contact]		
Date of delegation	[Date/meeting]		
MLC Engineer			
Reporting requirements			
Frequency of reports	[e.g. monthly update to the Chairman]		
Process	[e.g. By phone/email/Highlight Report]		
Tolerances	[e.g. notify key contact if cost increases by 20%/delay of 6 months]		
Benefits and funding [To be inserted by Consulting Engineer]			
Budget estimate	Study: TBC		
Anticipated Outcome Measures (OM2)	42 (TBC)	Potential GiA (%)	Up to £400k fully funded (TBC)
Funding source	FDGiA/Revenue		

Approvals

No work is to proceed until the Chief Engineer has confirmed availability of resources/proposed timescales and Board approvals have been received below:

Name	Title	Signature	Date
	Chief Engineer		
	Delegated Board Member		

Bluntisham IDB

Consulting Engineers' Supplementary Report - April 2023

Improving Capital Delivery

Introduction

Since being in post I have been getting to grips with a number of things in the Engineering/Technical Services Department. I've made a number of observations: officers are knowledgeable, dedicated and committed to delivering a service to the Commissioners and IDBs; working in partnership with the Environment Agency and local planning authorities/LLFAs is clearly evident; the operations team do an excellent job managing water resources in an extremely complex system; our capital delivery programme is growing as assets come to the end of design life; we have some significant changes and challenges ahead (biodiversity net gain requirements, the climate emergency and Fens Reservoir amongst others) which need careful planning and resourcing if we are to properly represent members and local communities and secure the best outcomes for the catchment.

We have an increasing capital delivery programme, with a number of ongoing projects and many identified for future delivery. I have identified areas where improvements are needed to deliver these projects better and to improve communications between the consulting engineer and the Boards.

Resources

Staff in MLC's Technical Services are currently stretched in terms of capacity and capability. There is a significant lack of suitable people across the engineering and project delivery profession generally, which impacts not only MLC's ability to recruit, but also the availability of consultant and contractor resources.

As well as our services to IDBs, and the Bank Raising Scheme over the next 4-5 years, and delivery of the pumping station refurbishment programme, there is an immediate need to provide resources to support MLC input to developing plans for Anglian Water's Fens Reservoir. This will have a significant and profound impact on water management in the catchment, and MLC officers need to ensure we secure the very best outcomes for our Board members, ratepayers, customers and the environment. We will be working very hard over the next 6 months to achieve this before the project passes its next 'gate'.

Now that MLC receives revenue through navigation licences, we have to ensure that we deliver on the requirements set out in the Navigation Byelaws 2020. This is a work in progress, but again sets additional demands on our internal resources and our ability to be proactive.

MLC were unsuccessful in recruiting a new planning engineer in 2022 and the existing team is under continued pressure to resolve ongoing and new applications, let alone adequately accommodate new demands. We are now looking at alternative resource solutions to support the wider engineering department.

IDB Projects

I am already aware of a number of projects that have been in progress for some time. There is lack of a clear programme of delivery and/project management discipline for these; there are no specific timescales and other agreed tolerances with the IDB as 'client', and this makes it difficult to plan and prioritise resources and workloads.

I am compiling a programme of all the projects being delivered by MLC and determining the resources needed to complete them. I will work with the Boards in question to progress delivery as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For new project requests, I am implementing a simple process with a 'Project Initiation Form' to capture key information and undertake an initial assessment of the project. I will prioritise work requested based on urgency and availability of resources. Unless otherwise instructed by an IDB, our default approach will be to seek to maximise FCRM Grant in Aid funding for eligible projects. I will implement a process of reporting progress regularly to the Boards/key contacts. As part of this process, I'll be asking each Board to agree how they delegate decision making, as projects can't be effectively delivered when governed through annual meetings, and how we manage better, more frequent, communications between the Boards' delegates and officers in Technical Services.

I am looking at the possibility of 'packaging' some works together for delivery by consultants, e.g. Pumping Station Refurbishment Projects rather than delivering each one individually. This has the advantage of securing a team of suitable resources who can focus on the work and deliver it as efficiently as possible (economies of scale). This will be a change of approach for individual IDBs and will need further work to determine how we manage this approach practically when each Board is its own individual entity with maybe a once per annum meeting. I hope to provide you with more detail about this, and the benefits it will give the Boards, in the coming months.

It may take some time to deliver the backlog of projects, which in turn might delay the start of new projects. However, I'm hopeful my approach will eventually lead to a more effective and efficient delivery process.

MLC Bank Raising Scheme

This is currently the largest IDB led project in the national flood investment programme and gives us the opportunity to develop capacity and capability in the organisation and share best practice across all our work. The scheme will be under the spot-light and have a focus from the Environment Agency in terms of grant assurance.

Works are progressing on a number of fronts but were lacking leadership and direction and there was no delivery programme. I have implemented some standard project management tools to control, manage and deliver the project: An 'exception report' was raised to the Project Board/MLC Executive Board outlining the existing situation and mitigation measures being put in place; A project plan and outline programme is now in place; Clear project governance has been identified; A data management plan is being drafted; Risks and issues are being identified; Project and delivery manager resources have been appointed and they will start in April.

Most of the project work was being carried out by MLC staff putting a strain on their already stretched ability to delivery other commitments, especially to the IDBs. The Technical Services team does not currently have the capacity or capability to deliver major projects.

There was a lack of clarity around environmental impact and risk assessments for activities which are considerably more than 'business as usual.'

Resources are in place/are being identified to complete environmental impact assessment required before wholesale desilting works can be undertaken, including significant input from the MLC Environment Officer.

The Independent Technical Advisor has prepared a scope for tender to secure a consultant to develop outline design and prepare Full Business Case (for MLC Project Board approval). The consultant will provide all technical input needed for developing and planning the project and ensuring consents and approvals are identified and in place. MLC staff will continue to act in a lead client capacity, providing their specific technical expertise and knowledge of the catchment as necessary. I will lead the project as Project Executive, working closely with the Project and Delivery Managers and providing regular updates to the Project Sponsor (Chief Executive) and MLC Executive Committee.

MLC's H&S advisor, Cope, visited and assessed the provisions in place and provided advice on additional requirements. Risk assessments/methods statements are being developed for physical work activities alongside a full review of the MLC H&S policies.

A Communications & Engagement team is in place and is planning engagement in parallel with Chief Executive's proposed MLC engagement and branding improvements.

A robust forecast of project costs needs developing. It is likely that the total project costs will exceed the current approval limit of £23million from the Outline Business Case. There are also some risks to the delivery programme that need to be investigated further and mitigated as necessary. All of these will be considered in more detail over the next 6 months, appraised and included in the Full Business Case, before the end of the financial year 2023/24.

Contractors are currently being identified for the various work phases: desilting; material import; bank raising works and hard defences (including detailed design).



Consulting Engineer

5 April 2023

Mr Hill reported on the Engineer recommendation for a catchment study, for which members were in agreement but considered that these should be a fully costed funding position agreed before any expenditure was committed.

RESOLVED

- i) That Mr Anderson be nominated as the delegated board member for proposals for a study to be initiated by the Consulting Engineer.
- ii) That the Board approve the funding of any study/works before any commitment is made.
- iii) Planning ref: MLC 011,013,027 – that the Middle Level Commissioners solicitor write to the developer advising of the byelaw contraventions and that these need to be formalised on as a matter of urgency.
- iv) Planning ref: MLC 012,017 – that the Middle Level Commissioners solicitor write to the applicant/agents advising of the byelaw contraventions and that these need to be formalised on as a matter of urgency.

B.898 Environment Officer's Report

Mr Hill referred to the Environment Officer's Report, viz;

MIDDLE LEVEL COMMISSIONERS

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Sofi Lloyd
Environment Officer

Bluntisham IDB

Environmental Update – May 2023

1. Bank Raising Project

You will have been made aware of the Bank Raising Project and the work that is planned on the MLC channels and banks within the district. The ecological considerations of the project are being dealt with separately, outside of this report, along with the project update. However, should you have any questions about the projects' ecological considerations then do contact me directly and I will be happy to help.

2. Biodiversity Action Plan Review

The Biodiversity Action Plan has traditionally been the key document which sets out the IDBs' planned contributions towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Although the BAP remains vital, the objectives are unlikely to be reached unless there is a process in place to ensure that the incremental steps that need to be taken to achieve the BAP objectives are incorporated into regular operations and are reviewed regularly. Otherwise, the BAP simply becomes a document that is reviewed once or twice a year. It is the review of this vital process that I will be focussing on, rather than reviewing the objectives in the BAP, because the objectives themselves still remain valid.

3. Environmental Screening Report (ESR)

We have developed the template for IDBs to complete when planning any ad hoc/non-routine works that will "break ground" on the any of the banks. The information is needed in order to evidence that we have correctly considered the ecological impacts of the work, and to identify opportunities for enhancement, as we are mandated to do, by law. Activities for which the form would be relevant include bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling, filling in a ditch, moving an access culvert etc.

Only the first page needs completing by the IDB (not a lot of info needed) and the rest by me. I undertake the assessment as far as possible, and then return the second part of the document to the IDB, setting out what surveys etc. will be needed, if any. I may be able to undertake some of the practical surveys but in some cases, an ecological consultant with a specialist licence may be needed. In some cases, there may not be a need for any surveys and the recommendations will be that the work can proceed with some adaptations to the proposed approach, such as altered timings or establishment of "no-work" buffers around sensitive areas.

When all desk and fieldwork is complete, the form is "signed off" from an ecological perspective, and returned to the IDB with recommendations for the approaches to be taken. This means the IDB and the operatives undertaking the work have full sight of the ecological constraints, mitigations and approaches required to remain compliant. It is recommended that this form is completed and sent as early as possible to prevent delays, even up to 1 year in advance of the proposed works. The form is available by emailing sofi.lloyd@middlelevel.gov.uk and is also available from the MLC website.

4. Protected Species

a) *Water Vole*

As always, any work that plans to “break ground” on the any of the banks, so bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling etc, **OR the removal of any marginal vegetation, please let me know ASAP by completing the above ecological screening document** so we can plan the appropriate surveys and mitigations in plenty of time, to avoid any delays and ensure compliance with wildlife legislation. This is particularly relevant for water voles. We know that there are some known, valuable water-vole ditches in the district, and some which could be enhanced to better support the local population, but the accepted approach is to always assume water voles are present in all ditches, and plan work around their assumed presence, in order to avoid committing an offence in terms of wildlife legislation. There is a lot of good, pragmatic and practical guidance on how to properly consider water voles during IDB works contained in the Environmental Good Governance Guide for IDBs.

b) *Badgers*

A reminder that badgers and their setts are protected by law and care must be taken not to disturb setts during routine channel management. Sett interference requires a licence under all circumstances. Please contact us should you have any queries regarding activities taking place around any known badger sett. Please also let me know asap if there are any setts which are presenting a flood risk due to any burrowing which is destabilising banks etc. More detailed information and refresher training on approaches to be taken around badger setts will be organised in the coming months. In the meantime, please refer to the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) for more detailed information on badgers.

c) *Reptiles*

Just a reminder that reptiles, particularly grass snakes will be found basking on south facing slopes or in direct sun on reeds slopes this time of year. Operations should aim to move as slowly as possible to allow them time to move away from the works area and to allow operatives a better chance of spotting them. Cutting blades should be set as high as possible to minimise the risk of blade strikes. Clear egress routes should be maintained to allow them to move into a safe area and out of harm's way. Please report sightings of any reptiles, all information is welcome so we can better understand population status and trends.

d) *Birds*

Please be reminded of the legislation around the disturbance of breeding birds, particularly when cutting vegetation or bank-side trees, between March and September and where kingfishers are known to hunt. Please see the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) to refresh your understanding of mitigation and survey requirements and get in touch should you have any questions.

i. *Barn owls*

I have met with our barn owl conservation delivery partners and we had defined a schedule of checking and refreshing barn owl boxes over winter but have unfortunately been unable to commence due to the restrictions imposed by BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) due to avian flu. We continue to monitor the guidance and act accordingly and have been able to commence some box checking by following strict biosecurity measures. Please do let us know therefore if there are any boxes that you feel need some maintenance ASAP so we can plan to visit them before the start of the breeding season. It is even more important during these times that you please help us with the following:

- Tell us if you spot a box needing repair
- Tell us if you see a box being regularly visited in nesting season
- Tell us if you'd like a barn owl box
- Establish and maintain un-cropped field margins for foraging

I understand that you have at least one barn owl frequenting the area near Fenton Lode, so please keep an eye on where it may be roosting, and we can monitor the nest if you believe there may be young in it.

i. Avian Flu

Avian Flu is now thankfully less of a risk now that temperatures are increasing and there are less avian arrivals from overseas. However, please ensure that you are familiar with, **and promote the knowledge of** the DEFRA guidelines on avian flu, in particular those for reporting suspected cases: Bird flu (avian influenza): latest situation in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). If any dead birds are spotted, please do let us know and either we can come and collect and dispose of them in a safe manner to minimise the risk of the disease spreading to other wildlife, or we can arrange for the collection.

5. Invasive species

When any non-native species (particularly the following) are spotted, please record the location using the what3words app ([what3words](https://www.what3words.com/) /// [The simplest way to talk about location](https://www.what3words.com/en/The%20simplest%20way%20to%20talk%20about%20location)) if possible (if not postcode or grid ref) and inform us ASAP. Useful identification guides and information can be found online at [ID sheets » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](https://www.nonnativespecies.org/)

- Floating Pennywort
- Mink
- Himalayan Balsam
- Parrot's feather
- New Zealand pigmyweed (Australian swamp stonecrop - Crassula)

a) Turkish Crayfish

We have received reliable reports of the presence of Turkish crayfish in some MLC drains. Turkish Crayfish are a schedule 9 listed species listed in the Wildlife & Countryside Act meaning that it is an offence to release them or allow them to escape into the wild. Their impact is not widely understood but it is said that they are known to reside alongside Signal Crayfish, rather than displace them or be displaced by them. Where populations of our native and protected white-clawed crayfish are still present, they are likely to outcompete them but they do not carry crayfish plague which does impact native crayfish. There is no evidence that Turkish crayfish burrow so it is unlikely that they would cause extensive damage to riverbanks but they could reduce fishery profits by competing with fish for food, stealing baits or causing declines in fish recruitment through loss of macrophyte habitat, according to the non-native species secretariat. Please be vigilant and report sightings of the species and maintain strong biosecurity procedures. They can be distinguished from other crayfish species by their long narrow claws, as shown in the pictures below.



Turkish Crayfish

Claws: claws normally same colour as body but underside lightly coloured.
Fingers long, straight and narrow





White-clawed crayfish

Claws: are noticeably granular and are whitish to light pink on the underside, never red.

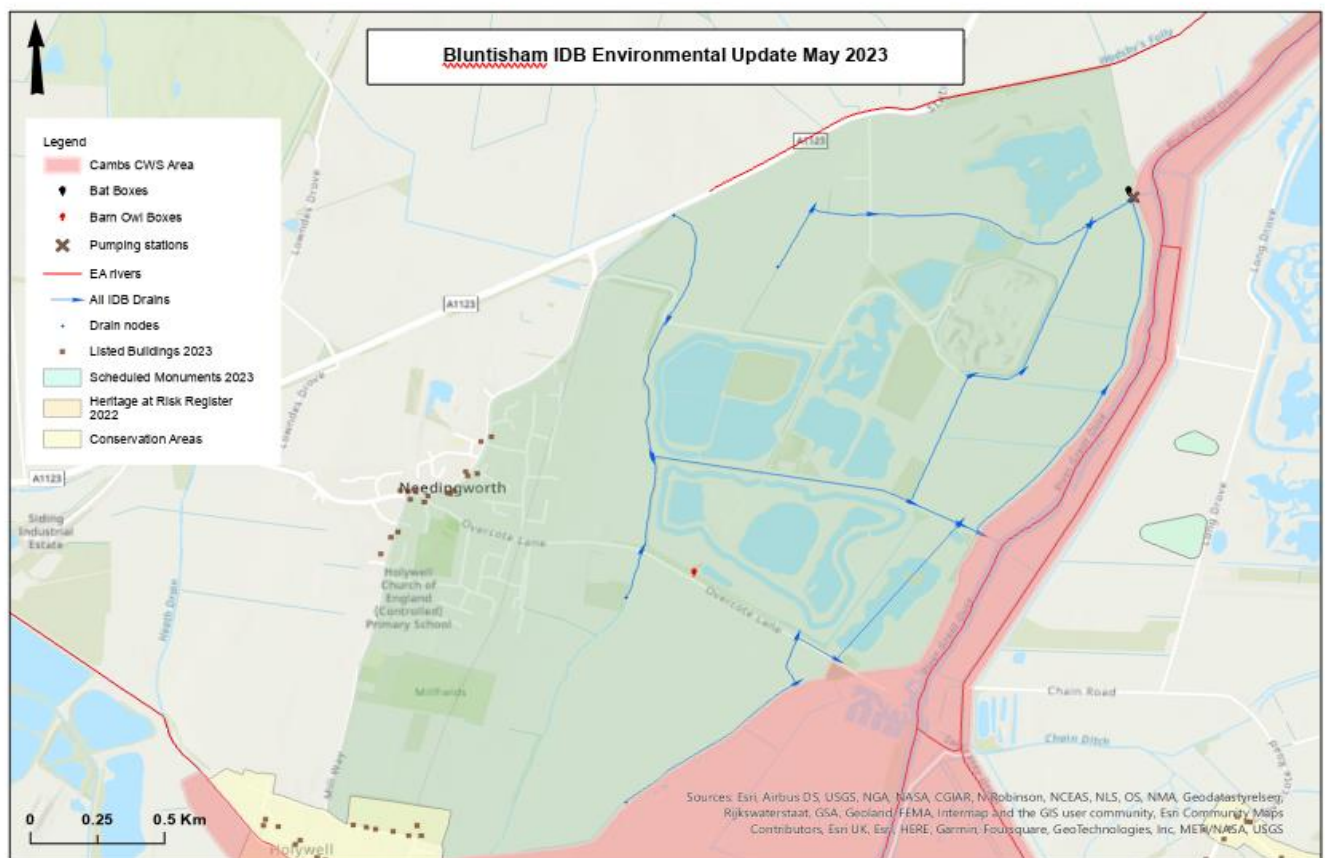


American Signal Crayfish

Claws white or turquoise patch at junction between fixed and moveable finger. Underside of claws are red.

If it is necessary to dispatch a Turkish crayfish, American signal crayfish, or any other non-native crayfish, because it has been removed from the channel accidentally, please ensure that you are familiar with its distinguishing features and can confidently tell it apart from particularly white clawed crayfish. This will ensure no offence against a protected species occurs. There are very few records of the native white-clawed crayfish remaining in the MLC area but care should still be taken and no assumption made. More information can be found at:

<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/non-native-species/information-portal/view/381>



The Vice-Chairman queried the extent of the Cambs CWS area and its proximity to the Board.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Officer provide an update on the Cambs CWS area and of any implications its proximity could have with regards to the maintenance operations of the Board.

B.899 Pumping Station Duties

Further to minute B.848, Members considered that Mr Green was doing an excellent job at the pumping station and the Vice-Chairman reported that some works could be required to keep the channel clear.

The Chairman reported, that as long as there were not any restrictions in flow, the presence of reeds in the watercourse had a significant benefit for water quality.

Members considered that although the Board approved a base fee for the provision of services, actual costs could vary depending on the amount of work required during the year.

RESOLVED

That there be no change to the base allowance for the provision of services for pumping station duties for 2023/2024.

B.900 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.901 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings & that the sum insured is index-linked but to monitor valuations for other boards following any re-valuations carried out, viz;

BLUNTISHAM IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATION

As At
1st April 2023

BARLEY CROFT PUMPING STATION

470,000.00

470,000.00

B.902 Health and Safety Report

Further to minute B.852, the Vice Chair referred to the report from Cope Safety Management after their visit to the district on 9th February 2023, viz;



Site Safety Inspection Record

Bluntisham IDB

Complete

Name of organisation:	Bluntisham IDB
Date of site visit	09.02.2023 09:00 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Hanson Quarry. Bluntisham.
Name of Advisor	Martin Clark
Time of arrival at site:	09.02.2023 09:00 GMT
Audit Name	Bluntisham IDB

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

James Anderson.

Have there been any accidents since our last visit?

No

None recorded

Have there been any new starters since our last visit?

No

None recorded

1

It was pleasing to note that the platform above the weed screen has now been fitted with appropriate guarding including a fan type guard to prevent unauthorised entry and an intermediate rail to reduce the potential for operators to fall from the platform.

The existing photographic risk assessment index will be amended accordingly.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

2

As discussed it is recommended that additional signage is provided warning persons of deep water and also the presence of high voltage machinery.

General operations were discussed and no significant issues were noted in the period since the previous site visit. (12.10.21)

Photographic Risk Assessment

Advisor's signature



Martin Clark
09.02.2023 22:02 GMT

Departure time

09.02.2023 10:45 GMT

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

18.10.19 1,2

Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments

0
From 0 to 99

Appendix



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

Bluntisham IDB SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

No outstanding PRA's

The Vice-Chairman reported that the Health & Safety consultant was happy with the fencing erected and there were some further signage requirements at the pumping station.

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners Operations Engineer contact the Vice-Chairman concerning signage at the pumping station and that the Vice-Chairman be authorised to take any further action as he considers appropriate.

B.903 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

Mr Hill submitted the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

The Board approved the recommendations.

B.904 Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement, viz;

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that this authority:
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

COMMITTEE

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLIC URL: WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK OR ADDRESS

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2023.

B.905 Payments 2022/2023

The Clerk reported on payments made during the financial year 2022/2023, viz;

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2022/2023 (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023)

Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,237.82
Middle Level Commissioners - Galvanised tube and tubeklamp fittings	44.64
D & M K Green & Sons - Work carried out whilst pump was being repaired, including 2,490 litres of diesel for pump	3,396.72
Lattenbury Services Ltd - Drain maintenance	7,740.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	185.76
Environment Agency - Precept	967.22
R & S Anderson & Son - Re-imbursement for the supply of JCB telehandler to assist with emergency work on pump to remove entangled item	267.00
Water Resources East - Contribution to operating costs 2022-2023	150.00
Lattenbury Services Ltd - Temporary pump hire (removing blockage)	6,216.66
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	482.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	444.50
PKF Littlejohns LLP - Audit fee (2021/2022 accounts)	240.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	210.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	2,676.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	352.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2021-2022 accounts)	558.00
Environment Agency - Precept	967.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to vent pipe and supply of padlock	488.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	185.76
Lattenbury Services Ltd - Flailmowing	4,800.00
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2022/2023	6.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Consider contents of the matters arising following Board meeting, planning and development applications)	106.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	129.60
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2023	716.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	319.20
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	185.76
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
	<u>33,114.59</u>

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

RESOLVED

That the Board approved payments made during the financial year 2022/2023.

B.906 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board - 2022/2023

The Board considered and approved the Annual Account, Annual Return and bank reconciliation for the year ended 31st March 2023 as required in the audit regulations, viz;

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS MONITORING 2022/2023

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Probable Actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>
1 Channel Maintenance	5,100	1,500	4,972	- Additional flail mowing authorised
2 Pumping Station				
Repairs and Renewals	1,650	6,831	6,954	- Includes additional charges for pump blockage
Electricity	2,500	3,500	3,900	- Esstimated to usage calculations
Labour	1,600	1,550	1,600	
3 Administration				
Insurances	500	450	445	
Administration	7,500	7,350	6,915	
4 EA Precept	2,000	1,934	1,934	
5 Improvement works	0	0	0	
	20,850	23,115	26,720	
LESS Deposit Accounts interest, etc	990	6,497	11,659	- Includes refund for pump blockage costs
	19,860	16,618	15,060	

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
GENERAL FUND

2023			2022		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-		Apr-01	Balance brought forward	21,148.06
	Precept	1,934.44	2023	Rate income & Special levy	18,294.97
	Insurances	444.50	Mar-31	Irrecoverables	<u>0.00</u>
	Administration	6,915.20			18,294.97
	Drainworks	4,971.75			
	Pumping Station Repairs	6,453.74		Highland Water Contributions	2,348.94
	Electricity	3,900.00			
	Contractors Charges	<u>1,600.00</u>		Refund of costs:	
		24,285.19			
	Transfer to Pump Replacement Fund			- clearing blockage at pumping station	10,342.71
	Funds raised in year	500.00			
	Funds surplus for year	<u>1,032.43</u>			
		1532.43			
	Balance carried forward	<u>24,382.62</u>			
		<u>52,134.68</u>			<u>52,134.68</u>

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities

Capital Provisions 470,000.00

Assets

Barley Croft Pumping Station 470,000.00

Revenue Section

General Fund 24,382.62

Sundry Creditors 26,837.03

Pumping Plant Replacement Fund 36,794.74

Development Charges Account 301.90

558,316.29

Value added Tax - Refunds due 668.46

Ratepayers Account - Arrears 0.00

Sundry Debtors 10,790.46

Balance in hand -

Barclays - Treasurer's Barclays Bank 76,857.37

558,316.29

Bluntisham Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Treasurers Account 2021/2022

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	83,260.77	Payments made during the year	33,114.59
31st March 2023			
Receipts during the year			
Clerk's collection account	26,711.19		
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>0.00</u> 26,711.19	Balance carried forward	76,857.37
	<u>109,971.96</u>		<u>109,971.96</u>

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	76,857.37
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u>76,857.37</u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2022

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account	76,857.37
<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u>76,857.37</u>

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

BLUNTISHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	66,653	56,562	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	18,295	18,295	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,866	12,842	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	31,252	26,220	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	56,562	61,479	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	83,261	76,857	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	470,000	470,000	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE

Date

22nd May 2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Bluntisham IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2023

**Per Annual
Return**

Line 1	Balances brought forward		
	General Fund	21,148.06	
	Pump replacement fund	35,112.31	
	Development Charges Fund	301.90	
		56,562.27	56,562
Line 2	Rates and Special Levies		
	Agricultural rates	6,118.97	
	Special Levies	12,176.00	
	Penalty	0.00	
	Costs	0.00	
	Write-off	0.00	
		18,294.97	18,295
Line 3	Total other receipts		
	Interest		
	General fund	0.00	
	Pump replacement fund	0.00	
	Development Charges Fund	0.00	
	Highland Water	2,348.94	
	Write Back of Provisions	150.00	
	Refund of Costs for Clearing Pump	10,342.71	
		12,841.65	12,842
Line 4	Staff costs		
	Wages/salaries	0.00	
	National Insurance contributions	0.00	
	Pension costs	0.00	
	Travelling expenses	0.00	
		0.00	0
Line 5	Loan repayments		
	PWLB - Principal	0.00	
	PWLB - Interest	0.00	
		0.00	0
Line 6	All other payments		
	Precept	1,934.44	
	Rates, Insurances, telephones	444.50	
	Repairs and renewals	6,453.74	
	Fuel	3,900.00	
	Drainworks	4,971.75	
	Contractors charges	1,600.00	
	Administration	6,915.20	
	Underprovision in previous years	0.00	
		26,219.63	26,220
Line 7	Balances carried forward		
	General Fund	24,382.62	
	Pump replacement Fund	36,794.74	
	Development Charges Fund	301.90	
		61,479.26	61,479
Reconciliation			
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6		61,479.26	
Balances carried forward			
Per Annual return		61,479.00	

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return on behalf of the Board for the financial year ending 31st March 2023.

B.907 Date of Next Meeting

The Board agreed the date for the next meeting to be Friday 12th January 2024 - 10.30am at Hanson's.

B.910 Any Other Business

As this was an election year and therefore would be the Chairmans final meeting, the Vice-Chairman, on behalf of the Board, thanked Peter for all his work over the years, which has been greatly aprecated by all members. Peter thanked James for his kind words and informed members that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time as a member of the Board and had always had an interest in the operations of the Board and enjoying the challenges posed.

RESOLVED

That the services of the Chairman be recorded, and that Mr Peter Burton be thanked for all his work over the years.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date