

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD IDB	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME
Date:	Monday 2 March 2026	Officer Responsible:	Nicola Oldfield

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- A. The Board authorises the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board with advice from MLC.**

1. Enforcement & Compliance Overview

Our Enforcement and Compliance Officers Dave Coles and Tony Payne joined us on the 23 June 2025 as a job share. They are currently investigating cases across 17 boards plus Middle Level Commissioners, including:

- 47 active enforcement cases,
- 23 surface water or surface water and foul discharges,
- 24 byelaw cases.

Cases already concluded:

- Eight cases in the last two months including trespass, unlicensed moorings, unauthorised structures and encroachment,
- Six major developments have been referred to Technical Services following enforcement action, as consent applications for outstanding discharge consents.

In September and October, they were successful in recovering more than £70,000 of historic outstanding drainage charges for three developments across two boards and the MLC.

It is recommended that the Board authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board, having taken advice from MLC Officers. They will engage other Board Members as they see appropriate and determine whether a Special Meeting of the Board is needed on a risk and complexity basis.

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Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Applications since last meeting

Appendix 2: Board's District Plan

There have been 21 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

There have been 1 Byelaw Consent applications (to undertake works in and around watercourses) have been granted since the last meeting:

There have been 1 Byelaw Consent applications (to discharge to a watercourse) application processed since the last meeting.

There have been 2 infiltration device applications acknowledged since the last meeting:

Planning Updates & Consultations

Domestic Garden Water Logging at Small Lode, Upwell

The Board are advised that we have been contacted by the LLFA regarding a riparian dispute relating to the infill of a ditch, allegedly resulting in flooding to adjacent garden. We will respond to the LLFA to confirm that similarly to the LLFA in their assessment, the Board has limited powers in such circumstances. This matter has previously been passed to the District Officer and we believe there are complicated factors outside the remit of the Board or MLC

Pinfold Road area

Four dwellings at 5 Pinfold Road, Upwell – Fountain Construction (MLC Ref No 677)

Consent for partly attenuated surface water discharge was granted by the Board in March 2024.

As reported in the last Consulting Engineer's report, a Section 23 application was refused regarding piping the watercourse to the rear of the development. However, it was discovered by the Enforcement team that the watercourse has been infilled, with a small pipe installed. After discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, it has been decided to allow the culvert and small pipe to remain, but the applicant has been advised that the work is unconsented, and the Board may request the works to be removed at any time if so required. The householders will be written to, advising them of the situation.

Upwell, Stonehouse Road blocked or collapsed riparian access culvert

The owner of a property close to the junction with Stonehouse Road and New Bridge Road called MLC claiming his access culvert had collapsed. As the District Officer was otherwise engaged, an officer from MLC attended site on January 22nd, 2026. After meeting the owner to ascertain details on the property and culvert, an inspection was done using a surveying level staff and arm to feel the culvert from each end due to high water levels in the IDB drain covering the culvert. Both ends of the culvert are blocked with silt, and it seems to be a 350mm diameter concrete pipe. As it resides at the gravity flow split in the drain, it's not holding any water up to worry about.

MLC subsequently advised the District Officer of the survey findings who requested MLC contact a local contractor to provide a quote swiftly to either rod, jet, or pull this culvert through, along with a further

thirteen others on a 600m reach along the same drain between nodes 6 to 9. Ideally, this is to include the NCC Highways culvert at the juncture with New Bridge and Stonehouse Roads. Subject to any quote being acceptable to progress matters, MLC Operations will pursue the matter on the Board's behalf. A temporary road closure may be required to undertake such works for which there will be fee payable, and road space will need booking in advance.

