Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board with advice form MLC.
B. To consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and to instruct the Consulting Engineer with a view to seeking grant in aid.

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, unlicenced 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.

2. Summary of Key Planning Issues

We will, when possible, seek the Board's input, rather than wait for Board meetings. This will be done via correspondence with the Chair, Vice Chair, District Officer and any appropriate sub-committees.

2.1 Flood incident 15th January 2026 – Glatton Brook

On 16 January 2026, the Enforcement & Compliance (E&C) Team was contacted by a Glatton resident regarding flooding issues affecting the areas around Infield Road and Sawtry Road. Concerns were

also raised about an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) drain that runs from Sawtry Road parallel to Glatton Ways before joining the Connington Brook watercourse.

Initial assessments found that some of the flooding, particularly around Infield Road, was not directly linked to IDB assets. During the rainfall event, a temporary road closure was implemented in this area. However, water from the Highways drainage system ultimately discharged into the IDB drain at Sawtry Road, Glatton, contributing to elevated water levels during periods of heavy rainfall. These matters were raised with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Highways, both of whom have responded positively to the concerns.

The IDB drain at Sawtry Road passes through private land, specifically the gardens of two residential properties. Following site inspections, the IDB Chair and District Officer identified this section of drain as a potential candidate for un-adoption. The rationale is based on the anticipated difficulty and cost of enforcing maintenance responsibilities and vegetation clearance on private landowners where resistance may occur.

Multiple site visits and community engagement activities have already taken place, with additional visits planned as required.

3. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

Following the initial, unsuccessful bid for funding, the Environment Agency subsequently awarded funding for the 'Asset Resilience Pumps & Channels' package in June 2025. These works were completed by March 2026.

Works delivered included:

- Pump control panel refurbishments
- Water level monitoring across the wider Bevill's Pond

4. New FCERM grant funding guidance

The Government published new FCERM funding guidance on 3 March 2026.

To be eligible for funding a project must deliver strategic objectives and government policy. Governments' objectives most relevant to IDBs include:

- value for money (Net Present Value)
- reducing flood risk
- focusing on deprived areas
- prioritising projects with contributions from others (this would include funding provide by IDBs themselves)
- a percentage investment in Natural Flood Management (NFM) across the programme

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

- refurbishing or replacing existing assets
- building new assets
- NFM projects
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Asset Refurbishment Projects

Asset refurbishment is a significant renewal to one or more components in an existing asset that is not covered by routine maintenance.

It includes work to mitigate for the loss of asset performance. This covers issues that asset maintenance cannot manage and that would be significant and permanent if not fixed.

It does not include asset replacement projects where an existing asset at the end of its life is replaced with another like for like asset which sustains the standard of service.

Under the new FCERM funding policy existing FCERM assets are eligible for 100% of funding for refurbishment.

New or Improved Asset Projects

Projects that are not refurbishment are eligible for 100% for the first £3 million, and 90% for costs above £3 million.

These include:

- projects replacing existing assets with a like for like replacement
- projects building new or improved assets
- projects with combined asset interventions

Projects cannot be artificially split into smaller components to fall below the £3 million fully funded threshold.

Applying for funding

It should be noted that there will be more projects that are eligible for investment than funding available. Projects will need to be prioritised to meet government targets and achieve best value for money.

Therefore, it is recommended that should the Board wish to apply for FCERM grant funding, they consider part-funding projects. This is similar to the funding rules that were in place prior to 2011 when IDBs only received 45% of project costs.

Should the Board wish to submit a new project to be considered for funding, the first step is to collate relevant cost and benefit data to submit to the Environment Agency from 1 July 2026. This requires collating costs and benefits and other relevant data required by the EA to determine a project's eligibility and prioritise the programme. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this and this will be recharged to the Board.

If a project already appears on the FCERM investment programme with an allocation for future years, an application for grant funding approval/business case will need to be submitted. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this.

Timescales

The Consulting Engineer currently has limited resources to develop and deliver projects, although recruitment is currently in progress to address this. The likely timescales for project delivery are:

- submit for funding consideration July 2026 onwards

- prepare and submit applications for subsequent funding approval onwards
- delivery 2027/28 onwards

It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for future asset refurbishment/replacement with a view to seeking grant in aid.

5. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1. Pumping station replacement costs are included on the capital programme. Further investment will be needed in the interim and will be developed further in line with the Key Health Indicators.

The Board is advised to consider the development of a capital investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Capital Programme
Appendix 2: List of applications since last meeting
Appendix 3: M&E Report

Appendix 1

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

Capital Improvement Programme (2026/2027)

		PREVIOUS YEARS	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Castle Hill p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,700.0	1700.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Moat Farm p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,500.0	1500.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Sawtry Roughs p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,725.0	2725.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	108.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	15.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	15.0
Drainage Channels	System watercourses	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
														0.0
		13.9	**0.0**	**0**	**15**	**0**	**200**	**100**	**0**	**28**	**0**	**15**	**5,940**	**6,298**

Appendix 2

There have been 14 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

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

There have been 3 infiltration device applications acknowledged since the last meeting.

There have been no applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) granted since the last meeting.

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**		**8**
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**	
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Dave Bantoft**

1. M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters previously reported or described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition. The stations and pumps are at an age where reliability is a concern and a plan should be put in place to overhaul or replace items as necessary to ensure ongoing reliability.

The Board is strongly advised to consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. The Board is asked to instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

1.1 M&E Equipment Key Health Indicators

Over the past 2 years we have been compiling and verifying Pumping Station Key Date to allow easier identification of equipment age and the need for refurbishment to assist in developing an investment plan for asset refurbishment or replacement. The details below include any works already scheduled and funded to be completed this year. For example, the level Controller and Pump Starter work carried out across Castle Hill, Moat Farm and Sawtry Roughs by Carlton Controls. To ensure reliability, resilience and longevity of the pumping equipment it needs to be refurbished or replaced at suitable intervals. We have experienced examples lately of pumps being left too long and failing, or when they are removed for overhaul the condition is very poor and the pump overall lifetime has been reduced significantly, which is not cost-effective use of the asset. The same is true for control panels, component failures often damage other components incurring costly repairs and machine downtime. Overall, it is more cost effective to run well maintained equipment.

The pictures below are of pump bolts that have been in situ for 20 years and have corroded to the point of failure as shown by the gap between the flanges. Although now rebuilt with stainless steel bolts they were not in the past. The pump tubes are also heavily corroded which reduces pump life considerably. Ideally pumps should be refurbished every 10 years because by the time they reach 15 to 20 years it is likely the corrosion will heavily impact their overall residual life.



Table 1: Key Health Indicators

Station	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Controls	Weedscreen Bars
Castle Hill	1973	1973	2003	2026	1973
Moat Farm	1965	1965	2003	2026	1965
Sawtry Roughs	1970	1970	2004	2021	2011

The weedscreen bars are manually raked so condition is not as critical as it is for automatic machine cleansed screens.

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 53 to 61 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 22 to 23 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 3 pumps that are due refurbishment. Having a plan in place and underway helps to secure further grant funding when it comes available, such as the recent IDB Recovery Fund.

Standard pumps are normally cost effective to repair and lead times can be as short as 4 weeks or can be over a year if impellors are damaged and must be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £20k to £100k depending on pump condition.

Please confirm if the Board would like for quotes to be obtained for pump overhauls.

2. Pumping Stations

2.1 Sawtry Roughs

The Pump Control Panel has been upgraded with a Pulsar Ultimate controller which has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Sawtry Roughs Pump Station took place 18th February 2026. Recommendations / remarks include:

1) The onsite chrome is not long enough to effectively clean the weedscreen.
2) The inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.
3) The seal water hose is corroded and will require replacement soon.
4) Siphon Breaker Vent Tube Broken.

Also, a note to consider replacing the internal and external lights for modern LED lighting (6ft Led) is mentioned.

Castle Hill

The Pump Control Panel complete with Pulsar Ultimate has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B – GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Castle Hill Pump Station took place 18th February 2026.

Recommendations / remarks include:

1)The inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.
2)Probes corroded, requires stainless tube.

Moat / Manor Farm

The Pump Control Panel complete with Pulsar Ultimate has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B – GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Moat Farm Pump Station took place 1st December 2025. Recommendations / remarks include:

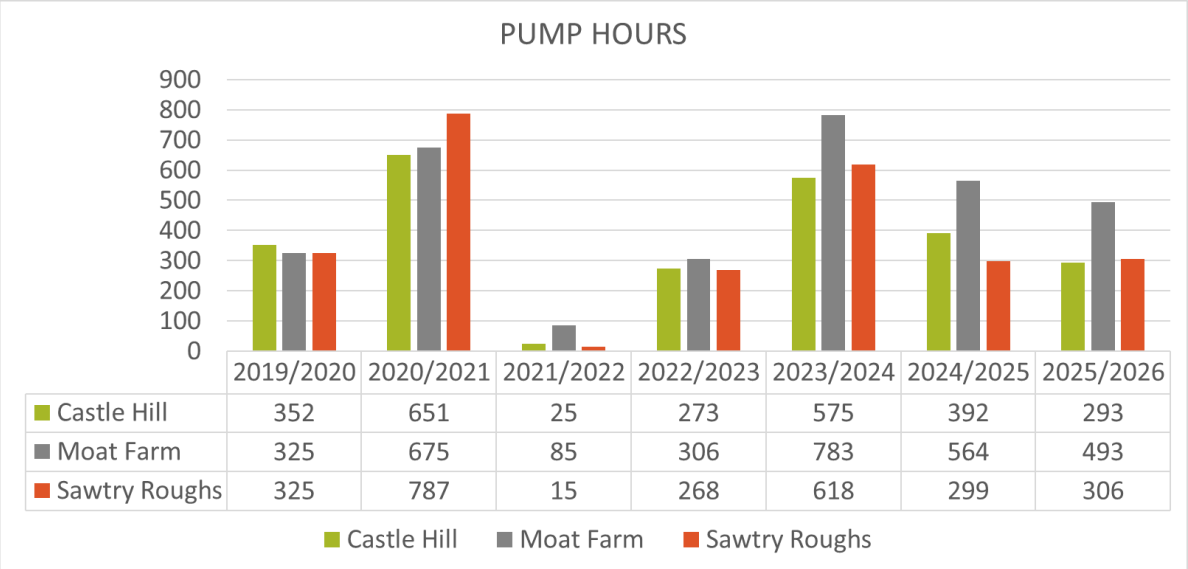
1) Inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.

The inspection due in February 2026 was not carried out due to poor access to the site along the bank.

2.2 **Electricity Readings**

Mr S Custance has provided regular meter readings and pump hours for Sawtry Roughs, Castle Hill & Moat Farm which has been a great help verifying electric bills.

3. Pumping summary



	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Castle Hill	352	651	25	273	575	392	293
Moat Farm	325	675	85	306	783	564	493
Sawtry Roughs	325	787	15	268	618	299	306

4. Inspections

4.1 HSB Engineering annual inspection for insurance was carried out at Castle Hill Pump Station during September 2025.

4.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Report (due every 5 years) are in date, the upcoming inspections will be booked as required.

Station	EICR Date	EICR Due
Castle Hill	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030
Moat Farm	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030
Sawtry Roughs	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030

5. Water level Management

The pumping stations have summer and winter pump level references based on historic values which serve as very good reference points. I would actively encourage pump attendants to vary these to suit their current catchment conditions. For example, running pump start and stop levels at intermediate settings above the base winter settings during times of high Soil Moisture Deficit and then reducing towards winter level setpoints as the SMD reduces or if there is heavy rainfall forecast. This needs to be balanced with ensuring the pump has a good operating range so it is never short cycling (hunting). This can also be used to ensure maximum benefit of the lower night electricity rate.

Ultimately this takes more operator time but will produce more efficient running and reduce costs. We can advise on this if needed and show some good and bad examples to help with setting and monitoring your pumps.

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