

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME
Date:	Thursday 18 th 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 from MLC.
- B. Approve critical work identified in the M&E Report.
- C. Consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and grant funding and instruct the Consulting Engineer.

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 22 boards plus Middle Level Commissioners.

We have a total of 102 investigations of which 47 are currently active including:

- 29 surface water or surface water and foul discharges,
- 12 byelaw cases.

The Officers will also be taking over some aspects of Navigation Enforcement.

Since joining they have successfully recovered £445,000 of outstanding discharge contributions across IDBs 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.

Refer to Appendix 2 for more details.

3. Technical Services Overview

The team was joined by Project Manager, Ellie Edwards at the end of April. She will be assisting the Engineer in planning and delivering capital projects, significantly increasing our capacity to deliver the developing works programme.

4. 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 for this district include the following:

- Control panel replacement
- Culvert improvements

5. 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 provided 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

The Consulting Engineer will prioritise workload based primarily on Key Health Indicators.

6. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1.

This includes budget estimates for critical works identified in the M&E Report – control panel, weedscreen and control building repairs.

The Board is asked to approve this work.

It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. 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 asked 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: Operational Report

Appendix 4: M&E Report

Appendix 1

Ramsey First (Hollow) 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
Ramsey Hollow p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,000.0	0.0	5000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	5.3	0	50.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	230.3
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	45.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	5.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0
	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
	Pumping station roadway and bridge maintenance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Watercourses	Drainage Channels	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Refurbishment of inlets/outfalls	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Culvert 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
Property	Bungalow	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Study	Catchment Study	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		5	0	50	5	100	50	50	60	0	0	5,000	20	5,340

There have been 9 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

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

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

There have been no Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) applications granted since the last meeting.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: OPERATIONAL SERVICES
Date:	Thursday 18th June 2026	Officer Responsible:	Morgan Lakey

1. Weed Control & Drain Maintenance

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

The Board was successful in securing full funding for improvement works from the DEFRA IDB assets resilience grant and the mobile pumps package. This allowed for fully funded culvert replacement at point 11, Long Drove. Once the works commenced, it was evident the 750mm culvert was not only half full with silt, (due to water depths at the culvert restricting the access for cleaning out) it was also not installed straight, increasing the build-up of silt in the middle, where slightly different size pipes met at an angle. The replacement 1500mm twin-wall plastic pipe, will improve water conveyance and suffer less from silting up in the future due to a straighter pipe and the greater diameter.



Fully funded, replacement culvert at Point 11



Fully funded improvement works at Pumping Station

Works carried out under the mobile pumps package included improvements at the Board's Pumping Station. Access improvements and a hard standing were installed at the stations weedscreen entrance, to allow for the deployment of mobile pumping equipment in the event of a pump breakdown.

A recent joint inspection of the Board's district drains has been undertaken with the District Officer revealing that the majority of the drains remain in a satisfactory condition and are being maintained to a good standard.

The inspection highlighted sporadic stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation in the Meggs Drove Drains to the Northwest of the District. It is recommended these reaches are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide followed by light machine cleansing, post harvest this year. Emergent aquatic vegetation was also evident in the Bury Lug and Wistow Fen drains and it is

recommended the affected reaches are included in this year's herbicide programme to control any future growth and further spread. A provisional sum has been included within the Board's estimated costs, for the proposed works to be completed the season. The identified locations can be seen on the Board's plan following the estimated costs on the next page.



Meggs Drove drain, reach 11-12



Wistow Fen, reach 51 - 52



Collapsed Headwall, reach 2-11

It was also noted during the inspection the collapsed culvert headwall (reach 2 -11) discussed at previous Board meetings, still remains an issue and has deteriorated further. It is recommended that the current brick rubble is replaced with a new concrete bagged headwall to prevent any possible blockages and ensure continued water conveyance. A sum has been included within the estimates to allow for the works to be completed in conjunction with the proposed adjacent machine cleansing works.

The removal of the self-sown saplings identified on the western bank of the Board's main Ash Drain, was postponed last year and will be programmed in to be cut back or removed this autumn/winter. This will require an ecological survey to ensure the works are carried out compliantly and follow the correct guide-

lines for working around any wildlife identified. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for the works to proceed at the end of the year.

The Board's previous flail mowing contractor, Mr Ashman will no longer be available due to retiring at the end of last year. For the previous three seasons, Mr Ashman has been assisted by M&C Agricultural services and they are available to undertake the flail mowing requirements this year if the Board wish to proceed with them. Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator optimum visibility to undertake the cleansing work. A sum for the completion of flail mowing of the Board's drains for the ensuing year has been included in the estimated costs.

A provisional sum has been included within the estimated costs for any emergency machine cleansing, Cott removal or culvert clearance works that may be required later in the year.

2. Estimated Costs of Anticipated Drain Maintenance and Weed Control Programme

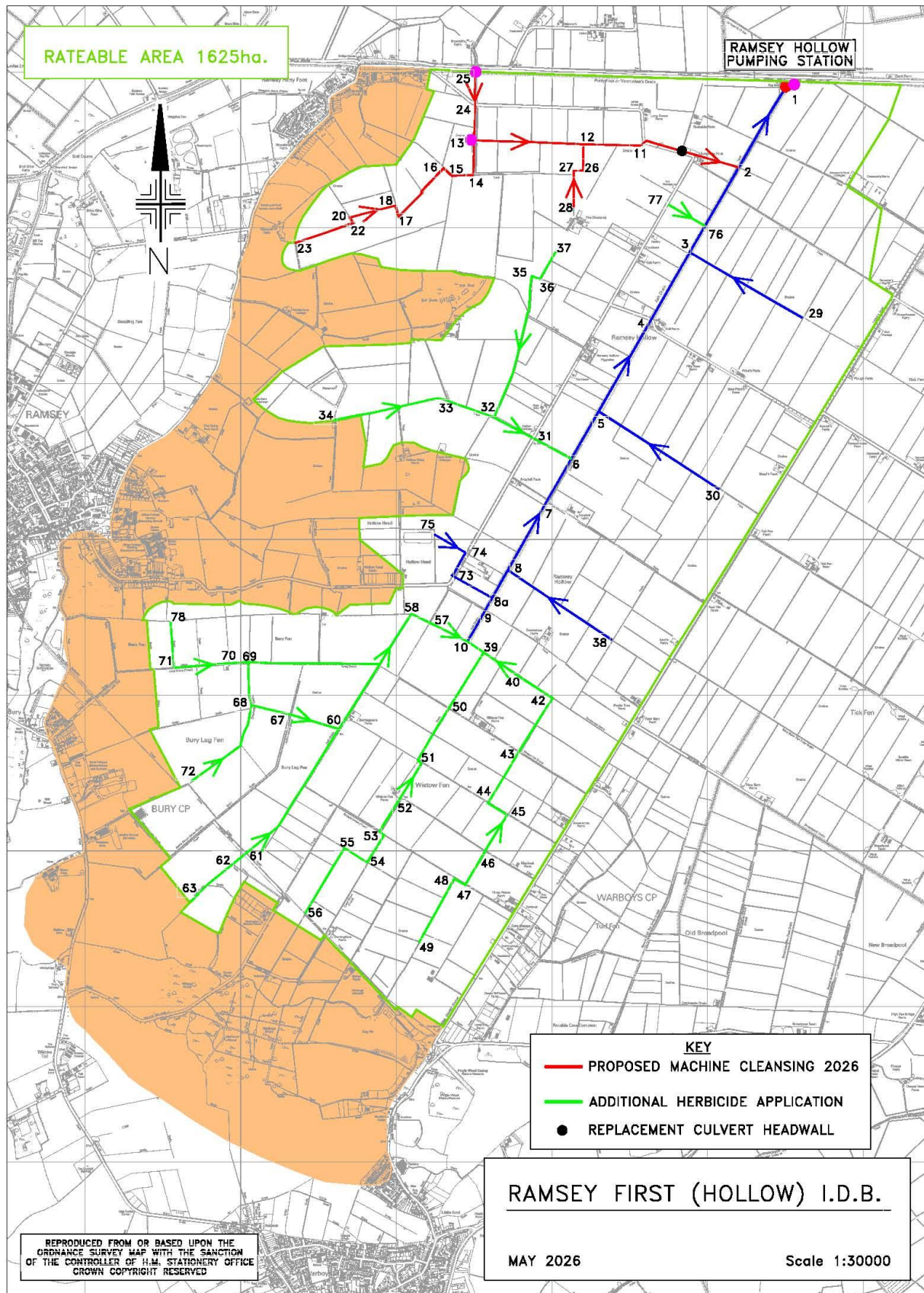
The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works follows, please refer to the previous plan for locations.

1	Allow sum for Roundup herbicide application where required throughout the district	Item	Sum	900.00
2	Machine cleanse Megs Drove Drains			
	i) Reach 2-11-12-13	1700m	@ 1.40	2380.00
	ii) Reach 12-26-27-28	500m	@ 1.40	700.00
	iii) Reach 25-24-13-14-15-16-17-18-20-22-23	2100m	@ 1.40	2940.00
3	<u>Provisional Item</u> Cut back saplings on Ash Drain	Item	Sum	4000.00
4	Replace culvert headwall	Item	Sum	1800.00
5	Allow for flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing	Item	Sum	3500.00
6	<u>Provisional Item</u> Allow for emergency machine cleansing, Cott removal or culvert clearance works	Item	Sum	2000.00
7	Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement of herbicide treatments and machine cleansing works	Item	Sum	1400.00
TOTAL				£19,620.00

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

Author Name: Morgan Lakey

Role: Head of Operations



Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL
Date:	Thursday 18 th 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. 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	WSC	WSC Over-haul	Controls
Ramsey Hollow	1947(P&P) 1986(E) 2012 (D)	1974 (1E)	2014 (1)	1974	1986	2011	2011	2011
		1986 (2E)	2013 (2)	1974	1986			
		2012 (D)	2012 (D)	2012(D)	2012			

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical areas for concern and improvement is the pumps and control panels for the electric pumps. The pumps range from 14 to 52 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 12 to 14 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 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 impellers are damaged and have to be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £30k to £100k depending on pump condition.

- 1.3 The control panels for the electric pumps are now 50 years old and their reliability is a concern. Consideration should be given to replacing the control panels. The condition of the roof of the old station has deteriorated allowing more water ingress into the area of the control panels which is deteriorating them quickly. They do have a cover above but water on floor is corroding panels. When replacing the control panels, it would be a good opportunity to move them and possibly the electricity meter into the same enclosure as the diesel pump control panel. This would offer them better protection and would remove all need for the old station building for the current pumps. The fibre glass control room has been designed with room to allow fitting of new panels for the replacement electric pumps control panels.

No further progress has been made of costing of the control panel replacement and relocation of mains and feed and meter.

The weed screen bars will need replacing in the next few years. The bars, excluding damming and fitting, will cost in the region of £20k. To enable them to be fitted successfully the drain will need to be dammed and desilted as there is approximately 1 metre of silt build up upstream of the bars.

The last routine inspection at Ramsey Hollow Pump Station took place 19th February 2026. Recommendations / remarks include:

Telemetry draw rope installed ready for Xylem.

The general age of the equipment makes failures more likely, consider replacing the electrical panel and relocating to the green cabinet.

Water leaking through the old station roof next to the pump panels. Requires repair to prevent splashing and corrosion of electrical panels. (socket isolated)

Pump pipework is corroding on Pump 1 and needs to be monitored for perforation.

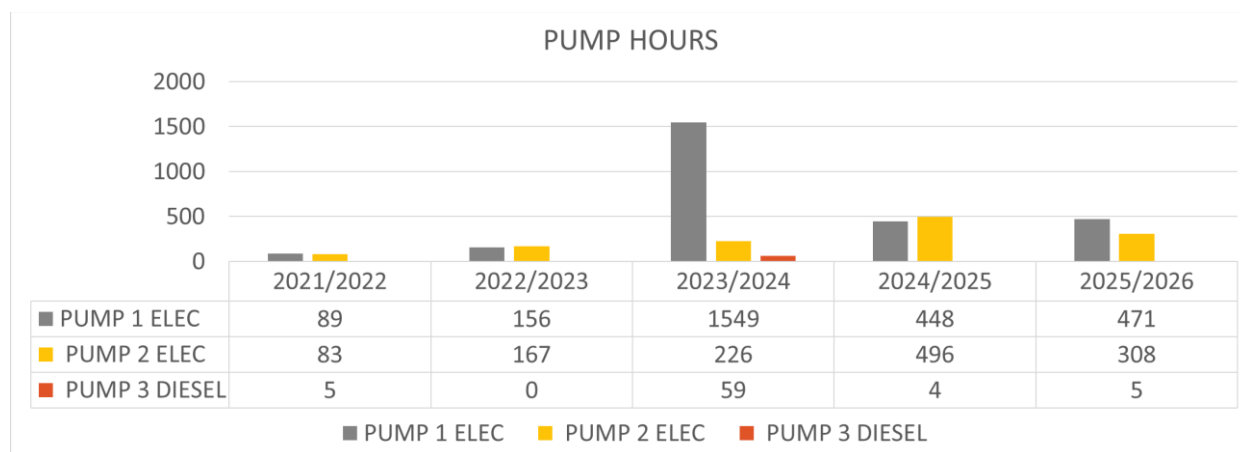
WSC inspected, load rope worn but serviceable.

2. Electricity Readings

Mr T. Allen provides regular readings of pump hours and electricity usage which is greatly appreciated.

A new electricity meter was fitted in June 2024 by the meter operator (IMServ); this unit initially required multiple site visits due to communication issues (SIM Card / poor phone signal) in the local area; MLC are currently monitoring this situation.

3. Pumping summary



4. Inspections

- 4.1 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Report (due every 5 years) was carried out in March 2024 and failed due to 2 old light fittings with poor readings. Remedial works were booked in and the work was carried out in June 2024.

EICR Date	EICR Due
24-Jun-2024	24-Jun-2029

- 4.2 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out in September 2025.

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.

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer