

SUTTON AND MEPAL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Sutton and Mepal Internal Drainage Board
held at Chatteris Cricket Club on Tuesday the 1st June 2021

PRESENT

M R R Latta Esq (Chairman)	R J Angood Esq
C P K Lee Esq (Vice Chairman)	M Jackson Esq
A Allan Esq	P E Sole Esq
P W Allpress Esq	R H Smith Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor S Criswell, M George Esq, J Sole Esq, E F Veal Esq, W Veal Esq.

B.2212.Standing Orders

Further to minute B.2153, Miss McShane reported that ADA have obtained agreement from Defra for the flexibility which allowed the Board to choose how they wished to hold Board meetings during the pandemic to become permanent. This change will allow remote attendance or fully virtual meetings to take place in future should that best meet the Board's particular requirements at that time, viz:-

RESOLVED

That the Board adopt the revised Standing Orders.

B.2213 Inspection of the District

Prior to the meeting, those Members present, with the exception of Mr M Jackson and including Mr M Heading, undertook an Inspection of the District which embraced the following matters:-

(i) Colne Fen Farm

The Chairman thought it was useful for the Board to consider the requests from an applicant, D M Newman, to fill in a section of the Internal Drainage Board's drain. The infill of the drain would allow Mr Newman to better use his fields. Having considered the request from Mr Newman and the flow of water in the area, the Board felt that it would not be appropriate to give consent.

RESOLVED

That it was a dangerous precedent to permit the infilling of a Board Drain. Mindful of their responsibilities for flood risk as an Internal Drainage Board, it was decided that the request should be refused.

(ii) Environment Agency Counter Drain

The Chairman referred to the work the Environment Agency had successfully carried out by piling the drain. The work being paid for by the Environment Agency and approximately 1,000 metres would be completed in total. It was anticipated that another 200/300 metres would be carried out in the next year as part of these works.

(iii) Holwood Farm

The Chairman referred to seepage which was occurring from the slacker. The Chairman advised the Board that to carry out this work and renew or line the pipe he had sought quotations which were £6,000 to replace the pipe and to line the existing pipe would be in the region of £2,000.

(iv) Goodjohn's Farm

The Board inspected the dam which had rotted at this location. The dam on the airfield holds back water. The owner was concerned about the water levels and had requested that water levels be lowered. This would require a new dam which would hold water levels at this point. It was proposed to put the dam near the culvert at this location.

(v) Jolly Banks Crossing

The Board inspected the culvert at this point and agreed that the culvert should be removed for security purposes as access was not needed there.

(vi) Pumping Station

The Board inspected the Pumping Station and the works that had been carried out by the Vice Chairman and the District Officer in response to the Risk Assessment prepared by Cope Safety Management. All the works were noted by the Board and the Vice Chairman and the District Officer were thanked for the works they had carried out.

B.2214 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in any matters relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared an interest in minute no. B.2228.

The Chairman declared an interest in the planning applications MLC Ref Nos. 179, 188, 199, 226, 228, 232, 258, 296, 297 & 300 received for R A Latta (Farms) Ltd and Mick George Ltd.

The Vice Chairman declared interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 072, 148, 177, 182, 236, 237, 298 & 301, 335, 338 & 341) received for P J Lee & Sons and (MLC Ref Nos. 227, 231, 240, 245, 246, 305, 309, 326 & 334) received for Pretoria Energy Ltd & Little Green Consulting Ltd.

Mr M Jackson declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 078, 143, 164, 275 and 318) received for Mr and Mrs Jackson and D M Jackson & Son.

Mr P Sole declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 091 and 319) received for A Sole & Son and Mr P Sole.

B.2215 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 14th January 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2216 Potential Amalgamation Discussions – Sutton and Mepal IDB, Manea and Welney DDC and Upwell IDB

Further to minute B.2193, the Chairman explained that this would be an ongoing matter and remain on the agenda for future consideration. No further action was to be taken at the current time.

RESOLVED

To keep this matter under review and it be revisited at a later date.

B.2217 Water Levels in the Counter Drain System

Further to minute B.2194, the Chairman reported that the works carried out by the Environment Agency had largely resolved the seepage issue. Further works on the bank of the Counter Drain were proposed to be carried out during the course of the next year.

The repair work had involved piling into the banks and restoring the banks.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.2218 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Inspection Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank works

Further to minute B.2195, Miss McShane referred to the Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated March 2021.

B.2219 Low Level Restoration at Block Fen Account (Redland Aggregates) Limited

Further to minute B.2196, Miss McShane explained that these were funds that had been ring-fenced by the Board until a final restoration scheme was known and the Board have discharged all of its duties under the Agreement. It was previously proposed that once the quarry works were completed that the land would be returned to low level agriculture. One of the options now being discussed for Block Fen was to construct a large reservoir and the sub-committee formed by the Board were meeting with the Environment Agency to look at future options.

B.2220 Meter Readings – Lafarge and Tarmac

Further to minute B.2197, Miss McShane reported that she had the meter readings and costings but needed still to consider whether any new agreement needs to be drafted. She would progress this matter and report directly to the Chairman.

B.2221 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane advised;

- (i) Association of Drainage Authorities
- a) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held virtually on Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

Matters covered were that there was a change in Chairman with Harry Raby stepping down and Marc Heading taking his place. Councillor Doug McMurdo takes on the role of Vice Chairman. This maintains the balance of having upland and lowland members in key roles and also balances council and agricultural ratepayers' interests. John Heading was appointed for another three years on the ADA Board as branch representative. Robert Caudwell gave an update on ADA matters focusing in on progress of the agriculture bill through parliament and the lowland peat initiative which he considers must not negatively impact on livelihoods and the need to produce food for the nation. Next to speak was Brian Stewart who was seeking support for his initiative to create an Ex-Officio post on the FRCC for the sitting Chairman of the Great Ouse branch of ADA (EA nominated post). This was supported unanimously and Marc Heading will take up this new role with immediate effect.

Claire Jouvray and Paul Burrows gave updates on the revenue funding position, which was quite healthy with sources of money found to deliver what had been targeted and on the long-term strategy for the area including the tactical plans which are set to make access to grant in aid smoother than it might otherwise be. A warning was raised that funding may get squeezed as time passes and the financial impact of COVID-19 gets addressed.

Approximately 30 people attended this virtual meeting, which should return to its normal format at Prickwillow Hall next year.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 1st March 2022.

- b) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Enquiry Report

That ADA have responded to the Government EFRA report into the winters flooding, which has the headline conclusion that the lack of clear flood-resilience targets is leaving England at risk of 'playing catch-up' with climate change.

Encouragingly, in addition to recognising these challenges, EFRA have also clearly stated that in light of ever more frequent and severe storms, there is an urgent need to provide long-term funding for the maintenance of existing and new flood defences, to match capital commitment together with a need to examine the mental health impacts of severe flooding, calling for an action plan to address this alongside the economic and physical effects.

ADA's response and the full EFRA report can be found via the following link;
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmenvfru/170/170.pdf>

(ii) Land Registry

That whilst it is a legal requirement for land occupiers to notify the Board of any change of occupation, including releasing contact details for the new occupiers, on many occasions this does not occur and time is spent trying to determine who the new occupier is. When the normal avenues fail to deliver any meaningful information we now use our Land Registry account to gain details of the current land owner. The costs of making an application via this method are small (currently £6) but obviously this will show up on the Board accounts, hence the need to draw this new way of working to the Boards attention.

(iii) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021 will be held at the ExCel, London on 9th and 10th November 2021.

(iv) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute B.2139(v), Miss McShane reported that WRE have had a productive and fruitful year despite COVID and have managed to lever many millions of funding for studies and initiatives which in the long term should benefit this area by recognising the importance of agriculture to the water resource supply chain and by seeking ways to integrate water resources, flood risk management and environmental objective delivery together. For the 2020/2021 year (should the Board continue to wish to support the work of WRE and contribute accordingly) the calculated figure will be £125.00. Please note that ADA have developed a new band based charging structure, hence the change from the previous year's figure.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the requested annual contribution of £125.00.

B.2222 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the report of the Consulting Engineers,

Sutton & Mepal I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2021

Pumping Station

Main Pumps

As previously reported pumps 1 and 2 motors had shown a decline in winding resistance to earth in December 2020. However, readings taken in March 2021 showed a dramatic rise which is entirely due to the exceptionally high number of running hours over the extremely wet winter. In January pump 2 was noted as running with a slight grumble, the cover was removed and the cables observed to be tight, hence it is assumed that there can be no other obvious reason apart from pump wear. The Board do have an overhauled pump which remains in store as a spare.

In March pump 3 starter had a failure of its power factor correction capacitors, new capacitors have been fitted and the pump is now running normally again

Weedscreen Cleaner

Whilst the cleaner worked well over the period and an inspection of the wheels showed that they were in a satisfactory condition it is proposed that the worn trolley wheels be replaced in 2022.

Running Hours = 1452

Pumping hours

(note pumping hours are a close estimate derived from available data to show comparable pumping hours for like periods)

Total Hours Run	May 20 – May 21	May 19 – May 20	May 18 – May 19	April 17 – May 18	April 16 - April 17
No 1	1468 (28282)	981 (26814)	395 (25833)	569 (25438)	1094
No 2	1156 (27912)	818 (26756)	608 (25938)	863 (25330)	808
No 3	1464 (28345)	1194(26881)	81 (25687)	1191 (25606)	699
No 4	0 (2993)	143 (2993)	0 (2850)	38 (2850)	833

Total Hours Run	April 15 – April 16	May 14 – April 15
No 1	773	1065
No 2	762	1146
No 3	668	1110
No 4	1	28

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

Tactical Plans for the Fens

The Tactical Plans referred to in this document cover what has been termed the 'Great Ouse Fens', which covers the catchment of the River Great Ouse in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and

Suffolk. Its boundary to the west is formed of the right bank of the River Nene and includes all of the Middle Level catchment area and its constituent IDBs.

'Flood Risk Management for the Fens' is a project that has been set up to plan the best way of managing future flood risk in the whole Great Ouse Fens area. It is to be a Strategic Outline Programme which will set out the preferred option for managing flood risk in the Fens, taking in to account climate change and sea level rise (Strategic Outline Programmes sit above/before Strategic Outline Cases and are large scale programmes, so the Fens catchment scale fits this.)

The project will recommend actions that will be the best/most appropriate way of managing flood risk in the Fens over the next 50-100 years. The Flood Risk Management for the Fens project will take approximately 10-15 years to complete and in the mean time we need to know the maintenance and capital work needed in the area to continue to manage flood risk over the next two 6 year capital Grant in Aid settlement cycles, the period 2021 to 2027 and 2027 to 2033.

The background to the above is that the East Anglia Flood & Coastal Risk Management team have been working with national colleagues to come up with a better way of presenting the whole picture of future investment to allow us to have a conversation with government about the short, medium and long term plans for the area. We agreed that we would produce Tactical Plans for each of the sub-catchments (Middle Level, South Level, West and East of Ouse and King's Lynn areas) to look at ALL FCRM assets for all sources of flooding that would better present the short term programme of works required and the agreed amount of benefits (Outcome Measures) that can be claimed for each project. This advice has led to the piece of work around benefit apportionment to address the issues with double counting of outcome measures by individual projects. In January 2019 all IDB Chairs in the Fens area were sent a letter, explaining the Fens project and how it fitted with the Strategic Approach for Flood & Coastal Risk Management Projects. This strategic approach fits with the Tactical Plans.

The Tactical Plans therefore clearly set out what maintenance and capital works are required in each sub catchment over the next 12 years (feeding into the East Anglian Area pipeline of work), and what benefits this work delivers. The plans also highlight the apportioned Outcome Measures and the likely FDGiA funding each scheme can attract based on maintaining the Standard of Service, along with the Partnership Funding (PF) scores to show where PF contributions are needed. The Plans also take into account benefits that have been claimed already in the previous six year capital investment programme (2015-2021).

The expectation is that work in the Fens area will only be to continue delivering the current Standard of Service for the area, until the Flood Risk Management for the Fens project has set out the preferred direction for the area as a whole. This can, though, include capital interventions to assets to return them to design standards, where assets are currently below target conditions and

Standard of Service levels. The expectation is that those with assets in the area will be able to provide a plan of work for the next 12 years, and this will lead to us having a joined up, strategic approach for the short to medium term providing certainty to all RMAs with their investment planning and highlighting the amount of FDGiA funding individual schemes are eligible for. It will however remain the case that for each scheme a business case will need to be developed and approved before any grant is released and of course over the six year period national priorities for funding FRM schemes could impact the amount of grant available, in any given year, for schemes that come forward that do not currently have an allocation of funding.

As part of the Tactical plans works, the base line economic benefits have been calculated for each of the Board's assets. This represent the potential maximum Grant-in-Aid that would be supportable, should a scheme or a series of schemes need to come forward to keep the asset operational over the 15 year period, whilst analysis of the long term catchment needs is identified. These sums effectively represent a cap on grant and are not allocated monies. They have been developed to help support scheme economics should an application for allocation be successful and in the development of the business cases. For this Board these sums by asset are:

Asset	Max eligible FDGiA £
Mepal PS	1,271,503
Sutton & Mepal Main Drains	643,587

Baseline Report & Economic Appraisal Report

Further to the last Meeting Report, additional supporting information has been supplied to the Agency and its consultants concerning the proportion of the annual cost that is due to electricity use, versus the proportion of the annual cost that is due to maintenance and inspection activities and the proportion of pumping stations that are not powered by grid electricity and rely on other energy sources. This information was provided to inform part of the Fens Carbon Baseline work that is being undertaken.

A virtual meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was arranged for the end of April in advance of the publishing of the Baseline Report which the Agency has advised it aims to publish in the week commencing 10 May (after the local elections) via a new Fen's webpage on ADA's website.

Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy

Since the last Board meeting, the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and the relevant Boards at regular "Update" Progress Meetings, primarily to discuss sources of funding, the delivery of opportunities and provided assistance concerning a visualisation project. Attendance at these meetings is not charged to the Board.

The Environment Agency (EA) has held further engagement meetings with stakeholders including, Tarmac and Aggregate Industries, RSPB and Water Resources East (WRE) and is currently setting up a contract for a Comms & Engagement specialist for the scheme to be appointed in April 2021. This contract is for a period of one year and includes an option to extend for a further year to allow for the strategy to develop. Once in post it is planned that an engagement workshop with the various stakeholders is held in May/June.

At the time of writing an Aerial/Drone survey of the Counter Drain and Welches Dam Pumping Station has been carried out with the survey of Mepal Pumping Station and the main Block Fen/Langwood Fen topographical survey planned to be complete by the end of April.

Tenders for the groundwater monitoring wells have been received and A F Howlands Ltd has been confirmed as preferred contractor. The site work to install the monitoring wells is programmed for commencement during May for a period of two weeks.

The EA is currently preparing a Business Case submission to the National Project Assurance Service (NPAS) to secure additional funding to progress the strategy over the next few years. The work planned for the current 2021/22 financial year includes hydraulic modelling work of the Counter Drain and Welches Dam System, to see how the design of the system compared to the recent Winter 2020 storms and to test a number of potential operational scenarios. In addition to this topographical modelling of the Block Fen/Langwood Fen areas, in respect of flood storage, are also proposed.

In addition to the above, the EA is seeking to appoint advisors from the Legal and Estates Teams to commence the process of identifying the relevant legal agreements that may be required and to start to develop "Heads of Terms" for the strategy. **In this respect it is suggested that the Board considers the appointment of an independent Land Agent to deal with any legal/estates process issues that may subsequently arise.**

An element concerning the CCD Strategy was included in Cambridgeshire County Council's Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme bid that is discussed elsewhere in this report.

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident

August Flooding Incidents

The heatwave experienced during early August resulted in an area of thundery weather moving across Essex, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire into Northamptonshire bringing heavy downpours and localised flash flooding.

The flooding experienced in the Somersham, Colne, Bluntisham and Earith areas was considered to be particularly bad and the County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA),

enquired whether anyone had any useful information on the event; for example, rainfall figures, the extent of any flooding, the approximate times of the storms etc.

Thunderstorms can be very localised with some areas hit by torrential downpours while other districts nearby miss the rain altogether.

It is understood that flooding also occurred in Cottenham, March, St Ives, St Neots/Eaton Socon, Weston Colville and Woodhurst with garden flooding in a number of other locations.

Work has been undertaken by the LLFA, in conjunction with the County Highways team, to investigate and address some of the issues directly.

December Flooding Incidents

Early December brought higher than average rainfall in the UK with some eastern areas exceeding their typical December rainfall by the middle of the month.

A more intense rainfall period was experienced just before Christmas which was formed from a concentrated belt of rain that extended from the Severn Estuary to The Wash. A few days later Storm Bella crossed the country on 26 and 27 December. Fortunately rainfall in the Eastern Counties was relatively low but this, and further rainfall, served to retain the saturated condition of the catchment which continued to respond rapidly to further rainfall events.

The Middle Level Commissioners recorded 127.5 mm of rain at their March office during December, with 52.5mm being recorded on 23 December. A total of 10mm was recorded between 24 December 2020 and 2 January 2021.

Whilst the amount of rain that fell during this period was not as great as that experienced in August 2014, it fell on highly saturated ground that offered no sponge effect and led to significant flooding within the local area which was featured in the local media.

Flooding was reported to Cambridgeshire County Council, in its capacity as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), at several locations including Yaxley, March, Manea, Ramsey, Glatton, Swavesey, Doddington, Wimblington, Wisbech, Chatteris, Stilton, Sawtry, Conington, Wisbech St Mary, Friday Bridge, Leverington, Whittlesey, Elm, Rings End and Benwick.

The Clerk to the Commissioners attended a high level meeting with Steve Barclay MP and representatives from other organisations and both the Clerk and the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer have attended both routine and extraordinary meetings of the Cambridgeshire &

Peterborough Flood and Water (C&P FloW) Partnership and the Fenland Flooding Sub-group which have discussed issues associated with the flooding event.

Flood incident reporting and investigations are currently being undertaken by the various Risk Management Authorities (RMA) involved.

As previously stated, upon initial review, it appears that the instances of reported flooding are less than experienced in August 2014. However, due to the number of incidents the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, is likely to prepare several Section 19 reports.

The preparation of any reports may involve the participation of the Middle Level Commissioners' staff on behalf of the Board. However, no internal flooding has yet been identified within the Board's district.

NB: Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) places a duty on LLFAs to undertake a flood investigation after a 'significant' flood event, to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate. Flood events are to be classed as 'significant' when certain criteria are met, such as internal flooding to five or more properties and/or if damage and disruption is caused to critical infrastructure and buildings; such as major roads and hospitals. The purpose of the report is to investigate the:

- Events leading up to the flooding
- Numbers of properties flooded
- Which RMAs have flood risk management functions in respect of the flooding
- Whether each of those authorities has exercised or is proposing to exercise those functions in response to the flood.

Planning Procedures Update

Example of Good Practice

Reserved matters for Outline planning application 17/01445/OUM for erection of up to 53 houses to include public open space and details relating to access on land rear of Garden Close Sutton – Abbey Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 002 & 004)

The re-submitted Reserved Matters application (East Cambridgeshire District Council Ref No 20/01169/RMM MLC Ref No 004) for this development was refused permission in January primarily on issues relating to the failure to comply with the Sutton Neighborhood Plan and District Council Policies relating to landscape and settlement characteristics, Design and Biodiversity.

However, the Decision Notice also includes the following:

“6 The applicants have failed to take a precautionary approach to the Riparian Ownership rights and responsibilities of new occupants of Plot Nos 22-31 and 40-46 by locating development within a watercourse on land between the rear of these dwellings which if not properly managed and maintained could lead to flooding of the site and adjoining land to the

detriment of their living environment and that of adjoining occupiers contrary to Policies ENV2 and ENV8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Flood and Water SPD.”

Members will be only too well aware of the importance of riparian watercourses in the larger flood risk and water level management system within the fenland environment and the workload and financial burden that dealing with riparian issues can cause. The importance of these “assets” is often overlooked or ignored when considering planning applications where planning authorities are under pressure to reach growth targets. Therefore, it is considered that the position taken is an unusual but appropriate one which should be applauded and considered as an example of best practice for all the planning authorities in the “Fenland” environment.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 10 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
334	F/YR20/1048/F	Pretoria Energy Company (Mepal) Ltd	Anaerobic digester plant (Extension)	Iretons Way, Chatteris
335	E/20/00325/FUL	P J Lee & Sons	Agricultural (Store)	The Gault, Sutton*
336	F/YR20/1097/FDL	GSM Investments Ltd	Residential (2 plots)	Tithe Road, Chatteris
337	E/20/01611/FUL	Mr Latta	Residence	The Gault, Sutton
338	CCC/20/052/FUL	P J Lee & Sons	Irrigation reservoirs	Blaby's Drove, Sutton Gault
339	E/21/00080/FUL	Mr C Baxter	Residence (Annex)	Chatteris Road, Mepal
340	E/21/00325/AGN	Mr L Smith	Agricultural (Straw/hay shed)	Low Bank, Mepal
341	F/YR21/0196/PNC04	P J Lee & Son	Residence	Stocking Drove, Chatteris
342	E/21/00364/FUL	Mr C Robbins	Residence (Extension)	Chatteris Road, Mepal
343	F/YR21/0256/F	Mr & Mrs Calderwood	Residence (Extension)	Tithe Road, Chatteris

***Planning applications ending 'AGN' relate to Prior Notification - agricultural
Planning applications ending 'PNC0' relate to prior notification change of use issues***

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge to the Board's system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems, where applicable. The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Mr Robins chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process for surface water disposal from an extension at Holne House, Chatteris Road, Mepal (MLC Ref No 342) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, he would be liable for discharge consent.

Developments outside the Block Fen/Langwood Fen Masterplan area

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents and the position is currently being ascertained in respect of the following:

- *Developments at Cromwell Community College, Wenny Road, Chatteris – Cromwell Community College* (MLC Ref Nos 173, 186, 197 & 310)

Developments within the Block Fen/Langwood Fen Masterplan area are dealt with elsewhere in this report.

Mixed Use Development on land at Tithe Barn Farm and south east of London Road, Chatteris - Hallam Land Management Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 184, & 190)

Further to previous Board Meeting Reports, particularly those in 2009 and 2010, planning permission was granted by the District Council, subject to the imposition of planning conditions, for planning application FDC Ref No F/YR10/0804/O, MLC Ref No 190, in December.

The contents of the Decision Notice are currently being considered but it is noted that a Drainage Advisory Note is included.

Members will be aware that this proposed development is predominantly within the Board's catchment.

An initial enquiry has been received from Brookbanks Consulting Limited concerning the first phase of this larger development.

Agricultural development at Lees Packhouse, The Gault, Sutton – P J Lee & Sons (MLC Ref No 072, 148, 236 & 237)

Further to previous Board Meeting Reports, a planning application has been approved for a 2000 tonne agricultural store which covers approximately 985m² and is adjacent to the previous store erected circa 2014.

It is understood that surface water will be disposed of by a private watercourse that forms the northern boundary of the site and not directly into the adjacent Board's Drain (Points 58-59).

Formation of an irrigation reservoir involving extraction processing, the export of sand and gravel and other works at Short North Fen Drove/Blabys Drove, Sutton - P J Lee & Sons (MLC Ref Nos 177, 182, 298, 301 & 338)

Further to the Board's December 2019 Meeting Report, no further correspondence has been received or consents sought for the extension of the irrigation reservoir, Cambridgeshire County Council Ref No E/3004/18/CM, MLC Ref No 298, and subsequent prior notification for agricultural development, East Cambs District Council Ref No 18/01374/AGN, MLC Ref No 301.

During November, the County Council, in its role as the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA), validated a planning application, Cambridgeshire County Council Ref No CCC/20/052/FUL, MLC Ref No 338, for the construction of additional irrigation reservoirs by the extraction and export of sand and gravel; silt lagoons; mineral processing plant etc.

Amber Planning Ltd's Hydrology Statement Ref. H8356 dated October 2020 advises:

"Based on the above background information and taking account of the highly managed nature of the downstream catchment, site level discharges are unlikely to have a significant impact on levels / flows within downstream receiving waters. Nevertheless, the following potential impacts on hydrology have been identified and are considered in greater detail below:

1. Dewatering of groundwater within the quarry void(s); and
2. Discharge of surface water runoff during periods of elevated rainfall."

In respect of dewatering operations, it advised that:

"The following measures are proposed to ensure no detrimental impacts on flows / water levels in adjacent watercourses arises from development proposals:

- Installation of a gauge board and / or float switch within adjacent watercourses to ensure pumped discharges are halted where water levels reach a designated trigger level;
- Regular visual inspection and maintenance of pumps to ensure maximum discharge rates are not exceeded; and
- Regular visual inspection of outfalls for blockage / siltation / scouring of downstream channel."

and for surface water disposal, it advised that:

"Site generated surface water runoff would be subject to on site attenuation and flow control, with incident rainfall directed towards a formalised (pond) section within the base of the mineral void(s). This attenuated water would then be pumped into a system of settlement ponds, for onward gravitational release to local

watercourses at greenfield rates. In this way the surface water management systems would seek to mimic natural hydrological processes.

Whilst elevated water levels / flows may arise from surface water discharges these would be commensurate with ephemeral fluvial flooding and would form an important part of maintaining the natural processes within the surrounding ecosystems, with no detrimental impacts on downstream water levels or flows anticipated and with no consequent or cumulative impact on the Ouse Washes or its associated functional floodplain.”

and suggests that

- Regular visual inspection of pumps to ensure minimum flows are maintained and that maximum discharge rates are not exceeded;
- Regular maintenance of surface water discharge pumps; and
- Regular visual inspection of outfalls for blockage / siltation / scouring of downstream channel.

The Statement concludes that:

“Taking account of the outlined mitigation and management measures, it is concluded that the residual impacts to hydrology arising from development proposals would be negligible, with no detrimental impact to water levels or flows within surrounding watercourses and with no consequent or cumulative effect on the Ouse Washes and its associated functional floodplain.

P.J. Lee & Sons Ltd. or an appointed agent will be responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the surface water management system, throughout the development lifetime.

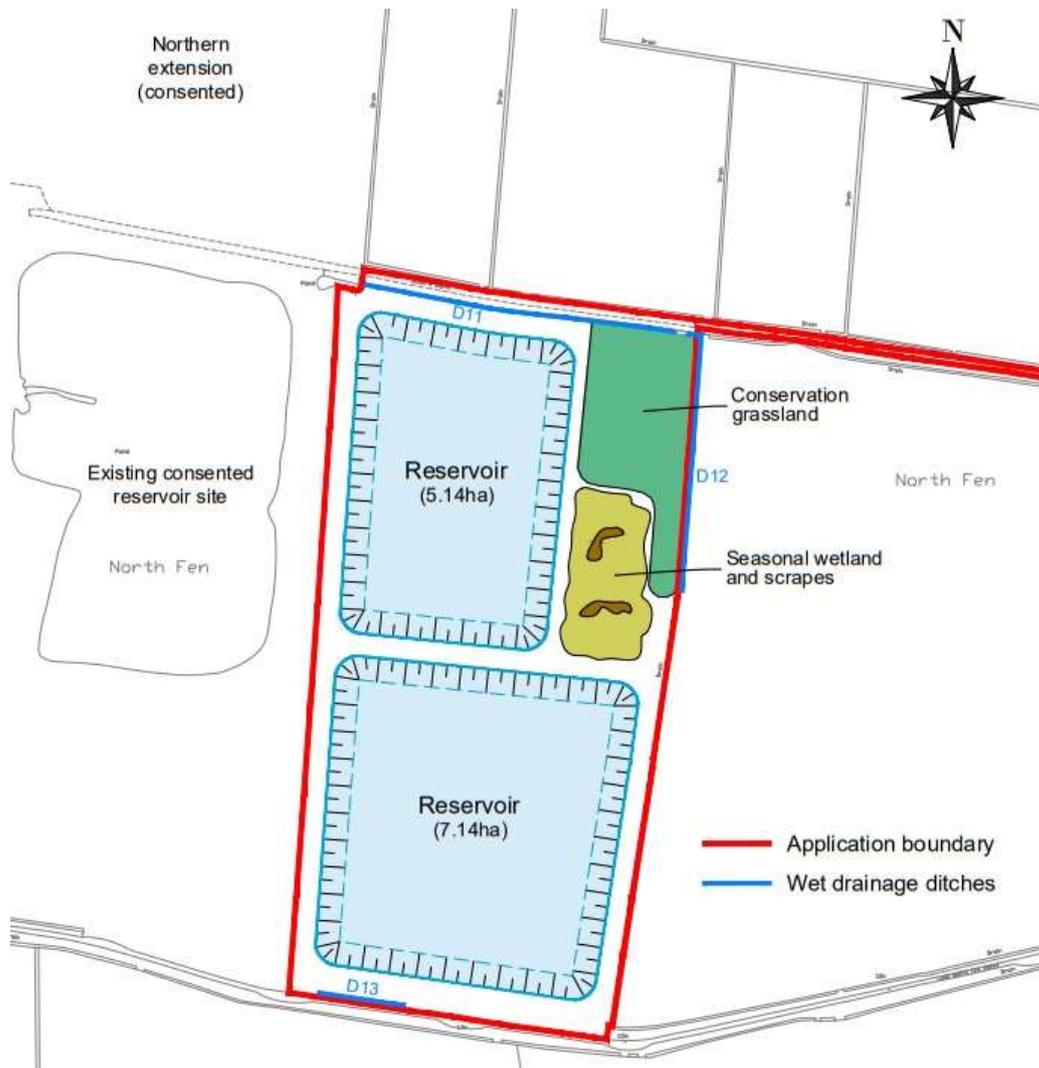
The mitigation solutions noted within this report are subject to agreement with the Environment Agency / Sutton & Mepal Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and Cambridgeshire County Council, as part of the application process”

The County Council’s response to the planning application, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), advises that the documents submitted, including the Hydrology Statement:

“.... demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use capturing the surface water runoff for use in the mineral extraction process. The water from the reservoirs will be pumped into settlement ponds. Pumping will be halted where elevated water levels are present in adjacent watercourses or storm activity is anticipated.”

and has recommended the imposition of a suitable planning condition.

The planning application is currently “Pending Consideration”.



Extract from the Mick George Group's FINAL LAYOUT Plan Drawing Number M34/E/19/04 Rev. –

Extraction and processing of sand and gravel and construction of access onto Chatteris Road (B1050), and associated works in connection with the construction of agricultural reservoirs on land at Bridge Farm, Holme Fen Drove, Colne - R Latta (Farms) Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 179, 188, 199, 226, 228, 232 & 258) + Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 296, 297 & 300)

Further to the Board's December 2018 Meeting Report, it is understood that the planning permission associated with the extraction of ancillary clay (for the Ouse Washes flood embankment protection operations) by deepening the final construction of an agricultural reservoir, with restoration back to agriculture, at this site, expires on 18 July.

Developments associated with the Anaerobic Digester (AD) plant facility, surface water reservoir and associated works on land east of Greys Farm, Iretons Way, Chatteris – Pretoria Energy Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 227, 231 & 240); Little Green Consulting Ltd (MLC Ref No 245); Pretoria Energy Ltd (MLC Ref No 246); Pretoria Energy Company (Mepal) Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 305, 309, 326 & 334)

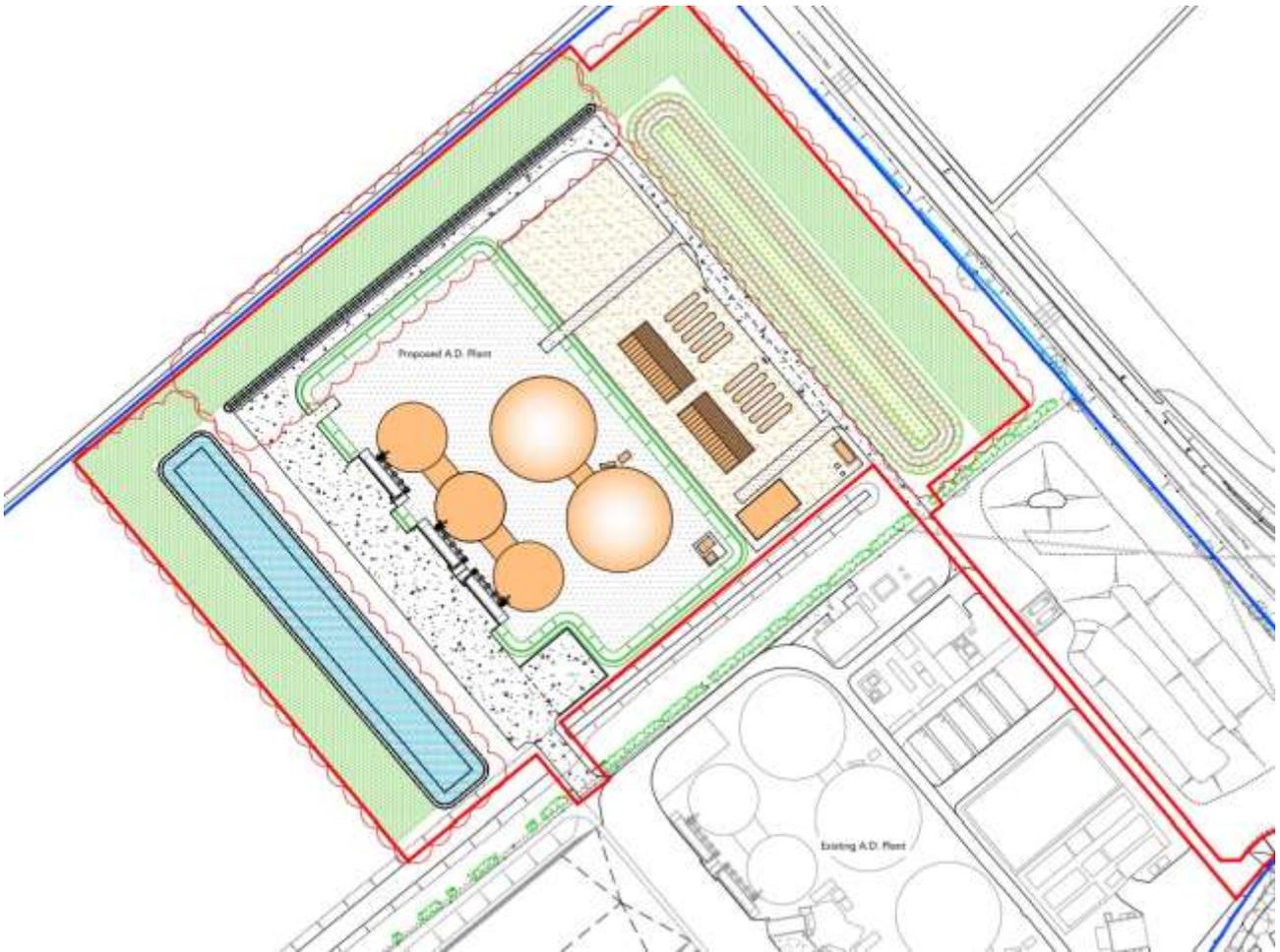
Further to the Board's last Meeting Report, an additional planning application has been validated and subsequently granted by Fenland District Council FDC Ref No F/YR20/1048/F, MLC Ref No 334, for an extension to the existing anaerobic digester plant facility.

It is understood that surface water will be collected and re-used on site as part of a "closed loop" system. In its response, the LLFA advised that the submitted documents:

"... demonstrate that surface water from the proposed extension to the anaerobic digester plant can be managed by directing surface water into a detention basin. This is designed to attenuate all flows up to and including the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm event including a 40% allowance for climate change. Surface water from this basin will be pumped into the existing AD lagoon on site."

The planning conditions requested by the LLFA have been imposed on the planning application. The Decision Notice includes both an informative and a Drainage Advisory Note which reminds the applicant that it has a separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the relevant Internal Drainage Board in the area.

No subsequent correspondence has been received from either the applicant or the applicant's agent.



Extract from Plandescil Ltd's Proposed Block Plan Drawing Number 26142/100 Rev. C

Current Planning Matters within the Master Plan area

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents in respect of the following:

- *Extraction of sand and gravel with restoration to agricultural use both at low level and existing level using waste silt and imported inert waste at land off Block Fen Drive, Mepal – Redland Aggregates Ltd (MLC Ref No 350/8), Aggregate Industries UK Ltd + Lafarge Aggregates Ltd trading as Lafarge Tarmac & Tarmac Trading Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 50, 87, 88, 192 & 196)*
- *Developments at Wenny House, Iretons Way, Chatteris – Mr Jackson (MLC Ref No 078); Mr & Mrs Jackson (MLC Ref No 143); Mrs Jackson (MLC Ref No 275); D M Jackson & Son (MLC Ref Nos 164 & 318)*
- *Developments at Hundreds Farm, Langwood Fen Drive, Chatteris – A Sole & Son (MLC Ref No 091) & Mr P Sole (MLC Ref No 319)*

Soils and Mineral processing; plant washing and stock pile area etc at Witcham Meadlands Quarry, Block Fen Drove, Mepal – Mick George (Haulage) Ltd (MLC Ref No 156); Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 207, 211, 213, 286, 289 & 303); Langwood Fen (Cambridgeshire Aggregates Ltd) (MLC Ref No 316)

Formation of Temporary Access Road/Quickbridge (MLC Ref No 289)

The Board is reminded that a condition of the consent for this temporary structure requires the works to be removed and the bed and banks of the watercourse to be restored to their former condition not later than 31 October 2021, unless the prior written approval of the Board to an extension of time for this consent has been granted.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning the extension of Witcham Meadlands Quarry (MLC Ref No 303) or the extraction of sand and gravel and importation of inert waste to create wet grasslands (MLC Ref No 316). The current position is currently being ascertained.

Local Plan Update and Associated Consultations

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC)/Fenland District Council (FDC)/Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)

No further correspondence has been received concerning Policy Planning issues and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Emerging Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C&P) Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP)

No further correspondence has been received concerning Policy Planning issues and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Management (FloW) Partnership

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the last Board meeting.

The main matters up to November 2020 that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

Future Meetings

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic meetings have been, and are likely to continue to be, held virtually. Whilst this does have some benefits the number of participants attending and the restraints that holding a virtual meeting presents restricts open discussion and meetings can be constrained by time limits.

The Oxford–Cambridge (OX-Cam) Arc Property Flood Resilience (PFR)

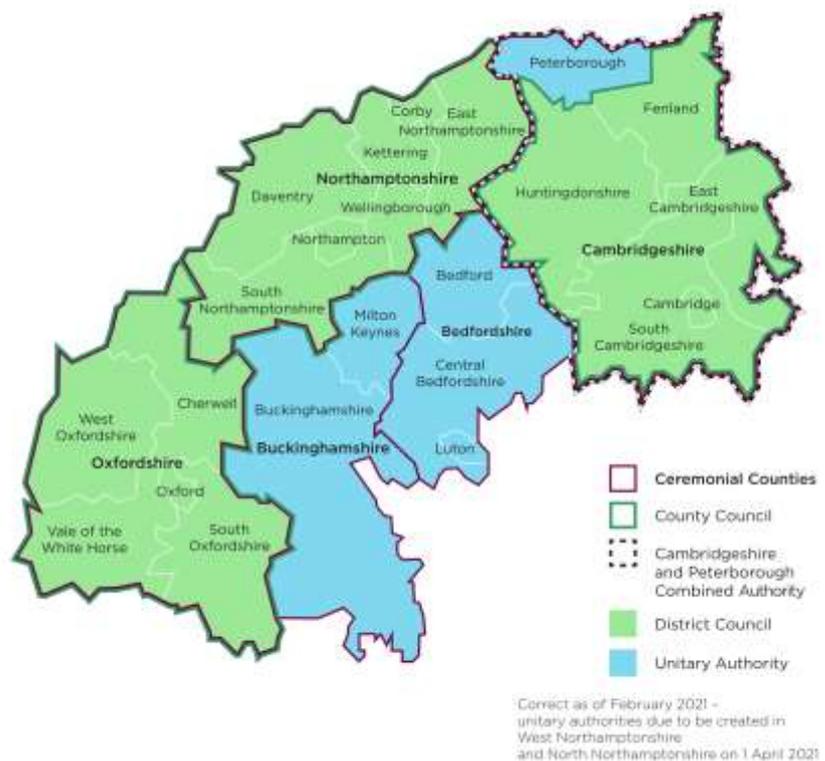
A successful £700k Grant-in-Aid (GiA) bid was made by a consortium of six LLFAs across the region, including Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Peterborough City Council (PCC) and Northampton County Council (NCC), in respect of The Oxford–Cambridge Arc (formerly the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor).

Five workstreams included:

1. Engaging with communities to inspire behavioural change to include community engagement in our area.
2. Creation of a demonstration property to highlight how PFR is installed and works, likely to be in Oxfordshire.
3. Training materials and information online including videos from the demonstration property.
4. A register of PFR installations and an interactive map that could be used to help provide more competitive insurance cover.
5. Evaluation of the project and areas of success.

A request for an extension and additional funding as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic was submitted to defra.

The Baseline Report has been completed.



Plan showing the extents of the Ox-Cam ARC

Riparian Responsibilities

In order to raise awareness of and instigate discussion on an issue that causes difficulties for RMAs, including the Boards, primarily due to increased workload and costs, the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team prepared an "Issues and Options Briefing Note" seeking changes to current practices that are inefficient and create inconsistency across the county in the use of public resources to address the issues associated with riparian assets. The document has been considered by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and was subsequently presented to the RFCC Chairman Group with the hope that it would actively support a national information campaign. Unfortunately, this did not happen but the information has been fed into the national strategy via the EA and the action plan is likely to contain actions related to riparian owners.

Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme

In response to the availability for funding as part of the Government's Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme, the County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, working with partners, including the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards, and other key stakeholders submitted an expression of interest for several workstreams which offered innovative approaches to improve resilience to flooding and coastal change, including the ability to adapt to future climate change. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful and other sources of funding are currently being investigated.

Major Flood Response and Recovery document

A consistent approach was requested concerning the provision of sandbags. This is hard to achieve given the desire and need to reassure communities during flooding. The problems associated with the use of sandbags are recognised and it is considered by some people that they do at least provide reassurance to landowners who consider that they are "better than nothing". Political decisions often take precedence about the use of sandbags in relation to this matter however guidance from the County Council's Emergency Planning Team concerning the publication and management of the document is on hold due to the workload generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sign off is required from Huntingdonshire District Council.

CCC and PCC Climate Change Strategy/Plan

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate

An initial public consultation sought the views of residents and organisations between 26 October and 13 November to help determine their areas of focus. This will be followed by a six week "call for evidence" and following consideration of the submission a recommendation report is planned to be issued in the spring.

The County Council was keen to ensure that water and flood management are a key focus and is planning on submitting a RFCC response which will highlight the evidence gathered as part of the FRM for the Fens project in particular.

Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

Virtual stakeholder workshops will be held on 14 and 15 June.

General Advice

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

- (a) Mr D M Newman – An application was received for byelaw consent to fill a section of Board's watercourse between C6 and C7, including a length of private watercourse upstream of C7. The watercourses to be filled are on land owned by Mr Newman and do not drain other land in the immediate area. The purpose of the infilling is to allow Mr Newman to better use his fields. See following plan for further details.

During the processing of the application the presence of a water vole habitat was discovered and if the application is approved the applicant would need to take measures to mitigate their presence.

The upstream private watercourse will be filled to facilitate Cambridgeshire County Council to upgrade the existing public footpath to a 4m wide bridleway.

Due to the fact that it is a drain in the Board's district it is the case that legally the consent of the Board will be required.

Consulting Engineer

13 May 2021

S&M(350)\Reports\May 2021

a) Pumping Station

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers on the condition of pumps and the pumping hours, and noted the increase in pumping over the winter period. The Vice Chairman explained the strategy on replacement pumps. A new pump had been installed last year and the original pump reconditioned.

b) Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

The Board considered and approved the Engineer's Report on the Tactical Plans for the Fens. They noted the baseline economic benefits that had been calculated for the Board's assets. For Sutton and Mepal the asset of Mepal Pumping Station is £1,271,503.00 and the Sutton and Mepal Main Drains is £643,587.00.

c) Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy

The Engineer reported that since the last Board Meeting he had represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and the relevant Boards at regular update progress meetings to discuss sources of funding. He advised that the Environment Agency had held further engagement meetings with stakeholders including Tarmac & Aggregate Industries, the RSPB and Water Resources East (WRE). An aerial drone survey of the Counter Drain and Welches Dam Pumping Station has been carried out with the survey of the Mepal Pumping Station and the main Block Fen/Langwood Fen survey was planned to be completed by the end of April.

The Engineer reported that the Environment Agency was currently preparing a business case submission to the National Project Assurance Service (NPAS) to secure additional funding to progress the strategy over the next few years. In addition, the Environment Agency is seeking to appoint advisors from the Legal and Estates Team to commence the process of identifying the relevant legal agreements that may be required and had started to develop "heads of terms" for the strategy. The Board noted that consideration should be given to the appointment of an independent Land Agent to deal with any legal/estates issues that may arise.

d) High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident

The Engineer reported on the flooding experienced in Somersham, Colne, Bluntisham and Earith areas. In its role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Cambridgeshire County Council had enquired whether anyone had any useful information on the event; for example rainfall figures, the extent of any flooding and the approximate times of the storms etc. During this event, flooding also occurred in Cottenham, March, St Ives, St Neots/Eaton Socon, Weston Colville and Woodhurst. It was noted that work had been undertaken by the LLFA in conjunction with the County Highways team to investigate and address some of the issues directly as a result of this flooding incident.

e) December Flooding Incidents

The Engineer advised that early December had brought higher than average rainfall in the UK with the Eastern areas exceeding typical December rainfall. A more intense rainfall period was experienced just before Christmas and then a few days later Storm Bella crossed the country on the 26th and 27th December. In the Eastern Counties this rainfall was relatively low, however the catchment by this time was already in a saturated condition. The Middle Level Commissioners recorded 127.5mm of rain at their March office during December with

52.5mm being recorded on the 23rd December. The flooding which occurred was reported to Cambridgeshire County Council as LLFA.

David Thomas had attended a meeting with Stephen Barclay MP and representatives from other organisations to discuss issues associated with the flooding events. Due to the number of incidents within the area it is likely that the County Council will prepare Section 19 Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) Report.

f) Planning Applications

The Board considered the development and related matters which had been received and dealt with by the Engineer.

g) Mixed Use Development on land south east of London Road, Chatteris – Hallam Land Management Ltd (MLC Ref Nos. 160, 184 & 190)

The Engineer had previously reported to the Board on a planning application for this development and a decision notice had now been issued which approved the development which is currently being considered by the Engineer. It involved the extraction and processing of sand and gravel and construction of access into Chatteris Road. It was noted that the planning permission associated with the extraction of clay (for the Ouse Washes flood embankment protection operations) by deepening the final construction of an agricultural reservoir, with restoration back to agriculture at this site, will expire on 18th July 2021.

h) Erection of an Anaerobic Digester (AD) plant on land east of Greys Farm, Iretons Way, Chatteris – Pretoria Energy Ltd and Little Green Consulting Ltd

The Engineer reported that an additional planning permission had been validated and subsequently granted by Fenland District Council for an extension to the existing anaerobic digester plant facilities.

i) Current Planning Matters within the Master Plan Area

The Board noted that no further correspondence had been received from the applicants or the applicant's agents in respect of the following developments;

- Extraction of sand and gravel with restoration to agricultural use both at low level and existing level using waste silt and imported inert waste at land off Block Fen Drove, Mepal – Redland Aggregates Ltd (MLC Ref No 350/8), Aggregate Industries UK Ltd + Larfarge Aggregates Ltd trading as Larfarge Tarmac & Tarmac Trading Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 50, 87, 88, 192 & 196)
- Developments at Wenny House, Iretons Way, Chatteris – Mr Jackson (MLC Ref No 078); Mr & Mrs Jackson (MLC Ref No 143); Mrs Jackson (MLC Ref No 275); D M Jackson & Son (MLC Ref Nos 164 & 318)
- Developments at Hundreds Farm, Langwood Fen Drove, Chatteris – A Sole & Son (MLC Ref No 091) & Mr P Sole (MLC Ref No 319)
- Soils and Mineral processing; plant washing and stock pile area etc at Witcham Meadlands Quarry, Block Fen Drove, Mepal – Mick George (Haulage) Ltd (MLC Ref No 156); Mick George Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 207, 211, 213, 286, 289 & 303); Langwood Fen (Cambridgeshire Aggregates Ltd) (MLC Ref No 316)

j) Application by Mr D M Newman

Mr Newman had requested to infill a section of the Board's watercourse between C6 and C7 and a length of private watercourse upstream of C7. The Board at their inspection considered the request and the length of the Board's watercourse that was proposed to be filled. This request had been made by the applicant for the watercourse to be filled on land owned by Mr Newman as infilling would allow him to better use his fields. The Board considered the request at the site visit and resolved to refuse the application.

There was a certain sympathy for the request by Mr Newman. The Board had however had to consider its obligations for flood risk management in the area and its duty as an internal drainage board, particularly in regard to rainfall over the last two winters.

RESOLVED

a) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

b) Pumping Station

That a new pump should be ordered and installed when it arrives taking the £40,000 from reserves. The proposal was to replace the oldest pump but to return it and recondition it as a stand-by.

c) Mr D M Newman request to infill a section of the Board's Drain

To refuse the application

(NB) - The Chairman declared an interest in the planning applications MLC Ref Nos. 179, 188, 199, 226, 228, 232, 258, 296, 297 & 300 received for R A Latta (Farms) Ltd and Mick George Ltd.

(NB) - The Vice Chairman declared interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 072, 148, 177, 182, 236, 237, 298 & 301, 335, 338 & 341) received for P J Lee & Sons and (MLC Ref Nos. 227, 231, 240, 245, 246, 305, 309, 326 & 334) received for Pretoria Energy Ltd & Little Green Consulting Ltd.

(NB) - Mr M Jackson declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 078, 143, 164, 275 and 318) received for Mr and Mrs Jackson and D M Jackson & Son.

(NB) - Mr P Sole declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 091 and 319) received for A Sole & Son and Mr P Sole.

B.2223 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future Capital Improvement Programme.

The Board considered the Plant and Vehicle Replacement Strategy and noted the requirement for replacement of a digger which had had some problems recently but these had been repaired.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle, to delay the purchase of a new digger and for this to be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

B.2224 District Officer's Report

The Board considered and approved the Report of the District Officer.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.

B.2225 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.2226 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.2227 District Labour

- a) Miss McShane reported that during the financial year 2020/2021 overtime payments had been made as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's salary for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED

That the salary of the District Officer be increased by 2.5% from 1st October 2021 as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

B.2228 Expenses Allowances

The Board gave consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Chairman and Vice Chairman on the Board's behalf.

RESOLVED

That the sums of £500 and £250 be paid to the Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Board for 2021/2022 and if any additional expenses were incurred by the Chairman and Vice Chairman the Board would approve any reasonable expenses incurred.

(NB) – The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

B.2229 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

The Board considered whether any revisions were necessary in their charges for hiring of plant for private work (last reviewed in May 2020)

i) Atlas 140W Excavator

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

ii) Flail mower

Present charge - £35 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

iii) Weed boat

Present charge - £35 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

iv) Piling Hammer

Present charge - £35 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

(NB) – Travelling time being charged in addition to working time.

RESOLVED

That the hire charges be increased as follows:-

i) Atlas 140W Excavator

- £40 per hour in the District (inclusive of operator's wages).
- £45 per hour outside the District

ii) Flail mower

- £40 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)
- £45 per hour for work carried out for the Environment Agency

iii) Weed boat

£40 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages) plus the addition of travel time by the District Officer

iv) Piling Hammer

£40 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

The Board noted that travelling time was to be charged in addition to working time.

B.2230 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss McShane reported that the precept for the financial year 2021/2022 had been fixed at £113,104.00 representing a rate including special levies of 17.89p (the precept for 2020/2021 being £113,104.00).

B.2231 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that the sum of £625.12 (£4,655.50 less £4,030.38 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2019/2020 together with the sum of £4,030.38 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

B.2232 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes:-

RESOLVED

- i) That the determination recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeal against the determination.

B.2233 Rate Arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £11.98.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.2234 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2205, the Vice Chairman reported on Health and Safety Matters and referred to his report.

It showed that all paint and old oils and aerosol cans had been removed by a waste contractor. All liquids had been removed from a high level cupboard, all floor areas had been cleared of rubbish and storage and waste disposed of accordingly. Paints were now to be in a metal, non-flammable cabinet in the Pump House. Signage had been updated and fire exit signs had been installed on all inside and outside doors accessing the buildings and "no unauthorised access" signs to be placed on the gates. Two life aids have now been mounted on the weedscreen, for the diesel engine and on the rails next to the electric weedscreen. A skip had been hired in April to remove all old office chairs and other general waste had been removed from the workshop and Pump House. The first aid kit had been replaced and new signage installed. Concrete slabs leading to the weedscreen had been unlevel and unstable in wet conditions and could become extremely slippery. These slabs have been removed and replaced with tarmac chippings to create a level, non-slip surface. "High Voltage" signs have been replaced on the weedscreen. The measures taken by the Vice Chairman to comply with the Risk Assessment prepared by Cope Safety were noted and approved and the Board wished to note their thanks for the work carried out by the Vice Chairman and David the District Officer.

The Vice Chairman reported that Cope Safety Management will look at the District Officer's lone working risks and any recommendations on this matter to be considered at the next meeting.

B.2235 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.2236 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with the Board's Risk Management Policy
- b) The Board reviewed and approved the insured value of their buildings

B.2237 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

B.2238 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.2239 Payments 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £302,325.77 which had been made during the financial year 2020/2021.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

(NB) – The Vice Chairman declared an interest in the payments made to P J Lee & Sons.

(NB) – Mr E Veal declared an interest in the payment made to him.

B.2240 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2021 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.2241 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2021/2022 and were informed by Miss McShane that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 80.83% and 19.17%

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £235,764 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £190,565 and £45,199 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 37.30p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £20,575 be made and issued to Fenland District Council and for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That a Special levy of £16,070 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council and for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vii) That a Special levy of £8,554 be made and issued to East Cambridgeshire District Council and for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- viii) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).
- ix) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.2242 Display of Rate Notice

RESOLVED

That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.2243 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board be held as follows in 2022:-

Thursday 13th January 2022 at 10.30am at Chatteris Cricket Club.

The Board considered the provision of refreshments after the meeting and felt it more appropriate to have bacon and sausage breakfast rolls could be provided with coffee.

Tuesday 31st May 2022 at Chatteris Cricket Club at 10.30am (prior to which the District Inspection will be held at 8.30am).

B.2244 Any Other Business

The Chairman reported that the District Officer in the course of his normal duties in September/October had repaired a stretch of bank at North Fen, but this work had been reported to the Environment Agency and an investigation was carried out as to whether the works had destroyed a water vole habitat. An inspection of the area did not reveal any evidence of water voles present in the area.

Peter Beckenham, Middle Level Conservation Officer, had investigated the matter and had written a report on behalf of the Board. The Chairman reported that he had advised David that in similar circumstances it would be prudent to consult the Conservation Officer first and have the work signed off by him to ensure no destruction of habitats.

The Chairman advised he was mindful that the District Officer could be considering his retirement within the next two years and he proposed to put an item on the next agenda regarding succession planning for the District Officer and the possibility of appointment of an apprentice/assistant to work with David prior to his retirement.