

THE RIVER STOUR (KENT) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held at 14:00 on Thursday 11 August 2022
at Bromley Green FC, Waterside Centre, Turner Close, South Willesborough TN24 0PQ

PRESENT

Mr G R Steed (Chairman), Cllr M J Burgess (Vice Chairman), Mr D M Botting, Ms N H Dyas, Mr P N Howard, Cllr P D Jull, Cllr N Ovenden, Cllr D O Smith, Cllr M Sole, Cllr G B Sparks Mr M P Wilkinson and Mr L Wooltorton.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P Dowling (Clerk & Engineer), Mr J Williamson (Technical Assistant) and Ms A Eastwood (Finance & Rating Officer).

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Dr D Price (Technical Advisor, Environment Agency), Mr M Sharpe and Ms T Spain (Members of the Public). He further welcomed Ms Annie Thurgarland (Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership – KSCP).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Crow-Brown (Deputy Vice Chairman), Cllr A Buchanan, Cllr M D Conolly, Mr P S Dunn, Mr D J Fuller, Ms A G Lynch and Mr P Williams.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PRESENTATION ON THE AZOLLA PROJECT BY ANNIE THURGARLAND – KSCP

Ms Thurgarland explained that azolla is native to America, but it has been in the UK since the 19th century, it thrives in shallow warm waters and can grow up to 30cm thick and is capable of doubling in size within 4 to 5 days. It spreads quickly as it floats with mobile roots which can be quite deep and it can cover and block a whole watercourse, taking away the light and oxygen suffocating any life below the surface. It also poses a hazard to livestock as it can create quite a thick blanket which animals will then walk on and get trapped and drown.

Azolla has a big impact on waterways, and it can survive on water pH range from 3.5 to 10 and between 18 to 28 degrees °C but it can survive outside of these temperatures. Azolla is however capable of reducing atmospheric nitrogen and is used to help address nitrogen deficiency to support crops in some parts of the world.

A survey of watercourses started at the end of 2021 and so far, the North & South Streams, Gosshall Stream, Richborough Stream, Wademarsh Stream and Minster Stream have been surveyed with some azolla being found in most. Ms Thurgarland urged anyone spotting signs of azolla in any watercourse to advise KSCP (or IDB office).

Ms Thurgarland reported that 28,000 weevils were ordered to be released this year with some already received and released: 6,000 on the North & South Streams, 3 weeks ago, another 1,500 last week on the Gosshall Stream and some more on the Richborough Stream next week. Weevils live from 45 to 60 days during which they mate, lay eggs multiple times and are totally dependent on the azolla so will not cause any issues to anything else.

Ms Thurgarland stated that ideally the weevils would have been released in the spring but as there is only one producer (cabi.org) they cannot keep up with demand. Therefore, she is having to be strategic where she places the weevils and hopes that they breed and spread. Surveys will need to continue to monitor the situation.

Mr Botting asked, if azolla has been present for over 100 years, why are we just now doing something about it. Ms Thurgarland replied that trying to tackle azolla is not new, CABI has been researching biological control for many years, many tests need to be carried before releasing any biological control to ensure that risks are understood. Also, azolla appears to be having a greater effect due to waterbodies becoming drier and warmer.

Mr Howard asked if azolla mainly takes hold in stagnant waters. Ms Thurgarland confirmed that this is where it will be found most, but it does of course travel with the flow.

The Clerk & Engineer asked if we could get weevils earlier next year. Ms Thurgarland replied that she has constantly chased the suppliers and we could not be any further up the list, but it all depends on their breeding.

Mr Wooltorton asked about the cost of the weevils. Ms Thurgarland informed that they are £365 per box of 500.

The Chairman stated that he farms the other side of the North & South Streams at Hacklinge, and they had an azolla problem and used weevils previously, and he strongly suspects that they do survive during milder winters because when azolla returned the following year, it quickly disappeared.

Cllr Burgess asked if the KSCP would consider breeding weevils. Ms Thurgarland stated that the Medway Valley Partnership has been discussing this and are keen to do it, but it does require a lot of space. The Chairman asked if there is any feedback from them with regards to their progress as they have been doing it for 2 years. Ms Thurgarland replied that unfortunately progress has been slow due to limited numbers of weevils being available.

The Chairman thanked Ms Thurgarland for an interesting presentation.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON MONDAY 9 JUNE 2022

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Thursday 9 June 2022 were received. It was proposed by Cllr Sparks, seconded by Mr Wilkinson, and resolved that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the proceedings at that meeting.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Ref: W5 Planning Application 19/01178 Sandwich Leisure Park

The Technical Assistant reported that he has contacted the landowner several times and is always assured that issues will be resolved but unfortunately with little progress. The landowner has now been informed that the Board will take enforcement action if the consent application is not received by the 21 August. **Action: Clerk & Engineer and Technical Assistant to progress.**

Ref:W1-8 Flooding in Deal

The Clerk & Engineer reported that the first cut of Mathew's Close Dyke and Southwall Sewer were completed in July and a second cut will be carried out, when necessary, prior to winter.

Action: Engineering Assistant to arrange second cut.

Ref: W7G EA Training Day

The Clerk & Engineer reported that this event was attended by 4 IDB Members and 4 IDB Staff. Unfortunately, we could not see the weed boat being deployed because there had been an accident involving a similar craft elsewhere in the country which led to a temporary stop in its usage.

The Chairman stated that he attended, and it was a very good opportunity to see what the EA are doing, and he found the boat trip through the Stour especially interesting as he was able to observe how far beaver activity has moved up through the catchment.

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, GENERAL PURPOSES & WORKS COMMITTEE HELD
25 JULY 2022

The minutes of the Finance, General Purposes & Works Committee held on Monday 25 July 2022 were received. It was proposed by Cllr Jull, seconded by the Cllr Burgess, and resolved that these minutes be received.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTESMOBILE PUMP

The Clerk & Engineer reported that the FGP&W Committee discussed the possible acquisition of the King's Lynn IDB's 12" tractor-powered pump which is mounted on a 6m long purpose made trailer and a substantial amount of pipework for £25,000, whilst the cost of a smaller self-contained unit is much higher.

The Clerk & Engineer stated that to help with this decision he has made some enquiries:

- Enquired and received the EA's agreement to store it at one of their pumping stations.
- Asked the EA if this pump could be incorporated within their fleet so if the Board requires a smaller pump, it can use one of theirs and on the understanding that the EA could use the IDB pump – Mr Nunn (EA) agreed this and confirmed that this will benefit both parties.
- The cost of a container to store the pump is between £3,000 and £5,000.
- Mr Godden (Rhino Plant Hire) upon receiving the technical specifications confirmed that their tractors will be able to tow and power the pump and their staff will be able to operate it.

The Chairman stated that when discussed at the FGP&W there were some reservations at the size of this pump but the fact that the EA is willing to continue close cooperation, sharing pumps means that we will be able to use a smaller pump should we need to.

Mr Botting enquired about the cost of renting a pump. The Chairman stated that it is extremely difficult to source a pump at short notice during flood events. Dr Price reported that the EA had hired a pump for Cooper Street Pumping Station for a couple of weeks, and it was in the region of £10,000.

The Chairman proposed that King's Lynn IDB's 12" tractor-powered pump be bought for £25,000 as well as a suitable container to store it, this was seconded by the Vice Chairman. All present were in favour. **Action: Clerk & Engineer to purchase pump & container.**

Report to the FGP&W Committee for the period April to June 2022

Ref: F2 IDB Annual Reports to DEFRA

The completed IDB Annual Report (IDB1 form) for year ended 31 March 2022 was presented to the Board. It was proposed by Cllr Sparks, seconded by Mr Howard and resolved that the IDB 1 be received and approved.

Ref: F4 Financial Regulations & Gifts & Hospitality Policy

The Board's reviewed Financial Regulations and the Board's reviewed Gifts & Hospitality Policy were presented to the Board with tracked changes. The documents were discussed, and all updates approved. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Jull, and resolved that the Financial Regulations be received and approved. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Sole, and resolved that the Gifts & Hospitality Policy be received and approved. All present were in agreement.

Ref: F7-4 Fuel Cost Increases

The Chairman reported that following sharp increase in fuel costs, Rhino Plant Hire submitted a request for the payment of a fuel surcharge to help accommodate these increased costs. The Clerk & Engineer stated that Rhino agreed to provide detailed and auditable information with regards to these costs, which will enable a fuel surcharge to be calculated on recorded cost increases and measured work monthly. As an example, the Clerk & Engineer reported that for June the fuel surcharge would be approx. £2,000 for approx. 40km of mechanical weed cutting.

The Chairman commented that this highlights just how much these costs could affect businesses. Mr Botting asked if it would be helpful to link costs to RPI? The Clerk & Engineer replied that the suggested way forward is clearly measurable and directly reflects fuel cost increases and amounts used. He added that whilst this would normally be a contractor risk, these are exceptional circumstances that could not be foreseen. The FGP&W Committee agreed that it would not be in the Board's interest to let its contractors run into financial difficulties. The Chairman reminded members that budgets had allowed for the change to white diesel, but we have been able to continue to use red diesel. Therefore, there is extra income which will help to support these increased costs.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr Woollorton, and resolved that a monthly fuel surcharge be paid to Rhino Plant Hire upon and according to the submission of all necessary information and documents, this decision is to be reviewed in 6 months' time. All present agreed. **Action: Clerk & Engineer to implement.**

ADMINISTRATION

Ref: A1-1 Board Membership

The Chairman reported that Ms Geraldine Wyant, Elected Member for Canterbury, Fordwich and Ickham electoral districts, stood down from the Board with immediate effect. Mrs Wyant joined

the Board in November 2015 and has been very supportive of IDB activities and she will be missed as well as her experience and knowledge.

The Chairman further reported that Mr George Holdstock had expressed an interest in replacing Mrs Wyant. He stated that it is very important for the Board to maintain full membership and there being no other nominations he proposed that Mr Holdstock be elected to the Board representing Canterbury, Fordwich and Ickham until the next Election takes place, in October 2024. This was seconded by Mr Wilkinson and all members present were in agreement. **Action: Clerk & Engineer to write to Mr Holdstock.**

Ref: W7 Structures Programme

The Chairman reported that it was discussed at the FGP&W Committee meeting to remove the ring-fence from the Demaining Reserve so that it becomes a more general Structures Reserve, so funds can be spent on the maintenance/renewal/decommissioning of all the Board's structures and not just on the structures recently transferred from the EA. This would introduce more flexibility to use the funds where they are most needed, especially with the escalating costs for repairing/renewing structures we are currently experiencing.

The Chairman stated that we budgeted £40,000 for the current year for structures works - £30,000 from this year's budget and £10,000 from the Operating Reserve – with a view to renewing Supperton Stop and carry out much needed maintenance on several other structures. With the increase in costs, the works identified to be done this year are currently estimated at £67,000.

Mr Botting asked if refurbished structures are made beaver proof. The Clerk & Engineer replied that new stop boards are being fitted with metal beaver strips and timber stop structures are being replaced with steel piling.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Jull and resolved that the Demaining Reserve become a Structures Reserve, with the Thrustbore Reserve to remain separate and ring-fenced. All Members present were in favour.

It was proposed by Cllr Jull, seconded by Cllr Sparks and resolved that the Structures Budget for 2022-23 be increased by £27,000 to £67,000 – funds to be used from the 'new' Structures Reserve.

The Thrustbore Reserve

The Clerk & Engineer reported that the latest CCTV survey of the Thrustbore suggested some work may be needed, although on further investigation the Board was advised that the culvert pipes are in good condition and a small leakage is to be expected and that furthermore sealing the leaky joints may negatively affect the adjacent railway embankment.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr Woollorton and resolved that no action is taken at present, but keep monitoring the culvert every three years with the next CCTV survey due in 2024. **Action: Clerk & Engineer to progress.**

Ref: W15 Adoption/Unadoption of Watercourses – RSPB Minnis Farm

The Chairman reported that the proposed changes were agreed in principle at the last Board meeting, but it would be beneficial to appoint a sub-committee to make the final decision on the proposed adoptions and un-adoptions once all agreed actions have been completed.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Cllr Burgess, and resolved that a sub-committee consisting of the Chairmen, Cllr Jull, Mr Wilkinson and Mr Williams be formed with the authority to make the final decision on the transfer proposals. **Action: Clerk & Engineer and Technical Assistant to progress.**

Ref: W15/Enf Enforcement issues & updates

The Technical Assistant provided the following updates:

Ordinary Watercourse at Chitty Lane, Chislet

The application for Consent was refused but as works have already been carried out and are not expected to create a problem, the landowner has been advised that no enforcement action is to be taken now but action will be taken if problems arise in the future.

Ordinary Watercourses at White Mill Wake and Aqua Park, Ash Road, Sandwich

A large amount of work has been carried out, but we are still lacking information to be able to process the application for consent. Discussions are therefore continuing regarding final details of drainage, consent and SWDC.

Ordinary Watercourse feeding into IDB116 Walmers Hill Stream

There has been some progress but the works necessary were not fully completed. Discussions will continue to reinstate this channel to its original depth and profile.

IDB218 Minster Station Lead Dyke

Details have been agreed with the landowner and work is now scheduled for November, but a consent has yet to be processed due to lack of detailed information.

IDB309 Shelvingford Stream

The landowner flattened the bund providing a wider area for spoil deposition, but the Board's contractor needs to assess and confirm that it is suitable and workable.

Action: Technical Assistant and Clerk & Engineer to progress all of the above.

Report to the Board for the period April to July 2022

Ref: W4/WSR Rainfall & River Flow Data

The Clerk & Engineer reported that after a very dry April, with an average rainfall total across the Stour catchment being just 10.7mm (21% of the Long Term Average), conditions improved in May with rainfall totals ranging from 54.0mm at Broadstairs to 78.2mm at Bybrook, averaging 61.5mm (32% above the LTA). However, it should be noted that the majority of this rain fell over six days. June was dry again with rainfall totals ranging from 18.9mm at Canterbury to 47.0mm at Sevenscore, averaging 30.6mm (60% of the LTA). River flows reflect the lack of rainfall and are currently 'notably low'. Similarly, groundwater levels at most sites are 'below normal'. Hand-off Flow constraints were applied to the Upper Stour in May and Middle Stour in June, with conditions on the Lower Stour still being monitored. With little significant rain in the Met Office's forecasts further restrictions and environmental stress should be expected over the remainder of the summer. Reservoir levels are 'below normal' for this time of year, with Bewl being recorded at 67% on 21st July.

Ref: W7 IDB Programme of Works (Including works carried out under PSCA)Weed Cutting

The Clerk & Engineer reported that this year's weed cutting programme started in mid-July as usual and IDB watercourses identified for the earliest (and possible second) cuts are as follows:

2	Pumping Station Dyke	219	New Watchchester Lead Dyke
32	Air Ministry Dyke	284	West Street Dyke
38	Fordwich Main Stream	297	Deal Town Dyke (Upper)
50	Monkton Main Stream	301	Southwall Road Dyke
190	Wantsum Lees Dyke	309	Shelvingford Stream

The following IDB watercourses have been identified as the next priority (to be completed by 30 September):

1	Hart Dyke	191	Woodnesborough Road Dyke
4	Charing Heath Dyke	214	Watchchester Drove Lead Dyke
8	Whitfield Road Dyke	218	Minster Station Lead Dyke
9	Kimberley Dyke	291	Kennels Farm Dyke
12	Court Lodge Dyke	292	Red House Wall Dyke
13	Willowbed Dyke	295	Old North Stream
15	Pleasuance Dyke	296	Deal Town Dyke (Lower)
17	Horton Priory Dyke	302	Upper Stour
19	Bockhanger Dyke	303	Sparrow's Bridge Loop
27	Waterbrook Dyke	304	South Stream (Hacklinge South)
34	Sturry Road Dyke	305	North Stream (Hacklinge South)
114	Wademarsh Stream	306	General Valley Dyke
115	Brooksend Stream	307	Hogwell Sewer
116	Walmers Hill Stream	308	Lampen Stream
170	South Poulders Main Stream	310	Minster Stream
171	Gosshall Main Stream	311	Richborough Stream
173	Stonelees Main Stream	312	Gosshall Stream
175	Stourmouth Stream	313	Gosshall Northern Arm

IDB watercourses planned to **not** be cut this year are as follows:

109	Silver Dyke	217	Minster Stream Lead Dyke
122	Tipper Drove Lead Dyke	220	Sheriff's Court North
199	Santon Lead Dyke	222	Clapper Hill Lead Dyke
209	Guston Farm Dyke	267	St John's Sewer

As usual, the above watercourses will continue to be monitored and some maintenance carried out if needed and budgets allow. All other IDB watercourses are to be completed by 31 October.

The Clerk & Engineer reported that approximately 50km of Main River weed cutting is planned under the IDB-EA PSCA and Mathew's Close Dyke is also planned to be cut under the IDB-DDC PSCA. He further reported that due to the very dry and hot weather conditions, the EA's Biodiversity and Fisheries Team instructed the Board to cease weed cutting for the time being due to concerns over fish health. The Clerk & Engineer commented that although we need to act on their advice, he has pointed out that under these conditions sometimes not clearing channels may

prevent fish from finding their way to healthier parts of the river network and this needs to be considered. Also, excess weed left in the channel will die off later and can reduce oxygen levels within watercourses.

De-silting

It was reported that land entry notices have been served for the 2022-23 de-silting programme, which remains the same as previously reported. This totals 19,271m and work is scheduled to commence in November.

There is currently no de-silting of Main River planned to be delivered under the PSCA, but the EA does plan to carry out some de-silting in-house.

Spoil Spreading

It was reported that spoil from last year's de-silted watercourses will be spread, in liaison with affected landowners, in August/September.

Tree & Shrub Maintenance

It was reported that details of this year's tree maintenance programme will, as usual, be finalised during the weed cutting season using feedback from the Board's maintenance contractor. This work will be scheduled for completion in late 2022/early 2023, although some work may be necessary earlier to facilitate de-silting operations. Any feedback from landowners will be welcomed but currently the following IDB watercourses are under consideration:

1	Hart Dyke	88	Lope Dyke
4	Charing Heath Dyke	114	Wademarsh Stream
6	Newlands Dyke	137	Island Road Dyke
9	Kimberley Dyke	172	Elmstone Stream
24	Golden Ball Dyke	195	Snipe Dyke
25	Buxford Dyke	198	Elmstone Lead Dyke
26	Bliby Wood Dyke	200	Stourmouth Lead Dyke
28	Flood Street Dyke	276	Pole Bay East Dyke
29	Swanton Mill Dyke	279	Sandhills Lead Dyke
31	Shalmsford Street Dyke	292	Redhouse Wall Lead Dyke
38	Fordwich Main Stream	302	Upper Great Stour
81	Hatfields Dyke	309	Shelvingford Stream
85	Lower Newnham Stream	310	Minster Stream
86	Supperton Dyke	311	Richborough Stream

A substantial amount of work on Main River is planned again, to be completed on behalf of the EA under the PSCA. Currently the Sarre Penn, Wingham River, Whitewater Dyke and Ruckinge Dyke.

This year's programme will be developed over the summer, initially focussed on watercourses to be de-silted but also using information received from Rhino staff.

Structures Maintenance

It was reported that Supperton Stop on Supperton Stream (IDB86) is planned to be renewed in the autumn, again in cooperation with the East Kent Engineering Partnership. Subject to funding being agreed, minor repairs and improvements will also be carried out on the following structures:

IDB86	Seaton Feed	IDB271	Fry Dam
IDB114	Baxter's Feed	IDB287	Maison Dieu Stop
IDB114	Broadley's Stop	IDB289	Saffrey Stop
IDB133	Hogwell Siphon	IDB295	Old Thrustbore
IDB143	Fowler's Feed	IDB310	Minster Siphon
IDB169	Coleman's Stop	IDB311	Richborough Siphon
IDB170	White Mill Stop		
IDB202	Stickell Stop		

Several stopboards will also be renewed and fitted with beaver protection strips and a 5-year structures programme is being developed and will be issued to the Board as soon as possible for its consideration. If agreed, this will continue to include one structure renewal per year along with an additional budget for ongoing minor maintenance and repairs.

Obstruction Clearance

It was reported that routine inspections continue to be carried out and obstructions cleared as necessary, particularly in the Ashford area.

Water Level Control

It was reported that water levels are being maintained as close to normal summer levels as possible, but with conditions being so dry, and low tides, most are slightly lower than usual.

The Mile Pumping Station, which can pump up to 750,000 cubic metres of water from the River Stour into the Chislet Marshes each year, continues to be used when river levels are not high enough to allow gravity feeding. Approx. 500,000 cubic metres have been used to date.

Efforts continue to help maintain healthy water levels and flows on the Delf Stream. However, due to a leak identified on a private structure and high demand for irrigation this has been difficult to achieve. The leak has however now been repaired which should improve the situation. The EA had planned to carry out a weed cut but this has now been put on hold due to the dry conditions. We are investigating possible changes to the Hacklinge pump outlet to help improve flows. **Action: Clerk & Engineer and Water Level Controller to investigate flow improvements.**

Ref: A4-3 Biodiversity

It was reported that the following updates, against each of the BAP main headings, have been provided by Mr Thomas of KSCP, who will provide a more detailed annual update at the next Board meeting:

1. Surveying:

Location data added to photos from last year's survey with assistance of Joe and James to enable analysis via GIS. Survey field sheet modified for ease of use and interpretation, to take account of changes in survey method and to facilitate digitisation of data. Surveying began mid-June.

Watercourses surveyed so far: 29, 31, 207, 268. Scheduling surveys to keep ahead of weed cutting programme. Short post-desilt survey of IDB108 and report provided. Resolved issues with digital transfer of photos to include location data.

3. Enhancement Projects:

Enhancement project on IDB30: site visit with contractor who has subsequently failed to provide quote. Ongoing search for alternative contractors. Ongoing communication with landowners over extent of project – two out of three have withdrawn. Currently, only culvert resetting has landowner approval. Worked with Joe on use of drone photography to identify areas of Parrot's Feather growth on IDBs 114 and 142. Ongoing work on review of project on IDB111.

4. Engagement with Landowners and External Organisations:

Presentation on new IDB Biodiversity Action Plan at Catchment Improvement Partnership meeting.

Ref: A10-21 Beavers

The following announcement from Defra was reported:

As announced during Defra's 2021 consultation on the approach to beaver reintroduction and management in England, Government will be bringing forward legislation to provide Eurasian beavers legal protection in England. This will implement our international legal obligations stemming from the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention).

Beavers will be given protection by listing them on Schedule 2 to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This will make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or injure beavers, or damage their breeding sites or resting places.

The legislation will also amend Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to move Eurasian beavers from Part 1B of Schedule 9 'Animals no longer normally present' to Part 1A of Schedule 9 'Native animals.' This variation will retain the requirement for a licence to be issued in order to release Eurasian beavers into the wild. It will though remove the option to use species control orders (which are usually used to mandate control of non-native species) as this conflicts with the protected status of the species

This legislation will be laid in Parliament on Tuesday 19 July 2022 and protection will come into force on 1 October 2022.

Natural England are continuing to develop guidance on the management of beavers, with input from key stakeholders. Following the coming into force of legal protection this will set out which management actions will or will not require a licence, and where stakeholders can go for advice and support. This guidance will be published on GOV.UK in the autumn to complement the change in legal protection coming into force.

The Clerk & Engineer stated that unfortunately no response was received from Defra to the consultation before this final decision was made. He further reported that the IDB, as an operating and risk management authority, needs to be licenced so he will be attending a 3 day licence training course in September.

The Chairman asked if this legislation was laid before Parliament on 19 July. Dr Price stated that the EA has received communications to indicate that this has gone ahead. The EA is creating a new post in the area in the Biodiversity Team to deal with beaver enquiries/situations and there are some meetings planned to help understand the impact of this decision on Capital projects as well as routine maintenance.

Ref: W7G Environment Agency Works

Dr Price reiterated the fact that the EA have temporarily ceased weed cutting in several areas due to the hot and dry conditions. He further reported that EA staff have been involved in numerous fish rescues and deploying aeration equipment.

Dr Price reported that despite the EA lodging concerns regarding proposed changes to the Hacklinge Track, the British Horse Society's application for access was approved by KCC. Access must be provided to horse and cart, meaning that it will make it possible for all other vehicles to access the track, which will likely cause further problems.

Dr Price further reported on the following:

Work delivered April to June 2022:

- Meica asset maintenance and repairs
- Ashford reservoirs maintenance (grass cutting, minor structure repairs)
- Sandwich storage areas maintenance (grass cutting)
- Poulders penstock step repairs
- Maintenance programme started in early July and will continue throughout the summer
- Cooper Street Pumping Station – pump now repaired and operational, minor snagging work took place in July 2022
- Sarre Pumping Station – discharge flap replacement

2022-2023 Project list – updates:

- Meica asset maintenance / PPMs (Planned Preventative Maintenance) – summer PPM round starting
- Desilting – Wantsum and North Stream to be undertaken this year. Suggestions for other watercourses welcome
- Hacklinge Pumping Station – Pump 1 refurbishment – H&S paperwork has taken its time so hoping to carry out work this year if safe to do so: Pump 2 also needs replacing
- Worth Minnis Pumping Station – sheet piling repairs – project has been postponed to 2023-24 due to staff resource in EA and CCC, ecological constraints and other priorities
- Worth Minnis Pumping Station – pump 2 refurbishment – H&S being completed, work to start 22 August 2022
- Black Sluice Pumping Station – eel pass pump replacement – likely to take place over winter period
- Black Sluice Pumping Station – eel pass access improvements – project has been postponed to 2023-24 due to staff resource and other priorities in EA and CCC
- Black Sluice Pumping Station – additional culvert (weed rake site) – soon to go out to tender, work likely to commence in early 2023 due to ecological constraints
- Reculver Pumping Station – replacement of motor control centre – project has been postponed to 2023-24 to achieve efficiencies by combining with another similar project in Romney/Rother patch
- Ash Level and Stonar Cut boat ramp repairs – project has been postponed due to prioritisation of funding elsewhere, awaiting update from finance leads

- Moles Hole – structure repairs – project had been postponed to 2023-24 but may be completed sooner
- Caytor Bridge – embankment repairs – project has been postponed to 2023-24 due to staff resource in EA and CCC, ecological constraints and other priorities
- Brooksend Outfall – culvert extension – MMO licence has been granted, works expected to start late September 2022, shortly followed by the reconfiguration of the terminal to minimise shingle loss and to reduce blockages
- Northern Sea Wall – structure repairs – project has been postponed to 2023-24 due to staff resource and other priorities in EA and CCC
- Brewery Sluice refurbishment – new trash screen – design has been approved, awaiting timetable for fabrication and installation
- Brewery Sluice refurbishment – new outfall flap – waiting for funding approval from National
- Stourmouth Pumping Station – pumps 1-4 refurbishment – pump 1 has been reinstalled and is operational, pump 2 has been removed for refurbishment
- Lower Newham Outfall repair – quote received from CCC, awaiting results of ecological surveys to inform timetable for repair
- Minster Pumping Station – replacement of 1 of the pumps with an eel friendly one, contractor looking into designs, but a structural survey still needed
- Northmouth Outfall – started leaking again, awaiting for the contractors to visit site and provide quote
- Pumping Stations at Hothfield’s reservoir to have some refurbishments to the control panel as well as the pumps possibly over the winter

The Chairman asked if there is any progress on sourcing funding for the Boiling Stop. Dr Price replied that this is still ongoing and being dealt by the Water Resources team who are currently understaffed. They will need to confirm if there are any abstraction licences linked to this asset before they carry out any work, if there are none the Flood Risk Team may take over this project and possibly progress it faster. Dr Price stated that they have a quote from EKEP for the work (£11,000) and funding, including some Precept, still needs to be secured.

The Chairman asked about the Lower Stour Survey results. Dr Price replied that the analysis of the results was delayed but this is a longer-term project to establish trends and regardless of the results no work will be undertaken on one set of results. Another survey will take place this November and next year’s survey is already also planned.

Ref: W5 Planning Applications

Ashford Borough Council

22/00131/AS - Mineral Depot, Conningbrook, Willesborough Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 9QP - Outline application for residential development of up to 170no. dwellings

This application for a residential development is located just to the north of the Julie Rose Stadium, adjacent to the recent development abutting Conningbrook Lakes. The applicant states that it is a ‘brownfield’ site, and that there will be an overall reduction in the rate of surface water discharge to the lakes. If permission is granted, we will review the information submitted to discharge any related Condition to ensure our Board’s interests are not adversely affected, particularly with regards to the volume of discharge from the site.

“This site sits largely within the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board’s (RSIDB) Drainage District; this proposal therefore has a potential to affect our interests, in particular drainage and downstream flood risk. The applicant should be reminded that the IDB’s prior written consent will be required for any works which will affect any ditch or watercourse on this site, in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the RSIDB’s own Byelaws (please see <https://rsidb.org.uk/consents-byelaws/>)..

*We would also draw your attention to the requirement for the payment of a Surface Water Development Contribution to the Board if the proposals result in any increase in the rate **or volume** of runoff being directed into our district.*

Our Byelaw 3 states:

“3. Control of Introduction of Water and Increase in Flow or Volume of Water

No person shall as a result of development (within the meaning of section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended (“the 1990 Act”)) (whether or not such development is authorised by the 1990 Act or any regulation or order whatsoever or none of them) for any purpose by means of any channel, siphon, pipeline or sluice or by any other means whatsoever introduce any water into any watercourse in the District so as to directly or indirectly increase the flow or volume of water in any watercourse in the District (without the previous consent of the Board).”

Any such contribution will be a one-off payment and will serve to facilitate the management of the increased flow rate or volume resulting from the development into our District. We would appreciate the opportunity to review the detailed drainage design when it becomes available, should your Authority be minded to grant permission to this development.”

18/00405/COND/AS - Land east of railway and north of John Lewis at Home, Fougères Way - Discharge of conditions 22 (Drainage - final plan), 23 (Drainage - surface water) & 26 (Disposal of surface and foul water).

Although not within our Drainage District, the vague Surface Water Management Strategy submitted with the application states that the surface water generated by the development will be directed to “two watercourses”, without any assessment of the wider receiving network. We have requested that this Condition is not discharged until it can be confirmed that the water can be accommodated within a wider network. If that network ultimately discharges to our District, we have asked for our SWDC policy to be considered.

“Although this site lies outside of our IDB Drainage District, the surface water strategy states that the surface water from this development will not be able to be disposed of via infiltration or directed to a surface water sewer; it further states that it will be discharged to “two existing watercourses”.

*Given the site’s location, it is likely that any watercourse on this site will form part of the wider drainage network that discharges to our District. We would therefore **recommend that this Condition is not discharged** until the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed point of discharge does indeed outfall into a wider, contiguous drainage system (rather than to a blind-ditch that may exacerbate the local flood risk).*

If it can be demonstrated that water can be effectively conveyed from the point of discharge, the applicant will need Land Drainage Consent from Kent County Council for any works that has the potential to affect flow in any ditch or watercourse on the site, and we would look to work with them and your Authority to apply our Byelaw 3, specifically with regard to seeking a Surface Water

Development Contribution for any increase in rates/volumes of discharge that may be directed into our District.

Canterbury City Council

CA/22/01092 - Broad Oak Farm, Sweechgate, Broad Oak, Sturry, CT2 0QR - Details submitted pursuant to condition 23 (watercourse), 24 (foul wastewater) and 26 (PTP) of planning permission CA//18/00868/FOS

The information submitted solely pertained to the principle of a proposed foul water package treatment plant. As the site itself is located outside of our District we have no specific concerns, other than with the increased flows into a watercourse that discharges into our area.

“As per our previous comments, any proposal that increases the rate or volume of flow to our Drainage District is likely to be subject to a Surface Water Development Contribution. The applicant will need Land Drainage Consent from Kent County Council for any works that has the potential to affect flow in any ditch or watercourse within or bordering the site, and we would look to work with them and your Authority to apply our Byelaw 3, specifically with regard to seeking a Surface Water Development Contribution for any increase in rates/volumes of discharge that may be directed into our District (whether the increase is a result of increased surface water runoff, or from treated effluent from the proposed package treatment plant). We would therefore be grateful if we could be kept informed of any additional submissions pertaining to the drainage of this site.”

CA/22/01530 – Land To The North Of The Quaives Retreat, Seaton Road, Ickham, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1RU – Retrospective change of use of land for up to 20 bell tents together with a temporary toilet block, covered cooking area, bar and associated parking.

This a retrospective application for the ongoing use of the site as a ‘glamping’ site, complete with bell tents and associated facilities. We had been recently contacted about relatively substantial earthworks on the site to excavate a lake/pond, with land-raising/bunding around the perimeter of the site. Unfortunately, there is no mention of any of this work in the application or associated Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The FRA is therefore an inaccurate reflection of the true situation as the flood-risk information within is based on a baseline that doesn’t take the earthworks into account. We have therefore raised an objection to the application as the effects on local flood risk and drainage are unknown, as are the implications for the Board for our maintenance activities.

“This site is located entirely within the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board's (RSIDB) drainage district. It is also bordered by two RSIDB adopted and maintained watercourses - IDB 106 (Seaton Lead Dyke to the south/east) and IDB 110 (Blackhole Dyke to the north/west). Accordingly, this proposal has a potential to affect our interests, with particular regard to drainage and downstream flood risk.

We have reviewed the submitted documentation and are somewhat surprised to see that there is no mention or consideration of the substantial earthworks and land-raising that have occurred across the site in recent months. There is now a large pond/lake in the middle of the site, with sizeable bunding around the perimeter. We are disappointed that this has not been considered in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, not least because some of this land raising is certainly within 8m of one, if not both, of the IDB adopted watercourses (as above). Given that the FRA states that the site lies partially within the functional floodplain, we would have expected to have seen an assessment of the pre/post earthworks scenario, with appropriate flood-plain compensation provided on a level-for-level, volume-for volume basis. Section 6.1 of the submitted FRA even states

that there would be little-to-no impact from the bell-tents or facilities, so compensation is not required. They have not considered the bunding that will have a potentially significant impact on local flow-routes and levels. We would strongly suggest that the Environment Agency are contacted to discuss this matter directly, as allowing this degree of land-raising in a fluvial floodplain can set a dangerous precedent.

It is also disappointing to note that the FRA states that all structures are located in excess of 8m from all watercourses, so there is therefore no need for Land Drainage Consent from the RSIDB for any of the activities on-site.

*The bunding constructed within 8m of the two watercourses **WILL** need formal written approval from the RSIDB, and it will have to be demonstrated that our ability to access and maintain their channels and banks has not been impeded. We would recommend that the applicants or their consultants contact us at their earliest convenience to discuss the requirements of the RSIDB for retrospective Land Drainage Consent. It should be noted that we would reserve the right to take enforcement action against any unconsented structure within the 8m byelaw margin, even if your Authority is minded to grant permission to this application in its current form.*

*In light of the above, we would request that an **Objection** is recorded against this application on flood risk and drainage grounds, and we would recommend that the Environment Agency are made aware of the earthworks and associated flow-obstruction and floodplain removal as result. We would further request that the FRA is amended to reflect the true situation at the site, taking into account all works that have been undertaken, which is more than is applied for and described in the accompanying paperwork. Appropriate compensation should be provided if it can be demonstrated that the obstruction of flow routes is acceptable and it can be guaranteed that the RSIDB's ability to access and maintain the watercourses has not been hindered."*

The Technical Assistant stated that this may require enforcement action, because the bunding put in was not covered within their application, but he will first seek to resolve the matter with the landowner. **Action: Technical Assistant to progress.**

Dover District Council

CON/20/01447/H | 12 - Land At North Poulders Ash Road Sandwich Kent – Drainage verification report.

We had previously raised an objection to the discharge of this Condition as the applicant had not considered the requirements for Land Drainage Consent, and we were therefore unable to assure the LPA that we considered that the drainage scheme could function, as designed.

The applicant has now engaged with us and is in the process of obtaining the relevant permits from the Environment Agency for water abstraction and works to a Main River. Although we have yet to receive all of the information we need to process the LDC application, we are satisfied the scheme can be operated as proposed; we were therefore able to withdraw our outstanding objection.

"We have previously been consulted on this Condition and other related Conditions attached to the approved development at the above referenced site.

We had raised no objection to the discharge of previous Conditions on the understanding that the applicant would seek the legally required Land Drainage Consent from our Board prior to commencing development (or at least prior to commencing any part of the development that had

the potential to affect the Board's interests as far as flooding and water-level control were concerned). Unfortunately, the requirement for the Board's Consent was overlooked and various aspects of the development were commenced without our involvement.

I am pleased to report that since our Objection to the Drainage Verification Report associated Condition was lodged, the applicant has been in touch and has submitted a draft application for Consent to cover those parts of the development that affect our interests, both for those planned and for those already undertaken. We have also received a signed 'letter of agreement' from the applicant to bind him to adhering to any reasonable Condition we attach to the Land Drainage Consent, once issued. He has also paid the requisite fee and is engaged in the remainder of the process and willing to co-operate with us in the future management of the facility.

We are therefore able to remove the outstanding Condition we have to this Condition (CON/20/01447/H | 12 - Drainage verification report). The information submitted in pursuance of this Condition along with site-visits and subsequent discussions have satisfied us that the surface water management scheme should function, as designed if maintained appropriately.

We would be grateful if you could attach a reminder to any notification of DoC, that it is the applicant's legal responsibility to obtain any other permission they may require from any other regulatory authority.

We would like to thank you for taking the Board's comments and requirements into consideration, and we would welcome the opportunity to be consulted and engaged early-on for any similar (or other major) development that has the potential to affect our interests."

Folkestone and Hythe District Council

22/0742/FH/CON - Land Rear Rhodes House, Main Road, Sellindge -Application for the discharge of conditions 16 (Drainage)

This application is outside of our Drainage District but is accompanied by a Surface Water Management Plan that proposed to discharge the runoff from the site to an existing watercourse to the east of the development parcel. This watercourse flows south, beneath the M20 and on to the East Stour. As per the draft F&H Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (see the following section), any increase in rate or volume of flow to our District should be subject to Byelaw 3 and a SWDC payment.

"Although this site lies outside of our IDB Drainage District, the surface water discharged from the site appears to flow towards and into our district. The applicant will need Land Drainage Consent from Kent County Council for any works that has the potential to affect flow in any ditch or watercourse on or bordering the site, and we would look to work with them and your Authority to apply our Byelaw 3, specifically with regard to seeking a Surface Water Development Contribution for any increase in rates/volumes of discharge that may be directed into our District. This requirement is reflected in your Authority's draft F&H SFRA (Section 6.59)."

Folkestone and Hythe Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) consultation

It was reported that we were consulted by F&HDC's Flood Risk consultants on any general comments or requirements we would like to see fed into their forthcoming update to their SFRA. We provided the following comments, and we were pleased to note their inclusion in the recently provided DRAFT document. This bodes well for working with the Local Authorities in better

controlling the discharge of water into our District from developments that are otherwise outside of our control.

*“We would like to draw attention to the requirement for our Consent for any works to any watercourse in our District (and for works within 8m of an IDB maintained channel). We would also like to draw attention to Byelaw 3, which relates to the discharge of water into our District (whether the site in question lies within our District or not): **3. Control of Introduction of Water and Increase in Flow or Volume of Water** No person shall as a result of development (within the meaning of section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended (“the 1990 Act”)) (whether or not such development is authorised by the 1990 Act or any regulation or order whatsoever or none of them) for any purpose by means of any channel, siphon, pipeline or sluice or by any other means whatsoever introduce any water into any watercourse in the District so as to directly or indirectly increase the flow or volume of water in any watercourse in the District (without the previous consent of the Board).*

Any such contribution will be a one-off payment, and will serve to facilitate the management of the increased flows resulting from the development into our District.

Please refer to our website for further information on the SWDC, our policies and byelaws:

<https://rsidb.org.uk/consents-byelaws/>

We would encourage the applicant to seek to minimise any increase in the post-development rate and volume of surface water discharge.”

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC)

We have received no new planning consultations from MDC, other than for minor development that is either outside of our area, or where there are no foreseeable consequences as far as our land drainage and flood risk management interests are concerned.

Thanet District Council (TDC)

F/TH/20/0648 - Stonelees Golf Course, Ebbsfleet Lane, RAMSGATE, Kent - Erection of 20 No. detached 2 storey holiday homes together with site office/reception building, parking and landscaping.

This application is for the construction of holiday-let units at Stonelees Golf Course on land adjacent to IDB173 (Stonelees Main Stream). The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment that states that our Consent is required for any works within 8m of this watercourse, but we have not been contacted to discuss the detail of the application.

Unfortunately, the proposed site layout places several of the units and associated infrastructure in close proximity to the watercourse. We have therefore registered an objection against the application, pending discussions with the landowner/their consultants to determine whether our interests have been compromised.

*“This site is situated within the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board’s (RSIDB) Drainage District; this proposal therefore has a potential to affect our interests, in particular drainage and downstream flood risk. The site is also bordered to the south and east by IDB 173 (Stonelees Main Stream), an IDB adopted and maintained watercourse. We would therefore wish to **raise an objection** to this application owing to the proximity of several of the proposed units and*

infrastructure to this watercourse and the potential implications that would arise for the maintenance thereof.

The applicant should be reminded that the IDB's prior written consent will be required for any works within 8m of any ditch or watercourse on this site, in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the RSIDB's own Byelaws (please see <https://rsidb.org.uk/consents-byelaws/>). Even if planning permission were granted against our recommendation, we would not be able to issue Land Drainage Consent without further discussion and would reserve the right to take enforcement action against any construction within the 8m Byelaw margin.

*We would also draw your attention to the likely requirement for the payment of a Surface Water Development Contribution to the Board if the proposals result in any increase in the rate **or volume** of runoff being directed into our district.*

Ref: W15 Applications for Consent

22-ST-02

Location: Chitty Lane, Chislet

Proposed: Retrospective application for culvert beneath OWC crossing

This issue had previously been reported to the Board as an enforcement case; the applicant had infilled a highways drainage ditch to provide an access to their proposed camping site. They had neglected to install a culvert to convey any water within the ditch to the wider network, which resulted in sporadic flooding of the adjacent road and driveways to residential properties. We contacted the landowner and asked for the situation to be remedied. They promised they would and submitted a draft application for Consent (without any accompanying information or payment). We subsequently served Notice on them to remove the obstruction. Shortly after Notice was served we were informed that they had installed the culvert and received payment for a retrospective LDC. Unfortunately, the culvert installed was smaller than that previously discussed and installed in a manner that we were unable to consider acceptable. The applicant has been informed that this application has been **refused**, but also informed that the Board does not intend to take enforcement action at this time but will do so should the culvert cause further problems.

22-ST-03

Location: Santon Lane, Stourmouth

Proposed: Removal and replacement of culvert and headwall

We received and subsequently **approved** an application from KCC Highways for the removal of an existing, failing culvert beneath Santon Lane, and its subsequent replacement with an upsized pipe and improvement works to its outfall. This was a relatively straightforward application and the works have now been completed.

22-ST-04

Location: Ham Fen, Finglesham.

Proposed: Replacement of 2x bridges, one on IDB 205, one on OWC

Kent Wildlife Trust has applied to replace two failing crossings. They initially applied for like-for-like bridge replacements, capable of withstanding loads of 5T. Following discussions with the Board's engineer and contractors, we requested that their designs be amended to accommodate heavier machinery to improve our ability to undertake maintenance. They duly submitted an amendment that saw the replacement of the failed IDB205 bridge with a culvert. The members have approved this amendment and Consent is to be issued to reflect this.

22-ST-07**Location: Rear of Matthews Close/Albert Road, Deal****Proposed: New 600mm surface water outfall to OWC**

Southern Water have applied to upgrade their surface water drainage network at Albert Road, Deal following an investigation that identified that improvements should be made to alleviate the residential property flooding that occurs in this area. The existing 450mm pipe, manhole and outfall are to be removed and replaced with a new 600mm pipe and outfall, with non-return flap and debris screen. The receiving watercourse is owned by Dover DC but maintained by the IDB under a PSCA; we are therefore fully supportive of any works that will serve to reduce this area of known flood-risk and make better use of the capacity in the receiving system (subject to ongoing monitoring and maintenance).

ADMINISTRATION

Ref: A3-6 Health & Safety - Reservoirs

It was reported that the Government has committed to improving reservoir safety through reforms to the regulatory regime and modernisation of the Reservoirs Act 1975. With a recent independent review recognising the strong safety track record of reservoirs in England, the reforms will help to ensure that the regulatory regime remains effective and robust in securing the ongoing safety of such critical infrastructure so that those living downstream of reservoirs are protected from flooding which could risk their lives and property. Reform of the regulatory programme will be delivered in collaboration with reservoir owners and engineers over the coming years, with a timeline that will ensure that the changes can be managed by industry while maintaining ongoing reservoir safety management.

The Clerk & Engineer reported that this is part 2 of this project, the EA has been given additional duties and powers to ensure public safety in relation to reservoirs. There is a greater focus on risk assessment for reservoirs and contributions from owners and operators to the cost of regulation.

Ref: A8-1.1 ADA South East Branch

The Chairman reported that Nominations have been received for the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman, therefore the next meeting of the ADA SE Branch is to be arranged to take place in Ashford in October.

MEETING CLOSED

There being no other business the Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.