



**MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013 IN ORFORD TOWN  
HALL**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Edward Greenwell Guy Heald Philippa Stewart Brian Johnson Ben McFarland Hugh Pilkington Richard Marson Alison Andrews Jane Marson Amanda Bettinson	<b>(Chairman, Farmer Nominee)</b> (Finance and Business) (Iken Parish Council Nominee) (Boyton and Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee) (Ecological Representative/RSPB) (Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council Nominee) (Aldeburgh Town Council Nominee) (A&O Association Nominee) (Landowner Nominee) (Partnership Secretary)
<b>ADVISORS</b>	Isobel Steen Emma Hay David Savill	(Environment Agency) (Natural England) (SCDC)
<b>CONSULTANTS</b>	Andrew Hawes	(Hawes Associates)
<b>PUBLIC ATTENDEES</b>	John Stanton Richard Pipe	
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Angie Mason David McGinity Trazar Astley-Reid Barry Leach Jane Burch	(Householder Representative) (Butley Parish Council Nominee) (Suffolk Coast & Heaths Unit) (Aldeburgh and Orford Business Associations Nominee) (SCC)

1. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** **Action**  
None to declare
2. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013 were agreed.
3. **MATTERS ARISING**
  - i) **The Ham Creek** landowners have met with the EA and will now be taking on any upgrading and repair work themselves.
  - ii) **FC'0'** The EA was asked to produce a crest level survey of the Shingle Street area so that bank levels could be determined. **IS**
  - iii) **Coastal Erosion** The erosion south of the Martello Tower at Aldeburgh would be rectified in September with a shingle recharge but no work could commence immediately as there would be disruption to a site of nesting little terns.
  - iv) **Saltings Trial** Materials for the saltings trial work would be delivered in the next 2-3 weeks to land close to the Aldeburgh Farm Shop and work would commence on site 1 (Iona at Aldeburgh) early August. Labour charges with the contractor had been agreed for this site. After completion of this and the Orford site, charges for the final larger site at Brick Dock will be reassessed and agreed. All three sites should be completed by September. The SCC had

arranged for a further £5,000 grant for this work and it was hoped any further overspend (anticipated £2,000) would be covered by the Alde and Ore Association. **Actions AH** to inform AJB when work starts on Site 1. **AA** agreed to raise this at the next A&OA committee meeting.)

**AH/AA**

v) **AH** was currently in discussion with the Rights of Way team and will be organising a trip to Felixstowe to view the armoflex.

vi) Bill Parker had informed the Chairman that £20,000 had been requested from the RFCC for design work fees for the upgrading of the defences and committee running expenses which will be used to set up the Estuary Trust.

#### 4. **ENABLING DEVELOPMENT**

The Chairman welcomed Charles Loyd, Land Management Partner with Strutt and Parker and John McLarty, Head of the Planning team, who had kindly agreed to discuss enabling development with the partnership. The essence of enabling development is to raise capital funds from selling agricultural land with exceptional planning permission, so increasing the value of the plot. The landowner would donate either the entire purchase price or, if they wished, just any uplift in value from the existing use value to the Estuary Trust.

The discussion was wide ranging but the main points were:-

- Acquiring planning permission, in terms of architect's fees etc can cost £15-30,000 per application site and consideration needs to be given to how this is funded.
- Values for plots will be different for each site, depending on size and location but in good locations the lower the density of housing the higher the value of the plot. A standard house plot of 1/8th acre could raise £80,000.
- The value of agricultural land is about £10,000 per acre but there will be parcels of land that landowners wish to hold onto for 'hope value' that in the future planning permission may be granted there. Acquiring the right plots and incentivising both landowners (retention of farm land and income tax advantages in donating to a charity) and the community (flood risk reduced and local economy remains positive) will be essential.
- SCDC are in the final stages of ratifying the criteria for enabling development and the new planning regulations fit well with the ED criteria and are supported by SCDC.
- John McLarty advised the partnership to agree a process and strategy before discussing with the planning department. He also emphasized that in his experience it was important to keep the district council informed of developments as although parish councils could initially be in favour of the principles of developments, very often they had difficulty in coming to a majority decision on developments particularly as they were wary of over development, and almost all developments will attract some opposition.
- High quality design was essential but a balance needs to be found between "gold taps" and cheaper housing. At one extreme, very low cost housing would not be acceptable or fulfil the criteria. Affordable housing is not required for enabling development as it is not cost effective.
- Charles Loyd suggested it might be sensible to consider a joint venture with a developer which would lessen the financial risk. Design criteria could be developed with them to avoid loss of quality in standards and ensure sustainability.
- Overage clauses could be written into a contract to ensure any profit over that anticipated is returned to the Estuary Trust for flood defences.
- It was also discussed that there might be some merit in approaching the district council in conjunction with the Deben Partnership to agree the range of prospective sites and even considering an approach to developers in association with them to show a united front..
- Ben MacFarland noted that managed realignment should be considered for flood protection as this would be trigger some funding for realignment but it was agreed that flood protection covers all options.

**It was agreed** that the first step would be to contact all landowners and confirm the sites they

had suggested some years ago. Other possible sites should also be investigated, in particular those suitable for a single dwelling, as the site value would be increased dramatically as would the ultimate sum for flood defences. This would also have the benefit of reducing the overdevelopment issue in the parishes. The potential sites could then be discussed with the district council to eliminate any that do not reach the criteria i.e. below 5 metres etc.

**Action EG** to coordinate discussions with landowners and discuss further the possibilities of a combined Deben/Alde Ore approach at the Liaison Committee meeting.

EG

5. **RIVER AND SEA WALL MANAGEMENT**

The Chairman welcomed Chris Strachan from the Environment Agency (EA) who explained that the permissions the EA give for work on the walls are designed so as not to cause damage to the wall biodiversity. A wide range of ecological information has been collected on each section of wall covering snails, reptiles, birds, hinterland flowering plants etc. This can then be used to guide the best times to carry out grass cutting and work on the walls to avoid disturbance during breeding seasons, high tide roosts etc. **AH noted** that the upgrading work to the walls will only be done in the summer to maximise use of day light hours and moisture content (the winter months are too wet and cause too much damage to the land). **It was agreed** that it will be important to tie this work into the sheep grazing trial so that any mowing regime could be regulated to best effect both financially and for the biodiversity. **CS** agreed to send his spread sheet of wall biodiversity information to **AJB**

JM/CS  
CS

6. **DEFENCE DESIGNS FOR FLOOD CELL 4 AND FC6/7**

**AH** discussed the designs sent as the agenda attachment. Main points were:

**FC4 (Orford and Gedgrave) – cost £1,743,774**

- Although weight is being added to the wall, the back slope can be slackened to take the strain of additional clay.
- A number of sections can achieve the design standard aims when reinforced mesh and anchors are used should clay not be so readily/locally available. This reduces the high cost of transporting clay from other sites.
- Aiming for 1.5metre footpath width
- In general the wall height would be 3.3metres but could be 500mm lower if the wall is meshed and anchored to resist overtopping of up to 3 hours.

**FC6 (Snape Maltings) –cost £17,907**

- Need to consider issues in raising the concrete wall by Snape Maltings quay as this could change the character of the quay.

**FC7 (Snape village) – cost £139,000**

- Some areas of wall (chainage 35-1044 to Snape Bridge) require 1 metre increase in height (2.2 existing to 3.3metres). The EA were asked to re-cost the BCR on FC7 as this could alter the Partnership's flood cell prioritisation.

IS

Other issues that were discussed were:

- Emma Hay (NE) queried whether the Orford Wall Trial had been formally evaluated. It was agreed that SCC (Highways and Rights of Way) Natural England and the EA should be asked for evaluation comments. **Action AH** to coordinate.
- Although riding bikes (and buggies) is not allowed on footpaths it does happen resulting in deep rutting in the ground. Armoflex can be used in a small width to circumvent this but it was thought there may be funding opportunities to increase the width for disabled access. **AH** to discuss with Rights of Way team.
- **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)** An EIA will be required for all the work planned for upgrading the walls in the estuary, particularly for work at Ham Creek which potentially could commence as soon as the landowners have agreed plans with the EA. The EA require a definitive plan for the estuary but it was unclear whether the three sets of design upgrades produced so far by Andrew Hawes gave sufficient

AH

AH

information to produce an EIA or whether a full set of upgrades were required for each flood cell. The latter could take potentially till the New Year to complete and this could hold up the start of the EIA. **Action IS** to research exactly how much information is required.

**IS**

**7. THE FUNDING GROUP**

The Funding Group had met the previous week and discuss a number of issues as recorded on the agenda attachment. It was felt that a launch of the Estuary Trust in the Spring of 2014 would give time to register the CIO and then to consider a number of different opportunities with prospective donors. The launch would then be the start of a public phase and could start with, maybe, an evening at Snape Maltings. An exciting list of possible local performers was discussed.

**Action EG** to discuss the possibilities with Aldeburgh Music.

**EG**

**8. THE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP**

**Alison Andrews** discussed the thinking of the group so far, in that the messages to various members of the community need to reflect their sphere of activity i.e. those to sailors will differ slightly to businesses etc but the main message is that they all need the river to stay as it is for their business or holiday activities to continue as they are now. It was hoped to piggyback on other events – e.g. the EA breakfast meetings with local businesses to get the message over.

**AA** also informed the partnership that the Alde and Ore Association was in the process of agreeing the final questionnaires with Risk and Policy Analysts who were updating the Economic Survey of the estuary that was first completed in 2004. The results of this can be used by the AOEP to support funding bids to statutory and non-statutory organisations or private donors. **HP** noted that it was important to try and calculate an economic value on intangible assets.

John Stanton has joined the Communications Group as Marketing Advisor and will help on the communications strategy.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday **26th September** in Orford Town Hall at 2pm and Thursday **28th November** 2013

**It was noted that it is extremely important for all members to keep a record of their time spent at AOEP meetings, reading papers etc. as this would be needed when applying for funds. ACTION ALL**

The public meeting ended and partnership members continued in private.