



MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP HELD ON THURSDAY 10th JULY 2014 IN ORFORD TOWN HALL

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL IN SEPTEMBER

PRESENT	Edward Greenwell Guy Heald Alison Andrews Jane Marson Richard Marson Tim Beach Peter Smith David McGinity Brian Johnson Rodney West Mark Johnson Amanda Bettinson	(Chairman, Farmer Nominee) (Finance and Business) (A&O Association Nominee) (Landowner Nominee) (Aldeburgh Town Council Nominee) (Snape PC) (Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council) (Butley Parish Council Nominee) (Boyton and Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee) (Ecological Representative for RSPB, NT, SWT) (Area Coastal Manager, Environment Agency) (Partnership Secretary)
CONSULTANT	Andrew Hawes	(Hawes Associates)
ADVISORS	Jane Burch Emma Hay Peter Roberts Giles Bloomfield	(SCC) (Natural England) (EA Team Leader Asset Performance) (IDB Engineer)
GUEST	Phil Camamile	CEO Water Management Alliance/ IDB
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC		Richard Pipe and Angela Sydenham, Estuary Trust, Johnny Gooderham, Snape Maltings, Bill Vaudrey, Shingle Street; Lindsay Clubb, Tunstall PC, Louise Mangeot, Aldringham cum Thorpe PC,
APOLOGIES	Lizzie Hammond Barry Leach Frances Barnwell Bill Parker Karen Thomas	(Householder Representative) (Aldeburgh and Orford Business Associations Nominee) (Estuary Trust Trustee) (SCDC) (Environment Agency)
1.	<p>The Chairman introduced Phil Camamile, Chief Executive of the Water Management Alliance (WMA) who administers the East Suffolk, Kings Lynn, Broads, Norfolk and South Holland Internal Drainage Boards. He attended the meeting to discuss how the partnership should access the RFCC funds as this will be managed by the WMA.</p> <p>Phil Camamile explained that the RFCC had allocated £50,000 to the Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership but to receive these funds the Partnership, through the IDB, need to complete an application for scrutiny and approval to the Environment Agency specifying how the funds will be spent. The proposal is:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) £15K (approx) on fees for Andrew Hawes upgrade design work already completedii) £25K towards a member of staff who will be responsible for the Project Appraisal Report (PAR) for the Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership. It is hoped that the Deben Estuary Partnership will also contribute £25K to enable recruitment of a full time individual with appropriate skills for this task. This report will be submitted to the EA for agreement and to enable release of the FDGiA funding (probably about £2-3M of the	Action

£7-10M anticipated for the upgrading works) which will be the EA's contribution to the work the Partnership anticipate completing in the next 5-7 years. It could take up to one year to prepare the PAR for submission.

iii) £7.5K to be allocated for planning consultant fees to ensure that the enabling development proposals are properly interpreted and connected to the Estuary Plan.

iv) £2.5K as a contribution to further hydrodynamic and sediment modelling work by Professor Pye in the Snape and Butley River areas.

The Partnership agreed this proposal.

It was made clear that two separate submissions are required:

i) **The Estuary Plan** is submitted to Suffolk County Council for a Sustainability Review which is environmentally based, to ensure the plan complies with the Habitat Regulations and Water Framework Directives etc

ii) **Project Appraisal Report** is submitted to the EA to release the appropriate funding and for flood defence consent.

iii) Both the Estuary Plan and the PAR are reliant on each other.

2. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Apologies received as above. Declaration of Interests – None

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES of 22nd May 2014 agreed with the exception that Peter Smith should be deleted from the attendees as he was already noted in apologies.

4. REPRIORITISATION OF FLOOD CELLS

It was agreed that the Snape flood cell should be the first priority of all the flood cells.

The new order therefore is:

1 Flood Cell 6/7 Snape (BCR 10.6)

2 FC10 Aldeburgh (BCR 6.7)

3 FC4 Orford (BCR 4)

4 FC5 Iken (BCR 1.7)

5 FC1 Butley and Hollesley (BCR 2.7)

6 FC3 Chillesford (BCR 1.5)

7 FC2 Butley Mills (BCR 3.1) - some work already commenced on this cell.

8 and 9 Ham Creek and Hazlewood March (BCRs .5 and .6 respectively) are deemed uneconomic by the EA and local landowners at Ham Creek have agreed to take on repair and maintenance work. Hazlewood Marsh surge damage is still under discussion, with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and local landowners now taking the lead.

5. ALDEBURGH AND SNAPE DEFENCES

Aldeburgh Coastal Defences at Slaughden

Mark Johnson informed the Partnership that there were plans to continue safety work on the Slaughden defences and to address the loss of beach material in the short term (this autumn and winter). Replacement of some groynes and joint replacement, due to the loss of shingle, would also be completed. **£150,000** was budgeted for this year. The EA have approached Professor Andrew Bradbury at Southampton University, an expert in coastal engineering and shoreline management, for advice to inform a capital project in the next two or three years. Natural England were also considering the geomorphology at Slaughden.

FC10 Aldeburgh Wall

Vegetation had been cut by contractors which should improve the grass cover. In the longer term, if funding was available early next year it might be possible to remove the steep sections of the wall. The AOEP would be kept involved with developments.

Snape Defences

The Chairman thanked Tim Beach for taking the lead in Snape for this project. The

decisions at the last meeting had been overtaken and amended due to public opinion and the efforts of the partnership, and it was now hoped to do more than just repair the wall. It was appreciated that there were a number of complex issues involved with any work in this area and flood defence consent for raising either north or south river wall could not be agreed until further hydrodynamic and bathymetric modelling data had been captured. The main points of a detailed discussion were:-

- The EA had been allocated £75K for the Snape wall from the nation fund of £270M for storm and surge repairs. £10K had already been spent on site investigation works so £65K remained for any repair works.
- Although Andrew Hawes had already provided a scheme for the upgrade of the walls there was not enough data to grant flood defence consent to heighten the walls, and the concerns of all local householders and businesses on both sides of the river had yet to be addressed.
- Guy Heald expressed deep concern that if Snape was not adequately defended this winter and the village flooded and Snape Maltings was out of action, the collateral damage to the partnership's reputation would be immense. It was vital that Snape village had to be better defended than it was pre surge and proposed that the wall should be heightened to 3.1metres as per Andrew's designs.
- Tim Beach noted that the views of the householders in Snape village were that they required a higher river wall and were not in favour of a retired wall.
- Mark Johnson noted that he had visited the Snape wall with a DEFRA representative only hours before the meeting and that the EA had this site as their highest local priority. After discussions with **MJ** some weeks ago, he had sourced a further £50,000 for appraisal work to commence immediately to enable a capital scheme to start next year, in effect bringing this project forward by a couple of years.
- Andrew Hawes fully supported **GH's** views but the Snape wall was a-typical and very complex. Although it was the partnerships policy to make only one visit to upgrade any area of wall from the cost implication point of view, in this case it was unavoidable due to the consent issues. It was, however, important to maximise available funding in the short term. After some discussion it was agreed to repair and enhance the wall by bringing up the low areas, some of which are as low as 2.3 or 2.4, to a uniform height of about 2.7/8. This would in effect offer some increased protection to the pre surge conditions and be a precursor to any further upgrade work in a capital scheme next year. It was hoped that local clay could be sourced from Wilson Homes.
- Footpath material would need to be considered carefully and **AH** advised using erosion proof material. The Partnership did not support gravel or hoggin based material which not only prevents grass cover growing but would be washed away during an overtopping event leaving a more vulnerable defence, topped only by bare clay. Grass seed or turfing would be a possibility but this might mean closing the footpath for the winter to enable the grass to establish. Further research would be completed prior to deciding on the final material. Funding for this would have to be discussed when the costs were known and contributions from local landowners and Suffolk Wildlife Trust who need public access to their marshes, may be necessary.
- Further funding was required to improve both the tidal sluice beyond the bridge and the sluice on the marsh to ensure any over-topping water was evacuated as quickly as possible. It was agreed that there was no quick fix for dealing with the sluices as they were determined by the eventual height of the walls (which may not be agreed until the data was available and the capital scheme agreed) and if work was to proceed now it may mean there was a weak area in the wall during the winter. Although **MJ** had agreed to source extra funds for the sluices it was thought a solution should wait to be considered in the capital scheme.
- Jane Marson noted that there was a total fund of £30M available for

MJ

householders and businesses to apply for £5K each household. This must be applied for now as there is a deadline on applications. It is hoped that once a scheme was agreed residents may wish to pool their £5K's to provide essential further funding for the wall repairs. If in any doubt residents should discuss with Tim Beach both their application to apply for funds and how this could be pooled.

- Both Johnny Gooderham and Lindsay Clubb, although grateful for the expertise on offer from the EA/AOEP, voiced concerns that more information was needed before decisions could be made on the wall height as by raising the wall height to 3.1metres it would be higher than the tidal sluice at the bridge (presently at 2.94 metres) and a further surge might then flood the Snape Maltings side of the river.
- **It was agreed** that the Giles Bloomfield/IDB would, by mid August, prepare a costed scheme to repair and level the wall to approx 2.7/8 in conjunction with Andrew Hawes/AOEP consultant engineer and Pete Roberts EA engineer, to be commenced early September to enable completion prior to the winter. This would enable further heightening of the wall next year when all the data had been captured and a decision made on the capital scheme. Additional local funding may be required from both residents and landowners which would be discussed once the total costs were available. The IDB would be responsible for contracting and supervising the work.

GB/AH/PR

6. FOOTPATH TRIAL

Jane Burch noted that the Orford footpath west of Orford Quay would be used for the footpath trial and a meeting would be held on 22nd July to discuss the details before start of the project in late August. Rights of Way recognised the significance of marrying in flood defence issues on the crest with the footpath design and material. Areas on the Deben were also under consideration as additional sites which received regular overtopping were needed to test the material when flooded. JB pointed out ROW liability issues, and that public acceptance of any material was required. In the event any material was not satisfactory, ROW would have the right to remove it. The height of the defence could not therefore be compromised if this should be necessary so it was essential to ensure the defence was at the correct height prior to any footpath being laid. The Orford wall was not yet at the correct standard height and this would need discussion. Richard Marson pointed out that the Slaughden footpath can become dangerously muddy in the winter and it was agreed that, should this happen, ROW should be prepared to close the footpath until it was safe.

JB

7. HAZLEWOOD MARSH

It was understood that three landowners were progressing work to build a short wall in discussion with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and considering lowering the breach to allow water to fully evacuate. No decisions had been finally agreed and it was with SWT and the landowners to take this forward.

Professor Pye's report

The final report had been received and Prof Pye's view was that the breaches at Hazlewood did not adversely affect the estuary. Some form of intertidal area in FC1 (Boyton flood cell) could also help the top part of the estuary by acting as a water storage area in a surge event so reducing the volume of water at Snape. He highlighted that before any schemes were implemented, further hydrodynamic and sediment modelling was required (30 days of tidal assessments at approx £5/6K) and also hydrographic surveys to improve the bathymetric data for the upper reaches at Snape and Butley which had not been collected during earlier surveys in 2003.

It was agreed for ACTION that Mark Johnson would investigate funding the hydrographic surveys and the AOEP in conjunction with the Alde and Ore Association would fund Professor Pye's further modelling work.

MJ/AA

8. **ESTUARY PLAN**

Alison Andrews discussed Draft 10 and no further comments were made. It was noted that a meeting had been held with SCC to discuss parts of the plan that need further input, and Rod West had agreed to produce a number of maps which would present information in a useable format. e.g. Details of the area irrigated by the various abstraction points were being sourced from landowners and would be mapped. The plan would shortly be submitted to SCC for initial assessment and it is hoped it would be finalised by early February. This would then feed into the PAR (see minute 1).

9. **CONSULTATION COMMENTS for CIL AND IPENS**

These were noted with no comments

10. **EMERGENCY PLANNING PRIOR TO SURGE**

Jane Marson felt that having drafted this document it now transpired that this work was more a responsibility of the East Suffolk IDB but it would be useful to use the AOEP newsletter to promote a self help plan for properties under 5 metres who potentially could be flooded. It was the Partnership's role to ensure that a satisfactory plan exists and that a system was in place to cover responses to physical emergency in terms of a breach and consequent flooding. It was the local parish councils through their community plans and the police who were responsible for ensuring the correct systems and responses for personnel evacuation etc. and the December surge impressed on everyone how important it was to have these in place. JM enquired whether there is an IDB representative on the Emergency command structure during a surge event and **It was agreed** Jane Burch would make enquiries.

JB

It was important to circulate new ideas for flood protection that are continuously coming onto the market. Please pass these on to your parish council. An alternative to sand bags needs to be found as they are problematic to use and not that effective.

ALL

11. **FLOOD CELL 1 BOYTON**

Richard Pipe noted that discussions were still ongoing. Although the EA had reached their saline habitat targets in the east for this epoch (until 2025) other regions had not, so options still need investigating in Suffolk.

12. **SALTINGS PROJECTS**

Monitoring

David McGinity stated that only limited monitoring had taken place to date but the monitoring volunteers were due to meet shortly to agree how best to conduct the measuring.

New Sites

Iken and Snape were possible areas for further projects and Hazlewood Marsh was also suggested. Further work was required to plot these sites, agree different methods to trial materials other than those already used and cost the schemes. About £8,000 was still available as ring fenced funds for these projects. Rod West had joined the project team in lieu of Trazar Astley-Reid.

RP noted that loss of intertidal habitat was not so much of an issue in A&O estuary as it is in the Thames Estuary, and queried whether off set funding could be considered. MJ noted that the EA were in discussions with Natural England on loss of habitat in the estuary and there should not be a presumption that this was happening or would happen. Studies of past losses of saltmarsh were now accepted to be unreliable. Although the Thames did have a net loss it was likely that land closer than Suffolk could be utilised.

It was agreed that a costed scheme of sites and techniques would be drafted for the meeting in November. **Action DMcG/RW**

DMcG/RW

13. **FUNDING**

EG noted that SCDC had agreed to report back on enabling development sites by the end of July. It would be necessary to employ a planning consultant to relate the enabling development land to the Estuary Plan. Anyone with contacts/names for consideration should be forwarded to the Chairman.

14. **ESTUARIES CONFERENCE**

It was noted that the Suffolk Coastal and Estuaries Conference would be held on 8th October in the Orbis Centre, Lowestoft. Please book now if you wish to attend.

15. **NEXT MEETINGS will be 18th September (not 12th) and 27th November at 2pm in Orford Town Hall.**