



ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

DRAFT MINUTES FOR AGREEMENT ON 6th FEBRUARY 2018

MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP HELD ON THURSDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2017 AT ORFORD TOWN HALL

PRESENT	Edward Greenwell	(EG)	(Chairman, Farmer Nominee)
	Alison Andrews	(AA)	(A&O Association Nominee)
	Brian Johnson	(BJ)	(Boyton and Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee)
	Mike Finney	(MF)	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council Nominee)
	Elizabeth Oxby	(EO)	(Aldeburgh TC Nominee in lieu of Peter Palmer)
	David McGinity	(DMcG)	(Butley Parish Council Nominee)
	Jane Maxim	(JM)	AOET in lieu of Guy Heald
	Tim Beach	(TB)	(Snape Parish Council Nominee)
	Rod West	(RW)	(Environmental Nominee)
	Rodney West	(RW)	(Ecological Representative)
	Harry Young	(HY)	(Business Representative)
	Amanda Bettinson	(AB)	(Partnership Secretary)

ADVISORS	David Kemp	(DK)	(Environment Agency)
	Karen Thomas	(KT)	(IDB)
	Pete Cosgrove	(PC)	(AONB)

APOLOGIES

Jane Burch	(JB)	(SCC)
Jane Marson	(JM)	(Landowner Nominee)
Bill Parker	(BP)	(SCDC)
Andrew Hawes	(AH)	(Hawes Associates- Partnership Consultant)
Emma Hay	(EH)	(Natural England)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Roger Baxter, Chris Gill, Mike Redmond, Colin Chamberlain

1. The Chairman welcomed Elizabeth Oxby who was representing Peter Palmer, Pete Cosgrove who was representing the AONB Unit (permanent advisor) and Jonathan Clarke from Natural England who will give a presentation on the Coastal Path.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No interests declared for the agenda. The Chairman asked that every member sign the Declaration of Interest forms and return to AJB.

2. **THE MINUTES** of 7th December 2017 were agreed

3. **NATURAL ENGLAND PRESENTATION ON THE COASTAL PATH**

EG declared an interest in a coastal path on his land and handed over to Alison Andrews to chair this presentation. Jonathan Clarke discussed the background to the Government's coastal path initiative. He was keen to discuss with everyone to help pull together the 'jigsaw of pieces' as to where best to site the coastal path. JC's aim was to agree how AOEP could best work with NE. Issues highlighted were:

- There will be constraints and issues for everyone including avoiding bird nesting areas, sensitive areas for other reasons and these will all need to be discussed prior to the public consultation next year
- Landowners will have the opportunity to object to a path and this then goes to the Secretary of State. Everyone else can make a representation
- Suffolk County Council will be funded to bring the path up to standard. Thereafter SCC will have to pay for upkeep.
- AA noted that the Estuary Plan agreed to comply with AONB and habitat monitoring

- **It was thought that due to increased footfall the wall upgrades should encompass a substantial path that would withstand overtopping of the flood defence and remain intact rather than hoggin that would be washed away. Funding this should be fully discussed with NE and Suffolk County Council who would be taking on maintenance of the path.**
- If the path cannot go on the walls will there be significant impact on other areas
- Mitigation measures required – possible fencing/screening if required /EH to agree
- Iken PC had already contacted NE to discuss an alternative route
- RW queried if the route was diverted inland did all areas become open access? Yes for the primary route, but there is no spreading room on alternative routes.
- Summer and winter routes may be agreed e.g.. Butley Ferry
- Exceptions to the rule need to be listed
- Low public liability – CLA have produced a document
- May be branded ‘East of England Coastal Path’
- JC agreed to come back to the AOEP to discuss further having had discussions with landowners

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

- i) It was noted that Elizabeth Stanton had resigned from the Partnership but remained a Trustee. The Partnership await Trustees’ view on the appropriate number of Trustees. JM
- ii) It was agreed that the vacancy for the Householder nominee should be discussed with the Parish Councils and a job description circulated seeking someone proficient in IT for managing the website and newsletters for the Partnership and Trust. AJB
- iii) DMcG noted that the MMO online licensing system worked well and maintenance work on the Orford site had been completed. A site tour to view Sudbourne saltmarsh was discussed. DMcG
- iv) It was agreed that the IDB should provide the right wording required for AOEP to request schemes. A framework for operational delivery and funding needs to be agreed. Local engagement and grant bids were additional to the plan and this should be itemised in the structure document. A meeting was arranged for 18th to discuss TLP scheme details with Iken landowners and following that there should be a meeting with The Trust and IDB to agree details. KT/EG
- v) Finance Report [to 6th December 2017] was discussed by AJB and would be circulated with the minutes. AJB

5. **IMPLEMENTATION GROUP**

This item is supported by 2 technical papers from Karen Thomas on behalf of AOEP’s flood risk modelling and also from TLP on their work regarding potential managed realignment projects at Iken, Gedgrave and Boyton. EG gave an introduction to the item and KT set out a summary of these papers for discussion.

The TLP/HR Wallingford final report was discussed in detail. This work has shown that the Estuary Plan is sustainable and is a good baseline and over-arching model for the whole estuary. There are 2 parts to the modelling- the first task is by AOEP to understand the effects of the estuary plan implementation on the wider estuary. This work will help to demonstrate any flood risk issues to EA and allow AOEP to resolve these ahead of works being implemented. The second element of the modelling was commissioned by TLP to consider managed realignment opportunities in the estuary as part of a national project they are undertaking looking for compensatory habitat for proposals for a tidal barrage in the Severn Estuary. The modelling work has been undertaken by HR Wallingford who were asked to consider these two tasks separately and in combination.

The intertidal habitat creation project required by TLP very much depends on their success in getting the agreed strike price for their power and whether their Swansea tidal scheme is accepted by the Government. Should the TLP options be considered viable by landowners there



would be further work by TLP to address any local concerns with communities. If TLP options were to progress there would have to be a formal amendment to The Estuary Plan for Iken and either Gedgrave or Boyton. These projects are at an early stage and require further discussions between TLP and landowners in these areas.

In terms of the AOEP plan implementation, it has become clear that the management of the upper estuary flood defences relies on a change in policy at Iken flood cell. AOEP have modelled a spillway at FC5 (Iken flood cell) and the modelling shows that a spillway at 2.4m which equates to an annual surge event would reduce water levels on more frequent events at Snape up to a 1 in 75 flood. Beyond this there is little effect from the spillway on more extreme events. This option does leave the hinterland subject to overtopping in surge events but water can be pumped out quickly and the land returned to grazing or agricultural use. This option requires a new secondary defence to be built further inland to protect people and property from flooding if the spillway is in use. There would also be a need for a counter wall to protect adjacent landowners where the flood storage option is not compatible with their business. Apart from a 600m spillway, this option also requires the main defence to continue to be held in position to the AOEP standard. As a result we would see increased costs of this option at FC5. These would be determined once AOEP have determined the best way forward following the modelling results being shared.

KT was asked for comparisons between the spillway option and the Managed Retreat (MR) proposal at Iken, i.e. a permanent breaching giving 336 acres of mud flats.

In contrast to the spillway option- the modelling shows MR option for FC5 leads to a reduction in flood depth and number of properties flooded in all but a 1 in 200 year event. In addition the MR option would result in 3 ½ kms less wall to maintain and the counter-wall AOEP require in the sill option would also be installed by TLP to protect people and property at their cost. The downside potentially may be that the flows around the Slaughden bend would increase. If the TLP option is considered by the landowner (s) as an option to be explored TLP would do further modelling and studies regarding the development of the site and any wider effects of the scheme would be mitigated. There would be a loss of saltmarsh adjacent to a breach in the defence and this would be compensated for with habitat creation within the MR site and through accretion elsewhere in the estuary. The Partnership also has to bear in mind that there will be future requirements for increased intertidal areas due to coastal squeeze and this work is likely to put back that requirement for some decades (subject to NE views).

AA noted that from the river and leisure users perspective the increased flow might seriously endanger sailing and the TLP plan of 336 acres of mud might not be what everyone wants. **KT** highlighted again that any concerns AOEP have over the Slaughden issue would need to be addressed through further discussions with TLP. **KT** would seek a technical note from TLP that summarises the modelling for the Slaughden bend.

A considerable amount of further thought was required and it should not be assumed that the TLP plan was the answer to everyone's prayers. TLP need to demonstrate that their plans will not have significant effect on the saltmarsh and economic impact. There was thought potential to discuss with TLP landscaping of intertidal habitats as required. **KT** highlighted that any effects of a potential TLP scheme considered in detail through EIA; planning permission (which is required) is unlikely to be achieved if the benefits do not outweigh the impacts.

It was agreed that further work was required to establish the real effect on the river, navigation and tourism which are ultimately the issues to consider in terms of economic viability of the estuary.

It was thought preferable to expedite the Snape work and encourage TLP to build the counter wall at Iken which would satisfy the EA consents. The spillway or breach need not be decided on immediately but the landowners in FC5 need to indicate to the AOEP how they wish to



proceed with the TLP offer – ultimately if landowners want to proceed then this triggers further work and investment (like counter walls) from TLP. KT highlighted that TLP would be unlikely to fund counter walls without an option being in place. There was agreement that a discussion with FC5 landowners was needed to establish their position.

It would also be important to discuss this with Iken PC and community and wider community to explore local support as this would need agreement from all concerned. TLP may also wish to present at such discussions.

KT also highlighted the modelling showed that Butley and Chillesford walls (FCs 2 & 3) may not need to be improved as much as had been expected as they were already close to our flood defence standard. KT also highlighted that the RSPB spillway at Havergate has a positive effect on flood risk at Snape with the AOEP plan in place. The spillway reduces flood risk by as much as 3cm in significant events and removes properties at risk on the 1 in 200 extreme event with climate change.

Actions:

i) **KT** was asked to:

a) seek a short paper on the potential issues for Slaughden bend from TLP.

b) provide an executive summary cover note of the modelling report.

ii) KT recommended that AOEP develop a list of jobs to be done/resources and forward plan for next 6 months including business case and suggested a meeting between key members of the IDB, AOEP and Trust to establish the next steps and how that can be funded.

iii) AOEP to set up a meeting of FC5 landowners to discuss their thoughts on spillway and MR options.

iv) 3 drop in meetings in Orford, Snape and Aldeburgh would be arranged for early March and a AOEP community meeting arranged towards the end of March to present to the community the Estuary Plan and the TLP options. Andrew Hawes would be asked to present on this with Karen Thomas. The Community meeting would be filmed and loaded to the website. Individuals attending/commenting would be encouraged to say where they lived so that their risk, if any, can be discussed with them.

v) Decide when to put the whole document on the website.

KT

AJB

6.

SALTMARSH RESTORATION

DMcG noted that maintenance on the Orford project had been completed with a 3rd lane which will help to protect the significant accretion. The next project of 500 metres of Sudbourne frontage will commence August next year. The EA had just approved £20K for this project which was excellent news. DMcG was also going to discuss with NORSE using Christmas trees as a trial project.

7.

ENABLING DEVELOPMENT

i) EG reported on the Tunstall meeting chaired by Lord Deben (over 100 attendees) and the Sudbourne meeting (about 80-100 attendees) held on 2nd December and noted that there had been strong opinions expressed by the community. However it was thought a good proportion of attendees at the 2nd December Sudbourne meeting were supportive of enabling development, a view articulated by a number of people.

ii) Following the meeting with SCDC/planners and The Estuary Trust, The Partnership agreed that it would be sensible to pause the programme for 12 months to allow time for fundraising to get established and to prepare a business case. Discussions will continue with planners and others in the meantime. EG is also discussing cash payments with farmers who have so far pledged £470,000. Action: ED team to follow up discussions with SCDC etc.

iii) It was agreed to formally recognise that the 80-140 houses predicted to be needed in the

DMcG

EG



enabling development program in The Estuary Plan 2016 is excessive. This figure had been included on assumptions about plot values that were, in hindsight, very pessimistic. The final number of house plots needed is not yet known as it depends on highly variable site valuations, but is likely to be a fraction of that number. While wishing to minimise the amount of ED carried out, the AOEP also recognises the wish of many communities to see smaller, cheaper housing built and will take that into account. Ultimately, the scale of enabling development needed will be dependent on the success of fundraising in other areas.

iv) Harry Young kindly thanked the enabling development team for all their hard work.

8. FUNDING GROUP REPORT

Jane Maxim informed the Partnership that the Pub Quiz had raised over £42,500 when gift aid had been accounted for. Since the launch there had been £130,000 raised in the first month.

The first HLF landscape workshop had taken place on 1st December and some useful scoping ideas had taken place. Since then it had been learnt from the HLF that they had put the whole Landscape Partnership Scheme on hold as the lottery receipts are dwindling. It will be possible to apply under the General Heritage Scheme which accommodates bids up to £5m but at this stage we do not know what terms apply. It is hoped to put in a bid Autumn 2018. JM to pursue.

JM

Discussions are also underway with Esmée Fairburn Trust and others for a substantial bid in the next 2-3 months. They respond within 6 months. They also have a loan scheme for 2 years at 2% pa. Foundations do like to see local commitment and involvement. KT had agreed to help in pulling a business case together.

JM

A high level approach to the National Trust will also be made and to the Orford Town Trust. SCDC will be approached for a regular annual CIL payment and parish councils will be asked if they have any ideas to encourage individuals to donate or other funding pots that could be suggested to SCDC. Jane Maxim agreed to speak to the Coastal Community Fund personnel but understood that their main driver was economic benefit.

JM

It was thought a drone film of the Aldeburgh wall showing what had been achieved would be very useful.

JM/AJB

9. The next meeting is on Wednesday 7TH March 2018 2pm Orford Town Hall

AJB/12/12/2017