



Lower Otter Restoration Project

Minutes of the Stakeholder Group Meeting

Clinton Devon Estates Office, Bicton Arena

10.00 am Wednesday 10 May 2017

1 - Attendees

Cllr Tom Wright (Chair)	East Devon District Council & Budleigh Salterton Town Council
Chris Woodruff	East Devon AONB
Cllr Geoff Jung	East Devon District Council - Colaton Raleigh
James Chubb	East Devon District Council
Cllr John Fudge	Otterton Parish Council
Ian Wycherley	Representing South Farm residents and businesses
Sam Bridgewater	EDPHCT / Clinton Devon Estates
Mike Williams	Environment Agency
Megan Rimmer	Environment Agency
Jayne Savage	Clinton Devon Estates
Andrew Howard	KOR Communication
David Butler	Representing Granary Lane residents
Marcus Adams	South West Water
David Turner	East Devon District Council
Richard Spurway	Devon County Council
Haylor Lass	OVA
Chris Jenner	FAB Link

2 - Apologies

Cllr Christine Channon	Devon County Council
David Smith	South West Water
Malcolm Baker	Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club

Introduction

Following recent local elections and subsequent change in boundaries it was agreed that Cllr Claire Wright (Devon County Council – Otter Valley) should be invited to attend future meetings.

3 – Actions from last meeting

Ian Wycherley confirmed that no South Farm residents currently wished to accept Mike Williams offer to meet and discuss the options.

4 – For discussion: Short Listed Options

Megan Rimmer, EA, confirmed that the Project Board has agreed to give further considerations to a short list of four options.

The short listed options are:

- floodplain restoration across Southern Big Marsh;
- floodplain restoration across Big and Little Marshes;
- large scale restoration of the River Otter;
- assisted natural recovery.

Additional components have been allocated to one of three categories:

- those we will aim not to do (see list below);
- those that we will aim to carry out;
- those that we may do dependent on funding

Components that we will aim not to do are as follows

- Swale (shallow ditch) at toe of Little Bank;
- Bund around cricket ground;
- Raise level of cricket ground;
- Relocate Cricket Club to landfill;
- Installation of new flapped outfalls through the embankments to southern Big Marsh (south of South Farm Road);
- Dredging of river/estuary;
- Installation of a larger overfall pipe from Cricket Club to river;
- Increased maintenance of the Kersbrook;
- Addition of a concrete spillway to Little Bank and Big Bank.

Haylor Lass commented that it is not necessarily only people who live in the area who are affected, it is also visitors. Should the site become popular with visitors, then parking needs to be considered.

Geoff Jung commented that as there is no defined plan yet, the people he has spoken to are happy so far.

Sam Bridgewater said that it is important that we know what public opinion is which should come from the Public Exhibition.

David Butler commented that it was important to make sure the public exhibition was well managed to ensure people are listened to and not “told”. The views of those who attend the exhibition need to be captured.

5 – For discussion: Updates and forthcoming work

Megan Rimmer confirmed that it was normal practice to use Do Nothing as a baseline when appraising options. However, in the case of this project, the Environment Agency's view is that the Do Nothing and Do Minimum options are not viable as they fall outside of the organisation's scope to deliver, and thus will not be considered further.

David Butler agreed it was not worth spending time and money investigating non-viable options. Residents would like to see a sustainable environment.

FAB Link Report

Chris Jenner gave an update on the FAB Link Project with respect to the impact on the River Otter and the Restoration Project. Report attached (appendix1). Engineering drawings are available for circulation if required.

Chris Jenner confirmed that all stiles would be re-instated and paths would be wheelchair friendly.

A small section near Lime Kiln car park will not be raised as it may cause more water to be trapped. Lime Kiln, at the bottom of Granary Lane, is the lowest point and if the road is raised it will move any flood water nearer to Granary Lane.

When asked if the proposed 1.5-metre-wide footpath would be wide enough, Chris confirmed that ideally 2 metres would be created but on this occasion, there is limited space available to deliver this.

Chris Woodruff requested further discussion with FAB Link regarding undergrounding of overhead electric cables. He highlighted that the AONB have previously recorded levels of recreational path use.

Geoff Jung asked if surplus soil from the FAB Link Project would be used to raise South Farm Road. Chris confirmed that to minimise lorry movements it would probably more likely be used for the new cricket club site.

When asked when the work would commence, Chris confirmed that the FAB Link project is still at the planning stage and the earliest start would be Summer 2018. He confirmed that if they needed to use Lime Kiln car park they would ensure that half the area was still available for public use and July and August would be avoided. The skatepark would be allowed to remain open.

Granary Lane Residents Group

Commented on the importance of ensuring that whichever option goes ahead, the sustainable maintenance and affordability must be taken into account, and that residents interests must be safeguarded.

South Farm Residents Group

Asked how information obtained from public exhibition will be captured. KOR reported that everyone visiting the exhibition will be invited to give feedback which will then be shared with Stakeholders.

Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club

Mike Williams reported that Malcolm Baker had enquired previously to ask if there was any progress with funding the Cricket Club relocation. Mike confirmed that no further work on this would take place until a decision had been made by the Heritage Lottery Fund on the project's funding application, anticipated to be end June 2017. Mike also noted that Landfill Committee Funding was likely to be favourable, but that funds need to be spent within a year of the application so it was too early to apply yet.

6 – For Decision

Proposed date for Public Exhibition:- Wednesday 5 July 2017.

Megan to book suitable venue. Suggestions in order of preference: -

Public Hall Budleigh Salterton

Temple Hall, Budleigh Salterton

East Budleigh Village Hall

Time:- 12 noon to 7 p.m.

Post meeting note: Temple Hall, Budleigh Salterton, booked for Wednesday 5 July.

Stakeholder representatives will be invited to attend.

EA to provide name badges for everyone.

James Chubb highlighted the importance of involving the younger population in the consultation as the project will be affecting the area for many future years and suggested details of the exhibition should be put on social media and maybe contact local schools. Tom Wright commented that there is a Budleigh Families group on Facebook. KOR/Laura Rose to consider further advertising via social media.

Ian Wycherley asked if KOR's questionnaire could be circulated to Stakeholders before the exhibition. It was agreed that KOR and EA set out the questions and circulate to all Stakeholders.

Megan Rimmer confirmed the consultation will be available online for those who are unable to attend in person.

7 – Issues Log

Nothing new to all. Further issues may be raised at Public Exhibition.

Cycle path option to be left open for the time being until FAB Link planning application confirmed. 1.5 metre width will not be wide enough for joint use.

8 – AOB

None

9 – Statement of outcome of meeting

See Appendix 2

10 – Next Meeting

Now postponed: was Wednesday 19 July 2017 Clinton Devon Estates, Rolle Estate Office.

Please note – Date of next meeting has been amended to Wednesday 2 August 2017 at Clinton Devon Estates to allow sufficient time to produce report following Public Exhibition.

Appendix 1 - FAB Link

- FAB Project has a 50 year design life, therefore a number of different future water level scenarios have to be considered.
- The proposed reinstatement of the ~900m section of the footpath will require a local planning application to EDDC as Permitted Development rights would not provide FAB Link with the rights to reinstate the footpath with a raised level and a crushed stone all ability surface. We will continue to consult with stakeholders in advance of submitting our application in summer 2017.
- The FAB Project preference remains for a 'footpath route' – the 'road route' (Salting Hill/Coastguard Road/B3178) cannot be discounted until planning permission is secured for the footpath route.
- Topographic, geotechnical, ecology, arboricultural surveys have been completed along the footpath route. Geophysical surveys to assess archaeology along the whole onshore cable route will be starting on 15th May and will include coverage of the area on the footpath known as Old Granary Dock.
- The finished surface and permitted rights of the reinstated footpath are proposed to be the similar as those for the existing SW Coast Path, i.e. an all ability crushed stone surface ~1.5m wide and no cycling.
- Propose to raise levels of existing footpath typically between 300mm to 600mm from existing level. Majority of finished level will be above MHWS (2.17m AOD) and below HAT (2.8m AOD) and will retain gently undulating form & minimise import/export of

material. Based on Environment Agency (EA) tide monitoring data at White Bridge (Aug 2014 to Aug 2016), max height of tide = 2.67 AOD, noting that 694 out of 59,000 records were recorded above 2.17m = 1.2% of the time tide is above MHWS.

- The EA have advised that the FAB proposal for a reinstated footpath is not required to act as a flood defence. Notwithstanding this, the proposed increase of 300mm to 600mm will improve flood defence in comparison to current situation.
- No fencing is proposed along the length of the reinstated footpath as this would become a trap for debris from any overtopping. FAB are flexible on the style of gate that may be installed at either end of the footpath route, noting that under certain flooding scenarios, this footpath could become a viable alternative route for the SW Coast Path (subject to connectivity being provided along South Farm Road).
- Proposed level of footpath has been designed to minimise potential entrapment of walkers during high tide events that would occur <1% of the time.
- The FAB Project recognises importance of interfacing with the LORP consultation in summer 2017 and EA (ABPmer) modelling of future scenarios.
- To accompany the planning application, the EA have requested that FAB undertake a Flood Risk Assessment with a mean annual fluvial flooding event with a very high tide (e.g. 1:200yr tide) or an extreme flood event (e.g. 1:100yr) with a mean spring tide.
- FAB has discussed with Western Power Distribution (WPD) the potential to underground existing 11kV overhead lines that run across the Marshes. An additional duct for the WPD cable could be installed at the same time as FAB, but would be subject to further discussions and agreement with WPD.
- The EA have stated that a condition of raising the level of the footpath would be to ensure that this does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the flood plain. This could be mitigated by taking a 500m³ scrape from somewhere in the existing flood cell and exporting the material somewhere above flood plain to maintain neutral balance of volume. FAB will consult with Country Wildlife Managers and Clinton Devon Estates to establish feasibility and candidate locations.
- Cross drains will be installed at strategic locations along the proposed reinstated footpath to mitigate potential for standing water being trapped between the footpath and the cliff.
- Estimated construction period of 3-4 months. Majority of construction will be accessed from South Farm Road where FAB are seeking a lease for a temporary construction compound opposite South Farm Road cottages.
- In respect of the existing flood protection arrangements located at the bottom on Granary Lane and at the entrance track to the Cricket Club, the FAB Project would intend to reinstate the road and open space grass area adjacent to Granary House to the same levels. It is recognised that any adjustments to ground levels at this location would potentially exacerbate the balance of flood protection in this locality.

Appendix 2 – Statement of Meeting

Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group meeting

Held May 10, 2017 at the Rolle Estate Offices

Statement of meeting:

The stakeholder group has noted that there are four potential options for the Lower Otter Restoration Project, which will now be investigated further.

These four options, which meet the essential criteria for both partners in the project, the Environment Agency and Clinton Devon Estates, will be explained and illustrated at a public consultation event, to be held at the Temple Hall in Budleigh Salterton on Wednesday, July 5, 2017 from noon to 7pm.

The stakeholder group thanked Chris Jenner, Development Manager of the FAB Project, for updating the meeting about the FAB Project's progress in respect of the interconnector landfall at Budleigh Salterton. The meeting supported the FAB Project's proposals for improvements to the footpath near Granary Lane. The meeting noted this was the FAB Project's preferred route, but it would require planning permission from East Devon District Council so could not yet be said to be the final route.

The group also noted that Public Health England is using the Lower Otter Estuary as part of a study into mosquito ecology and management.

The next meeting of the Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group is planned for August 2, 2017 at the Rolle Estate Office.

Chairman Cllr Tom Wright

May 11, 2017