

East Head Coastal Issues Advisory Group Meeting

West Wittering Football Pavilion
7th October 2009, 10.30am

MINUTES

Present:

Clive Moon (CM)	Havant Borough Council
John Davies (JD)	Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Nick Gray (NG)	Environment Agency
John Curzon (JC)	Natural England
Stella Hadley (SH)	Cakeham Manor Estate
Keith Martin (KM)	West Wittering Parish Council
Peter Morton (PM)	West Wittering Estate
Daniel Duthie (DD)	National Trust
Andrew Lawrence (AL)	National Trust
Richard Shrubbs (RS)	F.G. Woodger Trust
Jim Robertson (JR)	West Wittering Parish Council
David Lowsley (DL)	Chichester District Council
Gavin Holder (GH)	Chichester District Council

Item No:

1. **Apologies:**

Nick Bean, Environment Agency
Peter Jones, West Wittering - Member

2. **Minutes of Meeting 6th July 2009:**

Item 5:

JD was concerned that the group had lost sight of the requirement for a sill at East Head because the recent recharge had been a success. The requirement for a sill was identified as part of the Pagham Harbour to East Head Coastal Defence Strategy (the Strategy), on the recommendation of the expert panel. JD understands that a sill is not required at this time but if significant change occurs leading to the requirement of the sill, the EHCIAG must be at a stage where it can react quickly and be ready to install it. This means assessing the site and options now, considering costs and speaking to planners.

DL emphasised that there is enough resilience in the structure at present and that it is not ideal to apply for planning permission now, as this would lapse if the sill is not installed within a set period, leading to unnecessary costs. JD accepted this, but explained that design and costs should be considered now. PM pointed out that we need to know how the geotextile sill will work and whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required. RS summarised that we need to implement stage 1 now, determine what we need to install the scheme. Planning /

environmental assessments should come later - stage 2.

JC explained that the requirement for an EIA will change over time so there is little point undertaking one now, which will become out of date later. A full EIA will not be requested and JC will advise the group on EIA requirements as necessary. JD explained that the 'sill' scheme was accepted in the strategy, which is a strong indicator that it could be constructed when required (and that an EIA would not form a barrier). The strategy has been approved by all, which is the initial step to scheme implementation. JC went on to say that we still need to ensure that there are no issues when it comes to the detailed design stage. KM voiced concerns over disturbance of the salt marsh while testing occurs. JD explained that it would recover and that there would only be short term effects from this. JC also highlighted that we would need to consider bird disturbance – planning should cover these issues.

DD reminded the group that no-one has yet worked out the engineering procedures for the sill (how it will be installed). DL predicted that to appoint a Consultant could cost around £20,000 for a detailed project appraisal / project design report. DL will speak to Edwin Zenderink – a contact at Tencate who manufacture the textilell, to find out where we go now. DL will make an expression of interest to Tencarte at an up-coming exhibition at Goodwood. JR suggested that we should use an independent consultant for the sill, as Tencate would be biased towards their own product. JD also suggested we need a consultant that will look at a range of products – something rounded and robust that works. DL will report to the group the status of the de-silting project at South Pond, Midhurst, where the Council is considering the use of Tencate's products.

DL suggested that Malcolm Bray may have borehole data which could help the consultants and reduce costs of any site investigation works. This could provide a scoping idea for the consultants. AL offered to approach Malcolm for this info. PM said that the consultants would determine the line of the sill, based on substrate. JR pointed out that there is also a lot of information available in the Strategy, which can be passed to the consultant. DL will also start getting expressions of interest from a range of consultant engineers and will produce a scoping report for the consultants (which will first be agreed with the group). JC will consider the best time for investigations on the salt marsh to minimise disturbance (likely to be April/May or August/September based on bird use).

Item 4:

DL provided an update here: DL and Havant Borough Council met with PM and SH following concerns that recharge on Hayling Island led to sand accumulations fronting the beach huts between Cakeham and East Head. It was demonstrated why the schemes on Hayling Island were not likely to be linked to the accumulations at Cakeham because of the significant difference in volume.

Minutes of meeting of 6th July '09 agreed. DL to re-circulate with minor amendments as discussed.

Actions:

DL to speak to Tencarte at upcoming Goodwood event to make expression of interest towards sill;

JC to advise group on need for EIA;

DL to advise group on status of South Pond;

AL to approach Malcolm Bray for borehole data;

DL to seek expressions of interest from range of consultants;

DL to produce scoping report for group comments;

JC to advise on possible timings for salt marsh investigations;

DL to circulate minor amendments to July 6th minutes.

3. Strategy - Status:

NG explained that the Strategy is awaiting Defra approval, which is expected in the next 4 months. A project group has been set up to implement a flood defence scheme at West Wittering, which according to the strategy, may involve raising the road to provide flood protection. A range of options will be reviewed. The EA have appointed ARUP as consultants and they hope to report a range of options to the EHCIAG in 3 – 4 months from the date of this meeting (February 2010?). 2 – 3 months after this, the Parishes will be consulted on the preferred option and later in 2010, public exhibitions will be arranged if required.

4. Triggers for Action:

Prior to this meeting DL circulated a list of triggers and corresponding responses/actions that could be adopted at East Head. The Group agreed that the list was a good starting point. JR suggested that the trigger points should continue further East – up to groyne C18 by the public conveniences, as this is where the management policy switches from 'hold the line' to 'adaptive management'. DL explained that there are no hard defences here, and little pressure, however we can consider moving triggers eastward to this point.

PM was concerned at the wording 'consider repair to breastworks', as DL has committed to repairing the breastworks until the sill is in place. Therefore the response/action should be 'repair breastworks'. JC questioned whether we should commit to 'always' repairing the breastworks, as the priority is to maintain the hinge, and realigning the breastworks may aid this. JR said he would like to see the sill in place before such deteriorations are allowed. JC went on to say that Natural England may not allow further recharge if maintaining the breastworks is causing East Head to be in an unsustainable position. DL questioned to what extent we'd continue repairing the breastworks if the sill is planned and ready to go, due to unnecessary costs associated with this.

JD was concerned that the actions falling from the triggers were

incomplete. If the breastworks were to fail and a channel formed we would want to replace the breastworks as quick as possible. Also, beach recharge is important throughout. If a healthy, stable barrier beach is in place, there would be no adverse effect on East Head. Therefore recycling / recharge may be sustainable due to the value of the feature. JD was keen that we do not foreclose options. Having options is what adaptive management is all about. JC explained that recharge is not undertaken purely to keep the hinge intact, but to help maintain a naturally dynamic feature.

JR recommended that we should add columns to the trigger chart, such as 'who will implement the trigger action/response', 'how will the action be funded' and 'what is the timescale for this'. JR questioned whether we could recycle from where we are currently receiving surplus material to the east and whether this could be included in the trigger chart. JD explained that groynes are not included in the trigger chart and that they may need moving backwards or retaining. DL said that the groynes are currently robust but C22 and C24 may need extending backwards if the breastworks fail.

PM said that Groyne Bays C22-24 are currently full of material, leaving a significant drop to the beach. DL will investigate removing two planks from the inner end of groyne C22 to see what happens, to which the group agreed. RD suggested that a survey should be undertaken to see what happens. CM mentioned that a survey was carried out in the area yesterday afternoon (6th October '09), following the recharge earlier in the year. In addition, Lidar will be obtained over the Christmas period of all of East Head. CM explained that cross sections of the beach profile are available from before the recharge. JR suggested that cross sections illustrating the beach profile could be used to set triggers, i.e. if clearly defined points on the cross section are reached (when beach levels drop to a defined point), an action/response will be followed.

KM questioned whether we should have triggers for storm events, however DL explained that we would not necessarily react immediately to storm events, as the beach will generally recover post storm. It is not sudden change that is of concern, rather change over time, where the beach may become out of balance. JR suggested providing a safety margin. CM thought that a better approach may be to take volumes from groyne bays from the existing surveys and base actions on these. Cross sections are only representative of a single beach point, not the beach as a whole. CM explained that beach monitoring takes place at least every six months from Selsey Bill to Southampton, and even more data may be available, including Malcolm Bray's study.

DL has received a proposal from Malcolm Bray to update his 2007 report at East Head, taking it further eastwards. This will give a steer on what has been happening in the area including the sand accumulations at Cakeham. This additional survey has been quoted at a value of £2,800, and the survey could commence in January.

DL explained that we need this data to set triggers. The survey would cover the Eastern end of East Strand to East Head and would give us an idea of changes in beach levels. PM suggested that it would be better to have a study view of the whole harbour, including Havant's frontage. DL explained that such data is already available free of charge from the Regional Monitoring Programme. JR mentioned the Going Dutch event during the strategy consultation and their view to look at the whole cell, not just small areas.

DL continued to say that there are changes going on in this area that we do not fully understand, but we are able to track. It is for the academic world to explore why change is occurring. CM pointed out that the data Malcolm Bray may find, could be available in the year anyhow.

JR asked where the group was going to get data from for the trigger levels. DL said that he could extract data from the Regional Monitoring Programme. An alternative would be for Malcolm to set limits and prepare cross section locations. In relation to the Regional Monitoring Programme, CM explained that data would usually be available from Spring and Autumn surveys, and a Summer survey (so up to 3 a year). DL said that once we better understand the area, trigger points can be prepared. It was suggested that the EHCIAG should set these, rather than Malcolm Bray, and sooner rather than later. JD said he was happy with Malcolm Bray's project proposal.

DL explained that in Malcolm Bray's 2007 study, he set trends on what would happen over time. His new study would clarify whether the trends occurred and illustrate what exists now. The EHCIAG agreed that survey costs will come out of group membership.

In relation to the triggers, DD emphasised the need to ensure nothing is done that works against nature, and that we should always work with nature. JC went on to say that we are working with natural processes, but having some interference. We are not simply working against them.

In summary, the EHCIAG feels the triggers are a good start and all members should inform the Group of any amendments / additional comments.

CM suggested that Malcolm Bray should speak to Sam Cope and Andrew Bradbury of the Regional Monitoring Programme, as they have an excellent knowledge about barrier beach over-washing etc. Malcolm Bray should be asked to identify any missing survey data that would aid the trigger initiation. DL questioned whether planning permission would be needed for a beach management plan of this scale and he will speak to the District Planners to clarify. JD explained that with planning permission we should be looking at something along the lines of 'as and when required we will do this'. It's important not to be too specific with triggers as vagueness will help in this case.

JR made reference to Spurn Peninsular, where approval had been granted by the planning department to allow immediate management responses, particularly to allow recycling as and when required. CM also said that Havant have a 5 year rolling planning fee for their beach management plan.

DL noted that if a major breach occurred, we would need to decide whether we make the breach safe or immediately undertake a scheme. KM suggested that guidelines involving numbers are the way to go in order for future generations to pick up the intentions of the Group. JC made clear that the group must not lose sight of aims, which are to allow natural processes to prevail and maintain access.

Actions:

DL to consider removing two planks from inner end of groyne C22 to release surplus material.

DL to speak to District Planners regarding need for permission for beach management plan at this location.

5. Further Studies:

Clive Moon described a study led by Havant Borough Council on the Hayling Island to Gosport frontage. 3,000 pebbles with electronic chips inside will be deposited between Portsmouth and Hayling. The pebbles can be tracked by an instrument with a one metre range. This will provide a ground measurement of the movements of these and give us more of an understanding of sediment pathways. Each pebble has a 50 year life expectancy. Some funding for this study has come from SCOPAC and some from the local authorities involved. Some pebbles will be deposited on the beach at Gunner Point next month (November '09) and some at East Stoke at a later date.

6. West Wittering Estate FEPA licence application:

PM has got all the relevant papers for West Wittering Estate's FEPA licence application. PM requires a FEPA licence to remove the accumulation of sand fronting the beach huts. There are 2 options: 1. move accumulated sand just above mean high water mark on a set of spring tides, or 2. use a dumper truck to move the sand below high water mark. PM needs the support from all members of the EHCIAG to make the FEPA application worthwhile. Option one is preferable. DL satisfied on behalf of Chichester District Council but advised PM that he needs to consult with his neighbours. National Trust were satisfied. PM explained that approx 500 tonnes would be removed in 2-3 general movements. JD voiced concern over potential negative affects on the navigable channel. JD would like confirmation of values that will go into the FEPA application before he approves. Natural England were not too concerned. The group discussed the above further and are aware that they will be formally consulted when the application is made. It was suggested that Malcolm

Bray could be asked to look at where this sand would end up – to prove it will not drift east and negatively effect Cakeham Manor Estate. SH was keen for this before she agrees to support the FEPA licence. DL to add to Malcolm Bray's project scope.

Action:

DL to ask Malcolm to confirm whether sand migrates west.

PM to confirm quantity of sand to be moved

7. Accounts:

Invoices to be circulated to group members week commencing 12th October '09. Group agreed funds to be used for Malcolm Bray's study.

Lunch will not be provided in the future to keep costs down.

8. Any Other Business:

JR Suggested that we should have a website that contains all the groups decisions / minutes etc in relation to East Head that we can all access it at a centrally documented point – we should add an item to next months agenda.

The Gant chart for actions at East Head is out of date and should be updated at next meeting.

JD asked where we should place the award given to the group last year. AL suggested that we could attach it to the new notice board at East Head. JR would like to borrow it for a Parish Newsletter photo.

Actions:

ALL – To discuss central website as part of next meeting's agenda;

ALL – To update Gant Chart as part of next meeting's agenda.

9. Date of next meeting:

Should be held after Malcolm Bray has undertaken his study (i.e. after late January 2010).

Agreed: 24th February 2010 @ 10:30 at West Wittering Football Pavilion. Coffee will be provided.