

East Head Coastal Issues Advisory Group Meeting

West Wittering Football Pavilion
30th March 2010, 10.30am

MINUTES

Present:	Andrew Lawrence (AL)	National Trust
	Mark Wardall (MW)	National Trust
	Gavin Holder (GH)	Chichester District Council
	Jim Robertson (JR)	West Wittering Parish Council
	John Davis (JD)	Chichester Harbour Conservancy
	Jon Curson (JC)	Natural England
	Emma Kelman (EK)	Natural England
	Keith Martin (KM)	West Wittering Parish Council
	Nick Bean (NB)	Environment Agency
	Peter Morton (PM)	West Wittering Estate
	Richard Shrubbs (RS)	F.G. Woodger Trust
	Stella Hadley (SH)	Cakeham Manor Estate

Item No:

1. Apologies:

David Lowsley, Chichester District Council

GH explained that David remains signed off on sick leave and is not due to return to work until 7th June.

2. Minutes of Meeting 7th October 2009:

Item 2 Action Points:

JD asked about any progress made with actions from the last meeting.

DL initiated talks with the planning department but GH was unsure how far DL managed to progress this.

GH explained that DL organised a scoping report to be produced by Mott MacDonald. This provides advice on the design and construction of a geo-textile sill. The report also provides an estimated cost for the works based on the description in the Draft Pagham to East Head CDS. This scoping report was produced free of charge.

JD mentioned the intention from the last meeting was to invite a consultant to provide a range of possible options. We would then be able to select the best option and go to tender for the works. JD expressed concern that this report has not achieved what was intended at the last meeting. GH explained that the scoping report collected expressions of interest from consultants for potential geo-textile sill works. They were

also waiting on the study by Malcolm Bray as it was not explicit that a sill would actually be required. This scoping report has given an idea of what would be involved with the sill construction.

It was suggested that the actions from last meeting are addressed in turn.

- *DL to speak to Tencate at upcoming Goodwood event to make expression of interest towards sill:* GH was unaware of whether DL carried out this action.
- *JC to advise group on need for EIA:* JC explained that an EIA will be required at the scheme stage. It will not necessarily need to be onerous or complicated but an EIA will need to be submitted.
- *DL to advise group on status of South Pond:* GH said that Tencate were originally being considered for the works at South Pond; however, they are no longer being considered due to cost.
- *AL to approach Malcolm Bray for borehole data:* AL explained that DL was going to speak with MB but in his absence he is happy to follow this action up. AL would like to review the report fully before this.
- *DL to seek expressions of interest from range of consultants:* GH was unsure of any other consultants DL had spoken to.
- *DL to produce scoping report for group comments:* GH said this was the purpose of the Mott MacDonald scoping report.
- *JC to advise on possible timings for salt marsh investigations:* JC said investigations should be geared towards disturbance to birds rather than small scale physical disturbance to the saltmarsh. Also, summer seems to be a better time for investigations than winter.

JD furthered the point of the intention of the scoping report. He explained the need for an investigation of options, including the pros and cons of each option, to be carried out to ensure that plans are ready to be carried out in the future. JD said a scoping sheet should be circulated to consultants to see if they would take on the brief of preparing a range of options. He suggested that this is an action to be carried forward to the next meeting. GH would prefer to speak to DL first to see if this was something he had already started. JR asked whether it is realistic for this to be taken forward due to DL being on long term sick leave and GH's work commitments. JD suggested we should go back to Jacobs who produced the initial report and commission them to write a consultants contract brief for scheme options, as they are best placed to write this. GH commented that they would first have to find out how much that would cost and how it would be funded.

SH asked how GH will take forward any actions that come out of this meeting? GH said he is expected to follow up any actions from this meeting.

Item 4 Action Points:

GH explained that some maintenance of the groynes in the area of groyne C22 was carried out earlier this year, and two planks were removed from the inner end of the groyne.

GH was not sure of the progress DL had made with the action to speak with planners regarding need for permission for a beach management plan. JR explained that fundamental to moving forwards is to get plan and advance approval, just like at Spurn Head that has clear actions. JR suggested that an item for triggers should be added to every future agenda so they can be advanced to a point where one day they can be used.

JR reminded the group that columns would be added for cost and who should be responsible for each action. PM commented that this all seems too bureaucratic and that the group can meet quickly when a situation arises that requires action. JR responded that it is not bureaucratic; it is planning ahead in order to save time in the event of a situation. NB suggested that a Beach Management Plan (BMP) be established that all partners are signed up to with trigger points for when action or intervention needs to be undertaken. In addition, provisional planning approval of various actions can be obtained as part of this plan with an established lead in period for obtaining final approval. NB also explained the importance of identifying sources of funding for the schemes, because the type of failure or type of intervention needed may determine whether the Agency will grant funding or not. JD agreed that the production of a BMP is a good idea, but queried who would produce this plan, and whether a consultant would be used.

JD said he sees Havant as a model that the group should seek to follow. Their plan went out to consultation and has the approval of partners. It also has funding allocated. JC agreed but added that the overall aim to stabilise East Head in as natural a way as possible, should not be forgotten.

JC further voiced concern that public funding may not be available in the future. NB explained that there are other options for funding. There is no reason why schemes cannot be privately funded. JD added that when funds cease, the option of no active intervention option will kick in, as it will all around the country.

GH asked how much it cost for Havant to produce their BMP. NB said that the design work cost £200,000 and £4.5M of grant funding is allocated for the work to be carried out. SH queried how long will this money be in place for? NB explained that it has perceived as a worthwhile scheme so the money is in place and allocated at the moment.

JR suggested looking back at the original simplistic document that DL started working on. JR said that this document can be evolved into a BMP, especially as triggers are already being shaped by Malcolm Bray's study. However, no progress has been made since the last meeting and someone needs to lead and take this forward.

GH explained that a significant step forward since the last meeting is the

production of the geomorphology study completed by Malcolm Bray. GH expected that DL would have waited to receive this report before he arranged further discussion with the group. GH explained that he is not overly familiar with the site and Malcolm Bray has offered to meet him on site to talk through the report and also to talk through the triggers that he thinks should go ahead. He has offered to do this free of charge. GH said that after this site meeting he will be able to update the triggers table and report back to the group. KM suggested that this site meeting would benefit more members of the group. GH explained that this offer was a kind favour from Malcolm Bray as GH was once his student. If the group wanted to meet there would likely be a charge. MW said that this is a marvellous offer from Malcolm Bray and that GH should accept the offer and update the table accordingly afterwards. NB agreed that GH should attend this site meeting and then report back to the rest of the group.

GH suggested that after this, the group needs to decide who will monitor day to day changes. In addition a maintenance performer could be produced to run alongside the trigger list.

Actions:

GH to follow up talks with planning department in house.

GH to circulate Mott MacDonald scoping report for comments.

AL to approach Malcolm Bray for borehole data.

GH to call consultants to see if they had been approached by DL.

GH to speak to DL regarding report investigation a range of options

GH to draft email/ letter to Jacobs regarding the preparation of a consultant brief.

GH to speak to planners regarding the need for permission for beach management plan.

3. Strategy - Status:

GH explained that the Strategy is still waiting to be signed off by Defra and the Treasury. NB added that it takes a long time for the strategies to be signed off.

NB explained that Nick Gray had an options meeting regarding the West Wittering Flood Defence Scheme and that everyone should receive an email with the options.

GH mentioned that the North Solent SMP is currently out for consultation and it basically reflects what is laid out in the strategy.

JC mentioned that one difference is that the EA have changed the policy for West Wittering from managed realignment to hold the line largely due to the fact that they cannot afford compensation for land purchase.

4. Discuss East Head, West Wittering and Cakeham: interpretation of beach changes 2004-09 study, including recommendations and how they relate to triggers for action:

GH gave a summary of the report.

One of the major findings of the study is that that area is considered a complex and dynamic environment. Broad trends between 2005 and 2009 are covered by the study. A major trend is that of significant onshore movement of sand at Cakeham and West Wittering. Towards the hinge there are variable sediment gains and losses, and moderate foreshore sediment loss. The study shows that at East Head spit the upper beach is beginning to build up with formation of new dunes. In addition, the north end of the spit is starting to retreat slightly.

A large proportion of the sand is coming from swash bars originating from East Pole Sands and the majority of this is initially stored on the lower foreshore. This sand will eventually become wind entrained and move to the backshore of the beaches. Some sand will also move NW towards East Head. There are problems and benefits to this onshore sand movement. Large accumulations of sand at Cakeham and West Wittering will affect beach huts and properties in those areas. However, some of the sand will gradually move north westwards which will help to stabilise the hinge.

Malcolm's proposals include sand dune management techniques to prevent sand blowing into properties. Such management is beneficial in that when we stop seeing these swash bars moving onshore, there could be erosion at this location and therefore the dunes act as a buffer.

The key recommendations are that the CCO surveys are continued to enhance knowledge of the physical processes of the area. Additional monitoring and cross profile studies could be carried out, and there is potential for hydrographic surveys to identify the offshore swash bars. Other key recommendations from the study include sand stabilisation techniques, the recording of all management activities, and the use of historical images for sand dune development.

GH asked the group for their thoughts on the study.

JR said that MB is very cautious in the report to explain what is likely to happen over the next 3-5 years. GH explained that the report suggests that although the swash bars may cease to move onshore, the lower foreshore store is likely to continue the sediment supply for up to a decade. JR mentioned that we do not know what storms we may experience which could deplete the foreshore sediment store more rapidly.

JD interpreted the study as a good report. The situation is looking

promising for the time being, but contingency plans are still needed such as the Beach Management Plan. NB agreed and added that East Head is in good shape which gives us time to prepare a BMP. NB said that if it was haemorrhaging sediment, a sill would be necessary.

PM said that the scope should still be widened regarding our knowledge of exactly what is happening. Hydrographic surveys should be carried out to achieve this.

SH said that the Cakeham Estate would like to thank MB for the extensive report and asked if there is any chance of further support for the management of the sand dunes. GH explained that there may potentially be some funding available through a Coastal Change Project, which focuses on education and getting the residents involved. GH said he has already spoken to Julie Whitney regarding Cakeham and she is interested to talk about this.

GH asked PM his thoughts on stabilising the sand dunes. PM said they are delighted that dunes are establishing. PM explained that it is difficult for the marram grass to take where they cannot fence off the areas. The vegetation is taking but it is a much slower process.

JR asked whether the Coastal Change Project funding could help out with the dune management. GH explained that the funding could not help with practical management; it is more for education and advising local communities of the management techniques.

JD suggested the group go through the recommendations from the study.

JD asked whether the group needs to write to the CCO regarding recommendations 1 and 2. This letter could also address the possibility of the CCO carrying out hydrographic surveys as well as set out in recommendation 3 (and 4). NB asked what surveys are currently carried out. GH said that 2 surveys are carried out per year, but this does not include hydrographic surveys. JD asked whether the CCO would cover recommendation 5. GH said he could take this forward with Malcolm.

With regard to recommendation 6, SH asked who would carry out the monitoring of sand movement. GH explained that once the management techniques are established, it will be the responsibility of the estates to monitor how well these techniques are working.

GH will talk to MB on site regarding recommendation 7. GH said it would be useful to have a standard template to record all management activities. JR added that this would be the purpose of the website, to record all management and monitoring information.

JD suggested another recommendation is added to the list to employ Malcolm each year to report changes. This would not need to be such a comprehensive, it would simply need to cover changes from the previous

year. GH said he could find out from Malcolm the potential cost of this and the best time to conduct such a report. NB added that this would provide part of the adaptive management approach.

MW asked whether the groups' agreement to the recommendations mean agreement to the triggers. The group decided that the triggers will be considered when GH meets Malcolm. JR confirmed that the outcome of GH's meeting with Malcolm will be an updated trigger table.

Actions:

GH to write to CCO regarding recommendations 1, 2, 3 & 4 – asking if it would cost more than current work?

GH – to provide SH with Julie Whitney's details.

GH - to find out cost and timing for annual update reports from MB.

5. Further Studies:

GH reminded the group that Clive Moon attended the last meeting regarding a study led by Havant Borough Council. There is no further information to report at this time. PM asked whether Clive Moon is in contact and coordinating with Malcolm Bray. GH confirmed that they are in contact. JR added that it would be good to have Clive at next meeting and perhaps once a year to keep the group informed on what they are doing.

Action:

GH to arrange Clive Moon to attend the next meeting.

6. Accounts:

The study has been paid for and there is no other change in the accounts. JR mentioned that it may be useful to have an accounts update sheet for each meeting.

7. Any Other Business:

JR mentioned that the idea of a website was mentioned at the last meeting. This would be a place to record and store all information and activities in a central place. He queried where this website could be hosted. GH said that it could potentially be added as sub-heading on the CDC website or should this be more locally based.

KM raised the point that everyone needs to be able to log on to update records. Also, he queried whether the minutes would be made public. KM said the Parish Council could host the website. JD added that the East Head portal could host the site but there is not the facility for everyone to log on to this.

NB suggested that the group think about what is required – to upload minutes, links, and recording activities. It seems that the West Wittering Parish Council website would be the best place to host a website. A template for recording data can be devised with Malcolm Bray.

SH asked whether Malcolm Bray's report is publicly available? GH replied that it is but has not yet been circulated – GH to upload report onto CDC website.

JR offered, as a civil engineer, to help GH produce and update the triggers.

Actions:

GH - send template for recording data to KM after meeting with MB.

9. Date of next meeting:

September (mid)

Date: Tuesday 21st preferred – GH to circulate dates

DL due back 7 June