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Environment
Agency



The Moors at Arne Project, Stakeholder Liaison Group

16 September 2020, 17:00 – 18:30, Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Project Team

Helen Morgan – Environment Agency Project Manager
Kevin House – Environment Agency NEAS (National Environment Assessment Service)
Catherine Farrugia - Environment Agency Advisor (Flood & Coast Risk Management)
Neil Watson – Environment Agency Coastal Engineer (Wessex)
Hayley Hills – Environment Agency Community Engagement Officer
Dante Munns – RSPB Area Manager
Peter Robertson – RSPB Senior Sites Manager, Dorset Reserves
Paul Canning – Associate Director Atkins Ltd
Charles Bennett – Senior Engineer Atkins Ltd
Ian Alexander – Natural England

Chair – Helen Morgan chaired this meeting.

Representative of Birds of Poole Harbour
Representative of Ridge Moors Action Group
Representative of Dorset Bird Club
Representative of Arne Parish Council
Representative of CPRE
Representative of Open Spaces Society
Representative of Dorset Council
Two Ridge Residents

Welcome

Welcome and introduction by the Chair.

Review of notes from last meeting

Notes from last time agreed-

Brief project update and discussion

The project team are progressing the detailed design for the project. Ground investigations have been undertaken and this has included a number of trial pits, bore holes and various soil and ground testing analyses. Archaeologists, military experts and ecologists have been on site and observing the ground investigation to consider potential impacts to the current

environment. Geophysics surveys have also been undertaken during this time which will feed into future investigations which include archaeological trenching.

Ecological surveys have been progressing but have been delayed due to Covid19, these surveys have been looking at a variety of species to inform a baseline habitat survey to comply with requirements for gaining planning permission.

The results of these investigations and surveys will be compiled and will inform the ongoing design work. Continued monitoring and survey work will be progressing prior to planning permission. With Covid19 impacts there has been some delays to the work being undertaken and therefore the planning application will now be submitted in 2021.

Flood Risk (Freshwater and Tidal modelling) update

The flood risk assessment to establish the viability and any impacts of undertaking the project is a very complex, technical piece of work. The slides give an overview of the modelling work undertaken and presents the conclusions that will be included in the flood risk assessment report that will be submitted as part of the planning submission. The flood risk modelling assessment is a statutory requirement of the planning submission and the modelling has complied with the current guidance to complete this work. . In addition a series of technical notes are being prepared that will sit alongside the report to look at Ridge Wharf, Ridge Farm and Campsite, the settlement of Ridge, and Bankgate cottages. Consultants from Atkins Global Ltd explained the findings of the flood risk modelling work which can be viewed in the narrated slide pack. This presentation was shared with attendees prior to the Stakeholder Liaison Group meeting.

Questions following the presentation:

- A question was asked about how the tidal water locked behind the embankments would drain away? Within the new embankment (western) there are two new culvert structures that would be built in to the embankment, the main one being a culvert along the line of the Furzebrook stream. This would allow the water to flow through the structure.
- A further question to ask whether the culverts would have flaps? Yes these would have a flap valve on the tidal side to prevent the tidal flow coming through but allow the fluvial flow to drain out into the harbour.
- A question was raised about the length of time that tide locking occurred in current situations and whether further modelling would be undertaken for extended periods similar to current scenarios? The modelling has been undertaken following current guidance, this has taken into account the recent storms and therefore the likely surge which would occur. This has been applied within the model and this can be seen within the modelling in which the fluvial/freshwater area (behind the western embankment) filled up then started to drain and then slowed when the tide came back in and then drained over the successive tides.

Open forum

- A question was asked about navigation, to confirm understanding from the presentation that there would be no change to tidal heights? Within the river Frome the modelling shows there would be no change to tidal heights with the scheme in place.
- A further question was asked about any siltation effects in the river Frome or Poole Harbour? The detail of this will be covered in the next Stakeholder Liaison Group meeting but to note if there isn't any significant changes in tide levels or currents, along the Frome, there wouldn't be a driver to cause a difference in siltation patterns. This will be explored in more detail at the next Stakeholder Liaison Group meeting.
- A question was asked about the cost of the project, whether in the current government situation there would still be the priority to fund the project? The government has set out various plans and strategies to deal with both climate change and flood risk and they have recently announced a doubling of the money to be spent on flood risk over the next 6 years. This will be targeted to priority areas including projects that have environmental and socio-economic benefits and this project falls within that programme of works.
- A question was asked about compound flooding and does this modelling take this into account? The modelling that has been done uses the latest signed off guidance. There is always further research and development going on and there may be future improvements, the inputs within the model (both tidal and fluvial) have taken into account a higher probability event to ensure that the modelling we do is precautionary.
- A further question around the drainage and nature of the groundwater that was included in the modelling? The modelling takes account of the soil conditions, the geology, and the typical saturation of the ground. The ongoing groundwater monitoring to date is showing that there is no link between the tidal levels and the groundwater levels. These are shallow groundwater systems that are associated with the rainfall. From the CCTV survey work, some of the drainage within Ridge was shown to flow through Hallett's sluice which will not be impacted by the scheme and with the prediction of no change to the river levels this drainage system will carry on as it is.

Next Steps

The project team shared a date for the next meeting (4th November) and this would cover the navigation/siltation topic (geomorphology) and the results from the traffic data survey. The project team shared that for the foreseeable future they would look to continue with virtual meetings and would welcome feedback to make sure these meetings are useful to the participants.