

Slowing the Flow Project
Programme Board Meeting

FC Offices, Pickering

2nd November 2011

Attendees:

Jeremy Walker (Chair)
Cllr Brian Baker, Pickering Town Council,
Craig McGarvey, EA
Adrian Gill, EA
Dean Hamblin, EA
Andy Wilson, NYMNPA
Phillip Long, Ryedale DC
Gareth Dadd NYCC
Ruth Ashton-Ward, Defra
David Shaw, NE
Crispin Thorn, FC
Vince Carter, FC
Alan Eves, FC
Simon Marrington, FC
Tom Nisbet, FR

Apologies:

Paul Murby, Defra
Paul Cresswell, RDC

The Minutes from the last meeting of 15 August 2011 were accepted as read.

A draft paper entitled 'Pickering Update' had been circulated by the EA before the meeting and formed the focus of the first agenda item. AG presented the paper, which was followed by detailed round table discussions. The other items were then taken in sequence. The following summary points were noted and actions agreed:

- The revised bid to Defra for individual property resilience measures in Pickering was successful, with RDC to receive £85,000 to protect properties in the town. This is in addition to RDC's £50,000 householder flood resilience grant

ACTION: RDC to seek clarification from Defra on whether new grant monies can be carried forward into 2012/13

- Work continues to extend the land management measures to reduce flood risk. To date, the project has secured 17 ha of new riparian woodland and 13 ha of farm woodland, constructed more than 150 large woody debris (LWD) dams and 130 heather bale check dams, restored 370 m of streamside buffer zone, installed a range of measures to reduce farm runoff, and established no-burn buffer zones along

moorland streams. Plans are in place to build another 18 LWD dams and 10-20 heather bale dams, create up to a further 10 ha of riparian woodland, and to consider the scope for extending moorland no-burn buffer zones. Monitoring is in place to determine the effectiveness of riparian woodland planting and LWD dam measures and to check model predictions that they will reduce the peak flow of a 2000 type flood event by up to 0.5 cumecs. A trial of two timber 'minibunds' (each <6,000 m³ storage) is also underway in the River Seven catchment.

ACTIONS: FC and NYMNPA to pursue woodland creation on identified land and construct additional LWD and heather dams
FR and EA to finalise modelling statement on integrating the effects of the measures and post on website
FR to monitor effectiveness of timber mini-bunds
NYMNPA and FC to consider mapping tracks and possibly drains in Pickering Beck catchment to assess their contribution to rapid runoff

- AG outlined the work done since the last meeting in assessing the potential of small bunds (each <10,000m³) and other measures on Pickering Beck. It was agreed that the target should be try and provide at least a 1-in-25 year standard of flood protection for Pickering.
- The proposal to construct four small bunds within the SSSI was rejected on the grounds of the expected high cost associated with managing access and railway constraints, and damage to protected habitats. However, it was agreed that a number of other options merit further evaluation. These can essentially be described as a 'mix & match' combination of possible measures, and will involve the assessment of each potential location to store water within Pickering Beck and where feasible selecting the optimum solution. The measures to be considered include small bunds and below ground level storage (outside the SSSI), large woody debris dams, other channel restrictions, timber 'minibunds' and other minibund variants.
- It remains to be determined whether the mix & match approach will generate sufficient flood storage to deliver the required level of flood protection and a number of challenges remain. Potential constraints include environmental mitigation, archaeology, landowner consent and compensation, protection to the railway, access and planning approval. The Board agreed that this approach should be further investigated and funding has been secured from Defra to carry out the work. It was also agreed that early involvement of the EA and National Park Archaeologists would be advisable, as would early discussions with landowners. There is a need to update RDC and the wider project on progress.

ACTIONS: EA to assess feasibility of the small bunds supplemented by additional measures
EA to assess archaeological constraints and contact landowners
EA to amend the Pickering Update paper for wider circulation via the project website
EA to present the Pickering Update paper to a meeting of RDC before end December

- CM highlighted that the Reservoir Act 1975 and the reservoir provisions contained within the Flood and Water Management Act were still a consideration for small bunds and below ground level storage, but that following ‘advice in principle’ these proposals should not fall within the Act. Professional advice would be sought throughout the design process to ensure any proposals fall outside the requirements of the Reservoirs Act.
- A number of partners noted that the expected costs of bund construction in the Holnicote pilot project were significantly lower than the estimates so far provided for Pickering Beck. It was agreed that the EA would carry out a cost comparison and provide a more detailed cost breakdown to the Board.

ACTIONS: EA to compare bund construction costs with those from the Holnicote project and provide a more detailed cost breakdown to the Board
FR to provide EA with contact details for Holnicote contractor

- It was agreed that the EA would draft a press release by way of a project update, for agreement by the Board.

ACTION: EA to draft joint press release and circulate for comment

- RAW reported that the Institution of Civil Engineers has agreed to undertake a review of the Reservoirs Act guidance. This would be in two parts, with the first not completed before October 2012 at the earliest. The EA will have a seat on the review panel and CM has requested the Pickering project is used as a case study.

ACTION: Defra to circulate an update on the review of Reservoir Guidance and latest position on the F&WMA.
JW to invite review panel to visit the StF project

- It was agreed that the EA would continue its routine maintenance work in and around Pickering.

ACTION: EA to consider need for channel maintenance work in town

- It was agreed to hold a Wider Delivery Group meeting to provide feedback to other partners

ACTION: SM to canvas WDG for a suitable date for a meeting in November

Date of Next Board Meeting – late January 2012

ACTION: SM to canvas members for suitable date