

ONLINE MEETING
OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF SEVERN STOKE PARISH

Present: Cllr Watkins (Chair) Cllrs Preston (Deputy), Cox, Garrard, Halling, Seward and Sturgess.
DCllrs Harrison and Michael. CCllr Middleborough.

In attendance: Mrs L Stevens (Clerk and RFO). 3 candidates for co-option: Breslin, Faulkner and O'Loughlin
7 members of the public (residency confirmed): RA, SC, TC, JH, NS, JW, RW.

Resident Question Time

- 1 **To consider apologies and to approve reasons for absence.**
Cllr Eileen Hadley (lack of IT equipment), Cllr Ray Williams (working commitments).
- 2 **Declarations of Interest, dispensations and points of order.** Cllr Seward as resident of Severn Stoke in relation to the proposed flood defences at Severn Stoke. Cllr Watkins as a local land tenant/occupier who undertakes maintenance of the river banks and feeder ditches in cooperation with the EA.

Resolution for continuation of online parish council meetings: Following the Government announcement of further easing of lockdown restrictions from 4th July, NALC and SLCC strongly advise local councils to continue to meet remotely. Government rules still state that we should all work from home if we can. Local councils have the powers to hold public meetings remotely by using video/phone tech. until May 2021. **Motion** to continue online meetings via Zoom. Prp: Cllr Seward. Scnd: Cllr Cox.

- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting** - Wed 11th March 2020
Previously distributed and duly approved. Prp: Cllr Seward. Scnd: Cllr Preston.
- 4 **Co-option of a Parish Councillor – Three Vacancies.**
Candidates: Mr Daniel O'Loughlin (Severn Stoke), Mr Terry Breslin (Dunstall, Earls Croome), Ms Susan Faulkner (Severn Stoke).
Welcome and candidates to speak/put questions to the Council and vice versa. Candidates spoke of their commitment and local knowledge. **Motion carried** to accept all three candidates and to co-opt with immediate effect. Prp: Cllr Cox. 2cnd: Cllr Seward. All verbally accepted the position of Parish Councillor and confirm their intention to complete an acceptance of office and a declaration of interests. Cllrs Faulkner and Breslin represent Croome Ward and Cllr O'Loughlin represents Severn Stoke Ward. There followed a formal welcome from Chair. The Clerk spoke briefly to detail paperwork associated with new Parish Cllrs, Acceptance of Office, Declaration of Interests, copies of Policy documents and Privacy Notice. Newly appointed Members welcome to take part in debate from this point. – Nb All paperwork will be posted to new Cllrs for them to sign as soon as may be under COVID19 restrictions. For the remainder of this meeting newly Coopted Councillors were advised that they may take part in debate but, since they have not signed a 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' may not vote at this meeting only.

5& 6 Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Middlebrough

- Meeting reports from WCC internal GOLD meeting in respect of COVID 19 continue to be distributed by the Clerk. CCllr Middlebrough gave an update on actions by WCC to assist communities during the pandemic. Local schools and the children are coping very well under the circumstances. Astons bus service is now protected by the County Council, though service in the afternoons is still lacking. The mobile library service is still on hold.

DCllrs Harrison & Michael

- DCllr Harrison gave an update on planning app Defford 19/01852/FUL and work to ensure that the planning conditions contain the requirement to turn left when exiting the site and avoid local villages. Restrictions concerning entry via the Croome side and conditions regarding decommissioning (35 years) have also been inserted. As lockdown restrictions continue to relax, District Council staff are completing a stage returned to the office or their usual working patterns. Parish Cllrs learnt with concern that some district council staff have been sufficiently poorly as to be in intensive care and the Chair led Cllrs in wishing them well. Maintenance and refuse regimes fell behind as a result of this but extra staff covered and coped well.
- DCllr Michael gave an update on the SWDP. Various briefing events are open to Parish Cllrs to attend and online details can be obtained through him. The SWDP website has been redesigned to make it simpler to use and navigate around as well as archiving a significant amount of material relating to the adopted SWDP examination prior to 2016

Cllr Preston took the Chair at this point in the meeting, with full agreement of all Cllrs. Standing Orders were suspended with full agreement of all present. Prp: Cllr Cox. Scnd: Cllr Seward

7 Flooding

- a. **To receive an update from Mr N.S. (CIC) (Written report distributed to Cllrs prior to meeting).**
NS spoke to offer clarification on a number of the raised points and to offer reassurance that the Environment Agency has confirmed that the heights of the bund will protect the village from all floods. Plans can be amended if required after planning permission is granted. Full report from CIC in Appendix 2.
- b. **To note appendix of minutes of Environment Agency meeting 18/06/2020 “Answer to public questions raised”. (Distributed to Cllrs prior to meeting).**
Residents raised concern that this meeting (organised and hosted by the EA) was billed after the event as a public meeting, but in reality only the EA, land agents and land owners were present. Residents asked that the EA correct the description of the meeting and going forward be more open about the reasons for calling meetings and the objectives therein. Full copy of questions raised in Appendix 3 of these minutes.
- c. **Parish Cllrs debate on the parish council response to this application.**
 - i. DCllr Harrison provided an update on 20/0068/FUL Application for construction of permanent flood defences for Severn Stoke with associated earthworks. Land at (OS 8554 4404) Church Lane, Severn Stoke, WR8 9JQ. District and Parish Cllrs joined to express thanks to the CIC that the application has been submitted and acknowledged the effort and hard work so far. DCllrs have been liaising with MHDC officers in order to address concerns about the detail within the application, including issues in relation to the existing CLH Oil Pipeline and concerning the historical and projected flood height levels. A joint WCC/MHDC meeting/site visit with the Environment Agency is planned and the parish council and residents will be kept informed.

Cllr Halling joined via phone conference at this point, with apologies for lateness due to traffic.

- ii. Both District and Parish Councillors raised serious concerns over the proposed height of the bund, the likelihood of flooding behind the bund once constructed, funding, maintenance and the design of Ham Lane, which continues to be a well-used, important local facility. Cllr Cox spoke to raise concerns that local knowledge is being disregarded because of lack of accepted technical expertise.
- iii. Cllrs had previously debated via email and considered three options for the parish council response. Option 1 supported the application in principle and centred on detailed listing of parish council concerns including elements of suspected incorrect design based on local knowledge. Option 2 was a response lighter on detail which supported the application in principle, whilst acknowledging that the design & maintenance of the flood bund could be addressed later. Option 3 was a mix of response 1 and 2 and requested that the detail be checked and ensured correct before planning permission granted. All versions requested that the parish council be fully involved in all future consultation. Cllr Hadley had received copies of the documentation and had expressed support in full for this application.
- iv. Cllr Cox proposed adoption of Option 3. Seconded by Cllr Seward. Cllr Garrard: Op2. Cllr Halling: Op3. Cllr Preston Op3. Cllr Sturgess: Op3. Cllr Watkins: Op3. **Motion passed** by majority for submission of Option 3 summarised as the following: *“A response in favour of Planning Application 20/00668/FUL in principle but requesting changes to the detailed design on the following topics; Baseline data and surface water issues; 2. Height and design of bund; assessment of flood risk; Ham Lane design and safety; mitigation (replanted trees and vegetation); future maintenance and finally, fully endorsing comments made by the SW Land drainage Partnership.” Submitted 16/07/2020. Full copy in Appendix 4.*
- v. Subsequent to this meeting, Parish Cllrs wrote on 20/08/2020 to WCC and MHDC with regard their concerns regarding possible omission of technical comments or assessments in the WCC response to this planning application. The letters also reiterated the request to be fully consulted. Full copy in Appendix 5.

Cllr Watkins retook the Chair with full agreement of all Cllrs. Standing orders remained suspended.

8 Planning - to consider, comment and resolve to respond to the following applications

- i. **20/00717/CU Kerswell House, Kerswell Green, WR5 3PF. Proposal: Change of use of land for the siting of two holiday log cabins.**
 - a) To note correspondence and subsequent amendment received from residents R&J.W. Duly noted having previously been distributed.
 - b) RW addressed the Parish Council regarding resident concerns about access, traffic and disruption.
 - c) **Motion** to retract previous decision for comment only (as delegated to Clerk) – duly **carried**.
Proposal and motion for a new resolution and new submission to MHDC – duly **carried**.
Cllr Watkins **proposed** that a planning condition be requested that access must be from a southerly route. Scnd: Cllr Seward. Motion **carried**.

- ii. **20/000015/CM, Ryall North Quarry, Land off Ryall's Court Lane, Holly Green, Upton-upon-Severn, WR8 0PF. Proposal: Proposed minerals extraction of about 1.4 million tonnes of sand and gravel and erection of a temporary wharf with the progressive restoration to a landscaped lake AND 20/000009/CM, Land at Ryalls Court, Off Ryall's Court Lane, Holly Green Upton-upon-severn, WR80PF. Proposal: Proposed extraction of aggregates with restoration to Agriculture and lake suitable for watersports. Deadline for comments: 31st July 2020.**
 Cllrs considered the narrow access point. Cllr Hadley's concerns about increased traffic through Severn Stoke were noted. CCllr Middlebrough gave advice on planning considerations and confirmed that entrance and traffic issues will be addressed as part of a separate application of the leisure facility. Cllrs therefore had no comment to make at this stage.
- iii. **Update on the following planning applications:**

Application	Property	Detail	Action
20/00490/GPDQ	Kerswell House Kerswell Green Worcester WR5 3PF	Notification for prior approval for the proposed change of use of an Agricultural Building to a dwelling house and for associated operational development.	Refused The proposal is not permitted development due to the lack of agricultural activities on site and admission that they are not a 'commercial farmer'
19/01852/FUL	Croome Airfield Solar Limited. Ground mounted solar farm, Dunstall to Defford Aerodrome	Erection of a ground mounted solar farm associated works and ancillary infrastructure.	March 2020 - Comment submitted by PC ref turn left leaving and using A4104 as the route in and out. July 1 st 2020 – Application considered at MHDC planning committee.
20/00050/CM	Site adjacent to Croome Composting	Proposed waste wood, soil and stone recycling facility	MHDC requested further info. Comment submitted by PC re use of Defford Countryside as access and not Rebecca Road.
20/00095/FUL and 20/00096/LB	Cedar Lodge and Coventry Barn, Severn Stoke	Conversion works to Coventry Barn including internal and external alterations and demolition of part Listed Building known as Cedar Lodge. / Conversion of Coventry Barn into single residential unit and construction of one dwelling.	No comment from PC. Withdrawn by the Applicant on 2 June 2020.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders.

9 Highways, footpaths & infrastructure – discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice

a. Hedge onto A38 from Stonnall Close encroaching footpath.

The Clerk is chasing with the Housing Association (Platform, part of Fortis). It is not a visibility issue and the HA have been advised to wait until end of August (bird nesting).

b. Grass Stonnall Close (Calor gas location)

The contractor has attended (hired by Persimmon Homes) but did not touch the walnut tree or grass underneath. Contractor has been asked to grass cut twice a month. Thanks to resident JH for persistence and intervention. Cllrs queried why is this no longer Calor's job.

c. Conifer hedge (A38/path), Clifton – Letter sent advising of difficulties for pedestrians.

d. Old cricket pavilion, Severn Stoke.

The Clerk had written to P.W agent and ask that the premises be made more secure. Cllrs queried whether there is a land covenant on the site. PW is going to conduct a site inspection once off furlough.

e. Positioning of welcome signs for Croome d'Abitot.

Residents and Cllrs reported that the signs have been placed too close to High Green. The location was proposed by Highways. Residents consider that the signs need to be placed on the border of Croome d'Abitot. Cllrs commented that the sign is for the parish not the settlement. The Clerk was instructed to find out why the signs were placed where they were and check with the previous Clerk.

f. Street light and verge outside 1 and 2 Knights Hill.

The Clerk has reported the fault with the light and this has been acknowledged by Prysman and scheduled for repair.

g. Corner nr Croome Arch – muddy damaged road where people keep parking.

The Clerk had reported this. CCllr Middlebrough confirmed that plainings have been scheduled to be placed down and advised the parish council to pursue this with the police.

10 Community speed concern

a. Speeding generally.

CLLrs received the following update provided by A.A. Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator

Kinnersley – we have a team of 6 recruited to participate in community speed watch. Due to Covid19 and Govt restrictions the training is currently suspended but as this eases and we are given the go ahead to train people I will advise yourself accordingly. Kinnersley is on the list to be trained and I have equipment set aside for the team.

Clifton – We had an enforcement site in Clifton and during our time there we were detecting two speed offences per visit. The site is currently suspended due to those low numbers recorded.

Severn Stoke – We had an enforcement site at the bus stop/memorial, using our motorbike. Issues were raised where people complained the motorbike was causing an obstruction to those using the bus stop. The bus companies also complained about the bike being there and other drivers complained the motorbike was obstructing their view as they were turning out of Ham Lane. Because of this we stopped enforcing in Severn Stoke and unfortunately there is no other suitable location to position the motorbike safely. The recent speed data survey carried out showed speeds above the criteria we apply for community speedwatch, but as I mention no suitable location for the bike.

The Clerk was **instructed** to contact the police reference Severn Stoke to find a way forward. CCllr Middlebrough offer assistance in this.

b. Community speed watch training – covered above

c. Progress with new signage to alert motorists to the sharp bend and concealed entrances.

CCllr Middlebrough offered assistance in paying for additional signage if/once WCC Officer H.Davis conducts a site visit and agrees a location.

d. Reports of increased traffic in relation to businesses at Defford Airfield.

Cllr Garrard reported that waste lorries are using the Rebecca road entrance. DCllr Harrison **agreed** to report this.

e. High Green VAS.

Report and statistics provided. Cllr Garrard to provide stats via email to Clerk.

f. Progress with moving the VAS to between London Arch/entrance to Croome NT

VAS speed thresholds cannot be altered above 40mph. Unit cannot be relocated.

11 Group/Committee updates

a. Parish Hall committee

Updated received:

“Negotiations with insurers continue. The management committee for the hall commissioned a structural survey following the advice of the Insurers contractors. This report suggested the hall was unstable due to settling of the foundations following the most recent flood event. On receipt of this report, our insurers commissioned a second opinion, which refuted the conclusions of the first report, suggesting the instability was due to a longstanding design fault in the roof and therefore was not covered by the policy. The insurers have suggested a cash settlement to the value of their estimates for the claim. I have passed their offer to the management committee for consideration, but have asked suggested to our insurers that we ask the respective structural engineers to discuss their respective conclusions in the hope that a consensus can be agreed. Bottle banks will be removed as current contract has expired and household recycling provision is sufficient.”

b. Severn Stoke Flood Action Group – covered previously.

c. Tarmac Liaison Group – Site not operating at present. Staff furloughed.

d. Croome Liaison Group – waiting for meeting dates.

e. Police reports – no update available.

f. Lengthsman update – Hedge opp Rose and Cown field (A38) has been dealt with. Hedge near the Clifton Bus Stop has been cut. Footpath at the top of Kinnersley Turn has been cleared. Motion to approve Lengthsman returning to full duties in light of WCC advise that they “will be considering Parish invoices that cover the full range of Lengthsman tasks, as stated in Schedule 1 of the 2020/21 Lengthsman Agreement.” Duly **approved**. Prp: Cllr Seward. Scnd: Cllr Preston.

12 General Finance and Administration

a. To consider and motion to approve the payment of outstanding accounts. Appendix 1.

Duly **approved**. Prp: Cllr Cox. Scnd: Cllr Preston.

b. To receive and motion to accept latest bank reconciliation. Duly approved.

Prp Cllr Preston. Scnd Cllr Garrard.

13 Audit Finance – To sign off audit paperwork prior to sending to external auditors.

- a. To consider and motion to approve procedures and paperwork in connection with the Annual Audit Return.
- i. **Motion:** That this Parish Council resolves and hereby declares and certifies itself as exempt from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review AND that the following conditions are met: • total gross income and total gross expenditure both below £25k; and • no public interest report/statutory recommendation/advisory notice/judicial review/application to court issued by the external auditor in the prior year; (Nb the external auditor raised an 'except for' or 'other' matters in the External Auditor Report and Certificate for 2018/19, but this does not preclude the Parish Council from certifying itself exempt from review) and • the relevant financial year is not one of the first three years of this authority's existence. **Duly approved**

To note: even though the Parish Council is self-certifying as exempt, The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights (beginning on or before 1 September 2020) still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of the exemption certificate, published on a public website before 31st August 2020.

- ii. Cllrs considered and reviewed the effectiveness of internal checking procedures and internal audit work conducted across the entire year*. This included a review of procedures for internal checking of banking. **Motion** to accept considered findings of review and motion to confirm compliance with all assertions within the Annual Governance Statement. **Duly approved.**
- iii. Cllrs considered the report of the internal auditor and any matters raised in the AIAR provided by the internal auditor. **Duly considered.**
- iv. **Motion** to acknowledge Cllr and Clerk responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control and Annual Governance. **Duly accepted.**
- v. **Motion** to Approve Section 1 of the AGAR - the Annual Governance Statement. Chair & Clerk to minute, sign and date the Annual Governance Statement Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2019. **Duly approved. Prps: Cllr Seward. Scnd: Cllr Preston.**

* Parish Council will need to consider the internal audit work performed and internal audit arrangements in place between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 before confirming compliance with all assertions of the Annual Governance Statement.

14 Audit Finance – Continued

- a. To consider and motion to approve procedures and paperwork in connection with the Annual Audit Return – CONTINUED. **
- i. Cllrs considered Section 2 - the Accounting Statements. Previously distributed for consideration. Clerk gave a briefing on the Accounting Statements and confirm that she, as RFO, has already signed the Accounting Statements prior to presenting them to Members at this meeting.
- ii. **Motion** to approve Section 2 - Accounting Statements. Chair only to minute, sign and date the Annual Governance Statement Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2020. **Duly approved. Prps: Cllr Seward. Scnd: Cllr Preston.**
- iii. Approval and signature of the Declaration that the statement of accounts is unaudited (externally). **Duly approved and signed.**
- iv. Approval and signature of the Notice of Commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights. **Duly approved and signed.**
- v. To note that the completed annual return/exemption certificate and notification of date of commencement of period of public rights must be sent to PKJ Littlejohn by Friday 31 July 2020, but that this parish council intends to send the completed documentation via email on 20th July 2020 in order to adhere more closely to the timetable of a normal (non covid) year. **Noted.**

** Guidance for the completion of the Annual Return states that the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements can be considered and approved at the same meeting, as long as it is a meeting of the full authority and that it is clear from the minute references that the Statements were approved in the right order. The authority must approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and as a last resort both must legally be approved before 31st August 2020 in order to comply with new Covid Legislation

15 Correspondence, dates for diary, items for future agenda.

Cllrs may use this opportunity to report minor matters of info not included elsewhere on the agenda.

- a. Website Accessibility regulations come into force on the 23rd September 2020. those Parishes that use the My Parishes webpages, WCC have previously confirmed that these will be compliant. However, documents will still need to be re-entered in an accessible format. Clerk estimates 6 hours of time to complete this.

Date of next Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council meeting – 16th September 2020, 7.30pm.
Subject to change. Please check before attending.

Signed ChairmanDate

Appendix 1. Items already paid

(Approved under previous agenda or required payment under contract monthly):

Information Commissioner	Approved in March 2020. Cheque cancelled. Cheque stuck in ICO offices due to Covid19. Replacement payment via bank transfer	£40.00	VAT nil
Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman. June 2020. Paid 02/02/2020. Cllrs approved via email.	£208.00	VAT nil
Mr Simon Bott	Mowing Parish Hall June 2020. Paid 07/07/2020. Cllrs approved via email.	£30.00	VAT nil
Mr Simon Bott	Mowing Severn stoke verges 2020. Paid 07/07/2020. Cllrs approved via email.	£22.50	VAT nil

Item for payment:

Clerk Wages	Standing Order - Wages April 2020.	£294.16	VAT nil. Scheduled for payment end of July 2020 via standing order.
Clerk expenses: postage and Zoom membership	£14.39 (zoom June & July 2020) plus postage	£32.99	£4.80 VAT. Scheduled for payment 29 th July 2020

Appendix 2

SEVERN STOKE FLOOD DEFENCE Report to Severn Stoke Parish Council meeting on the 15th July by Severn Stoke Community Interest Company. Dated 9th July 2020.

Since the submission of the planning application a number of points have been raised by consultees, parishioners and other interested parties. It may be helpful to respond to these for the benefit of the parish council as follows:

SURFACE WATER The surface water running down the A38 and water behind the flood defence was modelled in a report paid for by Worcestershire County Council. This defined the positioning of the line of the bund at the southern end to ensure that in any extreme event the land between the A38 and the bund south of the church would be large enough to hold surface water, without affecting the road or the properties on the east of the A38. The modelling took into account the possibility of storms occurring during a flood event when the flood plain was already inundated. However Worcestershire County Council Highways have been asked to deal with surface water problems on the A38 at Severn Stoke bank junction and the track alongside Stoke Gardens, together with changes to direct A38 surface water into the field behind the proposed bund south of the Church.

RAISING OF HAM LANE The raising of Ham Lane has been designed and will be constructed by Worcestershire County Council Highways and they have been made aware of the points raised in the planning responses in relation to visibility and pedestrians.

DETAILED DESIGN The positioning, height and width of the bund will, subject to planning approval, be as shown on the plans submitted with the planning application. The detailed design of the bund is being commissioned by Worcestershire County Council in association with the Environment Agency. A tender document for the detailed design was issued last month. It is expected that the appointment of the design contractors will be finalised in the next few weeks. The design will include the technical details of the bund construction together with positioning of drainage through the bund and flap requirements. It will also include provision for dealing with the surface water during a flood event and the release of water from behind the bund during and following a flood event.

HEIGHT OF BUND The height of the bund has been calculated as being higher than 2007 and even 1947 levels. When this issue was raised in the planning comments, the levels were re-checked against historical data from Saxons Lode & Kempsey gauge readings and also from projected levels at Severn Stoke. The level will protect a 1 in 100 year event which includes all of the previously recorded events.

OWNERS & OCCUPIERS Over the last few months the landowners and tenants have been in discussion with the Environment Agency, including a telephone conference in June. Following this a response document has been submitted to owners and occupiers picking up and replying to points raised.

LANDSCAPING & MAINTENANCE The landscaping of the bund will be finalised in the detailed design in collaboration with the Landscape Officer, Woodland Trust and all interested parties. Replacement trees will be included with agreement of the owners of the land on which they will be placed. The requirements and responsibility for maintenance of the bund will be determined as part of the detailed design and a memorandum of understanding will be put in place between the EA and Severn Stoke CIC.

ARCHAEOLOGY It is hoped that the required investigations will be a condition of the planning approval and carried out during the initial site works prior to the construction of the bund.

-end of report to PC-

1. Why no outlet for water from the middle of the village?

Whilst this is admittedly not clear on the general arrangement drawing, provision for drainage through the embankment will be made where required. Currently it is proposed that this will include an outlet for water in the middle of the village and from the field to the south of the church. Should there be other drainage points that have not been picked up, we would be happy to work with you to establish the best way of managing these through the detailed design process.

2. Where have you got your height data from?

With regards to ground levels across the site, these are based on topographic survey undertaken across the footprint of the proposed works. This data is supplemented with Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data, collected for the wider flood plain. Flood levels have been determined utilizing a mixture of hydraulic computer modelling and actual gauge records from previous flood events.

3. What height do you have for the 2007, 2020 floods in Severn Stoke?

The recorded level, taken from the Severn Stoke gauge during the 2007 flood event was 13.96 mAOD. Unfortunately, the Severn Stoke gauge is no longer operational, but analysis of the 2020 gauge records from upstream and downstream of Severn Stoke demonstrate very similar levels to those recorded in 2007. At the Kempsey gauge (upstream) the recorded flood level was within 1mm of the 2007 event, with the Saxons Lode gauge (downstream) showing levels 400mm lower than those recorded during the 2007 flood event.

4. Who chose the 14.2m AOD and why?

The 14.2 mAOD level has been determined based on the above gauge records and the hydraulic computer model, calibrated and verified against historic recorded levels. The scheme has been designed to reduce flood risk up to and including a flood event with a 1% chance of occurring in any given year (i.e. a 1 in 100-year return period event). It is acknowledged that in flood events larger than this, there is a risk that the structure could be overtopped. Whilst there may be an opportunity to make modest changes to the embankment elevation during the detailed design works, we will be limited in the extent of raising that will be permitted in planning terms when considering the wider setting. Based on the information received to date, the level chosen would have been enough to prevent significant flooding during each of the flood events that Severn Stoke has experienced to date.

5. Who chose the 1:5 slope and why?

The 1 in 5 slopes chosen on the “wet side” of the embankment are reflective of the current Environment Agency requirements for flood defence embankment design. This slope ensures that standard maintenance requirements can be met without the need for bespoke machinery. Throughout the detailed design process, the detail regarding slope profiles and how these are landscaped into the existing topography will be determined. In addition, an assessment will be undertaken with regards to any additional protective measures that may be required to manage excessive velocities during flood conditions.

6. What is the EA’s understanding of the stand off from the oil pipeline?

We are in close communication with the oil pipeline company to refine our understanding of the location of the pipe, ensuring that minimum set backs are adhered to during the detailed design process. This will likely require some initial trial trenching to locate the exact alignment of the pipe and, if required, a potential alteration to the detail of the alignment should conflicts be identified.

7. What is the rationale for the positioning of the bund south of the church?

The bund has been positioned to ensure that the risk of surface water flooding to the A38 and adjacent properties can be appropriately managed, that the impact on the setting of the church is reduced and that existing services are considered.

8. Where is the emergency pump going to go there is no point indicating a sump?

During the detailed design phase, a mitigation strategy will be developed outlining the requirements associated with exceedance events (i.e. where the system and scheme becomes overwhelmed). As part of this work, potential mitigation measures (and their associated locations) will be determined. This will include provision for the placement of a temporary pump.

9. Where is the location for the mitigation measures?

See above. With regards to environmental mitigation measures, we would welcome local input to help determine where these might be most appropriate. We are not constrained to the red line boundary and, as such, have some flexibility in the way that these measures are implemented.

10. Who is choosing the seed mixtures?

Landscaping and seed mixtures will be determined during the detailed design, with it being an absolute requirement that the mixture is robust enough to withstand future flood events. As with other elements of the detail, we will work closely with landowners, tenants and the community to ensure that considerations such as this are appropriately dealt with.

11. Who is paying the tenants compensation?

All parties will be entitled to claim compensation for any loss or injury sustained as a result of our works. These are set under the provisions in Schedules 20 and 21 of the Water Resources Act 1991.

12. What happens to the ownership and maintenance of the structure when SSCIC is wound up? They will get fed up with fundraising to cover the cost as it seems there is no covenants on the properties that are being protected.

A maintenance plan will be developed by the detailed designers outlining future requirements. This will then form the basis of a memorandum of understanding between the EA and the SSCIC. Whilst maintenance budgets are determined annually, it is very likely that the EA would take on maintenance for the flood defence scheme if the SSCIC were unable to. The EAs Estates Lead is liaising with the land agent to ensure that no liabilities are transferred to either the landowner or tenant.

13. Computer modeling has not worked for the raising of the A4104 now a couple of properties that have never flooded do now.

Whilst we can't comment on the specifics of the example raised, the outline design produced to date for this scheme has been based on a whole variety of information, including local anecdotal reports and actual gauged records of previous events. We will develop the detail for the scheme during the detailed design phase and would appreciate any constructive input to ensure that that process is as informed as possible.

-end of EA minutes-

Appendix 4

Response to Planning Application 20/00668/FUL - Construction of permanent flood defence for the village of Severn Stoke with associated earthworks. Dated 16/07/2020

Parish Councillors are in favour of Planning Application 20/00668/FUL in principle, but we must request changes to the detailed design for the reasons listed below:

1. Baseline data and surface water issues

Parish Councillors are extremely keen that accurate, relevant and local baseline river data should be used. Samples/evidence within this application are derived from further up and further downstream of Severn Stoke and may not be relevant to calculations for Severn Stoke which are specific and complex. It is recommended that the modelling be independently checked, as any errors in this area will have serious ramifications on the effectiveness of the flood defences. Such modelling should take into consideration the ability of the wind to create additional flood heights through wave creation (believed to especially affect the area near Severn Bank Wood and several properties near the village hall).

2. Height and design of bund

Parish Councillors request that project engineers reconsider the bund design in terms of location, slope angle, height and land stability. Parish Councillors are concerned that the application's proposed slope angles are not correct and leave the slopes vulnerable to wave power. Wave power is unique to this location and is influenced by the local physical structures such as Severn Bank Wood, which, as noted above, are believed to affect local wind and wave patterns. The Parish Council also recommend that further bore holes are drilled to ensure that the clay core base of the bund is at an appropriate depth to provide bund structures with sufficient strength.

3. Assessment of flood risk

The Parish Council is concerned that the current proposal will increase the flood risk behind the bund resulting from rainwater running behind it. Only two outfall flaps are included in this proposal, but a third will be required in the middle of the village near the church car park to maintain existing surface water drainage running through the embankment. Parish Councillors recommend that the Environment Agency (EA) and Project Planners be asked to work with the Parish Council and local where additional drainage points are required.

Consultation is also required with the owners of *Half Acre Bungalow* and *Three Winds* regarding the flood defence walls proposed. In addition, Worcestershire County Council (WCC) needs to commit to undertaking kerb raising at *The Old Rectory*

4. Ham Lane design and safety

Parish Councillors are concerned that current designs for Ham Lane do not adequately consider the volume and variety of traffic using this road. Pedestrians will not be able to see oncoming traffic and similarly oncoming vehicles will not have full sight of pedestrians. The Parish Council recommend that the plans include a public footpath at this location to mitigate the danger. The increased risk of vehicle collisions must also be considered. Additional signage and placement of rumble strips are recommended. We request that a written commitment from WCC is obtained in relation to ensuring the safety of Ham Lane

5. Mitigation

Plans for mitigation (replanted trees and vegetation) are listed but no specific plans or locations are identified. It is essential these are confirmed before existing trees and vegetation are removed.

6. Future Maintenance

A detailed plan is required in relation to the maintenance of the flood defence. The plan should include:

- A clear statement specifying who/what organization will be responsible for maintenance programme, including its financing, over the long term. In particular, if the EA will assume responsibility for the maintenance of the flood defences should the Community Interest Company (CIC) cease to exist, this should be a definitive written commitment to that effect on the part of the EA, not a statement of intention.
- Schedule of inspection, maintenance and testing of all equipment/infrastructure on regular basis and during/after a flood event.
- Emergency call out procedures during a flood event. Parties involved must have local knowledge and have all the necessary equipment required to access and unlock the defence equipment. Plans need to be in place for an appropriate pump and a proposal is required for siting the pump during a flood event. The correct size pump attachment fittings must be specified in the designs and management plans. Dedicated access must be allocated to this facility/sump site.
- Identification, design, consultation and funding of future enhancements to the flood bund.

7. Parish Councillors wish to endorse and fully support the comments provided by Bob Hughes of the SW Land drainage Partnership.

Conclusion

Councillors wish to express their thanks and appreciation to the Severn Stoke CIC, The EA and all other participating third parties for their hard work in getting the project to this stage. We cannot stress enough how welcome a flood defence would be and how much the future of the community depends upon it.

Parish Councillors wish to assist with the changes to the detailed design that are outlined above to deliver a safe and highly effective flood defence for Severn Stoke.

-end of letter-

Appendix 5

Letter to WCC (MHDC) raising further concerns regarding planning application 20/00668.FUL. Dated 20/08/2020

To Mr JH, Environment and Economy, Worcestershire County Council

Planning Application 20/00668/FUL - Construction of permanent flood defence for the village of Severn Stoke with associated earthworks

Severn Stoke Parish Council recently responded to the above planning application to welcome plans for flood defences at Severn Stoke, gave support in principle, but also asked a number of questions in relation to design and funding (See appendix 1). Parish Councillors are concerned that the project as currently designed will not deliver a safe and highly effective flood defence for Severn Stoke and ask to work with all parties to assist by providing local knowledge.

Design and maintenance of the Flood Bund

Subsequent to its own submission the Parish Council examined the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) response to this consultation and was surprised to learn that, as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the County Council has very much concentrated on only advising as to procedures rather than providing vital technical comments or assessments. We have also now seen the response of MM on this issue but remain concerned that the current plans are not entirely correct and that there is no evidence that the technical side is being properly attended to.

In the email from M.M it is stated that *'all necessary technical issues are being satisfactorily assessed and addressed'* but no detail is provided of exactly how and which issues are being resolved, i.e. what the final design will look like. Significant changes, including 'addressed technical issues', should result in the application being withdrawn and resubmitted so that all parties are clear on what is being proposed.

The intention may be that planning approval could be granted with appropriate conditions in place based on matters raised during the consultation process. This is a major concern, because there is currently a significant gap between what may be approved in principle and what is required to deliver the safe and effective flood defence for Severn Stoke that we all want. If the LLFA has not visibly and properly fed into the consultation, how can the necessary conditions be applied?

What assurances can we have that the 'addressed issues' have been properly communicated to Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC). As we have already noted, none of that detail is within the current WCC submission. If it is being provided behind the scenes, is it also being shared with the Environment Agency? Is that information also included as part of the tender package for the independent consultants who, we understand, will shortly be appointed to prepare a detailed design for the bund, but who will have had no input in the planning application?

It is noted that WCC will request a planning condition requiring a satisfactory detailed drainage plan / strategy. Given that an effective drainage plan is critical to the success of this project, surely a detailed drainage plan should be part of the planning application and should have been subject to checking by WCC before that Council responded to the consultation. Without this detailed information, how can we be confident this plan will work?

Future consultation

If this plan is passed through to the next stage in its current form, we must ask for a written undertaking from WCC that the Parish Council will be fully consulted in the process of drawing up the final detailed plan. We appreciate that this is not usual procedure, but this is the most significant change to our village for decades. We are being fed the mantra that we should trust all is well and all will be well by the time the plans are approved – but honestly, so much local knowledge has been ignored hitherto that we have lost all trust in the process. The continued reference in email correspondence to the 'Chinese Walls' that exist at WCC is even more alarming and indicates a complete lack of joined up thinking between different parts of WCC who need to work together to deliver the best result for the village.

Therefore, we are convinced we must be party to that process to ensure the final plan is correct, the flood bund is as effective as it is possible to be and we properly fulfil our duty to protect the interests of all residents of Severn Stoke. We have also made the same request of MHDC.

Ham Lane

The proposed flood defences will necessitate a significant amount of work in relation to the Highway at Ham Lane, Severn Stoke. Ham Lane is the only route for vehicular access to the river at Severn Stoke and is used a great deal by residents and visitors.

A survey conducted by the Parish Clerk on 17/08/2020 between 10.30am and 4pm observed 64 pedestrians (of which 20 were children), 12 bicycles, 6 equestrians and 38 vehicles (with vehicle occupants not counted in the 64 pedestrians) travelling down Ham Lane for access to the public rights of way, for using the fishing facilities, to park cars and exercise dogs and horses. This is a major recreational route that currently has not received the attention it deserves as part of the flood defence plans.

Appendix 5 continued.

It is not clear whether WCC has had any involvement in the plans and designs for Ham Lane. Currently the road as shown on the plans will create a hazard for all users, motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, with significantly reduced visibility and with no indication of how vehicle speeds will be kept at safe levels.

Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot Parish Councillors have the following questions please:

1. Has WCC been involved in the design of the flood defences overall and more specifically the design of Ham Lane at the point where the flood defences will cross the highway at this location?
2. Has WCC undertaken an assessment of cost of the redesign of the highway at Ham Lane?
3. Has WCC undertaken a written commitment to fund and implement the changes to the highway and drainage at Ham Lane?
4. Will the WCC take part in future discussions concerning the flood defences, so that issues relating to visibility and speed can be adequately addressed and so that user safety can be maintained.
5. Will WCC undertake to liaise with Safer Road Partnership to ensure that 'post build' Ham Lane is monitored closely.
6. For critical safety reasons, pedestrian and vehicles need to be entirely separated along this stretch of road. Will you undertake to ensure that happens?

As with the flood bund itself, we ask for written confirmation that the Parish Council will be fully consulted to ensure the changes to Ham Lane deliver a safe roadway for all users.

-end of letter-

-end of minutes-