

**MEETING OF THE NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FLOOD APPRAISAL GROUP
WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST 2002 AT WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEENSHIRE**

PRESENT

Malcolm Taverner
Jim Lister
David Crichton
David Cameron
Claire Pritchett
Andrew Carruthers
Bill Murphy
Chris Jackson
Piers Blaxter

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies from Hilary McBean.

Action

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

One change was intimated to section 9 (any other competent business) where the date given of 1985 for the SEPA flood information was identified as wrong, this should read 1995.

3. MATTERS ARISING

It was noted that Aberdeenshire Council had not yet received a copy of Aberdeen City's response to the water framework directive.

David Crichton reported that he was very hopeful of getting insurance sponsorship for his time to attend flood appraisal group meetings but would still wish to have members consider travel sponsorship.

All
DC to
advise on
cost

This raised the issue of confidentiality, in that Mr Crichton's insurance sponsor would wish to see the Minutes of the meeting, therefore, there was need to identify that the items were confidential so that they could be considered as such out-with the main part of the meeting itself.

Andrew Carruthers reported that he had not invited David MacIntosh to the flood appraisal group meeting, but would for the next meeting.

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David Cameron reported that the SEPA flood database had been sent to Aberdeenshire.

4. FLOODS DATABASE

After a brief introduction by Andrew Carruthers, and a résumé by Piers Blaxter of current situation, there was discussion of the project and ways

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of taking the project forward. David Crichton identified that there may be an opportunity to tap into research funding from the Environmental and Physical Sciences Research Council, who had recently released a research proposal, which may have relevance to the FAGGIS. Andrew Carruthers, Malcolm Taverner and Piers Blaxter were asked to review the possibilities of that, to make contacts with Dundee or Macaulay Land Use Institute. There are also possibilities of tie-ins with Aberdeen University on Water Framework Directive related areas. David Crichton also intimated the quality of the red river basin website (www.RRDBIN.org) as an example of best practice in GIS use online.

5. THE SUDS WORKING GROUP

It was noted that the drainage impact assessment manual was now being implemented in both authorities. Aberdeen City had adopted a commuted payments scheme in terms of long-term maintenance of above ground SUDS. In Aberdeenshire, a 20 year period for maintenance had been agreed.

Claire Pritchett questioned this, giving the view that in her experience, within Aberdeenshire, the council not adopting above ground suds at all. It was identified that there maybe some confusion here and problem, specifically in terms of SUDS maintenance, as this element is but one element of the developer contributions payment, which is negotiated. Consequently it may not be transparent how much money has been obtained for that particular element. A specific problem was identified at Kintore, but Malcolm Taberner reported that there was no objection to adopting any above ground suds, but he thought that the problem was most likely to be failure to reach agreement over the developer contributions package as a whole, rather than the suds element within it.

Bill Murphy identified that in the city the designer was asked to specify the maintenance requirements of the scheme and this led to a very clear identification of costs. While the issue of maintenance of above ground drainage is significant for both authorities it is clear that the water services bill, and its associate regulations will clarify the situation. We are still waiting for a date when these issues will be resolved on a national level but the Scottish Executive is under considerable pressure to come to the solution. There is no certainty as to what the regulations will say but best guess, from SEPA, is that Scottish Water will be asked to adopt above ground SUDS. There will still be issues over where the drainage system is a combined system incorporating road drainage and the non-road drainage. In terms of the below ground suds, Scottish Water are responsible for below ground suds, as long as it has been built on a top-table standard, normally if it's contained within the site.

Local agreements are still possible in order to progress suds issues. It is important that all aspects of SUDS are agreed before planning permission is granted. In Aberdeenshire, the current stance of negotiation seems to be working well without prescription of design requirements. In Aberdeenshire there are local agreements over maintenance. It is clear that these issues are not going away and it was agreed that there was need to resurrect the SUDS working group to

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to research
background

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ensure that these issues are examined in detail, and to assess how the drainage impact assessment guidance was progressing in Aberdeenshire. Similar actions are taking place in the City.

Malcolm reported on comments coming back from developers about non-porous ground conditions precluding suds. It is clear that developers are not yet taking the issue to heart as there are very few cases where suds cannot be developed, even if only partially (one exception being on contaminated land).

Jim Lister identified the changes in the Building Regulations which resulted in no soakaways being permitted within 5 metres of the boundary property. This has resulted in issues for city brownfield sites. The issue whether a SUDS on a brownfield site should be considered as a flood mitigation measure was discussed and it was confirmed that the development plan is the source of the requirement for suds rather than regulation at this point in time. SEPA have an enforcement role but would find it difficult to refuse discharge consent in cases where water quality was not an issue.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK

Piers Blaxter introduced this item and highlighted a number of points from the report. Specific attention was taken to the adoption of the 200 year flood risk by the ABI and the considerations which the ABI members will review in terms of considering the availability of giving flood cover at risk areas. Discussion also touched on issues of building technology and the concept of “resilient reinstatement” of buildings, which will be given legislative backing by April 2003. The use of resilient technologies as a precautionary measure was discussed, as was whether there was a role for insurers to contribute to flood defences. It was identified that this was probably a long way off. Insurers are unable to do this at the current time as it could be seen as being anti-monopolistic.

7. DEVELOP AND PLAN PROGRESS

Andrew Carruthers reported on the Aberdeenshire Local Plan and the fact that it was being published in a fortnight's time. Copies of the relevant policy and appendix were circulated. It was also noted that Aberdeen City Local Plan had been published and was in deposit.

8. CURRENT SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

No significant development proposals were identified.

9. LINKS WITH OTHERS

It was identified that there was a Network Flood Appraisal Group meeting to be held in East Renfrewshire on 3 October 2002 and this was something that NESFAG should support. Unfortunately it conflicts with the climate change conference being held in Aberdeen City at the same time.

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There was discussion as to whether the flood appraisal group should review its function and performance. It was identified that there were lack of environmental interests represented on the flood appraisal group and that the group would benefit from SNH involvement. Overall, however it was felt that the FAG was doing well.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

A number of topics where future flood appraisal group meetings were identified including links with emergency planning, liaison with legal representatives on the issue of indemnity, a meeting with Public Health Authorities to see whether FAG could assist them with their contingency plans and to make both the FAG and the Public Health authorities more aware of flood related issues. A meeting with developers to consider their perspective on flooding issues and links with the local universities were also suggested. The 6th or 13th of November 2002 were identified as provisional dates for the next meeting

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