

NAYLAND WITH WISSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTY MEETING

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING TOPIC: CALEY GREEN:

Present SCC Cllr. J FINCH, Parish Cllrs. P. Wilkie, N. Cartright, M. George, S & J Dalton

Apologies: Cllr. D. Harris.

Purpose of meeting: to discuss draft drawings and percentages of planting/revetment, coir rolls v. Aqualog areas to combat further erosion, position of separate areas, pre application process and share further information.

M. George reminded participants that a Working Party is not a decision-making group. Decisions by Councils must be made at full council meetings after discussion. Working Parties do research and make recommendations, but discussions are confidential until published to full council.

P. Wilkie had produced a draft scale drawing based on a drone photo with assistance of a resident who had marked out 5 metre lengths on the ground, double markers for oak revetment areas. The 13.6 metres between tall reed bed and bench area is not included in the area for discussion as this will be left for access to the river in a shallow section with minimal erosion. EA had stipulated 12 metres of oak revetment, one option is to split that into two sections. Total area for discussion therefore 35 metres.

P Wilkie reported we were waiting for copies of the appropriate EA application. S Dalton said that EA website shows two types, Standard and Bespoke. M George agreed that Caley Green would need Bespoke. PC had been given the impression that there was more than one Bespoke application form. EA was now restricted on what UK Gov allowed to be on website.

Discussion re feasibility of Aqualog.

Environment Agency had made a case against using Aqualog and had recommended coir rolls. However, the group expressed the need for flexibility. Aqualog was not merely a barrier as it could be used for planting low vegetation so could be regarded as an alternative to coir rolls if the location is suitable.

S Dalton's previous emails had outlined information about Aqualogs and M George had circulated links to Salix brochure received from AONB Team earlier in the year. N. Cartright had made further enquiries with Salix about products and asked to see samples. Salix wanted far more detail before giving information. M George had contacted Salix earlier in the process to ask about sites in East Anglia where coir and Aqualogs had been used, but no the information was sent. N. Cartwright asked whether S. Dalton had seen products, but she had not. M George said there were other suppliers/contractors who did this work along the Stour, information circulated by DSVS AONB Team. N Cartwright suggested writing with broad details and asking for site visit. M George advised caution to comply with local authority regulations, as specifications had to be sent to three contractors when asking for quotations. Any approach would need to be on an information only basis.

Members were asked their views re the planting and non-planting areas. M. George asked for clarification of term 'riverbank planting' in table (attached), as Aqualogs could be planted. P Wilkie said this was intended as coir rolls area.

S. Dalton stated preference for the least area of planting, ie 31%. N. Cartright concerned about concept of mixing three difference materials. M George agreed. P Wilkie preferred the options of up to 43% of planting. M George preferred a middle road of 43%, not in one block, but could envisage a lower proportion, subject to EA advice as we had to comply with guidelines. *(later in the meeting J Finch expressed opinion that there should not be a hotch potch of types as it could look a mess).*

Comparative pricings: PC had details of comparative per metre pricings earlier this year. Aqualog prices had been much higher than coir rolls. S Dalton said that this was no longer the case because of supply chain problems.

Update on pricing needed to be sought by PC asap. In principle, it was agreed to review the use of Aqualogs subject to suitability for this location. EA had said it should be used in 'high density' areas of river movement. Discussion about 'toe' and support for each option. M George was concerned about the plastic netting element of Aqualog. Is

there a fibre netting option as with coir roll? J Finch supported a compromise solution and suggested that some plastics could be less harmful than others. P Wilkie expressed view we need more professional advice before making decisions. Agreed.

Use of river by craft. Access essential. Most damage being done at Bear Street end where bank is being gouged. J Dalton was asked for observations on how majority of craft users currently enter river. He said that most paddle boarders and small craft used the shallow area between the tall reed bed and the bench because they could put the craft into the water and step in. The more 'professional' kit users tended to launch off the other higher bank where water is deeper. S Dalton said that the old concrete 'toe' beyond the bench still gives protection. N Cartwright asked for confirmation that there was no vegetation planned in the bench area. Confirmed.

S Dalton felt that the original revetement was longer than 12 metres. Remnants in the river bed seemed to indicate this. Are there records of that installation? M George said that these could be the remains of more than one past revetment. The most recent had been installed by Environment Agency at request by Parish Council to protect the path that had been arranged by Parish Council for wheelchair access. At that time, EA had funds for those projects, but central funding had been cut in recent years. It is possible that EA had a record of the last installation.

S Dalton asked why we need to go for as much as 31% planting? P Wilkie expressed view that planting represents an eco friendly proposal, with attractive low planting, an educational resource, and this is part of what is needed to be seen in any proposal to EA. Tall reeds and tall vegetation has never been part of proposal. S Dalton confirmed some other species now establishing near end of tall reeds bed.

Planting on corner. Three metres? M George asked whether that was too much at that point. Discussion about blocked ditch, (*already reported by PC to SCC Highways for clearance*). S Dalton said that current resident on other side of ditch does not maintain the growth at the end of property and this has grown across the end of the ditch. M George reiterated the EA and SCC ecologists' view that the corner on the Caley Green side of the ditch needed protection so that it did not fall away and cause the river to erode a channel between the property and the reed island adjoining that property. (*SCC liability as landowner*). EA had mentioned this area as attractive to fry, S Dalton believed there was already adequate opportunity for fry to shelter.

S Dalton suggested that if a jetty is included, it should be at that point. M George asked how much response to the request in C Times there had been about jetty. Some vehemently opposed, some for, but not a large response. EA had said there needs to be overwhelming support. P Wilkie suggested a household leaflet drop could be more successful than C Times in getting responses.

J Finch mentioned that EA is reviewing reed maintenance along the whole river. M George said that EA would only clear reeds where navigation is impeded. J Finch offered to discuss with SCC Property Dept as to landowner and riparian rights responsibilities to clarify position with reed clearance, particularly the long bed of tall reeds that prevents access from some parts of the Green. M George confirmed that under the licence agreement SCC is responsible for health and safety issues in public places owned by SCC. Fishing Rights refers to the legal status but public need access to exercise those rights.

Maintenance. S Dalton asked about maintenance of new planting J Dalton said this is a concern for residents. P Wilkie confirmed that there has always been a commitment to a management plan in the proposal. S Dalton asked who would pay for it? M George confirmed that PC pays for current maintenance on the Green. P Wilkie believed that residents would be willing to have this covered by their precept contribution if it gave them peace of mind that it would be done. With low vegetation in mixed scheme, the bank will be protected for future. M George reiterated that PC has always emphasised at meetings with official bodies that only low vegetation should be considered.

There were differences of opinion about erosion, but agreed that action needs to be taken to prevent future damage. N Cartwright would not want the Green to become a messy silted area as at Dedham and showed aerial photos of Caley Green showing where silt is building up at the bend near the path because the edge of river bank is being broken off. This is the area under discussion for stretch of low planting to divide the access areas. P Wilkie

said we had a list of low plants from EA, two suggestions from another resident, if members of the working party have additional suggestions, they would be useful at any future meeting. J Finch said we need to be wary of over invasive species.

J Dalton said it was difficult to see exactly what is proposed from current draft sketch. It was agreed that a more detailed plan could be drawn up as soon as possible. M George reminded members of the Working Party that any final drawing and plan would need to be discussed and approved at full council before an application could be made to EA. If this is to be discussed at the January meeting, then relevant papers would need to be published by the Friday before as this is a statutory obligation. J Finch suggested that the next working party meeting should be on site, weather permitting. Meeting date agreed as Thursday 6th January at 10 am.

M George thanked S & J Dalton for attending. J Dalton had attended the meetings with all the official bodies earlier in the year as an observer and it was beneficial to continue involvement.

Plans for Action:

- Meet on site on 6th January (via zoom if weather is bad)
- P Wilkie to draw up Agenda for that meeting.
- P Wilkie to draw up a precise plan to cover what had been discussed.
- P Wilkie to investigate further planting options
- J Finch to discuss landowners' responsibilities with SCC Property Team, in particular with regard to the long reed bed, and report back.
- N Cartwright to draft letter of enquiry to be sent to various suppliers, but without committing Parish or County Councils to any agreement. To be approved at a full council meeting.
- After next Working Party meeting, to report to Parish Council for discussion at January council meeting. Circulate with Agenda.

MG 16 December 2021