

Fens Community Liaison Group (CLG) 7

Summary of meeting

Thursday 23 July, 7-9pm, Doddington Village Hall

Attendees

Organisation	
Anglian Water	Horseway residents
Fenland District Council	Fenland Ramblers
Doddington Parish Council	Chatteris Town Council
British Horse Society	March Town Council
March West Council	Manea Parish Council
Feofees Charity	

Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting. Members asked whether previous minutes had been circulated. Anglian Water (AW) confirmed they had been shared with all members and were available on the project website.

Members queried whether all CLG members had received the previous minutes. The project team asked anyone not receiving emails to provide updated contact details and confirmed it would check and update the circulation list where needed.

Electing a Chair

AW thanked the current Chair for chairing the CLG and explained that, in line with the Terms of Reference, a new Chair would need to be elected through a nomination process.

Members asked whether a new Chair could be elected at the meeting and whether the current Chair would be willing to stand again. The Chair confirmed he would be willing to stand, and the project team confirmed that, as not all members were present, a nomination process would be taken forward between meetings.

Update (following the CLG meeting): While some members on the evening suggested that DC chairs again, AW has since received feedback from other members with preference for a new chair. It has since been decided that AW will chair the CLG meetings for the time being.

Update on project status and programme

AW provided an update on the project status and programme, including ongoing work with the Environment Agency and Natural England, design development, the Development Consent Order process and engagement with contractors and investors.

Members asked for clearer information about what will be built, how the project will look at each stage and what has changed about the design since the last phase of consultation. Questions also covered local business engagement, procurement, ownership of the reservoir company, local employment, schools and young people, risks to local businesses, badger relocation and land purchase. The project team explained that design work is progressing, phase four consultation is expected in 2027 and the DCO application is expected in 2028, with a "Fenland first" approach being explored where possible.

Surveys

AW provided an update on surveys and investigations, including archaeological, ground, environmental and ecological work supporting the DCO and reservoir design. Current work includes boreholes, geoarchaeological trial pits and observational trial pits, continuing to December 2026.

Members asked about archaeological finds, local museums, road damage, worker safety in hot weather, embankment design, settlement and whether clay would be imported. The project team said heritage finds would be managed with the heritage team, but were ultimately owned by the relevant landowner; temporary works would be reinstated; that worker safety during the hot weather was being taken seriously and processes put in place to ensure this; road conditions were being considered; and the project does not expect to import clay, but would, as previously stated, need to import materials not found on site, including drainage material.

Construction, traffic and transport

AW provided an update on construction, traffic and transport, including construction planning, power supply, road upgrades, material sources and options for moving materials by rail or road. Transport assessments and modelling are being prepared for the DCO submission.

Members raised questions about engagement with highways authorities, speed limits, red routes, crossings, traffic on the A141/A142, equipment size, congestion and construction logistics. The project team said it continues to engage with the relevant highways authorities and statutory bodies, and that options for machinery and material movements are still being assessed, with traffic and transport forming a significant part of phase three consultation feedback.

Construction workers accommodation scheme (CWAS)

AW outlined the construction workers accommodation scheme, including the expected workforce, potential relocation of workers, local housing capacity, road impacts and possible benefits for the local economy. AW asked members for their preferred options on potential accommodation logistics, such as building a separate community for renters, then offering this space to young people in the future. AW requested that any ideas or suggestions from members are fed back to the team.

Members asked whether construction workers would return home at weekends, whether accommodation would be similar to military accommodation and whether the team would liaise with local job centres. A suggestion was also made for a community club for workers, which the project team said would be considered as the strategy develops.

Education work

AW provided an overview of the project's education work, including school engagement, work experience, the Young Ambassadors Forum, apprenticeships and graduate schemes. The Young Ambassadors Forum will focus on 16–17-year-olds and provide feedback on the ongoing development of the project, with CLG members agreeing that education work is important.

Community volunteering

AW provided an update on community volunteering and explained that the project is exploring opportunities similar to those on other major schemes. Members were asked to suggest local charities the project could work with.

Members were invited to suggest local charities and community organisations that could benefit from future volunteering opportunities. A member asked when more information on rail options would be available, and AW confirmed further information would be provided during phase four consultation in 2027.

Meeting ends