

LOWER LEE INVESTIGATIONS MEETING



Date: Wednesday 15 July 2015 10:00-15:00

Location: The House Mill, Bromley-by-Bow, London, E3 3DU

Attendees:

Jane Allam (Environment Agency, Principal Hydrologist) – JA
 George Horne (Environment Agency, Lee Fisheries Catchment Officer) – GH
 Sarah Wardell (Environment Agency, National River Basin Management service) - SW
 Mathew Wells (Canal & River Trust, Principal Hydrologist) – MW
 Dawn Richardson (Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Conservation Officer) - DR
 David Johnson (Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Catchment Officer) - DJ
 Derek Stork (Group Against Reservoir Development) - DS

Brian Arkell (Atkins) - BA
 Kieran Conlan (Cascade Consulting) - KC (chair)
 John Sanders (Cascade Consulting) - JS
 Peter Mulder (Cascade Consulting) – PM (minutes)
 Steve Tuck (TW) – ST
 Chris Lambert (TW) - CL
 Laura Beardsworth (TW) – LB
 Richard Smith (TW) – RS

Apologies:

Miles Morgan, Phil Belfield, Sandra Spinks, Amanda Mclean (EA); Rob Cairns, Claire Martin, Gary Smith, Steve Wilkinson (LVRPA); John Woods, Dennis Meadhurst (LAA); John Ellis, Adam Comerford (CRT); Rebecca Tibbetts (NE); David Mooney (London WLT); Tim Hill (H&M WLT); John Bryden (Thames21); Richard Everitt (PLA); Andrew Altman (OLC); Alex Nickson (GLA); Denise Roscoe (RSPB); Karen Gibbs (CCW); Jon Ashley (Ofwat); Andy Gill (Atkins); John Lawson (GARD).

Note of key discussion points:

Agenda item	Discussion point
1	Welcome and introductions
1.1	The Lower Lee Investigations Programme forms part of the Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) 2014 unknown sustainability reductions programme. The Lower Lee investigation outputs will feed into the 2019 WRMP and is required as part of the National Environment Programme (NEP).
2	Background to Lower Lee investigations programme
2.1	There are close connections to the Deephams Sewage Works Water Framework Directive (WFD) Upgrade; Deephams Sewage Works Effluent re-use scheme and the Eel Entrainment Mitigation Project, which includes a trap & transport scheme at High Maynard Reservoir.
3	Engagement with regulators and stakeholders
3.1	Regulator and stakeholder engagement is planned as part of the investigations. It was suggested by the group that the invitation should be extended to include the River Lee Anglers and Enfield Island Resident's Association.
3.2	Engagement of Local Authorities is planned through Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.
4	Proposed approach to the investigations
4.1	The outcome of the study will form part of the WRMP in 2019. Any impacts will need to be established by September 2017 to ensure they can be fully included in the WRMP19.
5	Discussion on Proposed approach
5.1	The PowerPoint slide set outlining the proposed approach and scoping study findings are made available via the TW website: www.thameswater.co.uk
5.2	WFD:

<p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p> <p>Action</p> <p>5.7</p> <p>Action</p> <p>5.8</p> <p>Action</p>	<p>The RBMP2 water bodies in the Lower Lee are all Heavily Modified Water bodies (HMWB) in recognition of specified uses (navigation, flood protection). HMWB designation allows continuation of the specified uses (which provide valuable social and economic benefits) but at the same time requires mitigation measures to improve ecological quality. For these water bodies, the environmental objective is to achieve “Good Ecological Potential” (GEP) rather than “Good Ecological Status” (GES).</p> <p>Action EA- Please can you confirm what the heavily modified water bodies in the Lower Lee will be designated for in RBMP2. If the designations do not include water supply/storage can you confirm why?</p> <p>Hydrology: Cascade presented a conceptual water balance based on available data. It was noted by JA that the flow characterisation was key. The EA have concerns regarding the accuracy of the historic record for the Feildes Weir gauge and a new gauge has been running in parallel since 2010. JA noted that installing a large number of flow gauging stations was probably not cost effective for this investigation. It is noted that the Lower Lee is not currently included in TW drought Plan and and that the Low Flow investigations undertaken in the catchment to date have focused on the potential for abstractions to exacerbate existing issues during low flow periods. DS requested that historic drought periods should be brought out more.</p> <p>Focus area: JA queried why the area between Feildes Weir and King George V upstream of the abstractions was included in the area to be investigated. It is important not to focus on the area containing the abstractions only, but to understand the wider catchment, including potential options for mitigation, if required. DS agreed with the focus area.</p> <p>Lee Navigation: It was assumed that the Lee Navigation is level controlled and therefore will not be considered further. This approach was endorsed by MW.</p> <p>Tidal Lee: It was noted that a degree of uncertainty surrounds the effect of freshwater discharges on the ecology of the Tidal Lee and these are likely to be heavily influenced by flow control and lock use at 3 Mills Lock.</p> <p>Action EA - Can you confirm if you are the contact for the tidal section or if we need to contact Kent and South London.</p> <p>Fisheries: Diffuse pollution and low oxygen events, as well as fish passage from the Tidal Lee into the freshwater Lee have been highlighted as an important limiting factor to fish populations. Most angling in the Lower Lee is undertaken upstream of Tottenham Locks. Further data is required on the effectiveness of the 3 Mills Lock fish pass, so an assessment of the effectiveness of the fish pass is proposed to be undertaken by CRT as part of a WFD Assessment. A Local Eel Management Plan is in place for all CRT owned structures.</p> <p>Action EA (GH) - please share details of the Eel Management Plan and any information on diffuse pollution impact (fish kills) in the Lower Lee.</p> <p>Review of Consents Action EA - can you confirm if you agree with the approach of screening out any reaches that were assessed in the review of consents</p>
	<p>LUNCH</p>
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Discussion on the Environmental Objectives for the Lower Lee</p> <p>Proposed draft Environmental Objectives for the Lower Lee Investigation study and Lower Lee catchment were presented. These include recognition of the different (designated) uses of the catchment and these are aligned with standards required by the WFD.</p> <p>The scoping study will recommend that Environmental Objectives are developed as part of the first phase of the project. It will also recommend that the number of Objectives is reduced to a total of 6-8 in line with other abstraction studies such as the Lower Thames Operating Agreement.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>Action</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>Other studies and investigations into the Lower Lee catchment</p> <p>CRT are finalising their water resources strategy by October 2015, which mirrors a water company approach and sets out how to manage water as a resource; service levels; and planned maintenance of assets. Unlike the Stort Navigation, the Lee Navigation has not been subject to problems with water levels or flow during recent low flow periods (i.e. between 2010-2012). Water levels in the Lee Navigation are maintained through a system of lock bypass channels. CRT has an asset database, lock use data, canal cross section data and hydrometric data at strategic locations.</p> <p>Action CRT (MW) – please can you share lock use data, cross section data and hydrometric data for the Lee catchment (Lee Navigation, 3 Mills Lock, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal)</p> <p>TW is currently undertaking drought permit baseline monitoring, an eels screening project, work associated with the Upgrade of Deephams Sewage Treatment Works. Upstream of the survey area, TW is undertaking catchment management to reduce pesticide levels in drinking water and is also working on a mitigation option arising from the low flow investigations on the Amwell Magna Loop.</p>

7.3	The EA is working on restoring sustainable abstraction investigations in the Upper Lee (with Affinity Water), which may affect flows at Feildes Weir. These include revocation of the abstraction licence for Welwyn Pumping Station at Singles Marsh, and amendments to abstraction licences in the River Mimram and River Beane catchments. The EA will undertake additional flood model runs using these changes for the River Lee and River Colne.
Action	Action EA - Please confirm what your (RBMP2) projects/site specific measures are, which ones are on-going, which ones are funded and which ones are aspirational?
Action	Action EA (JA) - Please confirm what modelling has been completed for the sustainability reductions in the Upper Lee catchment.
Action	Action EA - Please confirm if there are any planned changes to the flood defence operations in the study area
7.4	Thames21 – tbc by John Bryden.
7.5	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Thames 21 have online catchment plans for the Middle and Lower Lee respectively. They are also undertaking an EA funded Eels project on four barriers in the Middle Lee, including Holycross Weir, Nazeing Weir and two projects on the Amwell Magna Loop.
Action	Action (DJ & GH) – please can you share details of the EA funded Eel (Wildlife Trust) project to remove structures
8	Summary of key actions arising
8.1	Deadline for comments on report, environmental objectives and presentation by 28 July 2015 (All)
8.2	Final report released – 14 August 2015 (Cascade/TW)
9	Review of meeting and views on future stakeholder engagement
9.1	The preferred method of communication (agenda, report, etc) was email. The venue was considered appropriate.
10	AOB and next steps
10.1	A second stakeholder meeting is planned for later in 2015.
	Meeting close @ 15:00