

101382807

Revision 01

WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	7 th October 2024, 15:00-17:00
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	ESC – Naomi Hayes (NH)
Attendees:	SZC – Nick Stayt (NS), Steve Mannings (SMan), ESC – Naomi Hayes (NH), James Meyer (JM) WLMA – Alastair Bloomfield (AB), Suffolk Wildlife Trust – Ben McFarland (BM) Natural England – Sean Mahoney (SM) Environment Agency – Ayden Hassan (AH)
Apologies:	ENGL SCC

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Meeting Notes:

- The group approves the terms of reference

Action – NS to email ENGL and SCC to confirm their support of ToR, and aiming to send to the Environment Review Group ahead of their next meeting

PROJECT UPDATES

- SMan provided an update on the primary on-site activities, highlighting significant progress in tree clearance within the Sizewell Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) area, including the removal of scrub from reeds and trees to clear the permanent footprint of the Sizewell Project.
- Archaeological works are ongoing across the site, with the access route to the SSSI crossing nearing completion. Winter lighting plans for the main development site (MDS) are being finalised. A noise acoustic bund has been successfully installed at the Ancillary Construction Area (ACA) to the west of the office accommodation which is now in place. The barrier will serve as a prototype for use within across the MDS.
- UXO clearance is in progress in specified areas, which will continue into 2025. Trials for sheet piling methods have begun with the Main Construction Area (MCA), in preparation for work at the SSSI crossing later in the year, pending the discharge of relevant requirements.
- For the AD sites, a work program is scheduled between now and late February/early March for establishment of site access, vegetation clearance, and archaeological works, setting the stage for the commencement of civil work in Q2 2025

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MONTHLY REPORTING

- **Water Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (WMMP):**

- SMan noted that data on water levels and quality is being collected monthly in accordance with the WMMP.
- SMan noted the monthly report template has been developed to examine whether any triggers have passed, evaluate screening exercises, and suggest proposed actions.
- The group's role is to manage the discharge version of the plan, which includes the ability to update the discharge document and store the changes locally (without the need to be re-discharged)
- The group needs to agree how frequently the plan needs to be reviewed (dependant on changing trends and new monitoring requirements etc)
- Any changes that are made need to be highlighted in the meeting minutes and agreement log

- **Summary – Water Levels**

- Locations P1 and P7 are scheduled for replacement (due to their location within the footprint of the permanent development) by the end of the current year, with considerations being made for SSSI ascent compliance. Once in place monthly monitoring will continue.
- Trend analysis has identified that both upper and lower triggers (as defined in the WMMP) have been passed across the monitoring undertaken in 2024; however, these are attributed to natural variability and weather conditions rather than on-site activities
- In response to inquiries about distinguishing between natural and project related influences, NS clarified that current assessments are based on data analysis. The report includes a justification section at the end, featuring a monthly tracker that notes extreme weather conditions, such as unusually wet or dry periods. This section provides the rationale for the triggers and confirms that there have been no site activities as part of the Sizewell C Project that could have contributed to these variations.
- It was requested that where possible further information should be provided in the monthly reporting to justify the conclusions reached with regard to natural or project related influences.

Action - NS and SMan to liaise with technical specialists to determine how they can present whether water level changes are due to natural causes, and which are a consequence of construction activities

- BM stressed the importance of integrating water chemistry analysis to better distinguish between natural and construction-related changes in water levels as the two would likely be linked. SMan stated that it is known that the current high-water levels are caused by weather conditions. However, moving towards development that could affect water levels, SMan stated that future localised changes will be identifiable through monthly monitoring and will then be reviewed to determine if they are related to construction. An example of this is related to the dewatering activities associated with the installation of the cut off wall. As it is known when this is taking place, it will be possible to review the monitoring results in the context of these works to monitor any localised changes.
- JM emphasised the need for more detailed analysis for when triggers are passed (i.e. quantifying how much a trigger is exceeded by) and suggested enhancing the graphical representations to include additional context, such as challenges in data collection (e.g. access) due to weather conditions.

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- NH questioned the review protocol for exceeded triggers and how this process is represented in the monthly reporting, SMan clarified that while no current on-site activities are affecting water levels, the review process will become more dynamic as/if construction impacts emerge. SMan also stated that the team would refine reporting to include justifications for changes and possibly a one-page summary to explain trends and categorisations, which would align with the WMMP's guidelines.
- The protocol for exceeded water level triggers was examined, with NH questioning whether they should be marked for review regardless of the cause and noted the process outlined in the WMMP is not currently being followed. NH noted that the nuances of the current situation (i.e. no activities occurring that could affect water levels) are not reflected in WMMP. Although she understands the rationale for deviations, NH proposed finding a solution to ensure the plan's processes are fully followed or appropriately agree to adjust the process in the interim to reflect the current situation.
- SMan stated that the format of the monthly reports can be amended to provide more detail moving forward. It is considered that the information presented does provide the justification required under the WMMP but noted it could be amended to provide further information in future revisions.
- SMan proposed enhancing the current reporting by including justifications for any changes directly. Additionally, he suggested supplementing the reports with a one-page summary that provides a clear, evidence-based explanation of trends and the rationale behind the categorisation of results (green, amber, or red), aligning with the WMMP's guidelines
- He recommended refining the summary of findings to more accurately reflect the process or, alternatively, appending an additional page to provide this detail. As more intricate work begins, a one-page technical appendix could be issued to clearly articulate the assessment
- SMan recognised that while the team has adhered to the WMMP's process, they need to more explicitly demonstrate the reasoning behind their conclusions following the feedback received.
- NH agreed that this was a suitable solution.
- NS requested if there was any further feedback on the monthly reporting template that this provided by email following the meeting.

Action – SZC to review water levels summary of findings and make sure workings are clear and explicit, particularly for any transition of assessment between amber and green.

• Summary – Water Quality

- The team discussed the challenge of visually reporting on water quality, noting that while analysis covers more than four parameters, not all can be sensibly included in the monthly dashboard or have clear triggers for measurement.
- SMan noted that to identify emerging trends, key differentiators have been narrowed down to four main factors.
- BM questioned the absence of multivariate statistics to condense data, and SMan clarified that while the monthly dashboard is a simplified report to flag potential issues, a comprehensive interpretive report with full statistical analysis is planned annually in accordance with the WMMP.
- JM queried locations of monitoring

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- SMan asked for thoughts on clarifying the approach to presenting water quality. SMan stated that graphs could be provided if requested. BM stated that it would be useful to have all four parameters on the same graph.
- BM stated that it will also be important to analysis the data over time to review trends.
- JM stated that if interpretative reports are to be provided it changes the emphasis on the monthly reporting and noted a balance needs to be found.

Action – SZC to summaries statistical methods which will be used for the interpretive assessment

Action - SMan proposed exploring whether the water quality data could be simplified and represented graphically on the dashboard, with the possibility of offering both the current and alternative formats (graphs) for review

Action - SZC will circulate the scope of the annual interpretive water quality report and assess the value of a six-monthly version, rather than on annual basis as currently defined in the WMMP.

• Monitoring Location P1 and P7 and WMMP Update

- Replacement of monitoring locations P1 and P7 is underway, with updated located expected to be confirmed this week
- NS noted the existing WMMP does not identify trigger levels for P1 and P7. Once the locations are confirmed and trigger levels are established, the plan will be updated to include these details. NH supported this and then stated ESC would then publish the revised full copy on the ESC Governance Group portal as a minor revision to the WMMP. This follows the process outline earlier within this meeting and as noted in the MMP itself. No other comments were received on this matter
- SZC will provide updates on the locations in the coming weeks.
- For SSSI ascent considerations, discussions with SMah will be necessary. SMah noted that the determining factors will be whether activities have the potential not damage SSSI features. A conversation will be held before any actions are taken.

MATTERS ARISING

- SMan discussed the impracticality of using telemetry for data collection from hard-to-reach locations, as mentioned in the submitted plan. He reported that the team can access most locations regularly and as such telemetry is not proposed to be used going forward. He sought the group's comfort with this limitation.
- NH emphasised the importance of clearly stating the reasons for inaccessible monitoring points on the dashboard and provision of supplementary materials, such as water inundation.
- JM questioned the usefulness of monitoring points that frequently become inaccessible and the potential loss of data.

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- In response to JM, BM highlighted that the inaccessibility of points due to high water levels provides valuable information for the long-term understanding of the Sizewell Marshes SSSI and Fen's dependence on groundwater. Capturing this data is crucial given the existing pressures on the Sizewell Marshes SSSI
- SMan confirmed that the monitoring team lead has assured they can access most locations regularly. He had requested a detailed report from the Monitoring Team on access methods for each location and any necessary improvements to ensure regular data collection, and has requested a detailed report on the accessibility of each location. This report should include any necessary improvements for consistent access and identify any particularly challenging locations

Action: SMan to share note on accessibility of locations once available

- NH discussed meeting frequency as per the DoO, which states biannual meetings. Given the previous interval exceeded six months, she asked if the current frequency is sufficient or if more frequent meetings are desired. BM and SMan both advocated for more frequent meetings, proposing the next meeting be scheduled in three months.

Action: Schedule recurring meetings every three months. Upcoming meetings are set for the week commencing January 13th from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, April 7th from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, and a date to be determined in July. Nick will add these dates to the diary, aiming for the second Monday of the month for future occurrences

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Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
7 th October 2024	1	NS to email ENGL and SCC to confirm their support of ToR, and aiming to send to the Environment Review Group ahead of their next meeting	SZC	11 th November 2024
7 th October 2024	2	NS and SMan to liaise with technical specialists to determine how they can present whether water level changes are due to natural causes and which are a consequence of construction activities	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	3	SZC to review water levels summary of findings and make sure workings are clear and explicit, particularly for any transition of assessment between amber and green	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	4	SZC to provide a summary, of statistical methods which will be used for the interpretive assessment	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	5	SMan proposed exploring whether the water quality data could be simplified and represented graphically on the dashboard, with the possibility of offering both the current and alternative formats (graphs) for review	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	6	SZC will circulate the scope of the annual interpretive water quality report and assess the value of a six-monthly version	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	7	SMan to share note on accessibility of water monitoring locations	SZC	Next meeting
7 th October 2024	8	Schedule recurring meetings every three months. Upcoming meetings are set for the week commencing January 13 th from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, April 7 th from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, and a date to be determined in July. Nick will add these dates to the diary, aiming for the second Monday of the month for future occurrences	SZC	Next meeting

Author: Caitlin Murphy (SZC)