

Transcript of Verbal Submission to WODC Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 30/09/2021 at 14:00

Re: Continued Flood Risk and Update from WFMG

William Wareing, Woodford Mill, Mill Street, Witney OX286DE

Continued Flood Risk and Update from WFMG

Hello everyone, thank you for allowing me to address the committee again today on the issue of continued flood risk, and expected action.

I last addressed this meeting back in June and February of this year, as have members of our Flood Mitigation Group previously.

I hope that in order to get our points across to you on our recent efforts, you have both received and read my recent email containing a detailed update, and I would be happy to answer any questions you have either today or in a follow up, as we are committed to forming a positive working relationship with you all.

On the matter of numerous outstanding questions that we posed to this committee, I am yet to receive a response from anyone and would really like to put those to bed. Clearly, we as a group have continued to learn and evolve our understanding and expertise and have since learned a great deal more, recently met a team from OCC and from the EA and are awaiting follow up actions and meetings – as highlighted in my update to You.

On behalf of the people of Witney we are seeking the following:

- OCC
 - Witney Bridge Redesign or Rebuild
 - Remove the bund between two footbridges on Langel Common and replace with continuous bridge
- EA
 - Assess the riverbed at key locations in Central Witney so that proper maintenance can be determined and undertaken
 - Place, extend or replace gauges at key locations upstream and downstream of Witney Bridge to calculate Head Drop, and assess the effect of the bridge and Langel Common bund during flood/high water conditions
- Combined Team
 - Proper maintenance of main river and ordinary watercourses
 - An Attenuation Scheme upstream of Witney between Worsham and Crawley
 - An Attenuation Scheme for Hailey Road Drain above Eastfield Road.

Onto Specific WODC Accountabilities that sit nowhere else but here, I will reiterate my points made about how we think you can help:

- Review adequacy of and provide Crisis Management plan details, to reassure all residents
- Responsibly support the residents and this action group – why are you not leading/promoting a partnership funding scheme for Witney?
- Press OCC and EA for action and responsibilities, supporting us
 - EA for assessment of riverbed and flow capacity assessment

- OCC for a bridge capacity investigation and remedial measures arising, including measuring head drop across the bridge – i.e. how much of a dam OCC's bridge is, flooding properties upstream of it
- Pause all development contributing run off to the floodplain pending these investigations
- Assess how you will correct the planning errors made in allowing extensive development on and around the flood plain in Western and Central Witney, where many of us live
- Lead an active working group as our elected representatives, to help achieve a dependable remedy – from our perspective what we have observed so far is a lack of collaboration amongst key public departments
- As Riparian Owners, we would also like to see WODC lead the way, set an example in proactive land and river management, let's call it our own back yard.

Today we are due to be joined by the EA and OCC, it is a long time coming and we all hope to see some real collaboration and action and will either lead to or support group action. Clearly, we can only be involved/speak out as members of the public in this slot during proceedings.

We have not turned up in wellies this time, however given the time of year and what is ahead of us, I can assure you that flood risk remains firmly in our minds – the next few months of wet weather will continue to affect many of us psychologically. We have so far waited patiently for 9 months to see what will be done.

I hope we all go home later today with more hope for the future.

Thank you for your attention.

END OF ADDRESS