

**FINAL VERSION
(AGREED AT PLANNING CTTEE MEETING ON 30/10/18)**

**PROPOSED COGGESHALL, KELVEDON & FEERING FLOOD RISK
MANAGEMENT SCHEME**

STATEMENT BY COGGESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

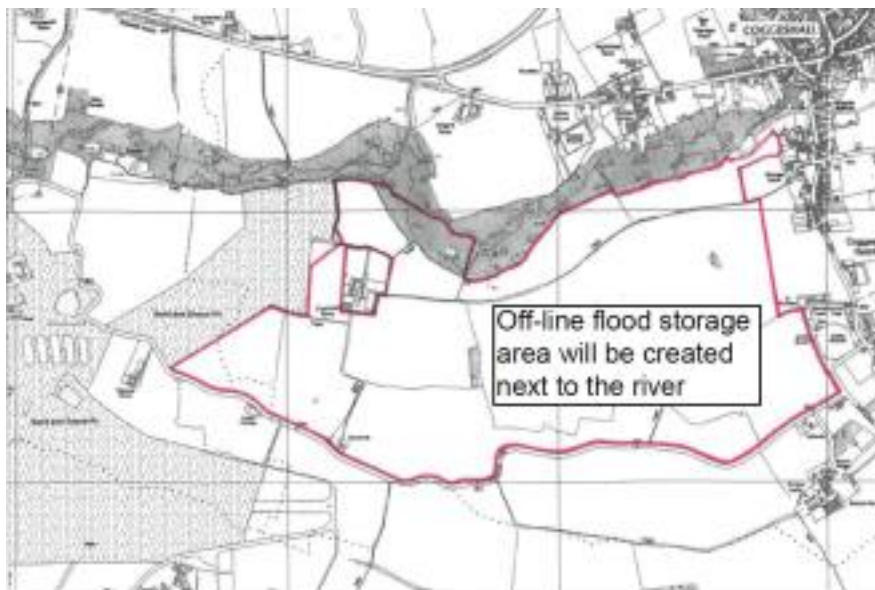
The Environment Agency recently produced the attached update about a proposed flood risk reduction scheme.

It might appear from this update that the proposed scheme

1. Would bring nothing but good to Coggeshall.
2. Is the only possible flood risk management scheme for the area.
3. Will definitely be going ahead.

If you think that, you would be mistaken.

Firstly, Coggeshall would pay a heavy price for the proposed scheme. A huge quarry would be created close to the heart of the village.



As the map shows, the boundaries of this quarry would be

- To the south, Cuthedge Lane.
- To the north, close to the banks of the River Blackwater.
- To the west, beyond Curds Hall Farm.
- To the east, behind the cricket ground, close to the houses on the west side of Kelvedon Road, and close to Greenacres and Grange Barn.

The creation of the quarry could mean up to 20 years of noise, dust and pollution, and congestion caused by large numbers of heavy lorries. It would also cause severe and irreparable damage to the environment and landscape of the Blackwater Valley on the western edge of the village. The Planning Inspectorate, a government

body, considers that this area is a “valued landscape” under the National Planning Policy Framework and as such should be protected and enhanced. It is also next to a local wildlife site.

Secondly, the proposed scheme is not the only possible flood risk management scheme. For instance, measures to manage river flow could be taken along a greater length of the course of the Blackwater, instead of all efforts being concentrated on Coggeshall.

What chiefly attracts the Environment Agency to the proposed scheme is that it would be cheap for them, i.e. it could be done without any investment of public money. Blackwater Aggregates (a joint venture between Gent Fairhead, the developers of the Rivenhall incinerator, and Cemex UK, the operators of the Rivenhall quarry) would carry out the flood prevention works as part of the “rehabilitation” of the land after they had finished quarrying it. However, as we have explained, this private sector funding would come at a heavy price for Coggeshall.

It should also be borne in mind that the Environment Agency itself calculates that there is only a 1% probability in any given year that the proposed flood defences would actually be needed. Moreover it is believed that a major cause of the 2001 flooding was the deliberate diversion of additional water into the Blackwater near Coggeshall – the flooding was not simply the result of heavy rain.

Thirdly, it is not inevitable that the proposed scheme will go ahead. For the quarry to be created, planning permission would have to be obtained for the use of the land to be changed from agricultural to minerals extraction. It is by no means certain that a planning application for such a change of use would be successful.

If and when a planning application is made, the Parish Council will be asked for its views by Essex County Council, the planning authority. We will examine any proposal in detail and listen carefully to what you the Coggeshall community say about its advantages and disadvantages, before we make our representations.

Coggeshall, Kelvedon & Feering Flood Risk Management



September 2018:

What are we updating you about?

You may be aware that we are currently working on a scheme to reduce the flood risk to properties and communities in the villages of Coggeshall, Feering and Kelvedon. This is an update on our progress since autumn 2016.

Background to the project

In October 2001 Coggeshall, Feering and Kelvedon suffered from significant flooding. Since then, in May 2012 and February 2014 the villages experienced further flooding.



Image of previous flooding in Coggeshall

In 2006 we commissioned a study to explore whether a scheme would be viable for the villages. The study demonstrated that the cost-benefit ratio for this area was low, resulting in options being too expensive to fund through our Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) money. The study also highlighted the need to complete a hydrological model of Robin's Brook, a "Main River" under our jurisdiction before considering a future scheme. This work was completed in 2013 allowing us to carry out further investigation.

What have we been doing since the last update?

Following our hydrological modelling, we have approached a number of local landowners and Blackwater Aggregates to ask for their support in the developing a flood storage scheme that could potentially protect the local communities.

This is a positive step. For us to manage and control flood water within the River Blackwater following a 1 in 100 year rainfall event, we need to create a flood relief scheme upstream from the communities of Coggeshall, Kelvedon and Feering.

We are currently exploring options that could provide the flood storage which could include constructing an "on-line" embankment across the River Blackwater and an "off-line" flood storage area next to the river. This was an idea favoured by the communities at our last public drop-ins (July 2015).



Image of an "on-line" flood storage embankment



Image of an "off-line" flood meadow

What will happen next?

As we take things forward, you will start to see people working along the River Blackwater and surrounding lands carrying out environmental surveys and other ground investigation works. This information will be used to help us to identify the optimal location for the flood relief scheme and develop the design further.

At this early stage, we are working with local landowners and Blackwater Aggregates. We will give the local community and stakeholders the opportunity to discuss these outline proposals further with us later this autumn at a local public drop-in event. We will publicise the date nearer the time.

Contact

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