

Questions to the Cheshire East Economy and Growth Committee

1. The Town Council and residents have a number of concerns regarding the Flood Study prepared by Jacobs. These include the redrawing of the direct catchment increasing by 40%, doubling previous estimates of run off, the small ungauged nature of the catchment which the Flood Study concedes makes flow levels more uncertain. The Inspecting Engineer in 2016 also recommended that the culverted section of the stream which would provide restriction to the incoming flow under flood conditions should be investigated. This does not appear to be covered in the flow estimates in the flood study.

The Flood Study is at odds with local knowledge as to what occurs at the Pool during heavy rainfall including flooding events. It concludes that overtopping would occur for events greater than a 1 in 50 year event. However, Poynton has suffered 3 serious flooding events greater than 1 in 50 in 2016 and 2019 but no flooding occurred from the Pool.

The Flood Study notes that a limitation to the study is that no historic information is available which could give verification data for the hydrological model. However, the Supervising Engineer in his annual report of 2019 states that the Prescribed Form of Record for the Reservoir contained monthly records of water levels from January 2016. In addition the Inspecting Engineer in his report recommended that water levels should be taken in exceptionally high levels during flood conditions. These should also be available in the Prescribed Form of Record.

The Town Council would ask that the historical data and local knowledge is used to sense check the Flood Survey and re-evaluate the hydrological modelling.

2. The removal of the trees and associated wildlife habitat is highly controversial. Given the potential conflict of interest between Jacobs as the author's of the flood study report and as the organisation who will carry out the work, would you consider asking officers to obtain an independent second opinion on the Flood Study for example from the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology or any other independent organisation.
3. The Options Paper reviewed the Flood Category of the Dam and considered it should remain a flood category B. One of the reasons given was that "the A Road would justify Category B". However, following the opening of the Poynton Relief Road the road has now been downgraded to a B road. Has the category status of the dam been reviewed in light of this change and if not, please can you advise what this committee will do to make sure it is?
4. As indicated in the report before you, off site mitigation works at a location in the Borough were extremely unpopular. Whilst we do not know where

mitigation works will now take place, paragraph 19 appears to suggest that these will be in the Stockport Metropolitan Council Region. However, this seems to be contradicted by paragraph 34(g) which states that mitigation will be delivered on Council owned land. Please can you advise how this committee will direct Officers to review any mitigation work locations and to ensure that mitigation works take place in Poynton.

5. The report states that alternative suggestions have been reviewed but none have provided a better solution to the proposed scheme. Can we request that the Council publishes a list of all the options suggested, considered by the Council and the reasons why they were discounted. Please can you advise how this committee will enable alternative proposals to be consulted on with interested parties in Poynton?
6. As set out in the Flood Study, the 4th edition of the Floods and Reservoir Safety (ICE 2015) where an existing spillway does not meet the engineering standard then a risk-based approach may be adopted. This compares the cost of upgrading to the reduction in risk to life achieved. The options report undertakes a risk-based approach assessment based on March 2021 costs. At that time the costs of the project were estimated to be £540,000. The report before you today (point 40) states that the estimated scheme cost is now £1.380m. Please can you confirm when the ALARP Economic Evaluation was reviewed on the basis that costs have more than doubled?
7. Is the committee aware that the council's **Site Allocations and Development Policies Document** states "*Contributions to off-site replacement trees will be calculated using an appropriate cost equivalent replacement calculation agreed with the council, such as capital asset valuation of amenity trees (CAVAT)*"?
8. Is the committee aware that Poynton Town Council commissioned such a valuation using the CAVAT method, and that the value of the trees affected by the proposal was calculated to be in excess of £3 million? Using another accepted method, the valuation was £5.5 million.
9. Is the committee aware that the cost of losing the trees, either from removal to facilitate the proposed work, or subsequently due to damage caused by the work, has not been accounted for in the consideration of ALARP in the Jacobs report, and that when the loss is accounted for, the risk from the reservoir is probably already ALARP. Will this committee request that Officer's review the Risk Based Approach and ALARP calculation to include the substantial increase in the costs of the project and the valuation of the trees which would be lost or damaged.

10. Is the committee aware that as an alternative to the current proposal, a continuation of the existing roadside wall could be constructed with very limited impact on trees by using the proven tree-friendly method of an above-ground reinforced concrete beam foundation on steel screw piles and would provide long-term low maintenance resilience. This option is not considered in the Jacobs report? (provide copies of example).
11. Can I ask whether the council, as applicant, secured the opinion of an arboriculturist that trees identified for retention can reasonably be expected to survive the impacts of the construction traffic and engineering works?
12. Is the committee aware that, contrary to the Jacobs report the highly branched and high tensile strength of fine tree roots provides stability to soil subject to surface water erosion?
13. We notice from correspondence that tolerance of the proposed kerb forming the dam crest will need to be +10mm-0mm. Given the dam crest is 480m long, on disturbed ground previously occupied by trees and still surrounded by trees, how sustainable do you estimate that fine tolerance to be in the short, medium and long term?
14. United Utilities is the land owner at Dovestone reservoir, near Saddleworth. Because of wear and tear by the public, UU has had to deny public access to the grassed downslope of the dam. At Poynton Pool the existing proposal is to install a grass verge and downslope like at Dovestone reservoir. The hope is to retain as much tree cover as possible. The grass is a safety feature. There will be shade from the trees. There is considerable use by the public.
- How will Cheshire East Council deal with the difficulties in establishing and maintaining good grass cover?
 - How will you deal with public access and do you think it will be a problem?
 - Will Cheshire East have to consider prohibiting public access to the grassed areas?
 - In practical terms, can you explain how this could be achieved while keeping the spillway effective?
 - How do you think banning access will be received by the public?
15. More than 80 measurements of the depth of the pool have been taken which indicate that at around 80,000 cubic metres the volume is far less than the 130,000 cubic metres set out in the Flood Study and Options papers. Why has this information not been included in the existing flood study and can a depth analysis of the pool be undertaken and this information included in an amended flood study.