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Teston Lock – Site Management Plan

Produced by Joshua Peacock, NEAS - March 2008

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View of Teston Bridge from some 50m downstream of Teston Lock, from the left bank, under frosty conditions in February 2008.

Teston Lock – Site Management Plan

1.0 Foreword

The Medway Navigation is a 31km (19 miles) of freshwater river above its tidal limit, stretching from Allington Lock near Maidstone to the footbridge immediately downstream of the Leigh Barrier just west of Tonbridge.

The Medway Navigation is maintained by the Environment Agency as a public right of navigation both within the river and along its left bank. We also have a general recreation duty to promote and facilitate recreation, and enjoyment of water.

The last round of Site Management Plans were carried out some ten years ago. This Management Plan looks to update the Environment Agency and its partners through a programme of works that are readily deliverable, whilst identifying those where conflicting concerns require further study and a partnership approach.

The Design principles of the Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook (October 2007) and its underlying baseline landscape and heritage data is referenced in providing Heritage and Landscape guidance to;

“Ensure that the identity of the Medway navigation is considered and strengthened as a whole, with regards to its unique character and heritage.”

And to;

“Inform and assist good design at project stage such as layout, design and finishes of built and soft elements whilst not compromising operational and maintenance requirement”

2.0 Legislation

It is important that the Environment Agency demonstrates good environmental design because we have strong legal duties under the Environment Act 1995. This act states that the *“principal aim of the Environment Agency is to protect and enhance the environment and contribute to achieving sustainable development.”*

We also have to *promote*

- *“The conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and amenity when developing our projects or consenting others*
- *Conserve flora and fauna*
- *Promote the use of water and associated land for recreational purpose.*
- *Conserve buildings and sites of historic interest.”*

The Code of Practice on Conservation Access and Recreation 2000 gives government guidance on how we should interpret our Environment Act duties. It says that the Environment Agency;

“should avoid damage arising from any works and land use changes which could have an adverse effect on the character of the landscape. Projects

should be designed to:

- *Conserve and enhance the landscape character of an area*
- *Use local materials and styles wherever possible*
- *Take extensive measures to identify the relative value and “avoid damage... to flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features”*

The Environment Agency is further a statutory consultee for development proposals submitted through the Town and Country Planning system. This was updated within the General Development Permitted Order (GDPO) 1996 to ensure consultation of the Environment Agency for all development within 20m of the top of the bank.

As a statutory undertaker for the Medway Navigation the Environment Agency has permitted development powers under (Part 17 part B of the GDPO) to improve, maintain or repair the river Medway only on operational land. Operational Land is only land that we have a freehold over.

Under the Upper Medway Navigation and Conservancy Act 1911 and the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973 the Environment Agency has further permitted development powers for development within the River Medway (Part 11 of the GDPO).

The Environment Agency should take steps to ensure that an appropriate balance of uses is achieved for any particular site, and that any activities and uses are properly managed and reviewed.

It is within this framework, and following the guidelines of the Site Management Plan Methodology April 1996, that this management plan has been produced.

3.0 Disability requirements

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005, which came into force in December 2006, focuses on actively promoting opportunity for disabled people. It means that we should identify and address any remaining barriers, which limit the full participation of disabled people. The new duty is an anticipatory one and encourages an organisation-wide approach to the identification of potential discriminatory policies, procedures and practices.

In respect of physical features, since October 2004, service providers have been required to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding the feature or an alternative method of making the service available. ‘Reasonable steps’ means ‘what a service provider can reasonably do in all the circumstances and relevant factors including effectiveness and practicality.’

English Heritages’ *Easy Access to Historic Landscapes* (2005) provides guidance on how to approach disabled access sensitive to context. This is achieved through consideration of barriers to access including organisational, physical, intellectual, sensory, social and cultural and financial.

4.0 Site Information

4.1 Location

Grid Reference: TQ 708 531



Teston Lock is one of a series of ten Locks along the 31km Medway Navigation that runs from the tidal extent north of Maidstone to the navigable extent north of Tonbridge. 'lock site' comprise the lock and weir and associated facilities.

It is the third Lock and weir site; some 10.4km upstream from the tidal extent of the River Medway at Allington Lock, north of Maidstone.

4.2 Description

The site is within Maidstone District, with Teston Parish to the left bank and East Farleigh Parish to the right.

The lock and sluice are situated to either side of a concrete lock island, accessible by members of the public. The vertical sluice structure constructed from iron girder lattice is a distinctive feature.

Teston Country Park comprises a parking area, picnic site, childrens play area, toilet facilities and an open space used for kite festivals. At the downstream extent of this and some 200m from the lock site is situated Teston Bridge, a Scheduled Ancient Monument due to its Medieval construction from ragstone, quarried from the underlying geology of the Greensand beds.

The Medway Valley Walk runs along the old tow path of the Medway Navigation.

4.3 Land Tenure

Along the Medway Navigation the Environment Agency owns or leases very little land. Its main ownership is of the navigational structures and concrete aprons that serve these, comprising the weirs and sluice gates, lock gates and chambers.

At Teston lock site the right bank is in private ownership, and the left bank in the ownership of Kent County Council. The Environment Agency have freehold ownership only of the gauging station on the right hand bank, with right of access to this.

The rest of the site is not "owned" but comes under the 1911 Medway Navigation Act as sites that we built in 1911. Under this act The Environment Agency 'owns' the extent of the concrete apron, timber gates and vertical sluice gate as indicated on the Management Plan.

4.4 Management Infrastructure

The Teston Bridge Picnic Site Country Park is owned and maintained by Kent County Councils' Countryside division. Teston Parish Council are actively involved in its management further to its proximity to Teston village. To our current knowledge there is no existing Management Plan for the Country Park.

The Medway Valley Walk, that runs along the left bank is managed by the Environmental Management Unit of Kent County Council. Local information is obtainable from the 'Medway Valley Countryside Partnership' (MVCP), which is a joint initiative between Kent County Council, Tonbridge and Malling District Council, Maidstone Borough Council and the Environment Agency.

The MVCP aims to maintain and enhance the Medway valley as a green corridor for the benefit of wildlife and people, through the promotion of community awareness and action. The MVCP was set up in March 1988 with the aim to "maintain and enhance the Medway Valley from Tonbridge to Rochester as a green corridor for the benefit of wildlife and the local community, through the promotion of community awareness and action". It was formed by its funding partners as an unincorporated body, which gives the independence to work freely with the local community to achieve a range of objectives.

5.0 Site Characteristics and use

5.1 Landscape

The site is situated within Maidstone District Councils "Character Area 15 – Middle Medway Valley". It describes the landscape type as comprising tight and intimate views, often crowded with incident further to the landform of steep valley sides about the scarp slope of the Greensand ridge.

Kent County Councils Landscape Assessment, similarly identifies the recreational importance of the area with boating, canoeing, and fishing as well as walking the dominant activities. The County Assessment identifies

time depth as provided by the ragstone bridges and few pollarded willows, which is otherwise marked by a lack of vegetative continuity, and the encroachment of agricultural land use. Features that detract from the visual quality of an otherwise picturesque rural landscape are identified as flood control, built development in general, lighting, and a proliferation of boat moorings and holiday developments.

Within the District Assessment Landscape condition is described as moderate, with high sensitivity. Characteristic features of steep sided valleys are identified as providing an apparent landform, with features provided by the historic bridges and locks.

Actions of Conserve and Restore are proposed. Principles are provided and the following Practical measures proposed:

- Areas subject to pressure from leisure use may need well thought-out soft surfacing designs, rather than hard surfaces which would exclude vegetation. An extremely 'tidy' appearance is not appropriate in this environment;
- Riverbank erosion is part of the natural fluvial process. However, if it is necessary to control this, the use of bioengineering techniques will be preferable to the use of hard finishes;
- Native planting schemes, using characteristic species, should be proposed in association with any development. On the valley sides, oak, ash, hazel, hawthorn, field maple, beech and willow would be appropriate, with willow, alder, poplar, sallow and alder buckthorn near the riverbank.

The river corridor is designated by Maidstone Borough Council as a Special Landscape Area (SLA) which emphasises the importance of paying particular attention to maintenance of open space and improvements in public access.

Views across the river of ivy clad Tutsham Mill, downstream views of Medieval Teston Bridge and upstream views of distinctive former hop kilns on the valley ridge provide the Teston lock site with its distinctive visual aspect.

5.2 Biodiversity

Teston Bridge Picnic Site Country Park is a Local Wildlife Site and attracts many different forms of wildlife. Birds such as kingfishers, terns and snipe can be seen from time to time. And during the summer months, bats including pipistrelle, noctule and daubenton glide up and down the banks searching for air-borne insects.

The seasonally varying habitat of the ditch and ponded areas supports a range of aquatic plants and insects and forms a locally important feature. The trees both living and dead, are also of local importance supporting numerous invertebrates and specific species such as siskin (*Carduelis spinus*) which feeds predominantly on the alder seeds.

A River Corridor Survey undertaken in 1996 of the Country Park identified the site as comprising four main communities as per the National Vegetation Classification:

- MG20 – The river banks
- MG7 The rough grassland edge community
- WG12 – The woodland component
- The mire / ponded area

Fauna:

- Kingfisher – *Alcedo atthis*
- Sand Martin – *Riparia riparia*
- Grey wagtail – *Motacilla cinerea*
- Common tern – *Sterna hirundo*
- Wren – *Troglodytes troglodytes*
- Grey heron – *Ardea cinerea*

There are suggestions from Teston Country Park manager, Jonathan Lee that the ditch habitat provided by the overflow channel provides habitat for water shrew, otter, toads, newts, frogs, grass snakes, birds and bats.

Giant Hogweed is present along the Medway Navigation and has the potential to be present to Teston lock site surrounds. Himalayan Balsam is present along the right bank.

5.3 Recreation

The Teston site comprises the upstream extent of the Millennium River Park, that extends from Allington Lock through to Teston Picnic site. Accessible from the Medway Valley Walk that runs along the river. Day ticket fishing is available. The site is bordered by Kent County Council's Teston Bridge Picnic Site Country Park, which comprises 12 Ha of open meadow where ball games and a twice annual kite festival occurs. There are also picnic tables, public toilets and childrens play equipment, within an enclosed area.

An Environment Agency 'Feasibility Study to Investigate the Potential for an Artificial White-water Paddlesports Facility on the River Medway, Kent' was carried out in 2004. One of the three potential locations that was considered for this was the Teston Countryside Park, further to utilisation and extension of the existing overflow channel. It suggests that the Teston site provides the opportunity of building a relatively modest natural white-water channel providing teaching and learning facilities in country park surroundings. Teston was the preferred site of the three based on impact on users, local residents and immediate environment.

5.4 Archaeology

A Heritage Audit was undertaken as part of the Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook (EA, Oct 2007), with respect to the historic environment of navigation and engineering, as outlined in the Environment Act and Protocol for the Care of Government Historic Estates. Appendix 4 provides sections from this specific to Teston Lock and its immediate context. The Heritage Audit states within its conclusions that:

"The River Medway has always been navigable to Maidstone and in the medieval period would certainly have been used extensively as a transport route. Along with other inland navigations it played a fundamental role in Britain's industrial revolution and in the country's economic development from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Indeed it was that development that drove the improvement of the upper river in the eighteenth century. The non-tidal river continues to be an important route for leisure boats, whose numbers grew though the nineteenth and twentieth century and steadily replaced declining commercial traffic."

It is important that the navigation features of the Medway are seen as a group. The various structures, earthworks and buried remains of locks, lock houses, weirs and other features dating from the eighteenth century through to the present have importance as 'documentation' of past developments, that can contribute effectively to an enhancement of our understanding of the history of this specific navigation as well as to a better understanding of river navigations at a national level. For example, whilst there is clear archaeological value in the remains of abandoned locks, it is also clear that there is surviving early fabric behind the modern lining of the operational locks. Hence, the lock and weir sites should be recognised for heritage and archaeological value in their own right."

The fabric of earlier lock possible survives behind concrete cladding. Later weir construction probably removed much of the earlier structures, but traces may survive in the riverbed. Lock and weir are 'engineering structures'. Immediately adjacent is substantial ruin of Tutsham Mill, also known as West Farleigh Oil Mill, that is a water powered C19 oil seed cake mill. Note 1940-41 pilbox above the lock site on the south bank.

5.5 Hydrometry

Environment Agency (EA) Field Monitoring and Data (FMD) own and manage water level monitoring equipment at Teston, on behalf of EA Water Resources and Flood Risk Management. The levels are then used for calculating flows. Teston is used for measuring low levels and flows, and further equipment downstream at East Farleigh for high levels and flows. The data from the sites are then combined to generate a complete level/flow record.

The interplay and historic record of data between the two sites is very important. When water levels are low, the single flow gauge at Teston provides an understanding of the rate of flow from Bewl Water. This then provides confidence in instructing the water companies in Kent on over 100 abstraction rates.

If a white water channel were to be constructed taking flow away from the main river this would require a second set of water level monitoring equipment within the channel. The calculations that would have to be made to accommodate the second flow gauge would reduce confidence in the total flow figure, by not being directly comparable with records from the last 30 years.

From initial consultation any impact on water levels and flows further to amendments to the overflow channel would not likely be accepted.

5.6 Past Management and Land Use

The past management of the site has included coppicing of trees on the sites northern boundary, the mowing of the grass area between the river and ditch and the management of the sites navigational infrastructure.

Further to Public Safety Risk Assessments (PSRA) and Operational Public Safety (OPuS) assessments Kee-Klamp and Pallisade type fencing was erected to site to prevent access to sluice and weir structures and increase safety along lock island edges where reasonable. A bright orange buoyed

boom was suspended from the lock island to the right bank to prevent craft from going over the weir.

5.7 Present Management and Land Use

The mowing of the grassland strip has become relaxed with only mowing adjacent to the footpath being undertaken.

Construction works to refurbish the structures further to survey works have been identified for delivery in 2008-2009.

The Teston Parish council are actively interested in the character and use of the Country Park, as are Kent County Council, who own and manage it. To our current knowledge there is no existing Management Plan for the Country Park.

5.8 Public Interest and Use

Primary users of the site are dog walkers and visitors to the adjacent Country Park, walkers following the Medway Valley Walk and anglers.

6.0 Implications for Management

Access to the lock site should be carefully considered with regards to potential impacts of heavy machinery on wet ground resulting in compaction and rutting of the ground. Restriction on construction activity in the winter months could mitigate this for example.

Jonathan Lee, the Countryside Manager at Kent County Council for Teston Countryside Park should be consulted on all matters with regards to access and improvement outside of the footprint of the lock site. Further the Medway Valley Partnership and Teston Parish Council should be consulted on all matters to do with recreation and conservation as they both have focused interest in the area and its use.

6.1 Conservation Evaluation

There is currently no facility for fish passage either up the weir, or around it. An improvement to fish passage would be beneficial, most likely through the construction of some form of weir ladder. A redesign of the white water channel would enable fish passage to be beneficially incorporated.

Any proposals for redesigning the bypass channel to cater for white water (kayak) activity would have to be further developed at feasibility level to consider the existing biodiversity sensitivity and potential for impact to ensure its conservation and enhancement.

The surveying for Giant Hogweed potential is identified under the Recreational evaluation. Through reference to the previous version of this Management plan produced some 10 years ago, Himalayan balsam control is not likely to be effective, further to there being an extensive population source immediately upstream.

6.2 Recreational Evaluation

The Teston Country Park attracts a large number and range of visitors, through provision of car parking facilities.

Fishing represents a key recreational use of the site. Ease of river access due to the nearby Teston Country Park facilities, as well as the attraction of fish to the deeper pools associated with the lock and weir, are central to the anglers' interest in the site.

Walkers using the promoted guide for the Medway Valley Walk which follows the designated public right of way, currently gain views of the Lock gates and the weir structures. It is likely that these two features represent the focus of interest for visitors. Operational and health and safety concerns need careful consideration however relative to attracting visitors to the lock site that is a hazardous area.

With regards to a potential white water (kayak) facility, this would be beneficial to the interests of white water enthusiasts, and could be integrated through planting and fencing to maintain sense of tranquillity and prevent access, where considered hazardous. It would provide a facility that presently the southeast including the 'Thames Gateway' is lacking.

The potential presence of Giant Hogweed along the right bank should be surveyed for and a management plan developed to control where found.

There may well be potential to improve disabled access to the lock site. To this end a disabled access audit would be beneficial. This may suggest providing over wide areas adjacent to proposed seating for example to allow wheelchair users to sit next to able bodied.

There is potential to provide solid and rustic bench type seating at the lock site that does not collect debris and vegetation during periods of flood.

There may further be potential to work in partnership with the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and Teston Country Park to deliver footpath improvements and replace some 50m of boardwalk, situated south of the lock structure so that it is stabilised against flood action.

6.3 Landscape and Heritage Evaluation

The tranquil and natural appearance of the site is an important characteristic, for the public amenity of the area. Existing downstream views of Medieval Teston Bridge and upstream views of the distinctive former hop kilns on the hillside horizon to the right bank should be maintained.

Views of the ivy clad, historic Tutsham Mill located on the right bank opposite the lock site should be reinforced, through vegetation clearance. The owner of Tutsham Mill should be identified and contacted to pursue this in partnership as part of this Management Plan. Clearance could for example comprise whips to 50mm girth and a notch cut to base of some of the larger ivy growths.

The elements of the historic landscape present on site are identified within the Heritage Audit. The 1911 mooring posts and paddle gear should be retained. Vertical timbers have not been replaced over the years from the

existing capping bracket supports (to prevent damage to vessels against the bull noses of locks.) These should be replaced.

There are no existing brick treads at Teston. These are present to assist on most lock push beams. Through the Heritage Audit and Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook the plain gault clay brick, referenced from Allington was selected to reinforce the heritage and distinctive character of the River Medway. Where reclaimed plain gault clay bricks can be sourced these should be used. Otherwise these can be substituted by Milton Hall Kentish Multi stock bricks.

Health and Safety fencing is a relatively recent accompaniment to the key features of lock, weir and sluice. Through reference to the MNEDH the Kee-Klamp should be replaced with a ball jointed type fencing that presents a more permanent character than the existing. Further the railing type closest to the Sluice structures should be painted a pale grey in keeping with the proposed grey of the sluice and black where associated with the lock. Further the lock walkway railing should be replaced as outlined within the MNEDH to ensure an element of consistency along the Medway Navigation, in keeping with its heritage.

The bright orange buoyed boom provided to prevent craft from straying onto the weir is a bold and visually incongruous features within the tranquil and historic character of the site. By its very boldness however, it can be seen as a distinctive element in its own right. Provided that the historic context within which it is situated is dealt with sensitively, and so not seen as a contributory factor to an overall lack of consideration.

An interpretative information board could be provided to provide public information in an illustrative way on the landscape and heritage quality of the Medway Navigation and how this is being conserved and enhanced along the Medway Navigation.

7.0 Management Objectives and Management Strategy

7.1 Management Objectives:

7.1.1 Operational Management Objectives:

OMO1 Maintain and locally enhance the Medway Valley Walk

- **OMO1.1** Disabled access audit – Undertake
- **OMO1.2** Disabled access – Ironstone surfacing to be layed as base for proposed seating. Provide adequate width to allow wheelchair users room to stop next to a seated person on bench.
- **OMO1.3** Seating – Provide solid (to ground) bench attached to ground on edge of grassed area to reinforce rural character and not trap debris from deep flooding.

OMO2 Maintain and enhance the site's botanical, bird and invertebrate interest

- **OMO2.1** Giant Hogweed survey – Undertake along the left bank to establish a management plan for control
- **OMO2.2** Provide a weir ladder for fish passage

OMO3 Maintain and enhance the heritage features of the site

- **OMO3.1** Retain 1911 Mooring posts and paddle gear
- **OMO3.2** Provide reclaimed solid plain gault clay bricks to push beam tread, and elsewhere as required. As identified within the Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook (MNEDH). If not available can be substituted with solid Milton Hall Kentish Multi Stock brick.
- **OMO3.3** Replace vertical timbers to existing capping brackets

OMO4 Maintain and enhance landscape character

- **OMO4.1** Replace Kee klamp type fencing with ball jointed type railing. Painted black where associated with the navigation structures. Painted pale grey where associated with the Sluice structures. Further when refurbishing lock walkways replace railing type as outlined within the MNEDH

7.1.2 Partnership Management Objectives:

PMO1 Explore the potential for a White Water canoe facility

- **PMO1.1** – Update the Feasibility study to scope proposal for White water canoe facility. To comprise study into ecological sensitivity with reference to MVCP report dated Nov. 2003, wetland restoration and water management with regards to hydrometry.

PMO2 Ensure any public information boards are delivered in partnership with MVCP

PMO3 Replace 50m board walk to south of Lock structure and stabilise against flood action

PMO4 Surfacing - Continuation of surfacing to the footpath downstream of the lock to the footbridge. (In partnership with MVCP and KCC Countryside Officer)

PMO5 Removal of vegetation from Tutsham Mill and its surrounds to enable a clearer view of the the mill ruins from Teston Lock. Consult with the owner of the property on the right bank with regards to achieving this objective.

8.0 Project outcomes

8.1 Prioritisation

This plan will be reviewed on a five-year cycle whereupon progress against the objectives will be measured and any reassessments implemented.

Projects have been prioritised on a scale of 1 to 4. The scale definitions are as follows:

| Scale Definitions | Priority |
|--|-----------------|
| Projects that are at an advanced planning stage with budget available and the commitment that they will be completed in year one. | 1 |
| Projects with a firm commitment for implementation where it is considered that budget will be available and completed in either year one or two. | 2 |
| Projects with a firm commitment where funding is not currently allocated or those that are considered to be of a secondary importance. | 3 |
| Aspirational projects, which will require research and funding with a non-specific | 4 |

| | |
|--|--|
| timeline. These will be investigated with the aim of implementation over the course of the plan. | |
|--|--|

8.2 Project Implementation

| Operational Management Objectives | | Priority |
|--|--|-----------------|
| OMO1 Maintain and locally enhance the Medway Valley Walk | | |
| OMO1.1 | Disabled access audit - Undertake | 1 |
| OMO1.2 | Disabled access – Ironstone surfacing to be layed as base for proposed seating. Provide adequate width to allow wheelchair users room to stop next to a seated person on bench. | 2 |
| OMO1.3 | Seating – Provide solid (to ground) bench attached to ground on edge of grassed area to reinforce rural character and not trap debris from deep flooding. | 2 |
| OMO2 Maintain and enhance the site’s botanical, bird and invertebrate interest | | |
| OMO2.1 | Giant Hogweed survey – Undertake along the left bank to establish a management plan for control | 1 |
| OMO2.2 | Provide a weir ladder for fish passage | 4 |
| OMO3 Maintain and enhance the heritage features of the site | | |
| OMO3.1 | Retain 1911 Mooring posts and paddle gear | 1 |
| OMO3.2 | Provide reclaimed solid plain gault clay bricks to push beam tread, and elsewhere as required. As identified within the Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook (MNEDH). If not available can be substituted with solid Milton Hall Kentish Multi Stock brick. | 4 |
| OMO3.3 | Replace vertical timbers to existing capping brackets | 3 |
| OMO4 Maintain and enhance landscape character | | |
| OMO4.1 | Replace Kee klamp type fencing with ball jointed type railing. Painted black where associated with the navigation structures. Painted pale grey where associated with the Sluice structures. Further when refurbishing lock walkways replace railing type as outlined within the MNEDH | 3 |
| Partnership Management Objectives | | |
| PMO1 Explore the potential for a White Water canoe facility | | |
| PMO1.1 | Update the Feasibility study to scope proposal for White water canoe facility. To comprise study into ecological sensitivity with reference to MVCP report dated Nov. 2003, wetland restoration and water management with regards to hydrometry. | 4 |
| PMO2 | Ensure any public information boards are delivered (In partnership with MVCP and KCC Countryside Officer) | 2 |
| PMO3 | Replace 50m board walk to south of Lock structure and stabilise against flood action. (In partnership with MVCP and KCC Countryside Officer) | 4 |
| PMO4 | Surfacing - Continuation of surfacing to the footpath downstream of the lock to the footbridge. (In partnership with MVCP and KCC Countryside Officer) | 4 |
| PMO5 | Removal of vegetation from Tutsham Mill and its surrounds to enable a clearer view of the the mill ruins from Teston Lock. Consult with the owner of the property on the right bank with regards to achieving this objective. | 3 |
| | | |

| Appendix 1 – General Contact | |
|---|---|
| Environment Agency Office : | Kent Area Office, Orchard House, Endeavour Park, London Road, Addington, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5SH |
| EA – Waterways - John Morgan | 01732 223213 |
| EA – Waterways - Jonathan Balkwill | 01732 223150 |
| EA – Navigation – Tom McManus | 01732 703041 |
| EA – Biodiversity - Tom Cook | 01732 223103 |
| EA – Fisheries – Nick Brain | 01903 833950 |
| EA – Recreation - Penny Fox | 01903 833101 |
| EA – Archaeology - Stephen Kemp | 01903 832158 |
| EA – Landscape - Joshua Peacock | 01903 832248 |
| County Authority: | Kent County Council, Strategic Planning, Environmental Management Unit, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME141XQ |
| Local Authority | Maidstone Borough Council, London House, 5-11 London Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8HR Tel: 01622 602000 www.maidstone.gov.uk |
| Teston Parish Council | Chair - Mrs Olive Oxley – 01622 812997 Hon Sec - Peter Coulling - 01622 813143 / 07710-523230 testonparish@aol.com |
| Medway Valley Countryside Partnership | Charlotte Curtis / Caroline Drewett 3 Lock Cottages, Lock Lane, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3AU Tel/Fax: 01622 683695 / 01622 768573 www.medwayvalley.org medwayvalley@kent.gov.uk |
| KCC Countryside Officer / Teston Country Park - | Jonathan Lee Tel: 01732 823570 / 07798 674 875 jonathan.lee@kent.gov.uk . |
| Medway River Users Association | Janet Higgins, Chair Pat Fyfe - Membership Secretary MRUA Membership Secretary 68 Halstead Walk, Allington, Maidstone Kent ME16 0DA themruea@tiscali.co.uk http://www.mruea.co.uk/ |
| British Canoe Association | Paul Newman Tel: 01634 232874 paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk |

Appendix 2 – Screening and Scoping Consultation Record

Internal Consultation – Environment Agency

| | |
|--|--|
| Recreation - Allison Thorpe / Penny Fox Tel - 01903 832572 / 01903 833101 | Received |
| Navigation - Tom Mcmanus Tel – 01732 703041 | Received |
| Biodiversity - Tom Cook Tel – 01732 223103 | Received |
| Fisheries - Nick Brain Tel - 01903 833950 | Received |
| Archaeology - Stephen Kemp Tel – 01903 832158 | Received |
| Water resources, hydrometry – Tim Norton Tel – 01732 703031 | Received |
| Landscape – Joshua Peacock Tel: 01903 832248 | Received |
| Stage in Process | Screening & Scoping |
| Date Consultation Sent | Thu 3 Jan |
| Date Response Due | Wed 23 Jan |
| Internal Consultees | Teston Lock |
| EA - Allison Thorpe – Recreation (Email) | <p>- In March 2004 consultants for the Agency completed a feasibility study for a whitewater canoeing channel at Teston lock site. This project has not progressed beyond the initial feasibility study. Perhaps the plan could be amended to reflect the current position?</p> <p>- Re: seating for elderly and proposed artwork. This could potentially be combined into one structure. We have had some lovely carved timber seating done on IOW. Site specific work by the same artist would lend itself well to the Teston site. I can provide contacts if necessary.</p> |
| EA - Tom Mcmanus – Navigation Team Leader (Tel) | Ensure any refurbished paths have a good fall to them to ensure sediment drains off after speight |
| EA - Tom Cook – Biodiversity (Email) | Teston - Again, this looks fine to me. The feasibility study for reinstating flows down the side channel would need close consultation with Water Resources as I believe the Teston Weir is an important gauging point for many abstraction licences on the Medway. It would also require an ecological assessment, but this would be a fairly low-risk proposal. |
| EA - Nick Brain – Fisheries (Email) | Having looked at the two sites, from a fishery perspective it would be great to get fish passes installed on the weirs at both locations. Allison Thorpe mentioned that Teston had been considered for a possible canoe pass - so this presumably could be tweaked to allow the addition of a fish pass either |

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| | <p>within the design or to sit alongside it for very little extra effort.</p> |
| <p>EA - Tim Norton – Water Resources / Hydrometry (email) (telephone)</p> | <p>FMD own/manage water level monitoring equipment at both Teston and East Farleigh, on behalf of Water Resources and Flood Risk Management. The levels are then used for calculating flows. Teston is used for measuring low levels and flows, and East Farleigh for high levels and flows. The data from the sites is then combined to generate a complete level/flow record.</p> <p>The two sites are very important. For example, there are over 100 abstraction licences tied to a level/flow condition at Teston. FMD could not accept any modifications to these sites which would have an impact on the water levels or flows.</p> <p>Telephoned on the 24 Jan. – Tim highlighted the importance of the confidence provided by a single flow gauge when water levels were low to understanding the rate of flow from Bewl Water and in instructing the water companies in Kent on abstraction rates. If a white water channel were to be constructed taking flow away from the main river this would require a second set of water level monitoring equipment within the channel. The calculations that would have to be made to accommodate the second flow gauge would reduce confidence in the total flow figure, by not being directly comparable with records from the last 30 years</p> |
| <p>EA - Joshua Peacock – Landscape</p> | <p>Make sure that the Design Principles provided within the Medway Navigation Environmental Design Handbook are successfully applied to each of the sites in a way that is pragmatic and achievable</p> |
| <p>EA - Steve Kemp – Archaeology (email)</p> | <p>Ivy on Teston mill should be managed. There needs to be a balance between nature conservation and heritage, too much ivy is detrimental to the buildings survival as the suckers will degrade the mortar and brick work, and much like a tree high winds catching the ivy could destabilise the walls. Any ivy on the buildings might be considered by some archaeologists as a hindrance to the long term survival of the structure, however it might also be suggested that an amount could potentially provide a weather proof covering, which is why I suggest careful management is needed; I appreciate the natural picturesque.</p> |

External Consultation

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| Medway River Users Association - Janet Higgins | Received (telephone approval in general)Detailed comment not received |
| Kent Wildlife Trust - dave.hutton@kentwildlife.org.uk | Not received |
| Kent Bat Group – info@kentbatgroup.org.uk | Not received |
| Maidstone Canoe Club - memsec@maidstonecanoecub.net Paul Newman / BCA – paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk Tel - 01634 232874 | Received – Via meeting on the 4 th Feb at GBH with Paul Newman |
| KCC Countryside Officer / Teston Country Park - jonathan.lee@kent.gov.uk . Tel - 01732 823570 | Received |
| Medway Valley Countryside Partnership - Charlotte Curtis / Caroline Drewett Tel - 01622 683695 | Received |
| Teston Parish Council testonparish@aol.com | Received (informal telephone discussion) Formal letter received on the 4 th Feb |
| Stage in Process | Screening & Scoping |
| Date Consultation Sent | Thu 3 Jan |
| Date Response Due | Wed 23 Jan |
| External Consultees | |
| Janet Higgins – Medway River Users Association | No Comment received |
| Dave Hutton – Kent Wildlife Trust | No Comment received |
| Kent Bat Group | No Comment received |
| Maidstone Canoe Club memsec@maidstonecanoecub.net Paul Newman / BCA – 01634 232874 paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk | From the Feasibility Study – Canoe - White water channel to function as fish pass also. A flow gauge, stilling well and kiosk would be incorporated and three bridges – one at either end and one to the lock from the footpath from the car park. Concern over safety of the weir as the standing wave for the full width of the weir prevents an escape route. Subsequent extensive modification of the weir would need to be undertaken to create a safe environment, and the flow from the side channel would weaken the strength of flow. Potential to increase size of wetland area / loss of 50% of trees. Paul Newman – Meeting 4 th Feb – Importance of slalom type course for beginners to the sport. Nothing comparable in Southeast including Thames Gateway. – (Nearest in Broxbourne) – Proposed cost of facility = 38k (Contributions – Awards for All – 10k / London SE Region BCU – 5k (figures provided in 2004) – BCU lost momentum on not being able to locate who owned land between overland flow and rivers edge when viewing the land registry. |
| Jonathon Lee – Teston Country Park - Tel: 01732 823570 / 07798 674 875 | Received via email – 15/02/2008 Formal - We at KCC have had time to look over the proposals for Teston Lock and these are our thoughts. The pond you refer to at the bottom right hand corner does not exist. It is part of a wetland area that only stays wet for 6 months of the year. We disagree with making pool side access for a number of |

reasons. First this is on our land and we dont want such a structure. Second, we dont want to manage such an area.

The interpretation panel is a good idea. My main thought on this is that a number of groups all have money to put interpretation along the Medway River. It would be silly to put all of these boards up so it will be a good idea if we all meet to discuss designing one board for all.

Area directly in front of the lock has always been a issue. I agree in principle to the creation of a nice flat grassed area with seating but! and its a big but, it normally comes down to my team to repair benches and mow the grass along this stretch because the EA does not have the resources to do it. Is this going to change? If not then i object to this.

The location of the art work is on our land. We dont want any such structure on our land. Teston Bridge Country Park is a Country Park and not a suitable place to put art work. This area is rough meadow and it would be obscured for many months of the year.

The pathway improvements are a good idea. The idea of making it disabled access is an interesting point though. Where do you intend on these people going? It leads onto a mud track. I might also point out that Teston Lock floods many times in the year. It comes down to my team to uncover all the paths on your land. I will not be uncovering a 1.5 metre wide path with a shovel every time it gets covered over with silt. If again you can provide resource then its a good plan.

Uncovering the Mill on the other side of the bank could be a good idea. It would certainly help with the interpretation. Do you own it?

The main area that needs to be pointed out is the idea of Canoes using the overflow channel. We at KCC strongly object to this being put foward in any way. These are our thoughts.

You are looking to but the entrance way for canoes on our land. We dont want a canoe facility is. We have enough problems we canoes on the site as it is without adding any more. We get a lot of erosion from canoeists and this is costly.

Our car park is for Park users only. If we have the car park used by canoeists bringing large vehicles and trailers this will damage our business.

There are many species which use the overflow channel throughout the year. Many of these are protected. It is in fact the best place for Flora and fauna on the whole site. Species include Water Shrew, Otter, Toads, Newts, Frogs, Grass Snakes, and a great deal of birds and bats. All of this would be lost if this work was to go ahead.

A couple of things that could be looked at include adding weir ladders along the whole river. We see many species of fish on the site struggle to climb the weir. If you introduce these ladders it may encourage new species to breed up river. The second thing is a 50 metre board walk got ripped out of the ground with the last flood. If

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| | <p>you have the money this could be replaced.</p> <p>I apologise if this all seems a bit negative but this all did come a bit out of the blue and many of these ideas have been discussed many times before and dismissed. If you want to talk through an of the site management then please call.</p> |
| Charlotte Curtis - MVCP | <p>..I think KCC have their own plans for how to develop the site- anything would need to be linked in with this.</p> <p>MVCP have recently installed a board walk at Teston- anything added needs to be linked into what is there already, there is a danger of adding too much in the way of surfacing and structures at the site which would detract from the countryside feel of the site, which is one of the reasons it is highly valued by the local community.</p> <p>Is there a particular need for seats for the elderly at this site? The site usage by the river seems to be far more young families therefore push chair access would be a higher priority.</p> <p>There are major issues with flooding at this site- any structures such as seating added will quickly become clogged with debris and need to be cleared/cleaned by someone, this needs to be agreed before installation.</p> <p>Is there a need for bat boxes? As I understand it there is already a very healthy bat population along this stretch of the river- not sure boxes will add anything here.</p> <p>Do schools use the site? If not schools would need to be encouraged to the site to make adding pond access for schools worthwhile, adding pond access has health and safety and access implications for the site- all of which have an impact on the management of Teston picnic site. The pond is not so much a pond for most of the year but is more mud in the summer due to the heavy siltation and so would need initial and on going management to maintain it as a pond.</p> <p>There is already interpretation planned at the site (I am working with Jon to develop) and there is an existing metal board- is there a need for more interpretation? How will these complement and not overlap with each other?</p> |
| Teston Parish Council – Mrs Olive Oxley – 01622 812997 – (Chair of) Peter Coulling – Secretary. | <p>21/01/08 – Spoke with Mrs Olive Oxley – Chair of Teston Parish Council. Concerned regarding the impacts of incongruous art and seating etc features – concerned of rural unspoilt nature being impacted on – Also was not happy with the state of the drain. – Own the site – and recent purchased 14 acres from road down towards Maidstone Millennium Park – Very concerned about urban creep from making way up river.</p> <p>Teston – sent a hard copy in the post.</p> <p>Peter Coulling, secretary. – several comments back – next Monday – 01622 813143 / 07710-523230</p> <p>Received formal letter on 4/2/08 – refer to rural n ature of intimate, fragile valley which is beautiful and historically important. – Supports all management objectives other than:</p> <p>2.2 – Art installation unnecessary, obtrusive and out of character</p> |

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| | <p>2.2 – Pond site access for local schools. – risks of drowning + weils disease</p> <p>4.1 – Reinstating overland flow with creation of white water facility – recreational use out of scale with this intimate valley will be resisted by the B.C. – As referenced within MBC Landscape Guidance.</p> <p>Considers proposed white water canoe facility to be potentially intrusive relative to concerns over hard engineering and safety railing. Highlights lack of understanding of habitat within the backwater / blocked drain – Proposed survey into flora and fauna of drain. – Drain is understood to be an old eel trap / potential for otters? Reference a MVCP report date Nov.2003.</p> <p>Concern over reference to site as Semi rural not rural. Reference to site as “Rural anchor to Maidstones River Park.”</p> <p>Requested to see canoe portage plans when became available.</p> |
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