

21 August 2019

Barhale appointed to fight the tide in Norfolk

Civil engineering and infrastructure specialist Barhale has been appointed to upgrade vital flood defence measures at Downham Market, Norfolk. The contract, awarded by Downham and Stow Bardolph Internal Drainage Board, will reduce the risk of flooding for 450 homes in the area and will help to protect approximately 3000 hectares of agricultural land.

A key element of the works will be the installation of a fully automated pumping station to pump water from the Cuckoo Drain which runs roughly one metre below mean sea level up to the tidal reaches of the River Great Ouse which typically sees high tide levels around four metres above mean sea level. Additionally Barhale will install 275m of twin 800mm pumping main, a new outfall structure and associated control buildings and sub stations.

The new facility will replace an existing arrangement which combines the use of a 1970s electrical pump with an older, manually-operated diesel pump dating from the 1950s. During periods of flood warnings the 1950s pump requires manning; this normally occurs six times a year.

The project will make extensive use of MoPVC (Molecular Oriented PVC) for the pipelines. Barhale's general manager Keven Stobbs explained that the material offered several advantages.

"It is a lighter pipe meaning it is easier to lay, has lower transport costs and a lower carbon transport footprint," he said. "It can be laid on a prepared bed delivering savings in the aggregate requirement – and again a lower carbon footprint from production and delivery. Installation also requires less excavation – so we can get it in the ground more quickly and there is less spoil to manage". "This will be a big step forward for flood protection around Downham Market. Upon completion, the client will have a fully automated pumping facility, monitored remotely and will benefit from not having to mobilise resources to man the station when unplanned flood warnings are issued. And local residents and business will have the peace of mind that the risk of flooding in the area has been significantly lowered."

Following the installation of the new facility, the 1950s pumping station will be demolished, The 1970s electrical pumps will be retained as a back-up system.

Ends

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Notes to editors

About Barhale

Barhale is a civil engineering and infrastructure specialist with over 35 years' experience in the construction industry. Founded by chairman, Dennis Curran in 1980, the group was originally set up as a specialist tunnelling contractor. While retaining its tunnelling roots, repeated success across the water, energy, transport and built environment markets of the construction industry has enabled Barhale to expand its skill sets to become one of the largest privately-owned infrastructure specialists in the UK. Visit www.barhale.co.uk