

FEDERATION OF PILING SPECIALISTS

MINUTES OF A TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday 25th February 2021

Time: 10:00am

Location: Online via Webex

PRESENT:

Tony Suckling	A2 Studio
Ash Rogers	Aarsleff
Michael Gavins	Atkins
Christopher Cox	Atkins
David A. Hard	Bachy Soletanche
James Binns	Byland
Andrew Bell	Cementation Skanska
Zoe Baldwin	Cementation Skanska
Sebastian Draghici	Central Piling
Richard Ball	CGL UK
Sean Beirne-Lewis	Dywidag
Chris Chapman	FK Lowry
Andrew Bond	GeoCentrix
Devji Bhuvra	GSS Piling
Ben Smith	JRL Civil Engineering
David Roy	Keltbray
Toby Hayward	Laing O'Rourke
Chris Fox	Murphy
Mike Johnson	Pile Designs
Craig Burton	Pile Designs
Neil Stone	Rock & Alluvium
Kayvan Kiany	Rock & Alluvium
Jon Ball	Roger Bullivant
Julia Hill	Roger Bullivant
Martyn Ellis	Socotec
Mark Toye	Socotec
Simon Shaw	Van Elle

In the Chair: Mark Pennington BBGE

In Attendance: Ciaran Jennings FPS Secretary
Melissa Bramley FPS Secretariat

No	TOPIC	ACTION
1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received from Jim Martin - Byland Engineering, Ian Jarvis – Dywidag, Ian Martin, Derek Egan – Remedy Geotechnics	
2	Minutes of the last meeting	
	The minutes of the meeting held on the 5 th November 2020 were approved.	
3	Matters Arising	
	<p>a) ICE Specification for Ground Treatment</p> <p>It was agreed this is not something the FPS can lead.</p>	

	<p>b) LABC Settlement Requirements It was agreed this could be removed from the agenda, following the discussion at the previous meeting, however a discussion then ensued on the requirements, with David Roy stating Keltbray were still experiencing this issue and that it may be an ongoing situation for Members to manage in discussion with LABC officers.</p> <p>A discussion ensued on the requirements.</p> <p>c) FPS Audit</p> <p>CJ reminded the Committee of the audit process, whereby every FPS Member is placed under audit every 3 years in 5 areas and stated the audit separates FPS Members from the wider piling industry as organisations with independently verified credentials. CJ stated the audits were due to start again soon, but there was a need to update the audit schedules and made a call for volunteers from the Committee to review these. CJ stated his expectation was that the work would take approximately two to three months and would start with an initial meeting with the Chair of the FPS, before a presentation on ideas.</p> <p>Jon Ball, RBL, and Devji Bhuvra – GSS Piling volunteered.</p> <p>Action: CJ to circulate audit schedules</p> <p>d) Piling Conference 2020 The Chair stated this virtual conference will be taking place from 23-26th March from 9am – 1pm each day and urged those in the Committee to Register.</p> <p>JH asked if there was the ability to have a pay to view option, and MP would investigate, and find out. <i>(Post Meeting note – the conference will be recorded, and available to view by those who have registered to attend)</i></p> <p>CJ mentioned the DFI / EFFC Conference in Berlin in 18-20 May 2022 has called for papers with a deadline of Friday 19th March for the abstracts / proposals. CJ stated the conference will be based on SMART construction for the future – sustainability and digital construction, and innovation. He hoped the conference will be digital, but also a physical event.</p> <p>e) Committee Chair CJ said MP had been Chair of the Committee since 2012, and would like to step down, thanking MP for his commitment over the past 9 years. CJ asked for volunteers for Chair and Vice Chair, and mentioned Steve Hadley, as Chair and Executive Sponsor of the Technical Committee will review the applications. CJ noted the new Committee Protocol of appointing a Chair and Vice Chair, with the expectation the Vice Chair will become the Chair following a two-year tenure.</p> <p>The Committee all thanked Mark for his dedication.</p> <p>Action: Those who have an interest in the positions of Chair and Vice Chair to nominate themselves to the FPS Secretariat</p>	<p>CJ</p> <p>All</p>
4	<p>Integrity Testing Guidance Review</p>	
	<p>CJ stated the review of integrity testing continues, and the FPS Secretariat are reviewing the incidents within the data, but alongside this a question has been whether the pile has been remediated to explore the question.</p> <p>MP asked the Committee how often Sonic Logging was a successful viable testing scenario.</p> <p>MP also asked what the benefit of sonic logging was and whether its use could be stopped for safety purposes? MP also enquired if there were viable alternatives.</p> <p>CJ said the EFFC had raised the issue of Sonic Logging as a potential work project two years ago and were interested in the next industry challenge to tackle, and the feeling within the EFFC was the lack of client understanding and prevalence of anomalies often leads to unnecessary excavations of piles.</p> <p>MP requested a joint committee needs to be formed across the Technical and Safety, Plant * & Operation Committees – because Sonic Testing is an issue, and there should be a better way of working to test the integrity of the pile.</p>	

	<p>Christopher Fox said on larger sites the cage has been laid out on the ground rather than working on it placed in the ground already, and suggested a ban on site where the cage cannot be put together on the ground?</p> <p>Tony Suckling, Martyn Ellis and Andrew Bell agreed to participate in a joint working group on the matter.</p> <p>Action: FPS Secretariat to arrange an initial meeting</p>	CJ
5	CIRIA - Proposed update of 1970's Piling Guides.	
	<p>Andrew Bell stated he had spoken to Kieran Tully who had left CIRIA at the end of 2020. CJ stated Dirk Vennix had taken over from Kieran, and the focus was on securing the funding. CJ stated the FPS has paid their first sponsorship instalments and had confirmed the FPS representatives.</p>	
6	Improving Ground Investigation Data	
	<p>a. Guidance on Minimum Site investigation requirements for foundation design & GI Questionnaire results b. Promotion of SI Data c. Draft 1 – The Third Edition of the Yellow Book – circulation</p> <p>Jon Ball mentioned he had sent some documents for the Committee to review, which would be circulated following the meeting. JB mentioned an AGS Working Group on SI, and how the AGS has agreed to put in an appendix to the revised GI Specification document with our wish list in it.</p> <p>JB noted the next set of Eurocodes to consider were the formulation of the nationally determined parameters of the National Annex and stated if the ICE framework on specification was set correctly, it could become the precedent to the National Annex, stating the current practice. JB urged for further views.</p> <p>TS stated there was an issue with SI Contractors, and a discussion ensued on the standards expected.</p> <p>CJ said he had attended a WG on SI procurement and Highways England and HS2 both mentioned the disconnect between the Geotechnical expertise and those undertaking the procurement, and the AGS is trying to tackle this issue through.</p> <p>CJ referred to the poor quality of data received from AGS and tackling standards in the GI industry. JH hoped by lifting the standards this would be alleviated.</p> <p>A discussion ensued on SI requirements and difficulties experienced.</p> <p>MP stated he hoped the Committee could work together to create clear concise guidance about the minimum SI requirements for piling works to tie in with the Eurocode and urged the Committee to comment on the guidance sent by JB, enabling everyone to challenge clients and SI Contractors.</p> <p>Action: CJ to speak to the Commercial Committee to ensure alignment, in this case led by the technical requirement.</p>	CJ
7	Sustainability by Pile Design	
	<p>BS stated he would produce some guidance on Sustainability within Pile Design, in a position paper format to be reviewed prior to the next meeting in May and discussed during the meeting.</p> <p>CJ said the EFFC were working on a Sustainability Road Map, built around the UN Sustainability Development Goals, and they are looking to define the best practices that will inform on those goals.</p> <p>Action: BS to create a guidance paper and circulate to the FPS Secretariat prior to the next meeting of the committee</p>	BS

8	Eurocodes & Execution Codes	
	<p>a) Revision of EN1997-3 Clause 6 – Pile Design</p> <p>JB said there was a real lack of response from FPS Members, and there were 140 total comments put in, and of these a lot were driven by JB and RBL and the four Members of the FPS who had responded. JB the vast majority of what was proposed was proposed forward, however there was a little bit of friction at the meeting with opposing views of what had been put forward by the FPS, but the maintenance of the position of the previous iteration, and the same simple one set of calculations, the acceptance of piling not just foregrounds and the degree of monitoring and resolution; and the exceptions of piling in good ground and this has now gone forward as the UK position back to the collation of the European position.</p> <p>Andrew Bond endorsed JB's view and said the details had come back to the Project Team 6 and AB had explained the importance of the comments made to the Committee and AB had agreed to have a meeting to discuss the technical and commercial points raised, and AB had also raised this with the Chair of SC7.</p> <p>JB offered his assistance in joining the meeting and said he would discuss with AB post the meeting.</p> <p>AB explained the next steps and stated the project team needed to complete it's work by the end of April, but then will be stood down. The documents then would be fed back to SC7 to prepare a draft for review by all the national standards body as a formal enquiry stage.</p> <p>AB reported the candidate for publication will be ready in the Autumn assuming all other deadlines are met, and in terms of ability to influence until now, the next opportunity to review and comment will be in December 2021.</p> <p>b) Revision of Eurocode 7 - Technical Content update</p> <p>CJ stated he had placed this agenda item, and DH said there was a desire to ensure design and execution are linked with the code, and there was a working group set up to look at how the new Eurocode and designers should be talking to those who are going to build the design, and the two documents link. DH stated Adrian the Chair of SC7 is trying to ensure two things are not acting in isolation, and there will be documents to make the Eurocode usable, however the documents would not be seen for the next year or two. DH said he was chairing the group on how design is implemented and he will gather feedback from the FPS at this point.</p> <p>JB said he was trying to get the FPS to be moved from the Sums and Implementation section but had not been successful yet, and he may need some further assistance to get moved to the Piling team.</p>	
8.	Technical note on base of pile reinforcement	
	Action: Re-circulate the note again for further comments and add to the agenda for the next meeting	CJ
9.	ICE Manual of Geotechnical Engineering Guidance Update	
	<p>Andrew Bell stated he had fed back that the Guidance was progressing and the aspiration was that the re-drafts finished by April 2021, and said he felt the timeline may be ambitious. MP stated he felt there were many areas that did not need to be updated. AB said the pile integrity testing section will probably see a great deal of additions to.</p> <p>Andrew Bond stated there was no point in waiting for Eurocodes and going with what was in the draft could cause issues.</p>	
10.	Rig Bearing Pressure Spreadsheet Workshops	

	<p>MB gave an update on the RBPS stating the workshops will remain virtual workshops, but will be split in two, with Derek Egan (Remedy Geotechnics) recording the first part of the workshop explaining how to use the tool, and the second part becoming a live virtual session using workable examples.</p> <p>The Introductory workshop will be held on the Members Area of the FPS website, and all sessions will remain free for FPS Members.</p>	
11.	Any other business	
	<p>NHBC & Premier Guarantee</p> <p>CB raised an issue ref NHBC Premier Guarantee and the stiffening of standards and wanted FPS Members views of the NHBC and Premier Guarantee of a trend in the driven piling scenario not accepting the tried and tested general approach of standard static design to a factor safety of two or dynamic load testing, or installing without static load testing on site, which was causing implications post construction and asked for any views.</p> <p>Simon Shaw mentioned he had spoken to CB earlier in the week and agreed this was an issue, and on every housing job where driven piles were used this was causing an issue. JH said there had been jobs in RBL in the North West where statics had been requested post construction, and stated the issue was UK wide. MP said he had not experienced this in BBGE but he would investigate.</p> <p>Chris Robinson said the NHBC guidance note on good practice and design by verification with dynamic load tests and it depends on the individuals dealing with this and the wording on 'comparable situations'.</p> <p>MP asked if the Committee could work on any guidance to assist. CB stated the issue seemed to be an issue for not all, but some FPS Members, and asked if representatives could be sent to discuss with the NHBC the issues.</p> <p>Action: Add to the Agenda for the next meeting</p> <p>Level 7 Apprenticeship Degree in Geotechnical Engineering</p> <p>Zoe Baldwin shared the Degree had been published on the Apprenticeship website and the general consensus from Universities was it would be open for delivery in 2022 delivery, with interest from Newcastle, Leeds & Birmingham, however there had been interest from Portsmouth and Imperial.</p> <p>Action: CJ to circulate the link to the Committee.</p> <p>CJ asked about the Level 6 Apprenticeship and the integration of Civil Engineering – and ZB felt there was a gap on Engineering Geology and Materials (e.g., quarrying – materials engineering and engineering geology) ZB said she did not mind helping with the content integration, and there was a definite gap for Level 6 for School Leavers, and there was a Level 6 Civil Engineering Degree Apprenticeship that existed, with Geotechnical modules, however there was less than 20% cross over, which was why there was a gap for the Geotechnical Engineering Degree Apprenticeship.</p>	<p>CJ</p> <p>CJ</p>
12.	Further Meetings	
	<p>To start at 10am and held online via webex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 27th May (10am – 12pm) <p>Further 2021 Meetings (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th September (location TBC) • 4th November (location TBC) 	