

Report from Drainage Group for Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting on 8 August 2019

Since our report for the NP meeting on 10 July, the Drainage Group have the following to report:

- 1. Nelson Court problems:** We held a meeting on 25 July outside 21 Nelson Court with the Area Manager for Anglian Water, the Area Manager for County Highways and the officer from the LLFA who knows about ditches. This was to address problems going back more than 20 years with the foul sewer surcharging after moderate to heavy rain. After due consideration, the decision was that the Highways Officer would carry out further investigation of where the surface water goes from Nelson Court into Sharman Avenue and whether there are any blockages there.
- 2. Update on Feasibility Study by Highways Engineer:** Last week the contractors appointed by the Highways Engineer jetted the Highways system in Watton Green and in Saham Toney. On Monday, the system in Langmere Road was traced and jetted. Liz went to Langmere Road to see what was happening. Tracing where the surface water sewer went was difficult but they thought it went towards Cranswick so the officers went there to talk to them. We now wait to about that.
- 3. Norfolk Day:** On Norfolk Day on 27 July at the WI event in the Christian Community Centre, Jane and Liz were present to represent the Neighbourhood Plan and the Drainage Group. The weather was not kind but there was a steady stream of visitors. Jane and I ended up not giving formal talks but it was very productive talking to people at our tables. Liz found out about 2 more properties that were internally flooded and met one of the WI ladies who used to work with Thames Water in their foul sewer department! We have agreed that the Group can call on her if there is anything she could help us with in relation to Anglian Water. There were two talks on scams by two women from NatWest who are working with Norfolk Trading Standards and two by the Daisy Programme. There was also a chap there from Norfolk Recycling who did not give a talk. Liz did talk to him and came away with more knowledge. She thinks it would be good to invite him to talk to the Steering Group about what might be done in Watton to improve recycling. Anglian Water supported the day by providing goodie bags with useful products to help the Keep It Clear Campaign.
- 4. Speaking at Planning Committee about flood risk on proposed developments:** Liz spoke at the Planning Committee on 22 July about the Gladman development on Thetford Road after writing a letter to all members of the Committee about the problems with surface water flooding and foul

sewer surcharging in the area. She used photos of the field flooded after moderate rain and one of the water standing in Saddlers Rise after a similar amount showing that shallow infiltration is not suitable as promoted by the Environment Agency. Peter Bishop spoke as a member of the public about the plans for two and a half storey dwellings along the boundary with Canon Close and its bungalows. DC Councillor Bowes gave apologies to the Committee but wrote a long letter of objection as did DC Councillor Kiddell. Councillor Gilbert, who is on the Planning Committee, argued that Wayland Wood needed to be protected rather than having mitigation measures put in place. After some questions from other members of the Committee to the Planning Officer, the Committee decided with one objection to approve the development.

Liz also spoke in objection to the 9 dwellings at the rear of 121A Brandon Road next to the Bridleway. Again, warnings about surface water flooding risk fell on deaf ears and the application was approved with one objection.

At the Town Council meeting the next evening, Liz spoke in the public speaking time. She suggested that the Town Council write to the agents/developers of both sites requesting a close working with them on the discharge of conditions 11, 12 and 13 of the Brandon Road one and all the conditions of the Gladman one. This was agreed and the letters written to the Agents are attached. The Clerk heard from the Agent for the Brandon Road one the next day agreeing to the request and asking in return for some information about the feasibility study. Liz has responded with some information and an offer to meet with him at the beginning of September to update him further.

Liz had asked the Area Manager at Anglian Water to check whether there were plans to upgrade the sewer system in Thetford Road. In her email reply she wrote:

We have been aware of this site for many years and have had conversations with the applicant regarding the foul network capacity constraints in the catchment.

Due to commutative growth in the catchment we are aware of constraints and actively defining a catchment strategy to address this issue.

We note that the case officer for planning application 3PL/2018/0952/O recommended a foul drainage condition be applied to the permission. This condition will ensure the developer engages with us to ensure the drainage strategy for the site fits into any wider strategy we have for the catchment.

We actively engage with developers of sites coming forward and actively monitor sites through the planning and local plan process.

Whilst we cannot give detailed regarding a solution as this stage we will keep you updated and as things progress I will be happy to set up a meeting with representatives from the parish council and Breckland District Council.

If you could confirm a contact to enable me to this I would be grateful.

Liz has given her the email contacts for the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk.

- 5. Future Work:** We just continue with ensuring that the authorities do the work they are supposed to and lobbying where and when we can.

Liz Witcher
Chairman
Drainage Working Group
5 August 2019