

Report from Drainage Group for Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting on 19 November 2019

Since our last report for the NP, the Drainage Group have the following to report:

- 1. Meeting at Breckland DC with the Head of Development and 2 officers from the LLFA:** We are meeting them on 20 November to discuss concerns about a number of developments in the town and Saham Toney. I have written some comprehensive notes to focus the discussion.

The main one is the Mallard Road one to highlight that the Flood Risk Assessment by the applicants is woefully short on actual information about the drainage systems on Birdland and in the surrounding area. The 2 ditches that are next the hedges that divide the site into 3 are vital for drainage and must not be filled in as seems to be their plan. We assert that they must do a new FRA and change their layout to take account of the drainage in the area. We will be interested to see the officers' response to this!!

Also concerns about what is happening at the Hopkins Homes development in Saham Road re drainage from a ditch in the garden of 44 Brandon Road as well as concerns about the boundary.

We are asking why the LLFA has withdrawn its objections to the Nile Field development.

We have highlighted how grass cuttings on a number of estates carried out by Breckland leave the cuttings on site and they then get washed into the highways drains and block them up and lead to flooding. We asked if funding could be found to have the grass cuttings taken away as this is known to be more expensive. We are not holding our breath!!

- 2. Flooding in Watton the 3-6 October:** The road before the bridge at Richmond Road was flooded as usual. This was flagged up to Highways as it is a high priority following the feasibility study and we understood it was to be completed by the end of the year. Highways said it was now thought to be due to a blocked ditch which the Group thought was nonsense. After contact with the officer at the LLFA who deals with ditches, it is now firmly back in the remit of Highways and they are working up a scheme.

A home in Langmere Road had 3 inches of water in the conservatory and one other had some in the porch. Residents agreed that there was less flooding following the works done in the Road in the summer. The assumption is that the recent flooding is because of the blockage found in the drainage system in Cranswick. The LLFA officer tasked with sorting this was alerted.

- 3. Plans for a comprehensive feasibility study:** The Group agreed it is good news that the Flood Team at the County are putting together a comprehensive plan to apply for funds *to carry out a study to investigate the feasibility and cost benefits of flood risk mitigation measures in Watton. This study would include modelling of the existing surface water systems to help inform any funding bids and future decisions for investment. Mitigation options for Watton could include: retrofitting SuDS, flood defences, increased capacity, property level protection and conveyance of drainage systems and improved land management practices. If and when funding is established for the study of Watton, the Flood and Water Management Team will be in touch with stakeholders, including us, as part of any engagement.*

- 4. Work on ditches in Watton:** The ditch at the southern end of the Gladman development has been cleared along with the culvert under the road. The LLFA officer talked with engineers on site about what was required. The assumption is these were from Barratts. The ditch on the other side has also been cleared along its length at the south of Saddlers Rise and then along its length where it turns south to join the next bit of the watercourse. It was possible to see the outflow from Saddlers Rise running well and the flow in the ditch too. Progress!!

- 5. Meeting with the LLFA at County Hall:** A meeting is proposed to help with the development of the feasibility study mentioned in 3 above. No date yet arranged.

- 6. Future Work:** We just continue gaining more knowledge of the drainage systems in the area and with ensuring that the authorities do the work they are supposed to and lobbying where and when we can.

Liz Whitcher
Chairman
Drainage Working Group
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