Weston Green – Surface Water Flooding 23 December 2020

Report Author – Andrew Durham on behalf of Councillor Bridget Durham

Introduction

Following a number of complaints of surface water flooding on 23 December 2020 and as Councillor Durham was unable to go in person, I went to look at the situation at circa 1600hrs, which is when the photographs in this report were taken.

It is therefore a snapshot of the situation at that time.

Summary

The situation along Common Road was better than might have been expected (based on past experience over 20 years). The clearance of the Stour Brook down to and beyond Horseshoes Lane has improved the flow.
Flooding across the Common Road (at the culvert between No.72 and "Thoresby") may be further reduced if all pipes / bridge arches downstream were cleared again (note: it is understood that the bridge at College Farm is to be removed following the recent diversion of footpath 19 and that would help get the water away).

The situation downstream of the Reading Room leading to the ford at the Three Horseshoes has improved following clearance work but attention needs to be paid to the pipes under the road in front of "The Three Horseshoes" where they appear to be surcharged and one is not flowing as strongly as the other.

Chapel Road appears to have a number of problems:

1. The ditch on the south side was surcharged at the Chapel and water was running across and down the road to flood the junction at the "Old Forge". It was obvious that there is a risk of flooding to the thatched cottage before the Reading Room.

2. The ditch on the north side of Chapel Road was surcharged at the access to Jubilee Farm but not downstream, suggesting the pipe under the access is either too small or obstructed.

3. The ditch was surcharged at the point where the ditch ends just before the bungalows suggesting that the piped drain beyond that point is either too small or obstructed. However, it is noted that there is at least one drain running away from Chapel Road (to the North) to join the drainage ditch behind the houses (at No.48 (under the drive) and possibly others) – refer to the 1949 aerial photograph and map of the village circa 1945. What drainage there was to get water off Chapel Road may have been compromised by post war development. It is suggested that effort should be paid to where these drains are and landowners encouraged to check that they are clear.

4. Many of the gardens of the properties on the North side of Chapel Road are at risk of flooding according the Government's Flood Risk assessment (some at High Risk). It is suggested that residents be advised to check their household insurance policies if their property is assessed as being at risk.

Weston Green – Surface Water Flooding 23 December 2020

Location: Stour House, Common Road.
1. Sewer surcharged and discharging into road
2. Ditch between "Stour House" and "Old Orchard" overflowing onto road.
3. Road drain blocked by debris but once cleared, was draining.
Note: The manhole located in the drive of "Old Orchard" has a very restricted opening to the pipe/culvert under Common Road and causes the water to back-up.

Location: Footbridges over Stour Brook.
Stour Brook had capacity but water was only just under footbridges

Location: Fox Hall, Common Road.
Stour Brook had capacity. Water was approx. 1 foot below level at which it would flood onto road.

Location: Bridge where former footpath 19 crossed Stour Brook at College Farm.
Stour Brook had capacity on both sides but was circa 30cm higher upstream. One of the two openings had less flow compared to the other suggesting an obstruction.

Location: Culvert under track opposite No.71 Common Road.
Stour Brook had capacity on both sides but was circa 30cm higher upstream. One of the two concrete pipes had little flow compared to the other suggesting an obstruction.

Location: Culvert under Common Road between No.72 & Thoresby
Water had covered road and was still draining away. Piped gully's to Stour Brook draining very slowly due to height of water in Stour. Earth channels to ditch on south side blocked (there was capacity in ditch).
Water in culvert flowing well and Stour Brook still had capacity.
Note – Cambs CC contractor had been to site recently to review but presence of a shallow and live 11Kv high voltage power line had been confirmed, which author understands precludes use of diggers.

N.B. This report is only a snapshot of the situation as at circa 1600hrs on 23 December 2021

Weston Green – Surface Water Flooding 23 December 2020

Location: Footpath 12 at point where it enters pipes in front of "Three Horseshoes"
Stour Brook had some capacity on both sides but pipes were surcharged. One pipe had noticeably more flow suggesting obstruction.

Location: Culvert by Reading Room and under Mill Hill road, ditch behind thatched cottages.
Stour Brook had capacity.
Water was covering road in front of the Old Forge (running down Chapel Road).
Resident was noted clearing gully to get water off road.

Location: Three Horseshoes ford.
Stour Brook flowing well and had capacity but water only just getting under footbridge.
Recent work to clear downstream has clearly helped.

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Weston Green – Surface Water Flooding 23 December 2020

Location: Ditch upstream of Jubilee Farm on North side still has capacity but water is flowing across the road from the ditch on the South side.

Location: Jubilee Farm entrance
Note water has over-topped suggesting the pipe under access is either too small or is blocked.

Location: Outside Chapel.
Water has flooded across road from ditch on South side of Chapel Rd beyond Chapel.

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Weston Green – Surface Water Flooding 23 December 2020

Location: Looking West along Chapel Road just beyond"Greenacres"/ "Paddocks" access.
Note plant growing in ditch.
Previously noted that ditch was silted up.

Note drainage along Chapel Road leading to North behind houses has been piped.
Known to be a pipe from the road at No.48 (under drive and garage)
But likely to be others (possibly in vicinity of "Paddocks"?)
Refer to Flood maps to see where drainage ditches are/were

Location: Looking West along Chapel Rd outside "Greenacres" / "Paddocks"

Location: Ditch on North side Chapel Road at point where it ends outside "Greenacres" / "Paddocks"

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Gov.uk Flood Risk Map – Extent of Flooding Risk

For detailed information on different risk levels see Gov.Uk. Flood Risk webpage

Gov.uk Flood Risk – Extent of Flooding – at “High Risk” Surface Water Flooding

Gov.uk Flood Risk – Extent of Flooding – at “Medium Risk” Surface Water Flooding

Gov.uk Flood Risk – Extent of Flooding – at “Low Risk” Surface Water Flooding

Three Horseshoes (P.H.)
F.B
Ford
G.P.
Allot Office
P.O.
330
B.M. 332·4
Meth. Chap
Allots
Pound Farm
Water Tower
F.P.
Weston Green
Allotments
F.B.
Polished Neolithic Axe found A.D 1904
318
Bone Implement found A.D. 1921
Fox & Hounds (P.H.)
B.M.324·6
Street Farm

1949
photograph