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23.9.2007

Kate Bowden,
Flooding Review,
East Riding of Yorkshire Council,

Flooding of Valley Drive, Kirk Ella,
through The Vale, Mill Lane,
St. Andrews' Primary School and West Ella Road.
Also West Ella Road, West Ella & Kirk Ella.

Further to my letters of 2.9.2007 and E-mails to Mr. Barry Adams regarding the above I would like to add the following comments.

Much of our flooding was caused by the rainwater coming off the A164 bypass and water coming off the fields, probably from Swanland, which did not get into the gullies and ditches.

It would seem that the water storage lagoon (built around 1990) for the A164 gullies at The Grove filled to capacity and overflowed. This lagoon and others had not been cleaned out for a very long time. I have been told that the plans have been traced to Goole. I would like to know how often they should be cleaned out and checked. Also what is the capacity of these lagoons and could they be enlarged? In addition how often are the gullies on the A164 cleaned out and when were they last cleaned prior to the Floods of 15th June & 25th June 2007?

This lagoon drains to the fields to the East. The 1888 map shows a ditch between fields then there are pipes in the Grove, and then it drains on a 6" pipe to a pond and ditch between fields 37 & 38. The ditch continues north of the Kerry Pit and to behind the bungalows in Valley Drive. This field ditch is referred to as the Easonby Drain in the Manuscript Notes on the Kirk Ella Award dated 1889. See Page 169. On the old maps it continues to the Dale Well Cottages and then joins the Western Drain. I am trying to ascertain if this is a public watercourse or a ditch fence, which were to be repaired by the allottee.

The Deeds from 50 Valley Drive show "assumed line of piped ditch", from No. 46 Valley Drive, when the land was sold for building. The plan also shows the position of "The Swanland Sewer", running in an approximately parallel line, from No. 52 Valley Drive and through the corner of No.50 Valley Drive.

The present residents at No. 52 Valley Drive do not have any such information with their Deeds. However there are 2 outlets from this ditch at the rear of No. 52 and the first one appears to be dropping into the sewer manhole. We have asked Gerry Frisby, the East Riding Land Drainage Engineer, to investigate and in particular to find out where the second outlet drains.

I am told that there would have been public consultation before the A164 was built. How much consideration was given to the drainage and in particular to where the water from the lagoon at the Grove would drain? The residents at Valley Drive tell me that the drain and pipes behind their properties have not been altered or enlarged since the properties were built in the early 1960s.

Three months after the floods we still do not know who owns the drain and who is responsible for its maintenance. The drain does not belong to the residents.

In addition water seems to be converging in the sewer from Swanland and from the South – residents at Nos. 54 & 56 showed me this last month – visible when there is no water entering from the ditch.

The piped ditch becomes an open watercourse from the boundary of 16/14 The Vale to the rear of the new house at No.10 Mill Lane. It used to drain underground when the two old cottages, Nos. 10 & 12 were standing and residents have told me it went under the School (I assume they mean the playground). On the 1796 map the Easonby drain is shown going across the then Mill Road and out to the Western Drain somewhere between what are now Nos. 49 & 51 West Ella Road. On the 1888 map there is a drain between the School and what is now No.61 West Ella Road. This area of drainage is being investigated by Gerry Frisby.

There is a letter on file from Yorkshire Water dated 17.7. 2002 stating "Land drainage must not be discharged to the public sewer network" Their reference C003484. Should Land Drainage and Surface Water Drainage be treated separately?

The Swanland Sewer converges with the Mill Lane Sewer at the manhole between Nos. 10 & 14 Mill Lane. Both these Sewers are 300mm (12") and the Sewer from this manhole to West Ella Road is only 300mm. I have asked Yorkshire Water for a detailed explanation but still await a reply.

Yorkshire Water claims that they have checked their sewers and there are no problems. On the days of the flooding water was coming out of the manholes and residents reported sewage in their garden. Yorkshire Water further claim that the rainfall was off their gauge on 25.6.2007.

.When I spoke to Alex at the Environmental Business Unit I was advised that they have a legal liability to connect properties to the sewers. How much consideration is given to the capacity of the sewers when planning consent is granted?

I have asked Yorkshire Water to check their Surface Water Drain in West Ella Road, including all manhole covers. The one outside my property does not appear to have been lifted and checked.

The Environment Agency is clearing both sides of the Western Drain, from No. 15 West Ella Road, the start of their responsibility, and down towards the Marr Bridge and Hessle. How often should this Drain be cleared and when was it last cleared out prior to the June floods?

Gullies

It would appear that several of the gullies in our area have not been cleaned out for some time. How often should they be cleaned and when were they last cleaned prior to the June Floods?

Yorkshire Water has supplied me with a map of sewers and surface water drainage. It shows "DRAIN" outside some properties in West Ella Road, i.e. "upstream from Yorkshire Water' responsibility. There is also a short section of open ditch outside Nos. 149 – 153, which drains to a 12" pipe. When was this section of drainage last checked prior to the floods, and how often should it be checked?

The E.A. has told me that some of the pipes and brick culverts from the gullies to their Drain are blocked. I have reported this to the E.R.Y.C. How often are they checked and when were they last checked prior to the June floods?

Yellow marks on some of the recently cleaned gullies denote a problem for Highways. I have asked for details of where these gullies drain – to the Surface Water Drain or the Combined Sewers?

I have also queried the surface design of the gullies, as some seem to block with leaves etc. very quickly. Other residents are concerned that grass cuttings are going into the gullies. Should some of them be upgraded? There are also long stretches of road without any gullies. What is the standard and should more gullies be put in to help reduce the risks of future flooding?

Fences and Walls

Some flooding was caused by close board fencing and walls, which did not permit the water to flow. Examples are in Mill Lane and West Ella Road. The water backed up and then went through air bricks. My Deeds state that walls are not allowed, only brick gate posts. Hedges are to be planted and fences should be of "ricker posts ". I previously thought that this was to preserve the rural aspect of the area, but it is more likely to allow the water to flow. Outside the St Andrews' School on Mill Lane there are still some of the old Estate iron railings, through which water would pass, in time of flood.

When I moved here 21 years ago the old Lodge to the former South Ella Hall was still standing on the plot next door and there were estate railings at the side, next to the Drive to the old South Ella Hall. There is now close board fencing on both sides of the Drive. Recently E.R.Y.C. built a cycle shelter and cycle path in this area. The cycle shelter is built adjacent to the Drain, and has reduced the soak-away properties of the land. No drainage has been put in the Drive and the new tarmac has been laid close to the fence of No. 1 West Ella Way and therefore the water had nowhere to go, backed

up and flooded the block of 6 garages on both 15.6.2007 & 25.6.2007 and on 25.6.2007 it flooded my neighbours house, No.51 West Ella Road.

All the local residents objected to this development and warned that it may cause flooding to properties.

21 years ago this Drain was open for several feet in the neighbouring plot. The builder piped it to the boundary with the School and recently the Council extended the pipe, within their land, to accommodate the cycle shelter path. The result is that water drains to the area downstream of the entrance to the pipe and then floods the garden of No. 51 and my garden when there is a lot of water i.e. in the June floods.

Yorkshire Water has explained that there should be an overflow between the drain and the pipe. This is exactly the same position as at the rear of No.10 Mill Lane. Similar drains are shown on the maps around Wolfreton Upper School, in South Ella Way, and that School also flooded. The plan of the South Ella Estate shows the various ponds – the School is built to the East of the old Hall buildings, i.e. "downstream".

The South Block of St Andrews' School, Kirk Ella was badly flooded and this appears to be down stream of the old Dale Well and near or on the area of the Easonby Drain, as shown on the 1796 map. When was the Dale Well filled in? I am told that the area used to be a store for grit and was then tarmaced to make a car park for the School. A flood survey was done at the School on 6.9.2007 by Rob Worsflod and survey team from ERYC. What were the findings?

Sandbags

Residents were told to telephone or e-mail for sandbags but none were delivered to Kirk Ella or West Ella. The Valley Drive residents obtained some from C.J. Reynolds, who also supplied some for the school. Residents from West Ella got some privately and other residents were having pallets of sand and bags of building sand delivered. I appreciate that it was a very difficult time but the Council should not have asked residents to order when they were unable to deal with the demand. On Saturday 30th June 2007, Huw Roberts was interviewed on Radio Humberside and stated that there had not been a problem with sand bags. Residents in this area know differently!

Private Ditches

Many of the ditches in this area have not been cleaned out each autumn and some have been filled in. Residents seem to think that because the ditch is dry they can fill it in. This also applies to ponds. Notably the pond at West Ella was filled in a number of years ago, the old pumping house was demolished and the stone thrown down the 180ft deep well. These areas would have helped to absorb water in June.

There needs to be a complete review of this area and it should be an offence to fill in drainage. There needs to be an authority to deal with this. The local Councils do not even know who owns the fields.

There seems to be a problem of clearing ditches at certain times of the year and wildlife seems more important than the flooding of homes, Schools and businesses. A North Yorkshire farmer has told me that this area is being investigated.

Hard Landscaping of gardens

Many front gardens are being paved and concreted to provide additional parking and large patios are being built in back gardens, thereby reducing the soak-away areas. There needs to be more awareness of the potential for flooding, and a need to provide areas of soak-away and to use more permeable materials.

Parish Councils

Kirk Ella and West Ella Parish Council has only 9 Councillors and we meet for only 2 hours per month. Barry Adams, Director of Corporate Policy and Strategy, ERYC says the Council do not have the resources to deal with the flooding work. Please note that at our meeting in September we set up a flooding sub committee to deal with the flooding issues.

In conclusion I feel that at least some of the flooding could have been reduced if the gullies, drains and lagoons had been properly maintained and serviced. I suggest that a thorough check is made on the capacity of the sewers, to take a reasonable amount of surface water.

*** Additional Information:**

The pipe from The Grove is 12 "

The Pipe from the field to the pond is 6"

More pipes drain from part way down in Fields 37 & 38

There is a further 6" pipe, draining from the lower corner of Field 38, into the Easenby Drain.

Additional information added December 17th 2007.