



Back on the Drainage Case Again - update 29

Report on

Teams meeting with RBWM Flood Risk & Highways

May 28 2021

At the start of the COVID Pandemic OGAFCA Environment were about to attend a scheduled meeting with RBWM Highways at Maidenhead Town Hall. We decided that everyone's attention and focus was rightly directed elsewhere and that it would not be realistic to expect the comparatively small drainage concerns of Oakley Green and Fifield to receive the attention we would hope for.

As things generally began to ease up we managed to arrange a re-start with an online TEAMS meeting on June 1 2021. Chairing the meeting was Sue Fox, RBWM Principal Flood Risk Management Officer. The Senior Flood Risk Engineer at Project Centre and RBWM's Highway Services Manager also attended along with OGAFCA Environment and Local Residents from 2 properties at the sharp end of water "events".

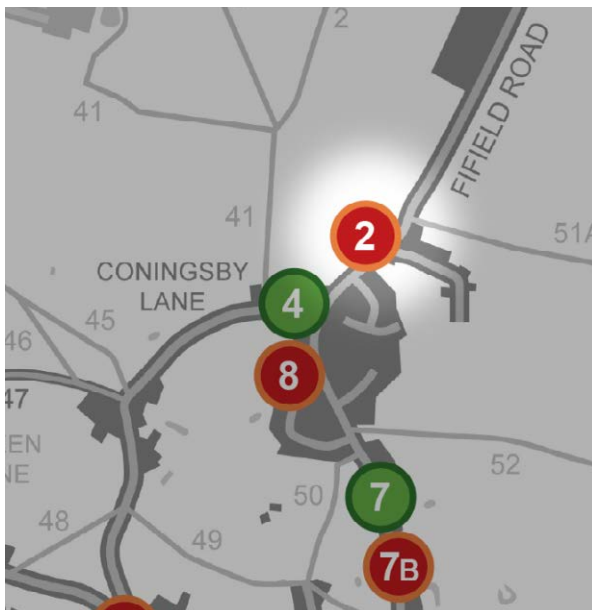
Agenda - 2 - Strategic Catchment Study

After introductions item 2 on the Agenda was a notification of a Strategic catchment study funding bid for 2022/23. In the misty ancient times of 2001 when I first had to start asking for drainage maps etc the answer I was given was that it was all held in George's head. Unfortunately George was retiring and things only started looking up a bit when young Canadian Mark did a year's placement with RBWM and carried out an extensive local survey. A bit later, way back in early 2010, OGAFCA's first contact at Streetcare told us that there was a new statutory requirement on Local Government to develop a comprehensive database of drainage and watercourses for their entire area of responsibility. That sounded promising but it was not until February 2015 that we were asked to provide what information we had accumulated to Consultants WSP who had been appointed to carry out this study. The updated version of the document we provided to WSP back then can be found [here](#). Some time later the contract was removed from WSP and things went very quiet on that front so it is welcome news that things might move forward again.

Continued

Agenda - 3 - “onward flow” maintenance attention.

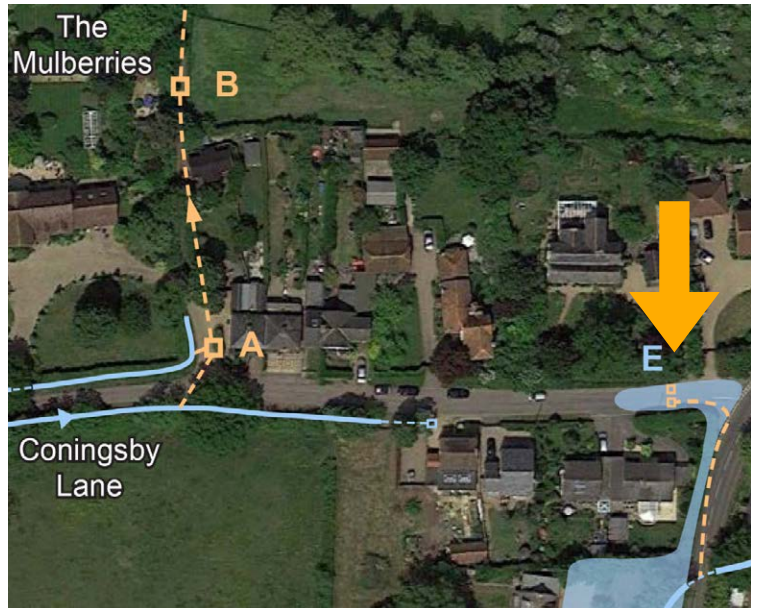
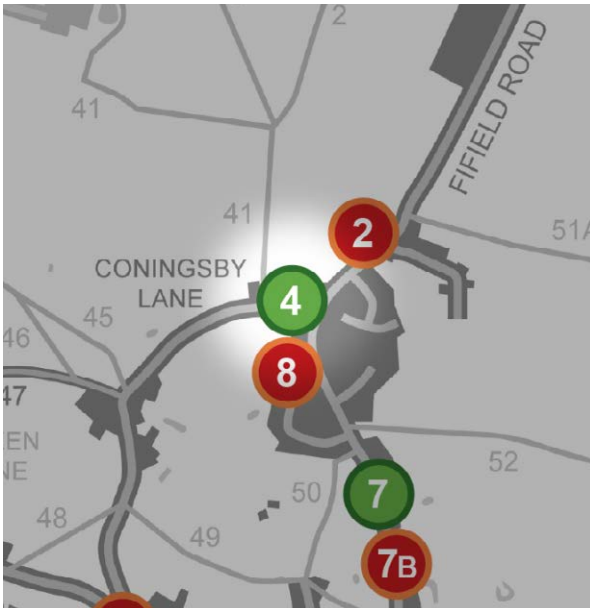
Item 3 on the Agenda dealt with the remaining “wet spots” that can still benefit from trying to improve the onward flow and-or capacity.



Wet Spot 2 at the speed bump on Fifield Road, south of Longlea Nursing Home, needs constant attention but the adjacent landowners deny their responsibility for this. Streetcare managed to carry out some work on this stretch in 2014 but it needs annual maintenance. A restructure at the speed bump itself, possibly involving a piped section with a gully either side of the speed bump, might turn out to be a way of making this spot easier to maintain and OGAFCA offered to submit drawings of suggestions. Project Centre will investigate and report at the next quarterly meeting in September.



Agenda - 3 - continued

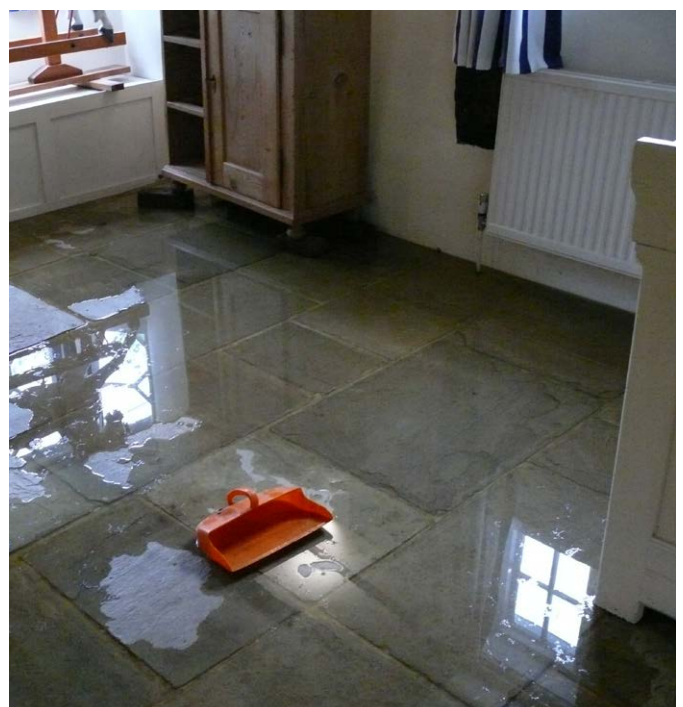


Although **Wet Spot 4** at Coningsby Lane has benefitted hugely from the new escape route northwards water still collects in the low spot at the junction with Fifield Road as was seen recently on Friday June 18 2021 - see below.

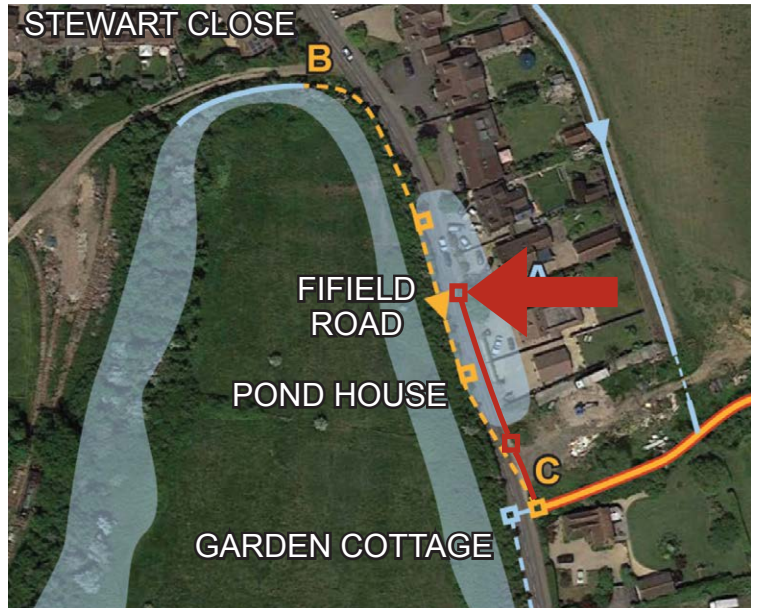
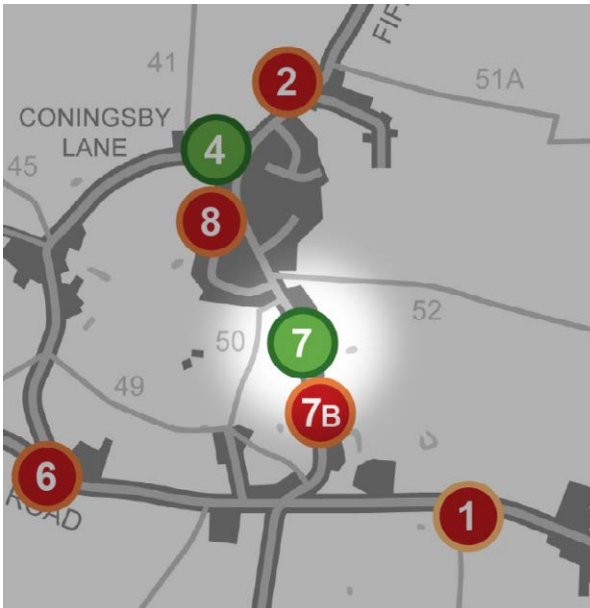
This is not caused by water running down the road from ditches to the east as it used to. We think this is caused instead by a backup past silted one way valves from the culvert just to the south.

As it did in 2001 groundwater pressure caused water to rise up through the floor in a nearby property. The fact that it was not the 5 inches of water that happened in 2001 is surely due to the improved area drainage achieved by the new northward pipe.

This is now on the list for jetting.



Agenda - 3 - continued



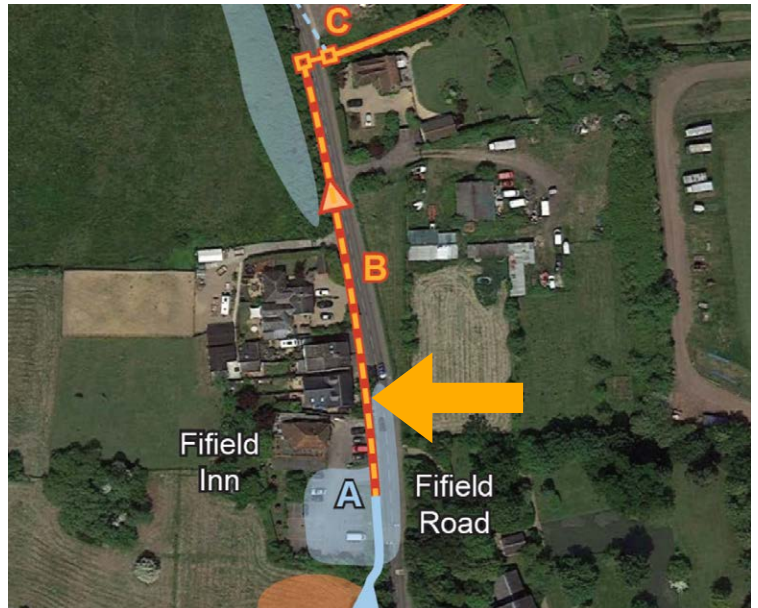
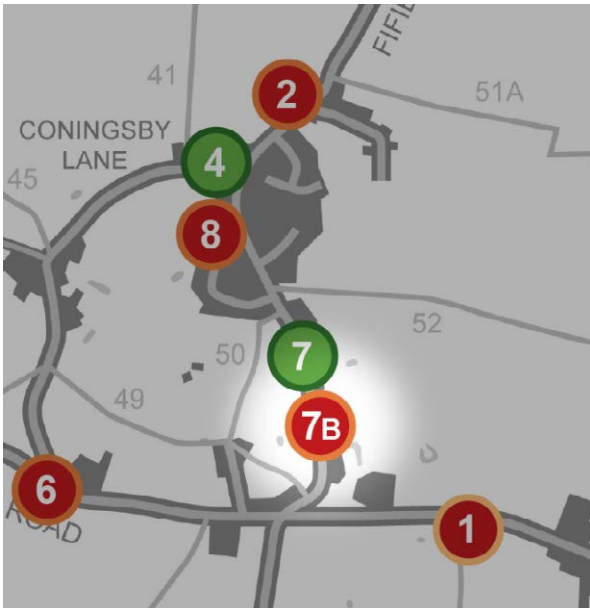
Wet Spot 7 from Stewart Close southwards to the chamber near Garden Cottage benefited from a new pipe and gullies in 2014.



But it is clear from events on Friday June 18 2021 (see below) that this problem has not gone away so the route from the gully at the entrance to **Chesapeak** down to the chamber at **C** will be jetted. If this does not cure the problem this spot will be returned to RED status.



Agenda - 3 - continued



Wet Spot 7B from south of the Fifield Inn northwards to the same chamber at Garden Cottage has been dysfunctional for a very long time. The problem starts at the pipe under the entrance to the pipe car park which simply has inadequate capacity and backs up eventually into the car park as seen many times and shown below.

This was also hi-lighted on Friday June 18 2021 when the usual situation developed.

Although it will not entirely cure the problem it is on the list for jetting in the hope of improving it.

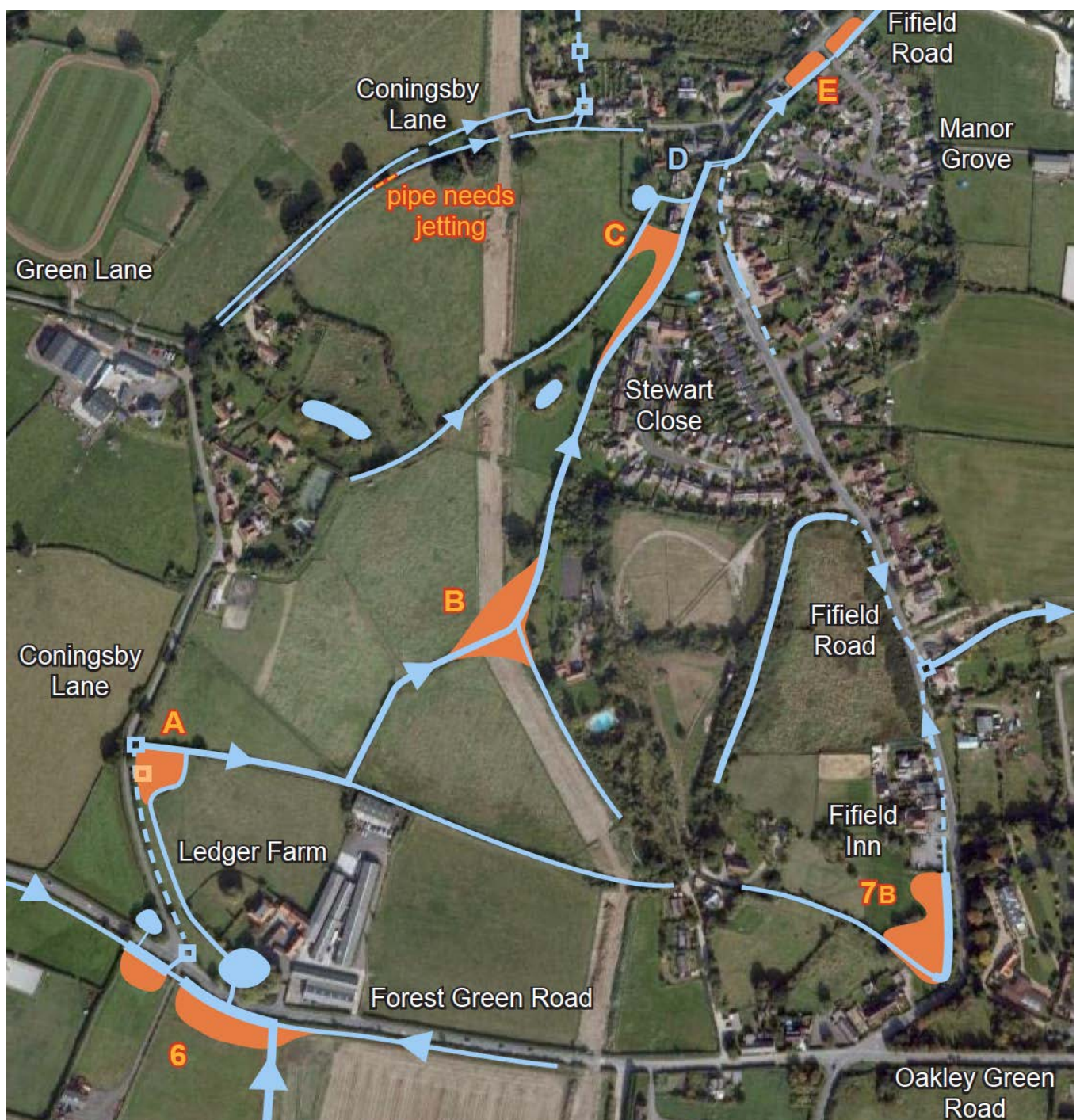


Agenda - 4

Agenda item 4 consisted of contemplating the concept and feasibility of trying to hold back water to delay the flow in an attempt to relieve the threat at those points where it is impractical to increase or improve onward flow.

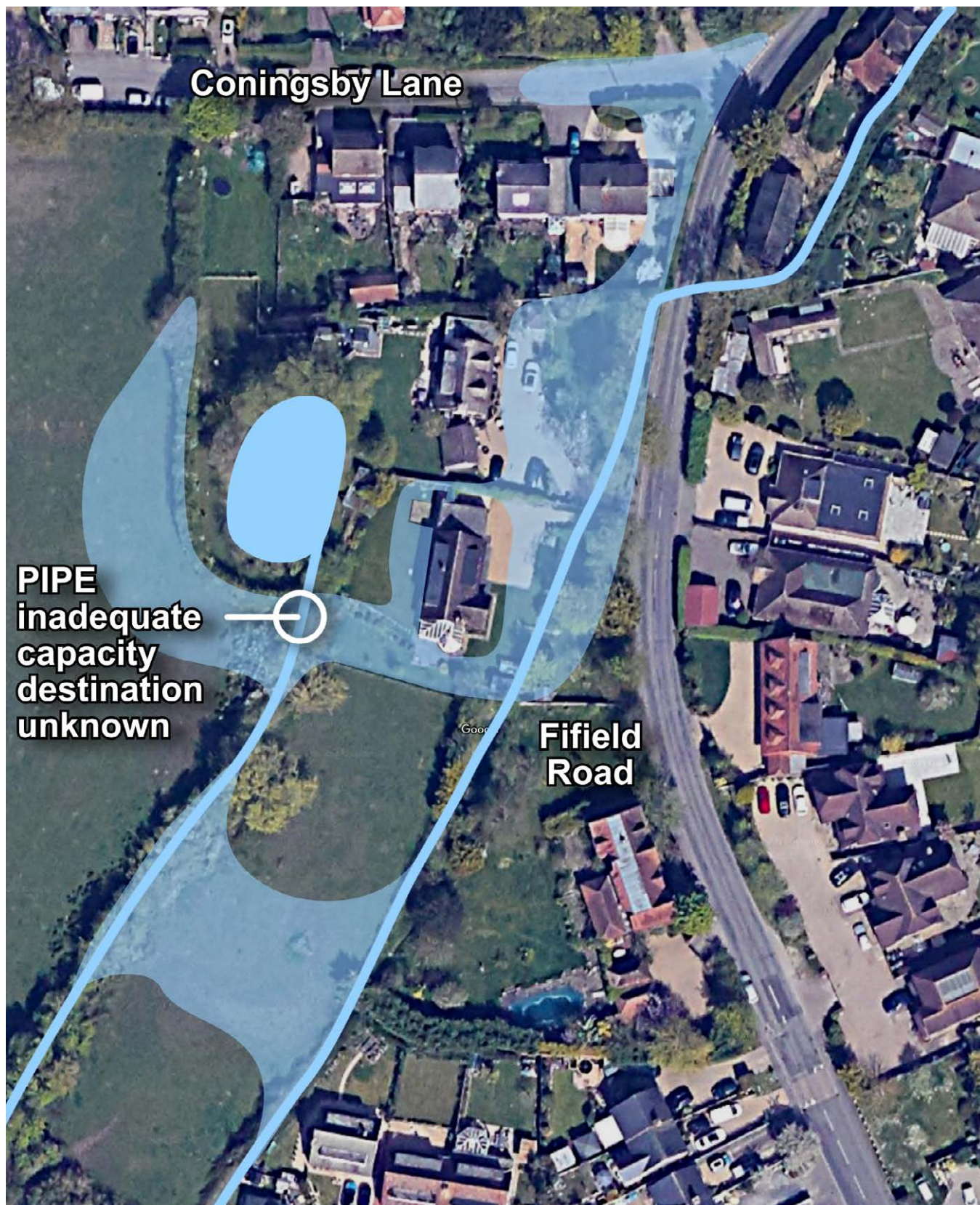
This was discussed at some length and Mr Hitchman of Project Centre raised the issue of new Government policies and funding aimed at encouraging landowners to consider planting and “leaky dams”.

This whole issue is crucial to hopes of further improvement in local drainage but requires detailed consideration by Project Centre before being revisited at the next quarterly meeting in early September.

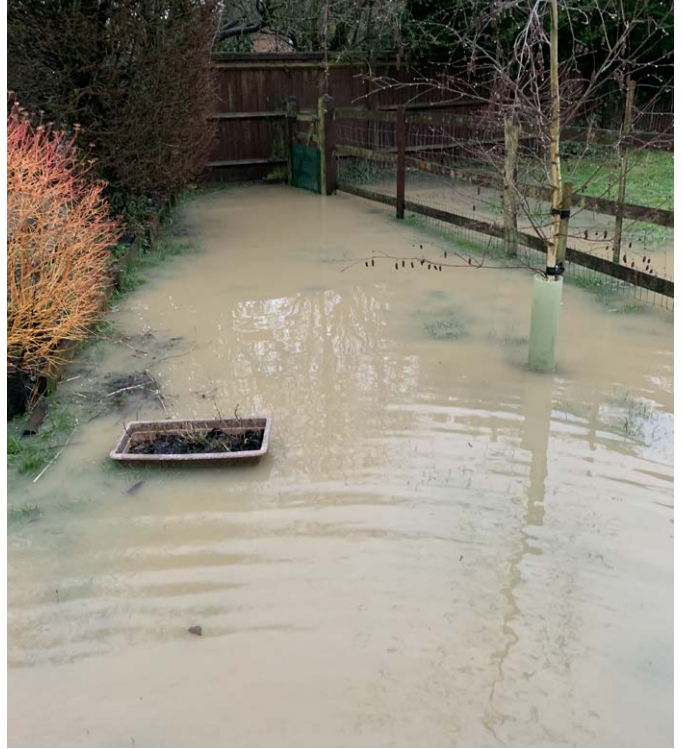


Agenda - 5 - Photos on next page

Item 5 involved the Residents of two properties describing the threat they face and what happens after heavy rainfall when all the water from the Drift Road heading north via the Ledger Farm area arrives at the pinch point of the culvert under Fifield Road just south of Coningsby Lane. Some tentative suggestions were made by OGAFCA about possible defences but Project Centre will investigate, consider possible measures, and report at the September quarterly meeting.



Agenda - 5 - continued



Agenda - 6

Item 6 on the Agenda looked at the start of construction work at the proposed Phoenix Gym site.

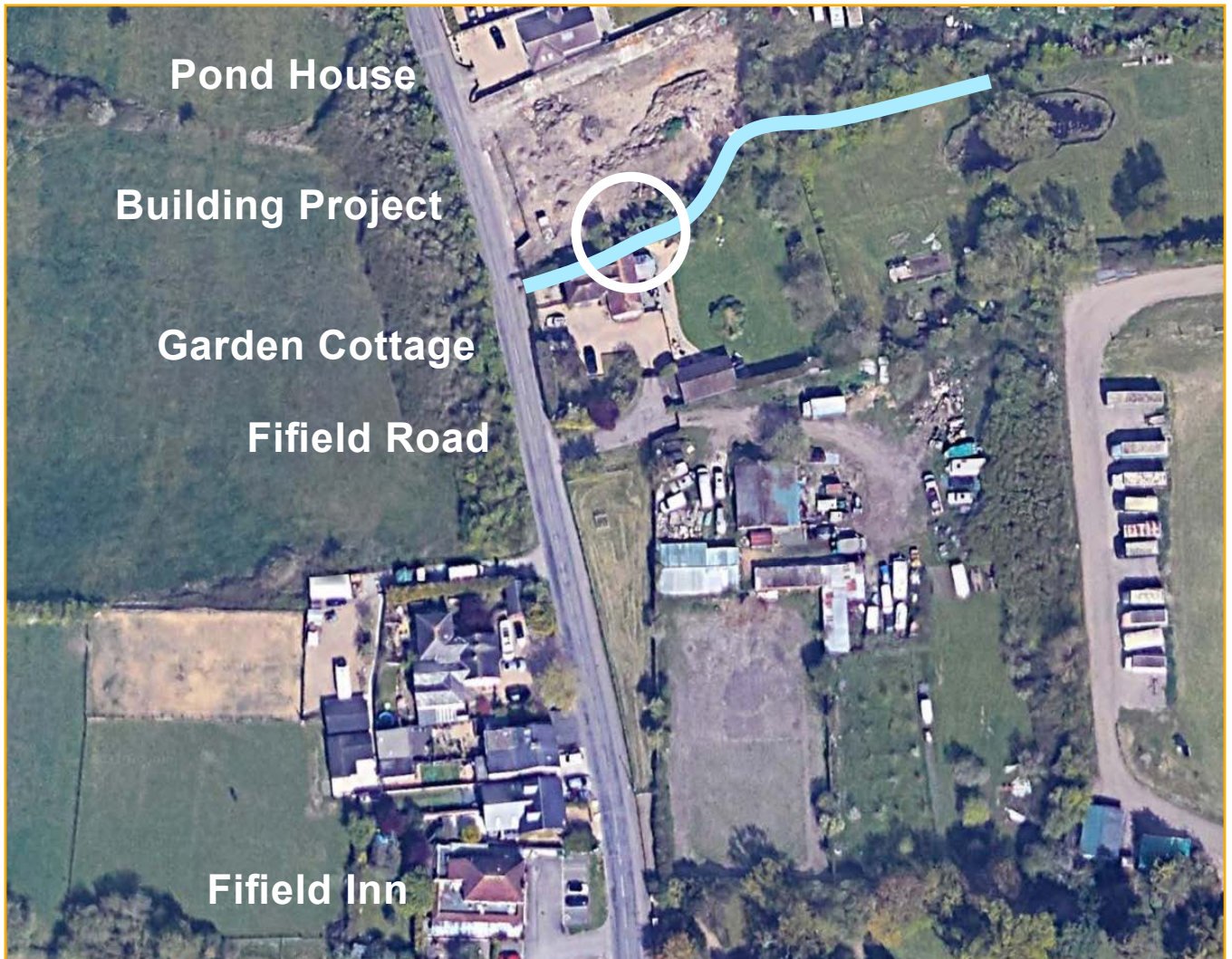
Many local residents had expressed concern over the apparently chaotic works and several reports had been made regarding filling-in the ditch, resulting in the back-up of water southwards, a digger falling over on its side in the ditch while attempting to cross it using its own bucket, etc. The need for traffic lights and bollards 24 hours a day and through weekends had also been questioned when for long periods no work was being carried out and no interruption or hazard on the actual highway itself. There was doubt as to whether necessary permissions had been obtained for traffic lights or for the temporary building proposed. Many residents complained of the construction working hours.

As it turned out quite soon afterwards all of those concerns were pertinent. But that info will be contained in another update report shortly. At the meeting Project Centre undertook to follow up.



Agenda - 7

Agenda item 7 raised a question about the building project on Fifield Road north of the Fifield Inn between Pond House and Garden Cottage. The ditch running beside the development work had been filled in at one point, presumably to allow vehicle access across it. This is a crucial water exit from Fifield and the interruption of it could potentially threaten the whole stretch from Stewart Close down to south of the Fifield Inn. We understood that planning permission called for a 600 mm concrete pipe. Project Centre undertook to investigate. We wait in hope to see an adequate system installed.



Agenda - 8

Finally, item 8 was just squeezed in before running out of time. After passing under Fifield Road at the culvert just south of Coningsby Lane water heads north to the culvert under the entrance to Manor Grove. The issue was raised because this is such a crucial watercourse for Fifield and the current state of it at this point is of great concern. This area is Parish Council land and OGAFCA is in contact with the Parish Clerk in connection with this matter and drainage in general. We hope to hear soon what the intentions are.



The meeting ended with an agreement that there will be a similar meeting every quarter with the first in early September.

Very recently 2 local businessmen with equipment and expertise have stepped forward to offer their services free of charge to try and help improve the situation along the Fifield Road in the Manor Grove and Longlea Nursing Home area. This is very exciting and raises hope for a little light at the end of what feels like a rather dark tunnel !

When you experience or witness a drainage or flooding situation please could I urge you all (even if you think it will achieve nothing) to use the RBWM **REPORT-IT** form.

RBWM are inclined to think that if their records show no reports there is no problem !