Flood Investigation Report

Storm Henk

2nd January 2024

Wymondham

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20 WYMONDHAM

Wymondham is a small village with a population of around 700 people, located within the Melton Borough, approximately 10km east of Melton Mowbray.

A formal investigation was not triggered for Wymondham because the source of the flooding is known. At the time of the flooding, actions were already being progressed by RMAs to try to mitigate future flooding. For more information see the main Storm Henk report.

20.1 LOCAL DRAINAGE CONTEXT

Wymondham Brook (an ordinary watercourse) flows south of Wymondham from the north-east as illustrated in Figure 20-1. It crosses Wymondham Drift and Edmondthorpe Road and proceeds through the southern extent of the village. Another unnamed ordinary watercourse flows southwards from the fields north of the village (Photograph 20-1) into a culvert (twin 225mm diameter (dia) concrete pipe with a trash screen at the inlet (Photograph 20-2) which flows under Main Street (identified as A on Figure 20-1) and re-emerges as an open channel in between rear gardens of properties along Sycamore Lane and Spring Lane (identified as B on Figure 20-1). This proceeds south within Flood Area A, through an access road culvert (identified as C on Figure 20-1) and a third culvert beneath Sycamore Lane (identified as D on Figure 20-1) before its confluence with Wymondham Brook approximately 200m to the south east of Spring Lane.

A network of highway drainage exists beneath Main Street which ultimately discharge to the Wymondham Brook just up from where Sewstern Road meets Main Street.

The UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology's Flood Estimate Handbook (FEH) Web Service[1] provides strategic level catchment mapping. This website however does not define a smaller discrete sub-catchment for this un-named tributary to its confluence with Wymondham Brook.

20.1.1 GEOLOGY

The BGS's online mapping system[2] identifies that this area of Leicestershire is dominated by Marlstone lithology, characterised by superficial deposits of predominantly Head Clay, and a bedrock of Marlstone. These ground formations are associated with relatively poor permeability, poor infiltration rates, with a high susceptibility to groundwater flooding and fluvial deposits in close proximity to the watercourse.

[1] Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (2026) FEH Web Service https://fehweb.ceh.ac.uk/Map
[2] British Geological Survey (2026) BGS Geology Viewer. https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/

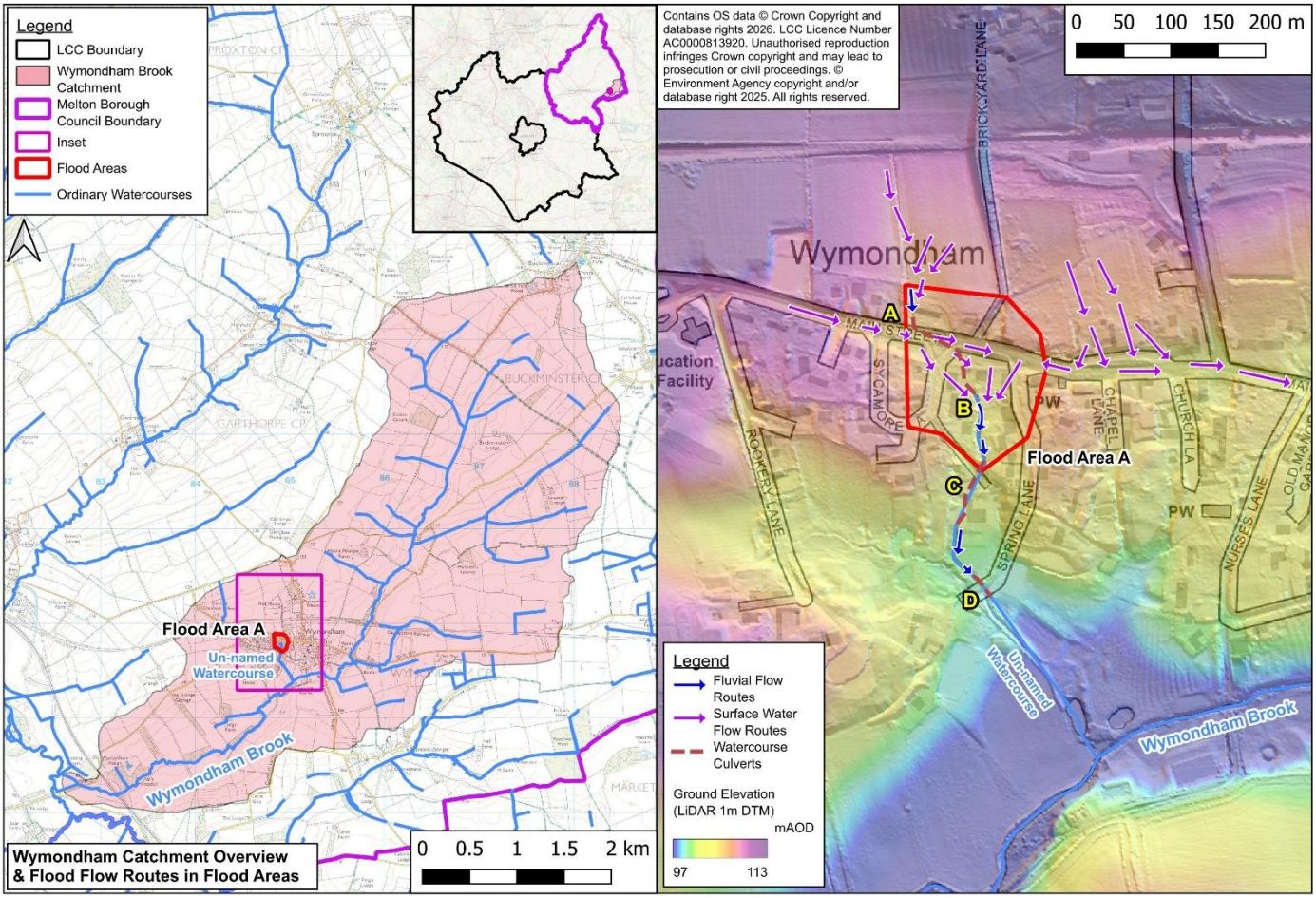


Figure 20-1: Wymondham Location Plan, relevant Watercourse Catchment and Flow Routes through Flood Area (INSET 6)

20.1.2 NATIONAL SCALE PREDICTIVE FLOOD MAPPING

The EA provides flood risk mapping nationally for both rivers and surface water as detailed within Section 2.7.6 of the main Storm Henk report. The EA's Flood Map for Planning (NaFRA2), illustrated in Figure 20-2, shows Flood Area A to be located entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) associated with Wymondham Brook. No modelled flood extents have been generated to date by the EA for this un-named ordinary watercourse catchment and added to the national scale Flood Map for Planning due to its small catchment size. This does not necessarily mean there is no fluvial flood risk, it just has not yet been defined in such detail in this dataset.

The EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) map (NaFRA2) however, also shown in Figure 20-2, identifies a key area at high, medium and low risk of flooding to the north of Main Street within fields. This progresses southwards between Sycamore Lane and Spring Lane towards Wymondham Brook. A further flow route north of Main Street exists to the east which again proceeds southwards onto Main Street, but progresses eastwards towards the junction with Edmonthorpe Road. This risk, however, can be exacerbated by localised ground elevation detail or drainage infrastructure constraints, which are not always represented within the strategic level RoFSW mapping.

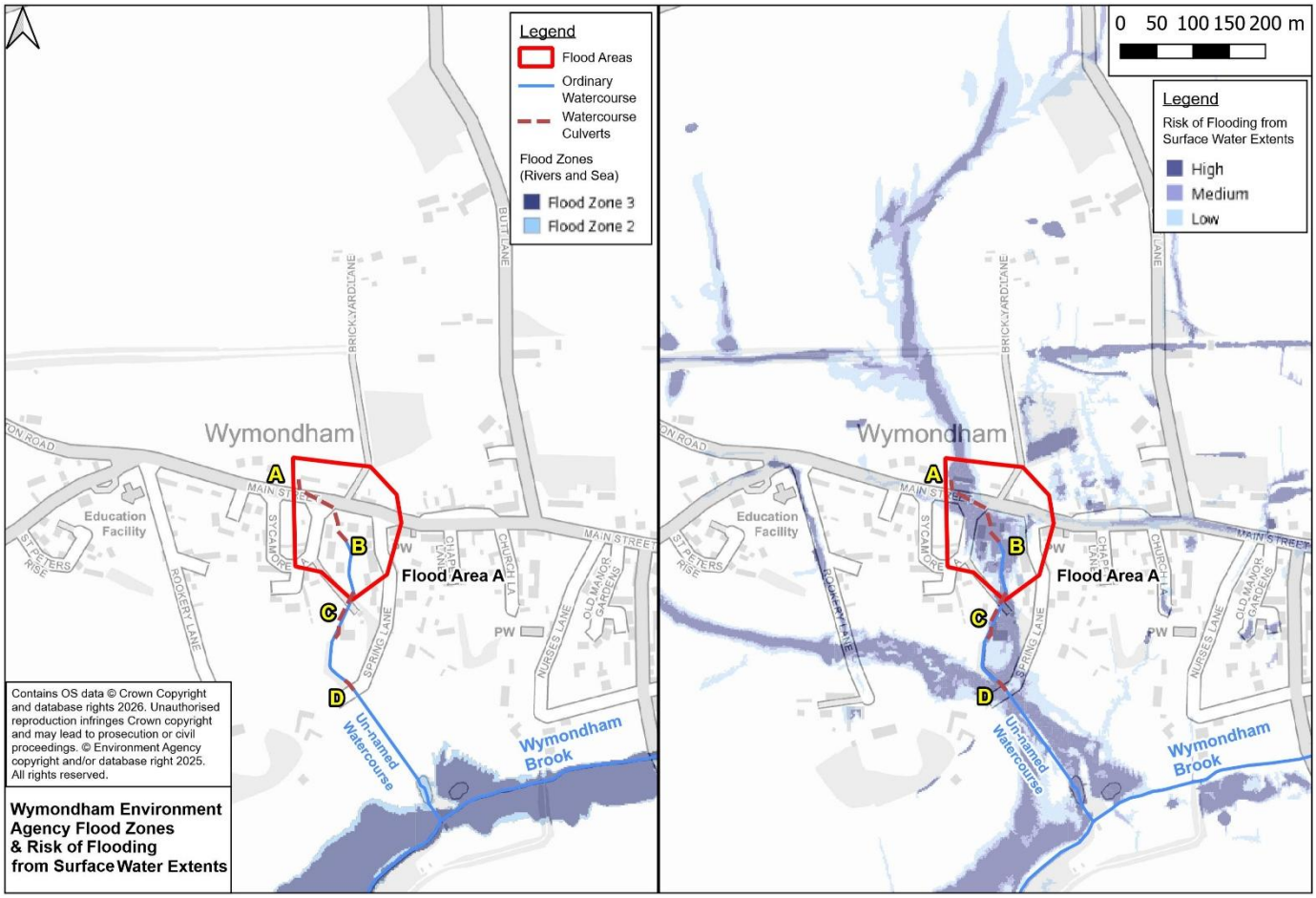


Figure 20-2: Wymondham Flood Map for Planning Flood Zones[3] and Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extents[4] in Flood Area (INSET 6)

20.1.3 FLOOD HISTORY

Leicestershire County Council (LCC), as the Local Highways Authority (LHA), were aware of flooding concerns to the community prior to Storm Henk and, in an attempt to help reduce flooding on the highway, upgraded part of the culverted watercourse located in Main Street in 2018.

20.1.4 HYDROMETRY

There are no known river flow gauges on the relevant watercourses within this catchment.

20.1.5 FLOOD WARNINGS

There are no EA Flood Warning Areas along the Wymondham Brook or covering the Wymondham Flood Area. Wymondham however is covered by an EA Flood Alert which is associated with the river flood risk along the River Wreake and tributaries from Langham to the River Soar at Syston[5]. This Flood Alert covers a large area and is for low lying land and

[3] Environment Agency (2026) Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map. https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map
[4] Environment Agency (2026) Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map. https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map
[5] Environment Agency (2026) River Wreake in Leicestershire Flood Alert Area - River Wreake and tributaries from Langham to the River Soar at Syston. https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/target-area/034WAF404

roads, not property flooding.

20.2 WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY?

WHO OR WHAT WAS AFFECTED?

6 properties reported as internally flooded

At least 3 properties reported as externally flooded

The mechanism of flooding in Wymondham was reported by local residents to be primarily a result of out of bank flows from the unnamed ordinary watercourses north of Main Street. This combined with significant surface water which was running off the fields to the north (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The water flowed onto Main Street towards properties situated at a low point to the field and highway. Water also flowed onto Spring Lane and Sycamore Lane. Water inundated gardens, driveways and eventually properties once depths exceeded building thresholds (see Photograph 20-5 and Photograph 20-6).

Flow within the unnamed ordinary watercourse is generated by surface water running off the steep sided fields into a network of open channel land drainage ditches, which combine and flow into the culvert beneath Main Street (as illustrated in Photograph 20-1 and Photograph 20-2). An abandoned railway line runs to the north of the village. It is likely that drainage associated with this abandoned line also conveys water towards the culvert beneath Main Street, although it is not known to what extent this may contribute during significant rainfall events. It is believed that the sheer volume of water that fell was unable to be conveyed effectively into the culvert and thus forced it to back up and get out of bank towards Main Street. No evidence has been submitted as part of the investigation to suggest that the inlet to the culvert beneath Main Street or the trash screen became fully obstructed by the event. It is possible that some debris was washed down and caught on the trash screen during the event, but it was not fully obstructed. This further suggests the main cause of the flooding was the sheer volume of water which fell and the culvert was unable to cope.

Anecdotal reports were made of water backing up behind an access gate to 19, Main Street during the flood event. The water pooled here and struggled to get away (Photograph 20-5 and Photograph 20-6) breaching thresholds to the front of properties along Main Street. It is therefore likely that this access gate may have slowed the movement of the flood water away from properties.

In addition, reports were received of overwhelmed highway drains and manholes at Main Street and near to Wymondham Drift reporting that the floodwater took a long time to drain away at these locations. Review of STW sewer records in the vicinity of Flood Area A identifies a 150mm diameter combined sewer running eastwards on the south side of Main Street, and one running northwards beneath the northern extent of Sycamore Lane that

connects into this. It is understood that the highway gullies connect into the ordinary watercourse network or a separate highway network.

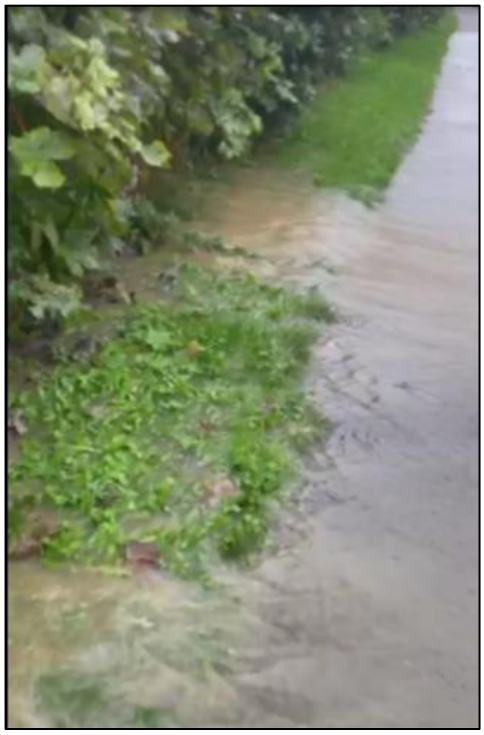
Road drainage networks are typically designed to accommodate limited rainfall events on the contributing area of highway itself, not for any additional volumes of overland flow originating from land adjacent to the highways or overtopping onto them from watercourses, as happened here.

The outfall from the culverted watercourse which runs through the village into Wymondham Brook was likely submerged by high flows within the brook. However, it is not likely that this reduced the rates of discharge away from the Flood Areas during Storm Henk, as there are open channel reaches in between upstream of Spring Lane where there was less restriction and any water backing up could have spilled out and followed lower ground levels.

Photograph 20-1: Open watercourse in the field north of Main Street that flows into a culvert looking northwards

Photograph 20-2: Trash screen and culvert inlet at the field north of Main Street

Photograph 20-3: Condition of open watercourse to the north of Main Street after maintenance



Photograph 20-4: Water running off field north of Main Street on the highway

Photograph 20-5: Water collecting in front of houses in Main Street between Sycamore Lane and Spring Lane

Photograph 20-6: Water collecting in front of houses in Main Street between Sycamore Lane and Spring Lane

Additional properties experienced external flooding further eastwards along Main Street, and external flooding of the highway at Edmonthorpe Road and Wymondham Drift (as depicted in Photograph 20-7) where Wymondham Brook crosses these was reported. As these were external flooding incidents and the source of the floodwater is known, these areas have not been discussed further for the purposes of this report.

Photograph 20-7: Flooding at Wymondham Drift – depth shown on flood gauges

20.3 WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

A number of public meetings have been coordinated with the community to understand what happened and to try to identify actions that may help to mitigate the impacts of future flood risk for the community.

A summary table of the actions undertaken by the relevant RMAs across Leicestershire is provided in Section 2.7 of the main Storm Henk report. A summary table of actions and any relevant next steps specific to Wymondham is provided in Section 20.4.

Whilst the actions from this investigation will help to reduce flood risk, communities should also take steps to be prepared for future flooding, especially with climate change increasing the risk of occurrence. More information about personal and community preparedness can be found in Section 21.8 of the main Storm Henk report.

20.4 WYMONDHAM ACTIONS

The following actions will be monitored by the LCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) through their local coordination role. This action plan is live and will be subject to change as actions are progressed.

Actions taken during and in the immediate aftermaths of the event, such as the closure of roads and set-up of rest centres are not detailed. Further details on RMAs and their roles, and how they work in partnership, can be found in the Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy[6].

20.4.1 SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (0 - 6 MONTHS)

ACTION	ACTION DETAIL	LEAD RMA or ORGANISATION	CURRENT STATUS
Henk Property Flood Resilience Repair Grants	LCC LLFA administered the National Flood Grant for Property Flood Resilience on behalf of DEFRA following Storm Henk. Two applications were received and processed.	LCC LLFA	Complete
Riparian Responsibilities Campaign	Riparian landownership guidance to be issued to landowners including the trash screen on land upstream of culvert beneath Main Street	LCC LLFA	Complete
Highways Asset Maintenance	Various reactive works have been carried out including jetting to gullies and works to Wymondham drift. Watercourse clearance was also undertaken to the outfall of highway network at the bottom of Main Street.	LCC LHA	Complete
Asset Register	The culvert beneath Main Street has been added to the asset register.	LCC LLFA	Complete

[6] Leicestershire County Council (2024) Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy - https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/lead-local-flood-authority/flood-risk-management

ACTION	ACTION DETAIL	LEAD RMA or ORGANISATION	CURRENT STATUS
Flow Depth Gauges	Re-establishment of flood depth gauges at Wymondham Drift.	LCC LLFA	Complete

20.4.2 MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (12 MONTHS+)

ACTION	ACTION DETAIL	LEAD RMA	CURRENT STATUS
Ongoing Scrutiny of Planning Proposals	LCC LLFA to continue to work closely with MBC, within its remit, to ensure any surface water drainage and possible flood mitigation is considered appropriately for any prospective development in the area including proposals to land to the north of Main Street.	MBC LCC LLFA	Ongoing
Capital and Investment Review	LCC LLFA to work with the community to review next steps and funding options for the community including Natural Flood Management in the upper catchment.	LCC LLFA	Ongoing