



HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 16 January 2025

QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

Question asked by a member of the public regarding flooding in Sileby and Cossington in 2024

Please would you be able to update on the specific actions that LCC have taken to reduce flooding on back of the flooding that occurred on 2 January 2024 which effected residents across Leicestershire and specifically Sileby and Cossington

With Leicestershire again being hit with devastating floods on the 6 Jan 2025 what actions are you putting in place so this event doesn't repeat for a third year in a row.

Reply by the Chairman

“As you have alluded to, the County has been significantly impacted by the floods on 6 January, with over 600 properties being internally flooded across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Council is aware that Sileby and Cossington were two of the many communities impacted by this event as they were a year ago during Storm Henk and we fully sympathise with those who have been affected.

Flooding can come from a range of different sources and there are many different responsible bodies, organisations or individuals and flood risk management requires a partnership approach between agencies and the community, as detailed in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management.

In its role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), as the Council did and continues to do following Storm Henk, the Council will collate information from those flooded to aid investigation and understand what happened in more detail. Please report any incidences to the Council's flooding@leics.gov.uk mailbox. As with Storm Henk, and also Storm Babet a few months prior, the high volumes of impacted communities across the County has generated a significant amount of investigative work for the Council's Flood Risk Management team, which will take some time to get through.

As such, there is still investigative work to do following Storm Henk and clearly there will be more following events this month, but actions taken so far include:-

- Seven public drop-in sessions being held throughout Leicestershire, including in Loughborough and County Hall, where all of the responsible agencies were represented to allow any member of the public to discuss any flooding concerns and to also learn how they could become flood ready.
- The assessment of a potential bridge removal at Cygnet Close, Sileby in partnership with the Environment Agency. This will take time including modelling and review of output to ensure that removal does not exacerbate flooding and creates betterment and then identifying and securing funding.
- The identification of works required to a Severn Trent Water sewer in Cossington.
- The administration of the £5,000 Property Flood Resilience Repair Grants on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. Some property owners in Cossington and Sileby have been able to benefit from these grants. There is still time for residents whose properties were flooded during Storms Babet or Henk to apply for this grant at the following link: www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/property-flood-resilience-repair-grant.
- The promotion, recruitment and training of local flood wardens to help promote local resilience.

While there is work to do to understand the impacts and what happened during the latest event in more detail, what the Council is aware of is that there was a prolonged and intense level of rainfall, compounded by snow melt on the already saturated, and also in some places, frozen ground. This led to the highest ever river levels being recorded (Storm Henk being the second highest recorded), which subsequently overwhelmed tributary watercourses and other drainage systems.

Unfortunately, with Sileby and Cossington being in close proximity to the River Soar, both communities will continue to be at risk, particularly during events of that magnitude. Ultimately, it is not possible to guarantee there will not be a repeat event in the next 12 months.

While, in its role as the LLFA, the Council will do everything within its powers and work with other agencies to identify the cause and any potential preventative solutions (as the Council have already have done so, as illustrated above), the stark reality is that there may not be a viable long-term solution that eliminates the risk of flooding for all residents, so the Council encourages residents to 'Be Flood Ready', know their flood risk, and work to make their properties more resilient by installing protection measures".

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/prepare-for-flooding.

**HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 16 JANUARY 2025**

QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

Questions asked by the Stoney Stanton Flood Action Group (SSFAG)

“Regrettably, SSFAG and residents of Mountsorrel Cottages, have been forced to contact the Scrutiny Committee once again following our previous submission of 16 questions on 7th November 2024.

The original reason for submitting the questions to the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee was purely because we were unable to meaningfully engage in discussions with LLFA. Our concerns and frustrations over the last five years had been totally rejected and with the LLFA continuing to be obstructive, submitting questions to the Committee appeared to be the only route that seemed open to us.

We also understood, that the questions and answers would be published on the LCC website which would aid our efforts to have our concerns taken seriously, highlighted and documented. Needless to say, we were shocked to find this was not the case, particularly as 15 of the 16 questions submitted were not answered, forcing us to ask supplementary questions. These were purely reiterations of the original questions submitted. Again, highlighting the many issues we face.

We would now like to raise additional concerns regarding the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee’s procedures;

- (A) Failure to answer 15 questions from 16 original questions.
- (B) The environment was so controlled that despite the fact that the answers to original questions were unrelated, we were not allowed to seek further clarification or ask additional questions to get the answers we sought.
- (C) The LLFA produced an expert who had not visited Boundary Farm recently nor had he observed for himself the current watercourse.
- (D) The transcript of the proceedings are inaccurate as a vitally important point was excluded.

In order to make our position clear we have produced a comprehensive analysis and critique of both the video and minutes of the Highway and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 7th November. This includes both the original and new additional questions for your response at the next Highway and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 16th January 2025.”

Please note: Details of the questions and replies provided to past questions raised, together with the supplementary questions and further responses given at the last meeting, are included in the minutes for that meeting (see minute 26 – Question time) published on the Council’s website (link below). These have not therefore been duplicated here and only the additional information and questions now raised by the SSFAG are set out below. Subheadings detail which question raised at the previous meeting the matter relates to.

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/g7459/Printed%20minutes%20Thursday%202007-Nov-2024%2014.00%20Highways%20and%20Transport%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

Re. Q1 asked by Ms Ann Jackson

“The written reply focuses upon a flood mitigation project based upon the S19 report. Despite its flaws and the lack of information on this water source, which is not acknowledged in the S19 report, is not appropriate to the original question.

The response to the supplementary question asking for more details clearly demonstrates that the original question hadn’t been considered and was bypassed in the written reply. Additional information was given at the drop-in session as requested.

- Why was this request for further information not made in the written response?
- When will this ineffective use of our time and the LLFA’s time and resources be used effectively?
- When will this be investigated and results shared with SSFAG?

The on-site meeting we have repeatedly requested would resolve this matter by allowing us to provide further information, ensure understanding of the situation on the ground.

- Therefore, we would ask again when will this meeting happen and resources be allocated to investigate the source of this water?”

Re. Q2 asked by Mr Phillip Pantling

“[The reply] is false as Victoria Coombes stated at the Scrutiny Committee, (21m14s)”

*“We have raised it **again** with the technical expert about that particular pipe you are taking about and that is being looked at.”* Proving that the issues with this pipe are not only “well known” but have been considered by the technical expert on other occasions.

The new highway gullies do not connect on to this pipe.

During the installation of the 13 New Drains the Highways/outside contractors altered the “overflow pipe” by cutting it to allow it to drain directly into the new drains. As previously stated, when the drains block the water in the pipe backs up resulting in the very issue that it was designed to alleviate”. The issues caused by this is therefore completely down to LCC.

We apologise for our error, due to lack of information, regarding the pipe. We have been made aware that the pipe is actually deeper than we believed. We have since been corrected that the pipe going into the drain/gully is in fact the overflow for the said pipe. Despite this, as previously stated, when the drains block the water in the pipe backs up resulting in the very issue that it was designed to alleviate”.

However, as previously stated this pipe was capped from flowing into the Flood Plain by Bellway contractors which backed up in 2019 contributing significantly to the flood. Clearly as nothing has been done to alleviate the issue, there is still a severe risk of flooding.

During a discussion at the flood drop-in session, regarding the 13 drains and the pipe that goes down the centre of the cottages. Several of the LLFA team concurred with Victoria Coombs that Bellway had done something to the pipe. When asked what specifically was done, we were told that they were not allowed to talk about it! Jamie Needham was explicitly asked; he said he would see if it was possible to let us have the information.

- Why is any information regarding this pipe and other issues so secretive?
- We want to know exactly what Bellway did?
- Can we have full details held by LLFA regarding this pipe?
- Why has this not been rectified?
- Why was this pipe stated as MISALIGNED in the section 19 report? When in fact the pipe was DISCONNECTED and CAPPED!
- Why has this not been addressed/ litigated with Bellway?
- Who is responsible for getting Bellway to resolve this issue?
- What account was taken as to the lack of efficiency of the pipe in the modelling?

[At the meeting it was stated that] ‘the flood mitigation scheme currently being designed **will** take into account **all known issues** found as part of the formal flood investigation and follow up modelling work.’

In other correspondence from Mrs Ann Carruthers she stated, the gullies are on your P1 frequency which is the highest level of intervention and are cleansed every 10 months. According to your records the last cleansing was on 12th August 2024. However, a mere 6 weeks later on 26th September 2024 once again the cottages nearly flooded due to full gullies.

Proof of the ineffectiveness of these drains is evidenced by a photograph from 26th September. Following events of the 26th September two people filed online forms regarding this. Another, person telephoned requesting the drains be cleaned and it took two weeks to respond. When the drain cleaners arrived, they saw parked cars and drove off. This is clearly frustrating for the residents and a waste of LCC's resources

We find extremely alarming and utterly unbelievable that, "Five years" on and the mitigation scheme is "currently" being designed and only using known issues. Yet we believe it will not take account of a number of our concerns.

- Why are the LLFA no further forward five years on?
- Why are our concerns still being rejected?
- WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO BE HEARD!???????"

Re. Q3 asked by Emily Copping

"Precisely, 5 years on and we are no further forward.

- Why is it that after 5 years the LLFA are prepared for us to flood rather than use their statutory powers?
- Why is it that this small section of pipe has not been repaired in 5 years when it is a MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR to flooding?
- How much longer do we have to wait for such a simple operation to be completed?
- What physical inspections have been done since the original investigations?
- Was this blockage/collapse taken into account in the new modelling?
- If so what effect did this show on the results of the modelling?"

Re. Q4 asked by Glen Hout

"We know that this is a Major factor in the flood risk.

- Why was this repair not a main priority?
- Why 5 years on has nothing constructive been done?
- Why is it that legal advice is only being sought now?"

Re. Q5 asked by Neil Brown (SSFAG)

"SSFAG has raised issues on a number of occasions and has now been compelled to bring this question before the scrutiny committee, we would again request a site meeting to share our concerns and knowledge of the situation. It is our belief that the issues can be resolved cheaply and easily by relevant parties."

Re. Q6 asked by Shane Reynolds

- “• Why wasn't the initial response to the question from the Chairman, that there wasn't enough detail? As Ann Jackson's question above.
- A site visit would easily identify the source and who is responsible for it?
- When will an investigation take place?”

Re. Q7 asked by Neil Brown

“This does not answer the question which clearly asked for proof that defects had been addressed and rectified. As with Stressline we are five years on from the flood and three years on from the CCTV survey. When will these issues be followed up on with the riparian owners and action taken if the faults have not been addressed?”

Re. Q8 asked by John Stone

- “• What confidence can we have in any flood modelling or reports provided in future planning applications?
- What faults previously identified have been rectified?”

Re. Q9 asked by Judy Askwith

“These issues have been raised repeatedly in the past and dismissed. We welcome this belated investigation and would again ask for a site meeting to share our knowledge and concerns on this and other issues that cause a threat of flooding and still need resolving five years on from 2019. Has this investigation been undertaken? If so what were the findings and if not when will it be taking place?”

Re. Q10 asked by Chris Askwith

“The answer does not directly address whether the investigation noted in the S19 report has been conducted, a report which you acknowledge was a snapshot that lacked significant information.

- Has the investigation been conducted?
- If so, what were the findings and what corrective actions are being proposed?
- If not, when will this investigation be undertaken?
- How can any mitigation scheme be sufficient without this knowledge?”

Re. Q11 asked by Peggy Hardy

- “• Do these inaccurate and incomplete records invalidate any modelling by Bellway in relation to planning nullify the Planning application/approval
- Did either of the models for, the Section 19 and the superseded report, take into account these inaccurate and incomplete records?”

- What effect did these have on the outcome?
- Did Bellway's professional modelling take this into account at the time?
- What actions are being proposed to mitigate shortcomings from the initial modelling regarding Bellway and when will they be completed?

It appears that the Parish Council have not received any such correspondence, when will it be furnished to them and SSFAG?"

Re. Q12 asked by Samantha Abbott

- “• What action are LCC as riparian owners taking to reduce the amount of water and silt now?
- When will results of the promised investigation, by Mr Jamie Forman, be provided?

Re. Q13 asked by Mrs Elizabeth Perry

“What immediate action will LCC take to reduce the amount of water and silt?

We find it disgusting that the LLFA would produce “an expert” (at taxpayers' expense, brought in from Aberdeen), who after the Scrutiny Committee meeting confirmed that he had not even visited Boundary Farm nor observed this watercourse for himself!

It is also unacceptable that Mr Forman was not present at the Scrutiny Committee meeting to update on his promised investigations. Particularly, as members of the SSFAG previously spent over two hours with him walking around, not only Boundary Farm but the complete area sharing knowledge and information on all our concerns and issues.

The expert, then with total confidence, gave a comprehensive and very impressive but a completely incorrect and inaccurate account of the situation. Including;

Quoting:

- “As I understand it”,
- At the present time this does have a small amount of silt.
- “..... at that point, they are diverted to the neighbouring owner's land.”

In fact, a 600mm pipe is 50% full of silt!

- How can he understand anything?
- How would he know because he hasn't been there to observe it?

This is completely incorrect, in fact an absolute load of rubbish! Due to the topography of the land all of the water from at least the last field goes directly into the above mentioned 600mm pipe and “not” into neighbouring land!

However, even more flabbergasting is that a Local “Flood” Authorities expert would state that “once the water gets to our boundary line it becomes the next riparian owner’s responsibility”!

This appears to be an attempt by LCC to evade responsibility for allowing too much water and silt to enter a watercourse that will flood local properties? A position, which directly contradicts their comments regarding other land owners as follows:

- That Stressline have a legal responsibility for any flooding that occurs on adjacent land, due to any failure in resolving drainage issues on land they have riparian responsibility for.
 - That Victoria Coombes, in a previous meeting, threatened that the LLFA would sue SSFAG, for negligence, if they made any changes that would cause flooding further downstream.
- Why doesn’t the same legal responsibility fall on both LCC and Stressline equally as riparian owners?
 - Why did Jamie Forman not attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting?
 - Why hasn’t he conducted and presented a proper investigation to us, as promised?
 - What are they going to do about it?

Re. Q14 asked by Brett Jackson

“The Committee’s transcript above actually differs from what was actually said at the time. Please see below the actual transcript.

21m14s SSFAG Transcription - We have “raised it again” with the technical expert that’s doing the flood modelling study about “that particular pipe” you are talking about and that is being looked at!!!!!!

21.30s

There are also with regards to the ponds you made reference to, “we are looking at how we can utilise and enhance them as part of a flood scheme..... We can’t and won’t be taking any action against the Local Planning Authorities decision, but we are trying to almost take on board what’s happened and try to see how we can move forward to improve the situation.

Why was the issue of the pipe omitted from the Chairmans response?

This omission proves that the issues with this pipe are not only, “well known” but have been considered by the technical expert on other occasions. Once again, we are shocked that this statement was made five years on!

It is known that any planning application/approval/scheme should not increase the risk of flooding. As we have persistently stated prior to the Bellway development any excess water flowed either directly into the flood plain or via the pipe along the

access between the two sets of cottages under the road and into the field/flood plain. Since the completion of the development the risk of flooding and actual flooding has increased significantly. Not only as the lagoons are ineffective, the raised kerbstones create a barrier, the waste pipe that runs down the access road has been capped and the overflow put into a gully that constantly gets blocked, together with numerous other issues.

We find it shocking that the developers are able to do anything they like after planning has been approved with full immunity. Even more deplorable that the LLFA as a Flood Authority won't take action to prevent us from flooding.

- What proof is there that the developer, Bellway correctly acquired planning permission from the Local Planning Authority?
- What investigations were made as to the accuracy of the modelling done by Bellway's contractors?
- Has anyone taken action against Bellway for exacerbating the flooding on Station Road?
- If not, why?
- Why won't the LLFA take action against Bellway?
- Who is responsible for taking action, LLFA, BDC or another body?

The new highway gullies do not connect on to this pipe.

During the installation of the 13 New Drains the Highways/outside contractors altered the "overflow pipe" by cutting it to allow it to drain directly into the new drains. As previously stated, when the drains block the water in the pipe backs up resulting in the very issue that it was designed to alleviate. The issues caused by this is therefore completely down to LCC.

We apologise for our error, due to lack of information, regarding the pipe. We have been made aware that the pipe is actually deeper than we believed. We have since been corrected that the pipe going into the drain/gully is in fact the overflow for the said pipe. As previously stated, when the drains block the water in the pipe backs up resulting in the very issue that it was designed to alleviate.

However, as previously stated this pipe was capped from flowing into the Flood Plain by Bellway contractors which backed up in 2019 contributing significantly to the flood. Clearly, as nothing has been done, to alleviate the issue, there is still a severe risk of flooding.

Furthermore, we have become aware that our suspicions regarding the legality of actions taken by Bellway during construction of Godfrey Close have foundation and that the LLFA are aware of them.

During a discussion, at the flood drop-in session, regarding the 13 new drains and the pipe that goes down the centre of the cottages, several of the LLFA team concurred with Victora Coombs that it had been raised with the technical expert.

They admitted that Bellway had done something to the pipe. When asked what specifically was done, we were told that they were not allowed to talk about it!

Jamie Needham was explicitly asked; he said he would see if it was possible to let us have the information regarding the issues with the pipe. It is abundantly clear to us that if installation of the 13 new drains was an attempt to rectify the issues that Bellway caused, it has not been successful. We would like to receive full transparency on this matter and engagement with the LLFA so it can be resolved.

- Why was this pipe stated as MISALIGNED in the section 19 report?
When in fact the pipe was DISCONNECTED and CAPPED!
- We want to know exactly what Bellway did?
- Can we have full details regarding this pipe?
- Why has this not been rectified?
- Why has this not been addressed/ litigated with Bellway?
- Who is responsible for getting Bellway to resolve this issue?
- What account was taken as to the lack of efficiency of the pipe in the modelling?

Re. Q 15 asked by Claire Shenton

“Investigations by the Council’s Property Services on the Council’s tenanted property, Boundary Farm, and the effects of water flows and ditch management have not identified any specific solutions which would impact on flood events at Station Road which have not already been identified by the LLFA.”

“No new survey investigations have been undertaken, however the LLFA has previously undertaken extensive survey work in the area and has developed a flood alleviation project for the area involving the provision of attenuation and other measures on land forming part of Boundary Farm. The requisite land has been set aside for this purpose It is not intended that the Council’s Property Services (or tenant) undertakes any other works other than routine maintenance prior to the outcome of the bid for National Flood Funding.”

These two statements by the Chairman, completely contradict each other. One says, “Investigations by the Council’s Property Servicesnot already been identified by the LLFA”. Whereas the other states, “No new survey investigations have been undertaken”!

- Have investigations been carried out or not?
- Jamie Foreman assured members of the SSFAG that he would undertake investigations, did he or not?

We find it shocking/disgusting appalling/ outrageous/ disgraceful/ alarming/ flabbergasting / that the LLFA would produce “an expert” (at tax payers expense was brought in from Aberdeen), who had not even visited Boundary Farm nor

observed this watercourse for himself. Then with total confidence, gave an impressive but a complete incorrect/ inaccurate account of the situation. Including,

- Quoting “as I understand it”, How can he understand anything?
- present time this does have a small amount of silt. In fact a 600mm pipe is 50% full of silt! But he wouldn’t know because he hasn’t been there and seen it!
- at that point, they are diverted to the neighbouring owner’s land. This is completely wrong. Due to the topography of the land all of the water from the last field goes into the above mentioned 600mm pipe!

However, even more appalling is that a Local Authority would state that; “once the water gets to the headwall on our boundary line it becomes the next riparian owner’s responsibility”. How can LCC have the audacity to say such a thing and accept no responsibility for allowing too much water to enter a watercourse that will flood local properties!

Ridicules way of looking at it. Where was/ is Jamie Foreman? Why hasn’t he conducted and presented a proper investigation to us, as promised.?

- Why haven’t these been actioned when it is known that it is a risk factor of Station Road flooding?
- Are these measures for the alleviation of flooding now or as a factor for the proposed new development
- What immediate action will LCC take to reduce the amount of water and silt.
- Has the layout of the drainage on the farm been changed? If so what impact has this on drainage and the flood mitigation plans?
- Mr Forman has not responded to numerous requests for an update, are the investigations complete and when can we expect a response and action plan?”

Re. Q16 asked by Diane Pantling

- “• These gullies as far as residents are aware only take water falling directly onto the public highways. However, they are ineffective.
- Will the Highways authorities investigate and survey these gullies to establish the cause of them being ineffectual?”

Re. Q17 asked by Susan Dolby

“Please provide evidence of how and when you engaged directly with the relevant landowners? Five years on from 2019 as with Stressline has there been follow up on whether these riparian owners have complied and what enforcement actions have been taken?”

Reply by the Chairman

In relation to the questions A to D in the covering letter received from the SSFAG:

A – All questions raised at the previous meeting were responded as detailed in the minutes of that meeting.

B – The process for dealing with questions at a Council meeting are prescribed within the Council's Constitution and supporting procedures and the Chairman, whilst exercising some discretion, followed the Council's usual processes.

C – See below.

D – Whilst replies to supplementary questions raised in a meeting are not captured as a verbatim record, on this particular issue the Chairman has agreed to include specific reference to the pipe being referred to in the supplementary question raised by Mr Brett Jackson (Q14).

In relation to all other questions raised:

There was significant flooding across Leicestershire last week and officers have needed to respond to this current emergency and co-ordinate the recovery response as an urgent priority. Due to this and taken together with the exceptional number of questions submitted, I have agreed with officers that, regrettably, we will not be in a position to provide responses to the above questions at the meeting on 16th January.

Officers were already working to update you in relation to work in Stoney Stanton and so attached is an overall position statement regarding the ongoing situation in Stoney Stanton. Officers will endeavour to answer any individual questions which are not specifically addressed by this position statement in writing in six weeks, where possible. The written responses will also be shared with Committee members and published with the minutes of the meeting.

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Position Statement December 2024: Flooding at Stoney Stanton

Statutory Duty of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

The statutory duty placed on an LLFA when flooding occurs, and the threshold to be met to trigger a formal flood investigation, have been published online at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

The role of the LLFA is to coordinate the management of local flood risk. The LLFA has five key statutory functions as follows:

1. Maintaining and applying the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
2. Investigating significant flooding incidences which trigger a locally agreed threshold.
3. Maintaining a register of structures and features which are likely to have a significant effect on flood risk in their area.
4. Being a statutory consultee for the planning process; to be consulted on major development with surface water drainage matters.
5. Leading consent body for works affecting ordinary watercourses.

More details regarding the role of the LLFA can be found by viewing the County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy online at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

LLFAs **do not** have a statutory duty to resolve flooding, nor do they have a direct budget to carry out any works relating to flood mitigation. The LLFA's duty is to investigate when certain thresholds have been met and to identify the responsible parties that have a role in addressing the issues. More details can be found by viewing the Leicestershire Formal Flood Investigation Policy online at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

However, it is important to note that the County Council is committed to delivering projects where possible by obtaining funding from external sources such as national flood funding from the Environment Agency (EA) in the form of Local Levy or Grant in Aid and the County Council is committed to delivering a project in Stoney Stanton.

The County Council does not have a ringfenced capital budget for flood alleviation projects and relies on external funding to facilitate flood risk management project delivery. Such projects are also not a statutory function of the LLFA.

Background

Stoney Stanton suffered significant internal flooding in October 2019 to multiple parts of the village. Upon receiving reports of flooding in October 2019, the County Council

in its role of the LLFA, brought together all Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to better understand what happened and identify responsible bodies.

Multi-agency meetings were coordinated by the LLFA after the 2019 flooding and attended by all RMAs. The local flood action group was also invited to attend some of the meetings to facilitate a transparent approach of actions and discussion items between RMAs. Updates were provided to the local flood action group and the Parish Council.

A formal flood investigation

The October 2019 flooding triggered a formal flood investigation, and the report of this investigation was published in April 2021. All RMAs were involved in the creation of this report as was the flood action group who provided photographic evidence and real time accounts of what happened. For more information, please refer to the formal investigation report which can be found at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

A conclusion of the formal flood investigation was that the understanding of the local drainage infrastructure was limited. A number of actions were identified within the formal investigation, and it was proposed that an integrated flood modelling study was undertaken to assess flood risk from all sources in order to gain a greater understanding of the nature and mechanisms of flooding in Stoney Stanton. It was also proposed that detailed surveys of drainage infrastructure were undertaken to inform this modelling study.

The formal investigation report is intended to act as a snap shot summary of the position at the time and is based on the best available data at the time. The County Council makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the report but occasionally, inaccuracies may occur and therefore, the report should not be used as a definitive assessment of all factors.

Highway drainage

The County Council as Local Highways Authority is responsible for maintaining drainage infrastructure which is there to manage water that falls directly onto the highway only. Highway drainage is not designed to cope with extreme rainfall events and is not designed to take third-party water such as surface water runoff from adjacent land.

Following the formal flood investigation, and recognising the identified constraints of the drainage network at the junction of Station Road and the Foxbank Industrial Estate, the County Council invested £90,000 on the implementation of a drainage scheme to direct highway water in the opposite direction to the west of the village and away from the affected properties.

Flood model and optioneering

Following a detailed administration process, the County Council secured national flood funding from the EA (the body who governs and administers national flood funding) to undertake the detailed drainage surveys and build a detailed flood model. Evidence was supplied and used by the local flood action group to quality assess the model and sense check the output compared to what happened in October 2019. The flood model included the updated highway drainage design, and a range of potential flood mitigation options were then tested.

Monthly updates were provided to the EA on the progress of the flood model and a cost-proportionate potential solution was worked up that helped to mitigate flooding.

The proposed cost-effective option was subsequently presented to the community via a public meeting in December 2021 and no negative feedback was received. The option included:

- Re-routing of the minor tributary stream (currently culverted/ artificial) which presently flows to the rear of Mountsorrel Cottages on Station Road into an adjacent agricultural field (*this would benefit Station Road properties but not those elsewhere*);
- Provision of floodplain storage through habitat creation (*this would benefit all properties*);
- Replacement of sub-standard trash screens at Fox Bank Industrial Estate and Meadow Close (*this would benefit properties downstream of Meadow Close*);
- A retrofitted sustainable drainage scheme at Manorfield Church of England Primary School (*this would benefit the school and reduce inflows to the sewer network*);
- Highway works at Station Road to improve conveyance of excess surface water and direct it away from properties (*benefitting Mountsorrel Cottages*); and
- Provision of a water level gauge to enable proactive community level response, inform screen maintenance and provide long-term gauging to aid future flood risk reductions in the upper catchment (natural flood management).

Outline Business Case for a flood alleviation scheme

Following the public presentation of options, the County Council began the detailed administration process to work up a viable bid for funding to deliver the detailed design and construction of a flood scheme for the community. This process is known as the Outline Business Case (OBC) stage, and it required extensive expenditure of team resources on the following:

- Exploration of all possible sources of partnership funding.
- Detailed administrative forms.
- Regular discussions and updates to the EA.
- Detailed and extensive discussion with landowners.

- Detailed legal discussions which required external legal counsel advice.
- Detailed optioneering and extensive economic analysis in line with the HM Treasury's Green Book and the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management manual for flood risk management to ensure that what is proposed represents good value for money.
- A detailed bid for funding from the Department of Education for the Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) for school element of the project which forms a crucial part of the overall partnership funding score of the project.
- Presentation of funding bid requests to the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.
- The creation of the OBC report which was in line with the Treasury's Green Book.

The OBC was then discussed internally via the County Council's project management processes for approval and submitted to the EA on 26th November 2024 for its final consideration and approval. The County Council is awaiting a formal decision on this submission, which will be confirmed by the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee after its meeting on 24 January 2025. It is at these meetings where financial decisions are made.

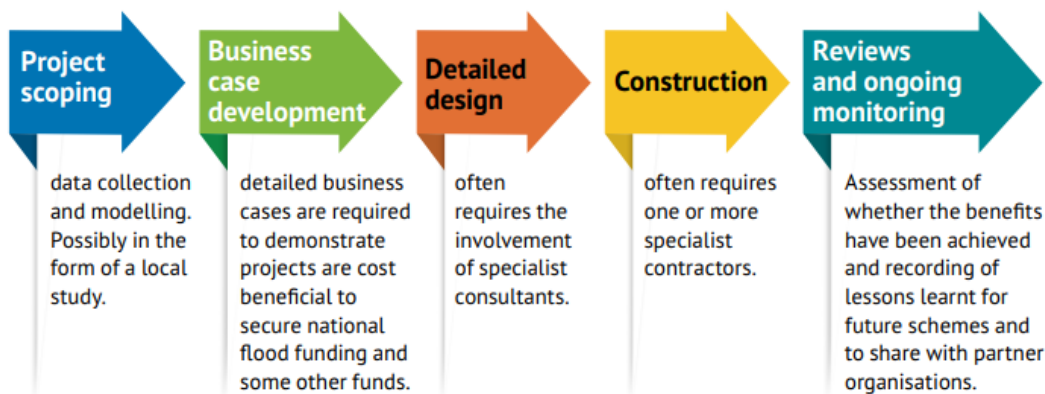
It has taken five years to achieve OBC status and reasons for this delay are explained above. In addition to them, in the time since the 2019 flood event, a number of significant flood events have devastated parts of the County including in February 2020, January 2021, June 2023, October 2023 (Storm Babet) and January 2024 (Storm Henk). Since October 2019, there have been 20 formal flood investigations triggered which has absorbed a significant staff resource and diverted it away from project delivery (which is a non-statutory function of the LLFA).

The County Council expects to receive approval for the OBC following extensive engagement and iterative review with the EA during the creation of the OBC.

Next steps for the flood alleviation scheme

Project delivery can be complex and resource intensive and can end at any point if it becomes unviable such as the cost becomes so high that it outweighs the benefits of implementing it. More details about how projects are designed, delivered and funded can be found by viewing the County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy online at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-management>.

Upon approval of the OBC, the County Council will start the detailed design of the final option and then construction as soon as possible. It is currently estimated that subject to no significant issues, the project will be completed by March 2028. Again, this process is anticipated to take a significant amount of time accounting for further landownership negotiation, tendering of works, construction time etc.



The current total project cost is estimated to be £994,000.

The project management of the detailed design and construction of the project is resource intensive and will require the County Council to:

- Provide monthly updates to the EA.
- Submit any necessary paperwork linked to any exceptions through the project management process.
- Provide monthly updates via the County Council's internal project management board.
- Provide monthly capital updates on project progress via the County Council's capital monitoring process.
- Liaise between landowners and secure agreements to complete the work.

Further flood events and flood preparedness

Since the flooding in 2019, the LLFA, and the technical consultants appointed to do the detailed surveys and flood model, have been on site to Stoney Stanton on multiple occasions and met with representatives from the local flood action group, the Parish Council, the local school, affected members of the community, other RMAs.

The County Council is aware of further flood events to the community since the 2019 flood event and sympathises with those affected. This information has been logged and shared with the technical consultant who is building the flood model and also the EA in support of the OBC submission.

The County Council will only attend further site visits where it is necessary such as when new data or concerns have come to light or data capture is required and where resources allow. The County Council cannot commit to attending site to each report of flooding and prioritises site visits to communities that were not previously known to the County Council.

Anyone affected by flooding is encouraged to be "Flood Ready" and do what they can to protect themselves from flooding. The County Council therefore strongly encourages residents to think about what they can do to be prepared if flooding should happen again before any flood scheme can be delivered. This is the exact

approach residents in other parts of the County are taking who have similarly been affected by flooding.

The County Council has hosted a number of public drop-in events across the County, including two events held specifically in the Blaby District area. These sessions were arranged to encourage communities to learn how they can become prepared for future flood events. It also provided affected residents and/or businesses the opportunity to speak directly with the responsible agencies and hear first-hand what is being done in their community. The County Council is looking to arrange further sessions in the future.

In addition to the public drop-in events, the Resilience Partnership with Local Resilience Forum partner agencies have developed a scheme for recruiting local flood wardens. This scheme involves providing training and resources to help wardens support local communities in a flooding emergency and help communities be prepared for flooding. Anyone who is interested in becoming a flood warden can email the Resilience Partnership at llrprepared@leics.gov.uk.

The County Council is aware of a number of sections of watercourse which are in land owned by a third party. To date, the County Council has engaged with various landowners raising awareness of riparian responsibilities. The County Council is aware of an obstruction along a section of culverted watercourse adjacent to the Foxbank Industrial Estate. This culvert is privately owned and the owner has been made aware of their responsibilities to resolve the obstruction. Any flooding that can be directly linked to this obstruction can be linked back to the responsibility of this landowner. The County Council remains committed to work with this landowner to resolve the issue in line with the Leicestershire Ordinary Watercourse Regulation and Culvert Policy.

Highway gullies in Stoney Stanton are on the County Council's Priority (P)1 frequency which is the highest level of intervention and are cleansed every 10 months. Since April 2021, the gullies on Station Road have been attended to on the following dates: 16/04/21, 17/01/22, 16/01/23, 13/10/23, 12/08/24. If during the intervening periods residents notice a problem with gullies, then this can be reported to the County Council via its Customer Service Centre. Cleansing gullies periodically can never be taken as a guarantee that problems will not arise between visits and therefore, members of the public are encouraged to report any concerns to the County Council directly.