



# Environment

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## **9 Wet Spots 2015** **Where are we after 6 years ?**

### **Drainage report 05**

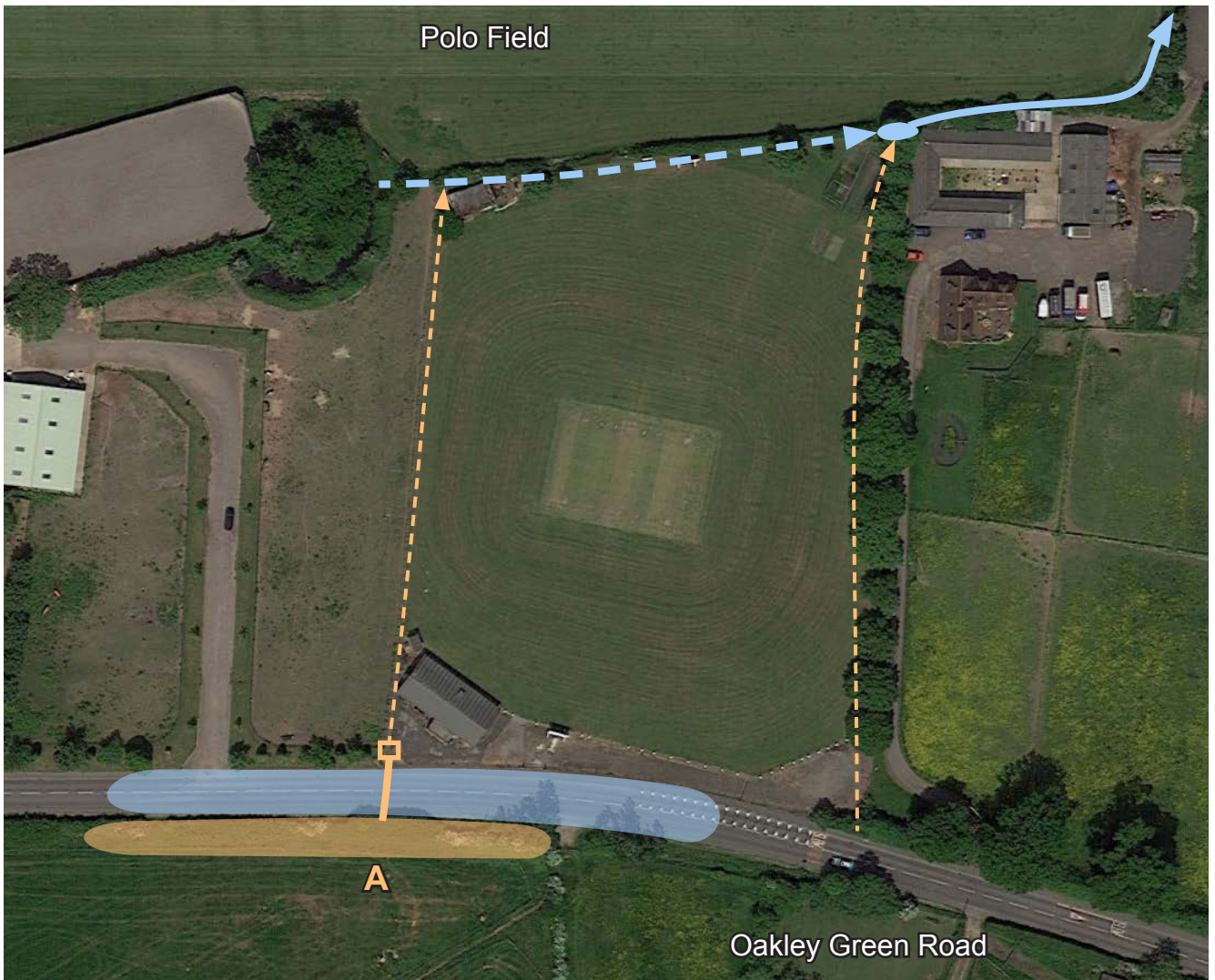
19.09.2015

The summaries on page 2 are expanded on subsequent pages with explanatory diagrams.



## 9 “Wet Spots” - the state of play in September 2015

- 1 Cricket Ground - Oakley Green Road** - page 3  
 Some improvement but no satisfactory solution until capacity of culvert and chamber at SW corner of site and pipes northward along boundaries increased and-or sump holding capacity south of road increased.
- 2 Area of speed hump and Fifeild Road (north)** - page 4  
 Ditch re-instated but needs regular pressure for annual clearing. Sub-footway pipes and culverts north of Wayside Stables repaired. East-west flowing culvert north of Longlea Home blocked as trial.
- 3 Braywood Lodge - Oakley Green Road** - page 5  
 Volunteers cleared ditches and Streetcare jetted roadside pipes. Resident reports problem recurs. After observing next event may need to recommend land drainage pipe installation.
- 4 Coningsby Lane shambles** - page 6  
 Some minor temporary work to clear ditch and improve roadside parking courtesy of local farmer. Streetcare avoiding proposed action due to resident's objection. Requires Streetcare commitment.
- 5 Oakley Green House and Forest Farm area - Oakley Green Road** - page 7  
 Streetcare partially carried out OGAFCA recommendations. 2 new gullies installed in gate opening feeding into sub-footway pipe. Residents report there has been no recurrence of this flooding problem.
- 6 Ledger Farm - Coningsby Lane (south) and Forest Green Road** - page 8  
 No progress. Sadly any improvement in capacity and flow at this site would result in increased problems at “Wet Spot” 8. Best short term hope for improvement probably working with landowner (Phil Mortimer ?) to substantially increase sump holding capacity south of Forest Green Road.
- 7 Fifeild Inn and Fifeild Road (south)** - page 9  
 New roadside pipe and gullies installed and culverts jetted to re-instate route via chamber under pavement at corner of Garden Cottage eastwards past polo pitch. Landowner promised to clear ditch in autumn-winter 2014 but this has still not been done. This may cause problems and needs monitoring.
- 8 Culvert under road at Willow Creek - Fifeild Road** - page 10  
 Difficult to see what can be done here. Capacity of double culvert cannot be increased due to limitations of route it feeds into on east of road. Maybe best practical and financially possible proposal to develop in cooperation with landowners more substantial sump holding areas along route before flow arrives here.
- 9 Cardinal & Hand Clinics - Oakley Green Road & Dedworth Road** - page 11  
 Too much water from under Dedworth Road onto private land. Route through site substantial but not able to handle extremes. Only reasonable possibility may be to divert excess water away from vulnerable buildings via new route through undeveloped land on site creating more sump holding capacity.



## 1 Cricket Ground - Oakley Green Road

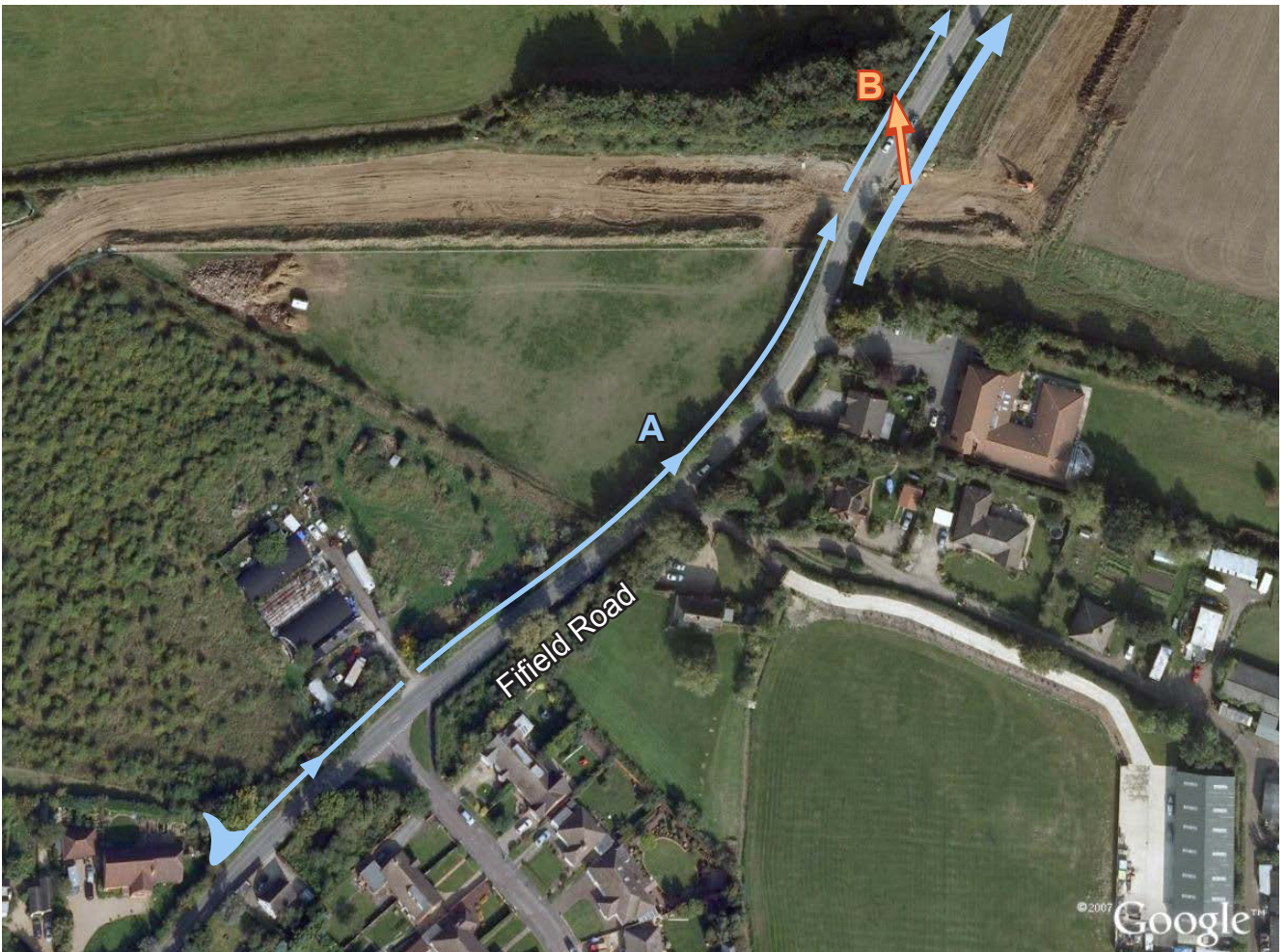
Some early improvement was achieved here when in 2009 an old bucket was cleared from the manhole chamber on the south side of the Oakley Green Road. We thought this was an early success and for a while it seemed to be. But recently the flooding seems to be becoming more frequent again.

We asked Streetcare to investigate further as the Cricket Club were reporting increasing problems also. We need to investigate with landowners the possibility of introducing a sump or pond area to try and hold back excess water at times of heavy rainfall. Consequently we have returned this wet spot to Amber status.

Streetcare have confirmed that the culverts crossing Oakley Green Road in the vicinity of the cricket club have again been checked and cleaned. A site meeting took place on Tuesday July 15 2014. The pitch and nets get flooded in the winter and the Oakley Green Road frequently floods along their stretch.

We believe the root cause of the road flooding is an inadequate capacity in culvert and chamber at their south west corner and the underground pipe heading north from there along their western boundary. Until such time as the capacity of this route is increased we do not expect to see any improvement.

We understand Streetcare has now been considering our earlier suggestions of delaying the arrival of water flowing off the drift road ridge towards this point and increasing the holding capacity of the ditch and ground on the southern side of the road at (A). We await their proposals with interest.



## 2 Speed hump and Fifield Road (north)

A protracted saga of official delays, obstruction by utilities companies, and the deployment of OGAFCA volunteers on 2 occasions. In February 2014 Streetcare contractors finally cleared the ditch at **(A)** on the west side of Fifield Road.

While work was in progress it was noticeable that a culvert just north of Longlea at **(B)** was delivering water from the large eastern ditch into the smaller western stretch. Streetcare said it had been assumed to flow in the opposite direction. The subsequent large volume of water in the smaller capacity western ditch caused a problem further north when entering a pipe just north of Wayside Stables. We requested that the culvert be disabled as the large ditch seems well able to handle whatever flow arrives at that point. Streetcare confirmed that the stoppers they ordered have been installed as a trial.

Wet spot 2 was expanded to include newly reported problems further north on Fifield Road highlighted by re-establishing the flow at the speed bump. On May 7 2014 a site meeting on Fifield Road at the northern boundary of Wayside Stables included Cllr Burbage, Cllr Coppinger, Simon Lavin of Streetcare, the Residents of the nearby property that had been threatened in the recent heavy rain, Grenville Annetts of OGAFCA and the Environment Work Group drainage volunteer. Subsequently Streetcare investigated pipework running north from that point and discovered an area of suspected damaged pipework on the west side of Fifield Road north of Deeds House. They requested plans for underground utilities so that an order could be raised for the necessary excavation and repair. This work was carried out and the two culverts crossing the road in the vicinity of Deeds House were jetted and found to be clear.

We have therefore tentatively returned this wet spot to green status.



### 3 Braywood Lodge - Oakley Green Road

In 2011 volunteers cleared the ditches at (A) and Streetcare arranged jetting of pipes under the roadside verge at (B).

As far as we were able to tell this improved the situation and we thought we were safe to give a tick to this “wet spot”.

Unfortunately the resident informed us at an open meeting in February 2014 that the problem is not resolved and that there had once more been a lot of water on the driveway. So this “wet spot” was returned to Amber status.

Streetcare promised that the pipework running parallel with the road in the vicinity of Braywood Lodge would again be checked and cleaned. This is unlikely to remove the problem completely so at the next heavy rainfall event the site should be monitored and it may be necessary to recommend land drainage piping at (C).



#### 4 Coningsby Lane shambles

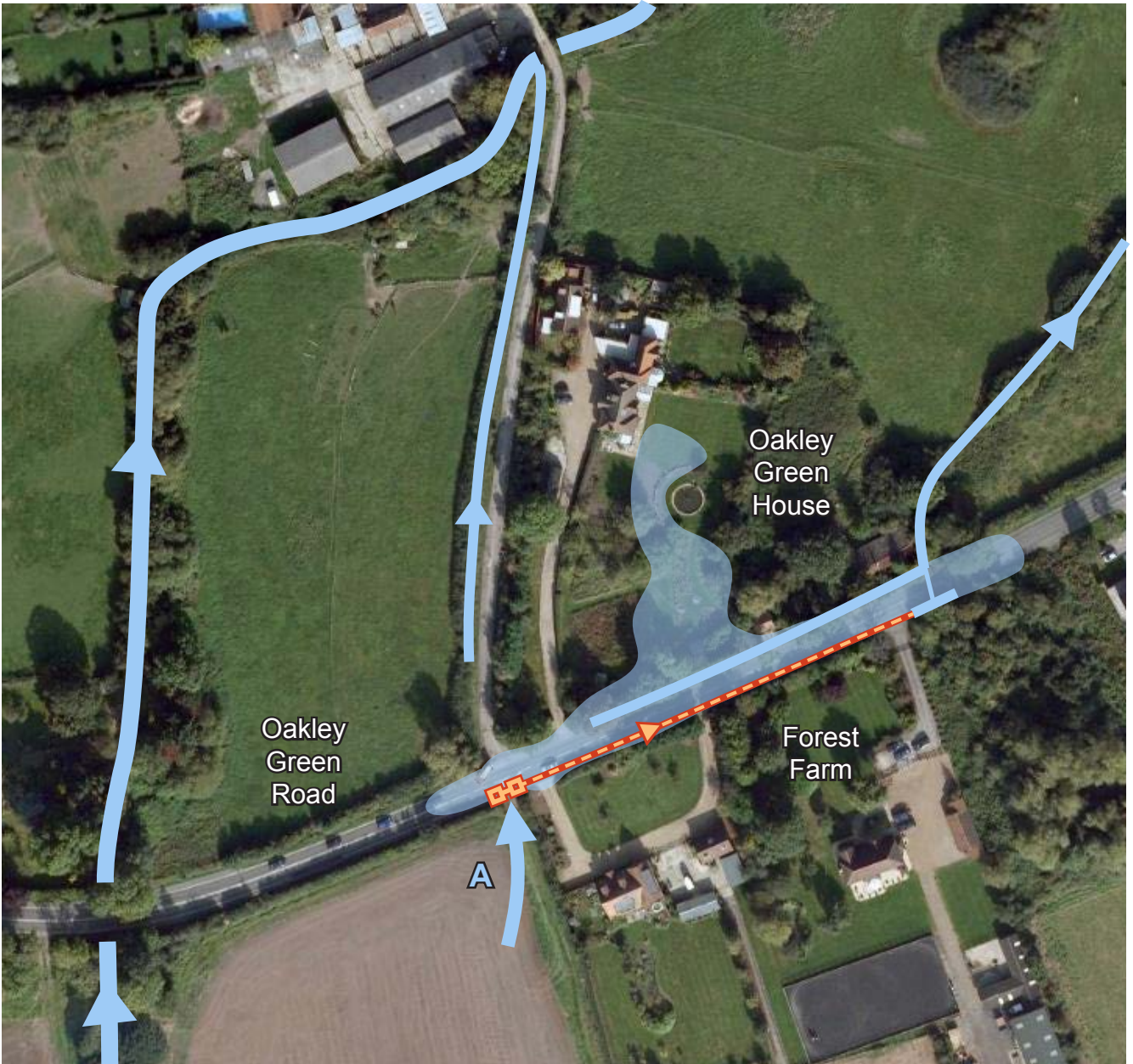
Water flows eastward along the ditches on either side of Coningsby Lane. The ditch on the southern side of the Lane can only escape via a 6 inch pipe (A) into the grounds of Willow Creek to join water coming from the south to the culvert under the Fifield Road. In times of extreme weather this pipe can no longer handle the volume of water and the ditch backs up. Even The manhole cover (B) that allows this route to be inspected and cleared has recently been covered over by a new driveway.

On the northern side of the Lane the installation of a new driveway without a culvert when the Mulberries was built interrupted the flow along a ditch running north (C). This ditch has long since become silted up and overgrown. A ditch that used to run north along the eastern boundary of The Mulberries (D) to drain into the eastward flowing ditch (E) was piped and covered over many years ago and no longer appears to function at all.

So with only a single 6 inch escape route southward from this watery cul-de-sac there is an inevitable back-up that eventually forms the familiar frequent lake at the junction with the Fifield Road (F).

The most obvious improvement would be to re-instate the now defunct ditch (C) but for the last 15 years the historical existence of this route has been disputed by a local resident who objects to both the re-instatement of this original ditch and the clearance of the pipe (D). Although it is quite obvious that this ditch once existed and can be vouched for by residents from before the late 1980s Streetcare are reluctant to take action as long as a resident objects.

An alternative plan might be to install a culvert to a chamber and a pipe running north (F) down the centre of the footpath to another chamber and feeding from there into the ditch (E). This would bypass the security concerns and be far simpler to install. But whatever is to be done requires approval, cooperation, and commitment from Streetcare.

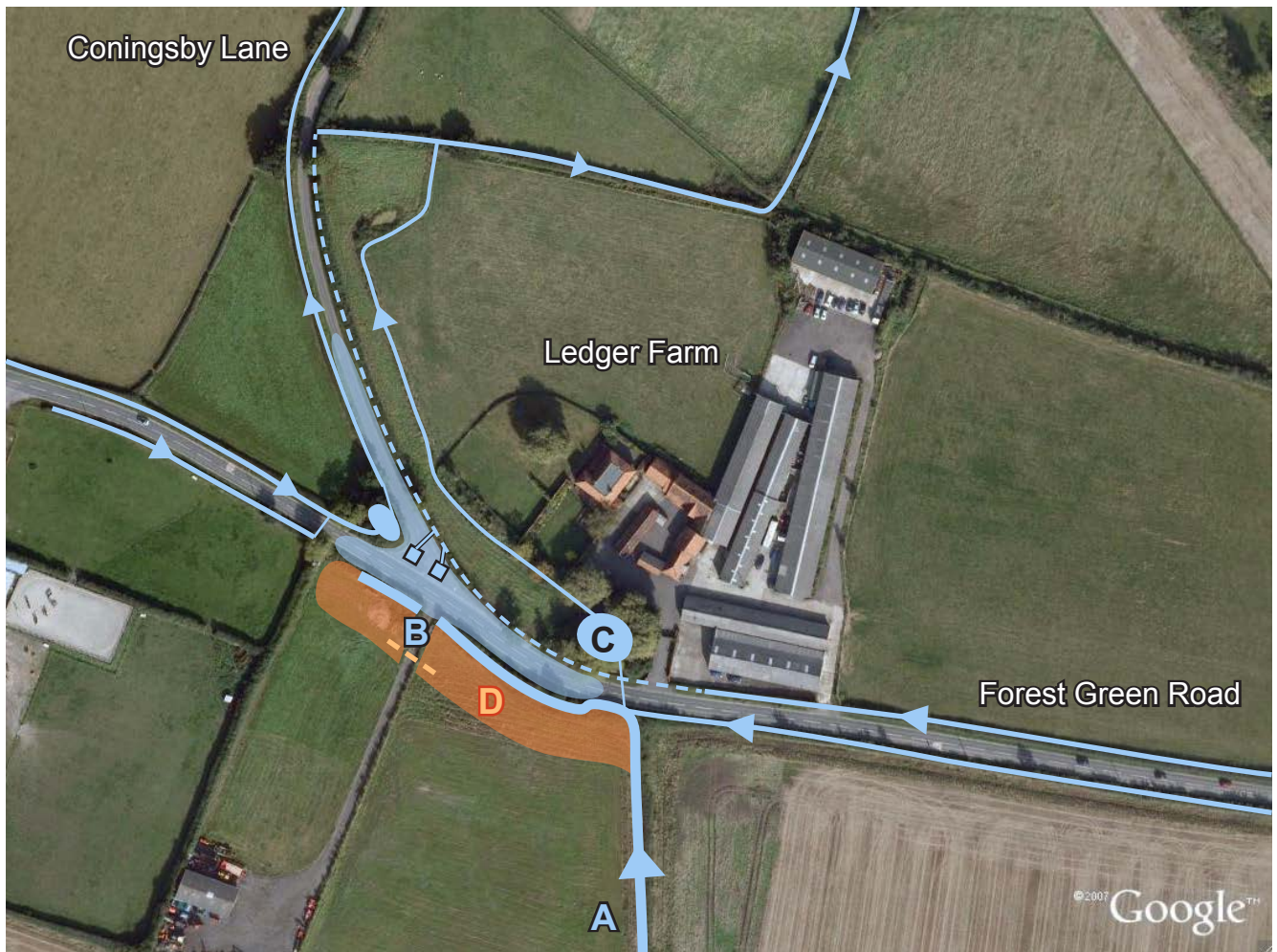


### 5 Oakley Green House and Forest Farm area - Oakley Green Road

Large amounts of water flowing out of the field gateway (A) used to cause the road east of this point to flood.

Streetcare carried out a reduced version of our recommendations and installed an extra 2 gullies in the gate entrance. This appears to have improved the situation and residents report that there has been no recurrence.

So until we hear otherwise this “wet spot” has been given green status.



## 6 Ledger Farm - Coningsby Lane (south) and Forest Green Road

Water coming down **(A)** off the high ground of the Drift Road collects on either side of an entrance **(B)** on the south side of the Forest Green Road. When the valve for the pipe under the road into the pond at Ledger Farm **(C)** is closed water can only proceed northward by spilling out across Forest Green Road and down Coningsby Lane.

We have been unable to achieve anything here yet. Suggestions made in our original report are unlikely to find Local Government funding, at least not in the short term.

Perhaps the best that can be attempted in the short term is to encourage the landowner (Philip Mortimer ?) to agree to accept much more of a sump area **(D)** on the south side of the road so as to delay the progress of large quantities of water for a little longer.

This would also have the beneficial effect of reducing the flow of water arriving at the north of Fifield in the front garden of Willow Creek (which used to be a pond) and trying to get under the road at the culvert there (which used to be a road bridge) to flow round the back of what was the old Chapel.





## 7 The Fifield Inn - Fifield Road (south)

In 2001, 2003-2004, and again on Saturday 4 January 2014 flooding at **A** forced residents to barricade their properties and deploy pumps. OGAFCA then made this the priority location as the most residents and properties were threatened. A site meeting on March 27 2015 led to a Streetcare investigation and within an hour a Streetcare team were clearing and jetting drains and gullies along this stretch. Contrary to expectations the gullies on the west side of the road did not extend away from the road at all but merely lead into the ditch, which was virtually non-existent anyway.

Streetcare's investigations led them to a decision to pipe the whole length from **B** to the chamber at **C** and renew roadside gullies and curbs. However, they said that the outflow from the chamber (**C**) flowing eastward beside the boundary of Garden Cottage along ditch **E** towards the Polo pitch needed to be cleaned out or the system would still back up. We wrote to the Landowner and a site meeting took place on Thursday July 17 2014. The landowner, Mr Bennett, met with us and Streetcare on site and agreed to clear the ditch.

At the end of October 2014 Streetcare carried out work and the new gullies now feed into this new pipe and from there under the road to the chamber. The contractors reported that the ditch towards the polo pitch still needed to be cleaned out or water would back up in the new pipe. Streetcare contacted the landowner again who promised to carry out the necessary maintenance. Unfortunately as far as we are aware this work has still not yet been done but this location has a GREEN status until wet weather shows if it is still deficient.



## 8 Culvert under road at Willow Creek - Fifield Road

Several drainage routes converge at a double culvert under the Fifield Road turning what is normally a stream through the front garden of *Willow Creek* into a large pond (A) in times of heavy rainfall. 60 years ago or more this really was a full time pond and there was a small road bridge allowing a substantial northward outflow (B).

At times of heavy rainfall this pinch point causes major flooding and as yet we have managed to achieve absolutely nothing that might improve the situation.

In fact it is very difficult to see how the onward flow from this point could be expanded to reduce the back-up. The route from what used to be the pond under the road via the culvert that used to be a road bridge and then the constrained channel behind the old chapel and the Old Cottage to the culvert under Manor Grove and onwards cannot realistically be usefully expanded.

The most obvious improvement to the onward flow of water for the whole area would be the installation of a major storm drain under the entire length of Fifield Road and on under the A308. But given the constraints of local government budgets this is clearly a fantasy.

When the rain stops and levels begin to drop excess water now clears pretty speedily, much more quickly than it ever used to. Probably the most practical approach is to investigate the possibility of delaying the arrival of all this water and spreading the flow over a longer period of time at a slower pace. This of course will in time require discussions with various landowners and we can hardly expect them to be keen on the idea of donating land to become a sump. It will also be necessary to consider how funding might be raised for this sort of work as it looks increasingly unlikely to be provided by local government.



## 9 Cardinal & Hand Clinics - Oakley Green Road & Dedworth Road

From the relative high ground of Tarbay Lane water heads north towards the Thames taking various routes through the dwellings south of the Dedworth Road. Once it reaches Dedworth Road there is really no sensible onward route and it gushes into the car park of the Greene Oak and out from under the road into the grounds of The Cardinal Clinic (A) where the existing fairly substantial route through the site is often overwhelmed.

This is the most difficult of all the “wet spots” to deal with and we have been able to achieve absolutely nothing here. It is very disheartening that a Streetcare officer once said that although he had worked for RBWM for 5 years he was not aware of any flooding in this area. Really ?

Once rainfall abates water levels generally fall speedily - much more quickly than in the past. This would suggest that some work by Streetcare to maintain the onward flow has been beneficial. But it also suggests that there is probably little we can ask for to improve onward flow. A major detailed survey will be needed and technical propositions for major storm drain works under the roads to take the water more efficiently towards and under the A308 to the Thames and-or to try and hold water back to delay the flow. It seems very unlikely that funding for such a scale of work will ever be provided by local government.

The best possibility for a short term improvement for the Cardinal Clinic might be to constrain the pressured inflow at A so that it can no longer escape north east, and divert a percentage of it to a holding pond or small lake (B). This might be created on what appears to be unused or paddock land at the corner of Oakley Green and Dedworth Road. The outflow from here could be taken north to join the existing route at C.

It has recently come to light that the area between the A308 and the Dedworth Road and also south of Dedworth Road is being considered for development. Good Luck to whoever ends up trying to build on this land !