

Thames Water sewerage flooding issues in West Oxfordshire Summary of responses from Thames Water

Strategic Issues

WODC have asked but have not had a satisfactory response in respect of the following questions:

Where is the infiltration strategy?

Broadly, we are looking beyond just infiltration strategies as we now realise that many of the issues experienced are related to surface water inundation, not just infiltration of groundwater. We are currently in the process of reviewing our plans but the study is likely to take a few years to mature to the stage where works are undertaken.

What work is it planned to do and to which Pumping Stations?

As mentioned we are awaiting the response from Ofwat to our PR14 business plan. In general items such as PS are covered by a block item and we do not specifically list PS work. Hence, we will have to wait and see (summer 2014) as to what Ofwat's response on our business plan is.

What properties are going to be helped?

I am not aware of any specific flooding schemes in AMP6 for the WODC area although this winter's flooding may change this. Essentially as with pumping stations, we will have requested a block of money to deal with problems.

A remedial and infiltration plan is needed so we know what it is intended to do to resolve the repeat problems we are seeing in a number of locations with inundation of systems, sewers backing up, surcharging and homes left without flushing toilets or experiencing sewage flooding in gardens and in some cases, internally.

Location specific

Brize Norton – Problems between Station Road and Crash Gate 5 at the back of Brize Norton – foul sewage in fields. Whilst there is no associated internal property flooding West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council have carried out work to surface water drainage but need to know what Thames Water intend to do to resolve sewer flooding.

Station Road is the road running past the Brize Norton SPS at the east of the airfield. The SPS does struggle with slow response and storm flows. There was probably river flooding this winter in the area too - the sewers lie in flood plains - a team has been sent there as part of our current investigations to take photos and build up evidence of the problems.

In the previous investment period (2005-2010), Halcrow undertook a study and recommended dualling the rising main and more or less doubling the stations output. Unfortunately, it never happened due to the high cost of constructing 5km of new rising main. However, as part of the current Drainage Area Plan study we have looked at diverting a large existing development from the Brize Norton SPS catchment into the Halton Road catchment. This may also require upgrading of Carterton STW.

A further issue is the unknown level of waste water flows from Brize Norton base, the strategic development at Carterton and the impact of these two things on the existing infrastructure in that area.

This has been looked at as part of the Carterton Drainage Area Plan - the new development (not yet started and additional to that mentioned above) is intended to drain through Carterton via Halton Road SPS. The STW has been upgraded to deal with this and the increased Brize Norton Airbase flows. All Brize Norton Airbase flows currently drain to Carterton STW - directly via their own SPS and via Halton Road SPS.

Finally in respect of Brize Norton a query has been raised regarding the water main pipe from Worsham to Carterton. This pipe keeps bursting, the workmen have said this is because it is no longer 'fit for purpose'. The concern is that if this is the case then leakages could be causing localised flooding. They also said that they would return to make good the verges and farm track when the ground dried up a bit - that was at the beginning of 2013 and nothing has been done yet.

Northmoor – specific problem at a property with sewer backing up and sewage surcharging through a shower. An update on what Thames Water has done is requested.

This seems to have been caused by a blockage which has been removed. If there are further issues please let me know

North Leigh – Work has reportedly been carried out – can Thames Water confirm this has been completed?

The original works on Windmill Rd to repair a section of pitch fibre sewer have been completed but a further similar issue exists on the other side of the road. This is programmed in to be repaired also.

Clanfield – High Street, shallow sewer being inundated with ground water causing sewers to back up. Homes without flushing toilets etc.

Clanfield was unfortunately affected by inundation of groundwater from the very wet winter. This overwhelmed our sewer network leading to restricted toilet use for some residents. We are in the process of gathering data from areas affected in the way and have had consultants (Mott MacDonald) out to evidence the degree of flooding. THIs will help in form any solutions we can move forward with.

Carterton Pavilion (retention pond) – what are Thames Water doing to further reduce the flow out of this pond?

This is our surface water balancing pond located to the north of Brize Norton airfield and east of . We've looked at this before. The developers have built it as specified by the EA in the early '90s. The pond is designed for 100yr storm retention. I have asked our reservoir design group to look at the possibility of the balancing pond holding more surface water but there is a risk that this could put it beyond its design parameter. I will give a further update when this is available.

Standlake – An update on the effectiveness of works undertaken including repairs to the reducing valve is requested.

The non-return valves fitted last year have performed very well. Also, Standlake will be looked into more closely with a full infiltration study during the next AMP period.

On a secondary point there is an on-going issue with the Egg Washing Plant which Thames water is seeking to resolve to ensure that there are no flooding issues when the system is struggling.