



**North Yorkshire County Council  
Richmond (Yorks) Constituency Committee – 8 January 2021**

**Briefing on the Melsonby Flood Risks and Drainage Issues**

**1.0 Background of briefing**

- 1.1 On the 7 December 2020 the Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services, accompanied by representatives from the Local Highway Office and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) team, met with the Parish Council and residents of Melsonby and also representatives of Northumbrian Water, to discuss the concerns of residents regarding flood risks. These related to the historic drainage system and its condition and the associated impact the development proposals would have on its finite capacity.
- 1.2 Concerns over a potentially collapsed culvert at the entrance of Limegarth, Moor Road were raised at the meeting. Following further investigatory work, the location of the collapse is confirmed to be in private third party ownership. Under common law, the responsibility to repair the watercourse falls to the riparian landowner. The County Council has permissive powers to serve notice on any landowner who does not undertake regular maintenance work or fails to repair a section of watercourse. NYCC will write to the landowners to remind them of their responsibilities and requesting that the culvert is repaired at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.3 Northumbrian Water explained the status of work concerning the proposed development and the adequacy of the existing system. Investigations are ongoing into the condition and serviceability of the combined sewer network. Hydraulic capacity will be investigated once the condition surveys have been completed and once it is confirmed that there are no defects exacerbating the issue the flooding issues. There is a known issue with tree root ingress into the surface water sewer on Saint James' close. Northumbrian water plan to re-line the sewer to prevent re-occurrence.
- 1.4 Blocked culverts under the ford on West Road and the condition of the watercourse upstream of the road were also discussed at the meeting. The local highways team has raised an order for the culverts to be jetted clear. The development management team will write to the landowner requesting the stream and culvert inlets are cleared at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4 Additional water being diverted into the ditch network on Moor Road and unconsented culverting works were also discussed during the site meeting and will be investigated further in the coming weeks.

**2.0 Outcome of meeting**

- 2.1 It was agreed that the LLFA would follow the meeting up with additional guidance on maintenance responsibilities for ditches, drains and watercourses for the Parish Clerk to share with all councillors and residents. Where required, the LLFA will write to the appropriate landowners reminding them of their riparian responsibilities to maintain the free-flow of water.

- 2.2 Flooding events are increasing in prevalence. Whilst the risk of flooding can never be removed altogether, ensuring that drainage systems are functioning adequately gives communities the best chance to mitigate any impacts leading from periods of heavy rainfall. Residents can ensure their community is as prepared as possible through appropriate resilience planning, creating an agreed response to events and also by reporting concerns over drainage assets to the relevant organisations to progress at the first opportunity, to ensure the appropriate action can be taken.

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