

Draft Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2026

Response from Shaw & Whitley Community Emergency Group

Ref (office use)

	<p>██████████ Shaw & Whitley Community Emergency Group – secretary ██████████ ██████████ July 2020</p>	
Plan page and para.*	Comment	Any proposal to deal with comment made
<p>42 – 4.3.3</p> <p>Allocation of Land at Middle Farm, Corsham Road, Whitley</p>	<p>Context:</p> <p>The Shaw & Whitley Community Emergency Group (CEG) was established following the flooding in Sept 2014. We are both re-active and pro-active – we respond to incidents in support of the community, and we monitor potential issues, working closely with MwPC and WC. Where we can safely undertake work ourselves, we organise volunteer working parties.</p> <p>From our own monitoring and measuring, we have found the Southbrook catchment to be very “flashy”. A heavy but brief rainfall in February 2020 quickly resulted in flooding across the B3353, and the CEG team helped prevent flooding of Shaw Vicarage and Shaw School.</p> <p>As well as the September 2014 flood, a previous flood happened in August 2012. Both these resulted in flooding of residential properties.</p> <p>We monitor rainfall, members have weather stations and; the Aug 2012 floods resulted from 32mm of rainfall, Sept 2014 from 75mm. Also, the Environment Agency make the monitoring telemetry from their measuring station on the Southbrook at the B3353 available. Image 1 (below) illustrates how rapidly the Southbrook rises in response to rainfall – the February level was 0.2m higher than the previous highest recorded.</p>	

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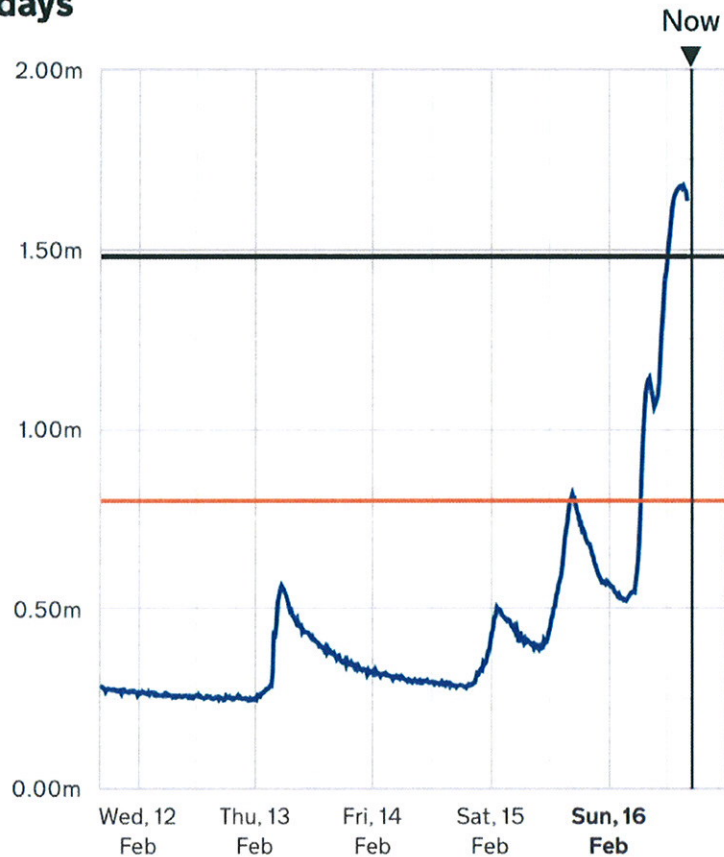
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Image 1: EA monitoring station on Southbrook at culvert under B3353, just above Shaw School, 16 Feb 2020

plusnet 16:45 52%
flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk

Latest recorded level **1.63m** at **4:00pm Sunday 16 February 2020**.

River levels at this location in the last 5 days



— Measured level

— When the water level reaches 0.80m here, minor flooding is possible in this area

— Highest recorded level. [Hide](#)

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	<p>Response to Neighbourhood Plan:</p> <p>We are extremely cautious about any development proposal in this area; we believe any change will be likely to increase the risk of flooding, either upstream in Shaw & Whitley, or downstream towards Melksham.</p> <p>With reference to the Middle Farm proposal, it should be noted that the Aug 2012 event resulted in the flooding of properties on both sides of Corsham Road.</p> <p>Further, property owners in this NE corner of Whitley are known to have had to expend considerable sums to increase protection against flooding.</p> <p>Any proposed developments must ensure their surface water drainage is adequate for that development, without increasing risk to the rest of the community.</p> <p>We would want to see the outputs from surface water drainage modelling for the Middle Farm proposal; provided these demonstrate a rigorous approach, we could anticipate supporting this.</p> <p>In view of our experience of this catchment, this is the only proposal we would expect to approve; any others, particularly on flood plain, we would strongly recommend are rejected.</p>	
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Figure 4: The collapsed garden wall between [REDACTED] (on the right) and [REDACTED]. The wall stood just to the left of the wooden shed.

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Figure 2: Hallway of [redacted] after the flood.

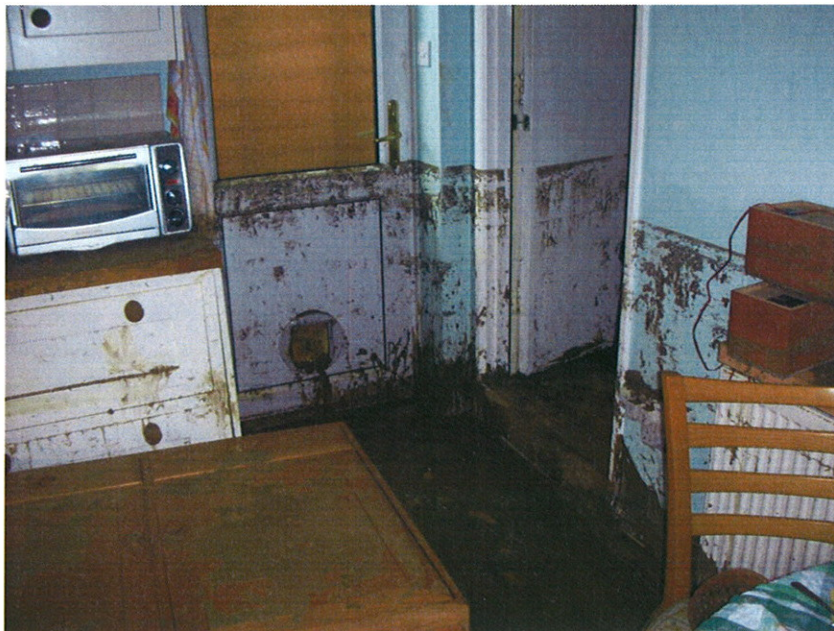


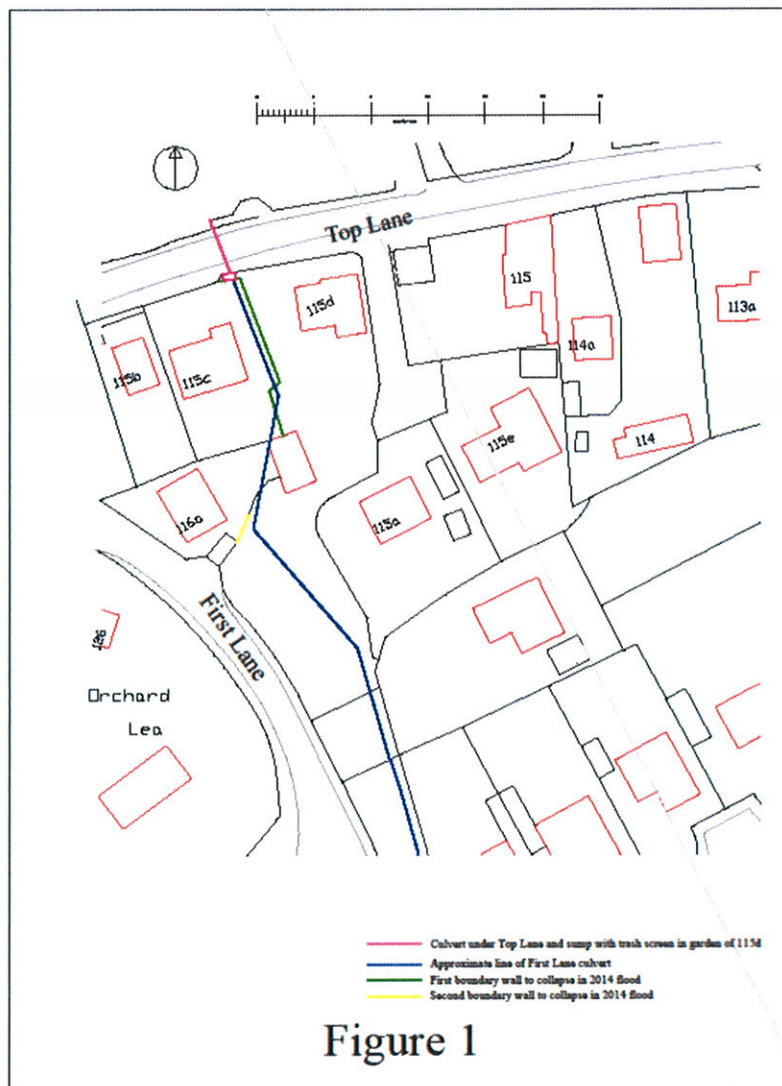
Figure 3: [redacted] kitchen

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The effect of that night on [REDACTED] lives was devastating. They were never able to return to their home and they lost many treasured and sentimental value items. Added to this was the significant financial penalty they suffered due to the value of [REDACTED] plummeting after the flood.

As well as [REDACTED] habitation flooding affected [REDACTED] and seven other properties in First Lane. The occupants of all these properties also suffered the distress and financial loss caused by the floods.



Appendix:

**The Effects of Flooding at [REDACTED] Top Lane, Whitley
18/09/2014**

The bungalow [REDACTED] and the house [REDACTED] are two properties that lie to the south of Top Lane in the village of Whitley, Melksham, Wilts. The exact location of the properties can be seen in figure 1 below.

At the time of this flood [REDACTED] lived at [REDACTED] the couple were both in their late 80's and were enjoying a quiet retirement in Whitley.

The boundary between the two properties (figure1, green line) was a 1.8m high concrete block wall. The wall largely followed the line of the culverted brook (figure1, blue line) which flows from north to south under Top Lane (figure1, purple line).

During the evening of the 18th September about 75mm of rain fell on the Whitley area over a six- hour period. The culverts shown in figure 1 were unable to cope with the volume of run off causing the flood water to back up to the north of Top Lane, and then to flow over Top Lane and into the driveway and garden of [REDACTED]

The flood water was unable to escape from the garden [REDACTED] and so it built up and flooded the whole bungalow to a depth of about 1m (figures 2 and 3). [REDACTED] were at home along with their daughter who was visiting them. As the level of the water built up, they tried to leave but the volume and speed of the flood water flowing down their moderately steep driveway prevented them. The fast-flowing flood water also prevented their neighbours from coming to their aid.

At this point [REDACTED] and their daughter were trapped in the bungalow surrounded by rapidly rising flood water with no obvious means of escape. The terror that they experienced can only be imagined by those not involved.

Fortunately, the boundary wall between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (figure 1, green line and figure 4) collapsed under the weight of the water flooding the bungalow and provided some relief from the immediate danger. However, [REDACTED] still had to wait for the flow of water to subside before they could leave and be taken care of by their neighbours.