

ENGINEERING

Flood Risk Assessment For the Proposed Allocation For Residential Development of Land South of 29 The Green, Great Staughton, Huntingdonshire In The Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan

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 $3246-FRA \ Rev \ A-Feb \ 2024$

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Limited has been asked to provide a Flood Risk Assessment in relation to the proposed allocation for residential development of Land South of 29 The Green, Great Staughton, Huntingdonshire in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Mr N Childerley.
- 1.2 This Flood Risk Assessment is based on the following information:-
- 1.2.1 Topographic survey by Gold Land Surveys;
- 1.2.2 Site plan provided by the client;
- 1.2.3 Environment Agency flood information;
- 1.2.4 Huntingdonshire District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA);

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- 1.2.5 British Geological Survey information;
- 3246 FRA Rev A Feb 2024

- 1.3 The comments and opinions contained in this report including any conclusions are based on the information available to MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd. during our investigations. The conclusions drawn could therefore differ if the information is found to be inaccurate, incomplete or misleading. MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd. accept no liability should this prove to be the case, nor if additional information exists or becomes available with respect to this site.
- 1.4 MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd. makes no representation whatsoever concerning the legal significance of its findings or any other matters referred to in the following report. Except as otherwise requested by the client, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd. are not obliged and disclaim any obligation to update the report for events taking place after the Assessment was undertaken.
- 1.5 This report is a Flood Risk Assessment relating to flooding issues associated with the proposed development. The information presented and conclusions drawn are based on statistical data and are for guidance purposes only. This report provides no guarantee against flooding of the study site or elsewhere, nor as to the absolute accuracy of water levels, flow rates and associated probabilities quoted.

2 Site Description and Existing Drainage

- 2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of The Green in Great Staughton, as shown shaded green on the site location plan provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To the northeast the site is bound by the existing dwelling Number 29 The Green and garden space to the rear, past which is open land in agricultural use but with the field immediately north of 29 The Green having consent for the erection of 12 affordable dwellings under Planning Approval 20/01915/FUL (the area hatched blue on the site location plan in Appendix 1).
- 2.3 To the south the site is bound by a small area of woodland in the east, with dwellings fronting the Green and gardens space to the rear to the south of the western part of the sites southern boundary.
- 2.4 To the northwest the site is bound by The Green, past which are some allotments and then open agricultural land.
- 2.5 The site itself is currently open grassland with one small building in the southwestern area being the only structure present on site, as shown on the site survey (Appendix 2).
- 2.6 The Green is relatively flat along the site frontage, with centreline levels of between 26.93m and 26.98m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) along the site frontage. A drain with invert levels a little over a metre below The Green centreline runs in a southerly direction along the boundary, with two small culverted sections present beneath a pedestrian access midway along this boundary and the vehicular access in the southern part of the northwestern boundary.
- 2.7 This drain falls from an invert level of 25.96m AOD in the northern corner of the site to 25.66m AOD in the south, having originally been fed by a pipe with an invert level of 25.81 which runs north beneath the access to 29 The Green.

- 2.8 The drain originally comes beneath The Green about 65m north of the site where a field drain runs through the agricultural land on the opposite side of The Green as marked on the Location Plan in Appendix 1. A second field drain from the opposite side of the road also comes beneath The Green at the southern corner of the site to join the drain along the sites northwestern boundary at the headwall in this location, as also shown in Appendix 1. A further pipe inlet approximately midway along this section of the drain is believed to take highway drainage from the kerb offlets on the opposite side of the road into the drain.
- 2.9 At the western corner of the site, the drain turns to flow in a southeasterly direction, picking up drainage from a piped system to the south of the site at the kink in the site boundary where it turns to run east, dropping to an invert level in the order of 25m AOD at the eastern boundary of the site where it then turns to run south then east and join a wider network of drains which eventually discharge to the River Kym system.
- 2.10 All of the drains noted in the area are private/ordinary watercourses for which the land owners are responsible for as a riparian system, with the River Kym itself being a Main River.
- 2.11 The site itself is lower than the adjacent road, with levels in the order of 26.5 to 26.6m AOD along the northwestern boundary of the site having an overall fall in an easterly/southeasterly direction towards a low point of approximately 25.75m AOD in the eastern corner, however levels rise slightly above this to a minimum of 26.06m AOD at the top of the bank down to the adjacent drain, essentially creating a low spot on the site.
- 2.12 Levels along the southern part of the site boundary particularly in the vicinity of the existing building are generally higher than those to the north. A number of small isolated low spots are present on the site in the central area, as shown on the site survey and by the contour lines, however these are generally shallow with a maximum depth of 300mm present at any point before water would flow southwest again towards the drain.

- 2.13 British Geological Survey Mapping indicates that the site is underlain by a bedrock geology of the Oxford Clay Formation with no superficial geology present, and the same geology extending beneath surrounding land.
- 2.14 This is a low permeability geology, thus site drainage and drainage from surrounding land is considered to be primarily via run off to the adjacent drains which take water to the River Kym.

3 Sources of Potential Flood Risk

- 3.1 In accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework all forms of flood risk need to be considered in relation to any development.
- 3.2 The first form of flood risk to be considered in respect of The National Planning Policy Framework is fluvial flooding.
- 3.3 The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Appendix 3) shows that the site lies completely in Flood Zone 1, thus at a low risk of fluvial flooding (less than 1 in 1000). The only land shown as at a greater risk of flooding (flood zone 2 or 3) lies in the vicinity of the River Kym more than 55m from the site.
- 3.4 The SFRA shows the same pattern of flooding as Environment Agency mapping and also shows the site to lie in Flood Zone 1.
- 3.5 The small drain running adjacent to the site boundary has an extremely small catchment area (less than the 3km² for which the Flood Map for Planning has been produced), with the catchment upstream of the site being almost completely permeable land in agricultural use, with the only exceptions being the section of The Green carriageway and sheds in the allotments opposite the site which drain into this watercourse.
- 3.6 The small upstream catchment of these drains means that they essentially pick up surface flows from the higher land in the area (primarily to the northwest) that falls into these drains and as such could be considered either as a surface water or a fluvial flood system (or indeed as both).
- 3.7 As surface water flood mapping includes smaller drainage systems such as those in the vicinity of the site, whereas the fluvial flood mapping does not considered them as fluvial flood risks, in this instance it is considered appropriate to assess these systems in more detail in the surface water flood risk section of this report below, however as both risks are essentially identical this means the fluvial flood risk will also be adequately assessed.

- 3.8 There are no further fluvial flood risks to the site and the overall risk of flooding from the fluvial sources assessed is above considered to be low.
- 3.9 The second source of flood risk to be considered in accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework is flooding from the sea.
- 3.10 This site is located a significant distance inland and at levels in excess of 25m AOD, thus it is not considered to be at any significant risk of flooding from the sea.
- 3.11 The overall risk of flooding from the sea is therefore considered to be low.
- 3.12 The third form of flood risk to be considered in respect of The National Planning Policy Framework is flooding from land.
- 3.13 Intense rainfall, often of short duration, that is unable to soak into the ground or enter drainage systems can quickly run off land and result in local flooding. In developed areas, this flood water can be polluted with domestic sewage with foul sewer surcharge and overflow. Local topography and built form can have a strong influence on the direction and depth of flow. The design of development down to a micro level can influence or exacerbate this. Overland flow paths need to be taken into account in development to minimise the risk of flooding from overland flow.
- 3.14 In this instance land to the northwest of the site is higher than the site, with all land in the vicinity tending to fall in a southeasterly direction overall. Virtually all higher land than the site is currently undeveloped and in agricultural use primarily as arable fields, but also allotments and grass paddocks.
- 3.15 As such in the majority of rainfall events drainage tends to be partly reduced by losses to evapotranspiration, with remaining water percolating through into top soils, where it will then slowly percolate in a southeasterly direction through topsoils above the low permeability clay (which is unlikely to absorb significant water) in line with the general fall of land in the area until reaching the small drains in the area as baseflow.

- 3.16 During extremely intense rainfall events where the evapotranspiration and percolation potential of the ground is exceeded, prolonged wet periods when ground becomes waterlogged, or following cold or hot periods in which ground has become frozen or baked, additional water is likely to also likely to flow over the land surface to drains as run off, then flow along the route of these drains towards the River Kym, with some ponding in local low spots during this process also occurring.
- 3.17 A site visit was undertaken on 08th January 2024, during/immediately following extremely heavy rain as confirmed by the flood update in Huntingdonshire issued by Huntingdon District Council the same day. The photos included in Appendix 4 demonstrate no surface flooding was present at any part of the main body of the site, with the drain along the boundary being significantly below top of bank levels. Whilst a return period for the rainfall events in early January is unknown, significant flooding was experienced elsewhere in the district in this event and this demonstrates that the site does not suffer from surface water flooding during periods of heavy rainfall.
- 3.18 Surface water mapping (Appendix 5) indicates that in a high risk (1 in 30 year) event water will back up on the opposite side of The Green to the site, with very limited flow over The Green which will start to act as a weir in this event. Water coming over The Green at the low point in the central area of the site is however indicated as being picked up by the drain on the site side of The Green, with no significant overspill on the site side of the drain which appears to remain within capacity.
- 3.19 The only other area of the site shown as at risk of flooding in a 1 in 30 year event is limited ponding in the southern and central low spot, where as shown on the site survey the low point is approximately 25.98m AOD, whilst a water level of approximately 26.3m AOD would be required before surface water could begin entering the drain along the southern boundary of the site based upon surveyed bank levels. As such all water would generally be of a depth of 300mm or less with the exception of a very small area at the very deepest part of the low spot, which is as indicated in this area of the site in the 1 in 30 year event.

- 3.20 A very small area of flooding may also be present in the very eastern corner of the site which again is another low spot with a minimum level of 25.75m AOD, but water level of approximately 26.1m AOD required before water can begin flowing into the adjacent drain. As such this area would again be almost entirely less than 300mm depth other than the very lowest area.
- 3.21 With no significant water coming south across the drain along the northern boundary to the site from land to the north, and thus no significant flow route across the site in such an event, the ponding in the southern part of the site and eastern corner is simply caused by water landing on the site itself gravitating to the lowest points/spots on the site causing very shallow ponding until it reaches a level at which it can start flowing over the bank of the drain to the south and entering the surface water drain network.
- 3.22 So long as any development constructed on the site includes a modern drainage system designed to accommodate a 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change rainfall event (which significantly exceeds the 1 in 30 year event the high risk mapping shows), as is currently a standard requirement for new development, then all water landing on the site will instead be taken to the attenuation area designed as part of the surface water drainage system thereby leaving the remaining areas of the site completely dry during such an event.
- 3.23 As such it is not considered that there would be any significant risk of flooding to the site in a 1 in 30 year event post development.
- 3.24 The medium risk or 1 in 100 year event mapping indicates that a limited flow of water may begin coming across The Green in the northern corner of the site, and begin flowing south across the site as a shallow flow not exceeding 300mm depth, before ponding in the same low spot as noted above in relation to the 30 year event before reaching a level at which it can enter the drain along the southern boundary at which point it will enter the drain then begin flowing east in the drain.

- 3.25 In the most extreme 'low risk' or 1 in 1000 year event mapping indicates a greater extent of water will build up causing ponding on the opposite side of The Green (likely to the culverts beneath The Green having insufficient capacity to accommodate flows.
- 3.26 As such The Green will begin functioning as a weir once water reaches a level of about 26.93m AOD or higher on the upstream side, and will begin flowing onto the site. Given that the site has a continuous fall in a southeasterly direction water would simply flow off the site in a southeasterly direction, and reenter the drain along the southern boundary of the site or at the eastern corner of the site, where some overland flow may then continue along the route of the drain to the east of the site due to this being over capacity in the 1 in 1000 year event.
- 3.27 With the exception of the lowest spots in the site which are detailed in Section 2 and subject to shallow ponding in the 1 in 30 year event, the vast majority of the area of the site which would be subject to flow at existing levels in the 1 in 1000 year event would be subject to a depth of less than 300mm of flow.
- 3.28 Whilst surface water may flow over the site in such an extreme event, it is not considered to provide any significant surface water storage for surface water that comes onto the site from higher land to the northwest in such an event. This is because the low spots on the site which could provide storage would have been already filled to capacity/to the point that water is flowing off the site into the adjacent drains in the 1 in 30 year event by rainwater landing on the site itself as shown by the 1 in 30 year mapping. Therefore no additional storage is offered for off site water, and any flow coming onto the site will simply continue off it.
- 3.29 Any proposed development will need to ensure firstly that the existing flow path across the site is not obstructed by designing a flow path around the boundary or through the site, and secondly that finished floor levels are set sufficiently above adjacent ground levels (at least 300mm above) with external levels falling away and no low spots in the vicinity of access points in which water could pond to a level at which it could potentially enter any dwelling.

- 3.30 Overall, in more frequent surface water events the only risk to the site is from water landing on the site itself, which will be dealt with by provision of a modern drainage system designed to accommodate a 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change rainfall event which will prevent any surface flooding occurring from water landing on the site itself in rainfall events upto the design event.
- 3.31 In more extreme events rainfall any flow of water onto the site will be dealt with by maintaining the existing flow path across the development, either by lowering land around the edges of the development site to direct flows along this direction, by using the access road through the site to function as a low level flow route for water through the development in extreme events, or by widening the existing drains (and potentially creating a new drain along the northeastern boundary) to accommodate the additional flow that currently comes over the surface of the site from The Green and across the drain on the site side of The Road which based upon mapping is over capacity.
- 3.32 Subject to suitable design of the site layout and external levels at an early stage should an actual layout be developed, all surface water flood risks can therefore be adequately managed/mitigated as part of any residential development.
- 3.33 The overall risk of flooding from the sea is therefore considered to be low.
- 3.34 The fourth form of flood risk to be considered in accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework is flooding from rising groundwater.
- 3.35 Groundwater flooding occurs when water levels in the ground rise above surface elevations. It is most likely to occur in low lying areas underlain by permeable rocks (aquifers). These may be extensive, regional aquifers, such as chalk or sandstone, or may be localised sands and river gravels in valley bottoms underlain by less permeable rocks. Water levels below the ground rise during wet winter months, and fall again in the summer as water flows out into rivers. In very wet winters, rising water levels may lead to the flooding of normally dry land.

- 3.36 The underlying bedrock geology is the Oxford Clay Formation with no superficial geology present. This is a low permeability geology which will not have any significant groundwater present.
- 3.37 The overall risk of the site flooding due to rising ground water levels is therefore considered to be low.
- 3.38 The fifth form of flood risk to be considered in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework is the risk of flooding from blocked, overloaded, or burst sewers and water mains.
- 3.39 Should any sewer or water main on The Green become blocked, overloaded, or burst any flows coming southeast onto the site would simply be picked up by the open drain along the site side of The Green with no significant impact upon the site.
- 3.40 The overall risk of flooding occurring at the site from blocked, overloaded or burst sewers and watermains is therefore considered to be low.
- 3.41 The last form of flood risk to be considered in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework is flooding from reservoirs, canals or other artificial sources.
- 3.42 There are no reservoirs, canals, or other artificial sources of water in the vicinity of the site that are considered to give rise to any significant risk of flooding at the site, and Environment Agency mapping does not indicate any flood risk to the site from reservoirs.

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4 The Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposal involves the residential development of the site. At present the site is seeking allocation in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan thus is at an early stage of development and no site layout is currently available.
- 4.2 As detailed in Section 3 the site lies in flood zone 1, and is at a low risk of fluvial flooding and all sources of flood risk aside from surface water which gives rise to minor on site ponding issues at low spots in more frequent events and provides a flow path in an easterly/southeasterly direction in the most extreme events.
- 4.3 Should the site be allocated for residential development, several measures will be undertaken to ensure that the development is safe from any risk of surface water flooding, and that there is no adverse impact upon the off site risk of flooding associated with the proposed development. These measures are outlined below, with further detail to be provided once a site layout is developed and the site comes forward towards an actual Planning Application.
- 4.3.1 Firstly, the proposed development will include a SuDS system designed to accommodate a 1 in 100 year plus 40% rainfall event to greenfield discharge rates. This will both resolve any potential issues associated with minor ponding that may occur at the site in low spots during a 1 in 30 year event at present, and secondly ensure that there is no increase to discharge rates and thus no adverse impact upon the downstream risk of flooding.
- 4.3.2 Secondly the flow route across the site in an easterly/southeasterly direction will be maintained through the development, most likely by either running swales around the edges of the site to take flows coming on to the site from the northwest east around the main body of the site to the point at which they currently reenter the drain along the southern boundary and eastern corner of the site. Alternatively the existing drains may be improved to give extra capacity and pick up the flows, or a new drain created along the northeastern boundary of the site.

- 4.3.3 Finally, finished floor levels of all dwellings will be set at least 300mm above existing ground levels and external levels all designed to ensure that water will not pond in the vicinity of any access point or enter any dwelling under any circumstances.
- 4.4 It is not considered that surface water flooding gives rise to any significant access issues at the site, firstly as in the 1 in 100 year event minimal flows are indicated across The Green and secondly as being at the very upstream end of the catchment the duration of any flow coming across The Green and the site in an extreme event would be low.
- 4.5 Overall subject to the design measures detailed in Section 4.3 being appropriately designed and implemented at the proposed development.

5 Assessment

- 5.1 The proposal involves the allocation of the site for residential development as part of the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 In accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework residential development is classified as 'more vulnerable' development.
- 5.3 The Environment Agency Flood Map for planning shows the site to lie entirely in Flood Zone 1. 'More vulnerable' development such as that proposed is appropriate in Flood Zone 1 without the need to apply the Exception Test, whilst in Flood Zone 1 the Sequential Test is passed.
- 5.4 All sources of potential flood risk to the site have been considered in Section 3, and the only risk of flooding to the site is associated with surface water from rainfall landing on the site ponding in low spots due to being unable to reach the drains around the site boundary in more frequent events, and some overland flow across the site in an easterly/southeasterly direction in the most extreme events.
- 5.5 Provision of a modern drainage system that accommodates a 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event, ensuring that the existing flow path is maintained around/across the site is maintained, and setting finished floor levels and external levels to prevent ponding in access points will ensure that all risks related to surface water are adequately dealt with, as detailed in Section 4.3.
- 5.6 There are clearly design solutions available to deal with any surface water flood risk at the site, thus whilst further detail as to the design of the measures will be required when a site layout is produced, this is appropriate to include as part of the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy that will be provided at the Planning Application stage when a site layout is available.

6 Conclusion

6.1 There are no flood risk or drainage related reasons not to allocate the proposed site for residential development as part of the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan.

SITE LOCATION PLAN



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TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY



NOTES The data used for the computation of the horizontal and vertical control for this survey was recorded using our survey grade GNSS receivers. This data was provided by Leica Geosystems Smartnet RTK correction service. Therefore primary survey control is based on OSGB36(15) A scale factor of 1 has been applied to this survey which has been based on station 1 and referenced to station 2 therefore this grid is related to but not on National Grid and should be treated as arbitrary. Plotting on paper may lead to a variety of scaling risks/errors due to paper stretching or inaccurate plotter settings etc. Therefore any dimensions scaled from a paper reproduction of this survey should be treated with caution. This drawing must be used in conjunction with all other relevant documentation.	The depiction of a wall, fence or hedge does not necessarily represent a legal boundary. It is the clients responsibility to confirm legal boundaries with the vendor. Unless previously agreed, all services existing on site have been surveyed apart from where access is restricted by vehicles or other significant obstructions. If applicable, manhole covers will be lifted unless this significantly obstructs the flow of traffic or vehicular access. Manhole will not be lifted if this were to present any health & Safety risk to staff or the public. Irreplaceable or cracked covers will not be lifted. All pipe directions are indicative only and have not been proved unless specifically instructed. For safety reasons, pipe sizes and directions are estimated from above ground and are therefore approximate values. All drawing units, levels and dimensions are in metres, unless otherwise stated.	
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ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FLOOD MAP FOR PLANNING



Flood map for planning

Your reference <Unspecified>

Location (easting/northing) **513055/265088**

Created **23 Jan 2024 12:55**

Your selected location is in flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.

You will need to do a flood risk assessment if your site is any of the following:

- bigger that 1 hectare (ha)
- In an area with critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency
- identified as being at increased flood risk in future by the local authority's strategic flood risk assessment
- at risk from other sources of flooding (such as surface water or reservoirs) and its development would increase the vulnerability of its use (such as constructing an office on an undeveloped site or converting a shop to a dwelling)

Notes

The flood map for planning shows river and sea flooding data only. It doesn't include other sources of flooding. It is for use in development planning and flood risk assessments.

This information relates to the selected location and is not specific to any property within it. The map is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing.

Flood risk data is covered by the Open Government Licence **which** sets out the terms and conditions for using government data. https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/

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SITE PHOTOGRAPHS FOLLOWING HEAVY RAINFALL ON 07/08 JANUARY 2024











ENVIRONMENT AGENCY SURFACE WATER FLOOD MAPPING



Surface water flood risk: water depth in a high risk scenario Flood depth (millimetres)



Surface water flood risk: water depth in a medium risk scenario Flood depth (millimetres)



Surface water flood risk: water depth in a low risk scenario Flood depth (millimetres)