

**Lead Local Flood Authority**  
**Section 19 (Flood and Water Management Act**  
**2010)**  
**Flood Investigation Report**

**Report Title:**

Downing Close, Mildenhall, Suffolk

**Report References:**

FW2020-2291 & FW2020-2299

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<i>Hannah Purkis</i>	
<b>Created by:</b>	<i>Hannah Purkis</i>	<i>12/01/2021</i>
<b>Checked by:</b>	<i>Simon Curl</i>	<i>10/02/2021</i>
<b>RMA Review:</b>	<i>SCC Highways</i>	<i>01/04/2021</i>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<i>Matt Hullis</i>	<i>12/04/2021</i>
<b>Date Published</b>		<i>13/04/2021</i>

**1.0** Suffolk County Council (SCC) as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has determined that in accordance with criteria, it considered it necessary or appropriate to carry out an investigation into this flood event in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and in accordance with Section 19 (2) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, to publish the results and notify the relevant risk management authorities (RMAs).

**2.0 References:** FW2020-2291 & FW2020-2299

**2.1 Location:** Downing Close, Mildenhall, Suffolk

**2.2 Flood Event Date:** 23/12/2020

**2.3 Reported to SCC Date:** 23/12/2020 to 05/01/2021

**2.4 Investigation Commencement Date:** 12/01/2021

**2.5 Criteria for investigation:**

<b>Criteria for an investigation (as per Appendix D of the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Strategy):</b>	<b>✓/X</b>
There was a risk to life as a result of flooding?	-
Internal flooding of one property (domestic or business) has been experienced on more than one occasion?	✓
Internal flooding of five properties has been experienced during one single flood incident	✓
Where a major transport route was closed for more than 10 hours as a result of flooding	-
Critical infrastructure was affected by flooding	-
There is ambiguity surrounding the source or responsibility of a flood incident	-

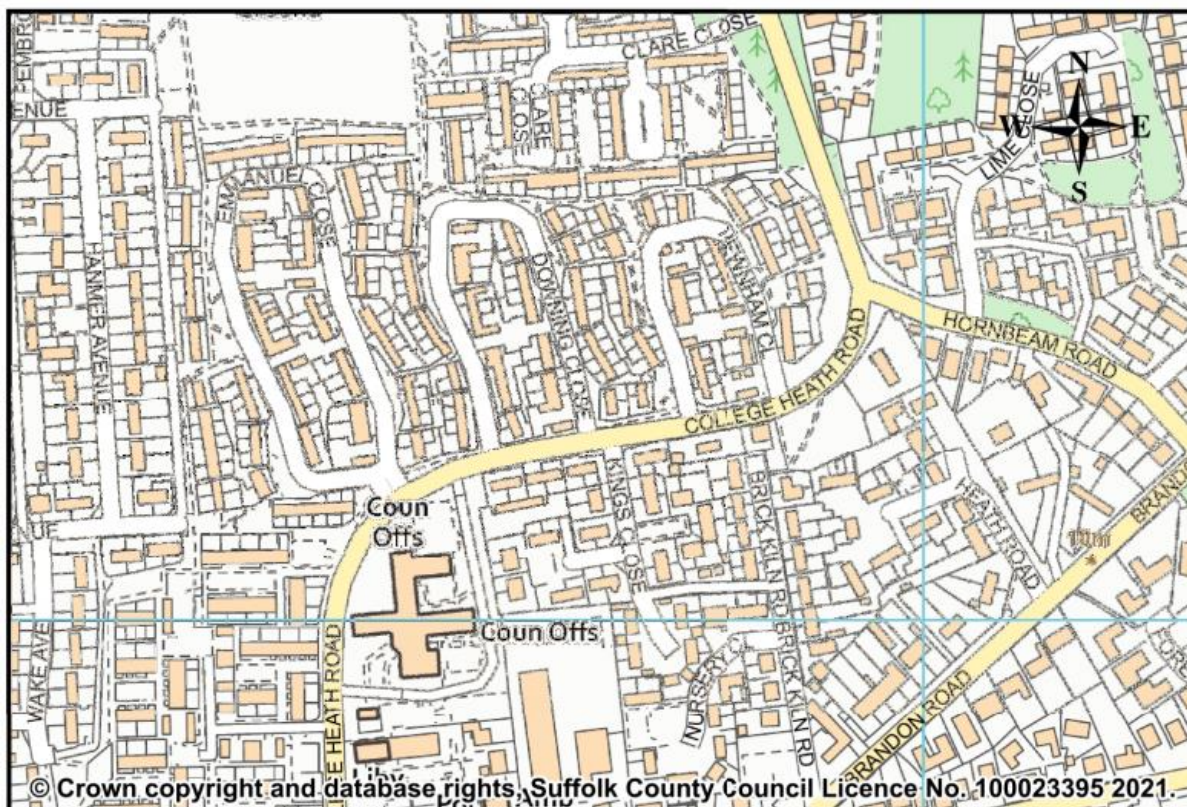


Figure 1 - Investigation Area Map

**2.6 OS Grid Reference:** TL 71763 75191

**2.7 Extent of flooding:**

Repeated incidents of highway flooding within Downing Close across the full width of the road and footway for a distance of 16-20m to a depth of approximately 100-150mm throughout December 2020 & January 2021.

Flooding also reported within adjacent garden areas and internally within nearby properties in multiple rooms throughout ground floor.

**2.8 Effect of flooding:**

Traffic driving through the standing water at speed causes a bow wave which displaces standing water onto surrounding footways, garden and properties.

Despite property level resilience measures (e.g. sandbags) being used by the residents, internal flooding has resulted within adjacent properties.

Internal flooding has been reported to have occurred within the lounge, kitchen and hall areas resulted in increased stress levels to resident tenants and damage to furnishings and furniture.

## **2.9 History:**

The highway (Downing Close) and adjacent areas have previously reported floodign, most notably in August 2020 and then again in December 2020 and January 2021.

## **2.10 Flooding Source:**

Surface water runoff (overland flow) from adjacent land, private roads and public highways.

## **2.11 Likely causes:**

Significant rainfall event coupled with known risk of surface water flooding locally.

The cohesive nature of underlying geology resulting in underperforming soakaways, upon which much of the local highway drainage network is reported to be dependant. This should be confirmed via additional survey work, see recommendations in Section 4.0.

Possible shallow groundwater levels inhibiting the soakage potential of the soakaways, as evidenced by the inspections by SCC Highways.

Urban nature of the environment, with associated increase in impermeable areas and historic culverting/removal of watercourses locally which formerly would have captured surface water flows.

Potential siltation and general deterioration of highways drainage assets within Downing Close, as evidenced by blocked gullies and failure of water to drain away after 24-48 hours following a rainfall event.

Excessive speeds of traffic driving through flooded areas, displacing standing water from highway onto private properties nearby.

## **2.12 Additional Information:**

The properties are set at a lower elevation than the highway, with the front gardens sloping down from highway kerbs towards the front doors. Finished floor levels also appear, from a visual survey, to be below the level of the highway in places.

The flooded properties are shown to be at medium to high risk of flooding from surface water on the indicative flood map for planning as hosted by the GOV.UK website.

Highway gullies along Downing Close are reported to have been surcharging during the storm event resulting in water flowing down the highway and

accumulating in low lying areas.

Historical survey work and mapping/modelling completed by the adjacent landowner, to inform a new development proposal, indicates that the highways drainage discharges to a series of soakaways located to the west of the highway which may require relocating in order to permit continued maintenance access.

Anglian Water have also been called out for flooding incidents within the highway by the residents in January and February 2021, however it is reported by the residents that these are unrelated to the highway flooding incidents.

Highway gullies were cleansed and the soakaway inspected in February 2021, however it was reported that due to high groundwater levels it was difficult to undertake the condition survey. A repeat visit is scheduled for later in the year once groundwater levels have dropped.

### 3.0 Risk Management Authority with Relevant Flood Risk Function

SCC - LLFA

SCC – Highways Authority

### 4.0 Recommendations:

Action	Responsible Authority	Timescale for response	Latest Progress Update for Actions
Explore potential options for property level resilience measures and funding opportunities	Property Owners /Landlord	3 months	N/A
Cleanse highways drainage system	SCC Highways Authority	3 months	Completed in Feb 2021, groundwater levels prevented full cleanse of soakaway. Second visit scheduled for later in the year.
Cleanse highways drainage system (specifically soakaways)	SCC Highways Authority	3-6 months	

Investigate (by way of CCTV survey) and record the highways drainage within Downing Close, including point of discharge	SCC Highways Authority	3-6 months	
Action any points of concern highlighted by the CCTV survey e.g. silted up soakaways	SCC Highways Authority	If the above investigation identifies the need	
Identify and review maintenance schedules for all surface water drainage assets in the highway	SCC Highways Authority	3-6 months	