

## **Flood Lane Report**

Based on meetings with Graeme Tuff (2 February 2026) and Daniel Cannon Skeet (16 March 2026)

### **1. Ownership and Responsibility**

The land and roadway in question are subject to fragmented ownership and maintenance responsibilities:

- Swale Borough Council (SBC) owns the green space and a small off-road section between the harbour board (HB) entrance and the residents' garage.
- The section of road beyond the telegraph pole, marked by a "roadway" sign, is currently unregistered. SBC indicated that any attempt by a local body (e.g., a town or parish council) to register this land would be unlikely to face opposition.
- Kent County Council (KCC) is responsible for the adopted highway up to near the telegraph pole, with the end of the tarmac clearly marking the limit of their responsibility.

### **2. Current Condition and Issues**

The unregistered section of the road is experiencing ongoing deterioration:

- The bank alongside the track requires lowering to improve drainage.
- Surface degradation is being accelerated by vehicle use, particularly due to the lack of a continuous tarmac surface.
- The transition point at the end of the tarmac creates a structural weakness, meaning this section will remain vulnerable to wear and decay over time.

Drainage is a key concern across the site:

- Water runoff is poorly managed, contributing to erosion.
- Conventional drainage solutions (such as installing a gully at the top of the road) are complicated by the relative level of the adjacent stream.

### **3. Maintenance and Planned Works**

- SBC has informally taken responsibility for some maintenance activities, evidenced by the recent replacement of posts before the bridge.
- There is potential for SBC to undertake further works on the unregistered section during the summer, although no formal plans are currently in place.
- KCC has not indicated responsibility beyond the adopted highway boundary.

### **4. Engineering Considerations and Potential Improvements**

Proposed technical interventions include:

- Raising the road level to encourage water to drain toward the stream.
- Lowering the adjacent grassed area to improve runoff pathways.
- Considering alternative drainage strategies due to constraints imposed by stream levels.
- Further cost estimates for these works are to be provided.

## **5. Road Closure and Access Management**

Closing the unregistered portion of the road is considered feasible but involves several procedural and practical considerations:

- A formal “stopping up” order would be required, likely initiated by SBC or a town council.
- Estimated cost is approximately £5,000, with a risk of legal challenge in a magistrates’ court.
- Any managing organisation would need to:
  - Address access rights for residents.
  - Coordinate with utility providers (e.g., telecommunications and waste services).
  - Maintain existing infrastructure such as street lighting.

If closure proceeds:

- A turning area would be required; a “back in and out” turning arrangement near the entrance is considered viable.
- SBC has indicated openness to providing land to facilitate such a turning point.

## **6. Pedestrian and Cyclist Considerations**

- The existing road alignment represents a strong “desire line” for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Creating a separate path is unlikely to provide additional benefit, as users would continue to favour the road itself.

## **7. Additional Considerations**

Additional issues raised during discussions include:

- Potential installation of an EE telecommunications mast on Lower Road.
- Ongoing flooding concerns affecting the pedestrian pathway near Creek Bridge.