

Steyping Grammar School
Condition Survey of Eastern Boundary Ditch
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Signed on behalf of CTP	
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1.0 Brief

- 1.1 This report has been prepared for BAM Construction as required to complete the Flood Risk Assessment.
- 1.2 CTP were instructed by BAM Construction to carry out a visual inspection of the Eastern Ditch at Steyning Grammar School, Steyning, West Sussex.
- 1.3 We have not inspected any areas of the ditch which were either dangerous or inaccessible, and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the ditch is free from defect.
- 1.4 CTP has no responsibility to any other parties to whom this report may be circulated, in part or in full, and any such parties rely on the contents of this report solely at their own risk.
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2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 As part of the proposed surface water strategy at Steyping Grammar School it is intended to outfall some surface water to the existing eastern ditch. This survey has been undertaken to assess the viability of the existing ditch to provide a suitable connection to the wider network of local watercourses. The visual inspection was conducted on 13-02-2026 and only covers areas which were readily accessible on the day.

3.0 Context

- 3.1 The existing ditch to the west of the school site runs almost the full length of the boundary, with the primary school, school car parks and playing fields sitting on the eastern side and a housing estate to the west.
- 3.2 The northern section of the ditch appears to fall, in a northerly direction, from a peak at the intersection of the northern boundary of the primary school. At the end, it feeds into the existing watercourse adjacent to the A283 Steyping bypass.
- 3.3 The southern section of the ditch appears to fall from the same peak, in a southerly direction, toward the main Grammar School entrance. The ditch then drains into a manhole, approximately 100m north of the main Shooting Field entrance and before entering a culvert believed to connect the public surface water network further to the south.



Extract from OS maps, the ditch follows the footpath north to south across the centre of the image

4.0 Weather conditions

- 4.1 On the day of the survey the weather was dry, sunny and mild for the time of year, earlier in the week had seen torrential downpours locally, with no significant rainfall noted over the previous 24 hours.
- 4.2 The ground directly adjacent to the ditch generally appeared to be dry, but some areas of the school field nearby were waterlogged.
- 4.3 The southern ditch was generally dry with small patches of ponding locally to incoming surface water outfalls.
- 4.4 The northern ditch started out quite dry, getting more wet as it headed north where there was a small but steady flow of water present.

5.0 Southern ditch observations (approx. 250m in length)

- 5.1 Whilst the drainage proposals leave outfalls into the southern section of the ditch largely unchanged, we have included detail of condition and outfalls in this report for completeness.
- 5.2 This section of the ditch appeared largely dry, clear of undergrowth in the form of shrubs and trees but there were a number of 'bridges' traversing the ditch at various entrances to the primary school site and a number of surface out falls the below observations are noted in order from the assumed peak of the ditch adjacent the northern boundary of the primary school.



Image 01



Image 02

Views looking down (01) and up (02) the southern section of ditch

- 5.3 At the peak of the ditch there appear to be a rudimentary earth bund (Image 01), to which appears to have been added a pair of concrete pipes – possibly to try and alleviate water build up to the north. The pipes were partially blocked with organic matter.



Image 03: Earth bund

- 5.4 30m south of the peak, there is a 300mm clay pipe outfall set into a blockwork head wall, the outfall has a mesh cover. This outfall is believed to serve the historically culverted ditch, which runs the full width of the school site. This was one of few areas along this section where water was visible. The ditch at this location contains twigs, vegetation and a thick layer of decomposing organic matter.



Image 02: 300mm diameter surface water outfall

- 5.5 Adjacent to the northeastern tip of the primary school building is another surface water outfall (Image 05), assumed to serve the primary building. The outfall comprises a 225mm diameter plastic pipe set in a brickwork head wall, the pipe is partially submerged in water and silt.



Image 05: Brick headwall

- 5.6 At the southernmost access into the primary school (located at about the centre of the primary school's eastern elevation) is a culverted bridge consisting of earth and timber over a 600mm diameter concrete pipe.
- 5.7 The pipe is partially blocked with earth and leaf litter and the 'bridge' appears to be in poor condition with rotting timbers and earth subsiding into the ditch. Directly adjacent to the northern bridge edge is an old, possibly iron, pipe spanning the ditch which has been broken and crudely repaired with a length of 100mm diameter plastic pipe.



Image 06



Image 07

Culvert below primary school access 'bridge'

- 5.8 Another 30m south is an assumed surface water outfall from the rear of the houses on Shooting Field. The outfall has a series of metal grates protecting a 225mm diameter pipe, which is free of debris, built into a simple brick head wall. Litter is present along most of the length of the ditch along with sporadic large chunks of rubble up to the size of a football.



Image 08: Outfall from rear of houses on Shooting Field

- 5.9 Just beyond the previous outfall is a section of embankment that appears to be made up of loose soil with no vegetation, which could be unstable.



Image 09: possible unstable embankment

- 5.10 As we reach the southern end of the primary school site there are another two culverted access points, both constructed from brick with pipes built in.
- 5.11 The first, with the handrail, has a 450mm diameter concrete pipe and a grate covering the downstream end, and the second, southernmost bridge a 150mm diameter clay pipe – both appear to be completely blocked with organic matter.
- 5.12 As the ditch progresses further south, its profile gradually becomes less defined and there is less evidence of water.



Image 10



Image 11

Culverted primary school access 'bridge'



Image 12



Image 13

Southernmost culverted primary school access 'bridge'

- 5.13 Adjacent to the primary school car park is the final exposed outfall, a 150mm diameter clay pipe and small brick headwall. This outfall serves a small area of car parking.



Image 14: Minor outfall from Grammar school car park

- 5.14 As the ditch becomes less defined at its lowest, southernmost point it meets a manhole projecting up from the base of the ditch. This manhole contains the outfall for the surface water drainage which runs from a catchpit situated on the eastern side of Horsham Road and picks up the Sports Centre surface water along with various other areas across the main built-up school site. The manhole also marks the start of the culverted continuation of the ditch, heading in a southerly direction via a 450mm diameter pipe.



Image 15



Image 16

Culverted primary school access 'bridge'

- 5.15 The 450mm diameter pipe is believed to enter the public surface water network at some point however, this remains unconfirmed and is not denoted on the Southern water network mapping. The brick wall of this manhole, projecting up from the base of the ditch has a single 150mm diameter pipe acting as an inlet for water from the ditch.



Image 17: 300mm diameter outfall
from Sports Centre / School
with 450mm diameter onward pipe

6.0 Northern Ditch (approx. 200m in length)

- 6.1 The northern ditch is deemed to start at the same point as the southern ditch (the earth bund, Image 01) but falls in a northerly direction towards the A283 Steyping bypass. Beyond the bund, the first 40m section of ditch is typically obscured by vegetation, twigs and organic matter. The profile is also poorly defined, but this may be a result of the obstructions



Image 18: Looking north from start of northern ditch

- 6.2 In localised patches where the vegetation thins out there are visible signs of water in the base of the ditch.



Image 19: water in the base of the ditch

- 6.3 Around 30m from the rear of the properties on Reads Walk the ditch becomes more defined with evidence of water and vegetation linked to damp environments



Image 20: The ditch becoming more clearly defined

6.3 Moving further north the ditch becomes obstructed by garden waste and litter just beyond the boundary of the housing on Reads Walk. Predominately consisting of tree branches and garden waste there are also plastic children's toys, motorcycle tyres and various aerosol cans in this pile.



Image 21: Garden waste and litter to the rear of a property on Reads Walk

6.4 It appears that one of the properties on reads Walk has constructed a makeshift platform over the ditch using scaffold tubes and timber boards, the ditch also appears to be partially blocked with earth.



Image 22: Fence panel spanning the ditch to the rear of property on Reads Walk



Image 23: Makeshift platform over the ditch,
to the back garden of property on Reads Walk.
The culvert below Reads Walk is beyond.

- 6.5 Below Reads Walk itself is a modern culvert, constructed at the same time as the housing the entrance and exit points have banks retained by gabions, all of which is visible on the most recent Google street view imagery. Unfortunately, on this visit, it was not possible to gain access to inspect this element.

To the south of the culvert, it appears to mainly be overgrown vegetation making access to the culvert difficult, however based on the amount of water present it can be assumed that the upstream ditch and culvert are functioning to a certain extent. With some clearance to this southern side, further inspection could be made to confirm.



Image 24: Ditch to the south of Reads Walk, looking south. Too overgrown to approach the culvert below Reads Walk

- 6.6 There are several minor obstructions to this area, from dumped bags of cement to logs and makeshift log bridges, all of which could be easily cleared. It is worth noting that the fall of the land to either side of the ditch does fall towards the ditch quite steeply and that obstructions in this area would be unlikely to cause wider issues – water would typically build up until it flowed around the obstruction without affecting the wider area in any meaningful way.



Image 25: Bags of cement dumped in the ditch
to the rear of properties on Reads Walk



Image 26: log 'bridge' and evidence of possible makeshift dam



Image 27: Looking north, logs blocking ditch before it intersects the ditch running West / East Adjacent the A283



Image 28: Looking south, back up the ditch
Logs blocking ditch before it intersects the ditch
running West / East Adjacent the A283

- 6.7 Approximately 90m north of the Reads Walk culvert, just beyond the boundary fence, the ditch reaches the water course running adjacent the A283 Steyning Bypass. This watercourse, whilst appearing somewhat overgrown appears to be functioning correctly and flows from west to east, with water visibly moving in that direction in a few locations.



Image 29



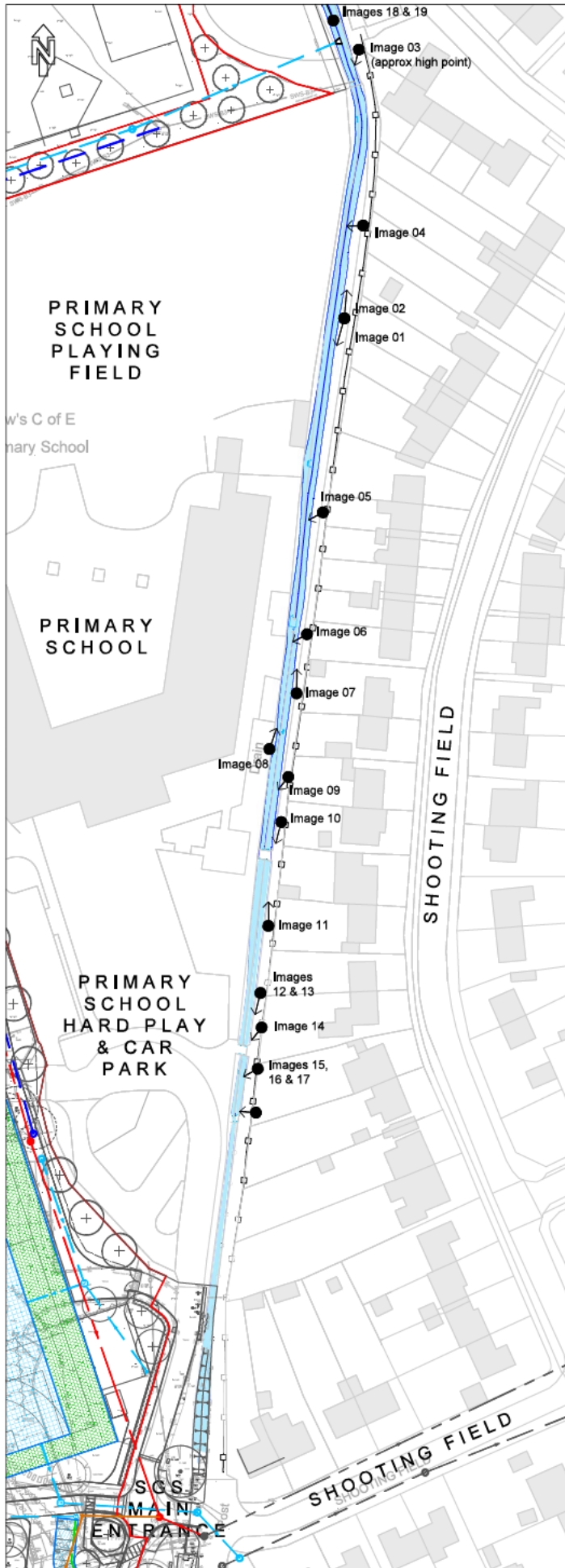
Image 30

Looking west (29) and east (30) along the watercourse adjacent the A283

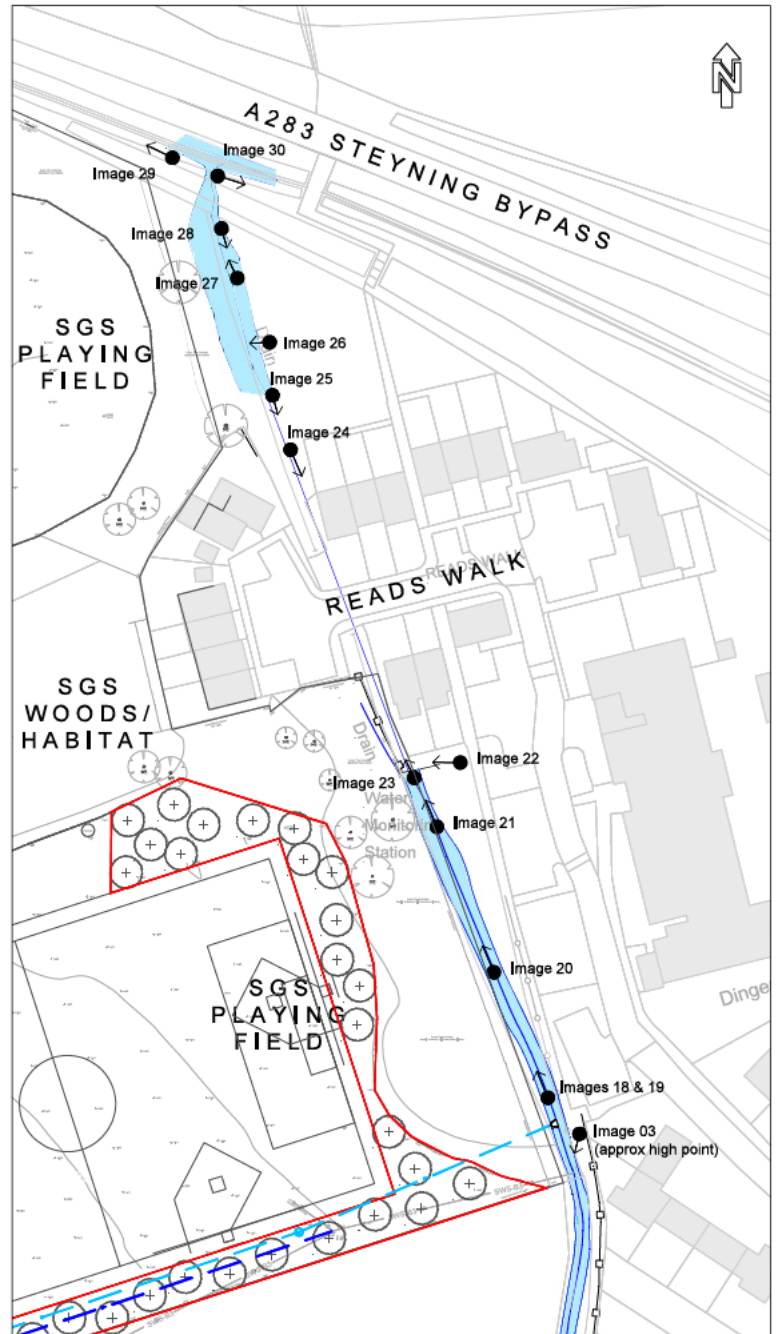
7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 The two sections of ditch are currently, generally poorly maintained. The southern ditch collects a number of surface water outfalls from the two school sites and appears to be functioning in some capacity. Local knowledge suggests that there was a time when there used to be flooding at an apparent low point somewhere alongside the primary school and that this is no longer the case. On this basis and as there are no proposed alterations to the to the amount of surface water heading to this section (except for possible reductions through demolition of some of the existing network on site) it may be prudent to leave this ditch alone almost entirely. With just clearance of building rubble and litter being possible.
- 7.1 The northern section of the ditch from the proposed outfall, several meters north of the existing 300mm diameter surface water outfall, down to the watercourse adjacent the A283 will become a fundamental element of the Steyning Grammar School surface water drainage strategy. We would therefore recommend that the base of the ditch is cleared of obstructions from the proposed headwall location down to the junction with the watercourse into which it feeds. The upper section of the ditch must be cleared of vegetation, and soft organic matter, clearly defining the ditch all the way to the culvert below Reads Walk. It is possible that the makeshift scaffold structure could remain, however the ditch below must be both cleared and maintained.
- 7.1 To the south of the Read Walk culvert the vegetation must be cleared to the section immediately downstream of the culvert, with an additional visit to ascertain the integrity of the culvert and ditch locally. Once the lower portion of the ditch has been cleared of larger obstruction little further intervention should be required.

Appendix A - Ditch Plan and key to photos



Southern Section of Ditch



Northern Section of Ditch



Key Plan

P02	15.05.26	SITE LAYOUT UPDATED	SP	LB
P01	16.02.26	PRELIMINARY ISSUE	NT	LB
Rev	Date	Amendment	By	Chk

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Steyning Grammar School,
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Condition Survey of Eastern
Boundary Ditch: Plan & Key
to Image Locations

Project	B1641	Client	n/a	Project	CIVILS
Drawn by	NT	Date	16.02.26	Drawn by	NTS
Scale	S2	Scale	Suitable for Information	Scale	@A1

PRELIMINARY

SRP1121-CTP-00-EX-D-C-SK99-P02