

Settlements: Hereford (Racecourse and Widemarsh Brook)

Location of Investigation

Figure 1: Large Scale Map showing the main flood site at the racecourse area of Hereford

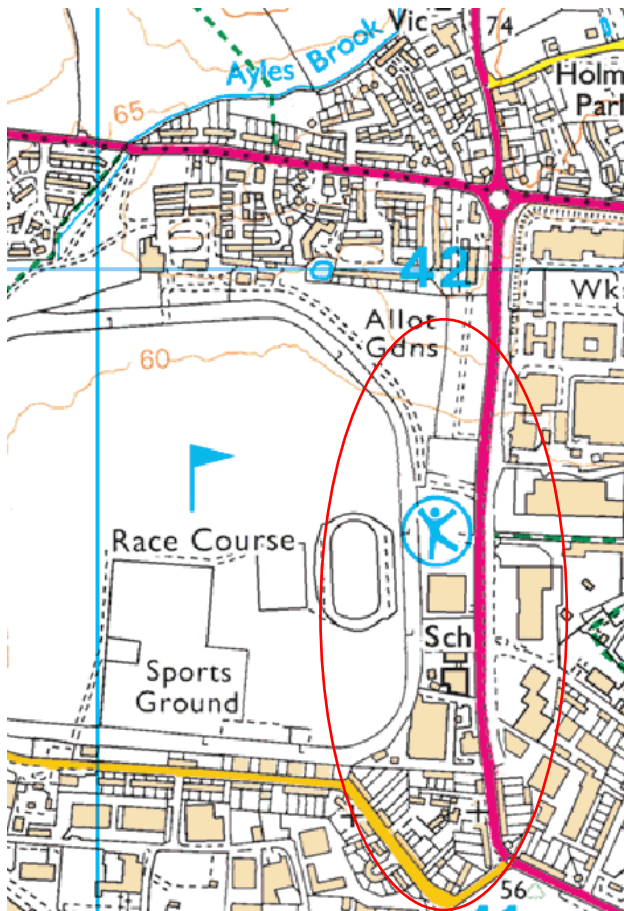
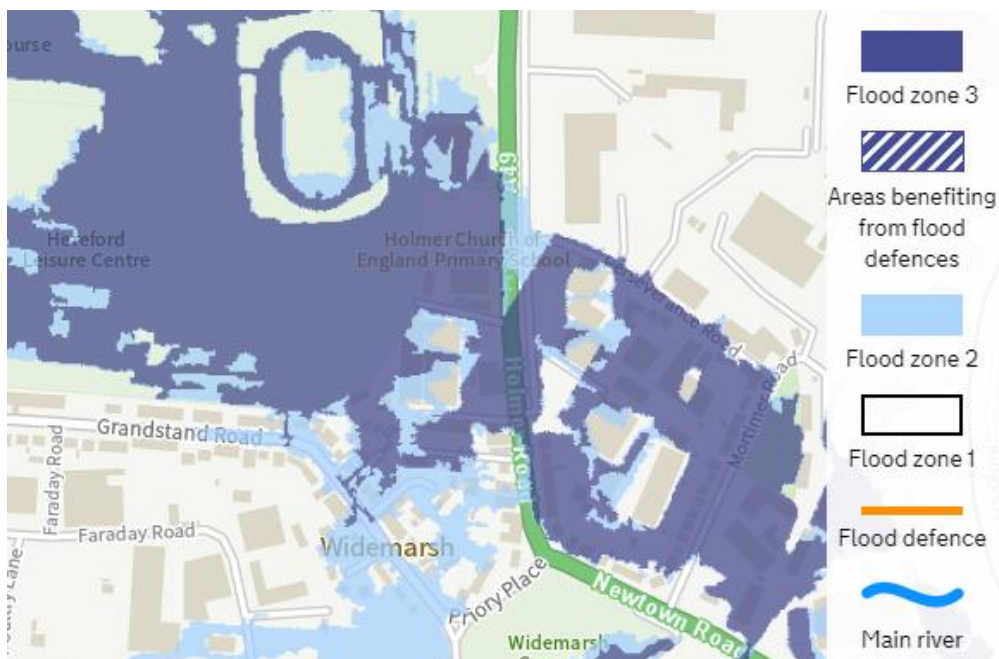


Figure 2: Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea), June 2021



Date of key flood event	February 16 th 2020
Authorities with Flood Risk Management duties or functions relating to the event	Herefordshire Council (Land Drainage Authority) Highways England Environment Agency

The Ayles Brook crosses the Racecourse and the A49 in a culvert and is designated as an Ordinary Watercourse which therefore falls under the regulatory supervision of Herefordshire Council Land Drainage Authority.

Highways England are responsible for maintaining the culvert below the A49.

The River Wye is a main river and is under the regulatory supervision of the Environment Agency.

Key Flood Event

A total of 34 properties were affected by internal flooding in the 'Racecourse to Ledbury Road' area of Hereford in February 2020 at depths of 1ft up to 5ft. Six respondents recorded outbuildings as having flooded to depths less than 6 inches. The duration of flooding was between 1 and 2 days.

Herefordshire Council records for this location identify an extensive history of flooding.

Hereford Racecourse (23 properties)

Flood Type: Fluvial and Surface Water

Watercourse Catchment: Ayles Brook is a tributary of the River Wye

Edgar Street Grid (7 properties)

Flood Type: Fluvial

Watercourse Catchment: Yazor / Widemarsh Brook is a tributary of the River Wye

Ledbury Road and Eign Road (4 properties)

Flood Type: Fluvial

Watercourse Catchment: River Wye and Widemarsh Brook.

Number of Internally Flooded Properties related to key flood event	34
Number of Internally Flooded Properties during most acute flood	34
Impact on Strategic Highway Network	None reported
Impact on Critical Infrastructure	Holmer C of E Academy Primary School
Health Risks	No injuries or loss of life were reported

Description of Flooding

Hereford Racecourse

The Flood Map for Planning indicates that almost every property which reported flooding is in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The source of fluvial flooding is the Ayles Brook, which drains into the Widemarsh Brook.

The A49 is raised slightly above the Racecourse. The Ayles Brook is culverted under Hereford Racecourse, so water which would otherwise have discharged into the brook becomes overland flow. Surface water flooding impacts the area because the Ayles Brook culvert has limited capacity and cannot convey water below the A49.

In the data there are also accounts of sewer overflow, surface water and blocked gullies so there was also a contribution from surface water overland flows that overwhelmed the local drainage network.

Holmer CoE Academy Primary School is recorded as being impacted during the February 2020 flooding. The school has flooded several times.

Further upstream, a tributary of the Ayles Brook was diverted into a highway drain prior to the Holmer West development. The drainage arrangement has now been altered but there is still a surface water flooding issue on A4103 Roman Road.

Edgar Street Grid

The Widemarsh Brook burst its banks due in part to backwater effects from the River Wye, causing fluvial flooding.

Ledbury Road and Eign Road

In February the Wye reached the highest recorded level at the Old Wye Bridge in central Hereford.

Ledbury Road was affected because the Widemarsh Brook burst its banks due to backwater effects from the River Wye.

Eign Road and Outfall Works Road was flooded directly from the River Wye.

Damage to Cultural Heritage Sites: There are no listed buildings located in the Flood Zone within this area of Hereford.

Previous reports of floods

Prior to the 16th February 2020 flood event, one site has report flooding numerous times.

Previous Flood Risk Studies

There are no flood risk studies previously undertaken at the racecourse.

Edgar Street Grid Flood Mitigation report 2017.

Conclusions

Herefordshire Council Land Drainage Authority proposes to exercise their flood risk management function in response to the recent flooding. Herefordshire LLFA has identified a requirement to promote delivery of a feasibility study on the Ayles Brook.

The Environment Agency have invited bids for DEFRA funding to support the delivery of Flood Risk Management projects. A bid for DEFRA grant funding has been raised on the basis of the existing fluvial flood risk to properties. The release of grant funding is however reliant on the submission of a robust grant application, the current programme identifies delivery of a study by March 2022.

DEFRA grant funding is being sought this financial year for a flood risk study in this area, based on the existing fluvial flood risk in this district.

A Flood Alleviation Scheme was constructed on the Yazor Brook at Credenhill and has been functional since 2012. Flows enter a 1.4 km culvert that discharges flow to the River Wye at the Old Weir. The primary driver for the scheme was the need for a strategic solution to flood risk in central Hereford and thus enable redevelopment of the Edgar Street Grid area. Herefordshire Council facilitates a walk-through inspection of the culvert every 2 years, the last inspection was on 29th May 2020.