

Storm damage from Wednesday 9 November 2016 in Ward 74

Suburbs in Ward 74

Abbotsford Bagleyston Birdhaven Birnam Bramley Cheltondale Elton Hill Fairway Forbesdale View Gresswold Highlands North Hawkins Estate Kent Kew - part Maryvale Melrose Melrose Arch Melrose Estate Melrose North Orchards Raedene Raumarais Park Rouxville Savoy Estate The Gardens

Water Courses in Ward 74

The Sandspruit runs through Ward 74. There are initially three sources that join in the James and Ethel Grey Park. Below is a description found on the City of Johannesburg web site.

Sandspruit

The Sandspruit is another stream that flows north. Its origins can be traced to three places. Firstly, the Orange Grove Stream, which starts in the Mountain View ridge, near the corner called "Death Bend" in Louis Botha Avenue.

It flows down to Houghton Drive, and along the edge of the Houghton Golf Course, where it is not visible, having been covered some time back. From here it veers east through Paterson Park and at Melrose North meets with a second, smaller stream that rises somewhere in the vicinity of the Houghton Golf Course, and is buried as it flows through Norwood.

The third stream has two sources: in Pine Avenue near St John's College, emerging again in the Killarney Golf Course, where it is joined by another small stream which probably rises in Oxford Road at Saxonwold, or near to the Johannesburg Zoo, according to Bodman.

These three streams join just north east of the Melrose Bird Sanctuary. Bodman suggests that this could be where the Sandspruit originates, in a concrete channel. Or, she ponders, perhaps it should be called the Sandspruit only once it has emerged from the concrete at Corlett Drive. Her research has failed to reveal exactly where the official Sandspruit begins.

http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&id=1104&Itemid=168%20J

Water related damage.

The most serious damage was caused along the line starting in the construction site of the Patterson Park re-development. Water from the Houghton Ridge dammed up against the boundary wall on the south side of Louis Rd. It eventually pushed the wall over and went across Louis Rd/Ivy Rd (they join at this point). On the north side that water pushed over boundary walls on a number of houses in a line along the culvert which was unable to contain the water. It appears that large volumes of water were added in each subsequent street, Henrietta, Garden and Oaklands Rd. Because the storm water inlets into the culvert were not able to cope with the volumes of water there were walls and fences that were pushed over to allow water to run through adjoining properties. Metal driveway gates were buckled, a stone wall had a hole breached in two places, a garden shed containing tools was swept away and not found. One resident found a bathroom bath in his garden.

Many houses suffered severe damage to their interiors. Water levels rose to the top of the door in the worst case. One family abandoned their house as it was not habitable.

I am not aware of any loss of life or serious injury to people but there were several family pets that were drowned. There were instances where residents were traumatised by their experiences, particularly women and children who in some cases were home alone during their ordeal.

In Orchards Rd Cheltondale the topography levels out and a number of blocks of flats had their ground floor parking flooded. The water then went through the Cheltondale park and then into the river course below the Norwood Mall.

The Hilson Bridge on The Avenue in the suburb of The Gardens was the next major obstacle. The banks on the upstream side were severely eroded. The foundations are now exposed and there is no lateral support.

I addressed an email on Thursday afternoon to Khaya Mbandla, the JRA Regional Manager with copies to the Regional Director, the Integrated Visible Service Delivery Manager and my Urban Inspector expressing my serious concerns for the safety of the roadway. The first picture below shows the extent of the river wall that was eroded and the second is from the park towards the roadway. The exposed foundations are on the right of the picture.



Further action required.

It is clear that the current infrastructure was not able to handle the volume of water on Wednesday. Residents who suffered serious damage report that there was a similar but smaller incident about 5 years ago. The redevelopment of Parerson Park may have changed the rate of flow of rain water. I did ask this question at the presentation at Spark Gallery on 26 October 2016, as did Mr Jeff Holtzhausen from 49 Garden Rd. He had his front and side garden walls knocked over. He lives adjacent to the culvert and water flowed from the street through his property into the culvert.

The City will need to have a detailed investigation into the storm water management system in this area.

David R Fisher

Councillor Ward 74

City of Johannesburg

13 November 2016

General pictures;



The culvert going north (down stream) from Louis Rd, Looking south from Louis Rd into the Paterson Park site.



General views of the culvert showing large bits of wall that had been dumped from further up as well as a boundry wall that was pushed over into the culvert by water coming in laterally.