

## **The Oakington Enclosure Act 1834**

The Oakington Enclosure Act was approved by Parliament in 1834, and defines a number of objects in the village at that time – land ownership, status of roads and their maintenance, and status of watercourses (“Drains”) and their maintenance. It is a lengthy volume, handwritten in script with a small number of copies, of which the Parish Council holds one. Ownership and divisions of land have of course changed a lot since then, and their history is recorded at the Land Registry and by individual deeds of ownership. The roads have changed too, mostly by addition of side-streets and the closure of some routes over the airfield. The Drains though have changed very little, and their maintenance remains of great interest to most residents in the village today. Below is a transcription from the handwritten script of the section of the Act relating to these Drains, where they run and ending in the description of the central (non-resident) requirement for their maintenance and upkeep. The map at the end (original courtesy of the environment agency) shows the numbers of the drains and how they relate to the still-existing watercourses.

### **(Part of) the Oakington Enclosure Act 1834 as approved by Parliament.**

And they the said Commissioners do hereby set out and appoint the following public drains and watering place in the said Parish of Oakington that is to say

(First Public Drain) One public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water being the moiety of a drain the other moiety being in the parish of Westwick leading out of a public drain in the parish of Longstanton St Michael and Westwick at the north east corner of Great Meadow and proceeding in the South East direction between the parishes of Westwick and Oakington to within the distance of forty four yards from the Westwick Road.

(Second Public Drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water leading out of the last described drain at the distance of forty four yards from the north east end of the New Bridge and proceeding in a south east direction to the east corner of an old Enclosure called Great Close belonging to Harry John Adeane Esquire and from there proceeding in a south west direction between Allotments and old Enclosures to a bridge across the Girton Road thence in a north west direction between allotments and old enclosures to a bridge called Gimblet bridge across the Dry Drayton Road then in a north west and south west direction between allotments and enclosures and over New Close field to the North East end of a Tunnel placed across the Huntingdon Turnpike Road.

(Third Public Drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the last described drain and proceeding in a south west direction to the north east end of a Tunnel placed across the Huntingdon Turnpike Road.

(Fourth Public Drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the second public drain at the north end of the first allotment herein awarded to Mr Richard Harwood and proceeding in south east and south west directions to the south west end of a Tunnel placed under the Girton Road thence in a North West direction across the end of the sixth private road to the north east corner of an Allotment to Stephen Radford the younger thence in a south-west direction by the north west side of the sixth private road to an allotment to Henry John (Rocane) thence in north west and south west directions over the said allotment until it (cuts) an

allotment to the {Giraz} and thence in south west and north west directions to the north east end of a tunnel placed across the Huntingdon Road.

(Fifth Public Drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the last public drain at the south corner of the first allotment herein awarded to Richard Harwood and proceeding in a south east direction along the north east side of the Girton Road until it enters the parish of Girton.

(Sixth public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the fourth public drain at the south west end of the tunnel placed under the Girton Road and proceeding in a south west direction along the south west side of the Girton Road until it enters the parish of Girton.

(Seventh public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the last public drain at the north corner of an allotment to Christ's College and proceeding in south west and south east directions between divers allotments to the north west corner of the parish of Girton.

(Eighth public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the second public drain at the east corner of an allotment to John Stittle and proceeding in a north west direction under Collins Bridge thence in the same direction to and across a tunnel under the Longstanton Road thence in the same directions to and across another tunnel under the fourth private road thence in a north east direction between allotments and enclosures to the south west side of the Longstanton Road thence in a north west direction along the south west side of the Longstanton Road until it enters the parish of Longstanton St Michael.

(Ninth public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the first public drain at the commencement thereof and proceeding in north west and south west directions by the side of the parish of Longstanton St Michael and across allotments in Mill Field to the public bridle way leading to Longstanton.

(Tenth public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the last public drain at the bounds of Longstanton and proceeding in south east and south west directions over Mill Field and Great Meadow to the Westwick Road.

(Eleventh public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water being the moiety of a drain the other moiety being in the parish of Westwick commencing at the east corner of an enclosure called Great Close belonging to Henry John Adeane Esquire and proceeding in a south east direction until it enters a drain in the parishes of Westwick and Histon.

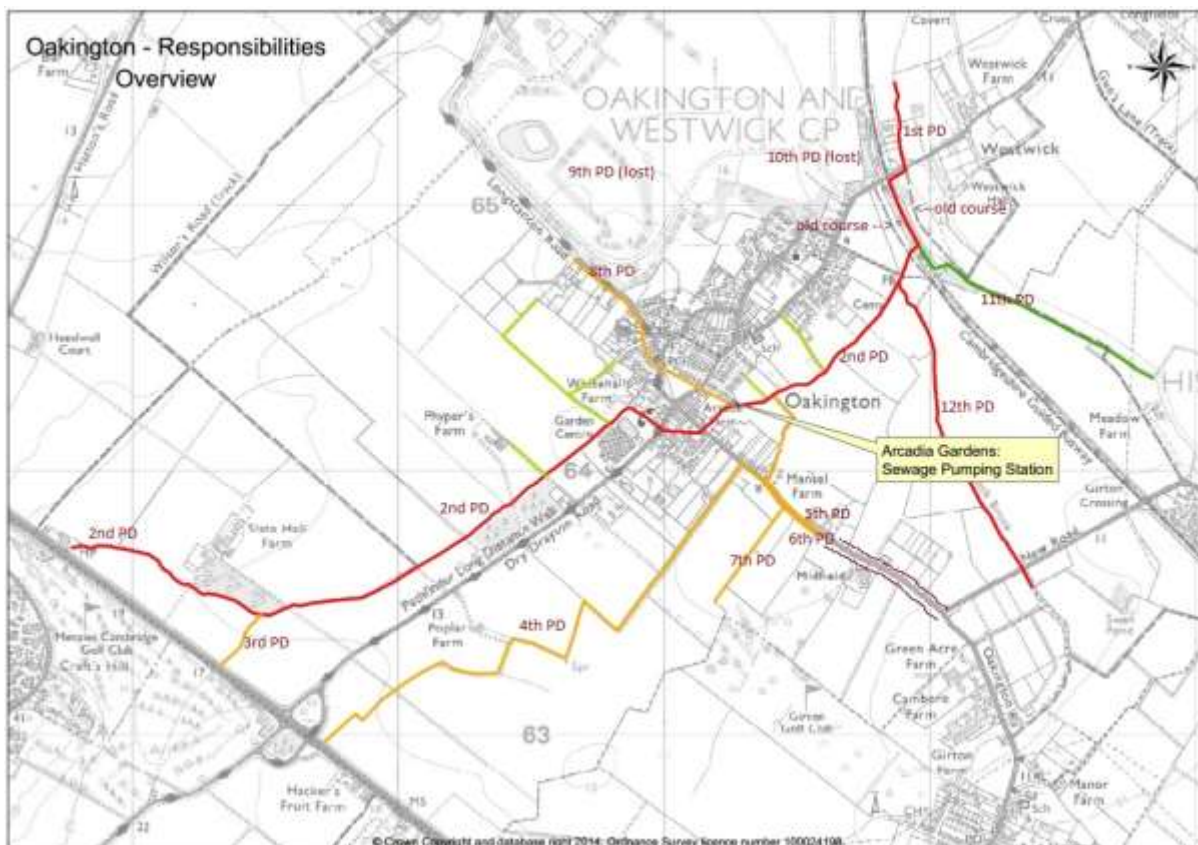
(Twelfth public drain) One other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water branching out of the second public drain and proceeding in a south east direction between old inclosures belonging to Henry John Adeane Esquire to the south east of Low Meadow and from thence being a moiety only the other moiety being in the parish of Histon and proceeding in the same direction along the northern side of an allotment to Henry John Adeane Esquire until it enters a drain in the parish of Histon.

(Public Watering Place) One public watering place containing twelve perches situate on Alehouse Green bounded on the north east by the Longstanton Road on the north west by the fifth private road and all other parts by an allotment to Edward Linton.

(Repair of Public Drains) And they the said Commissioners do also hereby Order and Award that the said public drains and public watering places so by them set out shall for ever be cleansed scoured repaired and maintained of such depths and dimensions as shall hereafter appear necessary making compensation to the owners whose land may be cut for that purpose by the Surveyor or Surveyors for the time being of the Highways within the said Parish of Oakington at the expense of the respective persons who for the time being are bound by Law to repair the highways within the said Parish.

*Notes: a "moiety" is a shared resource, and here seems to describe a watercourse running along a parish boundary with the course awarded in consequence in the Acts for both parishes.*

*Words which are unclear in the original appear as {such} in the text above.*



Red = Environment Agency maintained

Orange or Dark Green = South Cambridgeshire District Council maintained

Light green or not indicated = riparian landowner maintained