

9 DCSE2004/2777/F - NEW SOAKAWAY OUTFALL TO EXISTING SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT OUTFALL AT WALLOW FARM, PONTSHILL, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 5TQ

For: Kingsmead Construction Ltd. per M D Hughes & Partners, 52 High Street, Stonehouse, Glos GL10 2NA

Date Received: 29th July, 2004

Ward: Penyard

Grid Ref: 63210, 21819

Expiry Date: 23rd September, 2004

Local Member: Councillor H. Bramer

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Wallow Farm comprises a farmhouse and complex of stone barns on the southern side of the Pontshill - Coughton road (C1275). The barns have been converted into dwellings and the farmhouse renovated and extended. As part of this development a sewage treatment plant has been installed with the treated effluent being diverted to a stream to the west of the site through an existing field drain. The current proposal is to remove or abandon the western section of that drain and install a new soakaway system.
- 1.2 The former farm complex is elevated above the road with the land continuing to rise to the rear. A pond has been formed and a considerable volume of soil deposited on the land to the west of the buildings in order to resolve surface water drainage problems. The adjoining highway has been subject to flooding in the past and land to the north of the road by the stream has a high water table.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

D Circ 3/99 – Planning Requirements in respect of the use of non-mains sewerage

2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy C43 - Foul Sewerage

3. Planning History

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|-----|------------|---|-----------|
| 3.1 | SH930203PF | Conversion of 6 barns to residential use. - | Withdrawn |
| | | Construction of garage to serve existing house with new access. | 17.11.93 |
| | SH931417PF | Conversion of 6 barns to 5 residential and 1 garage - | Approved |
| | | | 13.06.94 |

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency has no objection to the proposed development.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Head of Engineering and Transportation has no observations on the proposal.

5. Representations

- 5.1 A report prepared by consulting engineers has been submitted which investigated the practicability of containing effluent within the field rather than discharging the stream 200 m to the west. It concludes, following a standard percolation test on the stony red marl subsoil that a total soakaway length of about 280 m would be required.

- 5.2 Parish Council representations are as follows:

After examining the drawings included with this application, it was unanimously resolved that Councillors felt that they were not qualified to form an opinion and that the matter should be referred to the Department of the Environment for their consideration.

- 5.3 Two letters have been received expressing concerns regarding this proposal. The following is a summary of these letters:

- (1) Apprehensive that the soakaway is to be built on land that has recently received on it hundreds of tons of waste and stone. Therefore the water will eventually find its own level which was the previous level of the field before the developer had his infill programme. This means however carefully it is 'laid' that on this sand land the above circumstances will prevail.
- (2) The effluent will eventually come out on the road or onto our land. We seem to be beset with major problems with this development, as the lake has not been properly lined and now propose that more water should flow onto our land.
- (3) We have lived here for 37 years, immediately to the north west and at least 6 to 9 metres below the development. We have planted many rare trees, only to find that since this development commenced we have lost many shrubs and trees to the south side of our stream. Now we find that far too many Sycamores and Hazel nuts (possibly the toughest species there are) are dying back and some of the largest bunches of nut have died.
- (4) The blue outline showing the demesne of the Developer is drawn so inaccurately, that the area is many metres out to the south and on other boundaries too, which leads one to ask how accurate is this proposal.
- (5) In my view of past history need to be aware of any implications this proposal may have on our property.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

6.1 The applicants do not give reasons why they propose to alter the foul drainage system. The planning issue however is whether the submitted scheme would result in environmental pollution or flooding on adjoining highway and land. There has been a history of drainage problems in this locality, which are continuing according to the representations. These presumably result from the topography, with surface water collecting in the valley bottom, and the inability of the soil, ditches and drains to ensure that all the water drains away. The rise in the water table coincident with development at Wallow Farm, according to objectors, has not been explained.

6.2 The treated effluent from the sewage treatment plant would add only a limited quantity to the volume of water that would drain through this area of land. The Environmental Agency is satisfied that the soakaway would be effective. There are no cogent reasons therefore to justify refusal of planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following condition:

1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Informative(s):

1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission.

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.