

JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE
UPDATE SHEET
16/05/2016

Correspondence received and matters arising following preparation of the agenda

Item A1

WA/2015/0478

LITTLE MEADOW, ALFOLD ROAD, CRANLEIGH

Responses from Consultees

County Council EIA Officer:

It would be unreasonable to request that the applicant undertake an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the capacity of the Cranleigh STW, and of the impacts of discharge from that facility on the quality of the Cranleigh Waters, as responsibility for ensuring that the STW offers sufficient treatment capacity to deal with the wastewater arising from the area that it serves lies with the sewerage undertaker, as does responsibility for ensuring that operation of the STW complies with the requirements of the permitting regime.

As it is proposed to attach stringent conditions to any planning permission that may be given for the proposed development in respect of the matter of foul water drainage, and as Thames Water have not objected to the scheme and have indicated that they will address the capacity and quality issues at the STW, there is a clear mitigation strategy in place to deal with the foul water that would be generated by the scheme.

If the scheme was reliant on a package sewage treatment works, with direct discharge to the wider water environment, it would be reasonable to expect the impacts of that element of the development on the water environment to form part of any Environmental Statement (ES). It would not be reasonable to require such information of schemes that propose connection to the established foul water network.

It is noted that a similar concern was raised in respect of the proposed development of 425 houses on land to the east of Alfold Road & west of Knowle Lane in Cranleigh (Application WA/2014/0912 and Appeal APP/R3650/W/15/3129019), and that the Inspector came to the following conclusion:

"68. The inquiry was informed by the Cranleigh Society that allowing the development to proceed could be in contravention of the Water Framework Directive, as the sewage treatment capacity is unlikely to support the anticipated increase in demand. Again, the matter has to be considered in the context of expected growth and additional homes to be provided in Cranleigh. The Environment Agency has not objected to the proposal and it would be for the statutory authorities to take the necessary measures to satisfactorily accommodate the new development."

From an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) perspective it is important to bear in mind that the 'environmental information' referred to in Regulation 2(1) of the EIA Regulations comprises of the ES (including any further information provided under regulation 22 and any other substantive information relating to the ES and provided by the applicant), of representations made by a relevant statutory consultee, and, representations made by any other party about the environmental effects of the development. So the views of Thames Water and the Environment Agency on foul water treatment, capacity and associated impacts, are salient in this case, and must be considered part of the 'environmental information' which the LPA needs to take into account in making their decision.

Officer comment:

The above comments were sought to reassure Members that the Environmental Statement submitted in support of the application was adequate to allow for the application to be determined, with particular regard to the current foul drainage capacity and water quality.

Officers have considered in detail the foul drainage position as well as the capacity of Cranleigh Waters to accommodate flows from the Thames Water Sewage Treatment Plant. Having regard to the advice contained within the Environment Agency's consultation response, dated 22 April 2016, this stated:

"We also strongly recommend that Waverley Borough Council liaise with the sewerage undertaker and if necessary impose a relevant planning condition that will ensure works to improve capacity of the existing sewage treatment works/network and/or have been completed prior to the occupation of the development. Where works cannot be carried out then planning permission should not be granted."

Officers have consulted with Thames Water and also visited the sewage treatment plant in Cranleigh. It is confirmed that sufficient capacity could be provided to accommodate the proposed development and those already permitted, within a reasonable time frame (i.e. within 5 years). In terms of the discharge to the Cranleigh Waters from the sewage works, Thames Water has a permit to discharge treated waste water to Cranleigh Waters. The discharge of treated water is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with appropriate warning mechanisms in place.

Given the assurances received from Thames Water regarding the ability to provide increased capacity, officers are satisfied that the development would not impact on water quality and therefore Water Framework Directive (WFD), subject to condition 14 on page 67 of the agenda. This proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of paragraph 109 of the NPPF and the European WFD.

There remains a wider issue to investigate the water course, however, this remains strategic matter to be addressed through the Local Plan process, and it would be unreasonable for the Council to require an individual developer to carry of wider assessments, as confirmed within the Environment Agency's consultation response.

3 additional letters of objection:

- Scheme being considered separately to the Berkeley's and Knowle Park Initiative scheme, all excess water would go into local streams which cannot cope with excessive rainfall, resulting in severe flooding in Elmbridge Road, Alfold Road and surrounding areas.
- Sewage is already at or near capacity, planning permission should not be granted unless upgrades are made.
- Total gridlock will result on Alfold Road and surrounding areas.
- Those living on Alfold Road will be able to get their cars in and out of their drives.
- Scheme is ill thought out and will have a major negative impact on the whole area.
- Look at the impact of Berkeleys again, particularly with regards to the potential flooding and sewage issues.

Officer comment:

The matters raised in the additional representation area considered to be addressed in detail within the officers report.

Revised Recommendation A

That, subject to ~~consideration of further comment from the County Council's Environmental Impact Assessment Officer,~~ completion of a S106 legal agreement to secure 36% affordable housing, infrastructure contributions towards off-site highway improvements, primary education, off-site highway works, play spaces and open space and the setting up of a Management Company to manage the SuDs, within 3 months of this date of resolution to grant permission, and conditions 1-39 and informatives 1-21, permission be GRANTED
