

Agenda item 18/205 – Notes re consideration of the clause *'By the time the building starts the water and sewage problems would be solved'*

When the possibility of affordable housing on the yard at Peaslake Farm was first publicly discussed in December 2014 concerns were expressed, via the Peaslake Protection Group, about the impact on the sewage system servicing Peaslake as a result of any house building on the farm yard.

A long history of problems relating to flooding and the questionable adequacy /efficacy of the system was referred to, with the severe problems experienced by the residents of Pursers Lea Cottages over Christmas 2012 , and again Christmas 2013, being the then most recent and significant manifestations of the problems experienced.

These expressions of concern prompted the start of an ongoing dialogue with Thames Water. This included correspondence and several meetings over a period, concerning the adequacy and performance of the sewage system. The concerns also prompted Ward Councillors to table a motion at the June 2016 Council Meeting (the meeting that approved the adoption of the development project) to accept a clause stating *'By the time the building starts the water and sewage problems would be solved'*.

At the October 2018 Council Meeting a report from the Chairman was considered and noted which summarized Thames Water's conclusions and position regarding flooding in Peaslake, the adequacy and performance of their assets following the investigations and improvements carried out since the dialogue was commenced and the extent of their legal responsibilities.

Attached is a copy of the October report to Council.

To re-cap – Thames Water's actions and clarifications since the dialogue began have been;

- 1.Thames surveyed, by CCTV, their 'assets' – the foul sewage lines – to confirm that they were running clear of obstruction (at that time) and that the integrity of the system was not compromised by water from the stream entering the foul water system.
2. The pumps and non-return valves at the pumping station were replaced to improve performance.
3. The pumping station has been put on to a quarterly maintenance routine.
4. An upgraded TEPI – telemetry control device – has been fitted at the pumping station to enable better control of the pumps and monitoring by Thames as to the station's performance.
5. The division of responsibilities between Thames and Surrey CC has been emphasized – the foul water sewers and system are the responsibility of Thames Water, but SCC are responsible for all surface water sewers, and culverts, which may also become overloaded in heavy rainfall.
6. Thames provide foul water systems capable of handling all foul water waste and in normal weather circumstances both the authorised and unauthorised surface water discharges into their assets. On occasions where rainfall is exceptionally heavy, the combination of the normal foul waste and the surface water discharges into the foul water sewers may be in excess of the foul sewer's flow and pumping capacity. However Thames Water is not liable for any flooding that may result in such circumstances.

Greenoak Housing Association is now preparing to submit a detailed planning application and to commit to a contract in accordance with the agreed and signed Heads of Terms. They have therefore asked via the Steering group meeting, that Council confirms that they consider the clause adopted by Council in June 2016 to have been sufficiently addressed as to enable its formal removal by Council.

In making this consideration it should be noted that since the enhancements undertaken by Thames Water the pumping station has coped with all identified pumping demands, and there has been no sewage flooding **SAVE when there have been blockages in the sewer before the flow reaches the pumping tanks, caused by 'inappropriate material' creating a blockage or restricting the flow, so causing a backup in the sewer itself.**

Some road flooding has still been evident on occasions, but this is associated with whether or not the road drains have been kept running freely.

Any removal of the clause adopted by Council in June 2016 will of course not obviate the need for Greenoak Housing Association plans to be acceptable to the Planning Department in respect of their proposals for drainage and sewage treatment. Also it will still need Thames Water's confirmation that their sewage assets are capable of the additional demands that would be put upon it.

Nor will the removal of the clause mean that the Council ceases to talk with Thames Water and Surrey County Council regarding mitigating the impact of surface water disposal at times of exceptional rainfall. The Council will lobby Surrey County Council on behalf of Peaslake residents, for the new initiative funded by Thames Water in 2020 to introduce Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems into some local areas.

And finally any resident will still be able if they wish to lodge a personal objection or letter of concern regarding the Planning Application itself, or their perceived implications for the sewage system in Peaslake.