Lee Witts (BEng Hons)

Sandleford Park, Newbury

Proof of Evidence Summary: APP/18 (Flood Risk, Foul & Water Supply)

LPA Ref: 20/01238/OUTMAJ
PINS Ref: APP/W0340/W/20/3265460

Bloor Homes Ltd & Sandleford Farm Partnership
6th April 2021

1 Introduction

Introduction

1.1 I am a degree qualified Civil Engineer (BEng Hons) and act as the Business and Development Director for Brookbanks. I am the witness for Flood Risk, Water Supply and Foul Drainage infrastructure.

1.2 I have 22 years experience in engineering consultancy and have specialised in the delivery of strategic development planning applications. I have also acted as expert witness on numerous occasions.

1.3 I through Brookbanks have been involved in the Appeal Site since 2014, providing drainage advice to support the emerging proposals.

1.4 My evidence is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional training and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

1.5 Referring to the previous Outline Planning Application (ref 18-00764/OUTMAJ) submitted for this Appeal Site, Mr Cooper, a Senior Engineer within the West Berkshire Council Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) provided written agreement (with no objection) to the drainage proposals.

1.6 The Flood Risk Assessment and all associated documentation linked to drainage, foul water and water supply fully accords with Core Strategy Policy CS16, the Sandleford Park SPD (Sections H & L) and the Sustainable Drainage Systems Planning Document.

Refusal Reason 13 – Surface Water

1.7 In response to the comment that the ancient woodland would receive less surface water run-off when the development is built, I have evidenced that the trees within the ancient woodlands receive water through their roots directly from the groundwater, not from the surface water flows from the upstream catchments.

1.8 As there are open green spaces within the development parcels, such as gardens, rainwater will still infiltrate replenishing the groundwater that feeds the ordinary watercourse that flows through Crooks Copse.

1.9 As infiltration is not proposed as a means of discharging surface water from the development site, there is no risk of groundwater contamination.

1.10 In response to the proposed drainage basins being incorrectly designed, I have evidenced that all basins have been designed to a 1.5m depth, 1.2m water level and 1 in 3 slopes, in accordance with Chapter 22: Detention Basins of the SuDS Manual C753. Page 475 of the manual states:

1.11 "The maximum depth of water in the basin should not normally exceed 2m in the most extreme design event. And; Slopes should be no steeper than 1 in 3 wherever mowing is required."

1.12 In response to the statement that development drainage if allowed to freely run into the ancient woodlands, I have evidenced that surface water runoff from the development parcels have not been designed to flow through or runoff into the ancient woodlands.

1.13 Only surface water from open green space and the ancient woodland will flow through Dirty Ground Copse and Slockett's Copse.

1.14 In response to the claim that on-site groundwater is high, I have provided information relating to infiltration testing which was completed by GEG in September 2014 (with the report issued in November 2014). The depths of the 17 trail pits from theses works ranged from 1.2m bgl and 3.7m bgl. And groundwater was not encountered in any of the trial pits. None of the proposed SuDS have been designed to a depth greater than 1.5m, therefore, avoiding any environmental impact with the groundwater.

Rule 6 Parties

1.15 My Proof of Evidence shows that:

1.16 There is a low risk of surface water flooding illustrated across the site, a designed SuDS network will collect, convey and store surface water in detention basins, removing the risk of surface water flooding.

1.17 No surface water from the development site will leave the red line boundary and a CEMP will be put in place before any construction works to mitigate against any adverse effects that construction pollution will have on the local environment.

1.18 No soakaway drainage has been proposed for the development therefore, the proposed SuDS will not impact groundwater levels or water quality.

Under the Water Industry Act 1991, 2003 et al, Thames Water has a statutory obligation to provide capital investment in strategic treatment infrastructure and provide any reinforcement works to meet development growth.