

Mr Alex Yendole - Principal Planner
Stafford Borough Council
Forward Planning Team
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
Staffordshire
ST16 3AQ

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Your ref: LDF
Date: 01 October 2007

Dear Mr Yendole

CASTLEFIELDS DRAINAGE

Further to your notes from our meeting on the 13th September, the Environment Agency would like to add the following comments to paragraph 17, relating to potential drainage issues at the Castlefields area of Stafford.

Any development at this location should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Techniques, in order to ensure that flood risk is not increased on the site or on third party land as a result of the development.

Environment Agency maps indicate that this area is underlain by geology classified as Minor Aquifer and Non-Aquifer. No Source Protection Zones are located in this area. Therefore, provided that ground conditions are appropriate, soakaways must be considered as the preferred means of surface water disposal. Any obstacles to the use of soakaways must be clearly justified and evidence provided (i.e results of ground investigations).

Prior to considering a potential surface water drainage system for the site a full study of the drainage system serving the existing Castlefields estate area should be undertaken, including the capacity of the balancing ponds, the Forebridge Drain system and the outfall location into the River Sow. The Environment Agency should be consulted at the earliest opportunity to agree the scope of this feasibility study.

We recommend that the developer consider at the earliest stage possible how SuDS techniques could be incorporated into the development in order to Make Space For Water, and to take into consideration the impact of climate change over the lifetime of the development. This should include the possibility of

Environment Agency
Environment Agency, Sentinel House, Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Nr Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 8RR.
Customer services line: 08708 506 506
Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

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balancing ponds as part of the design layout, which will need to take into consideration the existing balancing ponds serving the site.

A holistic approach to water management should be undertaken and as such we recommend that there is one integrated strategy for the whole development area, even if it is to be developed in phases. The drainage system should be put in place prior to any other construction works in order to ensure there is no temporary increase in the risk of flooding during construction, and that each phase is integrated into the drainage scheme and meets the required standard.

Any additional balancing ponds should be part of an on-line system, linking in with the existing infrastructure. It should be ensured that all balancing ponds, either new or existing have the capacity to retain the rainfall for a 100 year plus 30% for climate change rainfall event. As such, the capacity of the existing balancing ponds should be investigated as it is unlikely they were designed to have such a capacity.

All clean roof water should be directed to soakaways, whereas run-off from all driveways, roads and areas of hardstanding should be directed to balancing ponds via an oil interceptor/reed bed system to ensure there is no risk of water pollution from vehicle-borne contaminants.

Yours sincerely

Miss Jane Field
Planning Liaison Officer

Direct dial 01543 404878
Direct fax 01543 444161
Direct e-mail jane.field@environment-agency.gov.uk

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