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Wokingham Borough Council
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Our Ref: 241778/KL/ml/01

10 October 2024

Dear Sirs,

58 FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD

We have been passed a copy of the recent objection from Network Rail to the above planning application. We note that they do not consider that the FRA submitted with the application has considered the stream.

The FRA has clearly demonstrated to risk of flooding from fluvial “river” and all other sources of flooding. The fluvial flood risk from the Emm Brook was assessed and demonstrated that the only southwest corner of the site could be subject to flooding. With regards to the other sources of flooding, the surface water flood risk assessment shows that the southern boundary could be subject to flooding from the Emm Brook, based on the national surface water flood maps known as the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) maps. The mapping shows there is no flood risk from the stream or water course running around the eastern and southern boundaries of the site.

The Risk of flooding from surface water published on the government website reference LIT 8986, which sets out the methodology that was used to prepare the surface water flood maps to show how water moves across the ground and where is ponds. Based on the best available data no flood risk has been identified for the stream mentioned by Network Rail. The publication does say that if you disagree with the surface water map then you will need to provide appropriate evidence to your Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for consideration, therefore if Network Rail has better information they need to speak to the LLFA to get the mapping updated.

The figure below shows that the surface water flood risk and that the risk comes from the Emm Brook not the stream to the south of the site.



With regards to other sources of flooding the Councils SFRA shows the area is at low risk of flooding, it is assessed that the area has a less than 25% risk of groundwater flooding and there is no risk of reservoir flooding. Therefore, it is concluded that the flood risk from all sources including the stream have been adequately assessed.

With regards to the ownership and maintenance of the ditch it will not change the freeholder of the land will have riparian responsibility for the ditch maintenance. Any change in ownership of the land will not alter the responsibilities. The freeholder has a right to discharge to ordinary water course and has the responsibility to let water flow naturally with undiminished quantity and quality, not to obstruct the flow of a watercourse to the detriment of your neighbours.

The proposed development will not remove the riparian responsibilities even if there is a change in the freeholder of the land. The responsibility for the maintenance of the ditch will not be affected by these proposals so there will change to the current situation.

Finally, Network Rail sets out the requests from their Southern Asset Protection and Optimisation (ASPRO) team. The majority of these requests involve method statements on construction activities which can not be complete until a contractor is appointed. With regards to the permeable paving and soakaways these have all been covered in the FRA, contamination and soil investigations will be complete post decision and appropriate measures will be implemented if required.

The proposals will not alter the watercourse running around the site, so there will be no blockage or diversion of it that would remove or restrict the outfall from the Network Rail Lane. It is fully accepted that if needed an asset protection agreement will be signed with ASPRO.

We trust the above has clearly demonstrated that all flood risk has been considered including the stream that runs along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site and that Network Rail are able to remove their objection but if you require any further information, please let us know.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Lang