

Tom Rea
North Hertfordshire District Council
Planning Control & Conservation
Council Offices Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

Our ref: NE/2025/138224/02

Your ref: 25/00947/DOC

Date: 29 August 2025

Dear Tom,

Details reserved by condition 25 (topographic survey) of planning permission reference 22/00754/FP granted on 05.09.2023.

The Foundry, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, SG4 7NX.

Thank you for re-consulting us on the above discharge of condition application.

Environment Agency Position

Based on the information submitted we remain **unable to recommend** discharge of condition 25.

Comments

This submission includes two different topographic surveys - PC/DV0093/L25 and TS25-513-1. These surveys are not consistent and provide different levels in each.

We have reviewed drawing TS25-513-1 (titled: As Built Level Survey, dated July 2025) and compared it with the approved C17 Levels Drawing PC/DV0093/L17 (titled: Site Sections & Levels, dated September 2023), submitted under application 23/02620/DOC. The plans show that there are differences between the two, with the 'as built' drawings displaying areas which are now higher than those submitted as part of application 23/02620/DOC.

Detailed modelling was undertaken at the outline planning stage and used to inform the finished floor levels. Changing the ground levels may have increased the flood depths. As this area is located within flood zone 3, the level-for-level, volume-for-volume floodplain compensation calculations will need to be updated to prove that the development will not increase flood risk.

Of particular note is that the access road on the approved C17 Plans shows a level of approximately 70.4m AOD between plots 1 and 2. The 'as built' drawing now shows the access road set at approximately 70.9m AOD. This would exclude flood flows reaching the floodplain around plot 1, and may result in higher flood depths in the vicinity of plots 2 and 3. It may also increase the depth of flooding on Brookend Lane.

Please note that revised calculations will need to include an assessment on how the close board fencing (with 300mm gap) will affect the flows within the floodplain. The

original model included post and wire fencing. We are particularly concerned that plots 3 and 6 could see increased depths of flooding as the fencing will act as a barrier preventing the free flow of flood water. The ground levels are set at 70.45m AOD. The fencing has a 300mm gap to allow flood flows, however the 1% plus climate change level is 70.95m.

Based on the information provided above, we recommend that this condition is not discharged until additional information has been provided which shows that the changes in ground levels and fencing will not have an impact on flood levels, both on and off site.

Additional comments re fencing

We previously requested confirmation that the fencing installed is in line with drawing PV/DV0093/F26A, dated November 2023, submitted under planning ref. 23/02620/DOC. The additional information provided states that the fencing has been constructed in line with drawing PC/DV0093/F26B. It appears that there have been two discharge of condition applications relating to condition 26. The most recent discharge of condition 26 (with drawing PC/DV0093/F26B submitted) was granted by the LPA on the 16th April 2025. Drawing ref PC/DV0093/F26B shows that there will be a 1.5m post and rail fence with mesh alongside the channel and a 1.8m high timber close board fence with a 300mm gap to bottom. This is not in line with the approved fencing plan (as shown in drawing ref PC/DV0093/F26A) which showed that there would be a 1.5m high post and rail fence between the properties, rather than the approved close board fence with 300mm gap in the base.

Had we been consulted on this, we would have recommended against this condition being discharged as it may have an impact on flood flow routes, which has not been assessed. We request that the applicant provide evidence (preferably photos, with locations marked up on the supporting plans) to show the various fencing types installed.

The modelling and associated modelling report carried out by JBA (in particular, document EIK-JBAU-XX-XX-RP-HM-0001-A1-C04-002-FRA_Report included in planning application ref 23/02620/DOC) states that post-rail type fences should be used in areas where flood depths in excess of 300mm (as shown in Figure 4-5) are expected to occur during the 100yr plus climate change flood event; panel fences with a 300mm gap at the bottom elsewhere. Figure 4.4 (100 year with 19% climate change post development flood depths) clearly shows that the boundaries between all the plots (excluding plot 1) have depths greater than 300mm.

In our response to 22/00754/FP (our letter ref. NE/2023/135604/02) we requested that the permitted development rights were removed. Our response specifically stated: *'we ask to be consulted on any proposed built development, including fencing, within the floodplain to ensure that there will be no increase in flood risk as a result of the development.'*

Pre-Application Advice

In this case, we strongly encourage the applicant to seek our pre-application advice to fully resolve the issues at this site. Please email

HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk to communicate with us further over this. Further information on our charged planning advice service is available [here](#).

Final Comments

Thank you for contacting us regarding the above application. Our comments are based on our available records and the information submitted to us. Please quote our reference number in any future correspondence.

Should you have any queries regarding this response, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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Planning Specialist

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