

Ms Anne McDonald
North Hertfordshire District Council
Planning Control & Conservation
Council Offices Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

Our ref: NE/2024/137645/01
Your ref: 24/02382/DOC
Date: 3 December 2024

Dear Anne,

Newsells Park Winery, Whiteley Hill, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8DY.

Details reserved by condition 20 (surface water disposal) of planning permission reference 23/01420/FP granted on 05.12.2023.

Thank you for consulting us on the above application on 19 November 2024. As part of the consultation, we have reviewed the Solution. Surface Water Drainage Planning Condition nos. 6 & 20 Discharge: Job No. 1315. 23-05-2024

Environment Agency Position

The proposed surface water drainage scheme incorporates permeable paving and soakaways that will infiltrate into the ground. From the information provided we understand that soakaways to depths exceeding the 2m maximum that we advise as being routinely acceptable are proposed.

In this instance we are minded to accept such proposals because: (a) The soakaways as proposed will terminate at relatively shallow depths well above the estimated depth of groundwater; (b) It appears that adequate water quality treatment will be provided for the soakaway discharges. It also appears that the permeable paving will provide adequate water quality treatment; (c) We consider that there is a low risk of significant contamination in soakaway locations. The same applies to permeable paving.

Considering the preceding, we consider that the scheme as proposed is unlikely to present an unacceptable pollution risk to groundwater and on this basis **would not object to the discharge of Condition 20.**

If unexpected contamination is encountered during development in soakaway or permeable paving locations it must be managed via Condition 18. Our expectation is that the infiltration SUDs will not be constructed in contaminated ground.

Advice to applicant

Water Resources

Increased water efficiency in new developments potentially enables more growth to be realised without an increased availability of water resources. Developers can highlight responsible water use as a positive corporate social responsibility message that will boost the commercial appeal of the development. For the homeowner/tenant, lower water usage also reduces water and energy bills.

We endorse the use of water efficiency measures in all developments, particularly in those that are new. Use of technology that ensures efficient use of natural resources could support the environmental benefits of future proposals and could help attract investment to the area. Therefore, water efficient technology, fixtures and fittings should be all considered as an integral part of new developments and/or refurbishments. The technology used to achieve improved water efficiency (e.g. efficient fittings, greywater recycling, etc) is also an attractive feature for many prospective building owners and tenants.

We recommend that all new non-residential developments of 1000sqm gross floor area or more (i.e. 'major' developments) should achieve the [BREEAM 'excellent' standard](#) for water consumption (category 'WAT 01'), or equivalent. This standard may already be a requirement of the local planning authority.

We also recommend you contact your local planning authority for more information.

Pre Application Advice

Regarding future applications, if you would like us to review a revised technical report prior to a formal submission, outside of a statutory consultation, and/or meet to discuss our position, this will be chargeable in line with our planning advice service. If you wish to request a document review or meeting, please contact our team email address at HNLsustainableplaces@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Further information on our charged planning advice service is available at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-advice-environment-agency-standard-terms-and-conditions>.

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. Please provide us with a copy of the decision notice for our records. This would be greatly appreciated.

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

Yours sincerely,

Ms Frankie Mansi
Planning Advisor

Email: HNLsustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk
Direct Dial: 020 3025 2622