

Comment for planning application WSCC/007/24

Application number	WSCC/007/24
Name	Martin HOOPER
Address	LODGE, STAPLEFIELD COURT, BRANTRIDGE LANE, BRANTRIDGE LANE, HAYWARDS HEATH, RH17 6EN
Type of Comment	Objection
Comments	<p>I write to object to the application for a Wetland in Staplefield Village adjacent to the conservation area and within the AONB. I have been a Staplefield resident for 35 years.</p> <p>The provision of a wetland is inconsistent with the natural ecology of the area which is, and has been for many years, predominantly farmland. The proposal will introduce a foreign ecosystem into the High Weald ecosystem. The ecological assets within the AONB are highly protected and must remain so without the intrusion of unnatural fauna and flora.</p> <p>I write now about heritage assets of which there are many adjacent to and within the site. Firstly, the setting of the Forge and the workings of the Forge itself will be impacted. The latter being lost forever. The associated buildings (Bridge House AKA The Old Kennels) are essential components of this heritage asset. To insert a wetland into the centre of this whole will be to erode its importance and integrity. Similar comments could be made about Grade II Lower Ashfold.</p> <p>I make similar comments about the Heritage assets relating to WWII: MM18, MM19 and MM21. These are recorded accurately in Table C:2 of Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment. However, Section 7.2.1 is so inaccurate as to be misleading in that it locates MM18 to the SW whereas it is on the Northern boundary of the site, MM21 is not mentioned in this section and MM19 is dismissed lightly. The converse is in fact the case. These three WWII assets form part of the important Stop Line built to deter invasion from the coast by Blitzkrieg. They are part of a line that stretches from east to west half way from London to the South coast. They should not be viewed in isolation because their effectiveness required overlapping fields of fire i.e. they protected each other. The Coffins (MM19) and the R. Ouse stopped the tanks, MM21 had an anti tank gun to destroy the tanks and heavy/light machine guns to protect MM18. MM18 protected MM19. Additional "pillboxes " can be found along the stop line in nearby fields and farmsteads. The significance of this is that the views from MM18 will be interrupted and blocked by the raised beds, bunds and reprofiling of the proposed wetland. This is to negate the importance of the heritage asset and will reduce it to an individual building rather than a part of a much larger whole. It will become disconnected from its intent and purpose thus reducing the impact of an important historical aspect of our country's recent history. (Ref Pillbox Study Group)</p> <p>I turn to the Biology of the site. It is accepted that treatments of waste water must improve though this should not be to the detriment of the landscape, ecology and assets already present. Currently the treated water discharges into the fast-flowing River Ouse. The proposal will reduce the pumped flow through the cells to 4l/min. There appears to be no information as to the effect of this on odours emanating from stagnating water due to consequences of silting, pump failure and reduced maintenance. The SW prevailing wind will carry any such odours directly to the village of Staplefield. In 35 years, there have never been any such concerns with the current works. There has been no exploration of any alternative treatment so it is not all or nothing. Technology exists that could allow the effluent to be treated on the current site.</p> <p>I understand that this would be Southern water's first experimental wetland. Their track record of water treatment leaves much to be desired. I am not convinced that they can be entrusted with this experimental approach to an issue which can be solved in other ways in this particular environment. A further extension into the site is planned though not further explained by an extension of car parking. This will further damage the undisturbed and natural environment. Other than additional parking for visitors to this showpiece experiment ,there appears to be ample parking at the current site.</p> <p>In view of my above comments, I believe that the Wetland at Staplefield is no place for an experiment. I respectfully ask you therefore to refuse this application.</p> <p>Yours sincerely Martin Hooper MA BSc</p>
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Attachments	