

**From:** [DAVIES, Mims](#)  
**To:** [PL Planning Applications](#)  
**Cc:** [Pete Bradbury](#)  
**Subject:** Mims Davies MP - Comments for planning application WSCC/007/24 (Our ref: MD35553)  
**Date:** 12 March 2024 17:55:37  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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**\*\*EXTERNAL\*\***

Good Afternoon

I have been approached by a number of local residents from the Staplefield area who have expressed their extensive concern regarding planning application WSCC/007/24 for the proposed Southern Water Wetlands development adjacent to their existing water treatment plant. I write to echo the vast majority who have submitted their grave concerns via objections directly into the WSCC Planning Portal.

I very much recognise that this proposal is small scale, experimental in its process and, whilst the Southern Water documentation does not explain this, will take a period of time before its potential is or could be reached. However, I am also aware that constructed wetlands of this type are not always successful and that other similar schemes have resulted in poor outcomes including stagnant water and unpleasant odours impacting local residents. There is no clear data and impact assessment on this scheme and its viability.

Unfortunately, Southern Water do not have the strongest record of non-pollution, with residents referring to a weekly 3hour period where sewage is discharged into the River Ouse and fines of £90 million in 2021 amongst others for widespread pollution of rivers and coastal waters [source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stream-polluted-by-negligent-southern-water>]. It is therefore completely understandable that there are local reservations about this process and application.

Added to this I understand there is no clear explanation as to why this is the best option for the site, with 3 other alternative processes potentially being more suited both on environmental and cost efficiency standpoints. This application appears to be somewhat rushed and insights and reassurances thin on the ground as characterised below in regard to:

- 1) Upgrade to the current Staplefield Treatment Works to allow for Chemical Dosing
- 2) Upgrade to the current Staplefield Treatment Works to allow for Biological Nutrient Removal
- 3) Analysis of removing excess sewage to alternative sites with greater processing capacity

I am greatly concerned that there has been no formal public consultation prior to submission of the application so that the local community can better understand the implications of the planned development or allow them to comment on the application from a position of knowledge of the full expectations of what the proposal will achieve nor has there been sufficient clarity of how it will impact the community.

I would like to see consideration of this application be brought to committee, so the community are able to engage effectively with decision makers where these questions must be asked, or this be resisted until they can be. I also ask that WSCC Planning Team do challenge the applicant,

Southern Water, to gain a better understanding of why this option was chosen specifically for this site against the alternatives available as my constituents have asked me to request for them.

I do have significant concerns that there is insufficient clarity for the community and the decision makers at this time in respect of the positives, negatives and alternatives available for this proposal.

I look forward to receiving your acknowledgement of receipt for this approach and your serious consideration of this matter.

With kind regards

Mims



**Mims Davies MP**

**Working hard across Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and the Mid Sussex villages**

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