

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Supporting Planning Statement has been prepared by WYG Engineering Limited on behalf of VHE Construction Ltd. and provides supporting information to accompany a planning application for construction of a balancing pond adjacent to Weetshaw Lane, Cudworth, Barnsley.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. The site in question is located to the southwest of Shafton and the north of Cudworth and is part of the Cudworth and West Green bypass infrastructure. The landscape is characterised by open countryside with isolated properties and is on the edge of the recent housing developments in Shafton located to the north of Weetshaw Lane, near to the junction with Three Nooks Lane. The field associated with this planning application is to be included within the construction and landscaping works associated with the provision of the Cudworth and West Green Bypass.
- 2.2. The field has been utilised until recently as a pony paddock and is the site of the former brickworks. The field is relatively flat compared to the adjacent ground and appears as a raised plateau to the ground to the north and west due to the level being built up of the demolition materials from the former brickworks.
- 2.3. The existing highway drainage in this area runs off the edge of the road and onto the adjacent fields and eventually into the watercourse. The replacement road construction provides enhanced drainage and formal raised footways. To minimise the effects of flooding from the enhanced highway drainage a limit has been set for the maximum runoff from the highway to be discharged to the watercourse equivalent to the Greenfield runoff. The effect of the highway drainage system is to speed the passage of the flow to the watercourse from the carriageway. To counter this accelerated runoff a storage facility to contain the excess flows above the Greenfield runoff rate has been incorporated within the drainage network.
- 2.4. Proposals have been developed in consultation with the Highways Authority to utilise a balancing pond as the form of storage prior to the watercourse. Initially it was considered that this would be part of the design development to be approved by the highway Authority but further consultation was undertaken with the planning department of BMBC and it was considered that a formal application for the change may be required. This Statement sets out the case for the proposal in further detail.

3. SUPPORTING CASE

3.1. The inclusion of a balancing pond within the drainage network will increase the element of sustainability of the drainage system by reducing the use of imported pre-cast concrete construction materials and providing the potential for enhancement of the local biodiversity. It will also aid in the inspection by the Highways Authority of the storage facility without entering a confined space on each inspection.

3.2. The access, shown on plan, will provide vehicular access for the maintenance vehicles following completion and safer entry than directly off Weetshaw Lane for any landscape maintenance to the plot in the future.

3.3. The effect of the pond on the when the works are complete will have limited impact on the landscape as it will effectively be hidden by the existing topography, the most visible aspect will be the security fencing that is deemed necessary by the Highways Authority.

3.4. The pond is also excavated within an elevated plateau lifted above the surrounding ground effectively secluding it from neighbouring land and properties. Although the pond is designed to attenuate the flow from the highway drainage in line with the Guidance in PPS25, it is likely that the biodiversity of the area will be enhanced by having the pond adjacent to the existing watercourse and hedgerows. This will have benefits to the character of the area.

4) Environmental Impact

4.1. Discussions that have taken place with The Environment Agency have indicated a preference for open surface storage of surface water run-off in the form of ponds rather than enclosed buried tanks wherever practical due to the added potential for improved bio-diversity.

4.2. The use of a pond will slow down the rate of discharge into the existing watercourse and mimic the current overland flow discharge but will have the advantage that any accidental spillages on the highway can be contained more readily within the drainage network by the simple use of sandbags placed across the outlet from the pond. The use of ponds has been encouraged by the emergency services as a convenient method of containing accidental spillages which can then be pumped into tankers and removed.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. The balancing pond will provide the storage required under the PPS25 guidance and provide enhancements to the biodiversity potential for the area. It will also provide an accidental spillage containment facility to the highways adjacent to the Weetshaw Road roundabout.

5.2. The pond will be elevated above the surrounding ground and will cause little if any visual intrusion to the adjacent property.

5.3. The pond will be excavated in the made ground of the former brickworks site and will be further screened from the adjacent properties and footpath by the existing mature hedgerows.