Parish Council Headed Paper

Anglian Water Services Ltd.

Lancaster House

Lancaster Way

Ermine Business Park

Huntingdon

PE29 0XU

Attention Peter Simpson Esq. C.E.O.

20th November 2018

Dear Mr Simpson

Your Ref: PS/AW/903913329

Thank you for your letter of the 30th August. Your concern regarding the occasional flooding of sewage into the gardens and houses in New Road is heartening but the frustration and inconvenience caused by this is still an issue and one that is likely to increase in the future.

Your offer to advise residents about restricting the flow of surface water into the sewer and advice about alternatives will be communicated to those affected. I must point out that residents are well aware of these alternatives which basically are water butts or soakaways. Most already use the former. The latter is not an option as your engineers should be aware because the high water-table in this part of the village and particularly New Road makes these of little use. South Norfolk Council Planning Department is certainly fully familiar with this problem and incorporates restrictions on surface water drainage into the alternatives in any planning consent.

While surface water is part of the problem it is not, in itself, the main cause. Nor is the capacity of the local pumping station at the end of New Road.

In my letter to you in August I made it clear that it is likely that the primary cause of the problem was the capacity of the main sewer in The Street in Ashwellthorpe. This sewer runs the full length of The Street from New Road in the west to the Sewage Treatment plant beyond the village in the east. All the properties sewers in The Street are connected to it as are no doubt some surface water systems.

At times of heavy rain this sewer fills and it is this that causes the backup of sewage in New Road. No additional pumping capacity at New Road will solve this problem which is one of back pressure. Until Anglian Water address the limited capacity of the main sewer the problem will continue and is set to get worse.

Your Development and Planning Department are no doubt aware of the plans to build 29 houses at a Green Field site in Ashwellthorpe where enabling work has started and construction is imminent. In addition, at least eight other properties have been built or are under construction in The Street, there is planning approval for four others and plans have been submitted for a further 26 houses on three sites all which will be connecting into the main sewer. This is an increase of over 30% of the current usage of the main sewer. Arrangements for surface water drainage will no doubt be part of these schemes but sewage will be directed to the sewer.

My experience as a Chief Officer on very large tankers which were equipped with pumps enabling a total discharge rate of 18,000 m3 per hour of Crude oil at full speed is that this rate was never achievable where the shore facilities available was only a single 20” line. This was due to back pressure as charterers learned to their cost.

We consider that the only sustainable solution is one that builds greater resilience into the system and we feel that you and your engineers should review your plans and upgrade the sewage piping with a secondary pipe that would provide additional capacity with minimum disruption to the current arrangement. We would welcome your opinion and those of your experts about this proposal rather than trying to alleviate matters by tinkering with the surface water drainage.

Yours sincerely

Nick de Spon