

WESTSIDE SUPPLIES

17-18 DURBAN ROAD, BOGNOR REGIS

Flood Risk Assessment

1. Background

- 1.1 This note has been produced on behalf of Mr P. Hudson and Mr P. Meredith in support of a proposal for residential development on the site of the former Westside Supplies, in substitution for an existing office/ warehouse building that exists on the site.
- 1.2 A previous planning application for 17 No. 1-bedroom flats was turned down on appeal. A new application for 14 No. 1 and 2-bedroom flats, which includes measures to reduce the risk of flooding, will be submitted shortly.

2. Drainage Issues

- 2.1 Approvals have been received from Southern Water Services Ltd. for foul drainage (reference DS.D/106/20941 dated 10 December 2007) and for surface water drainage (reference DS.D/106/21320 dated 27 March 2008).
- 2.2 The proposed new development will produce very similar foul and surface water flows and it is not therefore expected that Southern Water will object to the planning application.

3. Flood Risk Issues

- 3.1 The Environment Agency (EA) were satisfied with the flood risk assessment that was submitted for the previous proposal and confirmed this in a letter dated 14 December 2007, reference SX/2007/103222/01-L01. The EA considered that fluvial flooding from the Aldingbourne Rife to be the only concern here and confirmed a peak flood level of 1.9m AOD for the area. Floor levels for the new building was set at 300mm above this flood level and care was taken in the design to ensure that no loss in flood storage would occur.
- 3.2 Despite the EA's acceptance of the flood risk assessment, the planning inspector dismissed the appeal on the basis of tidal flood risk and the results of a sequential test carried out by Arun District Council. The Inspector accepted that flood zoning should ignore the presence of coastal defences and considered the site to be within Flood Zone 3a, on the basis that it is below the 1 in 200 year peak tide level of 5.1m AOD predicted for the year 2115. The sequential test purported to show that there were other sites in lower flood risk areas that could be developed in preference.
- 3.3 It is considered here that a complete disregard for coastal defences and how they affect flood risk, is not a reasonable approach. Some defences, such as earth and shingle banks, can properly be viewed as vulnerable to serious breaches in extreme conditions but Bognor Regis is protected by substantial defences provided and maintained at public expense. They are protecting major development and infrastructure and it is not likely that they would be allowed to deteriorate within the lifetime of the proposed development to such an extent as to put the occupants at risk.
- 3.4 The current proposals provide for living accommodation at first and second floor levels only which will have a minimum floor level of 5.5m AOD, thus providing 400mm above the peak tide level of 5.1m AOD referred to above. The site lies some 2km from the coast and a suitably designed building would not be considered vulnerable to major overtopping or a breach in the defences.

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