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Tuesday, 4 October 2022

Dear Wealden District Councillor,

**Redrow Homes - Hesmond's Stud Detailed Planning Application WD/2022/0341/MAJ**

## **Village Concerns Objection 18 - Sewage Issues Addendum**

1. We are writing to you as the Co-Chairs of Village Concerns, a local Action Group from East Hoathly with Halland Parish. We represent the views of over 200 supporters against the overdevelopment of our Parish.
2. We have previously submitted objections to Planning Application WD/2022/0341/MAJ on Sewage Issues and now wish to add further objections on this matter.
3. Wealden District Council (WDC) approved a motion to give proper consideration to sewage issues when considering planning applications. Councillor Millward's motion to WDC on 20 July 2022 included the following:
  - “7. Ask Southern Water, from this date onwards, in its planning consultation responses for major development, to clarify which treatment works will be managing the sewage; whether it has the information available to assess the impact on the number or duration of sewage discharges into local rivers or seas, and if it does have this information to share it (noting that this can only be requested not required).
  8. Request that planning officers, from now onwards, include in all relevant reports relating to major development a specific section on the impact on watercourses, including the potential for the development to affect sewage outflow into watercourses.”

4. We can see no indication that this information was requested from Southern Water. If it was requested, the answers have not been included in the Application documentation nor the Officer's Report. There is no specific section on the "impact on watercourses". It therefore seems clear that the Planning Department has not complied with the WDC approved resolution. If this is because Southern Water would not provide the information, the Planning Department should say so.

5. The Officer's Report refers to: "concerns expressed by local residents, the Parish Council and others regarding problems that have been encountered as a result of the capacity of the foul sewer network, and in particular the local pumping station at East Hoathly". This is true, but it extends far more widely than concern about one unspecified pumping station. For clarity, we have concerns about the sewage overflows from:

- a. East Hoathly Sewage Plant.
- b. Halland Sewage Plant.
- c. Existing pumping station in Juziers Drive/Trug Close development. Local residents report that it regularly gets clogged and requires servicing. They also report the smell of sewage when it rains.
- d. Existing pumping station in Thomas Turner Drive.
- d. Proposed pumping station for Hesmond's development.
- e. Any other pumping stations that exist in the Parish, of which, we are currently unaware. We ask that the Planning Department inform us of any such pumping stations.

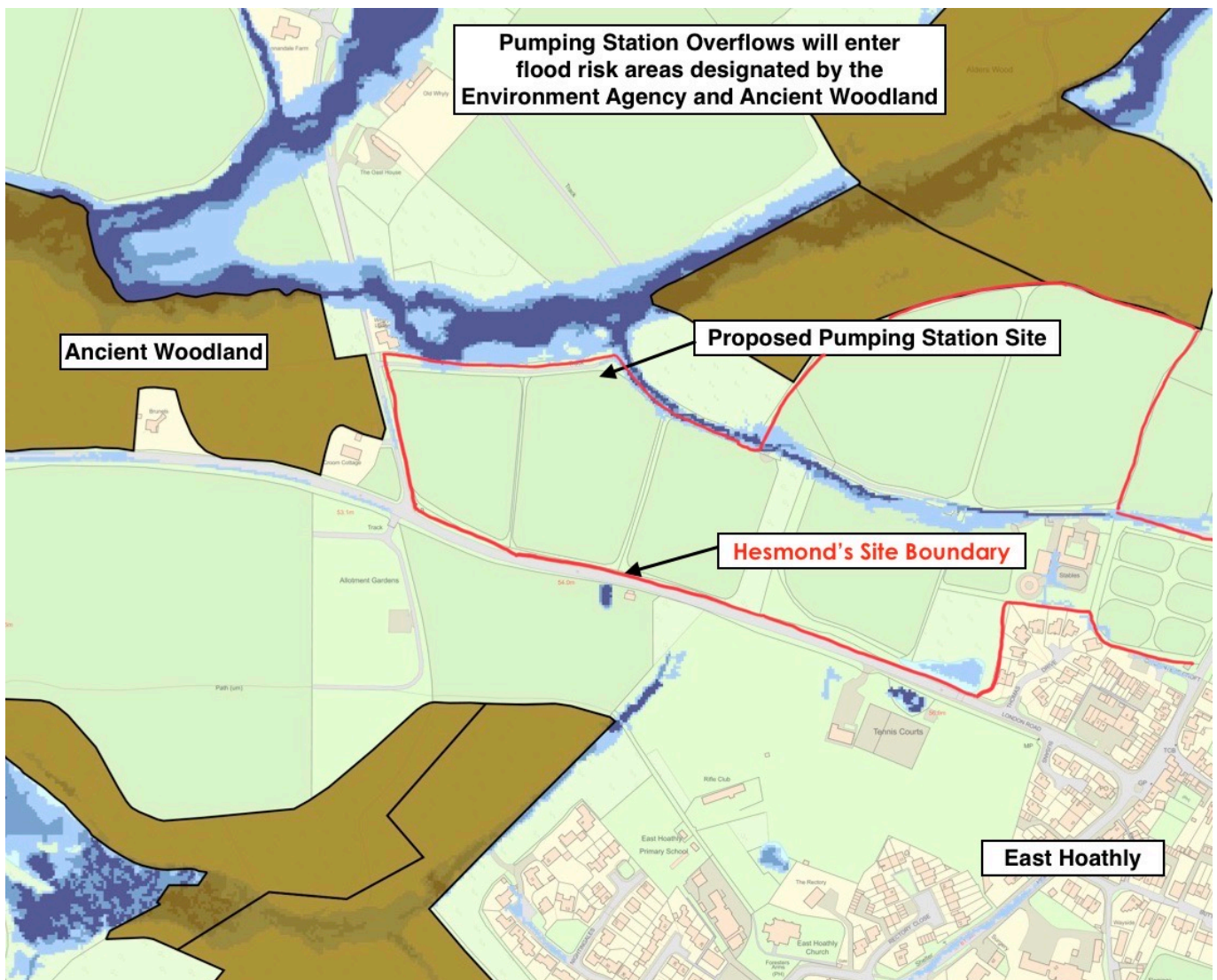
6. We have concerns over the coordination of the times that these pumping stations operate. Do they operate when full, or on a timed basis? Are the timings staggered? What happens if the tanks are full and there is a power cut or a pump failure? What happens if it is raining heavily when the pumping stations are due to operate? If the holding tanks are only large enough to hold one days capacity of sewage, what happens during maintenance periods?

7. The East Hoathly Sewage Plant has an overflow and its discharge of sewage is now known to be almost 600 hours in 2021. However, it appears that there may also be unrecorded overflows from pumping stations. We ask WDC as a matter of urgency to inform us:

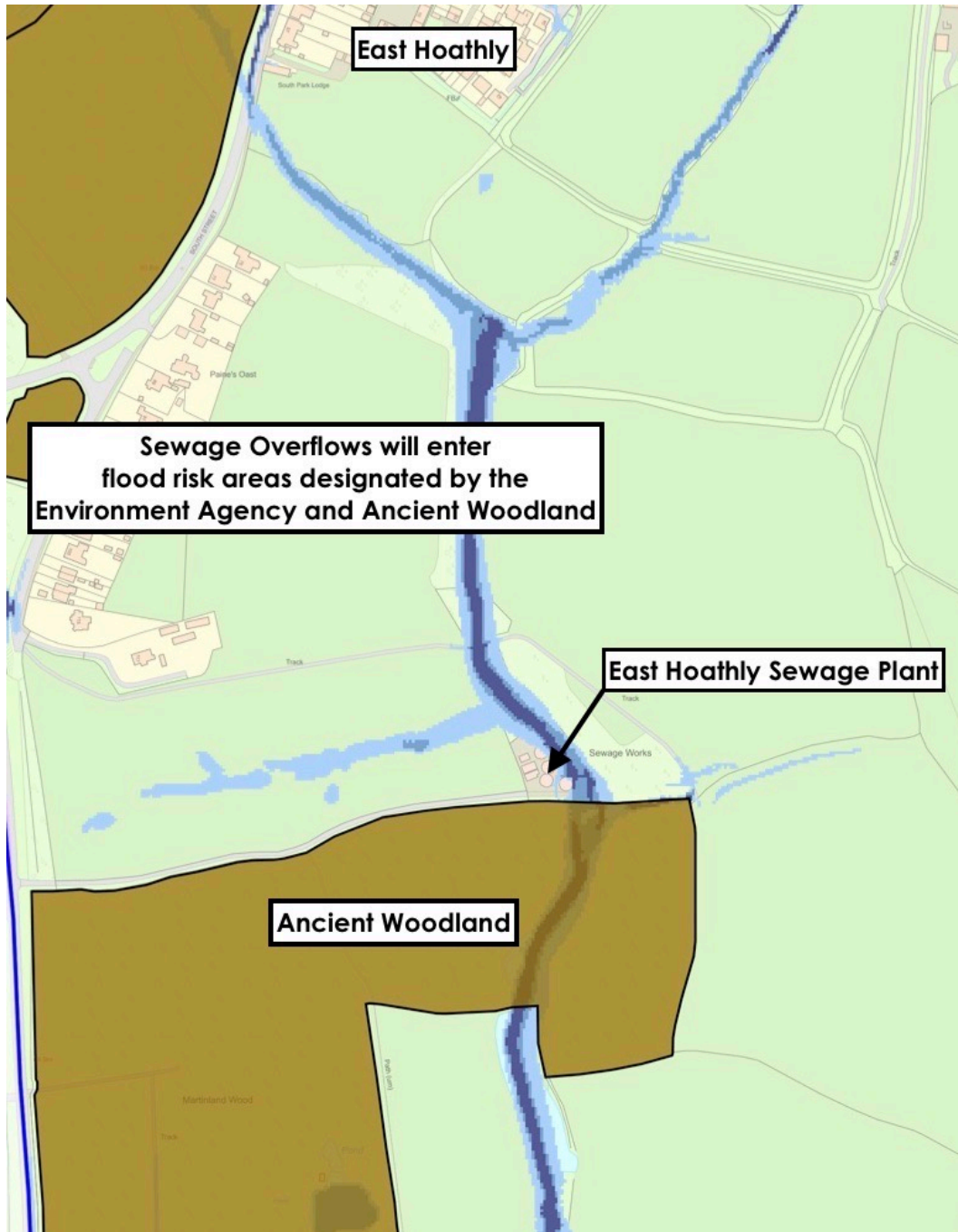
- a. If the existing pumping stations in Juziers Drive/Trug Close and Thomas Turner Drive have overflows?

b. Has the overflow data for the Juziers Drive/Trug Close and Thomas Turner Drive pumping stations been requested by the Planning Department? If not, why not? If it has been requested, why has it not been published? The Juziers Drive/Trug Close facility was only built in 2009, under the period when Southern Water and the Planning Department were in charge of ensuring that sewage systems were designed and approved such that they would not cause overflows. Why is this system now failing and what are they doing to correct it?

c. Will the proposed pumping station for the Hesmond's development have an overflow? As a new facility it should be designed to never overflow. What are the current design parameters for such systems? Is there an agreed and legally permitted level of overflows for new pumping stations? This will be of particular concern for the Hesmond's pumping station as it is in a flood risk area as can be seen on the map below:



8. The comments in the Officer's Report seem to focus on the issue of flooding. This is a piece of misdirection but is also questionable as can be seen on the map below. The Environment Agency already identify that this area is a flood risk area and it discharges into Ancient Woodland. The proposed additional daily discharge of 70,000 litres of sewage from the Hesmond's development must increase the flood risk downstream from the Sewage Plant.



9. However, the main focus of the WDC resolution of 20 July 2022 was about sewage discharge in watercourses. Given that this application was not

determined in August due to concerns about discharges of foul sewage and no further information has been provided, to now consider the application flies in the face of the Council's agreed resolution. We urge Councillors to demand that this is deferred again until the Planning Department address the matter properly.

Katherine Gutkind and Kathryn Richardson  
Co-Chairs  
Village Concerns