

DRAINAGE/SEWAGE SUBMISSION



DRAINAGE/SEWAGE

INTRODUCTION

- 1. This Submission is made by SHOCK in relation to the drainage and sewage issues raised by the LVA proposal to build 120 houses beyond the western edge of Keinton Mandeville.
- 2. The development poses two main environmental risks:
 - From run-off threatening Kingweston Meadows SSSI
 - Sewage overflows into the streets of Keinton Mandeville and local/regional water courses.

<u>SEWAGE</u>

Background

- 3. During the public 'consultation' at a Parish Council meeting in November 2021 concerned villagers raised with LVA's representatives the impact of the estate on the village's already overburdened sewerage system. LVA's answer was to point out that Wessex Water, as the relevant utility, was legally obliged under the Water Industry Act 1992 to connect up properties for which planning permission had been granted.
- 4. This is hardly a satisfactory response to local residents who regularly face raw sewage in their streets, lanes, and rivers. 138 of them mentioned increased sewerage problems resulting from the LVA estate in their comments made to SSDC. Nor does the Government consider it a satisfactory situation. This is why, in the Queen's speech in April 2022 introducing the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (with its significant planning reforms), a key policy objective was to bring infrastructure providers formally into the planning process as consultees. That will be a welcome development for Keinton Mandeville.
- 5. Until the law is changed, however, it is clear that, because of a utility's obligation to connect up consented dwellings regardless of the consequences, it is only the planning authority, not the utility, which has the power to prevent overburdening of a local sewerage system. It can do so by rejecting applications for more housing when that would impose significantly more demand on the system. This is plainly the case with the LVA estate for the reasons explained below. The impact of the estate is such that sewage is a material planning consideration for SSDC in this case. Rejection of the LVA application is the only way to guarantee that the environment and health of the villagers are protected.
- 6. The sewerage system in Keinton Mandeville was installed in around 1975 under the Northern Parishes Sewers Scheme, replacing septic tanks. It is a gravity-reliant system of 6-inch pipework, of shallow depth, which follows the linear pattern of the village. The treatment works in the village which used to treat foul water from the village was closed and replaced with a pumping station which pumps sewage down for to the Charltons for treatment. The system from the very outset suffered severely from groundwater infiltration and remedial work (e.g. relining chambers) was carried out in the 1980s, but with limited success. Historically, there was also no rigid separation between rainwater

drainage and the sewerage system and it is probable that a number of older village properties have rainwater systems which connect directly into the sewerage pipework.

The Current Situation

7. For some years there have been overflows of untreated sewage into Queen Street and Common Lane (see photos, Front Cover and Schedule). Since the Lakeview houses were connected to the village system such incidents have tripled in frequency. In the last month there have already been two such incidents immediately following heavy (but not exceptional) rainfall- around 20 mm on Tuesday 16 August and again on Monday 5 September, measured at Lower Farm, Kingweston by electronic rainfall monitors). Inadequate separation of rainfall and foul water and infiltration of groundwater into the village sewerage system is also responsible for discharges and overflows into the River Cary (via Bull Brook) from the plant in the Charltons. WW has, on occasion, explained these overflows as caused by "misuse of the system" through the disposal of wet wipes. But the reality is that the 1970s system cannot cope with the demands imposed on it by the new housing since 2016, and, in particular, the Lakeview development.

LVA's Proposals for Foul Water

- 8. LVA floats two ideas for dealing with foul water from its estate. One is to connect into the as yet unadopted Lakeview system. To add 120 houses via Lakeview will obviously overload a system already unable to cope with village effluent. In any event no physical link would be possible without the agreement of the village hall trustees and other private landowners to grant easements since the LVA estate is not contiguous with the Lakeview development. This option could only rely on gravity.
- 9. The second proposal is to pump foul water from the estate up to the village system at the junction of the B3153 and Barton Road. This would add the same substantial load to the village system and connect in at its western extremity. The configuration of the system in Barton Road would require the pumped sewage from the 120-house estate to negotiate 3 right-angle bends before taking the gravity-reliant easterly route along the High Street and then down Queen Street. The consequences of this for the village are obvious. The only design/plan which shows the new on-site pumping station required to move the estate's foul water up to the B3153 chamber is also located not at the low point of the development but near the western edge someway uphill of that point.
- 10. The Schedule to this Submission contains a request to WW made by SHOCK under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 aimed at obtaining data from WW about the impact of the LVA estate on the Charlton Adam Sewage Pumping Station Catchment.

KINGWESTON MEADOWS

11. SHOCK believes that the Applicants' landscaping proposals (Landscape Strategy; Design and Access Statements parts 1 & 2), which seem to incorporate proposed phosphate mitigation strategies with elements of landscape design and habitat provision, are unrealistic particular we would question the feasibility of creating a

'wetland' on the site; wetlands can only be created and maintained in specific geological circumstances, which do not exist in and around the development site. The site is free-draining and the underlying rock is both moderately permeable and predominantly calcareous.

- 12. Another element of the same landscaping strategy is to hold runoff from the site in a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SuDS). However, the site proposed for this actually lies uphill from the south-eastern segment of the development. SHOCK therefore has serious concerns regarding the potential impacts of increased runoff during and following construction; we believe there is the potential for this runoff to affect the residential area of parts of the existing village and the Kingweston Meadows SSSI.
- 13. The site is linked directly to Kingweston Meadows via a drain leading south from the pond in the south west corner of the north field. The flow through this drain is unpredictable and as such it is not marked as a watercourse on OS maps. Nor is it marked on any of the Applicants' documents. The fact that this ditch can discharge significant quantities of runoff is, however, well known to locals who are familiar with the area and the farmer who has care of the drain. Increased runoff and pollutants could potentially pose a threat to the SSSI.

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