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Dear Mr King

26 September 2011

RE: Core Strategy Examination – Request for Information on Waste Water and Sewerage Infrastructure

Yorkshire Water has previously provided information on infrastructure capacity within Selby District during various stages of the LDF's production; including the SHLAA and IDP. This statement is in respect to the email you sent on 19 September requesting supplementary information; specifically on Fairburn, Tadcaster, Eggborough and Kellington.

The two aspects were firstly the waste water treatment works (wwtw) capacity for the above settlements; and secondly, the sewerage network in Fairburn.

Waste Water Treatment Capacity

Yorkshire Water has a responsibility under the Water Industry Act 1991 to ensure our wwtw are suitably sized to accommodate existing flows and known future growth. We work within five year investment periods known as Asset Management Plans (AMP). The current AMP runs from April 2010 to March 2015 and the next AMP runs from April 2015 to March 2020. We have to submit to our Regulator, Ofwat, our business plan for each AMP which includes the level of growth we anticipate through information from Local Plans, LDFs and committed sites. In this case, we will submit in March 2014 our final business plan which includes all the sites allocated in the Selby LDF and those with existing planning permission. We will then have a responsibility to invest in those wwtw requiring additional capacity due to this growth by the end of the AMP (2020).

Therefore any sites put forward in a wwtw catchment with no capacity will require phasing until Yorkshire Water has completed a scheme to increase capacity. This will be completed between 2015 and 2020. Should a developer wish to bring a site forward prior to this timescale they will have to fund the required investment.

Fairburn drains to Sutton wwtw, there is currently a scheme at this wwtw which is increasing the capacity that can be accommodated; therefore there should be adequate capacity to treat future flows from Fairburn and the other settlements it serves (Beal, Brotherton, Byram Cum Sutton, Kellingley and Sutton).

Tadcaster drains to Tadcaster Domestic wwtw. As explained previously this wwtw is currently at capacity and can only accommodate brownfield sites with a like for like replacement of flows into the sewer network. Any future allocations in this catchment will require phasing to enable Yorkshire Water to increase the available capacity. Tadcaster wwtw also serves Appleton Roebuck, Bilbrough, Bolton Percy, Colton, Kirkby Wharfe, Sutton and Ulleskelf.

Eggborough and Kellington drain to Eggborough wwtw. As explained previously this wwtw is currently at capacity and can only accommodate brownfield sites with a like for like replacement of flows into the sewer network. Any future allocations in this catchment will require phasing to enable Yorkshire Water to increase the available capacity. Eggborough wwtw also serves Great Heck, Hensall, Low Eggborough, Whitley, Whitley Bridge, Whitley Thorp.

To summarise the above, Yorkshire Water is responsible for meeting the future growth of Selby District at our wwtw, as long as development is phased in line with our Business Plan to allow reasonable time to increase capacity.

Fairburn Sewerage Network

There are existing sewer flooding problems in Fairburn. These occur in the west of the village near the sewage pumping station (sps) at Caudle Hill during periods of exceptionally high rainfall. Fairburn is on a combined sewer system, which means both foul and surface water flows through the same pipe. All the sewers in Fairburn drain to this sps which pumps the flows to Sutton wwtw. Therefore the sewers and sps surcharge when significant surface water enters the system which is not designed to accommodate that level of flow.

We have carried out a series of improvements within the village including the replacement of the pumps in the sps which were not as reliable as they were designed to be. We have increased the capacity of the pipe the sps surcharges into and redirected the discharge from entering the Ings into the River Aire. We have also realigned the levels in the two sps' within the village to improve their performance.

It appears that we have not received a complaint regarding the sewer network since 2009 (we received one). There were several complaints in 2007 from residents on Silver Street but this appears to have been due to a sewer collapse which was rectified. There were numerous complains between 2004 and 2006 but as noted these appear to have subsided. It is not clear if this is due to the work undertaken, a lack of heavy rainfall or whether complaints are not reaching Yorkshire Water.

The expectation would be that any future housing in Fairburn has separate foul and surface water disposal methods, with only foul water entering the public sewer network and surface water utilising a form of sustainable drainage, e.g. soakaways. Given the potential level of housing that could occur it is unlikely that foul flows would have a significant impact on the sewerage network which has adequate capacity under normal conditions, i.e. outside exceptional rainfall events. While this seems contradictory to allow more flows into a network that already floods, unfortunately the network will continue to flood in exceptional rainfall whether new development occurs or not.

Therefore, while we accept there are sewer flooding events, any new development, subject to only foul flows entering the public sewer network should not have a detrimental impact on the capacity within the existing sewers. The new flows should not cause flooding. The flooding is due to the nature of a combined system and unrestricted surface water flows.

It could be stated in the Core Strategy that any future housing site has to reduce the existing surface water which enters the system where possible. This could be through the removal of any land drainage or cross connections on their site or within the vicinity should they be known. They may help alleviate future sewer surcharges; this should be investigated during the Site Allocations DPD consultation process.

Therefore Yorkshire Water would not object to new development in Fairburn due to the capacity of the sewerage network as an increase in foul flows should not increase the risk of flooding.

Yours Sincerely,

Matthew Naylor MA MRTPI
Development Planner