

Thames Farm Action Group, Rambler Cottage, Reading Road,
Lower Shiplake, Oxon RG9 3PH

Emma Bowerman,
SODC Planning,
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Milton OX14 4SB

11 January 2022
By Email only

Dear Emma,

Thames Farm, Reading Road, Lower Shiplake

You will have received our letter of 4 January 2022 by way of objection to application P21/S4749/LDP & P21/S4524/DIS.

Whilst researching the regulatory position for this letter we again came across EA guidance for how Applications within an SPZ1 and also those relating to grouting works should be dealt with both historically and also currently.

In this connection I am enclosing the historic guidance stating the regulatory position - MWRP RPS 108 Version:1 Issued: June 2011 and withdrawn 08 May 2017 and also the current guidance - The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection February 2018 Version 1.2.

You will recall, that the base application here was Ref P16/S0970/O, dated 18 March 2016, and was refused by notice dated 14 September 2016. The Public Inquiry took place on 13-16 June 2017 and the decision was dated 2 August 2017.

We no longer have access to the consultation's that took place in 2016 as these cannot be accessed from the web portal, however speaking with those involved at the time, no one has any recollection of there being any significant objections or cautionary notes from the EA or Thames Water about the potential implications of the scheme in relation to the underground aquifers or the fact that the application sat within a SPZ1.

In normal circumstances we would expect a very significant response/reaction from the EA over a major application within an SPZ1, but we do not recall anything of that nature at the time. Equally, had it been known in 2016, that not only was the site within an SPZ1 but also that it would require grouting to a depth of c 16m, then clearly the reaction from the EA/Thames Water might have been very significant indeed.

I would appreciate your looking into the events of 2016 and the consultations with the regulatory authorities at the time and your comments upon what then happened, and why.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

SIGNED ELECTRONICALLY

Peter Boros
Chairman,
Thames Farm Action Group

Attachments: MWRP RPS 108 Version:1 Issued & The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection February 2018 Version 1.2.