

Dear Mr. Watt,

Re: DM/26/2007 - Land East of Wineham Lane, Wineham, West Sussex, BN5 9AY.

Request not to discharge the Planning Conditions No's 9, 10 and 11 in relation to fire safety, firefighting water and emergency access set out in DM/21/2276.

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) (Ian Stocks) stated in their email to Andy Watt (MSDC) dated 14 August 2026, that the Condition would be met, if the Fire Service site access and supply of water for firefighting requirements were met, as stated in the Applicants documentation regarding DM/26/2007.

Theoretically this is acceptable, but in practice it may lead to less rigorous safety standards than envisaged by the Council and WSFRS. Ian Stocks in his email states that “the water tanks for the provision of water for firefighting” need to be “in place and ready for use, prior to the installation of the BESS units,” and their use on the site. He goes on to state that “on too many occasions WSFRS are not informed water supplies are in place and ready for use prior to the commencement of the BESS unit installations and the use of the site, which then increases the risk to the site in the event of a fire occurring.”

This raises serious safety concerns and considerations for the residents and others in the area. What mechanisms will the Council and WSFRS have in place, to ensure that sufficient water for firefighting purposes will be available to meet the Condition, if approved?

With the very dry summers we now seem to be having, residents need to be reassured that every possible safety condition is met regarding the provision of sufficient water for firefighting.

It should also be noted that with chemical fires, that water is not especially effective in fighting a blaze, hence I would question whether by confirming this condition you are still putting the residents at risk.

There also appear to be questions about the suitability and legal standing of the emergency access onto Wineham Lane. This needs to be clarified in full before the Conditions are approved. Condition 9 is around the “vehicular access” upgrade.

It should be noted that the quality of the road and its surface on Wineham Lane is in very poor condition and really needs to be completely replaced. We do not have details of increased vehicular movements or timings in application DM/26/2007, but these will impact on the “daily users” of Wineham Lane. Application DM/26/2159 shows in Table 1 projected increased traffic movements in the Lane over the 15-month project, which will impact the residents’ use of the Lane. An increased use of the Lane by HGVs will further cause the carriageway to deteriorate, making it less safe for cyclists, horses and pedestrians in particular. Will the developer improve Wineham Lane at the end of the project, by completely renewing the quality of road?

In addition, in the event of a fire it is questionable whether large emergency vehicles would be easily and quickly able to access the location of the BESS site on Wineham Lane, and in the number required. A similar type of fire near Toulouse, France had around 70 firefighters attending the blaze.

We would like MSDC to confirm that the current National Framework provided by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in respect of BESS is being followed, to provide sufficient safety guarantees to the local population, even if it cannot be applied retrospectively in full. If the type and nature of the newly proposed BESS are different to those for whom the original planning permission was granted, surely these should be reviewed too?

Considering the above, we request that MSDC do **not discharge Conditions 9,10 and 11**, until they are completely satisfied in writing that the site meets full safety requirements, not just those relating to the provision of firefighting water.

It is our opinion that a **new planning application should be submitted** for the whole site, rather than seeking to amend the original planning application on a piecemeal basis via the Conditions, as some important factors may be overlooked, if the BESS development is not viewed as a whole. Not least due to the fact that technological advances have taken place and new fire guidance is now available, potentially meaning that the old permission granted under DM21/2276 is not fit for purpose.

Yours sincerely,



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