

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 June 2026 15:07
To: planninginfo
Subject: Re: Ardingly SA25, DM/26/1186

[REDACTED]
46 Munnion Road
Ardingly
Sussex
RH17 6RP

DM/26/1186 Land west of Selsfield Road , Ardingly

Dear sir

After reviewing the site layout, my initial impression is that it deviates from the outline agreement previously provided. Specifically, several houses are now positioned to the west of the recreation ground, whereas the outline planning agreement indicated that all homes would be located to the north. These newly situated properties are large and lack any obvious affordable units. Their placement along the west side of the recreation ground introduces hydraulic challenges, as both foul and surface water from the lowest four houses now require pumps due to insufficient gravity flow. To address this, the designer has incorporated pumping stations just above the playground.

For surface water management, the proposal includes a substantial SUDS basin behind the north-west corner of the recreation ground. The basin's bottom water level is 120.65mAOD, with a top water level of 122mAOD, resulting in a maximum operating depth of 1.35m. Although fencing will likely be necessary for safety, this is not mentioned in the application. Surface water is directed to the SUDS basin via gravity through a combination of 225, 300, and 375mm diameter pipes. Outflow from the basin is regulated by a catchpit at a maximum rate of 5.8 l/s, then continues by gravity to the watercourse (ditch) north of the church graveyard via a 525mm diameter pipe. The levels for gravity flow appear workable.

However, gravity flow is not possible for the lower houses directly above the playground. In this area, surface water drains to a 74m³ cellular attenuation tank (97.5m² by 0.8m deep), from which it is pumped to join the main gravity line towards the discharge point. The pumping station is rated at 5 l/s. It remains unclear whether the total discharge to the watercourse is 5 + 5.8 l/s; this needs clarification, as the watercourse will have a maximum capacity. The watercourse itself is located on SEAS land and features a concrete structure at one end, along with a 300mm diameter ribbed pipe that either connects to highway drains or acts as a soakaway. We must confirm the ditch's function, maintenance arrangements with SEAS, and whether they will accept additional flows from the development.

If the pumping station fails, such as due to power loss, the application indicates that the cellular attenuation tank would overflow past the APC playground and tennis courts. Although the commentary claims this would not alter the current situation, this assertion warrants careful scrutiny.

Regarding foul water, the higher houses discharge by gravity into a manhole on the Selsfield Road sewage system, while the lower houses drain to a packaged pumping station sump and are then pumped to the same point. The report does not address what occurs if the foul water pumping station fails. The likely outcomes are either foul water backing up into the lowest house or overflowing past the playground and tennis courts, both of which are unacceptable.

Both foul and surface water pumping stations are located together, just north of the playground. If either station fails, water could flow past the tennis courts. The proposal suggests this is a "no change" situation, but this is inaccurate as there is now a risk of foul water following this route.

The application highlights the importance of regular maintenance for all pumps, valves, and grass cutting around open tanks. However, based on experience at Monks Meadow, consistent maintenance is unlikely despite the developer's assurances.

Finally, health and safety remain a concern. The SUDS basin is an open tank, and its proximity to the playground is problematic. A visit to the Monks Meadow attenuation tank would be valuable for further assessment.

Specific questions are

- What are the safeguards, if any, should the foul water pumping station fail, that will prevent foul water flowing past the playground and tennis courts.
- Can the Southern Water wastewater network hydraulically handle the additional foul water to be discharged into the manhole on Selsfield Road. The Showground is connected this same network and it is understood that at peak times for SEAS events foul water has to be tankered off site and taken direct to the Ardingly wastewater treatment works.
- What is the functionality of the surface water discharge to the water course (ditch) north of the graveyard. How does the ditch function - is it connected to highway drains or is it a soakaway. Are SEAS in agreement with its use and could local flooding occur?

Kind regards

