

DM/26/0073 – Public Note on Drainage and Ancient Woodland Impacts

I wish to comment on the recently uploaded drainage correspondence. While the developer has provided additional explanation of the proposed trenchless drainage installation, the information does not resolve the concerns previously raised by the Council regarding impacts on the Ancient Woodland.

The developer confirms that the outfall and headwall would be constructed within the Ancient Woodland, which is an irreplaceable habitat. National policy is clear that any loss or deterioration of Ancient Woodland, no matter how small, is unacceptable unless wholly exceptional circumstances apply. This development does not meet that threshold.

No independent hydrological assessment has been provided. The response relies on general statements about topography and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which is not a hydrological study and cannot assess soil moisture, groundwater recharge, seasonal wetting patterns, or long-term ecosystem impacts. These matters were specifically raised by the Council and remain unaddressed.

The drainage plan still shows an incorrect 5m buffer rather than the required 15m Ancient Woodland buffer.

The developer's attempt to distinguish the Rowhook appeal does not overcome the Inspector's reasoning, which is directly relevant: works within Ancient Woodland, including drainage outfalls, risk deterioration of the habitat and its hydrological functioning.

For these reasons, the drainage solution does not appear to avoid impacts on the Ancient Woodland, and the concerns raised by the Council remain unresolved.

I hope these observations are helpful.

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