

CR 10/11/20

Report on discussions re Church Farm West Rhoden Railway Culvert

The principal planning officer asked Network Rail to contact me as the deputy clerk regarding the drainage culvert. I received an email from Nick Donohue and Richard Newell asking for a Teams meeting which took place on the 22nd of October. Nick Donohue was unable to connect but I discussed the matter with Richard Newell who has extensive knowledge of this section of track and the related infrastructure. The following day I reported the conclusions of both this meeting and a subsequent telephone conversation back to Jenny Begeman and also Bronwyn Buntine at KCC whose team is primarily responsible for signing off the surface water drainage plans. See following emails.

From: Claire Reilly
Sent: 23 October 2020
To: Jennifer Begeman
Good morning

I had the 'meeting' with Network Rail this morning that you, Jenny, asked Nick Donohue to arrange. I met with Richard Newell who has a good knowledge of the culverts at this location. I have also spoken to Oliver Pantry at the UMIDB.

NR are not required to increase capacity of culverts to accommodate flows produced by modifications upstream or downstream of asset and therefore will not consider any modifications to the culvert at their expense.

However; If the developer would pay would consider installing a bellmouth exit and entrance to culvert to improve capacity. (Approx cost £ 15-20000 per bellmouth) and / or If the developer would pay they would consider installing a GRP lining which reduces the risk of collapse or blockage (see image) (approx. cost £40-50,000)



Relining Culverts under a live railway

They would also consider clearing culverts say 4 times a year instead of the usual once, but again would ask for someone else to pay for this. (This is a grey area as they are responsible for ensuring the through flow as it were under riparian law so should really be doing this anyway)

They are still unhappy that the developers modelling is not in accordance with their legal requirement from the regulator to maintain their assets to cope with a 1 in 200 year event. They did ask for modelling of this but Countryside said they were not obliged to do this.

I discussed this with Oliver and he says that UMIDB would be willing to maintain the entrance and exit to the culvert if it can be extended outside the Network Rail boundary so that they can have access to do the work. This would be the most effective way of managing any blockage on the ground in the event of a flood incident as the drainage board have response teams who can be contacted fairly quickly whereas Network rail normally take months to respond.

Oliver supported the idea of a bellmouth either side of the culvert as this apparently makes blockages less likely. I also discussed with him the possibility of a trash screen but he thinks that increases rather than reduces the chances of blockage unless it can be cleared quickly and regularly.

Can the two of you please advise what can be done by condition to ensure that this culvert is available to take all those flows. I know the modelling has allowed for a 20 percent and 50 percent blockage but in the real world either of those will rapidly become 100% with awful consequences for the property between this location and all the way down to Waitrose.

My feeling is that if the developer was to contribute the cost of 2 bellmouths and a GRP lining that would not be unreasonable to ask. Those prices were off the top of his head but he has done many similar projects elsewhere. Countryside's position when we met with them was that it was down to NR as riparian owner- that is of course correct but that will be no consolation if the culvert fails for weeks at a time.

PWTC and this office has been going on about this since 2015 when the site was allocated- it is to say the least unfortunate that Rydons did not speak to NR earlier in the process so that this was not all so late in the day.

If you want me to set up a zoom meeting to discuss this, including Oliver I can do that, equally if you arrange something I would be grateful to be included.

Regards
Mrs Claire Reilly
Deputy Clerk to the Council
01892 837373

From: Claire Reilly
Sent: 23 October 2020 13:40
To: Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>;
Bronwyn.Buntine@kent.gov.uk <Bronwyn.Buntine@kent.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 19/03655/REM | Approval of Reserved Matters/20/02657/SUB | Submission of Details in relation to conditions 11 (Details of Surface Water Drainage System); 12 (Flood Storage Basin Details); 13 (Ground Modelling for Whole Site);

Further to last- I also note from the plans submitted by Countryside that the diameter of the culvert as it leaves their site is 825 mm- I would encourage you to get out a tape measure and look at that as it's pretty frightening to think that all that drainage will have to pass through such a small opening!

Claire
Mrs Claire Reilly-Deputy Clerk

I received this reply from TWBC

Sent: 23 October 2020 14:04
To: Claire Reilly <deputyclerk@paddockwoodtc.co.uk>
Cc: Bronwyn.Buntine@kent.gov.uk <Bronwyn.Buntine@kent.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 19/03655/REM | Approval of Reserved Matters/20/02657/SUB | Submission of Details in relation to conditions 11 (Details of Surface Water Drainage System); 12 (Flood Storage Basin Details); 13 (Ground Modelling for Whole Site);

Hi Claire

Thanks very much for your email and the update on the outcome of your meeting today, with regard to the maintenance of the culvert under the railway line in PW, and the potential impacts from additional housing in the area.

It seems to me that there are several issues to discuss as to where the various responsibilities and this needs to be sorted out and agreed.

As you are aware pre commencement planning conditions 11, 12 and 13 are being considered at the moment under 20/02657/SUB | Submission of Details in relation to conditions 11 (Details of Surface Water Drainage System); 12 (Flood Storage Basin Details); 13 (Ground Modelling for Whole Site) at Church Farm with Bronwyn. This application is pending and at this stage I am awaiting the consultation responses

I will need to discuss the availability for a Zoom meeting with Pete and Steve.

I will get back to you.

Kind regards

As I received nothing further from either Jenny or KCC I sent the following email

Claire Reilly

Mon 09/11/2020 09:09

- **To:** Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>

Good morning

This was discussed extensively at the last planning meeting and PWTC still have a number of concerns. If you could update me on where we are as regards the discussion about the culvert under the railway as per my comments to you and Bronwyn that would help a lot. Also any comments in from Bronwyn's team and the UMIDB would be useful. I will get together the other points and send them in tomorrow. I am sorry this is taking a while but the shutdown thing has thrown the office processes out (again) and I am having to do a load of estates stuff as I'm the 'office' person most days.

Hope you are well

Regards
Claire

And received this reply

Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>

Mon 09/11/2020 09:30

- **To:** Claire Reilly

Hi Claire

Yes will do.

I have not forgotten – not yet heard back from Steve on the culvert under the railway issue and responsibilities.

Steve is in today – it's been half term and Lockdown 2 with endless emails.

I will just send an email in a moment and copy you in.

Kind regards Jenny

I then sent the following emails

Claire Reilly

Mon 09/11/2020 11:14

- **To:** Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>

Thanks

I am hoping that KCC will impose a condition- fyg there is room on both sides of the Network Rail boundary for the construction of a bellmouth as suggested by Oliver at UMIDB. Whilst there is a cost implication ; the cost implication of not having access will be worse.

Please consider the consequences of an **inaccessible** narrow culvert blocked by tree or rubbish debris in the middle of winter (or even July on recent evidence) when water is flowing from the attenuation ponds and from the East Rhoden as well as the West.

Claire

Received following reply

Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>

Mon 09/11/2020 11:23

- **Cc:** Stephen Baughen <Stephen.Baughen@Tunbridgewells.gov.uk>

Hi Claire

All noted

I have emailed Stephen Baughen

We will have to work with the existing planning conditions for Church Farm

I will get back to you

Kind regards

Jenny

To which I replied

Mon 09/11/2020 11:24

- **To:** Jennifer Begeman <Jennifer.Begeman@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>

Thanks

I appreciate that but I thought the details are still to be signed off.

Will wait to hear.

Claire