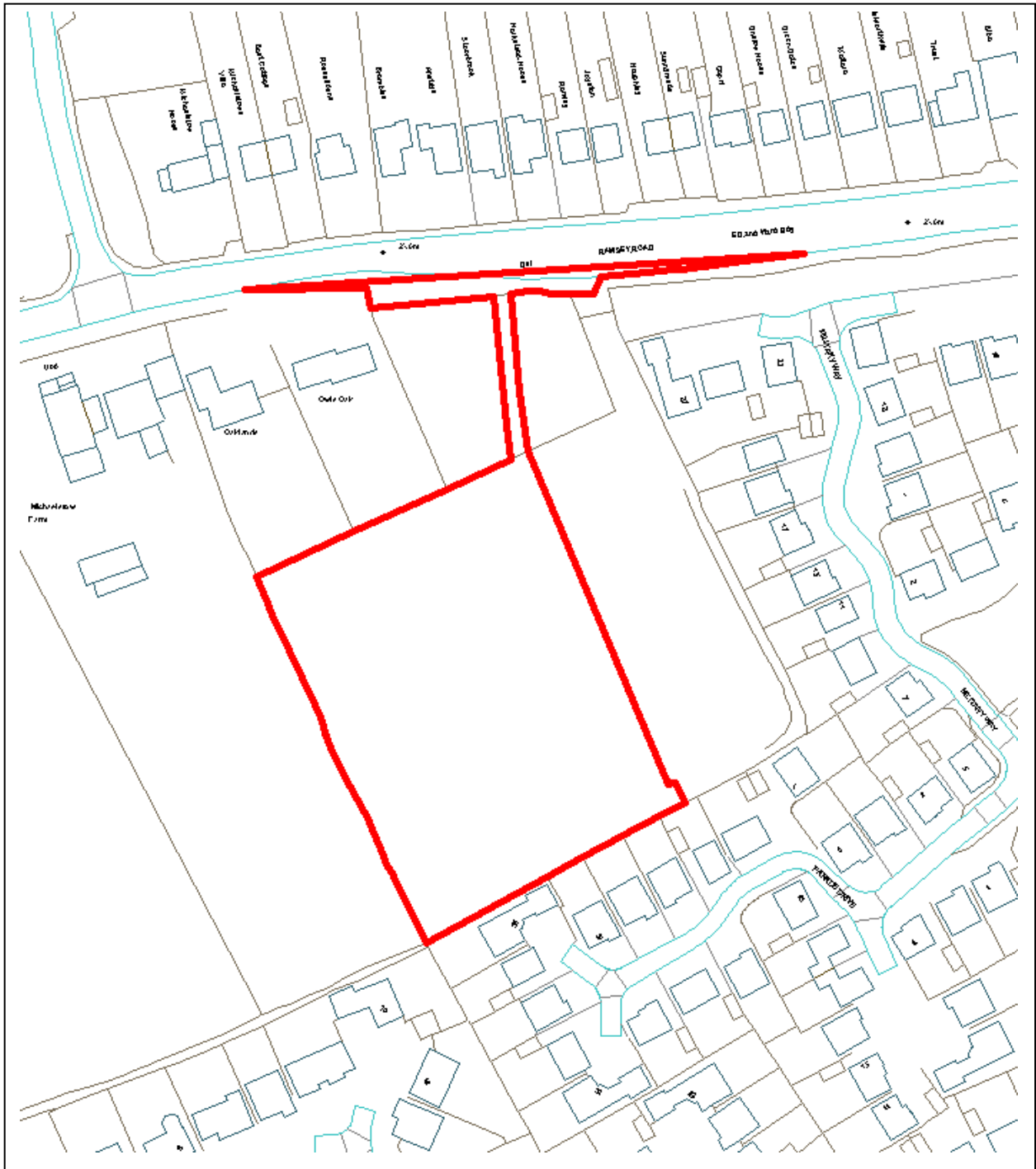


PLANNING COMMITTEE

30 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGER - PLANNING

**A.4 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – 10/01333/FUL – LAND ADJACENT OWLS OAK, RAMSEY ROAD, DOVERCOURT**



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<b>Application:</b>	10/01333/FUL	<b>Town / Parish:</b>	Harwich Town Council
<b>Applicant:</b>	Veolia Water East		
<b>Address:</b>	Land adjacent Owls Oak Ramsey Road Dovercourt		
<b>Development:</b>	Construction of service reservoir, access road and security fencing.		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Although in accordance with the development plan, this application has been brought for consideration by Members alongside application 10/01360/OUT for residential development of the remainder of the site.
- 1.2 The site lies to the south side of Ramsey Road on land allocated under local plan policy COM31 for water supply. The proposal is for a six million litre capacity covered reservoir which is set approximately 50% below the ground with grass roof and banks with 2.5 metre high green coated steel security fencing to the perimeter set within a landscaping margin. The proposal is not considered to result in any significant adverse impact upon the surrounding landscape, residential amenity or highway safety.

### **Recommendation: Approve**

#### **Conditions:**

- List of approved plans
- Layout of vehicular access and turning space as per amended plan
- Layout of vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays as per amended plan
- No unbound materials within 15m of highway boundary
- Any gates to be recessed minimum 15m from highway boundary
- Pedestrian visibility splays to pumping station access
- Surface water management to be provided as per submitted information
- Details of wheel and under body cleaning facility
- Details of construction parking, loading and turning
- Landscaping including security fencing
- Details of bricks to be used in construction
- Noise emitted from the site plant, equipment and machinery shall not exceed 5dBA above the background level at the nearest noise sensitive premises
- Timing of removal of standing dead tree to avoid bats being present
- Removal of any hedgerow outside bird nesting season

#### **Reason for approval:**

The site is allocated for water supply infrastructure under policy COM31 of the Tendring District Local Plan (2007). Having regard to the pattern of existing development in the area and the development plan policies listed it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions attached to this permission and owing to

siting, scale and design, the proposed reservoir would not reduce the amenities enjoyed by occupants of neighbouring property, would not have an adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding area, and would be acceptable in terms of highway safety.

## 2. Planning Policy

### National Policy:

- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation  
PPG24 Planning and Noise

### Local Plan Policy:

#### Tendring District Local Plan (2007)

- QL9 Design of New Development  
QL11 Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses  
COM22 Noise Pollution  
COM31 Water Supply  
EN1 Landscape Character  
TR1a Development Affecting Highways

#### Core Strategy and Development Policies Proposed Submission Draft (2010)

- CP7 Flood Risk, Coastal Change and Water Conservation  
DP1 Design of New Development  
DP5 Landscape Impacts

## 3. Relevant Planning History

- |               |  |          |            |
|---------------|--|----------|------------|
| 04/00643/LUEX | Use of the site for the storage of vehicles and tractor units. Maintenance activity including basic repairs not associated with garage services. | Refused  | 23.05.2006 |
| 09/00984/OUT  | Erection of 2 no.detached two-storey dwellings, 2 no. detached double garages and creation of new vehicular access.                              | Approved | 26.11.2009 |

#### 4. Consultations

Harwich Town Council	No objection.
Environmental Services	Request a condition to ensure the noise emitted from the site plant, equipment and machinery shall not exceed 5dBA above the background level at the nearest noise sensitive premises.
Essex County Council Highways	No objection subject to imposition of ten conditions relating to layout of access, vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays, parking and turning spaces, no unbound materials within 15m of highway boundary, any gates to be recessed minimum 15m from highway boundary, surface water management, and wheel washing facility.

#### 5. Representations

5.1 Five letters of objection have been received. A summary of the comments and the Officer response is set out below;

- Concerned about noise from pump house.  
*Officer response – This is discussed at paragraph 6.8 below and deemed to be acceptable.*
- Loss of views.  
*Officer response – This is not a material planning consideration. The impact upon residential amenity is discussed at paragraph 6.7 below and deemed to be acceptable.*
- Reduction in property value  
*Officer response – This is not a material planning consideration.*
- Adverse impact on wildlife.  
*Officer response – This is discussed at paragraph 6.10 below and deemed to be acceptable.*
- Want assurances on proposed landscaping.  
*Officer response – A condition has been imposed to secure details of the proposed landscaping and its implementation in order to soften the appearance of the development within the landscape.*
- Should be an open reservoir.  
*Officer response – The proposal is for a covered reservoir for security and maintenance reasons and the application must be assessed as submitted.*
- Access road will be an eyesore and create noise and light pollution.  
*Officer response – Access to the site will be very infrequent, around once a week for a short maintenance check and to maintain landscaping. There is therefore considered to be no significant adverse impact upon residential amenity.*

#### 6. Assessment

The main planning considerations are the:

- Principle of Development;
- Landscape Impact;
- Residential Amenity; and,
- Highway Safety.

#### Context

6.1 The site lies to the south side of Ramsey Road, outside the defined settlement limits and on land allocated under local plan policy COM31 for water supply. The site is predominantly open grassland with some hedgerow and planting to the boundaries. To the southern and

eastern boundaries lie residential development on Military Way and Parade Drive. To the northern boundary lies two detached dwellings and to the west is Michaelstowe Farm.

- 6.2 The proposal is for a six million litre capacity covered reservoir to provide increased security and volume of supply than can currently be provided from the smaller and aged structure at Fronks Road, Dovercourt. The design is low maintenance, has a long life (60 years), limits the range of temperature change to the structure and stored water, and is secure against any deliberate attempt to pollute the stored water.

#### Principle of development

- 6.3 The site is allocated under local plan policy COM31 for water supply. The proposed reservoir requires approximately two thirds of this site. Policy COM31 states the Council will support proposals that provide for the maintenance and improvement of water supply infrastructure and services and will safeguard sites identified for future water supply development. There is therefore no objection in principle to a reservoir on this site.

#### Landscape impact

- 6.4 The proposal is for a covered reservoir which is set approximately 50% below the ground with grass roof (3.8 metres above ground level) and grass banks. The pumping station is set into the bank on the east side and is constructed in facing brickwork. The reservoir will be surrounded by 2.5 metre high green coated steel security fencing set within a landscaping margin. Vehicular access within the site will be on a grasscrete surface.
- 6.5 The site is devoid of trees and there is no other significant vegetation in the main body of the land. Some remnant hedgerow and other planting exist on the perimeter of the site but none that makes a quantifiable contribution to the character or appearance of the area or that merits protection by means of a Tree Preservation Order. The recommendation contains a condition to secure landscaping of the site to reinforce existing landscaping and screen the perimeter of the site and proposed security fencing in the interests of visual amenity.
- 6.6 The adjacent site, Owls Oak, contains 4 trees that are the subjects of Tree Preservation Orders and are growing amongst a group of other trees that collectively help to soften the appearance of the area. They are not threatened by the current development proposal. It is therefore considered that the proposal would have no significant adverse impact upon the surrounding landscape.

#### Residential amenity

- 6.7 The closest existing dwelling is approximately 7 metres from the base of the bank (18 metres from the top of the bank). The indicative layout of the dwellings proposed under 10/01360/OUT shows a minimum of 17 metres from the base of the bank (28 metres from the top of the bank). The bank is a maximum of 3.8 metres above ground level so given the separation distances there will be no adverse impact in terms of loss of light to neighbouring dwellings.
- 6.8 The pump house is located on the eastern side of the bank and is at least 35 metres from the nearest existing dwelling. The indicative layout of the dwellings proposed under 10/01360/OUT shows two dwellings within 18 metres of the pump house. An Environmental Health Officer visited the Brightlingsea reservoir, which is smaller but of comparable design, to assess the noise level. He is satisfied that a condition to ensure the noise emitted from the site plant, equipment and machinery does not exceed 5dBA above the background level at the nearest noise sensitive premises (included those proposed under

10/01360/OUT) is achievable. It is therefore considered that there would be no significant adverse impact upon residential amenity in terms of noise.

#### Highway safety

- 6.9 The Highway Authority initially objected to the proposal and amended plans have been submitted to overcome their objections. The Highway Authority now has no objection subject to imposition of ten conditions as detailed at paragraph 4 above.

#### Other considerations

- 6.10 An extended phase 1 habitat survey has been undertaken. The generally low growing and sparse vegetation makes the habitat unsuitable for any protected species with the exception of nesting birds and low likelihood of individual bats in the dense ivy covering a standing dead tree. The following recommendations are made: Timing of removal of standing dead tree to avoid bats being present, removal of any hedgerow outside bird nesting season, and hedgerow planting. Subject to the recommendations there is considered to be no significant adverse impact upon protected species.