

Reason for Application

Our Client, the Mary Roxburghe Trust (a charity), has been advised by the local Environment Agency officer to submit an application for a replacement sewage treatment plant at West Horsley Place and Estate in Surrey, such that the discharge comes under the administration and modern permitting regulations of the Environment Agency. We have therefore submitted, on their behalf as agents, the enclosed application for this purpose.

Although for the avoidance of doubt, the Mary Roxburghe Trust believes that, under past and current legislation, it has the right to lawfully discharge treated effluent and upgrade its sewage treatment from the West Horsley Place estate, as it has done lawfully for many years.

It should also be noted that various planning and building regulation approvals obtained by the Mary Roxburghe Trust have reduced the amount of effluent from the estate requiring treatment (see details below). This includes the statutory planning change of use of the stables, farm buildings, farmyard and which, at present, deposits foul surface water etc to the existing sewage treatment plant.

Also, statutory planning 'change of use' was also approved for the farmyard, farm buildings and stables to change to buildings associated with the Arts in accordance with the charity's aims.

Historical Background to Sewage Treatment at West Horsley Place

West Horsley Place and estate is approximately 300 acres in area, including a Grade I listed mansion house originally constructed in 1425, and has been owned by various aristocratic families. A history of the estate has been recently published by Bamber Gascoigne. Archaeological investigation has also discovered that private sewage treatment with the outflow of treated effluent to surface water ditches has occurred at West Horsley Place from at least the introduction of the 1531 Statute of Sewers Act enacted by Henry VIII who owned the mansion and estate from 1538 until his death in 1547.

The existing extant sewage treatment system was installed in 1933. It was designed by the London Sanitary Protection Association. The plans of the sewage treatment plant and its outflow into the ancient ditches were submitted to Guilford Rural District Council in January 1933. They were approved by the district sanitary engineer in accordance with the 1875 Public Health Act Sections 13 to 55. This approval included (under Section 17 and 22 of the Act) the discharge of the treated effluent from the sewage treatment plant to the ancient ditches which is still extant and still working. Many of these clauses have been retained in essence in various Public Health Acts up to the present day. The installation was inspected during construction by both the district sanitary surveyor and the London Sanitary Protection Association.

From estate records, the sewage treatment system was regularly maintained and checked by the London Sanitary Protection Association on a yearly basis. This system is now over 85 years old (although still treating the effluent adequately and to the required standard) and the Mary Roxburghe Trust, as a responsible charity, decided to install a new modern replacement sewage treatment system which would treat the sewage to a clean drinkable standard. Planning permission

and building regulation approval for a new replacement system was given last year and the system was fully installed at a cost of £128,960 and estimated annual maintenance cost of £916 per year. Details from Marsh Industries are enclosed regarding the replacement. At present, the historic treatment plant is still in use, with the replacement plant's outflow capped.

Recent Changes to The Estate

For centuries the mansion house (West Horsley Place) and estate has been owned by various aristocratic families who farmed the land and used the mansion house for numerous shooting parties and general entertaining on a grand scale. The last aristocratic owner, the Duchess of Roxburghe, died in 2014.

The estate was inherited by her great-nephew, Bamber Gascoigne, who placed the estate into a charitable trust which is known as 'The Mary Roxburghe Trust'. The object of the trust is for the estate and mansion to be a centre for the arts for the public benefit.

To this end, the Mary Roxburghe Trust in association with another charitable trust, Grange Park Opera, obtained planning permission in 2016 to replace a number of industrial units, farm buildings and stables on the estate with a theatre for the performance of Opera during the summer season. The Trust also obtained planning permission and building regulations approval for the change of use of the mansion and various existing estate barns, stables and buildings for the arts and to hold events to raise funds for the repair and maintenance of the estate buildings and Grade I listed mansion house. These permissions also allow if required for the rainwater to the main house to naturally soak away by way of traditional soakaways and to the existing estate rainwater drainage rather than to the existing sewage treatment plant. The planning permissions also change the use of the extant farm buildings, farmyards and stables etc to uses associated with the Arts and not equine or farming purposes. As some of these buildings and areas including the stables and farmyards etc at present also deposit their foul and surface water via gullies and drains into the old sewage treatment plant, this requirement will not in the future be necessary, as the estate will not be used as a working farm under the approved statutory 'change of use'. As the estate is in the Surrey "Green Belt" the object of the planning permissions given were to neutralise or reduce 'development' of the existing usage. Therefore, the Opera House facility planning permission was only granted by the local authority if measures including the existing buildings etc were taken out of use and dismantled. The planning authority also took the same approach regarding the change of use of other farm buildings and the mansion house.

Resultant Sewage Flow Rates

As can be seen from the enclosed maximum usage tables which explain the existing and proposed effluent flow rates, the private sewage system will reduce the amount of treated effluent to the existing drainage ditch outflow by over 40% (see attached maximum sewage outflow quantities of the existing and the proposed usage data sheets and table below)

West Horsley Place c1940 to present sewage outflow per day = 32622 litres

West Horsley Place proposed planning approval sewage outflow per day = 17060 litres

Possible reduction = (47.7%) 15562 litres

Pre Application Check

We confirm that we have updated and carried out further additional research regarding sewage treatment etc at West Horsley Place, and apologise for any discrepancies and errors in regard of our 'provisional pre-application check' last year.

Thank you for your co-operation on this matter.