

## BREINTON PARISH COUNCIL

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### **Little Breinton planning Application P250728/F**

Further comments from Breinton Parish Council on planning application P250728/F, agricultural buildings north-west of Little Breinton, Hereford, HR4 7PH. Members considered this planning application at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 18th February, 2026.

Breinton Parish Council notes that the significant revision to this application is the removal of the previously proposed packaged sewage treatment drainage mound and its replacement with a drainage field located in the field to the south of the site.

While this amendment could be regarded as an improvement in principle, the Parish Council considers that its effectiveness can only be properly verified through percolation and groundwater testing undertaken during the wettest period of the year. Review of borehole water level data from elsewhere in the parish indicates that peak groundwater levels typically occur in February. The percolation and groundwater testing submitted in support of this application was undertaken during June, a dry summer month, and is therefore not considered representative of ground conditions during winter, when soil saturation and groundwater levels are at their highest.

Although it is possible that land to the south of the development site may exhibit improved drainage characteristics due to its alluvial structure, this assumption requires verification through testing carried out at the appropriate time of year. Without such evidence, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the proposed drainage field will perform effectively under peak winter conditions.

The Parish Council further notes that the proposed drainage field would constitute an off-site maintenance feature associated with the development. The Council has consistently maintained that the regular maintenance of site gullies, drains, and the packaged sewage treatment plant on a monthly basis will represent a significant ongoing expense and may not be reliably undertaken by future residents. The off-site positioning of the drainage field does not mitigate this concern and may compound the practical difficulties of ensuring compliance.

In the absence of verification of the drainage field's efficiency during wet periods, and given the risk of delinquency in maintenance schedules, the Parish Council

considers that there remains a material risk of increased flooding to properties and highways to the south of the development. There is also a corresponding risk of pollution entering the adjacent watercourse and ultimately the River Wye.

Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the application, the Parish Council strongly requests that stringent planning conditions be imposed requiring full compliance with the comprehensive maintenance schedule set out in the H&H Drainage Report. Such conditions should mandate the applicant to implement and adhere to all inspection, servicing, and maintenance requirements in perpetuity, and to secure the transfer of a legally binding responsibility for those obligations to the collective property owners upon sale of the dwellings. Without enforceable conditionality, there remains a significant risk that the long-term integrity and performance of the drainage infrastructure will be compromised.

The Parish Council also draws attention to apparent internal inconsistencies within the H&H Drainage Report concerning the proposed foul water disposal strategy. On page 42, three sequential conclusions are presented:

- It is stated that, following the flow diagram, a septic tank would be favoured; however, the percolation test results are said to demonstrate that the ground is unsuitable for the installation of a new drainage field. Yet on page 49, the same percolation test results are cited to support the conclusion that “the percolation tests have demonstrated that the local soils will support a drainage field.”
- The report then suggests that, noting the percolation results, a partial drainage field should be installed with final discharge to the local permanent watercourse.
- It further concludes that a packaged sewage treatment plant should be installed with a partial drainage mound and a seasonal discharge to surface water.

Notwithstanding these stated conclusions, the subsequent detailed description of the proposed treatment system, together with the “Foul Water Disposal Conclusions” on pages 56–57, makes no reference to a partial drainage mound forming part of the system. Instead, the focus is solely on the installation of a packaged sewage treatment plant and a drainage field.

These contradictions give rise to material uncertainty as to the precise components of the foul water disposal arrangements being proposed and their technical suitability. Until this lack of clarity is resolved and a single, coherent, and technically justified drainage strategy is presented, the Local Planning Authority cannot properly conclude on the adequacy, compliance, or environmental acceptability of the foul water disposal system.

Accordingly, Breinton Parish Council maintains its concerns regarding both the technical robustness and the long-term management of the proposed drainage arrangements.

Lisa Law,

Clerk,

Brienton Parish Council.