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Flood Risk Assessment
Change of Usage Class from A1 to A3 (Retail Shops to Restaurants and Cafes.)
At The Old Court House, George Street, Buxton, Derbyshire. SK17 6AY.

Having previously been employed as a Drainage Engineer with High Peak Borough Council from 1976 to1987 and subsequently by Severn Trent Water Ltd from 1987 onwards and having local knowledge of this site; the Developer has requested me to write the flood risk assessment to accompany the Planning Application.

I understand from a telephone conversation with Mr David Wooley from the Environmental Agency, Trentside Offices, Nottingham that the River Wye, which flows in a culvert under the Old Court House, is classified as a main river. The attached Plans A and B show the location of the proposed Restaurant in relation to the Rive Wye culvert.

In the late 70's the High Peak Borough Council's Clerk of Works, Mr Denis Copley and myself carried out structural inspection works and dye testing of the surface water drainage connections to this culvert from the Square through to Spring gardens for the following three reasons: -

The first was to establish the structural integrity of the culvert for the High Peak Borough Council acting as the Land Drainage Authority. This was prior to this section of river being made Main River.

The second was as part of the site investigation works for the Buxton Trunk Sewer renewal, acting as agents for Severn Trent Water. Plan C shows the result of these dye testing works and what connections there are to the culvert. I can only find a part copy of this plan, the original copy being held at the Town Hall Buxton.

The third being to locate the position of the culvert to ensure that the new stainless steel water pipe line from the source of Buxton Water at the Roman Baths, through to the new bottling plant on Station Road, did not clash with the wall or roof of the culvert.

The major change to this section of the watercourse was in 1983 when the Buxton Trunk Sewer was constructed. The new sewer clashed with the invert of the culvert in The Quadrant outside what is Currently The Edinburgh Wool Shop. This created a new weir to the river at this location. The effects of this were the matter of of some discussions with your predecessors at the Rive Authority. It was agreed and approved that by reducing the height of the weir; by the constructing a twin sewer pipe across the culvert no detrimental upstream flooding of the river would occur. Plan D shows the weir crossing at this location.

Since this work was completed, during my time in office at High Peak and Severn Trent, there has been no surface water flooding in George Street.

I do however recall local surface water flooding outside the Grove Hotel in The Quadrant in 1984, when the Spring Gardens Pedestrianisation Scheme took place. This was resolved when Severn Trent contributed to the renewal of the local surface water system in that locality. It has flooded again since at this location but this was found to be due to the lack of maintenance of the grids and drains.

I am sure that the flooding of the River Wye below its confluence with Hogshaw Brook is well documented, as is the Lightwood Road area of Hogshaw Brook.

Referring back to the proposed creation of a Restaurant at The Old Court House, this proposal is for minimal internal alterations only and makes no external alterations to the building itself. In addition the location of two car-parking spaces at the rear is not altering the hard standing area or the existing ground level. There is, therefore, no additional rainfall run off contribution to the local area or change in ground levels, which can give rise to increasing the existing flood risk to others.

If there were to be a flood incident in The Square/George Street area then the flood routing would be to follow the natural ground levels through onto The Quadrant and down into Spring Gardens. Evacuation of the proposed Restaurant would be to leave the building and walk some 10 metres directly across George Street onto the much higher ground by the side of the University of Derby's Pump Room and onto Manchester Road.

I trust that this report helps in the decision to give approval to the proposed Restaurant. Please contact myself directly if you have any further queries or issues arising from this report. It would be helpful if contact should be made on my mobile contact telephone number.

C K Greenhalgh
22 September 2010