

(SPARE)

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MINISTRY OF  
HOUSING & LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
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Please address any reply to  
THE SECRETARY

quoting: W.S. 2172/5/01

Your Ref. JHS/E.

Sir,

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal - Ringmore

I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to refer to the recent public inquiry held by his Engineering Inspector, Col. S. K. Gilbert, B.Sc., M.I.C.E., in connection with the Council's scheme for carrying out works of sewerage and sewage disposal for the parish of Ringmore at an estimated cost of £19,000.

Objections were received from several local residents and the Parish Council on the grounds that existing sanitary arrangements in the village are, on the whole, adequate and the proposed scheme is unnecessary and expensive and should be curtailed considerably.

The Inspector reports that whilst about two thirds of the village appears to be satisfactorily served by individual septic tanks a potential threat to public health arises from the inadequate drainage facilities of a group of houses in the middle of the village. The sewage from these houses is delivered by an existing sewer to a septic tank near Lower Manor Farm. After settlement it is discharged into a small brook and causes pollution.

In order to produce a satisfactory effluent of a standard acceptable to the River Board, further treatment of the tank effluent is necessary. The sewer is old and carries a large volume of infiltration and surface water, which in wet weather may be many times that of the domestic sewage. This results in the flushing out of solids previously settled in the tank, and aggravates the pollution of the brook.

It is proposed to eliminate as much of the infiltration and surface water as possible by laying a new sewer along the bottom of the valley, mainly in gardens and orchards. A length of old sewer will be retained where it is located in a narrow roadway and where the cost of replacement would be prohibitive.

The site of the existing tank is too close to the farm for the satisfactory operation of sewage treatment works without giving offence. It is therefore necessary to build new works further away.

/The

The Clerk of the Kingsbridge  
Rural District Council,  
Council Offices,  
Manor House.

The Inspector is satisfied that the proper solution is to provide a new sewerage system, and subject to the omission of the branch sewer between manholes 26 and 34 which in his view is unnecessary and would invoke heavy reinstatement costs, he recommends approval.

The Minister has carefully considered the report and the objections raised by letter and at the inquiry. He is satisfied that the pollution of the brook, which is used for watering cattle and the growing of watercress, is a potential danger to health which could lead to serious consequences. He has considered the suggestion put forward by the objectors that the scheme should be limited to dealing with the drainage from the small group of houses concerned. This would involve complete separation of surface water and foul drainage from these houses with a view to continuing to treat the latter at the existing septic tank. He has come to the conclusion that a limited scheme on these lines would not be reasonably practical and that in the circumstances its relatively high cost would not be justified. He has therefore decided to accept the Inspector's recommendation and he accordingly approves the Council's scheme in principle subject to the suggested modification.

Detailed drawings of the sewage disposal works should be submitted in due course. The Consulting Engineers are asked to give further consideration to the proposed sedimentation and humus tank capacities which appear to be small in relation to the flow to be treated.

Copies of this letter have been sent to the Devon River Board, the Devon County Council and to all the objectors.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

(C. W. DODGE)