

Mr Nicholas Butler

Appeal Reference APP/L1765/C/22/3311622

Unauthorised erection of a Polytunnel – retrospective planning permission refused on grounds of potential to exacerbate flooding in the local area

We have lived in the local area for nearly 20 years and walk along Dradfield Lane several times a week.

The field purchased by Mr Butler has always been known locally to be poor quality land due to its propensity to become waterlogged during winter months. The ditch running alongside Dradfield Lane and adjacent to this field in question whilst poorly maintained was rarely full to capacity. Excessive rainfall would occasionally cause the pond alongside Inglefield Lane to expand and there would be flooding of the road.

Since Mr Butler's purchase of the land he has undertaken considerable work which he has claimed was with the purpose of improving the drainage including laying hardcore etc creating a road down the middle of the field the laying some drainage pipes and clearing the ditch. Apparently, this was to allow him to keep livestock on the land and indeed there have at times been a small number of pigs raised and a few sheep.

Unfortunately, it would seem that this work has failed to mitigate the drainage issue and in fact has exacerbated the problems considerably. The field where the pigs were kept has become a quagmire with run off of contaminated water and mud from the pig's enclosure into the ditch. Water levels in the ditch are higher than previously observed and currently the ditch remains full of brackish water. The ditch has on occasions overflowed onto the road of Dradfield lane. The occurrence of flooding at the Junction of Dradfield Lane and Ingoldfield Lane has noticeably increased as has the flooding of Ingoldfield lane causing a hazard and inconvenience to road users and pedestrians. Any development which has the potential to increase the run off of surface water and increase flooding, where previously it would have been contained within the 'wet land' should not be condoned, It would seem to be too much of a coincidence that the observed increase in flooding along the roads has only been apparent since Mr Butlers work on the field including his unauthorised erection of a large polytunnel.

I am at a loss to understand the logic of erecting such a structure without planning permission were it not for Mr Butlers habit of using this approach and his very obvious strategy to ignore regulations designed to protect the environment whenever possible.