

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 12 March 2018 13:52  
**To:** Withers, Simon <[SWithers@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:SWithers@herefordshire.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** PA 152868 - Burghill Gospel Hall, Portway, Burghill.

Hello Mr Withers

I have just seen the email from Mr Nick Ford who says that:

*"As this is a change of use and not a newly constructed building, we have to assess what is reasonable.....the drainage provisions would be considered reasonable from a building control perspective."*

Mr Ford does not give any other information relating to flow quantities or occupation rates to justify his decision. The proposed change of use will see a significant increase in the discharge of domestic foul sewage from the building, making a cess-pool an unsuitable method of dealing with waste water in this location.

Most professionals who have/had dealings with sewage disposal will be familiar with the published works of L B Escritt - a known and respected expert in public health engineering.

I attach, as a reminder for all concerned, a photocopy of page 426 of my 1967 version of "Sewerage and Sewage Disposal by L B Escritt". I draw your attention to the last 4 lines of the relevant page on cess-pools. I think that from this the conclusion should be clear.

Sincerely

Anthony

A H Vaughan

by soakage into the ground. It is often thought that sullage is not a seriously contaminating liquid, but in so far as it contains faecal matter from the washing of napkins and from slops, the sullage from isolated premises is far from safe.

## CESSPOOL DRAINAGE

Cesspools are very commonly used for isolated houses, and even for small schools or institutions throughout the country. Nevertheless, cesspool drainage is an unsatisfactory means of dealing with sewage. Moreover, when cesspools are properly installed and maintained, this method often proves more expensive than any other. For this reason, opinion has of late turned against the use of cesspools, and some authorities consider that they should be abolished altogether.

A cesspool is intended to be a watertight tank into which water-borne sewage is discharged and periodically removed by a local authority or private contractor's cesspool emptier. Cesspools must be so constructed and situated that they are accessible for cleansing and can be emptied without the contents being carried through any dwelling house or work place. They must be *watertight and must not discharge any foul liquid or solid to either sewers or watercourses*. A cesspool, "not being a settlement tank or other tank for the reception or disposal of foul matter," must be covered and adequately ventilated.

In brief, it can be said that a cesspool must not leak or overflow—overflow being permitted only from settling or septic tanks discharging to some form of treatment works.

And here arises the main objection to cesspools. A country house with four occupants can easily discharge 700 gallons of sewage a week, which quantity is approximately the average capacity of a cesspool emptier. The cost of cesspool emptying by contract varies usually between 20 and 40 shillings a load, it being assumed that each load is a full load. But the men operating the vehicles are not particularly careful to ensure full loads every journey, and this makes the charge disproportionate to the service rendered. Thus, an ordinary family would, on the average, have to pay £2 a week for cesspool emptying. But it is known for a fact that most householders who have cesspools do not pay £2 a week, and that most local authorities who have cesspool-emptying services allow for emptying each cesspool in their area *three or four times a year only*. From the foregoing it is obvious that the quantity of sewage discharged to cesspools is far in excess of the quantity taken away from them, and that, therefore, very large quantities of sewage *must be finding their way into the subsoil by leakage or overflow*. It is also well known that, in chalk areas, builders advise householders to make their cesspools leak after they have been inspected by the building inspector, and local authorities are well aware that many of the cesspools in their areas must be in unsound condition.

From what has been said it should be clear that cesspools which are constructed and maintained in accordance with the law are prohibitively costly and therefore cannot be recommended for use in connexion with any building that has a good water supply.