Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project
Anglian Water Services Limited

Phase One (Non-statutory) Consultation Summary Report

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anglianwater

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Phase One Consultation Summary Report

November 2020

www.cwwtpr.com

Introduction

The relocation project will deliver a modern, carbon-efficient waste water treatment plant that will continue to provide vital services for the community and the environment, recycling water and nutrients, producing green energy, and enabling Cambridge to grow sustainably.

South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council recently consulted on a draft Area Action Plan for a new low-carbon city district in North East Cambridge, which could create 8,000 homes and 20,000 jobs over the next 20 years. We are working in partnership with them to help achieve this vision which relies upon the Anglian Water Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant to be relocated, unlocking the development potential of the area which has great walking, cycling and public transport links, making it a highly sustainable location for new homes.

Proposals for the relocation project are at an early stage. We recently held our Phase One community consultation, from 8 July to 14 September. We would like to say a big thank you to the thousands of local residents who provided feedback.

Your comments matter to us. This summary report shares the wide range of feedback we received and explains how we are using this feedback to inform our site selection and design processes for the relocation project. We are taking time to carefully consider all responses before we conclude our site selection process in late January 2021.

1,683 visitors to our virtual exhibition

5,780 visitors to our digital engagement platform

559 feedback forms by FREEPOST and email

Why relocate the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant?

For 125 years the current site on Cowley Road has been serving the needs of Cambridge and Greater Cambridge by receiving waste water from people's homes and businesses, treating it and returning it to the River Cam.

The new plant will continue to provide these vital services, treating waste water and storing storm flows. It will also continue to treat sludge to produce renewable energy via anaerobic digestion. This will be used to power the plant, as well as producing biofertilizer providing essential soil nutrients for farming.

Relocating the plant from the current site on Cowley Road will:

Allow the existing site to be redeveloped, delivering thousands of much-needed new homes including around 40% affordable housing (rented and shared ownership)

Provide a mix of homes, workplaces, shops and community spaces that are physically connected, socially cohesive and fully integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods

Enable improvements to walking, cycling and public transport connectivity, helping to address climate change through reducing car use

Create a lively mixed-use area with a real sense of place, fostering community wellbeing and encouraging collaboration

Create new parks and open spaces that will form a biodiverse and accessible green space network linked with parks in the wider area

The relocation project gives us the opportunity to design and build a modern, carbon-efficient waste water treatment plant, using the latest technologies. This will enable us to better serve the needs of our customers across Cambridge and Greater Cambridge, including Waterbeach and Waterbeach New Town, both now and into the future. With this new plant we will be able to:

Reduce the footprint of the modern plant by around half the existing site to a smaller 22 hectares area

Deliver new habitats for wildlife, increasing biodiversity

Minimise odour by incorporating solutions to address it at source and using best operational practices

Reduce harmful carbon emissions through sustainable design, helping address climate change

Deliver environmental and landscape enhancements

Contribute to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030

Respond to the needs and aspirations of the local community following feedback

Our consultation

We identified three potential new locations for the waste water treatment plant. We asked for your views on those three site options as part of our Phase One consultation.

All feedback we received to our consultation is being considered in our site selection and design processes for the relocation project. Site selection will conclude in late January 2021 when we will announce which site has been selected. We will report all feedback received during this consultation and the further two phases to follow in full in our final Consultation Report. This will be published with our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) planned for 2022/23.

In this report we summarise the feedback we have received from our first phase of consultation and how this is being incorporated into our proposals.

Figure 1: Core consultation zone which includes the three site areas. This zone will also include tunnels and pipelines required to take waste water to the site for treatment and take treated waste water away from the site, back to the River Cam.

We undertook our consultation by:

- Sending 14,447 community consultation leaflets to local homes and businesses in the core consultation zone
- Advertising our consultation in the Cambridge Independent and Cambridge News and at local information points
- Launching our digital engagement platform to invite comments online
- Holding a virtual exhibition of our project plans
- Holding community webinars and meetings (July to August)
- Being available via our dedicated communications lines, which remain open for enquiries

What you told us

We asked for feedback on the three site area options for the relocation project and what issues are important to the communities in these areas. The questions, answers, and the areas where we received most comments are summarised below.

Who responded:

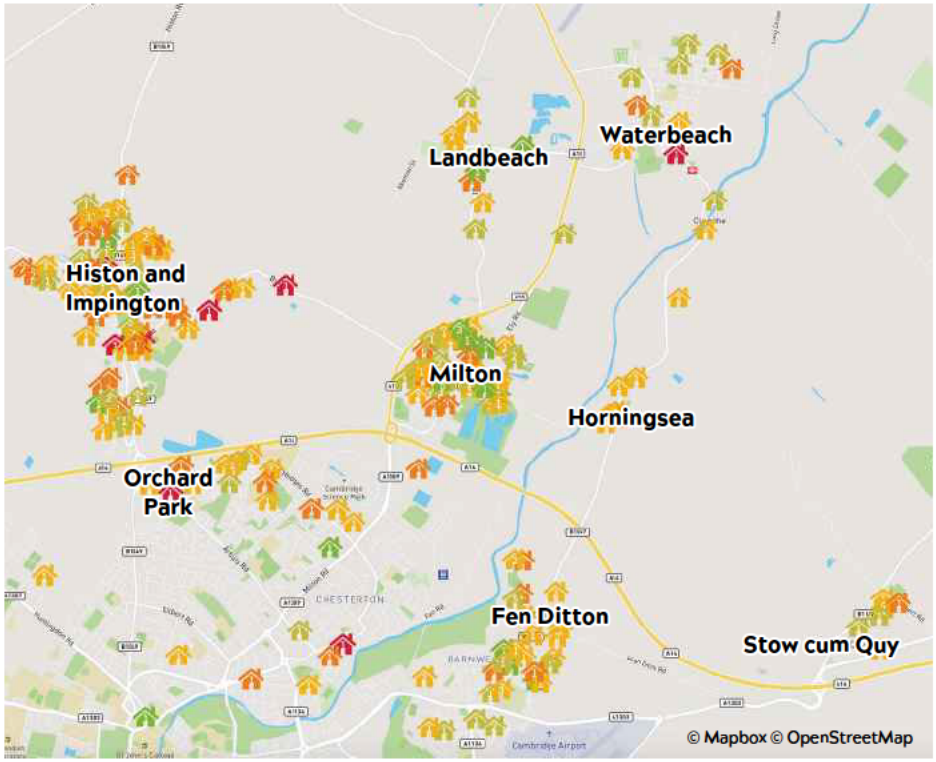
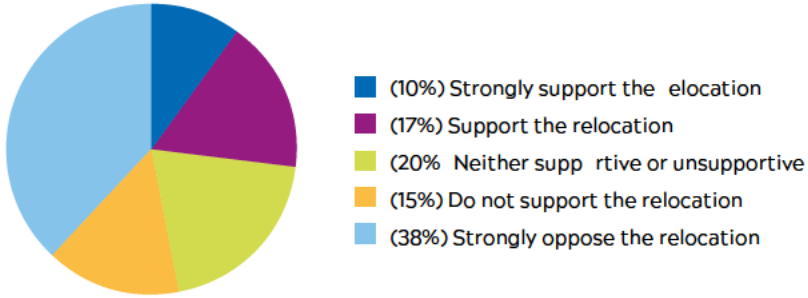


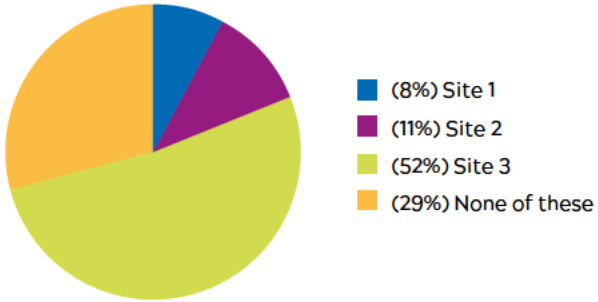
Figure 2: Map of respondents by postcode who commented using the interactive map on our digital engagement platform.

Introduction | Why relocate | Our consultation | What you told us | FAQs | What happens next

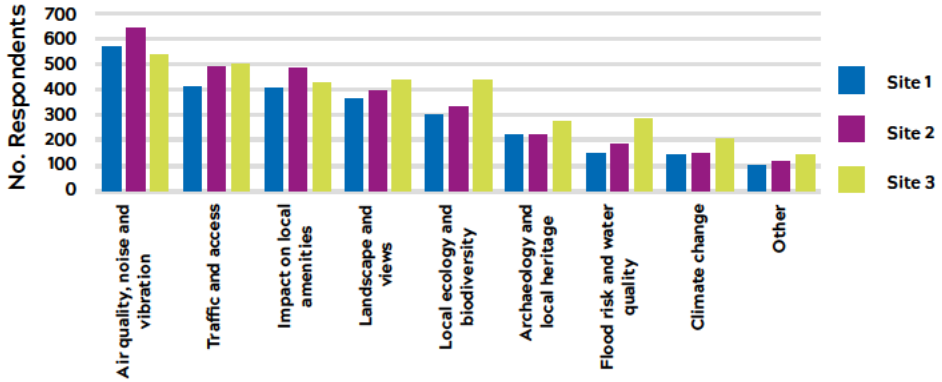
What is your opinion of our proposal to relocate and build a new modern, carbon-efficient waste water treatment plant for Cambridge, to enable the regeneration of the North East Cambridge area?



Which site area do you think is the most suitable for the relocation project?



What things relating to this site are most important to you? (presented by site)



We invited comments on the issues that were most important when considering the site options for the relocation project. The most common issues and how we're addressing these are summarised in the table below.

Topic	What you told us was important about this topic to you	How we're listening and what happens next
Air quality, noise and vibration	There is a concern about odour from the plant and the impact of odour on nearby homes, businesses, community facilities or recreational areas such as walking or cycle routes. Some feedback suggested that the new site be moved furthest away from residential areas. Other comments showed concern for prevailing wind directions and how that could impact the effect of odour from further away.	Our experience of operating waste water treatment plants and the nature of the job they are designed to do means that we understand the importance of minimising odour as far as possible for local communities. The opportunity the relocation provides is to build a completely new, modern plant, incorporating solutions into the design of the plant and using best operational practices to minimise odour at source. We are also carrying out a dedicated odour assessment as part of our site selection and design process. We will also be considering how odour might affect local amenities such as walking and cycle routes, following feedback from the community.
Impact on local amenities	Many of the comments we received relating to local amenity mentioned the value of outdoor spaces for residents. Sites 1 and 2 were often felt to have more amenity use because more local residents live nearby. Other comments suggested that Site 3 also has high local amenity value owing to there being fewer built up spaces and future projects such as the Wicken Fen Vision.	We have included consideration of key local amenities, including Mere Way and Low Fen Drove Way, as part of our site selection process following feedback from the community. For whichever site is chosen, we will collaborate closely with the community and stakeholders as part of our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Our commitment is to design a new plant that will deliver social value and environmental enhancements that will contribute to the amenity of the local area.

Topic	What you told us was important about this topic to you	How we're listening and what happens next
Traffic and access	People are concerned about increased congestion during both construction and operation of the new plant. There is particular concern for road safety from site traffic and how this would impact locations such as schools, including Impington Village College and Fen Ditton Primary School, among others. Congestion on roads such as the A10, or lorries using High Ditch Road or Butt Lane was particularly commented on. There is also concern that there could be greater cumulative impacts owing to disruption from other nearby developments being proposed. Protecting safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders is of particular importance in the feedback we received.	We understand that any changes in traffic flows and access to the new site will always be an important concern for the local community. Not just during construction of the plant, but also during its lifetime. Operational traffic movements for the new plant will be unlikely to materially increase from the levels of the current plant. We're committed to developing a scheme which minimises impacts on communities and the local road network as far as possible. We have been consulting with Highways England and the local highways authority on access routes for each of the site options. Once a site is chosen, we will be assessing traffic impacts further as part of our detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Transport Assessment. These will be available in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) in our phase two consultation next year. We will continue to consult with Highways England and the local highways authority to create a robust Traffic Management Plan for whichever site is selected. A draft of this plan will be consulted on with the community as part of our consultation process.

Topic	What you told us was important about this topic to you	How we're listening and what happens next
Landscape and views	The importance of open green spaces for health and wellbeing was commented on for all three sites. Views from pedestrian and cycle routes such as Mere Way and Low Fen Drove Way were also highlighted.	Although some visual impact from any new development is unavoidable, we will consider comments about landscape in our site selection and design processes. For whichever site is chosen we commit to designing a project that respects the location and landscape setting and achieves opportunities for environmental enhancements through consultation with the local community and other stakeholders. We are also receiving advice and guidance from the Design Council. As part of our further consultation process, we will be consulting on visualisations of the project from a range of viewpoints. Our full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will include a robust Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).
Local ecology and biodiversity	As well as open space for recreation and leisure, comments were also made about local wildlife and Fen Edge habitats too. This included protecting ecology and biodiversity for the local environment such as Quy Fen and being able to access nature and wildlife when using trails including Mere Way.	We will consider the sites and species you've told us about alongside our environmental surveys during our site selection. We will also continue to consult with Natural England, the Wildlife Trust, the National Trust, and local community groups to develop our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). We're committed to designing a project that will deliver habitat enhancements for wildlife and achieve an increase in biodiversity.

Topic	What you told us was important about this topic to you	How we're listening and what happens next
Archaeology and local heritage	Your feedback helped us to better understand the sources of local heritage for the community, such as places with historic character or archaeology. This included the history of the Mere Way as a Roman road, the conservation value of Horningsea and Fen Ditton, and the potential for further archaeological finds at Fleam Dyke.	The local heritage and archaeological features commented on are considered in our site selection process and we will be consulting with Historic England and the County Council Historic Environment team on our approach.
Flood risk and water quality	Because of the nature of the vital job the plant will do, we understand why a number of respondents were worried about the possibility of flooding. We also received suggestions that the plant should be built away from flood plains, or on top of Gault Clay, as well as concerns about contamination to groundwater at Quy Fen.	As a water company, treating and managing water safely and effectively is always our number one priority. The new plant is being designed to treat the waste water of Greater Cambridge, prevent flooding by managing storm flows and serve the environment. This includes taking account of a growing population and climate change. We understand the critical importance of hydrology, groundwater and protecting the underlying aquifer. We have also excluded flood zones and placed a 100m buffer around watercourses as part of our site selection process. A full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) considering flooding, contamination and mitigation for whichever site is selected will be consulted on with the relevant Internal Drainage Board, Lead Local Flood Authority, and the Environment Agency.

Topic	What you told us was important about this topic to you	How we're listening and what happens next
Climate change	People were concerned that the impacts of climate change would affect the operation of the plant. Some were supportive of the opportunities to create a more carbon-efficient plant, or preferred shorter tunnel and/ or pipeline corridors to reduce carbon emissions.	As a water company it's our job to manage this precious natural resource for our customers, treat it and return it safely to the environment. The new plant will be designed to account for climate change and contribute to helping us reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. We have already considered carbon emissions as part of our site selection and we will be providing more detailed carbon assessments as part of our full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for whichever site is chosen.
Other	Finally, people also often asked about the need for the relocation or suggested the plant could remain where it is. Some respondents are worried the economic benefits would not be felt by the local communities closest to it.	The proposals to build a modern, carbon-efficient waste water treatment plant are being funded by the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The HIF funding has been awarded to support sustainable growth and accelerate housing delivery in Cambridge through the Area Action Plan, in recognition of the regional and national significance of the redevelopment opportunity. Relocating the plant will unlock both the existing site and the surrounding area to be redeveloped to provide thousands of much needed new homes, including affordable housing, jobs and green transport connectivity. If the plant remained where it is, even if it could be rebuilt to be smaller, it would limit the amount of housing that could be developed to a few hundred new homes rather than thousands, if any. It's unlikely the Government would still make funding available for a new, consolidated plant on the existing site, as the business case would not be viable.

You can find out more about our site selection process in our Non-technical site selection summary. This is available on our website (www.cwwtpr.com).

Frequently asked questions

In addition to the feedback we received, a number of queries were raised by respondents.

How have local residents been consulted on the need for the project?

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service is proposing to deliver 8,000 new homes and 20,000 jobs for Cambridge through the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (AAP). The option of delivering homes and jobs through the AAP was identified in the adopted Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans. A number of alternatives were considered and consulted on with the local community as the Local Plans were developed by the councils between 2011 and 2014. The relocation project unlocks the last large brownfield site within the North East Cambridge Area to make way for up to 5,600 of those homes. The different issues and options stages for developing the AAP itself were consulted on between 2014 and 2019, as part of an open invitation to all residents and stakeholders of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. Feedback from these consultations was used to help develop the draft plan, which the local councils recently consulted on between 27 July and 5 October 2020. You can find out more about the draft AAP, previous consultation and the evidence and studies considered by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service here: [redacted]

Who is paying for the relocation project?

The regional and national importance of this last significant redevelopment opportunity within Cambridge has been recognised both by local councils, through the development of their proposed Area Action Plan, and by Homes England, the Government's "housing accelerator". The relocation will be funded by the Government's initiative to help deliver housing in areas of high demand – the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). A grant of up to £227m has been awarded. This enables us to design and build a modern plant to provide vital services for local communities and the environment, with the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan creating a new low-carbon city district for Cambridge which could deliver 8,000 homes and 20,000 jobs over the next 20 years.

Why is the project a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)?

Waste water treatment plants in England are NSIPs if they are expected to have a capacity, following construction, exceeding an overall population equivalent of 500,000. The current plant at Cowley Road already has the capacity to treat this figure and the new plant will be designed to deliver, functionality and capacity, in excess of 500,000 population equivalent. This will ensure the plant can also accommodate expected future growth, to include Waterbeach New Town and the new housing planned to be built on the existing site.

Why are the three sites you have consulted on all within the Green Belt?

We have undertaken a detailed and iterative site selection study. The aim has been to identify feasible locations that minimise environmental and community impacts. Although the Green Belt was considered as an important planning constraint, there were no suitable areas within the existing built up area of Cambridge, leaving options only in the rural area, in the majority of cases distant from the existing plant. The length of tunnel for each site and transport routes from the main strategic road network were key factors. This would mean a greater carbon impact from tunnelling and pumping waste water further away, and greater impacts on local communities from the construction of the new plant and the transportation of waste water to a site beyond the outer edge of the Green Belt.

If the new plant is going to be modern and carbon-efficient, why are you proposing three site areas which take up so much land?

The three site areas have been identified by applying a range of criteria including placing a 400m buffer zone around local residences. This excludes certain areas and results in the odd site shapes. The footprint of the new plant will be 22 hectares, only around half the size of the current plant, meaning it will actually be much smaller than any of the three site areas, once it is positioned within the final site area selected.

What happens next?

The feedback we received has been hugely valuable to our site selection and early design processes for the relocation project. We're currently using this feedback alongside environmental, planning, operational and economic assessments to help choose the best-performing site to take forward into our Phase Two consultation next year.

It's been especially important to ensure our consultation has been as open and accessible as possible given the challenges we have all been adapting to owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to be able to offer in-person consultation events for our future consultations, depending on any local or national restrictions.

We are now carefully considering all feedback responses before we conclude our site selection process in late January 2021.

As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), after our second and third stages of consultation we will submit an application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a Development Consent Order (DCO) in 2022/23. Our application will include an Environmental Statement, showing how we will mitigate any potential impacts on the local community and environment. Following acceptance of our application, our proposals will be considered through a public examination process.

You can learn more about the DCO planning process on the PINS website here: infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process

2020

July-September 2020
Phase One Consultation

We consulted with you on three possible site areas, seeking feedback to help us choose a final site.

July 2020
Phase One Consultation Activities

Late January 2021
Site Selection Conclusion

Summer/ Autumn 2021
Phase Two Consultation

We will ask for your feedback and input into how the new plant could look and operate.

Summer/ Autumn 2021
Phase Two Consultation Activities

2022

2022
Phase Three Consultation

This final phase of consultation will allow us to update you on our project plans, including how the feedback we received in Phases One and Two has influenced our proposals for the relocation project. We will seek your feedback on near-final design proposals for the new plant.

2022
Phase Three Consultation Activities

2022/23

Anticipated submission date for the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

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Pre-application
Anglian Water is consulting with the community and statutory consultees (such as the local authorities and Natural England) in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. To demonstrate this to the Planning Inspectorate, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, containing details of our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation and how this has influenced our proposals.

Acceptance
The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has 28 days to decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, including whether the applicant's consultation has been adequate.

Pre-examination
You can now register as an interested party – you will be kept informed of progress and opportunities to put your case forward. Inspectors will hold a preliminary meeting and set the timetable for examination.

Examination
You can send in your comments in writing. You can request to speak at a public hearing. The Planning Inspectorate will appoint a panel of examiners who have six months to carry out the examination.

Decision
A recommendation to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will be issued by the panel of examiners. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to issue a decision on the application.

Post-decision
Once a decision has been issued by the Secretary of State, there is a six-week period for legal challenge on the decision.

Get in touch

Our dedicated project website, email address, Freephone information line and Freepost address all remain open if you have any questions.

You can contact us by:

Emailing at **info@cwwtpr.com**

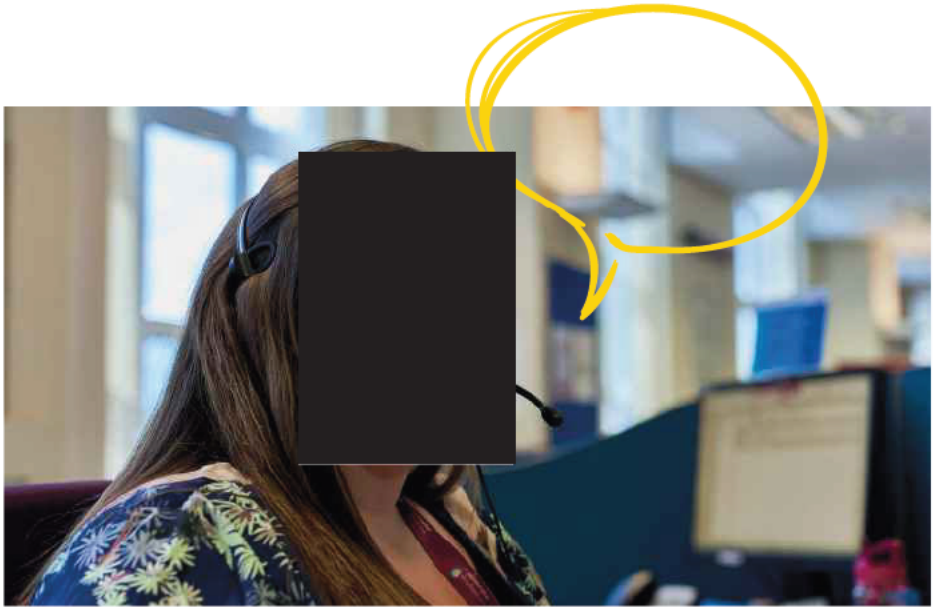
Calling our Freephone information line on **0808 196 1661**

Writing to us at **Freepost: CWWTPR**

Visiting our website at [redacted]

If you would like this document in large print, audio or braille formats, please contact us using the details above.

All graphics and maps in this document are for illustrative purposes.



Get in touch

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You can view all our DCO application documents and updates on the application on The Planning Inspectorate website:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/cambridge-waste-water-treatment-plant-relocation/