Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project
Anglian Water Services Limited

Phase Three Consultation Summary Report

Application Document Reference: 6.1.21
PINS Project Reference: WW010003
APFP Regulation No. 5(2)q

Revision No. 01
April 2023

love every drop.
anglianwater

Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project

Phase Three Consultation Summary Report

January 2023

[redacted]

Introduction

The Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project

Anglian Water is planning to build a modern, low carbon waste water treatment plant for Greater Cambridge. This new facility will provide vital services for the community and environment, recycling water and nutrients, producing green energy, helping Greater Cambridge to grow sustainably.

Anglian Water's vision goes beyond just building a new plant. It isn't simply about moving an old facility to a new location. We will build a facility to better serve the community and environment for years to come, one where waste water becomes a valuable resource. The new facility, as well as being operationally net zero carbon, will be energy neutral. It is designed to adapt to changing social and environmental priorities, increasing resilience to storm flows and flooding and provide a long-term solution to how we best treat waste water for a growing Greater Cambridge population.

The relocation will enable South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Councils' long held ambition to develop a new low-carbon city district on Cambridge's last major brownfield site, known as North East Cambridge. The site is included in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals, consulted on in late 2021 and is in the recently published Local Plan Development Strategy Update. The updated Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme was published in August 2022 and included the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP). NECAAP will be subject to public consultation prior to submission once the Development Consent Order is determined. The relocation of the existing waste water treatment facility will enable this new district to come forward and deliver 5,600 of the 8,350 homes, 15,000 new jobs and a wide range of community, cultural and open space facilities in North East Cambridge.

The scale of the essential infrastructure needed to ensure the long-term resilience of waste water treatment capacity in Greater Cambridge inevitably means impacts will be felt. We recognise and are sensitive to the community's concerns and questions about this. Our design has sought to avoid and reduce these impacts wherever possible.

Closing the facility at the current site on Cowley Road will enable development of a new low-carbon city district, known as North East Cambridge, which will:

Deliver around **5,600 of the 8,350 much-needed new homes** in North East Cambridge, including around 40 per cent affordable housing (rented and shared ownership)

Enable the vision of an **inclusive, walkable, low-carbon new city district** with a lively mix of homes, workplaces, services and social spaces with good connectivity, that are fully integrated with surrounding communities

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

Create **new parks and open spaces** that will form an accessible green space network with a wide range of plants and wildlife, linked with parks in the wider area

Reduce pressure for housing development in greenfield locations, where it would take up far more land and be less sustainable in terms of transport emissions. A low-carbon city district can achieve higher densities of housing than housing developed on greenfield or Green Belt sites and achieve a higher proportion of non-car journeys

Our Phase Three Consultation

We held a third and final phase of community consultation on our proposals for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project, between 24 February – 27 April 2022. Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide feedback. This valuable feedback has been considered and used to help shape the final design for the new facility.

138 attendees across our events

661 visits to our virtual exhibition

286 feedback forms received

1,298 visits to our digital engagement platform

659 comments from **151** unique respondents

45 pieces of feedback via letters, emails, or phone calls

Since the close of the consultation, we have been completing the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the new facility. During this time, we have continued to engage with stakeholders and community groups.

This report summarises the responses we received to the Phase Three Consultation and explains how we have considered this feedback. We also outline the next steps for the proposed new facility and how you can stay involved once we submit our application for Development Consent early in 2023.

Design of the new facility

In our Phase Three Consultation materials, we presented a near final design of what the new facility could look like. This included photomontages showing the new facility from a range of different viewpoints and measures that we have included to reduce and mitigate against potential visual and environmental impacts.

Aerial sketch of our detailed proposals for the site, showing a circular earth bank surrounding the facility and the preferred site access route.

Concerns remained about the height of the tallest buildings within the new facility, so we have been working hard to further reduce these buildings and improve the mitigation. We can confirm that the structure sizes have been further reduced as follows:

	Height above finished ground level	
Structure	**Phase Three Consultation design**	**Final application design**
Sludge Storage Structures	14m	8.5m
Post Digestion Storage Units x2	17m	9.5m
Cake Storage Barn	15m	9m
Liquor Treatment Plant Reactor	16m	9m
Boiler Building	12m	8.5m
Digester Stack	26m	20m
Boiler Exhaust Stack	24m	24m

Reducing visual impact

Since the end of the Phase Three Consultation, we have taken on board the comments on our landscape proposals and reviewed the design in order to reduce the visual impact of the new facility further. We have sought to create a balance between visual impact, landscape and heritage.

Full details of this will be available as part of the Environmental Statement, which will be published as part of the DCO application, however in summary the review of visual impact included:

- Design developments, including a reduction in height of a number of structures (as seen in the table on page 5) and a reduction in the massing of the buildings within the new facility. This means more structures will be screened by the 5m high earth bank than were screened in the design assessed during the Phase Three Consultation. Most of the structures of the revised design within the new facility will now be fully or almost fully screened by the earth bank.

- Design changes to allow some long views through the woodland which are angled to avoid views of the earth bank. Planting is targeted toward the most sensitive views with additional tree planting on the northwest and southwest sides of the earth bank.

- A commitment to early planting comprising a hedge with standard trees along the southern side of the western end of Low Fen Drove Way, a woodland belt approximately 7.5m wide along the southern boundary and part of the eastern boundary of the land required for the proposed plant; and trees planted in gaps between existing trees along the eastern side of Horningsea Road between Low Fen Drove Way and Horningsea.

- Additional planting - we received feedback for more trees to be planted to further mitigate views of the facility, including the planting of mature trees. Considerations include longevity (having long-living trees such as oak and beech), origin (having native, UK species) and variety (having both soft and hard-wood trees) have been included in the design review.

- A commitment to improve the chances of successful growth of trees by carrying out planting in the winter months (dormant season). Further details of planting and irrigation plans are set out in the DCO Application.

- Lighting proposals have been amended. The heights of lighting have reduced to 5 metres. The lighting will also be directed downwards and generally used for task purposes. Lighting outside of the earth bank will be discrete and kept to a minimum for safety reasons. It will also be activated by use, not permanently lit during night time hours.

Computer-generated visualisation of mature planting on top of the earth bank

Gateway Building and Discovery Centre

Following the feedback received during our Phase Two Consultation back in 2021, we presented an updated proposal for the Gateway Building showing a more natural entrance to the building, blending into the earth bank and planted screen. Although it was clear that some respondents were supportive of the updated proposals shown during the Phase Three Consultation, your feedback asked us to go further to mitigate the visual impacts of the building. We have listened to this feedback and have made the following changes:

- The Gateway Building has been redesigned to be more integrated into the earth bank structure.
- The exterior of the building includes more defined planting to further mitigate visual impacts of the facility.
- The car parking area now includes low level screening earth banks to further reduce visual impact.

We have continued to evolve our proposals for the Discovery Centre in a way that is sensitive to the community's previous feedback for a less expansive visitor offering. As previously confirmed, we are proposing for the Discovery Centre to be accessed by appointment only. Therefore, our Phase Three Consultation proposals for the Discovery Centre included a managed education programme with scheduled opportunities for local schools and groups to learn about the waste water treatment process, the environment and wider sustainability issues. The minimal additional traffic from these visiting arrangements will be accommodated within the proposed access and parking at the entrance of the facility.

Computer-generated visualisation of the Gateway Building

Odour

While the nature of the job a waste water treatment plant does makes it difficult to eliminate odour completely, our design uses the latest technologies for the new facility. This ensures that odour will not have a negative impact on people's enjoyment of their homes or the surrounding area.

In our Phase Three Consultation we provided information on the initial modelling we had carried out to assess odour and outlined the design measures that will be adopted to minimise odour impact.

From the feedback received, many respondents explained that they were pleased with the measures adopted to minimise odour. However, other respondents challenged the commitment that odour will not adversely impact people's homes or enjoyment of the area. Since Phase Three Consultation we have completed the odour modelling to evidence our commitment to deliver negligible odour and we have also drafted an Odour Management Plan. This will be available within the DCO application documentation.

In order to help demonstrate how odour is measured and managed at a Waste Water Treatment Plant, representatives from the local community visited the existing Cambridge facility. The project team demonstrated how odour is measured and how the new facility's design will deliver a different and significantly better odour profile compared to the existing, older facility.

Providing space for people and wildlife

We are committed to delivering landscape led proposals that include extensive planting to mitigate the impact of the project through the use of nature, reducing the visual impact of the site and responding to its setting. We understand that ecology and biodiversity of the local area are important to the community and we will improve our commitment to deliver a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain on the site.

We have continued to engage with a range of stakeholders from local authorities (Ecology, Landscape, Greenways) as well as stakeholders such as National Trust, Wildlife Trust and RSPB and have ensured that the design complements the Cambridge Nature Network and the Wicken Fen Vision.

Following Phase Three Consultation feedback, we can confirm:

- Where paths are in open areas, these will be defined by low level post and rail features, designed to promote the use of the paths, but not prohibit access to the open green spaces.
- Landscape design to encourage natural colonisation, where possible, adjacent to the Low Fen Drove Way Grasslands and County Wildlife Site (CWS). We also propose to improve the condition of the CWS through habitat management proposals, in order to buffer and improve resilience of the CWS.
- A commitment to ensure that hedgerow planting with fencing will be used to deter visitors from accessing ecologically sensitive areas, to maintain areas for wildlife and prevent trampling of grassland. Signage and interpretation boards will be used to divert pressure away from designated sites such as Stow-cum-Quy Fen SSSI and Low Fen Drove Way Grasslands and Hedges CWS.

Building a modern, low carbon waste water treatment facility

During our Phase Three Consultation we received feedback on the importance of achieving operational net zero carbon for the new facility during construction and operation.

Anglian Water is committed to becoming a net zero carbon business by 2030

The new facility, as well as being operationally net zero carbon, will be energy neutral

The new facility will generate biogas which, when processed and exported into the local gas network, will be used to heat the homes of the local community as a renewable fuel source

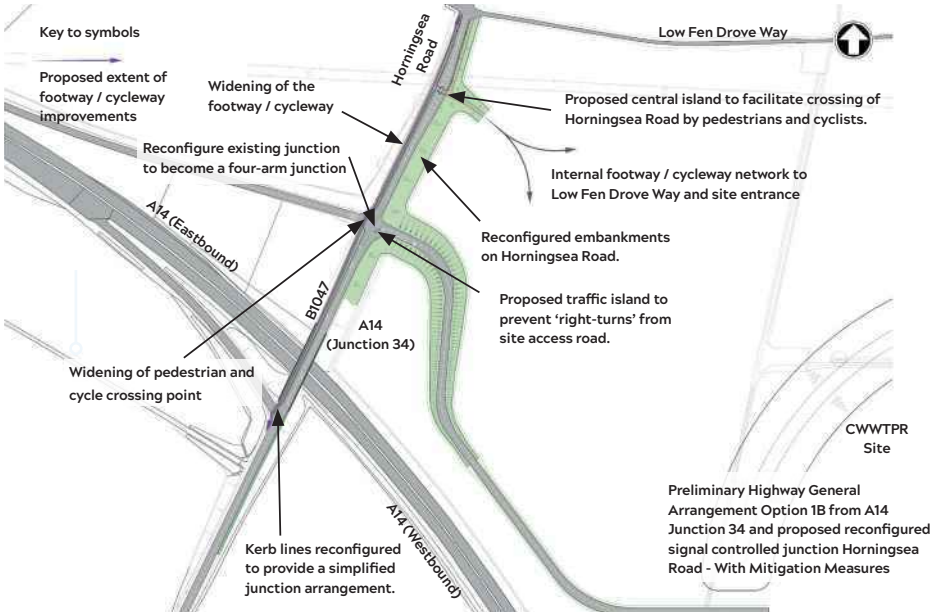
Solar panels will be installed at the new facility, producing 7MW of clean renewable electricity, approximately 7GW/hrs of electricity over a year

An increasing proportion of our commercial fleet of vehicles are electric and will be used for the new facility

The Environmental Statement assesses the carbon impacts of the relocation. This includes the carbon emissions associated with decommissioning of the existing facility, and the construction and operation of the new facility. The Development Consent Order application does not include the demolition of the existing facility or its redevelopment for low carbon housing and employment uses, which will be approved through a separate planning permission. Carbon impacts associated with these activities are therefore not assessed in the environmental statement, but they are considered in a high-level strategic carbon assessment which accompanies the DCO application.

Traffic and access

We have worked with National Highways and Cambridgeshire County Council as the relevant highways authorities on our traffic and access plans. Together with feedback from the local community and stakeholders as part of our Phase Two Consultation, we selected a safe and sustainable permanent vehicle access for the project from Junction 34 of the A14.



Since then further work has been carried out to refine the proposals, including design of detailed traffic and access mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts on the existing road network.

During the Phase Three Consultation we asked for comments or suggestions to the proposed measures to manage traffic.

It was clear from the responses received to our Phase Three consultation that there is still concern over the level of traffic and subsequent impacts this would have on the surrounding area. We have carried out additional engagement with the community between consultation phases in order to provide further information as to how we arrived at the decision of Junction 34 and to explain how we would use mitigation in design and management. We have continued to work with the local Highways Authorities on traffic assessment and mitigation measures, and we are confident that our proposals create an effective solution to the management of traffic.

Mitigation measures include the improvement of a section of the existing non-motorised user (NMU) route from Horningsea village to Fen Ditton Primary School between Low Fen Drove Way and the southern 'on slip' signalised junction. These measures include:

- increasing the width of the existing shared use footway / cycleway to three metres,
- providing separation between the NMU route and the adjacent carriageway by providing a new one metre wide verge between the carriageway and NMU route,
- replacing the existing parapet on the A14 overbridge (with a high barrier) to provide a cycleway compliant facility,
- improvements to the existing signalised pedestrian crossing points on the 'on-slip' and 'off-slip' roads,
- a reduction in the maximum speed limit on Horningsea Road from 60mph to 40mph between the villages of Horningsea and Fen Ditton (subject to agreement from the Local Highway Authority and the Police),
- provision of a central pedestrian island on Horningsea Road to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross from the existing footway / cycleway on the west side of Horningsea Road to the footway / cycleway network on the new facility site,
- a footway / cycleway link on the east side of Horningsea Road to provide access from Low Fen Drove Way to the new crossing facility on Horningsea Road.

These measures have also been discussed and coordinated with the national and local Highway Authorities and the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Horningsea Greenways team as they seek to deliver significant improvements to a key section of the Horningsea Greenway.

Construction

Following the completion of our Phase Three Consultation, we have reviewed the design of the project to further reduce potential impacts of construction. This includes:

- design measures such as relocating Shaft 4 and enabling it to only be a temporary construction shaft;
- early construction of the new vehicle access;
- early planting;
- amendments to the project boundary to aid access; and
- further development of management measures set out in the management plans. This includes preventing Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) entering the villages, creation of a reporting procedure on construction traffic, and use of Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology.

In response to stakeholder comments received during the Phase Three Consultation on access in Waterbeach during construction, the following changes to the traffic management were made:

- Provision of temporary traffic management to allow the option to restrict car parking at the junction of Denny End Road, Bannold Road and High Street junction in Waterbeach to facilitate safe two-way HGV movements during construction of the Waterbeach pipeline.
- Amending the project boundary to include the ability to provide a temporary pedestrian access route within a field adjacent to Hatridge's Lane.
- A full review of construction, maintenance and operational access requirements plus a review of land and environmental constraints also identified further minor changes to the project boundary.

These changes were consulted upon during an additional round of targeted statutory consultation which took place between 15 July 2022 – 15 August 2022.

What happens next

We will be submitting a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in early 2023. Aligning with the timeline of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

You can find further information on the PINS website: **https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/**

Pre-application
We have consulted with the community and statutory consultees in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. The DCO application will include a consultation report explaining our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation and how this has influenced our proposals.

WE ARE HERE

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**

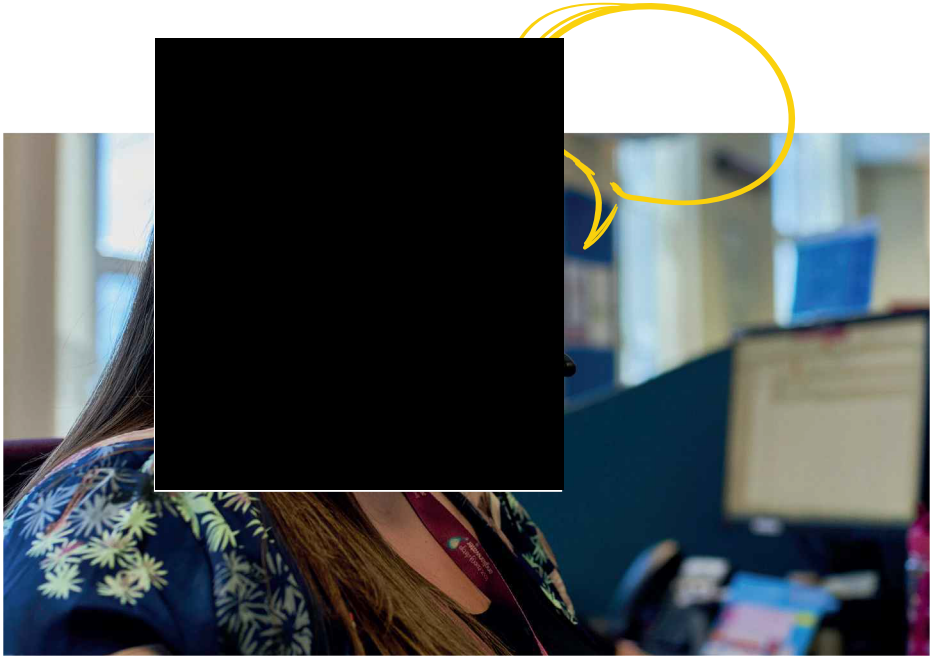
Calling our Freephone information line on **0808 196 1661**

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

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]

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/