



Meeting note

Project name	Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation
File reference	WW010003
Status	FINAL
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	21 April 2022
Meeting with	Anglian Water
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project Update Since December 2021 Meeting

Since the last project update meeting with the Inspectorate in December 2021, the Applicant has published the Phase Two Consultation Summary Report, which communicates how feedback has been considered and taken onboard.

At the time of the project update meeting, the Applicant advised that Phase Three Statutory Consultation, which ran from 24 February 2022 to 27 April 2022 was coming to a close.

Why Relocate?

The Applicant stated that the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant enables the delivery of the last large-scale brownfield regeneration opportunity in Greater Cambridge, with the possibility for 5000-5500 new homes.

Timelines

Development

The Applicant stated that submission is anticipated Autumn 2022. Construction of the new facility would subsequently commence in 2024, expected to be commissioned in 2028 when the old site is decommissioned and at which time, development of the existing site can be commenced.

Pre-Application

The Applicant re-iterated the pre-Application timeline as below.

- Phase One Consultation – Summer 2020
- Phase Two Consultation – Summer 2021
- EIA Scoping Report Submitted – October 2021
- Phase Three Consultation – Spring 2022
- DCO Submission Autumn 2022

Stakeholder Update

The Applicant advised that helpful feedback has been received from Natural England regarding biodiversity, HRA and BNG calculations.

The Applicant advised they have been conducting bilateral sessions and technical working groups with key stakeholders to answer questions in advance of them submitting responses. They have also started to draft and develop some Statements of Common Ground with stakeholders such as the Environment Agency.

The Applicant also advised that they continue to engage with the community through Community Working Groups and responding to enquires received by the Consultation Team.

Design, Reducing Visual Impact and Biodiversity Gain

The Applicant explained that during consultation, feedback has been received regarding the reduction of visual impact. The Applicant has formulated a design that reduces the heights of the tallest elements of the plant, with digesters being reduced from a maximum height of 26 to 20 metres. Early planting will be prioritised so natural screening has time to mature and become established as the construction phase progresses. The Applicant advised that further information on the Landscape Masterplan and visual impact is available through the Landscape, Ecological, and Recreational Management Plan (LERMP) and PEIR.

The Applicant highlighted for the Inspectorate that their initial commitment was to increase biodiversity at the site by 10%. However, due to recent design changes brought about by significant stakeholder engagement following phase 2 consultation, such as hosting workshops, this minimum has now been increased to 20%.

Improving Connectivity and Odour Mitigation

The Applicant stated that they are committed to improving connectivity and access to green spaces. The project aims to improve access to Quy Fen and Anglesey Abbey, whilst also providing additional recreational green space. Current proposals would provide a new 3.5km, circular walking route and a longer 9.5km loop for bridleway users.

The Applicant stated that further design improvements have been proposed to deliver levels of “negligible odour” from the new facility. Slight amendments to walking and cycling routes are also proposed to ensure they sit within “negligible odour” areas.

Discovery Centre

The Applicant is proposing a Discovery Centre, which provides a managed education programme targeting local schools and groups to provide a learning opportunity regarding sustainability. Concerns were raised during consultation that a visitor centre may attract too many visitors or tourism, which would negatively impact local infrastructure such as traffic. The Applicant took regard of these concerns, and the centre will therefore be on a scheduled programme basis, rather than open to walk ins.

Storm Resilience and Quality of Treated Water Returned to The River Cam

The Applicant stated that the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant will result in reduced concentrations of all regulated water quality treatment components entering the River Cam under non-storm conditions. The result is improved water quality in the River Cam, once the new facility is in operation.

The new facility is designed to provide greater resilience and storm management, making storm overflows far less likely to occur. This allows the facility to treat a greater volume of storm flows as Greater Cambridge continues to expand.

Traffic Access

When consulting regarding a permanent access route for the relocation project, the Applicant advised that community feedback showed a clear preference for option three (a new junction on the North side of the A14 only). However, the Applicant has chosen to proceed with option one (utilising the existing junction 34) as wider assessment failed to evidence a need for a new junction.

The Applicant stated that option one provides a solution where any adverse effects on local road networks are unlikely to be significant and can be mitigated. Furthermore, both operational and capital carbon considerations are lower and there is a lesser visual impact than option three. This is deemed the safest option for permanent access and means no construction or operational traffic is permitted to travel through Fen Ditton or Horningsea villages. Where possible, construction vehicles will avoid peak hours.

The Applicant advised that modifications have been proposed to the local road network that align with the Cambridge Greenways project. A new four-way signalised junction is proposed to provide access to the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Construction

The Applicant expanded for the Inspectorate on the below construction phases.

Enabling Work & Site Mobilisation – Autumn/2023 to Winter/2024

Construction of site access off Horningsea Road and establishing the site compound and offices. Construct work area by installing site drainage, removing topsoil and commencing excavation of sub soil to provide a work platform.

Water Recycling Centre Including Water Testing and Dry Commissioning – Autumn 2024 to Spring 2027

Construction of the process units and structures required for the Water Recycling plant. Wet and dry test conducted to confirm the quality and functionality of the units.

Sludge Treatment Centre Including Water Testing and Dry Commissioning – Winter 2024 to Summer 2026

Construction of the process units and structures required for the Sludge Treatment Centre. Wet and dry test conducted to confirm the quality and functionality of the units.

Wet Commissioning – Spring 2027 to Winter 2028

A sequence of activities that seeds the process tanks with biological enzymes and the sludge centre with sludge. On completion, the process of closing down existing works will begin.

Transfer Tunnel – Winter 2024 to Summer 2026

Construction of the tunnel is required to move the sewer flows from the existing works to the new works, including a connection shaft over the existing tunnel in Milton Works and a receiving pumping station at the new Works.

De-Commissioning Existing Plant – Autumn 2027 to Spring 2028

Once the new works are commissioned, the existing works will be safely shut down and disconnected from the sewer network.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

The Inspectorate queried whether the Landscape, Ecological and Recreational Management Plan (LERMP) would include the management element of landscape screening. The Applicant advised that the final version of the LERMP will demonstrate the management responsibilities and stakeholders will be consulted regarding this. The Applicant confirmed

that it intended to retain control of the land and there was interest from third parties in partnering with Anglian Water to achieve the management of the site.

Phase Two Consultation

The Applicant also outlined final engagement data during Phase two Consultation, which covered a range of physical and virtual events.

Phase Three Consultation

Phase 3 consultation launched on 24 February 2022.

Key Themes

The Applicant advised that phase three consultation highlighted the below feedback/concerns.

- Concerns over traffic management and in particular, that HGV vehicles used during the construction phase will go through the local villages.
- Concerns regarding the carbon cost of dismantling the old facility and building a new one.
- Suggestion that locals may be less inclined to use the recreational facilities proposed around the site due to odour.
- Belief that improved landscaping is required and that the proposals do not successfully screen the site enough at year 15.

The Applicant intends to conduct site visits to test odour and to show stakeholders what a “negligible odour” actually represents.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant is to finalise the DCO design, including DCO deliverables in advance of the Inspectorate’s review period.
- The Applicant is to continue the development and shape the Statements of Common Ground with Stakeholders.
- The Applicant plans to continue analysis of the Phase Three Consultation feedback to better inform their proposals.

- Continue to work with stakeholders and the community and finalise the Biodiversity Net Gain calculations.

Post Meeting Updates

The Inspectorate has liaised and determined with the Applicant which draft DCO documents are to be reviewed by the Inspectorate.

The Inspectorate and the Applicant have agreed upon the next update meeting to be conducted on 29 June 2022.