



**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017**

‘SCREENING OPINION’ (REG: 5 &7) (AS AMENDED)

Proposal Request for Screening Opinion proposals to upgrade
at: Chickenhall Wastewater Treatment Works (WTW)

County Council Ref: SCR/2023/0474 **Received** 7 August 2023

Refer to footnote

Is the development listed in Schedule 1? No

Is the development listed in Schedule 2? Yes

11 Other projects

(c) Waste-water treatment plants
(unless included in Schedule 1);

The area of the development exceeds
1,000 square metres.

13 Changes and extensions

(b) Any change to or extension of
development of a description listed in
paragraphs 1 to 12 of column 1 of this
table, where that development is
already authorised, executed or in the
process of being executed.

Either—

(i) The development as changed or
extended may have significant
adverse effects on the environment;
or

(ii) in relation to development of a
description mentioned in column 1 of
this table, the thresholds and criteria
in the corresponding part of column 2
of this table applied to the change or
extension are met or exceeded.

The indicative criteria for wastewater treatment plants (under Schedule 2, Part 11(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017), as set out in the Annex to the Planning Policy Guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) states that EIA is more likely where the site area exceeds 10 hectares or the capacity exceeds 100,000 population equivalent.

The development does not meet the area threshold for Schedule 2 or the indicative criteria, not exceeding 1000 sq.m. or 10 hectares. The WTW currently serves a population equivalent of 105,311 with the works being required to serve the local population growth estimated to be 127,184 by 2035. Given that Chickenhall WTW already serves a large population in excess of the indicative criteria of 100,000 and the proposed development is required to meet a growth of 21,873 the applicant suggests that it is more



appropriate to use this growth number rather than the total population equivalent number when considering the likelihood of significant effect given the existing land use and operation size of the WTW which will not change as a result of the proposed development. However, this approach is not supported by the Waste Planning Authority and it is considered that this criteria is exceeded and the Screening Opinion will consider this in its conclusion..

The EIA Regulations 2017 require that such proposals be assessed against three broad criteria; the characteristics of the proposed development (e.g. its size, treatment process, use of natural resources, quantities of pollution and waste generated); the sensitivity of the receiving environment; and, the characteristics and significance of the potential effects (magnitude and duration) (e.g. pollution and nuisance potential, topography, proximity of dwellings and the potential impact of traffic movements).

Is the development likely to have significant effects on the environment?

Site

Chickenhall WTW is an existing operational wastewater treatment site located on the eastern edge of Eastleigh within the administrative boundaries of Eastleigh Borough Council and Hampshire Sussex County Council. The WTW is accessed directly from Chickenhall Lane.

There is one statutory designated site within 2km of the WTW, the River Itchen SAC, and four Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) (Hampshire) within 500m of the wider WTW; Stanford Meadow LWS which is 20m east at its nearest point, Marshy Grassland, Bishopstoke which is 70m north east at its nearest point, Meadow North of Railway which is 220m south east at its nearest point; and Ashtrim Nurseries are 370m north at its nearest point.

Proposal

Chickenhall WTW requires a number of additional process units to ensure that it treats the community's sewage in accordance with a revised Environmental Permit. To accommodate the capacity issues the proposal includes; storm tank, Motor Control Centre Kiosk, a storm split chamber and two manholes.

The proposed structures will be connected to existing plant and equipment via new buried connections and ducts. Suitable site drainage will also be installed. All runoff from hard surfaces will be drained to the works return pumping station and from there back into the wastewater treatment process.

The temporary compound will be located in an area of hardstanding and amenity grassland within the WTW. The site compound would be used for car parking, material laydown and three double stacked (steel) containers with two additional stores. At the end of the construction period, all areas temporarily affected by the proposed works will be reinstated as close as



practicable to the pre-existing site condition and to suit the ongoing operational needs of the WTW.

Construction works are scheduled to take approximately 56 weeks for site set up, construction & commissioning (including any repair and reinstatement works), though 30-35 weeks of this programme will be for mechanical and electrical installation, minor civils and commissioning activities.

Construction work will generally be undertaken between 07:00 and 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and between 07:30 to 13:00 on Saturdays. There is no intention for work to be undertaken on Sundays or any Bank Holidays.

EIA Screening and Constraints

The proposed new infrastructure is located entirely within the existing operational site. If the development is assessed as 'not EIA development', the new infrastructure would largely be installed with the benefit of Southern Water's Permitted Development (PD) Rights for operational land - under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO 2015), Part 13, Class B (f).

As the temporary site compound would be established on land within the works this would benefit from PD rights under Schedule 2 Part 4 Class A of the GPDO 2015 for "the provision on land of buildings, moveable structures, works, plant or machinery required temporarily in connection with and for the duration of operations being or to be carried out on, in, under or over that land or on land adjoining that land".

The proposed works on the WTW will be developed to meet the requirements of the revised Environment Agency Environmental Permit.

Traffic

During the construction period, the proposed development and compound will be accessed directly from the existing WTW access road.

The peak mobilisation period is anticipated to run for approximately for one week during site set up and will require 20 vehicles movements, including 10 HGV movements per day. Following site set up the ground and civils works will run for approximately 20-25 weeks and will also require 20 vehicles movements, including 5 HGV movements per day. Throughout the site set up, ground works and civils period there will be 15 cars/LGV per day.

Once peak mobilization and ground and civil works have completed, and for a period of 30 weeks, a total of 15 vehicle movements per day will be need, which will include 1 to 2 HGVs per day with the remainder being cars/LGV.

At the end of the construction period during demobilisation there will be a slight upturn in vehicle movements to enable the removal of site cabins and



reinstatement works, though these will not exceed the peak mobilization numbers and will run for approximately a one week period.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan is to be prepared to detail access routes to the WTW with consideration of areas susceptible to congestion and timings of deliveries managed to avoid busy times and reduce impact on the local road network and local residences during construction as well as measures to control dust/mud. Operation and maintenance of the scheme will be included into the daily, monthly and annual operation and maintenance routine of the site operations team. Therefore, it is considered that there will not be a significant increase in operational traffic following the completion of the works.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The proposed scheme itself is situated within an existing WTW and is adjacent to a larger industrial area to the west though the River Itchen to the east is designated for its biodiversity importance. However, the proposed development is not expected to impact on the local distinctiveness of the landscape or prevent any existing access as all the works will be restricted to the current operational WTW area.

The centre of the WTW is located at 13m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), the site sits on level ground with existing buildings, structures and process units ranging from 2m to excess of 10m in height. The proposed development will consist of an additional storm tank to the three that are currently in situ, though as the above ground element will be no more than 3.5m it will not result in a significant net change in massing. Views from the PRoWs to the east are well screened by belts of broadleaved woodland and the landscaping that runs along the WTW perimeter.

The closest residential receptor is a property to the north west and at its closest is 50m though there are no direct views into the WTW due to extensive landscaping on the fence line of the WTW.

The current WTW has a number of large items of infrastructure and any distant views into the WTW are not anticipated to significantly alter as a result of the proposed works as they are in keeping with the extant infrastructure.

Based on the above, no likely significant effect on landscape is anticipated.

Ecology

A suitably experienced ecologist carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the WTW. This consisted of a Phase 1 Habitat Survey in June 2021 and a desktop assessment (in December 2022). The site was also visited in February 2023 to undertake a Potential Roost Assessment for bats and an Otter survey, and any changes to the habitats on site were noted. An

Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) for the WTW development was provided.

As previously noted, there is one statutory designated site within 2km of the WTW and four Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) (Hampshire) within 500m. Due to their location and nature, the proposed works are not expected to impact any Local Wildlife sites. Stamford Meadow does effectively border the WTW, but direct impacts are not anticipated as the proposed works are expected to be contained within the existing WTW site boundary and adjacent to the opposite boundary. Furthermore, the site's Local Wildlife Site status is not based on criteria that are sensitive to noise or visual disturbance.

The habitats within the existing operational site boundary have been categorised using the UKHabs survey methodology (UKHab, 2020). The only habitat to be directly affected by the proposed works is modified grassland and other native hedgerow. The scheme will involve a temporary construction compound located on modified grassland and hardstanding. A short section of isolated poor species rich hedgerow will also require temporary removal to enable construction to take place. These areas will be reinstated to the same or a more biodiverse habitat following completion of the works and so there will be no loss of biodiversity and there will not be a significant impact from the scheme on the existing habitats.

The PEA and survey work also considered the impact of potentially present species including bats, reptiles, hazel dormice, badger, water vole, otter and great crested newt, as well as any potential impact on breeding birds.

A preliminary ground level bat roost assessment was undertaken in February 2023. This identified one building on site with moderate bat roost potential. At the time of survey there was a risk that work would be required to the building or in close proximity. However since the time of the survey further design has confirmed there will be no direct or indirect disturbance to the building.

The proposed works will primarily impact areas of hardstanding and frequently mown modified grassland which have negligible potential to reptiles. A small section of isolated species-poor hedgerow will also be impacted. Any works impacting the hedgerow will take place in accordance with a precautionary method statement for the species. Therefore, no potential effects on reptiles are anticipated.

Whilst habitat adjacent to the scheme within the WTW and adjacent land may provide habitat for dormouse, the risk of dormice being present is considered negligible due to the small size of the hedgerow effected and a lack of connectivity to suitable habitat. The supervision of the clearance by an ecologist will be sufficient to mitigate any residual risk for that species. Therefore, no potential effects on hazel dormouse are anticipated.

No badger setts nor any sign of badger were recorded during the initial field survey though the presence of an active main badger sett within the on-site



scrub in the eastern extent of the WTW, approximately 200m from the proposed development, was identified during a survey in February 2023. However, it is thought highly unlikely that they will build a sett on the short maintained modified grassland within the WTW. A pre-construction check will be conducted by a suitably experienced ecologist to determine if any new setts have been established within 30m of the proposed working area. This will be conducted four to six weeks prior to works commencing, giving time for registration with Natural England under Southern Water's Organisational Licence should disturbance/closure of a sett be required. The check will then be repeated immediately before works begin. Subsequently, any excavations will be covered overnight, or a mammal ramp installed to prevent badger (or other mammals) getting trapped. With the adoption of these mitigation measures, the proposed works should not have a significant impact on badger.

No works are to occur within 10m of the watercourse which runs along the eastern boundary of the site. However, the River Itchen is approximately 50m east of the site boundary at the closest extent with dense continuous scrub, swamp and broadleaved woodland could potentially support otter resting places. An Otter survey was undertaken in Feb 2023 and no evidence of the species was found within the site. However, there are significant areas of suitable habitat outside of the WTW, in closer proximity to the river, which could also potentially support resting places. As a result, it is considered unlikely that otters would travel into the WTW to rest. The presence of an active main badger sett within the on-site scrub may also reduce its suitability. Otters are considered vulnerable to disturbance at up to 30m from a resting place and 200m from a natal/breeding holt. The current design indicates the proposed works will be at least 200m away from any habitat likely to support a resting place or holt. It is unlikely that a natal/breeding holt would be located within 200m of the WTW, as studies suggest these are typically located away from major rivers. On this basis, the risk of the proposed works at Chickenhall WTW negatively affecting otter is negligible and no further assessment or mitigation is suggested.

The only impact on the adjacent water course will be an improvement in the quality of the effluent once the scheme is in operation. If water vole, otter or white-clawed crayfish are present, there will not be a negative impact on them during construction of the scheme.

As mentioned, the proposed works will primarily impact areas of hardstanding and frequently mown modified grassland which have negligible potential to support great crested newt. A small section of isolated species-poor hedgerow will also be impacted. This habitat is potentially suitable for great crested newt, although the closest waterbody that could potentially support the species in its breeding phase is c.200m away and connected via sub-optimum habitat. As a result, the likelihood of great crested newt being present in the hedgerow is low. To account for the residual risk of encountering great crested newt, works impacting the hedgerow will take place in accordance with a precautionary method statement for the species.

Therefore, no potential effects on GCN are anticipated. Prior to any work on site Southern Water may wish to communicate with NatureSpace Partnership about their Organisational Licensing Scheme for GCN.

The proposed permanent works are entirely within the existing operational boundaries of Chickenhall WTW. With the application of standard checks and the proper management measures no significant impact on protected species, sensitive habitat, or designated sites are expected.

Noise

The construction of the proposed development will require typical construction plant and machinery including heavy goods vehicles, cranes, excavators, dumpers, and small plant and hand tools. The closest residential receptors are at their closest 50m to the north west and the ecological receptors as detailed above.

During construction appropriate working hours and good working practices in accordance with BS5228 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites will be followed (including sensitive timing of potentially noisy work) which will lower the potential for noise impacts. Liaison will take place with the closest residential receptors so they will be aware of the construction programme duration and when noisier activities will take place.

With the implementation of these control measures, sensitive working practices and the relatively standard nature of the works, no likely significant effect is anticipated as a result of temporary noise levels during construction.

As part of the proposed works no new noise sources will be introduced to the site and as such no likely significant effect is anticipated as a result of operation of the proposed scheme.

Flood Risk

The proposed development falls within Flood Zone 1, which equates to a 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding. The area is also at a very low risk of surface water flooding and such no likely significant adverse effect on flood risk is anticipated.

Arboriculture

The site is accessed via Chickenhall Lane which is already used by HGV tankers and it is not expected any of the roadside trees will require trimming.

The site itself has numerous perimeter trees though no works will take place to these trees or within their respective Root Protection Zones (RPZ). Regardless and as a minimum any excavation works and the wider construction of the proposed development will be undertaken in accordance

The British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012).

Based on the details and measures above, no likely significant adverse effects on trees are anticipated.

Water Resources

The proposed scheme is required to increase the storm tank capacity which will result in a net benefit to the wider water environment. This will contribute towards meeting the Water Framework Directive's (WFD) objective of good ecological status for the River Itchen. The operation of the new equipment installed will allow compliance with the tightened environmental permit conditions required by the Environment Agency.

Due to the nature of the works it is unlikely the River Itchen will be directly impacted on by the proposed works and any change to the number of storm releases will be an improvement to what is currently discharged. Due to the nature of the works, which will not be within the channel or impacting on the banks of the River Itchen, it is assessed that a WFD screening assessment is not required.

Pollution prevention best practice measures will be employed during construction and implemented through a site Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Dewatering of excavations will be carried out in accordance with applicable guidance, Environment Agency regulatory position statements or an Environmental Permit, as required. Appropriate pollution prevention measures will be adopted throughout the development. Based on the details and measures above, no likely significant adverse effect on water resources are anticipated. The development of the scheme will improve the quality standards of the final effluent released into the environment resulting in a beneficial effect.

Rights of Way

As detailed in the traffic management section above though the proposed development will lead to a temporary increase in traffic on local roads though it is not expected there will be a significant nor noticeable increase given the existing surrounding land use being an industrial rather than residential area. There is a public right of way to the east of the WTW that follows the flood levee, though the proposed development will not impact on the use and access to this PRow.

Archaeology

Southern Water's archaeological specialists have been engaged to assess the potential archaeological impact of the works. Initial desk-based environmental assessment has confirmed that there are no designated archaeological / cultural sites / structures within 500m of the proposed works.



This includes no scheduled monuments or world heritage sites within 500m.
No effects on designated cultural sites are anticipated.

The proposed development **is not** an **EIA development** under the ***Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017*** as the proposed permanent development is within an existing WTW site and will be commensurate with the existing infrastructure. Although the development does exceed the criteria to be considered as not requiring an EIA in that it serves over 100 000 population the overall impact of the proposal is considered to be minimal. The proposed permanent development is entirely within an existing WTW site. Standard construction methods and management tools are proposed to be used during construction to manage any potential impacts and where needed addition site specific measures will also be implemented as required. The assessment has concluded there will be no significant effects on ecologically significant habitats or protected species and no long-term impacts on the human or built environment.

Director of Universal Services
Date 24 August, 2023

*Note: An EIA development must **either**:
be within Schedule 1 **or**;
be within Schedule 2 within a 'sensitive area' **and/or** above thresholds/criteria
and/or 'likely to have significant environmental effects'.*