



<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	7 November 2023
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Peter MacDonald, Lead Member for Economic Development	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes	

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## Local Impact Report for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation DCO

### Executive Summary

1. Anglian Water have submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Secretary of State for the relocation of Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) from the existing site on Cowley Road, Cambridge, to a new site between Horningsea, Fen Ditton and Stow cum Quy, adjacent to the A14 in South Cambridgeshire.
2. As part of the DCO process, the relevant local authorities are invited to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR) providing details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area.
3. The Director for Planning and Economic Development has prepared a draft LIR for submission to the Planning Inspectorate. The report is attached in Appendix 1. The views of members are sought before formal submission to the DCO Examination on the deadline that has been set by the Examination Authority of 20th November 2023.

### Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - i. Agree the content of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project Local Impact Report in Appendix 1 in respect of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application submitted by Anglian Water and delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Economic Development to submit the report to the Examining Authority for the relocation of the CWWTP on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council subject to any changes made by Cabinet and any minor amendments to the Local Impact Report required in the interests of accuracy or clarity.

- ii. Delegate to the Director of Planning and Economic Development, the authority to take all associated action necessary in the interests of the efficient and timely conduct of the Council's compliance with the DCO procedures including but not limited to:
  - prepare the Council's responses to any written questions from Examining Authority during the DCO Examination and to submit those to the Examining Authority
  - settle the content of and submit any Written Representations to the Examining Authority
  - to negotiate, settle and complete any legal agreements relevant to secure the granting of a DCO pursuant to the application.
  - settling and the submission of the Statement of Common Ground to the Examining Authority
  - the instruction of witnesses and legal advisors throughout the Examination process
  - the discharge of DCO requirements made under any development consent order granted by Secretary of State

## Details

5. The Examining Authority appointed to report on the Application by Anglian Water for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) from Cowley Road, Cambridge, to a new site between Horningsea, Fen Ditton and Stow cum Quy, adjacent to the A14 in South Cambridgeshire has now held a preliminary meeting marking the commencement of the examination [on 17th October 2023]. The examination timetable has also been issued and the LIR from South Cambridgeshire District Council is due to be submitted by the District Council by 20th November 2023. In the period leading up to the production of this report South Cambridgeshire District Council has worked closely with Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council in their role as consultees in the assessment of the proposals. Each Authority has drafted their own specific LIR for the DCO process based upon their specific interests and impacts.
6. Reflecting the consistent approach to the Cambridge Northern Fringe East in the adopted 2018 Local Plans for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, the preparation of a joint Proposed Submission North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (Regulation 19) and the emerging Greater Cambridge Joint Local Plan First Proposals (Preferred Options, Regulation 18), there is a mutual approach to the policy position for both the South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council and this will be reflected in the LIRs for both authorities.
7. The LIR sets out the policy significance of the relocation of the existing CWWTP, considers the applicant's and the Council's assessment of the impacts of the proposals along with the benefits that it creates through its contribution towards achieving the spatial development strategy for homes and jobs being proposed through the Council's emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan being prepared with Cambridge City Council
8. In addition, the LIR highlights the main areas where the District Council considers further consideration and mitigation is required as part of the

examination process. The District Council's position on all key issues is set out in the LIR at Appendix 1.

9. The LIR highlights South Cambridgeshire District Council's and Cambridge City Council's shared long-held ambition to regenerate the part of the city within which the existing CWWTP is located. The interdependence between the DCO process and the development plan process in so far as it relates to proposed redevelopment of the site has been narrated and explained as part of the LIR. There is clear evidence through the emerging plan making processes of the significant benefits that would be enabled by the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (the CWWTP site) and the extensive area of surrounding, underutilised, previously developed land, where regeneration potential has been effectively sterilised.

10. The District Council considers these benefits to be as follows:

- The proposal will secure £227m in Government (HIF) funding to address the viability constraint to redevelopment of the existing CWWTP site.
- It will enable the comprehensive development of the wider NEC area, one of the most significant locations in the City and the UK for science, technology and innovation, optimising the development potential and enabling other benefits to the District to be realised.
- The release of the existing CWWTP site for redevelopment will remove the existing constraints imposed by the Waste Water Treatment Safeguarding Area designation upon the site and surrounds in respect of any development on land within 400m of the existing CWWTP, which incorporates a substantial area of previously developed land.
- This in turn enables the future development of the wider NEC area, including the existing CWWTP site, which is identified through the evidence supporting the emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan (Regulation 18) as the most sustainable location in Greater Cambridge for development.
- The release of the existing CWWTP site will underpin the delivery of 8,350 homes. This is demonstrated by the evidence in support of the Draft Proposed Submission AAP (Regulation 19) which shows the potential for the existing CWWTP site, once vacated together with neighbouring City Council owned land to accommodate c.5,500 net new homes, and by removing environmental constraints, to enable up to a further c.2,850 net new homes on surrounding sites.
- Enabling the NEC area to come forward will make a significant contribution to the substantial objectively assessed housing need in accordance with the NPPF of the Greater Cambridge area identified in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan to 2040 and beyond.
- In addition to housing, the site also offers the opportunity to deliver further beneficial commercial floorspace and a range of town centre uses, as well as social and physical infrastructure that will support the area's continued growth as a strategically important economic driver for Greater Cambridge and create a vibrant new mixed use urban quarter to Cambridge.
- The delivery of a new water treatment infrastructure that delivers treatment to a higher standard with lower energy use and carbon emissions than the existing plant.

- Increased on-site storage of foul/untreated water during storm flows contributing positively to the improved resilience of the Water environment and rivers downstream to the foul water discharge point.
11. The District Council considers these benefits amount to economic, environmental and social benefits to the locality and the region that are substantial.
  12. As such the LIR concludes that the District Council gives in principle support to the DCO application and the proposed development, subject to the resolution of a number of matters and, more specifically, to the assessment of the ExA and the determination by the Secretary of State of the DCO application in light of the ExA's report and recommendation.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

13. It is a requirement for local councils to submit a Local Impact Report within the specified time as part of the DCO Examination process. The appended report has fully considered potential impacts of the development to the South Cambridgeshire District.

## **Options**

**The options available to members are:**

- a. **Agree the findings of the LIR in Appendix 1,**
- b. Not agree the findings of the review or seek changes

## **Implications**

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

## **Financial and Fraud Risk**

15. The consideration of and support to the Council in responding to this DCO forms part of the existing funding and responsibilities of the Shared Planning Service. In line with best practice and reflecting the complex technical nature of proposals such as this and the level of specialist engagement required, the Shared Planning Service has entered into a PPA with Anglian Water Limited, to fund resources to support the Councils consideration and response to projects. In addition, the Council has secured expert legal advice to ensure effective representation during the DCO Examination process. The cost of and need for such advice has been considered in the service's budget insofar as it is possible to do so at this stage. This report raises no implications for the cost of delivery of that response.

## **Legal**

16. There are no legal implications arising from the report. Officers have sought appropriate legal advice when preparing the report, including specialist legal advice on the DCO process.

## **Staffing**

17. There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. A number of officers across the District Council and Cambridge City Council will contribute to the preparation of the Council's responses to the DCO Examination. This resource has been considered in the programming of other work across the Shared Planning Service and will be monitored on a regular basis.

## **Risks/Opportunities**

18. The LIR comments upon an application made by a third party to the examining authority. There are no direct risks to the Council arising from preparation of this report.

## **Equality and Diversity**

19. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has not been undertaken in respect of this report, as it does not relate to a decision for or against any infrastructure proposal – upon which the Council expects equalities and poverty implications to have been assessed by the promoter. The assessment of the DCO application by the Examining Authority will require consideration of the schemes impacts and officers will, in forming a response, have regard to the impact of the project on the Council's equalities objectives. The report is accordingly not considered to give rise to any equality or poverty impacts.

## **Climate Change**

20. There are no direct implications in respect of climate change as a result of this report. The project that forms the subject of the LIR is accompanied by an Environmental Assessment that has been considered by officers in the preparation of the LIR.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

21. There are no direct health & wellbeing implications arising from the report although these have been assessed in the preparation of the LIR.

## **Consultation responses**

22. South Cambridgeshire District is an interested party in this DCO process. The Applicant has borne the responsibility, as required, to undertake various consultations as part of the pre-application process.

## **Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

### **Growing local businesses and economies**

23. The LIR affirms the benefits to the local economy that could be realised through the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant.

### **Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in**

24. The LIR affirms the benefits that could be realised through the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant including housing and affordable provision in North East Cambridge.

### **Being green to our core**

25. The LIR has been prepared having regard to the contents and assessment of the application including the environmental information.

### **A modern and caring Council**

26. The LIR has considered all environmental, community and health impacts associated with the proposed development.

## **Background Papers**

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

**SCDC Local Plan 2018**

**Greater Cambridge Joint Local Plan First Proposals 2022**

**North East Cambridge Area Action Plan 20XXX**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Local Impact Report on Behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council

### **Report Author:**

Chenge Taruvinga – Principal Planner

(0) 1954 713266