



# LOCAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE CAMBRIDGE WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT RELOCATION DCO AND ASSOCIATED DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS TO THE JOINT DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

**To:**

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure  
Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee 09/11/2023

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

East Chesterton

Not a Key Decision

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Anglian Water have submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Secretary of State for the relocation of Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant from Cowley Road, Cambridge, to a new site between Horningsea, Fen Ditton and Stow cum Quy, adjacent to the A14 in South Cambridgeshire.

- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- I. Agree 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 on behalf of Cambridge City Council subject to any changes made by the Executive Member 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

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 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 is due to be submitted by the City Council on 20th November 2023.
- 3.2 In the period leading up to the production of this report Cambridge City Council has worked closely with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council in the assessment of the proposals. This is distinct from the City Council's interest as landowner, working with Anglian Water to bring forward redevelopment of their respective landholdings if the DCO is approved. Each Authority has drafted their own LIR for the DCO process based upon their specific interests and impacts.
- 3.3 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 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council and this will be reflected in the LIRs for both authorities.
- 3.4 The LIR sets out the policy significance of the relocation of the existing CWWTP along with the benefits that it creates through its contribution towards achieving the spatial development strategy for homes and jobs being proposed through the City Council's emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan being prepared with South Cambridgeshire District Council.

- 3.5 In addition, the LIR highlights the main areas where the City Council considers further consideration and mitigation is required as part of the examination process. The City Council's position on all key issues is set out in the LIR at Appendix 1.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The City 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.

3.8 The City Council considers these benefits amount to economic, environmental and social benefits to the locality and the region that are substantial.

3.9 As such the LIR concludes that the City 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.

## **4. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

4.1 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 Council's 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.

### **Staffing Implications**

- 4.2 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. A number of officers across this Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils 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.

### **Equality and Poverty Implications**

- 4.3 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.

### **Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 4.4 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.

### **Procurement Implications**

- 4.5 There are no procurement implications.

### **Community Safety Implications**

- 4.6 There are no community safety implications.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

- 5.1 Cambridge City Council 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.

## **6. Background papers**

- 6.1 Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- <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

## **7. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Local Impact Report**

## **8. Inspection of papers**

- 8.1 To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Chenge Taruvinga, Principal Planner, tel: 01954713266, email: [chenge.taruvinga@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:chenge.taruvinga@greatercambridgeplanning.org).