



Joint Position Statement on foul water and environmental capacity in relation to proposed development within South Cambridgeshire District

Purpose & objectives

This Joint Position Statement confirms our current understanding of the waste water treatment issues within the District and its associated environmental implications.

The Issue

The Cambridgeshire Horizons Water Cycle Study (WCS) Phase 1 Outline, September 2008, and Phase 2 Detailed Strategy Report, April 2011, identified potential constraints to development and demonstrated these constraints could be overcome with upgrades to Cambridge Water Recycling Centre (WRC) and Uttons Drove WRC.

However, the scale and direction of growth for the period up to 2031 has now been reviewed in the South Cambridge Local Plan 2013 and additional growth and has been proposed for existing development sites and at new locations.

The Solution

Anglian Water Services Ltd (AWS) and the Environment Agency (EA) will work closely with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and with developers to identify any potential constraints and to secure an agreed approach to enable delivery of the proposed quantum of development in a sustainable manner and in compliance with environmental legislation.

Through early consultation we have already established potential solutions that will allow several sites to proceed within wastewater and environmental capacity constraints. In partnership we will continue to look for options for the remaining sites but we agree that until capacity is created, or a solution to create capacity is identified, development may be delayed.

Agreed position for Development Locations

Sawston, Melbourn, Gamlingay, Over and Haslingfield WRCs have capacity to accept foul water flows from proposed growth without the need for increased capacity of water recycling (previously referred to as wastewater treatment) infrastructure. Growth is therefore not constrained by water recycling in these locations. However, no assessment has yet been made regarding the environmental impact of this growth, so all parties will work together in order to confirm that there will be no detriment to local water quality.

Northstowe New Settlement

Additional development identified in the Local Plan is not expected to raise any new concerns. The strategy to serve Northstowe continues in line with the WCS and will be served by Utton's Drove WRC. A Memorandum of Understanding is in place to address local land drainage issues.

Cambourne West

The growth proposed for Cambourne West could potentially be served by Bourn, Papworth Everard and/or Utton's Drove WRC. Initial assessments carried out in conjunction with the proposed development at Bourn Airfield have indicated that development is deliverable. All parties will continue working together to ensure the most sustainable solution within environmental parameters is achieved.

Waterbeach New Town

The location of the proposed new town is currently served by a small WRC that has insufficient capacity to serve this proposal. The preferred option is to build a new WRC to serve the proposed development, and initial assessment suggests that final effluent could be discharged into the River Cam without causing environmental damage. All parties continue to work at developing the most sustainable strategy within environmental parameters.

A Water Cycle Study (known as Denny St Francis WCS) specifically to look at the Waterbeach development proposal has commenced, the outcome should provide guidance on sustainable solutions for water supply and drainage.

According to Local Plan policy SS/5, no more than 1,400 dwellings of the total 8,000-9,000 dwellings will be completed by 2031. The current strategy for serving the development may need to be reviewed to ensure that it continues to offer the most sustainable solution *at the appropriate time*.

New Village at Bourn Airfield

The proposed development is in the catchment of Bourn WRC. The existing WRC has limited capacity but could take a portion of foul flows from the new site. Alternative WRCs in the vicinity are Papworth Everard and Utton's Drove, and each may be able to accommodate some or all of the foul water flows from the development.

Work is ongoing to assess the foul drainage options in conjunction with other development sites at Cambourne West and Northstowe. Initial assessment indicates that capacity could be made available at Papworth Everard within environmental parameters. Utton's Drove is less favourable at this time as the expansion of Cambourne and Northstowe would likely take precedence. Whichever option is taken, upgrades to the foul network will be required to convey the flows to the serving WRC.

Local Plan policy SS/6 dictates development will not commence until 2022 and will be phased so that approximately 50% of the total proposed number of 3,500 will not be completed before 2031. The strategy for serving the development may be reviewed to ensure it offers the most sustainable solution at the appropriate time.

Pre-application Services

EA and AWS provide a pre-application process. It is highly recommended that developers seek pre-application advice in order to understand the environmental infrastructure constraints and opportunities. For more information please see <http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/developers/planning> and <http://environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33580.aspx>.

Liaison and Working Arrangements

We are keen to ensure that water recycling infrastructure and environmental impact is adequately considered ahead of development commencing. Developers will need to engage with all relevant parties in order to identify any potential constraints and agree relevant solutions. Without the upfront engagement delays may impact on the development. We are committed to work with all parties in order to find solutions that will enable all proposed development in South Cambridgeshire District to go ahead.

Agreed by



Susan Bull

Planning Liaison Manager

Anglian Water



Adam Ireland

Principal Planning Advisor

Environment Agency