Southern Water

Ringmer Wastewater Treatment Works - Installation of Ferric Dosing Kiosk

Planning Statement

Planning Portal Reference:
PP-06309920

September 2017

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Issue and Revision Record

Revision	Date	Originator	Checker	Approver
A	28.9.17	Phil Jameson	Luke Mosson	Luke Mosson

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document is in support of a planning application relating to the proposed installation of a Ferric Dosing Kiosk at Ringmer Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW), Neaves Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex, BN8 5UA. Ringmer WwTW is a key Southern Water Services Limited (Southern Water) operational site that serves a population equivalent of 5111 in Ringmer and the surrounding area.

As a sewerage undertaker, Southern Water is obliged to provide the appropriate facilities for the treatment of wastewater to the required standard by the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations 1994.

The proposed development is part of a wider upgrade to the WwTW that is necessary to ensure compliance with a new effluent discharge consent for phosphorus, as set by the Environment Agency, that will take effect from 31st March 2020. In addition it is necessary to increase the treatment capacity of the WwTW to accommodate predicted growth in the catchment area to 2030. This scheme forms part of Southern Waters' Asset Management Plan 6 (AMP 6) Programme.

Much of the proposed upgrade constitutes permitted development under Part 13, Class B (f) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, as: *"any other development in, on, over or under operational land other than the provision of a building but including the extension or alteration of a building."*

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk can be considered to be a building and therefore requires planning permission.

2 APPLICATION SITE

The proposed development is to be located within the boundary of Ringmer WwTW, which is located off Neaves Lane approximately 630m to the east of the settlement of Ringmer (as shown on the enclosed Location Plan, Drawing No. JN.639248.0Z0752).

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The location proposed for the Ferric Dosing Kiosk is to the south of the WwTW site, approximately 7m from the WwTW southern boundary.

The eastern part of the WwTW is characterised by various plant and equipment including settlement tanks, lagoons, kiosks and areas of hard standing used in the treatment of wastewater. The western part of the WwTW site is open in character. There is also an area located to the east of Neaves Lane that is occupied by settlement tanks.

The area immediately surrounding the WwTW is primarily agricultural in character with open fields to the north, south, east and west. There are residential properties along Laughton Road approximately 180m to the north of the application site, on Chamberlains Lane approximately 310m to the west and at Arches Farm approximately 140m to the south.

There is a telecommunications installation, including a mast of approximately 15m in height in the north-eastern corner of the WwTW site. The treated effluent from the WwTW is discharged into the Glynde Reach River that runs in a west-east direction close to the northern WwTW boundary.

The WwTW is located within the administrative boundaries of Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council.

Planning History:

- LW/00/0248 - Installation of a 15m monopole, 3 sector antennas and up to two dishes. Equipment cabin 3.7m by 2.5m by 2.8m to be installed at ground level adjacent to pole. Approved - 14th March 2000.

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3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning Application.

The proposed development for which planning permission is required consists of a new Ferric Dosing Kiosk. The removal of phosphate from the effluent of a wastewater treatment works is an essential part of the treatment processes and is necessary to ensure compliance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and related directives.

Phosphate removal is carried out by dosing chemicals, with ferric chloride being the most commonly used. The proposed kiosk will contain plant and equipment necessary to enable the ferric dosing process, together with an internal bunded chemical storage tank.

The kiosk will be rectangular in shape and will be 7.5m in length, 3.5m in width and 3.8m in height (as shown on the enclosed Plan and Elevations, Drawing No. JN.639248.0Z0754-B). The kiosk will be constructed from Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) coloured dark green and this covering is necessary to protect the chemical dosing and storage equipment from the elements.

The kiosk will be set on a concrete base slab of 7.8m in length, 3.8m in width and approximately 0.2m above ground level. There will be external metal stairs and a door at the western end of the kiosk to provide access. There will be air extraction vents in each end elevation and a chemical fill point in the east elevation.

Permitted Development.

In addition to the Ferric Dosing kiosk that requires planning permission there are a number of other elements within the proposed WwTW upgrade that constitute permitted development under Part 13, Class B (f) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, as:

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"any other development in, on, over or under their operational land, other than the provision of a building but including the extension or alteration of a building."

These location of these scope items is shown for information on the enclosed Site Layout Plan, Drawing No. JN.639248.0Z0753-B and are as follows:

Ferric Dosing.

In addition to the Ferric Dosing Kiosk there will be the following located in the area around the kiosk:

- Bunded tanker delivery area to facilitate safe delivery of chemicals.
- Emergency shower and eye bath.
- Below ground pipework to integrate the new chemical dosing plant with the existing WwTW inlet works and tertiary treatment plant.

Tertiary Treatment.

To be located to the north east of the ferric dosing area:

- 2no. filter units (tanks), with distribution chamber, interconnecting pipework and access platform.

Tertiary Feed Pumping Station.

To be located to the north of the Tertiary Treatment area:

- Below ground pumping station with submersible pumps.

Monitoring Equipment.

To be located to the east of Neaves Lane:

- Replace existing monitoring equipment to include phosphorous monitoring system with sample chamber.

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4 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012. The policy guidance it contains which is relevant to the determination of this application includes provision for:

- A presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- Proactive drive and support for sustainable economic development to deliver infrastructure that the country needs.

The Development Plan.

The development plan for the proposed development comprises the: Lewes District Local Plan - Part 1 Joint Core Strategy 2010-2030; the saved policies of the Lewes District Local Plan 2003 and; East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan, February 2013.

The development plan policies that are considered to be relevant to the assessment of the proposals are:

Lewes District Local Plan - Part 1 Joint Core Strategy 2010-2030

- Core Policy 7 - Infrastructure
- Core Policy 8 - Green infrastructure
- Core Policy 10 - Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Core Policy 11 - Built and Historic Environment and High Quality Design
- Core Policy 12 - Flood Risk

Lewes District Local Plan 2003 - Saved Policies

- ST1 - Infrastructure Provision

- CT1 - Planning Boundary and Key Countryside Policy

East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan, February 2013

- WMP1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- WMP10 - Management of Waste Water and Sewage Sludge
- WMP22 - Increased Operational Capacity within the Site Boundary of Existing Waste Facilities
- WMP25 - General Amenity
- WMP27 - Environment and Environmental Enhancement
- WMP28 - Flood Risk

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development / Waste Water Infrastructure.

The policies of the development plan are supportive to the provision of necessary wastewater treatment and utilities infrastructure. Core Policy 7 (Infrastructure) is aimed at ensuring the provision of new and upgraded infrastructure to support sustainable communities. Saved Policy ST1 seeks to ensure that the necessary infrastructure, including foul drainage and water supply infrastructure, is in place in time to serve new development.

Policy WMP1 advises that waste development that accords with the Waste and Minerals Local Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy WMP10 advises that proposals for the provision of new wastewater treatment facilities will be supported where the development is a necessary extension to or replacement of existing infrastructure and where the development is required to:

- meet the relevant environmental standards
- improve the operational efficiency of wastewater and sewage sludge management

- enable planned development to be taken forward

Policy WMP22 sets out that proposals for increased operational capacity within the boundary of existing waste management facilities will be supported in principle where the development is required to meet environmental standards, or to improve the operational efficiency of the facility.

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk is a key part of an upgrade to Ringmer WwTW that is necessary to ensure ongoing compliance with the relevant environmental standards (a new effluent discharge consent for phosphorous, as set by the Environment Agency). The proposed development is also required in connection with an increase in the treatment capacity of the WwTW to cater for predicted growth in the catchment area.

The principle of the proposed development is therefore in accordance with Core Policy 7, Saved Policy ST1, WMP1 and WMP22.

Amenity.

Policy WMP 25 advises that there should be no unacceptable effect on the standard of amenity appropriate to established land uses and no significant adverse impact on air quality or the local acoustic environment.

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk is to be located well within the existing WwTW site and is relatively minor in scale in the context of the existing WwTW site. There are no neighbouring or residential properties in close proximity to the proposed development. The closest residential properties are approximately 140m to the south and 180m to the north. The Ferric Dosing Kiosk will have no impact on air quality and will not generate any significant noise, vibration or dust.

The proposed development will have no significant impact on the amenity of the surrounding area and is therefore in accordance with Policy WMP25.

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Landscape / Visual Impact.

Core Policy 10 and WMP27 are aimed at conserving and enhancing local landscapes and landscape character. Ringmer WwTW is not located within an area that is subject to any formal landscape designations. The surrounding area is agricultural in character.

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk will be relatively small in scale in the context of the existing WwTW site. The kiosk is to be located to the south of the WwTW within an area that is occupied by existing plant and equipment.

There is existing planting on the southern, eastern and western WwTW boundaries that provides effective screening in views from outside. The proposed kiosk will not be prominent in views from outside the WwTW site and there will be no significant impact on landscape character or visual amenity. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Policy 10 and WMP27.

Nature Conservation & Ecology.

Core Policy 10 and WMP27 aim to conserve and enhance wildlife, biodiversity and habitats. Ringer WwTW is not subject to any nature conservation designations and no designated areas will be affected by the proposed development.

A qualified Southern Water ecologist carried out a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site to identify any ecological constraints associated with the proposed development activities. The preliminary ecological appraisal identifies that the Ferric Dosing Kiosk is to be located on an area within the WwTW that is currently short mown grass. This area is of low ecological value and there is limited potential for any protected species to be affected.

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Particular attention was given to searching for signs of or habitat suitable for protected species and the presence of potential habitat to support them when carrying out the preliminary ecological appraisal.

Badgers.

An active badger sett was identified within the WwTW site. The sett contained 2 well-used entrances, with guard hairs, well-used mammal paths and a number of fresh dung-pits. The sett is likely to be an annex sett which could be connected to a main sett within 0.15km of the WwTW site. The habitat adjacent to the WwTW site provides optimal habitat for badgers. The sett is over 0.1km from the proposed upgrade works. The sett and habitat suitable for badgers will not be affected by the proposed development activities.

Bats.

The buildings and structures within the WwTW site have a low potential to support roosting bats as they do not have suitable features. There is a poplar (TQ 03524 17884) within the WwTW which has a woodpecker hole potentially suitable for roosting bats. This tree is classed as Category 2 as per the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines (Hundt, 2010) as it has some potential for roosting bats. This tree is over 0.3km from the proposed development activity working area. The tree will not be affected by the proposed development activities.

Great Crested Newts.

As part of the design process great crested newt eDNA surveys were carried out for six ponds within 250m of the proposed development. Great crested newt eDNA was confirmed as positive in these ponds. As the works are within amenity grassland and hardstanding only the risk of encountering great crested newts during construction is however negligible. A precautionary Method Statement has been produced which will be adhered to during construction. This includes:

- To provide appropriate protection for great crested newts and their habitat adjacent to the scheme, the removal of vegetation and initial topsoil excavations shall be undertaken under the supervision of a suitably experienced ecologist. Vegetation shall be subject to a fingertip search and a watching brief of the first 20cm of excavations in soil shall be carried out by the ecologist.

- To ensure habitat does not encourage great crested newts to approach work areas, all grass on the site shall be kept short for the duration of the works and no pools of water shall be allowed to accumulate on the site, including puddles of rainwater.

- All materials shall be stored above ground level on e.g. pallets or bricks to avoid newts sheltering under them.

- When in storage all pipes shall be capped at both ends with suitably sized caps and stored above ground level. Covering pipes with polythene or another material is not sufficient protection.

- Where ever possible excavations shall be backfilled on the same day to avoid great crested newts entering as they move around at night. If an overnight open excavation is unavoidable, the excavation shall be covered overnight with a suitable cover to exclude great crested newts. Excavations left overnight or longer shall be checked daily and prior to further excavation/backfill for animals that may have entered.

- Site checks shall be made daily to ensure the measures listed above are in place and to check for animals around the site.

- If a great crested newt is found on site an ecologist will be contacted and a Natural England mitigation licence may be required.

Reptiles.

The proposed development activities will take place in the operational areas of the site within hardstand and grassland, which have a low potential to support reptiles, as

the grass is regularly mown and kept short making it unsuitable for reptiles to colonise this area. There are records of slow worm and grass snake within the site according to SxBRC records. All works will take place within amenity grassland and will have a low chance of encountering reptiles. The area west of the site which forms the old WwTW site has a high potential to support reptiles as the area contains scrub, rough unmanaged grassland and tall ruderal vegetation. This habitat will not be affected by the proposed development activities. The risk of encountering reptiles during construction is negligible.

Breeding Birds.

The vegetation within and surrounding the site contains a mixture of trees and scrub which provide opportunities for nesting, feeding and shelter for numerous species of breeding birds. Development activities which may damage or disturb vegetation will, where possible, be removed outside of the breeding bird season (breeding bird season March - August inclusive). Should vegetation removal be required during the breeding bird season then the vegetation will be checked by a suitably experienced ecologist prior to removal. If breeding birds are identified a suitable exclusion zone will be established and the exclusion zone will be left undisturbed until the young have fledged the nest.

Other Habitats / Species.

All protected species have been assessed for this site. The survey revealed no other habitats or features that were considered likely to be of significant ecological value or to support protected species.

The proposed development will have no adverse impact on nature conservation, habitats or species and is therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Policy 10 and WMP27.

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Flood Risk / Water Quality.

Core Policy 12 and WMP 28 are aimed at ensuring that development does not have any adverse impact on flood risk, groundwater or water quality. The application site is not located within the flood plain as shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Maps.

The proposed development is relatively minor in scale and will not result in any significant additional surface water run-off. The existing drainage strategy for the WwTW is for surface water to be conveyed to the head of the WwTW for treatment within the WwTW processes prior to discharge to the watercourse. The additional impermeable area as a result of the proposed development is minimal in comparison to the extent of the existing WwTW site and its contribution to the total flow though the WwTW and discharged to the watercourse will be negligible.

The proposed development will not result in any additional risk of flooding, or any adverse impact on the flood plain.

The proposed development is required in connection with a wider upgarde scheme that will enable Ringmer WwTW to meet a new effluent discharge consent for phosphorous from March 2020. The proposed development will therefore have a beneficial effect on water quality and is therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Policy 12 and WMP 28.

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Archaeology / Heritage.

Core Policy 11 advises that the local planning authority will safeguard historic assets including archaeological remains. Policy WMP27 seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets.

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk is to be located within the WwTW boundary in and area that is likely to have been previously disturbed. However, given that Ringmer WwTW is located within an Archaeological Notification Area it is proposed that the wider upgrade scheme is carried out in accordance with an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief.

The WSI is enclosed with the planning application submission, please note that the WSI relates to the wider WwTW and is not specific to the Ferric Dosing Kiosk. The proposed watching brief will ensure that there is no adverse impact to archaeology and the proposals are therefore in accordance with Core Policy 11 and WMP27.

Conclusion.

The proposed Ferric Dosing Kiosk at Ringmer WwTW forms an integral part of a wider development that will ensure the WwTW has sufficient capacity to cater for future growth in the catchment and to ensure ongoing compliance with the relevant environmental standards.

The proposed development is located within an existing WwTW site and is relatively minor in scale. There will be no adverse impact on amenity, landscape character or biodiversity as a result of the proposed development and there will be no increase in flood risk.

The proposed development is in accordance with the policies of the development plan and it is considered that planning permission should be granted.