



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

SCREENING OPINION

LOCAL AUTHORITY REF. 20/00004/EIASCR

Site: Farlington Water Treatment Works, Gillman Road, Portsmouth, as defined on the Location Plan ref. HTR-ATK-PT-FR-DR-A-0001 rev. P1, appended to the EIA Screening Assessment Report prepared by Atkins (4 August 2020).

Proposal: Proposed new water treatment plant within new building and associated facilities.

The works would comprise the construction of a Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) plant within a new building measuring approximately 1,290m², 43m in length, 30m in width and up to 12m in height. Proposals would also include a new sludge holding tank, new access road to service yard, underground pipework, chambers and connections and temporary construction compounds. The overall site area, including DAF building, access road and temporary compounds, would be approximately 1.6ha.

Is the proposal an EIA development?

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 defines EIA development as either Schedule 1 development, or Schedule 2 development which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

Schedule 2 development is further defined as: 'a development of a description mentioned in Column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 where: a) any part of the development is to be carried out in a sensitive area; or b) any applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of Column 2 of that table is respectively exceeded or met in relation to that development'.

A sensitive area is defined as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European Sites; National Parks, The Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and World Heritage Sites and scheduled monuments.

The proposed development would fall within the definition of 'Waste Water Treatment Plant' under Part 11(c) of Schedule 2, Column 1.

The site does not lie within a sensitive area, but would exceed the threshold as set out in Schedule 2, Column 2, being a development with an area of greater than 1000m². The development would therefore be considered as 'Schedule 2 Development' in accordance with the EIA Regulations and is required to be screened to determine whether significant effects on the environment are likely and whether an EIA is required. The screening process must take account of the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations.

Characteristics of the development

The proposed development is required to improve the efficient treatment of water supplies, and would also support the operation of the proposed Havant Thicket Reservoir (HTR) and pipeline, which is allocated within the neighbouring Havant and

East Hampshire Local Plans and is required to ensure long term water supply needs are met in the region.

The proposed works would take place within an existing Water Treatment site. The new DAF plant building would be positioned on an existing concrete basin/ overflow tank facility, therefore utilising land which is already developed, and would also be adjacent to other buildings on the site. The position has also been determined to allow connection to existing underground pipe routes and access points, including surface water drainage system.

Associated works would include the construction of a new access road from Gillman Road to the DAF building, and temporary construction compounds and parking areas as indicated on the submitted Site Plan ref. HTR-ATK-PT-FR-DR-A-0003 Rev. P1. These would all be located within the boundaries of the Water Treatment site.

Location of development

The site is located on the north east side of Portsmouth, to the east of Gillman Road and to the south of Portsdown Hill Road. The site is not located within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations, but it does lie within the East and West of Gillman Road Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), within an area of archaeological potential and within 2km of the following designated areas:

- Farlington Marshes Local Nature Reserve;
- Solent Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
- Langstone Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- Portsdown SSSI;
- Fort Purbrook Grade II* Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)
- Bevis's Grave long barrow and early medieval cemetery SAM (within Havant Borough)

Characteristics of potential impacts

The applicant has submitted a detailed assessment identifying the potential impacts of the development and relevant mitigation. This has been taken into account and the characteristics of the potential impacts can be summarised as follows:

Ecology and biodiversity - loss of grassland SINC habitat:

The applicants have confirmed that the proposal would result in the loss of 0.0217ha of calcareous grassland from within the SINC boundary and the temporary loss of 0.299ha of calcareous grassland. Proposed mitigation for the loss of SINC grassland would involve the translocation of topsoil to a species poor area of the SINC to improve the quality of the grassland. Temporary losses would be mitigated by careful removal, management and reinstatement of existing grassland. Liaison with the County Ecologist has taken place as part of a pre-application submission and it is considered that suitable mitigation could be agreed. In addition, a biodiversity enhancement strategy is proposed to create a Biodiversity Net Gain on the site.

Ecology - impact on nearby designated sites:

The applicants have carried out a Habitats Regulations (Screening) Assessment to consider the impact on nearby European designated sites, which concludes that due to separation distances and the presence of existing development with associated noise and disturbance including vehicle movements, the proposed development would not impact on the integrity of these nearby designated sites. It is considered that any matters that may arise in relation to potential impacts could be satisfactorily addressed in liaison with Natural England at the application stage.

Landscape and visual impacts, including impacts on heritage assets:

The site is in an elevated position but the visual impact of the development, including its impact on the setting of nearby heritage assets, would be mitigated by its position within an existing developed site, its partial set back within the rising land of Portsdown Hill and the use of appropriate materials and landscaping. The development would be subject to a detailed Heritage Assessment and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as part of the application process.

Traffic and transport:

Once completed, the proposed development is considered to generate a small increase in traffic compared to the existing use of the site, with up to 3 additional traffic movements per day. There would be more vehicle movements associated with the construction phase of the development but this would be temporary in nature. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be prepared, which would set out a suitable route for construction vehicles to avoid residential roads to the south of the site. The CEMP would also include measures to minimise temporary impacts of dust, noise and vibration during the construction phase.

Water environment and flood risk:

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. Given the position of the proposed building on an existing concrete basin, the increase in impermeable area /hardstanding on the site would be minimal.

Risks to human health:

The development would provide benefits in terms of the treatment of water supplies for the local area. Any impacts on nearby residential occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance during construction would be short term and could be satisfactorily mitigated through a CEMP. Once operational, the development is not considered to generate any significant levels of noise or pollution.

Land contamination:

There is the potential for contamination to exist on the site, but the end use is not a sensitive use and any required mitigation could be agreed through appropriate investigations/reports at application or condition stage.

In summary it is considered that any environmental impacts of the development could be satisfactorily mitigated through measures agreed through the submission of technical reports at application stage, and secured by planning condition.

Conclusions

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposal **would not be** classed as an EIA development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and **does not require** the submission of an Environmental Statement.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 22 September 2020

Assistant Director, Planning & Economic Growth on behalf of Portsmouth City Council