

App.No: 150589 (PPP)	Decision Due Date: 28 July 2015	Ward: Devonshire
Officer: Jane Sabin	Site visit date: 12 May 2015	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 26 June 2015		
Neighbour Con Expiry: 26 June 2015		
Press Notice(s): N/A		
Over 8/13 week reason: N/A		
Location: Water Treatment Works, Waterworks Road		
Proposal: Provision of a microfiltration building and ancillary equipment.		
Applicant: South East Water Limited		
Recommendation: Approve conditionally		

Executive summary:

The proposed development would have no adverse impact on visual or residential amenity, or on highway safety, and would deliver improvements to drinking water quality. The impacts during the construction phase would be adequately managed to reduce the impact on residential amenity and highway safety. It therefore complies with local and national policies.

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

B1: Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution

B2: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

C6: Roselands & Bridgemere Neighbourhood Policy

D10A: Design

E1: Infrastructure Delivery

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

NE14: Source Protection Zone

NE15: Protection of Water Quality

UHT1: Design of New Development

UHT2: Height of Buildings

UHT4: Visual Amenity

HO20: Residential Amenity
US2: Water Resource Adequacy

Site Description:

The treatment works is located on the south side of Waterworks Road, almost opposite the junction with Moy Avenue, and is bounded by the railway line to the rear, Goddens Removals to the north west, with the Dairycrest depot and the dwellings in Abbotts Close to the south east.

The site houses a variety of buildings and pumping/filtration equipment, surrounded by a high mesh fence.

Relevant Planning History:

None.

Proposed development:

Planning permission is sought to install a new microfiltration system to meet new standards for drinking water by March 2016. Microfiltration reduces turbidity, a key test of water quality, and is the cloudiness caused by large numbers of tiny particles that are generally invisible to the naked eye (similar to smoke in air).

The proposal involves demolishing a row of disused brick built stores along the south east boundary adjacent to the dairy depot, and the construction of a new building, two tanks and a re-lift chamber. The building would be 29.5m wide and 8.4m deep under a monopitch roof 5m at its highest point. Both the roof and walls would be constructed of profiled metal in cream, with brown doors and louvres.

Adjacent to the microfiltration building would be two tanks, finished in black (to protect the contents from UV light, and the re-lift chamber would be constructed from concrete; the overall height would be similar to the new building.

Whilst this development is undertaken, the opportunity is being taken to replace underground pipes, the borehole pumps and improve the existing filtration plant; all of this work can be carried out under permitted development rights and does not need consent.

Consultations:

Specialist Advisor (Policy) supports the application for the improvement to infrastructure of strategic importance to support existing and proposed levels of growth for the Local Plan period.

Specialist Advisor (Environmental Health) is concerned that the working hours are proposed to commence at 7am, as this may mean that there is noise from vehicles and staff arriving before that time affecting residents in the area. Works should not commence before 8am.

Highways ESCC note that once complete the facility will not alter the impact from the current situation on the highway, as the number of employees on site and vehicle movements will remain as they are currently, both of which are very low. Following pre application discussions with the applicant they have provided details of the parking and delivery arrangements which will be put in place during the construction phase. Off street parking will be provided for all staff which is a positive point as there is very limited on street parking in the area and any increased demand on street would inconvenience local residents without off street parking. The proposed route for HGV traffic via part of Moy Avenue & Courtlands Road will also limit the impact as it avoids the purely residential section of Moy Avenue which is relatively narrow and heavily parked. This route follows the signed route for the industrial estate which is more suitable than other local roads. For large vehicles to make the turn into and out of the site from Waterworks Road having travelled from Whitley Road would involve at least suspending parking opposite the access for the duration of the works. This again would have inconvenienced the local residents for a considerable length of time. It is also proposed to limit deliveries to between 9am and 4pm which will help as it avoids peak traffic flow times. The number of HGV and car trips to the site is quite low and will have little impact.

Neighbour Representations:

Neighbours have been very widely consulted, and the applicant and agent held a drop-in session locally for nearby residents. Two responses have been received from residents of Moy Avenue, one supporting the scheme, and another concerned that drivers of heavy vehicles relying on 'sat nav' may be directed down Moy Avenue, and that the restriction times for deliveries would coincide with the afternoon school run.

Appraisal:

The main issues to take into account in determining this application are the impacts on visual and residential amenity and highway safety.

Visual amenity

Although the site lies opposite a terrace of houses and Abbots Close adjoins it to the rear, the immediate vicinity is very much industrial in nature (Dairycrest, Gosdens Removals, Parker Building Supplies). The site serves one the main boreholes in the town and has done so for many years; it contains an early 20th century utilitarian building, as well as modern filtration machinery.

A modern metal clad building is located immediately adjacent to the front entrance, and the proposed filtration building would be constructed of a similar material to this. The tanks would be similar to those already on the site, but of a slightly lower height. Given the location of the new building and tanks adjacent to the adjoining depot and behind the utilitarian building, together with their height, which would be lower than surrounding development, it is considered that the impact on the visual amenities of the area would be minimal.

Residential amenity

The agent engaged in pre-application discussions, which resulted in the proposal being relocated to the north east, so that it would be entirely screened from the dwellings in Abbotts Close by the dairy building.

The tanks and re-lift chamber would make no noise during operations. The microfiltration building would have suitable cladding to provide noise attenuation to the internal compressors, and the ventilation louvres have also been selected to provide maximum noise attenuation. Noise surveys are to be carried out before and after construction to ensure that there would be no detriment to current noise levels.

The development would result in more frequent visits to the site, which is generally unmanned. Currently there are two visits each day by a light goods vehicle (LGV), and one delivery per week by a heavy goods vehicle (HGV). Post construction it would be necessary to receive two additional deliveries by heavy goods vehicles every three months.

On the basis of the above, it is concluded that the development would have no impact on residential amenity.

The main impact on residential amenity would be from the construction phase, which is planned to start in July 2015 and be complete by March 2016. This would have two parts: the noise from on-site works and deliveries to the site.

The applicant wishes to access the site for construction purposes from 7am to 5pm on Mondays to Fridays, and from 7am to 1pm on Saturdays, with no noise generating activities being permitted until 9am. Any extended working hours would be agreed with the Council. It is also proposed to continuously wet materials on site to minimise dust and nuisance, and road sweepers would be regularly used. In winter it may be necessary to use site lighting, but this would be localised and not used after 5pm. If works are to commence on site at 7am, the construction staff and vehicles would access the site some time before that, and it is not clear how or what activities could be carried out on the site between 7am and 9am which would not generate noise, or how this could be reasonably controlled. It is considered that a commencement of all activities on the site at 8am, as suggested by the Specialist Advisor for Environmental Health is an appropriate compromise.

Deliveries to the site would be made by LGV's and HGV's and limited (9am to 4pm) to avoid peak traffic periods, via the existing route for commercial vehicles Courtlands Road/Moy Avenue/Waterworks Road; the numbers of vehicles would fluctuate during the different construction phases, shown daily as follows:

Initial works	2 months	5 HGV's	4 LGV's
Civil construction	2 months	9 HGV's	6 LGV's
Plant installation	2.5 months	2 HGV's	10 LGV's
Commissioning	1 Month	0	4 LGV's

Clearly this would have an impact on local residents, however it would be for a finite period and limited to specified hours. The narrowness of Waterworks Road and the awkward bend into Moy Avenue means that the most direct route from Whitley Road is not suitable for HGV's, resulting in the proposed route through Courtlands Road has been signed for some years. The observation from one resident regarding the afternoon school run is noted, however, it is considered that restricting the times for deliveries any further than the applicant has suggested would be unreasonable, and there is unlikely to be a significant number of deliveries between 3pm and 4pm in any case. However, it may be feasible to provide additional highway signage to prevent works traffic using Moy Avenue, and this will be reported verbally at the meeting.

The applicant and agent have considered the impacts on local residents and have addressed these as far as possible. These impacts must be balanced against the requirement to comply with the need to improve water quality. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable, and would deliver benefits to local residents through the provision of cleaner water. The impact of the construction works, taking into account the measures proposed by the agent, is acceptable for the period proposed.

Impacts on highway network or access:

As the build is for a limited period (approximately 9 months), with deliveries using the existing signed route via the Courtlands Road industrial estate and scheduled to avoid peak times, it is considered that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on highway safety. As stated above, additional highway signage to prevent works traffic using Moy Avenue may be appropriate and is being investigated.

Other matters:

An ecological survey was carried out, which concluded there would be no impact on ecology. There are trees on the railway land to the rear of the site, and no vehicles or materials would be stored adjacent to them. Checks for nesting birds in the buddleia bushes to the rear will be carried prior to commencement.

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

The applicant and agent have engaged with the local planning authority, the highway authority and local residents to achieve an acceptable scheme. The proposed development would have no adverse impact on visual or residential amenity, or on highway safety, and would deliver improvements to drinking water quality. The impacts during the construction phase would be adequately managed to reduce the impact on residential amenity and highway safety. It therefore complies with local and national policies.

Recommendation: Approve conditionally

Conditions:

1. Commencement within three years
2. Carried out in accordance with the approved plans
3. Hours of operation
4. Deliveries and working practices in accordance with planning statement and traffic management plan

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations**.