

# Cleaner Seas for the Brighton, Hove and Peacehaven Area

IMAGE 1



IMAGE 2



IMAGE 3



## Southern Water has submitted new plans to bring significant environmental improvements to the East Sussex coastline.

This series of images show how the newly-designed scheme (image 1) would look from the A259, compared with the current view (image 2) and the previous application (image 3).

The company wants to build a £300 million wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre on land at Lower Hoddern Farm in Peacehaven. It will deliver modern wastewater treatment facilities to serve the communities between Hove and Peacehaven. The company's original proposal was rejected by the Government in July 2007 following a public inquiry.

Southern Water has now prepared new proposals which respond to the comments made by two Secretaries of State. The new design combines new features, landscaping and planting to blend the proposals into the surrounding landscape.

The new planning application was received by East Sussex County Council, the planning authority, in January 2008.

### *The current system*

Wastewater from the area travels through local sewers, many dating from Victorian times, to Portobello Wastewater Treatment Works at Telscombe Cliffs. There, it receives basic treatment before being pumped out to sea through a 1.8km long sea outfall pipe.

This helps to ensure that local bathing waters meet the European bathing water standards.

However, the area is now the only one in Sussex - and among the last in the UK - unable to meet additional European standards on wastewater treatment.

The European Court of Justice ruled in January 2007 that the UK had failed to comply with European legislation on wastewater treatment in Brighton and Hove, leaving the UK Government open to prosecution and substantial fines.

Following the public inquiry ruling into Southern Water's first proposals for Peacehaven in 2007, both the Planning Inspector and Secretaries of State highlighted the now "urgent and pressing need" to meet these European standards.

### *The new system*

While the planning inspector rejected our previous planning application over landscape and visual concerns, he supported other key aspects including:

- ✓ The need
- ✓ Site selection
- ✓ Odour control
- ✓ Traffic access and highway safety
- ✓ Suppression of noise and vibration

In the planning inquiry decision the Secretaries of State concluded that "no better site had been demonstrated". Southern Water has confirmed that Peacehaven remains the preferred site and prepared new proposals.

The company takes very seriously the points made by the Secretaries of State and the views of local people in and around Peacehaven. It has listened to their comments and has submitted a new application to address those issues.

The new planning application incorporates planted mounding on the eastern side and a green roof capable of supporting living grass.

The proposals include land reshaping to blend the proposed works into the wider rolling chalk downland setting and to contain views from the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north.

The spoil generated on site during construction would, where suitable, be re-used as part of these landscaping proposals.

Land near the works would be landscaped and levelled and offered for community use. Southern Water plans to make a financial contribution towards the creation and maintenance of a sports pavilion and sports pitches suitable for football, rugby, hockey and other field sports.

The scheme will treat 95 million litres of wastewater generated each day by the 250,000 residents of Brighton & Hove, Peacehaven, Woodingdean, Ovingdean, Rottingdean, Saltdean and Telscombe Cliffs. The treated water will be released into the sea 2.5km off shore.

### *The timings*

There is an urgent and pressing national need for a new wastewater treatment works to serve the area. However, Southern Water needs to obtain the necessary planning permissions and consents before any construction work can start.

The scheme would take three to four years to build and the earliest operational date is 2011.

