

One ♦ Introduction

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.1 This design and access statement supports a planning application by Southern Water Services Limited for a new wastewater treatment works and associated sludge recycling and flow transfer infrastructure to serve the Brighton and Hove drainage catchment.

THE APPLICANT: SOUTHERN WATER

1.2 Southern Water Services Limited is the 'statutory sewerage undertaker' for most of East and West Sussex, Hampshire, Kent and the Isle of Wight, which means that the company is responsible for the safe collection, treatment and discharge of wastewater.

1.3 The company operates 103 water supply works and 376 wastewater treatment works, serving over a million properties. Its pipe network is thus extensive, with 13,369 km of water mains and 20,979 km of sewers. The company is responsible also for delivering drinking water to around one million households in its region. Southern Water is an important employer in Sussex. Its headquarters are in Worthing and the company has another major office and depot at Falmer.

1.4 Southern Water's duties with respect to the wastewater treatment services it provides are defined in law. The water industry regulator *Ofwat* has a responsibility to achieve best value for customers, whilst ensuring that water companies invest in new water and wastewater treatment facilities to the standards required. The Environment Agency licences and monitors water abstraction and the discharge of the effluent from wastewater treatment to rivers and the sea. The Agency approves the level of wastewater treatment provided by Southern Water in individual locations.

FORM AND CONTENT OF THE PLANNING SUBMISSION

1.5 Southern Water is applying to the waste planning authority, East Sussex County Council, for planning permission for the following principal elements.

- An underground tunnel to convey wastewater from the municipal boundary between Brighton and Hove and East Sussex at Saltdean to the new wastewater treatment works, and onwards to a new long sea outfall at Friar's Bay, with access shafts and a new pumping station at Southern Water's existing Portobello headworks.
- A wastewater treatment works (WTW) on the northern edge of Peacehaven, providing treatment to secondary standard, and a sludge recycling centre (SRC) on the same site to enable the sewage sludge arisings to be processed to a standard in which they can be used as a soil conditioner on

farms and elsewhere.

- Space at the WTW/SRC site for future expansion in response to evolving regulatory requirements.
- A new long sea outfall to dispose of the treated wastewater effluent out to sea, leaving the existing Portobello long sea outfall as a discharge route for stormwater overflows.

1.6 The planning application is accompanied by the following documents.

i). Environmental statement

1.7 The project requires environmental impact assessment (EIA), which is a systematic process to identify, predict and evaluate the effects of proposed actions and projects on the environment. The findings of the EIA are reported in an environmental statement, which forms a part of the environmental information to be taken into account by the planning authority in assessing the likely environmental consequences of granting planning permission for a proposed scheme.

1.8 The *Environmental Statement* that accompanies Southern Water's revised planning application assesses the environmental effects of the whole project, including both the development for which permission is now sought and those components of the scheme within Brighton and Hove that already have planning permission. This has been done so that the overall effects of the project can be considered.

1.9 Chapter two of the *Environmental Statement* provides an overall description of the current proposals, including a technical explanation of the wastewater treatment and sewage sludge recycling processes.

ii). Site selection review and update

1.10 The *Site selection review and update* report considers changes in circumstance arising since the closure of the 2006 public inquiry into Southern Water's planning appeal that might have a bearing on the selection of a site for the wastewater treatment works.

iii). Design and access statement

1.11 This is the current document, the purpose and content of which will now be explained.

THIS DOCUMENT

1.12 The structure and contents of the current document conform to Article 4(C) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended), government guidance in Circular 01/2006 *Guidance on changes to the development control system* and the Commission for Architecture

and the Built Environment's good practice guidance *Design and access statements: how to write, read and use them*.

1.13 In the words of Circular 01/2006 (paras 61-63):

A design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way . . .

They provide an opportunity for developers and designers to demonstrate their commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility in the work they undertake, and allow them to show how they are meeting, or will meet the various obligations placed upon them by legislation and policy.

The level of detail required in a design and access statement will depend on the scale and complexity of the application, and the length of the statement will vary accordingly. Statements must be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but need not be long.

1.14 Article 4(C) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended) requires that a design and access statement should explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to particular aspects of the proposal, in terms of the amount, layout, scale, landscape treatment and appearance of the development. The design and access statement should demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development, and should explain how the proposed access arrangements will provide users with 'equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and the public transport network' (Circular 01/2006, para. 101). In this context, para. 100 of the Circular advises that '*it is important to note that the requirement for the access component of the statement relates only to 'access to the development' and therefore does not extend to internal aspects of individual buildings*'.

1.15 The current design and access statement is arranged in five main parts.

Part A considers the project from an overall perspective, explaining the need for enhanced wastewater treatment, the local economic and environmental context, relevant design and access considerations, the site selection process and the principles applied with respect to design – including landscape architecture – and access.

Parts B and C give individual consideration to the two principal above-ground elements in the current planning application. Respectively, these are the wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre at Peacehaven and the proposed pumping station at Portobello.

Part D then examines the underground flow transfer infrastructure required to convey the catchment's wastewater to the treatment works for treatment, and to discharge the treated effluent to the sea through a long sea outfall.

Part E of this statement explains how the design and access provisions described will be implemented, and draws together the overall conclusions of the design and access statement.

1.16 Parts B and C are each arranged in four chapters:

- *an introductory chapter*, presenting the scheme in overview and reviewing site-specific planning policy;
- *a design evolution chapter*, which considers the site and surroundings, summarises relevant consultations and explains the design rationale for the development;
- *a design chapter*, describing the amount, layout, design, appearance, landscape treatment, sustainability, safety and security aspects of the proposals;
- *an accessibility chapter* addressing provisions for vehicular traffic, pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders and access for the emergency services.

1.17 Part D follows the same structure but within a single chapter.

1.18 Whereas site-specific planning policy for the treatment works and pumping station sites is reviewed in chapters four, eight and twelve, Southern Water's proposals have been influenced by a wider body of planning and waste policy. To provide a context for the design and access evaluation, this generic policy is summarised in the appendices.