

Seven ♦ Access to the Peacehaven wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre

POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

7.1 The principal planning policies that have influenced access considerations to the proposed development are identified in appendix II and chapter 4 of this design and access statement. Insofar as these policies relate to access considerations their main focus is to deliver safe, convenient and technically adequate access arrangements to development. In addition, policy EN7 in the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan specifically encourages greater public access to land in urban fringe locations such as that found at Peacehaven, and Policy PT16 in the Lewes Local Plan allocates land for recreational purposes on land immediately to the west of the main works building, where access for pedestrians is also encouraged.

7.2 The general approach to vehicular and pedestrian access at the Peacehaven wastewater treatment works site has evolved following careful consideration of options and extensive consultation with the highway authority and other interested parties.

7.3 In terms of vehicular access, the alignment, geometry and design of the proposals for vehicular access were discussed in detail with the county highway authority and considered at the 2006 public inquiry into Southern Water's previous proposals. Access considerations took into account a local *Safe Routes to School* initiative. The general approach was endorsed by the Secretaries of State in their appeal decision as follows:

Traffic, access and highway safety

44. For the reasons in IR7.96, the Secretaries of State agree with the Inspector that the increases in traffic proposed during the construction and operation stages of the appeal scheme would not raise significant cause for concern in highway capacity terms, subject to a routing agreement for the construction phase (as now found in Clause 13 of the S106 Obligation), the details of the site access and the link with Greenwich Way/Hoyle Road (as in proposed conditions 21 and 30).

45. In terms of the effect on the Safe Routes to School scheme, the Secretaries of State agree with the Inspector that, for the reasons in IR7.97, the appeal development would not cause serious conflict.

7.4 The vehicular access arrangements considered by the Secretaries of State now form part of the current proposals by Southern Water.

7.5 The access principles adopted for the Peacehaven site were also influenced by Association of Chief Police Officers (APCO) guide *Secured by Design*, 2004. The APCO guide contains the following advice:

- superfluous and unduly secluded access points should be avoided;

- access points to the rear of buildings should be controlled;
- footpaths and cycleways should only be provided if they are likely to be used;
- footpaths and cycleways should, if provided, be of generous width to avoid creating narrow corridors which could be perceived as threatening;
- good visibility should be maintained from either end and along the route of footpaths and cycleways, with sharp changes in direction avoided;
- alternative routes to important destinations may be beneficial, although a balance has to be struck between the advantages of greater choice and perceived security against the disadvantage of providing additional means of escape, or of discouraging inappropriate movement of people.

These principles and how they have applied are explained in more detail below.

CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

7.6 Chapter three explained how the public and other stakeholders have been consulted throughout the pre-application process. Discussions have been held with the highway authority concerning access arrangements to the site. Compatibility of proposals with the *Safe Routes to School* initiative that has been developed by the authority has also been evaluated and agreed with the highway authority.

7.7 With regard to the main vehicle access to the treatment works site, Southern Water prepared an *Access Options Report* for consideration by the local highway authority, the purpose of which was to seek approval and agreement of the principal access route to the works either direct from the A259 to the east, or from Bolney Avenue/Hoyle Road to the west. Access options were therefore explored from a technical highway point of view and the options evaluated from a planning policy and environmental viewpoint.

7.8 Having due regard to the balance of constraints affecting the various road access options, it was concluded that the western access option was the most appropriate. This option was favoured also by the local highway authority and was thus taken for both the construction and operational phases of development.

7.9 During the pre-application stage of the 2005 planning application, the following authorities, groups and organisations were consulted:

- Countryside Agency
- East Sussex County Council
- Brighton and Hove City Council
- Lewes District Council
- South Downs Joint Committee
- Local residents, local councillors and the general public (through public exhibitions and public meetings)

7.10 It was through consultation with the South Downs Joint Committee that the need for an integrated land management scheme for public access and grassland was identified and addressed.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

7.11 There are a number of footpaths and pedestrian ways within the vicinity of the proposed WTW/SRC at Peacehaven (see figure 14.5.2 of the Environmental Statement that accompanies Southern Waters current planning application). These can be divided into the two following categories:

- definitive rights of way (source: Lewes District Council definitive rights of way maps).
- Non-designated ways.

7.12 The definitive rights of way, including both bridleways and footpaths, connect Peacehaven to the surrounding countryside.

7.13 A survey of the locality was undertaken to assist in the understanding of the potential effects on the routes and users of footpaths in the vicinity of the proposed treatment works, and to inform the design response. The survey sought to determine the numbers of users of all designated and non-designated ways in the vicinity of the proposed treatment works at Peacehaven. Survey work took place at three separate locations (identified in figure 14.5.2 of the *Environmental Statement*) during a 12 hour period on a weekend day and mid-week day during August 2004.

7.14 The results from the user surveys (see ES figure 14.5.3) indicated that the most intensively used routes during midweek periods include F1-F8, 7a and 8, situated towards the eastern and northern edges of Peacehaven. The survey results also indicated that most journeys were undertaken by pedestrian dog walkers originating predominantly from the north-eastern edge of Peacehaven. During weekend periods these routes remain popular with dog walkers together with an increase in use of routes including 7b, 8, 9, 16a and 16b predominantly towards the north eastern edge of Peacehaven. During weekend periods Bridleway 7a was found to be used occasionally by equestrians. The results of the surveys are indicated on figure 14.5.3 of the *Environmental Statement*. This figure indicates the routes taken by footpath users and illustrates the most popular routes.

7.15 The construction of the proposed treatment works and associated access would result in the severance of Bridleway 7a, which is a definitive right of way, and of the non-designated ways F3, F4 and F5.

7.16 As part of the current proposals the bridleway is thus proposed to be diverted and alternative provision made for the non-designated paths. Where the bridleway crosses the proposed access road, an equestrian crossing similar to a 'Pegasus'-type crossing, would be installed. In either direction both to the north and south of the crossing, the landscape will be sculpted to accommodate a 3 x 135 metre equestrian visibility splay to ensure a safe crossing facility.

7.17 North of the treatment works the bridle path would return to its original course and follows its existing route to the downs beyond. The overall course of the realigned bridleway would remain attractive to use, being on gentle gradients with good visibility.

7.18 A network of other access ways through informal open space, available for use by the public, has also been designed to create improved linkages east-west across this part of Peacehaven.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

7.19 Away from the public rights of way previously described, pedestrian access to the work site would be via the vehicular access way off Hoyle Road, and would follow the same line of the vehicular access.

7.20 There is a section of footpath proposed from the entrance to the site, along the northern outer curve of the vehicular carriageway to a point where it is expected there will be a pedestrian crossing across the carriageway. This footway would be 2.0 metres wide.

7.21 This footway will form part of a pedestrian link to pathways created to the north and south of a landscaped area, formed so that future sports pitches can be accommodated in line with planning policy PT16 of the Lewes Local Plan. As such, the future provision of these pitches would not be prejudiced by the wastewater treatment works development.

7.22 Elsewhere along the route of the vehicular access, no separate footway would be provided. However, there would be a verge on either side of the carriageway for the remainder of its length to allow safe and convenient refuge for pedestrians. This combination of vehicular and pedestrian access was considered the most appropriate design response, particularly given the rural nature of the area, and the desire to maintain the rural character.

7.23 In highway terms this arrangement was also considered acceptable and would not present a risk to highway safety. The expected pedestrian and vehicular usage is low, alignment and visibility is good, and refuge for pedestrians is readily available.

7.24 On arrival at the security fence line, pedestrian access to the treatment works would be gained via a security gate used also by vehicles visiting the site. At this point it is anticipated that directional signs for staff and visitors, whether on foot or in vehicles, would be provided to the main areas of the facility.

7.25 Once within the security fence boundary of the works, pedestrians would need to cross the parking area and internal roadway to reach the main building. Signage will be provided to direct pedestrians and warn drivers of speed limits and appropriate crossings will be provided as necessary.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

7.26 Public transport is available from the nearby Meridian Centre, the main bus route terminus for Peacehaven, which then links via Sutton Avenue to the A259 South Coast Road, itself served by regular bus services between Brighton to the west and Newhaven to the east. These services should improve as a consequence of current works to provide a dedicated bus lane along sections of the A259.

VEHICULAR ACCESS AND SERVICING

7.27 Vehicles visiting the treatment works would approach the site from the strategic A259 South Coast Road via Sutton Avenue, Greenwich Way, Hoyle Road and the treatment works access road. No other vehicular route would be used without prior agreement with the appropriate authority. Routes along and beyond the A259 would be controlled where relevant by a routeing agreement with the local highway authority.

7.28 Within the operational boundary of the site and along the approach road from Bolney Avenue/Hoyle road, a speed limit would be strictly enforced to a maximum of 20 mph (32.2 kmh), made clear by roadside signage.

7.29 As there would be no general public access to the secure treatment works compound, routeing maintenance and servicing associated with the site and plant would be undertaken in accordance with normal site operating procedures and in accordance with normal health and safety policy. The site has been designed to allow all parts of the plant to be served in a safe and secure manner.

APPROACH AND SITE ENTRANCES

7.30 The main approach to the treatment works would be clearly signposted and the entrance demarked by a gate and fence. From this minor gate the main pedestrian entrance and parking area will be clearly marked. The low on-site speed limit would further reduce the risk of vehicle and pedestrian conflict.

CAR AND CYCLE PARKING

7.31 Car and cycle parking would be provided outside the main facility building in line with industry and local planning policy standards.

7.32 A raised verge is proposed between the car parking area and the inner circulation road, which encircles the main facility, so that the parking area is clearly defined and vehicles could not inadvertently reverse into vehicles on the minor circulation road.

7.33 Cycle parking close to the main facility building will be provided for employees in line with a proposed green travel plan.

SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

7.34 Signage would be used on the access road only if required for safety purposes. A standard Southern Water sign board will be provided at the treatment works entrance. There will be no lighting to the access road except at the junction with Hoyle Road and Bolney Avenue.

7.35 Although the treatment works site is surrounded on three sides by urban development and is close to a floodlit sports pitch, the site is also adjacent to downland. Southern Water is sensitive to the need to avoid night-time light

pollution, including direct views of lighting and lit areas.

7.36 The lighting strategy for the treatment works will give priority to the use of low intensity, low level light sources. Specific task-based lighting would be down-focussed and located at strategic points outside of buildings for occasional maintenance use. The exterior lighting would provide adequate illumination for safety, security and operational purposes whilst minimising spill and obtrusive lighting levels.

7.37 It is anticipated that lighting would be provided for safety and security by luminaires mounted on the inward-facing building elevations, on columns and bollards on the inside of the perimeter road on the north and west sides, and in the central area. Locally-controlled lighting would be provided for the entrance, parking area and southern side of the building when access to these areas is required. Lighting for operational activities during the hours of darkness would be provided from the same luminaire units but they would be run at a higher output to achieve the appropriate lighting levels.

7.38 Luminaires would be of the full cut-off, flat glass downlighter type to provide maximum control of light spill and to limit obtrusive light. Full cut-off luminaires emit no light above the level of the horizontal flat glass protector, and when viewed from a location higher than the luminaires the direct light output of the lamp and reflector is not visible. Additional lighting necessary for servicing and maintenance works during the hours of darkness would be provided by vehicle or trailer mounted lighting and portable units.

7.39 The access road through the valley to the site from Bolney Avenue to the south-west of the treatment works would not be lit.

EMERGENCY SERVICE ACCESS

7.40 Access to the wastewater treatment works for emergency services will be along the access road from Hoyle Road. Inside the site, access would be provided to all buildings and operational facilities from the two way site roads.

MAINTENANCE

7.41 The vehicular access to the treatment works would be designed and constructed to adoptable highway standards, with the section of the access route at Bolney Avenue and Hoyle Road intended for adoption by the local highway authority and maintained as public highway. The rest of the access would remain in the ownership of Southern Water and maintained to a high standard, with any pot-holes or other surface defects repaired as they arise.