

**REPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
COMMITTEE**

Report No.

Date of Meeting	20th February 2008
Application Number	07/03149/FUL
Site Address	Land to East of Pond Lane, Purton Stoke, Wiltshire
Proposal	New Sewage Pumping Station
Applicant	Thames Water Utilities Ltd
Town/Parish Council	Cricklade and Purton
Grid Ref	408843 190212
Type of application	Full application

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been submitted to the Committee for decision under the scheme of delegation in force after the 8th April 2002 because Councillors Lay and Berry have requested that the application be considered by committee to assess impact of the design on the surrounding area.

Summary of Report

This application has been submitted by Thames Water for the erection of a Sewage Pumping Station (SPS). The SPS is required in connection with a scheme to replace an existing main which is prone to frequent bursts and to alleviate foul water flooding to several properties in the area.

- Implications on DC Core Policy C3
- Design and scale of the development and the visual impact on the surrounding area.

Officer Recommendation

Delegated to the Implementation Team Leader for the receipt of an appropriate landscaping scheme to help further screen the site.

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Proposal and Site Description

The proposal is for the erection of a new Sewage Pumping Station (SPS). The development will mainly include the following:

- Creation of new vehicular access
- Concrete hard-standing
- Pole mounted transformer
- Swing Jib Crane
- Enclosed control panel kiosk (2m x 0.57m x 1.5m)
- 2.1m high palisade fencing/gate

The site relates to an area of land, approximately 0.02 hectares in size, located to the south of the village. The closest house is approximately 50m away to the north. The site is bounded by hedgerow to the west and north. The south and east elevation are relatively open to views.

Planning History

Application number	Proposal	Decision
None		

Consultations

Purton Parish Council has no objections.

Cricklade Town Council is in support of this application.

Wiltshire County Council Highways have no objections subject to the access and layby being properly consolidated and surfaced.

Environmental Health has no adverse comments to make.

Representations

Three letters have been received. Whilst it is accepted that the development is necessary, the main concern relates to the design details of the site and its appearance within the countryside. Additional landscaping and flooding lighting restrictions are suggested should permission be granted.

Planning Considerations

Impact of the development on the surrounding area

The application site is located outside of the built up area of the village and with the open countryside. The site does benefit from hedgerow screening to the west and north, but none to the south and east.

The main parts of the development that are considered to be most visible, are the palisade fencing, transformer pole, crane and ground surfacing.

The palisade fencing is required for the purposes of providing adequate security to the SPS. The fence has been reduced in height from 2.1 metres to 1.8 metres and will be coloured green to help blend in with its surrounding. It is important to note that planning permission is only required where the fencing exceeds 1 metre in height adjacent to the highway and not over 2 metres in height elsewhere.

The crane has now been amended from yellow to green. Thames Water has explained that it is necessary to have a permanent crane installed, as opposed to a demountable or folding one, due to the depth of the wet well and weight of the pump and the equipment needed to lift the pump.

In relation to both of these it is considered that the visual impact would be much reduced by the choice of colour. The exact colour can be subject to a planning condition.

The proposed pole mounted transformer this equipment provided by the local electricity company and is akin to the appearance of a regular telegraph pole. Its position in the furthest corner of the site adjacent to the existing hedge is considered to be most appropriate in terms of its siting.

The proposed ground surfacing will be concrete. The applicant has been requested to look at alternative surfacing materials to help mitigate any visual impact on the site. However, Thames Water has confirmed that they have duty to carry out the appropriate Health and Safety measures and provide a safe working environment for its operators. As part of this the use of concrete is the chosen for all new pumping stations. Also in the event of any sewage spillage, it is easier to clean. In light of this, the application needs to be considered on this basis. Whilst the use of concrete may not be the most attractive form of surfacing, it is commonly used in connection with similar utility facilities.

Notwithstanding this, the applicant has been requested to look at the possibility of providing further landscaping off site to help reduce the visual impact of the development. Any landscaping outside the site would however, become the responsibility of the existing landowner.

The proposed development is considered necessary to help alleviate foul water flooding to several properties in the area. Thames Water has provided further information in support of the proposed equipment and this has been taken into account. The scheme has been amended following comments raised by a local resident.

Whilst the proposal would result in some visual impact, which will not be entirely harmonious with the rural amenity of the countryside, this impact must also be balanced against the need to prevent any foul water flooding which might otherwise occur to properties within the village. The practical implications of seeking alternative options have been explored and justified by Thames Water.

With due consideration to the purpose of the SPS, and in the absence of any contrary evidence to confirm that an alternative site would be more appropriate, the benefits of providing the flood alleviation measures are considered in this case to override the visual impact of the development in this location.

Recommendation and Proposed Conditions/Informatives

Delegated to the Implementation Team Leader for the receipt of an appropriate landscaping scheme to help further screen the site.

Reason for Decision

The proposed development is required to prevent foul water flooding to local properties and the visual impact of the development would not be so detrimental as to override this to warrant the refusal of planning permission, in accordance with policy C3 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NONE
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	1.20, 2.02, 3.06, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04