

Electoral Division affected: Longridge with Bowland
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Ribble Valley Borough: application number. LCC/2021/0004
Construction of a new wastewater treatment works, access track, bridge, 3 no. culverts, outfall, partial demolition of existing works and landscaping.
Chipping Waste Water Treatment Works, Longridge Road, Chipping, Preston.

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Executive Summary

Application: Construction of a new wastewater treatment works, access track, bridge, 3 no. culverts, outfall, partial demolition of existing works and landscaping. Chipping Waste Water Treatment Works, Longridge Road, Chipping, Preston.

Recommendation – Summary

That subject to no objection from the Environment Agency, planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling time limits, working programme, highway matters, site preparation and construction works, landscaping and management.

Applicant's Proposal

The application is for a new waste water treatment works to replace the existing Chipping waste water treatment works. The development to provide the new treatment works would be on an area of agricultural grazing land measuring 270 metres by 70 metres and would include the following elements:

- Inlet screen plant – required to remove large debris from incoming waste water. The plant comprises of two screens measuring 8.6 m by 6.2 metres by 8.2 metres high. The platforms and structural steelwork would be constructed from galvanised steel. The screens themselves would be in stainless steel.
- Inlet Pumping Station Area having a diameter of 8m by 1.1 m in height (partially buried).
- A motor control centre kiosk building – containing electrical control equipment, the building would measure 10 metres by 3.5 metres by 4.3 metres in height.
- Primary settlement tank area – measuring 20.5 metres by 16.1 metres by 6.4 metres in height – this would incorporate three tanks measuring 5.6 metres in diameter by 5.3 metres in height with a distribution chamber measuring 1.8 metres diameter by 5.3 metres in height.
- Submerged Aerated Filter area – measuring 13.8 metres by 13.5 metres by 4.4 metres in height- this would include a distribution chamber 3.7 metres by 2.0 metres by 4.6 metres in height which would feed eight aeration tanks each measuring 12.6 metres by 5.75 metres by 3.5 metres in height.

- Humus Tank Area – comprising two partially buried tanks measuring 5.6 metres diameter by 2 metres in height.
- Chemical dosing kiosk building – measuring 7.8 m metres by 2.5 m metres by 3 m metres high.
- Washwater booster kiosk – measuring 2 metres by 4 metres by 2 metres high.
- Admin/Welfare Kiosk Building – measuring 4.5 metres by 3.5 metres and 3 metres in height.
- New concrete outfall structure into the Chipping Brook.
- Installation of 320 metres of weldmesh fencing 2.4 metres in height to enclose the new works.
- An improved access off Longridge Road together with a new access road approximately 500 metres in length by 3.5 metres in width. The track would be surfaced in coloured concrete and would incorporate a new bridge across the Chipping Brook measuring 8 metres by 4.2 metres in width.

All the new buildings, fencing and external elevations of plant and equipment would be coloured holly green.

Upon the new works being commissioned, the existing treatment works would be demolished, and the site returned to grassland apart from the existing trickling filters which would remain on site and allowed to naturally regenerate. The access road to the existing works would be retained as an access into the adjacent agricultural premises.

There would also be a temporary construction compound located on land to the east of the new waste water treatment works.

Description and Location of Site

The application site would occupy an area of agricultural grazing land immediately south of the existing Chipping Waste Water Treatment Works. The existing works is accessed off Longridge Road which is a C class road linking Longridge with Chipping which is 800 metres to the north of the application site.

Immediately to the west of the application site is the Chipping Brook, to the north is the existing treatment works while on the southern and eastern sides are areas of agricultural grazing. The existing treatment works measures approximately 100 metres by 40 metres and is comprised of a number of tanks and other infrastructure to treat waste water from the Chipping area.

The nearest residential properties to the site are located at a farm complex 240 metres to the north and at Goose Lane Cottages 125 metres to the west. There is another property approximately 400 metres to the south east which is a grade II listed building (Pale House Farm).

An area of wet grassland 100 metres to the south east of site known as Chipping Moss is designated as a Biological Heritage Site for its value for ground nesting birds. The whole site is also within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The entire site is located within Flood Risk Areas 2 and 3 (areas at highest risk of flooding).

A public footpath is located approximately 80 metres to the east of the site.

Background

History: There is no relevant planning history.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework: The following paragraphs are relevant: 8 – 11 (definition and achievement of sustainable development), 108 – 109 (transport considerations), 127 (design), 155 – 165 (flooding), 170 - 175 (landscape and biodiversity), 183 (planning and pollution control), 196 (heritage).

Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (JLMWLP)

Policy DM2 – Development Management

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

Policy DMG1 – General considerations

Policy DMG2 – Strategic considerations

Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility

Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME2 – Landscape and townscape protection

Policy DME3 – Site and Species protection and conservation

Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets

Policy DME6 – Water Management

Consultations

Ribble Valley Borough Council: No objection but request that consideration be given to the implementation of landscape and biodiversity improvements in advance of development commencing on the new works were practicable.

Environment Agency (EA): No objection to the principle of the proposal. However, the Flood Risk Assessment supporting the application needs further refinement before it can be confirmed that the flood risk at the site has been fully assessed. The application is a complex development with a number of aspects that could affect flood risk. It appears that the flood risk assessment and site design has been based on a hydraulic model which does not form part of the EA's Flood Map for Planning and only limited detail of the applicant's model has been submitted. If the design and assessment is based upon the model, then a report allowing a review of the model must be submitted. Comments are also made about the design of the new bridge across the Chipping Brook and the access road and potential impacts on flooding, the modelling of the compensatory storage and the design of the outfall structure.

In response to further consideration of the applicant's flood model, the Environment Agency consider that the model requires a more detailed review and therefore their objection is maintained at this stage.

Chipping Parish Council: No comments received.

County Archaeology Service: Agree with the findings of the applicants Archaeological Assessment that no further archaeological investigation of the site is required.

County Landscape Service: No comments received.

Lancashire County Council Ecology Service: The proposals would result in a loss of habitat for ground nesting birds which are species of principal importance and are linking to the nearby Chipping Moss Biological Heritage Site (BHS). The County Council will need to be satisfied that these impacts are unavoidable and ensure that proposals are submitted to demonstrate that these impacts can be adequately compensated for. Planning conditions should be imposed relating to lighting, the implementation of reasonable avoidance measures, protection of vegetation adjacent to the working area, invasive plant controls, measures to protect hares and hedgehogs and habitat creation and landscaping. A condition is also requested preventing works on the application site between 1 March and 31 August unless a survey for ground nesting birds has confirmed absence.

LCC Highways Development Control: No objection. The submitted traffic management plan should be adhered to during construction operations. Conditions are also requested to require the provision of electric vehicle charging points and to ensure that the new access road is constructed to at least base course level prior to any other construction work commencing.

Representations – The application has been advertised by press and site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. Two representations objecting to the application have been received raising the following issues:

- Longridge Road is the main access to Chipping for all residents who live south of the village. The road has a 60 mph limit has no pavements and many bends especially around Goose Lane Cottages. The development will give rise to many HGV movements endangering pedestrians on the highway. It is therefore requested that a permanent 40 mph speed limit be imposed on Longridge Road together with traffic calming measures.
- The area has an active bat population and the proposals would involve the loss of seven trees and 130 metres of hedgerow which would impact on this species.
- The lighting of the site needs to be adequately designed so there is no detrimental effect on bats or other nocturnal wildlife. There is no street lighting in this area so any new lighting would have a greater impact.
- The area also has a good brown hare and barn owl population and these species need to be given full protection. Kingfishers have also been sighted on the Chipping Brook.
- The new works would have a considerable visual impact on the views from Goose Lane Cottages. The new works would be almost four times the size of the existing treatment works, and the buildings would be taller and larger. The new works would not be in keeping with the natural and cultural heritage of area and are on a landmark location at the entrance to the village.
- The proposed landscape screening alongside Chipping Brook would be inadequate to screen the development from Longridge Road.

Advice

The existing Chipping Waste Water Treatment Works has provided waste water services for the local area for over 45 years. Whilst the existing works can meet current discharge quality standards, the Environment Agency are imposing tighter water quality parameters from December 2023 particularly in relation to chemical oxygen demand and ammonia content in the effluent discharge to the Chipping Brook.

The treatment processes used at the existing works cannot meet the new standards and its continued use presents a high risk of failure to comply with the pollution control consent. The proposed new treatment works would utilise modern water treatment processes/technology to allow compliance with new water quality standards. The proposed development would also increase the treatment capacity of the works to accommodate a predicted population growth in the catchment served by the works.

The existing works would have to continue to operate whilst the new works is constructed on land to the south. Once the new works is constructed and operational, the majority of the existing treatment equipment would be demolished, and the land restored.

The main issues relate to the landscape impact of the development, flooding, ecology and local amenity issues.

Landscape

The site is located within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that planning decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes in a manner commensurate with their statutory status. Paragraph 172 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that the scale and extent of development in these areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- The need for the development including in terms of any national considerations and the impact of permitting it or refusing it upon the local economy.
- The cost of and scope for developing outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way.
- Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated.

The applicant has prepared a landscape assessment with the planning application which examines the impact of the development on the key landscape characteristics and impacts from key viewpoints.

The Forest of Bowland Landscape Assessment produced by Natural England identifies the main landscape character types and areas and their sensitivity and capacity to accommodate change. The site falls within the Little Bowland landscape character area where the main features relevant to the application site are the undulating agricultural landscape, network of mixed hedgerows with hedgerow trees delineating fields, the open views towards the Bowland Fells and mixed semi natural woodland following watercourses and in - field trees.

The applicant has undertaken an assessment to determine the extent to which the site is visible from key local and more distant viewpoints.

The application site is comprised of a flat agricultural field with patches of marshy vegetation directly adjacent to the Chipping Brook. Directly to the north is the existing treatment works which includes various primary settlement tanks and trickling filters (approximately 1 metre above ground level), a humus tank and other brick tanks (approximately 2.5 metres high) and an single storey admin/office and larger chemical dosing building which is the most prominent structure on the site and clearly visible from Longridge Road and Goose Lane Cottages. The views of the existing works and application site from these locations are partially screened by an overgrown hedge forming a line of gappy trees adjacent to the Chipping Brook. The farm complex at Startifants close to the treatment works entrance also screens the site from the north.

From the south and east, from the footpath and Pale Farm, the site is more open with no existing screening features.

In terms of the more distant viewpoints, there are locations on Longridge Fell and from the summit of Parlick that have wide expansive views over the Chipping Valley. These views points are 2.7 and 3.7 km from the application respectively. The application site is located in the centre of such views but is a relatively small area in very expansive vistas.

In terms of landscape impacts, the construction of the new treatment works itself would not result in the removal of key landscape features apart from the areas of pasture and marshy grassland forming the site. No trees or other vegetation alongside the Chipping Brook would need to be removed. The main vegetation losses would arise from the construction of the new access road and alteration of the underground pipelines. These works would require the removal of four trees and two sections of hedgerow totalling 130 metres.

The new treatment works would have a greater landscape impact than the existing works due to the number of structures and the heights of some elements of the new plant. The inlet works would have a maximum height of 8.2 metres needed to incorporate the rotating screens that lift debris out of the incoming waste water and deposit it into skips. A number of other elements of the new plant and tanks would have heights of up to 5 metres. The height of some element of the development have been raised on steel frameworks to lift them clear of the predicted maximum flood level. By comparison, most elements of the existing works have a maximum height of around 2 metres with one tank structure being 8.6 metres high. Although, the development would not result in a significant loss of existing landscape features, without mitigation the visual impact of the new works is likely to be greater than the existing treatment works.

Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a presumption against major development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty such as that proposed other than in exceptional circumstances and where it is demonstrated that the development is in the public interest taking into account the three tests set out in the policy.

Chipping has a population of approximately 1300 the majority of which will be served by the applicant's waste water infrastructure. The village is designated as a Tier 2 settlement within the Borough Local Plan where key statement DS1 permits development required to meet proven local needs or to deliver regeneration benefits. It is therefore likely that there will be small future upfits in the population within the catchment. The provision of modern waste water treatment facilities to serve this population is therefore important.

The Water Framework Directive of 2014 sets standards for water quality including in surface water courses. The standards within the Framework cover the types of pollutants that are typically released from waste water treatment works. Chipping Brook is a salmonoid water course where water quality considerations are especially relevant. The proposed works would involve the installation of new treatment infrastructure which would improve the quality of the discharge into the Chipping Brook therefore having a beneficial effect on the environment, in particular ecology, of this watercourse and would meet the objectives of the Directive.

The location of the new works is largely dictated by the route of the existing waste water infrastructure. There is no alternative site in the immediate locality that is outside of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the new works cannot be located on the existing site due to the need to maintain treatment capacity. The only alternative would be to transfer the flows to another treatment works which would still require a pumping station in the Chipping area and installation of a new pipeline which would have other landscape and ecological impacts. The development of the new works within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is therefore considered to be in the public interest and there is no reasonable alternative option.

Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that a key consideration for major development within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty is the detrimental impacts, including on landscape and recreation, and the extent to which they can be moderated. To mitigate the landscape impacts of the development, the applicant has produced a comprehensive landscaping scheme. Due to the location of the site in flood plain, it is not possible to create any permanent screen mounds around the new works as these would increase flood risk elsewhere. As an alternative it is proposed to create a 10 metre wide planting belt alongside the eastern boundary of the new site, new planting alongside Chipping Brook, new hedgerow and tree planting on both sides of the new access road, further hedge planting to recreate field boundaries and the demolition and subsequent landscaping of the majority of structures within the existing treatment works. The elements of the existing plant that would be retained would be three trickling filter beds. These beds are not required for the future operation of the works but would be problematic to demolish and would be left to naturally revegetate. The applicant has agreed to mound excess soil against the sides of these to reduce their visual impact.

Although it will take at least five years for the landscaping to mature, it is considered that the landscaping proposals would allow for a satisfactory screening of the new works from the main local viewpoints. The views which are obtained from the nearest properties and from Longridge Road would be attenuated through the retention of the existing trees alongside Chipping Brook which would be supplemented by new planting and the present open views of the site which are obtained from the footpath to the south and east would be screened by the 10 metre wide planting belt. With the landscaping proposals, the landscape impacts are therefore considered acceptable. It is recommended that conditions are imposed regarding retention and protection of all retained trees, implementation of all landscaping works, demolition and restoration of the existing works within one year of the new works being commissioned and aftercare / management of the planting works. Given the location of this site in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty it is also considered that some of the permitted development rights that exist for sewerage undertakers should be withdrawn through a condition which would give greater control over future development at the site.

Ecology

In relation to ecology impacts of relevance to this development, paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that if significant harm cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy relates to sites and species protection and conservation. The policy requires that proposals that are likely to adversely affect sites and species including priority habitats and species, county biological heritage sites or species protected by law will not be granted planning permission and that exceptions will only be made where it can clearly be demonstrated that the benefits of a development at a site outweigh both the local and wider impacts.

The applicant has undertaken an ecological assessment to identify the presence of priority habitats and protected species. The application site is mainly comprised of poor semi – improved grassland with amenity grassland within the existing treatment works. There are also a number of hedgerows with ground flora with associated standard trees. A number of these trees are assessed as having a moderate suitability for roosting bats with one tree having high suitability. There are two ponds within the nearby Chipping Moss which are within 250 metres of the application site. One of these ponds has confirmed presence of Great Crested Newt following eDNA sampling. The assessment concludes that there will be some impacts on Habitats of Principal Importance including hedgerows, the Chipping Brook and areas of rush pasture and that if any of the trees having moderate or high bat potential would be affected, they should be subject to further survey. A range of mitigation measures are recommended to off set these impacts including landscaping to replace lost hedgerows and specific measures for individual species.

The County Council's Ecological Advisor considers that the proposals would lead to a direct loss of habitat for ground nesting birds such as curlew and lapwing which are species of Principal Importance and which are associated with the nearby Chipping Moss Biological Heritage Site (BHS). The development would lead to a reduction in the size of the field which together with proposed woodland landscaping, would make the remaining area of field less suitable for ground nesting birds. She considers that the County Council should be satisfied that these impacts are unavoidable and that they are capable of being mitigated. In relation to other habitat impacts, attention is drawn to the impact on the loss of trees and hedgerow although it is considered that the landscaping proposals would adequately compensate for those that are lost. However, the landscaping along the eastern site of the site needs to be modified to remove large trees which would reduce the attractiveness of the adjacent field to ground nesting birds. Subject to the impacts on ground nesting birds being resolved, no objections are made subject to conditions relating to lighting control, implementation of reasonable avoidance and pollution control measures, tree protection measures, invasive plants, landscaping plan and a seasonal restriction on initial site clearance works.

The main ecological impact of this development would be the loss of the existing rough grazing land and the associated impacts on ground nesting birds. However, there is no reasonable alternative to the extension of the existing treatment works and the use of the land to the south as proposed would ensure the maximum standoff to the Biological Heritage Site compared to alternative options such as developing the land to the east of the existing works. It is also likely that the existing condition of the application site and wider field area including its proximity to the existing works and the trees adjacent to the Chipping Brook reduces its potential as ground nesting bird habitat. The impacts on Species of Principal Importance are therefore considered to be slight and are largely unavoidable. The proposed development would also have other benefits for ecology in terms of a likely improvement in water quality in the Chipping Brook and the proposed landscaping works would also provide new habitats for other bird species. Subject to the conditions requested by the County Council's Ecologist, the application is considered acceptable in relation to paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Flooding

The application site is located immediately adjacent to the Chipping Brook which is designated a main river by the Environment Agency. The site is also within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (areas at highest risk of flooding). The flood risks from the development arise by the construction of the treatment works within the flood plain and also the construction of the new bridge across the Chipping Brook. The proposal also includes the provision of a temporary flood defence bund adjacent to the Chipping Brook to prevent the site from being flooded during construction works.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk and that development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. If the development cannot be located in an area with a lower flood risk, it should be demonstrated that the development would have wider benefits that outweigh the flood risks and that the development will be safe for its lifetime without

increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible reducing flood risks overall. Paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework also requires all development within areas 2 and 3 to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment.

Policy DME 6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

The application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment which is based upon a hydraulic model to quantify the flood risks from the Chipping Brook and to assess the impacts of the new development on flood risk elsewhere. The new plant has been designed so that it would not be flood free with some elements of the plant being sited on steel frames thereby providing at least 300mm of freeboard above the flood level to minimise the impacts on the flood capacity of site. Structures containing liquids would be designed so that the top of the structures are above the maximum flood levels which would ensure that the site remains operational and would prevent pollution during flood events.

Some regrading of the development site would be required to create working platforms. However, the volume of cut is greater than the volume of fill and therefore the applicant considers that the proposals would actually increase net flood plain storage following the reprofiling works especially in those areas directly adjacent to the Chipping Brook which are most at risk of flooding. It is proposed to construct a temporary earth bund alongside the Chipping Brook to ensure that the site does not flood during the construction works. The bund would result in a loss of flood storage capacity although the applicant estimates that the impact would be minor as the flood depth would not be significant, the bund would be temporary, and third party properties would remain unaffected. The applicant therefore considers that it unnecessary to provide compensatory flood plain either during construction or the operational period.

Flood risk issues also arise from the proposed new bridge over the Chipping Brook. The bridge has been designed so that it would be a clear span structure with abutments that do not interfere with the flows in the river and a soffit level (the underside of the bridge) that is at least 600mm above the 1 in 100 year (+35% for climate change) level.

The Environment Agency have no objections to the principle of the development but do have a number of outstanding issues in relation to the modelling that was carried out to predict the flooding impacts of the development. In particular, there are many aspects of the development such as the temporary protection bunds, bridge and access road design, and ground level alternations which rely on the outputs from the applicant's model. The applicant has recently supplied further information regarding the model that they used. However, the Environment Agency state that they require further time to consider this information and their final response is awaited at time of writing this report. In terms of detailed design, the Environment Agency comment that the proposed outfall pipe would appear to be higher than the surrounding land levels which would not be acceptable, that the access road may not be 'at grade' with surrounding land and that there are some conflicts between information presented in the planning application. In response, the applicant is preparing a modified outfall design, confirmed that the access track will be constructed at grade

and that the Flood Risk Assessment will be updated. The issues relating to the outfall design and access track can be the subject of planning conditions.

Although this development is located within an area of high flood risk contrary to the sequential test in paragraph 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the location of the development is constrained by the need to link with the existing waste water infrastructure. There is no other site in the nearby area which could be used to accommodate the development which would not have other significant landscape or ecological environmental impacts. The development would have wider benefits in ensuring the treatment of waste water to modern standards and provided that flooding would not be increased elsewhere, it is considered that the exception test in paragraph 160 of the National Planning Policy Framework would be satisfied.

Subject to the Environment Agency confirming that they have no objections to the application and conditions relating to the design of the development and removal of the temporary flood protection bund, the development is considered acceptable in terms of the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Highways

The existing waste water treatment works is accessed off Longridge Road via a narrow access road which also serves the adjacent farm site. As part of the proposals, it is proposed to widen the existing access point and to construct a new access road to serve the new works.

Longridge Road is a C class road which at the access location is derestricted (60mph limit). The applicant has provided a Traffic Management Plan with the application which contains details of the predicted traffic movements and the routing/times of construction traffic. The construction of the new works would generate approximately 600 HGV and 2000 light vehicle movements (in and out) over the 2 year period of construction works.

Lancashire County Council Highways have no objection to the development subject to electric vehicle charging points being provided, the Traffic Management Plan being adhered to during the construction period and the new access being constructed to at least base course level before any other development takes place. However, the site would not be permanently manned during the operational period and the requirement to provide electric charging points cannot be justified. The other matters can be the subject of conditions.

Two representations have been received which both raise concerns relating to the impacts of construction traffic on pedestrians on Longridge Road and request further traffic calming measures. Although Longridge Road is subject to a 60 mph limit, the nature of the road is such that average speeds especially for HGVs are likely to be significantly below this level. It is acknowledged that there are no footways along Longridge Road but Lancashire County Council Highways do not consider that it would be necessary to install traffic calming measures given the relatively short term period of the construction works. Installation of footways alongside the highway would require hedgerow removal and could not be justified given the level of pedestrian activity.

Subject to conditions requiring wheel cleaning and compliance with the traffic management plan, the highway impacts of the development are considered acceptable.

Local amenity

There are a number of properties that are close to the application site including a converted dairy building at Goose Lane Cottages 125 metres to the west where there are 26 separate properties. There is also another dwelling located adjacent to the site access around 250 metres to the north. The properties at Goose Lane cottages have views towards the existing treatment works and proposed new site.

The applicant has undertaken a noise assessment and a comparison of odour emissions between the existing and proposed plants. As the plant would operate on a 24/7 basis the assessment included a night-time noise survey to assess existing noise levels.

In general, the new treatment works would not be substantially nearer to any of these dwellings than the existing site. It would include a greater amount of noise generating plant and therefore the noise impacts are potentially greater. However, the new plant would be of a modern design and the assessment concludes that the predicted noise levels would not be discernible at the nearest properties.

In relation to odours, the new plant will enable greater attenuation of potential odours. The applicant's assessment indicates that there would be a 24% reduction in odour emissions.

The new plant would need to be the subject of a permit from the Environment Agency. The permit would contain controls on issues such as odour and noise during operation of the works. Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the focus of planning decisions should be on whether the proposed development is an acceptable use of land rather than the control of processes or emissions where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes. In this case, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable local amenity impacts that would suggest that planning permission should not be granted and that the detailed control of such impacts can take place within the permit.

The new treatment works would be visible from the nearest properties. However, the views would be partially screened by the trees along the Chipping Brook that would be retained, and the separation distances are such that there would be no detriment to the visual amenity of these properties. The further planting on the western side of the site would in time provide an enhanced level of visual screening.

Provided that conditions are imposed regarding the noise from construction works and hours of operation, it is considered that this impacts of the development on local amenity would be acceptable and the development is acceptable in terms of Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Heritage Issues

The applicant has carried out a desk based assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. Lancashire County Council Historic Environment consider that there is no evidence that the application site has potential for archaeological remains and therefore no further work is necessary as part of the development.

There is a Grade II listed building at Pale Farm 400 metres to the south. However, this building is far enough from the site that there will be no impacts on setting.

Conclusions

This proposal would replace existing aging infrastructure and would ensure that waste water is treated to modern standards therefore meeting legal requirements for water quality in the surface water courses.

Although the site is located in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Flood Risk area 3 where major development would not normally be supported, the development is in the public interest and there are no sites outside of the above areas that are reasonably available that could support the development.

The proposal does raise some inter-relationships between the landscape, flooding and ecology impacts. In order to address the impacts on flooding, various items of the plant would be raised on steel work platforms which would increase the visual impacts of some elements of the development. Providing a satisfactory level of screening would necessitate a larger scale of landscaping which could have an impact on the value of the surrounding land for ground nesting birds. Whilst, there would be some trade-offs between the flooding issues and the landscaping and ecology impacts, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable taking into account the substantial benefits to pollution control and water quality.

The highway and local amenity impacts are considered acceptable and therefore the proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions appended to this report.

In view of the scale, location and nature of the development, it is considered that no Convention Rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.

Recommendation

That subject to no objection from the Environment Agency, planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions to this permission, in accordance with the following documents:

a) Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing 97-DR-T-10001 Rev PO6 - Site Location Plan
Drawing 97-DR-T-10002 Rev PO3 - Proposed Site Layout
Drawing 97-DR-T-10015 Rev PO1 - Cut and Fill Areas Sheet 1
Drawing 97-DR-T-10016 Rev PO - Cut and Fill Areas Sheet 2
Drawing 97-DR-T-10013 Rev PO3 - Proposed Site Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10010 Rev PO1 - SAF Area Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10021 Rev PO1 - Site entrance visibility splays
Drawing 97-DR-T-10070 Rev PO2 - Inlet pumping station - elevations
Drawing 97-DR -T- 10006 Rev PO2 - Chemical dosing Kiosk Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10007 Rev PO1 - Inlet Screens Area Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10008 Rev PO2 - MCC Kiosk Elevations
Drawing 97 - DR -T-10009 Rev PO1 - PST Area Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10005 Rev PO1 - Demolition Works
Drawing 97-DR-T-10012 Rev PO2 - Welfare Kiosk Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10011 Rev PO2 - Humus tank Area Elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10022 Rev PO1 - Existing Site entrance modifications
Drawing 97-DR-T- 10003 Rev PO6 - Proposed Road Layout
Drawing 97-DR-T-10017 Rev PO2 - New bridge and culvert elevations
Drawing 97-DR-T-10028 Rev PO3 - Proposed outfall general arrangement
Drawing 97-DR-L-00001 Rev PO4 - Landscape proposals general arrangement
Drawing 97-DR-L-00002 Rev PO4 - Detailed Landscape Proposals
Drawing 97-DR-L-00003 Rev PO4 - Detailed Landscape Proposals
Drawing 97-DR-L-00004 Rev PO4 - Detailed landscape Proposals
Drawing 97-DR-T-10025 Rev PO2 - New site fencing

c) All schemes and programmes approved in accordance with this permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the County Planning Authority to adequately control the development] and to minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the local area, and to conform with policy DM2 of the of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3, DME1, DME2, DME3 and DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy .

3. Prior to any other development commencing on the site, the site access onto Longridge Road shall be improved in accordance with the design shown on drawing 97-DR-T-10022 Rev PO1 - Existing Site Entrance Modifications.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

4. The rights in Part 13 Class B (d) and (f) of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any amendment, replacement or re-enactment thereof are excluded and shall not apply to this development. Any development referred to in that part shall only be carried out pursuant to a planning permission granted under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or any amendment, replacement or re-enactment thereof.

Reason: To provide greater control over future development on the site in view of the location of the site within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to conform with Policy DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

5. No development shall commence until details of the new outfall from the treatment works to the Chipping Brook have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.

Thereafter the outfall shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: In the interests of flood prevention and to conform with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

6. The upper surface of the new access road shall not exceed the levels of the land immediately adjoining the new access road.

Reason: In the interests of flood prevention and to conform with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

7. Within three months of the commissioning of the new waste water treatment works, the temporary flood defences shown on Plan 97-DR-T-10027 shall be removed from the site and the land restored in accordance with the submitted landscaping plans.

Reason: In the interests of flood prevention and to conform with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

8. No external lighting shall be erected on any plant or buildings within the site unless details of such lighting have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Any lighting erected at the site shall be operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Management of Construction Works

9. Measures shall be taken at all times during construction operations to ensure that no mud, dust or other debris from the site is deposited by vehicle wheels upon the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

10. The provisions of the submitted Traffic Management Plan shall be complied with at all times during the duration of construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

11. No construction development, delivery or removal of materials shall take place outside the hours of:

08.00 to 18.00 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),
08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday.

No construction development, delivery or removal of materials shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

This condition shall not however operate so as to prevent the use of pumping equipment and the carrying out, outside of these hours, of essential repairs to plant and machinery used on the site.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

12. Prior to the development of any of the construction compounds shown on drawings 97-DR-T-10003 - Rev PO6 - Proposed Road Layout and all topsoils from those areas shall be stripped and stored for use in restoration works. The construction compounds shall be restored within six months of the completion of construction works by removing all surfacing materials and geotextile membranes, respreading of the stored topsoils to its original depth, cultivation and reseeding with a suitable agricultural seed mix.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in order to secure the proper restoration of the temporary works and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Landscaping and Ecology

13. No trees or hedges other than those edged in red on drawing 97-DR-L-0001 - Landscape proposals shall be removed during the development. All other trees and hedgerows on the boundaries of the site shall be protected and retained during the duration of the development.

Reason: In the interests of ecology and landscaping and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

14. Within one year of the commissioning of the new waste water treatment works, all plant and equipment and buildings other than the structures identified for retention on drawing 97-DR-T-10005 REV PO1 shall be demolished and the site landscaped in accordance with the proposals shown on drawing

Following demolition all waste materials shall be removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Policy DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

15. Within three months of the date of this planning permission, a phasing scheme for the landscaping works shown on drawing 97-DR-L-00001 Rev PO4 shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing.

The phasing scheme shall identify the areas of landscaping which can be undertaken in advance of the new waste water treatment works being commissioned and implementation dates for those works.

The landscaping works shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved phasing plan.

Reason: In order to ensure the landscaping of the site at the earliest stage and to conform with Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

16. All landscaping works shall be maintained for a period of ten years following the date of their implementation. The maintenance works shall include the replacement of dead and dying species, weed control and maintenance of protection measures.

Reason: In order to ensure the proper landscaping of the site and to conform with Policy DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

17. Not later than five years from the date from the commissioning of the new treatment works, a review of landscaping works shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing. The review shall be based upon a survey of the existing landscaping works and shall include a schedule of management works for the landscaping over the remaining period of landscape management, details of any thinning works to be undertaken and details of any further planting that are required to ensure the proper landscaping of the development.

Thereafter, management of the landscaping shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved landscape review.

Reason: In order to ensure the proper landscaping of the site and to conform with Policy DME2 of the Ribble Valley Borough Core Strategy.

18. The Reasonable Avoidance Measures described in the Ecology Advice Note: Chipping WwTW (Bowland Ecology, October 2020 and the Advice Note: Chipping WwTW (Bowland Ecology, May 2020) shall be implemented at all times during the construction of the development.

Reason: In the interests of ecology and to conform with Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

19. No site preparation works including vegetation clearance or soil stripping works within the site shall take place between 1 March and 31 August unless the area has been surveyed immediately prior to works commencing by a qualified ecologist and the survey demonstrates that there is no nesting bird activity within the survey area.

Reason: In the interests of ecology and to conform with Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Notes

The grant of planning permission does not remove the need to obtain the relevant statutory consents/licences from the Environment Agency.

Definitions

Planting Season: The period between 1 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2021/0004	January 2021	Jonathan Haine, Planning and Environment Ext 534130

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A