

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

AT A MEETING of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held at the Stanley Community Centre on **Monday 17 January 2005** at **10.45 a.m.**

Present

Councillor K Henderson in the Chair

Members of the Committee who attended site visit : Councillors, Armstrong, Blenkinsopp, Dormer, Douthwaite, E Foster, Hogan, Hunter, Marshall, Shuttleworth, Thompson and Watson.

A1. Application to be determined by the County Council

Derwentside District: Proposed new on-site structures and upgrading of access at Hustledown Sewage Treatment Works (STW), south-east of Stanley, for Northumbrian Water Ltd

The Chairman welcomed Eileen Liddle and Michael Lockie (South Stanley Woods Group), Brian Croft (Stanley Green Corridor), Donna Rawlinson and Ian Sheldon (Northumbrian Water) to the meeting.

The Head of Planning referred to the site visit that had now taken place and presented a brief synopsis of his report. He advised the Committee that much of the work on the site does not require planning permission, as it was permitted development. The site visit had been arranged due to objections over the proposed felling of trees along the access road that was to be widened. He advised the meeting that the scheme had been revised so it was no longer necessary to remove any trees as the tanks had been re-designed and are now smaller so only pruning to some trees is necessary.

Donna Rawlinson (Northumbrian Water) informed the Committee that the works were essential in order that they could comply with EC Regulations. The application has been amended as originally the trees needed to be removed on safety grounds but this is no longer necessary due to the redesign of the tanks.

Councillor Hogan expressed concern over the difficulty in accessing the site when travelling from the southern approach and asked if this would present a problem to tankers visiting the site. Donna Rawlinson said that this was not expected to be a problem as they now intended to use smaller tankers.

Councillor Thompson queried the timescale for the works and was informed that the works must be complete by August 2005.

Brian Croft (Stanley Green Corridor) informed the Committee that there was never any objection to the works because they realise the need to carry out the work to comply with EC up grading the regulations; their concerns were over environmental issues. He asked what the effects would be on the environment following the chemical dosing process, when the effluent is released into the stream.

Donna Rawlinson replied that the chemical precipitates in the tanks and that the effluent released into the stream was clear. She added that this was the standard method used across Europe and the UK. The Head of Planning added that the concerns of the Environment Agency related to the provision of appropriate measures to deal with any gas occurrences either now or in the future.

Brian Croft informed the meeting that they had held discussions with Northumbrian Water who agreed to keep them advised of any future works.

Resolved:

that planning permission be granted for the proposed operational and access improvement, subject to appropriate conditions, for the following reasons:

- i) NWL is obliged to provide upgraded sewage treatment and effluent discharges in order to comply with new European water quality objectives. The proposals for Hustledown STW are designed to improve the operation of an existing facility providing an essential service for the community.
- ii) The developments requiring express consent are associated with significant investment in a wider works improvement scheme. Given the location, nature, scale and integrated purpose of the new development, intended to raise operational standards for the future, the scheme will provide material benefits.
- iii) The development aligns with relevant development plan Policies, notably CSP Policy 87 relating to waste water treatment and disposal facilities and WLP Revised Deposit Draft Policy W44 in respect of necessary improvements at sewage treatment works.
- iv) The original proposal which involved the removal of trees has been withdrawn in the light of potential effects. The revised proposal will only require pruning works to be carried out when necessary which will only have a minor impact on Stanley Wood. With the minor works now proposed and the above measures set out in (v) below the proposal does not materially conflict with CSP Policies 67C and 69 and WLP Policies W13 and W13C, CSP Policies 67C and 69 and WLP Policies W13 and W13C, intended to protect nature conservation interests and designations.

- v) Appropriate mitigation measures are to be provided to secure the protection of bats and nesting birds, reduce the potential for disturbance to an essential minimum, and provide adequate alternative habitats, in accordance with the intentions of CSP Policy 67D and WLP Policy W13B.