

## **SCREENING OPINION**

### **THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017**

**Screening Opinion reference:** SP/17a

**Applicant:** Southern Water Services Ltd

**Date Received:** 12/10/17

**Site:** Southern side of Coolham village and A272 (approx. RH13 8QJ) to Stakers Lane Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS) adjoining the A24 (approx. RH13 9AF), Southwater, West Sussex.

**Proposal:** Dragons Green Rising Main Project comprising the construction of two new rising mains connecting Coolham Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS) to Dragons Green Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS) and then Stakers Lane Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS) with minor infrastructure improvements at Coolham and Dragons Green WPS

Southern Water has a duty to provide wastewater collection and treatment. The proposed scheme is driven by the Environment Agency's National Environment Programme 5 permit for the River Adur Catchment, which requires environmental improvement associated with nitrate and phosphorus levels on discharge consents.

The proposed rising main (i.e. sewerage pipeline) would be installed in two sections, with a total length of 7km. The first section would be 2.8km long running from Coolham Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS), north-east to Dragons Green WPS. It would largely follow the route of the east-west running A272. The second section would be 4.2km long, running from Dragons Green WPS north-east to Stakers Lane WPS at Southwater, through largely Greenfield land.

Both sections would be laid underground, primarily (6.4km of the 7km route) using trenchless drilling techniques (Horizontal Directional Drilling - HDD), with traditional open excavation at some locations. The HDD process will require the creation of launch and reception pits every 200m along the route (i.e. an estimated 32 in total along a 6.4k route), measuring 4m X 2m, excavated to a depth of 2m.

Modification works, including upgrades to pumps and wetwells, and the construction of small kiosks within the boundaries of the Coolham and Dragons Green WPS, are also proposed.

Construction would take place over a period of one year, and require five, varying sized temporary construction compounds, ranging between 20m by 20m and 40m by 40m in area, along the pipeline's route. The locations of four have these have

been identified, with a fifth yet to be confirmed. Construction work would be undertaken between the hours of 07:30 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 07:30 to 14:00 on Saturdays.

The rising main is required to be operational by March 2020. This is to ensure Southern Water's compliance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

### **Classification of the Proposed Development**

The proposal does not comprise Schedule 1 development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations').

The installation of sewer pipelines is not specifically identified within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. Part 10 of the Regulations relates to 'infrastructure projects' so is considered of most relevance to the present proposal. Within this, the project is most appropriately considered to fall within either Part 10(k) of Schedule 2 which relates to oil/gas pipeline installations, or Part 10(l) which relates to the installation of long-distance aqueducts.

In considering this, it is noted that interpretation of the EIA Regulations should be given wide scope and broad purpose. Further, while no further clarity is provided by the recent Planning Policy Guidance: EIA, such developments were previously considered to fall within Part k or l due to interpretation provided within the more detailed government Circular 02/99 (now cancelled). Paragraph A28 of this Circular referred to "*installation of oil pipelines, gas pipelines and long-distance aqueducts (including water and sewerage pipelines)*". While now out of date, this clarifies that water and sewage pipelines were historically considered in a similar vein to oil/gas pipelines and long distance aqueducts, for screening purposes.

The proposed development relates to a site over 7 hectares, exceeding the 1 hectare, threshold criteria as set out in Column 2 of Schedule 2 for Part 10(k) and 10(l) development. A Screening Opinion must therefore be issued, giving consideration as to whether the development has the potential to result in 'significant environmental effects' which require an EIA. The following therefore considers whether the proposed development would result in significant effects on the environment so require EIA.

In considering the proposal it is noted that if the works are not EIA they would be 'permitted development' under Schedule 2, Part 13, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015. This class of 'permitted development' has no conditions attached so there is no certainty, through the planning process, that the mitigation measures set out in the Screening Request would come forward. However, as a statutory water undertaker under Chapter I of Part II of the Water Industry Act 1991, Southern Water is subject to a duty to comply with various requirements under S3 of the Act including to (in summary) preserve and conserve flora and fauna, urban/rural amenity, features of historic interest, and freedom of access.

In relation to works on private land, as is the case with much of this project, the company has an enforceable duty under S182 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to prepare a Code of Practice for approval by the Secretary of State. The approved Code of Practice requires that upon completion of the works, the area worked is restored to the same condition that it was in before they started; and that any

damages to fences, banks or walls will be repaired. There is therefore certainty that the land would be restored once works are completed.

They would also be subject to more general legislative provisions such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, identified as relevant below, which would give more certainty that the environment would be protected in bringing forward the development.

<b>Characteristics of Development</b>	
Development Area	No total site area is given. Given the pipeline route is approximately 7km in length, assuming a narrow construction corridor of a minimum of 10m the total site area would be at least 7Ha.
Development Nature / Scale	<p>In addition to the pipeline: Five temporary Construction compounds at 3200m<sup>2</sup> = 0.32Ha</p> <p>Assumed minimum total site area approximately = 7.32Ha</p> <p>The main impacts of the development are likely to be temporary in nature in association with construction of a subterranean 7km sewerage pipeline.</p> <p>The construction programme is likely to take approximately 12 months, during which there would be approximately 10 HGV movements per day.</p>

	<b>Likely/Unlikely – briefly describe</b>	<b>Is this likely to result in a significant effect?</b>
<b>1.</b> Will the development involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc.)?	Unlikely. The proposed sewerage pipelines would be located underground, and all permanent above-ground works would be located within the boundaries of existing Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS) sites. All temporary construction compounds would be reinstated on completion of the works.	No significant effect anticipated. Surface works would be modest in scale and within existing waste sites.
<b>2.</b> Will the development use natural resources such as land, water, materials, or energy, especially resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Unlikely. No significant, permanent land-take proposed. Some use of fossil fuels during construction but not expected to be extraordinary.	No significant adverse effects anticipated.
<b>3.</b> Will the development involve the use, storage, production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment?	Likely. The proposed development would involve the pumping of waste water through pipelines (sewers). Construction activities may require some limited storage of harmful substances or materials (e.g. petrol/diesel).	No significant effects anticipated, particularly given the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and the other legislation and regulations enforced by the Health and Safety Executive.

	<b>Likely/Unlikely – briefly describe</b>	<b>Is this likely to result in a significant effect?</b>
<b>4.</b> Will the development produce significant volumes of wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Unlikely. Excavated materials for pipelines would largely be replaced in-situ. Upon completion the development will transport waste, and enable it to be properly managed.	No significant effects anticipated.
<b>5.</b> Will the development give rise to significant noise, vibration, light, dust, odours? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- during construction</li> <li>- during operation</li> </ul>	<p>Noise and dust are likely during the 12 month long construction period. This includes daily HGV movements (albeit a low number) and both directional drilling and traditional excavation activities within a rural area. There is also likely to be some vibration during piling activities.</p> <p>Limited risk of odour impacts and only at existing WPS sites where additional plant would be installed, but these sites subject to Environmental Permitting process.</p> <p>Some lighting would be used during construction.</p> <p>Upon completion, limited potential for significant impacts envisaged.</p>	<p>Given the long period of construction and the large site area there is the potential for significant environmental effects, particularly associated with construction compounds and sites of horizontal directional drilling/sheet piling, but also resulting from HGV movements (10/day during construction; 10/week during mobilisation/ demobilisation).</p> <p>However, the works would be short term in various locations along the linear route which is relatively sparsely populated, with few other 'sensitive receptors'. Any noise impacts would be subject to the 'nuisance' requirements of the Environmental Health regulations. The use of lighting would be temporary and would move along the linear project so the impact would not be long lasting.</p> <p>No significant effects anticipated from construction or operation.</p>
<b>6.</b> Does the proposal have the potential to release pollutants to air, land, or water?	<p>Unlikely. Although the proposed development would transport sewage it would be contained, with regulation in place to ensure this is the case.</p> <p>Further, pipe and pumping station specifications are likely to be typical of those used by water authorities across the country without significant environmental impact</p> <p>Some limited potential for contamination associated with excavation/drilling activities and associated fluids.</p>	No significant impacts anticipated.
<b>7.</b> Are there areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage – e.g. where existing environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No such areas identified. Site includes areas within highway and existing WPS, but project unlikely to exacerbate any environmental damage.	Unlikely. No significant effects anticipated as a result of this proposal.

	<b>Likely/Unlikely – briefly describe</b>	<b>Is this likely to result in a significant effect?</b>
<b>8.</b> Is there a high risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which could have effects on people or the environment?	Unlikely. Proposed construction techniques are not considered particularly high risk.  Upon completion low risk of accidents and pipeline subject to standard protection measures.	No significant effects anticipated.
<b>9.</b> Will the project result in social changes e.g. demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Unlikely. Project would not require significant employment or otherwise result in social changes.	No significant effects anticipated.
<b>10.</b> Are there areas on or around the location which are protected under international, national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value which could be affected by the project?	Likely. The pipeline would pass under (using HDD) St Cuthman's Pond Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) east of the Coolham WPS; and under an area of Ancient Woodland east of Dragon's Green Road, which contains Dragon's Green WWTW.  The pipeline would about the western boundary of the Horsham Common, Alder Copse, Coate's Furzefield and Constable's Furze SNCI/Ancient Woodland (north-east of Dragons Green), and the north-western boundary of the Downs Link, Nutham Wood, Greatsteeds Farm Meadow Ancient Woodland and SNCI, close to the Stakers Lane WPS, in Southwater.  The pipeline would about the boundaries of two further areas of Ancient Woodland, and would pass within 350m of two others.  The pipeline would pass close to 4 Grade II Listed Buildings (2 at the George and Dragon Inn, Dragons Green, Goffsland Farmhouse and Brickkiln Farmhouse, the latter two situated between Dragons Green and Southwater) designated for their special architectural/historic interest or character/appearance. Further, it would cross over large areas of relatively undisturbed greenfield land which has the possibility of containing features of archaeological interest. An archaeological desk based assessment has been submitted which recommends trial trenching in the undisturbed compound areas, but notes that trial trenching in the HDD areas would have a greater impact than the works themselves.	Potential for significant effects on these features if not properly mitigated.  Legislation including the Wildlife and Countryside Act, the Habitats Regulations, and the Hedgerows Act would ensure some species and features are protected. While the timing of works may have some impact on habitats and species, it is considered that these are given sufficient legislative protection to ensure the impact is not significant.  Ancient woodland and SNCIs are not given legislative protection, but the works within the woodland areas would be at a depth of 2.5m to ensure roots are protected. Further, as a statutory water undertaker, Southern Water must take into account any effect the proposal would have on flora and fauna (S3(2)(c) of the Water Industry Act 1991). It is considered that these factors, along with the requirement to restore the private land on which the ancient woodland is situated, give sufficient certainty that it would be protected from significant effects.  Under S3(2)(b) of the Water Industry Act 1991, Southern Water is required to "have regard to the desirability of protecting and conserving buildings, sites and objects of archaeological, architectural or historic interest." It is considered this gives sufficient certainty that the measures identified in the Screening Request would be undertaken, particularly in relation to the construction compounds.
<b>11.</b> Are there any other areas around the location	Likely. There are a number of ponds/water bodies in the locality	Potential for significant environmental effects

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which are important for their ecology e.g. wetlands, forests, coastal zone which could be affected by the project?	<p>and the requirement for hedgerow/ditch crossings is such that there is the potential for impacts upon ecology.</p> <p>Surveys undertaken in 2017 identified bat and dormice habitats in a woodland area due south of Southwater, as well as a water vole habitat in the Knepp Mill Stream area.</p> <p>A number of surveyed ponds within 250m of the proposed development confirmed the presence of Great Crested Newts and/or their habitat.</p>	<p>associated with construction activities.</p> <p>However, there is legislative protection for species and habitat, as well as hedgerows, and it is proposed to HDD under the woodland/SNCI features. This being the case, and with restoration required to be to the existing condition, overall, no significant effects are anticipated.</p>
<b>12.</b> Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected or sensitive species of fauna or flora which could be affected by the project?	<p>Likely. In addition to the matters set out above (items <b>10.</b> and <b>11.</b>), hedgerow and water feature crossings and the extent for construction activities on greenfield sites have the potential to impact upon protected species and/or their habitats such as water voles, dormice, bats, badgers and Great Crested Newts.</p> <p>A vegetation survey identified the presence of &gt;30 rare 'Wild Service' trees (<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>) close to the eastern area of the proposed pipeline route.</p>	No significant impact anticipated, given protection afforded by legislation and measures set out in Screening Request.
<b>13.</b> Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>Likely. Some sections of the pipeline are located in areas at high risk of flooding (between Dragons Green and Southwater), but the provision of sewage infrastructure is acceptable in flood risk areas.</p> <p>No groundwater source protection zones within the pipeline route.</p>	<p>Unlikely. Construction would have limited, if any impact on flooding, and pipeline would be buried so ongoing impacts not significant.</p> <p>Overall, no significant effects anticipated.</p>
<b>14.</b> Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>Unlikely. While the proposed pipeline would pass entirely through the countryside, it does not pass through any protected landscape designations.</p> <p>Construction impacts would be temporary and should be limited to minor visual impacts.</p>	Unlikely. Upon completion little impact expected on landscape.
<b>15.</b> Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Likely. The pipeline construction will be adjacent to/along public rights of way and highways, and close to some dwellings.	Unlikely in the long term. The project would be visible during construction, but would move along a linear path so impacts would be relatively transient. Upon completion the works would have little visible impact.
<b>16.</b> Are there routes on/around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities	Likely. The temporary construction activities associated with the pipeline would cross and/or affect a number of PROW (including the Downs Link close to Stakers Lane	Unlikely. The operator will be required to ensure that access to the PROW network is maintained throughout the

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which could be affected by the project?	<p>WPS), roads, access tracks and recreational areas.</p> <p>Some areas may also be temporarily affected by construction compounds and drilling rig entry/exit pits.</p> <p>The pipeline would cross and/or affect a number of PROW (including the Downs Link close to Stakers Lane WPS), roads, access tracks and recreational areas.</p>	<p>construction period.</p> <p>No long term impacts anticipated and overall, no significant effects anticipated.</p>
<b>17.</b> Are there any routes on or around location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	<p>Likely. The pipeline would run alongside and cross under small sections of the A272 and A24, and a number of C &amp; D class and unclassified rural roads. It is, however, noted that in most cases the pipeline could be installed adjacent to and drilled under roads to avoid closures and minimise disruptions. Open cut excavation would only be used along Roman Road in Southwater.</p> <p>The proposal would result in up to 10 daily HGV movements over a 12 month construction/mobilisation period.</p>	<p>Unlikely, given the use of HDD over most of the route. Road closures therefore unlikely.</p> <p>Some impact on highway around construction compounds but low movements anticipated.</p> <p>Overall, no significant effects are anticipated.</p>
<b>18.</b> Are there any features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>Likely. The pipeline and compounds are near several listed buildings; much of the pipeline route is greenfield land so has the potential to contain archaeological features.</p>	<p>No significant effects anticipated given compounds would be in place for a temporary period. Potential for some loss of archaeological features through HDD but the route would not pass through or near any Scheduled Monuments, Registered Gardens, and would not be within an Archaeological Notification Area (as indicated on WSCC mapping).</p>
<b>19.</b> Will there be any loss of Greenfield land?	<p>The route and compounds would be on/under greenfield land, but any impact would be temporary.</p>	<p>No significant effects anticipated.</p>
<b>20.</b> Are there existing land uses around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>Likely.</p> <p>The pipeline would pass through large areas of agricultural land, as well as sections of recreational (PROW) and residential land use, potentially affecting users of those areas.</p> <p>Further, the construction of the pipeline may have temporary impacts upon areas largely in agricultural use and users of the affected PROW network.</p>	<p>Potential for temporary effects on PROW users but associated with construction activities, but this would be transitory as walkers use the routes. Southern Water would need to secure the agreement of landowners/tenants of agricultural land before carrying out the work, so would minimise the impact on agricultural operations.</p> <p>Upon completion little impact expected.</p> <p>No significant effects anticipated.</p>

	<b>Likely/Unlikely – briefly describe</b>	<b>Is this likely to result in a significant effect?</b>
<b>21.</b> Are there areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	Likely. The pipeline would pass through the southern area of Southwater village, a densely populated residential area.	Significant effects unlikely as operations in close proximity to this built-up area would be relatively short-lived, and experienced in the context of the adjacent A24.
<b>22.</b> Are there areas on or around the locations which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, community facilities which could be affected by the project?	Likely. Compound 2 is adjacent to a scout hut and public house. Goffsland Farm B&B adjacent to compound 3.	No significant effects anticipated as works would be undertaken during the day, and otherwise subject to 'nuisance' provisions under Environmental Health legislation.
<b>23.</b> Are there any areas in or near the application site which contain high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development, e.g. groundwater resources, forestry, agriculture, tourism, minerals?	Likely. The works pass under agricultural land and the PROW network.	Some likelihood of adverse effects on agriculture, recreation and tourism associated with construction activities but not considered to be significant. Upon completion little impact expected.  No significant effects anticipated.
<b>24.</b> Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding, or adverse climatic conditions which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Likely. The pipeline would cross under numerous drainage channels/field drains, and a tributary of Adur West, and areas at high risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3).  Although the proposed end use is likely to be compatible with a flood risk area, construction activities within these areas have the potential for environmental impact.	Some temporary impact on drainage but not considered to be significant, particularly as HDD being used.  Upon completion little impact expected.  No significant effects anticipated.
<b>25.</b> Are there plans for future land uses on or around the site which could be affected by the project?	Unlikely. No such schemes identified.	Positive effect anticipated through the delivery of improved wastewater treatment.
<b>26.</b> Is there a potential for transboundary impacts?	Unlikely. No boundaries within or near site.	No significant effects anticipated.
<b>27.</b> Will any effects be unusual in the area or particularly complex?	Unlikely.	No particularly unusual or complex effects identified.

### **Conclusion**

The applicant proposes a new 7km pipeline for a wastewater rising main (sewerage pipes) running from Coolham Wastewater Pumping Station (WPS), situated on southern side of Coolham village to the Stakers Lane Wastewater Pumping Station, situated on the south-eastern edge of Horsham.

Guidance is provided in National Planning Practice Guidance: Environmental Impact Assessment (revised 28 July 2017) to aid local planning authorities to determine whether a project is likely to have significant environmental effects.



This includes a set of indicative thresholds and criteria. For Part 10(k) and (l), the indicative criteria and threshold is as follows:

*"Pipelines over 5 km long. Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for pipelines laid underneath a road, or for those installed entirely by means of tunnelling."*

Further, guidance suggests the key issue to be considered is: *"For underground pipelines, the major impact will generally be the disruption to the surrounding ecosystems during construction, while for over-ground pipelines visual impact will be a key consideration."*

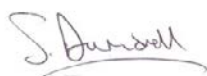
In this case, the proposed sewerage pipeline would be constructed almost entirely through tunnelling (HDD) techniques, with only a small area constructed using traditional trenching. This would help to minimise the impact on ecosystems and the landscape, as well as minimise disruption to the highway network. It is considered that there is sufficient provision in legislation including the Wildlife and Conservation Act 1981 (as amended), the Habitat Regulations 1994 (as amended), the Water Industry Act 1991, and the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 to ensure that the project is undertaken without significant impact.

Taking into account selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations and National Planning Policy Framework - Planning Practice Guidance as set out above, it is considered that the proposed development is not likely to give rise to environmental impacts of a scale sufficient to require an EIA. Accordingly, the County Planning Authority considers that the development **does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.**

#### **Screening Opinion.**

In the opinion of the County Planning Authority the development **would not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.**

**Signed:**



Sam Dumbrell / Jane Moseley  
Senior Planner

**Date:** 1 November 2017

**Reviewer:**



Chris Bartlett  
Principal Planner

**Date:** 21 November 2017

**on behalf of the Head of Planning Services**