

10. FULL APPLICATION - REPLACE EXISTING CESS PITT WITH SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT. NEW TREATMENT PLANT TO BE WITHIN EXISITNG SITE BOUNDARY BUT AT A NEW POSITION. INSTALLATION OF NEW DRAINAGE PIPES AND INSPECTION CHAMBERS TO CONNECT SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT TO EXISTING FACILITIES AT ASHFORD DEPOT, THE DUKES DRIVE, ASHFORD IN THE WATER (NP/DDD/1119/1234, SC).

APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Summary

1. The application seeks permission to replace an existing cesspit with a new Sewage Treatment Plant to allow the essential and continued use of the site. It is considered, the key considerations are, the potential impact on the wider conservation area and the adjacent watercourse. In this case, the impact of the development is acceptable and the application is recommended to members for approval.

Site and Surroundings

2. Ashford Depot is located just outside of the village of Ashford in the Water and to the south of The Dukes Drive (A6), close to The Rookery Bridge. The Depot consists of three buildings within a yard area and is a base for the Peak District National Park Authority's Countryside, Maintenance, and Projects Team. Access to the site is directly off The Dukes Drive. The nearest residential dwelling is River Cottage, sited on the opposite side of the A6 around 35m from the development site. The River Wye runs by the east and southern boundaries of the site. The Depot is located within the boundary of the wider Conservation Area of the village.

Proposal

3. Full Planning permission is being sought to replace an existing cesspit with a new Sewage Treatment Plant within the existing yard area at Ashford Depot.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard 3 Year time limit
2. Submitted plans and details

Key Issues

4. The potential impact on the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area and the nearby River Wye.

History

5. None.

Consultations

6. Highway Authority - No objections
7. Parish Council - No response to date.

8. Environment Agency - No planning comments to make.
9. DCC Flood Risk Team - Due to the nature and scale of the proposal, have no comment.
10. PDNPA Archaeology - No objections.

Representations

11. None.

National Planning Policy Framework

12. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales: Which are; to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to; seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.
13. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised (2019). This replaces the previous document (2012) with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date.
14. In particular, paragraph 172 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. Whilst Paragraph 193 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
15. In the National Park, the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the new Development Management Policies (DMP), adopted May 2019. These Development Plan Policies provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. In this case, it is considered there are no significant conflicts between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and government guidance in the NPPF.

Main Development Plan Policies

Core Strategy

16. GSP1, GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.

17. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles*. Requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park.
18. DS1 - *Development Strategy*. Allows for development that secures effective conservation and enhancement.
19. L3 - *Cultural Heritage assets or archeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance*. Explains that development must conserve and where appropriately enhance or reveal the significance of historic assets and their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances, development will not be permitted where it is likely to cause harm to the significance of any cultural heritage asset or its setting.
20. CC1 - *Climate change mitigation and adaption*. Sets out, that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources and to achieve the highest possible standards of water efficiency.
21. CC5 - *Flood Risk and water conservation*. States amongst other things, that development will not be permitted unless wherever possible wider benefits for the natural environment can be secured.
22. E2 - *Business in the countryside*. States, that development in the countryside outside the Natural Zone and named settlements should be located in groups of buildings in sustainable locations.

Development Management Policies

23. DMC3 - *Siting, Design, layout and landscaping*. Reiterates, that where developments are acceptable in principle, Policy requires that design is to high standards and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape. The siting, mass, scale, height, design, building materials should all be appropriate to the context. Accessibility of the development should also be a key consideration.
24. DMC5 - *Assessing the impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting*. The policy provides detailed advice relating to proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, requiring new development to demonstrate how valued features will be conserved, as well as detailing the types and levels of information required to support such proposals.
25. DMC8 - *Conservation Areas*. States, that applications for development in a Conservation Area, or for development that affects it's setting or important views into or out of the area, across or through the area should assess and clearly demonstrate how the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be preserved and, where possible, enhanced.
26. DME8 - *Design, layout & neighbourliness of employment sites*. States, that where development for employment purposes is acceptable in principle, it will only be permitted where every practicable means is used to minimise any adverse effects on the valued characteristics and amenity of the surrounding area.

Assessment

Background

27. The planning application proposes the decommissioning of an existing cesspit, with the

installation of a new Sewage Treatment Plant at Ashford Depot. The upgrade would be considered essential to allow the continued use of the site. The current cesspit collects the sewage produced on site, and the cesspit has to be emptied several times a year by tanker and the sewage disposed of at a waste disposal site. This is not sustainable, hence the current application to require a more efficient and sustainable use of the land and to achieve a higher standard of water efficiency at the site.

Siting, Design and materials

28. The new treatment plant would be located towards the north eastern edge of the site, on a flat area of land between the river and adjacent to a high drystone boundary wall. Like all treatment plant systems such as the one proposed, all that would be visible above ground would be the access cover, with the installation of the required drainage pipes and inspection chamber being connected to existing facilities at the depot. Regarding this, the siting of the new Sewage Treatment Plant is considered to be located in the least obtrusive part of the site and well screened from the roadside and public view. Consequently, by virtue of its siting and design, the new Treatment Plant is considered acceptable, according with policies DMC3, DMC5 & DMC8 in these respects.

Amenity impact on neighbouring properties

29. Due to the well-screened location of the New Treatment Plant within the depot yard, it is considered the amenity of the nearest neighbouring dwelling (River Cottage) or any other residential properties in the locality would not be adversely affected by the proposal. Consequently, it is considered the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings would not be unduly compromised by the development; therefore, the proposal would accord with policies GSP3 & DMC3 in these respects.

Highway Impact

30. The Highway Authority have raised no objections to the proposal. In this case, the relocation and installation of the Sewage Treatment Plant would have no impact on existing access or parking arrangements at the site, therefore, considered acceptable in highway terms, in accord with policy DMT3 in this instance.

Other issues

Flood risk

31. The site lies within flood zone 3, therefore required a flood risk assessment. This has been carried out with the report concluding, that the proposed development could be constructed without being at an unacceptable risk of flooding and without increasing the risk to other sites in the vicinity. In this case, the Environment Agency and the Local Flood team were consulted and returned no objections to the scheme. Consequently, the development is considered to accord with policy CC5 in this regard.

Environmental management

32. According to the applicant, the new Sewage Treatment Plant would consume only a small amount of electricity to run and would generate approximately 300kg of CO2 per year, which is considerably less than the CO2 produced by the transport and processing of the waste collected from the existing cesspit. Regarding this, it is considered the development would meet the requirements of policy CC1 in achieving a more efficient and sustainable use of land and buildings and a higher standard of water efficiency for the site.

Conclusion

33. In conclusion, the screened siting and installation of the Sewage Treatment Plant is considered acceptable and would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area or affect the nearby watercourse. Consequently, the scheme is considered in accord with National Guidance, Development Plan Policies and adopted Design Guidance, therefore recommended to members for approval.

Human Rights

34. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.
35. List of Background Papers (not previously published)
36. Nil

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