

What you said and how we're responding



**Deephams
Sewage Works Upgrade**
Creating a cleaner, healthier River Lee



We asked for your feedback between 4 July and 24 October 2012 on our proposals to upgrade Deephams Sewage Works in Edmonton, north-east London. This leaflet provides a summary of what you said, how we will respond to your comments and the next steps for the project.

Key findings

- There is clear support for the need to upgrade Deephams Sewage Works
- Most people agreed that the upgrade should be built at our preferred site (the existing Deephams Sewage Works)
- A small number of local residents disagreed and suggested other sites, but after looking at each of these sites again, none of them were more suitable
- As the existing site remains the best option for building the upgrade, we can confirm it as our preferred site
- Reducing odour, noise, traffic and other disruption while we build the upgrade and operate the works are the most important issues for most respondents
- The second phase of consultation in 2013 should be advertised more widely and the information should be less technical, more visual and easier to understand

About the upgrade

- We need to upgrade Deephams Sewage Works to significantly improve the quality of the treated wastewater that flows into the Salmon's Brook, a tributary of the River Lee. The Environment Agency has set us a new quality standard for this treated wastewater, which is why we need to upgrade the works to provide an improved treatment process.
- The upgrade will also allow the sewage works to cope with population increase in the area already served by the works, improve treatment facilities that are becoming old and worn out, and cope with the heavier winter rainfall and warmer summer temperatures that are predicted due to climate change.
- To meet the new quality standards, we do not need to improve the areas where sewage arrives at the site, the storm tanks or the sludge treatment part of the works.
- It is likely to take up to seven years to complete and, subject to planning permission, the main construction work is expected to start in 2015.

What we asked

Our preferred option is to build the upgrade in phases at the existing Deephams Sewage Works site.

During our phase 1 public consultation, we asked for feedback on the need for the proposed upgrade, our preferred site and the other sites we have looked at, the range of sewage treatment options we are considering and initial ideas on how we would build the upgrade.

What we did

To make sure that everyone had a chance to have their say on our proposals, we tried to make the consultation as accessible as possible. We:

- Sent letters, leaflets and postcards to over 19,000 properties within 1km of Deephams Sewage Works and 250m from the other four short-listed sites
- Advertised the consultation and exhibitions in local newspapers
- Set up a dedicated website (www.deephamsconsultation.co.uk) to provide information on our proposals with an online feedback form



- Provided a dedicated phone number for you to ring to find out more about our proposals, ask questions and request paper feedback forms and leaflets
- Held a total of 11 exhibitions and drop-ins in July and September to hand out leaflets, answer questions and help people fill in paper feedback forms
- Produced a wide range of leaflets and more detailed consultation reports, which were available on our website and at exhibitions, local libraries and council offices
- Made all the consultation information available in large print, Braille, or in an audio format, on request. We also offered a telephone translation service and produced translated versions of the key leaflets in Bengali, French, Polish, Somali and Turkish
- Allowed participants to tell us what they think by completing paper and online feedback forms, or by sending us emails and letters
- Attended community group meetings to provide an overview of our proposals and answer questions, including Edmonton Partnership and Edmonton Neighbourhood Panel meetings

Who took part and how?

Submitted written responses

Local residents, customers and members of the public	23
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Stakeholder organisations*	11
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How they took part

Online feedback form	17
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Paper feedback form	7
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Email	4
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Letter	8
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*Stakeholder organisations included: Environment Agency, Enterprise Enfield, Greater London Authority, Institution of Civil Engineers, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, London Borough of Enfield, London Borough of Haringey (3 responses), London Borough of Waltham Forest, Natural England, North London Waste Authority and Thames 21.

What you said

The need for the upgrade

Nearly all of the respondents agreed with the need for the upgrade. They supported our plans to improve the quality of river water in the Salmon's Brook and River Lee, as well as making sure Deephams Sewage Works has enough capacity to meet future needs.

Our preferred site

The majority of respondents agreed that upgrading the sewage works on the existing site is the best option, with over two-thirds of the comments received supporting our choice of preferred site.

The existing Deephams Sewage Works site was seen by most respondents as the best site to build the upgrade. They thought this option would cause the least disruption, make good use of the existing space and would be more cost effective than other options.

Comments included:

"...it is already an established use"

"Other options would be more expensive"

"...keeps things all in one place rather than disrupting other areas"

"...good use of existing space"

A small number of local residents thought the upgrade should be built at a different site, and some felt the sewage works should be moved altogether.

Comments included:

"A green field site should be used instead"

"Using redundant industrial land would be a better option"

"Consider going to another part of London further along the River Lee"

"It needs to be moved out of London so no one has to live within a 1 mile radius"



We have looked very carefully at 22 possible sites for the upgrade. Many of these local sites are either areas of open space or Green Belt. This means these areas are protected from developments, such as sewage works, by strict planning policies. It's also important to note that the area of the works where sewage arrives at the site, the storm tanks and the sludge treatment facilities would remain on the existing site even if our preferred site was one of the other sites we considered.

We assessed all potential sites on a range of environmental, planning, engineering, property and legal factors and none were more suitable for the upgrade than the existing sewage works site.

We believe that the majority of the feedback received during the consultation, and the detailed work we have done so far, shows that the existing sewage works site remains the best option and so we are confirming it as our preferred site to build the upgrade.

This means that we will submit our planning application to the London Borough of Enfield and not the Planning Inspectorate.

Sewage treatment options

There were mixed views on this issue, as respondents preferred different treatment options. Most agreed that the key issue is using a technology that reduces the odour produced by the sewage works to a minimum.

Comments included:

“Support use of a biological, aerated system”

“...a combination of Conventional Activated Sludge and Integrated Fixed Film Activated Sludge as it increases the site's capacity”

“Best treatment option is the one producing the cleanest end product with the least odour”

We haven't yet selected our preferred treatment options at this stage. We are using this feedback, and our ongoing design development work, to help us decide which treatment technologies are best for the upgrade.

Odour

Reducing odour was the most important issue for the vast majority of respondents and is one of our top priorities for the upgrade.

Comments included:

“Reduce odour as much as possible, even if this means confining it to the interior of a building”

“Odour is a major concern. Local residents describe Edmonton as a no-go area...”

“The odour can be very strong at times and prevents people from moving to the area”

We realise there are a large number of people who live or work close to Deephams Sewage Works, or visit the leisure facilities in the area, who at times may be affected by smells from our works and other waste and industrial sites in the area.

We have recently completed a construction project to improve the screening stage of the treatment process, where the sewage arrives at the site. This will reduce the levels of odour produced by that part of the sewage works and the proposed upgrade is the next stage of improvements.

We will design the upgrade to significantly reduce the current odour levels. This is likely to include controlling odour at the smelliest parts of the works – the primary treatment and sludge treatment stages of the sewage treatment process. This may involve covering the large settlement tanks used at the primary stage, or putting this part of the process inside a large building and treating the gases produced, before releasing them higher above the sewage works. We may also cover part of the sludge treatment stage of the process. However, we also need to make sure that our proposals provide the best value for money for all our customers who are paying for the upgrade.



We will develop our proposals to reduce odour in more detail as the design of the upgrade progresses, and we will consult on these detailed proposals as part of our second phase of public consultation in 2013. The funding for these proposals will need to be approved by Ofwat (The Water Services Regulation Authority), our economic regulator.

Designing and building the upgrade

Most people thought reducing odour and disruption during construction, such as noise, dust and traffic, were the most important matters we should consider when designing and building the upgrade.

Comments included:

“Eliminating odour”

“Being a good neighbour, noise, etc”

“Noise, dust and heavy traffic”

“Dealing with traffic congestion whilst the works are taking place”

“Minimising the effect on local residents”

“Keep costs down and keep disruption to a minimum”

We realise that the possibility of noise, dust and traffic during construction will be of concern to the large number of people who live or work close to the sewage works. We are committed to working closely with residents, local authorities and other organisations as we design and develop the upgrade. We are confident we can design, build and run the upgraded works in a way that reduces the impact on our neighbours and the community.

To help us identify and manage the positive and negative effects of the proposed upgrade, we will carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment. This assessment will help us to understand the environment around the sewage works and how the upgrade may affect things like air quality, transport, ecology, noise and odour. This will allow us to change the design of the upgrade, wherever possible, and work out where and when we need to do things differently.

Depending on the outcomes of our Environmental Impact Assessment, we will look at ways of reducing noise and disruption, such as putting up specially designed hoardings and using noise suppressing equipment wherever possible. We will limit dust by using water to dampen the site during demolition work and by keeping roads and vehicles clean. We will also direct construction traffic to use routes to and from the site that avoid any sensitive areas, such as schools and housing, wherever possible.

We will develop our proposals in more detail as we design the upgrade and consult on these during our phase 2 consultation, before we submit our planning application for the upgrade.

Other comments

There were a number of other comments made by respondents that covered a wide range of issues:

“Need to reduce amount of rainwater going into the sewage system through investment in natural drainage systems”

“There should be less return to shareholders as it is their asset that is currently not up to standard”

“Would like Thames Water to consider the options for constructing a biogas refuelling station as part of the upgrade”

“Good luck - a massive project”

Sustainable drainage systems and other natural drainage systems on their own would not be enough to meet the need for the upgrade. Using sustainable drainage systems may reduce the flow of rainwater to the works during storms, but it would not reduce the amount of sewage that needs to be treated from an increasing population or improve the sewage treatment processes to meet the new quality standards.

However, working with the Environment Agency and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, we have selected 10 schools within the Pymmes Brook area to design and build sustainable drainage systems in their school grounds. More information is available at www.wwt.org.uk/what-we-do/suds-for-schools.

Customer bills and how much they change each year are set by our economic regulator, Ofwat. In 2009, Ofwat allowed us enough funding for the preparation and early construction work for the upgrade. After we have submitted a planning application, we will ask for the rest of the funding to complete the upgrade. If Ofwat allow us the funding, our customers will begin paying for the upgrade in 2015.

The costs will be spread across many years to make sure any price rises are kept low.

We are also looking at options for a biogas refuelling station that could serve as a potential fuel source for the vehicles of local businesses. However, at the moment, all of the biogas we create from sludge treatment is used to create heat and renewable energy for use on the site. If we need to upgrade the existing sludge treatment process at some stage in the future, we will include the idea of a biogas refuelling station when we review the potential options.

Consultation

A small number of respondents made comments about how we carried out the consultation, including feedback on the leaflets and other information provided and the exhibitions and drop-ins we held in the local area.

Comments included:

“Didn't hear about the exhibitions”

“Publicity about the upgrade needs to be increased and communicated to all likely to be affected”

“Should advertise the event in the local paper”

“Enough leaflets but not enough focus and solutions to the main problems of odour and pollution”

“Need to be more accessible, some of the language is too technical”

“...impressed with the quality of information shared and the effort being made to consult with the public”

We advertised the first round of exhibitions in July 2012 by delivering over 19,000 leaflets to properties within the surrounding area. We also sent an additional postcard to advertise the September exhibitions/roadshows. The exhibitions were also advertised in the Enfield Independent, Haringey Independent and Waltham Forest Guardian.

We tried to make the consultation materials as clear and accessible as possible and benefited from the advice of local authorities and other stakeholders as we prepared for the consultation.

We will use the comments made about how we carried out this consultation to improve our second phase of consultation in 2013. We will also look to advertise the phase 2 exhibitions using a variety of methods, to increase awareness among local residents. We will provide much more detailed information on how we expect the site to look and on how we will deal with problems such as odour.

We will also aim to present the more detailed information in a format that is easier for customers to understand.

What happens next?

We will take all of the consultation feedback into account while we work on our more detailed proposals for the upgrade, which will include the choosing a preferred treatment technology, deciding on the design and layout of the site and the best ways of dealing with issues such as odour.

Before we submit a planning application for the upgrade to the London Borough of Enfield, we want to understand the views of the community and technical consultees on our detailed plans. We plan to hold a second phase of consultation on our more detailed proposals in 2013 and aim to submit a planning application later in 2013 or in 2014, and start construction from 2015 onwards.



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