

Public exhibition by STW/Fisher-German re proposed sewage plant - Manafon

Council meeting was preceded by a presentation/ public exhibition by STW and Fisher German vis a vis the proposed construction of a new sewage treatment plant. This was followed by a general discussion between STW/Fisher German and all councillors. Separate notes taken during exhibition attached as an appendix (1) to minutes. A number of local residents visited the exhibition.

Notes made by Clerk Lorraine Stanton, 24th June 1700 hours to 1900 hours.

Some of the information displayed by STW is as follows:-

Rationale for building the plant is that it is a clear necessity according to STW:-

- Asset life has expired
- Restricted/limited access to site to maintain
- Refurbishment in 2002 can no longer sustain system
- Current system overloaded, built for a pop. of 74 in 1987, currently serves a pop. of 186, growth estimates in pop. to 2026 have been calculated to be 224.
- Totally inadequate for current population not withstanding any increase in future numbers

Benefits

- Enhanced river quality as a result of improved sewage treatment
- Assets will meet the catchment area needs
- Reduction in health and safety risk to present site operators / technicians
- Improved / revised access to operational site
- Improved flood alleviation scheme, flood resistant no potential for pollution/contamination

Current status/progress

- Land purchase still in process of being negotiated for site and access changes.
- Natural Resource Wales are heavily involved in consultations.
- Investment will be in region of £750,000 by STW already approved within STW.
- All still subject to final planning permission and land purchases.
- Planning permission can be applied for even without land being negotiated. A pre-application discussion has already taken place and planning permission may go in in about 2 weeks. STW can serve notice on land owners and a last resort would be compulsory purchase.

General information / comments from residents, General information / comments from STW

Some residents were concerned about the maintenance of the access road once the site was completed; whose responsibility would it be to maintain it. STW have been asked this question, awaiting a response. They did state at the time that the right of access and road condition still need to be negotiated

Odour – potentially a major issue with residents, according to STW air quality is not generally compromised, maybe some effluent smell 3 or 4 times a year when 1 or 2 tankers come to remove slurry.

Remaining land not purchased/leased by STW will remain with the Church; an area will be leased for STW to use for contractors needs for approx... 8 months during the build process. A major concern was the maintenance after the building was completed and construction area closed off...

Maintenance of the flood plain after completion was a real concern as it is known from other sites locally that tree growth and rubbish can accumulate and affect functionality of the flood plain.

Access by STW after completion of the site will be limited, a STW technician once a week on average to check out site smell 3 or 4 times a year when 1 or 2 tankers come to remove slurry.

Local residents stated their annoyance/concerns as to the proposed location of the site to STW/Fisher-German and a number of them felt STW had “gone for the cheapest option” and not taken the local views into enough consideration. Question was asked as to why change from original site (Ffynant field) to the proposed location. According to representatives it is because of geological / hydraulic reasons.

All registered concerns over views of the site from residencies and that their current outlook aspect was being severely compromised; concerns over odours; environmental concerns, concerns about damage to some special trees (redwoods) on adjacent properties, concerns over the risk of nearby buildings being flooded during excavation works. STW said all measures necessary would be taken to address these concerns, adequate landscaping, full environmental studies etc. and number of specialists would be drafted in to protect property and the environment.

Some residents feel that they are going to suffer financial hardship as a result of this project, for example, will their insurance costs for homes increase? Quite possibly with extra activity on the access road; Will the value of properties diminish? Representatives suggested that residents should maybe get properties valued now and again in about 12 months when project was completed.

Signage – there were strong feelings that no signage stating “Sewage Plant” were erected. It was also felt that the 30MPH sign needed to be drawn back to ensure access wasn’t compromised by speeding vehicles.

With regard to which properties would be connected to new system, it would not include New Mills or The Green. According to representative, first time sewerage for villages comes under section 101A of the Water Act; if there are issues with sewage/pollution etc. an application can be made by a group of residents to the Environment Agency who will involve relevant weatherboard with regard to implementation. New Mills lacks the potential for residential development due to issues with sewerage.

3rd July 2015