

Construction impacts (Short Term)

Construction impacts may potentially arise from the short term presence of contractor's compounds, construction activities and the working areas. Features is likely to include plant activity, parking of contractors vehicles, storage of materials and fuel, movement of excavated materials, delivery of materials and plant.

Operational Impacts (Long Term)

Operational impacts may potentially arise from the presence of new structures in the landscape. These elements will comprise the Waste Water Treatment Plant and Pumping Stations and/or control kiosks, these being the only above-ground features of the development. The WWTP is the most significant of these and, given the height and location of some of the structures (up to 6.5 metres high), these is the potential impact for these to be dominant features of the local landscape. There is also the potential for lighting of the WWTP to feature in the nocturnal landscape, although this is likely to be used mainly during maintenance works and directed to avoid unnecessary light spillage.

6. Proposed Mitigation Measures

Waste Water Treatment Plant

The principal consideration in mitigating potential landscape and visual impacts by the WWTP has been site selection. As described above, the location of the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) occupies a position that has a minimal visual envelope, ensuring that where views do occur, this is likely to impact on as few people as possible. This is the largest above-ground element of the proposed development and comprises a number of individual components. Within the site, endeavours shall be made where possible to locate taller structures or buildings on lower parts of the site, in order to minimise their elevation and avoid intruding on the skyline or shoreline. It may be appropriate and necessary to reduce ground levels at the southern (higher) side of the site in order to keep buildings and structures below the level of the promontory's ridgeline and the vegetation located there. The objective here is to utilise the absorption capacity of the landscape, as identified in the County Development Plan's account of "Landscape Character Area J: Clew Bay Drumlins" and to minimise or avoid intruding on any primary ridgeines (e.g. the Nephin Beg Range) and/or secondary ridgelines (local ridgelines). The objective is also to avoid undue intrusion in a landscape identified as a Vulnerable Area. This approach also accords with Principal Landscape Policies 3, 4, 5, 7 and 10 (refer to Planning Context Section).

Existing vegetation surrounding the site will be retained as far as practical, in particular along the southern boundary where the hedgerow features at the horizon of this secondary ridgeline. Some of the scrub vegetation along the eastern and northern perimeter will be removed to accommodate access to the site and its internal layout. Supplementary planting of a similar nature is likely to be provided at the site's perimeter to reinforce the existing landscape

structure and character and provide additional screening in the medium and long term.

The finishes for the WWTP will also be considered carefully. From the surrounding landscape the site is mostly seen against a backdrop of existing vegetation on account of either elevated viewpoints and/or higher ground beyond the site. For this reason, an appropriate selection of materials and colours is likely to be applied to the buildings and structures within the site so as so assimilate them into the surrounding landscape. Stone and render finishes will be appropriate to the buildings and muted olive green and brown paint finishes to treatment tanks and other structures; perimeter fencing will also be finished in similar colours that will recede into the background. In carrying out these measures, the potential for the WWTP to dominate the local landscape will be minimised in accordance with Principal Landscape Policy 10.

Marine Outfall Pipeline

Careful location of the marine outfall pipeline will be critical, not that it will have a presence in the finished scheme, but on account of potential construction impacts arising from the removal of landscape features. The indicative route mostly follows the centre of the Rosmore road; however, the nature of this road is that it is narrow and accommodates the width of only one vehicle. In practical terms, this means that the working width for installing the marine outfall pipeline would be approximately 3.0 metres. In the event that this is not practical, then consideration will be given to an alternative pipeline route, perhaps parallel to, and uphill of, the road. This would enable the existing banks, walls and vegetation to be retained and minimise the likely impacts on the landscape. This solution would be preferable to removing and reinstating these features. The least favoured option would be the removal of banks and vegetation on one side of the road to facilitate the required working area, on account of the significant impact this would have on the local landscape in the short and medium term.

Waste Water Collection System

Existing vegetation is a dominant feature of Quay Road at its western end in particular. The site selected for one of the Pumping Stations lies within these trees at the western end of Quay Road, where the vegetation comprises relatively scrubby trees. In order to avoid removing significant numbers of trees, the Pumping Station is likely to be located adjacent to the road in a position where it does not feature in views along the road and out to the Newport Channel. This location is likely to also minimise the potential impact on the trees of the waste water collection system that the Pumping Stations will serve. To this end, the pipelines are likely to be located on the opposite side of Quay Road to the trees and Pumping Station, as far as is practical, to avoid or minimise potential damage to tree roots through excavation of the pipeline route. Similar consideration will be required along the road to Milcum House and beyond.

Material finishes to the Pumping Stations will be critical to their assimilation into the landscape. Observation of other structures within the vicinity of the

site reveals that many are constructed in a style sympathetic to the surroundings and finished in local stone. It would be appropriate for relatively small structures such as the Pumping Stations to be treated with similar finishes to avoid drawing attention to their 'industrial' purpose and reinforce local landscape character.

Reinstatement works

Finally, careful reinstatement of the landscape following construction works will be undertaken. This is likely to include replacing excavated roads/pavements, walls, banks, hedgerows and trees and will be most applicable to the marine outfall pipeline route. The road that this follows is a good quality farm road, finished with a stone surface – it would be most appropriate to retain this type of finish rather than construct a tar macadam road. A similar finish would be appropriate to the road accessing the WWTP. High quality road finishes will also be important in retaining the integrity of Newport's road network where the new waste water collection system is to be installed.

All of the above measures seek to ensure that the development takes place in accordance with the Policies of Landscape Policy Area 2: Lowland Coastal Zone, as described in the planning context section above.

7. Likely Landscape and Visual Impacts

At this stage, we have considered the scope of the proposed development, the relevant planning context and landscape policies for the area, the potential landscape and visual impacts that might arise from the proposed development and the range of mitigation measures that are likely to be employed in implementing this project. This section of the landscape and visual assessment will describe in detail the anticipated likely impacts upon the landscape and visual amenity of the area arising from the proposed development.

Likely impacts during construction

Construction impacts are likely to be the most significant impacts arising from this proposed development, but by their nature will be short-lived. The most significant are likely to be the installation of the new Waste Water Collection System (WWCS), which will have a short term moderately negative impact on the streetscapes of Newport, arising from the presence and operation of plant machinery, the excavation, stockpiling and replacement of fill material, and from the storage and installation of the new pipes. However, once complete, the roads and pavements will be fully reinstated and there will be no ongoing landscape or visual impacts.

Construction of the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is likely to have the most significant impact arising from the construction and use of the Access Road, along the line of the existing track (refer to Photographs 3 and 4). A slightly to moderately negative impact is likely to arise in the short term from the removal of existing walls and hedgerows and the presence of a

temporary construction road, although new walls and/or hedgerows will be reinstated once construction works are complete.

Construction activities on the WWTP are likely to be largely screened from Newport but more significant in views from the minor road and properties at Lisduff where there are more open views of the site (refer to Photographs 11 and 12). From here there is likely to be slightly or moderately negative landscape and visual impacts arising from construction activities at the WWTP site. Such activities will include operation of plant machinery, earthworks, delivery and installation of materials and equipment, partially completed structures and buildings, contractors compound and storage areas.

Construction of the Pumping Stations are likely to have only localised landscape and visual impacts. There is likely to be a slightly negative landscape impact arising from the removal of vegetation at the western end of Quay Road for one of the Pumping Stations (refer to Photograph 5). There is likely to be short term slightly negative impacts arising from the construction of both Pumping Stations, most particularly at the western end of Quay Road, where construction activities are likely to result in a temporary loss of public amenity. However, following completion and reinstatement, construction impacts will cease.

Construction of the marine outfall pipeline to the west of Newport town is likely to have a slightly negative landscape and visual impact, resulting from the presence and activities of plant machinery, excavation of soil and overburden, and temporary storage of pipe units prior to installation. The route of the marine outfall pipeline is only overlooked to any significant degree at its eastern end from Lisduff. Construction will be completed with the reinstatement of the route and there is likely to be no ongoing impacts arising. Construction activities along the Rosmore peninsula will be evident only in distant views from Quay Road and the western fringes of Newport, and shall have only a slightly or imperceptibly negative impact on the landscape.

Likely impacts on the landscape

The proposed development is likely to have only a very slight and neutral impact on the landscape. The location of each element of the development proposal is well contained by topography and vegetation, and considered layout and appropriate finishes to the buildings and structures will ensure that this development sits well in the landscape. The development will not impact significantly on the secondary ridgeline formed by the promontory on which the Waste Water Treatment Plant will be located; the development will not impact significantly on coastal views or views of the surrounding landscape from the public realm; it will retain the relatively undisturbed nature of this section of coastline as it approaches the fringes of Newport town; and the development will be accommodated comfortably within the landscape without undue or disproportionate impact upon it's character.

Likely impacts on public open space

Areas of public open space occur infrequently in the vicinity of the proposed development. In essence these are the incidental spaces that comprise the waterfront area along Newport Harbour, including both north and south quays and Quay Road, which are regularly used as a walking route and offer fine views of the harbour (refer to Photograph 1). The Waste Water Treatment Plant is likely to be substantially or completely screened from view by intervening topography and vegetation and will therefore have no visual impact upon these locations. The proposed Access Road to the WWTP will be visible from the northern side of Quay Road, and is likely to appear as a new minor road in the local landscape, accompanied by a likely permanent loss of some of the existing vegetation; the impact of this on the local landscape and visual amenity is likely to be slightly negative.

The two Pumping Stations are likely to have a slight but neutral impact on visual amenity, by virtue of their presence as new structures in the landscape. With appropriate siting, use of construction materials and style, these will be assimilated into the local landscape and are likely to have no detrimental impact on visual amenity. The Pumping Station located near the new apartments at Teevmore will be underground and only the control kiosk will feature, with no significant visual impact; the Pumping Station at Quay Road will appear as a new building in the landscape and, with appropriate design and finishing, will be consistent with other buildings in the vicinity and therefore blend with the landscape with no detrimental impact on landscape or visual amenity.

There are likely to be no impacts upon these areas arising from the waste water collection system or marine outfall pipelines after their completion, as these will be completely underground (or underwater) and fully reinstated.

Likely impacts on roads

Views of the proposed development from the local road network will be very limited. There are no views of the site in general from the N59, although construction works for the waste water collection system are likely to have a short term direct impact on the road during the installation of the works.

Quay Road on the western side of Newport town will have limited views of the nearest Pumping Station and the Access Road to the Waste Water Treatment Plant (refer to Photographs 5 and 6). The Pumping Station will be constructed and finished in a manner that renders it inconspicuous features in the landscape, located so that it does not interfere with views across Newport Harbour/Channel and beyond thereby having a slight and neutral impact on landscape and visual amenity. The new Access Road, by virtue of the loss of vegetation and presence of a wider road is likely to have a slightly negative impact.

The remaining views from roads occur to the northwest of Newport along the road at Lisduff, where views are orientated towards Newport town and the Waste Water Treatment Plant (refer to Photographs 11 and 12). A short section of road affords views across the Newport channel to the site of the

Waste Water Treatment Plant and the Pumping Stations. The latter will not feature significantly in these views on account of their small size, discreet location and distance from the vantage point. The WWTP will lie significantly closer to the vantage point and will occupy a significant part of the hillside.

Views from the road at Lisduff are mostly orientated southwards towards the Newport Channel rather than southeast to the Caulicaun peninsula, the principal exception being from the small bridge that crosses the narrow channel separating the 'island' of Rosmore from the mainland, where the view is directed towards the Caulicaun peninsula. Where visible, the WWTP site lies amongst substantial scrubby woodland vegetation, most of which will be retained for screening purposes. The proposed plant is likely to be partially visible above the existing vegetation, with further screening afforded by additional planting and/or earthworks. At the same time, the colour and material finishes to visible structures are likely to complement the surroundings in order for them to blend into the landscape rather than feature in it. Therefore it is likely that there will be only a slightly negative visual impact upon these vantage points.

Likely impacts on residential areas

There are very few residential areas that overlook the proposed development site. Short term impacts will occur upon residential properties throughout the town while the waste water collection system is being installed; upon completion there will be no residual landscape or visual impacts.

Residential areas with ongoing views of the permanent above-ground installations will be confined to the new apartments on Newport's south quay (refer to Photograph 7), a small number of residential properties on the north side of Quay Road, and a small number of houses at Lisduff (refer to Photographs 1 and 11).

The apartments on the south quay are located adjacent to the proposed site of one of the Pumping Stations. As such, these apartments may have direct or indirect views of the control kiosk new Pumping Station, but with appropriate location, design and finishing it can be absorbed successfully into its surroundings as part of the quayside furniture. Therefore it is likely that the proposed Pumping Station will have a neutral impact on visual amenity.

Properties to the north side of Quay Road will have views onto the proposed Access Road to the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The more significant impacts are likely to occur during construction as described above; following completion, the road will be reinstated to an appropriate finish and the walls, fences and hedgerows removed at the start of the construction phase will be replaced. The ongoing impact of the new road is likely to be slightly negative on account of the loss of more substantial vegetation and the presence of traffic movements where previously there were none. There is likely to be no significant view of the proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant itself.

Properties at Lisduff share similar views towards the Waste Water Treatment Plant as those from the road here. Views of the WWTP site will be oblique to the orientation of the houses, but the proposed WWTP is likely to be partly

visible. Screening afforded by existing/new vegetation, earthworks and the considered use of colour and material finishes will all serve to integrate the development into the landscape. Also, the context for these views is the western fringe of Newport town. As a result there is likely to be only a slightly negative impact upon visual amenity.

Likely impacts on sites of archaeological and/or historical importance

The County Development Plan 2003-2009 outlines the location and nature of such sites within the area. A number of protected structures occur within the town of Newport itself, including St. Patrick's Church, rail/road bridges and station. A number of houses occur nearby including Newport House, Carrowbaun House and Milcum House. The views from each of these locations have been carefully reviewed during the site visit carried out at the beginning of this study, concluding that there is likely to be no significant views of the completed development from any of these locations. Therefore the landscape setting of these protected structures will not be affected in any way.

With regard to archaeological features, the most prominent of these is the remains of a ring fort at Lisduff, located at the tip of the headland facing towards the Caulicaun promontory (refer to Photograph 1, left hand side). It is clearly evident on account of the characteristic earthworks and mature vegetation that define its outline. The route of the proposed marine outfall pipeline passes immediately north of the fort - it is proposed that the pipeline is routed away from the ring fort in order to preserve it. From the fort itself, there is unlikely to be any significant view of any part of the proposed development, the only exception being a short section of exposed pipeline at low tide.

A full account of the areas archaeological heritage within the vicinity of the proposed development is included in the Cultural Heritage section of this EIS.

8. The 'do nothing' scenario

In the event that the proposed development does not proceed, the landscape is likely to remain much as it is at present. The site of the Waste Water Treatment Plant will remain as unimproved pasture characterised by encroaching scrub vegetation. The sites for the Pumping Stations will not change, being maintained in their present state. As a result there is likely to be no significant gain or detrimental effect arising.

9. Conclusion

Having considered the planning context and carried out a field assessment of the proposed development sites, it can only be concluded that the proposed development is likely to have slightly or moderately negative impacts on visual amenity in the short term during the construction phase, but no significant medium or long term impacts on the landscape or visual amenity of the area.

The majority of the works will be contained underground. The remaining elements, comprising buildings, structures, Pumping Stations and Access Road have all been located where they are likely to have the least significant impact on the landscape and visual amenity of the areas. Furthermore their design and detailing is likely to be complementary to the local vernacular style in so far as is possible and will utilise forms, materials and colours that are easily assimilated into the landscape.

The proposed development, and particularly the Waste Water Treatment Plant, has been developed with reference to the Policies applying to "Landscape Policy Area 2: Lowland coastal Zone", as outlined in the Planning Context section above, as follows:

Policy 3: The proposed development is unlikely to have a disproportionate effect on the coastal environment. Its location, particularly that of the Waste Water Treatment Plant, has been chosen to minimise its visual envelope and its prominence in views from the public realm, and the design considered with a view to minimising the number and extent of new features in the landscape.

Policy 4: As with Policy 3, the proposed development is unlikely to significantly interfere with scenic coastal vistas when viewed from the public realm, most particularly when viewed from the Harbour and Quay Road areas of Newport or from the few vantage points within the town. The proposed development will not impact in any way on Scenic Routes along the N59.

Policy 5: The proposed development is unlikely to interrupt or penetrate distinct linear ridgelines and coastlines when viewed from the public realm, particularly views towards the WWTP from the Harbour and Quay Road areas.

Policy 6: The confined scope of the visual envelope and careful design and finish of new structures in the landscape is likely to ensure that the proposed development will not compromise the undisturbed coastal character of parts of this area. Notwithstanding this, the development will take place within and at the fringes of Newport town, a location which is has undergone, and continues to undergo, extensive development.

Policy 7: The proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant will take place on modest slopes but set within a mature landscape and avoiding a skyline position. The layout and choice of materials and finishes is likely to minimise and avoid prominence in the landscape.

Policy 8: The proposed development will be located within and at the fringes of Newport town and is required to meet the needs of a growing population.

Policy 9: The proposed development is appropriate in that it meets a specific need and occupies an appropriate location in close proximity to the town it serves. The scale and presentation of the proposed

development is intended to sit comfortably and discreetly in its landscape setting.

Policy 10: The design and layout of the proposed development seeks to minimise the potential impact of tall structures in a low lying landscape, through considered layout and design, and is unlikely to have any significant adverse effect on the landscape and visual amenity of the area.

The setting for Newport town is a very attractive coastal landscape, a fact that has been instrumental in the evolution of the proposed development, and there is likely to be no compromise of landscape character or visual amenity arising from the proposed development.

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