

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Regulatory Committee

**Date of Committee** 12th June 2007

**Report Title** **Finham Sewage Treatment Works -  
Erection of a Bat Roost Building on Land at  
Finham Sewage Treatment Works,  
Coventry**

**Summary** This application is for the erection of a bat roost building on land at Finham Sewage Treatment Works, St Martins Road, Finham, Coventry.

**For further information please contact** Ruth Bradford  
Student Planner  
Tel. 01926 412391  
ruthbradford@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** Yes/No

**Background Papers** Planning Application registered on 20/4/2007.  
Letter from the Environment Agency dated 30/4/07.  
Email from the Highway Control dated 2/5/07.  
Letter from Warwick District Council dated 11/5/07.  
Email from Libraries, Adult Learning and Culture dated 18/5/07.

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

Other Committees  .....

Local Member(s)  .....  
(With brief comments, if appropriate)

Other Elected Members  Councillor M Doody – No comments received as at 29/5/07.

Cabinet Member  .....  
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

Chief Executive  .....

- Legal  I Marriott – Comments incorporated.
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  Warwick District Council – No objection – see paragraph 2.1.
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  Stoneleigh Parish Council – No comments received.  
Libraries, Adult Learning and Culture – No objection subject to conditions – see paragraph 2.4.  
Environment Agency – No objection – see paragraph 2.5.

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Regulatory Committee - 12th June 2007**

**Finham Sewage Treatment Works - Erection of a Bat Roost Building on Land at Finham Sewage Treatment Works, Coventry**

**Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy**

**Recommendation**

That the Regulatory Committee authorises the grant of planning permission for the erection of a bat roost building on land at Finham Sewage Treatment Works, St Martins Road, Finham, Coventry subject to the conditions and for the reasons contained in **Appendix B** of the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

Application Number: W274/07CM014

Received by County: 18th April 2007.

Advertised Date: 30th April 2007.

Applicant: Severn Trent Water Limited, 2297 Coventry Road, Birmingham, B26 3PU.

Agent: Entec UK Limited, Canon Court, Abbey Lawn, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 5DE.

The Proposal: The erection of a bat roost building.

Site and Location: Finham Sewage Treatment Works covers approximately 44 ha of land approximately 1km south of Coventry and 3km northeast of Kenilworth. The site is located within the Green Belt and screened from surrounding area by extensive vegetation around the perimeter. [grid reference: SP.332739]

See plan in **Appendix A**.

## **1. Application Details**

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a brick built 4.25 metres high bat roost building covering 20 square metres (4 metres x 5 metres) within Finham Sewage Treatment Works (STW).
- 1.2 The proposed bat roost building will replace two existing single storey, derelict buildings which have signs of bat activity. One building is brick and the other is made from wood. Once the bat roost is established the existing buildings will be demolished to improve internal access within Finham Sewage Treatment Works.
- 1.3 The facing brickwork and roof tiles of the new development will match the brick derelict dwelling in colour and texture. The existing building is built in brick and render under a plain tile roof.

## **2. Consultations**

- 2.1 **Warwick District Council** – No objection.
- 2.2 **Stoneleigh Parish Council** – No comments received.
- 2.3 **Councillor M Doody** – No comments received as at 29/5/07.
- 2.4 **Libraries, Adult Learning and Culture** – No objection provided a condition is imposed to protect newts.
- 2.5 **Environment Agency** – Assessed the application as having a low environmental risk.

## **3. Representations**

- 3.1 None.

## **4. Observations**

### **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1 Finham Sewage Treatment Works covers an area of 44 hectares approximately 1 kilometre south of Coventry and 3 kilometres northeast of Kenilworth. The River Sowe runs along the southeast border of the site and Finham brook dissects the site, running easterly in to the River Sowe.
- 4.2 The proposed development site is currently an undeveloped grass lawn on the southern boundary of the Finham Sewage Treatment Works, adjacent to the River Sowe and a public footpath. The site is isolated from residential and other sensitive properties and is bounded by a wire mesh fence, approximately 2.4 metres high, and screened from the public footpath by dense, mature vegetation.
- 4.3 The adjacent land is used for agriculture.

## **Planning Policy**

- 4.4 The proposed development is located within the West Midland Green Belt. Such development within the Green Belt is considered by Planning Policy Guidance Note No2 “Green Belts” to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt (as defined by paragraph 3.4 of PPG 2) and may only be permitted when justified by the existence of very special circumstances.
- 4.5 Severn Trent believe the development is appropriate development and accords with category ‘h’ in the Warwick District Local Plan policy DAP1 (protecting the Green Belt) as it is within a large operational site benefiting from extensive boundary planting and situated amongst existing infrastructure. However paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 defines this proposal as inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.6 The development does not preserve the openness of the Green Belt as a new building is being constructed at the edge of the site, as such it is inappropriate development on Green Belt land. However the applicant has demonstrated a need for development and demonstrated very special circumstances.
- 4.7 Bat activity has been recorded in two single storey buildings on the site that Severn Trent plan to demolish in order to improve access on the site. The Bats are protected by European and national regulations. In order to comply with these regulations it has been agreed with Natural England that a new building will be provided to compensate for the loss of the existing habitat.
- 4.8 The buildings being demolished have a larger combined footprint and are taller than the proposed structure therefore the openness of the Green Belt is being enhanced by this development.

## **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 4.9 The development is situated to the rear of the site, away from residential properties. It would only be visible from the public footpath which follows the River Sowe to the southeast of the site. However, the dense vegetation along the border of the site screens it from view. There would be very little visual impact on the local environment from the proposed development.

## **Flood Impact**

- 4.10 The site is shown on the Environment Agency’s indicative floodplain map as being within the flood plain. However the development accords with the Environment Agency requirements that the building will be a minimum of 7 metres from the top of the bank of the Finham brook. The smaller footprint of the development means there would be a low flood impact resulting from the development.

## **Access and Traffic**

- 4.11 The small scale of the development means there would be a very limited impact on traffic in areas surrounding the site during the development period of approximately three weeks. There would be no effect on traffic once construction is completed. The access to the site will be via existing routes.

## **Ecological Impact**

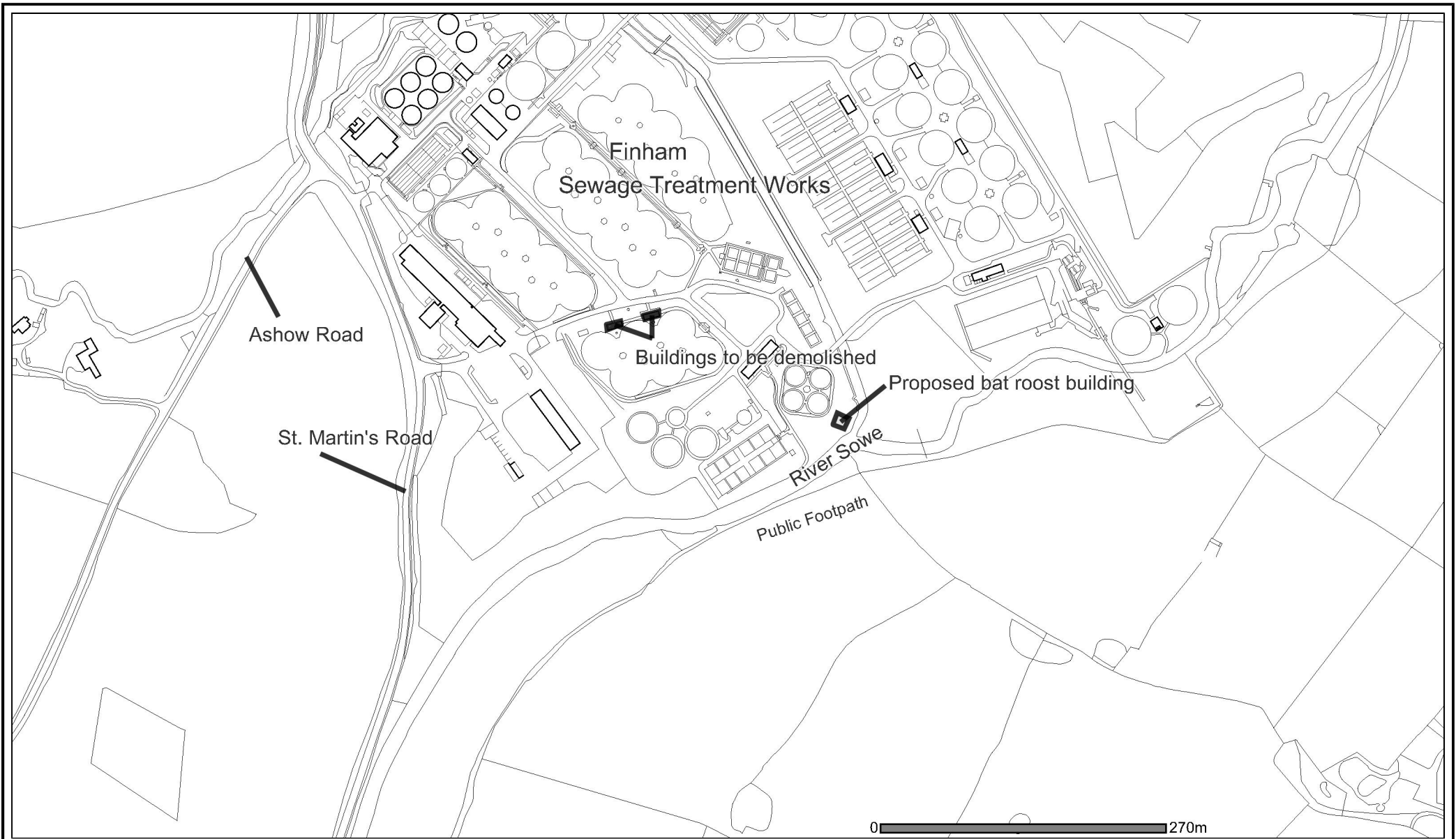
- 4.13 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was undertaken in 2005; it indicated that there was no ecological constraints on the site, apart from the identification of the potential for bat habitat. The survey suggested vegetation clearance works should be undertaken outside the bird nesting season or have a qualified ecologist present.
- 4.14 A Great Crested Newt Survey was undertaken in 2006 to investigate two ponds within 500 metres radius of the works. It confirmed the development would not affect any potential newt habitat.
- 4.15 On balance Severn Trent considers the provision of a purpose built bat roost is the most suitable way of ensuring the bats are protected. The loss of the existing bat roost was considered to have a low impact on the bat species.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Although the development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is contrary to policy DAP1 of the Warwick District Local Plan, very special circumstances exist to justify the granting of planning permission in this specific instance in as much as it is necessary that the Sewage Treatment Works provides alternative accommodation to ensure access improvement works on the site do not have a detrimental impact to the existing bat habitat on the site. Furthermore, it is considered that this development would not have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the locality or the openness of the Green Belt due to the small size of the building proposed and the enclosed nature of the site, away from residential properties. The development would have no adverse ecological impact and would not increase the likelihood of flooding. The application will deliver a positive biodiversity gain in a sustainable way by building on an already developed site. The development is, therefore, considered to be acceptable.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

30th May 2007



Scale 1: 5000

Ref No. W274/07CM014

Drawn Ruth Bradford

Regulatory Committee - 12 June 2007

Subject

**Finham Sewage Treatment Works - Bat Roost Building**



John Deegan  
Strategic Director for  
Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4SX

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APPENDIX A OF AGENDA NO.

**Regulatory Committee - 12th June 2007**

**Finham Sewage Treatment Works - Erection of a Bat Roost Building on Land at Finham Sewage Treatment Works, Coventry**

**Application No: W274/07CM014**

**Commencement Date**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with the provisions of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**General Conditions**

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details submitted with application Reference No. W274/07CM014 and in accordance with the approved plans comprising the site location plan dated 05/04/07 and plans Reference No. T388491-PA001 and T388491-CA700 and details approved in accordance with the conditions attached to this planning permission, unless these conditions require or allow or the County Planning Authority agrees in writing to any modifications.

**Reason:** In order to define the exact details of the planning permission granted and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in the locality.

3. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority, within two years of the completion of the development hereby approved the two buildings identified in the planning application as to be demolished shall be demolished to ground level and demolition waste shall be removed from the site.

**Reason:** In order to maintain the openness of the Green Belt and to prevent an increase in built obstructions within the river flood plain.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until two weeks notice in writing of the start of works has been given to an ecologist licensed to deal with great crested newts, appointed by the applicant to supervise all ground work elements of the development within the site.

**Reason:** To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development.



## **Development Plan Policies Relevant to this Decision**

### **The Waste Local Plan for Warwickshire:**

- (i) Policy 1.

### **The Revised Deposit Warwick District Local Plan (May 2005):**

- (i) Policy DAP1.

### **Reasons for the Decision to Grant Permission**

The harm caused by the inappropriateness of the development hereby permitted in the Green Belt is not accompanied by any other detriment which cannot be successfully overcome by conditions and is outweighed by the very special circumstances constituted by the need to provide alternative accommodation for a protected species on this site.

### **Notes:**

1. The policies, proposals and reasons given above are only summaries of the considerations set out more fully in the application report and minutes of the Regulatory Committee.
2. It should be ensured that there is no contamination of the watercourse either during or after development. No work to start until measures have been put in place to ensure that the pollution prevention guidelines produced by the Environment Agency regarding prevention of pollution during working and operation are adhered to. The Environment Agency can provide further details if required. There should be a buffer zone of *at least* 8 metres between the edge of the watercourse, (i.e. the top of the bank), and the development.
3. The applicant is advised that a protected species licence from Natural England is required to undertake the works to the existing buildings supporting the bat roost. Further information about species licensing and legislation can be obtained from the Applicant's surveyor or the Species Licensing Service on 0117 3728000.