

The Location of a New Sewage Treatment Plant for Dover

On 24th September some thirty persons met officers of Southern Water "informally" at Dover District Council, to discuss the merits and demerits of three options for siting a proposed sewage treatment plant. Folkestone had firmly rejected the proposed site for a headworks there. The proposed Dover site, at the junction of the Admiralty Pier with Shakespeare Beach had revealed severe geo-technical problems. We were therefore being asked to consider three possible sites for a single processing plant to receive waste water from Dover and Folkestone, located between the two towns, where the combined flows could be treated before discharge into the sea.

The three sites were:

- (A) In the A20 valley near Great Hougham Farm, (Broomfield Bank).
- (B) The Farthingloe Village.
- (C) The Shakespeare Platform.

We, the "jury", consisted of representatives of Eurotunnel, Planners and Environment Societies – in roughly equal numbers.

We started from the premise that action must be taken to reduce sea and beach pollution and that the construction of the plant, wherever, will temporarily, and the plant itself will permanently, have some impact on public amenity.

The Dover Society three years ago had favoured one outfall for the two towns. Hawkinge airfield was being thought of at that time. The Shakespeare Platform seemed to be the least of three necessary evils.

The Dover Society was indeed at first opposed to the construction of the Eurotunnel ventilation plant on the Platform but was relieved when the final plans produced a lower and more sympathetic building. The Southern Water proposal for the Shakespeare Platform would entail buildings over a similar area, reducing the amenity of the platform, in total, almost by half.

Eurotunnel drew attention to the fact that the extent of re-landscaped land on the Shakespeare Platform is laid down in the Act of Parliament. The National Trust was opposed to any building on the Platform.

Dover District Council was opposed to the use of the Farthingloe Village which, in the local plan, is proposed for employment development.

The Great Hougham site is currently for sale and might become the property of another developer before a decision is reached.

We were arriving at a log-jam situation. Southern Water spoke of "other options", without naming them, and said that a choice must be made by the end of the year.

The Chairman, John Clayton, drew attention to possible derelict sites such as land at Tilmanstone and Snowdown. Southern Water repeated that we had been considering only three out of a number of possible options but that sites so far inland as these could not be considered.

The Chairman drew the threads together. He thought that the Platform development *might* be approved from the planning aspect if it was partly underground. Underground construction would be costly. A *short* sea outfall would be necessitated, because of undersea cables, but this would bring the environmental bonus of obligatory secondary treatment.

..... In the circumstances, it is no surprise that the public exhibition in the autumn, which I urged members to attend, has been postponed!