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Via email to Aquind

FAO Aquind

Dear Sirs,

Portsmouth City Council ("PCC") writes further to the Keeping in Touch meeting held this week (20th January 2021). At that meeting we discussed the Framework Recreational Management Strategy ("FRMS") that WSP is working on for the applicant. Further to the grant of licences by PCC, the applicant's consultants are conducting on-site surveys at Farlington Playing Fields 20-21 January 2021 to assess the complex drainage system there.

We appreciate your frankness during the meeting that this means the FRMS is not likely to be ready for submission to the Examining Authority ("ExA"), and to PCC for review, before Deadline 7, 25 January 2021. We were not able however to ascertain from you at the meeting a definitive date when the FRMS would be submitted, either to PCC for informal review or to the ExA for formal consideration as part of the Examination.

We are all acutely aware of what little remaining time there is left for the completion of the examination within the statutory period and indeed as timetabled on 8 March 2021. PCC is concerned that after 25 January 2021 the penultimate formal deadline is Deadline 8 which falls on 1 March 2021. This is intended by the ExA for 'finalised' submissions on all topics. Thereafter the last deadline, Deadline 9, is only some 4 days later (ie 5 March).

We cannot imagine that the applicant would want to leave the issuing of the FRMS to the ExA and PCC so late as it would make formal, public comment on the FRMS by PCC and other interested persons extremely challenging and contrary to the ExA's envisaged procedure for bringing the examination to an orderly close.

The FRMS is of course crucial to assessing the overall environmental impact of the scheme, as well as the local impact of the scheme; the implications for protected habitat; the acceptability of the proposal upon special category land; the implications for protected habitats and HRA; together with mitigation to be secured through s.106

agreement, to name but a few things. There are therefore clear implications not only in terms of procedural fairness in the submission of the evidence at this juncture but also in terms of the lawfulness of the EIA and HRA.

We should be grateful, therefore, if you could provide PCC with confirmation of when the FRMS will be submitted to the ExA and PCC simultaneously so that these matters might be examined in good time by all parties. We have cc'd in the ExA for completeness, given the time constraints, but reserve the right to draw the ExA's attention and make submissions about this matter should it be necessary.

Yours faithfully,



Ian Maguire
Assistant Director Planning & Economic Growth

CC: Examining Authority for the Aquind Interconnector DCO