

Meeting note

Project name	Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project
File reference	WA010002
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	23 March 2022
Meeting with	Applicant
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project update
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Scheme Refresher

The Applicant gave an overview of the project design and development to date. Initially, the proposal had involved building a desalination plant. However, the Applicant has since decided that this part of the proposal would not be taken forward and instead a proposal that utilised water transfer and water recycling technology was now favoured. Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) consent for the Havant Thicket reservoir in Q4 2021 was noted as a significant factor in this decision. This proposal will transfer wastewater from Budds Farm Wastewater Treatment Works to a new Water Recycling Plant (WRP) before then being added to the Havant Thicket reservoir and transferred through a 35/42km pipeline to Otterbourne Water Supply Works (WSW). The Applicant noted that the planned Non-Statutory Consultation due to take place in summer 2022 will assist in deciding on a final project route. The peak output is expected to be 15 Ml/d but it was noted that the potential existed to significantly increase this capacity in future if this need were to arise.

The Applicant noted substantive works will be included within the Development Consent Order (DCO), but stated they were reviewing whether certain interface works to the Havant Thicket reservoir could be secured through the reserved matters process of the TCPA consent for the reservoir.

RAPID Gate 2

RAPID Gate 2 was submitted on 6 December 2021 and confirmed the desalination option was not being taken forward. It was explained that a back-up option has been identified which is similar in nature to the proposed option but would use an alternative environmental buffer lake, the location of which is yet to be decided.

The Applicant noted that the need for the area has been calculated at 90 MI/d. This calculation has reinforced the decision not to move forward with the desalination plant proposal as this would only provide 75MI/d.

DCO Schedule and Section 35 Direction Request

The Applicant provided a current timeline for the scheme. They noted that submission of the Application to the Inspectorate is expected in Q4 2023 after Gate 4 of the RAPID process.

The aim is to publish Gate 3 at the same time as notification of the Statutory Consultation is released. The stated purpose of this is to ensure adequate time exists for consultees to take account of Gate 3 submissions. The Applicant stated that RAPID decides the deadlines regarding the Gates.

The Applicant noted that discussions with RAPID continued over the necessity for a Section 35 request. They noted RAPID's stance is for the need case for the scheme to be included in Water Resource Management Plan 24 (WRMP24). However, the Applicant noted this would incur a 2-year delay which they considered unadvisable.

The Applicant stated they consider the need for the scheme was established within WRMP19. If it were found that the need case for the scheme was not established, then they expected the need case for the scheme will be included in WRMP24.

The Applicant explained that the consent route through the TCPA is felt to be unachievable as the scheme will require consent from six separate Local Authorities. They noted that local opposition to a WRP existed and that a single planning refusal will render the scheme unworkable.

The Applicant noted they expected to submit a Section 35 direction request to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on 29 March 2022 and this places a duty on DEFRA to respond within 28 days. The Applicant explained that as the scheme will not deliver a continuous output (it will only be operational in drought periods) it considers that the scheme does not meet the Planning Act 2008 thresholds and therefore they believe a Section 35 direction is required.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant that they should include in their Section 35 direction request to DEFRA why they believe that the proposal is of national significance.

Scheme Development

The Applicant stated that a review of pipeline options was ongoing and that, following a review of corridor options, work was now taking place on risk evaluation of each option. They noted site visits have been undertaken and engagement with stakeholders has begun. Following this, the intention is to identify a preferred corridor option and include this in the Non-Statutory Consultation due to take place in summer 2022.

Non-Statutory Consultation

Non-Statutory Consultation is due to begin on 5 July 2022 and expected to last six weeks. If restrictions allow, it will consist of a blend of online and in-person events, at venues yet to be decided. The Non-Statutory Consultation will be advertised through a combination of letters

being posted to those within inner zones, alongside utilising social media and Parish Councils to reach those in the outer zones in relation to the proposal.

The Applicant explained that the goal of the Non-Statutory Consultation will be to seek feedback on the proposal, as well as to provide an opportunity to explain why the proposal has changed and the methodology used to inform this decision. The Non-Statutory Consultation will seek feedback on; the proposed WRP location, the preferred pipeline corridor and potential route options within this corridor, potential zones for an above ground plant and other issues, including opportunities within the corridors and zones.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping

The Applicant noted that an EIA consultant has now been onboarded and the submission of the Scoping Report (SR) is expected in Q3 2022. They noted that the majority of EIA topics will likely be scoped in, with the possible exception of marine topics.

The Inspectorate queried whether it is expected that the feedback from the Non-Statutory Consultation will be included within the SR. The Applicant noted that key messages from the Non-Statutory Consultation will be fed into the SR. The Inspectorate advised that further information on what should be included in the SR can be found in [Advice Note 7](#).

Any Other Business

The Applicant noted the current name for the project is 'Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project.'