

# Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project
<b>File reference</b>	WA010002
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	06 September 2022
<b>Meeting with</b>	Southern Water
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project update meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	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.

## ***Update on summer 2022 public consultation***

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on the outcome of the non-statutory Summer 2022 public consultation. The public consultation ran from 05 July to 16 August 2022. Over 31,000 residents and potential landowners were sent consultation letters. The Applicant held six in-person consultation events and had nine deposit locations that hosted consultation materials. Three interactive webinars were held online, and an online consultation platform was available.

The Applicant received 570 responses through various response mechanisms including email inbox and freepost.

The Applicant provided some key themes from the non-statutory consultation:

- The Applicant noted that most people understood the need for the project but some questioned if it was necessary due to the infrequency of drought conditions – it was noted that views may have been different had the consultation been held later in the summer following the imposition of droughts across the South East;
- Concern over the construction impact of the proposed development on traffic, noise, and vibration;
- Some were concerned over water quality in the Havant Thicket Reservoir with regard to the mixing of recycled water with spring water; and
- The underground aspect of the pipeline was welcomed, and that most people wanted more information on the above ground equipment.

The Inspectorate queried how the Applicant has perceived the feedback from the non-statutory consultation. The Applicant explained that it is in the process of analysing the consultation feedback from the more open-ended questions, which often focussed on site-specific elements of the proposed development.

### ***Scheme development update***

The Applicant explained that an indicative pipeline route within the wider preferred corridor was presented during the Summer 2022 non-statutory consultation. The Applicant explained that the indicative pipeline route refers to what is most hydrologically optimal and is 'the best engineering solution'. The Applicant also showed preferred zones for the above ground plant and a proposed site for the Water Recycling Plan (WRP). The Applicant explained that the next stage of scheme development will involve having regard to the consultation feedback over Autumn and Winter 2022. The Applicant also explained that this next stage will enable the preferred pipeline route and locations of the above ground plant to be presented in the statutory consultation planned for 2023.

The Applicant explained that there are three key inputs for the next stage of scheme development, which were: extracting design information and feedback from the consultation responses and through ongoing stakeholder engagement; ongoing site survey and assessment work; and system design and construction methodology being developed in more depth. The Applicant explained that these inputs will feed into refinement of the pipeline route.

### ***Programme Update***

The Applicant advised there will be a slight adjustment to the programme due to various factors including the timing of ground investigation and environmental survey information. The Applicant now aims to seek a Scoping Opinion in Q4 2022/Q1 2023 and commence Statutory Consultation later in 2023. The Applicant anticipates that the DCO application could be submitted to the Inspectorate in the first half of 2024, however dates are not fixed and subject to change. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant to provide any further programme updates when appropriate.

### ***Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping***

The Applicant explained that the first draft of the EIA Scoping Report has been completed, which is currently subject to client and legal review. The Applicant confirmed that it will incorporate feedback from the non-statutory consultation by the statutory environmental bodies in the Scoping Report, where possible and appropriate. The Applicant explained that the second tranche of EIA Working Groups with statutory bodies and key stakeholders is taking place in September 2022, confirming there are five EIA Working Groups focussing on different EIA topics.

The Applicant presented a draft of the proposed scoping boundary but noted this remains under review. The Applicant discussed some proposed boundary adjustments, such as the inclusion of Budds Farm Wastewater Treatment Works (WTW) and the Havant Thicket Reservoir. The Applicant further explained that it is considering the inclusion of construction compound locations within the scoping boundary. The Inspectorate queried whether any construction compound areas would bring in new host local authorities under Section 43 of

the Planning Act 2008. The Applicant confirmed that this is not the case. The Applicant also identified that the boundary of the Otterbourne Water Supply Works site would also be included in the scoping area.

The Applicant showed the current inclusion of an area around the Eastney long sea outfall in the scoping boundary, where reject water from the WRP would be released, although no construction works are anticipated to take place at the outfall. The Inspectorate queried whether there would be any element of the Proposed Development within the marine environment. The Applicant confirmed that the proposed tunnelling for the pipelines connecting the WRP to Budds Farm WTW would be under the marine environment but there would be no construction in the marine area. The Applicant confirmed that discussions are still continuing with regard to the proposed scoping boundary, including whether to include the long sea outfall pipeline from Budds Farm, Havant Thicket Reservoir and other components.

The Inspectorate queried the status of the geotechnical work that is currently underway and whether it was likely to affect the proposed route of the pipeline in terms of the scoping boundary. The Applicant advised they are working through the indicative pipeline route in phases and on the basis of levels of perceived risk.

The Applicant confirmed that the date for requesting a Scoping Opinion from the Inspectorate will be dependent on the decision to be made with regard to the proposed sizing of the WRP, which will be determined by the Regional Plan and Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) 24 modelling. The Applicant is currently assessing the phasing and sizing of the WRP and is working on the basis of a minimum 15Ml/d capacity plant. The Applicant explained that if it needs to scope for a larger plant, it may affect the date of the Scoping Opinion request, as changes would be required to the draft Scoping Report. The Applicant is considering whether it would need to construct the WRP in phases rather than all at once. The Applicant confirmed that the scoping area would remain similar, however additional construction areas might need to be identified outside of the WRP site to enable construction of a larger plant. As a result, the Applicant confirmed that its submission of a request for a Scoping Opinion could be some months away (i.e. during Q4 2022/Q1 2023). The Inspectorate advised that certain periods can be more challenging for the prescribed consultation bodies to respond within the statutory timeframe and therefore recommended that the scoping opinion request avoid the Christmas holiday period, where possible.

The Applicant outlined some of the EIA scoping matters that it may request to scope out of the Environmental Statement (ES). These primarily related to the marine environment, including: marine water and sediment quality; coastal marine processes; other marine users; and heat and radiation. The Applicant also explained that, although the majority of material is expected to be delivered by road, there may be a requirement to deliver materials for construction (such as pipeline and bedding material) via vessel to a port along the south coast of England, which is yet to be determined.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to provide in its Scoping Report the justification for scoping matters out, together with supporting evidence, where available. Where such matters have been agreed with relevant consultation bodies in advance, it is helpful to include reference to/evidence of such agreements with the Scoping Report.

## ***Engagement update***

The Applicant has issued a forward look engagement plan to all the host local authorities, which advised on the key engagement inputs foreseen up to the DCO submission. The Applicant explained that local authorities and some key stakeholders within the EIA Working Groups have also been briefed on the next steps of scheme development. The Applicant has issued Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) for local authorities to sign, which were issued at the end of July 2022.

The Applicant explained that the focus of the EIA Working Groups has been on baseline and assessment methodology. Engagement with the EIA Working Groups is ongoing, including Natural England and the Environment Agency, and a Wildlife and Water Interest Group has been established. The first meeting of the Wildlife and Water Interest Group was held in July 2022 and the next one is planned for October 2022.

The Applicant is also currently developing a community engagement strategy.

### ***Rapid Gate 3 guidance***

The Applicant explained that the final RAPID Gate 3 guidance was issued on 23 August 2022. The Applicant noted that the guidance has addressed the majority of its concerns regarding potential duplication with the consenting process. The Applicant is encouraging RAPID to now consider Gate 4 guidance.

The Inspectorate queried the timing of submission in relation to Gate 4. The Applicant confirmed they would like their DCO application to be accepted prior to Gate 4, to then give certainty of programme in any Gate 4 submission. Further clarification of the requirements of Gate 4 is however required to understand the implications.

### ***Regional Plan and WRMP24***

The Applicant advised that Southern Water's WRMP 24 is now back on standard track timescales, as opposed to fast-track. The Applicant explained that the revised draft submission date for the WRMP 24 is 03 October 2022, and that the statement of responses and feedback are expected to be published in May 2023. The final WRMP is expected to be published in November 2023.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if the WRMP 24 went to an inquiry, would they delay the DCO application submission timetable. The Applicant confirmed this would depend on the nature of the inquiry itself, and they would need to understand the timescales for the inquiry before a decision could be made.

### ***Next steps/ Any other business***

The Inspectorate made the Applicant aware of a forthcoming change in the Inspectorate's Operational Lead for the proposed project.

The Inspectorate directed the Applicant to [Advice Note 7](#), which contains helpful and practical advice with regards to EIA Scoping, including the requirements for a GIS shapefile 10 working days in advance of the formal scoping opinion request. The Inspectorate also made the Applicant aware of the recently published revised [Advice Note 10](#).

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed once scoping timescales have been decided. The Inspectorate suggested having a short meeting prior to the scoping opinion request submission, with a more detailed meeting after issue of the Scoping Opinion.