

[REDACTED]
From: SEPA [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 January 2022 09:31:14
To: SEPA [REDACTED] SEPA [REDACTED] SEPA [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry - DRAFT
Importance: Normal
Sensitivity: None

OFFICIAL

Fine with me
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@sepa.org.uk>
Sent: 20 January 2022 09:15
To: [REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk> [REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry - DRAFT

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That's great. Thank you all for your help.

I would agree about avoiding any time frames and just keep it simple, sticking to the facts. The first 7 or 8 paragraphs of [REDACTED] enquiry is speculation and the 'we are still in discussions' line covers this.

Draft statement below if you're able to let me know your thoughts this morning.

A spokesperson for SEPA said: "We continue to be in discussions with Whiteshore Cockle regarding their proposals for the salmon mortalities processing plant and their PPC permit application, which has not yet been received.

"SEPA can only issue a permit if, having considered all aspects of the application, it is satisfied the installation will operate within relevant environmental quality standards and comply with the conditions of the PPC permit."

Thank you again.
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>
Sent: 20 January 2022 08:27
To: [REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@sepa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry - DRAFT

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Thanks all.
I've suggested a slight working tweak to [REDACTED] comments in red – see purple.

██████ – any thoughts on what we have given you – is this ok? If you can draft up a reply on the basis of what we have given you and then recirculate for comment?

I'm keen that we don't get drawn into commenting on specific timescales for either submission of the application or issue of any permit – as this is still unclear (and may yet be subject to further change!)

██████

From: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 19 January 2022 16:43

To: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>; ██████████@sepa.org.uk>

Cc: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry - DRAFT

OFFICIAL

See comment in blue. The summary is a reasonable reflection of the discussions at the SG T&F group.

██████████

T: ██████████

From: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 19 January 2022 15:40

To: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Cc: ██████████@sepa.org.uk>; ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: FW: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry - DRAFT

Importance: High

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Hi ██████████

Could you please review this enquiry and advise on the first question as the summary appears to reflect what might have been conveyed at the SG Task & Finish group?

My draft response to the other questions has been provided below in red. ██████████ ██████████ – Feel free to comment on these.

Cheers

██████

From: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 19 January 2022 14:28

To: ██████████@sepa.org.uk>

Cc: ██████████@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry

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Hi ██████████

I've forwarded on the query to [REDACTED] who is the officer for this site / application. One of us will come back to you on this.

[REDACTED] I'm about to go into a meeting but will try to catch you later for a quick chat on this.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@sepa.org.uk>

Sent: 19 January 2022 14:26

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles - media enquiry

OFFICIAL

Hi [REDACTED]

Hope you are well.

I have just [REDACTED] and I was hoping you may be able to help me with a press enquiry that has come through this afternoon.

A journalist is looking for a statement with regards to Whiteshore Cockles, and I saw that you helped provide information on an issue to do with this company last year.

Details of today's media enquiry below:

I'm writing an article about the apparent move by Scottish authorities to see the fish waste landfill at Whiteshore Cockles on North Uist closed for good.

I understand that the Scottish Government's 2016 temporary exemption order is set to be revoked by no later than 31 March, according to [communications between authorities](#) obtained via FOI.

Use of the landfill is also "subject to cancellation" by ministers if Whiteshore Cockles fails to stick to the new rules, or if the Sepa refuses a permit for its drying plant.

The firm said the plant will open in March 2022, communications between authorities show.

The government emphasised that if Sepa did not grant Whiteshore Cockles an environmental permit, burial would no longer be allowed. "We are working towards an alternative solution and if that route fails, fish waste should be going to alternative legal disposal routes," they stressed.

On 4 November a Sepa employee said they believed Whiteshore Cockles had "the resources available to develop a proposal that will meet the relevant requirements."

The firm had withdrawn an earlier application which was due to be resubmitted in early 2022, with Sepa advising that stronger plans were required to contain odours and other emissions.

The firm estimated it would apply for a permit by March 2022, which, if successful, would be issued by December, Sepa said. [I did not say they would have a permit by December. I said that December was a real possibility if we received all the information we needed. If we don't then the timescale could be a lot longer.] The drying facilities would [could] begin operating by March 2023 or sooner, if issues were addressed.

The government could extend its relaxation of rules around burying dead fish to 31 March 2023 or earlier, if a permit was obtained. Whiteshore Cockles would "have to find another treatment route in the meantime" if they did not meet the March

deadline, added Sepa.

I'd be grateful if you could please comment on the above. Please can you confirm the latest developments with the Whiteshore Cockles drying plant?

I'm wondering whether their PPC application has been resubmitted yet? If so, please could you share an updated timescale of approval/operation?

SEPA has not yet received a PPC permit application from Whiteshore Cackle. We continue to be in discussions with the company regarding their proposals for the salmon mortalities processing plant and their PPC permit application. The plant will need a PPC permit to operate and SEPA has a duty to determine any permit application such that it can be satisfied that the installation can operate within relevant environmental quality standards and SEPA can only issue a permit if, having considered all aspects of the application, it determines that that the installation will be able to operate within relevant environmental quality standards and comply with the conditions of the PPC permit.

Are you able to help me answer some of these questions so I can prepare a statement? [REDACTED] deadline is 2.30pm tomorrow so I'd be keen to sort this today if possible, to allow time tomorrow morning for sign off.

Let me know if you can help and feel free to give me a call.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED] e: [REDACTED]@sepa.org.uk w: www.sepa.org.uk

Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Strathallan House, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TZ

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Oifis chlàraichte: Taigh Srath Alain, Pàirc Gnothachais a' Chaisteil, Sruighlea FK9 4TZ. Fo Achd Riaghladh nan Cumhachdan Rannsachaidh 2000, dh'fhaodadh gun tèid an siostram puist-d aig SEPA a sgrùdadh bho àm gu àm.

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