

FOI disclosure on Whiteshore Cockles by the Scottish Government disclosed on 8 December 2021 ([published on 20 January 2022 via FOI-2021-00254831](#))



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PUBLICATION - FOI/EIR RELEASE

Information regarding Whiteshore Cockles since July 2021: EIR release

Published: 20 Jan 2022

Directorate: [Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate](#)

Part of: [Marine and fisheries](#), [Public sector](#)

Information request and response under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004

FOI reference: FOI/202100254831

Date received: 12 Nov 2021

Date responded: 8 Dec 2021

Information requested

Information on Whiteshore Cockles since 26 July 2021 including any Cabinet Secretary, internal correspondence, complaints, photos, videos, emails, letters and any other information.

Attached is a copy of the information requested.

Published: 20 Jan 2022

Information regarding Whiteshore Cockles since July 20...



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Summary:

Key Points/Quotes:

In August 2021, Whiteshore Cockles offered to fly politicians out to the Uists in a private jet owned by steel magnate John Roe:

“I will arrange for a jet to collect the party from Edinburgh Airport private facility - fly to Uist in 30 minutes - have a couple of hours here and return you all to Edinburgh in the afternoon,” [wrote Whiteshore Cockles on 16 August 2021](#). “We haven’t won the lottery! I have a friend with a private jet who is coming out to Uist during this period (he has a house here) and he is delighted to help us as he knows the importance of our project to the Uist community.”

Following legal advice, in October 2021 the Scottish Government closed the net with a new derogation on burial of morts at Whiteshore Cockles with tougher conditions including: No burial above ground (no bunded pits); Weekly list of morts detailing daily tonnage and origin sites to be emailed to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council); No pits left uncovered overnight – records and daily time stamped photographic evidence to be kept; Fish morts to be buried within 4 hours of arriving on site; Skips to be cleaned immediately on emptying; Only routine morts from Uist & Barra; Any disposal of event morts have to be pre-notified to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Scottish Government with quantities, origin location and disposal plan; and Whiteshores will pay £200+vat for CNES monitoring:

“Burial derogation: We are wanting to move away from an open ended derogation,” [wrote the Scottish Government \[name redacted\] in an email dated 28 October 2021](#). “The new derogation is likely to remain in place until 31 March (at which point it would come to an end), although subject to cancellation by the Scottish Ministers if Whiteshore Cockles fails to adhere to the conditions. On top of the conditions, an additional event that might lead to the cancellation of the derogation could be the refusal of the PPC Permit. Burial is not a long term solution, so failure to get a PPC Permit would mean the aquaculture industry seek alternative disposal routes. Can SEPA advise on appealing a refusal of a the PPC Permit? Could a revised application be made after the initial refusal? In any case, the new derogation will not make a categorical statement that a new derogation will not be granted if the existing one comes to an end. That will enable us to have a full range of options available to it.”

“We have concerns about the current burial procedures and site capacity to bury fish morts at Whiteshore Cockles,” [wrote the Scottish Government \[name redacted\] in an email dated 2 November 2021](#). “This is the reason we are reviewing the burial derogation to make it easier for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to official supervise the site. The geographical condition should reduce the current volume of morts going to the site. However, we should also be aware of mortality levels above background levels to ensure disposal is managed properly.... In theory, we would not reject any request from fish farms local to Whiteshore Cockles. We are trying to prevent large quantities of/any fish morts from out with Barra and Uist being disposed of at Whiteshore Cockles.”

“Whiteshore Cockles (WCL) should be keeping commercial documents of all consignments going to the site under ABP Regulations,” [wrote the Scottish Government \[name redacted\] in an email dated 2 November 2021](#). “I am sure a system can be adapted to relay this information to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar for official supervision purposes. I will let Comhairle nan Eilean Siar comment on frequency of providing this data.....A disposal plan is needed because burial of fish morts is not be allowed. We have temporarily allowed burial for WCL and these conditions apply to WCL only. We want to ensure that fish morts that are not included under the derogation are not getting buried at WCL. We want to maintain strict conditions for any fish farms that plan to use WCL as their method as disposal. So if a fish farm needs to use WCL for above background (event mortality) disposal then we need to have a process of recording that use.”

“The challenge for the Uists/Barra is the current lack of disposal options and the difficulty of transporting the mortality off-island,” [wrote the Scottish Government \[name redacted\] in an email dated 2 November 2021](#). “From the perspective of disease control, the challenge is to offer a biosecure disposal option at a reasonable distance from the source of the mortalities, whilst minimising nuisance. With regard to what defines the farms in the Uists/Barra, I think of them as being the farms with their operating shore base in the Uists/Barra, regardless of where they are spatially in the sea.”

“Just to update you on the Whiteshore Cockles PPC permit timeline,” [wrote SEPA in an email to the Scottish Government, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Animal and Plant Health Agency on 9 November 2021](#). “We have had discussions with the operator and they have advised they expect to be able to submit a permit application in early 2022 with the timing dependent on some further work they need to undertake to design the emissions control infrastructure.”

“I want to get the views of others within the Task and Finish Group and then run this past Scottish Government solicitors, with a view to putting a new burial derogation in place using these conditions,” [wrote the Scottish Government \[name redacted\] in an email dated 17 September 2021](#). “One thing we want to be clear is that if no PPC Permit is granted from SEPA, burial is no longer permissible. We are working towards an alternative solution and if that route fails, fish waste should be going to alternative legal disposal routes.”

“As you pointed out the Times has now printed an article claiming that seepage has been reported by officers which we all know is incorrect,” [wrote an email \[the name is redacted\] on 15 November 2021](#). “They also claim that our derogation is to be withdrawn due to this report. Is there any chance that the CNES/Scottish Government can speak to the author of the article pointing out the errors? We have tried to provide information to the newspaper to enable them to give a “balanced” report but to no avail.....Everything is progressing well now and we could do without newspaper articles printing false information that has been supplied by the Scottish Government.....Our small company has invested a huge amount of money into building a plant etc that will ensure the long term viability of the fish farming industry in the Western Isles and it is very worrying for the owners and staff when they read misleading articles in the newspapers.”

“After your visit last week you will be aware of the huge amount of work that has been done on the site to get the plant to the completion stage,” [wrote an email \[the name is redacted\] on 15 November 2021](#). “We are in constant dialogue with SEPA concerning preparing our PPC

application and although we are working on gathering the information for the Animal Rendering By Products licence we have been told that we cannot move this forward until SEPA approve the PPC.....I am presuming that we will be getting a letter outlining the conditions that are required to continue with the derogation (I am also presuming that these are as our Method Statement) and that it will continue until the Part A PPC/Animal Health approvals have been given.”

“Failure for WCL adhere to burial conditions will result in any burial derogation being revoked,” [reported the 1st meeting of the ‘Task and Finish Group’ on 22 July 2021](#). “Other disposal options are available so it should not come as a shock to the aquaculture industry if WCL is no longer a disposal option.”

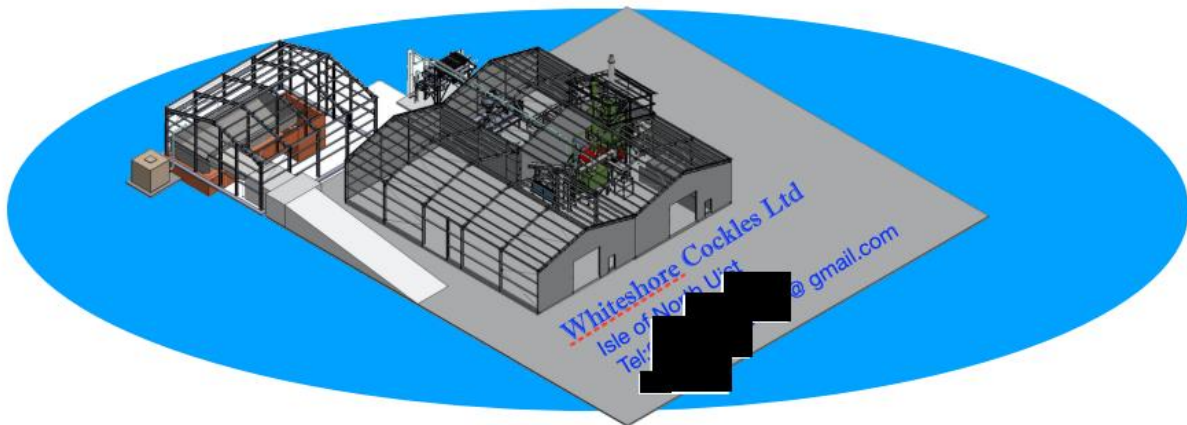
“Discussion on Official Supervision: [Redacted] expressed concerns regarding site capacity and the actual numbers of fish being buried,” [reported the 1st meeting of the ‘Task and Finish Group’ on 22 July 2021](#). “AP [Redacted] to engage with WCL to request quantities of fish waste buried at site in past year on a monthly basis. [Redacted] raised concerns that no actual burying is taking place and instead fish are being stored in open pits and containers. New conditions should be set to address this. Council visits would need to be monthly to check records and visit the site.”

“Engagement with Whiteshore Cockles Ltd and aquaculture industry: The Group agreed wider aquaculture industry needs to be involved in any future meetings,” [reported the 1st meeting of the ‘Task and Finish Group’ on 22 July 2021](#). “AP [Redacted] to engage with Marine Scotland to let them know about meeting with the aquaculture industry that operate in the Western Isles and ask for contact details. Looking to meet with WCL and aquaculture industry in September.”

“Deadline for new derogation: PPC permit application process is likely to take 6 months to a year,” [reported the 1st meeting of the ‘Task and Finish Group’ on 22 July 2021](#). “Need APHA input about timings for ABP approval, including new method for validating rendering plants. No deadline set but discussion on possible rolling monthly derogation be put in place, subject to satisfactory inspection from CnES. AP [Redacted] – to engage with solicitors on legality of rolling derogation.”

“On-going burial of fish waste for contingency planning for event mortalities: Fish waste burial at WCL must stop when the fish waste dryer is operational,” [reported the 1st meeting of the ‘Task and Finish Group’ on 22 July 2021](#). “Burial may be granted for event mortalities but only under approval from Scottish Government. AP [Redacted] – to consider how/if this would work in practice.”

“Now that the Covid 19 restrictions have eased considerably it has allowed the designer of the equipment and the engineers to return to Uist to complete the final connections and electrical switchgear,” [wrote Whiteshore Cockles in a letter to the Scottish Government dated 24 September 2021](#). “We expect the plant and machinery to all be in place by early November. We are in constant dialogue with SEPA regarding our Part A PPC application and our consultants should have the necessary data to submit the application within the next few weeks. We are also working on our licence application with the Animal Health Dept to allow us to render and produce animal by products.”



“In respect of your continued interest and following the visit to our site by yourself and Kate Forbes MSP in the latter part of 2019 we would like to formally invite you and Kate back to Uist to see the completed project,” [wrote Whiteshore Cockles in a letter to the Scottish Government dated 24 September 2021](#). “We would respectfully also extend the invitation to the Cabinet Secretary, Mairi Gougeon and Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, who we believe would both have an interest in seeing first hand our innovative plant, which will help to ensure the long term viability of fish farming in the Western Isles, as well as visiting a unique part of Scotland which I believe they both have an interest in.”

“My suggested itinerary would be,” [wrote Whiteshore Cockles in a letter to the Scottish Government dated 24 September 2021](#). “A date in late autumn to fit in with everyone’s diaries - I appreciate the difficulty this may cause. Collected by private jet from Edinburgh airport mid morning and a flight to Benbecula airport which would take approximately half an hour in a Citation CJ4. Collected from Benbecula by Whiteshore staff and driven to North Uist for a three hour visit. A ‘Uist’ lunch at a facility we have overlooking Vallay Island to which a visit can be arranged if requested. A return flight to Edinburgh which would leave late afternoon. If the party wish to visit any other facility in the Uist during their trip I can easily organise this. The jet is operated by one of my friends, Mr [Redacted] of the Roe Group (They have a depot in Edinburgh) who has a house in Uist and he will coincide the trip with a visit for a few days. [Redacted] is very keen to promote or assist any island person / business and has made his plane available to me before for charity auctions.”

Read more about the Roe Group via: <http://www.theroegroup.com/> and <http://www.theroegroup.com/about-group-2>

Note that a John Roe – a director of the Roe Group – applied in 2012 to build a house in Askernish in South Uist: https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/media/3373/copy-of-copy_of_foi_tcp2008.xlsx

1_Reference	2_Development	3_Description	4a_Applicant	b_Applicant Address	5a_Agent Name	5b_Agent Address	5c_Agent Email	5d_Agent Phone
12/00651/PPD	House, Askernish, Isle Of South Uist	Erect house	Mr John Roe	C/o North West Steel Ltd, Fengate, Peterborough, PE1 5BQ	Mr Ralph Thompson	Aird Ruairidh, Daliburgh, South Uist, HS8 5SS	rthomp4521@btinternet.com	01878 700684

Companies House [report for Roe Bros & Co. Ltd:](#)

Mr John Patrick William Roe ACTIVE

Correspondence address

1 Fenlake Business Centre, Fengate, Peterborough, PE1 5BQ

Notified on

6 April 2016

Date of birth

March 1958

Nationality

British

Nature of control

Ownership of shares – 75% or more

Country of residence

England

Ownership of voting rights - 75% or more

Right to appoint and remove directors

More on John Roe via <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/PwwjDTm4vkxkveMILYBanmkxxc/appointments>

Mr John Roe of Brancaster came 2nd in a golf competition at Askernish in 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/AskernishGC/posts/at-the-weekend-we-welcomed-visitors-from-around-the-globe-as-we-hosted-our-life-/1562617213780007/>

The engagement of John Roe’s daughter was announced in Peerage News and the Daily Telegraph in October 2021: <https://peeragenews.blogspot.com/2021/10/oliverroe-engagement.html>

“I was down in Uist next week and had a look at the site,” [wrote Comhairle nan Eilean Siar \[name redacted\] in an email dated 3 September 2021](#). “Getting on well with installing the equipment and anticipate it being in place for October. The application to SEPA has still not been submitted because of a query regarding waste water disposal. They are also under financial pressure to have it in operation by March 2022. This seems quite optimistic though if the PPC application is still in limbo.”

“I’ve also attached a video of the large pit that was taken last week,” [wrote Comhairle nan Eilean Siar \[name redacted\] in an email dated 3 September 2021](#). “[Redacted] is forwarding you copy of the latest complaint we received from one of the local residents.”

“The team I work with have been briefing Ministers, dealing with correspondence from Whiteshore WCL and handling FOI’s about the business for several years now and we recently established a task and finish group with wide representation to push the long running WCL ‘fish

dryer' project to completion," [wrote the Scottish Government to Highlands & Islands Enterprise on 30 September 2021](#). "In recent correspondence from the Managing Director of WCL to Murdoch McLeod, Deputy Director Financial Services and Location Director for the Outer Hebrides in the Scottish Government, it is stated WCL received support from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). In the letter, WCL state they received grant funding to assist with the purchase of equipment. We have asked WCL about funding for their project and been informed it is private funding, perhaps this is a new development? I would be very grateful if someone could provide me with further information about the grant funding that WCL are referring to."

"For background information," [wrote the Scottish Government to Highlands & Islands Enterprise on 1 October 2021](#). "The Scottish Government banned the burial of fish waste in 2016. However, Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), in North Uist were granted a temporary derogation by SG to bury fish waste at their site until the fish dryer was operational. The derogation also allowed the company to begin construction on a permanent solution for fish mortalities in the Western Isles; Whiteshores claimed continued burial of fish waste at their site was necessary to fund the fish dryer; On engaging with Whiteshores, they said the fish waste dryer project is self funded; Securing this funding was one of the reasons for the delay in building the fish waste dryer; Burial of fish waste cannot go on indefinitely; Scottish Ministers need to have a clear picture of what is happening with the fish waste dryer project."

"We have provided two grants to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd as detailed below," [replied Highlands & Islands Enterprise to the Scottish Government on 1 October 2021](#). "Fish waste drying project – for the establishment of a facility to process salmon morts November 2016 £404k Eligible costs – plant & equipment, construction of yard and building to house the machinery Fish waste processing expansion – expansion of site to include ensiling facilities holding morts under controlled temperature and pressure Feb 2021 £200k Eligible costs – construction, steel fabrication and installation."

Emails Disclosed (72 pages): [Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Emails](#)

Here's some emails (in chronological order – most recent first):

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 15 November 2021 15:38
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: times article

(Annex 1)

Good morning <redacted>,

Please find attached a copy of the letter I sent to <redacted> refuting the claims that appeared in the minutes of a Scottish Government meeting.

As you pointed out the Times has now printed an article claiming that seepage has been reported by officers which we all know is incorrect. They also claim that our derogation is to be withdrawn due to this report.

Is there any chance that the CNES / Scottish Government can speak to the author of the article pointing out the errors? We have tried to provide information to the newspaper to enable them to give a “ balanced” report but to no avail.

After your visit last week you will be aware of the huge amount of work that has been done on the site to get the plant to the completion stage. We are in constant dialogue with SEPA concerning preparing our PPC application and although we are working on gathering the information for the Animal Rendering By Products licence we have been told that we cannot move this forward until SEPA approve the PPC.

Everything is progressing well now and we could do without newspaper articles printing false information that has been supplied by the Scottish Government. I am presuming that we will be getting a letter outlining the conditions that are required to continue with the derogation (I am also presuming that these are as our Method Statement) and that it will continue until the Part A PPC / Animal Health approvals have been given.

Our small company has invested a huge amount of money into building a plant etc that will ensure the long term viability of the fish farming industry in the Western Isles and it is very worrying for the owners and staff when they read misleading articles in the newspapers.

I hope your self isolation does not curtail your lifestyle to any great degree and that you have a speedy recovery.

<redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 09 November 2021 13:59

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> (MARLAB) <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; k<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

OFFICIAL

Just to update you on the Whiteshore Cockles PPC permit timeline: we have had discussions with the operator and they have advised they expect to be able to submit a permit application in early 2022 with the timing dependent on some further work they need to undertake to design the emissions control infrastructure. Therefore the timeline indicated below is reasonable.

Regards,

<redacted>

<redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: <redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 04 November 2021 09:57

To: <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot

Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk;
<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk;
<redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted>@gov.scot;
<redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

<redacted>,

Regarding the PPC permit process: we are continuing dialogue with Whiteshore Cockles and we believe that they have the resources available to develop a proposal that will meet the relevant requirements. We have asked them for an indication of when they expect to be able to submit a permit application and I will let you know their response. Taking various factors into account, a likely timeline would be an application received by March 2022, and a permit issued by December 2022. They could then begin commissioning once they have the permit in place and this is likely to last at least 2 months. The site is likely start to waste processing in March 2023. This timescale could be advanced, but this is dependent on the quality of the permit application and more crucially, the emissions control measures being employed at the site.

It is our understanding that Whiteshore Cockles intend re-evaluate a number of the proposed emissions control measures to meet the relevant requirements in light of SEPA's feedback on the withdrawn application. Discussions with their new consultancy support indicate odour treatment system, as well as other areas, will need to be redesigned. We are awaiting Whiteshore Cockles to confirm its approach in writing. Subject to this confirmation, it is SEPA's view that they should be allowed some time to properly develop these measures, but this has to be balanced with the continued operation of burial activities.

The options are to extend the derogation to 31/3/23 or until the PPC permit is in place, whichever is the earlier, or they have to find another treatment route in the meantime.

Regards,

<redacted>

<redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: <redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>
Sent: 02 November 2021 17:28
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted> (MARLAB) <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

Hi <redacted>,
On condition 5 where query is addressed to APHA
See my comments below in [green](#).

Best regards.

<redacted>; DVM MRCVS
Veterinary Advisor - Field Delivery
APHA Scotland Field Services (Galashiels)
Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
Telephone: <redacted> | Email: <redacted>@apha.gov.uk
Website: www.gov.uk/apha | Twitter: [@APHAgovuk](https://twitter.com/APHAgovuk) | Facebook: [APHAgov](https://www.facebook.com/APHAgov)
Address: APHA Perth Field Services, Strathearn House, Broxden Business Park,
Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RX

Includes:

More detail on cleaning requirements, again to be clearer is condition has been breached. Method statement states - The empty bins are transported to the wash area where they are steam cleaned and disinfected before the lids are attached with cable ties. Are we content with this condition? Maybe **APHA** could state example to follow?

[<redacted> (APHA)]

A C&D procedure stripped to bare essentials has only two steps (cleansing and disinfection) but the cleaning step can be as simple as just a sweep or long and complex (flushing, soaking with water at different temperatures, application of different detergents with or without scrubbing, etc...) depends on concrete conditions on the ground.

The cleaning step removes contamination by physically removing organic material and exposing inert surfaces as much as possible, the disinfection step intends to kill any lingering pathogens and must use a disinfectant approved by DEFRA under the General Diseases Order applied to the concentration required under said Order for an adequate amount of time.

In this method statement, considering we are just looking at skips, the steam clean is probably enough to achieve adequate cleaning, however, I would insist on the operator laying out a disinfection step where he clarifies: which DEFRA approved disinfectant will be used; what concentration will it be used and how long will it be allowed to be in contact with clean surfaces of skip.

I would suggest that if the legal advice is to include more detail with this condition, then the condition could be worded slightly different:

"5 - Skips to be cleaned and disinfected immediately on emptying in accordance with cleaning schedule agreed in advance with competent authority."

From: <redacted>

Sent: 02 November 2021 16:37

To: <redacted> (MARLAB) <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>r@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

Thanks <redacted> and <redacted>, both of your comments are helpful

Going back to <redacted> email, on the record keeping, I think we can make a work around on GDPR issues. WCL should be keeping commercial documents of all

consignments going to the site under ABP Regulations. I am sure a system can be adapted to rely this information to CNeS for official supervision purposes. I will let CNeS comment on frequency of providing this data.

On event mortality, it is important we distinguish mortality that is above background levels. From what you say FHI already make this distinction, so this is not new. We have concerns about the current burial procedures and site capacity to bury fish morts at WCL. This is the reason we are reviewing the burial derogation to make it easier for CEnS to official supervise the site. The geographical condition should reduce the current volume of morts going to the site. However, we should also be aware of mortality levels above background levels to ensure disposal is managed properly. You mentioned the FHI provide guidance when levels rise above background, does it refer to ABP regulations?

On your questions:

- Who do these conditions apply to - whiteshore or the fish farms? I assume the conditions can only apply to whiteshore? Only WCL
- What is the difference in what is to achieved by condition (2) and condition (7)? Condition 2 is general record keeping compliance. Condition 7 would be to ensure large scale disposal is managed properly i.e. not sitting uncovered for days.
- What is the fish farm or whiteside to do i.e. notify only or notify and wait for approval? Because it's the latter and if there's a delay to approval, what do you expect the fish farm to do with mortalities in the meantime? In theory, we would not reject any request from fish farms local to WCL. We are trying to prevent large quantities of/any fish morts from out with Barra and Uist being disposed of at WCL.
- Why does a disposal plan need to forwarded everytime? Is it an operational requirement of the fish farm to have a disposal plan and is this not checked via other routes than a condition which applies to whiteshore? And equally if the conditions only apply to whiteshore than why does the disposal plan need to forwarded every time?

A disposal plan is needed because burial of fish morts is not be allowed. We have temporarily allowed burial for WCL and these conditions apply to WCL only. We want to ensure that fish morts that are not included under the derogation are not getting buried at WCL. We want to maintain strict conditions for any fish farms that plan to use WCL as their method as disposal. So if a fish farm needs to use WCL for above background (event mortality) disposal then we need to have a process of recording that use.

Hope this is helpful.

<redacted>

<redacted>

*Animal Health - Disease Prevention Team | Animal Health & Welfare Division | Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy | Scottish Government
Tel. <redacted> | Mob: <redacted>*

From: <redacted>

Sent: 28 October 2021 16:03

To: <redacted> - Western Isles Council (<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk) <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> - Western Isles Council (<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk) <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; '<redacted>' <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; '<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk' <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>, <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

Hello

I have received advice from my Scottish Government legal colleagues on the fish waste burial conditions. Nothing major to change but they would like to see a bit more detail in the conditions. I have highlighted the conditions that need more detail and put in bold who I think is best placed to advise.

Burial conditions

1. No burial above ground (no banded pits)
2. Weekly list of morts detailing daily tonnage and origin sites to be emailed to eh@cne-siar.gov.uk
3. No pits left uncovered overnight – records and daily time stamped photographic evidence to be kept.

Further specification on the meaning “uncovered”. Greater specificity on the requirements will make it easier to establish a breach of the condition. We have this in the original Method Statement - Hole is covered in sand. If the pit has capacity left then a predator net is firmly secured over the site. Probably a question for **CnES**, is this what you would be looking for by having the pits covered?

4. Fish morts to be buried within 4 hours of arriving on site.

Recommend changing to – Animal by-product waste from aquaculture to be buried within 4 hours on arriving at site.

5. Skips to be cleaned immediately on emptying.

More detail on cleaning requirements, again to be clearer is condition has been breached. Method statement states - The empty bins are transported to the wash area where they are steam cleaned and disinfected before the lids are attached with cable ties. Are we content with this condition? Maybe **APHA** could state example to follow?

6. Only routine morts from Uist & Barra

Is routine sufficiently clear? Same with Uist and Barra. Would “from fish cultivated in waters [around/within x distance of] the coastline of Uist and Barra and any inland waters of those islands [if there are any fish on inland waters]” be more appropriate? Suggest **Marine Scotland** advise.

7. Any disposal of event morts have to be pre-notified to CNES & SG with quantities, origin location and disposal plan

Specification on an “event”. Could **Marine Scotland** provide advice on event mortality?

8. To end on 31/03/22 – to be debated
9. The site will be subject to a weekly unannounced weekly inspection.
10. Whiteshores will pay £200+vat for CNES monitoring

There may be scope for CNeS to charge but it should be removed from the conditions.

Burial derogation

We are wanting to move away from an open ended derogation. The new derogation is likely to remain in place until 31 March (at which point it would come to an end), although subject to cancelation by the Scottish Ministers if Whiteshore Cockles fails to adhere to the conditions.

On top of the conditions, an additional event that might lead to the cancellation of the derogation could be the refusal of the PPC Permit. Burial is not a long term solution, so failure to get a PPC Permit would mean the aquaculture industry seek alternative disposal routes. Can **SEPA** advise on appealing a refusal of a the PPC Permit? Could a revised application be made after the initial refusal?

In any case, the new derogation will not make a categorical statement that a new derogation will not be granted if the existing one comes to an end. That will enable us to have a full range of options available to it.

Grateful for comment by 19 November.

Thanks

<redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 04 October 2021 13:25
To: <redacted>@hient.co.uk
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Hi <redacted>, thanks for this. Is this information publicly available on your website (tried to locate it unsuccessfully)?
<redacted>

<redacted>

Animal Health - Disease Prevention | Animal health and Welfare Division | Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy | Scottish Government | Tel. <redacted> | Mob. <redacted>

From <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
Sent: 01 October 2021 13:50
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Hi <redacted>

We have provided two grants to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd as detailed below:

Fish waste drying project – for the establishment of a facility to process salmon mortars
November 2016
£404k

Eligible costs – plant & equipment, construction of yard and building to house the machinery

Fish waste processing expansion – expansion of site to include ensiling facilities holding mortars under controlled temperature and pressure

Feb 2021
£200k

Eligible costs – construction, steel fabrication and installation

I hope that helps but please don't hesitate to get back in touch if you require anything else.

Kind regards

<redacted>

<redacted>
Interim Area Manager
Innse Gall

DD: <redacted> | **Mob:** <redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 01 October 2021 13:02
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
Cc: <redacted> <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Good afternoon <redacted>,

Many thanks for your quick reply.

We would like to know the following:

- Did Whiteshores received a grant from HIE?
- If so what exactly was it for?

- What was the total amount of the grant issued?
- And finally what was the date that Whiteshores received the grant?

For background information:

- The Scottish Government banned the burial of fish waste in 2016. However, Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), in North Uist were granted a temporary derogation by SG to bury fish waste at their site until the fish dryer was operational. The derogation also allowed the company to begin construction on a permanent solution for fish mortalities in the Western Isles.
- Whiteshores claimed continued burial of fish waste at their site was necessary to fund the fish dryer.
- On engaging with Whiteshores, they said the fish waste dryer project is self-funded.
- Securing this funding was one of the reasons for the delay in building the fish waste dryer.
- Burial of fish waste cannot go on indefinitely.
- Scottish Ministers need to have a clear picture of what is happening with the fish waste dryer project.

I hope the above helps to answer your questions/queries but if you require any further information then please just let me know.

Kind Regards

<redacted>
Policy Officer
Disease Prevention Team
Animal Health & Welfare Division
Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy
Scottish Government

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
Sent: 30 September 2021 20:12
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Good evening <redacted>

I will be happy to help you with this. If you could let me know what specific information you require I will be happy to respond appropriately. If it would be easier to discuss I am free between 1 and 2 tomorrow on either of the numbers below.

Regards

<redacted>

<redacted>
Interim Area Manager
Innse Gall

DD: <redacted> | **Mob:** <redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
Sent: 30 September 2021 17:06
To: <redacted>@gov.scot
Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted> - Econ <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Hello <redacted>,

My colleague <redacted>, interim area manager in the Outer Hebrides, will be able to respond to your enquiry regards grant funding to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd.

Kind regards
<redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 30 September 2021 14:19
To: <redacted>@hient.co.uk; <redacted>@hient.co.uk
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Good afternoon <redacted> and <redacted>,

I have been passed your contact details from <redacted>, Head of Marine Grants Team to help clarify a query I have regarding Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), Whiteshores, Kyles, Pailble, Isle of North Uist, HS6 5DY (Companies House details - Company number SC379476 - 26 Lewis Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2JF).

The team I work with have been briefing Ministers, dealing with correspondence from Whiteshore WCL and handling FOI's about the business for several years now and we recently established a task and finish group with wide representation to push the long running WCL "fish dryer" project to completion. In recent correspondence from the Managing Director of WCL to Murdoch McLeod, Deputy Director Financial Services and Location Director for the Outer Hebrides in the Scottish Government, it is stated WCL received support from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). In the letter, WCL state they received grant funding to assist with the purchase of equipment.

We have asked WCL about funding for their project and been informed it is private funding, perhaps this is a new development? I would be very grateful if someone could provide me with further information about the grant funding that WCL are referring to.

Happy to discuss further if required.

Kind Regards

<redacted>
Policy Officer
Disease Prevention Team
Animal Health & Welfare Division
Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy
Scottish Government

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 September 2021 09:37

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> | <REDACTED> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Morning

RE point 10.

The figure of £200 + vat was going to be per month but following further internal discussion we are anticipating weekly inspections so would increase to £350 + Vat per calendar month.

<redacted>

--

<redacted>

<redacted> (<redacted>) | Manaidsear Seirbheisean Luchd-Cleachdaidh agus Arainneachd (Consumer and Environmental Services Manager)

Roinn nan Coimhearsnachdan | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | Rathad Shanndabhaig | Steornabhagh | Eilean Leodhais | HS1 2BW

Communities Department | [Comhairle nan Eilean Siar](#) | Sandwick Road | Stornoway | Isle of Lewis | HS1 2BW

<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk | <redacted> | Ext <redacted> | www.cne-siar.gov.uk

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 23 September 2021 09:10

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>r@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

OFFICIAL – BUSINESS

Re fish ensiling, from a SEPA perspective we won't require an environmental authorisation for < 10m³ capacity sited on fish farm shore bases or on cage rafts/barges. However, where there is evidence that the activity at a particular site is consistently giving rise to offensive odours outside the site where we will consider the need for a PPC Permit. Larger scale ensiling plants >10m³ capacity and those maintained at processing plants will always require to be authorised under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations.

Hope this helps,

<redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: <redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 September 2021 18:33

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk

Subject: Re: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Hi <redacted>,

(<redacted> removed as is a local North Scotland issue)

Thanks for this.

1. Can you clarify the sentence below- I think it should be "once a PPC permit is granted...?"

One thing we want to be clear is that is no PPC Permit is granted from SEPA, burial is no longer permissible.

2. Could you provide an update on where we are with regulation of fish ensiling as this is related in terms of fish disposal options for industry.

3. Point 7 disposal of event morts- It would be good for APHA to also be notified of these- we are in discussion with FHI on this matter as well. Such events are sometimes reported to us as a welfare concern by external parties so early notification would assist in our assessment.

Many thanks,

<redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Sent: 17 September 2021 14:27

To: <redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>
<<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>
<<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> - Western Isles Council (<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)
<<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> - Western Isles Council (<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)
<<redacted>r@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>
<<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Afternoon all

<redacted> and colleagues at CnES have produced a list of condition for the official supervision role CnES would carry out for the burial of fish waste at WCL. I have discussed them internally within SG and we agreed that they seem reasonable and not too onerous to achieve/stick by.

I want to get the views of others within the Task and Finish Group and then run this past SG solicitors, with a view to putting a new burial derogation in place using these conditions.

Conditions which could be applied to the site:

1. No burial above ground (no bunded pits)
2. Weekly list of morts detailing daily tonnage and origin sites to be emailed to eh@cne-siar.gov.uk
3. No pits left uncovered overnight – records and daily time stamped photographic evidence to be kept.
4. Fish morts to be buried within 4 hours of arriving on site.
5. Skips to be cleaned immediately on emptying.
6. Only routine morts from Uist & Barra
7. Any disposal of event morts have to be pre-notified to CNES & SG with quantities, origin location and disposal plan
8. To end on 31/03/22 (?)
9. The site will be subject to a weekly unannounced weekly inspection.
10. Whiteshores will pay £200+vat for CNES monitoring?

On point 8, the end date of end of March next year would support Whiteshores latest estimate for being operational. One thing we want to be clear is that is no PPC Permit is granted from SEPA, burial is no longer permissible. We are working towards an alternative solution and if that route fails, fish waste should be going to alternative legal disposal routes.

On point 10 and CnES charging for monitoring. I am assuming this will be for every visit (<redacted> can you confirm if this is correct?) and seems reasonable to recoup costs/time spent monitoring the site. We will need to clarify with legal if this is set in the conditions or taken up separately between CnES and WCL.

I would be grateful if you could respond to me by the end of the month. Nil replies will be treated as content with the conditions.

Hope you have a good weekend.

<redacted>

<redacted>

Animal Health - Disease Prevention Team | Animal Health & Welfare Division | Directorate

From: <redacted> | <REDACTED> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>

Sent: 06 September 2021 14:17

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@gov.scot

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Hi <redacted>

We've had a chat about Whiteshores and put together the following conditions which could be applied to the site:

1. No burial above ground (no bunded pits)
2. Weekly list of morts detailing daily tonnage and origin sites to be emailed to eh@cne-siar.gov.uk
3. No pits left uncovered overnight – records and daily time stamped photographic evidence to be kept.
4. Fish morts to be buried within 4 hours of arriving on site.
5. Skips to be cleaned immediately on emptying.
6. Only routine morts from Uist & Barra
7. Any disposal of event morts have to be pre-notified to CNES & SG with quantities, origin location and disposal plan
8. To end on 31/03/22 (?)
9. The site will be subject to a weekly unannounced weekly inspection.
10. Whiteshores will pay £200+vat for CNES monitoring?

Have a look at the proposed conditions and we'll discuss it when you get back. I've also attached a video of the large pit that was taken last week

Also <redacted> is forwarding you copy of the latest complaint we received from one of the local residents.

Regards

<redacted>

From: <redacted> | <REDACTED> <kredacted@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 September 2021 15:10
To: <redacted> <redacted@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Hi <redacted>

Hope you're fully refreshed, recharged and raring to go following your break!!

We're planning on meeting next week to discuss our options . Is that ok?

I was down in Uist next week and had a look at the site. Getting on well with installing the equipment and anticipate it being in place for October. The application to SEPA has still not been submitted because of a query regarding waste water disposal. They are also under financial pressure to have it in operation by March 2022. This seems quite optimistic though if the PPC application is still in limbo.

Regards

<redacted>

From: <redacted@btinternet.com> <redacted@btinternet.com>
Sent: 30 August 2021 12:45
To: <redacted> <redacted@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Uist visit

Good afternoon <redacted>,

I have extended the invitation to three of the politicians who have an interest in our project + yourself and Murdoch MacLeod who will facilitate the politicians visit if it can be arranged.

If you cant make it then hopefully we can accommodate members of the T & F group. How many people are in it and are we allowed to know who they are as there has been no contact from anybody since you told me that it had been formed?.

Had a better meeting with SEPA last week which was more constructive.

Best regards

<redacted>

On 30 Aug 2021, 11:20 +0100, <redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:

Morning <redacted>

Thanks for the kind offer to facilitate the transport for a site visit but I will need to decline it. I do appreciate the offer of a site visit though and if possible would like to extend it to the wider task and finish group?

I would imagine most of the group could possibly still make the first week in October, not sure if that date was suggested due your friends availability. My travel would be through Scottish Government travel procedures, with due consideration for environmental impact and in line with the Civil Service Code.

Let me know if you want to host the task and finish group for a site visit?

<redacted>

<redacted>

Animal Health - Disease Prevention Team | Animal Health & Welfare Division | Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy | Scottish Government

Tel. <redacted> | Mob: <redacted>

From: <redacted> | G <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>

Sent: 27 August 2021 09:52

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - 1st meeting 22 July 2021 - discussion and action points - draft for comment

Morning <redacted>

It seems accurate.

Only thing I would include from my perspective is to mention the problem with resources for continuous monitoring of the location.

Other than that, OK

I'm down in Uist next week and planning on having a look to see what's been happening .

Cheers

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>
Sent: 16 August 2021 11:02
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: Uist visit

(Annex 3 – additional letter sent to Murdoch Macleod)

Good morning <redacted>,

I hope all is well.

Following the latest meeting with SEPA and our consultants (they seem to be intent on delaying our application) I believe it would be a good idea if I organise a day trip out to Uist for yourself and some politicians with an interest in our project to see for yourselves the progress that has been made and the equipment and buildings that are now complete and almost ready for operation.

Would you be available during the first week of October? I will arrange for a jet to collect the party from Edinburgh Airport private facility - fly to Uist in 30 minutes - have a couple of hours here and return you all to Edinburgh in the afternoon.

We haven't won the lottery! I have a friend with a private jet who is coming out to Uist during this period (he has a house here) and he is delighted to help us as he knows the importance of our project to the Uist community.

Your thoughts would be appreciated.

<redacted>

<redacted>

From: <redacted>@gov.scot <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Sent: 05 August 2021 17:13

To: <redacted> | G <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@apha.gov.uk;
<redacted>@apha.gov.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted>@gov.scot;
<redacted>@gov.scot; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>
<<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>

Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - 1st meeting 22 July 2021 - discussion and action points - draft for comment

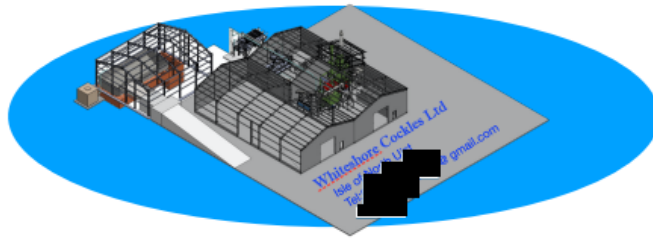
WARNING: THIS EMAIL CAME FROM OUTSIDE THE COMHAIRLE; PLEASE TREAT HYPERLINKS OR ATTACHMENTS WITH CAUTION. CONTACT THE IT HELPDESK IF IN ANY DOUBT.

Hello all

Attached is a draft note of the main discussion points and actions from the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group. Grateful if I could have your comments by 27 August. I will take no response as being content.

<redacted>

Annex 3: [Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 3 letter from Whiteshore to SG 24 September 2021](#)



24/09/2021

Dr Murdoch M Macleod
Deputy Director , Finance (Financial Services)
And Location Director for the Outer Hebrides
The Scottish Government
Room 3A North, Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Dear Dr Macleod,

Reference : Aquaculture Drying / Recycling Facility in North Uist

Thank you for your recent telephone call to enquire on the progress of our salmon waste drying and recycling project in North Uist. Now that the Covid 19 restrictions have eased considerably it has allowed the designer of the equipment and the engineers to return to Uist to complete the final connections and electrical switchgear. We expect the plant and machinery to all be in place by early November . We are in constant dialogue with SEPA regarding our Part A PPC application and our consultants should have the necessary data to submit the application within the next few weeks. We are also working on our licence application with the Animal Health Dept to allow us to render and produce animal by products.

We received excellent support from Highlands and Islands Enterprise with our project which resulted in grant funding to assist with the purchase of the equipment. The proposed fifteen employment opportunities are seen as vital to the North Uist economy.

In respect of your continued interest and following the visit to our site by yourself and Kate Forbes MSP in the latter part of 2019 we would like to formally invite you and Kate back to Uist to see the completed project. We would respectfully also extend the invitation to the Cabinet Secretary, Mairi Gougeon and Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, who we believe would both have an interest in seeing first hand our innovative plant , which will help to ensure the long term viability of fish farming in the Western Isles, as well as visiting a unique part of Scotland which I believe they both have an interest in.

In terms of security and Covid restrictions, if required, the visit would be unpublicised and the only other persons present would be the staff of Whiteshore Cockles Ltd and the local representative of H.I.E. (<redacted>) whom you met with on your last trip.

My suggested itinerary would be :

A date in late autumn to fit in with everyone's diaries - I appreciate the difficulty this may cause. Collected by private jet from Edinburgh airport mid morning and a flight to Benbecula airport which would take approximately half an hour in a Citation CJ4. Collected from Benbecula by Whiteshore staff and driven to North Uist for a three hour visit. A 'Uist' lunch at a facility we have overlooking Vallay Island to which a visit can be arranged if requested. A return flight to Edinburgh which would leave late afternoon. If the party wish to visit any other facility in the Uist during their trip I can easily organise this.

The jet is operated by one of my friends, Mr <redacted> of the Roe Group (They have a depot in Edinburgh) who has a house in Uist and he will coincide the trip with a visit for a few days. <redacted> is very keen to promote or assist any island person / business and has made his plane available to me before for charity auctions.

Thank you once again for your continued interest and advice which is very much appreciated by our small family company and we would all be delighted if you could manage to facilitate a visit as suggested.

<redacted>

Annex 2: [Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 2 Fish Waste Working Group meeting 22 July 2021](#)

**The Burial of Fish Waste and Installation of Fish Waste Dryer System at
Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist**

1st meeting of the Task and Finish Group

Thursday 22 July 2021, 10 am to 11:30 am

Attendees

Chair, <redacted>, Scottish Government (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Scottish Government (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Scottish Government (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Scottish Government (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Animal and Plant Health Agency (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Animal and Plant Health Agency (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (<REDACTED>)
<redacted>, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (<redacted>)

Responsibilities of the Fish Waste Working Group

Scottish Government

- Legislative responsibility around animal by products (ABP).
- Set conditions for burial derogation.

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

- Responsible for inspection and assessing regulations of ABP sites. For new ABP sites, once APHA are satisfied that conditions are met approval recommendation passed to SG for approval.
- Responsible for fish welfare.
- Complaints regarding live fish and disposing of mortalities.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES)

- Official supervision for fish waste burial at Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL).

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

- PPC licensing for site equipment. Normally takes between 4-6 months to process an application but can be up to a year and even longer if problems.

Discussion and Action Points (AP)

Conditions for new fish waste burial derogation under the Animal By-Products Regulations. Failure for WCL adhere to burial conditions will result in any burial derogation being revoked. Other disposal options are available so it should not come as a shock to the aquaculture industry if WCL is no longer a disposal option. **AP - <REDACTED> to send Group what conditions CnES feel should be in the new burial derogation.**

Discussion on Official Supervision. <REDACTED> expressed concerns regarding site capacity and the actual numbers of fish being buried. **AP - <REDACTED> to engage with WCL to request quantities of fish waste buried at site in past year on a monthly basis.** <REDACTED> raised concerns that no actual burying is taking place and instead fish are being stored in open pits and containers. New conditions should be set to address this. Council visits would need to be monthly to check records and visit the site.

Engagement with Whiteshore Cockles Ltd and aquaculture industry. The Group agreed wider aquaculture industry needs to be involved in any future meetings. **AP - <REDACTED> to engage with Marine Scotland to let them know about meeting with the aquaculture industry that operate in the Western Isles and ask for contact details.** Looking to meet with WCL and aquaculture industry in September. **AP - <REDACTED> to draft invite letter.**

Deadline for new derogation. PPC permit application process is likely to take 6 months to a year. Need APHA input about timings for ABP approval, including new method for validating rendering plants. No deadline set but discussion on possible rolling monthly derogation be put in place, subject to satisfactory inspection from CnES. **AP – <REDACTED> to engage with solicitors on legality of rolling derogation.**

On-going burial of fish waste for contingency planning for event mortalities. Fish waste burial at WCL must stop when the fish waste dryer is operational. Burial may be granted for event mortalities but only under approval from Scottish Government. **AP – <REDACTED> to consider how/if this would work in practice.**

[Annex 1: Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 1 letter from Whiteshore to SG in July 2021](#)

Whiteshore Cockles Ltd
Whiteshore
Kyles, Paible
North Uist
HS6 5DY

Mr <redacted>
Animal Health - Disease Prevention Team
Agriculture and Rural Delivery Directorate
Animal Health and Welfare Division
Scottish Government
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh, EH11 3XD

6th July 2021

Dear Mr <redacted>,

Thank you for your letter dated 5 July 2021 regarding the disposal of animal by products and derived products by way of burial in an authorised landfill.

We have replied to your queries regarding our Method Statement procedures below:-

1. We were unaware that a geographical limit had been imposed on the derogation authority. On the very rare occasions that we have accepted morts from out with the Western Isles it has been in an emergency situation. The last time this occurred was over ten months ago and from today's date we will no longer accept fish from outside the Western Isles until our new plant is operational.
2. Our record keeping is nothing short of meticulous. Every collection is recorded on a waste transfer document which has the date, fish farm site name, time of collection, time of delivery to our site and amount of waste completed accurately. This document is countersigned by the site manager, driver and our site manager. It is then recorded digitally and copies are also given to the fish site and the transport company. This information is freely available at a moments notice to any of our monitoring agencies. Our biosecurity arrangements are also very rigid. Every vehicle arriving at our site is deeply cleaned and disinfected. All tubs and skips are also allocated to an individual holding area for each fish farm site before being cleaned and disinfected. A deodoriser is also put on all vehicles before leaving our site and going on to the public road.
3. The burial process is exactly as per our Method Statement.
4. Our maintenance procedures are followed exactly as per our Method Statement.
5. Our Health & Safety Policy is up to date as per legal requirements.
6. The Corn Bunting only arrived on our site after our current burial process and regeneration policy took place, as the site was an unproductive field previously. It is now one of the best populated areas in the Western Isles due to our environmental practices. This can be confirmed by our local RSPB office if required.

To address our other concerns that have been identified incorrectly:-

1. We have never accepted ensiled fish at our site.
2. We do not use sand from out with our site.
3. Hard core rock has never been used to shore up pits. The only rock / concrete on our site has been used in the extensive building programme for our drier project.
4. The maximum time any pit is uncovered is a few hours whilst burial operations are taking place. Seaweed cover is provided on a daily basis as and when required. Tens of thousands of tons of seaweed have been used on the site since we started.
5. The last known complaint we received was in October 2020 from a mainland family who have a holiday home on the island. On the rare occurrence of seepage from a pit it is dealt with immediately as per our maintenance procedures.
6. In October 2020 we provided CNES with an up to date plan which identified the areas of our site that were still available for burial; this shows that there is still ample capacity.

We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from our local community since the illegal break in of our site by Mr <redacted> and the negative press reports which ensued. Since we started building works we have welcomed many visitors to the site who have shown an interest in our project which will be vital to the circular economy of the Highlands and Islands. Our local councillors have recently visited our site and were hugely impressed by the works that have already taken place and are fully supportive of our project, which will bring employment opportunities to the island as well as having significant environmental benefits. They also mentioned that they have never received any complaints from their constituents concerning our operation.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the proposed Task and Finish Group as their expertise and advice will hopefully assist us in completing our project as soon as possible. We will make ourselves available to the group members at the earliest opportunity to meet with and discuss the best way forward for all interested parties.

Yours sincerely

<redacted>
Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

Appendix 1: FOI Correspondence with the Scottish Government

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 2:37 AM

Subject: Re: Your recent correspondence with Scottish Government and partner agencies - 202100254831

To: sheila.voas@gov.scot

Please consider this a formal request for a review of 202100254831.

The FOI reply dated 8 December 2021 refused to provide "a submission, a document which has been circulated internally" and provided reasons for withholding the document; namely:

Annex

An exception applies:

An exception under regulation 10(4)(e) of the EIRs applies to some of the information you have requested. Regulation 10(4)(e) of the EIRs allows a Scottish public authority to withhold internal communications. In this case a submission, a document which has been circulated internally.

This exception is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exception. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exception. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosing information as part of open, transparent and accountable government, and to inform public debate. However, there is a greater public interest in allowing a private space within which officials can provide free and frank advice and views to Ministers in submissions. It is clearly in the public interest that Ministers can properly and robustly defend the Government's policies and decisions. They need full and candid advice from officials to enable them to do so. Disclosure of this type of information could lead to a reduction in the comprehensiveness and frankness of such advice and views in the future, which would not be in the public interest.

In your review please provide further information on the type of document withheld including who wrote it and a summary of the subject matter.

Scottish Salmon Watch objects to the "private space within which officials can provide free and frank advice and views to Ministers in submissions". Indeed, the whole *raison d'être* behind Freedom of Information is the requirement for public accountability.

No mention is made of any legal submission so there appears to be no legal barrier to disclosure.

Granting privacy to submissions by civil servants - and other parties - to Ministers is a dangerous precedent which must be resisted. Hence this request for a review.

Please therefore reconsider the refusal of this document. At the very least, in your review Scottish Salmon Watch asks you to provide more context and details of the submission.

Indeed, any future appeal to the Scottish Information Commission would require further information on the submission.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI review request.

Thanks.

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

From: <casehandling.service@gov.scot>

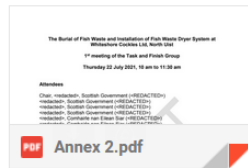
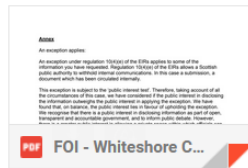
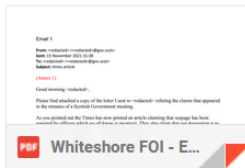
Date: Wed, Dec 8, 2021 at 3:41 PM

Subject: Your recent correspondence with Scottish Government and partner agencies - 202100254831

To: salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com

Please find attached a response to your correspondence.

6 Attachments



[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 SG Letter Response-202100254831](#)

[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 SG Letter Response-202100254831 Annex](#)

[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 1 letter from Whiteshore to SG in July 2021](#)

[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 2 Fish Waste Working Group meeting 22 July 2021](#)

[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Annex 3 letter from Whiteshore to SG 24 September 2021](#)

[Download Whiteshore FOI disclosure December 2021 Emails](#)



Don Staniford
salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com

Our Reference: 202100254831

8 December 2021

Dear Mr Staniford,

**REQUEST UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2004 (EIRs)**

Thank you for your request dated 12 November 2021 under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

Your request

You asked for information on Whiteshore Cockles since 26 July 2021 including any Cabinet Secretary, internal correspondence, complaints, photos, videos, emails, letters and any other information.

As the information you have requested is 'environmental information' for the purposes of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs), we are required to deal with your request under those Regulations. We are applying the exemption at section 39(2) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA), so that we do not also have to deal with your request under FOISA.

This exemption is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exemption. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exemption, because there is no public interest in dealing with the same request under two different regimes. This is essentially a technical point and has no material effect on the outcome of your request.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



Accredited
Until 2020



Response to your request

I enclose a copy of the information you requested.

While our aim is to provide information whenever possible, in this instance we are unable to provide some of the information you have requested because an exception under regulation 10(4)(e), internal communications, of the EIRs applies to that information. The reasons why that exception applies are explained in the Annex to this letter.

Marine Scotland response

In relation to your request, we may hold some relevant information through the inspections conducted as part of Scotland's aquatic animal health surveillance programme. The results and outcomes of these inspections, including any information collected and retained, are published by Scottish Government, as part of an active publication plan -

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/publication-of-fish-health-inspectorate-information/>

Under regulation 6(1)(b) of the EIRs, we do not have to give you information which is already publicly available and easily accessible to you in another form or format. If, however, you do not have internet access to obtain this information from the website(s) listed, then please contact me again and I will send you a paper copy.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your EIRs request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to:

Sheila Voas
Chief Veterinary Officer
P Spur
Scottish Government
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

Email: Sheila.voas@gov.scot

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at:

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

Yours sincerely

Sam McDonald
AHW : Disease Prevention

Annex

An exception applies:

An exception under regulation 10(4)(e) of the EIRs applies to some of the information you have requested. Regulation 10(4)(e) of the EIRs allows a Scottish public authority to withhold internal communications. In this case a submission, a document which has been circulated internally.

This exception is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exception. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exception. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosing information as part of open, transparent and accountable government, and to inform public debate. However, there is a greater public interest in allowing a private space within which officials can provide free and frank advice and views to Ministers in submissions. It is clearly in the public interest that Ministers can properly and robustly defend the Government's policies and decisions. They need full and candid advice from officials to enable them to do so. Disclosure of this type of information could lead to a reduction in the comprehensiveness and frankness of such advice and views in the future, which would not be in the public interest.

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 12, 2021 at 12:45 PM
Subject: FOI re. Whiteshore Cockles
To: CEU@gov.scot

Further to [FOI/202100225785](#) which was filed on 26 July 2021 and replied to by the Scottish Government on 13 August 2021, could you please provide any information on Whiteshore Cockles and the dumping of diseased farmed salmon since 26 July 2021.

Please provide any briefings to the Cabinet Secretary, internal correspondence, complaints, photos, videos, emails, letters and any other information.

As context, Scottish Salmon Watch received this message via Facebook on 29 October 2021 (we have the person's identity but have withheld it as they asked to remain anonymous):

Oct 29, 2021, 11:17 AM

Hi I am wondering if you could tell me if this is legal I would like to stay anonymous as fear come back
Are a salmon company allowed to take mass mortality's from 1 site and transport them by sea to another region of Scotland then give them to someone to bury in the western isles

This information has been corroborated by other witnesses who phoned Scottish Salmon Watch to claim that diseased salmon outwith the Outer Hebrides (i.e. from the Mainland) was still being dumped illegally at Whiteshore Cockles. Another whistleblower claimed that lorry drivers were engaged in a cash-for-dead salmon scam which earned significant money on the black market and oiled the wheels of the illegal trade in diseased salmon dumped at Whiteshore Cockles - the witness claimed that bins full of diseased salmon were being dumped illegally for £50 each (with the cash going to lorry drivers).

Scottish Salmon Watch received an email (again from a trusted local source which wishes to remain anonymous) on 29 October 2021:

From:

Date: Fri, 29 Oct 2021, 23:08

Subject: Re: No complaints since Oct 2020 claim Whiteshore in letter to Scottish Government

To: Don Staniford <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

The stench here is the absolute utter worst it's ever been. It's going way over to Sollas with many folk complaining (quietly to each other). Countless tubs being seen daily by many. Heard from a fish farm worker that 100 tubs came from the Mainland ? The derogation was only ever for western isles, I think that's what I read in the foi you shared? I can't imagine what the pits look like over there but I do know what they smell like nearly 5 miles away.... :(we thought of writing to msp but we know it won't result in any action....

Another email dated 20 September 2021 reported:

From:

Date: Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 12:48 PM

Subject: Re: No complaints since Oct 2020 claim Whiteshore in letter to Scottish Government

To: Don Staniford <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

This morning we have already seen around 60 tonnes on 3 different lorries ran by three different hauliers heading for the pits (the smell was horrific and we were in passing vehicle). . It looks like they are getting every lorry they can to help transport the morts. Apparently according to someone we know in fish farm there is a race on to harvest on farms everywhere as too much dead / dying.

Oh my goodness I'm just stopped at petrol station near the pits and another lorry with 40 tubs has just gone past....!

Yesterday I was only out on the road briefly and saw 30T go by. They are coming from north and south heading to the pits, not sure which farms are harvesting.

Another story we have heard but no evidence for this is that fish from skye will be coming here too. If I remember rightly from your foi on the derogation the permission was only granted for fish from the western isles.

Again, please don't use my name - thank you

Another email dated 8 September 2021 reported:

From:

Date: Wed, Sep 8, 2021 at 10:28 AM

Subject: Re: No complaints since Oct 2020 claim Whiteshore in letter to Scottish Government

To: Don Staniford <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

I heard last weekend (second hand via ff worker) that WSL are planning on taking morts from the Isle of Skye. Apparently there is a rush to harvest everywhere due to high levels of lice etc. The conditions in the attached state that any disposed at the site should be from western isles. I hope it is coming from an end, the stench is definitely back on the island and we are seeing tubs going by regularly

Please consider this a formal request for information under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide a receipt of this FOI request.

Please provide the information electronically.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

Appendix 2: FOI request to Highlands & Islands Enterprise

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 3:35 AM
Subject: FOI re. Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2017
To: Team - Customer Service customer.service@hient.co.uk

Please provide information on Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2017.

Please include letters, emails, photos, complaints, details of grants and financial payments and other information on Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2017.

As context, an HIE report published in January 2021 included:
<https://www.hie.co.uk/media/10581/hie-account-management-list-january-2021.pdf>

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

ACCOUNT MANAGED CLIENTS AND THOSE WHICH HAVE A STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP WITH HIE – JANUARY 2021

The list below shows clients which are Account Managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and also those clients with which Highlands & Islands Enterprise has a strategic relationship. This report reflects the client list as at 25 January 2021.

Clients with an Account Managed Relationship with HIE as at 25 January 2021

Client	Entity Type	Business Unit
Whiteshore Cockles Ltd	Business	Innse Gall

Please consider this a FOI request under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide the information electronically.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI request.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

From: **Team - Customer Service** <customer.service@hient.co.uk>

Date: Wed, Dec 15, 2021 at 10:20 AM

Subject: 041 2022 FOI to HIE - Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2017

To: Don Staniford <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Dear Mr Staniford,

Thank you for your e-mail dated 14 December 2021, received by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

Your email has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. We will respond as soon as possible and in any event within 20 working days from the date the enquiry was received.

Your request is also subject to any clarification which may be requested by HIE.

Should you have any queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch at;

customer.service@hient.co.uk

Kind regards,

HIE Customer Service Team

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Dec 15, 2021 at 10:28 AM

Subject: Re: 041 2022 FOI to HIE - Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2017

To: Team - Customer Service customer.service@hient.co.uk

Thanks - your FOI reply should include any correspondence on Whiteshore Cockles including these emails obtained from the Scottish Government via FOI on 8 December 2021:

From <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>

Sent: 01 October 2021 13:50

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Hi <redacted>

We have provided two grants to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd as detailed below:

Fish waste drying project – for the establishment of a facility to process salmon morts

November 2016

£404k

Eligible costs – plant & equipment, construction of yard and building to house the machinery

Fish waste processing expansion – expansion of site to include ensiling facilities holding morts under controlled temperature and pressure

Feb 2021

£200k

Eligible costs – construction, steel fabrication and installation

I hope that helps but please don't hesitate to get back in touch if you require anything else.

Kind regards

<redacted>

<redacted>

Interim Area Manager

Inse Gall

DD: <redacted> | **Mob:** <redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Sent: 30 September 2021 14:19

To: <redacted>@hient.co.uk; <redacted>@hient.co.uk

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Good afternoon <redacted> and <redacted>,

I have been passed your contact details from <redacted>, Head of Marine Grants Team to help clarify a query I have regarding Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), Whiteshores, Kyles, Pailble, Isle of North Uist, HS6 5DY (Companies House details - Company number SC379476 - 26 Lewis Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2JF).

The team I work with have been briefing Ministers, dealing with correspondence from Whiteshore WCL and handling FOI's about the business for several years now and we recently established a task and finish group with wide representation to push the long running WCL "fish dryer" project to completion. In recent correspondence from the Managing Director of WCL to Murdoch McLeod, Deputy Director Financial Services and Location Director for the Outer Hebrides in the Scottish Government, it is stated WCL received support from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). In the letter, WCL state they received grant funding to assist with the purchase of equipment.

We have asked WCL about funding for their project and been informed it is private funding, perhaps this is a new development? I would be very grateful if someone could provide me with further information about the grant funding that WCL are referring to.

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 01 October 2021 13:02
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@hient.co.uk>
CC: <redacted> <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL)

Good afternoon <redacted>,

Many thanks for your quick reply.

We would like to know the following:

- Did Whiteshores received a grant from HIE?
- If so what exactly was it for?

- What was the total amount of the grant issued?
- And finally what was the date that Whiteshores received the grant?

For background information:

- The Scottish Government banned the burial of fish waste in 2016. However, Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), in North Uist were granted a temporary derogation by SG to bury fish waste at their site until the fish dryer was operational. The derogation also allowed the company to begin construction on a permanent solution for fish mortalities in the Western Isles.
- Whiteshores claimed continued burial of fish waste at their site was necessary to fund the fish dryer.
- On engaging with Whiteshores, they said the fish waste dryer project is self-funded.
- Securing this funding was one of the reasons for the delay in building the fish waste dryer.
- Burial of fish waste cannot go on indefinitely.
- Scottish Ministers need to have a clear picture of what is happening with the fish waste dryer project.

I hope the above helps to answer your questions/queries but if you require any further information then please just let me know.

Kind Regards

<redacted>
Policy Officer
Disease Prevention Team
Animal Health & Welfare Division
Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy
Scottish Government

Thanks,

Don

Appendix 3: FOI request to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 11:16 AM
Subject: FOI request re. Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2021
To: CNES FOI Team foi@cne-siar.gov.uk

Please provide information - including emails, letters, complaints, videos, photos and other specific details - on Whiteshore Cockles since 1 January 2021.

This would include the video and complaint cited in this email in September 2021 (obtained from the Scottish Government via FOI):

From: <redacted> | <REDACTED> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 September 2021 14:17
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@gov.scot
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions
Hi <redacted>
We've had a chat about Whiteshores and put together the following conditions which could be applied to the site:

1. No burial above ground (no bunded pits)
2. Weekly list of morts detailing daily tonnage and origin sites to be emailed to eh@cne-siar.gov.uk
3. No pits left uncovered overnight – records and daily time stamped photographic evidence to be kept.
4. Fish morts to be buried within 4 hours of arriving on site.
5. Skips to be cleaned immediately on emptying.
6. Only routine morts from Uist & Barra
7. Any disposal of event morts have to be pre-notified to CNES & SG with quantities, origin location and disposal plan
8. To end on 31/03/22 (?)
9. The site will be subject to a weekly unannounced weekly inspection.
10. Whiteshores will pay £200+vat for CNES monitoring?

Have a look at the proposed conditions and we'll discuss it when you get back. I've also attached a video of the large pit that was taken last week

Also <redacted> is forwarding you copy of the latest complaint we received from one of the local residents.

Regards

<redacted>

Please consider this a formal FOI request under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide the information electronically.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI request.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

Appendix 4: FOI requests to APHA

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 11:53 AM

Subject: FOI re. Whiteshore Cockles and farmed salmon wastes (including ensiling) since 2 July 2021

To: SM-APHA-Enquiries APHA enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Please provide information on the waste disposal of farmed salmon mortalities since 2 July 2021.

Please include any reference to landfill disposal of diseased salmon mortalities at Whiteshore Cockles in North Uist.

This is an update of a FOI request filed on 2 July 2021 which is still to be replied to.

Note that the following emails were disclosed by the Scottish Government via FOI earlier this month (8 December 2021):

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 September 2021 18:33

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk

Subject: Re: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

Hi <redacted>,

(<redacted> removed as is a local North Scotland issue)

Thanks for this.

1. Can you clarify the sentence below- I think it should be "once a PPC permit is granted...?"

One thing we want to be clear is that is no PPC Permit is granted from SEPA, burial is no longer permissible.

2. Could you provide an update on where we are with regulation of fish ensiling as this is related in terms of fish disposal options for industry.

3. Point 7 disposal of event morts- It would be good for APHA to also be notified of these- we are in discussion with FHI on this matter as well. Such events are sometimes reported to us as a welfare concern by external parties so early notification would assist in our assessment.

Many thanks,

<redacted>

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>

Sent: 02 November 2021 17:28

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted> (MARLAB) <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles - Task and Finish Group - burial waste conditions - for comment by 19 November

Hi <redacted>,

On condition 5 where query is addressed to APHA

See my comments below in [green](#).

Best regards.

<redacted>; DVM MRCVS

Veterinary Advisor - Field Delivery

APHA Scotland Field Services (Galashiels)

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

Telephone: <redacted> | Email: <redacted>@apha.gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/apha | Twitter: [@APHAgovuk](https://twitter.com/APHAgovuk) | Facebook: [APHAgov](https://www.facebook.com/APHAgov)

Address: APHA Perth Field Services, Strathearn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RX

More detail on cleaning requirements, again to be clearer is condition has been breached. Method statement states - The empty bins are transported to the wash area where they are steam cleaned and disinfected before the lids are attached with cable ties. Are we content with this condition? Maybe **APHA** could state example to follow?

[<redacted> (APHA)]

A C&D procedure striped to bare essentials has only two steps (cleansing and disinfection) but the cleaning step can be as simple as just a sweep or long and complex (flushing, soaking with water at different temperatures, application of different detergents with or without scrubbing, etc...) depends on concrete conditions on the ground.

The cleaning step removes contamination by physically removing organic material and exposing inert surfaces as much as possible, the disinfection step intends to kill any lingering pathogens and must use a disinfectant approved by DEFRA under the General Diseases Order applied to the concentration required under said Order for an adequate amount of time.

In this method statement, considering we are just looking at skips, the steam clean is probably enough to achieve adequate cleaning, however, I would insist on the operator laying out a disinfection step where he clarifies: which DEFRA approved disinfectant will be used; what concentration will it be used and how long will it be allowed to be in contact with clean surfaces of skip.

I would suggest that if the legal advice is to include more detail with this condition, then the condition could be worded slightly different:

"5 - Skips to be cleaned and disinfected immediately on emptying in accordance with cleaning schedule agreed in advance with competent authority."

Please consider this a formal FOI request under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide this information electronically.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI request.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 11:44 AM

Subject: Re: FOI re. waste disposal of farmed salmon mortalities since 1 January 2015

To: SM-APHA-Enquiries APHA enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Could APHA please provide a reply to this FOI request filed on 2 July 2021?

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Jul 2, 2021 at 2:37 PM

Subject: FOI re. waste disposal of farmed salmon mortalities since 1 January 2015

To: SM-APHA-Enquiries APHA <enquiries@apha.gov.uk>

Cc: APHA.Scotland@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Please provide information on the waste disposal of farmed salmon mortalities since 1 January 2015.

Please include any reference to landfill disposal of diseased salmon mortalities at Whiteshore Cockles in North Uist and at landfill in Shetland.

As context, please note a FOI disclosure by the Scottish Government in June 2021:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-202100207142/>

This included correspondence featuring APHA:

From: <redacted>

Sent: 27 September 2018 11:16

To: APHA Corporate Correspondence <APHA.CorporateCorrespondence@apha.gsi.gov.uk>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Salmon - disposal on beach - Isle of Lewis.

Morning <redacted>

As <redacted> mentioned we are aware current issues regarding Whiteshores and are monitoring the situation closely to ensure compliance with the temporary derogation. In fact I was down there on Monday this week monitoring the site and it appears they are complying with the agreed methods of disposal. The picture was also forwarded to us 2-3 weeks ago alleging that the disposal site was Great Berneray although it definitely is the site in North Uist. I suspect the information was obtained third-hand and confused the area where the salmon were reared with the area of disposal. At the moment we have no concerns about the operation.

This method of disposal is due to end in March 2019.

Let me know if you require any further information

<redacted>

<redacted>

Animal Health Inspector
Consumer and Environmental Services
Development Department
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Sandwick Road
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis.
HS1 2BW

Tel: <redacted>, Fax: <redacted>, Mob: <redacted>

www.apha.gsi.gov.uk

From: APHA Corporate Correspondence
[mailto:APHA.CorporateCorrespondence@apha.gsi.gov.uk]
Sent: 25 September 2018 08:12
To: <redacted>
Cc: APHA Corporate Correspondence
Subject: FW: Salmon - disposal on beach - Isle of Lewis.

Good Morning <redacted>,

APHA received an enquiry from "Visit Scotland" following a complaint from a visitor about salmon being buried on a beach at Great Bernera. "Visit Scotland" are seeking guidance on what they should advise any other visitors who might contact them about this.

I am in the process of producing a draft response to them and the Animal by Products team (ABP) suggested that I notify you of this complaint to find out if you have any comments or wish to provide input to this.



From: APHA Corporate Correspondence

Sent: 24 September 2018 12:26

To: <redacted> (APHA) <redacted>

Cc: APHA Corporate Correspondence <APHA.CorporateCorrespondence@apha.gsi.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Salmon - disposal on beach - Isle of Lewis.

Hi <redacted>,

Please see email chain.

I have been led to believe that there is a temporary concession to allow the disposal of dead fish from salmon farms by burial due to the excessive distances to travel to dispose by normal means.

Before I respond to this enquiry from Visit Scotland, tourist board. Are you aware of an agreement to allow for the burial of dead salmon on the beach at Bernara, Isle of Lewis? Or would this be a local arrangement?

Regards

<redacted>

Complaints & Correspondence Manager.

Executive Support & Correspondence Management

email: APHA.CorporateCorrespondence@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

Email <redacted> Website: www.gov.uk/apha | Twitter: [@APHAgovuk](https://twitter.com/APHAgovuk) | Facebook: [aphagov](https://www.facebook.com/aphagov)

Address: APHA, Room B1, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD.

MEMORANDUM

From: [REDACTED]
Location: APHA Inverness
Tel: [REDACTED]
Mobile: [REDACTED]
Date: 06/09/2018

To: [REDACTED], VLS
Cc: [REDACTED], VA

Re: **SALMON DISPOSAL AT WHITESHORE COCKLES**
Whiteshore, Kyles, Paible, Isle of North Uist, HS6 5DY
Map ref: NF754672 ABP reg number U1141549 (haulier)

Background

1. The site at Whiteshores has been operating as a burial site for dead salmon since 2004. I have only visited the site once on the 12th December 2012 with Mr [REDACTED], CnES and [REDACTED], SG as a fact finding visit (copy of report attached).
2. The premises is not approved under the ABP legislation but is a registered [REDACTED] as a haulier (U1141459) dated 04/03/2013.



And another FOI disclosure by the Scottish Government in September 2018 detailed more information: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/disposal-of-mortalities-at-whiteshore-cockles-foi-release/>

A FOI disclosure by SEPA in June 2017 (F0187308) cites APHA as being involved in discussions over waste disposal of diseased salmon mortalities (PHA even visited Norway). For example:

2nd Meeting of the Working Group on Fish Waste Disposal

Contingency Planning for large scale disposal

Monday 9 March 2015

Attendees

John Webster, Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation

Jamie Smith, Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation

Andy Smith, British Trout Association

Ian Murdoch, AHW - Scottish Government

Colin Macaldowie, AHW - Scottish Government

Kate Smith, Marine Scotland

Charles Allan, Marine Scotland

Neil Leach, Defra

Alasdair Scott, Cefas

Gerry McElvogue, DARD

Donna Lyons, DARD

Jenny Purcell, APHA

Fiona Donaldson, SEPA

Michael Montague, SEPA

Willie Fergusson, Zero Waste Scotland

Alison McKinnie, Zero Waste Scotland

Willie Young, Argyll and Bute Council

2. SG AHW, Defra and APHA visit to Norway

JP and CM provided feedback on the SG AHW, Defra and APHA visit to Norway. We had been invited to Norway by the Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) mainly to visit a plant using the newly authorised heat treatment of fish silage processing method. We also used the opportunity to get to know colleagues in the NFSA and exchange views on other important challenges facing ABP controls.

From: Purcell, Jenny (APHA) [<mailto:Jenny.Purcell@apha.gsi.gov.uk>]
Sent: 05 August 2015 19:01
To: Jamie Smith; Alison McKinnie; Ian.Murdoch@scotland.gsi.gov.uk;
Michael.Montague@SEPA.org.uk; Charles.Allan@scotland.gsi.gov.uk;
Kate.Smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk; Fiona.Donaldson@sepa.org.uk
Cc: John Webster
Subject: RE: Draft2 SSPO draft guidance on waste disposal under ABP regs

Dear all,

I think the draft 2 reads well and is concise but comprehensive: good work. I've made a few pedantic suggestions from the ABP regulation point of view, see attached. I've also added comments to Jamie's questions below – hopefully without treading on anyone's toes!

Happy to discuss,
Jenny

Jenny Purcell BVSc PhD MRCVS
Veterinary Officer
APHA Hamilton Field Services

APHA is also cited via:

[FOI Lifts Lid on the Stench of Scottish Salmon: Government Legal Department Target Illegal Dumping of Diseased Salmon](#)

[Letter to Scottish Ministers on Illegal Dumping of Diseased Scottish Salmon in North Uist](#)

You may have read The Times yesterday via: [The Times: "Fish graveyard 'severely hampers' life for islanders, officials claim"](#)

Please consider this a formal FOI request under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide this information electronically.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI request.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch

Appendix 5 – FOI to SEPA:

From: **Don Staniford** <salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 12:14 PM
Subject: FOI re. ensiling farmed salmon wastes/morts & incinerators
To: AccesstoInformation <foi@sepa.org.uk>

Please provide information on the ensiling and incineration of farmed salmon wastes/morts - including a list of salmon farms with ensiling units and processing plants with PPC licenses for ensiling and a list of incinerators.

This email disclosed by the Scottish Government on 8 December 2021 provides some context to this FOI request:

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Sent: 23 September 2021 09:10

To: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> <<redacted>@apha.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>r@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk; <redacted> <<redacted>@SEPA.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd - Task and Finish Group - fish waste burial conditions

OFFICIAL – BUSINESS

Re fish ensiling, from a SEPA perspective we won't require an environmental authorisation for < 10m³ capacity sited on fish farm shore bases or on cage rafts/barges. However, where there is evidence that the activity at a particular site is consistently giving rise to offensive odours outside the site where we will consider the need for a PPC Permit. Larger scale ensiling plants >10m³ capacity and those maintained at processing plants will always require to be authorised under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations.

Hope this helps,

<redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: <redacted>

Please include information relating to any complaints re. offensive odours in relation to the ensiling and incineration of farmed salmon wastes/morts.

Please consider this a formal FOI request under the relevant FOI and Environmental Information regulations.

Please provide this information electronically.

Please provide a receipt for this FOI request.

Thanks,

Don Staniford

Director, Scottish Salmon Watch