

22 June 2016



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Drew Hendry MP
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Dear Drew

**Ardersier Waste Water Treatment Works
Your Ref: ZA3356**

Thank you for your letter about your constituents in Ardersier and their concerns over our essential project to upgrade the existing Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW).

As you may know, we have operated a WWTW at our site outside Ardersier for many years that also serves the existing Tornagrain and Inverness Airport areas. The planned investment has three distinct components:

1. Installing ultra violet treatment to improve the quality of treated waste water being discharged to the Moray Firth.
2. Extending the existing outfall 300 metres further into the Moray Firth to an area of higher natural dispersion.
3. Providing additional treatment and pipeline capacity to meet the planned growth demands from Tornagrain, and elsewhere within the existing catchment area of Ardersier.

The first two improvements are statutory environmental quality enhancements which are required regardless of the capacity increase to deliver essential improvements to protect and enhance the environment of the Moray Firth.

In terms of the planned growth, this matter was subject to previous engagement and discussion with many different agencies and the community in 2008-10 prior to the planning application being granted by Highland Council. However, due to the economic downturn in the housing market there was no need for us to proceed at that time.

I fully recognise that, given the significant passage of time, we need to more fully engage the Community about:

- the nature of the existing waste water arrangements,
- the options that were considered for accommodating growth within the Ardersier area,
- the proposals for upgrading the waste water treatment facility at Ardersier where the overall size of the waste water treatment facilities will be largely similar to the current arrangements,
- our work with Moray Estates to build a new pipeline to transfer waste water flows from the new Tornagrain development and Inverness Airport expansion to Ardersier WWTW, where the new pipeline will follow a broadly similar route to the existing sewer and, when finished, will be completely underground.

To keep the community informed, we are providing written information to every household in the area, as well as holding a series of further information events. This will give everyone in the community the opportunity to be informed about all aspects of the current and proposed future waste water arrangements in the Ardersier area. A copy of the information sheet is enclosed.

We want to hear the community's views to ensure their concerns are reflected in progressing these improvements and we will be holding information events at Ardersier War Memorial Hall, Station Road, Ardersier from 2pm to 6pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, June 28, 29 and 30, from 2pm to 6pm on Monday 11 July and from 6pm to 9pm on Tuesday 12 July. Customers are welcome to drop in at any time during the events. We will also be attending the Ardersier and Petty Community Council meeting on Tuesday 28 June at 7.30pm.

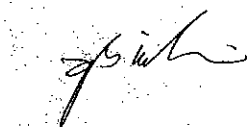
I hope these proposed actions assure you of the importance of this project to the future of the Ardersier area and of our wish to engage fully with the community in respect of these.

The following is our response to the key questions you have raised on behalf of your constituents:

- A full Environmental Impact Assessment survey was undertaken and was included in the planning application. This document is a matter of public record and can be accessed on the Scottish Water website at www.scottishwater.co.uk/ardersier.
- We realise that there will be increased traffic while we are carrying out this work. We have already discussed plans to manage the construction traffic with Highland Council and would like to discuss this with residents and the community council and local elected members.
- While there is no specific legislation applicable to socio-economic impacts, an Economic Analysis was undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. Due to the kind of development proposed and the distance between major tourist attractions in the area (Fort George) and the proposed development, no adverse effects on tourism are anticipated. Recreational activities such as walks in Ardersier Common and along the Candidate Core Paths Network will not be affected by the proposed WWTW. The proposal will result in an improvement in water quality on the shoreline of the Inner Moray Firth and is therefore considered to have a positive effect.
- Scottish Water operates many hundreds of wastewater treatment facilities in and around villages, towns and cities across Scotland resulting in very few odour complaints. We are not aware of any odour complaints relating to the existing Ardersier Works which has been operating for many years at the location of the proposed upgrade. There is no reason to believe that a new facility would result in any change to this situation. We develop Odour Management Plans which are approved and monitored by the local Environmental Health Officer within the Local Council.
- We are not aware of any existing impact on local organic farms and there is no reason to believe that a new facility would result in any change to this situation.
- The proposed upgrade will result in an improvement in water quality on the shoreline of the Inner Moray Firth and is therefore considered to have a positive effect.

I hope this is helpful but if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact our Public Affairs team who are always available to address any issues raised by your office. They can be contacted on 01383 848272.

Yours sincerely



Douglas Millican
Chief Executive