

HAVANT THICKET RESERVOIR PROJECT

Spring Consultation Report

August 2020



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Executive Summary

This report summarises the consultation exercise undertaken for the Havant Thicket Reservoir project in the Spring of 2020, the feedback we received and the actions we are taking in response. The feedback has informed our proposals and will be included with the outline planning applications for the reservoir and pipeline to be submitted this autumn.

The public consultation for the Scheme ran from May 11th to June 8th, though we did accept some late submissions up until June 15th. We had planned an approach centred around a series of public exhibition events, however due to the Coronavirus situation, we had to adapt our plans to avoid face-to-face events. We created a broad range of online and hard copy materials, explaining and visualising our proposals; and used a combination of channels to present our proposals and capture feedback. The consultation was advertised using a combination of digital and printed methods including a leaflet posted to over 50,000 households.

The consultation was a great success, with good levels of feedback received and general support for our approach and proposals. 578 responses were received in total, with 301 via a feedback form and 277 from other channels, including post, phone, email, website comments, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Feedback was anonymised but the report provides a breakdown of the location, gender and age of the feedback form respondents.

Responses to the multiple-choice questions in the feedback forms suggest strong support for the scheme, with a majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with the overall plan and each individual element of the scheme we asked about. The majority of respondents also agreed that the consultation information we provided was useful.

We also received 1,375 template emails from a Woodland Trust Campaign, objecting to the location of the reservoir and urging us to find an alternative site if the scheme could not be redesigned to avoid the loss of ancient woodland.

The report lists all of the themes identified, across all stakeholder and public feedback received. The themes are sorted into separate sections for each element of the scheme, listed as areas of support, questions, concerns and suggestions.

Responses to the issues raised, explaining what we're doing about the feedback are provided in section 4 of the report. The most frequent concerns with the scheme surrounded the loss of ancient woodland; the impacts of either access road option on local roads and residents; and the disruption caused by construction. In response, we've developed a new approach to access combining both options, diluting the construction and visitor traffic that will use either route; and reducing the loss of ancient woodland, by halving the width of the northern access road.

All of the feedback has been shared with the project team and many of the issues raised will be covered in detail in our planning applications, which we expect to be registered by Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council in October.

Foreword

by Bob Taylor, Chief Executive of Portsmouth Water

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts on our plans to develop Havant Thicket Reservoir.

Over the years, we've held many conversations and face-to-face meetings with local residents, community groups, environmental organisations, the local authorities and water industry regulators as we've developed our proposals.

This has helped us progress our plans to secure much-needed water resources for our region, which will also help protect world-famous chalk streams in Hampshire as less water is taken from them. And these conversations have also enabled us to make the most of this unique opportunity to create a valuable wetland for wildlife and create a green, leisure space to support the mental and physical wellbeing of our communities.

For this reason, it was very important to us to carry on with our latest public consultation during May and June this year, despite the restrictions of the Covid-19 lockdown. We wanted to make sure everyone's views were captured in the planning applications we're now able to submit after many years of preparation.

Given the need to keep everyone safe during the pandemic, we needed to work in innovative new ways to reach out to people and enable them to give their feedback.

This included holding a series of webinars, creating a 'virtual exhibition' for people to visit online, recording short bite-size interviews with the project leads on different topics and reaching out through the local media and social media, as well as posting 50,000 flyers through doors and mailing printed copies of a consultation brochure and feedback form for those who are not online.

We were delighted with the response, receiving a large amount of feedback, where people had clearly taken time to find out more and share informed ideas, as well as asking valid questions.

We worked hard to answer all of these and make it easy for people to have their say, whether that was online, by phone or post. So, again we would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who took the time to support us.

We heard views across a variety of different topics including support for the community facilities we're proposing, and in particular, the new wetland we want to create. We were also challenged in some areas, such as the need for the reservoir and the loss of ancient woodland and the options for the access road. You'll see in this document we have considered all of the comments and queries and taken action to address them.

For example, we're committing to replanting and improving at least 110 hectares of woodland and grassland to create new and enhanced habitat – both on and around the reservoir site and further afield – and have been able to modify the design further to reduce the loss of ancient woodland around the car park, access road and along the embankments.

Our aim is to make sure our objectives are in line with those of communities with an interest in the site, and what we've heard has helped shape the planning applications we're submitting to Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council this autumn.

We believe this is part of the reason we have such strong support and I know we are looking forward to engaging much more with local communities, partners, local authorities and environmental advisors in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Taylor".

Bob Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Portsmouth Water

1. What we did

Planning background

- 1.1. This Consultation Report has been prepared to share the results of our recent consultation with everyone who took part and support outline planning applications submitted by Portsmouth Water; for a new reservoir at Havant Thicket and a pipeline between the reservoir and Bedhampton pumping station ('the scheme'). The reservoir site is split along a north south alignment between the two local planning authorities of Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council, both within Hampshire County Council. The pipeline corridor is located in Havant.
- 1.2. An outline planning application is being submitted for development of the reservoir, with a separate outline planning application for the pipeline. As the reservoir site and pipeline corridor are a 'single project' (i.e. inextricably linked) they are supported by one Environmental Statement which assesses both the reservoir and pipeline as one scheme. One set of documents has been provided to cover both elements of the scheme. Both applications will be determined together.
- 1.3. The application for the reservoir site will include vehicular and pedestrian accesses, an operational control house and visitor facilities - a visitor centre, bird hide, car park and recreational walking and cycling network.
- 1.4. More detail on the scheme is provided in the Engineering and Design Report, which sets out the operational requirements and summarises the optioneering work; the Planning Statement, which sets out the need for the scheme and how it complies with planning policy; the Design and Access Statement, which illustrates how the scheme design evolved, taking into account the site context and consultation feedback; and the Environmental Statement, which reports on the environmental impacts of the scheme.

The consultation

- 1.5. The public consultation for the scheme ran from May 11th to June 8th, though we did accept some late submissions up until June 15th, to allow people to respond to a mail-out of brochures to residents of Warren Park in the latter half of the consultation period.
- 1.6. We had planned an approach centred around a series of public exhibition events, however due to the Coronavirus situation, we had to adapt our plans to avoid face-to-face events. Our revised approach is summarised below.

Materials

- 1.7. We created a broad range of materials, explaining and visualising our proposals, including:
 - A 24-page consultation brochure, in both printed and 'Interactive PDF' formats
 - An animated fly-through film, visualising our proposals
 - A series of video podcasts, interviewing project team experts about different parts of the project
 - A feedback form, in both online formats and printed with a Freepost envelope to return to Portsmouth Water
 - Dedicated project pages on the Portsmouth Water website
 - A consultation microsite, creating a 'virtual exhibition' to present all the materials and capture feedback from the public, with interactive maps where people could post comments, a guest book and an ideas forum

Methods

- 1.8. We used a combination of channels to present our proposals and capture feedback, including:
 - Continuing engagement with key stakeholders and statutory consultees via Skype and other conference call methods
 - A series of six public webinars, a stakeholder webinar and one dedicated to Portsmouth Water employees, presenting the proposals using the films and answering public

questions via a live Q&A, with a panel of project team experts. Recordings have been hosted on YouTube so they can be viewed at a later date

- A dedicated project phonenumber, where people could leave feedback, ask questions and request printed copies of the brochure and feedback form
- A mail-out of printed copies of the consultation brochure, feedback form and Freepost envelope. This included 102 people who had requested materials and 1250 residents in Warren Park, who were close to the proposed southern access option
- Regular posts, including films, on Facebook, Twitter and Linked In
- Via the Portsmouth Water email address
- Via the Portsmouth Water postal address
- A consultation microsite, where users could submit feedback via digital forms, a map-based tool and Q&A boxes
- An online questionnaire for young people aged 11 – 18
- Questions submitted via the phone, microsite, email, social media and post were individually answered throughout the consultation period

Promotion

1.9. The consultation was advertised using a combination of digital and printed methods, including:

- A leaflet posted to 50,000 local households ahead of the consultation, with details on how to get involved and find out more
- Posters in retail premises around local communities
- A series of press releases, resulting in editorial coverage in newspapers, radio interviews and a feature on BBC South East
- Banners on the Portsmouth Water website
- Continuing social media activity and paid advertising, targeting messages at households around the reservoir site and along the pipeline route
- Email updates to stakeholders
- E-newsletters to subscribers
- Email promotion from our project partners, including HBC, Community First, and the Rowlands Castle Parish Council

1.10. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus situation at the time, it was not possible to erect site notices advertising the consultation.

Archive

1.11. You can still find lots of information on the [project website](#) and you can even watch the public webinars at the [Portsmouth Water Youtube](#) channel.

2. How it went

- 2.1. The consultation was a success, with good levels of feedback received and general support for our approach and proposals.

Key metrics

- 2.2. In total, we received:

- 1,953 items of feedback, including 301 feedback forms; 277 comments from other channels (including post, phone, email, website and social media comments); and 1,375 template emails from an online Woodland Trust campaign
- 4,180 visits to the consultation microsite pages
- 124 attendees to the public webinars and 32 to the stakeholder session
- Over 250 views (and counting) of the webinar recordings on Youtube
- Over 4000 views (and counting) of the animated fly-through film on Youtube
- 102,026 impressions on Facebook and 886 engagements
- 6,980 impressions on Twitter and 133 engagements
- Over 5,200 impressions on LinkedIn and 134 engagements
- Coverage on BBC Radio Solent, BBC South Today TV, Portsmouth News, Petersfield Post and the PO Community Newspaper
- 40 completed questionnaires by young people aged 11 – 18

Who responded?

- 2.3. Looking at responses to the public feedback form, a majority of respondents were male, though not by a huge margin; a significant majority were from the local area; and a majority of respondents were 55 and over.

Table 2.1 Gender of feedback form respondents

Gender	Total (of 301)
Female	116 (39%)
Male	165 (55%)
No answer, or 'prefer not to say'	20 (7%)

Table 2.2 Postcodes of feedback form respondents

Post code	Total (of 301)
PO9	165
PO8	46
PO7	31
PO10	9
PO18	3
PO13	2
BH1	2
CF45	1
GU31	1
PO14	1

PO2	1
PO3	1
PO6	1
SO14	1
SO31	1
SY1	1

Table 2.3 Age of feedback form respondents

Age	Online submission total (of 172)	Paper submission total (of 129)	Overall total (of 301)
Under 18	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
18-24	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)
25-34	10 (6%)	1 (0.8%)	11 (4%)
35-44	19 (11%)	9 (7%)	28 (9%)
45-54	26 (15%)	12 (9%)	38 (13%)
55-64	47 (27%)	25 (19%)	72 (24%)
Over 65	44 (26%)	77 (60%)	121 (40%)
No answer	25 (15%)	5 (4%)	30 (10%)

- 2.4. These figures show low levels of participation from young people, which has also been the case during previous rounds of consultation. In anticipation of this, we put in place several initiatives to capture their views, which included an activity sheet sent to primary schools and a survey of secondary school students aged 11 to 18. A total of 40 students took part in the survey, with a majority being aware of the plans, though not clear on the reasons for doing it. There was overwhelming support for the reservoir, with specific reasons including the positive impact on the community; being a great place to visit with friends and family; the new leisure facility; and helping to secure water supplies. They also supported the environmental aspect of the scheme and all of the leisure facilities planned. More information on this survey can be found in Appendix B.
- 2.5. It's also worth noting that while under 55's were more likely to submit online than by paper; and a majority of paper submissions were submitted by over 65's; a majority of online submissions were still submitted by people 55 and over, suggesting that these platforms were not a major barrier to participation for this group.

Feedback on the consultation

- 2.6. When asked if they agreed that the consultation information we provided was useful, the vast majority of respondents (83% in total) who used the feedback form either agreed, or strongly agreed.

Table 2.4 Multiple choice feedback on the consultation exercise

Do you agree the online and printed consultation information we've provided is useful?	
Strongly Agree	111 (37%)
Agree	139 (46%)
Neutral	18 (6%)
Disagree	13 (4%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (0.3%)
Don't know	1 (0.3%)
No comment	18 (6%)

- 2.7. An analysis of all the public feedback received identified the following themes relating to the consultation exercise itself. They've been split into areas of support, concern and suggestions and each theme has a code listed, identifying a response provided in section 4 of the report. Areas of support that don't require a specific action have been listed as 'N/A'. These themes, along with all the feedback have been shared with the project team.

Table 2.5 Themes from public feedback on the consultation exercise

Support	Response
We have delivered an effective consultation	N/A
The consultation was informative and the proposals were clearly presented	N/A
We provided a wide range of useful, comprehensive and well produced materials, particularly the booklet, website and animation	N/A
Our approach was a good alternative during the lock-down and allowed us to continue to progress the project safely, without face-to-face events	17
The online consultation worked well - it was informative, easy to participate in and maybe even better than a face-to face approach, as it's more flexible; environmentally friendly; informative; easy to ask questions; and gives you a chance to reflect	17
The webinars were easy and convenient to access; clear and informative; well produced, blending discussion with video; and provided comprehensive, honest responses to people's questions	17
Our 'offline' options were informative, flexible and inclusive, including hard copies of the booklet and feedback form by post; and the project answer phone	17
The consultation was well advertised	N/A
It was good to know the perspectives of local authorities	N/A
The consultation has given people a chance to voice their thoughts and concerns on the project	N/A
Support for continuing to keep the public informed as the project progresses	17
Concerns	Response

Face-to-face events would have been better, as you can ask questions, challenge answers and get a clearer understanding	17
We have taken advantage of the lock-down and tried to push the project through without proper scrutiny. We should have waited until public meetings were possible	17
The online tools were not accessible – it was hard to join the webinars; difficult to navigate the website and leave feedback; and challenging for the visually impaired	17
There are some people who will be impacted but aren't online, they may not have felt included	17
The proposals have not been clearly presented or detailed enough - specific topics include public transport access; visitor centre design and location; disabled access; pipeline route; noise mitigations; environmental assessment; alternative solutions; loss of ancient woodland and other habitat (including upper lake); impact on wildlife (including bats); Southern Water's situation (demand, wastage and alternatives explored); environmental impact of traffic; the embankment; cycling and walking paths	17
Some questions are too complex for just yes/no answers	17
We have presented the proposals in a dishonest way, underplaying our impact on the environment and withholding assessments on the options available and our impacts, on the environment, residents and traffic	17
There hasn't been enough time to consider and respond to the proposals, because the consultation period has been too short and the booklet mail-out was too late	17
The consultation was not well advertised – mail-outs were not distributed widely enough; there was not enough advertising in the local area; and there were no posters around the site	17
The consultation will have no impact	17
There's been too much consultation – we've provided too much information and gone through too many rounds over the years	18
Some didn't want to comment on some aspects of the scheme, as they didn't feel informed, or 'qualified'	17
Decisions about the reservoir, construction, access and other facilities should be made by experts from the project team	18
Young people should shape the project	17
We should focus more on the water supply improvements than the recreational benefits	17
Suggestions	Response
A follow-up face-to-face consultation, once the pandemic is over	17
Invite all close neighbours for a meeting	17
Create a timeline map, showing construction phases and the disruption to paths and trails around the site	17
Create before and after visualisations	17
We should show major planned developments on our master plan	17
We should include a map on any flyers sent out via post	17

3. The feedback

Multiple-choice questions

- 3.1. Responses to the multiple-choice questions in the 301 public feedback forms we received suggest strong support for the scheme, with a majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with the overall plan (80% in total) and each individual element of the scheme we asked about.

Table 3.1 Multiple-choice feedback on our overall plans

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our plans to build the reservoir?	
Strongly Agree	146 (49%)
Agree	93 (31%)
Neutral	20 (7%)
Disagree	16 (5%)
Strongly Disagree	16 (5%)
Don't know	1 (0.3%)
No comment	9 (3%)

- 3.2. Even for the elements with the lowest margins of support (our approach to the access road and the pipeline route) a majority of respondents still agreed or strongly agreed with our approach and only 20% (access road) and 19% (pipeline) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Table 3.2 Multiple-choice feedback on individual elements of our plans

To what extent do you agree with our approach to the different aspects of the scheme below?						
	The location of the reservoir	The design of the reservoir	The road to provide access for the public	The creation of a wetland for wildlife	The location of the visitor centre	
Strongly Agree	146 (49%)	114 (38%)	65 (22%)	182 (60%)	92 (31%)	
Agree	82 (27%)	104 (35%)	88 (29%)	70 (23%)	98 (33%)	
Neutral	28 (9%)	40 (13%)	67 (22%)	23 (8%)	60 (20%)	
Disagree	14 (5%)	14 (5%)	36 (12%)	3 (1%)	20 (7%)	
Strongly Disagree	18 (6%)	11 (4%)	23 (8%)	5 (2%)	14 (5%)	
Don't know	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)	6 (2%)	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.7%)	
No comment	12 (4%)	17 (6%)	16 (5%)	17 (6%)	15 (5%)	

To what extent do you agree with our approach to the different aspects of the scheme below?

	The size of the visitor centre and the facilities	The network of paths for walking, cycling and horse riding	Parking	Other outside visitor facilities	The route of the reservoir pipeline
Strongly Agree	77 (26%)	119 (40%)	64 (21%)	112 (37%)	64 (21%)
Agree	103 (34%)	117 (39%)	110 (37%)	108 (36%)	92 (31%)
Neutral	65 (22%)	30 (10%)	61 (20%)	43 (14%)	98 (33%)
Disagree	25 (8%)	9 (3%)	27 (9%)	8 (3%)	9 (3%)
Strongly Disagree	10 (3%)	10 (3%)	20 (7%)	13 (4%)	10 (3%)
Don't know	4 (1%)	1 (0.3%)	4 (1%)	1 (0.3%)	12 (4%)
No comment	17 (6%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)	16 (5%)	16 (5%)

Public feedback themes

- 3.3. While the multiple-choice feedback above suggests strong public support for the scheme, the feedback form was designed to capture why people felt the way they did and encourage them to raise concerns and make suggestions.
- 3.4. The table below lists all of the themes identified, across public feedback received via the feedback forms and other channels, including post, phone, email, website comments, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.
- 3.5. The themes are sorted into separate sections for each element of the scheme, listed as areas of support, questions, concerns and suggestions. A code is listed for each theme, identifying a response provided in section 4 of the report. Areas of support for our proposals as they are, that don't require a specific action have been listed as 'N/A'. These themes, along with all the feedback have been shared with the project team.

Table 3.3 Themes from public feedback on the proposals

The whole project	
Support	Response
General support – the project is a good idea	N/A
It will secure water for the future, responding to climate change and an increasing population, without putting further strain on chalk streams	N/A
It will provide a green leisure facility for anyone in the community, to exercise or relax in nature	N/A
Support for a wheelchair friendly site	N/A
It will be good for the environment, create a variety of habitats and encourage a variety of wildlife	N/A
Our project experts have carefully considered our impact on the environment, wildlife and the community and tried to come up with a sustainable approach	N/A

It will promote and educate people about wildlife and the environment	N/A
It will enhance an underused site, create beautiful scenery and keep a green space	N/A
It will reduce antisocial behaviour currently happening on the site	N/A
It will help the local economy, create jobs and increase house prices	N/A
It will help to keep costs down for Portsmouth Water customers	N/A
There is a good business case	N/A
Support for a safe, considerate construction, with mitigations to reduce disruption e.g. construction vehicle speed limits and restricted working hours	4
Portsmouth Water and Southern Water are working together to find a solution	N/A
Questions	Response
Who is paying for the reservoir, how much will the project cost and how much profit will Portsmouth Water make?	3
Will Portsmouth Water's prices be affected by this?	3
What other locations did you consider for the reservoir?	5
Why have the Woodland Trust not been involved in the project?	5
When will the construction start and end?	19
How will we limit the impacts of construction on neighbours, in terms of noise, emissions and debris on roads?	4
Where will HGVs come in and out of the site during construction?	4
How will we compensate people directly affected by construction? Will there be discounts?	4
Have you published a full environmental impact study yet?	5
How many hectares of ancient woodland will be lost? How much of the existing Havant Thicket and Staunton Country Park will that be?	5
Will I still be able to access the site, Havant Thicket and Staunton Country park during construction?	4
How will we manage anti-social behaviour? Will there be fences, security or surveillance systems?	16
Will there be regular public transport to and from the reservoir?	10
Will new cycle paths to the reservoir be created?	10
Will entry be free for visitors?	15
Have we budgeted for ongoing maintenance of the site, including cleaning, litter-picking and gardening?	15
Concerns	Response
General opposition – the project is a bad idea	1
That water saving alternatives and leak reductions have not been properly explored	1
The project is a waste of money	1
We are just trying to profit from the water and leisure	3
If the reservoir will only be used during droughts the damaging abstraction levels will continue	6

Concerns about Southern Water - Including their perceived failure to conserve water; pollution and over-abstraction of water sources; and investment practises	3
We've talked about the project for too long. We need to get it done	18
Environmental objections will delay/stop the project	18
There is already too much development going on in the area	10
Concern about dust, emissions and water pollution from construction traffic and activity	4
Concern about construction noise and disturbance over a lengthy period	4
There will be mud and debris on roads and paths during construction	4
There is no compensation for people who will experience disruption	4
Concern about construction traffic going through residential areas	4
Construction will restrict people from walking and cycling around and through the site	4
Concern about the disturbance and displacement of wildlife from construction, including many species of birds, mammals and some reptiles	5
Concern about the loss of habitat including ancient woodland, grassland and hedges, include The Avenue and Upper Lake	5
Removing trees will reduce air quality, which will contribute to climate change and affect asthma sufferers	5
Leaving the site alone would be better for wildlife, nature and the community	5
The community will lose the site, without benefiting from the water captured	3
The development will change the views of historical structures	11
The scheme won't blend in with the natural environment	11
Environmental assessments should be done by an independent party and all reports should be published	5
Visitors will damage habitat and disturb wildlife, we should prioritise nature and carefully manage leisure	14
Visitor traffic will cause congestion on local roads; disturb wildlife and residents; and increase pollution	7
Concern about litter, around the site, in the reservoir and in neighbouring residential areas	16
The site will attract anti-social behaviour and security will be required	16
That the reservoir is needed but the leisure aspect is unnecessary	13
Suggestions	Response
Find another local site without ancient woodland	5
Suggestions for alternatives to a reservoir, including a desalination plant and water saving initiatives	1
Suggestions for alternative locations for the reservoir, including under the South Downs and at Buster Hill	5
Use 'Direct Vision' construction vehicles, to improve safety	4
Lock entry gates at night to reduce littering	16
Publish a management plan along with the planning application	15

Implement a youth warden scheme, to encourage environmental education	15
Have dogs on leads throughout the site, in certain areas, or have completely dog free areas	15
Insure against drought	1
Re-use timber to create wildlife sculptures for the site	15
The reservoir	
Support	Response
It's the right site for the reservoir	N/A
Support for a robust embankment around the edge of the reservoir	N/A
Support for the realignment of the embankment, to reduce environmental impacts	N/A
Support for re-use of waste materials within the site and locally to avoid construction traffic	N/A
Questions	Response
How much water do Southern Water need? How much are they using currently?	3
How deep will the water be in the reservoir?	19
Did you consider leaving the avenue as an island, or splitting the reservoir in two?	5
How will the reservoir affect other water bodies in the area, including Durrants stream and Langstone Harbour?	6
How will we avoid over extracting water during the drier summer months?	6
How will we avoid flooding following extreme rainfall?	6
Will the weight of the water cause settlement issues or ground tremors?	6
Will such a large body of water affect buildings insurance for neighbours?	6
Will the reservoir attract flying/biting insects such as midges?	6
Concerns	Response
The reservoir needs to be bigger for a growing population	2
A clay embankment will sink over time, especially with climate change and so risks flooding	6
The reservoir will cause flooding during extreme weather	6
The reservoir might affect neighbouring properties, increasing risk of flooding, changing ground conditions and lowering house prices	6
The reservoir will attract mosquitos	6
The rocky embankment design will not blend in with the natural environment	11
Children might be attracted to the water and so at risk of drowning	16
Suggestions	Response
Use overflow pipes at top of the reservoir, to reduce flood risk	6
Have steeper embankment slope to increase capacity	2
Change the shape or size of the reservoir to keep the avenue	5
All homes within 300 metres of the reservoir boundary should be given free flood insurance	6

Look at Llys y Fran Reservoir as an example	11
We should have a wider variety of planting around the embankments, including meadows on the outer banks; trees along the crest; planting along the outer face of the wetland retaining structure; and planting to soften the look of the rock armour	11
The access road	
Support	Response
The northern option is better than the southern option	N/A
The northern option is in a less densely populated area and so will be less affected by construction vehicles, visitor traffic and parking on local roads	7
The northern option does not go directly through the Thicket, it uses an existing Forestry England track and for the short section where it doesn't, it should be possible to find a route that avoids mature trees	N/A
The northern option limits the impact of operational and construction traffic on local communities, by providing a direct B-road connection to the A3(M), without traveling through Rowlands Castle	N/A
Support for a ghost junction along the B2149	N/A
The northern option will provide a more rural approach to the reservoir for visitors	N/A
The northern option will encourage local people to walk or cycle to the site	N/A
The southern option is better than the northern option	N/A
The southern option should not cause too much disruption to Leigh Park and Warren Park, as the area is already built up; the route travels around the edge; construction vehicles will be moving slowly; and once construction is complete, the access road will not attract much traffic	N/A
The southern access will avoid the disruption and loss of woodland and wildlife	7
The southern access will protect well-used paths through Havant Thicket	9
The southern access will provide easy access for residents of Leigh Park, Warren Park and surrounding areas	N/A
The southern option will be more cost effective	7
Support for a combination of both the northern and southern options, as it would share traffic and the risks posed by it across both communities, as well as providing the option of a one-way system (during events for example) and multiple entrances/exits for emergency services	N/A
They trust our decision on the best route	N/A
Questions	Response
Did we survey traffic around Swanmore Road before the lockdown?	7
Would a route directly from junction 3 of the A3(M) be possible?	7
What would we do to avoid added congestion and speeding along the B2149?	7
What sort of junction will be put in place for the northern access?	7
Are we going to upgrade the existing track along the south side of Havant Thicket, which already has a durable, all-weather surface?	19
How will we avoid a combination of both the northern and southern access becoming a rat run between Warren Park and junction 2 of the A3(M)?	8

How will we separate pedestrians and cyclists; and cars along the access road?	9
Concerns	Response
Vehicle access is the main issue with the project	7
The traffic assessment is inaccurate, because we've underestimated visitor numbers and surveyed the area during lockdown	10
Either route would create traffic on inappropriate local roads; risks for pedestrians and cyclists; and destroy countryside	7
The B2149 is not suitable for this level of construction and visitor traffic and will lead to congestion in Rowlands Castle – it is already very busy; has issues with speeding; is dangerous to cross and cycle on; and is prone to subsidence	7
The B2149 would be dangerous to turn in and out of and would require traffic lights, or a roundabout at the junction to be safe	7
Large planned housing developments in the area (including Land East of Horndean) will cause further congestion on the B2149. The northern access will make the problem even worse	7
Constructing the northern route would damage ancient woodland, impacting on air quality and protected wildlife, which can't be justified if the southern route is available	7
Traffic using the northern access will disturb and endanger wildlife in the woodland, including deer, foxes and badgers	7
Replacing the existing path with the northern access will discourage people walking to the site; and prevent cycling and walking from north to south	9
Concern that speed limits will be reduced on the B2149	7
The southern access would bring construction and visitor traffic through a residential area and congestion, noise, pollution and safety issues would affect residents	7
Swanmore Road is not suitable for this level of construction and visitor traffic – it is already congested; has issues with speeding; has many parked cars; a blind corner; is a bus route; and is surrounded by other small residential roads	7
Construction and visitor traffic using the southern option would endanger residents of Warren Park and Leigh Park, especially children and pets	7
There is a primary school near the southern access – children will be at risk from lorries and affected by traffic fumes	7
The southern access will lead to cars parked in Swanmore Road and other local roads	7
The southern access will attract vandalism, anti-social behaviour and motocross bikes/quad bikes accessing the site	16
A combination of both routes has all of the disadvantages and none of the benefits - more expensive and slow to construct, without protecting either the Warren Park community, or the ancient woodland	8
A combination of both access options would create a rat run between Warren Park and the A3(M). If you lock the gates out of hours, people will park in residential streets	8
A combination of both roads would make wildlife crossings dangerous, disturbing Bell's Copse and Havant Thicket	8

Suggestions	Response
Don't have an access road. Promote sustainable travel instead	7
Suggestions for alternative routes including a new direct link to the A3(M); a route via Hazleton Farm (either 'Land East of Horndean' or the former banger racing track); a direct access from London Road (Waterlooville); a route off the B2149 via Blendworth Common; an eastern access, with a bypass of the B2149; a route off the double roundabout at Rowlands Castle; and a new road, joining up Rowlands Castle, junction 3 of the A3(M) and Hulbert Road	7
Take construction and visitor traffic from junction 3 of the A3 through Dunsbury Park, to avoid residential areas on the way to the southern access	4
Use a temporary 40mph limit on the B2149 during construction, so HGV's can exit the site safely	4
If a combination is used, construction traffic should only use the northern access	4
Upgrade and widen the roads in the surrounding area	10
Limit access to the south for walking, cycling and wheelchair users	7
Create a one-way system, with the southern access as an entrance and the northern access as an exit	15
Have a shuttle bus route and service, between the visitor centre and local communities	15
Collaborate with developers and local authorities to find a holistic solution, that considers all the major developments in the area, including Land East of Horndean	10
The wetland and other habitat creation	
Support	Response
The wetland will create valuable habitat for wildlife including migratory birds and insects	N/A
Support for the design of the wetland, including different compartments; islands for wildlife; and the retaining structure, to protect the habitat and wildlife from droughts	N/A
Support for the creation of other habitats including woodland and grassland	N/A
Questions	Response
What will happen to the existing wildlife? Will we rehome them? What is the plan for doing that?	5
Have we considered glow worms and other unusual invertebrates?	5
Will there be efforts to increase bee numbers?	5
Will our grant scheme safeguard other local woods?	5
How will we stop litter ending up in the wetland?	14
Concerns	Response
The wetland is being used to justify the destruction of ancient woodland	5
Planting new trees will not replace ancient woodland, it takes many years before trees help to clean the air and for their complex eco-systems and soils to develop	5
We need to balance the loss of valuable habitats with other environmental gains and make the most of the opportunities surrounding the wetland	5

Visitors and water sports would disturb the wildlife in the wetland area	14
Wildlife won't be contained to the wetland, so the whole reservoir should be protected	14
The wetland habitat and wildlife could be harmed by lower water levels and predators during dry periods	19
Suggestions	Response
We should aim for biodiversity net gain with the project	5
Our promises about habitat creation and enhancements should be formally documented in our planning application	5
Encourage the designation of the remaining woodland areas as a Special Area of Conservation, because of the high number of bat species	5
Transfer soil from the ancient woodland to the new woodland	5
Create wet meadow habitat	5
Install posts for birds such as ospreys	12
Create floating islands, to encourage wildlife and improve views	12
Install wildlife webcams	15
Use mesh fencing and landscaping along the north western shore, to prevent people and dogs from accessing the wetland	12
The visitor centre	
Support	Response
The visitor centre will create a great new place for local people and families to go and learn about wildlife and nature	N/A
The café will generate income and provide views over the water, rest and refreshment for visitors	N/A
The visitor centre is in a good location – a suntrap, far away from residential properties, with good views along the water	N/A
The visitor centre is about the right size	N/A
The visitor centre looks modern and clean	N/A
Support for the education space	N/A
Concerns	Response
Having the visitor centre in such a central position takes traffic through the whole site	14
The size and design of the visitor centre will not blend into the rural landscape and damage views from Staunton Country Park. Natural materials such as timber should be used instead	11
We should avoid a fully open plan design	12
The visitor centre design is not future-proofed – it needs scope for future extensions; more flexible space; extra utilities capacity; and mains drainage	2
A green roof on the visitor centre would be vulnerable to and maybe even encourage vandalism	12
A glass dominated design would not fit-in with the landscape; be vulnerable to vandalism; cause glare affecting views; risks bird strikes; will be difficult to clean; and isn't actually necessary for good views	12

The visitor centre being located on a pier, within the retained wetland will disturb wildlife; use up space for habitat; risk litter in the wetland; be vulnerable to vandalism; be costly to construct; limit scope for future expansion; be difficult to service; be difficult to set up utilities for; and be more difficult to connect with the bird hide	14
The location of the external terrace will interrupt views from the café; be difficult to screen; lead to litter in the wetland; encourage people to swim; and disturb wildlife as people come and go	14
A smaller visitor centre would be better from a conservation point of view	14
The visitor centre and café will disturb wildlife	14
Funds to manage the visitor centre need to be protected	15
The visitor centre will just be a building promoting Portsmouth Water	13
The visitor centre will just be for profit and the cafe will be too expensive	3
Suggestions	Response
Build a visitor centre at an existing local wetland, such as at Langstone Bridge	13
Suggestions for alternative locations for the visitor centre, including the south side of the site; the east of the site, with a larger car park and a shorter access; and the western corner of the north bay, with the terrace to the south and the play area attached	14
Look at other sites including the café at Cley Marshes; the information displays at Lyndon visitor centre; and the South Downs Sustainability Centre	12
Use natural, local materials like brick and flint to construct the visitor centre and re-use the timber from any woodland removed, to leave a legacy and educate visitors about sustainability	11
Create a wildflower garden surrounding the visitor centre	12
Avoid lighting the visitor centre after dark, to reduce disturbance to nocturnal wildlife	5
The café should be sustainable - carbon neutral, with no single use plastics and serving only healthy and environmentally friendly food	15
Ideas for the visitor centre, including wildlife art; classes including local wildlife illustration; educational pond dipping; displaying archaeological finds from the site; and interactive displays on water, climate change and wildlife	15
Carefully design seating for the elderly in the visitor centre café and outside terrace	12
The network of paths for walking, cycling and horse riding	
Support	Response
Support for the circuit trail around the site, with access points to connect the surrounding communities	N/A
Support for a network of trails across the site, for walking, cycling and horse-riding; for leisure, commuting or everyday travel	N/A
Support for new routes for both commuting and leisure for walkers and cyclists	N/A
Support for a system to stop motorcyclists accessing the trails	N/A
Footpaths should be suitable for electric mobility scooters	N/A
Questions	Response

Will the bridleways around Havant Thicket be easily accessible for horses from the Rowlands Castle entrance?	9
What is the total distance of the trail around the reservoir going to be?	19
How will we stop motorcyclists and 4x4s accessing the trails and making them dangerous to use?	16
Concerns	Response
The current circuit around the site, used by many walkers and cyclists, will be lost	9
The community is losing a quiet and natural area for walking, horse riding and cycling to a much busier, touristy place	13
The trails need to be carefully designed to avoid environmental impact and disturbance to wildlife from walkers and cyclists, a good distance from the wetland area and screened	14
Concern that a waterside wetland boardwalk, between the visitor centre and bird hide, would disturb wildlife and should be set further back from the wetland	14
Many visitors will struggle with a 5km walk. There needs to be a wider variety of options for different abilities	19
Concern that walkers, cyclists and horse riders will be sharing trails – it will not be safe for walkers or cyclists and horses might be overwhelmed	9
Walking and cycling routes need to be integrated with the surrounding network	10
People are already using the trails around the site to ride motorbikes, the reservoir will attract even more	16
Gates to keep motorbikes off the trails will also block some bicycles and trailers	16
Dog walkers will not control their dogs and will leave mess on the trails	16
Suggestions	Response
We should engage Cycling UK and the Rowlands Castle Walking for Health Group	17
Have separate paths for cyclists and walkers	9
Use an all-weather surface for trails and bridleways, specifically asphalt or tarmac for cycle tracks	9
Design the trails to avoid unwanted vegetation, mud and flooding	9
Install gates along paths to wildlife viewpoints to reduce disturbance	12
Recommendations for guidance on cycle track design, construction and maintenance including the Department for Transport Local Transport note 2/08; as well as Sustrans, Transport for London and Highways England documents	9
Have an additional bridleway access on the Horndean side	9
Create pedestrian and cycle routes in the wider area, including from Horndean to the site; from Cowplain to the site via Waterloooville; from Horndean to the Havant cycle network, via Havant Thicket; from Waterloooville, to Rowlands Castle and on to Havant; from Leigh Park to Rowlands Castle, via Horndean; and re-opening the old Dunsbury Park A3(M) underpass	10
Install clear signage for cycling routes, at the residential edges of the site	15

Bridleways should be free to all horse riders	15
Parking	
Support	Response
The car park is about the right size	N/A
The car park is located far away from residential properties	N/A
Support for bicycle parking	N/A
Support for disabled parking	N/A
Support for horsebox spaces and links to bridleways from the car park	N/A
Support for encouraging people to walk, cycle or use public transport, rather than drive	N/A
Support for parking charges, to manage demand, generate income and encourage sustainable transport	N/A
Questions	Response
Is the car park shown to scale in the artists impression?	11
Concerns	Response
We should be focusing facilities more on cyclists and walkers than drivers	10
Ancient woodland should not be lost for parking space	5
There's not enough parking and we must have enough capacity to take future demand	2
The location of the overflow car park is not clear	17
The car park should be further away from the reservoir, to encourage people to walk and avoid pollution near people exercising	10
The car park looks urban	11
People will park in surrounding residential streets in the Warren and Rowlands Castle, which are already congested	10
We shouldn't charge for parking as its currently free at Havant Thicket and will encourage people to seek free parking in residential areas	15
Parking in surrounding residential areas will be restricted	10
Suggestions	Response
With the exception of disabled people, we don't need a car park. We should be encouraging people to walk or cycle instead	10
Put the car park on the outskirts of the site, to encourage people to walk in	10
Have a second car park, on the east of the site, or near the southern access, for people walking along the crest	2
Close the Forestry England car park	10
Introduce residents' permits to avoid parking on surrounding roads	15
Other outside visitor facilities, such as picnic sites, play areas and bird hides	
Support	Response
Fishing, swimming and water sports should not be allowed – it would disturb wildlife and visitors and there are a number of alternatives in the area	13
Support for the range of facilities, beyond just the visitor centre	N/A
Support for the woodland play area	N/A

Support for picnic areas	N/A
Support for bird hides	N/A
Support for frequent dog bins	N/A
Support for frequent toilets	N/A
Support for the inclusion of a slipway, for future use if needed	N/A
Questions	Response
What water sports will there be? Will there be swimming? Boating?	13
If Langstone Harbour, Chichester Harbour and the Solent have water level changes and still permit sailing, why can't we?	13
Will people be allowed to fish?	13
Could this be a larger mixed-use development, with entertainment, restaurants and bars?	13
Where will the steps and viewing platform shown in the visualisation be located and can we use less harsh, urban materials?	11
Concerns	Response
The woodland play area will disturb wildlife	14
Play areas should be further away from the visitor centre	13
The play area is too far from the visitor centre for parents to see from the café	12
We should be focusing on the environment and wildlife rather than creating a leisure 'theme park' (e.g. mountain biking and play areas)	13
The viewing platform and steps leading to it look urban and inaccessible	11
Having land and plants in front of the main bird hide will obscure views; encourage people to climb the hide; and need maintenance that disturbs wildlife	12
The wetland boardwalk between the visitor centre and bird hide is too close to the wetland and will disturb wildlife	14
Floor to ceiling windows are not necessary for bird hides and increase the risk of disturbance and damage	12
We are wasting an opportunity to host water sports, as there aren't many facilities in the area and they help to educate people about nature	13
Disappointment that there will not be fishing, as there are not many places for freshwater fishing in the area	13
Disappointment that there will not be swimming	13
Bird hides will attract antisocial behaviour and vandalism	16
We need to offer constructive activities for young people, or there will be anti-social behaviour	13
Suggestions	Response
Encourage walking by putting play areas a good distance from the visitor centre	10
Suggestions for bird hide design including metal hides; two storey hides; one-way glass; opening windows; spotting scopes; a shape that enables views in multiple directions; and a buried bunker design	12
Have non-motorised water sports, including sailing, canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding, rowing, inflatables, scuba diving and swimming. This could	13

be seasonal, supervised and kept to a restricted area, to avoid disturbance to wildlife	
Suggestions to include fishing, including trout fishing and fly fishing	13
Create an archery range	13
Create spaces for mindfulness, meditation, yoga and prayer	15
Have a designated dog swimming area, at the northern tip of the western embankment	12
Safety measures should be in place for swimming and water sports anyway, as they will be done with or without permission	16
Have large rubbish bins and litter picking stations	16
Have picnic tables at regular intervals around the trails	12
Ban BBQ's on the site	15
The pipeline	
Support	Response
Support for the pipeline route, because it avoids Great Copse and woodland; uses the open space along the stream corridors; and avoids busy roads through Leigh Park	N/A
Questions	Response
Did we consider any alternative routes, or approaches to the pipeline?	19
How long will the pipeline take to build?	19
Will we reinstate roads and paths after the pipeline construction?	4
Will the pipeline interfere with streams in the area?	6
Could we enhance Hermitage Stream and Riders Lane Stream while we're constructing the pipeline?	5
Concerns	Response
Residents of Leigh Park will experience disruption from the pipeline construction	4
Construction of the pipeline will disrupt access to properties along the route	4
The pipeline construction will have to take place during summer months, for practical and financial reasons	4
The reservoir site should not be used as a construction compound for the pipeline, as it is too far away and construction traffic would disturb residents along Swanmore Road	4
The pipeline route passes through Ellisfield Road, where houses often have subsidence and construction could cause earth movements	4
The route will require us to cross the Riders Lane Stream	4
Pipes running through Leigh Park will burst or leak, causing flooding and disruption	6
The pipeline route is unnecessarily complicated, which may make maintenance difficult in the future	6
Pumping water through the pipeline will be noisy for neighbours, especially at night-time	6
Suggestions	Response
The route should cross the Riders Lane Stream just north of Highlawn Way	4

Take the pipeline route along the B2149 to avoid residential areas	4
Site the pipeline construction compound off Purbrook Way	4

Stakeholder feedback

- 3.6. We also received a number of responses from larger organisations who we describe as 'stakeholders'. A selection of these responses are summarised below. As responses were anonymised before being analysed, it is possible that feedback forms have been received from other organisations and included in the public feedback summarised above.

Table 3.4 Summarised stakeholder feedback

Ancient Tree Forum	Response
Object to the proposals because of loss of ancient woodland, particularly ancient wood pasture	5
Removing these areas would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitat, which cannot be truly compensated for and is protected by the National Planning Policy Framework	5
No survey data has been shared, to confirm if any other ancient, veteran or notable trees would be impacted by other elements of the scheme, such as the pipeline or access route	5
The trees, their soils and habitat help to combat climate change, by removing carbon from the air	5
The remaining woodland and wildlife will be impacted by changes to the hydrology of the area	6
The remaining woodland and wildlife will be impacted by pollution, noise and from construction	4
Visitors will disturb wildlife, impacting on behaviour and reproduction	14
As the clearance of the site is relatively recent and the soils have not been changed for farming, it would be possible to restore the whole area to wood-pasture or woodland. So, the entire site should be compensated for	5
Compensation should include large-scale creation of wood pasture, extending the existing areas; re-use of soil from the lost ancient woodland; planting of young, locally native trees, including oak and hawthorn; management of nearby ancient and veteran trees; relocation of any ancient and veteran trees to areas of new wood pasture; and long term monitoring and reporting on created sites	5
Forestry Commission	Response
Concern that constructing the reservoir, supporting infrastructure and car park in Bells Copse will result in the loss of several areas of irreplaceable ancient woodland	5
Visitors to the reservoir could have further impact on the remaining areas of ancient woodland	14
Ask for further clarity on the total woodland loss predicted; our plans for compensatory planting and ongoing management; details of translocation, of soils and plants; and how will we will manage the impact of visitors on Bell's Copse, including soil compaction, wildlife management and air, noise and other pollution	5
Request a long-term commitment to ecological monitoring and management of both newly created woodland, and impacts on the existing woodlands of Havant Thicket, Bells Copse and Staunton Country Park	5

Concern about the additional loss of woodland caused by the northern access option	7
Concern about the additional loss of woodland caused by the car park located at Bell's Copse	5
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust	Response
Think the reservoir is a sustainable way to secure future water supply, while reducing pressure on globally significant chalk rivers	N/A
Recognise the project's contribution to biodiversity and support the creation of new habitats, including wildflower embankments, that will create pollen and nectar for insects; new woodland, which will go some way towards mitigating losses; and the large retained wetland area, which will be a key route to securing net gains in biodiversity for the site	N/A
As valuable habitat that supports wildlife including bats, under normal circumstances, the loss of ancient woodland would not be acceptable. As a result, mitigation must be ambitious and create net biodiversity gains to make the losses acceptable. Our planning application should detail the natural capital delivered by the project	5
Assuming the design is sensitive to the wildlife, the reservoir will also create a recreational site for the community and wider population, that will improve physical and mental wellbeing and create an attractive place to learn about wildlife	N/A
The exact location of the visitor centre is unclear and different visualisations show different things	17
Concerned that the visitor centre should not be within the footprint of the wetland and urge us to locate it as far to the north west as possible while still providing views	14
Suggest that we locate the educational hide far away from the visitor centre, to avoid disturbance of wildlife and enhance the visitor experience	14
Support the inclusion of nest boxes, bee bricks and green roof in the design of hides and the visitor centre	5
Encourage the use of permeable surfaces, wildflower-rich verges and native shrubs for the access road, to provide habitat and connectivity for wildlife; and a more natural approach for visitors	12
While the pipeline route should avoid harm to habitats such as woodland and streams, if there are any losses during or after construction, then we should aim for net gains in biodiversity there also	5
Horndean Protection Group	Response
We should include evidence of net zero carbon impacts with our planning application, including calculations relating to the removal of mature trees, offset by the planning of new ones; and changes in biodiversity	5
Concerns about air pollution and the disturbance of wildlife during construction and the mitigation measures we will put in place	4
Request cumulative traffic assessment of the roads surrounding Horndean, Rowlands Castle and Havant, during construction and operation and mitigation plans	10
Supports collaboration with local authorities to create a holistic, Sustainable Transport Plan for the area before proceeding with the development and the creation of an access route that connects developments north of the reservoir (including Land East of Horndean), with the reservoir and Junction 3 of the A3(M)	10

Request assessment of all cumulative impacts on people, local communities and nature from the project, along with a plan for mitigations	10
Rowlands Castle Parish Council (RCPC)	Response
Fully support the project, to increase water resilience for the south of England	N/A
Prefer the southern access if only one option is used, partly because of public transport links	7
The northern access should only be built if a combination of both options is pursued	7
The northern access option would need a new junction along the B2149. Preferably a roundabout but a ghost junction at least	7
Our Transport Assessment must consider the changes to the road network and predicted traffic generated by both committed developments and those awaiting decision, including Land East of Horndean and Extension of Land East of Horndean (Hazelton Farm). They expect large increases on the B2149. In addition to the B2149, the transport assessment should consider the impacts of visitor traffic travelling via Castle Road, Redhill Road and Whichers Gate Road (B2148)	10
To encourage sustainable transport to and from the reservoir, there needs to be safe and convenient access to public buses from Rowlands Castle. There is not currently a safe, fully paved route between the reservoir and the nearest bus stop; and the service currently available is not sufficient	10
The bridleway and pedestrian access at Rowlands Castle needs to be compatible with a potential conversion of the mini-roundabouts to a fully signalised junction	10
Parking charges should be moderate to avoid parking in narrow residential roads. Restrictions such as double yellow lines would not be supported. Parking charges should match the Forestry England car park and we should consider a low-cost annual parking ticket for residents at both locations. Can we confirm that horseboxes can be parked in the car park?	10
Need to work with HCC Highways and Forestry England to remove or block unofficial pull-ins on the Thicket side of the B2149	10
We will need gates and fencing to stop bikers gaining access to the site when closed	16
If a combination of both access routes is pursued, we need measures to prevent this becoming a rat-run	8
Half of the reservoir would be in the 'Strategic Gap' between Rowlands Castle and Havant, which requires us to enhance the rural character of the area. We should consider this as we develop our design and proposals, including avoiding attracting too many visitors; motorised boating; and floating solar panels that create glare	11
A representative of the council also sent thanks for the stakeholder webinar we held during the consultation, which they found informative and interactive	17
South Downs National Park Authority	Response
Recognise the need for water in the area and the benefits of the reservoir over further abstraction from the Test and Itchen	N/A
Cautiously support a combination of both access options, though barriers would be needed to prevent rat running	8
Concerned that a junction along the B2149 should be low-key to retain the rural character of the national park boundary. Other exits don't have signals or roundabouts, so a reduced speed limit should ensure safety	7

Areas of the National Park (including The Holt SINC) and the reservoir site (including the ancient woodland impacted by the northern access) are not distinct habitats and host several European protected species including bats. The relationship between both areas needs to be understood and considered	5
Using only the southern access for construction traffic could avoid the need for a junction along the B2149 and give time to work with housing developers in the area, to create an access that avoids ancient woodland	10
The impacts of construction traffic on the B2149 need to take the construction of other developments in the area into account	10
Access roads should provide a segregated space for cyclists and walkers and trails around the site should be a minimum of 5m, to accommodate cyclists, walkers and horses	9
Support our aims to deliver biodiversity gain, especially through the creation of the wetland	5
More tree planting may be needed to offset the loss of irreplaceable ancient woodland and we should consider the translocation of soils	5
We need to balance recreation and wildlife conservation, managing leisure around sensitive habitats and keeping more intensive activity at a distance	14
Support the level of recreation proposed, to avoid conflict with conservation, too much traffic, or disruption to residents. Could introduce managed water-based activities in the future	13
Suggest an adventure cycling area, to reduce the risk of people creating their own jumps and trails in areas that would disturb wildlife	13
Suggests a designated parking area for horseboxes	12
Suggests additional cycle parking near to the visitor centre and at various locations across the site	12
Support for early construction of the circuit trail, to ensure access around the site during construction (where safe)	4
We need to consider sensory impairments and neurodiversity when considering the accessibility of trails	9
We need to assess public transport links, including local bus routes and rail stations and consider changes needed to bus stop locations and routes	10
We need to create walking and cycle routes that connect the reservoir with planned developments in the area and consider a link up with Broad Walk and the Monarch's Way long distance trail	10
Requests a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, with photomontages showing the completed water level, to assess the impact of the reservoir on views from the national park	11
Suggestion of a new landmark, to replace the historic feature of The Avenue in the Grade II* listed landscape of Leigh Park	11
Support for the educational displays planned for the visitor centre and wider side, particularly regarding local wildlife and habitats and water conservation.	15
South East Hants Ramblers	Response
Their old computer struggled to access the webinar and they felt two hours was too long	17
They accept the need for the reservoir and are in favour of the leisure facilities proposed	N/A

Welcome the idea of viewing platforms to follow progress with the construction	N/A
If a combination of both access options is pursued, while the route should be kept closed or motorised vehicles outside of hours, it should remain open for bridleway users at all times	8
Suggest a bridleway connecting the northern access with the motorway crossing at Hazelton Common	10
Suggest an extra entrance into the reservoir site from the southern end of Swanmore Road connecting to the circuit trail	9
Our plans don't make a clear distinction between Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and proposed 'permissive' paths. Will the circuit trail be PRoW?	9
We need to agree a diversion of the existing PRoW before any temporary diversions and closures should be no more than a few weeks at a time	4
Woodland Trust	Response
Object to the scheme in its current form, because of damage or loss of approximately 14 hectares of ancient woodland including 'Middle Clearing', 'Round Wood', 'The Avenue' and 'Havant Thicket/Long Wood'	5
The National Planning Policy Framework states that developments resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. They argue that is unclear whether our proposals would fall under the banner of exceptional reasons	5
The scheme also breaches local planning policy designed to protect ancient woodland, including The East Hampshire District Local Plan (2014) and Havant Borough's Core Strategy (2011). Havant Borough's Core Strategy also outlines requirements specifically for the reservoir, including the need to minimise the loss of ancient woodland and trees. The trust is not clear on how we have tried to minimise loss, but feel the losses proposed are not in line with this	5
Ancient woodland is irreplaceable – it takes centuries to develop and creates varied and unique habitats for many of the UK's most threatened plants and wildlife.	5
Requests that changes to the design to avoid the loss of ancient woodland are considered and if losses can't be avoided then an alternative site is identified	5
Request further survey work to find and protect any ancient, veteran or notable trees that could be impacted by the scheme	5

Woodland Trust email campaign

- 3.7. The Woodland Trust has been briefed on and involved in the project since 2018. Portsmouth Water invited them to visit the site in 2019 and carried out a joint inspection of all the ancient woodland blocks with two Woodland Trust officers. In 2019 and 2020, Portsmouth Water wrote to the Woodland Trust, requesting their advice and support in developing new areas of woodland habitat. We continue to have a constructive dialogue with them, and we understand and appreciate their position.

3.8. In May 2020, the Woodland Trust identified that the project would cause a loss of up to 14 Hectares of ancient woodland, and on May 21st launched an online campaign, urging people to submit a template email to us, to raise concerns about the impact of our proposals on ancient woodland. In doing so they set out their support for the reservoir and the purpose of its development, and their appreciation of the difficulties we face in finding a suitable site. Specifically they stated:

- "We understand the need for the scheme to secure future water supplies for the region"
- "We aren't opposed to the construction of the new reservoir in principle"
- "It would be difficult for Portsmouth Water to redesign the reservoir in this location to avoid ancient woodland"

3.9. The text of the template email is as follows:

Dear Portsmouth Water,

I object to the proposals to construct a new reservoir near Havant Thicket on account of the proposed loss of ancient woodland. According to the Woodland Trust's assessment, up to 14 hectares of ancient woodland could be lost to the proposals, some of which is considered ancient wood pasture and is likely to be a remnant of the historic Forest of Bere. Therefore, in response to question 7 of your online feedback survey, I strongly disagree with the location of the reservoir.

Ancient woodland is home to an array of rare and threatened plants and wildlife, with the woods and grassland habitat around Havant Thicket especially abundant, including rare birds, reptiles and wildflowers.

It is vital that these plans are reconsidered now before they are progressed any further, particularly considering that a planning application is scheduled for submission this year. If you are unable to redesign the scheme to avoid loss of ancient woodland then please identify an alternative site for a reservoir that wouldn't result in the loss of irreplaceable habitat.

In a time of climate and ecological emergency, Portsmouth Water must give consideration to the role of ancient woodland in combating these crises and therefore avoid the destruction of an integral part of the UK's natural environment.

Yours sincerely,

3.10. Overall, 1,375 of these emails were received during the consultation period. As they were encouraged to send an email, rather than complete our feedback form, we cannot establish where these respondents are based and if they are local to the scheme. 891 of these emails contained additional, personalised comments. These have been analysed and key themes emerging from them have been summarised in the table below.

Table 3.5 Themes from Woodland Trust emails

Theme	Response
Ancient trees are sacred	5
Ancient woodland is a part of our heritage, which should be protected	5
Our planning application should detail how we'll reduce the impact of losing woodland	5
The new habitat we are creating cannot replace the ancient woodland	5
There are laws and planning policies which protect the trees	5
There is too much development in the area/country	10
We are being short-sighted	5
We are losing a beautiful, much loved site, enjoyed by people	5
We are only doing this for profit	3

We are removing precious habitat and will impact wildlife	5
We are removing trees that clean the air and remove carbon from the atmosphere	5
We are taking the woodland from future generations	5
We are trying to push through the destruction of ancient woodland without people noticing	17
We can build a reservoir, but we should find a way to avoid removing the woodland or find another site	5
We must protect the ancient woodland we have left	5
We should be more transparent and make assessments of our impacts available	5
We should focus on other approaches (e.g. water saving, de-salination, fixing leaks etc)	1
We should not be removing trees during a climate crisis	5
We should not interfere with and destroy nature	5

- 3.11. Our response to the campaign is attached to this report, as 'Appendix A. Response to the Woodland Trust email campaign'.

4. What we're doing about it

- 4.1. Table 4.1 below provides our response to the feedback received, explaining what we're doing about the issues raised. To avoid repetition, we've grouped the issues into key themes.
- 4.2. Many of these issues will be covered in detail in our planning applications. If you [sign up to our newsletter](#), we'll email you to confirm when the planning authorities have registered them, which we expect to happen in October.

Table 4.1 Our response to the feedback received

	You said	We're doing
1	<p>Disagreement with the idea of a reservoir. Some respondents felt that the reservoir was a waste of money and that alternative solutions, like desalination, fixing leaks and water saving initiatives should be explored instead.</p>	<p>We understand that some people wouldn't be aware of the detailed planning that supports the case for the Reservoir.</p> <p>In response to a restriction imposed by the Environment Agency, Southern Water needs to find more water to supply a growing population and cater for the effects of climate change, while taking less water from some of their current sources - the internationally designated River Itchen and nationally designated River Test. By capturing some of the excess water from our underground springs and storing it in a reservoir, Portsmouth Water could supply our customers and then share the surplus required with Southern Water.</p> <p>The Havant Thicket reservoir was identified as one of eight 'big ticket' options for meeting future demand for water in the region by the Water Resources in the South East (WRSE) group – a sector-wide partnership between six water companies and regulators like the Environment Agency; who use advanced computer modelling to test out different plans and develop a regional strategy for water companies every five years.</p> <p>Portsmouth Water and Southern Water both subsequently identified the reservoir as a crucial part of their latest Water Resource Management Plans (WRMP). These have been scrutinised by the Environment Agency and signed off by Defra; and also include ambitious long-term targets to reduce leakage; promote water efficiency and metering; and, in Southern Water's case, develop other large-scale options like desalination. We've also received lots of support for our WRMP through a public consultation, with 87% of 2,084 respondents saying they supported our plans to build the reservoir as a regional water source.</p>

2	<p>Concerns that our plans are ‘future proof’. A number of people raised concerns that we needed a bigger reservoir, more parking and scope to extend the visitor centre, to ensure that we have capacity to meet future demands.</p>	<p>In many ways, the creation of the reservoir is all about future proofing and the proposals we’ve put forward are based on careful estimates of the water we’ll need in the future and the number of visitors we’ll attract.</p> <p>Having developed a good understanding of what is possible on the site, the capacity needed for the reservoir (around 8.7 billion litres), was set by Southern Water’s ‘Water Resources Management Plan 2020–70’, which details their plan for supplying drinking water to more than one million homes and businesses for the next 50 years. The study that informed this plan used complex computer models to establish future needs and test different ways to meet that demand.</p> <p>The size of the visitor centre and car park were informed by a study published in July 2019, that estimated potential visitor numbers by looking at similar facilities and other sites in the area, factoring in forecasted population growth. Our current planning application is only for an ‘outline design’ at this stage, but in light of your feedback, as we’ve finalised our submission, we’ve taken extra care to make sure that our designs are adaptable, so that they can be expanded later if needed.</p>
3	<p>Concerns around the business arrangement with Southern Water. Who is paying for the reservoir and why? What’s in it for Portsmouth Water and are we only doing this to make money? Will this affect prices for Portsmouth Water customers? Some also raised issues with Southern Water’s business practices.</p>	<p>We want to be as transparent about our arrangement with Southern Water as possible and assure you that the project is being carefully overseen by regulators.</p> <p>The project will cost around £120 million to complete and will be funded over time by Southern Water. They need our help because of an agreement they’ve made with the Environment Agency, to take less from two of their own sources, the rivers Test and Itchen. Only Southern Water customers who receive drinking water from them will have the cost of the reservoir reflected in their bills. Portsmouth Water, or our customers won’t pay for the development, design, construction or operation of the reservoir, but we will own it and it will help us meet a government challenge to share our surplus water supplies with others who have shortages.</p> <p>As monopoly suppliers, water companies are subject to stringent regulation and our plans for the reservoir have been rigorously scrutinised and tested by both our financial regulator Ofwat and our environmental regulators – the Environment Agency and Natural England, as well as by the Drinking Water Inspectorate, Consumer Council for Water and our own Customer Challenge Group.</p>
4	<p>Concerns about the impact of construction, on residents, the environment and transport. Specific concerns include noise; air and water pollution; dust and debris; disruption to wildlife: traffic disruption and risk to</p>	<p>We understand these concerns and have undertaken a thorough ‘Environmental Impact Assessment’. The ‘Environmental Statement’ which summarises this work will be submitted along with our planning applications. It carefully considers the different ways that our construction will impact the environment and the people around us (both positive and negative) and includes measures to reduce any potentially negative impacts. It has a</p>

	<p>residents; access restrictions; and property subsidence. Several measures to reduce disruption have been suggested and there have been questions about financial compensation.</p>	<p>dedicated chapter for all the issues listed and includes an assessment of cumulative impacts, taking into account other developments planned in the area.</p> <p>Throughout the construction, we'll be following a 'Construction Environmental Management Plan', which sets out rules and procedures that will minimise the disturbance, environmental impact and traffic disruption that we cause. This includes things like only working during certain hours, or planned diversions for public rights of way. An outline version of this plan will also be submitted with our planning applications, with the full version needing to be agreed with the local planning authorities before any construction work starts. We aren't expecting any financial compensation to be required.</p> <p>Many of the concerns raised were about construction traffic though, either coming through Warren Park, or using the already congested B2149, depending on the access option developed. We've heard this feedback and decided to create a combination of both options instead. By having two accesses, we double our options for traffic coming in and out of the site, creating opportunities to reduce the impact on local communities.</p>
5	<p>Concerns about the loss of habitat including ancient woodland and the impact this will have on wildlife, residents and the environment. For some this is unacceptable. They say we need to find a way of avoiding the ancient woodland or find another site. Others demand full transparency about the impacts anticipated and our commitment to an ambitious compensation strategy, with many suggestions about what this could involve.</p>	<p>The Havant Thicket Reservoir is a critical scheme, both to make sure we have enough water for the future and to reduce the amount taken from the protected rivers Test and Itchen. Ultimately, to construct the reservoir on this site and store the volume of water we need, some ancient woodland will need to be removed. However, in response to these concerns, we've revisited our plans to explore any possible ways of reducing our impact. As a result, we've created a new combination of both access options proposed, allowing us to half the width of the northern route, reducing the associated loss of ancient woodland by 45%.</p> <p>In selecting the site, we reviewed more than 70 possible locations and assessed five shortlisted sites in detail. Since choosing Havant Thicket, we've worked closely with organisations including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Historic England, Havant Borough Council, East Hampshire District Council, Hampshire County Council and Forestry England, to develop our plans and minimise our environmental impact.</p> <p>We've worked closely with these partners to develop an ambitious mitigation and compensation strategy, to demonstrably give back more to the environment than we take. This will be subject to a binding agreement between Portsmouth Water and the local planning authorities. An outline strategy is being submitted along with our planning applications and includes the creation of a new wetland area; replanting and improving at least 110 hectares of woodland and grassland; improvements to the Riders Lane and Hermitage streams; translocation of wildlife, trees and soils; and a grant scheme for other projects in the area</p>

		<p>An Environmental Statement will be submitted along with our planning applications, detailing the amount of habitat that will be lost and the impacts we expect to have on wildlife and the environment. A 'Construction Environmental Management Plan' will also be agreed with the local planning authorities before any works start, detailing the procedures we'll follow to reduce that impact where possible.</p> <p>We've listened carefully to all the discussion during the consultation period about the affect the development will have on the environment and accept that we can't strike the right balance for everyone between impact and benefit. But we think that the comprehensive habitat mitigation and compensation plan we've developed, will significantly offset the habitat lost and create significant areas of new habitat that will flourish and become cherished over time. We continue to make an open offer to the Woodland Trust, to help us develop this plan further.</p>
6	<p>Concerns about the impact of re-routing water and storing it in the reservoir and the affects that might have on properties and the environment. Particular concerns include flooding; resilience to drought; impacts on local rivers, streams and water sources; effects on local woodland and wildlife; subsidence and ground tremors; attracting insects; operational noise; and impact on property prices and insurance.</p>	<p>We understand these concerns but want to reassure you that the design and construction of reservoirs are very strictly controlled and regulated.</p> <p>Under the Reservoirs Act 1975, the design of reservoirs is supervised by an independent, Government approved engineer. They inspect our work during construction and have to confirm the reservoir meets the correct standards before we'll be able to start filling it up.</p> <p>Our Environmental Statement also has a chapter dedicated to Water and the impacts we expect the reservoir to have on the water system in the area. It should actually reduce the risk of flooding, as it will hold excess water that could have caused issues elsewhere. We'll also have lots of control over the water levels in the reservoir, because most of the water will need to be actively pumped up from the Bedhampton springs and we can use the same pipeline to take water back out if we need to.</p> <p>So, there won't be any significant risk to neighbouring properties. We also don't expect a significant increase in insects in the wider area; and the detailed design of the new pumping system will include features to reduce any noise issues we think will arise.</p>
7	<p>Issues raised with both the northern and southern access options. Concerns that the northern option goes through ancient woodland and traffic will impact on wildlife; and both construction and visitor traffic would need to turn off and on to the B2149 - a busy, fast-moving road, with large housing developments planned. The southern option however comes off a residential road with blind corners, a</p>	<p>We carefully looked at all the options available for the access road and while we believe the two approaches we put forward are the best available, we're aware that they both have drawbacks. Based on the feedback from this consultation, we're now proposing a combination of both the northern and southern options, to 'dilute' the overall impact of either. This will split additional traffic between Swanmore Road and the B2149 and has helped us to nearly halve the width of the northern route, reducing the loss of ancient woodland by 45%, by creating a single lane single carriageway with passing bays.</p> <p>The northern access will be sign-posted and promoted as the main entry, particularly for the longer distance and 'regional' trips, with the southern access providing a route for locals. A</p>

	<p>school and a bus route. As result, construction and visitor traffic might cause congestion and endanger residents. Some respondents have suggested alternative routes.</p>	<p>ghost island will be installed along the B2149, with lines marking out a place to wait and turn into the site.</p> <p>The new combined approach has been assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment, which looked at the impacts of construction traffic, visitor traffic, changes to the road network and impacts on public rights of way. Our 'Construction Environmental Management Plan' will also set out measures for reducing traffic disruption during the works. An outline version will be submitted with our application.</p>
8	<p>Concerns that a combination of both options will be slower and more expensive, become a 'rat run' and endanger wildlife. Having an access point at either end of the site and a route all the way through will create a rat run between Warren Park and junction 2 of the A3(M) and make wildlife crossings more difficult. Closing the access points outside of hours will lead to parking on local roads.</p>	<p>As we've developed our new combined approach, we've thought carefully about the concerns people have raised with the idea.</p> <p>Firstly, we've designed both roads so that they lead to the car park, rather than create a direct route all the way through the site. Not only will this slow vehicles down, deterring rat-runners, it will also be safer for wildlife, as the car park will be a relatively wooded area, with connectivity for animals in mind. The northern access, with its single lane and passing bays will also make a charming, rural entrance to the park, but an unsuitable shortcut for drivers trying to shave off journey time.</p> <p>It is however important to remember that we are only submitting an 'outline design' at this stage and so we can continue to think about ways to avoid these issues as we develop our design and site management plans.</p>
9	<p>Concerns about access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and requests for further details. This included questions and suggestions about changes to the routes around the site and connections with the Thicket and residential areas; queries about designations of different paths; and feedback on the design of the trails themselves, including support for an all-weather surface, that avoids flooding an vegetation; concerns about different users sharing routes safely (will paths be segregated? how wide will they be?); and demand for accessibility.</p>	<p>The reservoir will provide a fantastic new resource for walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders, so we totally understand the eagerness for more detail, concerns about how we'll meet everyone's needs and the enthusiasm to suggest ideas.</p> <p>We've aimed to create a network of trails for a variety of user and abilities, that will ensure easy access from surrounding residential areas; and connections with the trails around Havant Thicket, Staunton Country Park and long-distance paths in the area.</p> <p>In response to your feedback, we've updated our masterplan, to confirm the legal designations of the different paths proposed, including a 5km circuit route around the reservoir and a 2km woodland circuit to the north. This new masterplan will be included in our planning applications.</p> <p>The bridleway crossing the site will be rerouted to the south of the proposed embankment. During construction, there will be a temporary diversion through Forestry England land to the north. A new bridleway access will then be created along Cedar Drive, providing a safe replacement of the current access on Manor Lodge Road. Pedestrian access points will be from the existing 'Forest of Bere' car park; Gypsies Plain via the new Cedar Drive access; Staunton Country Park along the Avenue; Swanmore Road by the viewing area; and in the north west corner from the car park.</p>

		<p>We've followed guidance from Hampshire County Council (HCC) on the design of the trails, which will use an all-weather, compacted gravel surface, providing drainage and easy maintenance. We've listened to your concerns about different users sharing the same paths though and have re-designed the main circuit to be 4m wide, rather than the 3m minimum recommended by HCC. There will also be a maintenance track of the same width running alongside the southern vehicle access route, so that users can avoid traffic coming in and out of the site.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 has been followed throughout our design process, to ensure that the trails are accessible to all users.</p>
10	<p>Concerns that we need to think holistically about how the reservoir fits in with the wider transport network and other developments in the area. There is lots of development locally and people have urged us to think about the combined impacts of everything planned for the area, especially with regards to transport. We need to work with local authorities and other developers to ensure a holistic transport strategy, that avoids traffic and parking in the surrounding area; integrates with public transport; improves the surrounding road network; and encourages walking and cycling, by providing new connections to the wider area.</p>	<p>While changes to the wider transport network in the area are obviously outside of our direct control, we fully understand your concerns that the reservoir fits into the wider transport strategy and will continue to work closely with the Local Highways Authority, to make sure that it does.</p> <p>Our Environmental Statement, which will be submitted along with our planning applications, includes a chapter that looks at the combined environmental impacts of our project, with others planned for the area. It also contains a full Transport Assessment, that considers how the reservoir fits into the wider transport network (including bus routes, railway stations and cycling routes); and uses computer models to predict traffic issues, by combining data on current traffic levels (adjusted due to the lock-down) and anticipated traffic from both the reservoir and other major planned developments.</p> <p>One of the benefits of this location is the accessibility of the site, with good public transport links and residential communities right on our doorstep. With the new combination of both access options, we also don't anticipate any significant changes to traffic in the surrounding area. However, if the Local Highways Authorities have any concerns, we'll explore options for improvements to the wider network together.</p>
11	<p>Concerns that the development won't blend in with the historic, rural landscape and will alter views from Staunton Country Park and the South Downs National Park. This includes the rocky embankment design; the scale and urban feel of the visitor centre, car park and viewing platform; the volume and activity of visitors; and solar panels. Suggestions and requests include a Visual Impact Assessment; a new feature to replace the avenue; a variety of planting around the</p>	<p>It's essential that we protect and improve the rural character of the site and our Environmental Statement has a chapter dedicated to the landscape. We've completed a thorough assessment of how the reservoir will change views from homes in Warren Park, Leigh Park and Rowlands Castle; public rights of way; the South Downs National Park; and other viewpoints agreed with the local authority.</p> <p>It's important to remember that we're only submitting an 'outline design' at this stage, so decisions on materials used, planting locations, or the specific look of buildings have not yet been made and any visualisations we've shown are simply for illustrative purposes.</p> <p>However, we've thought carefully about the feedback we've received and have been exploring several ideas in response, including:</p>

	<p>embankment; and the use of local natural materials such as brick, flint and timber for the visitor centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A living 'green roof' for the visitor centre, providing a more natural look and additional habitat • A topsoil brush for parts of the rocky embankment, creating a greener appearance, with reeds and sedge grasses <p>Being years off completion, we also haven't made any decisions about the rapidly evolving options for solar panels on the site, though we'll be sure to consider glare and the landscape when we do.</p> <p>We've also thought carefully about how the project will change the historic landscape of the Grade II* registered Historic Park and Garden at Leigh Park and the George Staunton Conservation Area. We've completed 'A Statement of Heritage Significance' for this area, to identify important features that the reservoir will affect.</p> <p>These considerations have been fundamental to the design we've developed, and we've tried to create new features that pay tribute to lost ones, including a new focal point at the end of the Avenue, with a tiered staircase leading to a viewing platform. More detail about the evolution of the design is included in our Design and Access Statement, which will accompany our planning applications and we we'll continue to work with local planning authorities and Historic England to develop our plans.</p>
12	<p>Detailed design suggestions, for the visitor centre, access road, conservation area, bird hides and wider site. This included suggestions for the interior and exterior of the visitor centre; the surfacing and surroundings of the access road; the shape and design of bird hides; parking space allocation; and ideas for the conservation area including bird posts, floating islands and protective gates and fencing; a designated dog swimming area; and regular picnic tables and cycle parking around the trails.</p>	<p>We're currently in the 'outline design' stage, which means we're only seeking planning permission for the scale and nature of the visitor centre, facilities, bird hide, car park and wetland area. However, it's really useful to capture your feedback and ideas at this early stage, so we can explore your suggestions and consider your concerns as we develop our proposals. We've shared all your feedback with the project team and will continue to engage and update the public as we design in more detail.</p>
13	<p>Continued debate about the level of activity. Some are asking for more managed activities, including swimming, fishing and non-motorised water sports; some are asking for less activity and are concerned that we're creating a 'theme park'; and others think we've got the balance</p>	<p>After several public consultations; a thorough desk study published in July 2019 to predict visitor numbers; and close engagement with our Stakeholder Group (which includes representatives of local councils; Forestry England; walking and cycling groups; wildlife groups; and community organisations); we've decided that a 'medium' level of activity, where the quiet and rural nature of the site is maintained, fits best with our objectives for the project, the aspirations of the community and the experience that visitors will be seeking.</p>

	about right, in order to avoid disturbance to wildlife, visitors and neighbours.	<p>Our current position on fishing, swimming and water sports is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing: coarse fish are unlikely to thrive in the cold, clear and deep water of the reservoir but we're talking to the Angling Trust to see if other types, such as trout and perch fishing would be possible • Swimming: we don't think it would be safe to allow swimming in a cold, deep and unsupervised reservoir, where water can be pumped in or out at short notice • Water sports: we think water sports, such as sailing and canoeing would make the reservoir feel like a much busier place, attracting more people and putting greater strain on the environment, facilities and local communities. We're not currently planning to offer public water sports at this stage
14	<p>Concerns about the impacts of visitors on wildlife and habitats on the site. Assertions that we must carefully manage visitors and activity to avoid disturbance to wildlife and damage done to the wetland and woodland area. Particular concerns include the size, location and design of the visitor centre and outside terrace; the proximity of paths to the wetland; the woodland location of play area; and the design and location of bird hides.</p>	<p>We hear your concerns and agree - it's absolutely critical that we deliver a balance between leisure and wildlife conservation, making sure that we avoid disturbance, or damage to precious habitat from visitors.</p> <p>We've been working closely with a wide range of organisations to make sure we get that balance right. This includes ongoing collaboration with our dedicated wetland group, including representatives of the Environment Agency, Natural England, Hampshire County Council and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. We also hosted the annual 'Conservation, Access and Recreation Conference' in November last year, bringing together other water companies who have recreational sites, to learn from their experiences and refine our proposals.</p> <p>While we've carefully considered your feedback and suggestions, as our project is currently at an 'outline design' stage, we aren't proposing an exact location or design for the visitor centre, bird hides, or play areas. However, listening to your concerns, we've included several features including gated pathways to stop dogs accessing the wetland viewing areas; and banks, barriers and planting, to keep people away from the most sensitive habitats.</p> <p>All of your feedback will be crucial as we develop a more detailed design and we'll carefully consider all of your ideas and suggestions as we move through the process.</p>
15	<p>Suggestions around managing the site, including policies, initiatives, activities and displays. This included lots of different ideas, for policies including residents parking permits and dog free areas; initiatives such as a youth warden scheme, carbon neutral café or local shuttlebus service; activities like wildlife art</p>	<p>While we're still many years away from opening our doors to visitors, we're already thinking about how to manage the site once its complete. Hampshire County Council (who manage Staunton Country Park) and Forestry England (who manage many sites in the area) have committed to a shared management arrangement, for the visitor centre, car park, wetland and leisure facilities. This will be formally laid out in a 'Management Agreement', which will be a condition of our planning permission.</p>

	<p>classes and pond dipping; and displays including wildlife cams and interactive exhibitions on water conservation. Funds for management should be protected and a management plan should be published with our planning application.</p>	<p>We'll soon be developing more detailed plans for managing the site and the range of ideas and suggestions you've provided will be invaluable for our discussions as we do so.</p>
16	<p>Concerns about antisocial behaviour on the site, including vandalism, motorcycling, drug use littering and prohibited swimming. Several respondents have suggested measures to reduce this, including fences, gates, security guards, surveillance systems, motorcycle barriers, litter picking stations and water safety equipment.</p>	<p>We understand these concerns, as any publicly accessible site is vulnerable to anti-social behaviour. However, the reservoir will be manned and managed with Hampshire County Council and Forestry England, who have plenty of experience in running this kind of place and navigating these issues. In November of last year, we also hosted the annual 'Conservation, Access and Recreation' conferences, bringing together water companies who manage recreational sites, to share lessons and help shape our approach.</p> <p>The project is currently at an 'outline design' stage, so our thinking is still evolving, however, in response to some of the specific concerns raised, we're currently exploring ideas including special access gates for bridleways, designed to stop motorcycles; robust fencing around operational buildings; and safety equipment for accidents occurring from unauthorised swimming.</p> <p>We'll continue to consider all of your concerns and suggestions as we develop our plans and refine our approach to safety and security.</p>
17	<p>Feedback on the consultation and our COVID-secure approach. Comments on what did and didn't work with our approach, including how we shared the proposals, captured feedback and advertised the consultation; areas of our proposals that we didn't make clear or share enough detail on; and various suggestions on how we could improve, or do things different next time.</p>	<p>Throughout this project, we've always taken engagement with the community very seriously and have tried our best to give everyone an equal voice. However, the situation around coronavirus has presented an unprecedented challenge to our usual approach, forcing us to try new things and use technology more than ever. As a result, we're extremely grateful for your feedback on how that went and will use it to plan what we do next, how we navigate the ongoing situation and how we'll consult in the future, once things get back to normal.</p> <p>As with any consultation though, we're always trying to walk the tightrope between providing enough detail and making the information accessible. So your feedback on where we've got that balance right and wrong is also invaluable for refining our materials and the way we present our proposals.</p>
18	<p>Encouragement to just get on with it. For many, the project has been talked about for too long and we need to get it done. Some raised concerns that there has been too much consultation over the years, that the project will be delayed again because of objections and</p>	<p>We understand your frustration and we're working hard to progress the project, but we felt it was important to consult the public before we submitted our planning applications.</p> <p>While the idea for a reservoir at Havant Thicket has been discussed since we first purchased the site in the 1960s, the first detailed plans were not developed until 2008. Even though a public consultation showed lots of support for the project, we couldn't demonstrate sufficient need for the water at the time.</p>

they trust us to make decisions and move forward.

The reason we're able to go ahead with this application now, is the unique collaboration with Southern Water and the more regional approach to securing water resources for the wider South East. They need the additional water for their customers, having signed a legal agreement with the Environment Agency to reduce the amount of water they take from protected chalk streams.

Once we had updated our proposals, we felt that it was important to go back to the public and consult them, as people's views could have changed over the years and many new people would have come to the area; and there were changes to the proposed design - such as the access road options, pipeline route and shape of the reservoir.

19 Other questions. A number of questions were simply clarifications of what we are proposing. Questions like these were answered directly throughout the consultation, however, the information remains on our project website.

Lots of information about the project is available on our website: <http://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk/havant-thicket-reservoir> including how we keep water in the wetland; the distances of the main trails; the route of the access options; the capacity and depth of the reservoir; the options assessment for the pipeline; and a timeline for the construction.

5. Next steps

- 5.1. We plan to submit our planning applications to Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council in September/October and would expect them to have registered our submissions and made them public a few weeks after submission. We would expect a decision by early 2021.
- 5.2. If our applications are successful, we'll move on to the detailed design phase of the project. We'll continue to work closely with stakeholders and the public as our plans develop further and will run more consultation exercises in the future, to gather feedback, identify concerns and capture suggestions.

Appendices



Appendix A. Response to the Woodland Trust email campaign

Portsmouth Water statement on the loss of ancient woodland on the site of the proposed Havant Thicket Reservoir

We welcome the Woodland Trust's recognition that we need to develop new water supplies in the water-stressed South East.

The proposed Havant Thicket Reservoir is a critical scheme which will enable the protection of the world-renowned Test and Itchen chalk streams in Hampshire, while at the same time making sure there's enough water to supply homes and businesses for years to come. The reservoir will allow a reduction in the amount of water taken from the Test and Itchen, which are special, rare and unique habitats and home to many species.

We initially identified more than 70 possible locations within the local area where the reservoir could be built. Most of them were unsuitable because they were not close enough to a reliable and sustainable source of the water that could be used without creating further environmental harm.

Five sites underwent a detailed assessment which included scrutinising the options against a range of environmental, social, economic, and engineering criteria. Havant Thicket was identified as the preferred site and since then we have worked closely with a range of organisations including the Environment Agency, Forestry England, Natural England, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Hampshire County Council to develop our plans, which has included eight different designs for the site.

The proposal we are currently consulting on has been developed with considerable input from Portsmouth Water's Stakeholder Forum since 2008, comprising over 25 organisations and individuals, representing community and environmental organisations.

It will deliver considerable benefits to the environment and for local communities; as well as a much-needed new water source for the South East, most of which is under serious water stress and faces increasing pressure from climate change.

Although just under 14 hectares of ancient woodland habitat would need to be removed to enable the reservoir to be built, we are committed to replanting and improving at least 110 hectares of woodland over the next 15 years.

This is in addition to the creation of a significant new wetland that would itself become a very important habitat for wildlife in the local area. Alongside these commitments we will carry out improvements to local streams and design the reservoir itself to support a variety of species and deliver an overall net gain for the environment.

It will also provide the community with a new amenity that will be accessible to all, helping to bring people closer to nature and providing facilities for educational and recreational activities.

Our plans for the reservoir are currently out for consultation and we are engaging extensively with our local communities. We'd like to hear all views and people can find out more and share their feedback by visiting our virtual exhibition at www.portsmouthwater.co.uk/havant-thicket-reservoir.

Ends

Media Contact: [Personal details removed]

Portsmouth Water is one of the oldest water companies in the country, having been incorporated in 1857. We are proud sponsors of EBP Schools STEM Fair, Education at Staunton Country Park and Water Aid. We serve 316,000 homes and businesses in an area covering 868 square kilometres (335 square miles) from the River Meon in Hampshire to the River Arun in West Sussex. Every day we supply around 170 million litres (37 million gallons) of water to a population of over 720,000 people at the lowest cost in England and Wales.

Appendix B. Havant Thicket Reservoir

Young People Questionnaire – overview

An online questionnaire was shared with young people aged 11 – 18 through Park Community School, in Havant, and organisations such as youth groups, church groups and young carers groups to learn more about what young people know about Havant Thicket Reservoir, how they feel about plans for the reservoir and how they may use the proposed facilities.

The questionnaire replaced planned face-to-face discussion groups which were cancelled following the move to lockdown due to Covid-19.

Forty young people completed the questionnaire, which was incentivised with a prize draw to win an iPad.

Key feedback:

Respondents: 55% female, 42% male, 5% prefer not to say.

- Over four fifths (83%) had heard something about Havant Thicket Reservoir – with one fifth (20%) having heard a lot about it.
- **Over 9 in 10 survey participants were supportive of the new reservoir.**
- Only a quarter (24%) said they knew why the reservoir was being built.
- The three main ways the respondents had heard about the reservoir were word of mouth (48%), social media (45%) and during a lesson or assembly at school (21%). *(Their preferred social media channel is Instagram, followed by Facebook).*
- The small number who were not supportive are concerned about the environment.
- They are **mostly likely to use the walking and running paths**, adventure trails, picnic and play areas and to walk dogs. Least likely to use horse riding trails and there is not particularly strong support for a bike or skate park.
- **Good for physical and mental health** and a good place to meet friends and enjoy time with their families were the main reasons for using the proposed facilities. Conversely, 10% found the proposed activities boring and 40% preferred to do other things with their time.
- **Interactive games** most interest them at the visitors' centre and facts and figures least.
- In normal circumstances, three-quarters of the respondents said they would spend more than half of their spare time outdoors.
- Over four fifths supported the schemes and initiatives by Portsmouth Water to support the wildlife and the environment.
- Most respondents would prefer to hear future updates through **school** or social media.



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