Points for Stakeholder Meetings for Ingrid Strawson raised by the Horndean Protection Group together with responses from Portsmouth Water

Please note the points raised by the Horndean Protection Group are in bold and the response from Portsmouth Water is in normal type face.

1. **The UK has made a good start to reducing greenhouse gas emissions but progress towards 2050 will become increasingly difficult. So Portsmouth Water needs to recognise now that it must make its own contribution to future reductions by ensuring that the emissions arising from its reservoir construction work are substantially mitigated and that it will not be said when the work has finished that it was responsible for causing a backwards step in progress. In ten years time when the development comes on line PW needs, and we all expect, to be proud of its achievements and that this infrastructure project becomes an exemplar of what can be achieved on major developments without harming our environment.**
   As presented the planning application admits the greenhouse gas emissions will be in excess of 200,000 tonnes of CO2 eq. with little in way of mitigating measures other than a promise. This volume of greenhouse gas represents an increase of between 20 & 25% of the present emissions from East Hampshire and Havant combined, again using PW's figures. And the nearby LEOH housing development and others in the region have been ignored in this analysis. The justification which has been offered is that this is an infinitesimal amount viewed country wide but if every region made similar justifications the total emissions would be huge setback to what has already been achieved nationally.

We absolutely agree that this project should exemplify what can be achieved on major developments without causing harm to the environment.

Portsmouth Water is part of the UK water sector's initiative to become carbon neutral by 2030 and is developing detailed plans to achieve this in line with all water companies.

The overall total greenhouse gas emissions of approx. 226,000 tCO2e provides a baseline and we will look to reduce this figure as much as possible in the design and construction of the project. This is likely to be through low carbon energy sources, whole life costs to avoid replacement and sourcing materials on site or nearby.

The visitor centre will achieve net zero carbon and a living roof will sequester carbon.

We are looking to maximise opportunities to remove greenhouse gas through tree planting and sustainable transport options will be promoted through footpaths and cycle paths.

The scheme is unlikely to cause significant effects on the climate or significantly affect the UK's ability to meet its emission reduction target and it is considered achievable for the reservoir operation to become carbon neutral by 2050, meeting the requirements set by the planning policy.

2. **Due to the loss of irreplaceable ancient woodland and a large number of trees there is a net loss in biodiversity which will not be compensated for by establishing 80 hectares of new woodland/pastureland alone. This is because, as the Woodland Trust pointed out, the biodiversity of ancient woodland including veteran trees can take hundreds of years to develop. The UK has signed up to the 20 Aichi targets, agreeing to halt biodiversity loss by 2020 as part of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. We would therefore like to understand and be able to monitor the suite of mitigation plans which PW have put in place to satisfy this requirement.**

We absolutely regret the need to remove ancient woodland and would like to reassure you that we have done all we can to reduce this to an absolute minimum.

We have developed an extensive mitigation and compensation package, working with the Environment Agency, Natural England, the county council's ecologist and the Forestry Commission.

This will include planting and improving up to 200 hectares of woodland and wood pasture, creating a new wetland on the northern shore to support wetland birds, improving local streams and launching a grant scheme to support environmental projects.

As the Woodland Trust themselves say, just 7% of the native woodland is in good ecological condition and our mitigation will bring much woodland nearby into better condition to support more biodiversity.

Here is a summary of measures we are taking on site:

- Planting of woodland and standard trees on Gipsies Plain
- Bolstering of hedgerows adjacent to Gipsies Plain
- Planting of woodland and standard trees on Deerslaughter Plain
- Clear fell pine area (4.07 hectares) and create Forest Meadows in Havant Thicket woodland (2.22 hectares) to provide receptor area for reptiles
- Pond enhancement measures in Havant Thicket woodland
- Translocation of notable plant species from Upper Lake to Havant Thicket woodland ponds
- Translocation of notable plant species from on-site streams to suitable habitat within Havant Thicket woodland
- Vegetation protection measures in line with BS 5837:2012
- Erection of bat boxes in off-site areas
- Pre-felling checks for roosting bats
- Hazel dormouse translocation works
- Felling of on-site woodland under the supervision suitability licensed and experienced ecologists
- Translocation of felled oak standards to create monoliths
- Erection of bat, dormouse and bird boxes in retained woody vegetation

- Works timed to avoid nesting bird season, or undertaking breeding bird checks where this isn't possible
- Pre-construction grazing of grassland to reduce suitability for reptiles
- Creation of reptile hibernacula within Havant Thicket woodland and translocation of reptiles into receptor areas within Havant Thicket woodland
- Create Forest Meadow - Clearance of young birch trees which have regenerated in previous clear fell areas to create permanent open space
- Clear-fell Areas to make room for native trees
- Woodland Pond And stream enhancement
- Priority Ecological Corridors along existing rides - Create graded edges to existing ride network]
- Management of birch dominated areas
- Creation of racks through birch dominated woodland to either encourage existing broadleaved tree or plant new broadleaved woodland (leaving some unplanted clearings)
- Grassland / Scrub Mosaic Management Area - Rotational management of grassland and scrub along wayleave

3. **As stakeholders we would like to be given the opportunity to influence the design basis and objectives for the visitors centre. As the building will not be open for many years there is a need to think ahead. It needs to be a sustainable building using the latest "green" design concepts. State of the art heating equipment should be used. (P.V. panels, ground & air source heat pumps and small wind turbines with battery storage should be considered). Also sustainable (reduced embodied carbon) building materials should be used. The centre needs to appeal to the widest cross section of the public and "advertise" the credentials of the reservoir and the centre (see item 1 above) and to encourage awareness of low carbon construction. Above all, demonstrate the ways in which it was possible to complete this major infrastructure project with the minimum impact on climate, biodiversity and healthy living.**

We absolutely support the idea of a sustainable visitor centre. We can assure you that the visitor centre will be sensitive and sustainable design to fit in with the local natural environment, using natural materials such as wood from the site.

It will be designed and constructed to achieve BREEAM Very Good status. Sustainable sources for heating and ventilation are being considered. This will be subject to a subsequent full planning application, once the design has been developed further.

The route to the centre, with paths adjacent to the wetlands and potentially bridge links, would enable visitors to experience the surrounding habitats.

The annual UK water company conservation, access and recreation conference was hosted by Portsmouth Water in 2019 and we gained insights and advice from other water companies who also have visitor centres and recreational areas on their sites.

The outcome of the workshop was a preferred waterside location for the visitor, also supported by many at a Havant Thicket Stakeholder Group workshop in 2020

Having the visitor centre closer to the water's edge means the car park doesn't need to encroach on Bell's Copse ancient woodland and would enable the visitor centres to function as a hide for the visitors to watch birds. Detailed design can ensure the location doesn't disturb birds on the water or in the wetland.

4. **Ensure that safe pedestrian & cycling routes link Horndean (including the LEOH development) with the reservoir. The existing north access route to the reservoir involving the use of the B2149 has no footpath and is avoided by cyclists. An alternative will greatly benefit the use of the Visitors Centre and public trails around the reservoir without increasing the volume of vehicles parking at the reservoir.**

The Highway Authority is satisfied that the improvements to the walking and cycling access strategy provides points for local residents to reduce the reliance on private car use to access the site and ensures safe and suitable access for all users:

- Improvements to the existing crossing on B2149/Castle Road junction to provide formal crossing and footway connection to the existing access track
- Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists to the existing crossing point on the B2149 at the Forest Bere car park
- Improvements to Swanmore Road southern access to the site to include additional pedestrian and cycle connections and tie into the Public Right of Way network
- Improvements to the Whichers Gate double mini-roundabout to provide a suitable crossing point into the site
- Improvements to the existing walking and cycling routes through Staunton Country Park north of Middle Park Way which will provide suitable access from the south as agreed with Countryside Services
- PRoW Bridleway 121 to provide access from the southern access.

5. **Facilitate discussion with the councils involved to investigate solutions to the inevitable construction traffic problems caused by the confluence of construction traffic on the local roads from the reservoir, LEOH developments and other local projects. The problems will be exacerbated by the need to make large design changes to these roads to cater for the extra traffic generated by these developments. Consideration should be given to combining the northern access**

road with the road from the southwestern development of the LEOH development such that they share a common junction onto the B2149. This would need the current landowner's permission but would effectively eliminate a junction, thereby saving the cost of one junction and section of road widening, reducing the amount of hedgerow lost and reducing the disruption of through traffic on the B2149. Such a rerouting done properly could also eliminate the exclusion of safe cycling and walking raised in item 4 above. (Extending the northern access road is already under discussion with the landowner in order to protect ancient woodland).

We want to be a good neighbour and as we finalise our plans for the reservoir, we'll prepare a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to make sure we reduce our impact on the environment and local communities as much as possible.

We'll agree this with the local authorities and the measures will stay in place from the beginning to the end of the project. It will include a plan to manage traffic, with measures such as restricting the times construction traffic can arrive and leave and the routes it can take.

The work will need a construction compound, likely to be in the north-western area of the site, where the visitor centre will be built as there's a large area of open grassland, so we can avoid trees and local communities as much as possible. The majority of the construction traffic will use the northern access route. As previously stated, traffic will be minimised by the use of materials on site (e.g. clay) in the construction work.

11 potential access roads were identified and assessed against environmental, engineering, safety criteria and project drivers.

A route through Dunsbury Park into the site would pose significant engineering and environmental impact challenges. Hampshire County Council won't support a main access option from Dunsbury Park onto residential streets due to local traffic impact (so a second access would still be required).

Portsmouth City Council do not support a route through the business park, due to the impact on their current occupants and visitors and their aim to support regeneration.

Other access options to the north and west all had potential environmental, safety or traffic impacts.

6. **We would like to see further discussion on the subject of air pollution. The data provided is of concern because the statement is made that construction traffic emissions will have a "slightly adverse" effect on the local population. (The writer knows from experience that even slight changes can trigger asthma attacks with life threatening consequences.) Also it is noted that a mitigating measure is to consult with stakeholders before and during construction work. Finally two further notes**
    - **Horndean has the highest pollution levels in the area and it is located downwind of this construction site.**

- **Emissions from other developments which will add cumulatively to pollution levels in Horndean appear not to have been allowed for**

Carbon emissions were a consideration when Water Resources South East considered schemes to secure future water supplies for the South East – the reservoir had a lower energy consumption than other options.

From a construction perspective, the site is such that an embankment will only be needed around 60% of the reservoir perimeter and all clay needed to build the watertight embankment is available on site and will not need to be imported. This will significantly reduce carbon emissions during construction. Other sites did not offer these major advantages.

We do appreciate your concerns and would like to reassure you that consultation is always on-going and we'll continue to seek people's views and share information.

7. **Persuade the 3 Councils involved to ensure the work on each and all simultaneous developments proceeds smoothly and that lines of communication are available to the public. Who will inspect work, who will co-ordinate interfaces between developers, the public and other authorities. If these developments were the responsibility of a commercial organisation an overarching management team would be appointed to supervise, co-ordinate and troubleshoot the work.**

We have acknowledged there are committed schemes in the area, namely Aquind Interconnector and Land East of Horndean. These have been heavily considered during the planning application and we have worked with Highways Authority to ensure a framework is in place that will minimise the overall impact to the area. We will engage with both developers to ensure the impact of all three developments is minimised where possible, and specifically at the A3(M) junction 2. This will be assured by Highways Authority by them supporting the discussions between the various developments and signing off any Construction Travel Management Plan.