

Email 1

From: <redacted> (<redacted>)

Sent: 26 May 2021 12:09

To: Communications Rural Economy & Environment

<CommunicationsRuralEconomy&Environment@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>

Cc: Voas S (Sheila) <Sheila.Voas@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> (MARLAB) <redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: Burial of salmon mortalities at Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Press enquiry to Local Authority

(Email 1.1 attached)

All

Forwarding for awareness. Comhairlie nan Eilean Siar (CnES) have received a press enquiry about the dumping of salmon carcasses at Whiteshore Cockles Ltd in North Uist. Follow up correspondence may come to SG.

The burial of salmon morts has been illegal under the animal by-product Regulations since 2016. However, we have allowed Whiteshore Cockles Ltd a derogation to allow burial to continue until they installed a legally compliant disposal route for salmon morts on their site in North Uist. Whiteshore Cockles Ltd expected their fish waste dryer to be operational in the summer of 2016 but to date it is still not operational.

Policy met with CnES on 19 March to raise concerns that Whiteshore Cockles are not operating to the terms of the Method Statement (one of the conditions to allow burial of salmon morts to continue). Policy have engaged with SGLD to look at legal options on how to address Whiteshore Cockles Ltd not complying with the Method Statement. A submission is being prepared for the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands on this issue.

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

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

Sent: 26 May 2021 11:25

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

Subject: RE: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

Morning <redacted>

Any progress re this?

Please see attached press enquiry.

My thoughts of a Comhairle response are keeping it brief - something like:
The Comhairle are aware of the concerns around the facility and are in discussion with the Scottish Government to find an early resolution.

Give me a call if you want to discuss.

<redacted>

--

<redacted>

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

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

Communities Department | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | Sandwick Road | Stornoway | Isle of Lewis | HS1 2BW

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

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www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus

From: <redacted>@gov.scot [mailto:<redacted>@gov.scot]

Sent: 19 March 2021 15:23

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

Subject: RE: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

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

Hi <redacted>

That statement on the derogation looks factual so I am happy with the content. I have updated my colleagues in in Animal Health and Welfare plus Marine Scotland on today's meeting. I will aim to get an update on Whiteshore Cockles to Ministers next week with a view to reviewing the conditions of the derogation and seeking a update on capacity/burial practices at the site.

<redacted>

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

Sent: 19 March 2021 12:29

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

Subject: FW: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

Hi <redacted>

This is what planning are putting in their screening assessment report.

The site is situated in a coastal location, on the machair, to the south-west of Paible, North Uist. The application site forms part of a larger site, which was granted planning permission for the burying and ensiling of fish morts in 2005.

It is understood that fish morts are classed as Category 2 animal by-products (ABPs) and that the disposal of fish morts by burial was conducted under a derogation for remote areas, for the disposal of ABPs, initially monitored through Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Animal Health); it was not considered to be a permitted operation regulated by SEPA.

In January 2016 the derogation for the disposal of salmon morts by this means ceased to be effective, through an amendment to the Animal By-Products

(Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013. Notwithstanding the Regulations, the Scottish Government (Animal Health and Welfare Division) granted its authority to allow the burial of fish morts to continue, initially for periods of six months and in October 2019, confirmed this burial activity could continue on this particular site, on condition that burial would end when a fish waste processing facility, planned for the site was granted a PPC permit from SEPA.

From the applicant's submitted BAT Assessment, it is understood that the aquaculture industry is now required to ensure that they dispose of their waste in accordance with the 2013 Regulations, so that it can no longer be landfilled.

Thanks for today.

<redacted>



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Email 1.1

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 May 2021 10:05
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: The Times - Dumping of salmon carcasses

Morning gents. Any guidance/thoughts on query below?

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@thetimes.co.uk>
Sent: 26 May 2021 09:45
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Subject: The Times - Dumping of salmon carcasses

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

Good morning <redacted>,

I wonder if you, or one of your colleagues, might be able to help me?
We are going to be running an article in tomorrow's edition about the continued landfill disposal of hundreds of thousands of unprocessed salmon carcasses by the firm Whiteshore Cockles beneath dunes on North Uist.
There have been complaints that the process is contrary to Scottish Government guidance and causes foul odours which affects the local community.
In 2018 <redacted> told the BBC "I'm not going to continue burial for much longer because I have a new state-of-the-art unit coming in."
Our understanding is that the promised unit has not been introduced and the landfill dumping of dead salmon continues to this day.
We also understand that planning permission was granted in March for the installation of a fish drying plant at the site,
However, concerns have been raised that it will take until 2022 or 2023 for any new drier unit to be installed and become operational.
My editor is very keen to get the Comhairle's take on this.
I'd be very grateful if you were able to send over a statement for publication before 4.30 today.

Many thanks and best wishes,

<redacted>

<redacted>, Scotland reporter, The Times

<redacted>

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Email 2

From: <redacted>

Sent: 30 June 2021 13:18

To: 'r<redacted>@btinternet.com' <<redacted>@btinternet.com>; <redacted> | <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>

Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; Voas S (Sheila) <Sheila.Voas@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

Hi <redacted>

Thank you for the update and for raising your concerns about the recent Environment Information Regulations (EIR) request Mr <redacted> made to the Scottish Government. We are in the process of preparing a letter to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd regarding these matters. It should be with you within the next week.

<redacted>

<redacted>

The Scottish Government

Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy
Animal Health and Welfare Division
P-Spur, Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh, EH11 3XD

Tel: <redacted>
Mob: <redacted>

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>
Sent: 29 June 2021 14:37
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted> | <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

Good afternoon <redacted>,

Unfortunately <redacted> submitted an FOI request and received back a selection of emails from CNES and your department which contain a lot of statements which are entirely untrue but will be damaging to us all.

To try and relief the pressure from yourselves , which I am sure you are feeling, please see an update on our project below and a suggestion regarding the derogation.

All the buildings are now constructed and the main body of the plant is in place (and has been before Covid 19 struck) with the engineers scheduled to make three more trips to complete the installation. The electrical circuits will then be connected and this should be completed by the end of the year.

The main reception pit and macerator connections are 90 % complete and we just have to get SEPA's agreement on the final air filtration system. The stainless steel tipping body is on site and will be installed once all the concrete works are completed.. Due to the current crisis in getting steel we have been quoted a December delivery date for the stainless steel sheeting to line the pit. This will take three weeks to install and therefore this building will be complete by the end of January.

Licence for rendering animal by products - this has been applied for and I am in contact with your staff regularly to supply information.

SEPA. It has been agreed with the SEPA inspector that our application will be submitted in July and our consultants are confident in achieving this. With the problems SEOPA have been having of late we dont know how long the application process will take but we are allowing six months.

Allowing for teething problems etc we therefore fully expect to have our new system up and running by the 31st March 2022 (if not sooner).

Would it help your department if you gave us a derogation deadline of this date? We are happy to accept this as we are confident of the project being completed.

We have the capacity at the site to continue servicing our contracts within the Western Isles until this period.

This suggestion would hopefully ease the pressure on all of us and give us a target which is achievable.

Your thoughts on this matter would be appreciated.

P.S. I have copied <redacted> into this email.

<redacted>

<redacted>

Email 3

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>

Sent: 29 June 2021 14:37

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

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

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This suggestion would hopefully ease the pressure on all of us and give us a target which is achievable.

Your thoughts on this matter would be appreciated.

P.S. I have copied <redacted> into this email.

<redacted>

Email 4

From: <redacted>
Sent: 05 July 2021 17:30
To: '<redacted>@btinternet.com' <<redacted>@btinternet.com>
Subject: Correspondence from the Scottish Government
(Annex 1)
Dear <redacted>

Please see the attached correspondence from the Scottish Government.

<redacted>

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

Email 5

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>
Sent: 06 July 2021 15:44
To: <redacted> (<redacted>) <<redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: Re: Correspondence from the Scottish Government
(Annex 2)
Good afternoon <redacted>,

As promised please find our response letter answering your queries and also

outlining a few errors in the description of our current operating methods.

Best regards

<redacted>

On 5 Jul 2021, 17:30 +0100, <redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:

Dear <redacted>

Please see the attached correspondence from the Scottish Government.

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

Tel. <redacted> | Mob:<redacted>

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Email 6

From: <redacted> <<redacted>@gmail.com>
Sent: 27 May 2021 11:24
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>; publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk; Ahearn, Terry <terry.ahearn@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; Director of Marine Scotland Mailbox <Directormarinescotland@gov.scot>; Media <publicrelations@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk>; Kate Forbes <kate.forbes.msp@parliament.scot>; Mairi.McAllan.msp@parliament.scot>; Gougeon M (Mairi), MSP <Mairi.Gougeon.msp@parliament.scot>; defra.helpline@defra.gov.uk; SM-APHA-Enquiries APHA <enquiries@apha.gov.uk>
Cc: <redacted>@ec.europa.eu; <redacted>@ec.europa.eu; <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>; Enquiries <enquiries@cne-siar.gov.uk>; Ruskell M (Mark), MSP <Mark.Ruskell.msp@parliament.scot>; Beamish C (Claudia), MSP <Claudia.Beamish.msp@parliament.scot>; MSP <Alex.Rowley.msp@parliament.scot>; Mountain E (Edward), MSP <Edward.Mountain.msp@parliament.scot>; Cameron D (Donald), MSP <Donald.Cameron.msp@parliament.scot>; Ariane.Burgess.msp@parliament.scot
Subject: EU Derogation for Whiteshore Cockles Must be Rescinded Now!

Please read a letter to the Scottish Government, DEFRA & SEPA (copied to the European Commission and Western Isles Council) re. a breach of EU law on the continued dumping of diseased salmon in landfill dated 27 May 2021 - online here

The basic question asked by Scottish Salmon Watch is this:

When will the UK and Scottish Government start adhering to EU law and stop the burial of diseased farmed salmon at Whiteshore Cockles in North Uist in the Outer Hebrides?

Read more background via:

Video Exposes Mass Graves of Millions of Diseased Scottish Salmon

The Times: "Islanders raise a stink over vast salmon graveyard"

Thanks,

<redacted>

Director of Scottish Salmon Watch

Email 7

From: <redacted>
Sent: 26 May 2021 11:43
To: <redacted> <<redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

Morning <redacted>

I am happy with that response. I will alert my own communications team that there is some press interest in Whiteshore Cockles.

I had been seeking legal advice on this from my colleagues and never managed to get an update to Ministers in time before the Scottish Parliament elections. A submission on this will be going to Mairi Gougeon, the new Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, hopefully next week. We should be able to come back with a formal response soon.

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

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

Sent: 26 May 2021 11:25

To: <redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

Morning <redacted>

Any progress re this?

Please see attached press enquiry.

My thoughts of a Comhairle response are keeping it brief - something like:
The Comhairle are aware of the concerns around the facility and are in discussion with the Scottish Government to find an early resolution.

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<redacted> | Manaidsear Seirbheisean Luchd-Cleachdaidh agus Arainneachd (Consumer and Environmental Services Manager)
Roinn nan Coimhearsnachdan | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | Rathad Shanndabhaig | Steornabhagh | Eilean Leodhais | HS1 2BW

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

redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk | [redacted](#) | Ext [redacted](#) [redacted](#) | www.cne-siar.gov.uk | [Area Offices](#)

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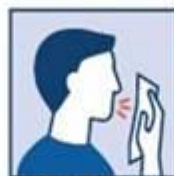
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www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus

From: redacted@gov.scot [<mailto:redacted@gov.scot>]

Sent: 19 March 2021 15:23

To: redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk

Subject: RE: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

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Hi [redacted](#)

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[redacted](#)

From: redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk

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To: redacted@gov.scot

Subject: FW: WHITESHORE - Screening assessment

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From the applicant's submitted BAT Assessment, it is understood that the aquaculture industry is now required to ensure that they dispose of their waste in accordance with the 2013 Regulations, so that it can no longer be landfilled.

Thanks for today.

<redacted>



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Email 8

From: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 29 June 2021 17:25
To: <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk
Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi <redacted>,

I think i<redacted> would be best placed to help with this but she's currently on A/L until Monday 5th. If you need assistance sooner than this then please let me know and I'll see if someone else can assist.

Thanks
<redacted>

From: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 26 June 2021 09:29
To: <redacted>@sepa.org.uk; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@sepa.org.uk
Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi both
Are either able to help <redacted> (cc'ed in) with his request below?

Thanks
<redacted>

From: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Sent: 25 June 2021 12:32
To: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi <redacted>

This is very helpful and helps build a full picture about what is going on. I have sent a letter to <redacted> to comment on which will be going to WCL to notify them we are issuing a new burial derogation with stricter conditions. In the letter I mention the Task and Finish Group which will be setting conditions for the new burial derogation. I was hoping SEPA could be part of that group. Do you know who would be the most suitable person(s) to be involved?

My usual SEPA go to person is <redacted> but I have not been in contact with her for a while with the cyber-attack.

<redacted>

From <redacted>@gov.scot>

Sent: 25 June 2021 10:45

To: <redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi <redacted>

The Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL) animal by-product processing plant could have a number of potentially significant environmental impacts and needs a permit under Part A of the Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (PPC). A key aspect of concern for us is the potential for the release of offensive odour that, if the plant is not built and operated correctly, could result in a worsening of the situation affecting the surrounding local community. Some of the fish meal produced will be used as a fuel in a boiler that will provide heat to the drying process. This means the plant must also meet the stringent design and emissions controls for waste incineration activities.

We advised WCL that they would need a permit for their animal by-product processing plant and associated co-incinerator in September 2019. We have been engaging with them providing pre-application advice to improve their proposed plant and infrastructure such that it could meet the relevant requirements to enable a permit to be granted.

An application had been expected in early 2020. We have agreed to fast track it to enable the plant to commence operations if the application demonstrates that it would be built and operated in a manner that would meet requirements, but we haven't received an application yet. On Christmas Eve, SEPA was subject to a serious and complex cyber-attack which has significantly impacted our contact centre, internal systems, processes and communications. We got back in touch with WCL in March to let them know that whilst in general we are not accepting new applications for PPC permits we will accept theirs. We are still committed to issuing the permit as quickly as possible, but that is dependent on the quality of the application WCL submits.

In December 2020, a retrospective planning application for the recent modifications to the WCL facility was submitted and was granted by CNES (Western Isles Council). The information provided by WCL showed that the facility was capable of being granted a PPC permit but we made it clear in our response to CNES that, on the basis of the information provided, the current proposals would not be sufficient for it to be permitted as it was clearly deficient in a number of key areas. The basis for this was detailed to WCL in February 2021 to help with their permit application preparation, with an offer for a meeting to discuss any points.

We last spoke to WCL on 24th May to get an update on progress and we again offered a meeting to help them complete their application. They indicated that they would speak to their consultants to see if the permit application could be ready for submission to SEPA by the end of this month (June).

We haven't heard anything yet and they haven't taken us up on our offer of further meetings.

If you have any questions or need any further detail please get on touch.

Kind regards,
<redacted>

<redacted>

Senior Manager | Waste and Industry | Environmental Performance
Scottish Environment Protection Agency

<redacted>

Working days Mon to Thur

From: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Sent: 22 June 2021 10:19

To: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Cc: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Subject: FW: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi <redacted>

<redacted> suggested you would be the best contact to provide an update on the application process for a PPC permit at Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), North Uist.

As you can see from my email to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) below, we have concerns around how WCL are currently burying fish waste at their site. WCL have a derogation to bury fish waste at their site until a fish waste dryer system has been installed. The installation of the dryer has suffered from a number of setbacks for a few years now. The current delay is around obtaining a PPC permit. Are you able to provide an update on how the PPC permit process is going at WCL?

Thanks

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

From: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Sent: 21 June 2021 17:38

To: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

<redacted>

I have been in touch with SEPA earlier to find you a contact for the fish waste. If you want to speak about the PPC permit please contact <redacted>. She has both a scot gov and sepa email and will be able to provide you with an update on the application.

Hope that helps.

<redacted>

From: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>

Sent: 21 June 2021 17:13

To: <redacted>[@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto: <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)> <<redacted>[@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto: <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)>>; <redacted> - Western Isles Council (<redacted>[@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto: <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)>) <<redacted>[@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto: <redacted>@cne-siar.gov.uk)>>

Cc: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@apha.gov.uk](mailto: <redacted>@apha.gov.uk)>

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Hi <redacted> and <redacted>

We raised the concerns around the fish waste burial practices of Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL) with Ms Gougeon, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands. The concerns relates to WCL not operating to the terms of the Method Statement. The Method Statement states:

- fish mortalities are from farms within the Western Isles;
- the collection and arrival at site process, in line with the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, record keeping, cleansing and disinfection, etc;
- burial process. Tipped into holes and covered with sand. Predator net to be firmly secured if the pit has more capacity;
- maintenance procedures. Daily inspection of site, checking newly closed pits for any seepage, applying more sand if necessary. All holes to have seaweed spread on top of sand to stop wind blow and encourage grass growth.
- health and safety; and environmental responsibility. Relates to large population of Corn Bunting and no disturbance of their natural habitat

From feedback from yourselves, WCL are disposing of fish waste in embanked sand pits that are open and filled with ensiled/liquefied fish waste. These pits are being built using sand from out with the site and being shored up with hard-core rock and remaining uncovered for weeks with little seaweed cover. There is evidence of seepage from the pits and members of the public are complaining about the smell from WCL. There are also concerns around how much capacity is left at the site to bury fish waste and concerns around recording keeping in general. On recording keeping, hand written notes have shown fish mortalities from the mainland going to

WCL. Based on this information **the Cabinet Secretary has stated that the current situation cannot continue and action must be taken to address these concerns.**

As a means to address these concerns, we suggested that the existing burial derogation is replaced with a derogation that is time-limited and which imposes express conditions on the operations of WCL. The Cabinet Secretary supports this recommendation and has requested SEPA involvement as well. As a minimum, the new derogation would need to be time-limited to a specified period and would specify enforceable conditions such as a requirement for record keeping, a limitation on fish waste coming only from the Western Isles and a requirement that certain practices be followed.

We are also suggesting a "Task and Finish Group" is formed to develop these conditions with WCL and also meet regularly to ensure the conditions are being followed by WCL. This would be officials from Scottish Government, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES), SEPA and possibly APHA as well. Can I have your thoughts on forming this group to address the concerns around WCL fish waste burial practices?

Lastly, have you had any contact/an update from the SEPA officers doing the PPC Permit work at WCL or just an update in general? I am seeking an update from SEPA via the Scottish Government SEPA Sponsorship Team as communicating with them right now is difficult due to the cyber-attack. It would be good if we could get a local update on what is happening at WCL. Ideally we want the plant up and running as soon as possible so no more fish waste is being buried on site.

Thanks

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

Email 9

From: <redacted>

Sent: 05 July 2021 17:55

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

Cc: Voas S (Sheila) <Sheila.Voas@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: Burial of Fish Waste - Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist

Annex 1

Email 9.1

Attached is a letter from the Scottish Government to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL), North Uist. We are seeking a response from WCL following an update from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) that raised concerns around the burial of fish waste at the site. We are replacing the current authorisation to bury fish waste on site and replace it with a time limited and conditional authorisation.

From the letter, we are wanting to establish a Task and Finish Group to identify conditions that WCL can adhere to. Membership of the group would be officials from SG, CnES, SEPA and APHA and I am assuming most of the people in this email will be part of the group. Could you let me know if I have identified the right people or let me know who else should be included or would be more suitable to invite?

I have also attached a recent email from Mr <redacted> from WCL. From that email, it is positive to see WCL are willing to engage with us and will reply to the letter immediately. In the meantime, if we can work out membership of the Task and Finish Group we should then be able to proceed on agreeing a time limit for the new authorisation and the relevant conditions for the continuation of fish waste at WCL.

Thanks

<redacted>

<redacted>

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

Email 9.1

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>

Sent: 30 June 2021 13:53

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

Cc: <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; <redacted>@gov.scot>; Voas S (Sheila) <Sheila.Voas@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

Thank you <redacted>.

We will respond immediately on receiving the communication.

Regards

<redacted>

<redacted>

On 30 Jun 2021, 13:21 +0100, <redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:

Hi <redacted>

Thank you for the update and for raising your concerns about the recent Environment Information Regulations (EIR) request Mr <redacted> made to the Scottish Government. We are in the process of preparing a letter to Whiteshore Cockles Ltd regarding these matters. It should be with you within the next week.

<redacted>

<redacted>
The Scottish Government
Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy
Animal Health and Welfare Division
P-Spur, Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh, EH11 3XD

Tel: <redacted>

Mob: <redacted>

From: <redacted>[@btinternet.com](mailto:btinternet.com) <<redacted>[@btinternet.com](mailto:btinternet.com)>
Sent: 29 June 2021 14:37
To: <redacted>[@gov.scot](mailto:gov.scot)>; <redacted>[@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto:cne-siar.gov.uk)>
Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd

Good afternoon <redacted>,

Unfortunately <redacted> submitted an FOI request and received back a selection of emails from CNES and your department which contain a lot of statements which are entirely untrue but will be damaging to us all.

To try and relief the pressure from yourselves , which I am sure you are feeling, please see an update on our project below and a suggestion regarding the derogation.

All the buildings are now constructed and the main body of the plant is in place (and has

been before Covid 19 struck) with the engineers scheduled to make three more trips to complete the installation. The electrical circuits will then be connected and this should be completed by the end of the year.

The main reception pit and macerator connections are 90 % complete and we just have to get SEPA's agreement on the final air filtration system. The stainless steel tipping body is on site and will be installed once all the concrete works are completed.. Due to the current crisis in getting steel we have been quoted a December delivery date for the stainless steel sheeting to line the pit. This will take three weeks to install and therefore this building will be complete by the end of January.

Licence for rendering animal by products - this has been applied for and I am in contact with your staff regularly to supply information.

SEPA. It has been agreed with the SEPA inspector that our application will be submitted in July and our consultants are confident in achieving this. With the problems SEOPA have been having of late we dont know how long the application process will take but we are allowing six months.

Allowing for teething problems etc we therefore fully expect to have our new system up and running by the 31st March 2022 (if not sooner).

Would it help your department if you gave us a derogation deadline of this date? We are happy to accept this as we are confident of the project being completed.

We have the capacity at the site to continue servicing our contracts within the Western Isles until this period.

This suggestion would hopefully ease the pressure on all of us and give us a target which is achievable.

Your thoughts on this matter would be appreciated.

P.S. I have copied <redacted> into this email.

<redacted>

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Email 10

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

Sent: 22 June 2021 10:35

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

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

Subject: RE: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

Morning <redacted>

Good to see it being progressed and we are happy to be involved in anything that will resolve the issues, including being part of the Task and Finish Group.

A few observations.

I think the timescale should be very limited to ensure a quick transition to the new plant; I understand that there are external constraints on WCL's progression but it should still be a tight window.

We still have concerns over capacity and in addition to the geographical restriction there should be some restriction on quantity, tied in with WCL being able to demonstrate capacity.

In terms of the new derogation being enforceable, I think it should be clear what the sanctions are and how it will be monitored.

We haven't had any recent formal contact with SEPA re WCL. I emailed you two local SEPA contacts who will be better placed to get you a contact for the person dealing with the PPC process.

Let me know if you need anything further.

Regards

<redacted>

--

<redacted>

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

[Roinn nan Coimhearsnachdan](#) | [Comhairle nan Eilean Siar](#) | [Rathad Shanndabhaig](#) | [Steornabhagh](#) | [Eilean Leodhais](#) | [HS1 2BW](#)

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

redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk | [redacted](#) | Ext [redacted](#) | www.cne-siar.gov.uk

Links to further service information:

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[Trading Standards](#)

[Food Safety](#)

[Health and Safety at Work](#)

[Licensing](#)

[Animal Health & Welfare](#)

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Ag Obair Comhla airson na h-Eileanan Siar **COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR** Working Together for the Western Isles



Wash your hands.



Use a tissue for coughs and sneezes.



Avoid touching your face.

www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus

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

Sent: 21 June 2021 17:13

To: redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk; redacted@cne-siar.gov.uk

Cc: redacted@gov.scot; redacted@gov.scot; redacted@gov.scot; redacted@gov.scot; redacted@apha.gov.uk

Subject: Whiteshore Cockles Ltd, North Uist - Actions to address concerns around fish waste burial practices

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

Hi [redacted](#) and [redacted](#)

We raised the concerns around the fish waste burial practices of Whiteshore Cockles Ltd (WCL) with Ms Gougeon, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands. The concerns relates to WCL not operating to the terms of the Method Statement. The Method Statement states:

- fish mortalities are from farms within the Western Isles;
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- burial process. Tipped into holes and covered with sand. Predator net to be firmly secured if the pit has more capacity;
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- health and safety; and environmental responsibility. Relates to large population of Corn Bunting and no disturbance of their natural habitat

From feedback from yourselves, WCL are disposing of fish waste in embanked sand pits that are open and filled with ensiled/liquefied fish waste. These pits are being built using sand from out with the site and being shored up with hard-core rock and remaining uncovered for weeks with little seaweed cover. There is evidence of seepage from the pits and members of the public are complaining about the smell from WCL. There are also concerns around how much capacity is left at the site to bury fish waste and concerns around recording keeping in general. On recording keeping, hand written notes have shown fish mortalities from the mainland going to WCL. Based on this information **the Cabinet Secretary has stated that the current situation cannot continue and action must be taken to address these concerns.**

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Thanks

<redacted>

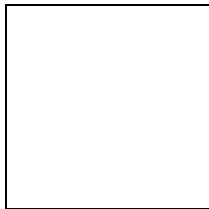
<redacted>

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

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British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)



Email 11

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>
Sent: 20 July 2021 21:22
To: <redacted>@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Correspondence from the Scottish Government

Ok. We are available anytime.

Engineers are on site from Manchester this week so things have started moving again.

PPC application is scheduled to be submitted next week.

Hopefully Covid won't cause any more holdups.

Regards.

<redacted>

On 20 Jul 2021, 16:48 +0100, <redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:

Hi <redacted> We shouldn't need your input for the first meeting of the

Group. **From:** <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>**Sent:** 19 July 2021

18:30**To:** <redacted>@gov.scot>**Subject:** Re: Correspondence from the Scottish Government

Thank you <redacted>.

Does the group not require any input from ourselves at this meeting?

<redacted> and I can make ourselves available on Zoom , Microsoft Team or whatever if

required.

Best regards

<redacted>

On 19 Jul 2021, 16:34 +0100<redacted><a href="mailto: <redacted>@gov.scot"><redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:

Dear Mr <redacted> Please see the attached correspondence from the Scottish Government.

Thanks

<redacted>

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

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Government.*****

Email 12

From: <redacted>@btinternet.com <<redacted>@btinternet.com>

Sent: 20 July 2021 21:22

To: <redacted>@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Correspondence from the Scottish Government

Ok. We are available anytime.

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<redacted>

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Thank you <redacted>.

Does the group not require any input from ourselves at this meeting?

<redacted> and I can make ourselves available on Zoom , Microsoft Team or whatever if required.

Best regards

<redacted>
<redacted>

On 19 Jul 2021, 16:34 +0100, <redacted>@gov.scot, wrote:
Dear Mr <redacted>

Please see the attached correspondence from the Scottish Government. Thanks <redacted>

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

<redacted> *****
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