

Dear Sir/Madam

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Site Address: Pavilion, Bidbury Lane, Havant

Proposal: Temporary use of land to carry out ground investigation works comprising the drilling of 2 no. boreholes and the installation of headworks and equipment to monitor ground conditions for a period of 18 months including mobilisation, decommissioning and full restoration periods.

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This application should not be approved for the following reasons.

Firstly:

Bidbury Park is a valuable public facility. It is not acceptable for the Council to allocate sections for commercial activities, including the attendant accesses for a long period of time to facilitate a speculative drilling venture by Southern Water as part of the recycled sewage and Havant Thicket project.

Southern Water are not the drinking water supplier for a huge area including Portsmouth, Cosham, Farlington, Havant and Chichester. It is not acceptable for a second water company to undertake drilling activities in the same source area which is the major water source for many communities. The risk of pollution through separate drilling activities which are not under the control of the abstraction license holder is problematic.

Southern Water have a poor reputation and are a major polluter of Langstone and Chichester harbours and the wider Solent. They have a major task on their hands to resolve the problem resulting from their unsound business practices.

This project is contentious, and is not supported by HBC or stakeholders, and no decision on its viability has been made by Defra.

Secondly:

The choice of this location is suspect for other reasons:

- Southern Water says it is to test the suitability of the land for the pipelines to and from the Havant Thicket reservoir and to Southampton. Looking at the length and routing of these pipes, it is not possible that testing in this one site can achieve the stated objectives.
- It is far more likely that Southern Water are not revealing the real reason for this activity. (We should remember that Southern Water in the overall proposal deliberately hid the fact that the Portsmouth Water customers are to receive their drinking water from the processed output from Budds Farm.)

- It is more likely that Southern Water are drilling to see how much additional water can be extracted from the aquifer. This drilling is in the same area as the Bedhampton wells, and the depth of the boreholes (50 metres) and the length of the test points to an assessment of the flow capacity, not ground stability, would point to this as the more likely intent.
- In addition, sanctioning drilling into the Portsmouth Water drinking water source would require a detailed risk analysis before even considering any reasons.
- And more importantly, recognising the potential impact to numerous Councils in the area that they are officially brought into the decision-making process as they are impacted by this element and the broader Treatment & Havant Thicket project in the same way as HBC.

Thirdly:

Looking at this situation with a broader view, we are witnessing Southern Water seeking to take over the water supply strategy with this drilling of the proposed treatment works, and control of the provisioning pipe network including Southampton. This is beginning to look like a takeover of Portsmouth Water in all but name, avoiding all of the detailed scrutiny and planning which a takeover would mandate.

For so many reasons, this application should not be approved.



Save Our Island Group