

Comments on Southern Water Consultation, Water For Life – Hampshire

1. In principle FPC oppose the use of a desalination plant at Fawley. The plant will be situated in the New Forest National Park close to residential properties. It would be a further industrialisation of a landscape that is already under extreme pressure. There will be significant environmental effects from noise and pollution, and during the construction period. The construction of the pipelines connecting the plant to the sea water intake and to the Testwood plant at Totton will cause further environmental damage and disruption. This damage and disruption will be caused for something that may only be used very intermittently (if at all).
2. FPC recognise that Southern Water (SW) have to provide for anticipated water demand in drought conditions. SW advise that desalination is their preferred solution, and that alternatives would not provide sufficient water to meet the demand. FPC do not have the technical expertise to challenge this conclusion. However, FPC question whether sufficient effort has been made to consider alternative locations for a desalination plant.
3. One possible alternative would be to have the desalination plant on an offshore structure much closer to the SW plant at Totton, or in the Marchwood industrial estate.
4. SW have not provided sufficient detailed information to usefully comment on most aspects of the scheme, and SW advise that this detail will follow later in the next months. FPC will consider these more detailed proposals when received and may comment further.

FPC will therefore restrict themselves to comments on the proposed scheme as submitted in the consultation brochure.

- a. The size of the plant is unknown. SW state that they own one third of the required site. Who owns the remainder?
- b. It is unclear whether agreement has been reached with Fawley Waterside as to the location of the sea water intake. What are the alternatives if this is not possible?
- c. Will there be any effect on marine life through the suction effect of the intake?

- d. The route of the intake pipe to the plant is not detailed. What size is the intake pipe?
- e. There will also be a discharge pipe back to the sea. Will it take the same route? Presumably recycling effects have to be avoided.
- f. What will be the effect of the discharge of concentrated brine solution on marine life?
- g. Presumably, the power supply will be taken from the existing substation within the Fawley Waterside development. Will this connection be by underground cable? We are aware that desalination has a large power requirement; we assume this has been allowed for.
- h. It is assumed that when in operation the desalination plant will operate 24 hours a day. What are the likely noise levels? Will there be any vibration from pumps? Will there be any gas discharge?
- i. How and where will the solid waste be disposed of? How much will there be during operations? What is the solid waste?
- j. It is proposed that the treated clean water will be pumped to the Testwood water plant at Totton. No details of the route of this pipe are given, but it appears that it could be along the B3053 and the A326. There is also some suggestion that it might run along the route of the old railway. Both these proposals have major problems and FPC consider that this will be the main obstacle to the realisation of the scheme.
- k. So far as the road route is concerned the A326 is currently the subject of a HCC design to widen and improve the road. Any water pipe work must be carried out in conjunction and coordination with HCC. Most of the road route runs through the New Forest National Park and through conurbations at Holbury and Marchwood
- l. With respect to the railway route this will either involve laying a pipe through Fawley Refinery (which we believe may be opposed by Exxon), or following a route along the A326 through Holbury, then along Fawley Road and Frost Lane, and then through the centres of Hythe and Marchwood with all the disruption this would cause.
- m. An alternative pipe route might be offshore. Has this been considered?