

OPPOSITION of HERONSCOURT and COLVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS to the ROUTE of the SLP FUEL PIPELINE across TURFHILL

Executive Summary

The Heronscourt Residents Association (HCRA) and the Colville Gardens Residents' Association (CGRA), object to the route chosen for the Southampton to Heathrow Fuel Pipeline, as it crosses Turfhill Park, Lightwater, on the grounds that (1) Esso failed in their undertaking to consult with all Relevant Organisations and directly affected residents, and (2) that Esso have applied an unjustifiable balance to the many factors influencing their decision and have chosen the wrong option.

- HCRA and CGRA are Relevant Organisations, established as Limited Companies over 30 years ago, and are immediately adjacent to the proposed pipeline route. Esso failed to recognise their relevance and as a result did not consult with them at any time in the consultation and decision processes.
- In any case, Esso's assessment that the route change from a probable F1c to F1a+ was "not material" was erroneously made despite moving the pipeline and construction to the immediate boundary of HC and CG, and has thus, inevitably caused offence.
- During the Design Refinements stage, when the route change was introduced, at no stage were the residents of HCRA and CGRA consulted by Esso, nor did they receive any communications from them, or from their representative bodies. They are therefore, only at this late stage, able to make their strong views known to the ExA.
- In considering the factors influencing the decision, Esso has given unjustifiable weighting to only a few of the many environmental and ecological fauna and flora issues, that has resulted in a questionable, imbalanced decision. In particular, the presence of sand lizards is quoted as a reason for route change, ignoring the facts that they plan to take the pipeline through known sand lizard habitats elsewhere, and that there are many sand lizard populations within 7 miles of Turfhill Park.
- Route F1a+ requires the felling of a large number of trees, significantly detracting from the pleasing environment experienced and enjoyed by HCRA and CGRA residents and users of the public amenity that is Turfhill Park. Route F1c fells no trees
- Route F1a+ will result in permanent damage to the natural environment, significant risk of biodiversity net loss and lasting public amenity damage, whereas methods exist to manage the temporary disruption to wildlife during the short construction period along Route F1c.
- The engineering and construction reasons for changing the route from F1c to F1a+ are believed questionable. F1a+ is 400 metres longer, extending ecological and social disruption, and is complicated by having to fell and avoid mature trees. It is also likely to be undeliverable, due to an existing major water main along its planned length.
- Esso has considerably underestimated the amenity value of Turfhill Park to Lightwater.

It is logical to HCRA and CGRA, that these reasonable objections justify rebalancing the route decision back to Route F1c. In January 2019, the change from F1c to F1a+ was deemed by Esso to be "not material"; therefore the same logic dictates that it is not material to revert back to Route F1c, and remain within the terms of the Application.