

## **Suspension of the hearing process to the end of August 2021**

### **Revised timeline for the hearing process and report to the council**

Following our last statement dated 31 May 2021, this further statement considers the council's response to our queries which have now been received. The council has indicated that it should be in a position to submit its statement for both the Celtic Park/Emirates Arena Order and the Ibrox Stadium Order by the end of September 2021, including any proposed modifications. The council hopes that the resulting process would enable the reporters to submit their report by mid-summer 2022. A revised timeline will be prepared in due course following further consideration.

However, under the terms of the notes of the pre-hearing meetings, the deadline for the submission of the council's statements would be 6 weeks from the publication of a programme for the submission of statements. We are of the view that parties who intend to participate in the hearing should be consulted on any such programme before its publication.

Therefore, whilst we confirm the suspension of the hearing process until the end of August 2021, there is now an exception to the extent that we are writing to all potential hearing participants asking for their views on the following programme, which is based upon the timescales set out in the notes of the pre-hearing meetings:

- Council's statement due end September 2021
- Other's statements due end November 2021
- Rebuttal statements due end December 2021

We recognise that it may be difficult at this stage for other parties to determine how long they may need to respond to the council's statement and any proposed modifications. However, we are now considering the prospect of holding hearings for both orders and their associated site inspections in March/April 2022. We would emphasise that the qualifications set out in our statement issued on 31 May 2021 still apply. These include all planning for hearings being undertaken on the basis of using a virtual process at the present time, although we recognise that this may change by the end of August 2021. Site inspections may still be difficult depending on how the relaxation of Covid-19 related restrictions progresses.

Anyone who wishes to comment on the above programme for the submission of statements, and/or the subsequent hearing process, should do so by writing to or emailing the programme officers by **Friday 30 July 2021**, after which time we will further review the suspension of the hearing process, and if considered appropriate publish the programme for the submission of statements on the web pages, having taken all views expressed into account. In the event that the hearing process recommences in September 2021, we will contact all parties intending to participate in the hearings with respect to the further process considered necessary in the context of the notes of the pre-hearing meetings and subsequent statements.