

On the 23rd of March 2022 I received a scanned copy of letter that had been picked up at Central Pier. The letter sets out details of a potential extension to the Article 4 Notice in place on the Promenade and makes specific reference to the Pier.

The poor standard of the letter is of grave concern, it was sent to an unnamed person at the Pier, simply addressed to the owner/occupier and unsigned at the Councils end with no point of contact other than a mailbox address for the heritage team.

The ramifications of the policy change will have a significant impact on the Pier Company, so we very much intended to make strong representations. We consulted with our Planning Consultant shortly after reading the letter on the 23rd of March who in turn advised us that he would need to consult with his heritage specialist. I was asked to get clarification on some Schedules referred to in the consultation letter.

On Friday 1st April 2022 I sent an e mail to the heritage mailbox, the address of which is detailed at the foot of the letter asking for precise information relating to schedule 1,2, and 3 which they refer to in the poorly drafted original consultation letter. 5 working days have now lapsed since that e mail was sent and I have still not received the information.

The knock-on effect is that our Heritage specialist has not even begun to draft a representation as we cannot provide him with the suit of documents he needs. To add further pressure to the situation he is now on holiday for 1 week. The original letter has set a deadline of the 20th of April 2022 for any written submissions to be made.

I am lodging this complaint to cover several issues.

1. The deadline of the 20th of April 2022 should be extended based upon the poor-quality consultation letter that was only read on the 23rd of March 2022.
2. The deadline should be extended as we have not been furnished with the information required to make a thorough representation, hampered further by the fact that my e mail of the 1st of April 2022 has been ignored
3. We have still not been able to establish that the changes will affect South Pier, again because my e mail has been ignored.

It would appear that if we are to make this deadline then we will have to do so without the contributions of our experts, this deprives us of making a thorough representation and in my view would give rise to challenge on the inadequacies of the consultation process.

The Council imply that that the Piers are important heritage assets? It would seem they are not important enough to make direct contact with anyone from the Company in advance of a formal consultation and not important enough to respond to an e mail which is clearly time sensitive as the deadline of the 20th April 2022 is looming.