

Rationale for Extending the Compost Pilot Timeline

The objective of the Salakee food waste composting pilot is to validate the technical approach and compliance processes for a potential on-island circular food waste composting solution before attempting to scale this up to be able to handle Scilly's food waste in full on a long-term basis.

The first timeline challenge is that of island logistics. The pilot commences from the arrival of the composter on site, but delays to other elements of the preparatory works means that it is likely to be as much as three months from this point to when the composting process can begin operating.

Once operating, the first stage in-vessel process is relatively quick (48 hours). However, to produce a mature and usable compost material requires several months in subsequent stages, meaning that the iterative development of the compost formulation can only really get started around month 4 from the first waste being processed (potentially 7 months into the programme). Given the small volumes expected as part of the pilot, distinct formulations will likely only be able to be produced at a rate of 2-3 per year.

On top of this, once a satisfactory formulation has been devised, sample testing to support the compliance needs of the project will extend over a minimum period of 3 months (with any problems highlighted by these tests extending the period).

Altogether, a 12-month programme leaves no flexibility for expected or unexpected delays at any stage, and even an optimistic assessment of the time needed would be more than 18 months.

This variation application seeks to extend the pilot period to three years to ensure that the pilot does not fail simply due to running out of time, whilst ensuring that the change of use remains time limited to only the necessary time to deliver its purpose.