

APPENDIX 1.6
NPCU SCREENING DIRECTION



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Lucy Wood
Director
Barton Wilmore

By email only:

Please ask for: Karen Rose
Tel: 0303 44 48069
Email:
Your ref:
Our ref: PCU/EIASCR/Y3615/3262002
Date: 9 December 2020

Dear Ms Wood

**Request for a Screening Direction
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations
2017
Proposal for: Suitable Alternative Natural greenspace (SANG) at the former
Wisley Airfield, Wisley**

I refer to your request dated 23 October 2020, made under 6(10) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017(S.I. 2017/571) ("the 2017 Regulations") for the Secretary of State's screening direction on the matter of whether or not the above development is 'EIA development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations.

The above development falls within the description at paragraph 10(b) Urban Development projects of Schedule 2 to the 2017 Regulations. Since the proposal exceeds the threshold in column 2 of the table in Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations, the Secretary of State considers your client's proposal to be 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations.

Having taken into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the 2017 Regulations the Secretary of State considers that the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, see the attached written statement which gives the reasons for direction as required by 5(5) of the EIA Regulations.

Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by regulation 7(5) of the 2017 Regulations the Secretary of State hereby directs that the proposed development described in your client's request and the documents submitted with it, **is 'EIA development'** within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations.

Any application for planning permission for this development must be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Under regulation 2 of the 2017 Regulations, an Environmental Statement must contain, for the purpose of assessing the likely impact on the environment, the information specified in that regulation. I recommend that you refer to the Regulations before and during the preparation of the Statement.

Planning Casework Unit
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I am sending a copy of this letter and written statement to Guildford Borough Council.

Yours sincerely

Karen Rose

Karen Rose

Planning Casework Manager

(This decision was made by officials on behalf of the Secretary of State under delegated powers)

Town & Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017
Secretary of State Screening Direction – Written Statement

Application name:	Suitable Alternative Natural greenspace (SANG) at the former Wisley Airfield, Wisley
SoS case reference:	PCU/EIASC/Y3615/3262002
Schedule and category of development:	10(b) Urban Development projects

Full statement of reasons as required by 5(5)(a) of the 2017 EIA Regulations including conclusions on likelihood of significant environmental effects.

The Secretary of State has considered whether the above proposal is likely to have significant environmental effects. He has undertaken this screening taking into account the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. In doing so he considers the main matters to be addressed are:

Schedule 3 selection criteria for Schedule 2 development refers:

1 (a) – (f) regarding characteristics of development

Proposed development of enabling works (engineering operations) to facilitate the first phase of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) at the former Wisley Airfield, Wisley. It is noted that the former Wisley Airfield site has been removed from the Green Belt and part of the site has since been allocated within the Guildford Borough Local Plan under allocation A35 for approximately 2,000 homes, approximately 100 sheltered/ Extra Care homes, 8 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches, and approximately 6500 sqm of flexible floorspace, a two-form entry primary school and a four-form entry secondary school. Policy requirement (13) states the need for ‘a bespoke SANG to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA’.

2 (a)-(c) (i) – (viii) regarding location of development

It is noted that within the planning application documents that there are concerns raised by NATS (UK's leading provider of air traffic control services).and airports around the site that the land in question is occupied by two aeronautical beacons which form part of a national infrastructure network of aviation related navigational beacons which are used by aircraft and are an integral part of instrument flight procedures for Gatwick Heathrow, Northolt and Farnborough. Specifically in relation to Gatwick, the Ockham Doppler Very High Frequency Omni Directional Range (DVOR) beacon installation supports two Standard Instrument Departures, the HARDY 5M 5V and BOGNA 1M 1V. The removal of the Ockham DVOR would render both departure routes inoperable. Therefore, there is likely to be a significant effect to air transport routes created by the proposal which requires further investigations.

The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies approximately 4.8km to the south of the site. The Scheduled Monuments are the Bowl Barrow and Bell barrow west of Cockcrow Hill located c. 1.2km northeast of the site. A further seven Scheduled Monuments are located within 5km of the site. The Grade I Church of All Saints and the Grade II* Stables to Okham House lies c. 0.85km to the south west. The Grade II* Chatley Semaphore Tower lies c. 0.9km to the north east. There are 19 Grade II Listed Buildings along and just off Ockham Lane and the B2039 between 0.5km and 1.2km to the east, south east, south and south west of the site.

The Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, and related Grade II Listed Building of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Gardens, Wisley lies c. 300m to the north west. However, RHS Wisley is separated from the site by the A3. Conservation Areas have been designated at Ockham, c. 0.6km to the south, Ripley, c. 1km to the west and Ockham Mill, c. 1km to the north west.

Historic England in their letter dated 13 November to the LPA, report that Desk Based Archaeological Report accompanying the application identifies the potential for Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Bronze Age

remains to be found at the site as well as prehistoric activity. In addition, elements of the medieval and post-medieval rural landscape may be evident in sections of the field boundaries and hedgerows and at the former Harold's Farm. Extant parts of the 20th century Wisley Airfield are also present, comprising concrete and tarmac hardstanding and likely redundant buried services. However, it is noted that HE recommend early consultation with Surrey Archaeologist to ensure that the scheme is designed to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on undesignated archaeology and with regards to assessment of further potential for archaeological remains, however it is considered this could be dealt with under a specific planning condition.

It is noted that the nearest SSSI is the Ockham and Wisley Commons SSSI located immediately north of the site and that a further three SSSIs are located within 5km of the Site, all located to the south. The nearest National Nature Reserve is the Ashted Common, which is located 8km east of the site. The LPA reports that the majority of the site is agricultural land. A strip along the northern part is designated as SNCI (former Wisley Airfield SNCI) for which the primary interest is reptile species. Great crested newts have been recorded in ponds to the north and south of the site with the central section considered terrestrial habitat. It is noted that the applicant expects to need to obtain a European Protected Species Licence to undertake mitigation works to clear the site. Other common floral and faunal species have been noted on the site but the proposed works are considered to protect and ultimate enhance biodiversity. A small area of Ancient Woodland (Hunts Copse) to the north of the site is considered unlikely to be affected by the works. The entire site is within Flood Zone 1 which is at very low risk of fluvial flooding.

Natural England were consulted given the concerns outlined by the LPA in their screening opinion and they confirmed that it is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that there are potential likely significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscape. However, it is noted that in NE email of 4 December regarding the application submitted that based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites Ockham and Wisley Commons Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which forms part of Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and has no objection. However, in regards to the submitted Construction Environmental Environment Plan document (CEMP), Natural England is of the opinion as it currently stands, it requires more detail in relation to impacts on the nearby SSSI/SPA.

3(a) –(e) regarding characteristics of potential impact

The Secretary of State having regard to the environment and locational factors, considers that a significant environmental effect is likely in terms of the magnitude, complexity and intensity of the impact. The Secretary of State has had regard to cumulative impact and notes that the proposed scheme forms part of the approximately 2,000 homes, approximately 100 sheltered/ Extra Care homes, 8 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches, and approximately 6500 sqm of flexible floorspace, a two-form entry primary school and a four-form entry secondary school, he is therefore persuaded that the proposal would impact on landscape visual, hydrology and air transport to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely necessitating an environmental statement.

Is an Environmental Statement required?	Yes
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Name	Karen Rose
Date	9/12/2020