



HM Revenue
& Customs

Warrington Inland Border Facility

OMP Non-Technical Summary

January 2021

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1 Introduction

This document forms the non-technical summary of the Operational Management Plan (OMP) and has been developed for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Inland Border Facility site at Warrington.

The purpose of this document is to give an overview of the site, its purpose, its size and the operations that will take place on it. It also provides more detail in response to common queries raised by engagement parties during the SDO process to aid better understanding of operations at the site.

Appendix A contains a series of frequently asked questions.

1.1 Purpose of the Site

The use of the site is of a temporary nature for up to two years until 31 December 2022 and has been created to enable the safe and efficient processing of customs paperwork relating to international freight movements for HMRC.

The Warrington Inland Border Facility (IBF) operates on a 24/7 basis. One inspection shed is located on the site for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) to be inspected.

A review of potential nationwide sites has been undertaken and, as part of the overall strategy, this location has been selected to process HGVs.

1.2 Design Considerations

The site has been designed to

- Take account of COVID-19 and the associated requirements for social distancing, cleaning etc
- Operate a zero-pollution goal at the site in terms of spillage and contamination
- Provide safe environmental conditions for all who are working on-site
- Provide protection measures that afford safety to the general public, staff / workers, organisers and visitors
- Maintain effective liaison with the emergency services
- In partnership with the emergency services, provide clear governance and co-operation to enable the emergency services to manage any incidents and the rescue and treatment of casualties
- Be sympathetic to the environment in and around the site, together with a robust and rapid approach to any incident that may have a possible harmful effect on the environment

2 The Site

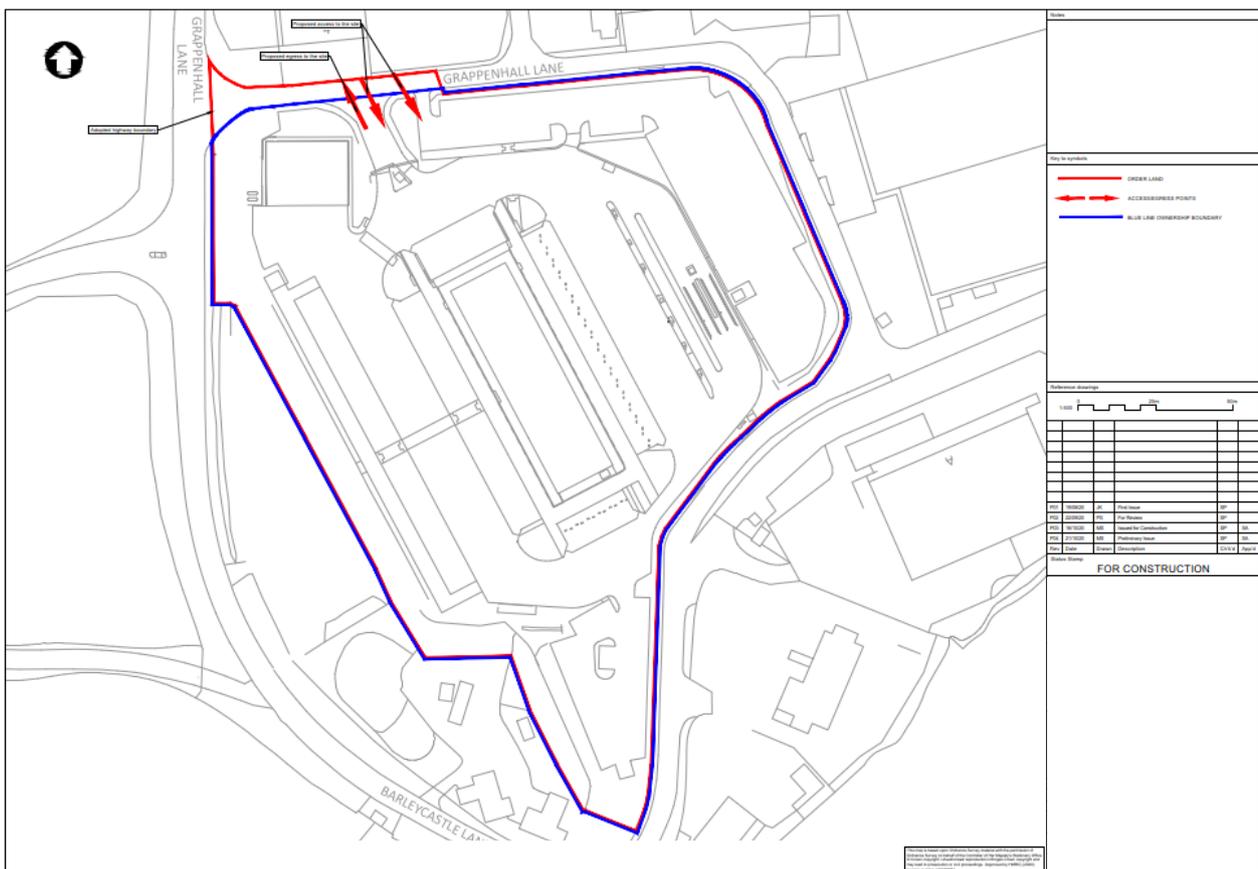
2.1 Overview of Site Location

The Warrington Inland Border Facility (IBF) is located near to Appleton Thorn, which is close to the M6 and M56 motorways. The site is accessed from M6 junction 20 via the A50 and B5356 Grappenhall Lane, onto an unnamed site access road within the small industrial estate opposite the B5356 Grappenhall Lane / Barleycastle Lane junction. Egress is on the same road.

The site has a one-way circulation system for vehicle movements through the site.

The limits of the site are denoted by the red line boundary as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Site Redline Boundary



Source: 418703-XXX-04-SH-DR-C-0001 Proposed Red Line Boundary

The routes to and from the M6 at junction 20 and M56 junction 9 are clearly signed to enable HGVs to access and leave the site without causing disruption to the surrounding local road network. HGVs enter the site from the unnamed site access road using dedicated entry and exit gates.

2.2 Site Capacity

The maximum capacity at the Warrington site is 69 HGVs at any one time.

Procedures are in place to avoid the situation where HGVs queue back onto the road network leading to the site.

Additionally, there are 71 car parking spaces for staff, including Marshals, which are accessed via an entry gate located adjacent to the HGVs entrance, used solely by staff, servicing and emergency vehicles.

3 Overview of Site Operation

The use of the site is of a temporary nature for up to two years until 31 December 2022 and has been created to enable the safe and efficient processing of customs paperwork relating to international freight movements for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

HMRC are responsible for the activation and operation of the site through their Site Operator. Contractor(s) are on-site to support the Site Operator for the duration of the operations.

The site is a 24-hour, seven day a week operation and involves staff based at the facility to manage this. The workforce includes fully trained security staff, who regularly patrol the site, and incident management staff. Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras are positioned across the site and cover all entrances to buildings. Due to COVID-19, there are various requirements for the site which affect the site layout and how it operates. Government recommendations are to be adhered to as these reflect the latest advice. The site has been designed taking social distancing into consideration.

Cleaning contractors are appointed to fulfil the daily cleaning requirements. Toilet facilities are available on the site for drivers and staff.

3.1 Directing vehicles to the inland border facility

HGVs accessing the site are expected to travel via the M56 and M6.

HGVs should exit the M6 at junction 20, travelling along the A50 Cliff Lane and exiting onto the B5356 Grappenhall Lane.

HGVs travelling from the Port of Holyhead will be expected to travel along the A55 to junction 34, A494 and the M56 to junction 9, linking with the M6 junction 20 dumbbell roundabout. From here, it is a short distance on the A50 and B5356 Grappenhall Lane to access the site. HGVs travelling in the opposite direction are expected to use the same route in reverse.

HGVs must not exit via M56 J10 and must avoid using the B5356 Stretton Road through Appleton Thorn where existing weight restrictions are to be enforced.

3.2 Prominent road signage

There is prominent road signage that directs HGV drivers to the inland border facility via M6 junction 20 and M56 junction 9. Additional signage directs HGV drivers between the motorway and the site in both directions.

There is also signage outside the site entrance to advise hauliers about the use of site facilities and providing site contact details.

3.3 Arrival at the site

After entering the site, HGVs stop at the Vehicle Entry Check Point before being directed to a vacant HGV space. From there, the HGVs are processed as necessary. During processing, no HGV drivers are allowed to leave the site. Once processing has been completed, the HGVs leave the site to continue on their journeys.

3.4 Vehicle processing

It generally takes a maximum of two hours for an HGV to be processed unless a physical examination of a vehicle is required. If a physical examination is required, processing may take up to eight hours.

3.5 Monitoring the number of HGVs arriving at the inland border facility

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras are positioned at the site access and egress point in order to record vehicles entering and exiting the site. This data will be used to identify when the site is nearing capacity.

When the site reaches 60% capacity, this changes its status to Amber, whilst 80% capacity changes the site status to Red, resulting in messaging on the Strategic Road Network and the Government website to deter HGVs from using the site.

HMRC will monitor the use of Grappenhall Lane by HGVs using existing Automatic Traffic Counting equipment. Data collected by the equipment will be obtained from Warrington Borough Council and shared with the Traffic Working Group.

In addition, HMRC is funding two new traffic cameras on the local road network between the site and the A50 roundabout to allow monitoring of the local highway.

The Traffic Working Group comprises representatives from HMRC, the local highways authority, Highways England and Cheshire Resilience Forum. It will meet at least monthly to review the traffic monitoring data for vehicles using the inland border facility and consider whether measures to mitigate traffic impacts are sufficient.

3.6 Staffing the inland border facility

Approximately 81 HMRC staff (which consists of Site Management, Site Operator Personnel, Traffic Management Marshals, Security Marshals) and Border Force staff will be on the site at any one time. Total site employment is over 300 staff.

All staff working on-site work a standard set of shift patterns. For the government agencies, staff work across three shifts, with each shift split into two in order to reduce the number of vehicle movements on-site at shift changeover times. Shifts changeover periods will be timed to avoid the network peak hours which are typically 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00.

In recognition of the limited opportunities for staff to travel to the site by public transport, HMRC in conjunction with the Site Contractor, provide free transport for staff to and from the IBF for each shift.

Designated pick up/drop off points have been identified based on current employee information. The service will be accessed via a mobile phone app so that the number of vehicles and pick-up/drop off points will be tailored to reflect demand as more employee information becomes available and their travel behaviour known.

Social distancing measures will be fully met to ensure safe travel (including a 50% occupancy rate, use of seat covers, hand sanitiser on board, cleaning between shifts and a deep clean every day).

Current pick-up points for the shuttle bus service are at the two main stations in Warrington (Warrington Central and Warrington Bank Quays). Pick-up points will however be tailored to the requirements of staff and may change at different times of the day to encourage maximum use of this service

3.7 Managing site capacity

Several methods will be used to dissuade drivers from continuing to travel to the site, if it is approaching or at capacity. The HMRC Inland Border Facility Service will provide real-time site status updates to drivers via direct communications to mobile phones as well as through a HMRC website to be used by hauliers.

While HMRC cannot mandate its use, drivers and hauliers will benefit from checking site status prior to arrival at an inland border facility, using the Inland Border Facility Service. Drivers and hauliers can also choose to provide prior notification of arrival which will assist in managing capacity at each IBF.

Variable Message Signs (VMS) will also be used to direct HGVs to alternative sites and deter drivers from arriving at the inland border facility and causing congestion on the local road network.

3.8 Notifying hauliers of the site's closure

Should the inland border facility be closed, information about the site's status will be notified to the Border Operating Centre (which oversees operations of all IBFs nationally), the local highways authority and Highways England. An additional VMS sign will be placed on Grappenhall Lane on the approach to the Broad Lane roundabout; this will direct HGV drivers away from the site in the event of an emergency or incident.

3.9 Biodiversity improvements

Improvements to biodiversity will be made through the introduction of bird and bat boxes within the surrounding habitat of the inland border facility. This will improve the biodiversity value of the site by offering additional nesting opportunities for bird and bat species.

A maximum of five bat boxes and up to ten bird boxes are to be erected within suitable areas within retained vegetation. The exact location and number of boxes will need to be determined by a suitably qualified ecologist once on site and the areas of retained habitat are confirmed.

Although the scheme has limited impact upon biodiversity, as a responsible Government department, HMRC on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is keen to ensure that the provision of the inland border facilities can also bring forward wider community benefits as we recognise the importance and value of this.

Biodiversity initiatives can play an important role in combating the effects of climate change and help to contribute to Her Majesty's Government's wider net zero carbon emissions commitment by 2050. Planting schemes have a variety of wider benefits, including tackling poor air quality, supporting biodiversity and health and wellbeing.

Improvements to biodiversity will be instigated, through bolstering the western boundary vegetation in areas where it is currently open and limited, subject to agreement with the landowner as necessary

HMRC have engaged in discussions with Warrington Borough Council, a local residents group, Appleton Thorn Parish Council and Stretton Parish Council about opportunities for re-planting to mitigate loss from on-site tree removal that is required as part of construction of the inland border facility proposal. Opportunities to contribute to local schemes are being considered to enable local tree planting which will benefit the local community.

Once the site is no longer operating, it will be necessary to reinstate the cleared vegetation with a minimum ratio of 1:1, in accordance with the requirements of the planning consent.

The value of the biodiversity units to be impacted by the scheme and the enhancements to be provided would be calculated to quantify the net impact of the scheme. This would be completed using the Biodiversity Metric 2.01 based upon the Phase 1 Habitat Survey and information from the proposed reinstatement and further enhancements.

All reinstatement and on site enhancement works will form part of the Reinstatement Plan that will need to be submitted to the Secretary of State (SoS) within six months of the scheme ceasing. As such, a planting specification will need to be produced by an appropriately qualified Landscape Architect to feed into this strategy.

3.10 Noise monitoring

Ambient noise monitoring will be undertaken using long-term noise monitoring equipment for a period of six months following the commencement of site operations and, wherever practicable prior to site operations. At each monitoring location, the equipment will include a sound level meter housed in a weatherproof case, a power supply (which could be batteries, mains, solar power, or a combination), an external microphone and weatherproof wind shield, and internet connectivity for remote download of data.

If monitoring results in the first six months of operation confirm that additional mitigation is not required, then the monitoring survey will cease. In the event that the monitoring indicates that further mitigation may be necessary then the monitoring will be extended as required.

Monitoring locations have been selected to enable impact to be determined at the nearest representative receptor locations. These locations are:

- One at a location on the site boundary in between the site and Ashberry Drive
- One at a location on the site boundary in between the site and Yew Tree Lane
- One at a location on the site boundary in between the site and Barleycastle Lane

Noise monitoring data will be measured on a monthly basis and reported to Warrington Borough Council.

In the event that the monitoring indicates exceedance of the noise limits, details of additional mitigation that will be implemented as soon as reasonably practicable will be set out and will comprise noise control measures such as extending the height or improving the noise insulation properties of any fences between the site and receptors, restricting use of some parking areas to daytime only, or making other operational changes on the site or restrictions that would reduce noise at particularly affected receptors.

3.11 Air Quality monitoring

Monitoring of traffic movements in and out of the site, and on surrounding roads will include:

- Monitoring of vehicles entering and exiting the site using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) or the Site Contractor's PINC system
- Monitoring of traffic flows on the B5356 between the Broad Lane roundabout and Cliff Lane roundabout will be undertaken using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs)

Warrington Borough Council (WBC) have agreed to share data from their ATC sites on request. Data will be collected for the first year of operation as a minimum. Following the first year of monitoring, this will be reviewed based on usage of the scheme and monitored traffic flows.

Data will be collected for total traffic flows (Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)) and Heavy-Duty Vehicles ((HDVs) vehicles greater than 3.5 tonnes).

Following the first month of operation, the collected traffic count information will be analysed and indicative AADT and HDV numbers calculated, for comparison with the data used within the assessment for the Article 4 submission. A technical note will be prepared detailing the observed traffic flows compared to the assessed flow.

Following the first six months of operation, the collected traffic count information will be analysed and indicative AADT, HDV numbers calculated, for comparison with the data used within the assessment for the Article 4 submission. A technical note will be prepared detailing the observed traffic flows compared to the assessed flow.

Following a whole year of operation, the collected traffic count information will be analysed and the required AADT, HDV numbers calculated, for comparison with the data used within the assessment for the Article 4 submission. A technical note will be prepared detailing the observed traffic flows compared to the assessed flow.

After a year of operation, in the event that the collected traffic data demonstrates the assumptions used with the assessment are an underestimate of existing and scheme traffic flows, the risks of the scheme creating an exceedance of the air quality objectives will be assessed. This will be undertaken by considering the difference in traffic flows, and the likelihood of an exceedance of the air quality objectives. If required, the air quality modelling assessment will be updated. If the updated assessment indicates potential likely significant effects, the operation capacity of the site will be reviewed to reduce air quality impacts. For future years, the number of vehicles entering and exiting the site will be compared to the first year of operation. Where the total number is lower than the first year, no further action is required as traffic impacts will be lower than during the first full year of operation. Where the total number is higher, the need for additional traffic counts will be determined considering the additional number of vehicles using the site and the risk of likely significant effects.

If monitored traffic flows are higher than those assumed in the Article 4 air quality assessment, after a whole year of operation, air quality dispersion modelling will be undertaken. Modelled results will be compared against the annual mean air quality objectives to confirm if there are any predicted exceedances of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). In the event that there are any exceedances, the operating procedures at the site will be revisited to reduce the capacity such that there are no predicted exceedances of the air quality objectives.

Appendices

A. General FAQs

For answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), please refer to the Warrington Inland Border Facility website:

[Warrington Inland Border Facility – Inland Border Facilities](#)