



HM Revenue
& Customs



Department
for Transport

Ashford Waterbrook Inland Border Facility

Operational Management Plan 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 the Department of Transport (DfT) site at Waterbrook Park Estate, Ashford, Kent.

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 Special Development Order (SDO) process to aid better understanding of operations at the site.

1.1 Purpose of the Site

The use of the site is of a temporary nature to 31 December 2022 and it has been created to enable the safe and efficient processing of paperwork relating to outgoing freight movement (Common Transit Convention (CTC) and Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnet) to prepare HGVs to cross the Channel. Department for Transport (DfT) will carry out border readiness checks on vehicles intending to leave the country.

The Waterbrook Inland Border Facility (IBF) operates on a 24/7 basis. Two inspection sheds are located on the site for HGVs to be inspected.

The site is also capable of accommodating Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) during any disruption events that may occur, such as inclement weather, when Channel crossings may be affected.

A review of potential sites within Kent 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

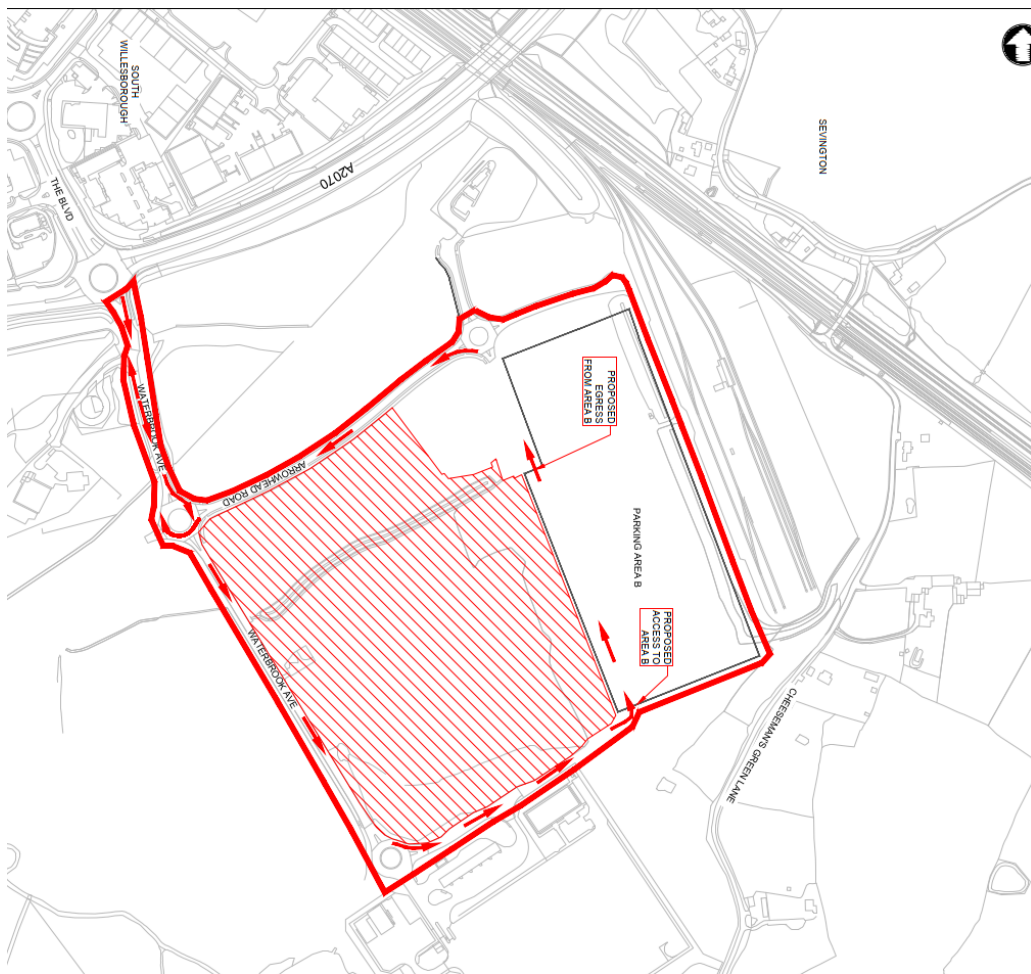
2 The Site

2.1 Overview of Site Location

The Ashford Waterbrook Inland Border Facility (IBF) is located south east of Ashford, Kent. It is accessed from the M20 Junction 10a to the A2070 and then via the southern side of the A2070 Orbital Park Roundabout. The site has a one-way 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



Site access is provided via Waterbrook Avenue, located at the southern side of the A2070 Orbital Park Roundabout. This marks the commencement of the site and the end of the public highway.

The initial section of Waterbrook Avenue immediately before the roundabout junction with Arrowhead Road is bi-directional and provides access and egress to the site for all HGVs and private car traffic.

HGVs are directed south onto the continuation of Waterbrook Avenue, this marks the start of the site one-way system. HGVs intending to use the parking facilities at the Ashford International Truck Stop are exempt from the one-way system and can enter and leave the truck stop via Arrowhead Road. The Truck Stop is a commercial operation and does not form part of the IBF site.

HGVs intending to make use of the site continue on Waterbrook Avenue towards the existing Truck Stop, turn left at the roundabout prior to the Truck Stop entrance and approach the parking area entrance eastbound, on the continuation of Waterbrook Avenue.

Vehicles leaving the site must stop at the vehicle exit check point before departing the parking area via the roundabout on Arrowhead Road immediately after the parking area exit. HGVs are instructed to turn left at this roundabout and use Arrowhead Road to reach the roundabout junction with Waterbrook Avenue. HGVs are instructed to turn right and re-join the A2070.

2.2 Site Capacity

The capacity at the Waterbrook Ashford Inland Border Facility is 475 HGVs. The site is split into two areas, B1 and B2, that serve Department for Transport (DfT) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) respectively. The total site capacity is 475.

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

Additionally, there are 102 car parking spaces for staff, including Marshals.

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). Department for Transport (DfT) will carry out border readiness checks on vehicles intending to leave the country.

DfT 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.

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

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.

3.1 Directing vehicles to the inland border facility

The key routes on the highway network providing access to the site via the Strategic Road Network are the M20 and A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road.

Most HGVs visiting the site are expected to approach the Ashford area via the M20 exiting at junction 10a and using the A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road to reach the A2070 Orbital Park roundabout. HGVs will be encouraged to use junction 10a rather than junction 10.

In small numbers, HGVs travelling from other parts of Kent and the south coast may take the A259 and the A28 respectively and then the A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road to reach the A2070 Orbital Park Roundabout.

3.2 Prominent road signage

There is prominent road signage that directs HGV drivers to the inland border facility via M20 junction 10a and the A2070. 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 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.

3.6 Staffing the inland border facility

The number of staff at the site is subject to change depending on the delivery of other sites and change throughout the day and week. The Duty Manager is responsible for ensuring that the minimum number of trained Security Marshals and Traffic Management Marshals are on-site to cover every shift each day

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.

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) may 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. 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.

At least one bat box and one bird box are to be erected within suitable areas within retained vegetation. The exact location of the 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, DfT 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.

As no habitat is present for the construction of the IBF, no vegetation clearance is required and therefore no re-instatement of vegetation is needed.

3.9 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 receptor locations are:

- One at a location on Wren Drive
- One at a location at Kent Chamber of Commerce
- One at a location on Cheesemans Green Lane/ Church Lane.

Noise monitoring data will be measured on a monthly basis and reported to Kent County 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.

3.10 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 A2070 between the M20 junction 10a roundabout and the Sevington roundabout will be undertaken using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs)

- Monitoring of traffic flows on the A2070 between the A2070 Sevington roundabout and junction 10 (Bad Munstereifel Road) will be undertaken using ATCs
- A2070 between the A2070 Sevington roundabout and the site entrance will be undertaken using ATCs

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.

A. General FAQs

Please access the general FAQs for the Ashford Waterbrook IBF using the following link:

[Ashford – Waterbrook Inland Border Facility – Inland Border Facilities](#)