



HM Revenue  
& Customs

# **North Weald 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) site at North Weald Airfield, Rayley Lane, Epping, Essex.

The purpose of this document is to give an overview of the site, its purpose, its size and the operations that take place on it. It also provides more detail in response to common queries raised by engagement parties during the Special Development Order 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 has been created to enable the safe and efficient processing of paperwork relating to outgoing freight movements (Common Transit Convention (CTC) and Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnet) to prepare Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to cross the Channel.

The North Weald Inland Border Facility (IBF) operates on a 24/7 basis, with the process expected to be completed within one to two hours. An inspection shed located on the site is for a proportion of HGVs to be inspected.

A review of potential sites within Essex 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

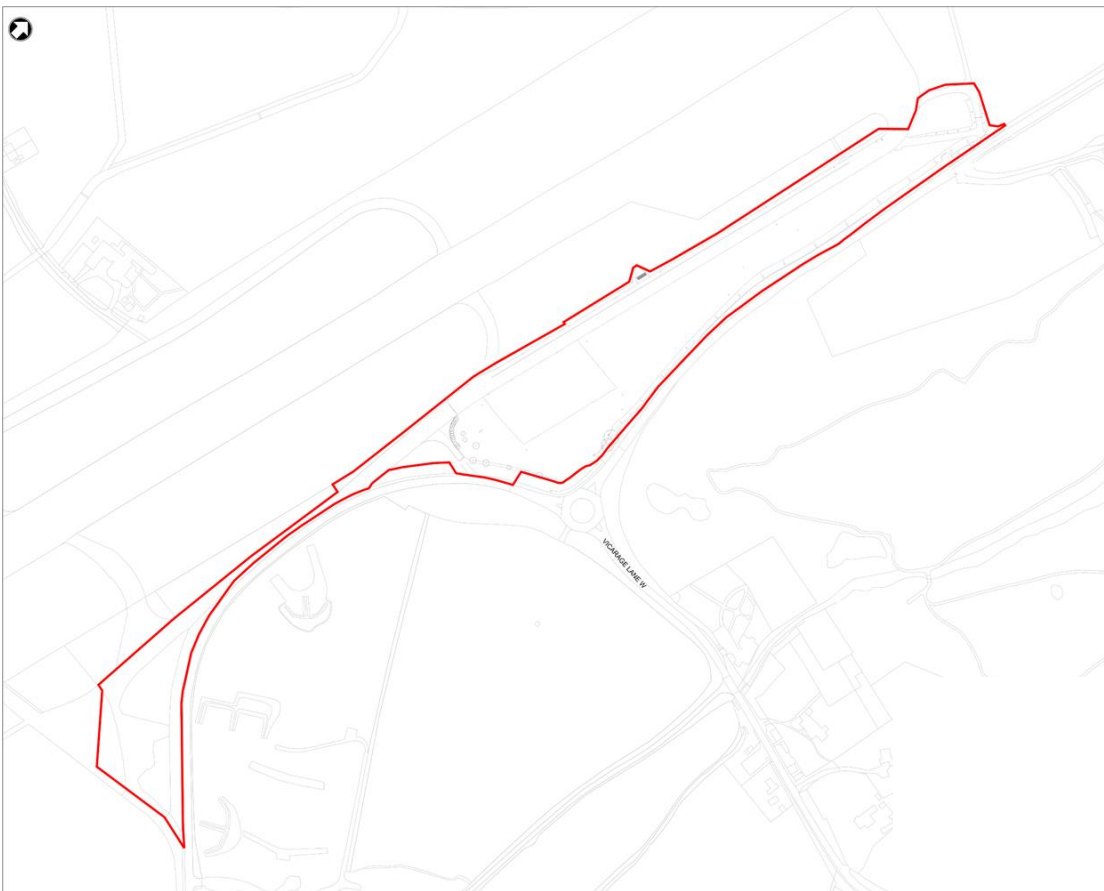
## 2 The Site

### 2.1 Overview of Site Location

The North Weald Inland Border Facility is located north of North Weald Basset village, near Epping, and is accessed via junction 7 of the M11 motorway, A414 (Canes Lane) and Rayley Lane. The site features separate entrance and exit points, creating a one-way movement 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**



An improved entrance to the site from Rayley Lane allows traffic to be controlled by demand responsive traffic signals. Additionally, in conjunction with Essex County Council, a 40mph speed limit and clearway restrictions have been implemented on Merlin Way and Rayley Lane.

The site is anticipated to cater for traffic travelling south. Vehicles attending the site leave the M11 at junction 7 with clear signage directing vehicles towards the site via the A414 Canes Lane. At the roundabout with Rayley Lane, signage directs vehicles towards the site entrance prior to the roundabout at Merlin Way. Vehicles leaving the site join Merlin Way and are signed back to the M11.



Routes to and from the M11 are clearly signed to enable HGVs to access and leave the site directly without causing disruption to the surrounding local road network.

## 2.2 Site Capacity

The capacity at the North Weald Inland Border Facility is 51 HGVs.

Procedures have been implemented to avoid the situation where HGVs queue back onto the road network leading to the site.

Additionally, there are 66 car parking spaces for visitors and staff, including Marshals, which are accessed either via the main site entrance on Rayley Lane or the secondary staff only entrance on Merlin Way.

## 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.

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.

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.

### 3.1 Directing vehicles to the inland border facility

Most HGVs travelling to the site will access the site from the north, exiting the M11 at junction 7 onto the A414.

HGVs travelling from south east England, central northern England, the East Midlands and the M40 corridor will exit the M25 at junction 27 onto the M11, before exiting onto the A414 at junction 7.

HGVs travelling from Hertfordshire will travel to the site on the A10 before exiting onto the A414 north of Hoddesdon. HGVs travelling from northern Essex and Suffolk will access the site from the east, travelling to the site on the A12 then exiting onto the A414 south of Chelmsford.

It should be noted that all HGV trips are expected to travel to the site via strategic routes. HGV drivers will be advised to avoid local routes through the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation.

### 3.2 Prominent road signage

There is prominent road signage that directs HGV drivers to the inland border facility via M11 junction 7 and the A414. 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.

### 3.6 Staffing the inland border facility

Approximately 66 full time staff (which consists of Site Management, Site Operator Personnel, Traffic Management Marshals, Security Marshals, Border Force staff) will be on site at any one time.

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.

A framework Staff Travel Plan has been developed to manage staff travel to and from the site and reduce the impact of staff travel on the local area. As part of ongoing staff training, daily briefings and induction, the requirement to avoid travel through the Epping Forest SAC will be made very clear and monitored.

Staff also benefit from a free shuttle bus service that currently operates from Harlow and Epping town centres, via the IBF and avoiding the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

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).

### 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.

### 3.9 Biodiversity improvements

Improvements to biodiversity will be made through the introduction of 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 bat species.

At least two bat boxes will be erected within the vegetation bordering the car park. The exact location will need to be determined by a suitably qualified ecologist once on site.

Additionally, a 'dark corridor' will be maintained along the vegetated bund bordering the eastern boundary of the site, mitigating against potential non-significant effects on bat commuting corridors and foraging areas

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.

One initiative that is currently being explored is to support aspects of the North Weald Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace as part of Epping Forest District Councils (EFDC) wider master planning.

When the site is no longer operating, any cleared vegetation will be reinstated with a minimum ratio of 1:1.

Further improvements to biodiversity will be identified and made where possible such as through bolstering the vegetation in areas where it is currently open and limited. This would improve the biodiversity value of the site by offering additional habitat opportunities and connectivity for reptiles seeking to achieve biodiversity net gain.

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 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.

### 3.10 Noise monitoring

Ambient noise monitoring will be undertaken using long-term noise monitoring equipment for a period of up to six months (with an initial review after three 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 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:

- A property in Canes Lane A414
- A property in Rayley Lane
- The north east corner of the site

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

### 3.11 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 Canes Lane between the M11 Junction 7 roundabout and the A414 roundabout will be undertaken using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs)

Data should be collected for the first year of operation as a minimum. Following the first year of monitoring this should be reviewed based on usage of the scheme and monitored traffic flows. Data should 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 (NO<sub>2</sub>). 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 North Weald Airfield IBF using the following link:

[https://inlandborderfacilities.uk/?page\\_id=53](https://inlandborderfacilities.uk/?page_id=53)