



# Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project

Environmental Statement

Appendix 9.3.1: Summary of Stakeholder Scoping Responses – Ecology and Nature Conservation

**Book 5**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This document forms **ES Appendix 9.3.1: Summary of Stakeholder Scoping Responses – Ecology and Nature Conservation** (Doc Ref. 5.3) of the Environmental Statement (ES) prepared on behalf of Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) for the proposal to make best use of Gatwick Airport’s existing runways and infrastructure (referred to within this report as ‘the Project’).
- 1.1.2 This document provides details of stakeholder scoping responses for **ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** (Doc Ref. 5.1) for the Project. Details of how the stakeholder comments have been taken into account in the ES and where that information can be found is also provided in this appendix

## 2 Summary of Stakeholder Scoping Responses for Ecology and Nature Conservation

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
Crawley Borough Council	The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre records should be drawn upon and should inform the existing baseline conditions.	The ES includes <b>Appendix 9.6.1: Ecological Desk Study</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3). All appropriate records provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre are summarised in that Appendix.
Crawley Borough Council	Within the section on ‘existing baseline conditions’ the EIASR fails to mention the locally designated Biodiversity Opportunity Areas which extend up to and within the airport boundary, these areas must also be carefully considered, and impacts assessed as part of the ES. There are also pockets of ancient woodland just beyond the airport boundary, such as Huntsgreen Wood at the Gatwick Rd /A23 junction, and Allen’s Wood /Blackcorner Wood to the SE of the airport boundary which should be included in the scope.	Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) have now been included. The Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory has been used to identify areas of ancient woodland within the Zone of Influence and any effects are reported in Section 9.9 Assessment of Effects.
Crawley Borough Council	In respect of the potential effects in table 7.3.1, the ES should be clear on the clear synergies between drainage and ecology impacts upstream or downstream from the airport as any increase in water flow through a watercourse could impact on the ecology of the watercourse or floodplain (including any increased sediment loading or contaminants). This should be assessed, and mitigation methods identified.	The ecological assessment provided in <b>ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation</b> (Doc Ref. 5.1) has taken into consideration the hydrological assessment set out in <b>ES Chapter 11: Water Environment</b> (Doc Ref. 5.1).
Crawley Borough Council	The mitigation list 7.3.43 makes no reference to the enhancement of biodiversity which should be included as a requirement of the Project, to be consistent with the Government position set out in its 25-year Environment Plan (2018) (and reflected in the Crawley Borough Local Plan Policy ENV2) to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2020 and move to net gain.	Mitigation and enhancement proposals are detailed in Section 9.8 and Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES). The Environment Act 2021 included provisions applying certain biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements to the nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) regime. However, those provisions are not yet in force and their commencement is dependent on secondary regulations, which are currently subject to consultation. The expectation (discussed in the consultation) is that a BNG requirement will be imposed on NSIP projects from November 2025, with the level of requirement detailed within a BNG statement(s) (subject to prior publication – currently expected to be November 2023, to allow a period of transition) and presently expected to be set at a minimum of 10%. The consultation sets out that projects which have been accepted for examination prior to the November 2025 date would not be required to deliver that minimum BNG target but could choose to do so voluntarily.

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
Crawley Borough Council	CBC confirms that Willoughby Fields is a designated Local Nature Reserve.	Willoughby Fields Local Nature Reserve is identified as a receptor in Chapter 9 of the ES and an assessment of potential effects is included in Section 9.9.
Elmbridge Borough Council	It is considered that the potential effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA which falls just outside the 20km buffer for International Statutory Designated Sites and Study Area should also be assessed as part of the ES.	Impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA have been considered and are reported within <b>ES Appendix 9.9.1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Report</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3).
Horsham District Council	Reference should be made to the draft Sussex Bat SAC Planning and Landscape Scale Enhancement Protocol (South Downs National Park Authority/Natural England, undated)	This has been referenced and included within <b>ES Appendix 9.9.1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Report</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3).
Horsham District Council	Although the ecology chapter refers to Natural England's MAGIC website, the applicant's ecologists need to use this resource to check the Impact Risk Zones for individual designated sites instead of a generic 5km buffer from the development.	The MAGIC Map website (Defra) was referred to and identified the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SSSI and Glovers Wood SSSI as having Impact Risk Zones overlapping the Project site boundary. The impacts of the Project on these sites are assessed in Paragraph 9.9.4 of Chapter 9 of the ES.
Horsham District Council	The final Study Area should be refined in relation to SACs designated for bats, should such mobile species be identified as present on the development site or where these sites lie outside the initial 20km and 5km search areas. We note that the survey area will also include up to 500 metres both up and down stream of the major watercourses that flow through the Project site to identify any potential sign of otter/water vole. A similar survey area would be used for fish, should such surveys be required.	The initial search area for European designated sites (including SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites) was 20 km from the Project site boundary to allow for effects arising from vehicle emissions. This buffer has been extended for SACs designated for bats within 30 km of the Project site. (Paragraph 9.4.8 of Chapter 9 of the ES).
Horsham District Council	We note that the desk study for species records will include local record centres - this should include Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) - and these records should inform survey requirements. Records from any new or updated surveys undertaken in Sussex should be shared back with SxBRC.	The ES includes <b>Appendix 9.6.1: Ecological Desk Study</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3). All appropriate records provided by the Sussex Biodiversity record centre are summarised there.
Horsham District Council	As protected Species including badgers and reptiles such as grass snake have also been found within the Study Area, we expect the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) to include details of mitigation, compensation and enhancement for all protected species. It is particularly recommended that the survey and assessment of badgers is provided in a separate confidential appendix to avoid release of sensitive information.	Details of mitigation measures designed into the Project are described in Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES) and <b>ES Appendix 9.6.4: Confidential Badger Survey</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3).
Horsham District Council	Although surveys for breeding birds have been undertaken, we recommend that these include nesting birds as some Priority Species, for example, Skylark, may be affected by wildlife hazard safeguarding considerations.	Breeding bird surveys identified any details of nesting birds on site. Details of mitigation measures designed into the Project are described in Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES). These have been designed in consideration of wildlife hazard safeguarding.
Horsham District Council	We recommend that the PIER contains details of air quality monitoring available on roads within 200m of N2k sites and SSSI woodland particularly those which are likely to generate increased traffic to the airport as a result of the development. This is particularly important for Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA Mole Gap and Reigate escarpment SAC as these Habitat (European) sites are designated for nutrient poor heathland. Ashdown Forest supports important lichen assemblages and air pollution listed in Site Improvement Plan (SIP) which needs a Site Nitrogen Plan to control, reduce and ameliorate	Change in traffic flows on routes serving the site to be considered in the ES and will be used to inform any necessary air quality monitoring.

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
	<p>atmospheric nitrogen impacts. Mole Gap and Reigate escarpment SAC also has air pollution as an issue listed in the SIP. Further investigation of the impacts of nitrogen deposition is needed by monitoring the indicators of increased nitrogen (N) deposition, such as increased vigorous grass growth, increase in Tor-grass and other grasses, and a decrease in orchid species through the use of fixed-point quadrat surveys over 5 years. These habitat sites could therefore be adversely affected by changes in air quality resulting from the development so this needs to be covered by the shadow HRA/Appropriate Assessment.</p>	
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>We recommend that botanical survey consideration of habitats is related to SAC or SSSI designation features, such as species rich grassland which may be intolerant to nutrient deposition and species, such as lichens susceptible to air pollution. This also applies to Ancient Woodland which is recognised by the NPPF as an irreplaceable habitat and it is important to understand if any of these are sensitive to nutrient nitrogen and NOx concentrations.</p>	<p>Effects on European designated sites are provided within Section 9.9 of this chapter and within the <b>ES Appendix 9.9.1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Report</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3). Ancient Woodland has been identified as Important Ecological Features in Table 9.6.5 and any potential effects on this habitat are described in Section 9.9 (Chapter 9 of the ES)</p>
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>We note that 7.3.15 lists habitats of ecological interest, however, it will be necessary to identify any impacts on Priority habitats and species (and not just significant ones) in the Environmental Report to ensure that the Secretary of State can demonstrate their Section 40 duty under NERC Act 2006.</p>	<p>Priority habitats and species have been identified as Important Ecological Features in Table 9.6.5 and any potential effects on them are described in Section 9.9 (Chapter 9 of the ES).</p>
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>We welcome protection of habitats during construction activities from pollution/disturbance etc. and recommend that effective mitigation measures are embedded in the CoCP and secured as a requirement of the DCO. A draft should be submitted with the PIER and outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.</p>	<p>A draft CoCP has been produced (Appendix 5.3.2 of the ES (Doc Ref. 5.3)). An outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan is located at Appendix 8.8.1 of the ES.</p>
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>Further mitigation, such as the provision of new commuting routes for bats or new foraging habitats for birds, may also need to be incorporated, based on the findings of the assessment as required, noting that any new habitat provided may be influenced by wildlife hazard safeguarding considerations.</p>	<p>Details of mitigation measures designed into the Project are described in Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES).</p>
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>Any potential significant effects, both direct and indirect, should be assessed and appropriate mitigation and compensation measures recommended to ensure these can be secured by a condition of any consent. This will allow the Secretary of State to discharge all associated statutory duties, including the Section 40 NERC biodiversity duty.</p>	<p>Details of mitigation measures designed into the Project are described in Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES).</p>
<p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>We recommend that references to notable (which has a specific meaning relating to distribution of species) are refined and that the report needs to clearly identify Priority Habitats and Species. We note that the Scoping Report uses the term "notable" for species, includes additional criteria, for example, Red Data Book. Clarification of this term is recommended as it does not reflect that term where it is used for distribution trends measured at 10km square resolution, for example, Nationally Notable.</p>	<p>Priority habitats and species have been identified as Important Ecological Features in Table 9.6.5 and any potential effects on them are described in Section 9.9 (Chapter 9 of the ES).</p>

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
Horsham District Council	As PINS and the Secretary of State will need to prepare/adopt an HRA screening/Appropriate assessment, the applicant should provide shadow documents for consideration and possible adoption for formal consultation with Natural England. There needs to be in-combination assessment in tandem with the cumulative assessment for EIA to ensure that regulatory requirements are met.	A HRA has been provided as <b>ES Appendix 9.9.1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Report</b> (Doc Ref. 5.3).
Horsham District Council	To establish a consistent assessment approach, there is merit in the use of a Significance Matrix and standard terminology as the basis for assessment for each individual topic, where this is possible.	Table 9.4.5 establishes a significance Assessment Matrix that has been used to assess the effects in Section 9.9 (Chapter 9 of the ES).
Horsham District Council	The Scoping report paragraph 7.3.46 only lists two ecological issues to be scoped out but Appendix 9.1.1 lists three.	During the PEIR process as more detailed designs were provided only one ecological issue was eventually scoped out, this being the direct habitat loss effects within the boundary of designated sites. All other ecological issues have been assessed within the ES chapter.
Horsham District Council	We recommend creating Priority Habitats as well as measures for Protected and Priority Species. The PIER should thoroughly explore all reasonable options to deliver measurable net gain from the development and restore biodiversity networks.	Details of mitigation and enhancement measures designed into the Project are described in Table 9.8.1 (Chapter 9 of the ES). The Environment Act 2021 included provisions applying certain biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements to the nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) regime. However, those provisions are not yet in force and their commencement is dependent on secondary regulations, which are currently subject to consultation. The expectation (discussed in the consultation) is that a BNG requirement will be imposed on NSIP projects from November 2025, with the level of requirement detailed within a BNG statement(s) (subject to prior publication – currently expected to be November 2023, to allow a period of transition) and presently expected to be set at a minimum of 10%. The consultation sets out that projects which have been accepted for examination prior to the November 2025 date would not be required to deliver that minimum BNG target, but could choose to do so voluntarily.
Horsham District Council	In addition to the EIA report, it will be necessary to also provide sufficient information on non-significant impacts on Protected and Priority species and habitats at submission either in a non-EIA chapter or separate documentation.	Information on non-significant impacts on protected and priority species have been provided within Section 9.6 (Chapter 9 of the ES).
Mid Sussex District Council	It should be noted for the purposes of undertaking the EIA that CIEEM has just released an updated version of their guideline for ecological impact assessment (September 2019).	The assessment in Chapter 9 of the ES is based on the 2019 guidance.
Mid Sussex District Council	It should be noted that the standard assessment thresholds described in the scope of the noise and vibration assessment (Chapter 7) may not be adequate as a proxy for noise impacts on some ecological receptors such as bats. This may therefore need considering for the EIA depending upon the location of the Bechstein's bat colonies and the expected change in the noisescapes due to the project.	Impacts on sensitive species from noise in the vicinity of the airport is not predicted due to them already being habituated to high noise levels from both aviation and traffic.
Mid Sussex District Council	In light of High Court rulings relating to Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA, assessments at internationally important wildlife sites should apply any thresholds used to determine a significant change in traffic flows to 'in	Change in traffic flows on routes serving the site have been modelled and are presented in the PTAR with the results used in Chapter 20: Cumulative Effects and Inter-

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
	combination' changes in traffic flows with other plans and projects, rather than to the Project in isolation, therefore the Transport Model needs to be robust and fit for purpose to ensure this can be assessed.	relationships of the ES, to model changes in air quality. Interpretation of these impacts is provided in Appendix 9.9.1.
Mole Valley District Council	Paragraph 7.3.1 – For the avoidance of doubt, the Council would like to make clear that not all of the Mole Valley Local Plan 2000 policies listed as relevant to Ecology and Nature Conservation were saved following review of the 2000 Local Plan in 2007. Policies ENV9 and ENV10 were not saved and are therefore not applicable.	Table 9.2.2 (Chapter 9 of the ES) has been amended to reflect the comment.
Mole Valley District Council	Paragraph 7.3.13 – The Scoping Report fails to refer to Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), designated under Policy ENV12 of the Mole Valley Local Plan 2000 and Policy CS15 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy 2009. These sites are designated as they contain flora and fauna of county or regional value. They play a valuable role in nature conservation and should therefore be considered accordingly. The SNCIs within the 5km study area, available to view on the Council's Proposals Map, are: Withy Gill, Hookwood Edolph's Copse, Charlwood Rickett's Wood, Charlwood Pockmire's Wood and Beggar's Gill, Charlwood Leg of Mutton Wood / The Jordans, Newdigate Duke's Copse, Newdigate Newdigate Brickworks Hammond's Copse, Newdigate	Full details of SNCIs have now been provided by Surrey Biodiversity Records Centre and an assessment of the proposals on nature conservation assets of these sites has been undertaken as part of the ES.
Mole Valley District Council	Paragraph 7.3.14 – The potential impacts of the development on Priority Habitats and Species, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, should be fully assessed through the EIA process.	Priority habitats and species have been identified as Important Ecological Features in Table 9.6.5 and any potential effects on them are described in Section 9.9 (Chapter 9 of the ES).
Mole Valley District Council	Paragraph 7.3.43 – The Proposed Development should provide biodiversity net gains in accordance with national policy set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan (2018).	Biodiversity net gain calculations have been completed and are reported in Appendix 9.9.2 Biodiversity Net Gain Statement.
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	References to saved Borough Local Plan Policy Pc2G "Local Nature Conservation Interest" should be removed from Paragraph 7.3.1 of the EIA Scoping Report following the adoption of the DMP.	This has been noted and updated within the ES Chapter.
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	We question whether there is enough evidence/ justification at this stage to screen out changes in water quality at European designated sites. Whilst we note the justification for screening out the effect on water quality at European designated sites (namely that European designated sites are not hydrologically linked to the Project site and that therefore there is no impact pathway), we would draw attention to Reigate & Banstead's Habitat Regulation Assessment produced for the DMP Examination (October/ November 2019) which concluded that there was a potential hydrological	An assessment of effects on European designated sites is provided within Section 9.9 of Chapter 9 of the ES and within the Habitats Regulations Assessment Report included in Appendix 9.9.1 of the ES, which considers the potential for effects on European designated sites. This includes consideration of the potential for effects arising from hydrological pathways and associated changes to water quality.

Consultee	Details	How/where taken into account in ES
	impact pathway between our borough and the Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA and ask that GAL consider whether this site should therefore be scoped in.	
South Downs National Park Authority	The SDNPA concurs with the identification of The Mens SAC and Ebernoe Common SAC within the scope of the study. Both of these locations sit within the South Downs National Park.	Stated in Section 9.6 (Chapter 9 of the ES).
Surrey County Council	With reference to the guidance listed under paragraph 7.3.2 (p.74) of the Scoping Report (Volume 1), given that the assessment is to include modelling of air quality effects on designated sites, the County Council would recommend that the recently published Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance (A Guide to the assessment of air quality impacts on designated nature conservation sites, IAQM, June 2019) on that topic be included. The County Council would expect the assessment of air quality impacts on nature conservation assets to include Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs).	Surrey Biodiversity Records Centre have provided details of SNCIs and an assessment of air quality on nature conservation assets of these sites has been undertaken as part of the ES. The assessment has had full regard to the IAQM guidance.
Surrey County Council	The County Council notes that no reference appears to have been made to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), which may be of assistance to the assessment in respect of the identification of appropriate mitigation and opportunities for net gain. The BOA most relevant to the proposed DCO application site is the RO5 'River Mole & Tributaries' BOA.	SNCIs and BOAs are included as locally designated sites within this assessment (see Appendix 9.6.1 and Table 9.6.1 Chapter 9 of the ES).
Tandridge District Council	No specific comments are made on the proposed scope of the baseline studies, study area, affects proposed to be assessed, and the approaches to the assessment of effects, and mitigation, enhancement and monitoring in relation to this topic.	All these matters are addressed in the ES Chapter 9.
Wealden District Council	The Council must be content that any potential impacts to the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation have been taken into account and are satisfactorily scoped into the assessment. The Council will require detailed assessments to be undertaken in relation to the impact of traffic and airplace emissions. The Council would recommend the EIA scoping assessment list all of the relevant 'designated sites' that it will test effects of development on.	Effects on European designated sites are provided within Section 9.9 of the ES chapter and within the Habitats Regulations (Non-significant Effects) Report included in Appendix 9.9.1.



### 3 Glossary

#### 3.1 Glossary of terms

**Table 3.1.1: Glossary of Terms**

Term	Description
BOA	Biodiversity Opportunity Areas
CBC	Crawley Borough Council
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
DCO	Development Consent Order
DMP	Development Management Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIASR	Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
GAL	Gatwick Airport Limited
IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SNCI	Sites of Nature Conservation Importance
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SxBRC	Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre
UKFS	United Kingdom Forestry Standard