

Northern Runway Project (TR020005) Mole Valley District Council Response to the Rule 6 Letter (IP Reference: 20044578)

Examination Schedule and Timescales

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) would like to raise concern regarding the period of the examination and the ability of both the Examining Authority and interested parties to be able to respond sufficiently within the six-month programme in such a way as to ensure that the Secretary of State has all the relevant information needed to make their decision. Whilst it is fully appreciated that the timescales for the DCO are restricted to some extent by legislation, the Council would not wish to see the examination truncated for sake of achieving the deadline and seeks a fully informed and robust decision. The Northern Runway Project (NRP) DCO is a significant project and the breadth of information and response required justifiably extensive and highly technical. However, the process is not easily resourced by local authorities, the community and stakeholders who do not have easy access to much of the specialist knowledge that is both relevant and important. As such, MVDC asks that the Examining authority (ExA) keep an open mind regarding the timescales and allow for flexibility in seeking inputs where it is necessary to do so.

Regarding the initial assessment of principal issues the Council appreciates the early publication of the agendas and these are considered reasonable for the most part. It would have, however, expected Air Quality to appear as a single-matter within the list of Issue Specific Hearings and seeks assurance that a necessary session will be held during the examination proceedings at a later point.