



# Ministry of Defence

Richard Daone  
Deputy Head of Planning  
Bath & North East Somerset Council

# Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Safeguarding Department  
Statutory & Offshore  
Defence Infrastructure Organisation  
St Georges House  
DIO Head Office  
DMS Whittington  
Lichfield  
Staffordshire  
WS14 9PY  
Tel: 07800 505824  
E-mail: [DIO-safeguarding-statutory@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO-safeguarding-statutory@mod.gov.uk)  
[www.mod.uk/DIO](http://www.mod.uk/DIO)

6<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Your Ref: Local Plan Partial Update and SPD consultations**  
**DIO Ref: 10050348**

Dear Richard

## **Bath & North East Somerset Council Local Plan Partial Update and SPD consultations**

It is understood that Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NESC) are undertaking a Regulation 19 consultation on their Local Plan Partial Update. Additionally, Three Supplementary Planning documents (SPDs) have also been prepared. They will provide additional guidance to support existing policy and the policy updates proposed within the Local Plan Partial Update. They will also be subject to separate consultations alongside the local plan. They address Transport and Developments, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Energy Efficiency Retrofitting and Sustainable Construction. Both the Local Plan Partial Update and the SPD'S will inform the implementation of policies within the B&NESC for future development within the Authority area

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding Team represents the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as a statutory consultee in the UK planning system to ensure designated zones around key operational defence sites such as aerodromes, explosives storage sites, air weapon ranges, and technical sites are not adversely affected by development outside the MOD estate. For clarity, this response relates to MOD Safeguarding concerns only and should be read in conjunction with any other submissions that might be provided by other MOD sites or departments.

Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 requires that planning policies and decisions should take into account defence requirements by '*ensuring that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area.*' To this end MOD may be involved in the planning system both as a statutory and non-statutory consultee. Statutory consultation occurs as a result of the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Safeguarded aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas) Direction 2002 (DfT/ODPM Circular 01/2003) and the location data and criteria set out on safeguarding maps issued by Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) in accordance with the provisions of that Direction.

**Copies of these plans, in both GIS shapefile and .pdf format, can be provided on request through the email address above.**

Having reviewed the supporting documentation in respect of Bath & North East Somerset Council Local Plan Partial Update and SPD consultations there are two areas of interest for the MOD.

DIO safeguarding have an area of interest in RAF Colerne and the Statutory Aerodrome Height, Technical and Birdstrike Safeguarding Zones surrounding the aerodrome. We have an additional interest in Keevil Airfield, and the Statutory Aerodrome Height and Birdstrike Safeguarding Zones surrounding the aerodrome. The authority area of Bath & North East Somerset Council encompasses areas within the Statutory Aerodrome Height, Technical and Birdstrike Safeguarding Zones surrounding both aerodromes. RAF Colerne lies approximately 3KM to the North of Bath & North East Somerset Council local authority area Keevil Airfield lies approximately 11.8km to the East of Bath & North East Somerset Council local authority area

The aerodrome height and technical safeguarding zones serve to protect the airspace above and around aerodromes to maintain an assured, obstacle free environment for aircraft manoeuvre and ensure that line of sight navigational aids and transmitter/receivers are not impeded. This airspace needs to be kept free of obstruction from tall structures to ensure that aircraft transiting to and from or circuiting the aerodrome can do so safely.

Additionally, within the statutory consultation areas associated with aerodromes are zones that are designed to remove or mitigate birdstrike risk. The creation of environments attractive to those large and flocking bird species that pose a hazard to aviation safety can have a significant effect, this can include landscaping schemes associated with large developments as well as the creation of new waterbodies and drainage systems.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems additionally provide an opportunity for habitats within and around a development. The incorporation of open water, both permanent and temporary, and associated reedbeds, wetlands ponds and ditches provide a range of habitats for wildlife, including potentially increasing the creation of attractant environments for large and flocking bird species hazardous to aviation.

In addition, where development falls outside designated safeguarding zones the MOD may also have an interest, particularly where the development is of a type likely to have an impact on operational capability. Examples of this type of development are the installation of renewable energy generation systems and their associated infrastructure. The MOD has, in principle, no issue or objection to renewable energy development though some methods of renewable energy generation, for example wind turbine generators or solar photo voltaic panels can, by virtue of their physical dimensions and properties, impact upon military aviation activities, cause obstruction to protected critical airspace encompassing military aerodromes, and impede the operation of safeguarded defence technical installations. In addition, where turbines are erected in line of sight to defence radars and other types of defence technical installations, the rotating motion of their blades can degrade and cause interference to the effective operation of these types of installations with associated impacts upon aviation safety and operational capability. Planning Practice Guidance published on the Gov.uk website acknowledges the potential effect of wind turbine generators and directs developers and Local Planning Authorities to consult the MOD where a proposed turbine has a tip height of or exceeding 11m or has a rotor diameter of 2m or more.

Policy CP 3 Renewable Energy states:

1. Proposals for all renewable and low carbon energy-generating and distribution networks, will be supported in the context of sustainable development and climate change
2. Wind energy development proposals will be supported
3. The Council particularly encourages ground mounted solar energy development proposals on land which is not functionally linked to nationally protected sites (SACs; SPAs, SSSIs) in the high, moderate-high, moderate

potential areas set out in the Solar Assessment Report and shown on the Policies Map (subject to the other criteria in this policy). Proposals will be acceptable in other areas (of lower potential) provided that applicants clearly demonstrate that adverse impacts on the landscape can be satisfactorily mitigated (as set out in 1b). (See SCR2 for roof mounted solar)

In order to provide a more broad representation of MOD interests, and to ensure prospective developments are aware of the implications of developing within an area containing MOD safeguarded zones, it is requested that the diction of Policy CP 3 Renewable Energy is supplemented with a statement that explains that applications for development that would not compromise, restrict or otherwise degrade the operational capability of safeguarded MOD sites and assets will be supported.

In summary, the MOD would wish to be consulted within the Bath & North East Somerset Council Local Plan Partial Update and the Transport and Developments, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Energy Efficiency Retrofitting and Sustainable SPD'S of any potential development within the Aerodrome Height, Technical and Birdstrike safeguarding zones surrounding RAF Colerne which consists of structures or buildings exceeding 10.7M Above Ground Level or any development which includes schemes that might result in the creation of attractant environments for large and flocking bird species hazardous to aviation. In tandem any potential development within the Aerodrome Height, and Birdstrike safeguarding zones surrounding Keevil Airfield which consists of structures or buildings exceeding 91.4M Above Ground Level or any development which includes schemes that might result in the creation of attractant environments for large and flocking bird species hazardous to aviation. Additionally, Policy CP 3 Renewable Energy Policy Areas are supplemented with provision that applications for development do not compromise, restrict, or otherwise degrade the operational capability of safeguarded MOD sites and assets.

I trust this clearly explains our position on this update. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to consider these points further.

Yours sincerely

*C Waldron*

Chris Waldron  
DIO safeguarding Officer