

Full statement of reasons as required by 4(5)(a) of amended EIA Regulations including conclusions on likeliness of significant environmental effects.						
Application name:	Rabbit Hill Covert	Land off Briscoe Way	Land west of Eriswell Road	Land Adjacent to 34 Broom Road	Land North of Broom Road	Land North of Station Road
SoS case reference:	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76489	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76488	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76490	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76493	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76491	NPCU/EIASC/R/H3510/76492
Schedule and category of development:	10 b - Urban development projects	10 b - Urban development projects	10 b - Urban development projects	10 b - Urban development projects	10 b - Urban development projects	10 b - Urban development projects
<i>Schedule 3 selection criteria for Schedule 2 development refers:</i>						
<i>1 (a) – (f) regarding characteristics of development</i>	81 Dwellings on 2.45 ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects.	67 Dwellings on 2.43 ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects.	140 Dwellings on 5.43ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects.	120 Dwellings on 6.8ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects.	132 Dwellings on 4.62ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects..	375 Dwellings plus a school on 22.8ha. Having regard to the characteristics of the project, as residential development, the Secretary of State does not consider that the proposal is likely to give rise to particularly complex and hazardous effects.
<p>All sites are in close proximity to Lakenheath, however the schemes all propose residential development and seen in the context of the existing housing in the settlement, the Secretary of State does not consider that a significant effect on the environment is likely, either individually or cumulatively, in terms of changing the nature of land use in the area. The Secretary of State notes that there may be increased activity at RAF Lakenheath in the future. However, while this may affect occupiers of the new development, existing residents of Lakenheath and other settlements in the surrounding area, the Secretary of State is not persuaded that a significant environmental effect is likely for this reason necessitating the preparation of an environmental statement. It is also noted that the proposed developments would result in an increase in the local permanent residential population, however given the proximity of the proposals to existing residential areas in Lakenheath, the Secretary of State does not consider that the effects would be significant.</p> <p>Although the Secretary of State notes that the proposals would result in an increase in traffic, during the construction and operational phases, none of the sites fall within an existing air quality management area, there is no information to suggest that the proposals, individually or cumulatively, would result in any exceedence of air quality objectives in the area and there is no information to suggest that the proposals, either individually or cumulatively, would affect parts of the highway suffering from congestion or other environmental constraints to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely.</p>						
<i>2 (a)-(c) (i) – (viii) regarding location of development</i>	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. The site is not located within a ground water protection zone.	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. it is not located within a ground water protection zone.	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. it is not located within a ground water protection zone.	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. it is not located within a ground water protection zone. It is noted that the site is located in close proximity to the Maidscross SSS, therefore Natural England have been consulted for their advice. Natural England report that they are in consultation with the Council to increase the green space in Lakenheath to divert residents away from the SSSI. Therefore there may be some effect but it is not considered to be sufficiently significant to justify an ES.	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. it is not located within a ground water protection zone. It is noted that the site is located in close proximity to the Maidscross SSS, therefore Natural England have been consulted for their advice. Natural England report that they are in consultation with the Council to increase the green space in Lakenheath to divert residents away from the SSSI. Therefore there may be some effect but it is not considered to be sufficiently significant to justify an ES.	The proposal is located on Grade 3 Agricultural land and there is no information to suggest that the impact on the supply of agricultural land in the area would be such to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely. it is not located within a ground water protection zone.
<p>The Secretary of State notes that there are sensitive areas in the surrounding landscape, including The Breckland SPA/SAC and Maidscross SSSI. The Secretary of State has therefore consulted Natural England, the Government's advisor on the natural environment. In its response, Natural England does not consider that a significant environmental effect is likely in terms of Internationally Designated Sites and while it considers that some effects cannot be ruled out in terms of the impact on Maidscross Hill SSSI by the 34 Broom Road and Land North of Broom Road schemes, it is satisfied that appropriate mitigation measures could be put in place without subjecting the applications to full EIA. Overall, the Secretary of State considers that while there may be some impact on sensitive areas, mainly as a result of increased visitor pressure, the proposals, individually and cumulatively, would not affect the integrity of any sensitive area to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely. On the basis of the information, the Secretary of State does not consider that the schemes, either individually or collectively, are likely to result in a significant environmental in terms of landscapes designated for their scenic beauty or landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.</p>						
<i>3(a) –(e) regarding characteristics of potential impact</i>	<p>The Secretary of State notes that the proposed developments would result in an increase in the local permanent residential population, however given the proximity of the proposals to existing residential areas in Lakenheath, he does not consider that the effects would be significant. While there would be an increase in traffic, the sites are not located within an AQMA and there is no information to suggest that parts of the highway suffering congestion or other environmental constraint would be affected to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely, either individually or cumulatively. The Secretary of State notes that there is likely to be additional impacts on sensitive areas due to increased visitor numbers, but having regard to advice from Natural England, he is satisfied that the proposals, either individually or cumulatively, do not have the potential to have significant environmental effects necessitating an environmental statement. Overall, the Secretary of State is satisfied that taken individually and collectively, the proposals are unlikely to give rise to the magnitude and complexity of impact such that a significant environmental effect is likely.</p>					

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<i>Planning Practice Guidance and conclusion</i>	The Planning Practice Guide outlines that each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. However, there are occasions where other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. Possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development should always be considered, taking into account where the overall combined environmental impact of the proposals might be greater or have different effects than the sum of their separate parts. The Secretary of State has taken into consideration advice in the Planning Practice Guidance on having regard to the possible cumulative effects (Paragraph: 024 Reference ID 4-024-201403606). While all the proposal covered by this screening direction are not approved or existing development, the Secretary of State accepts that there is a possibility that some or all of the schemes may receive consent and therefore he has considered the potential for cumulative impacts in the preparation of this screening direction.					
<i>Conclusion</i>	The Secretary of State considers on the evidence before him, taking into account comments from the Local Planning Authority, those of the Third Party and those of Natural England that there is insufficient evidence that there is likely to be a significant environment effect from the proposals and as such directs that an Environmental Statement is not required for any of the proposals listed in this statement.					
Is an Environmental Statement required? Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No	No

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