

Update on the Southampton to London Pipeline Project.

Summary

Esso Petroleum Company Limited submitted an application on the 15th May 2019 to the Planning Inspectorate for the replacement of the Southampton to London Pipeline (SLP), which runs from the Fawley Refinery near Southampton to the West London Terminal storage facility in Hounslow. The replacement and existing pipeline transect Surrey Heath Borough Council from West to East.

The SLP Project is a National Infrastructure Project, and the application will be the subject of an Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The Council is a stakeholder in the examination process and will be expected to produce a Statement of Common Ground with Esso and a Local Impact Report. This report provides a summary of the project to date and information on the next steps for the application process, including outlining key issues for inclusion in a Statement of Common Ground and Local Impact Report.

Portfolio – Planning and People

Date Portfolio Holder signed off report: 26 June 2019

Wards Affected

All

Recommendation

The Executive is asked to RESOLVE to:

- (i) agree to the production of a Statement of Common Ground with ESSO;
- (ii) agree to the production of a Local Impact Report with other impacted local authorities in Surrey; and
- (iii) due to uncertainty over submission timescales, delegate authority to the Executive Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Planning & People Portfolio Holder to agree the content of these documents.

1. Resource Implications

- 1.1 There are no resource implications beyond that provided for within the agreed budget for 2019/20.

2. Background

- 2.1 In late 2017, Esso Petroleum Company Limited launched the Southampton to London Pipeline Project (SLP). The project proposes to replace 90km of the 105km underground aviation fuel pipeline that runs from the Fawley Refinery near Southampton to the West London

Terminal storage facility in Hounslow. The existing pipeline runs from west to east in Surrey Heath, entering the Borough in Frimley Green and exiting into Runnymede from Chobham Common.

- 2.2 Between the 19th March and 30th April 2018 Esso conducted a non-statutory consultation seeking views on potential corridors for the replacement pipeline. The Council raised significant concerns that corridor (J), one of the options for the Frimley area, which was routed in close proximity to Frimley Park Hospital and could therefore have significant implications for access to the hospital during construction. Concern was also raised on the potential impact on the local road network and residential areas in Frimley. Following the consultation, ESSO excluded the corridor impacting Frimley Park Hospital.
- 2.3 In July 2018, ESSO invited impacted local authorities to provide feedback on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). Surrey Heath noted that a section should be included on social media and press release within the document to provide greater coverage and access to harder to reach groups, and suggested that wording be expanded on the purposes and benefits of community involvement. Following the consultation (which lasted 28 days), ESSO agreed with both comments and amended the SoCC accordingly.
- 2.4 Between 6th September and 19th October, ESSO consulted on the Preferred Route Consultation (statutory consultation), which detailed the preferred route for the replacement pipeline. The Council was satisfied that the Preferred Route had taken full account of the concerns raised in respect of the potential corridors consultation. The consultation included sub-options for the preferred route, and concern was raised in respect of potential impacts on traffic congestion during construction, for example on Red Road, and the potential for sub-option E4b to disrupt access to Farnborough North Station and the Henry Tyndale School.
- 2.5 ESSO consulted on the Design Refinements in February 2019 (non-statutory consultation). This took into account comments raised in the Preferred Route Consultation, including the removal of sub-option E4b for which the Council had previously raised concerns. The Council raised no specific new concerns, but reiterated that the route will likely cause significant disruption to Red Road during construction and full regard will have to be given to the impact on Chobham Common Special Areas of Conservation and Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).

3. Next Steps and Key Issues

- 3.1 ESSO released the final pipeline route on the 27th March 2019. Annex 1 details the location of the final route in Surrey Heath. An interactive map is also available on the Southampton to London Pipeline Project's website: <https://www.slpproject.co.uk/interactive-map/>.

- 3.2 The SLP Project is a National Infrastructure Project and applications for such plans are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Esso submitted the Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Southampton to London Pipeline Project on the 15th May 2019. The Planning Inspectorate will ultimately decide whether the application is accepted, and following examination, if the DCO will be granted. Surrey Heath is a key consultee within the examination process. Following the submission of the DCO, Surrey Heath was invited to submit an Adequacy of Consultation Representation. The Planning Policy and Conservation Team reviewed the application and considered that ESSO have met the relevant requirements Planning Act 2008 in producing the DCO application.
- 3.3 The application was accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate on the 10th June 2019. Following the acceptance of the DCO by the Planning Inspectorate, between the 26th June and 27th July 2019, the Council will have the opportunity to register as an interested party and be involved in the examination process going forward. There will be two documents that the Council will be expected to produce as part of this process. First, the Council will seek to agree a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with ESSO, detailing areas of agreement and any areas where there is a difference in opinion between the two parties. The submission of the SoCG will be expected in advance of the examination of the DCO, which will take place following the preliminary meeting a few months after the DCO is accepted.
- 3.4 The second is a Local Impact Report (LIR) for Surrey, which is likely to be produced jointly with Runneymede, Spelthorne and Surrey County Council, which gives details of the likely impact of the proposed development upon the local authority's area, for example the short term impact of the pipelines construction on the local road network. The content of the LIR is a matter for the local authority concerned, as long as it falls within this statutory definition, and may include details of the proposal, local area characteristics and designated sites. By setting out clearly evaluated impacts in a structured document, local authorities will assist the Examining Authority by identifying local issues which might not otherwise come to its attention in the examination process. The deadline for the submission of an LIR will be set by the Examining Authority following the preliminary meeting. The examination process, following the preliminary meeting, can last up to 6 months.
- 3.5 Upon reviewing the DCO application and considering previous consultation responses, it is proposed that the following points are included in the SoCG and LIR:
- Full regard will have to be given to the impact on Chobham Common Special Areas of Conservation and Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). To date, the impact on the SPA and SAC has been considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment.

- The adverse impact on the local road network during construction, especially for Red Road and Balmoral Drive, will need to be minimised and managed efficiently. As part of this, Esso has committed to abiding to a Construction Traffic Management Plan. If not managed effectively, the impact on traffic congestion could be significant in the Borough, and could likewise adversely impact the SPA due to implications for air quality on roads proximal to the SPA.
- During construction of the pipeline along Balmoral Drive, full consideration will need to be given to the impact on access to residential properties and businesses on the Beaumaris Parade. For example, residential properties on Braemar Close and Penshurst Rise are only accessible from Balmoral Drive, and therefore access to these areas could be severed for a short period of time during construction. It is noted that any closures or diversions will be communicated to residents and businesses in advance of works and Esso have committed to maintaining access at all times for emergency services.
- During construction of the pipeline along the footpath between Red Road and the A322, any disruption to the residential properties directly north of the pipeline route should be minimised. It is noted that as part of the application the SLP Project have adopted a Code of Construction Practice.
- The final pipeline route passes through two Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) sites in Surrey Heath, namely Clewborough SANG and Windlemere SANG, and best efforts will need to be made by the SLP to ensure that there is minimal disruption to these sites during construction.
- The pipeline transects Windlemere SANG which is home to a number of protected and endangered species, including Great Crested Newts. The Council expects the maximum level of mitigation to be provided for any impact on such species during construction, and will not consider the minimum level of mitigation to be acceptable.
- The SLP Project have broadly agreed the approach to scoping contaminated land with the Council. It is noted that contaminated land could pose a significant issue, for example when the pipeline passes through Frith Hill.
- There is the potential for the loss of trees during construction, including in the Frith Hill area, along Deepcut Bridge Road and at Turf Hill. Esso have committed to, where practical, to limiting the loss of trees along the route. Where removals are required, Esso would seek to replant and restore the land to its former state as much as is practical.

3.6 It is noted that concern has been raised by residents in respect of the location of the final pipeline route in Lightwater, specifically the footpath between Red Road and the A322. The area was included within the corridor options in the non-statutory spring 2018 consultation. The Autumn 2018 consultation included this area as one of the sub options for Lightwater, with the exception of the 130m section of the pipeline that is routed on the track west of Turf Hill between Red Road and the footpath south of Lightwater. The reason

for the selection of the sub option in this area was due to significant constraints regarding the location of the replacement pipeline, including the Thames Basins Heath SPA, and to shorten construction times for Red Road. However, it is important to note that issues of concern that could arise in the Lightwater area can be referred to in the Local Impact Report and Statement of Common Ground, as appropriate.

- 3.7 The final pipeline route represents what ESSO consider to be the most appropriate location based on the constraints in this area and construction considerations. If Councillors or residents would like to make a representation as part of the examination process, they can register as an interested party with the Planning Inspectorate and make a written representation to the Examiner as part of the Examination process.

4. Options

- 4.1 The options for the Executive to consider are to:

- (i) **AGREE** to the production of a Statement of Common Ground with ESSO and the production of a Local Impact Report with other impacted local authorities in Surrey and due to uncertainty over submission timescales, for authority to agree the content of these documents to be delegated to the Executive Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
- (ii) **NOT AGREE** to the production of a Statement of Common Ground with ESSO and the production of a Local Impact Report with other impacted local authorities in Surrey.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Council produce a Statement of Common Ground with ESSO and a joint Local Impact Report with other impacted local authorities.

6. Corporate Objectives And Key Priorities

- 6.1 The proposals may affect the Council's ability to achieve the Objective for prosperity by affecting the Council's ability to support business and the wider community by impacting detrimentally on local transport and other infrastructure.

7. Policy Framework

- 7.1 The consultation process Surrey Heath is responding to will have implications for the Borough's accessibility and therefore may impact on the Council's ability to meet Objective 1 of the Core Strategy.

Annexes	Annex 1: Map illustrating the final location of the replacement pipeline route.
Background Papers	
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Consultations, Implications and Issues Addressed

Resources	Required	Consulted
Revenue	✓	✓
Capital		
Human Resources		
Asset Management		
IT		
Other Issues	Required	Consulted
Corporate Objectives & Key Priorities	✓	✓
Policy Framework		
Legal	✓	✓
Governance		
Sustainability		
Risk Management		
Equalities Impact Assessment		
Community Safety		
Human Rights		
Consultation	✓	✓
P R & Marketing	✓	✓

Review Date:

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