

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the Animal and Plant Health Agency?

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is a government agency part of Defra. We protect the UK from animal and plant-related threats to human health, the economy and the environment. APHA's work underpins £12 billion in trade in products of animal origin and is critical to keeping the UK safe from animal diseases including those that can spread to people.

The site is a major local employer, providing jobs to over 1,000 people, many of whom live in the area. Our Master Outline Plan is designed to enhance our APHA site, significantly improving the UK's capability to anticipate and respond to emerging threats from animal diseases, while protecting public health and supporting UK trade.

## Are you building on the green belt?

The Master Outline Planning Application is focused primarily on previously developed land where there are existing buildings. However, there will be a small amount of temporary development immediately next to the current main site, in our fields to aid construction. This area will be screened and removed, and the land reinstated when the work is finished.

## Will you be building new houses?

Our plans do not include building any new houses.

## Will there be changes to public rights of way?

Public rights of way will be maintained. We are currently working through options to make sure all public rights of way remain accessible. We are also in discussion with Surrey County Council around the potential for footpath improvements.

## Have you decided on the design of the development?

This consultation is on our plans for our main site on Woodham Lane, New Haw. Once this Master Outline Planning Application has been approved by Runneymede Borough Council, we will prepare detailed designs for individual elements of the development and submit separate planning applications for these elements to the council. You will be consulted and will have a chance to comment at all stages of this process.

## Will there be an increase in traffic?

We are planning carefully to keep potential disruption to a minimum at all stages of this key project. Your feedback will help us do this. Our outline masterplan planning application will include detail on how traffic will be managed during construction. You can comment on these plans as part of the consultation.

## Will there be noise caused by the construction?

We are planning to keep any construction noise to a minimum. We will work within the Runneymede Borough Council guidelines and will adopt industry best practice to mitigate noise where we can. Our science site will remain operational throughout construction - minimising noise is a priority for staff and local residents alike.

### Will you listen to feedback?

Yes, we will – your views are important to us. We will capture all the comments we receive and intend to take these into account when finalising our plans. You will also be able to send your comments directly to Runneymede Borough Council during the planning period.

### Can I see the plans and talk to someone in person?

Yes, we are running drop-in sessions at New Haw Community Centre on the 8, 15 and 22 June. You can register to attend at <https://APHAMasterplanevent.eventbrite.com>.

### What benefits will this work bring locally and nationally?

Our plans will deliver a wide range of benefits to the local community around our New Haw site. These include:

- **Local employment:** APHA is a large local employer, and this investment will ensure that we continue to thrive, creating employment opportunities for scientists and local people
- **Community facilities:** Defra has supported a large area of nearby land and buildings that we no longer use, for use by the Holme Farm Community Workshop and Gardens. (Since becoming a charity in 2022, Holme Farm has been working to become a hub for local people with workshops, gardens and wildlife areas)
- **Flood management:** Our plans include work to improve flood management along the River Bourne
- **Enhanced biodiversity:** The improved landscape will increase habitat across the site and surrounding areas attracting wildlife and increasing biodiversity
- **Sustainability:** We are committed to embedding sustainability into building design and all our construction activities
- **Education:** We will continue to work closely with local schools to ensure local children benefit from career opportunities at APHA
- **Open and transparent:** We will work closely with the local community at all stages of this project, keeping you informed and listening to your views
- **Economic benefits:** APHA's work underpins £12 billion annually of international trade

### How can I get in contact with you?

You can email us at [localengagement@defra.gov.uk](mailto:localengagement@defra.gov.uk) or write to us at Local Engagement – SCAH Programme, Building 33, APHA-Weybridge, Woodham Lane, KT15 3NB. You can also register to attend one of our drop-in events at New Haw Community Centre at <https://APHAMasterplanevent.eventbrite.com>.