

19. Aviation Hazards

19.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

There are four airports in Ventura County: The County-owned and operated airports in the cities of Camarillo and Oxnard, a private airstrip in the city of Santa Paula that is open to the public, and the federally operated Navy Base Ventura County (NBVC) Point Mugu Site. The Channel Islands Air National Guard Station has an operation on a 204-acre site *adjacent* to, and utilizes the runways at, the Point Mugu Site. In addition, there are approximately 13 heliports (five associated with hospitals/medical centers), and a few privately owned landing strips located in various parts of the county.

The Ventura County Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (ACLUP) seeks to protect the public from the adverse effects of aircraft noise, to ensure that people and facilities are not concentrated in areas susceptible to aircraft accidents, and to ensure that no incompatible structures or activities encroach upon or adversely affect the use navigable airspace. The ACLUP is intended to protect and promote the safety and welfare of residents near the military and public use airports in the county, as well as airport users, while promoting the continued operation of those airports. To achieve those objectives, the ACLUP provides guidance regarding limiting population densities within applicable safety zones and defines noise exposure levels that are in the *Airport Area of Influence (AAOI)* of an airport (see Appendix 19A). The purpose of establishing land use restrictions in safety zones around an airport is to minimize the number of people exposed to aircraft crash hazards and unwanted aircraft generated noise. In Ventura County, the legal authority for ACLUP development and oversight rests with the Ventura County Transportation Commission, acting as the *Airport Land Use Commission*.

In addition, development near military installations such as the NBVC Point Mugu naval base should consider guidance provided in the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) and the Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Study. The JLUS is a collaborative effort between the cities of Camarillo, Oxnard, and Port Hueneme, County of Ventura, NBVC, and other stakeholders, that aims to guide planning and land use decisions about development surrounding NBVC and its operational areas at NBVC Point Mugu, NBVC Port Hueneme, and NBVC San Nicolas Island. The AICUZ Study, last updated in 2015, provides prospective aircraft operations, *noise contours*, and accident potential zones, identifies areas of incompatible land use, and recommends actions to encourage compatible land use.

Incompatible land uses near airports include those associated with residential development, retail centers with high density uses, schools, assembly uses, refineries, and mobile home parks.

19.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis and evaluated using the following thresholds of significance as specified below.

AVI-1 A project may have a significant impact if it would result in a potentially incompatible land use within the *AAOI* of an airport, which would expose people residing or working in the

project area to excessive noise levels or substantial safety hazards related to airport operations.

19.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Guidance on addressing the questions from the Initial Study Checklist is provided below. In order to determine whether project impacts exceed or meet the criteria of the thresholds of significance in Section 19.2, the level of impact shall be evaluated based on the appropriate assessment methodologies as outlined below.

- (a) *Would the project result in a potentially incompatible land use within the AAOI of airport, which would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels or substantial safety hazards related to airport operations?*

Assessment Methodology

Determine whether the project is located within the *AAOI* of one of the airports in Ventura County and the Naval Base Ventura County military airport (see Appendix 19A). Projects within the *AAOI* of any of these airports shall be referred to the applicable airport authorities for review to determine consistency with adopted guidance in the ACLUP. The ACLUP includes noise compatibility standards, identifies safety zones and compatibility standards, and protects airspace through building height restrictions that guide nearby property owners and local jurisdictions in determining what types of land uses are appropriate near these airports. To determine incompatible uses within safety zones or accident potential zones near military installations, refer to the ACLUP, applicable airport land use plan, and JLUS and AICUZ study if applicable. Uses that may be incompatible within more restrictive safety zones in closer proximity to airport runways include, but are not limited to residential uses, churches, theaters, and similar assembly uses, schools, and commercial and industrial buildings with high occupancies. In addition, refer to the following plans and policies:

- Applicable development standards and allowable uses in the County's Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance and Coastal Zoning Ordinance.
- Noise policies and land use guidance in the General Plan.
- General Plan Policy HAZ-9.2, which states in part: "New *noise sensitive uses* proposed to be located near airports:
 - Shall be prohibited if they are in a *Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) 65 decibel (dB)* or greater, *noise contour*; or
 - Shall be permitted in the *CNEL 60 dB to CNEL 65 dB noise contour* area only if means will be taken to ensure interior noise levels of *CNEL 45 dB* or less."

General Plan Policy HAZ-9.6 requires that the *Lead Agency* use aircraft noise analysis prepared for local airports or the *noise contours* from the most current AICUZ study, as most appropriate for a project location, as an accurate mapping of the long-term noise impact of the airport's aviation activity. Pursuant to General Plan Policy HAZ-9.6, discretionary residential land uses shall be restricted to areas outside of the *60 dB CNEL aircraft noise contour* unless interior noise levels can be mitigated to meet a maximum *45 dB CNEL*.

The specific airport referrals to determine if the project would comply with the applicable provisions of the ACLUP for that airport and have any project-specific and/or cumulative impacts on airport operations are:

- Camarillo or Oxnard airports - Ventura County Director of Airports and the Ventura County *Airport Land Use Commission*
- Santa Paula Airport - Santa Paula Airport Manager and the Ventura County *Airport Land Use Commission*
- Naval Base Ventura County Airport - Naval Base Ventura County and the Ventura County *Airport Land Use Commission*

Following review of the project, written comments and observations shall be forwarded to the *Lead Agency*. The comments should provide guidance for determining level of impact and measures to mitigate those impacts, as well as whether a hearing before the Ventura County *Airport Land Use Commission* is necessary.

Preparation of Initial Study Checklist

A determination of **No Impact (N)** shall be made if the project is not located within the *AAOI* of an airport and will not introduce an incompatible land use that would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels or substantial hazards related to airport operations.

A determination of **Less Than Significant Impact (LS)** shall be made if the project is located within the *AAOI* of an airport and complies with the land use and development standards, including the restrictions on uses within the airport safety zones, established in the adopted ACLUP, and would not substantially increase the risk of exposing people living or working in these areas to excessive noise levels or hazards associated with airport operations.

A determination of **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated (LS-M)** shall be made if the project is located within the *AAOI* of an airport and would substantially increase the risk of people living or working in these areas to excessive noise levels or hazards associated with airport operations. However, the project will incorporate impact mitigation measures that will reduce the impacts to a less than significant level.

A determination of **Potentially Significant Impact (PS)** shall be made and further analysis shall be addressed in an environmental impact report (EIR) if there is *substantial evidence* that the project is located within the *AAOI* of an airport and would substantially increase the risk of people living or working in these areas to excessive noise levels or hazards associated with airport operations.

19.4 RESOURCES & REFERENCES

Source	Managing Agency/Organization	Online Access
Resources		
Ventura County CEQA Implementation Manual	Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) Planning Division	PDF Website
Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Introduction	Ventura County RMA Planning Division	PDF Website

Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

Source	Managing Agency/Organization	Online Access
Ventura County Initial Study Checklist Template	Ventura County RMA Planning Division	PDF Website
References		
Air Installations Compatible Use Zones Study (AICUZ), December, 2015	Naval Base Ventura County	PDF
Joint Land Use Study (JLUS), September, 2015	Naval Base Ventura County	PDF
Ventura County Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (ACLUP), July 7, 2000	Ventura County Airport Land Use Commission	PDF
Ventura County General Plan, Hazards and Safety Element	Ventura County RMA Planning Division	PDF Website
Ventura County RMA Geographic Information Systems Viewer	Ventura County Information Technology Services	Website

APPENDIX 19A

Airport Areas of Influence

See Figure 19-1 below for a map of the *Airport Areas of Influence (AAOI)*. An interactive map of the *AAOI* can also be found online through the website of the Ventura County *Airport Land Use Commission* or on the Ventura County *Resource Management Agency Geographic Information System Viewer*.

Figure 19-1. Airport Areas of Influence

