



FAIRTHORN
CONSULTANCY

Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared for
Hampshire and Isle of
Wight Air Ambulance



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Executive summary

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (henceforth known as HIOWAA) is committed to consulting with the community regarding its proposals for a new headquarters at George Curl Way, Eastleigh, on land adjacent to Southampton Airport.

Residents and other important local stakeholders were given the opportunity to give feedback regarding the proposals via a host of different channels. A freephone information line along with a project email address were both made available throughout the process for interested parties to receive further details and to provide feedback.

Additionally, a community drop-in session was held near the proposal site on **Tuesday 5th March 2024** between 4 and 8pm at Eastleigh Football Club, Silverlake Stadium, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh. For those unable to attend the event, a virtual consultation was held on the project's dedicated website - <https://hiowaa.your-feedback.co.uk/> - from **Tuesday 13th February 2024** to **Sunday 17th March 2024**. It featured all the consultation materials displayed at the drop-in session and provided the opportunity to submit feedback, replicating the experience of attending the in-person event.

The drop-in and virtual consultation were promoted with a community flyer, which also included details on how residents and other important local stakeholders could contact the project team. During the consultation period we received a total of **612** responses. The feedback included many positive features, such as support for locating the air ambulance adjacent to an existing airport and general praise for the air ambulance charity and its lifesaving work. Indeed, the large number of feedback responses was primarily driven by respondents wishing to show their support for the charity and wishing it well in the future.

Some concerns were raised regarding noise from the helicopter and any conflict with commercial flights. It should be noted that the helicopter is not as loud as a commercial flight, and HIOWAA are currently working with the airport, air traffic control and the Civil Aviation Authority to ensure the helicopter can coexist with commercial services without significant issues.

The applicant ensured it was proactive in inviting residents and other important local stakeholders to provide feedback, and the main comments raised have been addressed within this document and the wider material submitted as part of the application. This document also provides a chronological account of the pre-application consultation undertaken and a review of the feedback received.

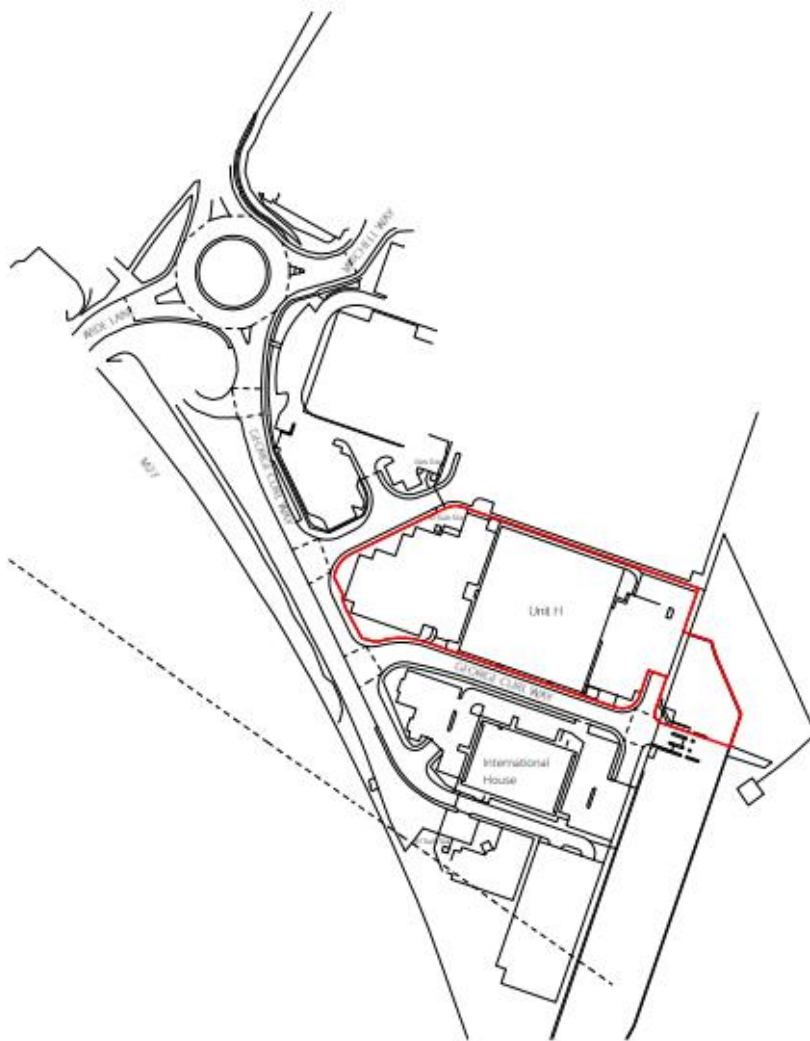
1. Introduction

- 1.1 HIOWAA is bringing forward proposals for a new headquarters at George Curl Way in Eastleigh, adjacent to the southern boundary of Southampton Airport. It would replace the charity's existing two locations, firstly at Thruxton near Andover where the helicopter and operational staff are based, and secondly its facility at Nursling near Southampton, where the remaining employees are located.
- 1.2 From the outset, the applicant has been committed to consulting key stakeholders with regards to its proposals. They have included locally elected councillors, businesses, and residents living near the site.
- 1.3 This document has been produced to clearly and concisely detail a chronological account of the community engagement undertaken by the applicant in respect of its proposals.
- 1.4 To assist with the community engagement process, HIOWAA brought Fairthorn Consultancy, a specialist communications agency, into its wider project team for the proposed development.
- 1.5 All the feedback received is accounted for and represented within this document.

2. Background

2.1 Proposal site

- 2.1.1 The application site at George Curl Way, Eastleigh, is previously developed and located on the southern boundary of Southampton Airport.
- 2.1.2 HIOWAA has carried out a lengthy search for an appropriate location to bring all the charity's staff and operations together in one place, and the proposal site offers everything that is required for this to happen.
- 2.1.3 Along with proximity to the airport, with its infrastructure to support aviation and its existing flight operations, the site is close to the motorway network, which is important for the charity's ground response crews.



Our proposal site at George Curl Way in Eastleigh is denoted by the red line

2.2 Proposals

- 2.2.1 HIOWAA's vision is to deliver new headquarters at the proposal site at George Curl Way in Eastleigh. It would include a helipad, parking spaces including electric vehicle charging points, welfare facilities for staff, offices, landscaping improvements, and the potential to offer aftercare services along with a medical innovation centre.
- 2.2.2 The project represents a vital opportunity to bring all the charity's staff together in one place whilst reducing response times to emergency calls. It should be noted that the majority of missions that are tackled by the charity are towards the southern half of Hampshire, where the proposal site is located, while the existing helicopter base is in the county's northwestern corner.



An indicative view of our proposed new headquarters at George Curl Way, Eastleigh

3. Community Engagement

3.1 Statement of community involvement

3.1.1 The Localism Act 2011

Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 outlines that a person proposing to make a planning application on land in England should carry out consultation on the proposed application. This should include publicity considered likely to bring the application to the attention of a majority of the persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land.

3.1.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2012, updated 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for England and outlines how these policies should be applied. The applicant has had regard to the NPPF at Paragraph 39 when it states that *"early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties."*

3.1.3 The NPPF goes on to highlight at Paragraph 40 that *"Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications."*

3.1.4 Paragraph 41 outlines that the Local Planning Authority should encourage other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, noting that *"the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits."*

3.1.5 Eastleigh Borough Council

Eastleigh Borough Council adopted its current Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in December 2023. It outlines the expectations the authority places on developers during the planning process. The most relevant sections are reproduced overleaf:

2.13. The NPPF also encourages developers to engage with the community before they submit their planning applications [NPPF para. 40]. Further support, and guidance is also offered in the 'Before submitting an application' chapter in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

4.12. Developers are also encouraged to meet town/parish councils and local groups to explain their proposals and seek local views before they make a planning application.

4.13. Workshops, forums or meetings involving invited representatives of the consultation bodies may be held during the initial stages of development plan document preparation and evidence gathering. These can help to establish issues that need to be addressed, and priorities for dealing with them.

4.14. The Council may select participants for the workshops/forums to ensure that all relevant interests are represented. If necessary, a series of workshops may be held in order to accommodate all interests. It is unlikely that workshops will be used in the preparation of SPD, but there may be exceptions. They will be held in accessible, and where possible wheelchair-friendly, venues.

4.15. Developers may also employ workshop techniques in order to involve communities in the evolution of larger development schemes.

4.16. The Council may stage local staffed exhibitions as a means of helping communicate Local Plan and supplementary planning document options, proposals and/or issues for consultation. Local communities will be made aware of these opportunities through a variety of different measures. These may include local press releases, email updates sent out to consultees, the Council's 'Borough News' newspaper and local poster and leaflet publicity. In the case of a site-specific SPD local residents in the area most affected may be notified of exhibitions by letter. They will be held in accessible, and where possible wheelchair-friendly, venues.

4.17. Developers are also encouraged to hold local exhibitions and undertake local publicity to advise communities of their development proposals and seek views before they submit a planning application.

Based on Eastleigh Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement, HIOWAA undertook a programme of community engagement, which is outlined in this document.

3.2 Engagement with statutory bodies

- 3.2.1 Before the proposals were shared with the community, appropriate steps were taken to discuss the principle of development with statutory bodies and other experts. The detail of this is included within the planning statement.

3.3 Stakeholder engagement

- 3.3.1 HIOWAA recognised it was important to engage proactively with key stakeholders regarding its proposed new headquarters. As a result, the project team reached out to local politicians before the wider community consultation began. This ensured they had early sight of the proposals ahead of residents raising any queries or comments with them about the scheme.

- 3.3.2 The stakeholders contacted shortly before the wider public consultation included:

- Leader of Eastleigh Borough Council
- Relevant cabinet members at Eastleigh Borough Council
- Borough Councillors for Eastleigh South ward
- Borough Councillors for West End North ward
- Hampshire County Councillor for Eastleigh South division
- Hampshire County Councillor for West End and Horton Heath division
- Southampton City Councillors for Bitterne Park ward
- Southampton City Councillors for Swaythling ward (including the Leader)
- Chair of Eastleigh Town Council
- Member of Parliament for Eastleigh

3.4 Wider community engagement

- 3.4.1 After approaching key stakeholders, HIOWAA launched its wider community consultation.
- 3.4.2 To commence the process, a community flyer was circulated to properties near the proposal site. It outlined the charity's vision and invited residents and other important local stakeholders to attend the community drop-in session on **Tuesday 5th March 2024**. It also provided details on how to access the virtual consultation on the project website. The flyer also included the freephone information line number and project email address.

3.4.3 A total of **1,500** copies were sent via Royal Mail first class postage on **Tuesday 13th February 2024**, and the distribution area included residential and commercial properties. The area was determined by the intention of covering all the properties that would be most interested in the application.

3.4.4 A map of the distribution area for the community flyer is shown below.



A map depicting the community flyer distribution area – the proposal site is marked with the red 'x'

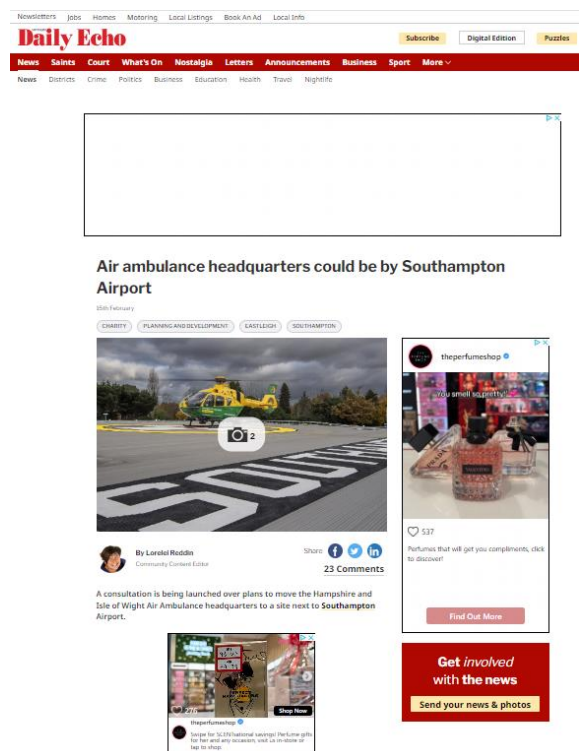
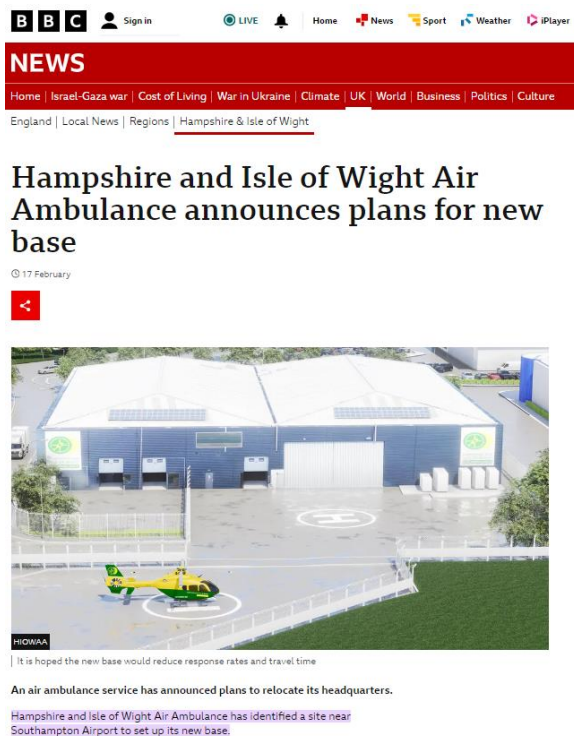
3.4.5 The community flyer contained the following:

- Background to the site
- An overview of the proposals
- An invitation to the community drop-in session
- Information on how to access the virtual consultation
- Details of the project team's freephone information line and email address

3.4.6 A copy of the invitation flyer can be found in the appendices.

3.5 Press release / media coverage

- 3.5.1 To coincide with the community flyer, the project team also produced a press release.
- 3.5.2 It was circulated to print, radio, television, and online media and generated a good level of interest, with several outlets reporting on HIOWAA's plans for a new headquarters. Much of the coverage was positive, with clear levels of support for the plan.
- 3.5.3 Contained within the release were details about the proposals and the upcoming community drop-in session. Statistics about the air ambulance's lifesaving work were also provided along with a link to the project's website.



Some examples of the media coverage resulting from the press release, including articles posted on the BBC News website (left) and the Southern Daily Echo newspaper (right)

- 3.5.4 A copy of the press release is included in the appendices.

3.6 Community drop-in session

- 3.6.1 A community drop-in session was held on Tuesday 5th March 2024 between 4 and 8pm at Eastleigh Football Club, Silverlake Stadium, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh. The timings were chosen so that the event would extend into the evening for the benefit of any stakeholders who couldn't attend earlier due to work commitments.
- 3.6.2 Once the event began, the team welcomed a range of stakeholders to the event, including locally elected councillors, some of whom left feedback after viewing the proposals.
- 3.6.3 The information displayed at the event included:
- Welcome and overview
 - Details about HIOWAA and its lifesaving missions
 - Background information about the site
 - Details about the proposals, including the case for relocation
 - Details about landscaping and greenspace
 - Information about transport, access, and ecology
 - Key benefits of the scheme
 - Next steps and how to provide feedback

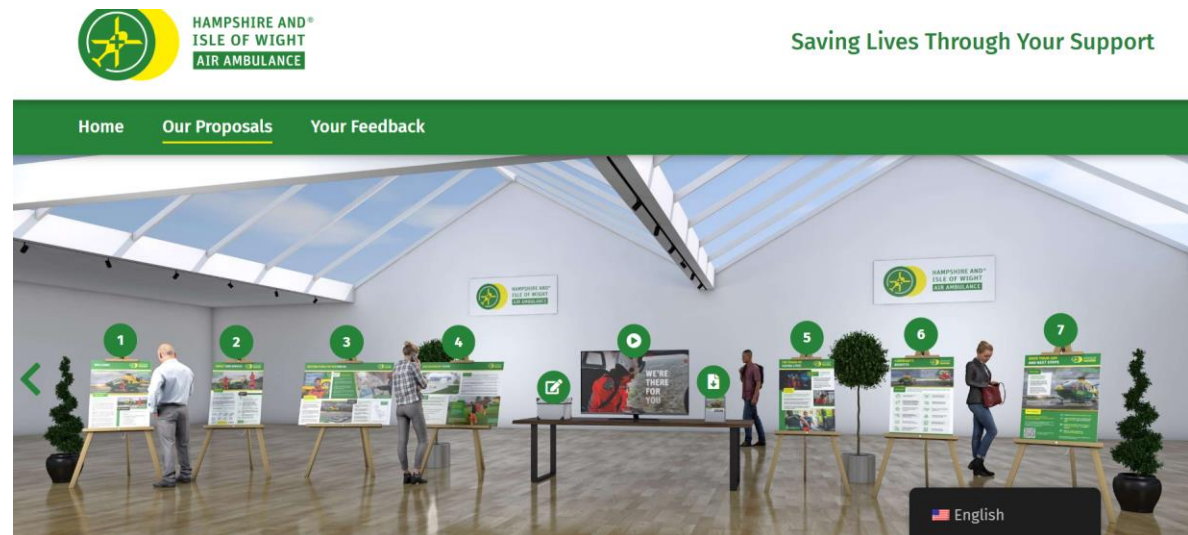
A copy of the exhibition boards has been included in the appendices.



The community drop-in session held at Eastleigh Football Club

3.7 Virtual consultation

In addition to the community drop-in session, a virtual consultation was hosted on the project's website from **Tuesday 13th February 2024** to **Sunday 17th March 2024**. The information displayed was identical to the exhibition boards shown at the in-person session, and there was the chance to leave comments and feedback. In effect, it replicated the experience of the drop-in event, but could be accessed whenever respondents wished to view the information and provide their comments. The feedback submitted has been included in our analysis of the data in Section 4.



A screenshot of our virtual consultation for HIOWAA's proposals

3.8 Dedicated project email address

- 3.8.1 A project email address – mail@your-feedback.co.uk – was made available to receive feedback and answer any queries both during and after the consultation period.

3.9 Freephone 0800 comment facility

- 3.9.1 During and after the consultation, access to a freephone telephone information line – **0800 099 6712** - was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposals, or register comments via the telephone.

4. Community Engagement

4.1 Feedback

The community consultation generated **612** items of feedback, which comprised **552** online forms and **9** filled in at the community drop-in session. Additionally, **51** emails were received by the project team.

A series of questions were listed on the feedback form. All the responses have been recorded to ensure all views have been included in the data, and this is presented in the pages that follow.

Regarding the specific questions, the first one listed on the feedback form was:

Q1: Do you believe the air ambulance makes a vital contribution to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight?

The project team was delighted by the overwhelming support expressed for the air ambulance. Some of the respondents added that it had saved their life, or that of a loved one.

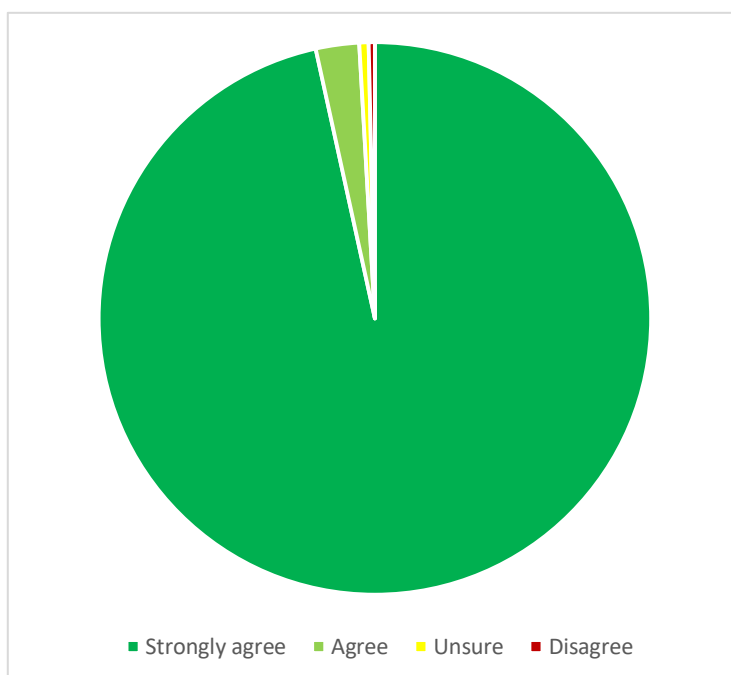
Strongly agree: 542 96.7%

Agree: 14 2.5%

Unsure: 3 0.5%

Disagree: 2 0.3%

Total replies: 561



The project team then looked into the comments in more detail and we have provided examples of the issues raised by respondents in the tables that follow:

Supportive comments	Respondent's address
Having worked opposite the landing pad at University Hospital Southampton, I know how often your services are used and are extremely vital.	The Parkway, Bassett, Southampton
Not only are lives saved by the rapid deployment of highly skilled critical care paramedics and doctors, the outcomes of patients who suffer injuries are vastly improved.	Braemar Road, Gosport
I don't see a problem with you being based Southampton Airport, you do a wonderful job and the quicker you can get to places to help people the better. I'm all for you coming to Southampton Airport.	Hamilton Road, Bishopstoke
As a staff member at Southampton General Hospital since before the air ambulance started, I've seen how important the service is to saving lives. The closer the HQ is to the area it serves can only be a good thing	Chirk Place, Romsey
The air ambulance saved the life of my son in 2012.	Netley Road, Titchfield Common

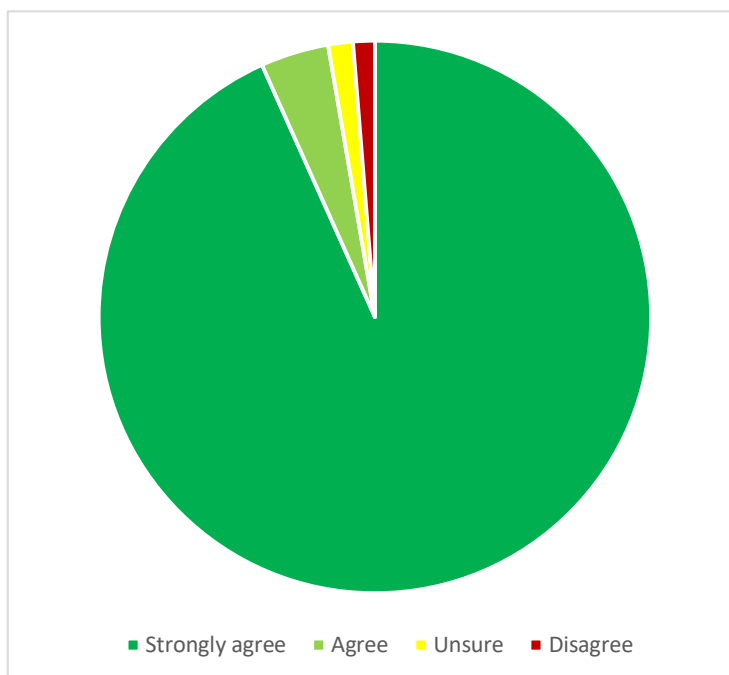
Other comments	Respondent's address
From what I see it takes longer to find a suitable place to land and then yomp to the casualty than a simple road journey, especially when used in towns and cities.	Yew Tree Close, Fair Oak
What about Lee on the Solent airfield? Another readymade site and don't Hampshire Police also use it as well as the coastguard?	Peters Road, Locks Heath, Fareham

Q2: Would you agree moving our base is sensible if it reduces average emergency response times?

Once again, the support for the proposal was overwhelming, with just a handful of respondents not supporting the proposed relocation, which will lead to reduced response times.

Strongly agree:	523	93.2%
Agree:	23	4.0%
Unsure:	8	1.5%
Disagree:	7	1.3%

Total replies: 561



The project team then looked into the comments in more detail and we have provided examples of the issues raised by respondents in the tables that follow:

Supportive comments	Respondent's address
I have always thought that Thruxton is too far away and to have to bases such as Adanac Park seems silly.	Winchester Close, Netley Abbey
As an Isle of Wight resident, any time saving is crucial. It's a no-brainer.	Colenutts Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight
It sounds like the most logical thing to do. Like stated, the local airport/train station will mask the sound. I currently live in the flight path and can say I smile when I hear the helicopter go over as I know what a fantastic thing it's doing.	Bramble Drive, Romsey
Obvious location for the base, and bringing the HQ and Ops base together makes a lot of sense	Merdon Close, Chandler's Ford
Perfect location near the airport. It really shouldn't need any consultation. We all just might need the air ambulance.	Broadwater Road, Romsey

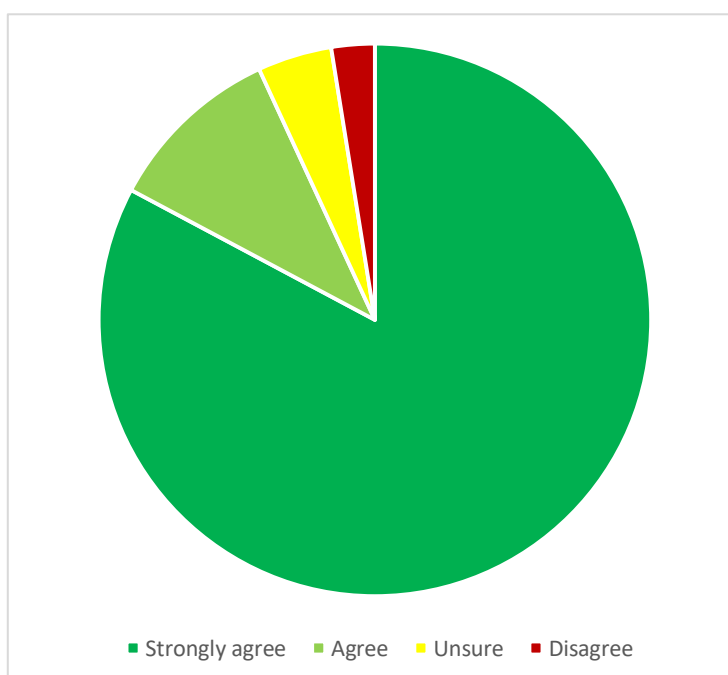
Other comments	Respondent's address
It's not clear from any of the information how this affects response times in different parts of the county - it only mentions 'average'. It seems to me that this will increase response times in the north of the county, where I live.	Poppy Field, Basingstoke
I am concerned Southampton is not central enough. It's too far away from the north of the county. Currently Andover to Basingstoke gives a quick response time to the north of the county.	Wentworth Crescent, Basingstoke
I am based in the north of Hampshire, and selfishly feel happier with the base being at Thruxton. How does the move affect us in and around Andover?	Quarley, Andover
My only concern would be if you ever have to wait longer to take off because of planes coming into land or taking off.	Gladstone Road, Sholing, Southampton
From a purely selfish point of view, it would be great to have the air ambulance continue to fly from Thruxton - it is closer to my home	Tintagel Close, Andover

Q3: Do you believe that we've chosen the right location, given that commercial flights will mask the noise of our potentially lifesaving helicopter missions?

Regarding the responses, more than 93% of respondents agreed that the right location had been identified, of which 82.7% strongly agreed. Only 2.5% were against the chosen site.

Strongly agree:	464	82.7%
Agree:	59	10.5%
Unsure:	24	4.3%
Disagree:	14	2.5%

Total replies: 561



The project team then looked into the comments in more detail and we have provided examples of the issues raised by respondents in the tables that follow:

Supportive comments	Respondent's address
There is no reason a helicopter for saving people's lives and assisting people at their time of need should be denied a location next to an airport!	Gatcombe, Netley Abbey
Southampton has lived with the airport noise for years. Anyone that complains will be those that have nothing to do but moan about everything and anything.	Rownhams Lane, North Baddesley
Seems sensible to locate near or adjacent to an airport.	Quebec Gardens, Bursledon
Yes, and as you say, the noise from the M27 too. But I personally don't feel the noise of a single helicopter would be an inconvenience to anyone anyway.	Walker Gardens, Hedge End
Local people are used to the airport (I originally came from Eastleigh) and the noise generated by air traffic, so this move will not create a new disturbance to the area.	Westfield Road, Chandler's Ford

Other comments	Respondent's address
The noise issue needs to be assessed. The main impact will be at night when there are no commercial flights due to strict conditions under which the airport operates. No night flights.	Oakfields, Boyatt Wood
Will commercial operations impact on emergency response times?	Brackley Avenue, Fair Oak
Southampton Airport commercial flights operate between the hours of 6am and 11pm. If the air ambulance is required outside of these hours the noise will not be masked. There is likely to be noise disturbance at unsociable hours.	Robert Cecil Avenue, Mansbridge, Southampton
Have you considered sharing the base at Daedalus with the coastguard facility instead?	Hamble Lane, Hamble
It's okay as long as the flight path doesn't interfere with an emergency, for example, delaying air ambulance to take off due to flights taking off or coming in into the airport.	Delamere Gardens, Fair Oak

Q4: Is there anything further you'd like to say about our proposals?

As this question was open-ended and allowed residents and other local stakeholders to leave any comments in addition to those already submitted, the responses weren't placed into groups. However, the project team has reviewed all the replies and a sample of comments received is shown in the tables that follows:

Supportive comments	Respondent's address
Look forward to HIOWAA being based at Southampton. I do work at Southampton Airport in ground handling, and would happily volunteer to help.	Pantheon Road, Chandler's Ford

I think it's a fantastic idea; the airport makes sense and near the motorway for the road crew, especially if it makes response times quicker. You all do an amazing job.	Oakmount Avenue, Chandler's Ford
I see no reason why anyone would be against this! It's a fantastic organisation and an excellent proposal. I hope it happens.	Noyce Court, West End
This is a 'no brainer.' Drastically cutting time to incidents is critical to saving lives. I fully support this proposal.	Turnberry Close, Botley
Totally makes sense to move, and after reading a lot of local comments, I hope this will go ahead.	Toynbee Road, Eastleigh

Other comments	Respondent's address
Although being more central reduces response times, I think being adjacent to an airport with commercial flights could also serve as a delay in takeoff due to those planes and may then not be effective.	Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford
The only thing I would say is that I wish the building was a little more stylish instead of looking like a shed. However, I realise it's all down to funds.	Maddison Street, Old Town, Southampton
Being near to the main airport may slow down the access time because of the number of flights coming and going to the airport, whereas being at Thruxton is away from the main hub. In addition to the above what about the link to the other air ambulances we also pay a major part of e.g Sussex, Thames Valley etc. meaning more flight time to access their locations?	Gaza Avenue, East Boldre
The only concern is the noise when flying in and out over residential homes in different directions, as commercial flights have set in and out routes. Will your flights have set in and out routes?	Whalesmead Close, Bishopstoke
I will miss seeing the helicopter fly over my house daily. But if it's better to relocate, it should happen.	Sun Cottages, Weyhill, Andover

4.2 Email feedback

- 4.2.1 As previously highlighted, a dedicated project email address was provided in case residents or other important local stakeholders preferred to send comments to the project team without completing a feedback form. A total of **51** emails were received and the applicant has reviewed all the responses, and provided replies if more information was requested or questions were sent.
- 4.2.2 Examples of the comments received via email are provided in the tables that follow. The vast majority were supportive and we have provided a selection of these comments, but there were a small minority that raised concerns, which have also been listed to provide balance.

Supportive comments
Having looked at the proposed relocation plans, I would just like to say I support the proposal. It makes sense and would put the base in a more central position within the area covered by the Air Ambulance. I live within two miles of Southampton General Hospital and am under the flight path of the helicopter returning to its Thruxton base and I can say that any noise is minimal. I really hope this relocation takes place.
I am really excited at your proposals which will bring all your teams together under one roof – and in a location which is right on the doorstep of your operational area. I wish you all the very best of luck with the planning application. I live in Southampton and whenever I see you flying overhead my first thought is for the poor soul who needs your help but the second thought is always how lucky they are that you are responding. I have supported HIOWAA for some years now and will continue to do so. Thanks to you all for the wonderful service you provide.
It makes sense to be near the Southampton Airport infrastructure and to better serve the south and The Isle of Wight. I agree with this proposal. I am a supporter of this very worthwhile charity. I'm a fervent supporter of the helicopter rescue and the amazing staff that use their skills to help so many. I am a regular monthly donor and my feelings are that if those on the ground or at the coalface so to speak think it will benefit, then I'm in full support. Wishing you all the success it can only help the service users. Stay safe and thank you for all your dedication.
I still support the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance and feel that your plans to relocate to Southampton Airport would be a very good idea. It would be more central and closer to the General Hospital. Best wishes to you all. You do a very good job.
The proposal to relocate your base 'closer to the action' makes complete sense in every way. I always thought Thruxton was a curious choice anyway!
Having read the air ambulance's intention to move their operations base to the southern end of Southampton Airport in George Curl Way, I fully support their proposal. It makes sense at every level, and I look forward to seeing it come to fruition.
I think the relocation to Southampton is a brilliant idea and should happen as soon as possible.
Thank you for the information about your proposal (which I have already seen on TV). I consider that relocation is the right thing to do and your plan to achieve it is comprehensive. I wish you every success.
The air ambulance saved my life back in 2021 after my cardiac arrest. I recently had an airbase visit to Thruxton; this was the aftercare service your guys are starting to give and I found this is a total amazing place, but totally understand it's on the northern borders of our area. I totally support the new HQ coming to George Curl Way.

Other comments

I am very concerned about the impact of operations on the wildlife in the Itchen Valley. I am sure you are aware British wildlife is in a very precarious position and needs protecting at all costs. The Itchen Valley is internationally important and so are a lot of its species of flora and fauna. I am particularly concerned about the impact on our peregrines, ravens, and the visiting ospreys.

By granting the Airport its runway extension, Eastleigh Councillors have already demonstrated their disregard for Southampton residents such as ourselves who now live with increased noise and air pollution. If this relocation were to take place the situation will only get worse.

You have chosen to take the line that noise is subjective and that as there is existing noise from the airport, railway and motorway, further noise will be minimal. Technically, in terms of overall noise levels this may be true, but I do not believe it takes account of the nature of helicopter noise, the fact that it originates on the ground and climbs rapidly or that it may overfly homes.

I do not agree with the relocation, moving the helicopter to a commercial airport seems naive but moving it so close to so many people is not acceptable. Flying low over populated areas is not ideal but making it the norm on all take off and landings is a very poor idea. Operations and administration have no need to be located together, and noise being masked by the airport is a poor argument as the airport has defined flight paths plus flies at restricted times. Bringing the operation so close to homes in all directions from an aircraft heading in all directions is wrong.

Yes, of course it makes sense for you to move south, but we in the north and northwest of Hampshire lose. Shame...but, keep up the good work.

4.3 Response to comments

- 4.3.1 All comments received during the process have been reviewed and the project team has responded to the most recurring themes that have been raised.
- 4.3.2 The project team noted the feedback included many positive features, such as support for locating the air ambulance adjacent to an existing airport and general praise for the air ambulance charity and its lifesaving work. Indeed, the large number of feedback responses was primarily driven by respondents wishing to show their support for the charity and wishing it well in the future.
- 4.3.3 Some concerns were raised regarding noise from the helicopter and any conflict with commercial flights. It should be noted that the helicopter is not as loud as a commercial flight, and HIOWAA are currently working with the airport, air traffic control and the Civil Aviation Authority to ensure the helicopter can coexist with commercial services without significant issues.
- 4.3.4 The applicant is seeking to continue its dialogue with residents and other local stakeholders as the scheme moves forward, and has been grateful for the constructive input received during the process.

5. Appendices

- Copy of the community flyer
- Copy of the project press release
- Copy of the exhibition boards



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT AIR AMBULANCE EXCITING PLANS FOR OUR NEW HQ

Relocating nearer to Southampton

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance is seeking to move from its current home at Thruxton near Andover, and base its new headquarters on a site adjacent to Southampton Airport.



Demand is currently rising and last year (2023) we tackled 1,842 missions, including 153 on the Isle of Wight.

The charity has been based in the north-west of the county at Thruxton, Andover, since 2007, but with the majority of calls coming from the south of the region, we are seeking a more central location to improve response rates, minimise travel times and save more lives across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

We have identified a site in George Curl Way on the airport's southern edge that would suit our need perfectly.

The new location would become our new headquarters with a helipad, offices, staff facilities, along with parking for our emergency response vehicles and those of visitors and employees.

Before relocating, we need to prepare a planning application and therefore wanted to speak to residents and other important local stakeholders about our plans.

Join our consultation

Location: Eastleigh Football Club, Silverlake Stadium, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh, SO50 9HT.

Date: Tuesday 5th March 2024.

Time: Between 4pm and 8pm.

Our plans can also be viewed online at hiowaa.your-feedback.co.uk



Please scan the QR code above to view our proposals online.



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE



©Tim Wallace

**Find out more and
share your feedback**

Location: Eastleigh Football Club, Silverlake
Stadium, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh, SO50 9HT.

Date: Tuesday 5th March 2024.

Time: Between 4pm and 8pm.

For those unable to attend, we are providing the same information online that will be displayed at the event. It can be viewed at hiowaa.your-feedback.co.uk or by scanning the QR code to the right. Your comments can be left for the project team.



Registered Charity
Number: 1106234



PRESS RELEASE - For immediate circulation

CONSULTATION OPENS ON AIR AMBULANCE HQ

A community consultation is being launched regarding a new headquarters for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance charity.

Its personnel are currently based across two locations, with the operations side including the helicopter and medical teams based at Thruxton Circuit. The rest of the staff are based at Nursling in the southern Test Valley.

The charity has identified a site at George Curl Way adjacent to Southampton Airport that would be ideal for a new headquarters.

Along with bringing everyone together under one roof, moving to a central location will dramatically reduce response times and minimise flying and travel time. This means crews will be able to get to patients far quicker and be restocked, refuelled, and ready to respond to the next emergency call - saving precious minutes that could spell the difference between life and death.

Demand for the air ambulance is currently rising. Since its first mission in 2007 the doctors, dispatchers, pilots and paramedics have responded to more than 18,000 missions, with no fewer than 1,842 throughout 2023.

A new headquarters will ensure the charity can continue its lifesaving work. It will also present opportunities to create an aftercare facility delivering follow-up care for those who have previously received emergency critical care, and collaborate with like-minded organisations working in the field of emergency medicine.

The charity's preferred site is previously developed, with an existing building on the land, and its proximity to Southampton Airport will mask the noise of helicopter take-offs, due to the existing commercial flights in the area.

Before submitting an application to Eastleigh Borough Council, the charity is seeking feedback from residents and other important local stakeholders. As a result, a community consultation is being held that features a drop-in session at **Eastleigh Football Club, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh, on Tuesday 5th March 2024 from 4pm to 8pm.**

For those unable to attend the event, a virtual consultation is taking place on the project's website, **hiowaa.your-feedback.co.uk**, where the same information will be displayed and comments can be submitted until **Sunday 17th March 2024.**

More follows >>>

Richard Corbett, Chief Executive Officer of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance charity, said: *“Demand is rising for our vital lifesaving work, but presently, our helicopter is located in the northwest corner of Hampshire, further from the majority of our missions than our preferred site.*

“Moving would reduce response and flying times, and enable us to locate all our valued staff under one roof in purpose-built facilities that will allow us to continue our crucial work for years to come.

“The new headquarters would also open the door to providing other services, such as aftercare.

“We want to be good neighbours, as a result, we are keen to hear from residents and other important local stakeholders regarding our proposed new headquarters and would encourage people to take part in our community consultation.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. A stock picture of the air ambulance landing at Southampton General Hospital is included, credit ©Tim Wallace
2. As further data, here are some figures regarding the incidents we handled in 2023:
 - Cardiac Arrest 22%
 - Medical 21%
 - Road Traffic Collision 16%
 - Accidental Injury 15%
 - Intentional Self Harm 6%
 - Assaults 4%
 - Sports 3%
 - Transfers 2%
 - Other 11%
 - TOTAL MISSIONS: 1,842

WELCOME



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

“If they weren’t dispatched to the accident, I think the chances of me being here now would be very slim. **I am so grateful and lucky to still be here today.**”

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance have been saving lives through your support since 2007



Consulting the community

Thank you for taking time to learn more about our plans to relocate our vital lifesaving service to a new base adjacent to Southampton Airport.

The charity has been based in the north-west of the county at Thruxton, Andover, since 2007, but with most calls coming from the south of the region, we are seeking a more central location to improve response rates, minimise travel times and save more lives across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Moving close to Southampton Airport will reduce average response times, which could make all the difference in critical situations. We have identified a site in George Curl Way on the airport’s southern edge that would suit our need perfectly.

The new location would become our new headquarters with a helipad, offices, staff facilities, along with parking for our emergency response vehicles and those of visitors and employees.

Before relocating, we need to prepare a planning application and therefore wanted to speak to residents and other important local stakeholders about our plans.



The helipad at University Hospital Southampton

Our exhibition

At our exhibition, the following information is being provided:

- ✈ Welcome
- ✈ About Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance
- ✈ Exciting plans for our new HQ
- ✈ Our sustainable vision
- ✈ The sound of saving lives
- ✈ Community benefits
- ✈ Have your say and next steps

ABOUT OUR SERVICE



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

Hampshire and Isle of Wight
Air Ambulance delivers critical
care, by road and by air



**Saving lives
since 2007**

Since our first flight in 2007, we have responded to **18,000 missions**, including **1,842 last year (2023)** as demand for our vital lifesaving service is increasing.

We are ready to respond day and night, 365 days a year. And, as a charity, we rely entirely on the generosity of our community to continue our life saving work.

Our specially trained doctors and paramedics can administer blood and advanced medication, ventilate patients and even perform emergency surgical procedures – whether it’s at the roadside or by the bedside.

Our missions

No two missions and no two patients are ever the same.

Here is a breakdown of our 2023 call-outs:

22% Cardiac Arrest	21% Medical	16% Road Traffic Collision	15% Accidental Injury
6% Intentional Self Harm	4% Assaults	3% Sports	2% Transfers
11% Other	Total missions: 1,842		

What we offer



We carry blood on board

We have doctors on board for the majority of our missions



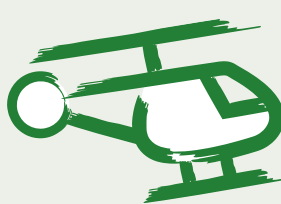
In 2016 we began night Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) operations, enabling us to undertake emergency missions during the hours of darkness, reaching sick and injured people when they need us most

In 2017 our Emergency Response Vehicles became operational



In 2018 we began a new three-way partnership working with University Hospital Southampton and South Central Ambulance Service

Specially trained paramedics who can perform advanced critical care



Since 2007, we’ve flown to 12,500 patients by air, and 5,700 by road.

18,000

missions since our first flight in 2007.

EXCITING PLANS FOR OUR NEW HQ

“Time is of the essence and moving our base will give us the best possible chance of giving you the best possible chance!

We’re here for you and yours, and we want to reach you even quicker. The airport will position us within excellent reach of all corners of our area by helicopter and amongst excellent road networks for our emergency cars.”

Dr. Simon Hughes -
Clinical Lead

Quicker response,
improved outcomes

Our Clinical Lead, Dr Simon Hughes

Our need to relocate

Since our first mission in 2007, we have operated out of Thruxton Circuit, Andover.

It offers Air Traffic Control, refuelling and fire services, and a purpose-built hangar.

Our first home has served us well, but as our charity has expanded, we have recognised that moving to a more central location could save and improve more lives every single day.

Increasingly, our missions are south of the M27 around Southampton, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight. This is a considerable distance from Thruxton which sits on Hampshire’s north-western edge.

Despite the speed of our aircraft and response vehicles, patients are losing out on critical minutes that could spell the difference between life and death.

As a result, moving to our preferred site adjacent to Southampton Airport is a vital next step in our journey as a growing charity.

Our search for a new home

Finding a site for an airbase which meets our requirements has proved challenging.

The site at George Curl Way has many benefits to our service, our patients and our communities.

Excellent motorway access provides the flexibility to choose the right asset for our patient and respond by air or road.

The large building can comfortably be converted into an office, warehouse, training, and hangar space.

The freehold licensing means it has the potential to become our forever home and secure our operations for years to come.

It is ideally located to enable rapid journeys by both air and road across the whole region.

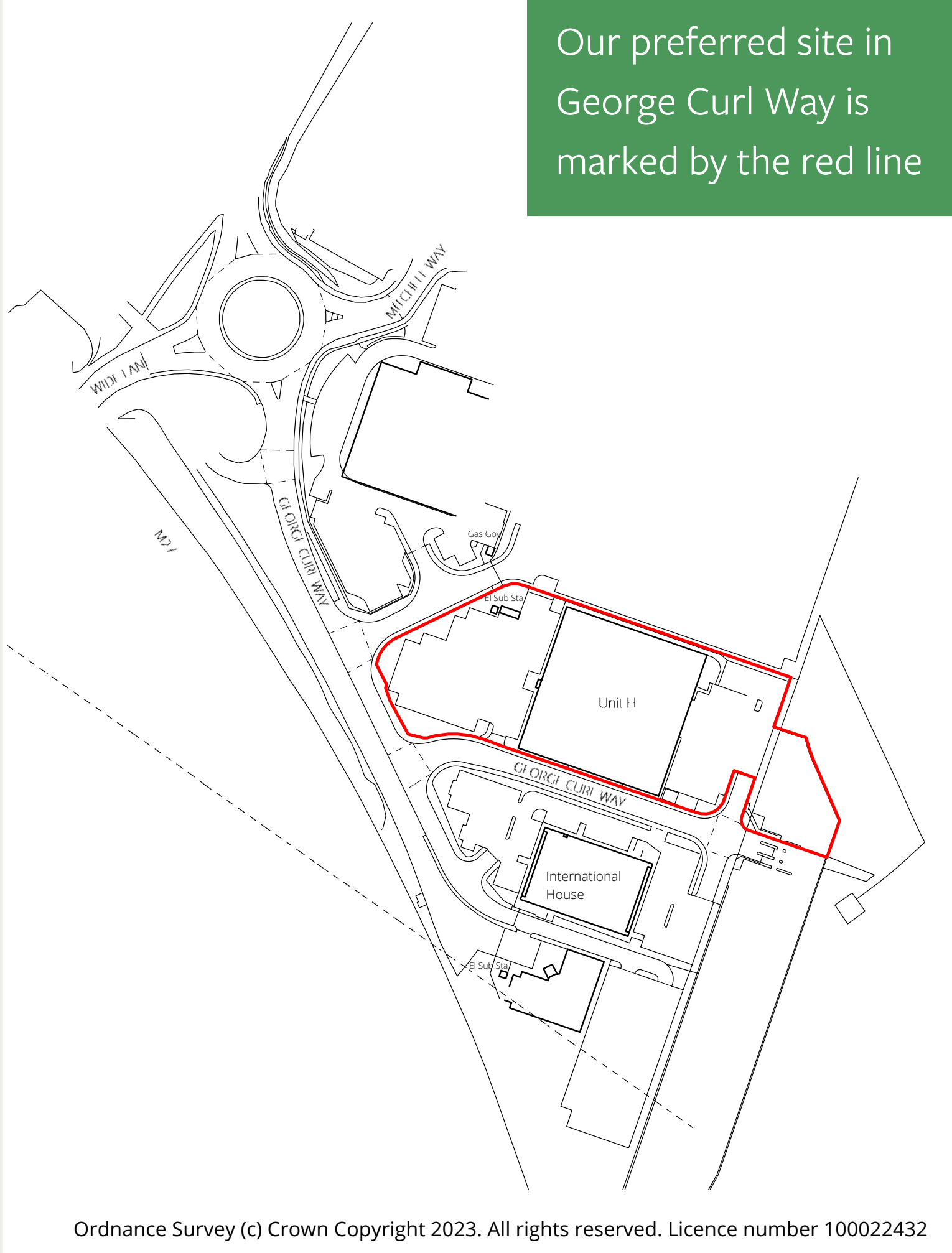
Moving south will save vital minutes in getting our doctors and paramedics to critical incidents.

Whether it’s providing an emergency blood transfusion or performing advanced, lifesaving surgical procedures, when giving each patient the best possible chance of survival and recovery, every second counts.

Travelling shorter distances to and from the scene of an incident or hospital (especially our Major Trauma Centre at University Hospital Southampton) means we spend less time travelling and more time standing ready to respond to other patients.

This will mean that even patients in Andover and the north of the county, where we’ve previously been based, will receive an enhanced service.

Minimising our travel time (both by air and road) by many hours each year will also drastically reduce our carbon emissions, fuel costs, and engineering downtime.



OUR SUSTAINABLE VISION



Our proposals

We are seeking to convert an existing building at George Curl Way adjacent to Southampton Airport into our new headquarters.

At present, our helicopter flies out of Thruxton, Andover, with our office staff based elsewhere in Nursling, Southampton.

We now have a golden opportunity to bring everyone together under one roof in a location much better suited to our operations.

Not only will this save costs with just one site rather than two, but it will further improve the collaboration between crew and charity staff that is so vital in engaging with the community we serve.

Converting an existing building to our own specifications will also allow us to create dedicated space for crew training, physical exercise, education, and rest.

This will ensure our crews are physically and mentally prepared to deal with the next emergency whenever it comes in.

With the remaining space in the building, we will also be exploring opportunities with partner organisations such as medical researchers who could benefit from the expertise of our doctors and paramedics while they are on the ground awaiting their next mission.

Delivering our green vision

Our proposals have been shaped with sustainability in the forefront of our minds, with a host of features to benefit the environment.

We will deliver a biodiversity net gain on the proposal site, for example, by replacing some existing low-quality shrubs with much richer and diverse planting.

Other features including electric vehicle charging points, cycle parking, and a reduction in flight emissions by having a base that is nearer to the majority of our calls.

Our green credentials include:

- Fewer miles flown in responding to missions, due to our improved location
- Landscaping and biodiversity improvements, including new planting
- Dedicated cycle parking to encourage greener travel
- Electric vehicle charging points
- Sustainable drainage systems on-site
- Minimising noise impacts by locating our airbase adjacent to a motorway, railway line, and commercial airport

Our vision for aftercare

A dedicated and suitable safe space where patients, relatives and bystanders can access the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance Aftercare Service is the next step in our journey.

This will greatly enhance the experience of those who have been in some way touched by the charity's service, often in emotionally traumatic moments.

“We donate to these charities hoping that we’ll never need them, but without your donations and support I’d have been on the ground, perhaps for hours, in a pain I can’t describe – left unable to walk again. So, thank you everyone – I just don’t know how to make that small word bigger.”

Our vital lifesaving work takes us to every corner of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, with most of our calls towards the south of our catchment

THE SOUND OF SAVING LIVES



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

Our lifesaving missions

Every time we embark on a mission, the clock is ticking. Lives are at stake.

Whether by air or road, we give each patient we respond to the best chance of survival and recovery. We now want to respond to more patients faster than ever before.

This wouldn't be possible without the ability to respond from a more central location, ensuring those in the most need in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight can rely on our lifesaving service.

Minimising noise impact

One of the reasons for this being a preferred site is because the existing noise of commercial flights will largely mask our own movements.

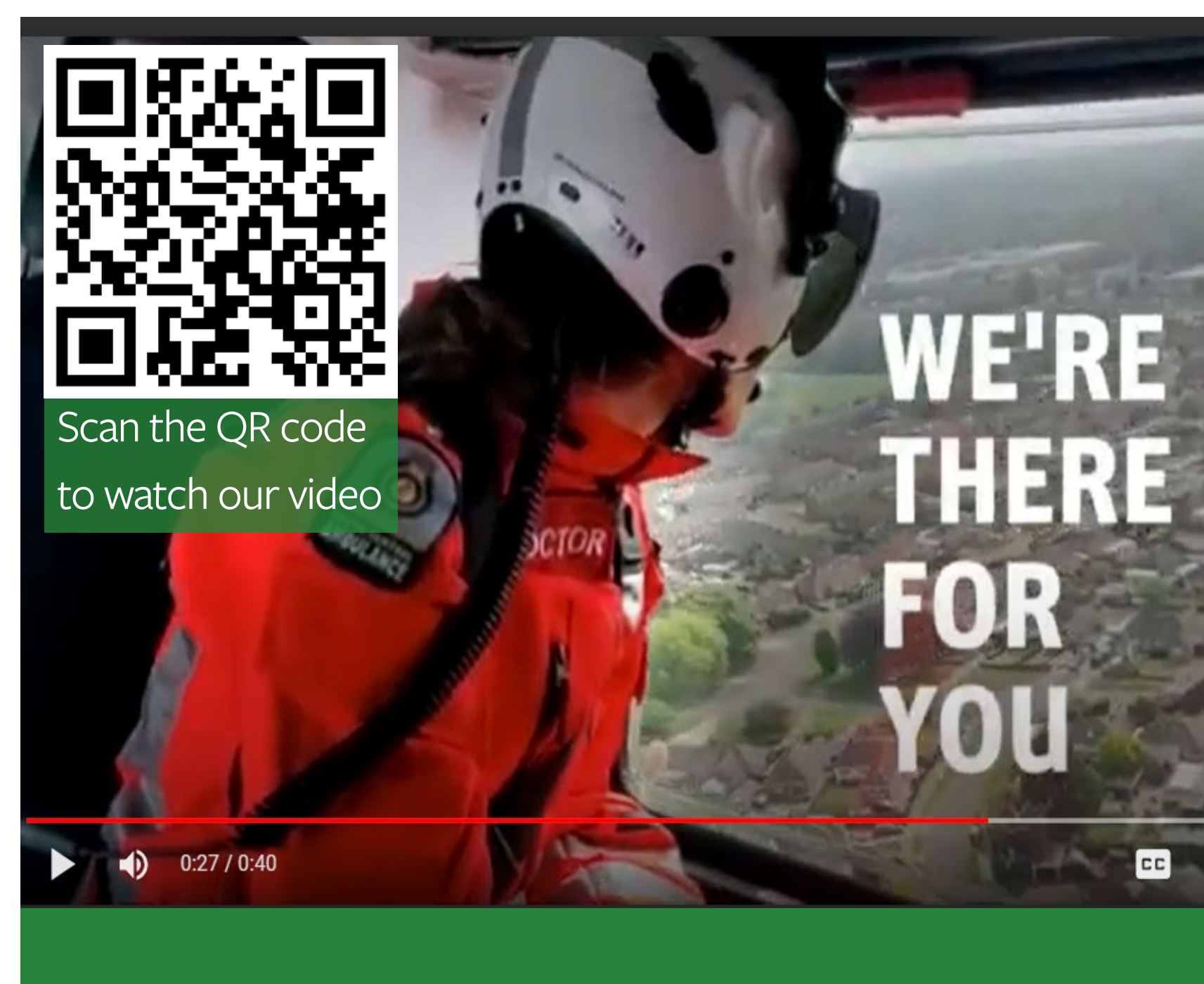
Our proposed site also lies close to the M27 and a mainline railway, both of which create significant amounts of noise.

We recognise the importance of this issue, and want to be good neighbours. As a result, we have carried out detailed work to identify the impact of our lifesaving flights in terms of decibels.

The predicted level of noise from the development is sufficiently low enough at the closest residential dwellings to accord with the 'No Observed Adverse Effect'.



Scan the QR code
to watch our video



During 2023, on average we responded to just over five missions each day

COMMUNITY BENEFITS



HAMPSHIRE AND[®]
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE



“Relocating to Southampton Airport enables us to swiftly reach the people in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight by helicopter or car, faster than ever before. This strategic shift from Thruxton marks a transformative leap, providing the flexibility and agility to choose the right asset and be by the side of our patients when they need us most.”

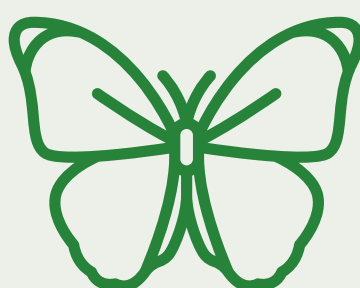
- Dr. Jamie Plumb - HEMS Doctor

Key benefits

Relocating and opening a new base adjacent to Southampton Airport will deliver a host of significant benefits in the local area and for the wider community, and for our staff, crew and volunteers, including:



Faster response times to the majority of incidents



Delivering landscaping and biodiversity improvements



Shorter distances to and from the majority of missions, means less time travelling and more time standing ready to respond to other patients



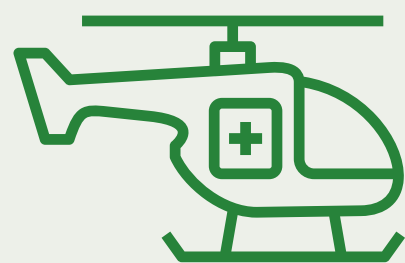
Bringing extra jobs to the area around Southampton Airport



Reduced emissions from less flying time, while still responding to emergencies



Bringing our whole team together under one roof



Take off and landing that is quieter than commercial flights at Southampton Airport



Providing secure cycle parking to promote green transport



The opportunity to provide aftercare services at our new base



Delivering charging points for electric vehicles at the site



The potential to deliver a medical research hub alongside our primary operations



Breathing new life into a previously developed site

HAVE YOUR SAY AND NEXT STEPS



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

Next steps

Thank you for viewing our proposals to relocate our service to Southampton.

The move depends on securing planning permission and we will be applying to Eastleigh Borough Council in due course.

Those who support the air ambulance charity can register their backing – please leave your details with us if you would like to endorse our plans.

“I find it hard to articulate how grateful I am. My hope is that somehow, the crew go home every day knowing that they’ve tangibly impacted lives for the better.”

We will be seeking planning permission to deliver our new base adjacent to Southampton Airport

“Nobody ever leaves their house thinking they might have an accident that day, but as I saw far too often, they or their loved ones might need that helicopter. I did, and thank God it was there!”

“Every time I see the helicopter fly overhead, tears build up in my eyes. I will always hold this service close to my heart.”



Your feedback

The views of residents and other local stakeholders are important to us, and we are keen to receive your comments.

You can leave feedback by completing one of our forms, either in person at our drop-in event, or online. Alternatively, you can write to us, send an email, or leave a message on our freephone line.



Please scan the QR code to visit our project website.



Email us at **mail@your-feedback.co.uk**



Leave a message on our freephone line, **0800 099 6712**, and we will call you back



Write to our project team at **Freepost, Fairthorn Consultancy** – no stamp is required



Visit our project website at:
hiowaa.your-feedback.co.uk

If you are attending our drop-in session, feedback forms can be left in our comments box.