



Hampshire  
County Council

Countryside Planning and  
Development Control  
Hampshire Countryside Service  
Hampshire County Council  
Three Minsters House  
Winchester  
Hampshire  
SO23 8UL  
[www.hants.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.hants.gov.uk/countryside)

*Universal Services*

*Countryside Service, Three Minsters House  
High Street, Winchester SO23 8UY*

Telephone 0845 6035636 (call charges apply  
– please see [www.hants.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.hants.gov.uk/contactus))  
[www.hants.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.hants.gov.uk/countryside)

*Enquiries to*

*My reference*

*Direct Line*

*Your reference*

O/25/99506

*Date*

08 August 2025

*E-mail*

[countryside.planning@hants.gov.uk](mailto:countryside.planning@hants.gov.uk)

For the attention of Liz Harrison:

**Planning reference:** O/25/99506

**Site location:** Navigator Quarter, Eastleigh, SO18 2NL

**Proposal:** Hybrid Planning Application - Outline application for development of the land adjacent to Southampton Airport to provide employment floorspace of up to 92,000 sqm (GIA) within Use Classes E(g) (ii & iii), B2 and B8 with ancillary offices and areas for service yards, car parking, landscaping, ancillary buildings and associated activities, and access from Wide Lane (all matters reserved except for access). Full planning application for initial infrastructure works and construction of new access road including site levelling and other engineering works. (EIA development).

**Consultation response: No objection subject to obligation**

Thank you for consulting the Hampshire County Council Countryside Service (the Service) as Highway Authority in respect of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Commons Registration Authority. We also manage Hampshire County Council (HCC) Country Parks and Countryside Sites. Please accept this as our response to the above application.

**Site Context:**

- Eastleigh Town Public Footpath 49 (FP49) runs north from the district boundary passing adjacent to the site's southeast and east boundary, continuing north beyond the railway line.

*Director of Universal Services*  
**Patrick Blogg**

- FP49 forms part of the Itchen Navigation, a popular long-distance walking route that follows the course of the River Itchen between Hinton Ampner and Southampton Water.
- The route of the footpath, where it runs close to the site boundary, runs through land subject to several environmental designations: Itchen Valley Nature Reserve, a Site Important for Nature Conservation (SINC); River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- The site does not lie in a material proximity to any HCC Countryside Site.

A copy of the Definitive Map of Rights of Way and Countryside Sites and Definitive Statement can be found at <https://maps.hants.gov.uk/rightsofwaydefinitivemap/> and <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/definitivemap>

### **Commentary:**

At the pre-app stage, the Service requested consideration by the applicant of the creation of pedestrian links between the site and FP49/ the Itchen Navigation. As per the following comments the applicant does not consider such links feasible, largely due to ecological constraints.

*Planning Statement, section 6.45:*

*“Opportunities for other active travel connections have been considered, including potential routes through to Campbell Road and the Itchen Way public right of way, however these are constrained by third party land ownerships, existing infrastructure, operational requirements of nearby occupiers and/or existing areas of dense vegetation that should be retained to maintain buffers to the adjacent designated sites. The provision of other connections are not considered practicable or feasible at this stage.”*

*Environmental Statement (Volume 3) Technical Annex G. Transport Part One section 4.37:*

*“The opportunity to connect the Site to the Itchen Way PRow route has been considered, via a 3m section of shared-use footway/ cycleway from the masterplan. However, while it may be technically feasible to provide this connection, the ecological impact of these proposals is considered to outweigh the benefits of providing a connection to the PRow at this time.”*

The Service considers the above statements reasonable and does not request a connection to the public footpath from this development.

The visual impact of the proposed development on users of the Itchen Navigation must be noted, however. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

Scoping Report (Appendix 11.2), October 2024, section 1.5.16, states, “Recreational users of PRoW would likely be the most sensitive visual receptors of any change in the landscape.”

In the Appendix 11.4: Viewpoint Analysis table, sections 8 and 9 consider the potential visual impact of the development upon Itchen Navigation users. In section 8, dealing with the footpath south of the site, it has been stated in the Predicted Visual Change column that:

*“The proposed development parameter sits above the tree line for much of the view meaning that the proposed buildings on the scheme will be visible from this location. While the proposed mitigation planting around the periphery of the site will thicken and reinforce this screen it is unlikely to provide additional height with the tops of buildings remaining visible.”*

The visual tranquillity of the footpath setting, once the site is built out, but possibly before also, would, therefore, be negatively impacted for users and would remain so even after new planting has matured. The effect would be far greater than any that currently results from other industrial, urban infrastructure in the area, e.g. Eastleigh railway depot and Southampton Airport, which are both much further removed from the footpath than the proposed employment units would be.

As the LVIA statement indicates, mitigation planting will not be able to offset the visual impact of this development on users of the Itchen Navigation. The Service, therefore, considers alternative compensation necessary, in the form of a financial contribution, secured in an S106 agreement, towards the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the Itchen Navigation footpath, one of the county’s most popular and attractive walking routes.

Subject to this obligation, the Service raises no objection to this proposal and provides the following informatives for the applicant and landowners’ awareness, regarding their responsibility towards the PROW network.

## **Informatives**

1. Nothing connected with the development’s construction or operation, including its method for discharging surface runoff, shall have an adverse effect on Eastleigh Footpath 49/ The Itchen Navigation, the surface of which must remain available for safe public use at all times.
2. Any damage caused to the surface of Eastleigh Footpath 49/ The Itchen Navigation during the site’s preparation, construction or operation will be

required to be restored to the satisfaction of Hampshire County Council, as Highway Authority for Public Rights of Way, as soon as possible.

3. There must be no surface alterations to a Public Right of Way without the consent of Hampshire County Council, as Highway Authority for Public Rights of Way. To carry out any such works without this permission would constitute an offence under Section 131 of the Highways Act (1980).
4. No vehicles, machinery, equipment, materials, spoil, scaffolding, or anything else associated with site's preparation, construction or operation, shall be left on or near to Eastleigh Footpath 49/ The Itchen Navigation as to cause obstruction, hindrance, or a hazard to footpath users. The public retain the right to safe and convenient use of the Public Right of Way at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Miles  
Countryside Planning Officer  
**Hampshire Countryside Service**