

July 2025

Site address: Eastleigh, SO18 2NL (known as 'Navigator Quarter')

Proposal: Hybrid 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).

This policy review of the hybrid application above references elements of sub-regional planning and relevant evidence, and key policies and text from the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016–2036).

1. Partnership for South Hampshire

There is consistent support for the provision of strategic new warehousing and logistics facilities, most notably as regards the Solent Freeport initiative, in planning statements and economic evidence produced by the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH):

- *Economic, Employment and Commercial Needs (including Logistics) Study (PfSH, 2021)*: Paragraph 10.22 supports the development of approximately 5 'strategic warehouses' across the South Hampshire sub-region.
- *Spatial Position Statement (PfSH, 2023)*: Recommendations in paragraphs 6.52-6.55 (inclusive).

2. Eastleigh Borough Local Plan

The adopted Local Plan's strategic vision includes supporting a strong and sustainable economy with adequate supply of employment land and infrastructure. One of its key objectives is to ensure appropriate employment floorspace to meet future economic and job needs, particularly in accessible locations. General policy considerations, with specific reference to policies E7 and E9, follow:

General considerations

- **Principle of Development:** The proposal aligns with the Local Plan's employment strategy. The site's proximity to Southampton Airport and strategic road/rail links supports its suitability for B2/B8 and E(g) uses under Policies S4 and E7 / E9 (see below).
- **Access and Highways:** The proposed access from Wide Lane must demonstrate that impacts on local and strategic road networks can be safely accommodated. Sustainable travel measures should be secured (Policy DM13)
- **Environmental Impacts:** Any impacts on local habitats, biodiversity or protected species must be addressed with appropriate mitigation and net gain measures (Policy DM11).

- Noise/Amenity: Given proximity to residential areas and the Airport, impacts from noise, lighting and operational activity must be carefully assessed (Policy DM8).
- Design and Layout: Although the detailed design is reserved, future reserved matters must demonstrate high quality design, appropriate landscaping and integration with surroundings (Policy DM1).

Policy E7: Development Opportunities Adjoining Eastleigh Riverside

Policy E7 supports the principle of new employment development within the wider area, recognising its strategic importance as a key employment corridor with opportunities to enhance the Borough's economic base.

The policy specifically encourages high-quality employment development on sites adjoining Eastleigh Riverside that can help deliver significant floorspace for B-class and E(g) employment uses, especially where these proposals can complement nearby uses, contribute to the sub-regional economy, and enhance connectivity.

The supporting text to Policy E7 emphasises that:

- Development should maximise employment density and provide flexible floorspace to attract a range of occupiers.
- Proposals should be well integrated with surrounding infrastructure, particularly transport links including road and rail, to ensure accessibility and minimise impacts on local highways.
- Design and layout should respect local environmental constraints, including the river corridor and any ecological assets.

In the case of the hybrid application, the proposed quantum and mix of employment floorspace aligns with the objectives of Policy E7 in providing substantial new floorspace, contributing to local economic growth and supporting strategic employment objectives. The access from Wide Lane connects directly to existing strategic routes, consistent with the policy aim to maximise sustainable transport connections.

Careful consideration should be given at reserved matters stage to site layout, landscaping and design quality, to ensure that the development integrates well with the surrounding area, enhances visual amenity, and appropriately mitigates any environmental impacts.

Policy E9: Southampton Airport

Policy E9 seeks to safeguard the operational integrity and future expansion potential of Southampton Airport, recognising its regional economic role and connectivity benefits. The supporting text to E9 highlights the need to ensure that development proposals in the vicinity of the airport:

- Do not prejudice airport operations or future growth;
- Avoid unacceptable impacts on flight safety, including safeguarding requirements such as building heights, lighting, landscaping, or features that could attract birds or interfere with radar and navigation systems;

- Are compatible with the noise environment generated by airport operations.

Given the site's immediate proximity to the airport, the proposed development must demonstrate full compliance with airport safeguarding requirements. This includes:

- Building heights and crane use during construction should be fully assessed and agreed with the airport operator and the Civil Aviation Authority where relevant.
- Landscaping should be designed to avoid creating habitats attractive to flocking birds.
- Lighting schemes should be designed to prevent glare or confusion for pilots.

Furthermore, the applicant should provide evidence that the employment uses proposed are appropriate given the noise contours associated with airport operations, and that the design includes necessary mitigation where required to protect the amenity of future occupiers.

Principle of Development

Taking the above into account, the principle of developing this site for high-quality employment uses is **acceptable in policy terms**, subject to:

- Demonstrating that the quantum and type of development aligns with identified economic needs and contributes positively to local employment growth (Policy E7).
- Ensuring that the location, scale and operational details do not adversely affect Southampton Airport's current operations or future expansion potential, and comply with safeguarding requirements (Policy E9).
- Providing suitable access arrangements, including the proposed access from Wide Lane, which connects directly to the strategic highway network and supports sustainable travel choices, consistent with Local Plan objectives for Eastleigh Riverside.

3. Conclusion

In principle, the proposed hybrid application is supported by the sub-regional planning statement and local planning policy for employment use at a sustainable, accessible site near Southampton Airport. The scheme must robustly demonstrate:

- Suitable and safe access arrangements.
- Mitigation of transport impacts, supported by a Transport Assessment.
- Adequate measures to protect amenity and address noise/pollution.
- Biodiversity net gain and landscape integration.
- Safeguarding of airport operations.