

Planning Application at Navigator Quarter

Southampton City Council Development Management – Consultation Response

Date 29th August 2025



Your Reference:	23/01643/FUL	Please ask for:	Jenna Turner
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Summary of Comments

Southampton City Council raise no objection, in principle, to the above planning application subject to a condition relating the scope of the Class E uses and further engagement relating to transport and the management of future employment opportunities.

Detailed Comments

The City Council's Planning Team has had the opportunity to review the application submission and liaise with departments in the Council and sought the views of Members whose wards adjoin the site. The following comments incorporate the responses received.

Principle of Development

In terms of the principle of the use I note the proposal will be for 92,000 sqm in Use Classes E(g)(ii & iii), B2 and B8 with ancillary offices. Work on our new Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) is on-going, so we do not yet know how much of these employment uses are needed in Southampton but given limited land availability in the city, we are unlikely to have sites big enough to deliver such a scheme. Therefore, this proposal could provide important employment opportunities for Southampton residents given its proximity to the city that may not otherwise be deliverable within the city boundary.

A condition should be applied to any grant of planning permission to ensure that the proposal cannot be changed to other uses within Use Class E, for example offices (Use Class E(g)(i)), as this would conflict with the Partnership for South Hampshire Spatial Strategy of directing offices towards city and town centres in the first instance. Whilst waiting to be quantified in the HENA, Southampton has been losing some competitive advantage to out of centre office parks that have higher quality office space and more parking than is available in the City Centre. It is important that Navigator Quarter does not become a further source of competition.

Employment and Skills

The economic benefits appear to be substantial and as mentioned before it is unlikely that a scheme of such size would come forward in Southampton in the short to medium term.

To secure benefits for Southampton workers we would like to engage further with EBC, whether skills and training obligations for local residents could be secured

within a section 106 legal agreement. The potential economic benefits should be maximised and we would request for skills and employment contributions to maximise Southampton residents as well as Eastleigh residents.

Impact on Strategic Gap

In terms of the strategic gap between Eastleigh and Southampton whilst the gap would inevitably reduce there will still remain a significant gap enforced by defensible spaces that would preclude further reductions, namely the Airport and the River Itchen SSSI/SPA/SAC. We have recognised that the strategic gaps may be subject to some development to support growth needs in sustainable locations that form logical extensions of existing settlements.

Parking, Highways and Transport

The proposed development is located within Eastleigh Borough Council's boundary including the proposed works relating to its access and footway connections. Therefore, these matters will be agreed between Eastleigh Borough Council and Hampshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority, we'd expect HCC to comment on the impact on their highway and National Highways for impact on M27 Junction 5.

As such, these comments will focus on the impact generated by the multimodal trips distributed towards and along areas within Southampton City Council's boundary.

SCC was involved in the pre-application discussions with the application and HCC, EBC and National Highways, and the responses raised by HCC and NH. This included the scoping for the Transport Assessment including commenting on the trip rates, distribution etc. The junctions of Wide Lane/Mansbridge Road, Wide Lane/Mountpark and Stoneham Way/Bassett Green Road/Wide Lane/Wessex Lane were requested to be investigated.

Trip Generation

The development takes a 'Vision based approach' in line with the new NPPF but this still appears a standard assessment with little done on non-vehicular trip assessment. It is noted that Figure 3.5 the walking isochromes indicate the area within 10-minute walking distance of the site, incorporates adjacent parts of Eastleigh such as Campbell Road but there is not a direct route across the railway lines (either South West Main Line or the loop for the Eastleigh works that connects to Campbell Road). This appears to indicate that the site is sustainable but the actual walking route to these points is longer (2-3 miles) via Southampton Airport Parkway station footbridges, and an accessible route for wheeling is significantly longer via Wide Lane. This is likely to mean that non-car based trips to local services will not be as attractive. We recommend that this and the cycling catchment map are done on actual networks rather than straight line/as crow flies.

The development encompasses a variety of potential end-users based on the number of proposed use classes. No confirmation has been provided in terms of the unit/floorspace split between different use classes. Due to the difference in trip rates between the use classes under the proposal, a couple of scenarios have been provided with suggested split in land uses. We note that the applicant wishes for a more 'flexible' application but in terms of trip generation and assessment a land use

needs to be applied and assessed with the potential for the highest level of vehicle trips. This is consistent with HCC's approach for ensuring the assessment is robust.

Scenario 1 consists of:

- 15% Class E (g) (ii) R&D and (iii) Industrial Processes
- 15% B2 - General Industrial Use
- 60% B8 - Warehousing Use
- 10% B8 – Parcel Distribution.

Scenario 2:

- 10% Class E (g) (ii) R&D and (iii) Industrial Processes
- 10% B2 - General Industrial Use
- 75% B8 - Warehousing Use
- 5% B8 – Parcel Distribution.

It is noted that the highest trip generators (Business Park and Parcel Distribution) have a low percentage share of total floorspace/land use. As such, it is not considered to be a robust assessment and as described by the TA as 'worst-case'. It is noted TRICS land use 'Business Park' is used to represent the planning Use Classes E (g)(ii) and (iii). Looking at some of the TRICS surveyed sites, arguably the sites are broadly representative of the development whereby these survey sites contain a complex of large units similar in design and scale of the proposal. As such, a more robust assessment could consider a much higher percentage or even full 100% split for Business Class use.

Trip Impact Assessment

Looking at the trip distribution figures, it is not clear what the level is for Wide Lane South of the M27 (leading to Mansbridge Road roundabout). There were count data done for this and a junction assessment at (Junction 5) Wide Lane/Mount Park but it is not clear if the Wide lane/Mansbridge Roundabout has been assessed. Junction 7 have been done which includes Stoneham Way/Wide Lane /Wessex Lane and Wide Lane/Mansbridge Road. Looking at the queuing data for this junction, it would seem that the additional queues would significantly impact on the Mansbridge Roundabout. Further clarification on this is needed.

The 2028 future year assessment carried out for Wide lane/Mountpark junction appears to show that the development would result in the junction breaching capacity. This is not explained in the write up but does mention that in the 2036 future year assessment, the baseline assessment already breaches capacity and therefore no mitigation is needed. Without further explanation, mitigation is considered to be needed as the 2028 baseline is operating within capacity whilst with development results in breaching capacity. Furthermore, if a junction breaches capacity based on general network growth, it doesn't mean adding to it is acceptable without mitigation. Mitigation is considered to be important especially if the junction is already at or over capacity as any increase in traffic flows would exacerbate the harmful impact.

Trip Budget

In order to provide flexibility for the applicant whilst allowing some assurance for the LPA that the type of end users operating from the development will not deviate significantly as suggested by the scenarios, a trip budget condition is proposed.

It is not clear how the suggested wording of the condition would work. It first talks about a daily cap of 7,984 trips. Then it shows a table which represents daily trips permitted per use class. For example, for Class E (g)(ii)(iii), the figure is 1,004 trips per 100sq/m2. It would seem that the 1,004 figure is based on the daily trips generated by the Class E(g)(ii)&(iii) land use at 15% of overall floorspace (as shown in table 7.10 in the TA). Is this an error whereby the this section of the condition should be the raw trip rate ('7.272' as per table 7.6)? Clarification is needed for this.

It is suggested that pre-occupation of each unit and subsequent occupations, a reserved matters application (RMA) will be submitted whereby trip data will be provided and then be assessed against the overall development in order to keep to the agreed cap on daily trips. Although in simple terms, this seems like an option in principle to provide the desired flexibility whilst ensuring the transport assessment carried out is reflective of the development, there are concerns to how this would be monitored and managed when the cap on the daily trips is breached. Would the RMA simply be refused or mitigation measures be provided? If the latter, we have concerns with the practicality if, for example, the development is small and only breaches the capacity by a small amount and the mitigation measure needed is unviable for the particular development parcel. An option would be that remedial works should at least be identified and agreed at this stage should the daily cap be breached and some form of bond/surety is secured. However, the question is how the level of contribution will be agreed mainly due to the risk if the breach doesn't occur until further in the future, the contribution originally sought may not be able to fund the agreed works.

Ideally, a worst-case scenario (as mentioned above) should be provided at this stage whereby any mitigation measures can be agreed and designed to be effective and also cost reflective of current of the current market.

Active Travel Assessment

The TA has assessed the pedestrian and cycle network around the site but has not looked at the Southampton network to the south of the Mitchell Way/Wide Lane (Spitfire Roundabout) which will be vital connection to those coming from Southampton to the site. We request that assessment is done on the route along Wide Lane to, and including, the Wide Lane/Mansbridge Road roundabout which forms part of SCN7 (Southampton Cycle Network) as the main cycle route to Southampton. This is similar to the highway assessment.

On the Spitfire Roundabout, there are existing crossing points for people walking & cycling but they are uncontrolled and represent a key point on the cycle network (SCN7) between Southampton and Eastleigh. The increase in trips, both vehicular and cycle, mean that safer crossing points with better visibility/control should be provided as part of a mitigation package linked to the delivery of the Wide Lane Bridge as requested by HCC.

SCC would support a Healthy Streets Assessment of the access routes and onwards connections to Southampton.

The TA references the existing Beryl bike operation in Eastleigh, but it is

recommended that the current Solent micromobility operator Voi is also included, subject to HCC approval, to extend to the site to provide Southampton residents with an option of travelling there.

Public Transport

Southampton Airport is served by the high-frequency U1 service (from City Centre via University) which terminates at the stop by Southampton Airport Parkway station. This is over 1 mile from the development site and likely to be unattractive as people would have a more than 20 minute walk to the site. The U1 has long hours of operation (0500-0100) but given the distance between the site and bus stop it unlikely to an attractive option for those living in Southampton travelling to the site. There is mention of expanding bus services or the existing shuttle service, a new service similar to new Bluestar 61 to Nursling Industrial Estate that provides a connection to Southampton would benefit residents in Southampton, and/or extensions to some of the U1 services would be a way to improve sustainable travel as a genuine option for Southampton residents and reduce vehicular traffic associated with the development. The extension of the shuttle service would not be considered acceptable as this would introduce an exchange penalty (i.e. changing from one bus to another) which would be unattractive and not a high-quality public transport link.

Funding for improved bus services should be secured through the S106 Agreement.

Mitigation Measures

A comprehensive list cannot be provided at this time due to the number of clarifications needed as covered above but items have been noted.

Transport Summary

At this stage SCC Highways cannot provide a final conclusion on the application without the outstanding issues raised SCC, HCC and National Highways are concluded.

Air Quality

The Council's Environmental Health Team raise no objection to the air quality effects of the development. All areas in Southampton City Council are meeting the air quality standards at present.

To mitigate air pollution impact, the developer should be encouraged to install electric chargers for EVs at the provided car park spaces for the business premises. Opportunities for sustainable modes of transport should also be maximised, in line with the comments relating to Transport, above.

Conclusion

The City Council would welcome further engagement on this project. Please keep us informed of any further or amended information relating to this site.