

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.

Landscape Officer: Tim Dyer

Summary:

- The parameter plan proposes a scale of; alignment, massing and heights of development, which would create an unacceptable landscape and visual impact upon the countryside, open spaces and a National Trail.
 - The parameters seem excessive in relation to the likely scale of the scheme as set out in the illustrative scheme and at odds with the context of the site.
 - The way forward is a modified parameter plan stepping back from the sensitive boundaries and showing reduced massing and heights in some areas.
 - Landscape holding objection to the proposed development
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ES Vol 2 – 11. Landscape and Visual and ES Vol 3 – F. Landscape and Visual Impact.

I have some slight differences regarding the scores I judged by using the same methodology for magnitude and the effectiveness of year 15 mitigation giving different final effect scores. My significance scores in some cases are higher. There are also other viewpoints that could have been selected but I accept those included capture are a representative selection, if unfortunate that the northern water meadows could not be included. Overall the landscape work seem well judged and executed.

The landscape report highlights significant effects as a result of the development and I would challenge the effectiveness of mitigation as based on the parameter plans. This is the crux of this application and I will give some details below to explain my concerns regarding the parameter plan approach.

Viewpoint 2 – Existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh with a few large scale building noticeable by linear silhouette and among the upper tree line. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline more significantly with the potential for the mass and linear form to create a new edge rather than sit within the existing character. By contrast slight tweaks to the illustrative design could sit the whole proposed development below the treeline.

Viewpoint 3 – No existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where no other buildings are visible, exposing the industrial edge of Eastleigh further into the countryside and strategic gap. By contrast a very slight tweaks to the roof of one building in the illustrative design could sit the whole proposed development below the treeline.

Viewpoint 4 - No existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where no other buildings are visible, creating the industrial edge of Eastleigh

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further into the countryside and strategic gap. The illustrative design would still create a new industrial edge however changes to the heights of a couple of buildings and introducing some curving rooflines would start to soften the large buildings and start to blend them better into the setting.

Viewpoint 6 – Very limited perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where few buildings are visible, extending the industrial edge of Eastleigh further into the countryside and a busy country park. This location is identified as a “view point” in Itchen Valley Country Park literature. By contrast tweaks to the illustrative design to change the heights of a couple of buildings and introducing some curving rooflines would sit the majority of the proposed development below the treeline and start to soften the remaining large buildings and start to blend them better into the setting.

Viewpoint 7 - No existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where no other buildings are visible, creating the industrial edge of Eastleigh further into the countryside over a wide area of country park within the strategic gap. By contrast tweaks to the illustrative design to change the heights of a couple of buildings and introducing some curving rooflines would sit the whole proposed development below the treeline and start to soften the large buildings from other the closer views in this areas (see note on current management of this area).

Viewpoint 8 - No existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where no other buildings are visible, creating the industrial edge of Eastleigh further into the countryside over a wide area of country park and within the strategic gap. By contrast tweaks to the illustrative design to change the heights of a couple of buildings and introducing some curving rooflines would sit the whole proposed development below the treeline and start to soften the large buildings from other the views away from the PRoW / Itchen Way (see note on current management of this area).

Viewpoint 9 - Existing views of the industrial edge of Eastleigh with noticeable urbanising features and buildings. The parameter boundaries clear existing vegetation with the potential for the mass and linear form to extend the industrial influence rather than sit within the peripheral character. By contrast the illustrative design could sit the whole proposed development below the existing vegetation.

Viewpoint 10 – Existing view along the built edge of Eastleigh with prominent residential development. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline and would be the only industrial building in view. By contrast a slight tweaks to the height and roof of one building in the illustrative design could sit the whole proposed development below the treeline. (Likely to be more significant from the high point within Lakeside Country Park).

Viewpoint 11 a and b - No existing perception of the industrial edge of Eastleigh. The parameter boundaries breach the treeline where no other largescale buildings are visible, overbearing in massing, height and length on what is a residential scale open space. While the illustrative design needs much more work from this vantage point to reduce the developments impact, it shows that with height changes to the neighbouring buildings some curving rooflines the proposed development could be dramatically better.

Itchen Valley Country Park – Northern water meadows. Currently the water meadows have limited access. The southern water meadows (incl. viewpoint 7) have some formal paths of varying quality and due to their location they experience flooding. The northern area of water meadow does not

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currently have formal paths and is where access is currently discouraged with walkers directed onto the Itchen Way. It should be noted that there are proposals to improve the formal connection from Eastleigh to Itchen Valley Country Park upgrading the Itchen Way and a route across the water meadows. This is likely to be a well used connection.

Landscape Character

Lower Itchen Valley Floodplain – Around between half and two thirds of this character area will be affected by the parameter plan proposal.

Upper Itchen Valley and Horton Heath Undulating Farmland – Around a third will be affected by the parameter proposal.

Campbell Road – CHARACTER AREA: ELAC 29 <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/2476/character-area-appraisal-for-eastleigh.pdf> Plus Open Space impact.

Local Plan Policy E6 – “The residential amenities of the occupiers of dwellings in Barton Road, Campbell Road and Southampton Road must not be adversely affected by activities in adjoining industrial areas, including through noise, light, air pollution, traffic generation or hours of working”

Conclusion

From previous conversations with the applicants agents I understand the intention is to bring forward development closer to that shown in the illustrative scheme however the parameter plans are what a reserve matter application would work within. I find the principle of this level of landscape and visual impact to great to support this application.

Landscape holding objection subject to further information

However in the illustrative scheme I can see parameters that are much closer to acceptable because they can step down and make the most of the sites context. A revised parameter plan that focuses on refining the building line and heights to mitigate the concerns raised above, alongside agreement that building design and roof lines will need to sensitively respond to their context.

In order to inform that work my concerns are outlined in the text above but after that I am happy to work with the case officer and applicants agents to refine the parameters and other elements.