

*The Independent Voice of Local Business*.....

SOUTHAMPTON & FAREHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
COMMENTS ON PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE  
JOINT EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL/SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL  
EMPLOYMENT LAND STUDY

The Southampton and Fareham Chamber of Commerce would like to have the opportunity to discuss in more depth the full scope and implications of the Joint Southampton City Council/Eastleigh Borough Council Employment Land Study and so seeks the opportunity to comment in greater detail at a later date and especially wishes to comment in full on the final version before its submission. Members of the Chamber's Planning & Transport Committee have already had consultation with New Forest District Council about their Employment Land Study.

The Chamber of Commerce commends the decision to carry out a joint Study between Eastleigh and Southampton and our initial comments would be that the Chamber of Commerce believes that:

1. There would be merit in consulting business as part of the study; and the Chamber would like to offer its assistance in this respect.
2. It is essential that if the study includes the 'Southern Test Valley' then this area should also consider Romsey within that area.
3. It is important that Southampton City Council look at ways to make the city centre more attractive to new developers, including developing links from the station to the Waterfront.
4. The issue of Employment Land/Buildings being lost to residential use because of increased land/building value for the latter needs to be discussed and the potential to protect the use of employment land/buildings via the planning route needs to be included in any review.
5. The inclusion of the potential employment land within the Eastleigh Borough Council region is a priority and the development of the Chickenhall Lane Link Road is key to opening up the employment land in this area. To achieve this, a substantial investment in the infrastructure is necessary for a successful long-term development. Such investment is very unlikely to be met alone by BAA's Southampton Airport development and therefore investment from other sources will be necessary to finance the possible £40 million required.

After a recent meeting with Martin Tugwell, Planning Implementation Director for SEERA, it has become clear to the Planning and Transport Committee of the Southampton and Fareham Chamber of Commerce that it is crucial for all the stakeholders who will benefit from the Chickenhall Lane Link Road to unite and discuss the opening up of employment land through this link, in order to find the best long term solution for this development.

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It is essential that an agreed solution to opening up this land should be achieved as soon as possible as the delays are adversely affecting the economic growth of the region. The development involving the Chickenhall Lane Link Road should be seen as a priority bringing major benefits to a host of organisations such as Eastleigh Borough Council, Southampton City Council, BAA, St Modwin, Pirelli, EWS, RailTrack, HCC and regional government.

J Chestnutt  
Director General  
Southampton & Fareham Chamber of Commerce