

SOUTHAMPTON CITY VISION

EMPLOYMENT LAND BACKGROUND PAPER

○ October 2022



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to assess the currently safeguarded industrial land in Southampton. This is informing the emerging policies and proposed allocations in Southampton City Council's (SCC) new Local Plan, Southampton City Vision. The paper assesses all the industrial sites which are currently safeguarded by the adopted development plan, to identify which sites are potential options for release. It relates to the options set out in policy EC2 of the draft plan.

Industrial employment land is an important element of Southampton's land use and should be safeguarded where appropriate. Protecting employment land is important for supporting local economic development, ensuring that residents have access to a local jobs market and that these jobs are protected within the city, thereby reducing the need to travel for work. A healthy supply of employment land is also necessary to create employment links to priority neighborhoods and address issues of deprivation and inclusion within the working population.

It is equally important to consider which sites are potentially suitable for release. An employment site may be deemed fit for release if it does not match existing or foreseeable market requirements, if there are issues of oversupply in an area, if a site is not deemed fit for purpose, or it could deliver strong regeneration benefits. A site deemed suitable for release will be 'de-safeguarded', making it available to be allocated for other uses. A key reason for release would be so that the site could be used for residential land to help meet SCC's housing requirements. However, it will also be important to consider the cumulative release of sites, to ensure that the cumulative loss of industrial sites is not too great given their importance to the city for the reasons stated.

2. Policy Guidance

- 1) The NPPF (2021) encourages sustainable economic growth and as such requires that Local Plans "should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt." (para. 81).

This should be achieved through planning policies which "set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period" and are "flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allowing for new and flexible working practices" (para. 82).

The NPPF also states that planning policies should "recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors", going on to highlight the need for knowledge /data driven or creative / hi-tech industries and storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations (para. 83).

To support sustainable economic growth in Southampton throughout the plan period, it is necessary for the Council to review employment land requirements and assess whether land in the city is being used effectively. The Council have completed an assessment of industrial employment sites which are currently protected for employment uses and based on its findings set out options as to which sites should be retained for industrial employment land and which could potentially be reallocated for other uses, to inform the consultation on the draft plan. Following this the Council will consider which of these site options it wishes to continue to safeguard for industrial use, and which it wishes to release for other uses. This will be set out in the next stage of the plan.

- 2) The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PFSH) comprises the unitary authority areas of Portsmouth and Southampton, Hampshire County Council, the district authorities of Eastleigh, Gosport, East Hampshire, Fareham, Havant, Test Valley, New Forest and Winchester, and the New Forest National Park Authority. PFSH are currently preparing a strategy for South Hampshire, and this will be taken into account as the Local Plan progresses.

- 3) The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is established as a private sector led body tasked with working collaboratively with local partners to stimulate and promote sustainable growth across the Solent region. The Solent LEP's "Transforming Solent Growth Strategy" supports sustainable economic growth and private sector investment to assist the globally competitive area to reach its full potential (part of the vision). The Strategy sets objectives and strategic priorities, including to promote the area as the leading growth hub for advanced manufacturing, marine and aerospace, unlock critical employment sites, provide new housing, support small and medium enterprises, support infrastructure, and develop strategic sectors of marine, aerospace and defense, advanced manufacturing, engineering, transport, logistics, low carbon and the visitor economy.

- 4) To become a City of Opportunity, the Council is working towards becoming a Greener, Fairer and Healthier city. The Corporate Plan states that the city's infrastructure must support growth by:
 - Reducing congestion
 - Overcoming barriers to jobs and opportunities
 - Improving the environment
 - Building an infrastructure resilient to change

- 5) In line with this, the Council have produced the Economic and Green Growth Strategy (2021). Through a collaborative approach, the strategy aims to encourage economic prosperity and opportunity in Southampton by focusing on four key themes:
 - People, employment and skills
 - Supporting and growing local businesses
 - Sustainable place shaping
 - Growing an international city

Through these themes, the strategy communicates how Southampton will restore and renew its economy over the next decade. It also considers the impact of both Covid-19 and the UK's exit from the EU, and as such is set to be delivered within the regional approach to Covid-19 recovery over three phases: Survival, Stability, and Growth.

- 6) It is important to acknowledge the impact of Covid-19 on the regional economy. Following record widespread falls in services, production, and construction across the country, key local impacts highlighted in the Solent LEP's Economic Recovery Plan include:
 - 2019 – 2020 GVA output change for Southampton predicted to be -15.1%, signifying the largest drop in economic output in the Solent region
 - Southampton forecast employment change of -4.6%, exceeding expectations for UK as a whole

- Southampton represents a local business base with ‘high risk’ sectors, in particular construction, education and hospitality

The Economic Recovery Plan takes a three-stage approach to drive activity over the next few years, concentrating on survival, stability and growth throughout the region. In line with the Solent 2050 Strategy, Priority 6: An Outstanding Business Environment focuses on “building resilience and continuity in the short-term, followed by a longer-term emphasis on productivity growth as the economy recovers and transitions to a ‘new normal’” (pp,14).

To help businesses begin to stabilise, the Economic Recovery Plan suggests the implementation of several regional services. Suggestions include the provision of a locally responsive Business Resilience Programme, expansion of LEP’s Coronavirus Support Hub, and the establishment of a Solent Supply Chain Network to facilitate resilient, inclusive supply chains and a collaborative approach to procurement of local products and services (pp, 14).

3. Methodology

Table 1 shows the criteria used to assess which industrial land in the city could potentially be de-safeguarded in the new Local Plan and which should continue to be safeguarded. The draft Local Plan sets out in policy EC2 the sites which could potentially be released as options for public consultation, so that the Council can consider wider views before deciding which of these sites should be de-safeguarded.

All industrial sites which are currently safeguarded in the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan or the 2015 City Centre Action Plan are assessed. Each site is referenced as it will be in the new Local Plan and as it was in previous adopted plans, including the 2006 Local Plan and City Centre Action Plan, to easily identify sites. The analysis also included an LSH rating which indicates the commercial viability of each site. Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) were commissioned by the Council to determine these ratings through a detailed, qualitative assessment of Southampton’s existing industrial employment sites from a commercial perspective (Employment Land Study – Southampton 2017). Sites were scored A to E in terms of commercial quality:

A – High

B – Above Average

C – Average

D – Below Average

E – Low

These scores took account of the following issues: strategic location, prominence, area / character, local amenities, planning status, age / suitability, redevelopment prospects. Sites that scored an E are identified as potential options to consider for release (shown in Table 1), while sites that scored A/B/C/D generally remained safeguarded as industrial land (unless they are considered for release for other reasons).

It is expected that de-safeguarded employment sites will be allocated as residential land to meet the Council’s housing targets where possible, therefore it is also useful to identify which sites have been

put forward through the 'Call for Sites'. Table 1 indicates that most of these sites have been identified as potential options to consider for release.

The Council identified industrial sites with poor accessibility, and these were highlighted as options for release (shown in yellow in Table 1). It is important for industrial sites to have good access routes to accommodate HGV's, LGVs and staff traffic whilst causing minimal disruption to the surrounding area. The analysis checked for access via A or B roads, bus corridors and proximity to railway stations. Sites accessed via residential streets and located in predominantly residential areas were highlighted as potential options to consider for release due to poor access, while those with direct A or B road access generally remained safeguarded. The Council also identified and considered sites which have waterfront access and are therefore a key asset for marine industries, an important economic sector in the Solent area. This does not include all sites which are adjacent to the waterfront, as marine access to some is restricted by low bridges or by mud flats (which are environmentally protected).


The Council also identified industrial sites with regeneration potential. A long list of initial sites for consideration was identified in Table 1 (predominantly waterside or City Centre sites). These sites were then considered further in the commentary in section 4, to identify which had the most regeneration potential. These were also highlighted as potential options to consider for release (shown in blue in Table 1).


In conclusion, the sites in Table 1 highlighted in yellow or blue are those considered to be potential options to be considered for release. The Council is seeking views on these options through public consultation on the draft plan, specifically policy EC2. It will also be important to consider the cumulative loss of industrial sites to ensure that sufficient industrial sites overall are retained in the city. Therefore, the sites indicated as potential options for release at this stage do not necessarily indicate they will be released in the final version of the Plan. In-order to ensure that any cumulative loss of industrial sites is not too great, it is unlikely that the Council will chose to release all of these options.

(Table 1 also highlights in grey industrial sites which were safeguarded in the original 2006 Local Plan but have since been de-safeguarded by the City Centre Action Plan or have had planning permission granted for redevelopment to other uses).

Table 1

 = Site has already been de-safeguarded by CCAP or redeveloped for housing, or has a permission for redevelopment to housing

 = Site with regeneration potential: Itchen Riverside / waterside / city centre

 = Site with poor access (eg without direct or very close access to A/B road); and or site with E (low) LSH rating for commercial viability

The sites below are also listed in the options associated with policy EC2 in the draft Local Plan; and are illustrated in the map of employment sites in the policy map changes booklet.

New Local Plan		Previous Plans		LSH Study		SLAA	Accessibility					Marine employment	Regeneration	Conclusion
New LP Ref.	Site Name	2006 LP Ref.	CCAP Ref.	Name (if different)	Rating	Call for Sites	A Road Access	B Road Access	Railway Station Access	Medium Accessibility Bus Corridor	High Accessibility Bus Corridor	Waterfront Access	Regeneration potential considered in option 2?	Option for Release?
RED005	Test Lane South	MSA 19			A	No	Yes (A35)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
WOO002	Centenary Quay marine employment	MSA 18			B	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Meridian	MSA 16			D	No	Yes (A3024)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes		Site already released from employment safeguarding by planning permission
BEV011	Drivers Wharf	MSA 16			D	No	Yes (A3024)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes – site has regeneration potential
MIL007	British American Tobacco site	REI9	i		D	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
SWA005	Mountpark (previously Ford)	REI9	ii		A	No	Yes (A27)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

RED007	Phillips Business Park	REI9	iii			B	No						No	No	No
	Ordnance Survey, Romsey Road	REI9	iv				No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No		Site already released from employment safeguarding under adopted plan or planning permission
SHO001	Ashley Crescent (off Portsmouth Road)	REI10	i			D	No	Yes (A3025)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
MIL006	First, Second and Third Avenue, Milbrook Trading Estate	REI10	ii			B	No	Yes (A3024)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
	City Industrial Park	REI10	iii	CCAP policy AP22 allocates for mixed use		B	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No		Site already released from employment safeguarding under adopted CCAP
BAR029	Central Trading Estate	REI10	iv	Still safeguarded by CCAP policy AP3		C	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes – site has regeneration potential
BPA007	Centurion Industrial Park	REI10	v			C	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No – remove as option
BEV015	Empress Road Industrial Estate	REI10	vi			D	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No

POR003	Belgrave Industrial Estate	REI10	vii		Portswold	C	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
SWA003	Site north of Orion Industrial Centre	REI10	viii			A	No	Yes (A335)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
SWA004	Orion Industrial Centre, Wide Lane	REI10	ix			A	No	Yes (A335)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
SWA002	Airways Distribution Centre, Wide Lane	REI10	x			A	No	Yes (A27)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
BEV019	Northam Industrial Estate	REI10	xi		Northam triangle	D	No	No	Yes (B3038)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
BAR036	City Commerce Centre	REI10	xii	Still safeguarded by CCAP policy AP3		B	No	Yes (A3025)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No – remove as option
	West Quay Road site, north of the Post House Hotel	REI10	xiii	AP22		B	No	Yes (A3057)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No		Site already released from employment safeguarding under adopted CCAP
BEV016	Mount Pleasant Industrial Park	REI10	xiv		West of Meridian	D	No	Yes (A3024)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes – site has regeneration potential and in residential area/poor access route
BEV014	Gasholder Site, Britannia Road	REI10	xv	Still safeguarded by CCAP policy AP3			Yes	No	Yes (B3038)	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes – site has regeneration potential

BAR030	Floating Bridge Road and Crosshouse Road site	REI10	xvi	Still safeguarded by CCAP policy AP3		C	No	No	Yes (B3039)	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes – site has regeneration potential if an appropriately designed scheme comes forward; otherwise it should continue to be safeguarded
BEV018	Millbank Industrial area	REI10	xvii (marked on map as vii)		Northam peninsula	D	No	No	Yes (B3038)	No	No	No	No	No	No
PEA006	the northern end of Hazel Road	REI10	xviii			D	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No – remove as option 2
PEA007	Spitfire Quay	REI10	xix			D	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No – remove as option
MIL001	Site on the corner of Oakley Road and Tebourba Way	REI10	xx			E	No	Yes (A35)	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes – site has poor access and low LSH rating
MIL004	Site on the corner of Auckland Road and Tebourba Way	REI10	xxi				No	Yes (A35)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
SHI004	231 - 271 Winchester Road	REI10	xxii				No	Yes (A35)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

BPA002	North of Quayside Road	REI11	i			D	Kemps Quay	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes – poor access
BPA008	South of Quayside Road	REI11	i			D	Kemps Quay	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No – marine employment site
BEV013	Radcliffe Court	REI11	ii				No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes – site accessed via residential streets and in predominately residential areas
BEV017	183-215 Radcliffe Road	REI11	iii				No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes – site accessed via residential streets and in predominately residential areas
BAR037	Site bound to the east by Paget Road and to the west by Albert Road north	REI11	iv (marked as v on map)	Still safeguarded by AP3			No	No	Yes (B3039)	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No – remove as option
	Brunswick Square Industrial Area	REI11	v	CCAP policy AP27 allocates for mixed use			No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No		Site already released from employment safeguarding by adopted CCAP and planning permission
	College Street Site	REI11	vi	Old warehouses already redeveloped, CCAP			No	Yes (A33)	No	No	No	Yes	No		Site already released from employment safeguarding by adopted

				policy AP34 allocates for mixed use											CCAP and planning permission
FRE004	Mountbatten Industrial Estate	REI11	vii				No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - has regeneration potential
RED006	The corner of Redbridge Causeway and Gover Road	REI11	viii			C	No	Yes (A35)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
RED004	Test Lane North	REI11	ix			B	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
BAS001	Northbrook Industrial Estate	REI11	x			E	(Unit 4)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes – site accessed via residential streets and in predominately residential areas
MIL005	Trinity Industrial Estate	REI11	xi				No	Yes (A33)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
PEA008	Marine Technology Centre	REI11	xii				No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
FRE005	Pitt Road Industrial Estate	REI11	xiii			E	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes – site accessed via residential streets and in predominately residential areas
FRE003	Corner site - Park Road and 53-75 Milbrook Road East	REI11	xiv			E	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes – site accessed via residential streets and in predominately residential areas

BEV014	Land rear of 174 Empress Road	REI11	xv			D	No	Yes (A335)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
BEV014	Sites adjacent to Empress Road Industrial Park	REI11	xvi			D	No	Yes (A335)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
MIL008	The Solent Business Centre	REI11	xvii		South of Costco	D	No	Adjacent to A3024	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
MIL009	The T.A.V.R site	REI11	xviii		South of Costco	D	No	Yes (A3024)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

4. Commentary on sites with regeneration potential

1) Drivers Wharf

- Within Itchen Riverside Quarter
- Residential potential – located near existing residential areas, including newly developed Meridian site
- Waterside frontage
- Redevelopment of this site could act as a Gateway Feature on a main road into the city – potential to develop high rise on both sides of the bridge
- Issue of noise and transport associated with metal recycling facility located to the east of the site, however it is likely that this could be incorporated within the design. This element would likely assign the site to mixed use regeneration, to include marine employment
- Conclusion: Option to consider for regeneration
- (Note – the metal recycling facility, Princes Wharf (part of the existing Local Plan allocation), is safeguarded as a waste wharf and is not currently a regeneration option. (However, if the metal recycling facility were relocated in the future this could form part of a wider regeneration site).

2) Central Trading Estate

- Within Itchen Riverside Quarter
- Reasonable access
- Located within the City Centre boundary and next to the football stadium
- Adjacent to wider sites, could form part of a wider waterside regeneration area including redevelopment and open space
- Site has potential but may be restricted due to the adjacent mineral wharves.
- Conclusion: Option to consider for regeneration

3) Centurion Industrial Park

- Outside of the Itchen Riverside Quarter
- Waterfront site
- The site is not surrounded by any other recent redevelopment schemes
- Generally works well as an industrial area
- We have considered regeneration for this site, but it is not the highest priority for regeneration
- Conclusion: Not an option to consider further

4) City Commerce Centre

- Located within City Centre boundary
- On A road - well connected
- Well contained site – site is tucked in underneath Central Bridge which means that it is not an overly visible industrial area
- Several other industrial areas within the city centre are planned to be released – we do not want to get to a position where we have de-safeguarded too many in one area
- Generally works and we don't want to flag too many within the City Centre boundary
- Conclusion: Not an option to consider further

5) Mount Pleasant Industrial Park

- Within Itchen Riverside Quarter
- Located next to Meridian site which is being redeveloped into housing area
- Good option for accessibility – surrounding residential areas and access via level crossing route
- Could be suitable as a redevelopment option due to surrounding redevelopment areas and waterfront potential – an existing cycle route could form part of this waterfront development.
- Conclusion: Option to consider for regeneration

6) Gasholder Site

- Located within City Centre boundary and Itchen Riverside Quarter
- Submitted as Call for Sites
- Decommissioned –the vacant land is suitable to be released as not currently being used for employment uses
- Potential for contamination
- Would be valuable land for residential use due to proximity to football stadium and other leisure uses within the City Centre
- Footbridge linking to stadium creates good pedestrian access to the City Centre
- Conclusion: Option to consider for regeneration

7) Floating Bridge Road and Crosshouse Road site

- Located in Itchen Riverside Quarter and City Centre boundary
- Waterfront site
- Site is tucked away and located on an A road so works well in industrial terms
- The site location is mixed: the surrounding industrial areas and proximity to high bridge make the site less desirable for residential; the proximity to Ocean Village and Chapel Riverside (and the ability to link the two) make it more desirable for residential regeneration
- Community marine uses would need to be safeguarded
- Conclusion: The site should only be considered as an option for regeneration if a redevelopment scheme comes forward with an appropriate design in relation to the Itchen Bridge and which creates a waterfront walkway and protects the community marine uses. Otherwise, the site should remain safeguarded.

8) Hazel Road

- Waterfront site
- Would have to be a comprehensive redevelopment as site is a large area with various elements and would be difficult to deliver
- Some areas within the site have marine access – other areas do not have marine access but include mudflats which are protected internationally placing tight restrictions on development potential
- Subject to flooding but not part of the RIFA scheme on opposite bank of river. Redevelopment would require the land to be raised – this creates problems with the surrounding mudflats and would be expensive
- The site is accessed down a long cul-de-sac road only
- Important businesses operate on this site which would need to remain in the area

- Conclusion: Not an option to consider further

9) Quayside Road

- Waterfront location
- Impacted by noise from recycling plant
- Important businesses functioning on site
- Marine employment/access which is important for Solent economy
- Northside may have development potential. Near a school so could be suitable for a mixed use/residential area
- The southern part of the site has the waterfront location and so its regeneration potential has been considered. However, given its importance for the marine economy it is not an option to consider further. The part of the site north of Quayside Road has neither a waterside location nor is occupied by marine industries, but does have poor access through residential streets. This part of the site is therefore an option to consider further.

10) Site bound to the east by Paget Road and to the west by Albert Road north

- Within Itchen Riverside Quarter and City Centre
- North of the site is industrial site
- West of the site is a new residential scheme
- South and east of the site – Chapel Riverside regeneration scheme/American Wharf listed building/some industrial
- Occupied by long established firm serving the marine industry
- Conclusion: The site could have regeneration potential as part of a regeneration of the wider area. However, as the site is occupied by an established marine industry, is not being promoted for redevelopment through the 'call for sites' and the wider area also currently includes a mix of industrial uses, this is not an option to consider further.

11) Mountbatten Industrial Estate

- Poor road access
- Regeneration potential due to proximity to the city centre and Central Station
- Suitable for residential which would generate higher density than current use
- Conclusion: option to consider for regeneration