



Fao: Kerry Trueman, Programme Officer at Fareham Borough Council

Re: **Fareham Local Plan – Re: Employment Land/Sites Consideration (March 2022) from Hampshire Chamber of Commerce for the Fareham Borough Council Local Plan Examination Hearing.**

Hampshire Chamber of Commerce is very concerned about the proposed losses of employment land in the Borough. The Chamber identified in its previous representations that there are several employment sites changing to mainly residential. On the other hand, there isn't any comparable additional provision elsewhere.

List of Sites proposed to change to Residential Use

FTC 3 Fareham Station East 120 dwellings: The site currently includes local businesses, unoccupied industrial premises and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. This site will provide opportunities for a mixed-use area including new residential, retail and café uses, and potential business development.

FTC 4 Fareham Station West: - 94 dwellings: The site currently includes local businesses and ancillary railway operational land. The Station Quarter will provide opportunities for a mixed-use area including new residential, retail and café uses, and potential business development.

FTC 5 Crofton Conservatories: 49 dwellings; loss of commercial use

FTC6 Magistrates Court 45 dwellings; loss of office use

HA 27: Rookery Avenue: Residential and Employment: 32 dwellings and 1800 sqm. employment floorspace (new allocation)

HA 31: Hammond Industrial Estate; Stubbingon: 68 bed care home

The Redevelopment of the Town Centre

The redevelopment proposals for the Town Centre place considerable, if not exclusive, emphasis on the provision of housing. **Policy BL1: The Town Centre**

Employment Provision

The draft Local Plan makes positive statements about the economy.

Paragraph 6.1 states:-

Building a strong, responsive and competitive economy is a key principle of the NPPF and fundamental in helping to deliver sustainable development. The Council is committed to delivering economic growth, in order to maintain and enhance the Borough's position as a prosperous economic area.

Paragraph 6.2 states:-

"However, since the economic recession in 2008 employment growth in Fareham has not kept pace with the Solent LEP and national averages – due to a sharper decline in public sector employment combined with a lower rate of growth among the private sector. The policies in this plan aim to redress some of the underlying reasons for the slow growth."

However, these are not carried forward into provision.

National Planning Policy Framework

The Plan recognises the thrust of the NPPF, paragraph 81. Paragraph 6.4 states that:

"it is therefore the aim of the Local Plan to support and facilitate sustainable economic growth and productivity across the Borough".

However, the emphasis is on "inward investment". The proposed provision is intended to attract "quality" uses and the main areas of new provision in Welborne and Daedalus exclude many uses with emphasis on large users or only marine and aviation companies.

The Displacement of Non Conforming and Sui Generis Uses

New proposal displaces large number of non conforming uses. There is no assessment of the impact upon displaced uses. What has happened to the occupiers of sites such as E31 – Hamond Business Park, Stubbington. Where have the Crofton Conservatories gone (FTC 5).

There is market information that existing sites such as Palmerston Business Park that it is fully occupied and that when units become available potential occupiers immediately make offers to rent them.

It is also understood from the market that land values for industrial/commercial can exceed residential values but opportunities to acquire sites is very limited. The Council should consider the identification of a new site for a range of business users. Over 800 dwellings have been permitted on appeal in the last few months on 'greenfield' sites. The new occupiers need places to work. No flexible live-work units have been proposed on these sites.

The policies of the Council appear to be focussed on removing non-conforming and low key sites and relying on more attractive modern developments. Where will these go – into rural sites. This is not very sustainable.

Flexible Work Space

Paragraph 6.4 c states that

Being flexible to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allowing for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

However, no sites are earmarked. Where are the policies seeking "live-work accommodation"? The proposed development of Hangars with accommodation has been rejected and the prospective developer has indicated that he will have to look elsewhere. This is, admittedly, a controversial proposal as there is an issue of residential amenity but there are no other proposals for live work accommodation.

The Chamber strongly supports the provision of a "Business Hub" and believes that specific provision should be made rather than part of a "wish list".

List of Existing Employment Areas

There is a long list of existing employment areas (paragraph 6.31). However, many of these are full. The buildings are typically limited to specific uses and the floor areas are often very large and this also limits the attractiveness to many users.

WELBORNE

There remains considerable reliance on Welborne, particularly for logistics and large sheds. But the development of Welborne keeps being delayed. The latest advice is that the junction works are anticipated to start towards the end of 2022 / start of 2023. However, these and the associated works could take two years to complete.

The timing of the provision of the major employment area remains uncertain. Could there be an interim highway access proposal that facilitates early development for logistics prior to the provision of the new road link?

The development company, Buckland, has indicated the developments proposed in the first five years but the elements quoted do no mention business uses.

Surely early provision should be made for a “Business Hub” in Welborne. This will help to make the development more sustainable.

Could the first phase include an area set aside for commercial uses close to Knowle.

Sites close to Fareham Station

Sites close to the station are earmarked to residential redevelopment. Should there be an amendment to these Policies that excludes the redevelopment until it is evident that the occupiers are not being forcibly removed? These and other sites should only be redeveloped for residential uses if there is no net loss of provision.



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