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Solent Local Growth Deal Consultation: Solent Gateways

Summary of Responses

19 November 2015



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Introduction

In October 2014, the Solent LEP signed the Solent Local Growth Deal with central Government.

As part of this deal, the Solent LEP secured £124.8m from the Government's Local Growth Fund to invest in projects focussed on:

- Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment
- Enhancing transport connectivity across the area
- Growing the skills base and supporting business growth.

A copy of the Solent Local Growth Deal is available at the following link: http://solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/29_Solent_Growth_Deal.pdf

The Solent LEP administered a consultation on the first tranche of projects included in the Growth Deal for 10 weeks (extended from 8 weeks to reflect the Christmas and New Year holiday period), from 22nd December 2014 until 2nd March 2015.

This included consultation on the following projects:

- Eastleigh College Estates Upgrade
- Isle of Wight College Composites Centre
- North Whiteley Transport Improvements
- Cross-Solent Connectivity

No responses were received during this consultation period.

Following submission of a new business case for the Solent Gateways project (previously titled "Cross-Solent Connectivity" project) the Solent LEP undertook a second consultation on this scheme.

This second consultation ran for eight weeks from 15th July 2015 to 9th September 2015. A copy of the published business case on which the consultation was undertaken is available at the following link:

[http://solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Solent_Gateways -
_BBP_Regeneration_Report_-_Final_\(v10_1\)_PUBLIC.pdf](http://solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Solent_Gateways_-_BBP_Regeneration_Report_-_Final_(v10_1)_PUBLIC.pdf)

A total of nine consultation responses were received during this period. Respondents are summarised as follows:

- 2 responses from Businesses
- 3 responses from Individuals
- 1 response from a Public Authority
- 3 responses from other stakeholder groups

The consultation asked the following three questions:

1. Do the projects respond to the following key priority areas outlined in the Solent Strategic Economic Plan:
 - Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment;
 - Enhancing transport connectivity across the area; and
 - Growing the skills base and supporting business growth.
2. Do you think the projects provide sufficient geographic / sector coverage?
3. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

All 9 consultation responses received focussed on the East Cowes side of the Solent Gateways Business Case. A summary of responses to each question is provided in the following sections of this document.

Question 1 Response Summary

"Do the projects respond to the following key priority areas outlined in the Solent Strategic Economic Plan:

- **Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment;**
- **Enhancing transport connectivity across the area; and**
- **Growing the skills base and supporting business growth."**

All nine respondents completed Question 1. A range of responses were received this question. For the purposes of this summary, these responses have been categorised as follows:

Positive comments in relation to the Business Case

- **Reference to positive connectivity** - including improved Island - Mainland Connectivity and East - West Cowes Connectivity via Floating Bridge
- **Employment Impact** - including positive impact on employment in visitor economy.

Issues in relation to the Business Case

- **Infrastructure** - including potential for increasing congestion without investment in wider road network and its ability to handle traffic flow, positioning of drop-trailer site in town centre, need for additional parking in the town centre, need for a multi-modal transport interchange, and a need for broader infrastructure to support proposed additional housing including water supply, sewerage, education and health systems
- **Deep Water** - potential loss of key employment site with deep water access as a result of the project

- **Focus on Tourism to the Detriment of Marine Industry** - due to loss of Marine site with potential to support high skilled jobs for project to benefit seasonal tourism employment
- **Detrimental effect on Skills** - including loss of skilled jobs for tourism jobs and loss of opportunity for East Cowes Studio School to develop links with Marine Businesses
- **Business Impact** - including limited or detrimental impact on existing business base
- **Housing** - including reference to housing provision in project not being good fit with local need and reference to East Cowes Council Strategy recognising that the housing quota for the town has been reached
- **Timing** - Including concern with bringing forward development simultaneously to potential alternative sites

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised in the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Point raised	Respondents Raised by
Infrastructure	Individual, Public Authority, Other Stakeholder Group
Deep Water	Individual, Business, Other Stakeholder Group
Reference to positive connectivity	Individual, Business, Public Authority, Other Stakeholder Group
Focus on Tourism to the Detriment of Marine Industry	Individual, Business, Other Stakeholder Group
Detrimental effect on Skills	Business, Public Authority, Other Stakeholder Group
Business Impact	Business, Public Authority
Housing	Individual, Business, Public Authority, Other Stakeholder Group
Timing	Business
Employment impact	Public Authority

Question 2 Response Summary

"Do you think the projects provide sufficient geographic / sector coverage?"

Eight of the nine respondents responded to Question 2. Of these, the following responses were received in direct answer to the question:

- **Focus on Tourism to the Detriment of Marine Industry** - due to loss of Marine site with potential to support high skilled jobs for project to benefit seasonal tourism employment
- **Geography** - including welcoming consideration of a Solent-wide geography

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised in the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Point raised	Respondents Raised by
Focus on Tourism to the Detriment of Marine Industry	Individual, Business
Geography	Individual, Other Stakeholder Group

Question 3 Response Summary

"Are there any additional comments you would like to make?"

Question 3 provided an open ended opportunity for respondents to submit additional comments which had not been raised elsewhere. All nine respondents provided comments in relation to question 3. Summaries of those points which are not captured under questions 1 and 2 are listed below:

- One respondent raised the issue that the Business Case may not meet the green book standard and that the project may not be eligible for any LEP funding
- One respondent raised concern that the Business Case does not meet a range of LEP Priorities
- One respondent raised the issue of the demolition of existing homes
- One respondent suggested the development on the Isle of Wight should be smaller scale than Southampton side to reflect location
- One respondent advised the Business Case does not address barriers in relation to frequency / cost of ferry crossing
- One respondent raised the issue that the Business Case ignores Maritime Heritage of site
- Some responses raised planning concerns regarding inadequate public engagement / consultation
- One respondent raised the issue that there was a lack of planning and financial support to safeguard employment
- Some responses maintained the importance of ensuring waterfront access for business and local use and highlighted that the LEP would need to consider the business case against the Waterfront Sites Study
- One respondent suggested that an opportunity to capitalise on Assisted Area Status lost
- One respondent suggested the Business Case would have a positive impact in Southampton

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised in the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Point raised	Respondents Raised by
Business Case may not meet the green book standard and that the project may not be eligible for any LEP funding	Other Stakeholder Group
Business Case does not meet a range of LEP Priorities	Other Stakeholder Group
Demolition of existing homes	Other Stakeholder Group
Development on the Isle of Wight should be smaller scale than Southampton side to reflect location	Individual
Business Case does not address barriers in relation to frequency / cost of ferry crossing	Individual
Business Case ignores Maritime Heritage of site	Other Stakeholder Group
Planning concerns regarding inadequate public engagement / consultation	Individual, Other Stakeholder Group, Business
Importance of ensuring waterfront access for business and local use	Business, Public Authority, Other Stakeholder Group, Individual
Opportunity to capitalise on Assisted Area Status lost	Business
Business Case would have a positive impact in Southampton	Other Stakeholder Group
Lack of planning and financial support	Business