



Gloria.ighodaro@push.gov.uk

PUSH Executive Director

Tel: [REDACTED]

Mr Stewart Dunn
Hampshire Chamber of Commerce
Wates House
Ground Floor
Wallington Hill
Fareham
Hampshire
PO16 7BJ

25 April 2016

Dear Stewart

Re: PUSH: South Hampshire Strategy 2012 and its update - Matters of concern raised by the Hampshire Chamber and for discussion with PUSH Chief Executive – February 2016

Many thanks for your letter of correspondence which I received through email on 3 March 2016. Since our meeting in February with yourself and Chris Corcoran, I attended the Solent Land, Property and Infrastructure Delivery Panel (LPIDP) on 30 March 2016, at which the Chamber's views as set out in your letter, was reiterated by Chris Corcoran. At the meeting, I noted that the Panel agreed for PUSH to address the following matters:

1. PUSH to explore establishing a 'Monitoring and Review Framework' to ensure outputs from Local Plans reflect and deliver on the ambitions set out in the PUSH Spatial Strategy. PUSH agreed to take this forward through the PUSH Planning Officers Group (POG) and begin this work after the PUSH Spatial Plan has been adopted.
2. PUSH Spatial Strategy to reflect the emerging LEP Logistics Study as a key evidence for addressing the employment needs of this priority sector.
3. The Chamber of Commerce to email PUSH with a list of sites the Chamber has identified as potential sites for employment use. The matter will be reviewed and discussed at the PUSH POG mindful however, that PUSH, as a voluntary partnership, has no statutory function to impose / enforce local authorities to take on proposed sites other than to share information and help to facilitate partnership working. Site allocation for development is very much a subsidiarity

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PUSH, Floor 2, Core 3, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2AY



matter for Local Planning Authorities but PUSH is happy to flag the concerns raised by the Chamber on lack of sites allocated for employment use with respective authorities for their consideration.

In relation to action one above, I have since consulted with the PUSH Chief Executive Lead & and met with the PUSH Planning Officers Group on 14 April. I can confirm that data regarding employment completions and land availability for all PUSH Local Planning Authorities are monitored by Hampshire County Council (HCC). To access this information, please make contact directly with HCC noting that the County provides this service (to all partners including local authorities) at a cost.

The emerging PUSH Spatial Strategy Review will set the strategic approach to guide Local Plans, which will translate the overall PUSH targets in to site specific allocations. The draft and final Strategy will be approved by the PUSH Joint Committee.

The final PUSH Spatial Strategy will be part of the evidence base to inform Local Plans, along with evidence prepared by the Councils and evidence / representations from others (e.g. the business community). All evidence and representations will be scrutinised by an independent Inspector at the Local Plan examination.

It is prudent to note that the PUSH Spatial Strategy is aligned to the LEP Strategy refresh and the underlying economic forecasts by Oxford Econometrics, based on a strong growth rate and an understanding of growth rates by different economic sectors. There is also scope prior to approval of the final Strategy to consider further evidence as it comes forward (e.g. the LEP's logistics study).

This will be translated into a major need for office, and for industrial/warehouse/logistics space. It is anticipated that the draft Strategy will set out district level targets and identify strategic employment sites.

Local Plans will need to decide whether existing permissions and allocations are of sufficient quality / deliverability to meet these needs, and whether further employment site allocations are needed.

Despite the loss of employment land, there is the potential for a net gain in employment development in both the cities and elsewhere.

With respect to office development, the draft Strategy is likely to take a balanced approach between city centres and other locations. The office market is generally weak at present – this is not just a city centre specific issue. Over the last 20 years there has been significant office development in both city centre and out of centre locations in South Hampshire. For example, Southampton city centre has seen over 220,000 sq m of new office development built between 1988 and 2013.

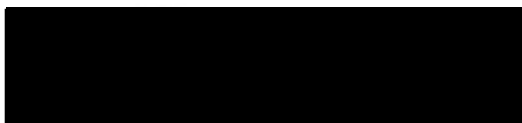


The draft Strategy looks 20 years ahead, well beyond current market conditions. The draft Strategy will take account of all planning policy considerations (economic, social, and environmental). Nevertheless in purely economic terms there is considered to be a case for a balanced approach to city centre and out of centre office growth. Out of centre locations benefit from quick access to the motorway, more space for car parking and a business park environment. Further city centre office development over the next 20 years is also attractive in economic / commercial terms as it helps to develop existing business / University hubs / economic synergies; can create 'critical mass' in a new city centre business district and benefits from a city centre environment (good quality design, public realm).

Different locations (city centre and out of centre) may be more suited to different types of business. A good portfolio of city centre and out of centre sites is likely to create the strongest foundation to promote economic investment in South Hampshire. Many of the benefits of the above locations already exist. I recall that business representatives on the LPIDP at its last meeting were certainly in favour of striking a balance on city centre vs out of town office accommodation.

PUSH looks forward to continuing to work with the Chamber of Commerce and other key partners in delivering the area's growth ambitions.

Yours sincerely



Gloria Ighodaro
PUSH Executive Director