

### First round consultation

This document outlines the recurring themes raised in the feedback we received and our responses to that feedback. Both the themes and our responses are linked to the questions asked in our feedback form and are presented in the same order too.

This analysis has been conducted using the written feedback we received.

#### 1. Do you have any views or suggestions on this proposed new transport infrastructure? For example, how we can develop it while remaining sensitive to the needs and priorities of the local community?

Key feedback raised	Our response
<b>Existing traffic congestion on the A326 and its effect on local air quality.</b>	<p>It is clear from the feedback received that the level of existing traffic on the A326 is a key issue and significant concern for local communities. The local highway authority, Hampshire County Council (HCC), is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the A326.</p> <p>We are working with HCC closely to ensure our proposals are consistent with the council's own wider A326 highway improvement plans.</p> <p>We are undertaking traffic and air quality assessments as part of our full Environmental Impact Assessment. We will report back on the preliminary results of these assessments at our next consultation.</p>
<b>The potential for reinstating the Hythe Ferry and opportunities for the introduction of new water taxis.</b>	<p>Public transport, such as the Hythe Ferry, is operated by third parties and not directly related to our proposals for Solent Gateway 2. We have long supported the operation of the Hythe Ferry through the provision of space to berth at the Port of Southampton and we are open to discussions with the operator around the opportunity to restart its operation.</p> <p>We also continue to be supportive of the concept of water taxis and, as the Statutory Harbour Authority, we would welcome the opportunity to speak with businesses or organisations interested in providing this service.</p>
<b>The use of existing rail links for the importing and exporting of automotive vehicles.</b>	<p>We are proposing to use the existing Solent Gateway rail infrastructure for Solent Gateway 2, which will help reduce HGV traffic on local roads.</p> <p>We are exploring what level of automotive exports may be moved by rail freight and we will include further details on this as part of our next consultation.</p>
<b>The use of existing railway level crossings and what this could mean for local traffic.</b>	<p>We are in early conversations with Network Rail and the Office of Rail and Road on managing train movements along the Fawley branch line and across existing level crossings.</p> <p>These discussions include identifying how we can use rail to reduce traffic movements on roads, without impacting pedestrians, cyclists and existing local traffic.</p>

Key feedback raised	Our response
<b>The noise generated by additional rail movements.</b>	We are conducting assessments to consider the noise levels that could be created by extra rail movements. We can use this data to propose appropriate ways in which we can manage or reduce these noise levels. We will provide information on these assessments at our next stage of consultation.
<b>The potential resumption of the Fawley branch line for passenger transport.</b>	The Fawley branch line, or Waterside Line, is operated by third parties. Our proposals for Solent Gateway 2 will not restrict the way in which this line could be used in future.

## 2. What would you like to see included as part of the design of the proposed major new country park?

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>The amenities and facilities that could be included in the country park.</b>	We received feedback on the amenities and facilities local communities would like to see included as part of the proposed major new country park, including car parking, children's play areas, cafés and waterfront access / seating. We are now evaluating how we can incorporate these suggestions into our design process and will continue engaging with local communities as these proposals develop.
<b>The future management, maintenance and ownership of a new country park.</b>	We received feedback about the future ownership and management of the proposed major new country park. This included suggestions that the country park could be adopted by a third-party organisation, such as the New Forest National Park Authority or the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. These suggestions will all be considered and explored with a range of local partners and stakeholders so that potential options can be shared as part of our next consultation.
<b>A guarantee that the country park will be protected from further port-related development.</b>	The country park will not be used for future port-related development. We recognise this is an important point for the local community and are looking at ways we can give this assurance more formal weighting. We will provide more information at our next consultation.

## 3. What do you feel is important we take into account as we consider enhancements to the environment in and around the proposed site? For example, protecting existing biodiversity, creating spaces to learn about local nature, or providing areas to view Southampton and the Solent.

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>Identifying and mitigating any potential impacts on the protected wetland and intertidal habitats of the River Test and the Solent.</b>	We recognise the importance of the waterside, and we want to reassure the local community we understand the sensitivity of its environmental designations. We have already undertaken a large number of surveys in the area to ensure we properly understand the baseline against which any impacts or mitigations will be measured. Our next round of consultation will include more details on the project's approach to environmental enhancement and compensation which will include both onsite and offsite opportunities.

Feedback raised	Our response
<p><b>The principle of building on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other designated landscapes.</b></p>	<p>Solent Gateway 2 has been chosen because the existing port estate has very limited potential for any further expansion or intensification and there are no other sites in our local area which can accommodate this expansion. The location chosen also enables us to build on the success of Solent Gateway, providing extra capacity where it is most needed.</p> <p>Solent Gateway 2 would be situated in part within the Dibden Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is made up almost entirely of land reclaimed between the 1930s and 1970s for port use. In addition, the proposed jetty would be partly situated within the Hythe to Calshot Marshes SSSI and the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site.</p> <p>The designation of an area as an SSSI, SPA or Ramsar site does not preclude development taking place, but it does mean that any activity is subject to higher levels of environmental protection and in turn legal and consenting tests.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that our proposals for Solent Gateway 2 deliver meaningful environmental improvements. This will be developed in close collaboration with statutory bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, as well as local authorities and other environmental organisations. We are committed to Solent Gateway 2 being a sensitive and responsible development.</p> <p>We will be ensuring that our project delivers biodiversity net gain (BNG). This means that it will increase the biodiversity of the local environment compared to the current position. Although our work and planning in this area is at an early stage and is still ongoing, we know that this could include both on and offsite opportunities for improving biodiversity which will help to improve any potential impacts of our proposed development. For example, we are exploring opportunities to create additional biodiverse intertidal and coastal grassland habitats.</p> <p>As part of our plans, we are currently assessing areas that may be suitable for biodiversity enhancement and where it might be possible to help improve and support a diverse range of wildlife, flora and fauna.</p> <p>Further detail about the ways in which, and opportunities we will have for, biodiversity enhancements will be available as part of our next round of consultation in 2026.</p>
<p><b>How landscaping measures could manage visual and noise impact.</b></p>	<p>We are considering how to create and enhance natural barriers between the development and existing residential areas, such as Marchwood and Hythe.</p> <p>These natural sound barriers and green buffers have a role to play in the management of visual impact, limiting light pollution and noise. Visual impacts and engineering assessments are under way, and we will share more detail on this at our next consultation.</p>
<p><b>Flood risk management, and the potential need for the inclusion of flood defences to ensure year-round access to the country park.</b></p>	<p>We are undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment. This will consider in detail how any flood risk issues that are identified can be managed effectively.</p> <p>We will share the preliminary results of this assessment as part of our next consultation and seek feedback from both local communities and relevant statutory consultees, such as the Environment Agency.</p>
<p><b>Environmental mitigation and compensation as a legitimate means of protecting and enhancing environmental habitats.</b></p>	<p>The concepts of mitigation and compensation are well-established in the environmental legislative framework within which we will deliver the Solent Gateway 2 project.</p> <p>This framework asks us first to identify how we can avoid negative environmental impacts and then propose appropriate measures to manage or reduce impacts that can't be avoided.</p> <p>Protecting the natural and marine environment is a priority for this project, and promoting environmental sustainability is one of our foundational Design Principles.</p> <p>This process allows for the overall enhancement of the local area post-development, including the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).</p>
<p><b>Green energy generation and its use on site.</b></p>	<p>We are exploring opportunities for on-site green energy generation at Solent Gateway 2 using rooftop solar panels, as well as future proofing our facilities through the provision of shore power for vessels and onsite electric vehicle charging.</p>

#### 4. Do you have any ideas on how we could best achieve these design principles?

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>Areas covered by the Design Principles and when more information will be available.</b>	We welcome feedback that the Design Principles being used to guide our approach to the design of Solent Gateway 2 are covering useful, helpful and relevant areas. These Design Principles will remain under review as the project progresses with further detail on how they are shaping the emerging design present at our next consultation.

#### 5. Do you have any views about our emerging proposals for the use of a new direct access route to Solent Gateway or other suggestions for improving connectivity?

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>The type of junction that will be used to connect the proposed link road to the A326.</b>	<p>Feedback asked how we might approach the development of the new junction and our new link road, including whether we would be using a roundabout or a signalised T-junction.</p> <p>We are working with Hampshire County Council, as the highway authority, to determine which option would be most suitable and progress its design. We will continue to engage with the council, and other local stakeholders as our design develops, and we will present further information at our next consultation.</p>
<b>The potential for an increase in traffic on local roads and in villages.</b>	<p>We know traffic management is important for local communities. The feedback we received regarding this has reinforced the need to ensure our proposals are being brought forward with traffic management in mind.</p> <p>As stated in our non-statutory consultation, we are exploring how a new link road to connect the proposed development to the A326 could also serve to accommodate the vehicles that currently need to drive through Marchwood to get to and from the existing Solent Gateway. If we are able to achieve this through the proposed project, this will result in a reduction in traffic that currently needs to drive through the village of Marchwood to access the site.</p> <p>We also heard feedback about limiting HGV traffic through local villages, including traffic coming from Marchwood Industrial Estate and how traffic might use our proposed junction to drive through Marchwood as a way of avoiding congestion on the A326.</p> <p>We are working on a Transport Assessment which will measure existing and potential future vehicle movements and the impact of these vehicle movements. This will be developed in consultation with Hampshire County Council, as the local highway authority.</p> <p>We will be providing more information on traffic impacts and our proposed mitigation measures as part of our next consultation.</p>

#### 6. How would you like to see these emerging proposals improve the connectivity of local communities? For example, through better foot or cycle path connections between Marchwood and Hythe.

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>Request for active travel routes connecting Marchwood and Hythe, with a focus on new cycle and walkways.</b>	<p>Our intention is for the major new country park to be a space for everybody to use and enjoy.</p> <p>We are exploring active travel routes, such as new cycle and walkways, to improve connectivity between Marchwood and Hythe. This includes seeking to understand how our proposals could enable improved cycle connections to local schools.</p> <p>Our ongoing design work will consider lighting, surface material and environmental factors, as well as the potential routes for these cycle and walkways.</p>

## 7. In what way would you like our proposals to help maximise opportunities for local communities and residents?

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>The new jobs and apprenticeships that would be created as part of our emerging proposals.</b>	<p>Our operations in the Solent contribute over £2.5 billion a year to the UK economy, and we already support around 15,000 jobs across the region. We are proud to be a partner of programmes such as the Maritime and Transport Careers Programme, an initiative that helps young people explore pathways into the maritime and transport sectors.</p> <p>Additionally, we have recently launched a 'Next Generation' programme of outreach to local schools and colleges which will include educational institutions in the Waterside area.</p> <p>When Solent Gateway 2 is fully operational we would anticipate a requirement for several hundred new jobs on an ongoing basis. We will be undertaking a socio-economic assessment to establish the direct employment opportunities and those within the wider supply chain.</p>
<b>How the proposals would respect and promote local heritage.</b>	<p>Being sympathetic to local heritage and history is an important part of the design approach to Solent Gateway 2.</p> <p>A recent example of our commitment to this area is the has been the lifting and transfer of a D-Day 'Whale bridge' from its recent position near the Red Funnel terminal in Southampton to Marchwood Military Port.</p> <p>We have had many ideas put forward to us on this subject during the first round of consultation - including suggestions around information boards and educational visits and are considering how they can be incorporated into our emerging masterplan for the site.</p>
<b>The potential for new / managed access to the waterfront, including footpaths and cycle paths.</b>	<p>We are exploring opportunities to create managed access to parts of the site that are currently restricted, including to the waterfront. Access will be carefully managed due to the presence of environmentally sensitive habitats.</p> <p>As part of our plans for Solent Gateway 2 we are progressing the development of a site masterplan, which considers access, biodiversity enhancement and active travel. This will be presented at our next round of consultation.</p>

## 8. Do you have any suggestions as to how we might best engage with the local community, including schools, colleges and universities during the development of our proposals?

Feedback raised	Our response
<b>Working alongside and supporting local communities, groups, education providers, and businesses.</b>	<p>We already support several community events and initiatives in the Solent area, including the Southampton Marathon festival, where we have recently celebrated a decade of support.</p> <p>Specifically on the Waterside our initiatives to support local communities and bodies include donating land for improved access to Totton station, and providing funding for the Marchwood Fete, the Fawley Armed Forces Day and the Marchwood girls and boys football teams.</p> <p>We will expand these partnerships with local communities, and we welcome suggestions of groups in the local area that may benefit from this support to the project email: <a href="mailto:contact@solentgateway2.co.uk">contact@solentgateway2.co.uk</a>.</p>

9. We have asked a number of questions on specific areas of our proposals relevant to this stage of consultation. Is there anything else you would like to share with us in relation to our proposals at this stage?

### Feedback raised

### Our response

**Whether the site will only be used for automotive handling purposes.**

The proposals set out for Solent Gateway 2 are for a world-leading, sustainable automotive terminal, suitable for roll on / roll off (RoRo) vessels.  
Because of the nature of the new infrastructure being proposed, there would be no ability for it to be utilised by other port trades, such as containers or cruises.

## Next steps

The publication of this document marks an important milestone in the pre-application process of the Solent Gateway 2 project. We'd like to thank everyone that submitted feedback as part of the initial non-statutory consultation as this is now helping us to refine our proposals.

This process is governed by the Planning Act (2008) and will involve at least two stages of public consultation before the submission of our application.

This is followed by an examination of the application led by an Examining Authority including both written submissions and a series of public hearings. The Examining Authority will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will determine whether the Order granting Development Consent (known as a Development Consent Order or DCO) should be made.

This timeline shows the key dates between the conclusion of our non-statutory consultation and when we anticipate a decision to be made on our application for development consent. These dates are indicative and subject to change.

2025

Non-statutory consultation.

2026

Statutory consultation.

2027

We aim to submit our application for a Development Consent Order to the Planning Inspectorate.

2028

A final decision on the Development Consent Order will be made by the Secretary of State.