

Appendix D: Economic Impacts of Mineral Extraction at Hamble Airfield

- 1 At the Cabinet Meeting on 26th September representations were made on the potential detrimental economic impact of mineral extraction at the Hamble Airfield site by two Deputations. Cabinet requested that in response to the submission of the deputees, that it would be appropriate to advise the Council meeting on the 13 October on an assessment of the economic impact on businesses in the Hamble area if the Hamble Airfield site were to be worked. The purpose of this annex to the main report is to address this matter.
- 2 The economic benefits of marine industries and the marine sector in general are acknowledged and identified as an important component of the Hampshire economy. The SEEDA waterfront and marine industries studies highlighted this as recently as 2008/9, and identified the key high end economic value of the sector in Hampshire. Hamble has an international reputation and a very important role to play in this, it is a key location for the marine sector. Whilst it has not been possible in the short time since the Cabinet meeting to research specific figures, the general principle of the importance and value of Hamble's marine industries and services to the local economy is fully accepted. The deputees submission suggested that the visual, amenity and traffic impact of mineral extraction at Hamble Airfield would be sufficiently detrimental to significantly impact on marine businesses at Hamble and was likely to cause them to re-locate away from the local area.
- 3 The marine sector in Hamble has thrived and, for the most part has happily co-existed alongside established major industrial complexes in the area, such as the BP Oil Terminal, and the Fawley complex (on the opposite side of Southampton water) and local industrial areas such as the Ensign Way Industrial estate. The site identified for mineral workings will be visible from parts of the Peninsula, but, due to levels and vistas, would not be prominent in the landscape from Hamble village waterfront area, or in this context, more importantly from Hamble Point Marina (1.1 KM away) Port Hamble Marina (0.3 Km away) or Mercury Yacht Harbour (0.4Km away). Even where the workings will be visible, the impact they have will be limited, and must be considered in the overall context of a busy riverside area, a major oil storage facility and established commercial and industrial areas in the vicinity.
- 4 The deputees also suggested that the workings would have a significantly detrimental impact on local amenity in terms of dust, noise, mud on the access roads and related matters. Future mineral operations would need to secure planning permission, which would, in accordance with the new Minerals and Waste Plan, impose significant conditions around protecting local amenity and environment, including the suppression of noise and dust, and the imposition of wheel washing at exit points from the site and so on. It is also likely that some workings would be 'wet' anyway, negating potential dust issues. With environmental health as well as planning legislation in place to protect amenity, the argument that the site would have a severe detrimental impact on the general area, and in particular on boat yards or moorings hundreds of meters away is not accepted.

- 5 The Hamble peninsula does have access constraints in terms of the limitations on Hamble Lane, the main access route off the peninsula. This route is busy throughout the day and has limited capacity, with congestion and queuing already experienced, not only at peak times; the northern end of the route, at the Windhover roundabout is the main congestion point, but queues are also experienced elsewhere along the route and at side roads. The additional traffic which would result from sand and gravel extraction at Hamble Airfield amounts to an increase in local traffic of half of one percent. The County Council's Strategic Traffic and Transport Assessment, which forms part of the evidence base, concluded that:-
*"...total site traffic will not have a significant impact on existing flows and that the level of increase is within the range of normal daily fluctuations to traffic flows. This is not unexpected as the site is located close to a main route where traffic levels are already high."*¹
- 6 HGV traffic is raised as a particular concern. Hamble Lane currently carries a significant number of HGV movements each day, as it serves the BP Oil Terminal as well as business and industrial estates. The Traffic study concluded that
"It can be seen that the additional HGV traffic associated with the site would represent a slight increase in hourly HGV flows of up to five additional movements in an hour. This would represent a negligible increase in the frequency of HGVs on Hamble Lane and would mean an additional HGV movement generated by the site every 12-15 minutes. Therefore, it is considered that the levels of increase in HGV movements as a result of the site traffic would not materially alter the current traffic profile on the highway network".¹
On the basis of the traffic analysis there is not likely to be any significant additional traffic impact to deter existing or future boating and marine interests in the area.
- 7 In conclusion, it is considered that there would be little likelihood of a significant detrimental impact on amenity, or traffic disruption as a result of any future permitted mineral extraction at Hamble Airfield. On this basis there would therefore be no significant detrimental economic impact. Indeed the site is likely to create modest additional employment during the anticipated 5 – 7 years of operation and restoration, as well as injecting modest additional spending into the local economy during its operational phases through procurement of local services and through the production of one and a quarter million tonnes of sand and gravel, prior to restoration. The restoration to grazing, nature conservation, open space and woodland that is proposed would also produce a significant amenity benefit to the area following mineral extraction operations.

¹ HCC Strategic Traffic and Transport Assessment 2011 (<http://consult.hants.gov.uk/file/1938571>)