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HAMPSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
FURTHER SUPPORT STATEMENT FOR STATION APPROACH, WINCHESTER
BY WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL – JULY 2016

Business members of Hampshire Chamber's Winchester Area Committee visited the exhibition and participated in the early design stage of Station Approach. The Chamber's consultation response supported the proposals in May 2016 and at the 8.6.16 Cabinet. The Chamber wishes to emphasise its concern about the need to ensure that sufficient employment floor space is allocated to address the loss of employment floor space in Winchester. This could be done by identifying a minimum level of employment floor space required on this and any mixed use development being planned, as proposed by the Chamber in its response to consultation on Winchester's Local Plan earlier this year.

The revision to the Permitted Development Order (PDO) in 2013 permitting the change of use of offices to residential has had a significant impact on the availability of office space in Winchester town and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Since 2013, nearly 20,000 sq m of B1a floorspace has been lost to other uses within Winchester Town.

With a slowdown in the country's economy now more likely than not since the Referendum result, the need is for the provision of new commercial premises to support the growth of existing local businesses and to draw new economic life into the city. Without the development of new modern office premises, the City runs the risk of existing businesses having to move to other locations with a consequential likelihood that the office accommodation they currently occupy will be converted to residential use. The impact of such an event on the Winchester economy would be significant.

Hampshire Chamber of Commerce welcomes the plans to develop Station Approach as a premier business location close to the M3, A34 and rail links to London. The opportunity to retain and attract professional firms to the Carfax site can be further capitalised with the development of the Cattlemarket site with further offices and multi-storey car parking.

The Chamber is pleased to note that further work on transport matters and parking provision will be undertaken by the Council, including a full transport assessment for the development. The Chamber strongly supports this application and also welcomes that the Council has applied for a £5m grant from the M3 LEP for works to the public realm in the vicinity of the Carfax junction.

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Hampshire Chamber of Commerce is the Independent Voice of Local Business across the county and is one of the largest business representational groups in the UK. It brings together the combined influence, expertise and business support of the county's three former major Chambers of Commerce to represent the voice of local business to the Enterprise M3 LEP, the Solent LEP and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Business Alliance of which it is the founding member. This substantial business network engages businesses of all sizes and in all sectors, whether throughout Hampshire through its two sector committees for Planning & Transport and Tax Finance & Legal, or in local groupings via its Area Committees for Southampton, Eastleigh, Portsmouth, Rushmoor & Hart, Basingstoke, Andover and Winchester, as well as its affiliates in Romsey, Stockbridge and Alresford. It is also the lead organisation for Creative South and Future South.