



Bob Young

Havant Borough Council

Network Rail
1 Puddle Dock
Blackfriars,
London
EC4V 3DS
craig.hatton@networkrail.co.uk

Via email only

27th August 2026

Dear Bob,

NETWORK RAIL CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO APP/26/00324– LAND TO THE EAST OF DENVILLES, HAVANT KNOWN AS SOUTHLEIGH

These representations are submitted to Havant Borough Council (HBC) by Network Rail Infrastructure Limited ('Network Rail') to APP/26/00324 ('the planning application'). Network Rail (NR) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the planning application.

NR is the statutory undertaker for maintaining and operating railway infrastructure of England, Scotland, and Wales. As statutory undertaker, Network Rail is under license from the DfT and Transport Scotland (TS) and regulated by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) to maintain and enhance the operational railway and its assets, ensuring the provision of a safe operational railway. As a matter of course, proponents of sites which are close to the railway boundary or sites which could affect the railway asset directly are required to engage with our Asset Protection and Optimisation team (ASPRO).

Having reviewed the planning application, NR have the following comments to make.

The planning application is located north of the railway and consists of three parcels. The application is for:

Outline planning application, with all matters reserved except for means of vehicular access to the public highway and associated highway improvements, for: the demolition of existing buildings; the erection of new residential dwellings (C3); a Local Centre (comprising local retail (E(a)), financial and professional services (E(c)(i), E(c)(ii), E(c)(iii)), restaurants, cafés, and drinking establishments (E(b) and Sui Generis), hot food takeaways (Sui Generis), medical services (E(e)), offices (E(g)(i)) and community facilities ((E(d)), E(f), F2(b), F2(c))); a Primary School (F1(a)); early years provision (E(f)); informal and formal public open space including community park; community food-growing space; Active Travel routes; drainage infrastructure; utilities infrastructure; and all other associated and necessary infrastructure. Accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

The planning application site proposes access onto Southleigh Road which, when heading south, reaches Warblington railway station and the road level crossing. The level crossing has manually controlled barriers but has a high-risk rating owing to the number of existing users. It is noted that the applicant's Transport assessment (TA) does consider the level crossing. However, we also note that Hampshire County Council (HCC) have submitted a



holding objection and requested further information. Until this information is provided to allow HCC to make detailed comments, NR is unable to fully consider the impact of the new development on the road level crossing.

It is also noted that whilst the application has been live, the Regulation 19 submission version of the Local Plan has been published for consultation. As part of this, the draft site allocation for Southleigh includes at paragraph K iii) the need for the site to provide 'a new walking, cycling and public transport bridge over the railway to connect the site directly with the Emsworth Road/A27 Warblington junction'. In addition, the evidence base for the Regulation 19 version of the Plan includes the Southleigh S-W bridge link feasibility study (June 2026) which considers options for a bridge over the railway.

As the new Local Plan is at Regulation 19 stage, some weight is attached to this and the planning application does not appear to include reference to the proviso of bridge. This is considered to have some beneficial safety effects for the railway given the potential to take users away from the Warblington level crossing.

NR would welcome further discussion over the bridge link and request that the applicant provide the necessary information to HCC to enable NR to comment on the application. At present we are unable to do so and therefore submit a holding objection pending the above.

Yours Sincerely

Craig Hatton

Senior Town Planner
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited