

From: [Solent Gateway 2](#)
To: [Hythe Administrator](#); [Solent Gateway 2](#)
Cc: [Sean Spencer](#); [Marcus Kendall](#); [ProjectSLR](#)
Subject: RE: Clarification Request - Solent Gateway 2 Scoping Opinion and A326 Assessment
Date: 19 February 2026 15:04:30

Dear Mr Spencer,

I am writing in response to your letter dated 12 February 2026 requesting clarification around the Inspectorate's advice given in its Scoping Opinion for the Solent Gateway 2 traffic assessment. The Inspectorate understands that the A326 Improvement Scheme is separate to the proposed Solent Gateway 2 and is being taken forward by Hampshire County Council. The Scoping Report states (paragraph 2.3.32) that it is assumed that the road improvements would be consented and constructed prior to the operation of the proposed development.

In the Scoping Opinion, the Inspectorate noted that a planning application for A326 Improvement Scheme is due for submission in 2026 and therefore advised that the Environmental Statement (ES) should include an assessment scenario for the proposed development in the absence of the A326 Scheme and describe any likely significant effects arising. We also highlight the comments from Hampshire County Council:

“[The A326 is] not considered a committed scheme for the purposes of the future year assessment (future baseline) as it is not yet the subject of planning approval. It is therefore necessary to test the impacts of the proposed development both with and without the A326 improvement scheme. The future baseline section of the Scoping Report (13.5.3) indicates the A326 improvement scheme will form the future baseline scenario, but this does not enable assessment of a potential scenario where the A326 improvement scheme planning application is not approved.”

To clarify:

1. The Inspectorate considers that an assessment of Solent Gateway 2 effects ('alone') should be provided for a scenario whereby the A326 scheme is absent.
2. In light of these effects, appropriate mitigation should be proposed.
3. Should the applicant decide to include some highways improvement works within the proposed development as embedded mitigation, the effects of such works (eg noise, dust, etc) would need to be assessed where relevant.
4. The cumulative effects (whether beneficial or adverse) of the proposed development with the A326 Improvement Scheme should be assessed in line with the Inspectorate's advice on cumulative effects assessment: [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Cumulative Effects Assessment - GOV.UK](#)

Please note, a record of the advice provided will be published on the 'Find a National Infrastructure Project' Solent Gateway 2 webpage, and we have included the applicant (cc'd) for transparency.

We hope this clarifies matters,

Best wishes

Stephanie

From: Hythe Administrator <admin@hytheanddibden.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 February 2026 14:03
To: Solent Gateway 2 <solentgateway2@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: Sean Spencer <sean.spencer@hytheanddibden.gov.uk>; Marcus Kendall <marcus.kendall@hytheanddibden.gov.uk>
Subject: Clarification Request - Solent Gateway 2 Scoping Opinion and A326 Assessment

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Good afternoon,

Please see attached letter on behalf of Sean Spencer, Clerk to Hythe & Dibden Parish Council.

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