

Statement of Common Ground

Havant Borough Council & the rest of the
Partnership for South Hampshire authorities

Parties

The Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH)¹ is comprised of:

- Hampshire County Council

The unitary authorities of:

- Portsmouth City Council
- Southampton City Council

And district or borough authorities of:

- Eastleigh Borough Council
- East Hampshire District Council*
- Fareham Borough Council
- Gosport Borough Council
- Havant Borough Council
- New Forest District Council
- New Forest National Park Authority*
- Test Valley Borough Council*
- Winchester City Council*

Those district or borough authorities marked by a star (*) are partly within PfSH.

¹ Membership correct as of 30th September 2020

Introduction

1. This Statement of Common Ground is a jointly agreed statement between Havant Borough Council and the rest of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) authorities². It sets out how the local authorities in South Hampshire have successfully worked together on strategic planning matters, how they continue to do so and the common areas of strategic agreement which have informed the production of the Havant Borough Local Plan (HBLP).
2. This statement articulates the relationship of the HBLP with the strategic planning activities undertaken by PfSH. The PfSH constituent authorities have agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) which sets out the strategic issues to be addressed in South Hampshire and the process for resolving them. Matters relating to the review of the 2016 Spatial Position Statement, sub-regional evidence base workstreams and the production of a new Joint Strategy are set out in the PfSH SoCG and not repeated in this statement. The PfSH Statement of Common Ground was approved at PfSH Joint Committee on the 30th September 2020³. A plan is provided at Appendix 1 which shows the location of, and the administrative area covered by PfSH which includes Havant borough.
3. This is the second Statement of Common Ground agreed between Havant Borough Council and PfSH. It has been updated to reflect the changed housing need and supply position of Havant Borough, following application of the latest affordability ratios to the standard method for calculating local housing need and an extension to the plan period to 31st March 2037 (and consequent renaming of the plan to the Havant Borough Local Plan (HBLP)). This has necessitated an update to the consideration of where unmet need can be accommodated.

Background

4. The Partnership recognises the benefits of working together and brings together local authorities in the South Hampshire region to support sustainable development, economic growth and coordinate strategic planning activities. Both signatories consider that PfSH represents an excellent way for local authorities in South Hampshire to work positively and proactively collaboratively on cross-boundary issues, including planning matters.
5. Whilst the membership has altered slightly over the years, the membership has remained broadly consistent. HBC has been a member of PfSH since its formation in 2003.
6. The following sections set out agreed matters between PfSH and HBC. There are further statements with other individual PfSH authorities and the PfSH Statement of Common Ground which sit alongside this Statement of Common Ground with PfSH.

² At the meeting of the PFSH Joint Committee on 4 June 2019, the decision was made to revise the name from 'Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PFSH)' to 'Partnership for South Hampshire' (PFSH) reflecting a change in membership to encompass the whole of the New Forest, including the National Park.

³ [Report to the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee – 30th September 2020](#)

PfSH Spatial Position Statement

7. The Joint Committee authorised the publication of the PfSH Spatial Position Statement (SPS) on 7th June 2016. The statement is not a statutory development plan, but provides a framework for, and means of coordinating decisions about long-term development and infrastructure across the sub-region. It forms a significant part of the statutory duty to cooperate that the Council and PfSH authorities have with one another and has informed the strategic matters in the HBLP accordingly.
8. The evidence base for the SPS identifies three separate housing market areas (HMAs) within the PfSH area. These are the Isle of Wight HMA, the Southampton HMA (which includes Southampton, New Forest, Test Valley, Eastleigh and western parts of Winchester and Fareham) and the Portsmouth HMA (which includes Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport, East Hampshire and eastern parts of Winchester and Fareham). Whilst the SPS was prepared in line with the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is agreed that the HMAs remain relevant for the purposes of the duty to cooperate.
9. Whilst Southampton and Portsmouth are identified to deliver a significant number of homes, the SPS recognises that the scale of housing need cannot be fully met in Portsmouth which is densely built up within a “peninsula” geography. This is particularly significant given that Havant borough borders the north-eastern extent of the City.
10. A key role of the SPS has therefore been to consider the capacity of different areas within PfSH to accommodate housing. This should inform Local Plans where there is the ability to meet unmet need from the relevant housing market area provided it is reasonable to do so. On this basis, the current SPS considers that only 104,350 homes could realistically be provided in the period up to 2034, recognising the environmental and infrastructure constraints across PfSH.
11. Significantly, the 2016 PfSH SPS set out a proportionately reduced housing figure for Havant recognising the extent of environmental constraints affecting the borough. As set out in the process note³, this was based on analysis of relevant constraints agreed through multiple meetings of planning officers, chief executives and elected representatives, and subsequently informed the Council’s first iteration of the Housing Constraints and Supply Analysis⁴.
12. There is, however, clearly a need to review and update the SPS in the light of national policy and the introduction of the Government’s standard method for calculating local housing need. This is considered in detail below.

⁴ Available at www.havant.gov.uk/localplan/evidence-base

Reviewing and updating the PfSH Spatial Position Statement

13. On 30th September 2020, the Joint Committee approved the PfSH Statement of Common Ground, which sets out the process and workstreams that will lead to the review of the SPS and the production of a new Joint Strategy. For further detailed information reference should be made to the PfSH SoCG. Havant Borough Council are committed to inputting into this review. This will include considering with PfSH and partner authorities how to meet housing needs (and other strategic spatial policies) where individual authorities cannot meet their own needs.
14. PfSH authorities are at various stages of reviewing their local plans. The New Forest National Park Authority and New Forest District Council have recently adopted Local Plans and Eastleigh Borough Council's Local Plan is at an advanced stage of examination. These Local Plans were all progressed under the 2019 NPPF transitional arrangements. Havant Borough Council will probably be the first authority in the Portsmouth HMA to submit a local plan for examination and will likely be the first PfSH authority to have submitted a plan outside of transitional arrangements of the revised NPPF.
15. PfSH is supportive of authorities proceeding with local plans before the SPS review has concluded and recognises the importance of local authorities of having up-to-date local plans.

Housing need in Havant Borough

16. The Council's Local Plan Housing Statement in 2016 identified a gap of 4,809 homes between the Borough's established housing need and suitable housing sites available to meet that need. Since then, the Council has persevered to assess the suitability of land and is in a position to demonstrate that it can accommodate its objectively assessed housing need in full.
17. As set out above, the 2020 Pre-Submission Draft HBLP provides for a total of 10,773 dwellings between 2016 and 2037. On this basis, the Plan provides for Havant's objectively assessed need of 10,433 dwellings, with a buffer of 340 homes. This represents a reduction from a buffer of 971 homes identified by the 2019 Pre-Submission Plan. As such, any buffer would be likely to be needed to provide flexibility for changing circumstances in Havant borough.
18. It should be noted that the housing need figures in Tables 2 and 3 of the PfSH SoCG are provided for 2020-2036, rather than 2016-2037 as in paragraph 17 and the HBLP. As a result, the former indicates that Havant borough has a buffer of 758 homes over the period 2020-2036.

Unmet housing need in Portsmouth HMA

19. Whilst the review of the PfSH work is ongoing, it is accepted that Portsmouth City is unable to meet its housing need in full based on the 2016 SPS. The issue of planning for unmet needs is part of the work to develop a new Joint Strategy and dealt with in the PfSH SoCG.
20. Notwithstanding the updated development needs within respective PfSH authorities (including Havant borough), it is agreed that the HBLP has maximised the potential for housing delivery within Havant Borough so far as sustainable development can still be achieved. However, both signatories recognise that it would be unlikely that any buffer could be considered as contributing towards Portsmouth City's unmet housing need. This reflects the reduced buffer in the 2020 version of the Pre-Submission HBLP following the need to extend the plan period.
21. A separate bilateral Statement of Common Ground with Portsmouth City Council sets out this position in full.

Employment need in Havant Borough

22. The PfSH SPS (E1) indicates a net change of employment floor space in Havant of 110,000 square metres of employment floor space development from 2011 to 2034. This is split between 55,000 sqm of office floor space and 55,000 sqm of mixed B-Class floor space. The SPS (E2) also highlights Dunsbury Hill Business Gateway (now generally referred to as Dunsbury Park) as a strategic development location. PfSH is currently updating the evidence base for employment needs, to inform the production of the new Joint Strategy, as set out in the PfSH SoCG.
23. The PfSH Spatial Position Statement's approach to employment provision was informed by the PfSH Economic and Employment Land Evidence Base Paper (March 2016). This provides a high-level assessment of where growth could be located based on trend based labour demand forecasts at a sub-regional level. However, this did not take into account local circumstances of employment land supply and land availability which exist in the Borough. On this basis, the Council has undertaken its own assessment of local employment need through the Employment Land Review (ELR)⁵. This was prepared in association with Lambert Smith Hampton.
24. This work highlighted that the Borough continues to be a secondary office location by virtue of the lack of credible demand for high quality office accommodation, and the resulting residual land values which do not currently support speculative development. Hence it is not felt that an office floor space of 55,000 sq. m is achievable over the plan period.
25. The 2020 Pre-Submission Draft (Policy DR1) does not distinguish between use classes providing flexibility over the plan period should market conditions improve. As

⁵ <http://www.havant.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Employment%20Land%20Review%20December%202017.pdf>

part of this, the majority of commercial allocations in the HBLP provide for Class B1 and/or Class B2/B8 floor space. On this basis, it is considered that there are adequate opportunities to secure high quality office development as part of new employment provision. This is particularly pertinent as market conditions continue to improve to ensure there is a sufficient choice and availability of employment sites to attract and encourage companies from outside of the Borough to invest.

26. Based on the local analysis in the ELR, an employment floor space requirement of 86,919 square metres is proposed in the Local Plan. Nonetheless, the 2020 Pre-Submission Draft HBLP provides for a total of 149,940 square metres, which provides for flexibility in order that the Plan is able to respond to rapid change. It would exceed the target for employment floorspace in the PfSH SPS.

Nutrient neutrality in Havant and South Hampshire

27. Following the Dutch case in late 2018, there is a greater emphasis on the burden of proof required to demonstrate that new development will not cause a likely significant effect on the integrity of Solent European Sites. Development needs to ensure that it would prevent any net increase in nutrients into the harbour, and therefore be 'nutrient neutral'. The Council has set up a cost effective and simple scheme at Warblington Farm which may be used by applicants. The scheme at Warblington has a finite capacity but provides Havant borough with a short-term solution until a sub-regional mitigation strategy is put in place.
28. The Council is also continuing to work with PfSH through the Water Quality Working Group to coordinate the provision a strategic PfSH-wide solution in the medium to long term. This has included the Council's support for the appointment of a Strategic Environmental Officer to take forward the creation of a pilot sub-region mitigation scheme.

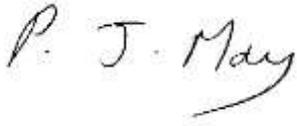
Governance of PfSH

29. The groundwork for the PFSH Spatial Position Statement in particular was undertaken by the PfSH Planning Officers Group, a working group of planning officers from each of the partner authorities together with Solent Transport, the Environment Agency and Natural England.
30. The work of the Planning Officers is overseen by the PfSH Chief Executives Group, which is comprised of all of the Chief Executives of partner authorities. Ultimately decisions by PfSH, such as the publication of the PfSH Spatial Position Statement, are made by the PfSH Joint Committee. This is a member group comprised of a councillor from all of the partner authorities, generally the Leader.

Review of this Statement

31. Both PfSH and Havant Borough Council are committed to continuing an effective working relationship. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed periodically as and when necessary.

Signatories

| This statement has been prepared and agreed by the following organisations | |
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| Havant Borough Council | Partnership for South Hampshire |
| Signature | Signature |
|  |  |
| Simon Jenkins | Paddy May |
| Director of Regeneration and Place | Partnership for South Hampshire Coordinator |
| Date: 26 th January 2020 | Date: 1 February 2021 |

Appendix 1: Map of administrative areas

