

Horsham District Local Plan Examination: Crawley Borough Council Hearing Statement

September 2026

Matter 5: The Spatial Strategy and site selection

i. Spatial distribution: whether the plan's proposed distribution of development is an appropriate spatial response to:

- housing need in the District and in adjacent districts

- 1.1 Crawley Borough Council (CBC) submitted formal representations (Response #1194005 [Crawley Borough Council Response - Horsham District Local Plan 2023 - 2040 \(Regulation 19\)](#)) to the submission draft Horsham District Local Plan (HDLP) Regulation 19 consultation on 1 March 2024. Further representations were made through Examination Hearing Statements submitted in April 2026 relating to the Inspector's Matters and Issues: Matter 1, Matter 3b and Matter 4.
- 1.2 The comments made at those stages of the HDLP's preparation remain standing. This Hearing Statement seeks only to provide factual updates on progress since then.
- 1.3 It is noted that hearing sessions in relation to the Strategic Sites will be for a later session. This Hearing Statement only provides updates in response to the Inspector's question under Matter 5 – whether the plan's proposed distribution of development is an appropriate response to housing need in the district and in adjacent districts.

Unmet Housing Needs arising from Crawley

- 1.4 The [Crawley Borough Local Plan 2023 to 2040](#) (the 'CBLP') was adopted in October 2024. Due to Crawley borough's constrained land supply, the CBLP identifies an unmet housing need arising from Crawley over the Plan period of approximately 7,505 dwellings. The average annual unmet need level is 442 dwellings (7,505 / 17-year plan period = 441.47).
- 1.5 It is noted that the Main Modifications proposed would increase the housing requirement set out in the HDLP to help address unmet need arising in Crawley Borough. The HDLP now confirms that provision is being made for 221 dwellings per annum (3,757 homes in total) to meet half of Crawley's unmet housing needs.
- 1.6 CBC supports this increased provision across the district, including through the allocation of an additional strategic site and further smaller sites to increase overall housing supply to meet the housing needs of the district and assist in meeting unmet needs elsewhere. However, no comment is given on the appropriateness of the specific sites identified by HDC, aside from the two sites which are located close to CBC's administrative boundaries (West of Ifield and Kilnwood Vale – both of which are covered by separate Written Statements for Matters 6a and 6h respectively).

HDLP Spatial Strategy

- 1.7 Horsham Local Plan Evidence Document H01 [Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (SHMA) confirms that the Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex fall within a Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area as a best-fit to local authority boundaries. It is agreed that is the principal grouping around which discussions on meeting housing need should take place and these discussions are likely in particular to need to address land supply constraints within Crawley Borough (paragraph 1.8). This is supported by the [Northern West Sussex Housing SOCG \(2024\)](#) (Document Reference DC02).

- 1.8 In particular, all of the main settlements within Horsham district are well connected to Crawley by transport links, including road and rail. Therefore, it is maintained that any sustainable location within the district would be appropriate for meeting Crawley's unmet housing needs within the same Housing Market Area.
- 1.9 Notwithstanding this, the CBLP recognises that well-planned urban extensions to Crawley which provide comprehensive, sustainable new neighbourhoods with local facilities and services, relate well to their rural landscape character, protect the setting of Crawley's neighbourhoods and mitigate their impacts on infrastructure through provision of a sufficient critical mass of funding to deliver infrastructure improvements may be appropriate locations to help meet Crawley's housing needs unable to be realised within Crawley's administrative boundaries. Should such development address all of these issues, locations closer to Crawley could offer particular opportunities in relation to meeting affordable housing needs through using blended housing mix and agreeing shared nomination rights between the councils in relation to those residents on the respective council's housing lists.