

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN HOMES ENGLAND, WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

20TH NOVEMBER 2024

1. INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This is a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between Homes England, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and Horsham District Council (HDC) which sets out the details of the current and future cooperation and the joint working relationships of the parties.
- 1.2 This statement specifically relates to the school provision outlined within the Horsham District Council Local Plan in relation to the Policy HA2 “Land West of Ifield” that Homes England are promoting. Homes England, WSCC and HDC have been working proactively together through pre-application discussions, supported by a Planning Performance Agreement, to ensure that the school provision within the West of Ifield development meet the requirements identified by the Local Education Authority - WSCC.

2. PARTIES:

- 2.1 The relevant parties for the purpose of this SoCG are Homes England, WSCC and HDC.

3. KEY MATTERS – SCHOOL PROVISION

- 3.1 Pre-application discussions have established the school provision requirement for the West of Ifield Development, informed by a blended housing mix devised to meet the needs of Horsham and Crawley at the time the planning application has been prepared. This also reflects the site’s position “At Crawley”.
- 3.2 This approach has subsequently been incorporated into Strategic Policy HA2 through the Suggested Modifications to the Horsham District Council Local Plan as summarised below:
- “Approximately 3,000 homes (C2 and C3 Use Class), a minimum 40% of which will be affordable homes, ~~together with~~ and to include provision for young families, older people, land for Community Land Trust (or similar community led scheme) housing ~~and, together with~~ the provision of a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site of 15 pitches. A blended mix of housing sizes will apply, to take into account both Horsham’s and Crawley’s strategic mixes for affordable and market housing, as expressed in respective local plans.”
- 3.3 Through the pre-application process, it has been agreed that based on the proposed quantum of development of 3,000 homes, the detailed housing mix for the proposal and the current methodologies for education places, the education requirements comprise a 2 form (expandable to 3 form) entry primary school, with an onsite early years facility and provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), accompanied by a separate, privately run early years facility in the neighbourhood centre, and a 6 form entry secondary school (expandable to 8 form) with provision for children with SEND.
- 3.4 The Suggested Modifications to the Local Plan policy reflect representations from WSCC and amend the school provision for the West of Ifield site allocation which is set out below for ease:
- e) Land and contributions to meet the education provision standards advised by the Local Education Authority, (or any future updates based on refinement of needs evidence) as follows:

- i. ~~two~~ one 2-form entry primary school and one 2-form entry expandable to 3-form entry primary school, both to incorporate support centres for special educational needs,”
- ii. an 8-form entry expandable to 10-form entry secondary school, to incorporate...”

3.5 The Suggested Modifications reflect a strategic policy position of educational needs evidenced by WSCC to align the policy with requirements in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which are based on the allocation quantum of housing.

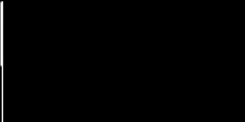

3.6 It is agreed between the respective parties that the Suggested Modifications do not reflect the provision that has been agreed in pre-application discussions between Homes England and WSCC, based on the blended housing mix specific to Land West of Ifield proposed planning application, which is yet to be submitted for determination. The suggested modifications will ensure that, if an alternative masterplan were prepared with a different housing mix, appropriate land and contributions could be secured to suitably mitigate the planned development in educational terms. It will also enable suitable mitigation to be secured if circumstances change as WSCC continue to monitor forecasts, the impact of migration and local plan developments.


3.7 Modifications to Policy HA2 section e) (modification HM065) and Paragraph 10.94 in the supporting text to policy HA2 (modification HM058), enable changes such as housing mix that may lead to a refinement of needs evidence, can be taken into account at the planning application stage.

3.8 In determining a future planning application for Land West of Ifield, the education needs will be determined by the proposed housing mix. This may result in alternative school provision being required to meet the needs of the development to the criteria currently set out in Policy HA2. Based on the pre-application discussions to date, it is anticipated by Homes England, that the actual needs for education provision will be reflective of that set out in paragraph 3.3 of this statement.

4. SIGNATORIES

4.1 The parties agree that this SoCG accurately reflects the matters discussed and the issues that are agreed upon.

Organisation	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Homes England	Kate McBride	Regional Development Director		28/11/2024
West Sussex County Council	Mike Elkington	Head of Planning Services		28/11/2024

Organisation	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Horsham District Council	Catherine Howe	Head of Strategic Planning		28/11/2024

4.2 The parties will strive to maintain their cooperation and joint working efforts and their obligations to provide transparency and fairness. The parties will actively address any issues outlined in this SoCG.