

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

1. List of Parties involved:

- Horsham District Council (HDC)
- Mole Valley District Council (MVDC)

2. Signatories:



17.08.21

Horsham District Council
Councillor Lynn Lambert, Cabinet Member for Planning



15.06.21

Mole Valley District Council
Councillor Margaret Cooksey, Cabinet Member for Planning

3. Strategic Geography

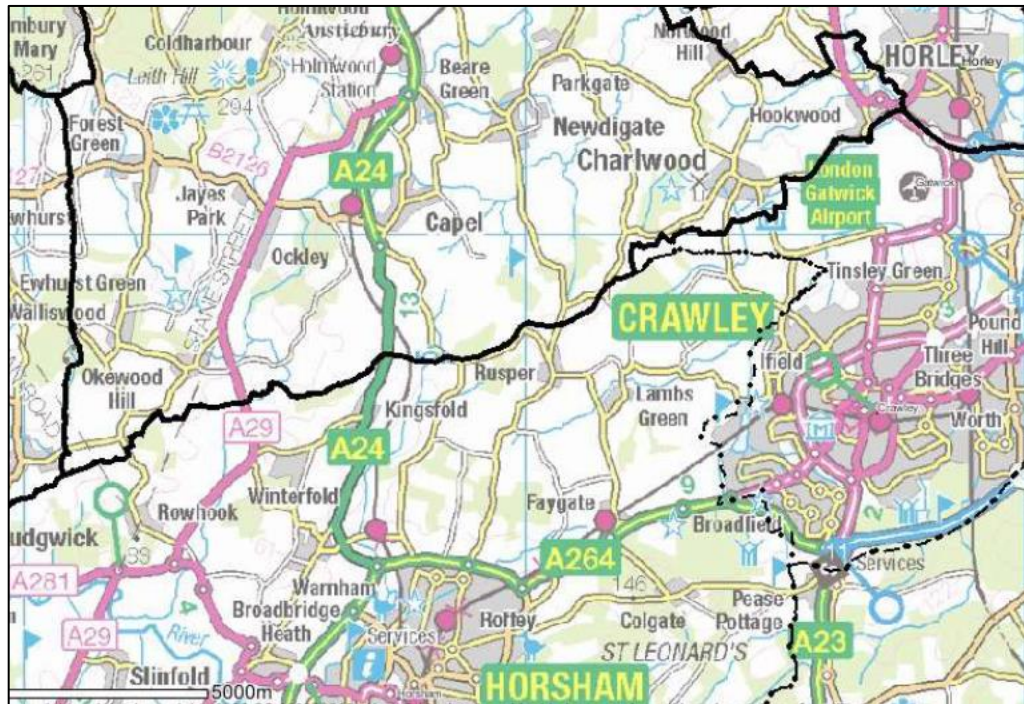
The Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) is between the local authorities of Horsham District Council (HDC) and Mole Valley District Council (MVDC).

HDC and MVDC share a common boundary, which also forms the boundary between Surrey and West Sussex County Councils. HDC, which is to the south and within West Sussex County Council, includes Horsham town as its largest settlement, which is over four times bigger than the next largest settlement in the district. Like Mole Valley, it is influenced by Gatwick Airport and has close linkages to Crawley Borough Council, but it also has close linkages to Brighton and the south coast. Mole Valley has two principal settlements, Leatherhead and Dorking, and has two-thirds the population of Horsham district. The principal physical connections lie through transport with the local authorities linked by the A24 (the spine road for both authorities) and the A29, and also the Mole Valley rail line.

Although the two local authorities are within separate Housing Market Areas, it is beneficial to prepare a SOCG to deal with the strategic and locally specific cross boundary issues.

Both authorities also lie in separate Functional Economic Market Areas. However, both authorities are located within the Gatwick Diamond sub-region and within the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Area.

The map below shows the authorities in relation to each other (i.e. indicated with the black administrative boundaries).



4. Strategic Matters

Both parties have identified the following strategic matters as of importance:

Housing Need

Background

The whole of Horsham District falls within an area known as the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. This area includes the whole of Crawley Borough, and Mid Sussex District. A modest southern portion of the District also falls within the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Housing Market Area. HDC will, through its emerging Local Plan, seek to explore the extent to which it can accommodate unmet needs in so far as this is consistent with achieving sustainable development. This will consider emerging requirements across the wider sub region i.e. arising from the Northern West Sussex HMA and coastal West Sussex.

MVDC is in a housing market which includes Elmbridge BC, Epsom & Ewell BC and RB Kingston. MVDC has strived to meet its housing need figure in its Local Plan by (i) allocating town centre sites for housing-led redevelopment; (ii) adopting a policy of gentle densification on brownfield sites; (iii) allocating outmoded office complexes for housing-led regeneration; (iv) de-designating Green Belt for housing; (v) allocating Green Belt sites in and around Hookwood

for housing; and (vi) amending village boundaries for housing development. MVDC has a local unmet need of c1,700 dwellings over its plan period 2020-2037.

The parties agree:

1. Each authority has assessed the ability of its area to accommodate housing development. They each consider that they are doing the maximum reasonable to meet the housing needs.
2. HDC considers it should firstly meet its own housing needs, and then the housing needs of its North West Sussex Housing Market Area (in particular Crawley Borough Council's unmet need and the Coastal Sussex HMA, of which the south of Horsham District is a part. Due to Horsham District and Mole Valley being in different HMAs, it is unclear at this stage as to how housing development within Horsham District would provide homes that meet the needs of Mole Valley residents. Taking into account Horsham's own high standard housing method calculation of need, and those of the unmet needs of the authorities with whom Horsham has a direct relationship in housing market terms, it is considered that it is unlikely for Horsham District to be able to additionally accommodate unmet needs from Mole Valley.
3. Due to the fact that 76% of Mole Valley district is designated as Green Belt and 45% is designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Area of Great Landscape Value and both its principal towns are Conservation Areas, MVDC is unable to meet its own local housing need in full and so would not be able to meet any unmet housing need arising from Horsham district.
4. They will seek to respectively meet their own need for additional Gypsy and Traveller provision.

Gatwick Airport

The parties agree:

5. Land should continue to be safeguarded for a potential future southern runway at Gatwick Airport for the purposes of the current round of plan-making.
6. Any necessary airport-related parking should ideally be located on-airport as the most sustainable location and should be justified by a demonstrable need therefore off-airport parking facilities will be discouraged.
7. Each authority will work collaboratively with Gatwick Airport, the other Gatwick local authorities and the LEP to:
 - understand and respond to the impacts of the current economic crisis; and
 - understand the implications of the proposed Northern Runway Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) on the environment, community and economy, and to respond to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.
8. They will work with the Gatwick Officers Group and the Gatwick Joint Local Authorities, as agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) supporting the Gatwick S106 Legal Agreement, to share expertise on airport related matters including noise, air quality and parking.

Transport

The parties agree:

9. Where development with strategic transport implications is proposed close to the authorities' common administrative boundary, the authorities will work together to ensure

that all strategic cross-boundary impacts are fully explored and addressed as far as possible.

10. They will jointly explore opportunities for transport improvements through discussions with Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council

Land at Ifield Developments

Background

The development at Ifield for c3,250 homes, as set out in the emerging HDC Local Plan, would not affect Mole Valley district as the development would provide its own educational facilities and there are no identified critical cross-boundary health linkages between MVDC and HDC. Furthermore, initial transport modelling does not identify any significant adverse junction capacity issues on the A24 north of the Great Daux roundabout.

The parties agree:

11. Any additional strategic scale development to the west of Crawley is likely to require the construction of a full link road from the A264 to A23.

Non-Significant Matters in the Context of this Statement of Common Ground

The parties agree:

12. The following matters are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as strategic matters but are not significant in the context of this Statement of Common Ground:
 - Affordable housing, employment, retail and leisure;
 - Infrastructure for telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, coastal change and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

5. Governance Arrangements

The authorities are committed to working positively together, sharing information and best practice and continuing to procure evidence jointly, where appropriate, throughout the plan preparation phase and beyond. This co-operation and collaboration takes place at senior member, chief executive and senior officer as well as at technical officer level.

Joint working will include the following existing governance arrangements:

- Gatwick Diamond Authorities Partnership;
- Gatwick Greenspace Partnership; and
- Gatwick Joint Local Authorities Group and Gatwick Officers Group.

In addition, both authorities will continue to exchange information on transport modelling for new developments, where appropriate.

This Statement of Common Ground is signed at planning portfolio holder member level and will be reviewed by officers, and if necessary updated, at each key stage of planmaking. It will be updated to reflect progress made through effective cooperation.

In terms of governance, the authorities agree:

13. To continue to work with the other Gatwick Diamond authorities on housing, employment and other strategic issues affecting the Gatwick Diamond as a whole;
14. To work collaboratively on plan preparation and evidence, whilst acknowledging others' timetables and timescales.
15. To respect each other's right to develop their own plans that fit the specific circumstances of the local authority's communities;
16. To meet at member and officer level as required to review the situation and respond to new issues and changing circumstances; and
17. To update this SoCG, if appropriate, as progress continues through the preparation of the local plans and development plan documents for each of the authorities.