Statement of Common Ground

as agreed between

Hart District Council

and

East Hampshire District Council

October 2026

In respect of the emerging New Hart Local Plan and the East Hampshire Local Plan

1 Purpose & Background

Hart District Council (HDC) is currently developing a new Local Plan for the District (New Hart Local Plan, the 'Plan'), which will replace the Hart Local Plan Strategy and Sites 2032 adopted in April 2020 and saved policies from the Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006.

In May 2026, East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) moved preparation of its new Local Plan from the 'legacy' planning system to the government's 'new' 30 month planning system. While the initial intention was to prepare for future plan making as part of the then anticipated unitary authority, national government has since announced, in September 2026, the withdrawal of plans for Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire. EHDC will therefore now prepare an East Hampshire Local Plan, with a new timetable being produced at the time of writing this statement.

HDC and EHDC are relevant stakeholders for the purposes of the respective Local Plan of the other, as a neighbouring local authority.

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) sets out the position of the Councils to date and has regard to strategic matters in relation to their respective Local Plans, including areas of agreement, areas for ongoing discussion, and how strategic matters between HDC and EHDC are being addressed throughout the plan-making process.

The SoCG has been prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) policies PM10 on Maintaining cooperation between plan-making authorities and PM11 on Demonstrating cooperation between plan-making authorities. It also follows SoCG guidance prepared by the Planning Advisory Services (PAS).

2 List of Parties involved

- Hart District Council (HDC)
- East Hampshire District Council (EHDC)

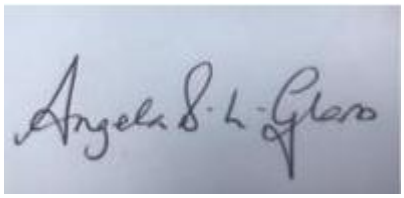
3 Signatories

We confirm that the information in this statement and documents referred to therein reflect the joint working undertaken and agreements made to date between HDC and EHDC, in relation to the New Hart Local Plan, and emerging East Hampshire District Local Plan.

East Hampshire District Council

Cllr Angela Glass

Portfolio Holder, Regulation & Enforcement



6 October 2026

Hart District Council

Daniel Hawes

Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager

7 October 2026

4 Strategic Geography

The New Hart Local Plan will apply to the geographical area of Hart District and provide a long-term planning framework from 2026.

Appendix A provides a map of the plan areas which together constitute the strategic geography covered by this SoCG.

The East Hampshire Local Plan will cover the area of East Hampshire outside of the South Downs National Park (SDNP). The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) prepares its own Local Plan.

5 Strategic Matters

5.1 Areas of Agreement

Strategic Matter	Hart District Council (HDC) Position	East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) Position	Record of Agreement (October 2026)
Local Housing Need (LHN)	HDC's current standard method LHN is 804 homes per annum. HDC is in the process of producing a Land Availability Assessment (LAA) which provides evidence on development land supply and site options for plan-making. HDC is currently preparing a Draft Spatial Strategy for its consultation on proposed plan content and evidence (currently planned for October 2026).	EHDC's current LHN is 1,118 homes per annum. Though EHDC has received legal advice on disaggregation of housing needs between the district and the SDNP which covers much of the District. The Council's 2026 Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) describes the standard method and housing stock within and outside the SDNP as the most appropriate approach and therefore, 823 dwellings per annum is the appropriate approach for the plan area. EHDC updates its housing land supply position annually through its LAA.	HDC and EHDC agree that • meeting the housing need is a relevant strategic matter • both authorities will work positively to address their own respective LHN • both authorities will update each other on evolving housing need positions, including an understanding of the extent of any potential unmet need, if this emerges.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Need	HDC's emerging Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) indicates varying need dependent upon the timescale being considered. For the	EHDC's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2024 identifies a need for 62 Traveller pitches and 53	Both authorities recognise meeting the need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation as a relevant strategic matter.

Strategic Matter	Hart District Council (HDC) Position	East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) Position	Record of Agreement (October 2026)
	period 2026/27 to 2043/44 there was an identified need for 57 pitches, for the period 2026/27 to 2038/39 the identified need was 43 pitches. The figures are substantially higher than the outcome of previous assessments. The GTAA has identified that the Local Plan should look to accommodate transit pitches of varying sizes, though it does not specify the number of pitches required. The GTAA does not identify a need for travelling show person pitches. The GTAA is subject to a review to take account of the latest NPPF. This is due by the end of the year. HDC has not yet established a supply position in relation to land suitable for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation.	Travelling Showpeople plots between 2024 and 2044. The GTAA does not identify a need for transit accommodation but recommends monitoring of this to determine if there are any increases in the number of encampments.	Both authorities will work positively to address their respective own accommodation needs in their area but recognise significant delivery challenges. Both authorities will update each other on evolving need and supply positions. Both authorities will liaise about monitoring of transit accommodation needs.

5.2 Areas of Ongoing Discussion

Strategic Matter	Hart District Council Position	East Hampshire District Council Position	Implications of positions	Activities towards Agreement
Water Resources	HDC is working closely with EHDC, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) and other impacted Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), the Environment Agency (EA), Natural England (NE) and South East Water (SEW) to fully understand implications and work towards a manageable position in planning terms to the Water Resource issues which potentially constrain future development in Water Resource Zone 4 West (WRZ4-W). HDC has commissioned a Water Cycle Study which will address the Water Resource issues in the District.	EHDC is part of the working group described in the preceding column. EHDC is exploring commissioning a Water Cycle Study to support the Local Plan.	SEW's sub-zone WRZ4-W has a catchment that serves the northern quarter of EHDC; the west half of HDC and the eastern half of BDBC. SEW has identified a water supply-demand deficit in the sub-zone WRZ4-W for at least the next five years. Until works to increase the sustainable supply of water to increase capacity to support growth are delivered, all development requiring new connections to mains water supply in SEW WRZ4-W will increase the reliance on abstraction from Greywell and Itchel. Continued abstraction at Itchel and Greywell is contributing to those water	The two authorities will continue to work closely with BDBC and other impacted LPA's, the EA, NE and SEW through the SEW WRZ4-W water resource group to fully understand implications and work towards a position to help manage the constraint in planning terms. The two authorities will contribute to work arising from actions agreed through the SEW WRZ4-W water resource group, including the review of position statements by the EA and SEW and the development of the shared understanding of the extent to which future growth may be affected by water resource constraints.

Strategic Matter	Hart District Council Position	East Hampshire District Council Position	Implications of positions	Activities towards Agreement
			bodies failing to achieve the statutory objective of Good status and risks their deterioration. Greywell abstraction is preventing the Greywell Fen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from achieving Favourable Status and Itchel abstraction is adversely impacting an adjacent wet woodland Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). HDC and EHDC need to consider environmental impacts this will pose for future growth in local plans in the WRZ4-W area.	The two authorities will work closely on water resources through their respective Water Cycle Study evidence and ensure that their respective consultants are enabled to work together where required.
Employment & Economy	HDC is currently in the process of undertaking a HEDNA.	EHDC's published HEDNA 2026 identifies needs for employment floorspace.	Both HDC and EHDC will progress with employment allocations through their emerging Local Plans, informed by the identified need in their respective HEDNAs.	The HDC HEDNA will take account of EHDC's published evidence. As both authorities progress with their emerging Local Plans, so too should any dialogue relating to any

Strategic Matter	Hart District Council Position	East Hampshire District Council Position	Implications of positions	Activities towards Agreement
				significant employment requirements and impacts that could relate to a cross-boundary matter.
Transport	HDC's Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) is currently at scoping stage. No specific transport infrastructure issues have yet been identified, but higher standard method need may create impacts requiring assessment, including of cumulative impact. HDC will take account of any identified cumulative impacts through the STA. HDC expects to undertake stage 2 STA (modelling) once potential site options are emerging.	To date EHDC's transport evidence consists of a Transport Background Paper, Accessibility Study and a Decide and Provide methodology for a strategic Transport Assessment to inform the evidence of the emerging Local Plan. EHDC will undertake further transport evidence gathering, in the form of a strategic Transport Assessment, to support the emerging Local Plan that will be undertaken in the new plan making system.	HDC and EHDC will need to identify any significant cross boundary transport impacts that are projected from their resulting transport evidence as a result of cumulative or individual proposed developments planned within the emerging Local Plans.	The two authorities will communicate any identified cross boundary transport impacts from the emerging Local Plan development proposals. Partnership working should be undertaken in developing any required cross boundary transport mitigation schemes related to either authorities emerging Local Plans.

6 Governance Arrangements & Review

Decisions on this SoCG will be managed and agreed through cooperation meetings, circulation of draft statements, signature of final statements, and circulation of proposed revisions where necessary, between designated officers of HDC and EHDC.

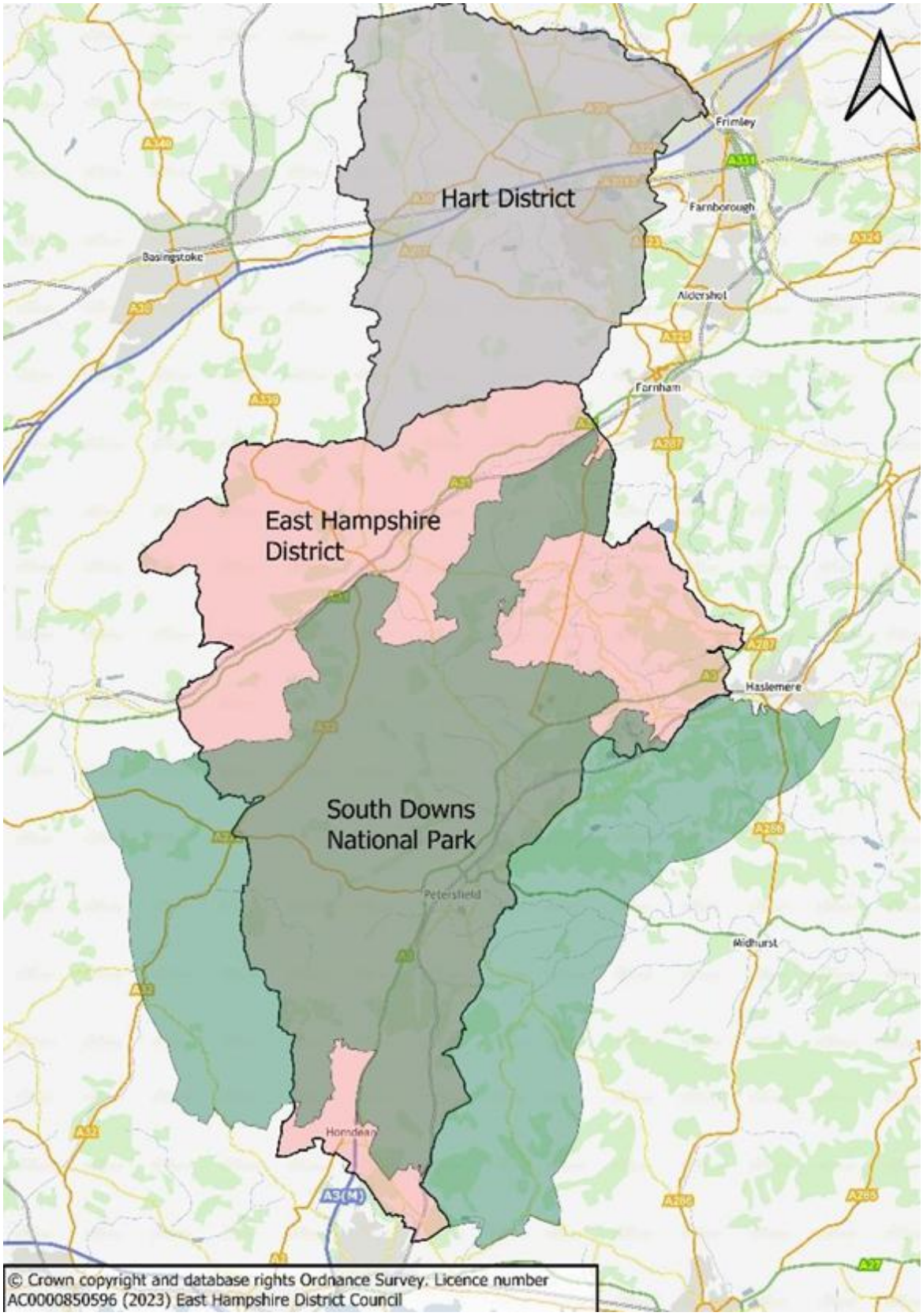
HDC takes responsibility for the drafting, updating, and circulation of this SoCG in cooperation with EHDC. Future reviews of the SoCG will be initiated and led by either authority as required to meet the needs of their respective Local Plans. The two authorities will publish the SoCG on their website at appropriate points.

A SoCG is a live document. This SoCG will be drafted and reviewed by officers at appropriate points. These may include:

- Whenever agreement is reached on any outstanding matters, or
- Relevant new evidence becomes available, or
- At key milestones in progress towards addressing strategic matters, or
- At relevant key stages of the plan making process.

6. Record of / Timetable for Cooperation

Date	Stage	Form of Correspondence / Meeting	Matters for discussion
24.06.2026	Scoping	Online Meeting	Key cross boundary issues including in relation to housing, Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation, employment, transport, and water resources. Ongoing DtC engagement process and SoCG preparation.
16.09.2026	Scoping	Circulating, editing and signing of first SoCG.	Same as above
Week commencing . 2026	Preparation for Gateway 1 in September 2026	Online Meeting	Same as above

Appendix A - Strategic Geography

Geographical area to which this SoCG relates: