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By email only:
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Enquiries to: David Hayward
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My reference:
Your reference:
Date: 10 August 2026

Dear Lee and Pete

UPDATE FROM HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL ON UNMET DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

As you will be aware, the Publication (Regulation 19) Building a Better Future Plan was published on Monday 20 July and is currently subject to public consultation until 5pm on Wednesday 9 September 2026. Thank you for your collaboration on the multi-lateral Statement of Common Ground between the South East Hampshire authorities which includes Fareham Borough Council and supports this consultation. The purpose of this letter is to formally update you on the latest position on our housing and employment development needs.

On the 25 March 2026, a number of new provisions from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act came into force. These regulations provide for the transition to the 'new style' plan making system, whilst importantly saving the relevant Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 enabling development plans to progress to adoption under transitional arrangements. Havant Borough Council will submit its Local Plan under the legacy plan making system, to be examined under the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Significantly however, the regulations do not 'save' the Duty to Co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development, set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Although the legislative requirements remove the duty to cooperate have removed the Duty to Cooperate as a legal compliance requirement, paragraph 24 of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that local planning authorities continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic matters.

Throughout the plan's production, the Council has continued to take a robust and extensive approach to collaboration and engagement with its neighbouring authorities particularly in respect of unmet development needs. This is set out in detail in the Statement of Cooperation[1] which forms part of the evidence base to the Plan. This has also taken the form of collective discussions with South East Hampshire authorities (also including

[1] https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies

Gosport Borough Council and Portsmouth City Council) as all three authorities have unmet development needs in the same housing market area. More recently, this has also included engagement with authorities in the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority area.

The purpose of this letter is to formally update you on the Borough's housing and employment need and supply position at Publication (Regulation 19) stage.

Housing need and supply

The Council has left no stone unturned to meet as much housing need as sustainably possible through the Plan, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) includes a comprehensive and robust assessment of land to ensure the Council has fully examined all opportunities for development. This was updated in June 2026 and has been published as part of the evidence base for the plan[2]. The monitoring data in the Plan has a base date of 1 April 2025, but it has been necessary to re-base the start of the plan period to 2022 ensure that the Plan is up to date on adoption.

The Publication Building a Better Future Plan makes provision for at least 7,087 new dwellings for the plan period (2022 to 2043), averaging 337 dwellings per annum. The housing need for the Borough using the standard method is currently 879 dwellings per annum, equivalent to 15,822 dwellings over the remaining plan period (2025-2043).

As of 1 April 2025, there remains a supply of 5,908[3] new dwellings remaining to be delivered by the Plan. This would result in an unmet housing need figure of 9,914 dwellings. However, with an unmet need allowance of 345 dwellings from the adopted Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040 this reduces Havant Borough's unmet need to 9,569 dwellings.

Given the scale of unmet housing need that exists, the Borough has also engaged with other authorities in the Hampshire and the Solent devolution area. The Statement of Cooperation documents this and shows that it has not been practicable to secure any further commitments towards unmet housing need at this time. The Statement of Cooperation also highlights the various statements of common ground agreed with other local authorities, and how we have had ongoing discussions regarding the unmet need from the Borough.

Nonetheless, given the scale of the issue, we continue to seek collaborative discussions on a bilateral and multilateral level with other authorities to try and address this key issue. In the medium term of course, this will be further addressed by the Spatial Development Strategy undertaken by the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority. However in the meantime, we would continue to ask that should there be new opportunities to work together to further boost the supply of housing, that this is discussed as a matter of priority.

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[2] https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies

[3] Excluding 1,179 completions which took place during 2022/23 to 2024/25

Employment need and supply

Thank you again for Fareham Borough Council's formal offer of 19,973 square metres of employment floorspace to address unmet need in Havant Borough which has been formalised as part of a Statement of Common Ground between the South East Hampshire Local Authorities.

The Council has published an Employment Land Review Update[4]which considers two scenarios based on the number of jobs that would be generated under the low end (based on the housing requirement set out in the Plan) and the high end (which assumes the standard method is met in full). Therefore, the Publication Plan sets out the Borough's assessed employment need of 146,213 sq m and demonstrates the need for net new floorspace can be met by a small margin.

However, under the high end scenario, the Borough would have an unmet need of 31,177 square metres but this scenario is linked to Havant Borough delivering the standard method for housing need in full. Whilst this scenario is unlikely, paragraph 36 a) of the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that in order to be 'positively prepared' the strategy should seek to meet the areas objectively assessed needs as a minimum. As such, it is considered pragmatic to provide for some contingency over the plan period. The formal offer of employment floorspace of 19,973 square metres would represent around 14% of the Borough's objectively assessed need in the low end scenario. On this basis, we would welcome confirmation that Fareham Borough Council is willing to continue to commit its surplus of 31,261 sq. m of industrial floorspace to meet unmet need in Havant Borough? The Council will be engaging with Portsmouth City Council separately in respect of office floorspace.

Joint working

Our authorities have a strong track record of working together and we look forward to continuing constructive and active discussions to effectively address unmet development needs arising from Havant Borough.

I look forward to receiving any response to our Publication Building a Better Future Plan consultation in due course. In the meantime, please let us know if it would be helpful to arrange a meeting to discuss our unmet housing need, employment position or any element of the Publication Plan in more detail?

Yours sincerely

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Strategic Planning Manager

[4] https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies