Town Hall, High Street,
Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1EB.
DX136567 Gosport 2
Website: **www.gosport.gov.uk**
Switchboard: **(023) 92584242**
Chief Executive: Debbie Gore

David Hayward
Strategic Planning Manager
Havant Borough Council

By e-mail

Please ask for:
Jayson Grygiel
Direct dial:
[redacted]
E-mail:
[redacted]

8th July 2025

Dear David,

Request for Havant Borough Council to consider taking Gosport's Unmet Housing Need and vice versa

Thank you for your letter dated 12th June 2025 setting out an update on the progress of Havant's Local Plan and formally requesting assistance with Havant's unmet housing needs, as well as highlighting employment matters. Please see Gosport Borough Council's response to your request below.

In addition, thank you for meeting us on the 25th May 2025 in relation to our ongoing Duty to Cooperate arrangements. I have attached a copy of the slides we presented at the meeting for your information and as you will recall we have previously agreed a set of notes and outcomes for this particular meeting.

The purpose of this letter is to set out a response to your recent letter, and formally update you on the progress of Gosport Borough's Local Plan and our housing need and supply position. It also represents the Council's formal request to ask whether Havant Borough Council can consider taking any of Gosport Borough's unmet housing need which is set out later in this letter. As discussed at our recent meeting, Gosport Borough Council recognises Havant's increasing housing need and the significant constraints facing the Borough. For your information, we have recently completed a round of meetings to discuss our unmet needs with all the local authorities that comprise the Portsmouth Housing Market Area and have formally written to each accordingly.

Response to Havant Borough Council letter

In relation to your formal request it is clear from your explanation that significant analysis has been undertaken by Havant Borough Council to search for new housing sites across the Borough. It is noted that Havant has an unmet need of 10,622 dwellings which could reduce to 9,292 dwellings if the submitted Winchester Local Plan's 'unmet needs allowance' is partly apportioned to Havant Borough.

I can advise you at this time Gosport Borough Council is unable to assist in meeting the unmet housing need of other local authorities. As set out in this letter and covered in our recent meeting, unfortunately, despite a thorough search of the Borough and four 'call for sites' we have only found a supply of 2,538 which means that over the plan period to 2042 the Borough would have an unmet need of just over 4,800 dwellings and therefore highlights that we are unable to meet the housing needs of other authorities at this time.

In relation to employment need and supply, thank you for your explanation of your recently published Employment Land Review and the supply position which results in an unmet need for employment floorspace. Your formal request for assistance in meeting the 51,424 sq. m of unmet employment need (of which, 17,665 sq. m is industrial demand and 33,759 sq. m if office demand) is noted.

I can advise you at this time Gosport Borough Council is unable to assist in meeting the unmet employment need of other local authorities. As discussed at our recent meeting, Gosport is currently able to identify sufficient land to meet the employment needs suggested in its employment evidence which is informed by the Economic, Employment and Commercial Needs (including logistics) Study produced for PfSH by Stantec in 2021, and the Gosport Economic Development Needs Assessment and Employment Land Availability Assessment (EDNA/ELLA) (produced in 2018). I can advise that based on the available sites and the Council's employment evidence, the majority of our supply over the plan period to 2042 is likely to be light industrial and general industrial. Due to the lack of office demand, I can confirm we are very unlikely to be able to meet any office demand from other authorities. The Council is currently commissioning an updated EDNA/ELLA and I will keep you updated on progress with our evidence work.

Sub-regional cooperation

In order to work across boundaries it is acknowledged that both Havant Borough Council and Gosport Borough Council have worked very closely and collaboratively with the authorities that comprise the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) including the work that led to the production of the PfSH Spatial Position Statement (SPS), approved by PfSH Joint Committee on 6th December 2023.

PfSH has provided a framework for sub-regional planning since the production of the South East Plan (adopted May 2009). It has also been successful on a number of cross-boundary environmental initiatives including finding effective measures to address the issues of recreational disturbance and nutrient pollution on internationally important habitats in order that authorities can keep granting planning permission for new dwellings.

Local Plan timetable

In relation to Gosport Borough's Local Plan, we recently published an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) which indicates that we will be publishing a Regulation 19 Local Plan in early 2026. The LDS can be viewed here: Local Development Scheme (LDS) - Gosport Borough Council

The timing of our request regarding unmet need

As you will be aware there has been a period of uncertainty with a number of actual and proposed changes published regarding the calculation of housing need for each local authority area and whether it will be discretionary or mandatory and whether there would be particular exceptions to this. Following the Government's publication of the latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated documents in December

2024, the Council is in a clearer position of its latest local housing need, that it is again mandatory, and how the Council should consider its unmet housing need.

In addition, following a recent Inspector's Advisory Meeting regarding our emerging Local Plan it became clear that we needed to undertake further work with the local authorities that make up the Portsmouth Housing Market Area (HMA), particularly as there have been a number of changes to the Standard Method for calculating local housing need since the SPS was approved.

Housing Need and Supply

As we discussed at the meeting, the housing need for each local authority in South Hampshire has significantly increased, except for Southampton. Gosport's Standard Method has increased from 339 dwellings per annum to **434 dwellings per annum** (a 28% increase). As the slides indicate this level has only been achieved four times in the last 42 years due to two major site releases available at the same time (see slide 14). Our current adopted Local Plan includes a figure of 170 dpa and we are anticipating a slightly lower figure going forward with our emerging Local Plan due to limited site availability.

As slide 12 indicates our current supply is 2,538 which means that over the plan period to 2042 the Borough would have an unmet need of just over 4,800 dwellings.

Gosport Borough Council has an established history of being pro-growth and is now a largely dense urban area. The Council has one of the highest rates of granting planning permissions in England.

Slide 15 of the attached presentation indicates the urban character of the Borough, brownfield opportunities, and the restrictions on any non-urban areas such as operational MoD establishments or a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The Council has taken a no-stone-unturned approach and has undertaken four 'call for sites' including enabling landowners/developers and other interested parties to submit sites at any time through the preparation of the Local Plan. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is currently being refreshed for the Reg 19 consultation with the previous version available to view on the Council's website[1]. As identified on our slides a number of sites are no longer available for residential as the landowners have alternative plans (such as Gosport Police Station, Immigration Removal Centre). A smaller number of additional sites have become available (see slide 23).

The Borough has particular deliverability and viability issues with a number of its key sites. Over the past twenty years the Council has successfully facilitated development on a number of complex former MoD sites, a number of which are still ongoing (e.g. the former HMS Daedalus and Royal Hospital Haslar sites). Many of the sites have a complex mix of issues including: contaminated land; a lack of investment by Government agencies in infrastructure including sea defences; ongoing flood management issues; significant heritage assets that have been left in a deteriorating condition; limited transport options; and relatively low gross development values. All these issues have affected the speed of delivery of past and current sites and continue to impact on ascertaining whether current brownfield releases are deliverable. This also poses challenges for securing affordable housing and developer contributions.

[1] Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

As a consequence of the above matters it has been made clear that we need to formally request all the local authorities in the Portsmouth HMA to consider whether they are able to take our identified unmet housing need which as outlined above is just over 4,800 dwellings.

As discussed recently, the duty to cooperate meetings and this formal letter are part of an ongoing process and consequently we would be happy to discuss the matter on a regular basis with Havant BC and the other local authorities in the HMA.

I would therefore be grateful for a response to our request for Havant BC to consider taking our unmet need by **12th September 2025** in order that you are able to give this matter due consideration.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter and if in the meantime you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me. Please note that we may share your response as part of our evidence base.

Yours sincerely,



Jayson

Jayson Grygiel
Manager of Planning Policy
Gosport Borough Council