Isle of Wight Council

To

David Hayward
Strategic Planning Manager
Havant Borough Council

Via email to:

[redacted]

From

James Brewer, Planning Policy Manager

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Dear David

Re: Housing Need in Havant Borough

Thank you for your letter dated 11 March 2026 updating on progress of the Council's Local Plan.

Following our useful meeting on 24 March 2026 to discuss our respective emerging local plan positions, I am writing to formally respond to the request for the Isle of Wight to assist in meeting the unmet need arising from Havant Borough and also to confirm our current local plan position on the island.

Draft Island Planning Strategy

With regard to our emerging local plan, we remain at examination having submitted the Draft Island Planning Strategy in October 2024. Further hearings are scheduled for 15 & 16 April with main modifications consultation likely to take place in early summer.

Our ongoing co-operation with various nearby local authorities was reflected by the Planning Inspectors for our examination stating in their Post Hearings letter of 11 April 2025 that we had met our 'Duty to Co-operate' requirements. This included agreement that the island was in a separate housing market area (HMA) to mainland authorities.

One of the key soundness concerns raised by our Inspectors was the shortfall in our submitted housing requirement (453dpa) from the standard method housing need (703dpa). As part of the proposed changes to the Draft Island Planning Strategy (subject of the aforementioned hearings in April 2026) we are therefore seeking to allocate additional sites to meet our standard method housing need (703dpa) over an initial 5 year plan period, as suggested by the Inspectors.

I can confirm that we are able to identify these additional sites within our own administrative area and for the first 5 years of the emerging plan period (2025-2030) there is no unmet need arising from the Isle of Wight.

The island will have an identified shortfall of approximately 2,100 dwellings in year 6 of the plan period onwards (2031-2037). However under the transitional arrangements for the new plan-making system, the Isle of Wight Council is required to commence plan-making before the end of 2026 for our new local plan. With a maximum 30 month preparation process, this new plan will be adopted towards the end of 2029 and that plan will therefore be able to consider the shortfall identified above.

At this stage of our local plan process for the Draft Island Planning Strategy, I would see no reason to revise the position agreed by our Inspectors that the island is in a separate housing market area to mainland authorities.

Housing Need and Supply

Looking ahead we acknowledge that, at present, there is a likely unmet need of at least 10,276 dwellings arising from Havant Borough.

Notwithstanding the Isle of Wight being in a separate HMA, the island itself is also facing a significant increase in standard method housing need figure for our next local plan. At the time of writing, our next plan (after the Island Planning Strategy) would have to plan for 1,060dpa – an increase of over 300dpa per year from the 703dpa in the Draft Island Planning Strategy (or an increase of 4,500 dwellings in a 15 year plan period).

Even the figure of 703dpa is significantly in excess of the average housing delivery on the island of 366dpa since the adoption of our current Core Strategy in 2012.

At this stage, until work on our next local plan begins in earnest, we are unable to confirm whether the island is even able to accommodate our own level of proposed growth as defined by the governments standard method housing need.

For these reasons, the island would not be able to assist in meeting unmet need arising from Havant Borough. Should this position change as work on our new local plan (post adoption of the Island Planning Strategy) progresses, then our regular communication through various officer working groups within the region will be able to discuss and review in more detail.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me and we look forward to continuing to liaise and work together on various strategic and regional topics as our local plan processes move forward.

Kind regards

[redacted]

James Brewer
Planning Policy Manager