Local Plan 2036

What it is

How far we’ve come

How will it help our communities?
Foreword

Development of any sort – be it housing for residents or units for industry – can be contentious and emotive. I understand your concerns and appreciate your passion.

We live in interesting times, and our country is undergoing profound changes. The pressures on our infrastructure will increase, even if building in our borough stopped today. Nationally, as well as locally, our roads will get busier and our population will increase – this is the inevitable face of our country’s evolution.

There is a stark need for new housing in this country and Government has made clear its determination to address the issue. This means a large amount of development in all parts of the country. Everywhere will need to play its part, including the borough of Havant.

Our choice is not whether development takes place. It is whether that development takes place in a planned and coordinated manner, providing infrastructure and environmental safeguards or whether it is ad hoc and unplanned, without the necessary infrastructure. We need to be well informed and equipped, making sure any changes to our borough work for us. The plan puts us in the best place to influence and shape the development that will inevitably happen.

Havant Borough Council’s Local Plan aims to make this happen. With thousands of hours of work for our residents spent in research and development, it is a considered and relevant strategy, bespoke to your needs.

This document aims to highlight why we need this Local Plan, and what would happen without it. It will also summarise its aims and address some areas of the Local Plan which are emotive for residents. It is vitally important we complete our Local Plan to secure local influence and management of future development in the borough – I hope this document helps you realise the value of supporting such a strategy.

Councillor Leah Turner
Cabinet Lead for Communities, Development and Housing

Why have a Local Plan?

Every council in the country must produce a Local Plan. The document provides a blueprint for all development in the borough for the long term.

Central government has a standard model for calculating housing need. A Local Plan must meet at least this level of housing need to be approved by central government.

If a council does not produce a suitable Local Plan, central government will intervene and produce the plan. In the meantime, the council will not be able to stop piecemeal development or demand the necessary infrastructure to support it.

If approved, a Local Plan can include numerous local policies setting out how and where development should take place. If no plan is in place – or is considered out of date – developers can potentially bypass these policies.

A Local Plan is approved by a government inspector. Its validation provides the council with a government-approved strategy that clearly defines to developers what can be built and where.

By meeting central government requirements with its Local Plan, the council is best placed to have local leverage and make sure the development is high quality and will stand the test of time.

Only an approved Local Plan can provide the council with the opportunity to capture significant additional local benefits with developments that support the environment, infrastructure, transport and residents’ quality of life.
The advantages of a local plan

Previously adopted versions of the Local Plan have delivered additional local benefits where development took place. Examples include:

Hampshire Farm
- A total of £825,000 in transport infrastructure, including highways works, public transport services and walking and cycling paths.
- Extensive open space provision as part of the development and £130,000 funding towards its ongoing maintenance.
- £55,000 of improvement works to playing pitches and courts in Emsworth.
- On-site allotments.

West of Waterlooville
- Employment of a dedicated officer to help build a community as the development progresses.
- Extensive open space, including youth facilities, natural green space and a meadow.
- A new primary school, two community facilities and a sports pavilion.
- Award winning, sustainably designed drainage systems.
- A hotel, pub, older people’s housing and employment development.
- Off-site infrastructure including highways works and support for Waterlooville Town centre.
- Effective coordination of development and infrastructure across two local authorities.

What happens without an up-to-date Local Plan?

Not having an up-to-date Local Plan makes a real difference when new developments are proposed and this is being felt in many places across the country. The two local examples below show what could happen without one…

Cranleigh Road, Portchester
- Fareham Borough Council was in the process of updating its Local Plan to meet Government aspirations for higher housing numbers. A developer applied for 120 homes. The council refused on the basis it was not in the Local Plan, was on a greenfield site and harmful to the character of the area.
- The Council was supported by public opinion, with around 500 objections from local residents and societies.
- At appeal the government inspector recognised the development would harm the character and appearance of the countryside it was being built in, but the need for new homes to meet the higher housing figures was given greater weight than the harm to the character and appearance of the countryside.
- The developer was successful in its appeal.

London Road, Purbrook
- Havant Borough Council refused planning permission for 42 retirement flats on an existing employment site, which was home to successful businesses.
- Housing supply was used as the key issue in the appeal by developers.
- An inspector determined that provision of housing overrode the retention of the employment site.
- As the “housing supply policies” were now considered out-of-date, the council could not intervene.
- The housing was built regardless of the objection of the council and local businesses.
The future of the borough...

An increasing population: Based on projections, the borough’s population will increase by 16,912 people by 2036 - equivalent to the population of Romsey.

69% of the borough’s population will be over 60 by 2036.

59% of residents want more affordable housing built.

Sea levels are expected to rise by 6mm per year.

According to waiting list data, the combined total need for affordable homes is 1,684 dwellings within the borough.

There is an emerging shortage of about 100 childcare places across the borough as more children become eligible for places funded by the Government.

A new reservoir is required to meet the need for fresh water in South Hampshire.

What the Local Plan will provide...

9,260 new homes in the borough

Southleigh – a new community providing 2,100 new homes and associated facilities

Development (and redevelopment) of allocated employment sites throughout the borough

Regeneration of old town centres to provide new housing, and engaging social spaces to enjoy

A third of new homes built to be adaptable so that older people can stay in their own home for longer

New developments will be 19% more energy efficient than the national standard

30% affordable housing on new development sites

44 separate local policies covering the environment, infrastructure, housing and commercial development

40 allocated development sites for housing

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Understandably with such an emotive subject, some residents have concerns with elements of the Local Plan. A number of sites are contentious including these three examples:

**H8 - Land north of Long Copse Lane** (Emsworth)
Controversial due to landscape impact, drainage and infrastructure. The site is proposed for allocation as whilst there would be an impact on landscape, this would not by itself render the site unsuitable for development. Environmental policies address potential drainage impact and highway access can be gained at an acceptable standard.

**H20 - Land south of Lower Road** (Havant & Bedhampton)
Controversial due to potential impact on the nearby Conservation Area, biodiversity and access. Following discussion with Historic England it is not considered that there would be sufficient heritage impact to render the site unsuitable for development. The development is considered acceptable in highway terms and the environmental policies include safeguards for biodiversity.

**H29 – Land north of Sinah Lane** (Hayling Island)
Controversial due to impact on drainage, ecology, highway capacity and loss of agricultural land. Analysis through the Hayling Island Transport Assessment found that the impact on the highway network was insufficient to prevent development. Environmental policies address potential drainage impact and the high soil quality would not by itself render the site unsuitable for development.

New housing is needed but it is contentious because of its impact on infrastructure, services and facilities. Regardless of any new development in the borough, the population and transport increase in the borough through an expanding and ageing population would mean that some elements of our infrastructure will become more strained regardless of any development. Policies included in the Local Plan address many infrastructure issues well – for example denying development where it increases flood risk to new or existing homes, or that impacts negatively on drainage for new and existing homes. It also covers the impact on quality of life, for example through minimising noise pollution and making sure that there is a reasonable distance between homes to ensure their privacy.

During the 2016 consultation, particular concern was raised about the impact of new development on the infrastructure network of the borough. As a result, the council has undertaken a robust assessment of 30 different kinds of infrastructure through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This has looked at topics such as education and utilities. However, it has also assessed the impact on other areas such as nursery provision, parks and open spaces and emergency planning. The assessment has found that there are a number of infrastructure projects that are needed to support new development, such as expansions to schools. There are also policies that have been changed in the Local Plan to take on board the study’s findings, such as identifying sites that could be suitable for a nursery.

Highway capacity on Hayling Island was identified as a key concern through the 2016 consultation. A robust and detailed model has been specifically built of the island’s highway network to fully investigate the impact that development would have. Projections indicate that the road system on the island could be better developed to support pedestrians, cyclists and address the practical issues arising from increasing motor vehicle use. The road system will be inherently safer, but journey times may be slower in places by around four minutes.

For reference, general increases in travel times are projected for the south-east region and the borough as a whole. The council is actively working with Hampshire County Council, the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners to ensure that mitigation is put in place to minimise this impact and improve the island’s transport network.
Planning to meet the future need for housing in the borough - as Government requires - is not easy. It requires developing new homes on areas that the council had previously thought would remain green. Such decisions can be difficult to accept.

The alternative is that the developments would take place anyway supported by national guidelines prioritising house building - but on an ad-hoc basis where the council cannot influence and co-ordinate their development with the major infrastructure required.

Throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, the council has adopted an up-front and honest approach with residents, taking difficult decisions and being clear about the tough choices we have in front of us.

The Pre-Submission Local Plan has to meet Government requirements and therefore must allocate sufficient land for housing, or it will not be able to proceed. Without our Local Plan, the infrastructure provisions and environmental safeguards our borough deserves will not be in place.

The pre-submission Local Plan is the version the council considers to be ‘sound’ having taken on board extensive research, advice and public feedback, before it is formally submitted for examination by an independent inspector appointed by the Government.

How to respond

The Pre-Submission Plan is available at www.havant.gov.uk/localplan and at the Public Service Plaza. The website also has the consultation form you will need to use and guidance to help you complete it.

The Council is also holding a series of drop-in sessions where council officers can help you respond to the consultation. Full details of the dates, times and venues are available on our website.