

Memorandum of Understanding under the Duty to Co-operate
between
Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)

on
The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-31

Date of agreement: June 2016

1. Scope of the statement

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared under the Duty to Co-operate requirements. It provides a position statement on the extent of co-operation and understanding in respect of the preparation of a local plan for SBC. The MOU is intended to set out the position of both signing authorities and be kept up to date as SBC as a local planning authority reaches key milestones in the preparation of their plan.

This MOU is intended to highlight the extent of agreement, or otherwise on strategic Stevenage and county wide matters. It is a shared objective of both HCC and SBC to facilitate the timely progression of sound local plans towards adoption in accordance with the required regulations.

2. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-31

This MOU has been prepared in the context of the publication version of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2011-31) which was placed on public deposit for a six weeks period ending 17 February 2016. The MOU was prepared in June 2016 in the period leading up to the planned 22 July 2016 submission of the plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

4. Matters agreed and outstanding

Engagement between the two under the Duty to Co-operate has focussed primarily upon the implications of the quantum and location of housing and employment, on services and interests of the County Council and how the Local Plan and Stevenage Borough Council more generally can facilitate future development requirements arising from these interests. This MOU highlights how there is a shared and common objective to resolve the issues in a manner which encompasses joint technical working, continuing Member involvement and through to the timely adoption of the local plan.

Set out in this memorandum are those matters of joint strategic interest to both groups as they are dealt with in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, Submission Version, July 2016 (hereinafter 'the plan') in accordance with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012.

Discussions between HCC and SBC have embraced the full range of strategic cross-boundary matters covered by the Duty to Co-operate in so far as they relate to the responsibilities and interests of the County Council. Both HCC and SBC are content that the

Duty to Co-operate has been met thus far and ongoing liaison will ensure that this continuing requirement will be effectively addressed. It is the opinion of HCC that SBC's Local Plan

2011-2031 is sound and has been correctly prepared in so far as they relate to the responsibilities and interests of the County Council. Both HCC and SBC agree they will continue to work together to try find solutions to support the delivery of the plan.

More specifically on matters of agreement and on ways forward on any outstanding matters:

- (i) HCC as Highways Authority are supportive of the Local Plan policies and discussed the suggested wording in depth on the 25th of February 2016. HCC are continuing to work with SBC on the new Saturn and Paramics models for which the results will be fed into the plan at Examination stage, and also on the affordability and delivery of an agreed infrastructure plan to underpin growth in Stevenage.
- (ii) HCC Gypsies and Traveller Unit and SBC have discussed the management of both the existing Dyes Lane site and the potential H012 site. HCC Gypsies and Traveller Unit support the allocation at H012.
- (iii) With regard to specific sites H01/2 and H04, HCC, as Mineral Planning Authority have reiterated that Mineral resources are essential to the wider community. To prevent their permanent loss, and in accordance with national guidance, appropriate weight should be accorded to the prior extraction of minerals which would otherwise be sterilised.

The county council (as MPA) encourages mineral extraction prior to other development taking place where any significant mineral resource would otherwise be sterilised. As a minimum, in accepting this policy, a report stating that the depth and quality of mineral has been assessed, together with an assessment of the consequential viability for prior extraction would be requested.
- (iv) HCC as property owner may wish to explore a replacement fire station closer to the A1(M). HCC has other property assets, such as those in the town centre at Southgate where change is proposed. SBC note this and will work with HCC to explore options including proposals for regeneration of the town centre and public service hub.
- (v) HCC as education authority identified that new primary schools are required within the town centre and at sites HO2 and HO3. In addition 8FE of secondary school places must be identified on a new site on the edge of Stevenage in North Herts district to serve the needs of both authorities. SBC will work with HCC on their new site-search work with a meeting on the 15th of July 2016 Joint work with both SBC

and NHDC is required in order to develop an infrastructure strategy for this matter.

- (vi) HCC as public health authority supports the suggested Health policies in the plan and sort the extension of the bar on new take-away food outlets from the High Street to all of the town's neighbourhood centres. At meeting on 18 April 2016 HCC confirmed their support for SBC in preparing a technical paper and identifying what local research is needed.
- (vii) HCC as Waste Disposal Authority Would like to extend or replace the existing Household Waste Recycling Centre in Caxton Way. SBC note this and will work with HCC to explore options.

6. Commitment to future co-operation

Both SBC and HCC remain committed to effective co-operation on all matters relating to the Duty to Co-operate. As such both SBC and HCC undertake to review and update this agreement as appropriate as key milestones are reached in plan preparation and any review.

7. Evidence of co-operation

- Stages of local plan preparation since April 2012 with dates of consultation responses:

Plan	Consultation	Date of response
Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 - 2031	Stevenage Borough Local Plan – early stage consultation	January 2013
Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 - 31	Stevenage Borough Local Plan – Key Issues and preferred options consultation	July 2013
Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 - 31	Stevenage Borough Local Plan – Revised housing target consultation	July 2015
Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 - 31	Stevenage Borough Local Plan – Publication stage consultation	February 2016

- Quarterly meeting of the Hertfordshire Planning Group - Local Plans (HPG Local Plans), Hertfordshire Planning Group (HPG); Hertfordshire Infrastructure & Planning Partnership (HIPP) meetings which both SBC and HCC actively attend.
- Numerous and ongoing meeting on specific topics as the need arises.

Signatories to this Statement of Common Ground

For and on behalf of Stevenage Borough
Council:



| & Environment

^{11th July}
Date: ~~8 June~~ 2016

For and on behalf of Hertfordshire County
Council:



Councillor Derrick Ashley
Executive member for Planning

Date: 8 July 2016