

**Statement of Common Ground
between Hart District Council,
Gallagher Estates & Barratt
Homes
and
Lightwood Land**

October 2018

Background

1. The Draft Hart District Local Plan (Strategy and Sites 2016-2032) ('draft Local Plan') sets out the amount and location of new development (housing, employment and retail) to be built in Hart over the Plan period 2016–2032. It contains a housing requirement of 388 homes per annum from 2016-2032 and identifies a specific supply of housing from deliverable and developable sites to meet that requirement. In addition the draft Local Plan identifies an Area of Search for the location of a new settlement at Murrell Green/Winchfield to address additional, future growth requirements. The preference for meeting this future growth is to plan for a sustainable new settlement.
2. Planning for a high quality and sustainable community takes time. The Local Development Scheme and the draft Local Plan confirms that the Council will produce a New Settlement DPD, inclusive of a framework plan, which will set out when and how a new settlement should take shape, including precise settlement boundaries and any designated 'gaps' between settlements.
3. The Area of Search covers a number of SHLAA sites, with the majority (approximately 68%) under the control of two developers; Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes and Lightwood Land.
4. It is the Council's intention that the two developers; Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes and Lightwood Land, as well as a number of other key Stakeholders, will contribute to the DPD and framework plan.

The purpose of this Statement of Common Ground

5. This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared between the following parties (hereafter referred to as "the parties"): Hart District Council (the Council), Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes and Lightwood Land. This document identifies the matters agreed with regard to the Hart District Council Local Plan Strategy and Sites 2016-2032 and supporting documents to assist the Inspector during the Examination of the Local Plan.
6. This statement particularly relates to the "Area of Search" set out in Policy SS3 for a new settlement at Murrell Green/Winchfield.
7. Where there is any conflict between Regulation 19 Representations and this SoCG, the SoCG takes precedent.

Areas of Common Ground

The spatial strategy

8. It is agreed that the strategy set out in Policy SS1 to meet as a minimum 388 homes per annum across the plan period is sound and consistent with national

policy. This is broadly consistent with, and a little higher than the 2016 SHMA. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF 2012 (and 67 of the NPPF 2018) set out that local planning authorities should “...identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and where possible 11-15”. The draft Local Plan is consistent with the NPPF by identifying the Murrell Green/Winchfield Area of Search as a broad location for growth likely to deliver from the mid-plan period and beyond to ensure at least this minimum figure is maintained and to also allow for other needs including infrastructure needs to be addressed. Consequently, the Plan is considered by the parties to be positively prepared in accordance with paragraphs 182 and 35 of the NPPF (2012) and (2018) respectively.

9. The parties agree that the identification of an Area of Search within the Local Plan will allow sufficient time for a comprehensive plan-led approach to the planning of a new community supported by major infrastructure, whilst significantly boosting housing supply from the middle of the plan period. All parties agree that the Area of Search and associated new settlement would future-proof the District’s ability to accommodate future housing requirements in a sustainable plan-led way.
10. The parties agree that the proposed strategy to identify an Area of Search for a new settlement provides flexibility in the plan to meet any increase in housing need as a result of amended household projections, standard methodology, affordability ratio or unmet housing needs within or beyond the HMA¹.
11. The parties agree that by the time the Plan is due to be reviewed, five years after adoption if not sooner, the evidence will have moved on and there may need to accommodate additional homes and supporting infrastructure. If the new settlement is to meet those needs (at least in part) it is necessary to start the planning process now. It is therefore necessary to include Policy SS3 in this Plan so that the DPD can progress without delay, focussing on the identified area of search.
12. The parties agree that the new settlement will also deliver beyond the end of the Plan period, meeting the test at NPPF paragraph 157 to “take account of longer term requirements”.
13. The parties agree that affordable housing needs in Hart District are high and will not be met in full by meeting the housing target of 388 homes per annum. Whilst this does not render the housing requirement in the Plan unsound, all parties agree that the Area of Search presents an ‘on-site’ opportunity to accommodate a significant amount of the identified affordable housing need within the plan period and beyond; an indicative estimate of the delivery of 1,500 homes to 2032 within the Area of Search would provide a further 600 affordable homes during the plan period. It will also help address the needs of an ageing population, providing specialist accommodation as required.
14. All parties agree that, as the majority of the housing requirements for the draft Local Plan are commitments, the majority of the housing delivery is frontloaded.

¹ Housing Market Area comprising Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath

The Area of Search is anticipated to begin delivering housing during the middle of the plan period thereby stabilising the rate of supply. For the new settlement to do this it needs to be planned for, at least an Area of Search in this Local Plan, with a DPD to follow. This will have benefits towards the end of the Plan period with regards to the Housing Delivery Test in which the past three years of delivery are compared to the annual housing requirement.

15. The Area of Search will allow for positive and proactive planning not only of housing but also new jobs, infrastructure and a strategic scale of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The alternative is to rely on piecemeal expansion or mitigation, which may address short term needs but will not be so sustainable in accommodating growth in the longer term. This is in accordance with paragraph 157 of the NPPF (2012). The NPPF 2012 goes on at paragraph 52 to say that “*the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements...*” This is supported by paragraph 72 of the NPPF 2018. As discussed below under ‘Areas of Search’, the parties agree that the new settlement would be the most sustainable way to accommodate significant amount of housing and mixed-use development, and therefore the strategy would be effective as per paragraphs 182 and 35 of the NPPF (2012) and NPPF (2018) respectively. This view is also supported by the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal.
16. Overall, the proposed strategy within Policy SS1 is both positively prepared and effective. This is evident as the strategy seeks to meet the minimum need identified in the 2016 SHMA, provides the basis to meet future needs, is deliverable, and is based on joint working with the neighbouring authorities.

Area of Search

17. The parties agree that it is a positive and effective strategy to create a comprehensively planned community with infrastructure and facilities, including a new secondary school, in a sustainable location. The parties agree that the approach taken to identifying this in the Local Plan as an “Area of Search” in Policy SS3 at Murrell Green/ Winchfield is justified and consistent with national policy. The parties agree that it is sound for the policy to refer to high level, non-site specific, principles for the new settlement, with detailed matters to be established through a subsequent DPD inclusive of a comprehensive framework masterplan.
18. The parties agree that the Murrell Green/Winchfield Area of Search is the most sustainable location for a new settlement within the District (supported by the Sustainability Appraisal), due to the proximity of existing strategic infrastructure (railway stations, A30 and junction 5 of the M3). There are also existing networks of local transport infrastructure linking the Area of Search to existing settlements, employment nodes and community facilities.
19. The parties agree with the Council’s view that it has tested reasonable alternatives as part of the preparation of the plan. The evidence base establishes the Area of Search as the most appropriate and sustainable strategy against the alternatives which included an alternative area of search at Rye Common, as well

as alternative urban extension options. As would be expected, the testing of reasonable alternatives has also identified some areas where further testing will be needed and refined through the subsequent DPD process. The Area of Search at Murrell Green/Winchfield is agreed to be the most appropriate strategy due to its existing infrastructure connections and the potential benefits which can be secured from a new settlement, including on-site new school places (primary and secondary) and employment opportunities.

20. In this regard, it has been acknowledged by the County Council that there are limited opportunities to expand existing secondary schools in a satisfactory manner beyond the plan period. Therefore, additional growth in the district needs to consider a new school in the long term to allow further capacity to be created alongside the long term housing growth of the area. The parties agree that the area of search is an appropriate location for a new secondary school which can support the new community as well as being in an appropriate location to help meet the future needs from elsewhere in the district.
21. The “Area of Search” has been subject to various technical assessments by both the Council and the parties. This body of work identifies that there is potential for a new settlement, to include requirements such as SANG, taking into account the identified environmental and technical constraints in the area. The evidence so far does not indicate there to be a constraint/or constraints which would represent a significant barrier to development, after mitigation, of a new settlement in the Area of Search. Technical constraints can be resolved (e.g. high pressure gas pipe at Murrell Green) in a manner that is not expected to affect viability or impact the delivery of a new settlement as envisaged. All parties agree that the final scale of the new community will be determined through the subsequent DPD and that it will be informed by a full evidence base which considers viability, infrastructure needs and constraints.
22. The proposed strategy under Policy SS3 enables specific details for the new settlement to be established at a later date as further technical reports can establish preferable locations for the varying uses, SANG and other infrastructure to be provided.
23. All parties agree that the scope of the DPD, in addition to identifying the exact extent and scale of the new community will include, but not necessarily be limited to, identifying policies and approaches to the following:
 - Infrastructure needs and other supporting land uses including schools and community facilities
 - Housing mix and principles for density
 - Employment and retail mix
 - Approach to affordable housing
 - Design principles
 - Phasing
 - Approach to gaps and SANG as well as other environmental mitigation

24. This will be translated spatially into a comprehensive framework plan as part of the DPD.
25. All parties are in agreement that the overall timeline shown in the Housing Topic Paper (August 2018) allows sufficient time for the New Settlement DPD to be produced, planning applications to be made and housing delivery on site to begin during the middle of the plan period.

Supporting evidence and availability of land within the Area of Search

26. The land under the control of both Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes and Lightwood Land has been subject to several technical assessments over a number of years.

Table 1: Existing Technical Studies/Assessments

Technical Assessments	Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes	Ref.	Lightwood Land	Ref.
Transport	Jubb (2018)	NSTS 28	Jubb (2018)	NSTS 28
	Jubb (2016)	NSTS 16	Transport Planning Associates (2017)	NSTS 1
	The Rail Estate Consultancy (2016)	NSTS 17		
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment and Integrated Water	Wardell Armstrong (2016)	NSTS 18	Abley Letchford Partnership (2018)	NSTS 3
		NSTS 19	Hydrock (2017)	NSTS 2
Ecological	Aspect Ecology (2015) Aspect Ecology (2016)	NSTS 20 NSTS 21	Ethos Environmental Planning (2017)	NSTS 4
Arboricultural	Aspect Arboriculture (2015)	NSTS 20	N/A	-
Heritage	Steven Bee Urban Counsel (2015)	NSTS 22	Pegasus Group (2017)	NSTS 5
Archaeological	CgMS Consulting (2016)	NSTS 23	Pegasus Group (2017)	NSTS 5
			Pre-Construct Geophysics Ltd (2017)	NSTS 6
Air Quality	Peter Brett Associates (2015)	NSTS 24	Air Quality Consultants Ltd (2017)	NSTS 7
Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal	Barton Willmore Landscape (2015)	NSTS 25	Pegasus Group (2017)	NSTS 8
Noise	Peter Brett Associates (2015)	NSTS 26	24 Acoustics (2017)	NSTS 9

Sustainability	Barton Willmore Development Economics (2015)	NSTS 27	N/A	-
Utilities Review (including advanced plans in relation to the proposed diversion of the on-site pipeline)	N/A	-	Abley Letchford Partnership (2018)	NSTS 10
			Gately Hamer (2017)	NSTS 11
			RUSH for Southern Gas Networks (2018)	NSTS12
			SGN (2018)	NSTS 13
			Health and Safety Executive (2018)	NSTS 14

27. These assessments and reviews identify that there is potential for a new settlement of between at least 1,800 and around 5,000 taking into account the constraints and any mitigation required, (notably transport works and SANG). This work will be consolidated and expanded upon through the DPD process to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken once the scale of new community is determined.
28. Both Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes and Lightwood Land confirm that there are no significant availability constraints, which would affect the deliverability of the new settlement on the land under their respective control. Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes, Lightwood Land and the Council do not consider that the presence of a number of other private landowners within the Area of Search would jeopardise the deliverability of a new settlement.
29. The work and information provided by the promoters, together with the work undertaken by the Council, demonstrates that the land needed for a new community at Murrell Green/Winchfield is available, suitable and developable in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 47 of the NPPF (2012). All parties consider that the evidence provides more than a reasonable prospect that the site is suitable, available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Summary of the Common Ground between the Parties

30. The parties are committed to working together moving forward as part of the New Settlement Development Plan Document (DPD) process. It is understood by all parties that the plan does not allocate a number of units to be delivered at Murrell Green/Winchfield, nor does it specify the site boundary, and that this detail together with a masterplan shall be set out within a subsequent DPD that will be subject to consultation and independent testing in the same manner as a Local Plan.
31. In addition, the parties support/agree:
 - a. The principle of an Area of Search.

- b. The Area of Search as proposed in SS3 complies with the NPPF (versions 2012 and 2018).
- c. The advantages of a new settlement over large scale urban extensions.
- d. The need and deliverability of infrastructure including the on-site provision of primary and secondary schools, local centres, bus routes, employment opportunities, SANG and Local Gaps.
- e. Working collaboratively with each other, Hart District Council, Hampshire County Council, Parish Councils and other key stakeholders.
- f. The Area of Search as suitable, available and developable within the timescales envisaged around the middle of the plan period in accordance with national policy requirements for identifying broad locations.

NEXT STEPS

- 32. The parties agree that the Housing Topic Paper (August 2018) sets a realistic timeframe for the production of the New Settlement DPD, and that completions can be achieved on site from the middle of the plan period.
- 33. All parties are also supportive of joint working through the governance arrangements associated with the New Settlement DPD to be considered by the Council's Cabinet in November.
- 34. The parties agree that the inclusion of the Area of Search represents positive planning. To not include it, and to defer consideration of a new settlement to a plan review, would serve to delay the planning and implementation of the Council's preferred strategy for future growth. This would not represent positive planning and, due to the time needed to plan and start delivering the new settlement, it would limit the spatial options available for boosting supply from the middle of the plan period (when additional supply may be needed in light of the evidence base at that time).
- 35. In addition, all parties are fully supportive of the Council submitting a bid to the Government's current Garden Communities Programme.

APPENDIX I

Email from Lightwood Land and Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes confirming agreement with this Statement of Common Ground

Statement of Common Ground



Richard Walker <richard@lightwoodstrategic.com>
Today, 15:55
Christine Tetlow; James turner <jamesturner@lightwoodland.com>; +1 more



Inbox

Blocked content will be shown while this message is open.

Dear Christine

This email confirms Lightwood Land's agreement to the Statement of Common Ground.

Richard Walker
Strategic Planning Director

T + 44 (0) 1275462023
M + 44 (0) 7887692058
www.lightwoodstrategic.com



LIGHTWOOD

Surrey Oak House Mews, 43 The Parade, Claygate, KT10 0PD
London 4 Carlos Place, Mayfair, London W1K 3AW
Bristol 2 Farleigh Court, Old Weston Road, Flax Bourton BS48 1UR

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Statement of Common Ground



Glen Langham (Gallagher Estates) <Glen.Langham@gallagherestates.com>

Today, 09:31

Christine Tetlow; James turner <jamesturner@lightwoodland.com>; +2 more



Reply all

Inbox



Download Save to OneDrive - Hart District Council

Dear Christine

Please accept this email as confirmation that the Statement of Common Ground between Hart DC, Gallagher Estates and Barratt Homes, and Lightwood Land (as attached) is agreed by Gallagher Estates.

Regards

Glen

Glen Langham
Group Planning Director

Tel: 01926 339339

Direct: 01926 455116

Mobile: 07974 319147

Email: glen.langham@gallagherestates.com

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Gallagher Estates Limited (Company Registration No. 3035968)

Gallagher House, Gallagher Way, Warwick CV34 6AF

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APPENDIX 2

**Table 1: Area of Search – Individual Sites:
Land Ownership/Control and Sizes as at August 2018**

Developer/Land Owner		SHLAA Site	Size (Ha)
Gallagher Estates & Barratt Homes		124	56.5
		183	125.4
		185	23.9
		Post SHLAA site	8.5
		Total	214.3
Lightwood Land		4 and 169	55.2
		84	2.8
		136	37.1
		167 (part of)	39.0
		168	7.3
		186	13.7
		187	28.4
		188	9.8
		Total	193.3
Other Land:	Private Landowner	83	2.9
	Private Landowner	123	0.7
	Private Landowner	133	33.4
	Private Landowner	135	3.4
	Private Landowner	182	21.1
	Private Landowner	184	18.8
	Private Landowner	209	14.5
	Private Landowner	211	4.9
		Total	99.7