Mid Sussex District Council and Crawley Borough Council

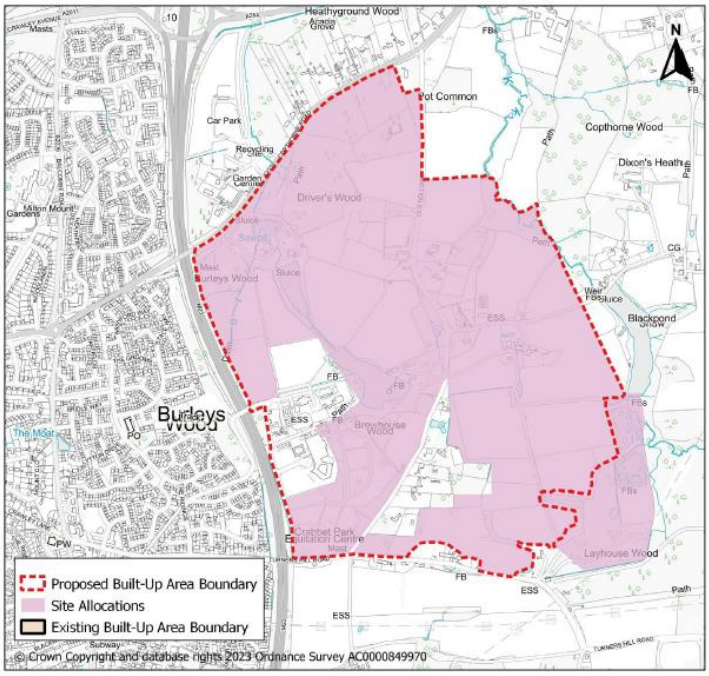
DC6a - Statement of Common Ground: Crabbet Park

March 2026

Mid Sussex District Council and Crawley Borough Council Statement of Common Ground: Crabbet Park

Context

1. The Submission Draft Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP) proposes an allocation **DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park**. The site is entirely within the Mid Sussex authority area but is immediately adjacent to Crawley, which is a major town with a population over 120,000, albeit physically separated by the M23. The local road network and footpaths connect into Crawley borough which would provide services and facilities for the new residents of what would form an urban extension to Crawley.



2. DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park is proposed for 2,000 dwellings (approximately 1,950 deliverable within the plan period to 2040). Infrastructure requirements are set out in the policy and include land for education provision, community buildings, community facilities, leisure, extra care, outdoor sports provision and wastewater infrastructure.

3. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) was agreed by Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and Crawley Borough Council (CBC) in September 2024 on strategic matters [MSDC reference: DC6]. In relation to Strategic Sites, the parties agreed that (in summary):

    - Development adjacent to administrative boundaries would be Local Plan-led to comply with the policies set out in the Mid Sussex District Plan, with the Crawley Borough Local Plan to be a material consideration given the “At Crawley” location (para 24)

    - To work together on highways matters, including modelling and to support positive sustainable development (para 25)

- To work together to seek opportunities in relation to housing mix, dwelling type, size and tenure and seek to reach formal agreement with regards to nomination rights (para 26)
- To work together to consider infrastructure impacts such as health, education, water supply and wastewater (para 27).

4. Separate SoCGs have already been agreed between the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area authorities (CBC, Horsham District Council and MSDC) on cross-boundary strategic matters and Housing, including agreements regarding the principle of development "at Crawley", housing supply and contributions towards unmet need.

5. This SoCG sets out the latest position specifically on **DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park.**

Engagement to Date

6. MSDC has worked collaboratively with CBC during the preparation of the District Plan, as set out in [DC6].

7. Alongside this, one of the site promoters (Wates) has also met with officers from CBC with MSDC on two occasions (May 2023 and January 2026) including a visit to the site in May 2023. These meetings have provided officers from CBC with an opportunity to understand the development proposals at a high level, to discuss matters of concern and the opportunities to address them.

Crawley Borough Council – Regulation 19 Representation

8. CBC submitted a representation to the MSDP at Regulation 19 stage (2024).

9. Due to the passage of time since then and to aid the examination, **Appendix 1** sets out the latest position on some of the points raised. It does not go through all of the Crawley Borough Local Plan criteria (paragraphs 12.17 – 12.23) for successful urban extensions.

10. This includes areas where MSDC believes it has addressed the concerns raised, where matters are progressing towards a positive outcome/will be resolved for the local plan policy or at planning application stage, whichever is most appropriate, and where there are still areas of disagreement.

Signatories

Mid Sussex District Council	Crawley Borough Council
SIGNATURE [redacted]	**SIGNATURE** [redacted]
Name: Ann Biggs **Position: Assistant Director Planning and Sustainable Economy**	**Name: Clem Smith** **Position: Head of Economy and Planning**
Date: 17.03.2026	**Date: 17.03.2026**

Appendix 1 – Current Position Re: Crawley Borough Council Regulation 19 Representation

Crawley Regulation 19 Response	Current Position (February 2026)
Transport	
CBC is concerned that the transport modelling does not take into account the 'in combination' effects of the Crabbet Park proposal alongside the proposals in the emerging Crawley Borough Local Plan and anticipated significant growth at Gatwick Airport and proposed allocation to the west of Crawley in Horsham district.	**Mid Sussex:** • West Sussex County Council as Highways Authority have informed and validated the Mid Sussex Strategic Transport Model [T1] and update [T13]. This is confirmed in the Statement of Common Ground between Mid Sussex and West Sussex. [DC15] • The Mid Sussex Transport Study [T10] accounts for cross boundary growth. This is based on TEMPro growth forecasts as (at the time of modelling) the precise locations within the Crawley Borough Local Plan (CBLP) were not committed developments as the Local Plan had not been adopted. However, the level of growth assumed by TEMPro is compatible with the committed developments in the CBLP. • Similarly, the Mid Sussex Transport Study accounts for the proposed Gatwick Airport expansion. The trip rates associated with the airport, including expansion, were agreed with WSCC and National Highways. • As a result of discussions held at Mid Sussex District Plan examination hearing sessions 24th February – 5th March, MSDC has been asked to test options for higher housing growth. This will need to be tested in-combination with growth arising elsewhere within Mid Sussex and cross-boundary. As a result, an updated Transport Study will be prepared which can account for the latest position – including the planned growth now adopted in the CBLP and implications of the Gatwick Northern Runway DCO. • The Crabbet Park site promoters have shared with CBC a non-technical summary note of the Highways Pre-application submission to the Highways Authority. • A full Transport Assessment, including updated growth assumptions, will be prepared by the Crabbet Park site promoters as part of their planning application. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the additional confirmation and the intended inclusion of the planned growth within the adopted Crawley Borough Local Plan 2023 to 2040 and Gatwick Northern Runway DCO as part of the Transport Study update. • CBC maintains its concerns that the Horsham District Council's Local Plan was submitted in July 2024 and the planning application for West of Ifield was submitted by Homes England in August 2025. Therefore, the updated transport modelling outlined above should take account of the full implications of all of the combined proposals around Crawley, including those to the West of Ifield.

	• CBC request being involved in the detailed Transport Assessment carried out in relation to this proposal.
CBC wishes to be involved in discussion regarding transport infrastructure, including sustainable transport connects into Crawley	**Mid Sussex:** • The Mid Sussex Transport Infrastructure Management Group (TIMG) has been set up. One purpose of this group is to supervise the monitoring and implementation of development in Mid Sussex with regards to transport. • As set out in the Terms of Reference [T16], the Core Group includes MSDC alongside WSCC and National Highways and will meet every three months. To date the TIMG meetings have not discussed individual sites. Crawley Borough Council are listed as a Neighbouring Authority who will be invited to attend the group meetings as required, when individual sites are discussed [T16] • Policy DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park requires a layout that will prioritise active and sustainable connections through the site, and "to improve sustainable routes to Three Bridges train station, Crawley Town Centre and areas of employment centres" • The Site Promoters for Crabbet Park have confirmed their intentions to work together with MSDC and CBC on agreeing a suitable alignment for high quality walking and cycling links connecting the development to key locations (transport nodes, employment area) within the Crawley Borough, including Three Bridges train station, Crawley Town Centre, Manor Royal and Gatwick, along suitable desire lines; and for CBC to be involved in the design of the active travel measures for the site. This is set out in the agreed SoCG between Mid Sussex District Council and Wates [S4]. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes confirmation that it is listed as a Neighbouring Authority who will be invited to attend the group meetings when individual sites are discussed. • CBC is not clear when this will be and who will determine when it is required. • CBC welcomes the confirmation that the site promoters intend to work with CBC in addition to MSDC for sustainable and active travel options. CBC would like certainty from MSDC through policy requirements that this will be the case if the site promoters were to change. • However, CBC would be concerned should this be restricted to sustainable and active travel measures only, as impact on local highways in Crawley is also an important consideration.
In regard to Three Bridges and Crawley railway stations '*CBC considers that financial contributions should be required towards proportionate*	**Mid Sussex:** • The TIMG will assess proposed transport infrastructure projects and make recommendation to decisions makers at member organisations in respect to the alignment of transport infrastructure projects and programmes, with funding resources and opportunities [T16]

accessibility improvements to these facilities, with early and appropriate engagement with CBC, Network Rail and other stakeholders to identify the specific improvements required.	• Policy DPSC2 states "7. A layout which prioritises active and sustainable travel connections throughout the site: a) To improve sustainable transport routes to Three Bridges train station, Crawley Town Centre and areas of employment centre including links to the Worth Way" therefore provides a policy hook for requesting contributions if necessary/justified. • Mid Sussex has consulted with Network Rail during the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. At this time Three Bridges and Crawley railway stations have not been identified as an infrastructure requirement arising from the Plan. However, this will be kept under review as sites progress to delivery and the work TIMG continues. • Site promoters have confirmed that they will engage with Network Rail, along with other public transport parties during the preparation of a planning application. • At the time of writing, no specific transport mitigation projects have been identified within Crawley Borough. However, as schemes are identified as the site progresses (e.g. through the detailed Transport Assessment work at planning application stage), MSDC will be happy to secure financial contributions towards projects in Crawley Borough as appropriate. This is a matter for application stage rather than Local Plan. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the policy reference for improving sustainable transport routes to Three Bridges station. • CBC remains concerned that the MSDP does not require contributions towards improvements towards access to Three Bridges Station from this site and suggests the requirement is included in the Policy as is in DPSC1 (Burgess Hill) and the DPSC5 Sayers Common allocations (for Burgess Hill and Hassocks Stations respectively) "Financial contributions towards the provision of: • Improvements at THREE BRIDGES Station". • CBC reiterates its request for early and appropriate engagement with CBC, Network Rail and other stakeholders to identify the specific improvements required to secure necessary transport infrastructure improvements within Crawley, and that this should be a policy requirement to ensure sustainable transport is positively taken up through improvements to linkages and capacity for the development.
Infrastructure	
The cumulative infrastructure needs are clearly identified and programmed for delivery in coordination with new development.	**Mid Sussex:** • MSDC has provided CBC with the infrastructure requirements for the site (based on engagement with infrastructure providers) and how these are reflected both in the policy requirements for DPSC2 and in work completed since by the site promoter. • The NWS Authorities are looking to collate the infrastructure requirements arising in Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex. This will assist in coordinating infrastructure delivery.

	Crawley: • CBC welcomes the policy infrastructure requirements currently set out for this site. • CBC is concerned that the infrastructure requirements for the site have been based on the site in isolation, or as a maximum with the other sites within the MSDP for the Mid Sussex district only. • The infrastructure impacts are going to predominately be on Crawley and should be considered cumulatively with other major developments, including Gatwick Airport NRP and West of Ifield. • This work should be required, particularly in light of the early stages of development potentially coming forward ahead of the main infrastructure provision. • The specific infrastructure needs arising from strategic development close to Crawley in Mid Sussex can then feed into the collaborative piece of work, potentially led by CBC, to collate all of the infrastructure requirements affecting Crawley arising from developments within Crawley, Mid Sussex and Horsham. • Include additional policy wording: "Determining the appropriate level of these infrastructure requirements, cumulative impacts on Crawley's infrastructure will need to be taken into account, including Crawley's own growth set out in the adopted Crawley Borough Local Plan, Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Project and the West of Ifield proposed strategic development in Horsham district."
Most GP Practices in Crawley have capped lists…' and *'suggests that the development offers an excellent opportunity for new onsite health provision and would expect MSDC and NHS Sussex to engage positively in order to secure this benefit.'*	**Mid Sussex:** • CBC are aware that Mid Sussex are working with the Integrated Care Board to ensure that health care provision is in place to meet the needs generated by the development. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes being updated on progress in relation to health provision for this site.
Seek confirmation of Thames Water's position on wastewater	**Mid Sussex:** • Thames Water are the wastewater body for this area. Mid Sussex has engaged with Thames Water during the preparation of the Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and have received no objections [IV4] • The IDP indicates that wastewater network and sewage treatment infrastructure upgrades are likely to be required. **Crawley:**

	• Cumulative impacts will need to be taken into account, including Crawley's own growth set out in the Crawley Borough Local Plan, Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Project and West of Ifield proposed strategic development in Horsham district (currently a submitted planning application and strategic allocation in the draft Horsham District Local Plan). See suggested additional policy wording above.
Support on site education provision, which may assist with meeting unmet needs for school places in Crawley.	**Mid Sussex:** • Work is ongoing with West Sussex County Council to determine the phasing of the on-site education provision • It is likely that there will be capacity to address unmet needs for school places (particularly secondary and SEND) arising in Crawley. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes being updated on progress in relation to education provision for this site and considers it essential that the policy provision assists in meeting any unmet education needs arising from Crawley.
Welcome on site infrastructure provision. Where a commuted sum is sought, should be associated with most appropriate project, which might not be in Mid Sussex.	**Mid Sussex:** • The NWS Authorities are looking to collate the infrastructure requirements arising in Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex. This will assist in coordinating infrastructure delivery and most appropriate locations for spend. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the commitment to joint working on the infrastructure requirements arising in Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex. • The specific infrastructure needs arising from strategic development close to Crawley in Mid Sussex can feed into the collaborative piece of work, potentially led by CBC, to collate all of the infrastructure requirements affecting Crawley arising from developments within Crawley, Mid Sussex and Horsham.
Housing	
Wish to be engaged in determining level, tenure and mix of affordable housing. proposed 30% affordable housing requirement currently proposed by the scheme (to reflect its location adjacent to Crawley the affordable housing	**Mid Sussex:** • The site is within Mid Sussex and therefore affordable housing will be sought in accordance with the District Plan policy. • The affordable housing requirement for Mid Sussex has been informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the viability assessment. • The delivery of 30% affordable housing is currently required on this site, and all sites within Mid Sussex. The evidence and justification for this was discussed at a hearing session on February 26th (Matter 3). MSDC

requirement level should be set at, at least, 40%)	recognises the evidence in the SHMA of the acute affordable need in Crawley. MSDC is testing whether an increased requirement can be supported by viability evidence. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the recognition for Crawley's acute affordable housing needs and welcomes the additional work being carried out by MSDC to test whether an increase for this site is viable. • CBC strongly maintains that the scheme should be required through the MSDP policy to provide at least 40% affordable housing. This is in line with the evidence in the Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019), the Inspectors' Final Report for the Crawley Borough Local Plan and the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2023 to 2040 reflecting the acute need for affordable housing arising in Crawley. • CBC would welcome being fully engaged in this new viability work and providing any additional information which may be of assistance in respect of this.
Wish to explore the option of granting CBC nominations in respect of at least half of the affordable housing	**Mid Sussex:** • Mid Sussex is open to discussions with Crawley regarding granting it affordable housing nomination rights on a proportion of the affordable housing delivered on site. • There is precedent for this approach as it was used at the Woodgate, Pease Pottage development (allocated in the adopted District Plan). • The principle is agreed, the details are a matter to be resolved at planning application stage **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the confirmation of the in-principle agreement and seeks further certainty that this will be agreed to at least a 50/50 share.
Wish to be engaged in determining the appropriate mix of housing sizes and types, to reflect needs arising from Crawley	**Mid Sussex:** • Mid Sussex has undertaken a comparison of the policy requirements for housing mix in the respective plans. • The Mid Sussex housing mix requirement is presented as a range, while Crawley policy is a specific percentage figure. • For market housing Crawley's figure sits within the Mid Sussex range for all house types. • For affordable housing there is a greater difference in the size of house types that are required to meet affordable need. • Mid Sussex will continue to engage with Crawley and site promoters regarding the mix of affordable housing provision on site as work progresses towards planning application stage. **Crawley:**

	• CBC maintain the Policy should set out a blended housing mix for private and affordable housing to reflect the site's location adjacent to Crawley borough, as an urban extension to Crawley. It should be clear for this site that it should not be based on meeting the Mid Sussex position alone and so should be a specific requirement rather than falling within a range of acceptability for the entire district which could result in not meeting the needs of Crawley residents.
Clarity required on gypsy and traveller provision and if site could meet emerging Gypsy and traveller needs.	**Mid Sussex:** • At Crabbet Park a financial contribution towards gypsy and traveller provision will be made rather than on site provision. • This will be secured via S106 and will provide detail of amount and location of spend. This is a matter for the planning application stage. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the approach that traveller provision will be secured through financial contributions from this site. • CBC request confirmation of where this need will be met and that a site/sites in a suitable location has been identified and permitted to meet the needs of the district if it is not to be required as a site as part of this Strategic Site allocation.
Other	
There should be a specified size threshold, and/or requirement for retail impact testing including on Crawley Town Centre	**Mid Sussex:** • Retail provision on site will take the form of provision in a neighbourhood centre, to support day-to-day needs, rather than provide comparison shopping facilities. • The SoCG between MSDC and Wates [S4] agrees the principle of a cap on the size of retail. • Given the above, the MSDC's view is that retail provision at Crabbet Park will not have any detrimental impact on Crawley Town Centre, where a wide range of comparison shops exist. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the requirement for a neighbourhood centre supporting the day-to-day needs of this new neighbourhood. • The Crawley Borough Local Plan requires an impact assessment for development of 500sqm gross floor space or greater. Therefore, CBC request the policy requires a Retail Impact Assessment for retail development over

	this size is prepared to show the impact of this site on Crawley Town Centre, and the neighbourhood parades on the eastern side of Crawley (Maidenbower, Pound Hill, Peterhouse and Shires).
CBC strongly objects to the low densities currently proposed by the scheme. It is strongly believed that to ensure effective use of land, development capacity of these Significant Sites should be maximised.	**Mid Sussex:** • Making effective use of land is a key principle of the District Plan. • MSDC position is that density on this site is not low for a greenfield site. Greenfield site density averages 30dph across the district, this site is 40-60dph. • The development density of various land parcel across the site will vary according to the on-site constraints such as Ancient Woodland, water course, topography, relationship with site boundaries and the proximity of the High Weald Protected Landscape. • In order not to have negative impacts on such constraints (to comply with national and local policies) the yield from the site has been determined accordingly **Crawley:** • CBC supports the District Plan's key principle for making effective use of land. However, CBC understands from the most recent meeting with Wates that some areas would have a density in the 20s, with the whole site having an average of 42dph. • Further clarity would be beneficial on what has been included and excluded in order to calculate the density levels. • CBC believes there are parts of the site, particularly around the neighbourhood centre which could, and should be higher than 60dph, especially to ensure sustainable travel, such as extending the Fastway bus network (not just a normal bus route), is viable, as well as contributing further to meeting housing needs.
Reference should be made to the need for addressing any aircraft noise impacts on sensitive receptors within the site area.	**Mid Sussex:** • A Noise Impact Assessment has been undertaken to understand the potential impact of aircraft noise on sensitive receptors, including at the land parcel identified for education provision. **Crawley:** • CBC welcomes the confirmation that a Noise Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this site in relation to aircraft noise, and requests this evidence is shared.