

# **DETAILED STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**between**

**ST ALBANS CITY & DISTRICT COUNCIL and**

**Historic England**

**October 2025**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 St Albans City and District Council (SADC) and Historic England (HE) have been engaging actively and on an ongoing basis in order to assist in the development of the St Albans Local Plan since the start of its creation. This resulted in an agreed and signed Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground, signed January 2025 (SADC/ED23).
- 1.2 The purpose of this Detailed Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is to set out areas of common agreement between SADC and HE and any areas yet to be agreed in relation to the draft St Albans Local Plan 2024 – 2041. The focus of this Detailed SoCG is on protections and mitigations and managing the impact of development on the Historic Environment.
- 1.3 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) covers the Local Planning Authority area of St Albans City and District Council.

## **2. Areas of Common Ground**

- 2.1 Both parties agree that they have a positive working relationship. Both agree to continue to work together collaboratively on the strategic matters relating to the draft St Albans Local Plan.
- 2.2 Both parties agree that the 'HE Comments and Agreed Mods October 2025' document appended to this SoCG represents an accurate representation of: the amendments to the Plan recommended by HE in their Regulation 19 response; and the result of discussions between SADC and HE in relation to those recommended amendments.
- 2.3 SADC will propose Main Modifications in due course to the draft St Albans Local Plan Examination in regard to the matters raised in this SoCG. As of October 2025, SADC have prepared suggested Main Modifications. These are appended in Appendix A and will be subject to further iteration through the Local Plan Examination process.
- 2.4 The further Main Modifications proposed to HE5 and HE6 below are also agreed:

**HE5 – Archaeological Sites for Local Preservation**

~~Planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the remains within, or the character of, the sites for local preservation as defined in Appendix 3. Development may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, following evaluation, if the Council is satisfied that important remains would not be destroyed or the character of the site adversely affected. The evaluation, which may involve limited excavation or other work (e.g. geophysical survey) is to be carried out by the Council or an archaeologist approved by the Council. Planning permissions will normally be subject to conditions requiring facilities for the Council to record remains by excavation in advance of construction and / or during construction. Development that preserves or enhances the remains and character of sites identified for local preservation (Appendix 3) will be supported. Where harm would result, this will be weighed against the significance of the asset and the extent of harm or loss. Applications shall have assessed the site in consultation with the Historic Environment Record and taken account of the archaeological importance of any remains, the need for the development, the likely extent of any harm, and the likelihood of the proposal successfully preserving the archaeological significance of the site.~~

## **HE6 – Archaeological Sites Subject to a Recording Condition**

~~Within the sites listed in Appendix 4, the Council will not normally refuse planning applications on archaeological grounds. However, following evaluation, planning permissions may be subjected to a condition requiring facilities for the Council to record remains by excavation in advance of construction and / or during construction. The evaluation may involve limited excavation or other work (e.g. geophysical survey) expect that the applicants shall have assessed the site in consultation with the Historic Environment Record and taken account of the archaeological importance of those remains, the need for the development, the likely extent of any harm. Where archaeological potential is identified but there is no overriding case for the remains to be preserved in situ, development which would destroy or disturb potential remains will be permitted, subject to conditions ensuring an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, recording, reporting and archiving, prior to development commencing. There will be a requirement to make the result of these investigations publicly accessible.~~

N.B. The sites in Appendix 4 are not a comprehensive list of archaeological sites (See the Historic Environment Record) and the potential for previously unknown sites on proposed development needs to be considered as part of the planning process.

## **3. Outstanding Matters**

- 3.1 Both parties agree that there is one substantive matter raised in the HE Regulation 19 response which remains not agreed, as follows:
- In relation to the inclusion of Part B site M3 - Bedmond Lane, St Albans, AL3 4AH in the absence of additional archaeological assessment – see row No. 4 of the appended table.

Signatories

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Briggs' with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Chris Briggs

Signed on behalf of St Albans City and District Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'AM' in a bold, stylized script.

Andrew Marsh

Signed on behalf of Historic England