



**Statement of Common Ground
Between
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
and
London Borough of Hackney**

**Stage:
Tower Hamlets Submission Draft Local Plan (Submission)**

29 January 2026

Executive Summary

A statement of common ground (SoCG) is a written record of the progress made by plan-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. It documents the strategic matters where effective cooperation has led to cross-boundary challenges and opportunities being identified, whether there is agreement between bodies in how these should be addressed, and how the strategic matters have evolved throughout the plan-making process. It is also a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan-period and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries.

This Statement of Common Ground addresses key strategic matters between the two signatories: the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the London Borough of Hackney as relevant to:

- The preparation of the Tower Hamlets Proposed Submission Version Local Plan and its progression to public examination

This document is intended to be a live document, updated as circumstances change. Please see the Governance Arrangements section of the statement for more details.

1. Introduction

1.1. This Statement of Common Ground is made between the following parties to assist in the Examination in Public of the Local Plan:

- The London Borough of Hackney (Hackney) and
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH).



- 1.2. Tower Hamlets Council is the Local Planning Authority for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Tower Hamlets is an inner London borough, which borders five other London boroughs and the City of London: Hackney to the north, Newham to the east, Southwark, Lewisham and Greenwich to the south across the River Thames, and the City of London to the west. Tower Hamlets is known for its diversity, multiculturalism and numerous historical and modern landmarks, including the Tower of London and Canary Wharf.
- 1.3. Hackney Council is the Local Planning Authority for the London Borough of Hackney. It borders the borough of Tower Hamlets to its south. There are several sites across the boundary, including Fish Island/Hackney Wick and Bishopsgate Goods Yard that require continuing cooperation for the benefit of both communities.

2. Need for a Statement of Common Ground

- 2.1. The London Borough of Hackney submitted a response to LBTH's Regulation 19 consultation (2024). They raised some concerns regarding the policy PS2 in relation to tall buildings.

3. Continued Engagement

- 3.1. Following the first Regulation 19 consultation (2024), LBTH and LB Hackney engaged in Duty to Cooperate discussions to ensure that the Heritage Impact Assessment would adequately address LB Hackney's concerns.

4. Tall Buildings

- 4.1. In their representation to the first Regulation 19 consultation (2024), LB Hackney raised concerns about the potential for tall buildings in Zone F to impact heritage assets and conservation areas along Hackney's southern boundary.
- 4.2. As part of their representation, they raised concerns regarding the lack of clarity about how areas of Zone F were deemed suitable for tall buildings and that the impact on Hackney's conservation areas and their setting had not been adequately considered. In addition, they stated that there are discrepancies between Figure 9 and Figure 10, that may have an effect on nearby conservation areas, such as Broadway Market. In order to reduce ambiguity and better protect heritage assets, Hackney recommends clearer wording for Zone F developments by stating that heights should not exceed 70m AOD.

- 4.3. There have also been concerns raised with inconsistencies in Zone F by excluding Bishopsgate Goods Yard, which already has existing permission for tall buildings, up to 142m.
- 4.4. LB Hackney also submitted a response to the second Regulation 19 consultation (2025) in which they continued to raise concerns regarding the potential for Zone F to impact conservation areas in Hackney.
- 4.5. LB Hackney identify a discrepancy between spatial strategy for growth set out in Figure 9, which comes from the Characterisation and Growth Study, and the areas covered by Zone F in Figure 10. Zone F includes several areas of Tower Hamlets that were identified as 'conserve' areas in the Characterisation and Growth Study.
- 4.6. LBTH considers that the overwhelming need for new housing in borough, as demonstrated in the Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) is able to justify the change from the London Plan target which is relatively similar in scale. According to the LHNA there is a demand for 3251 new homes per year.
- 4.7. LB Hackney also has specific concerns with areas of Zone F adjacent to the borough boundary and a Conservation Area within Hackney these include Hackney Road and the Gas District Centre.
- 4.8. LBTH consider that the wording of Policy PS2 is sufficiently strong to ensure that tall buildings do not have a significant negative impact on heritage assets and their settings. The detailed design of tall buildings and their potential impacts will be considered as part of the application process.
- 4.9. LB Hackney also recommends that Policy PS2 explicitly reference prevailing heights, the settings of conservation areas, and the relationship with existing residential areas as key considerations for determining the suitability of tall buildings.
- 4.10. Given the overwhelming need for new housing in Tower Hamlets, LBTH expects the character of some parts of the borough to change as a result of new development. It would therefore be unreasonable to limit tall building locations on the basis of prevailing heights. The impact on the settings of conservation areas would be considered in line with part 4.b. of Policy PS2, which expects development to avoid detrimental impacts on the significance of heritage assets. Where the setting of a conservation area forms part of its significance this would be a key consideration as part of the detailed design assessment of an application. Part 4.d. of Policy PS2 expects development to take account of impacts on daylight, sunlight

and overshadowing for neighbouring land and developments. This would include consideration of the impacts of tall building development on existing residential areas.

4.11. Matters of disagreement:

LB Hackney and LBTH have not yet reached agreement on:

- Tall Building Zone F and its justification, LBTH has outlined all of the Tall Building Zones with a comprehensive evidence based approach that includes documents such as the Characterisation and Growth Study. The proposed policy utilises all of these documents to ensure robust policy wording
- The extent of Zone F, particularly where it sits adjacent to conservation areas in Hackney.

5. Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

5.1. As part of the second Regulation 19 consultation (2025), LBTH wrote to all other London boroughs asking if they could assist Tower Hamlets in meeting its Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs given that there are no available sites in Tower Hamlets to accommodate new pitches.

5.2. LB Hackney responded to that request as part of their response to the second Regulation 19 consultation (2025) explaining that they did not have any sites available to accommodate an increase in Gypsy and Traveller pitches and therefore could not provide assistance to LBTH.

5.3. Matter of agreement:

LB Hackney and LBTH agree that LB Hackney is unable to provide assistance to LBTH in meeting its potential Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

6. Waste

6.1. As part of the second Regulation 19 consultation (2025), LBTH wrote to all other London boroughs asking if they could assist Tower Hamlets in meeting its waste capacity shortfall.

6.2. LB Hackney responded to that request as part of their response to the second Regulation 19 consultation (2025) explaining that they jointly adopted the North London Waste Plan in 2022 and that any waste capacity sharing may necessitate a review of that plan. LB Hackney also explained that, as a dense inner London borough, they do not have any sites that could provide surplus waste capacity to Tower Hamlets.

6.3. Matters of agreement:

LB Hackney and LBTH agree that LB Hackney is unable to provide assistance to LBTH in meeting its waste capacity shortfall, as evidenced by the supporting evidence for the recently adopted North London Waste Plan.



7. Governance Arrangements

7.1. This statement of common ground will be reviewed:

- a) whenever agreement is reached on any outstanding matters; or
- b) at key milestones in progress towards addressing strategic matters; or
- c) at subsequent key stages of the plan making process.

8. Signatories

8.1. We confirm that the information in this statement reflect the joint working-to-date undertaken between the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the London Borough of Hackney towards addressing the identified strategic matters.

Signed on behalf of the London Borough of Hackney  Name: Seonaid Carr Date: 03 February 2026 Position: Strategic Planning Manager	Signed on behalf of London Borough of Tower Hamlets:  Name: Natalya Palit Date: 29 January 2026 Position: Plan-making manager
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