

NORTH HUNTINGDON & ST IVES CUMULATIVE IMPACTS GROUP

Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) Summary

Note - these have been reviewed in relation to the
Whole Plan Viability Assessment (June 2026) and the
Stage 2 Infrastructure Delivery Study (June 2026)

The evidence base has materially improved and is now substantially more mature than at Preferred Options stage. However, the SoCGs generally demonstrate cooperation and acknowledgement of problems rather than proving that those problems have been fully resolved.

In planning terms, they increase confidence regarding soundness, but they do not remove concerns regarding deliverability and effectiveness, particularly for growth on a scale equivalent to a new settlement.

The SoCGs themselves are evidence that HDC has engaged constructively with infrastructure providers and statutory bodies.

Anglian Water

This is probably the single most important SoCG for the emerging Local Plan and does demonstrate improvements to the evidence base.

The SoCG demonstrates several major improvements:

1. Recognition of cumulative impacts

Both parties explicitly recognise that water and wastewater impacts extend beyond Huntingdonshire and require consideration of growth in neighbouring authorities. This is a significant advance and admission compared with the Preferred Options stage.

2. Anglian Water is now an active participant

The SoCG demonstrates that:

- Anglian Water has been involved throughout plan preparation;
- strategic sites have been discussed;
- phasing principles are being developed;
- wastewater upgrades are being planned.

3. Explicit reference to achieving environmental outcomes

The SoCG goes further than previous evidence by stating that development can *potentially* proceed whilst achieving "no deterioration" and "no adverse impacts", **subject to satisfaction of regulators**.

4. Remaining weaknesses

However, this SoCG still leaves significant questions unanswered.

It demonstrates cooperation but not certainty.

The SoCG does not demonstrate:

- final Asset Management Plan funding approval;
- detailed upgrade programmes;
- confirmed delivery dates;
- occupation triggers;
- contingency arrangements if upgrades slip.

This remains particularly important because the Water Cycle Study still identifies considerable dependency upon future investment programmes which are themselves dependent upon future investment decisions. These decisions are driven by Anglian Water's next Asset Management Plan covering 2030 -2035, the accompanying Business Case for investment and OfWat subsequent approval (for example of household water rate increases). Much of the timetable for this work is out of sync with the Local Plan timetable currently being pursued by HDC.

The SoCG also recognises interaction between growth and water supply via the Fens Reservoir proposals.

However:

- reservoir timing remains uncertain;
- governance remains uncertain;
- relationship with Greater Cambridge growth and priorities for scarce resources remains uncertain as does the growth priority of housing versus business use.

NHS / Integrated Care Board

This shows some improvements versus the Preferred Options stage of the Local Plan.

The key improvement is that the NHS now explicitly acknowledges:

- cumulative impacts;
- cross-boundary pressures;
- need for coordinated health planning.

This addresses one of our previous concerns that health impacts had been considered only locally. It also confirms active engagement between HDC and the NHS.

Remaining weaknesses

Unfortunately this remains one of the weaker areas of the evidence base. In terms of workforce capacity the SoCG still does not provide evidence regarding:

- GP recruitment;
- clinician shortages;
- nursing capacity.

It provides little evidence of secondary healthcare impacts regarding:

- Hinchingsbrooke Hospital;
- Addenbrooke's pressures;
- ambulance demand.

It lacks funding certainty regards:

- capital programme;
- approved business cases;
- delivery mechanisms.

The NHS evidence therefore still remains relatively formula-based and remains one of the weaker parts of the overall evidence base.

UK Power Networks

This is perhaps one of the most encouraging SoCGs and shows significant improvements.

It confirms:

- long-term engagement since 2023;
- UKPN input into the IDS;
- joint forward planning work;
- cross-boundary electricity considerations extending beyond Huntingdonshire

Remaining weaknesses

Again, cooperation does not automatically equal delivery. Questions remain regarding:

- location of new substations;
- delivery programmes;
- costs;
- grid reinforcement timescales;
- relationship with future electrification and EV demand.

For a development programme approaching new-town scale, these remain significant issues.

Environment Agency / Lead Local Flood Authority

Improvements

The SoCG demonstrates:

- extensive joint methodological work;
- agreement on Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) methodology;
- consideration of cross-boundary flooding impacts;
- updates following National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA2) mapping;
- recognition of cumulative catchment effects.

This substantially strengthens the evidence base.

It also demonstrates a high degree of technical cooperation between HDC, the EA and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Remaining weaknesses

Flood risk remains manageable rather than eliminated. There are still questions regarding:

- residual risk;
- climate change uncertainty;
- drainage delivery;
- interaction with water neutrality and groundwater.

In particular, cumulative impacts on the Great Ouse catchment remain difficult to predict.

Greater Cambridge

This Interim Statement of Common Ground document is highly relevant strategically and demonstrates that neighbouring authorities are themselves wrestling with:

- water constraints;
- wastewater constraints;
- infrastructure dependencies;
- cross-boundary growth impacts.

This is important because it supports one of our key arguments which is that Huntingdonshire cannot be assessed in isolation.

Growth pressures particularly around Greater Cambridge directly affect:

- water resources;
- strategic transport;
- utilities;
- labour markets.

The document therefore reinforces the need for:

- strategic planning;
- integrated infrastructure thinking;
- stronger horizontal evidence.

With limited resources and competing priorities across the County, this may point to the need for the CPCA to develop a Spatial Development Strategy to direct and co-ordinate the effort by setting realistic targets and guard rails within Local Plans.

Conclusion

It is fair to say that the Statements of Common Ground have partially resolved some of the principal criticisms of the Cumulative Impacts Group.

Resolved:

- Infrastructure providers are now engaged.
- Cumulative impacts are now being recognised as important
- Cross-boundary matters are being considered.
- Infrastructure requirements are better understood.
- The evidence base is now much more comprehensive.

Still unresolved:

- How to address infrastructure planning requirements when viewed as a single entity/new town?
- How will everything be funded?
- What happens if key infrastructure slips?
- Who prioritises and coordinates delivery?
- How are dependencies managed?
- Is there a governance model appropriate for growth equivalent to a new town?
- Can infrastructure be delivered in the correct sequence?