

## Councillors Briefing Note No. 19-022

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### WILTSHIRE HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

This briefing note provides:

- (i) An update on the 2018 housing land supply position for the three Housing Market Areas (HMAs) in Wiltshire
- (ii) An update on the 5-year land supply position for traveller sites.

#### Wiltshire Housing Land Supply Statement 2018

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements, with an additional buffer of housing requirement brought forward from later in the plan period to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

The update for Wiltshire has now been completed and the results of the assessment, using a base date of 1 April 2018, are set out in the 2018 Housing Land Supply Statement (HLSS) that will be published on the council's website on 8 August 2019 via this [link](#).

The updated position is summarised in Table 1 below.

Area	Housing requirement 2006-2026	Housing completions 2006-2018	Five year housing requirement* 2018-2023	Deliverable supply 2018-2023	Number of years of deliverable supply
East Wiltshire HMA	5,940	4,039	1,248	1,665	6.67
North and West Wiltshire HMA	24,740	14,211	6,910	7,009	5.07
South Wiltshire HMA	10,420	6,064	2,933	2,611	4.45
Wiltshire HMAs	41,100	24,314	N/A	N/A	N/A
Swindon (within Wiltshire)	900	773	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wiltshire Total	42,000	25,087	N/A	11,285	N/A

\* This includes a 5% buffer in accordance with the 2018 results of the Housing Delivery Test (see below)

This does not include the allocations in the emerging Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, which is being prepared to improve housing land supply across Wiltshire.

Appendix 6 of the Housing Land Supply Statement (HLSS) sets out the local housing requirements by Community Area and for each Principal Settlement, Market Town and, in South Wiltshire, the Local Service Centres as set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. It shows the level of housing completions, commitments and residual level of housing to be provided in each location to ensure the Wiltshire Core Strategy requirements can be achieved over the plan period.

The HLSS represents a snapshot in time and the assessment of housing land supply is not an exact science. The estimates of delivery for the sites listed are based on the evidence available whilst the Statement is being prepared.

Key points to note are:

- There is a sufficient supply of housing in the East Wiltshire HMA (6.67 years) and the North & West Wiltshire HMA (5.07 years). However the extent to which the position exceeds the requisite 5-year supply differs across these two HMAs.
- There is currently a deficit in the 5-year supply in the South Wiltshire HMA (4.45 years).
- The format of the HLSS and aspects of the 5-year housing land supply method have been updated in line with revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (see explanation below).

Table 3 of the HLSS contains sites with planning permission that have been permitted since 1 April 2018 (up to 31 March 2019). Whilst these are not in the housing land supply because they came forward after the base date of 1 April 2018 they may contribute to the housing land supply when the next housing land supply assessment (base dated April 2019) is published. These will help replenish the supply as it is reduced over time due to completions, permissions lapsing and not being implemented, and delays in delivery on certain sites.

In line with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) the following changes have been made to this HLSS compared to the previous version:

- The PPG has clarified that the buffer should be added onto the housing requirement side of the calculation rather than onto the supply. The implications of this are that, more logically, a 5 years supply is required to meet the NPPF target (i.e. 5 years which **includes** the 5% buffer).

In previous years the council has applied the necessary buffer to the supply-side of the equation. This has meant a 5.25 years supply (5 years **plus** 5% buffer) has been required to meet the requisite target in the NPPF.

This change does not decrease or increase the burden on the council as to how much land it needs to provide to meet the requisite 5-year housing land supply - it is simply a change to the accounting method used.

- Table 2b has been introduced to explain how the 5-year land supply position has been calculated by HMA. This shows how any shortfall in anticipated completions, when compared against the Wiltshire Core Strategy requirement, has been calculated.
- Appendix 1 'Summary breakdown of large sites in deliverable supply' and Appendix 2 'small sites contributing to deliverable supply' now include a more detailed breakdown. In addition to 'outstanding committed dwellings' for a site it states how many are 'under construction', 'completed' or have been lost through demolition.

- Appendix 3 'Deliverability summary for sites in Appendix 1 that are anticipated to deliver housing in the forthcoming 5-year period' has been revised to include an explanation as to why housing on the site is 'deliverable' (as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF).

## **Housing Delivery Test**

The NPPF requires a buffer to be applied to the 5-year housing land supply to ensure choice and competition in the market for land, and ensure land is made available in a timely manner to meet the housing requirement in the development plan. The revised NPPF has moved away from the concept of 'persistent under delivery', and now uses the nationally set Housing Delivery Test to establish whether a 5% or 20% should apply.

The Housing Delivery Test measures housing delivery for each Local Planning Authority against its housing requirement over the past three years. The latest [Housing Delivery Test](#) results means that the council should apply a 5% buffer to its 5-year housing land supply. A 20% buffer is only applied where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous 3 years i.e. 85% or lower of the housing requirement. The latest Housing Delivery Test results indicate that 139% of the housing requirement was delivered over the past three years in Wiltshire.

## **5-year housing land supply and decision-taking**

Where a 5-year land supply (with the appropriate buffer) cannot be demonstrated or the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing is substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the three previous years then the presumption (or tilted balance) in favour of sustainable development applies.

The NPPF makes it clear that where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply of deliverable sites, relevant policies should not be considered up to date. This does not mean that in these circumstances all proposals for housing should be permitted, only that relevant policies should be given less weight in decision making, particularly Core Policy 2 in relation to settlement boundaries. Cases where adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits can, and should, still be refused. However, where applications are being considered for sites at settlements but outside the defined settlement boundaries there may be the opportunity to improve housing supply by favourably considering proposals where appropriate. This would depend on the judgements made as to where the planning balance lies and considerations may include limited impacts and benefits to local communities that arise from the proposal.

## **5-year housing supply for travellers**

In accordance with [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (paragraph 10a) the council has published a 5 year land supply position against the targets for permanent pitches in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the 2014 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. This will be published on the council's website on 8 August 2019 via this [link](#).

This evidence will inform decisions on planning applications for new traveller sites in Wiltshire. As before planning applications will be determined in accordance with the development plan, particularly Core Policy 47 'Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers unless material considerations indicate otherwise.