

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Local Development Framework

Housing Land Monitor (Interim Report) 2011 – 2012

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Cheshire West
and Chester

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the Report

1.1 This document sets out the housing land supply in Cheshire West and Chester covering the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2012. This is an interim report that will be updated in line with the review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment that is currently taking place.

1.2 This report informs the Cheshire West and Chester Local Development Framework (LDF), provides housing data for the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), and is an integral part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.

Planning Policy

1.3 The North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) provides a housing number of 23,700 for Cheshire West and Chester for the period 2003-2021, which equates to 1,317 units per annum.

1.4 The Localism Act 2011 removed Part 9 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which prevents any further Strategies being created. It is anticipated that the RSS will be abolished in the near future. The Housing Land Monitor will take account of the Borough's RSS housing target until it is replaced by a new target, determined locally in the light of up-to-date evidence.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities that do not have a current 5 year land supply and/or have under delivered in previous years, to be able to demonstrate either an additional 5% or 20% land supply. The additional requirement is based upon the severity of historical under provision by the authority and will be included where appropriate in future monitoring reports.

2 Methodology

Aim of the housing land monitor system

- To provide a complete accurate and up-to-date picture of housing permissions and housing development in the Borough.
- To record projections of future housing completions in order to calculate a 5-year housing land supply in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.1 This information is also used to calculate the councils corporate performance indicator relating to net additional homes provided, produce the Annual Monitoring Report and the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Housing Flows Reconciliation Returns form, and is used by other departments in the council such as Research and Intelligence, and Education.

Objectives of the housing land monitor system

- Accurately record details for all pending and granted permissions for housing development in the Borough
- Calculate annual housing completions (by type / source / size)
- Record completion forecasts and calculate a 5 year housing supply

Carrying out the Housing Monitor

Housing Permissions

2.2 The initial source of data for housing applications submitted to the Council is the online Weekly / Monthly Lists (available through the Council's website). This facility allows a search to be made by specified time periods, and produces lists of all planning applications that have been submitted. From these lists details of all planning permissions that include residential units are extracted and input into the *Monitoring and Forecasts* excel workbook for the current year.

2.3 A unit is counted within the monitor if it is:

- A new dwelling;
- The conversion of an existing dwelling to more or fewer dwellings;
- The change of use of a building to residential use, or from residential use to another use class;

- New extra care or student accommodation where units are self-contained
- A permanent permission for a gypsy and traveller pitch (temporary permissions are not included)

2.4 The categories of homes as listed above are consistent with the sources of new homes that are counted for the purpose of New Homes Bonus.

Housing Completions

2.5 Site progress is monitored by carrying out site visits to each individual development. Proforma's are completed that detail the progress on the site. In addition to a site visit Building Control records may be used to verify whether a unit is complete.

Forecasting

2.6 Forecasting future dwelling completions is carried out and verified by officers in the Spatial Planning Team in collaboration with colleagues from Development Management, Growth Point, Strategic Housing and Building Control. Intelligence is gathered during site visits (where applicable / possible) and/or from discussions with developers.

3 Housing Completions

3.1 For the monitoring period 1 April 2011 - 31 March 2012 a gross total of **865** dwellings were completed. 62 dwellings were lost through demolition and conversion, therefore the net total of new dwellings in the Borough is **803**.

Table 3.1 2011 - 2012 Housing Completions

Type	No. Of dwellings
Gross Completions	865
Losses (Demolition / Conversion)	62
Total Net Completions	803

Historical Completions

3.2 The rate of housing completions in the Borough for the 9 year period between 2003 (the base date of the RSS) and 2012 (current year) are detailed in the table below. It is important to collate historic data and use this information to identify trends and anomalies which can be applied when forecasting future completion rates and preparing policy.

Table 3.2 Annual Net Housing Completions

Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	TOTAL
Net Completions	1062	1118	1336	799	707	723	733	654	803	7935

3.3 It is evident that the level of completions rose to in excess of 1300 homes in 2005/06 but then dropped sharply, with completions in the 700's between 2006/07 and 2009/10. The key determinants of this reduction in supply were the housing targets set within Regional Planning Guidance 13 (2003) (RPG 13) and the Cheshire Structure Plan Alteration (2006).

3.4 The average annual housing target within RPG 13 was 1630 homes for the whole of Cheshire. This was translated into individual housing targets for each of the predecessor districts through the Structure Plan Alteration. The combined target for the district areas that now comprise Cheshire West and Chester was 850 homes. The expectation was for this to be met, but not exceeded, through the managed and phased release of housing land. The reduced level of completions from 2006/07 reflected these targets with further pressure being placed on the districts through the 2006 Structure Plan to reign back the supply of land further because of the 'over-delivery' against this target immediately post 2002 (the base date for the targets).

3.5 The level of completions in the past few years has reduced because of market conditions, ironically at a time when the housing target for the Borough (no longer applied as a maximum target) has been increased substantially through the revised RSS published in 2008.

6 Gross Completions by Source

3.6 Dwellings completions by origin of the site fall into one of the following categories:

- **Allocated** - sites that have been specifically identified for housing development in the existing adopted Local Plans;
- **Brownfield Windfall** - located previously developed land that has not been specifically identified as available in existing Local Plans, and which have come forward through the development management process;
- **Greenfield Windfall** - sites that have come through the development management process as above, and are located on greenfield land; or
- **Mixed Windfall** - sites that have come through the development management process as above, and there is both greenfield and brownfield land within the site area.

Table 3.3 Gross Housing Completions by Source

	Allocated	Greenfield Windfall	Brownfield Windfall	Mixed Windfall	Total
Gross No. Of Dwellings	119	80	646	20	865
% of Total Completions	14 %	9 %	75 %	2 %	100%

Affordable Housing Completions

3.7 Affordable housing is defined as that which is accessible to people whose income does not enable them to afford to buy or rent property suitable for their needs in the open housing market.

3.8 For the purposes of the HLM report the completions total only includes new additions to the overall housing stock and therefore the figure recorded in this report may vary from the Councils Housing Flow Reconciliation Return (Communities and Local Government), which also takes into account changes in tenure of existing housing stock i.e. the acquisition of market housing to affordable housing stock.

Table 3.4 Annual Affordable Housing Completions 2008 - 2012

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
No of dwellings	228	283	323	382

4 Housing Land Supply Position

4.1 As at 1 April 2012 the total number of dwellings completed within the plan period (2003 - 2012) is 7935 (net). The future 5 year housing land supply i.e. the number of dwellings expected to be completed within the next 5 years is currently **5145** new homes. This supply is made up of the following sources:

- Existing planning permissions (sites either not started or under construction);
- Sites with a resolution to grant planning permission / subject to a S106 legal agreement;
- Remaining allocations for housing development in existing Local plans;
- Small sites allowance (as identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) for the last two years of the period; and
- Sites identified for delivery within the 1-5 year period in the Cheshire West and Chester 2010-2011 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

4.2 In order to be included in the five year supply a site has to be **deliverable**, sites should be **available** now, offer a **suitable** location for development, and be **achievable** with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on site within five years, and in particular that the site is viable. The full definitions are provided in the NPPF and available through the Communities and Local Government website.

4.3 Only sites which meet all of the criteria above are included within the total units available in each of the sources set out in the table below.

Table 4.1 Sources of Housing Land Supply

Source	No. Of dwellings
Extant planning permissions	4165
Planning applications awaiting resolution to grant permission (incl. S106)	346
Remaining Local Plan allocations for housing development	187
Small Sites allowance (187 per year)	374
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	73
TOTAL 5 YEAR SUPPLY	5145

Housing Supply Calculation

Table 4.2 Housing Land Requirement and 5 Year Supply Calculation

Formula	Calculation	
(A)	RSS housing requirement 2003 - 2021 (1317 x 18)	23,700 dwellings
(B)	Total dwelling completions 2003 - 2012	7935 dwellings
(C)	Net outstanding residual requirement 2012 - 2021 (A) - (B) = 23700 - 7935	15,765 dwellings
(D)	Number of years remaining in plan period (2012 to 2021)	9 years
(E)	Net revised annual completion requirement (2012 - 2021) (C) / (D) = 15,765 / 9	1752 dwellings
(F)	Outstanding 5 year provision / requirement (E) x 5 = 1752 x 5	8760 dwellings
(G)	Existing 5 year land supply as at 1 April 2012 (see table above)	5145 dwellings
(H)	Number of years housing supply (G) / (E) = 5145 / 1752	2.9 years

4.4 The table above shows that Cheshire West and Chester currently has a **2.9** year land supply for new housing based against the RSS housing requirement.

5 Next Steps

5.1 This is an Interim Housing Land Monitor Report. A review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is underway, the results of which will inform the first update of the Housing Land Monitor Report, anticipated early July 2012.

5.2 Work is also underway to develop a locally set (borough-wide) evidence-based housing target, reflecting the current and future needs of Cheshire West and Chester, which will replace the current RSS target as the basis for calculating the borough's supply of deliverable housing land. Again, this will result in an updated 5 year housing supply position.

5.3 Further versions of the Housing Land Monitor Report will then be published periodically to reflect additional planning permissions, thereby ensuring that there is a clear visibility of the 5 year supply position at any point in time.

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

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Tel: 0300 123 8 123 **Textphone:** 18001 01606 867 670

email: equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

web: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk