

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Local Plan

Housing Land Monitor

1 April 2013 – 30 September 2013

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Cheshire West
and Chester

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the Report

1.1 This document details the housing completions for the monitoring period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013 and sets out the five year housing land supply position as at 1 October 2013. New permissions since 1 April 2013 have been recorded, all sites in the monitor with a full or reserved matters permission have been visited and forecasting of future delivery has been reviewed and updated where applicable.

1.2 The Housing Land Monitor (HLM) 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. The calculation of a five year deliverable housing land supply is used for Development Management purposes when considering planning applications that include residential development.

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 Paragraph 47 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities that do not have a current five year land supply and/or have under delivered in previous years, to be able to demonstrate either an additional five per cent or twenty per cent land supply.

NPPF paragraph 47 reads:

"To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land."

Draft National Planning Practice Guidance (August 2013)

1.5 At the end of August 2013, draft National Planning Practice Guidance was published which includes the following information with regards to housing land assessments and in particular the inclusion of sites in the deliverable five year housing land supply:

“Deliverable sites for housing include those that are allocated for housing in a development plan and sites with planning permission (outline or full that have not been implemented) unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years or where planning permission has expired.

However, planning permission or allocation in a development plan is not a prerequisite for a site being deliverable in terms of the five-year supply. Local planning authorities will need to provide robust, up to date evidence to support the deliverability of sites, ensuring that their judgements on deliverability are clearly and transparently set out. If there are no significant constraints (e.g. infrastructure) to overcome, sites not allocated within a development plan or without planning permission can be considered capable of being delivered within a five-year timeframe.”

2 Methodology

2.1 The aims of the housing land monitor system are

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

2.2 The objectives of the housing land monitor system are to:

- Accurately record details for all granted permissions for housing development in the Borough;
- Calculate annual housing completions;
- Record forecasts for future housing completions; and
- Calculate the deliverable five year housing land supply position.

Housing permissions

2.3 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. The progress of each application is tracked through the planning process until a decision is issued.

2.4 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⁽ⁱ⁾
- A permanent permission for a gypsy and traveller pitch(es)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

2.5 Further detail on the types and make-up of dwellings that are included in the housing land supply can be found in Appendix A at the back of the document.

i Communal establishments i.e. Establishments providing managed residential accommodation where units are not self contained, are not counted in the overall housing supply statistics in line with CLG 'housing' definitions.

ii Temporary pitches are not included in the housing land supply

Housing completions

2.6 Site progress is monitored by carrying out site visits to each individual development that has an extant full or reserved matters planning permission. Proforma's are completed that detail the progress of construction on the site. In addition to a site visit Building Control records may be used to verify whether a unit is complete.

Forecasting

2.7 Forecasting future dwelling completions is carried out and verified by officers in the Spatial Planning Team in collaboration with colleagues from Development Management, Planning Delivery and Strategic Housing. Intelligence is gathered during site visits (where applicable / possible) and/or from direct correspondence with agents, developers and house builders.

2.8 Further research is conducted by the Planning Delivery Team which is used to produce a Housing Market Update report for the Borough. The intelligence gathered during this process on sales and site progress is used to inform the future forecasting to provide a robust evidence base for the calculation of the Council's deliverable housing land supply position.

2.9 General forecasting assumptions as detailed on pages 18 and 19 of the Council's SHLAA 2013 are the basis for the forecasting carried out in this report. Delivery rates are reviewed at the time of each monitor in order to apply the most up to date, realistic and robust rates that reflect the latest monitoring information, site status and market / economic information. For the purposes of this monitor, where information on delivery rates and / or delivery time frames is not available, the following assumptions have been applied:

Table 2.1 Delivery rate forecasting

Total net units on development	Forecast units per year / developer
Up to 10 units	Up to 5 units
10 - 25 units	5 to 10 units
25 - 50 units	10 to 20 units
50 - 100 units	20 to 25 units
100 to 200 units	25 to 30 units
200 + units	30 to 40 units

Table 2.2 Delivery timeframe forecasts

Site status	Estimated year of first completions	Reason / explanation
Site with extant outline planning permission	Year Two	Full / reserved matters permission granted in year one, preparation of site, construction and delivery of units commence year two
Site with extant full planning permission (development not commenced)	Year One	Preparation of site, construction and delivery of units commence year one
Site with full / reserved matters planning permission (development under construction)	Year One	Units recorded as under construction in last monitoring period forecast to complete in year one. For units currently not started, phased completion rates assumed (see table above)
Site with resolution to grant full planning permission subject to signing of legal agreement (S106)	Year Two	Legal agreement signed within year one, preparation of site, construction and delivery of units commence year two
Site with resolution to grant outline planning permission subject to signing of legal agreement (S106)	Year Three	Legal agreement signed within year one, full / reserved matters granted permission year two, preparation of site, construction and delivery of units commence year two
Site with pending application for residential development	Year Three	Decision received in year one, (full / reserved matters / S106 signed year two), preparation of site and delivery of units commence year three
Allocated sites (no current planning application / permission)	Year Four	Generally larger sites that require detailed planning at application stage. Where developer interest is shown, some sites may deliver units within five years.

2.10 The delivery rate applied to each site is determined by the individual site characteristics and circumstances e.g greenfield sites with good existing access may deliver at a faster rate than a brownfield site that requires wider infrastructure improvements prior to the commencement of units being built.

3 Planning Permissions

3.1 Between 1 April 2013 and 30 September 2013 new planning permissions have been granted on a total of 98⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ new sites which include residential dwellings and have been added to the overall housing land supply. These permissions equate to a potential net gain of 1068 additional new dwellings across the Borough. These permissions have been monitored and forecasts made to inform the future deliverable housing land supply.

3.2 It is important to note that these figures do not include planning permissions granted on sites that already have an extant permission for example where schemes have been altered, or where full or reserved matters have been granted on an existing site with an outline planning permission.

3.3 During the monitoring period a number of Section 106 legal agreements have been agreed and signed. The status of these sites has been updated and the supply from these sites is included within the category 'extant permission'.

Update since the end of the monitoring period

3.4 Planning applications for residential development continue to be submitted to the Council, and permissions have been both granted and refused since the end of the monitoring period. These decisions have been recorded on the monitoring database and will be included in future iterations of the housing land monitor. The base date of this report is 1 October 2013 therefore to ensure that the land supply position is robust and accurate, the status must reflect the position of a site as at this point in time.

3.5 For information, since the end of the monitoring period:

- Section 106 legal agreements have been completed on five sites recorded as 'Pending S106' in the current monitor. The status and source of supply of each of these sites will be updated in future iterations of the housing land monitor;
- Four planning applications for residential development^(iv) have been granted permission through the appeals process equating to an additional 747 dwellings to the overall land supply. These permissions will be included in future forecasts and iterations of the housing land monitor; and
- Of the sites identified through the SHLAA 2013, seven sites have been granted planning permission. The status and source of supply of each of these sites will be updated in future iterations of the housing land monitor.

iii New Planning Permissions are listed in the Housing Land Monitor October 2013 Technical Appendices document that accompanies this report.

iv 12/03056/FUL (Land off Greenfields Lane, Malpas), 11/05765/OUT (Grange Farm, Hartford), 11/05808/OUT (School Lane, Hartford), 12/01880/OUT (Flat Lane, Kelsall)

4 Housing Completions

4.1 For the monitoring period 1 April - 30 September 2013 a gross total of 490 dwellings were completed. 49 dwellings were lost through demolition or conversion, therefore the net total of new dwellings in this period, across the Borough is 441. ^(v)

Table 4.1 April - September 2013 housing completions

	Total dwellings
Gross Completions	490
Losses*	49
Total Net Completions	441

*A loss is recorded when a dwelling is demolished / change of use from residential takes place / a dwelling is converted to a greater or lesser number of dwellings.

Historical completions

4.2 The rate of housing completions in the Borough for the period between April 2003 (the base date of the RSS) and September 2013 (the current six month monitor period) are detailed in the table below.

Table 4.2 Net housing completions

Year	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	April-Sept 2013	Total
Net Completions	1038	1118	1336	799	707	723	733	654	803	673	441	9025

4.3 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).

4.4 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).

v Housing Completions are listed in the Housing Land Monitor October 2013 Technical Appendices document that accompanies this report.

4.5 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. However completions for the first half of the current monitoring period are positive and are greater than the equivalent period last year which recorded completions of 249 net dwellings.

4.6 The number of dwellings under construction at 1 October 2013 is 973, and there are 6410 units not yet started.

Gross completions by source

4.7 Dwelling completions by origin of the development site fall into one of the following categories:

- Allocated - sites specifically identified for housing development in existing adopted Local Plans;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (Cheshire West and Chester SHLAA 2013) - sites identified through the preparation of, and update(s) to a SHLAA;
- Garden Land - land that is in use as a domestic garden and is classified as within the curtilage of an existing dwelling. For the purposes of monitoring garden land is categorised as greenfield;
- Windfall - land not specifically identified as available for development in existing Local Plans or SHLAA, and which has come forward through the development management process; or
- Green Belt exceptions - land designated as Green Belt e.g a site may be granted planning permission for affordable housing to meet identified need. In addition, previously developed sites in the Green Belt may be identified through a SHLAA.

Table 4.3 Gross housing completions by source

Source	Greenfield	Brownfield	Mix (GF/PDL)	Total	% of Total
Allocated	0	7	0	7	< 1%
SHLAA 2013	37	301	15	353	72%
Garden land	5	0	0	5	1%
Windfall	18	86	8	112	23%
Green Belt exceptions	13	0	0	13	3%
TOTAL	73 (15%)	394 (80%)	23 (5%)	490	100%

4.8 Table 4.3 above shows that eighty per cent of completions recorded within the monitoring period were on previously developed land. Of these units, 301 were identified through the SHLAA and 86 were located on windfall sites.

4.9 As a total of all of the dwellings completed, seventy-two per cent are identified SHLAA sites and twenty-three per cent are windfall sites. The three per cent recorded as Green Belt exceptions is made up of a single site of thirteen dwellings and a site adjoining the urban area of Chester.

10 Affordable Housing Completions

4.10 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.

4.11 The HLM reports affordable housing completions on an annual basis, and for the purpose of this report only, the completions total takes account of new additions to the overall housing stock and does not include additions created through the transfer of housing stock between tenures. Therefore the figure recorded in this report may vary from the Councils Housing Flow Reconciliation Return (Communities and Local Government) and completion rates published by the Housing Strategy team, which also takes into consideration the acquisition of market housing to affordable housing.

4.12 It is also important to note that completions for the housing land monitor are recorded when a dwelling is physically completed i.e. doors and windows are in situ and the unit is habitable. This differs from the point in time that completions are recorded by the Housing Strategy team who include units when a dwelling has officially been handed over to the housing provider for sale or rent.

4.13 The table below details the annual completion of affordable housing and will be updated in March 2014 with the annual figure for the 2013 / 2014 monitoring period.

Table 4.4 Annual Affordable Housing Completions 2008 - 2013

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
No of dwellings	228	283	323	382	170

5 Sources of Deliverable Housing Land Supply

5.1 The sources of housing land that are included in the deliverable five year supply are:

- Existing planning permissions;
- Sites with a resolution to grant planning permission;
- Remaining allocations for housing development in existing Local plans;
- Sites identified through the Cheshire West and Chester Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013; and
- Small sites allowance (as identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013) for the last two years of the period only.

5.2 Existing planning permissions: sites that have a current planning permission (outline, reserved matters or full) with units outstanding i.e. not yet completed, can be included in the deliverable five year land supply where there is a reasonable prospect that the units will be delivered. On large sites, assumptions are made with regards to the rate in which units will be delivered. This can be dependant upon a range of factors including the site type (brownfield or greenfield) and the number of house builders that will be delivering the development.

5.3 Resolution to grant permission: where an application has a resolution to grant planning permission subject to conditions or a legal agreement, units can be included in the deliverable five year land supply. The timeframe for delivery takes account of the time that it may take for a legal agreement to be completed (see Table 2.2)

5.4 Local Plan allocations: Sites that are allocated in the adopted Local Plans of the former three District Councils have already been assessed and considered suitable for development. The deliverability of allocated sites has been carefully considered and only the number of dwellings considered likely to be delivered within five years has been included.

5.5 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013: The SHLAA identifies a large number of sites as suitable for development. In order for a site without planning permission to be included in the five year deliverable land supply there must be sufficient evidence to suggest that a site can be delivered. Sites that are within the planning process for example where positive pre- application discussions have taken place, may be considered for inclusion within the deliverable supply. It should be noted that sites identified in later stages of the Plan period i.e. Years 6-10 and Years 11-15 may reasonably come forward earlier than stated in the SHLAA 2013, and new permissions are incorporated into the housing land monitor where applicable.

5.6 Small sites allowance: The SHLAA 2013 includes a small sites allowance for the last two years of the five year deliverable supply period only. This has been calculated using past completion rates on small sites (sites of less than 10 units) and is included as a source of housing land supply because the SHLAA does not assess sites that are less than 0.4 hectares in size, or has a capacity of fewer than 10 dwellings. The allowance of 150 units per year is only applied to the last two years of the deliverable five year period to avoid double counting as all planning permissions, inclusive of small sites, are included in the potential supply.

5.7 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.

5.8 Table 5.1 below details the different sources of housing land supply and their potential five year deliverable capacity^(vi). This supply is used to calculate the five year housing land supply position in Section Six of this report.

Table 5.1 Sources of housing land supply

Source	Total supply	5 year deliverable supply
Extant planning permissions	7383	5768
Resolutions to grant permission	2494	1089
Remaining Local Plan allocations	806	134
Small sites allowance (150 per year)	N/A	300
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013	N/A	981
Total five year deliverable land supply		8272

vi The sites that make up the deliverable five year supply are listed in the Housing Land Monitor October 2013 Technical Appendices document that accompanies this report.

6 Five Year Deliverable Housing Land Supply Position

6.1 The future five year housing land supply as at 1 October 2013 is 8272 units i.e. the number of dwellings expected to be completed within the next five years, and which is detailed in Table 5.1 in Section Five of this report.

6.2 The total number of housing completions between 2003 (base date of the RSS) and the end of the current monitoring period is 9025 dwellings.

Housing Supply Calculation

The calculation is based upon the housing requirement of 1317 dwellings per year (as per the RSS), a twenty per cent buffer is applied to the five year housing requirement, and the calculated under delivery of 4804 units is added to the housing land requirement for the first five years. This equates to a revised annual housing requirement of 2541 units.

Table 6.1 Housing land requirement and deliverable five year housing land supply calculation

	Calculation	
	RSS total housing requirement 2003 - 2021 (1317 per yr x 18 yr plan period) = 1317 x 18	= 23,700 dwellings
(A)	RSS requirement 2003 - 1 October 2013 (1317 x 10.5yrs)	= 13,829
(B)	Total dwelling completions 2003 - September 2013	= 9025
(C)	Net outstanding residual requirement (over / under delivery) (A) - (B) = 13829 - 9025	= 4804
(D)	Five year housing land requirement (RSS) 1317 x 5yrs	= 6585
(E)	NPPF supply buffer (D) + 20% = 6585 + 1317	= 7902
(F)	Revised five year housing land requirement (including buffer and under supply) (E) + (C) = 7902 + 4804	= 12,706
(G)	Revised annual housing requirement (F) / 5yrs = 12706 / 5	= 2541
(H)	Five year deliverable land supply as at 30 September 2013 (Table 5.1)	= 8272
(H)	Number of years deliverable housing land supply (H) / (G) = 8272 / 2541	= 3.26 years

6.3 The table above shows that Cheshire West and Chester currently has a **3.26** years supply of deliverable housing land.

7 Next Steps

7.1 This is a six month update to the Housing Land Monitor (March 2013). An annual housing land monitor, which will incorporate the findings detailed in this report, will be produced in April 2014 and will take account of all new planning permissions for residential development, changes in planning and site status, and completions for the next monitoring period.

Dwelling Types

Definitions of 'housing'

The Council includes eligible types of housing units towards its housing supply figure where they clearly meet the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) criteria.

DCLG Core Output Indicators - Update 2/2008 defines a dwelling / residential unit as "a self contained unit of accommodation...".

Student accommodation and forms of extra care / specialist housing can contribute to the Council's strategic housing figures and therefore make a contribution to the five year housing supply required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In terms of student accommodation, the following definition was provided in DCLG Update 2/2008:

"Communal establishments are not counted in overall housing supply, i.e. establishments providing managed residential accommodation. These cover university and college student accommodation (including self-contained flats clustered into units with four to six bedrooms), hospital staff accommodation, hostels/homes, hotels/holiday complexes, defence establishments (not married quarters) and prisons."

This is to be contrasted with the latest definition provided whereby DCLG has included within the definition of "housing" the following:

The Department of Communities and Local Government has recently extended and clarified its definition of what types of residential accommodation may be taken into account by local planning authorities when assessing the local strategic housing land supply. The DCLG definition of a dwelling now includes self contained student flats with a cluster of four to six bedrooms. It states:

"Communal establishments, i.e. establishments providing managed residential accommodation, are not counted in overall housing supply statistics (however, all student accommodation, whether it consists of communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings, and whether or not it is on campus, can be included towards housing provision in Local Development Plans). These cover university and college students, hospital staff accommodation, hostels/homes, hotels/holiday complexes, defence establishments (not married quarters) and prisons. However, purpose-built (separate) homes (eg. self-contained flats clustered into units with four to six bedrooms for students) should be included. Each self-contained unit should be counted as a dwelling."

The key is whether the accommodation provided is not simply purpose-built accommodation but must have the essential component of being "self-contained".

Therefore for the purposes of housing land monitoring, housing forecasting and the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment residential units are assessed in the following way:

- Self contained flats (inclusive of student accommodation, extra care and specialist housing) (an individual flat with its own facilities – kitchen / bathroom / living space) **are included** in the housing land supply as an individual dwelling;
- Self contained cluster flats (between four and six bedrooms configured as a flat, sharing kitchen / bathroom and living accommodation) **are included** in the housing land supply and are counted as one dwelling towards the overall housing supply statistics per cluster i.e, three, six-bed cluster flats will be included as three dwellings in the land supply;
- Halls of residence (individual bedrooms configured along halls, sharing a living space) **are not included** in overall housing supply statistics as they provide a temporary residence for students, and would not provide an individual self contained unit of accommodation;
- Care homes (individual bedrooms configured along halls, sharing a living space, dining and care facilities) **are not included** in overall housing supply statistics as they do not provide an individual, self-contained unit of accommodation.
- Gypsy and Travellers, and Travelling Showpersons accommodation - individual pitches **are included** where planning permission is granted on a permanent basis. Temporary permissions **are not included** in the housing land supply.

.1 The table overleaf, which is based on The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (May 2013), indicates which elements of each use class are included in the Council's housing land supply.

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order

Use class	Use Class Order description	Elements included in land supply
C1 Hotels	Hotels, boarding and guest houses (where no significant element of care is provided)	Not included in housing land supply
C2 Residential Institutions	Residential accommodation and care to people in need of care, residential schools, colleges or training centres, hospitals, nursing homes.	Occupancy may be restricted by age or care needs, however units that are self contained i.e. an individual flat with its own facilities – kitchen / bathroom / living space, are included. Schools, hospitals and nursing homes where cooking, dining and living spaces are shared are not included.
C2a Secure Residential Institutions	Prisons, young offenders' institutions, detention centres, secure training centres, custody centres, short term holding centres, secure hospitals, secure local authority accommodation, military barracks.	Not included in housing land supply as residence is time limited and not permanent.
C3 Dwellinghouses	Use as a dwellinghouse (whether or not a main residence by: a) A single person or by people to be regarded as forming a single household; b) Not more than six residents living together as a single household where care is provided for residents; or c) Not more than six residents living together as a single household where no care is provided to residents other than use within Class C4	All houses and flats / apartments, inclusive of student accommodation and extra care accommodation are included where they meet the definitions detailed above i.e. self contained, or clusters of no more than six sharing facilities.
C4 Houses in multiple occupation	Use of a dwelling house by three to six residents as a 'house in multiple occupation' (HMO) NB large HMOs (more than six people are unclassified therefore sui generis.	Included in housing land supply (where six or fewer are sharing a dwelling)