

# Five-Year Housing Land Supply



## Methodology Practice Note - April 2023

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Practice Note sets out how the Council calculates its five-year housing land supply. It provides a transparent and publicly available explanation of how the Council:
- Calculates its five-year housing land supply.
  - Assesses its supply of housing sites which underpins its five-year housing land supply position.
- 1.2 Chelmsford City Council adopted its Local Plan for the period 2013-2036 on the 27 May 2020.

### 2 Housing Requirement

- 2.1 The housing requirement of 805 dwellings per annum is based on the adopted Local Plan.
- 2.2 In accordance with the National Planning Practice Guidance on Housing and Economic Land Assessment, the level of deficit or shortfall is calculated from the base date of the adopted Local Plan (2013/14) and added to the plan requirements for the next five-year period, if appropriate.

### 3 Method of Calculation

- 3.1 From the base date of 2013/14, the Council has an oversupply of 653 dwellings. As a result, no shortfall needs to be added to the plan requirement for the next five-year period.
- 3.2 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, a 5% additional buffer is added to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
- 3.3 In the latest published Housing Delivery Test measurement (2021 results published in January 2022 by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), Chelmsford exceeded the Housing Delivery Test Threshold by 40% therefore no further buffer is required.
- 3.4 The Housing for Older and Disabled People Planning Practice Guidance published in June 2019 provides guidance on how authorities should count older peoples housing completions in their five-year land supply. For residential institutions, to establish the amount of accommodation released in the housing market, authorities should base calculations on the average number of adults living in households, using published census data. For 'other communal accommodation' (which includes care homes for older people) this produces a weighted average ratio in Chelmsford of 1.87.

- 3.5 The Housing Site Schedule published in April 2023 contains three sites proposing residential institutions for older people in the form of care homes. The 1.87 ratio has been applied to the total capacity of these sites to establish the amount of accommodation released in the housing market. The output shown in the Housing Site Schedule is the output from the weighted calculation, not the total number of bedrooms proposed.
- 3.6 The Housing Site Schedule published in April 2023 also contains a site for student housing. In accordance with the Housing Supply and Delivery Planning Practice Guidance published in 2019, a ratio of 2.31 has been applied to the total capacity of the site and the output shown is the weighted output based on the average number of students living in student only accommodation using the published census data, to avoid double counting.
- 3.7 The definition of 'Deliverable' is set out in the NPPF (July 2021). The definition states that sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission and all sites with detailed planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires. Where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has grant of permission in principle or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years. The Housing Site Schedule published in April 2023 reflects this definition of 'deliverable'.

#### Calculation Formula for Chelmsford's five-year housing land supply

- 3.8 The calculation formula is as follows:

- Stage 1 Multiply housing target by five (years)
- Stage 2 Add historic shortfall (if relevant)
- Stage 3 Add 5% to the sum of Stages 1 and 2 = five-year housing requirement
- Stage 4 Divide five-year housing requirement by five (years) = Annual requirement
- Stage 5 Divide annual requirement by deliverable housing supply = Years of supply

## **4 Housing Supply**

- 4.1 The annually updated Housing Site Schedule provides information which includes the planning status of sites, whether works have started and the projected phasing of the delivery of housing units on each site.
- 4.2 The information in the Housing Site Schedule is collated and reviewed through the following methods:

### Regular Site Visits

- 4.3 Sites on the Housing Site Schedule will receive regular site visits throughout the year. These are generally carried out by the following Council Officers:
- Development Management Planning Officers
  - Planning Policy Monitoring Officer
- 4.4 Development Management Planning Officers will visit sites periodically, especially the larger sites, if further planning applications are submitted or meetings are taking place on site. Planning Officers update the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer of progress on site.

4.5 The Planning Policy Monitoring Officer then makes regular visits, every quarter, to a selection of different sites. Sites selected to be visited will largely be those which are known to have commenced or those in a similar area. Both large and small sites are visited. Throughout the year most sites which have commenced will have at least one visit by the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer.

4.6 The Planning Policy Monitoring Officer also receives regular updates from Registered Social Landlord's in respect of expected completions for affordable housing units within developments. This, alongside site visits, helps to accurately monitor the delivery rates for affordable housing.

#### Information Received by Development Management Planning Officers

4.7 Development Management Planning Officers provide the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer with regular updates on site progress, especially in respect of the larger sites, and those with various reserved matter applications. The information received usually comes direct from the site developer.

#### Building Control Weekly Reports

4.8 The Planning Policy Monitoring Officer receives weekly reports of all Building Control Applications received, approved, or completed. This gives an indication of starts and completions on sites. This enables the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer to take an informed view on the housing delivery rates within the Housing Site Schedule for sites which have commenced or when they are due to commence.

#### CIL Commencement Monthly Reports

4.9 The Planning Policy Monitoring Officer runs a monthly report which provides a summary of all developments where a CIL commencement notice has been received. This enables the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer to track all commencements and schedule site visits to monitor completions.

#### Annual Confirmation of Delivery Rates with Developers

4.10 Towards the end of the monitoring year the Planning Policy Monitoring Officer contacts promoters/landowners of larger development sites (predominately sites over 10 dwellings) setting out the Council's projected delivery rates for their site. The Developer/Agent of each site is asked to confirm or update these projected delivery rates and provide a reason for any changes. This informs the annual updating of the Housing Site Schedule.

#### Summary

4.11 The combination of the above methods enables the Council to use the best available information to calculate delivery rates within its annual Housing Site Schedule. The final version of this is normally published in April/May of each year.