



PLANNING STATEMENT

Land Adjacent to 48 Hitchin Road, Weston, SG4 7AY

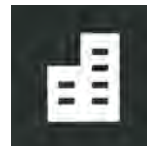
Job Ref: 23/060

Date: July 2026



Prepared by Tom Donovan BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI on behalf of

PETER GEORGE TOWN PLANNING



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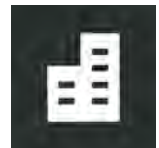


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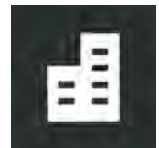
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Appendix 1: Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025)



Section 1: Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Peter George Town Planning has been instructed by Mr Fursland to prepare and submit a planning application for **Permission in Principle (PiP)** for the erection of two dwellings at Land Adjacent to no.48 Hitchin Road, Weston, SG4 7AY.
- 1.2 As set out within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the Permission in Principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.
- 1.3 In considering whether to grant Permission in Principle, the PPG sets out that **the scope of Permission in Principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development**. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage.
- 1.4 The purpose of this statement is to set out the proposals, relevant local and national planning policy, and ultimately make the case as to why Permission in Principle should be granted.



Relevant Planning History

Ref.	Site Address	Proposal	Decision
23/01698/FP	Land Adjacent To 48 Hitchin Road Weston	Erection of one detached 4-bed dwelling to include garage in basement, landscaping and creation of vehicular access onto Hitchin Road.	-Refused 08/09/2023 -Appeal Dismissed 05/04/2024
23/00949/FP	Land Adjacent To 48 Hitchin Road Weston	Erection of one detached 4-bed dwelling to include garage in basement, landscaping and creation of vehicular access onto Hitchin Road.	-Refused 22/06/2023 -Appeal Dismissed 05/04/2024
05/01596/1	Land Adjacent To 48 Hitchin Road Weston	Outline Planning Permission for one dwelling (all matters reserved).	Refused 21/12/2005



Section 2: Analysis of the Site and Surroundings

The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site lies north-east of Hitchin Road, adjacent to no.48, with Longmeadow to the north-west. The site is within the residential curtilage of Longmeadow, an existing substantial 1.5 storey dwelling in Weston on a reasonably large parcel of land.



Figure 1 - Site Location

- 2.2 Much of the site is laid to lawn with outbuildings, and a paddock to the south-east. The majority of the application site is scrub land and features a couple of redundant domestic chicken runs of block and fenced construction.



Figure 2 - Photographs of Site from Hitchin Road

- 2.3 The site benefits from an existing access to its west and is bordered by mature trees and hedgerows. The existing site banks up from Hitchin Road and sits around 2m above the carriageway level. Historically, the site was owned by no.48 Hitchin Road and used as extended residential garden to this property. The site was purchased by the owners of Longmeadow in circa 2011 and since used as an extension of their garden and additional parking area since.
- 2.4 As per the adopted North Herts Local Plan, part of the site lies within Weston's defined settlement boundary. The remainder of the site is situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.5 As noted above, the site lies immediately to the north of no.48 Hitchin Road which forms one half of a semi-detached pair of dwellings with no.46. Further residential development lines Hitchin Road along both sides towards the centre of the settlement.

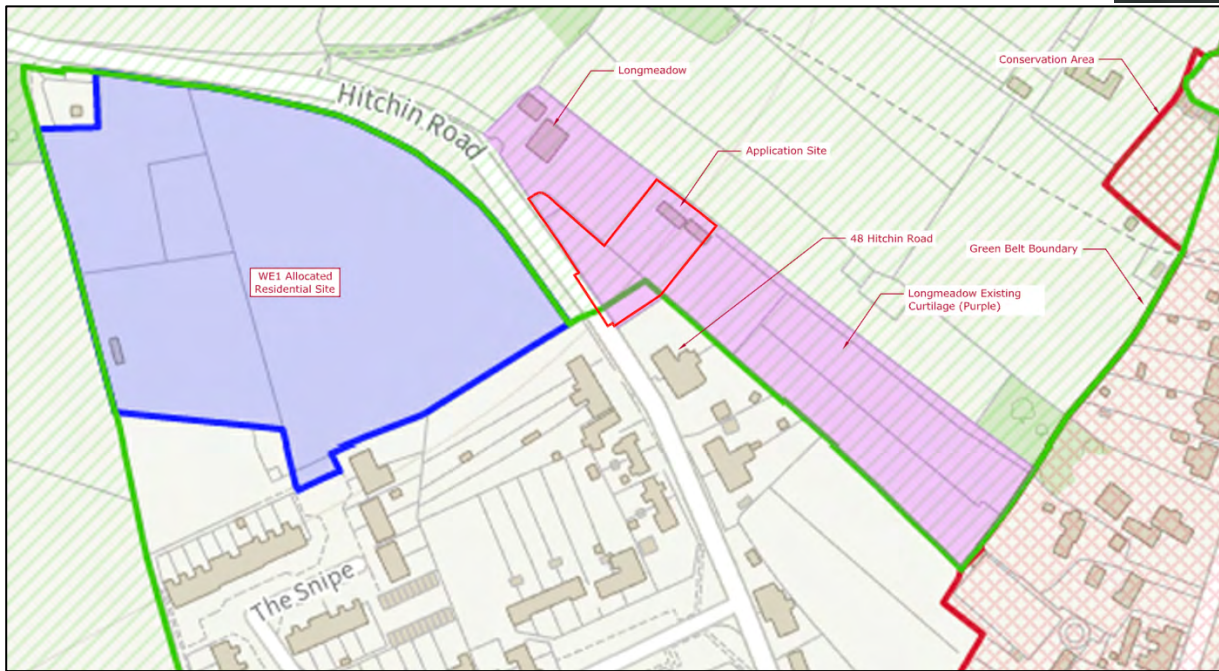
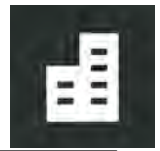


Figure 3 - Context Plan

- 2.6 Housing Allocation WE1 is situated immediately opposite the site occupying land to the west and south of Hitchin Road. The allocation is estimated to accommodate approximately 40 dwellings. At the time of writing, an application for planning permission in relation to the proposed housing allocation has not been forthcoming.

Surroundings

- 2.7 Weston is identified by the Council within its Settlement Hierarchy (Policy SP2) as a Category A village due to its size and the range of services that it contains. This includes a primary school, sports, religious and community facilities, and small-scale employment and retail premises.



Section 3: The Development Proposal

3.1 The development proposal can be described as follows:

“Permission in Principle: Erection of 2 dwellings.”

3.2 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out that:

“The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second (‘technical details consent’) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.”

3.3 This application was submitted as the ‘first stage’ or the ‘permission in principle’ stage. Subject to permission in principle being granted, the detailed development proposals would be submitted as part of the ‘second stage’ otherwise known as ‘technical details consent’.



- 3.4 Accordingly, no ‘details’ are submitted as part of the proposals, only an indicative block plan setting out how it is envisaged that the site could be developed as proposed.
- 3.5 Vehicular access is shown indicatively, albeit its precise positioning will need careful consideration prior to the submission of any technical details consent application which would follow any grant of permission in principle. This is not a matter to be considered at this stage.



Section 4: Relevant Planning Policy

Basis for Determining Planning Applications/ Appeals

- 4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act together require that planning applications for planning permissions be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, read as a whole, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Tilted Balance

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in decision making. The Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of land for housing and so the Tilted Balance is engaged. This means that planning permission should be granted unless: the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. Therefore, the primary concern when assessing the Application is conflicts with policies within the Framework. However, the development plan context will still assist.



Development Plan

- 4.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:
- “If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise.”*
- 4.4 The development plan context for the planning application is provided by:
- **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted November 2022)**
- 4.5 The following policies are considered relevant to the consideration of this application:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

- Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
- Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt
- Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport
- Policy SP8: Housing
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
- Policy SP11: Natural Resources and Sustainability
- Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity
- Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters
- Policy T2: Parking
- Policy D1: Sustainable Design



- Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions
- Policy D4: Air Quality
- Policy NE1: Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE4: Biodiversity and Geological Sites
- Policy NE7: Reducing Flood Risk
- Policy NE8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy NE9: Water Quality and Environment
- Policy NE11: Contaminated Land

Other Material Considerations

National Policy & Guidance

- 4.6 The Framework is a material consideration, as is the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD September 2011
- Design SPD July 2011



Section 5: Planning Analysis

Permission in Principle

- 5.1 As set out within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the Permission in Principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.
- 5.2 In considering whether to grant Permission in Principle, the PPG sets out that **the scope of Permission in Principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development**. In this case, and whilst part of the site is located within Weston's defined settlement boundary, this will require an assessment as to whether the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and whether the location would otherwise be suitable for new housing. All other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage.

Principle of Development – Location & Land Use

Whether Inappropriate Development



- 5.3 North Herts Local Plan (LP) Policy SP5 deals with development within the countryside. It largely defers to the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in respect to the consideration of development in the Green Belt.
- 5.4 Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that, unless compliant with a series of stated exceptions, development in the Green Belt should be regarded as being inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 155 of the Framework states that, the development of homes in the Green Belt on ‘grey belt’ land should also not be regarded as inappropriate development subject to compliance with a specific set of criteria.
- 5.5 ‘Grey belt’ is defined in the glossary to the Framework as follows:
- “For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”***



5.6 The question is therefore whether the site **strongly contributes** to purposes (a), (b) or (d) of the Green Belt purposes. An assessment of this in respect to each component is set out below.

Contribution to Purpose (a)

5.7 The site is an undeveloped parcel of land that lies between *Longmeadow* and no.48 Hitchin Road. Previously belonging to no.48 Hitchin Road, the site is now under the ownership of *Longmeadow* and used as residential garden in association with this property. The site is segregated from the surrounding countryside by existing boundary fencing, hedgerows and trees and as mentioned, is located between existing dwellings.

5.8 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides some useful clarity in terms of how local authorities should determine the contribution that land makes to the relevant green belt purposes. In respect to purpose (a), it states that this purpose relates only to the sprawl of large built-up areas and that villages should not be considered large built-up areas.

5.9 Given, therefore that the site lies immediately adjacent to the village of Weston our view is thus that it is not located adjacent to a large built-up



area. The site should not therefore be regarded as making any contribution to purpose (a) of the Green Belt purposes.

5.10 However, in the event that the Council disagrees and considers that the site does lie at the edge of a large built-up area, it is our view that the site makes no more than a moderate contribution to purpose (a) given its high degree of self-containment given its location between existing houses and the existing boundary features, its distance from the edge of a large built-up area, and close relationship and proximity to the village.

5.11 Consequently, the site does not strongly contribute to purpose (a) of the Green Belt purposes.

Contribution to Purpose (b)

5.12 The site is a small site at the edge of an existing village. It does not form part of a gap between towns and is thus not of strategic importance from a coalescence standpoint. Accordingly, it is not considered that the site strongly contributes to purpose (b) of the Green Belt purposes.

Contribution to Purpose (d)



- 5.13 The site is located within Weston, a medium-sized village located some 4.5km from the historic core of Baldock. Accordingly, the site does not form part of the setting of the historic town and has no visual, physical or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town. Accordingly, it is not considered that the site strongly contributes to Purpose (d) of the Green Belt purposes.

Footnote 7

- 5.14 The grey belt definition states that 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development. In this case, is not considered that any of the areas or assets in Footnote 7 would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

'Grey Belt' Summary

- 5.15 For the reasons discussed above, it is considered that the site meets the definition of 'grey belt' as it does not contribute strongly to purposes (a), (b) or (d) of the Green Belt purposes. Footnote 7 would not be engaged.

Compliance with Paragraph 155



5.16 Paragraph 155 of the Framework which states that:

“The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;***
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;***
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and***
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.”***

a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;

5.17 In terms of the first part of this criterion, the application site meets the definition of grey belt land for the reasons discussed above.



5.18 Regarding the second part of this criterion, the PPG provides guidance regarding the impact of releasing or developing grey belt land on the remaining Green Belt within the plan area. This states that:

“In reaching this judgement, authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt Land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.”

5.19 The site comprises a relatively small parcel of land immediately adjacent to the main part of the settlement. Given the degree to which it lies adjacent to existing built development and its degree of containment from the surrounding countryside, its contribution to the openness or purposes of the Green Belt is minor.

5.20 The site is moreover a very small component part of the District’s Green Belt which covers approximately 38% of its entire administrative area. Accordingly, its development would have no impact on the ability of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan to continue serving its functions.



5.21 Accordingly, if developed as proposed, the impact on the strategic Green Belt within the district would be negligible. In those terms, the proposal would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan and would not affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way.

b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;

5.22 Footnote 56 notes that, in the case of applications involving the provision of housing, a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed, means the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, including the relevant buffer where applicable, or where the Housing Delivery Test was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

5.23 The Council's Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025) (attached as **Appendix 1**) sets out that the Council are currently only able to demonstrate a 2.6-year supply of land for housing. Accordingly, there is a demonstrable unmet need for new housing development.



5.24 The proposed development would thus be compliant with limb (b) of paragraph 155 of the Framework.

c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework;

5.25 LP Policy SP2 regards Weston as a Category A village due to its reasonable range of local services and facilities including a primary school, sports, religious/cultural and community facilities, and small-scale employment and retail premises. It's Categorisation by the Council as a Category A village is in itself instructive that the Council consider that Weston is suitable of accommodating additional growth.

5.26 Moreover, the site is located partly within Weston's defined settlement boundary and is immediately adjacent to Housing Allocation WE1, which is allocated for up to 40 houses. Whilst WE1 is yet to come forward, the allocation already extends Weston's settlement boundary beyond *Longmeadow* and would further connect this part of Hitchin Road with the main part of the village.

5.27 Furthermore, the Framework recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and



that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking account of local circumstances. In this regard, the provision of additional housing in this location would assist in supporting the vitality and viability of services and facilities within the surrounding network of villages and nearby towns.

5.28 Future residents would contribute to the local customer base for shops, schools, community facilities and public transport services in nearby settlements, helping to sustain those services in accordance with the Framework's objective of supporting thriving rural communities. The proposal would therefore accord with the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the Framework.

5.29 Accordingly, it is considered that the site would be a sustainable location for the purposes of the application of paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework.

d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

5.30 Not applicable, as the proposal does not constitute major development.



Summary

5.31 As discussed above, it is considered that the proposed development meets the definition of grey belt land and is moreover in full accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 155 of the revised Framework. Accordingly, it would **not be inappropriate development** in the Green Belt.

5.32 Consequently, it is considered that the site is suitable in terms of the **location** and **land use** components of a Permission in Principle application.

Amount of Development

5.33 The indicative proposals demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating a small development of two detached dwellings in a manner that would be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and context and ensure a good standard of residential amenity for each of the proposed dwellings.

5.34 Accordingly, insofar as is relevant to the determination of Permission in Principle, it is considered that the **amount** of development is appropriate.

Highways Safety



5.35 It is proposed to construct a new access to the site from Hitchin Road.

However, the detail of this is not relevant to a Permission in Principle application but would rather fall to be detailed as part of any technical details consent application.

Materiality of Earlier Appeal Decisions

5.36 The Council may seek to place reliance on the previous appeal decisions relating to planning applications 23/00949/FP and 23/01698/FP, both of which were dismissed on 5 April 2024. Whilst those decisions form part of the site's planning history, they must be considered in their proper context. and we consider that they are of limited material weight in determining the present application.

5.37 Both appeal decisions pre-date the publication of the revised Framework in December 2024. They were therefore determined under a materially different national policy framework, at a time when the concept of “Grey Belt” had not been introduced into national planning policy and the revised Green Belt provisions contained within paragraphs 154 to 156 of the Framework did not exist. Consequently, the Inspector was not required to consider whether the appeal site comprised Grey Belt land, whether the proposal satisfied the new policy tests for development on such land, or



whether the proposal fell within the new exceptions to inappropriate development introduced by the revised Framework.

5.38 Importantly, the central premise upon which the previous appeals were determined has now fundamentally changed. The Inspector's conclusion that the proposal constituted inappropriate development within the Green Belt was reached because, under the policy framework then in force, no exception existed which could render the development acceptable in principle. The December 2024 Framework has since introduced a materially different policy approach through the concept of Grey Belt and the associated exceptions to inappropriate development. Those policy provisions did not exist when the appeals were determined and therefore could not have formed part of the Inspector's assessment or planning judgment.

5.39 The revised Framework represents a substantive change in national planning policy rather than a mere clarification of existing guidance. It requires decision-makers to undertake a different assessment of development proposals within the Green Belt, including consideration of whether land is Grey Belt and whether the proposal satisfies the criteria set out within paragraphs 155 and 156 of the Framework. Those are now the



principal issues before the decision-maker and were not matters considered in the earlier appeals.

- 5.40 Whilst the Inspector's factual findings in relation to the characteristics of the site remain capable of carrying some weight, the planning conclusions reached in April 2024 must necessarily be afforded limited weight because they were reached under a superseded policy framework. The present appeal falls to be determined against the current National Planning Policy Framework, and it is that policy context, rather than the materially different framework that existed in 2024, which should guide the determination of this appeal.

Other Matters

- 5.41 All other matters are not relevant to the determination of this Permission in Principle application and should thus be dealt with at technical details stage. Such an approach is clearly consistent with the guidance contained within the PPG.



Section 6: Summary & Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Statement accompanies an application for Permission in Principle for the erection of two dwellings on land adjacent to 48 Hitchin Road, Weston, SG4 7AY. As confirmed by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the determination of an application for Permission in Principle is confined to the principles of the site's location, land use and the amount of development proposed.
- 6.2 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land, with its latest published position confirming only a 2.6-year supply. Consequently, paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") is engaged. Permission should therefore be granted unless either: (i) policies within the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the proposal; or (ii) the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
- 6.3 Whilst part of the application site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, Green Belt policy does not provide a clear reason for refusing the proposal.



As demonstrated in Section 5 of this Statement, the Green Belt element of the site satisfies the Framework's definition of Grey Belt and the proposal complies with each of the requirements of paragraph 155. Accordingly, the proposed development would not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt and there is no conflict with national Green Belt policy capable of displacing the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.4 The proposal would deliver a number of clear planning benefits which attract significant weight in favour of the development. These include:

- the delivery of two additional dwellings at a time when the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land;
- making efficient use of a sustainable edge-of-settlement site, part of which already lies within the defined settlement boundary;
- supporting the vitality and viability of Weston through additional expenditure within local shops, services and community facilities;
- providing economic benefits during both the construction phase and subsequent occupation of the dwellings.

6.5 Whilst modest in scale, the Framework does not distinguish between large and small housing developments for the purposes of paragraph 11(d). In the



context of the Council's significant housing land supply shortfall, every additional dwelling contributes towards addressing that deficit and attracts material weight in favour of the proposal.

- 6.6 Against these benefits, there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh them when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. Matters relating to design, appearance, landscaping, drainage, access and other technical considerations fall outside the scope of a Permission in Principle application and are appropriately reserved for consideration through any subsequent Technical Details Consent application.
- 6.7 The previous appeal decisions issued in April 2024 remain relevant insofar as they describe the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings. However, only limited weight can properly be afforded to the Inspector's planning conclusions. Those appeals were determined under the pre-December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework, before the introduction of Grey Belt and the revised Green Belt provisions now contained within paragraphs 154 to 156 of the Framework. Consequently, the principal issue in this application: whether the site comprises Grey Belt land and whether the proposal falls within the exceptions to inappropriate



development, did not arise before the Inspector and could not have formed part of the earlier planning judgments. The present application must therefore be determined against the current national policy framework rather than the materially different policy context that applied in April 2024.

6.8 Having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, the proposal represents sustainable residential development in an appropriate location. The site lies partly within the settlement boundary and immediately opposite Housing Allocation WE1, where the Council has itself accepted that approximately 40 dwellings represent an appropriate form of development in this location. The proposal would not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt, would comply with paragraph 155 of the Framework, and would make a positive contribution towards addressing the Council's acknowledged housing land supply shortfall. The proposal would therefore deliver social, economic and housing benefits which attract significant weight in its favour.

6.9 When assessed against the Framework as a whole, there are no policies which provide a clear reason for refusing the proposal, nor are there any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its



benefits. The proposal therefore accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within paragraph 11(d) of the Framework and should be approved.

- 6.10 It is respectfully submitted that the application satisfies the relevant considerations applicable to Permission in Principle relating to location, land use and amount of development. Accordingly, Permission in Principle should be granted.



APPENDIX 1: Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2025)

Five-Year Housing Land Supply Update

November 2025



**North
Herts**
Council

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

North Hertfordshire's Local Plan (NHLP) was adopted on 8 November 2022. Since the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated on 20 December 2024, the rules for demonstrating a five-year housing land supply have changed and we must now show how housing delivery is expected to roll out over the plan period.

The updated NPPF requires us to identify and update, each year, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet a minimum five years' worth of housing against our adopted strategic housing requirement, or against local housing need where strategic policies are more than five years old.

The five-year supply must include a buffer to strengthen prospects of delivery:

- **5%** to ensure choice and competition, or
- **20%** where there has been significant under-delivery over the previous three years, or
- From 1 July 2026 a 20% buffer will be required for decision-making if our housing requirement was adopted within the last five years against an earlier version of the Framework **and** that requirement is 80% or less of the most up-to-date local housing need calculated using the standard method. Will shall keep this element under review.

How this affects North Hertfordshire

We are no longer protected by the transitional provisions in earlier versions of the NPPF that previously guarded five-year supply positions tied to recently adopted local plans. That change means we must now demonstrate a compliant five-year housing land supply under the current Framework tests.

Purpose of this update

This Five-Year Housing Supply Update sets out our position as of **31 March 2025** and explains how that position should be applied to relevant planning applications and decisions.

What to expect next

This Update explains our delivery trajectory, the sites included in the five-year supply, and any buffer applied. It provides the transparent, up-to-date evidence decision-makers and applicants need to understand how housing supply is being met across North Hertfordshire.

This report sets out the figures underpinning our Objectively Assessed Needs, forming a key foundation for the preparation of our Local Plan. In addition, we've included indicative calculations based on the Government's New Standard Method for assessing Local Housing Need. These figures are provided for context only, as we are currently unable to formally progress our Local Plan Update, pending the publication of the necessary regulations by Government.

FIVE-YEAR HOUSING REQUIREMENT

Five-Year Housing Requirement

Our Local Plan requires us to provide land for a minimum of 13,000 homes between 2011 and 2031. That target translates to an annual requirement of 650 homes. We monitor residential land availability every year, and this statement records the position as at 31 March 2025, prepared in line with national [Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#).

Paragraph 31 of the PPG directs us to make up any past shortfall within the next five years using the Sedgefield approach. During plan preparation we chose a different, more measured route to address historical under-delivery which involved spreading the shortfall across the remaining Plan period. The Examining Inspector agreed with this approach and confirmed it as the most appropriate method for calculating our five-year housing land supply.

‘...the Council proposes to use the ‘three-stepped approach’...in combination with applying the ‘Liverpool’ method, spreading the shortfall in delivery since the beginning of the Plan period across the remainder of the Plan period...I am of the firm view that it is the most appropriate in this case and should form the basis for future calculations of the district’s five-year housing land supply.’¹.

Policy IMR1 in the NHLP sets out our approach clearly:

- We apply the **Liverpool approach**, meeting the accumulated shortfall over the remainder of the Plan period rather than compressing it into the next five years.
- Once the combined annual requirement and any remaining shortfall are established, we apply a buffer if required, reflecting the most recent Housing Delivery Test outcome.

Policy IMR1: Five Year Housing Land Supply

In order to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing, we will:

- Deliver the total housing requirement of 13,000 net dwellings over the plan period on a stepped basis. The Council’s five-year housing land supply will be measured against housing requirement targets of:
 - 350 dwellings per annum for the plan period from 2011 to 31 March 2020;
 - 500 dwellings per annum for the plan period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2024; and
 - 1,120 dwellings per annum for the remainder of the plan period from 1 April 2024 to 2031.
- Add any shortfall in housing delivery since the plan’s start date, spread evenly over the remaining plan period, to the calculation of the requirement;
- Ensure that the supply of specific, deliverable sites included a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) in line with national planning policy; and
- Monitor housing completion and permissions on an ongoing basis to ensure the housing trajectory is based upon robust and up-to-date information and assumptions.

Stepped housing delivery

Liverpool Approach

As such, the annual housing requirement that should be used for calculating our five-year housing land supply is that set out in Policy IMR1: Five Year Housing Land Supply, of our

¹ Paragraph 113 [Inspectors Report](#)

Local Plan:

- 350 dwellings per year from 2011 to 31 March 2020
- 500 dwellings per year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2024; and
- 1,120 dwellings per year from 1 April 2024 to 2031.

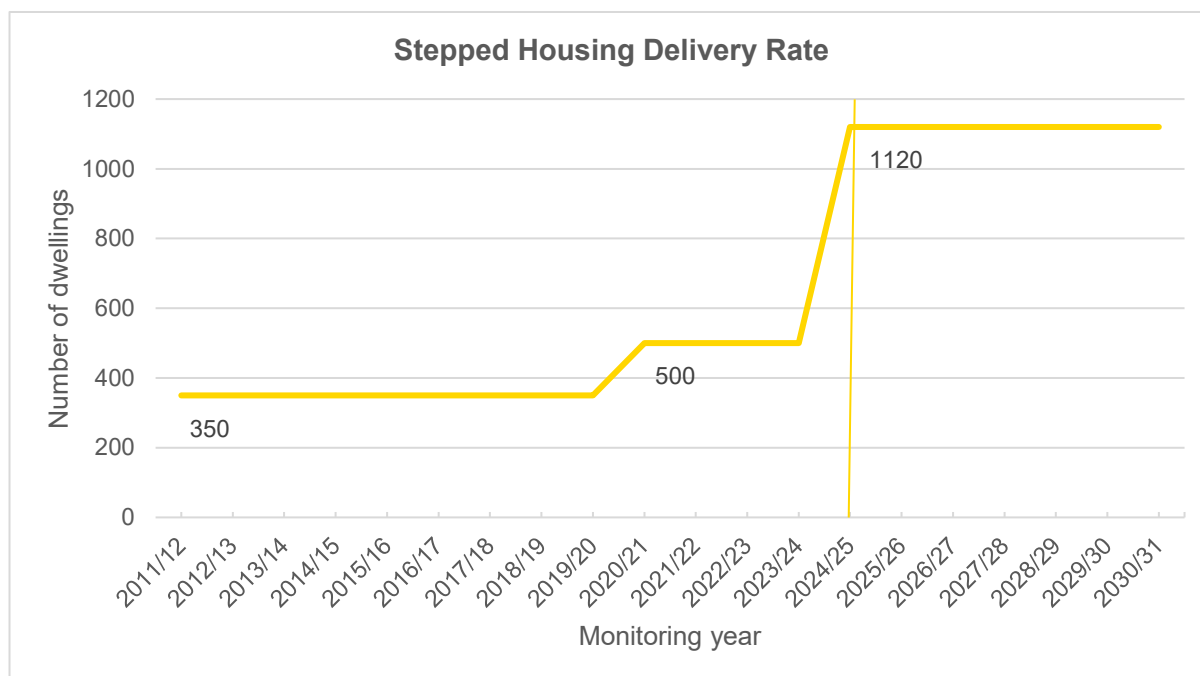


Fig 1 – Stepped housing delivery rate

Annual housing requirement figure	1,120
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Table 1 – Annual housing requirement figure to 31 March 2025

Table 2 presents our cumulative net housing completions from the Local Plan base date of 1 April 2011 through to the current monitoring date.

The PPG² requires any shortfall to be measured from this adopted plan start date. The table therefore sets out, year by year, how many homes have been completed and highlights the aggregated shortfall against the Plan target since the Plan period began.

Table 2 shows that since 2020/21 our annual housing completions have not met the Plan requirement, and the cumulative shortfall has continued to increase across the Plan period. As of 31 March 2025, our district faces an undersupply of 1,253 dwellings.

² (Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 68-031-20190722, Revision date: 22 July 2019)

Monitoring year	Annual net housing completions	Annual housing completion target	Annual net housing surplus/shortfall	Cumulative net housing completions	Cumulative housing completion target	Cumulative net housing surplus/shortfall
2011/12	384	350	34	384	350	34
2012/13	291	350	-59	675	700	-25
2013/14	259	350	-91	934	1,050	-116
2014/15	180	350	-170	1,114	1,400	-286
2015/16	341	350	-9	1,455	1,750	-295
2016/17	539	350	189	1,994	2,100	-106
2017/18	282	350	-68	2,276	2,450	-174
2018/19	220	350	-130	2,496	2,800	-304
2019/20	318	350	-32	2,814	3,150	-336
2020/21	593	500	93	3,407	3,650	-243
2021/22	333	500	-167	3,740	4,150	-410
2022/23	445	500	-55	4,185	4,650	-465
2023/24	425	500	-75	4,610	5,150	-540
2024/25	407	1120	-713	5,017	6,270	-1,253

Table 2 – Cumulative net housing completions and shortfall in housing provision 2011/12 to 2023/24

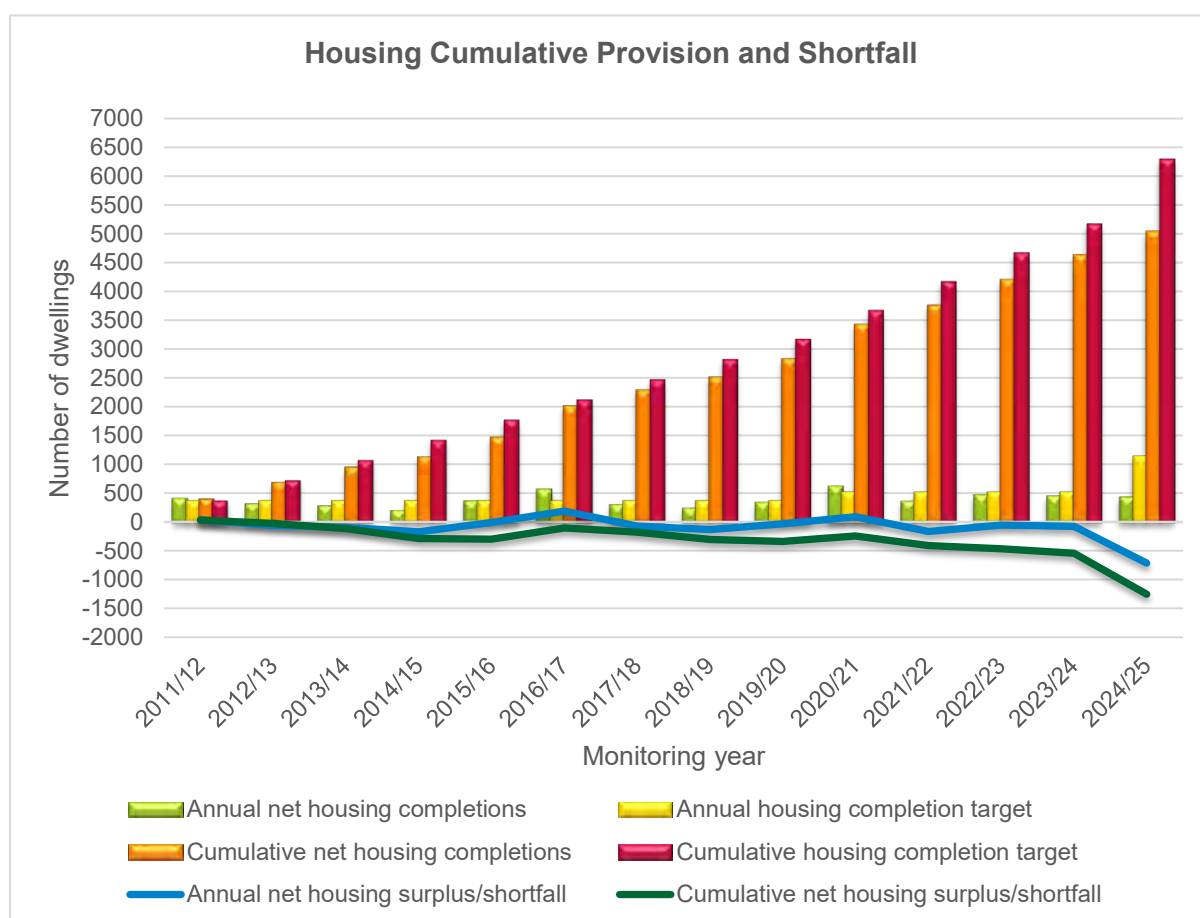


Fig 2 - Cumulative net housing completions and shortfall in housing provision 2011/12 to 2023/24

Under the Liverpool approach, this historic shortfall will be made up evenly over the remainder of the Plan period, so delivery of the 1,253 homes is spread across each year up to 2031. This approach smooths expectations for developers and communities, reduces pressure on the next five years, and provides a realistic, deliverable trajectory for meeting the Plan target by the end of the period.

Annualised requirement to provide for historic undersupply of housing using the Liverpool approach (1,253/6)

209

Table 3 – Annualised requirement for historic undersupply of housing

Paragraph 79 of the 2024 NPPF says that where an authority has experienced significant under-delivery of housing over the previous three years, an additional buffer should be added to the supply of specific deliverable sites.

The latest [Housing Delivery Test](#) (HDT) result for North Hertfordshire (published in December 2024) was 105%, so no delivery buffer is required for our five-year supply.

The HDT assesses actual housing delivery over the prior three years and is published

annually by government. Consequences by HDT band:

- >95% = No further action required.
- <95% = Authority must prepare an Action Plan.
- <85% = Action Plan plus a 20% buffer on the five-year supply.
- <75% = Action Plan, 20% buffer, and the presumption in favour of development.

Because our HDT score exceeds 95%, we do not apply an additional buffer when calculating our five-year housing land supply. This confirms that recent delivery performance (as of March 2023) is strong enough that no compensatory uplift is needed to improve the prospect of meeting planned supply.

The formula for the HDT calculation is:

$$\text{HDT \%} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three-year period}}{\text{Total number of homes required over 2-year 8-month period}^3}$$

Our results for the last published year (2023) are shown in Table 4.

ONS code	Area name	Number of homes required			Number of homes required
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	
E07000099	North Hertfordshire	333 ⁴	500	500	1,333
Number of homes delivered		Number of homes delivered		Score	Consequence
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			
618	335	447	1,400	105%	None

Table 4 – HDT score 2024

The updated NPPF (December 2024) has reintroduced the 5% buffer for calculating five-year housing land supply to preserve choice and competition in the land market, reinforcing the expectation that we factor a modest uplift into supply figures to support a healthy, competitive development environment.

Following the steps above, the total five-year requirement is:

Annual homes requirement for 2024/25	Annual shortfall (Table 3)	Total annual requirement	5-Year requirement	Annual 5% buffer	Total 5-year requirement including buffer
1,120 ⁵	209 ⁶	1,329	6,645	332	6,976

Table 5 – Five-year housing requirement for North Herts, 2024/5 – 2028/29

³ For the 2023 measurement, there is a reduction in the period for measuring total homes required – usually this would be measured over a 3-year period, but an 8-month period has been used for the 2020/21 monitoring year; requirement is assessed from 1 August 2020, meaning that 243 days are assessed. This is to account for the considerable variations in levels of housing delivery as local planning authorities and construction industry faced disruption on a national, regional, and local level due to the pandemic. No adjustment was made in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 monitoring years

⁴ This figure differs from the 350-figure set out in the Local Plan - this includes the Covid-related adjustments applied by Government to the annual target figures.

⁵ From 2024/25, the annual housing requirement increases from 500 to 1,120 dwellings per year.

⁶ Rounded up from 208.83

New Standard Methodology

In December 2024 the Government published a revised standard method alongside the updated NPPF, producing a new method of calculating indicative local housing need figures for our area.

The calculation sets our annual local housing need at 1,043 homes⁷ (published 22 May 2025) and is expected to remain in force until the affordability ratios are next updated in March 2026. This is an increase from the [figure published in December 2024](#). The affordability ratio that is used to calculate the standard method Local Housing Need figure has deteriorated and therefore our housing number has increased.

The updated standard method effectively resets the baseline for housing need, removing the obligation to make up past shortfalls under the old figures and, in practical terms, allows us to “start again” on meeting housing targets. This change means historic under-delivery no longer automatically increases our current requirement, so the focus shifts to delivering against the newly calculated need going forward.

Following the same steps as previous, the total five-year requirement looks like this:

Annual homes requirement of 2024/25	Annual shortfall	Total annual requirement	5-Year requirement	Annual 5% buffer	Total 5-year requirement including buffer
1,043	0	1,043	5,215	261	5,476

Table 6 – Five-year housing requirement for North Herts - new standard method, 2024/5 – 2028/29

As stated previously, this is an indicative calculation based on the Government’s New Standard Method for assessing Local Housing Need. These figures are provided for context only, as we are currently unable to formally progress our Local Plan Update, pending the publication of the necessary regulations by Government. However, we expect to transition to this figure upon the publication of the new regulations for plan making and will use the most up to date figures for any emerging housing target for the development of the new Local Plan update.

⁷ https://www.turley.co.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/file/2025-05/turley_lpdf_-_revised_standard_method_analysis_may2025_0.pdf

DELIVERABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

Deliverable Housing Supply

We have identified an annual supply of sites that can realistically deliver homes within the next five years.

The NPPF defines “deliverable” housing sites as those that are:

- Available now,
- In a suitable location for development now, and
- Achievable with a realistic prospect of delivering homes within five years.

Two important distinctions follow:

- Part (a): Non-major sites with planning permission, and all sites with detailed permission, should be treated as deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence they will not deliver within five years (for example, viability issues, lack of demand, or long-term phasing).
- Part (b): Major sites with outline permission, sites allocated in a development plan, sites with a grant of permission in principle, or sites on a brownfield register are only deliverable where there is clear evidence that completions will start within five years.

For sites that require extra proof of deliverability, notably outline permissions, allocated sites, permissions in principle, and brownfield register entries, PPG suggests the following types of evidence:

- Current planning status - progress on reserved matters, linked planning performance agreements and discharge of conditions.
- Developer commitment - written agreements with the local planning authority confirming expected start dates and build-out rates.
- Concrete site preparation - firm progress on site assessments and pre-application work.
- Practical constraints and mitigation - information on viability, ownership, infrastructure delivery, or successful bids for infrastructure funding.

We are also able to draw on the [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment](#) to demonstrate deliverability.

All sites we have identified meet the NPPF and PPG deliverability tests by being:

- Available now,
- Situated in suitable locations, and
- Achievable within a five-year horizon.

We have grouped sites against the Annex 2 tests so it's clear which require additional

evidence, and which do not.

Part A (normally deliverable)

- Sites under construction
- Sites with detailed planning permission
- Sites with prior notification

Part B (require clear evidence to demonstrate deliverability)

- Sites with outline permission or subject to S106 agreements
- Allocated deliverable housing sites

These Part B sites will only be treated as deliverable where there is demonstrable, site-specific evidence that housing completions will begin within five years.

Units deliverable withing 5 years	
Part A	Sites under construction
	691
	Sites with detailed planning
Part B	372
	Sites with Prior Notification
	84
Part B	Sites with Outline Permission/S106
	387
	Deliverable sites
	1,882
Total	
3,416	

Table 7 – Summary of supply of deliverable housing identified 31 March 2025

In addition to the deliverable sites above, we include a windfall allowance to reflect smaller sites likely to come forward during the Plan period. This approach follows the Local Plan examination recommendations and provides useful flexibility to support delivery.

Paragraph 98 states

‘Also within the supply are 440 new houses on small windfall sites, and 257 on large windfall sites. Windfall delivery is planned for in both the first five years of the Plan from adoption and in the remaining years afterwards.’

We include a windfall figure because it builds careful contingency into the housing supply without double-counting our identified sites, reflecting the Inspector’s view that modest, site-specific opportunities, particularly in town centres. It can also help speed delivery, allowing the Plan to remain responsive to changing market signals and local development opportunities over time.

Monitoring year	Small sites	Large sites	Total
2025/26	-	-	-
2026/27	25	-	25
2027/28	35	-	35
2028/29	50	-	50
2029/30	60	43	103
Final Total	170	43	213

Table 8 – Total supply of windfall housing identified 31 March 2025



Fig 3 – Total gross windfall completions since the start of the Plan period

Our projected windfall figures are deliberately conservative, grounded in actual delivery since the Plan period began in 2011. Figure 3 plots the number of sites recorded as “windfall” through the development management process and logged by Hertfordshire County Council, showing a reliable record that supports our cautious assumptions.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

Local Plan Figures

Our total requirement for housing delivery from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030 in our District is **6,976 dwellings**. This incorporates the objectively assessed housing need annual rate of 1,120 dwellings per year, the annual shortfall of 209 dwellings, totaling 1,044 dwellings per year, and the 5% buffer amounting to 332.

Total supply of deliverable housing identified	31 March 2025
Total number of dwellings under construction	691
Total number of dwellings with detailed planning permission	372
Total number of dwellings with prior notification (including -10% for non-implementation of under ten dwellings)	84
Total number of dwellings with outline permission/S106 (including -10% for non-implementation of under ten dwellings)	387
Total number of dwellings for other 'Deliverable' sites	1,882
Total number of dwellings for windfall sites	213
Total identified supply	3,629

Table 9 – Total supply of deliverable housing identified 31 March 2025

Table 9 shows that the **total supply of deliverable housing identified by the Council for that five-year period is 3,629 dwellings**.

This means we can demonstrate a deficit of **3,347 dwellings** over the five-year period of 2025/26 – 2029/30.

Table 10 shows that we can demonstrate a five-year land position of **2.6 years** against our adopted housing requirement. This figure falls below the five-year requirement.

Five-year housing supply calculation		
A	Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) (dwellings per year)	1,120
	OAN over 5 years	5,600
B	Remaining Local Plan period (years)	6
C	Completions 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	5,017
D	Target 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	6,270
E	Shortfall against target on 31 March 2024 (D – C)	-1,253
F	Target 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2030	5,600
G	Surplus / Shortfall to be delivered in 5yr period (E / 6 x 5)	1,044
H	Buffer to be applied (5%) based on 2023 HDT consequence	332
I	Total 5yr requirement (F + G + H)	6,976
J	Dwellings for sites under construction	691
K	Dwellings granted permission or prior approval	456
L	Dwellings granted outline permission or subject to S106	387
M	Other dwellings considered 'deliverable'	1,882
N	Dwellings from Windfall sites	213
O	Total deliverable dwellings (supply) 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2029 (J + K + L + M + N)	3,629
P	Total Years Housing Supply ((O / I) x 5)	2.6

Table 10 – Five-Year Housing Land Supply Calculation

New Standard Method

Our 5-year housing land supply under the standard housing method is also shown for comparison purposes and would be used if the new plan-making system had come into force and we were able to give formal notice to start preparing a new Local Plan.

Our total requirement for housing delivery from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030 in our District is **5,215 dwellings**. This incorporates the new standard method housing need annual rate of 1,043 dwellings per year, no shortfall, and the 5% buffer amounting to 261.

Table 8 shows that the **total supply of deliverable housing identified by the Council for that five-year period is 3,629 dwellings**.

This means there is a deficit of **1,586 dwellings** over the five-year period of 2025/26 – 2029/30.

Table 11 shows that we can demonstrate a five-year land position of **3.3 years** using the Governments New Standard Methodology. This figure falls below the five-year requirement.

Five-year housing supply calculation		
A	New Standard Method Local Housing Need (LHN) (dwellings per year)	1,043
	LHN over 5 years	5,215
B	Remaining Local Plan period (years)	6
C	Completions 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	5,017
D	Target 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2024	6,270
E	Shortfall	0
F	Target 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2030	5,215
G	Surplus / Shortfall to be delivered in 5yr period (E / 6 x 5)	0
H	Buffer to be applied (5%) based on 2023 HDT consequence	261
I	Total 5yr requirement (F + G + H)	5,476
J	Dwellings for sites under construction	691
K	Dwellings granted permission or prior approval	456
L	Dwellings granted outline permission or subject to S106	387
M	Other dwellings considered 'deliverable'	1,882
N	Dwellings from Windfall sites	213
O	Total deliverable dwellings (supply) 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2029 (J + K + L + M + N)	3,629
P	Total Years Housing Supply ((O / I) x 5)	3.3

Table 11 – Five-Year Housing Land Supply Calculation – New Standard Method