

FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY (2014-2019)**Frequently Asked Questions****What is the housing requirement for the County?**

Herefordshire is currently in a transitional period in not having an up-to-date objectively assessed housing requirement target that has been through an examination. The requirement will only be formally established with the adoption of the Core Strategy.

Now the Core Strategy has been submitted to the Secretary of State, a degree of weight can be applied to the housing target of 16,500 dwellings between 2011 and 2031. Evidence to support that target is set out in an update to the Local Housing Requirement Study (August 2014). The Study takes account of the latest demographic evidence, Government policy and Guidance to define the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing in Herefordshire. The study identifies an Objectively Assessed Need between 15,400 and 16,200 homes in Herefordshire over the 2011-31 plan period. This is within reasonable limits of the identified Core Strategy target. The target will be tested through the Examination in Public process before the Core Strategy is adopted.

What is currently happening in Herefordshire?

The County is currently experiencing an increase in development pressures. This comes at a time when the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan is out of date. In this regard the NPPF suggests that where the existence of a five year land supply cannot be demonstrated, there is presumption in favour of granting planning permission for new housing unless the development can be shown to cause demonstrable harm to other factors that outweigh the need for new housing.

In reaching a decision upon new housing the housing land supply position will need to be balanced against other factors in the development plan and/or NPPF which could result in the refusal of planning permission. The footnote to paragraph 14 of the NPPF is helpful in identifying those areas that the NPPF has in mind where development should be restricted. By way of example it lists:

- sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- land designated as Local Green Space
- land designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- land affected by designated heritage assets
- land at risk of flooding

Does Herefordshire Council currently have a 5 year land supply?

The housing supply policies in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) are not considered to be up to date as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The housing supply at April 2014 is 2.47 years.

What factors are important in estimating the 5 year supply?

The overall housing target provides a starting point for setting a target but the assessment will also need to take account of the previous record of deliverability. A recent appeal¹ decision indicated that the past under-delivery of housing should be compensated within the forward supply by the addition of 20% buffer to the target (in line with the NPPF).

In addition, case law is emerging which suggests that in calculating housing supply under-delivery requires both a 20% buffer and any shortfall to be added to the target for the five year period. This makes the demonstration of a 5-year supply increasingly challenging.

Will the adoption of the Core Strategy increase the supply of housing land in the County?

The adoption of the Core Strategy will significantly boost the housing supply in Herefordshire. The Core Strategy strategic proposals seek to provide almost 6,000 new dwellings and a deliverable proportion of these sites would be included with the 5-year supply figure. A five year housing land supply position statement in support of the Core Strategy from its adoption (2015-2020) was submitted with the Plan and dated September 2014 and is available to view on the Council's examination page –

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/7923552/i4five_year_land_supply_document_september_2014.pdf

This Statement demonstrates that a five year housing land supply will exist on adoption of the Core Strategy.

Why does the Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement in Support of the Core Strategy (September 2014) differ from the Interim Position Statement on Supply at (October 2014)?

The September 2014 Paper is written on the assumption of the Core Strategy adoption in April 2015. As such it would be acceptable to include the proposed strategic sites and other commitments as a suitable source of supply coming forward in the time period 2015-2020. The inclusion of these large strategic sites significantly increases housing supply and makes a 5 year supply achievable. Plainly the October 2014 paper cannot include such sites as they are not immediately available as required by NPPF footnote 11 and the examination/adoption process has not yet started.

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