

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Portfolio Holder

Report of: Head of Strategic and Economic Planning

Subject/Title: Cheshire East 5 year Housing Land Supply
Position Statement – September 2014

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Don Stockton

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East produced a Position Statement on the 5 year housing land supply in February of this year. It is both necessary and appropriate to bring this Position Statement fully up to date.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Position Statement appended to this report is to set out the Council's assessment of the housing land supply position on the base date of the 31st March 2014 and a further assessment of the relevant data up to the 31st August 2014.
- 1.3 The Position Statement illustrates that as of the 31st March 2014, Cheshire East was able to demonstrate the availability of a 6.08 years supply using the Sedgefield methodology with a 5 % buffer and a 5.32 years supply with a 20%.
- 1.4 To bring the housing land supply fully up to date the Position Statement illustrates that as of 31st August 2014, Cheshire East is able to demonstrate an increasing supply. The Position Statement illustrates that as of the 31st August 2014, Cheshire East was able to demonstrate the availability of a 6.36 years supply using the Sedgefield methodology with a 5 % buffer and a 5.57 years supply with a 20%.

2.0 Recommendations

- To approve and endorse the Cheshire East Housing Land Supply Position Statement – September 2014 attached at Appendix 1;
- To resolve that the Cheshire East Housing Land Supply Position Statement – September 2014 be given due weight in the determination of planning applications

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In order to meet the requirements in national planning guidance, it is important that the Council maintains an up to date position on its five year housing land supply.
- 3.2 The ongoing monitoring of housing land supply enables the Council to provide a robust defence against planning refusals, regardless of whether such decisions are appealed against by prospective developers.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All Wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Ward Members

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Determining Planning applications: Paragraph 47 of the NPPF requires that as part of the objective of boosting significantly the supply of housing, Council's should undertake regular assessments of housing land. These should seek to identify five years supply of deliverable housing sites. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF further advises that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It goes on to advise that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development where such requirements cannot be demonstrated.
- 6.2 The availability of a demonstrable 5-year supply of housing land is therefore fundamental in the determination of planning applications on sites not included in current and emerging local plans or which are contrary to the Council's adopted planning policy framework.
- 6.3 For the purposes of Development Management, appeals continue to be defended where appropriate, guided by the saved policies of the Local Plans for Congleton, Macclesfield and Crewe & Nantwich.

- 6.4 The availability of robust evidence, which is both contemporary and well researched, should also assist both the Council and local communities in refusing housing proposals which fall outside of the plan-led approach
- 6.5 Providing sufficient housing is important in not only replenishing the housing stock and providing a roof over people's heads, but also in assisting economic growth and meeting Council's health, caring and educational objectives.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, but indirectly, it is forecast that less resources should be expended in defending planning applications at appeal, together with any potential cost claims against the Council from successful appellants.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF requires all local planning authorities to demonstrate the availability of a minimum five years supply of housing land. This must be predicated on sites that are both developable and deliverable. An additional 'buffer' of 5% must be provided, but where there is a history of persistent under provision that 'buffer' must be increased to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 It must be acknowledged that there are risks associated with preparing housing land supply statements, as they are always subject to challenge by those seeking planning consent for residential proposals. However, it is considered that the Housing Position Statement provides a robust assessment based upon a rigorous analysis of the situation prevailing in Cheshire East as of the 1st September 2014.
- 9.2 The results of the assessment clearly demonstrate that the authority has a 5- year supply of housing land using both a 5% and 20% 'buffer', though it is the Council's position that the application of a 5% 'buffer' is the appropriate methodology in the circumstances prevailing in Cheshire East.

10.0 Background and Context

- 10.1 The Position Statement seeks to evidence a five year supply of housing land in the Borough. The approach taken to the

Statement has been informed by policy requirements and by consultation with the Housing Market Partnership.

The Borough's five year housing land requirement is 8,684. This is calculated using the 'Sedgefield' method of apportioning the past backlog in housing supply across the first five years. It includes a 5% buffer, which is considered appropriate in light of the Borough's past housing delivery performance and the historic imposition of a moratorium.

- 10.2 A standard formula of build rates and lead-in times has been applied to all housing sites of which the Council is aware. Those considered deliverable within the five year supply have been 'sense-checked' and assumptions altered to reflect the circumstances of the particular site.
- 10.3 Sources of supply include sites under construction; sites with full and outline planning permission; sites awaiting Section 106 Agreements; selected Strategic Sites which are included in the emerging Local Plan; sites in adopted Local Plans; and small sites. This approach accords with the National Planning Policy Framework, existing guidance and the emerging National Planning Policy Guidance.
- 10.4 A discount has been applied to small sites, and a windfall allowance included reflecting the applications which will come forward for delivery of small sites in years four and five.
- 10.5 The Position Statement appended to this report concludes that Cheshire East can demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing land as at the 1st September 2014.

11.0 Access to Information

- 11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Rachel Bolton
Designation: Housing Land Supply Co-ordinator
Email: Rachel.bolton@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Cheshire East Council Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement – September 2014