
WEST DORSET, WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

UPDATE - FEBRUARY 2015



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1. Introduction & Aims

1.1 The role of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

- 1.1.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a technical study of the theoretical development potential of sites in an area. The National Planning Policy Framework¹ (NPPF) makes clear that such an assessment is needed to provide realistic assumptions about the suitability, availability and achievability of land to meet the identified need for housing. National Planning Practice Guidance recommends that these should be based on housing market areas.
- 1.1.2 This assessment identifies land that may be suitable for development and potential issues but does not make judgements about whether it should be allocated for development. The report also makes clear which sites have been assessed but found to be unsuitable for development. The assessment of sites has not been limited by the amount of development needed.
- 1.1.3 The findings of the assessment are used to inform future local planning policy decisions, and this document therefore forms part of the planning policy evidence base. But it does not in itself constitute planning policy. It will be used to monitor and manage the supply of land for housing and the delivery of such housing, and it forms the basis of the housing trajectory that is incorporated in the local plan², illustrating the projected delivery of housing compared with the strategic housing requirements.

1.2 The area covered by the SHLAA

- 1.2.1 The administrative boundaries of West Dorset District and Weymouth & Portland Borough form the plan area for the Local Plan. Together, the two council areas form a single Housing Market Area (HMA).

Figure 1 - West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland HMA



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> Paragraph 159

² The most recent version of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan is the submission plan, Feb 2015

1.3 Previous SHLAAs and this update

- 1.3.1 West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council have worked in partnership since 2007 on strategic housing land availability assessments. Partnership working included: the establishment of a panel of stakeholders to oversee the development and application of a common method for undertaking SHLAA across the HMA; and consultation with the public, landowners and their representatives on development sites.
- 1.3.2 A first update of the SHLAA in the form of a single assessment report was produced across the housing market area in July 2014. The first update ensured a consistent approach across the plan area. It provided an opportunity to identify more clearly the sources of supply and explain the checks taken to avoid double-counting between different sources. The assessment was brought fully up to date so that actual completions up to 31 March 2014, and extant planning permissions as at 1 April 2014, could be used, together with the latest information supplied by prospective developers and landowners.
- 1.3.3 The July 2014 update was undertaken by officers from West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council on behalf of both authorities. Key stakeholders, including landowners and developers and statutory organisations such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, were involved in the preparation of the previous SHLAA assessments. The councils have drawn on that experience in preparing the single assessment report.
- 1.3.4 This document, dated January 2015, is a further update produced by the councils to respond to issues raised by the Inspector at the Local Plan examination in public, held in November/December 2014. Selected parts of the SHLAA have been updated including chapters 2, 3 and 4. The summary tables in each appendix have been updated where required. No changes to the mapping work or Appendix I have been made.

1.4 Method and core outputs

- 1.4.1 National Planning Policy Guidance³ provides clear guidance on undertaking the strategic housing land availability assessment, and makes clear that the assessment “should be thorough but proportionate”. There are 5 key stages and associated core outputs.

STAGE	CORE OUTPUTS	REFER TO
Site identification	list of all sites or broad locations considered, cross referenced to their locations on maps	Section 2 Appendices
Site assessment	proportionate assessment of each site or broad location, in terms of its suitability for development, availability and achievability and the potential type and quantity of development that could be delivered	Section 2 Appendices
Windfall assessment	an assessment of the historic delivery of large windfall sites	Section 2 Appendices

³ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>

Calculation of supply, short and long term	indicative trajectory of anticipated development	Section 3
Review of potential supply against objectively assessed need	overall calculations and consideration of associated risks	Section 4

- 1.4.2 The assessment we used followed a methodology⁴ which was published during the consultation for new sites. It follows national planning policy guidance but is proportionate taking into account available resources and time available. More detailed information on the methods used for calculating each component of the supply is set out in the appendices.
- 1.4.3 The assessment looks at potential availability of sites for new built houses and those provided through a change of use. It also includes housing accommodation provided for older people, such as residential institutions, care homes with self contained units (in use class C2 or sui generis). It does not include homes that have been restricted to holiday use (through a planning condition or agreement). It does not include caravans or temporary accommodation.

⁴ <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=192366&filetype...>

2. Site identification and assessment

2.1 Site identification

- 2.1.1 The starting point for the site identification process was the sites that had been considered through the previous SHLAA studies. These were all reviewed as part of this update. Many have since had planning permission or been proposed as development allocations in the emerging local plan. Sites have also been reassessed to make sure that previous assumptions about deliverability, or constraints information, still apply.
- 2.1.2 The first SHLAAs identified broad locations for development on the edge of Weymouth (Chickerell, Southill, Littlemoor), and Dorchester. These were typically large greenfield sites that had the potential to deliver significant levels of development, based on relatively extensive areas of search. Since the preparation of the first SHLAA reports, these sites, together with a number of other large sites on the edges of the towns and larger villages, have been considered in more detail through the local plan preparation process. This has led to some being allocated in the local plan, or rejected, and the results of this consideration have fed into this assessment. In the case of many of the ‘broad locations’, this further work has resulted in a reduced area of land being identified as having development potential, with the residual area now shown as a rejected site.
- 2.1.3 The councils undertook a ‘call for sites’ consultation in March – April 2014, in addition to reviewing completions, checking the status of planning permissions and applications, assessing local plan allocations and other evidence of potential sites.
- 2.1.4 The main focus of the assessment process was on sites within defined development boundaries. Towns and villages with defined development boundaries are considered to be in generally sustainable locations, and the principle of development in these locations would not require any policy change.
- 2.1.5 Sites put forward by landowners and developers outside, but well related to, towns and villages with defined development boundaries were also assessed in some detail. These are likely to be more sustainable than other, more remote sites, and could come forward for affordable housing or for open market housing should the policy that currently protects them change, or in the absence of a five year land supply. At this relatively late stage of the Local Plan preparation process, further allocations have not currently been proposed: the decision making process for such a change of policy would therefore be through a future review of the Local Plan, and would be subject to public consultation at that time.
- 2.1.6 Sites put forward by landowners and developers which were wholly unrelated to existing settlements with defined development boundaries are less likely to be sustainable. For this reason the assessment of their potential was much more limited, focusing only on sites likely to come forward as rural exception sites for affordable housing, through the conversion of rural buildings or through neighbourhood planning changes.

2.2 Site assessment

2.2.1 Ten potential sources of housing were identified:

SOURCE	NOTES	REFER TO
Sites with existing planning consent	All live planning permissions 'not implemented' or 'under construction' at 1st April 2014. Planning permissions are not subject to site assessment as the deliverability has been established through the planning application process.	Appendix A and Appendix F (for maps)
Sites allocated for development in the local plan	Sites allocated for residential and mixed use development in the draft West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. As part of this process site suitability has been assessed by the councils' landscape and urban design officers, officers of the local highways authority and other key stakeholders, and all sites have been the subject of public consultation. Developers, landowners and/or their representatives have been contacted to ascertain details of the delivery of their site and the estimated year of commencement. In addition to this, an independent review of assumptions made in terms of site capacity and delivery has been undertaken ⁵ .	Appendix B and Appendix F (for maps)
Submitted / identified large sites with development potential (within defined development boundaries)	Includes sites of any size submitted / previously submitted through the call for sites within development boundaries. Also includes sites of 0.15 ha or more that have been identified by officers as having development potential (including those known to be surplus, underutilised or vacant); and development proposals subject to pre-application consultation and planning applications pending a decision (prior to April 2014) where no significant issues have been identified to date. The suitability of these sites has been assessed by landscape and urban design officers. Site characteristics and owner expectations (where known) have been considered, in order to inform the assessment of deliverability of the site and provide an estimated net yield.	Appendix C and Appendix F (for maps)

⁵ West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Councils – Housing Delivery Review, February 2015
www.dorsetforyou.com

Identified minor sites with development potential (within defined development boundaries)	<p>Sites of less than 0.15ha identified from various sources including previous Urban Capacity Studies, known surplus land/buildings etc. within development boundaries.</p> <p>Site characteristics have been considered by officers in order to inform the assessment of the suitability of the site and provide an estimated net yield.</p>	Appendix D and Appendix F (for maps)
Rural exception sites likely to come forward	<p>Sites that are outside the defined development boundary where the landowner intention is to deliver solely affordable housing on-site as an exception to planning policy. These sites have been identified from submissions via the call for sites and the councils' housing enabling team working closely with external funding partners.</p> <p>Landscape and urban design officers have assessed the suitability of these sites.</p>	Appendix E and Appendix F (for maps)
Conversion of rural/office buildings likely to come forward	<p>New permitted development rights introduced by national government in 2014, and changes to local policy, will increase the potential housing supply from conversions of rural buildings and offices to housing. The likely yield has been based on the number of applications to convert rural buildings and offices to residential (outside of DDBs) since the new permitted development rights were introduced.</p>	Appendix G
Adopted neighbourhood plans	<p>Neighbourhood plans provide an opportunity to deliver additional development sites not identified through the Local Plan. A number of neighbourhood plans are proposed in the plan area, and these are at varying stages of development. The supply includes a yield from adopted Neighbourhood Plans only.</p>	Appendix H
Large Windfall	<p>An assumption of the contribution from windfall (unanticipated) sites based on the historical delivery of large windfall units (on schemes of 5 dwellings or more) outside Defined Development Boundaries between 2004 and 2010.</p>	Appendix J
Known pre-application or planning applications pending a decision	<p>An allowance for pipeline schemes covers a number of pending planning applications and pre application proposals, which have been submitted since April 2014, but which have not been identified elsewhere in the land supply assessment.</p>	Appendix K
Re-use of empty properties	<p>The council has a strategy for bringing empty properties back into use. However current data is limited and does not cover a long enough period to make accurate assumptions about future delivery. This source has not therefore been included in the calculation of supply.</p>	-- (insufficient data)

2.3 Checks for potential double counting

- 2.3.1 The sites forming the housing land supply come from a number of different sources. In order to ensure that sites were not contributing towards the land supply multiple times it was necessary to check the various supply sources for duplicate sites.
- 2.3.2 All sites from all sources were plotted on maps electronically and given a unique ID reference number. Queries were run using the mapping software to identify where sites intersected. The records returned by these queries were checked individually to remove any potential overlap or duplication, so that each site was only included in one supply source, and was only counted once within that source. Queries were also run to check that sites assessed as having no potential were not duplicated in any of the housing supply sources.

2.4 Submitted sites with no potential

- 2.4.1 Some of the sites submitted by landowners and agents during the ‘call for sites’ consultation in March – April 2014 were assessed as having no development potential. These sites are listed and mapped in Appendix I.
- 2.4.2 Sites were considered to have no potential if they were wholly unrelated to any town or village. Sites were also excluded if they had constraints that would be likely to preclude them from development, such as:
- Site of national nature conservation or geological importance (SSSIs) or higher, or within 400m of internationally protected heathland
 - Scheduled monuments
 - Flood Risk Zone 3 (undefended)
 - Land Instability Zone 4 (unsuitable because of land slipping and/or coastal erosion)
- 2.4.3 Sites were also excluded where it was considered that any form of development would have been significantly out of character with the local area; where there was no feasible highway access; where topographical constraints indicated that there was unlikely to be any development potential; or where there was known land contamination for which there was no potential mitigation.

3. Identifying Housing Requirements

3.1 The objective assessment of housing needs

- 3.1.1 The draft West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan identifies a requirement for 775 dwellings per annum across the housing market area (the plan area). Setting a single requirement for the whole plan area accords with the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that local planning authorities must meet the full objectively assessed needs ‘in the housing market area’. The evidence to support this housing requirement is set out in the Housing Needs Report 2014 produced by Peter Brett Associates (July 2014).
- 3.1.2 Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing (with an appropriate buffer), plus a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. This indicates that when adopted (estimated 2015), the minimum supply that must be identified in the plan from actual deliverable sites, is 775×10 plus any shortfall that may have accrued from the start date of the plan (April 2011).
- 3.1.3 The plan period for the draft Local Plan has been set at 20 years (from April 2011 to March 2031). This will provide a supply of 17 years from the time the plan is adopted. The strategic housing requirement for the plan period is $775 \times 20 = 15,500$ units. The current residual requirement (i.e. from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2031) is 14,012 dwellings and takes into account house completions of 1,488 dwellings between April 2011 and March 2014. These calculations are summarised in Figure 2 and 3 below

Figure 2 – Plan period housing requirement (2011-2031)

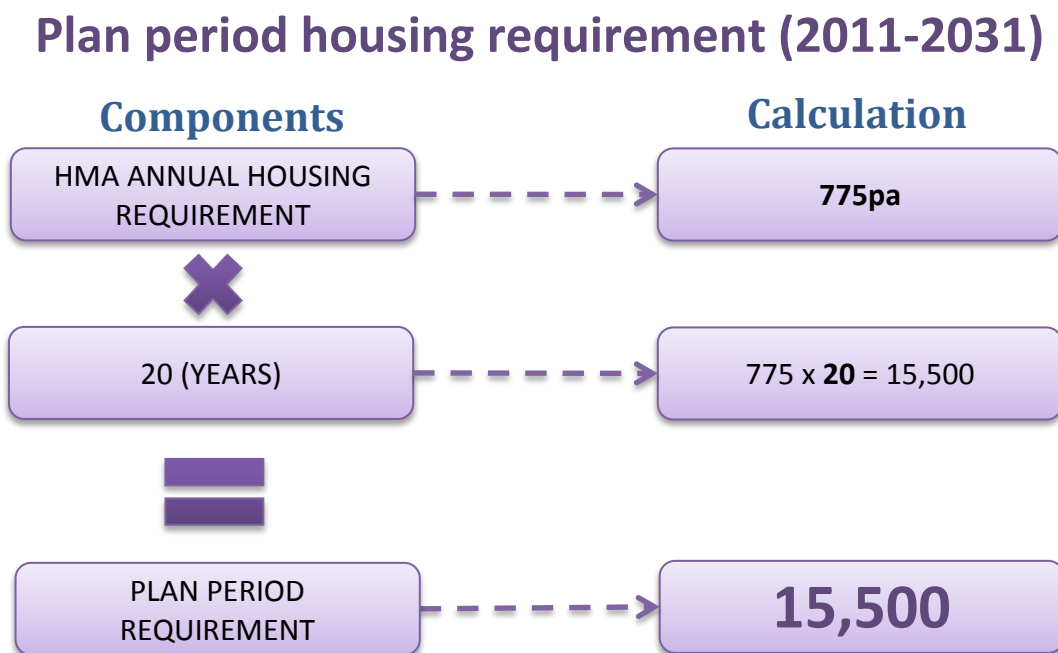
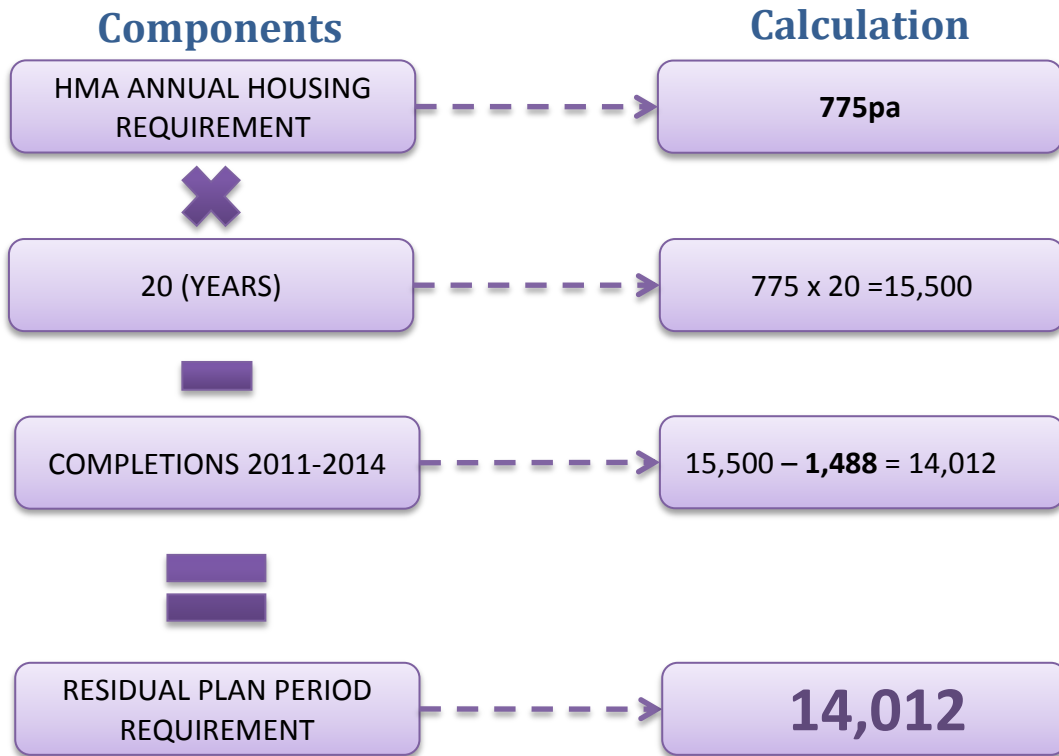


Figure 3 – Residual plan period housing requirement (2014-2031)

Residual plan period housing requirement (2014-2031)

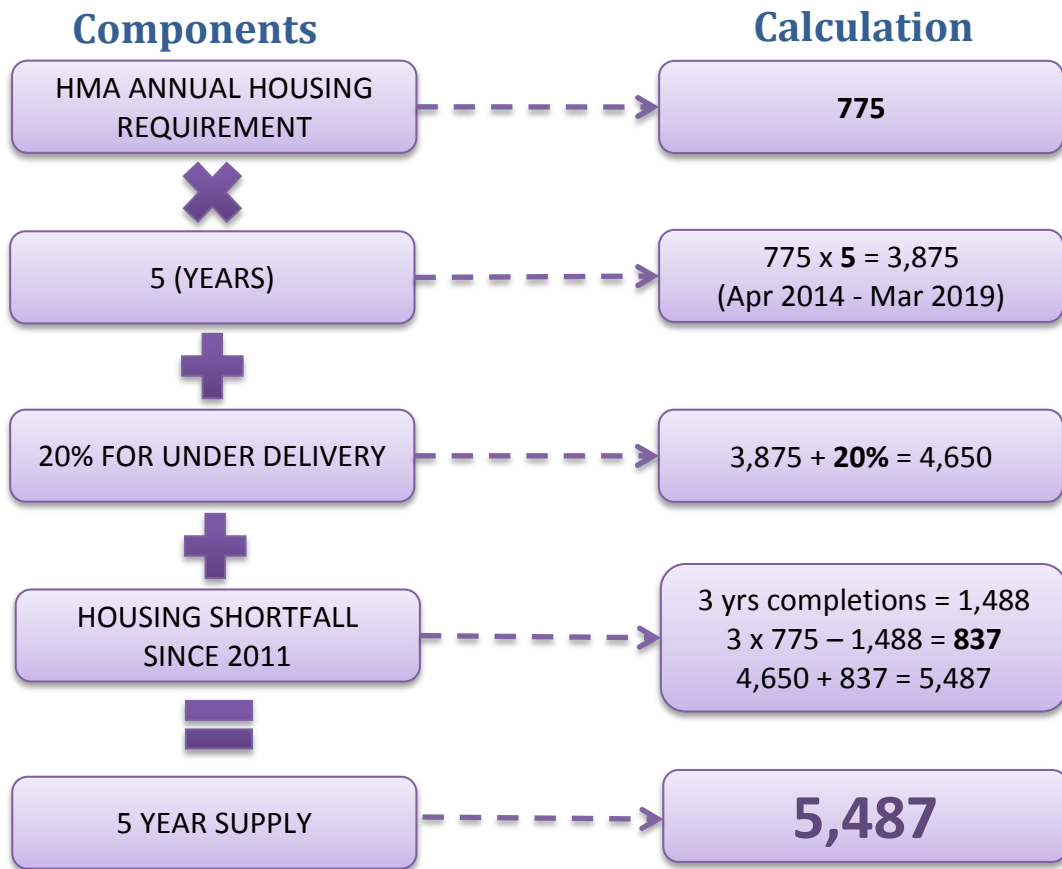


3.2 Five year requirement 2014-2019

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five year's worth of housing against their housing requirements. This supply should include an additional amount to make up for any shortfall from the earlier years of the plan period, plus a buffer allowance of 5% (or 20% if there has been a record of persistent under delivery). Housing delivery in the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland plan area has been 1,488 dwellings over the last three years, 837 dwellings below the annual requirement for that period, so a 20% buffer has been applied. The housing shortfall since 2011 has also been applied. The methodology for the 5 year supply is set out in figure 4 on the next page. Applying this approach will significantly boost housing supply in the area, from averaging 496dpa over the past 3 years to scope for 1,097dpa over the next 5 years.

Figure 4 – Five Year Housing Requirement 2014-2019

Five year housing requirement 2014-2019



4. Assessing the potential supply against objectively assessed needs

4.1 Housing Supply Calculations

- 4.1.1 The potential housing supply has been calculated for the five year period (from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2019), and for the residual plan period (which runs from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2031, spanning 17 years).
- 4.1.2 The projected completions take into account that delivery from some sources may not feature in the first few years of the five year supply given that it takes time to obtain permission, build and complete sites. As such, completions from rural affordable housing sites, minor identified sites and large windfalls were not included in the first year of the five year housing land supply and completions from rural/office buildings and pending/pre-application schemes were not included in the first two years of the five year housing land supply. On the same basis, completions from submitted sites within the five years' supply have been weighted more heavily towards the latter years.
- 4.1.3 Lapse rates have also been applied to the five year period for sites with planning consent (5%), and submitted sites (10%).
- 4.1.4 More detailed information on the assumptions on delivery, application of lapse rates and checks against each source can be found in the relevant appendices.

4.2 5 Year Supply (2014-2019)

- 4.2.1 As set out in section 3.2, the 5 year housing requirement (as at April 2014) is 5,487 units. The inclusion of supply from new allocations in the local plan will not be confirmed until the local plan examination has progressed to a stage where these sites can be given significant weight. When the new allocations are confirmed, the identified five year supply of 6,519 units will exceed the five years' requirement by 1,032 units. This is the equivalent of a 5.9 year supply of land.

Table 1 - Summary of 5 year housing requirements and supply

HOUSING REQUIREMENT 2014-2019	5,487 (1,097pa)
SUPPLY TO MEET REQUIREMENT	
Extant planning permissions at 1 April 2014 (5% lapse applied)	2,687
Submitted / large identified sites within settlements, where reasonable developer indication of delivery before 2019 (10% lapse applied)	1,411
Minor identified sites within settlements likely to be built (4 years with no discount)	444
Rural exception sites likely to come forward, with RSL interest / funding	63
Supply from rural and office conversions (based on past trends) (3 years with no discount)	63
Neighbourhood Plan	5
Large site windfall (4 years with no discount)	136
Pre-application or planning applications pending a decision (3 years)	213
SUPPLY SUB-TOTAL	5,022
Supply from new allocations in the local plan	1,497
TOTAL 5 YEAR SUPPLY	6,519

Supply in Equivalent Years 6,519/1,097

5.9 years

4.3 Residual Plan Period Supply (2014-2031)

4.3.1 Residential land completions between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014 count towards the supply from the start of the plan period, but have no further potential. These are monitored by Dorset County Council and the district / borough councils, and published in the annual monitoring reports. The total (net) completions for the first three years of the plan period (from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014) was 1,488 units. This information is provided in the councils' annual monitoring reports. The supply for the plan period 2014-2031 exceeds the housing requirement of 14,012 by 887 units.

Table 2 - Summary of housing requirements and supply

	Plan period 2011-31	Residual period 2014-31
HOUSING REQUIREMENT	15,500	14,012
SUPPLY TO MEET REQUIREMENT		
Completions 1 April 2011-31 March 2014	1,488	--
Extant planning permissions at 1 April 2014	3,973	3,973
Supply from new land allocations in the plan	3,742	3,742
Submitted / large identified sites within settlements	3,834	3,834
Minor identified sites within settlements likely to be built	1,783	1,783
Rural exception sites likely to come forward	170	170
Supply from rural and office conversions (based on past conversions)	315	315
Supply from adopted neighbourhood plans (estimate)	40	40
Large site windfall	547	547
Pre-application or planning applications pending a decision	495	495
TOTAL SUPPLY	16,387	14,899

4.4 Indicative trajectory of anticipated development

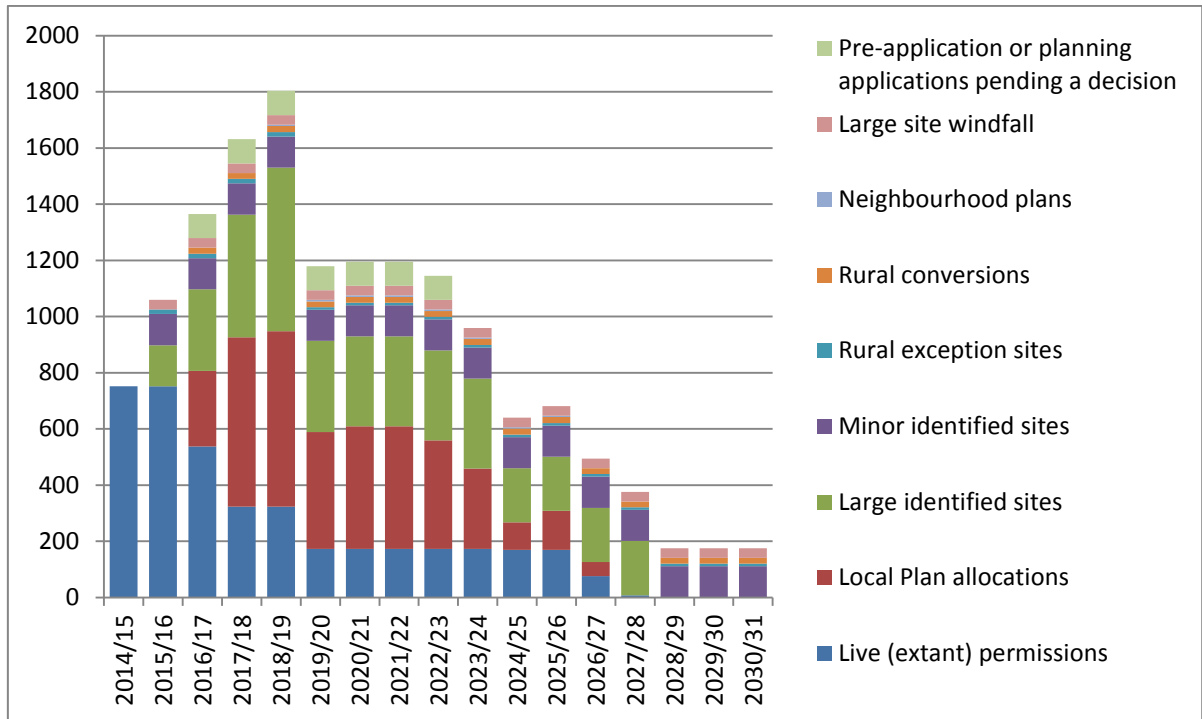
4.4.1 Although it is not possible to know for certain what development will come forward and when based on assumptions, the independent review of housing land supply carried out by BNP Paribas (February 2015) and other checks provide a projected delivery trajectory for the remaining period. This is illustrated in Table 3 and Figure 5 below.

Table 3 - Projected delivery by year from housing supply sources⁶

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Live (extant) permissions	752	752	537	323	323	173	173	173	173	173	170	170	76	8	0	0	0
Local Plan allocations	0	0	269	603	625	416	436	436	386	286	97	138	50	0	0	0	0
Large identified sites	0	146	291	437	582	324	320	320	320	320	193	193	193	193	0	0	0
Minor identified sites	0	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111	111
Rural exception sites	0	16	16	16	16	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Rural/Office conversions	0	0	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Neighbourhood plans	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
Large site windfall	0	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
Pre-application or planning applications pending a decision	0	0	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

⁶ Figures may differ slightly from overall supply calculations due to rounding

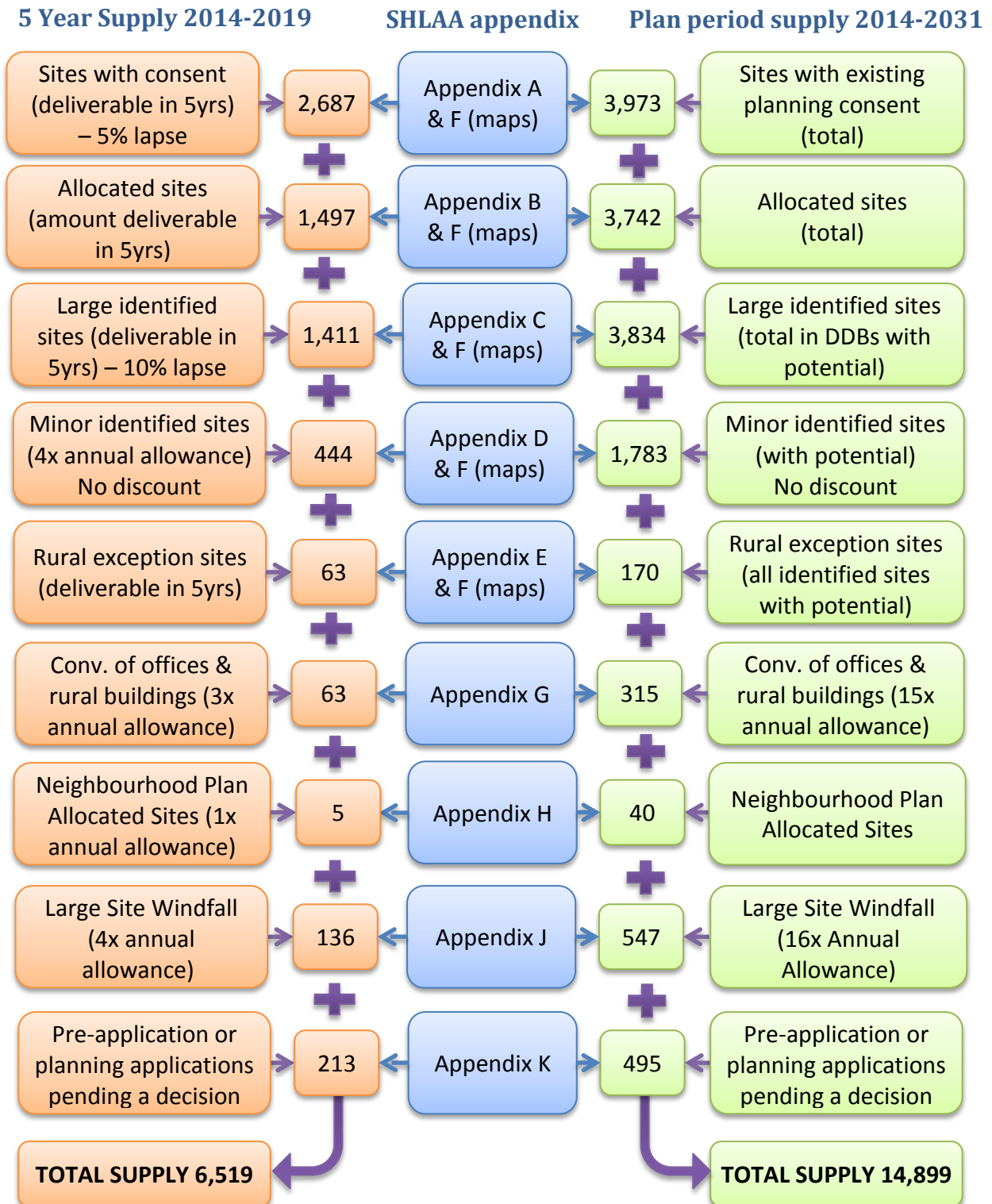
Figure 5 - Projected delivery by year from housing supply sources as a graph



4.5 Housing Land Supply Overview

4.5.1 Figure 6 below provides an overview of the five year and residual plan period housing supply bringing together the various components set out in section 2 against the assumptions and supply calculations shown in section 4.

Figure 6 – Overview of five year and plan period supply components



4.6 Risk analysis

- 4.6.1 This SHLAA indicates that there is some flexibility within the predicted supply. The 5 year supply will exceed the requirement by 1,032 and the overall housing supply will exceed the requirement to 2031 by 887 (equivalent to approximately 1 year's supply). Account has been taken of potential lapses in planning consents in the supply calculations, and checks undertaken to ensure that any assumptions are reasonable. Where evidence has been unreliable (such as the potential to bring back into use long-term empty properties) no allowance has been made, even though such sources are likely contribute towards the overall supply.
- 4.6.2 The assessment of land supply will be kept up to date as part of the Councils' regular monitoring, based on completions, new planning consents, lapsed permissions, and the consequential changes to the other sources. It should only be necessary to carry out a full re-survey of sites when the Local Plan is to be reviewed, or other significant changes make this necessary, e.g. if the councils are no longer able to demonstrate a five year supply of specific deliverable sites for housing.