



**Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council**

**Strategic Housing Land Availability  
Assessment (SHLAA) Report  
2017**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council are working together to prepare a new Joint Local Plan. The Joint Local Plan will replace the existing Core Spatial Strategy. Once adopted it will identify how much additional land is required to meet the development needs across both areas up to 2033.
- 1.2 It is a requirement of national planning policy that Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) are prepared by local planning authorities to provide evidence of all potential sources of housing land supply that are a combination of the following: suitable or potentially suitable, available or likely to become available, and achievable within 5 years or could be viably developed within 6-15 years. This is the key evidence to identify whether or not there is sufficient potential land for housing development to meet the local authority's development needs for housing over the plan period.
- 1.3 **It is important to note that the inclusion of any site within a SHLAA does not guarantee that it will be allocated for development or that planning permission for its development will be granted. It simply provides evidence of how the suitability, availability and achievability of the site has been assessed. All sites will require more detailed assessment and investigation if they are to be considered for allocation or planning approval. Any allocation of the sites included in this assessment will be made through either the Joint Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans that are being prepared within the Borough. Proposed allocations will be subject to extensive public consultation as part of the preparation of any of these documents.**
- 1.4 The Assessment will normally be reviewed on an annual basis and sites can be nominated for inclusion at any time. This version presents a snapshot of the potential housing land supply as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.
- 1.5 The Council identifies sites from existing data as well as conducting a 'Call for Sites', where sites are able to be promoted by anyone as available to the Council. Only sites over 0.25 hectares have been taken into consideration.
- 1.6 The assessment of sites included in this study is based on the best information available to the Council at the time. This includes information submitted by landowners, agents and other parties, which is correct to the best of our knowledge. If you consider any of this information to be incorrect or out of date, or if you have further information, please let us know. We will take any fresh information into consideration in the next update of the SHLAA.
- 1.7 Although Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council are working together on a new Joint Local Plan, both councils have prepared separate SHLAA reports. Nonetheless, both assessments have been prepared

under a shared methodology which has been agreed by both councils and was subject to consultation with relevant stakeholders from the development industry in late 2015. This report should be read in conjunction with the SHLAA methodology. The SHLAA Methodology is available on the council's website<sup>1</sup>.

## **2. Previous Assessments**

- 2.1 The Council first published a draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in October 2008 and this was used as part of the supporting evidence to inform the Core Spatial Strategy, which was adopted in 2009. It was then updated on an annual basis between 2010 and 2014 to measure housing land supply against the Core Spatial Strategy housing target numbers.
- 2.2 In light of the decision to prepare a new Joint Local Plan, and also because of changes to national and regional planning policy, the Borough Council and the City Council have reviewed their approaches towards undertaking SHLAA assessments and this new SHLAA report has been prepared under a new joint methodology<sup>1</sup>.

## **3. Planning Policy Context**

### **National Planning Policy**

- 3.1 Since the publication of the last SHLAA report in 2014 there have been some notable changes at the national level. The most significant change is the new Housing and Planning Act, which received royal assent on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The Act introduces new responsibilities for local planning authorities, many of which are relevant to the SHLAA. Examples of these new responsibilities include the following:
  - Enabling the provision of Starter Homes
  - Supporting self-build and custom housebuilding
  - Applying 'Permission in Principle' to suitable housing sites
  - Preparing registers of small sites and suitable brownfield sites
- 3.2 The government is currently preparing regulations to provide detail on how these changes are to be implemented and it is also in the process of reviewing national planning policy. In the absence of these new national requirements, this SHLAA report has been prepared to follow the requirements of the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), the Planning Practice Guidance and the principles proposed by the government in its Consultation on Proposed Changes to National Planning Policy (December 2015) and the Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes (February 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/IMCE/Planning/Planning\\_Policy/SOJLP/SHLAA%20Methodology.pdf](https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/IMCE/Planning/Planning_Policy/SOJLP/SHLAA%20Methodology.pdf)

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

- 3.3 The NPPF's objective of delivering a wide choice of high quality homes requires local planning authorities to identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites to provide five years worth of housing against their requirements, and to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for housing growth in 6-10 years and 11-15 years where possible.
- 3.4 Deliverable housing sites are defined as those which are available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. It is these principles of suitability, availability and achievability which underpin the assessment of sites within the SHLAA.
- 3.5 Developable housing sites are defined as those that are in a suitable location for housing development and where there is a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged (i.e. within 6-10 year or 11-15 years).

### **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

- 3.6 The PPG provides further guidance on how potential housing land should be assessed in accordance with the principles established by the NPPF. It states that SHLAAs should; identify sites and broad locations with potential for development; assess their development potential, and; assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability).
- 3.7 The process for assessing sites with development potential is split in to five stages within the PPG; identifying sites and broad locations; assessment of sites and broad locations; assessment of windfall (where appropriate); assessment review, and; final evidence base.
- 3.8 These five stages have been taken in to account and incorporated within the agreed Joint SHLAA methodology. Each stage is explained in more detail in section 4 of this report.
- 3.9 The PPG is an online resource and so it is subject to regular review and updating by the government. Any changes that are made to the PPG following the publication of this SHLAA 2017 report will be incorporated in to the next version.

## **Local Planning Policy**

### **Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy**

- 3.10 The Core Spatial Strategy was prepared jointly by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council and was adopted in 2009. It sets out the development strategy for the period 2006 to 2026 and sets a housing requirement for the Borough over this 20 year period of 5,700 net new homes (285 per year). This figure was derived from the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy which was revoked by the government in 2013.
- 3.11 The overall development strategy for the plan area is established by policy SP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy (Spatial Principles of Targeted Regeneration). This directs new housing development within the Borough primarily to the urban areas of Newcastle and Kidsgrove. Housing development in the rural area is directed towards the key rural service centres of Loggerheads, Madeley and the villages of Audley Parish through policy ASP6.
- 3.12 As the Core Spatial Strategy pre-dates the publication of the NPPF and the PPG, its policies have to be considered in the context of the newer policy direction that is set at the national level. As the Core Spatial Strategy housing target was derived from a revoked regional spatial strategy, according to the words of the PPG – it may no longer reflect current needs. To address this, the Borough Council and the City Council commissioned the preparation of a new SHMA to provide the housing need evidence to inform the Joint Local Plan. The revised SHMA was first published in 2015 and an updated SHMA (2017) is now available on the council's website, further information about this is provided below.

### **Joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2017)**

- 3.13 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should “use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area”. The SHMA was prepared with the task of identifying the extent of the housing market and the establishing the needs for housing that exist within that area.
- 3.14 Following the methodology prescribed within the PPG, the SHMA identified that Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent together form a single housing market area, and that the recommended objectively assessed need (OAN) for new housing across both areas is a minimum of 1,390 dwellings per year between 2013 and 2033. It should be noted that the SHMA 2015 and the SHMA Review 2017 comprise the most recent published assessment of housing need, but these reports are currently subject to public consultation as part of the background evidence to the Joint Local Plan Strategic Options Document.
- 3.15 The SHMA, 2017 recommends a local housing need for Stoke-on-Trent of 804 dwellings per annum and Newcastle-under-Lyme of 586 per annum.

- 3.16 This SHLAA will be considered alongside the Stoke-on-Trent SHLAA to indicate a potential housing land supply across the housing market area. However, it is at the next stage of the Joint Local Plan that the process will begin choosing sites to go forward to meet the final objectively assessed needs.
- 3.17 Given the above, it is no longer considered appropriate to analyse the housing land supply in the context of the Adopted Core Strategy 2009, but to instead assess the housing land supply against the most recent assessment of local housing needs, as set out in the SHMA Review 2017.

## **4. Methodology**

- 4.1 To guide the new approach for assessing housing land as evidence for the Joint Local Plan, a joint SHLAA methodology was developed by the two councils. This was subject to a period of targeted engagement with the development industry in October and November 2015. This included landowners, developer, agents, housing providers and other relevant organisations. This targeted engagement was intended to seek specialist views on the assumptions that are to be applied through the SHLAA assessments. Following feedback from these stakeholders, the assumptions were subject to minor refinement prior to applying them within this assessment. The SHLAA Methodology 2017<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.2 Once all potential sites have been collated, then a process of filtering begins in order to narrow down the number of sites that will be subject to more detailed assessment. As the first step, in accordance with the SHLAA methodology, all sites without planning permission that fall within the Green Belt have not been assessed. A list of these sites is available in Appendix C. No potential capacity figures have been provided for these sites, but their gross site area is shown.
- 4.3 There are 50 sites with residential planning approval contributing a potential capacity of 1,210 to the deliverable supply and 459 to the developable supply. Appendix A sets out the details of all sites with planning approval, their capacity and their construction status as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.
- 4.4 Finally, in accordance with the PPG, only sites that are capable of delivering five or more dwellings have been taken forward for assessment. However, the government's technical consultation on implementation of planning changes (February 2016) proposed that local authorities should publish a register of small sites, with a potential capacity of between one and four dwellings, to aid developer and individuals interested in self-build and custom housing. Following calculation of the developable area assumptions (explained later in this section), the following sites have been identified as having a potential capacity that falls below the five dwelling threshold. No judgments have therefore been made on the potential suitability of these sites for housing development. This preliminary list of sites can be used as the

basis of the Borough's small sites register. These sites are also listed and shown in Appendix A (Site details) and Appendix D (Details and Maps - sites with less than 5 dwelling capacity).

- 4.5 Once Green Belt sites without planning permission and sites with a potential capacity of less than five dwellings have been discounted, this leaves 308 sites that are subject to more detailed assessment of their suitability, availability and achievability for housing development. For each of these sites there is a site assessment pro-forma along with a site map provided in Appendix B.
  
- 4.6 In Newcastle-under-Lyme an achievability assessment has not been provided for sites outside of the deliverable supply, this is to avoid potential confusion and to differentiate between the deliverable and developable supply. NPPF footnote 11 and 12 suggest that an assessment of achievability is a criteria unique to whether or not a site features in the deliverable supply (0-5 year supply). Sites that are a combination of; suitable, potentially suitable, available now, or likely to become available, which are viable, are more suited to what NPPF footnote 12 describes a developable site to be, which does not include an assessment of site achievability. Although sites within the developable supply are technically 'achievable' insofar that there is a reasonable prospect they can be developed, such sites are not achievable in the same sense as is described in NPPF footnote 11 and sites that are within the deliverable supply.

## 5. Assessment Findings

### Overall Capacity

- 5.1 The housing capacity of all sites judged to be deliverable or developable has been estimated during the Assessment process, and the capacity distributed across 5 year key delivery periods to form an indicative forecast of the amount of housing that could be delivered over the next fifteen years. Table 1 summarises these findings, showing the potential housing land supply in each of the three key periods (0–5 years; 6–10 years; and 11–15 years). Appendix A contains a Schedule of Sites for each key period.
- 5.2 The Schedule of Sites provides an estimate of the capacity and phasing of each site. Many of the larger sites are expected to be delivered over several periods and may, therefore, have capacity that features in more than one delivery period.

### Spatial Distribution of Housing

- 5.3 For the purpose of indicating the spatial distribution of potential housing sites the Borough is divided into three sub-areas, as listed in Table 1 below.

<b>Dwellings by Spatial Area</b>	<b>0 - 5 year capacity</b>	<b>6 - 10 year capacity</b>	<b>11 - 15 year capacity</b>	<b>Total capacity by spatial area</b>
Newcastle	675	1,303	788	2,766
Kidsgrove	230	184	51	465
Rural	375	587	145	1,107
<b>Total capacity by delivery period</b>	1,280	2,074	984	4,338

**Table 1: Capacity of Gross Land Supply by Sub-Area**

- 5.4 The SHMA recommends an OAN of 1,390 dwellings per annum across both the Newcastle and Stoke area, which equates to a minimum housing requirement of 586 dwellings per annum for Newcastle and 804 for Stoke-on-Trent.
- 5.5 Table 1 indicates a total capacity of 1,280 for the 0–5 year period (the deliverable supply), and of 4,338 for the fifteen year period 2017–2032 (deliverable + developable supply). Therefore the table indicates a potential housing land supply across the borough that is insufficient to accommodate the growth required to meet the borough's recommended housing need.
- 5.6 The capacity for the 0–5 year period should be supplemented by dwellings expected to be delivered through conversions or changes of use, identified through existing

planning permissions. These sites are not listed in the Schedule of Sites but make an important contribution to the potential housing land supply. The total number of dwellings expected to be delivered by these means is 33. This increases the total capacity of the deliverable supply to 1,313.

**Sites without Planning Permission that are Considered Deliverable**

5.7 Three sites without planning permission have been included in the 0–5 year period. Both sites have been subject to extensive developer interest and are considered to offer a realistic prospect of delivering homes within the next five years. The phasing of housing delivery on each site has been estimated based on discussions with the developers concerned.

Site reference	Capacity in 0 – 5 Year Supply
Wilmott Drive, Cross Heath, Newcastle-under-Lyme	60
Chester Road (former Talke Library), Talke	5
Queensway, Westlands, Newcastle	5

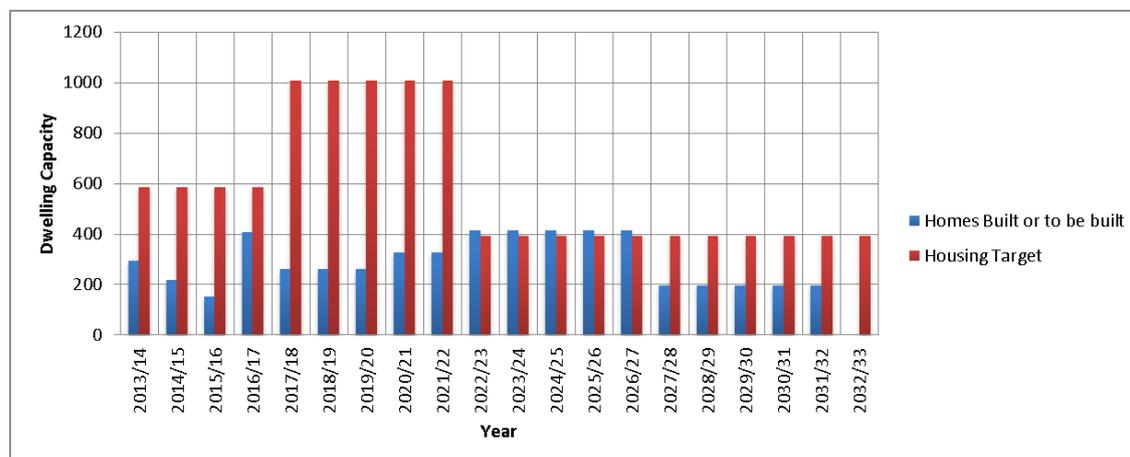
**Table 2: Sites without planning permission that are considered deliverable**

**Capacity of brownfield sites and large sites**

5.8 Section 3 of this report (Local Planning Policy) noted that the aim of prioritising brownfield sites had been successful to date but that the supply of these sites is now running out. This Assessment has identified 60 brownfield sites as being in the deliverable and developable supply, which combined could provide a total of 1,711 new dwellings, and 41 greenfield sites with capacity for 2,489 new dwellings. One site consists of both brownfield and greenfield land, and has an estimated capacity of 138 dwellings.

5.9 A significant proportion of the sites identified in the Assessment are small, with 32% having a capacity of between 5 and 10 dwellings.

## Housing Supply Trajectory



**Figure 1: Net Housing Supply Trajectory**

Figure 1 illustrates and compares:

- The number of homes that have been built each year from 2013 to 2017;
- The number of homes that could potentially be built in each year from 2017 to 2022 (this is an average of the capacity of sites in the deliverable supply + capacity expected from conversions and change of use permissions and a windfall allowance of 64 for year's 4 and 5). 2022 to 2032 is an average of the potential capacity within the developable supply (6 to 15 years);
- The housing target fluctuates as a consequence of under delivery against the recommended housing requirement of 586 (currently subject to public consultation as part of the Joint Local Plan Strategic Options Consultation Document). The increased target for the years 2017 to 2022 (1,008 new homes per year) is necessary to make up the shortfall from 2013-2017 and the addition of a 20% buffer, as is required by National policy. The 20% buffer is not an additional amount added to the overall housing requirement it is 20% of 5 years of the requirement, brought forward from later in the plan period, and the existing delivery shortfall

(1,269)<sup>2</sup>. This is why the housing target reduces to 394 per annum for years 2022-2033.

- 5.10 While 2016/17 has been encouraging with regards to the number of net housing completions recorded, cumulatively, since 2013 the number of homes built has fallen short of that which the SHMA, 2017 indicates is necessary to meet the borough's recommended housing need. This has resulted in a shortfall of 1,269 new homes against a cumulative target of 2,930 (as of 1 April 2017).
- 5.11 The National Planning Policy Framework and supporting guidance do not specify how the shortfall should be managed. However, appeal decisions have favoured a different approach in which the shortfall is made up in the first five years of the remaining delivery period. This approach, known as the 'Sedgefield Approach,' has previously been accepted by the Borough Council for the purpose of calculating the five year housing land supply. It forms the basis of the increased target of 1,008 new homes over the next five years. Figure 1 suggests there is insufficient capacity within the deliverable housing supply for the increased target to be achieved.
- 5.12 Due to its record of persistent under-delivery against the original housing target of the 2009 Adopted Core Strategy, and, more recently, the recommended housing need for the borough set out in the SHMA 2017, the borough council is required to apply an additional buffer of 20% to ensure competition and choice in the market for land. When this is taken into account, the borough council should aim to provide a five year supply of sites with a capacity of 5,039 homes.
- 5.13 While past completion monitoring supports a windfall allowance of 64 homes per year in the last two years of the five-year period. Adding this allowance to the capacity of sites included in the 0–5 year phase (1,313) increases the capacity of the 5 year supply to 1,441 falling short of the number of homes required over the next five years (5,039).

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<sup>2</sup> This is in accordance with the approach advocated by the Planning Advisory Service: <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/pas-topics/local-plans/five-year-land-supply-faq#17>. Where an authority has persistently under-delivered in recent years, at what point in the calculation should the extra 20% be added? Should it be added to the backlog or not?

## **6. Review of Assessment**

### **Phasing within the Trajectory**

- 6.1 Every effort has been made to ensure that the Assessment process does not overestimate supply or completion rates. The build out rates and phasing of sites included in this Assessment have been informed by the expertise and knowledge of development industry stakeholders, such as house builders and property agents. In the five-year supply period, sites with full planning permission and those already under construction have been phased ahead of sites with outline planning permission.
- 6.2 Generally, urban brownfield sites have been prioritised ahead of greenfield (previously undeveloped) land and rural sites. Some comments received through the Assessment Stakeholder Consultation recommended bringing forward rural sites within the housing trajectory to address a perceived imbalance in rural housing supply (an oversupply in later years being preceded by a period of undersupply). However, many rural sites will only be suitable for development once they have been allocated for housing development or once a revised village boundary is established. The remainder of the rural housing supply has been phased at the end of the plan period as these sites will only be developed if required. Further stages in the plan-making process will determine which rural sites are most suitable for development.
- 6.3 Areas of open space not identified as being required for local standards by the Open Space Strategy, 2017 have been assessed as 'potentially suitable' in accordance with the strategy's guidance towards the potential disposal of open space. However, the allocation of any open spaces for housing development, or other uses, will be informed by public consultation as part of the plan-making process.

### **Initial Findings and Implications**

- 6.4 The trajectory included in this Assessment (Figure 1) is only an indication of how sites in the borough might come forward. The Joint Local Plan, once adopted, will ultimately determine which sites come forward and the timing of when a suitable site comes forward.
- 6.5 Market uncertainty and factors outside the control of the borough council, such as changes in ownership, sites being subject to applications for alternative uses and developers working to alternative timeframes will impact on the supply and phasing of housing sites in the interim period. It can also be expected that potential housing sites that have not yet been identified will also be nominated for inclusion in future SHLAAs.
- 6.6 The Assessment demonstrates that the theoretical supply of deliverable and developable sites in the borough is insufficient to meet the recommended housing

need for the borough. The supply includes a large number of small sites and is unevenly distributed throughout the borough. The borough also has a shortage of sites deliverable within five years (currently sufficient to meet 1.43 years' of the recommended housing need for the borough).

- 6.7 The findings of this Assessment will form part of the evidence base for further stages in the plan-making process. This process will need to consider carefully how the borough can deliver the housing needed to support its sustainable growth, and balance this against other needs and objectives.

### **Limitations to Research**

- 6.8 This report, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2016/17, represents a 'snap shot' of the housing land supply position at 1 April 2017. Although every attempt has been made to ensure that the information is as accurate as possible, it is recognised that there are limitations to this research. A number of assumptions have been made where information was unavailable.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- 6.9 Regular updating of the Assessment will be undertaken as an integral part of the Authority Monitoring Report process. Such updates will ensure that the Assessment is responsive to market information.