

Darlington Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2013

HOUSING SUPPLY FACT SHEET



WHAT THE LOCAL PLAN SETS OUT TO DO

- Support new house building in Darlington to better meet the identified needs of local people and to help retain and attract more young and working age people.
- Identify sufficient land for about 350 net additional new homes every year until 2021, and about 400 per year from 2021-2026.
- Provide at least 35 additional affordable homes every year until 2016 and 50 per year from 2021-2026.
- Make provision for travelling groups at existing sites at Honeypot Lane, Neasham Road and other small sites within the Borough. Where required, make provision for additional sites according to the locational criteria in the Core Strategy to ensure access to sufficient good quality accommodation.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

House Build Rates: Following a year on year reduction in house build rates from 2008/09 to 2010/11, a small increase in net output was achieved in 2011/12. Unfortunately, completions dipped below 200 dwellings in 2012/13. Publicly funded affordable housing schemes have made an important contribution to output over recent years, highlighting the significance of funding provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). New build completions are expected to increase significantly over the next few years and much of the output is expected to be delivered by affordable housing schemes including new council house development. Projections indicate that 121 affordable completions are anticipated in 2013/14 and a further 137 in 2014/15.

Housing Build Rates: Net Completions and Commitments



Source: Darlington Borough Council. *Data correct at January 2014

Housing supply over the five year period 2014-19 is expected to be met through existing planning permissions, other achievable sites and a small contribution from windfalls. The Council maintains ongoing dialogue with affordable housing providers, private house builders and landowners to closely monitor the realism of projected build out rates for existing planning permissions.

Projected output, shown in the graph, does not yet factor in additional output capacity from housing site allocations identified in the emerging Local Plan. Work is currently underway to complete the trajectory for the full plan period.

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During the last year, the Council has assembled and prepared evidence to support decisions on future allocations. This includes the 2013 update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), a document which assesses the suitability, availability and achievability of potential new housing sites. The evidence base will inform site allocations in the emerging Local Plan and new allocations will be published for public consultation in Summer 2014.

The Council must allocate a sufficient and deliverable supply of land for housing to meet housing need over the Local Plan period. In line with changes introduced to the planning system by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012, in the first five years of the Local Plan period, the Council is factoring in an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

In terms of tenure of housing completions, the impact of the economic downturn on the viability and momentum of private sector house building is apparent. Affordable housing completions have made an important contribution to build rate output in the last three years, indicating the importance of public sector intervention in terms of kick-starting and maintaining development.

Housing Completions

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Gross additional dwellings completed	516	520	581	256	232	205	232	170
Affordable housing completions	10	38	50	25	49	60	107	54
Affordable completions as % of total completions	1.94%	7.31%	8.61%	9.77%	21.12%	29.27%	46.12%	31.8%
Development Plan Target	240	285	285	525	525	525	350	350

Source: Darlington Borough Council.



One affordable housing site was completed in 2012/13, for 12 dwellings on Haughton Road. Other sites were under construction with many affordable homes being delivered.

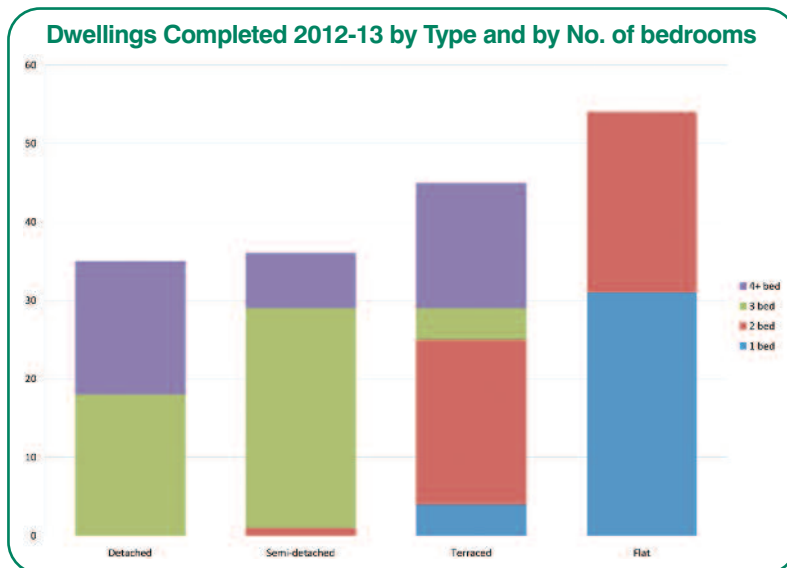
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Size, Type and Quality of Housing:

The Council continues to monitor dwelling type, size and quality to ensure the housing stock meets needs and aspirations. In terms of affordable housing provision, re-modelling of Council stock is helping to address this issue. In terms of private sector housing, the Council continues to work with house builders to ensure the housing mix on new sites is appropriate, though dwelling type has tended to be dictated by viability recently. Out of 170 dwellings completed in 2012-13, the majority of dwellings were 2 and 3 bedroom (26% and 29% respectively). However, the percentages of 1 and 4 bedroom properties increased from the previous year (21% and 24% respectively).



Source: Darlington Borough Council.

In terms of house type, there was a complete turnaround compared with the previous year. Semi-detached fell from 46% to 21%, detached increased from 12% to 20%, terraced increased slightly to 26% and flats increased from 19% to 32%.

Accommodating Travelling Groups: The Council is committed to providing for travelling groups at existing sites, and where required, on additional sites, selected according to the locational criteria in the Local Plan. Nine additional permanent pitches were granted planning permission in 2012/13, on three different sites. All of these sites included pitches with spaces for touring caravans. No pitches have been lost in the borough due to development or closure. At the time of writing, there are a number of planning applications either pending consideration, or going through the appeal process.

Site allocations for new pitches will be identified in the Making and Growing Places DPD. To inform this, in March / April 2012, the Council consulted on potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and subsequently, has selected its preferred sites. Feasibility work continues to inform delivery of one of the larger sites at Neasham Road, to create an additional 20 pitches alongside 20 existing pitches, and this will be implemented by Spring 2015. The Council is also currently in the process of commissioning a piece of work which will provide a review of needs within the Borough over the plan period, taking into account local information and insight, entitled, Darlington Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Review 2014.

In November 2013, the Council updated the Housing Strategy Action Plan and published the first Annual Monitoring Report. Overall, good progress had been made in the first year by improving the sustainability of housing, improving housing conditions and investing in regeneration areas.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

While efforts are underway to stimulate housing supply, housing demand continues to be suppressed following the onset of the credit crunch in 2007. On-going issues around limited access to mortgages, particularly for first time buyers combined with an increase in average house prices are part of the problem. Average prices across Darlington increased marginally last year from £134,000 to £138,000. Terraced houses, traditionally the first step on to the housing ladder, have become significantly less affordable at an average £104,000 in December 2013. However, overall affordability in Darlington has improved slightly. On average, houses are more affordable in Darlington than in the North East Region and in the Country as a whole.

However, while the housing market remains challenging, there are signs of recovery following an increase in net output in 2011-12. In terms of private sector housing, the development at West Park, which is currently the largest private sector housing site in the Borough, will continue to deliver a steady flow of completions.

Building started on other strategic development sites such as Central Park, where an outline planning permission has been granted for a refreshed Master Plan. Phase 1 of the residential development encompassing 325 dwellings over 10 years is under way. At Lingfield Point, 1,220 dwellings are proposed. Phase 1 has recently been started for the erection of 271 dwellings and sales are in line with expectations. Significant housing development is not anticipated to start coming forward as part of the Town Centre Fringe development until 2016.

It is anticipated that delivery of new affordable homes will help to maintain momentum up to 2015 as affordable housing schemes are built out. The Council continues to work with RSL providers to try to facilitate bids to the Government's Affordable Housing Programme 2015-18. The provision of Council owned land at a nominal cost and deferral of land receipts are examples of financial incentives which can help facilitate delivery of schemes. Deferral of land receipt at Beaumont Hill has facilitated delivery of new housing. The disposal of the Haughton Road/Dundee Street site has enabled the delivery of 12 new affordable homes and the disposal of surplus land at Buxton Moor at Firthmoor has facilitated the development of 20 new affordable homes.

The Council is actively pursuing opportunities to introduce a programme of Council houses to add to its own stock. This could make a significant contribution over the next 5 years.

MOVING THINGS FORWARD: KEY ACTIONS

- Discuss with relevant interests how constraints on potential housing sites can be overcome.
- Continue dialogue with house builders to identify opportunities for increasing build rates.
- Pursue opportunities to introduce a programme of Council house building, including a bid for HCA funding for 2015-18.

Contact Us: You can access more information on planning policy in Darlington at:

www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

If you are particularly interested in statistics and data for Darlington borough, you can view these at:

<http://lis.darlington.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, contact the Planning Policy Team on 01325 388644 or email planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

This document is available in different formats on request.