

Local Plan Strategy 6

6.1 Development Strategy (POLICY DS1)

Meeting Future Housing and Employment Needs

6.1.1 In accordance with national planning policy, this Local Plan takes a positive approach towards meeting the District's objectively assessed development needs for the period 2011-2031 (OAN). The District's OAN of 8,400 dwellings for the Plan period is based on the DCLG 2014-based household projections (5,900 additional households 2011 to 2031) and takes account of 'other factors', including market signals, house prices, affordability, rents, under-supply, concealed families, overcrowding, second homes and vacancies, and affordable housing. The OAN, moreover, was adjusted further to support future economic growth.

6.1.2 The District forms part of the Gloucestershire housing market area (HMA) and the Plan does not make provision to accommodate unmet needs from other parts of the HMA. However, it does assume that net in-migration will be higher than in the DCLG 2014-based household projections. The OAN includes market, affordable, sheltered and extra care dwellings, but does not include nursing and residential care home bed spaces.

6.1.3 The delivery of the housing requirement will be monitored annually to ensure the Council meets the District's OAN in full and maintains a five year housing land supply.

6.1.4 To achieve sustainable, balanced communities, the delivery of housing for the District needs to be accompanied by appropriate employment growth. The Local Plan strategy seeks to support forecast job growth through a combination of specific land allocations and policies. Providing for the baseline economic forecast plus a 5 year buffer requires a net increase in excess of 24 hectares of B Class employment land for the period 2011-2031. The requirement takes consideration of a forecast 16.6 hectare increase of B1 class land (including 64,626sqm of office floorspace⁽¹⁹⁾), a 2.1 hectare reduction of B2 class land, and a 9.9 hectare increase of B8 class land.

6.1.5 Having regard to the economic forecasts, trends in employment land completions, a 4.1 hectare (net) reduction of B class employment land between 2011 and 2016, in which time 5.8 hectares of B2 class land was lost, and the need to align with the GFirst SEP, the Local Plan proposes to allocate 23 hectares of B Class land and support the delivery of extant planning permissions for B class employment development (14 hectares). The Plan also safeguards established employment sites, promotes three new Special Policy Areas and provides supporting diversification policies in sustainable rural locations. In reaching conclusions on the amount of employment land to be provided, consideration has been taken of economic forecasts; historic rates of business development; market signals; and labour supply. The economic forecasts indicate that, over the Plan period, total job growth will be between 10,500 and 11,900.

19 Being a main town centre use, the floorspace requirement is also given for office uses (B1 class). This floorspace requirement includes the same 25% (5 year) buffer that is used to calculate the employment land requirement.

6 Local Plan Strategy

6.1.6 Maintaining a healthy supply of land for housing and employment are key objectives of this Plan and policies geared towards delivering them are set out in sections 6 and 7. In aiming to meet these needs, careful regard has also been had for the area's exceptional natural and built environment. The resulting development management policies (section 8 onwards) aim to enable development that positively promotes sustainable growth.

6.1.7 The Local Plan will meet the objectively assessed housing and employment needs of the District over the period 2011-2031.

Policy DS1

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Sufficient land will be allocated, which together with commitments and dwellings completed since 2011, will deliver at least 8,400 dwellings and at least 24 hectares for B class employment use over the Plan period 2011-2031 in the following Principal Settlements:

- Cirencester
- Andoversford
- Blockley
- Bourton-on-the-Water
- Chipping Campden
- Down Ampney
- Fairford
- Kemble
- Lechlade
- Mickleton
- Moreton-in-Marsh
- Northleach
- South Cerney
- Stow-on-the-Wold
- Tetbury
- Upper Rissington
- Willersey

6.1.8 In determining the supply and distribution of housing and employment land, particular account has been taken of:

- the Sustainability Appraisal;
- the District's Objectively Assessed Need for housing;
- the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
- the Housing Implementation Strategy;

Planning applications will be determined in accordance with relevant policies in this Local Plan, which should be considered together, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Plan Strategy 6

- the B class employment land trend, forecasts and allocations;
- the latest position on housing and employment completions since 1 April 2011 and extant planning permissions;
- the contribution of the strategic development site south of Chesterton, Cirencester; and
- the contribution of non-strategic housing and employment site allocations.

6.1.9 The Principal Settlements listed in Policy DS1 have been identified as the most sustainable locations to deliver future growth, with Cirencester being the District's main centre by a very considerable margin. These settlements were selected on the basis of their social and economic sustainability, including accessibility to services and facilities. The availability of suitable land capable of delivering sustainable development during the Plan period also helped determine which settlements to include in the Development Strategy.

Housing Land Supply

6.1.10 The main sources of housing supply are summarised below:

Overall Housing Requirement and sources of Land Supply	Number of units
Housing Land Requirement	8,400
Housing Land Supply	
Completions 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2017	3,176
Deliverable ⁽²⁰⁾ and developable ⁽²¹⁾ extant planning permissions at 1st April 2017 (including -27 dwelling lapse rate)	2,870
Chesterton Strategic Site	1,800
Other land allocations	577
Windfalls estimate 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2031	1,191
Total expected housing delivery over the Plan period	9,614

Table 1 - Housing Requirement and Land Supply 2011-2031

6.1.11 Completions since April 2011 and existing planning permissions provide an initial base for delivering the Development Strategy.

20 As set out by Footnote 11 of the NPPF

21 As set out by Footnote 12 of the NPPF

6 Local Plan Strategy

6.1.12 In order to assist the delivery of the District's remaining requirements to 2031, the Plan proposes mixed use development of a strategic scale to the south of Chesterton, Cirencester ('the Strategic Site'). Whilst this is expected to ultimately accommodate up to 2,350 new homes, around 1,800 are likely to be completed by 2031. This key component of the Strategy is complemented by smaller site-specific allocations in the Principal Settlements. These allocations and associated Development Boundaries (Policy DS2) have been made in accordance with the sustainability principles that underpin the Development Strategy.

6.1.13 The Plan, with commitments, allocates sufficient deliverable sites to meet the District's housing requirement. In addition, a realistic estimate of future windfalls (housing units expected to come forward on sites that are not allocated in the Local Plan) provide further flexibility in the housing supply. Based on past data and expected future trends, an allowance of 146 windfalls is added to the housing land supply for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2020 and 95 windfalls per annum over the remainder of the Plan period.

6.1.14 Full details of the housing supply can be accessed in the Housing Land Supply Report. An updated version of Table 1 will be included in subsequent reviews of the Housing Land Supply Report, which will be published around May each year.

Five Year Housing Land Supply

6.1.15 Local plans need to demonstrate that a five year housing land supply is available at the time of adoption and maintained through the Plan period. The calculation of the District's five year housing requirement is based on a residual requirement approach for the remaining years of the Plan period. This deducts net completions since 2011 from the overall requirement of 8,400 dwellings. The base date for the five year residual requirement is 1 April 2017.

6.1.16 Between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2017, 3,176 net additional dwellings had been completed in the District. The residual requirement for the remainder of the Plan period is therefore 5,224 dwellings (i.e. $8,400 - 3,176 = 5,224$).

6.1.17 The annualised average residual requirement is 373 dwellings, which is calculated by dividing the total residual requirement by the 14 remaining years of the Plan period (i.e. $5,224 / 14 \text{ years} = 373$). This method is similar to the 'Liverpool approach', whereby any shortfall in delivery is equally distributed across the remainder of the Plan period.

6.1.18 Multiplying the residual annual requirement by five gives a five year requirement of 1,866 dwellings (i.e. $373 \times 5 \text{ years} = 1,866$). The NPPF requires authorities to include a buffer of 5% (or 20% where there has previously been 'persistent under delivery'). Given that Cotswold District has not persistently under delivered, a 5% buffer is appropriate. The five year requirement plus 5% buffer (93) is therefore 1,959 dwellings (i.e. $1,866 + 93 = 1,959$).

6.1.19 The five year requirement will be recalibrated annually to take account of further dwelling completions over the remainder of the Plan period with a 5% (or 20%) buffer added in accordance with the NPPF. This will be set out in the Housing Land Supply Report, which will be published around May each year.

Local Plan Strategy 6

6.1.20 The supply of housing land to meet the five year requirement is as follows:

Residual Requirement		
A	Total Residual Requirement for 2017 to 2031 (i.e. 8,400 - 3,176)	5,224
B	Residual requirement for 2017 to 2031 expressed as an annual average (i.e. 5,224 / 14 years)	373.1
C	Total residual requirement for 2017 to 2022 (i.e. 373.1 x 5 years)	1,866
D	Total residual requirement for 2017 to 2022 plus a 5% buffer (i.e. 1,866 + 93)	1,959
E	Residual requirement for 2017 to 2022 (including 5% buffer) expressed as an annual average (i.e. 1,959 / 5 years)	392
Five Year Supply for 2017 to 2022		
F	Deliverable sites with planning permission on 1 April 2017 (including -27 dwelling lapse rate) ⁽²²⁾	2,503
G	Chesterton strategic site	120
H	Other land allocations	0
I	Windfalls	336
J	Total supply for 2017 to 2022	2,959
K	Supply available at 1 April 2017 expressed as number of years against the residual requirement (including 5% buffer) (i.e. (2,959 / 1,959) x 5 years)	7.6 years

Table 3 - Five-year Housing Land Requirement and Supply 2017-2022

22 The latest Housing Land Supply Report is available to download from the Council's Forward Planning Evidence and Monitoring pages at www.cotswold.gov.uk

6 Local Plan Strategy

6.1.21 Over the five-year period 2017-2022, there is a land supply capable of delivering 2,959 homes. The identified supply exceeds five years' worth of housing requirements (1,866) by 1,093 dwellings. This is equivalent to 7.6 years' supply of land and is sufficient to provide ample flexibility and choice over the next five years.

6.1.22 To boost significantly the supply of housing, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the Plan period. The trajectory for Cotswold District over the Plan period is set out in the following diagram:

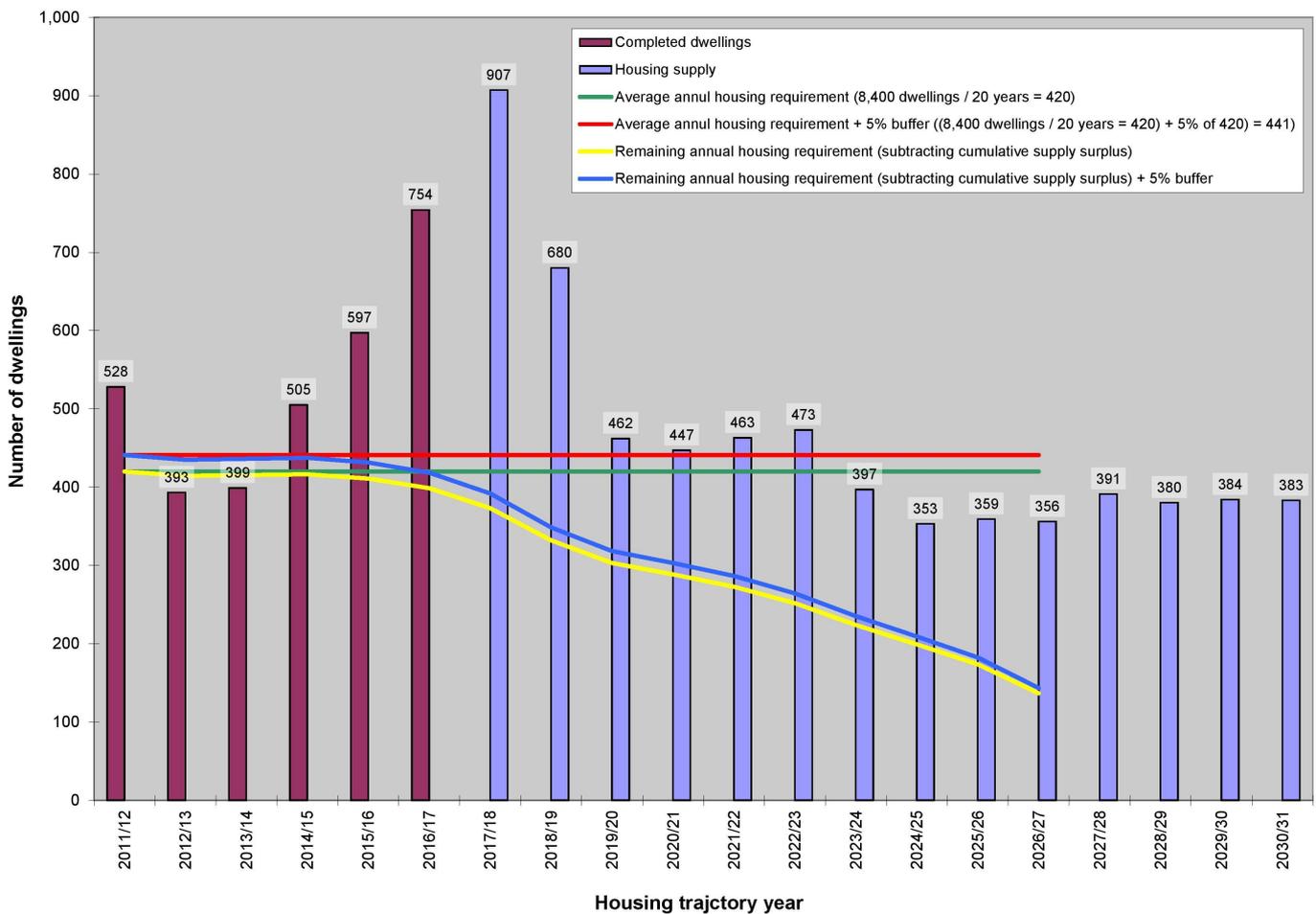


Figure 1 - Cotswold Housing Trajectory 2011-2031 at 1 April 2017

6.1.23 Policy DS1 states that the 24 hectare B class employment land requirement will be delivered through site allocations and committed developments. Some allocations include B1 class (office) land, which is a main town centre use. Due to the lack of sites in town centre locations, which are often constrained by their size and historic character, it is necessary to meet the B1 class requirement on alternative, sequentially preferable, sites.

Local Plan Strategy 6

6.1.24 B1 office use proposals on allocated sites where the proposal is consistent with the allocation would not be subject to the sequential and impact tests. Allocated sites have already been through a specific site selection process and are considered suitable for the allocated use. In this context the allocated site is already considered to be ‘in accordance with the Plan’.

6.1.25 The detailed site allocations for B Class employment land are set out in the settlement policies of this Plan (section 7). Cotswold District Council will work with land owners to develop an implementation plan for each employment allocation which will define the interventions necessary to successfully deliver the employment sites over the Plan period. Key employers in the District with major land considerations are supported through a Special Policy Area approach (section 9). It is likely that new B class employment development will be delivered through the intensification of uses on existing sites and such developments could contribute towards meeting the employment land requirement; therefore, Policy EC2 safeguards established employment sites along with other policies that are supportive of the rural economy.

6.1.26 Besides B-class employment growth, a large proportion of future jobs is forecast to occur in retail, leisure and tourism. These types of job growth are catered for through specific planning policies (section 9), and settlement policies, including site allocations where appropriate (section 7).

6.1.27 In the event that housing or employment targets are not being met, the Council will commit to a review of the Local Plan.

6.2 Development Within Development Boundaries (POLICY DS2)

6.2.1 Development Boundaries have been drawn around the settlements identified specifically in the Development Strategy (Policy DS1).

Policy DS2

DEVELOPMENT WITHIN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

Within the Development Boundaries indicated on the Policies Maps, applications for development will be permissible in principle.

6.2.2 The Development Boundaries essentially define the existing built-up areas of Principal Settlements, including sites that:

- are under construction; and
- have been granted planning permission.

6.2.3 They also include housing and employment sites proposed for development to meet the District's objectively assessed needs to 2031, including the Strategic Site. In essence, the Development Boundaries:

6 Local Plan Strategy

- help maintain a sustainable development strategy by focusing the majority of development in the District's most sustainable settlements; and
- protect smaller settlements (and the open countryside) from larger scale development, which is more appropriately located in the Principal Settlements where there is better access to services, facilities, employment opportunities, and transport links.

6.2.4 Most of the Principal Settlements have Conservation Areas and historic buildings, while Cirencester in particular includes large areas covered by scheduled archaeological sites. These make important contributions towards the area's heritage, for which the Cotswolds are internationally renowned. Evidence shows that inappropriate development can cause irreparable damage to the sensitive historic environment. In some instances, this has resulted from poorly designed development while, in others, infilling of visually important spaces has harmed the traditional character of settlements. A settlement's historic, incremental pattern of development should not be materially harmed by incongruous, out-of-scale, or inappropriate development.

6.2.5 In order to meet future housing and employment needs in the most sustainable locations, some larger-scale developments will have to take place. In such cases, direct impact on designated heritage and/or landscape assets should be minimised as far as possible. Good design principles will be important in helping to ensure that new development assimilates well with existing settlements.

6.2.6 Open spaces, gardens, gaps, 'green wedges' and 'green corridors' all make important contributions to the built environment. They can provide settings for buildings, variety in the street scene, vistas, and buffers between developed areas. Cotswold settlements derive much of their character from open spaces within the built-up area and it is important that they are protected from inappropriate development.

6.3 Small-Scale Residential Development in Non-Principal Settlements (POLICY DS3)

6.3.1 Beyond the Principal Settlements, the rest of Cotswold District essentially comprises open countryside and a liberal scattering of rural settlements, including villages, hamlets and farmsteads. About 40% of the District's population lives in these rural locations.

6.3.2 Most of the District's settlements have an essentially rural character that often merges into the surrounding landscape – a particular characteristic of the Cotswolds. Many, though not all, rural settlements lack 'everyday' services; facilities; and/or public transport to better-served settlements.

Policy DS3

SMALL-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NON-PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS

1. **In non-Principal Settlements, small-scale residential development will be permitted provided it:**

Local Plan Strategy 6

- a. **demonstrably supports or enhances the vitality of the local community and the continued availability of services and facilities locally;**
 - b. **is of a proportionate scale and maintains and enhances sustainable patterns of development;**
 - c. **complements the form and character of the settlement; and**
 - d. **does not have an adverse cumulative impact on the settlement having regard to other developments permitted during the Local Plan period.**
- 2. Applicants proposing two or more residential units on sites in non-Principal Settlements should complete a rural housing pro-forma and submit this with the planning application.**

6.3.3 Due to the generally low levels of service provision, job opportunities and public transport availability beyond the Principal Settlements, many of the 160+ villages and hamlets (rural settlements) are not sustainable locations for residential development. Therefore, Development Boundaries have not been defined around rural settlements and no land has been specifically allocated for residential development to help meet the District's objectively assessed needs to 2031. Any development that accrues from this source will therefore be 'windfalls'.

6.3.4 Some rural settlements, however, have greater sustainability credentials than others and may, for example, have 'everyday' facilities, such as a shop/ post office, a (non fee paying) school, and/or good public transport access to neighbouring service / employment centres. Availability of everyday facilities is important in reducing unnecessary traffic movements and engendering a sense of community, which helps to prevent 'social isolation'. Accordingly, this policy applies to those rural settlements in the District that have reasonable access to everyday services, facilities and/or employment opportunities, either within the settlement itself, at a Principal Settlement, or at a neighbouring rural settlement. Some rural settlements are located near to the District boundary and have better public transport access to equivalent service centres in adjacent local authority areas (e.g. Cricklade, Burford and Winchcombe). Distance, quality of route, topography and pedestrian safety are important issues when considering the accessibility of services and facilities.

6.3.5 Small-scale residential development means housing which is proportionate to, and complementary with, the size and character of the settlement and its surroundings. Any development provided through this policy, besides being proportionate in scale and appropriately designed, needs to be in keeping with the rural nature of the locality. Care should be taken that such development, which could include minor infilling, does not harm open spaces or gaps that make a positive contribution to the character of the village, including views and vistas. Careful consideration also needs to be given to the cumulative impact of new development which can, over time, subliminally erode the bucolic character of rural settlements and/ or lead to the coalescence of groups of buildings to produce a more 'urban' form.

6 Local Plan Strategy

6.3.6 For detailed policy relating to rural exception schemes, refer to Policy H3.

6.3.7 To demonstrate compliance with Policy DS3, applications must include sufficient information to show that the relevant tests have been satisfied. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the nature of the development, its scale, the sustainability of the settlement, and the sensitivity of the site. A rural housing pro-forma, to assist applicants with the preparation of the necessary information, is available on the Planning Policy pages of the District Council's website. Engagement with the local community, via the parish council or parish meeting, would be desirable when assembling this information.

6.4 Open Market Housing Outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (POLICY DS4)

6.4.1 To promote sustainable development in the countryside, paragraph 55 of the NPPF expects housing to be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. In the absence of special circumstances, local planning authorities should avoid permitting new isolated homes in the countryside.

Policy DS4

OPEN MARKET HOUSING OUTSIDE PRINCIPAL AND NON-PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS

New-build open market housing will not be permitted outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations.

6.4.2 The Local Plan's Development Strategy seeks to promote sustainability by focussing most growth in 17 Principal Settlements, notably Cirencester (Policy DS2), while facilitating small-scale residential development in non-Principal Settlements (Policy DS3). The Strategy facilitates sufficient development within Development Boundaries to meet, in full, the District's objectively assessed housing needs over the Plan period.

6.4.3 Besides the provisions of paragraph 55 of the NPPF, which makes an exception for country houses that are truly outstanding or innovative, the Local Plan has policies that potentially allow for certain types of housing development in the countryside including:

- affordable housing on rural exceptions sites (Policy H3);
- housing for rural workers (Policy H5);
- sites for gypsies and travellers (Policy H7); and
- conversion of rural buildings (Policy EC6).

Local Plan Strategy 6

6.4.4 Policy DS4 is intended to preclude, in principle, the development of new-build open market housing which, for strategic reasons, is not needed in the countryside. The policy does not, however, preclude the development of some open market housing in rural locations; for example, dwellings resulting from the replacement or sub-division of existing dwellings, or housing created from the conversion of rural buildings. It would also not prevent alterations to, or extensions of, existing buildings.

6.4.5 For the purposes of Policy DS4, any land that falls outside Development Boundaries and Non-Principal Settlements is referred to as countryside, even if it is technically previously developed land.