

**ADUR DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**HOUSING DELIVERY TEST  
ACTION PLAN**

**2019**

**August 2019**



**ADUR DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Context

1.1.1 The Council recognises the Governments' commitment to boost the delivery of new homes and has responded to this challenge by committing to planning a significant increase in the housing delivery rate, through the adopted Adur Local Plan 2017.

1.1.2 The Adur Local Plan was examined in January/February 2017 and adopted in December of that year. It sets the framework for development across the District including the strategy for the delivery of housing. In identifying a housing need of 325 dwellings per annum (through the Objectively Assessed Need process), the Inspector concluded that the Council had adequately justified this figure and its "approach is sufficiently aspirational whilst remaining realistic" taking into account the constrained nature of the area.

1.1.3 In considering whether this level of growth could be satisfactorily accommodated in the Plan area, a comprehensive evidence base supported the Local Plan. A Housing Implementation Strategy set out the Council's approach to managing the delivery of housing over the Plan period and assessed the risks to that delivery and how it can be mitigated and managed. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) assessed a large number of potential sites, including small sites (of less than six dwellings), areas of open space, employment land and greenfield/brownfield sites. It was accepted that the evidence demonstrated that this level of growth **could not** be delivered in a sustainable way because of the constraints that exist and that the Council had gone as far as possible to identify potential development sites.

1.1.4 Given the significant constraints in Adur, particularly in terms of flood risk, the desire to retain green gaps between settlements and the limited options for growth, the Local Plan proposed a sustainable development strategy to deliver 3718 new homes (177dpa) over the period 2011-2032. This strategy relies on the delivery of two strategic greenfield sites (which together will deliver a minimum of 1080 new homes) and a broad location for development identified at Shoreham Harbour which will deliver a minimum of 1100 new homes, for which the detailed development proposals will be addressed in a Joint Area Action Plan which has been through Examination and has recently been found sound and will be adopted by the relevant Councils over the next few months. The delivery of small and unidentified sites will also continue to make a significant contribution to the housing supply. The Inspector supported the annual delivery target in the Plan of 177dpa.

1.1.5 The strategic sites and the broad location at Shoreham Harbour by their very nature have a long lead in time before they start to deliver. This is recognised in the housing trajectory which predicts the delivery of these sites from 2021/22. Until this point, housing delivery has, as anticipated, been largely reliant on smaller SHLAA/unidentified sites; this is reflected in the Housing Delivery Test results below.

## 1.2 Why an Action Plan has been prepared

1.2.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) introduced a Housing Delivery Test (HDT) as a mechanism to monitor housing delivery locally. The HDT measures additional net dwellings provided in a local authority area against the homes required. The consequences of failing the test are set out in the NPPF and these will apply until subsequent HDT results demonstrate that delivery in future years has improved:

- A local planning authority must produce an Action Plan within six months if the Housing Delivery Test result is less than 95%.
- A local planning authority with a Housing Delivery Test result of less than 85% must provide a 20% buffer to the five year housing land supply.
- The presumption in favour of sustainable development applies if the Housing Delivery Test result is less than:
  - i) 25% in November 2018
  - ii) 45% in November 2019
  - iii) 75% from November 2020 onwards

1.2.2 Where an Action Plan is required, this should be prepared within 6 months of the test results being published. There was a delay in the publication of the HDT and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the test results on 19 February 2019. This Action Plan will therefore be published by 19th August 2019 which is in line with the Governments' requirements.

*How is the Housing Delivery Test Measured?*

1.2.3 The methodology for calculating the HDT measurement is set out in the Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rulebook. It is based on the MHCLG statistics for the total net housing completions in a local planning authority area over a three year rolling programme which includes student and other communal accommodation using a ratio to adjust for occupancy. The result of the HDT for each local planning authority will be published annually by the MHCLG in November.

*How did Adur perform against the Housing Delivery Test?*

1.2.4 For Adur, housing delivery will be measured against the adopted Adur Local Plan 2017 target of 177 homes per annum.

Adur Housing Delivery Test results

<b>Year</b>	<b>Delivery Figure (net)</b>	<b>Annual Housing Target (Adur Local Plan 2017)</b>
2015/2016	39	177
2016/2017	64	177
2017/2018	114	177
<b>Total over 3 years</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>531</b>

The Housing Delivery Test measurement for Adur is  $217/531 = 41\%$

1.2.5 Based on performance over the past three years Adur avoids the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It does, however, have to produce an Action Plan and add a 20% buffer to the five year housing land supply.

### **1.3 Purpose and Objectives**

1.3.1 This Action Plan is the Councils response to the challenge set out in the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of homes. It sets out why this authority has not delivered against its housing requirements (as detailed above) and identifies a number of actions to increase and maintain housing delivery. However, it should be recognised that housing delivery is a complex matter which includes the involvement of a number of different organisations in the delivery of new homes. Consequently, if this Action Plan is to succeed, then the cooperation of all partners will be essential, for example, landowners and developers.

1.3.2 This Action Plan covers the following issues:

- The historic performance on housing delivery.
- Explains what the Council has been doing so far to boost housing delivery.
- Analyses evidence on sites with planning permission (and sites allocated for housing development) to understand what barriers are preventing homes being built on these sites.
- Sets out what actions the Council can take to increase the rate and number of homes built.
- Monitoring.

### **1.4 Relationship with other plans and strategies for housing delivery**

1.4.1 This Action Plan together with the following key Council plans, policies and strategies provides a mechanism for delivery of local housing targets:

*Platforms for our Places (Corporate Strategy)* - is a plan that sets out Adur & Worthing Councils' ambition for our places' and our communities' prosperity and wellbeing. Platform 2 (Our Social Economies) encourages innovative actions around housing needs.

*Economic Strategy 2018-2023* - this sets out ambitious plans for how the place will achieve "good growth" It seeks to ensure that this growth balances economic success with improvements to the quality of life for residents, including good quality housing.

*Adur & Worthing Housing Strategy 2017-2020* - the strategy sets out the Councils' housing priorities and dovetails with the Councils' corporate priorities, other Council strategies and the strategies and priorities of other partners and stakeholders. The Housing Strategy is currently being reviewed.

*Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)* - produced by the Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Partnership comprising the local authorities of Adur District Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and West Sussex County Council and working with Shoreham Port Authority. The JAAP sets out the overall spatial strategy for the regeneration of Shoreham Harbour and proposals for the identified character areas within it. The Plan has been through Examination and has recently been found sound and will be adopted by the relevant Councils over the next few months.

*Sompting Neighbourhood Plan* - Produced by Sompting Parish Council, this Plan is approaching Regulation 14 stage. It is not seeking to allocate any additional housing sites.

*Shoreham Beach Neighbourhood Plan* - Produced by Shoreham Beach Neighbourhood Forum, this Plan is approaching Regulation 14 stage. It is not seeking to allocate any additional housing sites.

*Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership* - this is a local business led partnership between local authorities and businesses and plays a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs. It has a critical role in the delivery of local infrastructure to support growth in the local economy and helps unlock development. In turn this helps to support the housing delivery priorities of the District.

## **1.5 Approach and Methodology**

1.5.1 The Council already has in place a long standing monitoring arrangement with West Sussex County Council and also maintains its own comprehensive monitoring system. The Annual Monitoring Report provides updates regarding the housing land supply position. This monitoring has identified that there are significant challenges to the delivery of housing typical of an authority with limited land availability and recognised constraints to development.

1.5.2 A number of sources of information/evidence have been, and continue to be, used to identify and assess any opportunities for residential development and to understand any barriers to delivery that need to be addressed. These include:

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Brownfield Register
- Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register
- West Sussex County Council Data
- Empty Homes Strategy
- Affordable Homes Delivery Group
- Adur and Worthing Strategic Asset Management Group
- Housing Implementation Strategy

These are reviewed on a regular basis.

## 2. Housing Delivery Analysis

### 2.1 Past Performance on housing delivery

2.1.1 Prior to the adoption of the Adur Local Plan 2017, housing delivery was monitored against the South East Plan and the West Sussex Structure Plan before it. Historically the housing targets for Adur did not have a strong relationship with the need and demand for new dwellings in the District due to the tight geographical constraints and were strongly influenced by the capacity to accommodate development. The target of 105 dwellings per annum was set in the South East Plan (2006-2013) recognising the development constraints and strong environmental protection policies for the District included in previous regional and structure plans. Adur delivered sufficient homes to meet this target.

2.1.2 There has always been a considerable fluctuation in the delivery rates per year, with the highest number recorded in 2011/2012 (193 net dwellings) and the lowest in 2015/2016 (31 net dwellings). This is demonstrated in the table below which details delivery since the base date of the Local Plan. Whilst these fluctuations can, in part, be attributed to economic conditions, the availability, location and size of site coming forward also play a role. In previous years, much of Adur's new development has been on smaller infill brownfield sites. With only a limited number of large brownfield sites available for development, the delivery of these sites makes a significant difference to the annual number of completions.

2.1.3 The adopted Adur Local Plan 2017 has a base date of April 2011 for monitoring housing delivery.

2.1.4 Since the start of the new plan period in 2011 and 1 April 2018, 737 net new homes have been completed at an annual average of 105 dpa as shown in the table below:

#### Dwelling completions 2011/2012 - 2017/2018

Year	Dwelling Completions	
	Gross	Net
2011/2012	204	193
2012/2013	153	146
2013/2014	103	93
2014/2015	105	96
2015/2016	38	31
2016/2017	71	64
2017/2018	121	114
Total	795	737

2.1.5 Since the base date of the Adur Local Plan in 2011, the Council has granted planning permission to build 735 homes against a target of 1239 homes required.

2.1.6 The number of homes delivered (737) overall appears to keep pace with the number of homes granted planning permission (735), although delivery rate has fluctuated considerably as shown below:

Housing approvals and completions against housing targets 2011-2018

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
<b>Housing Supply Target</b>	177	177	177	177	177	177	177
<b>New Residential Approvals</b>	60	72	187	139	147	86	44
<b>Net Residential completions</b>	193	146	93	96	31	64	114

2.1.7 The number of homes that have actually been built is 737 or 59% of the Councils housing target, giving a shortfall of 502 homes. This can mainly be attributed to a lack of suitable sites coming forward for development and the challenge has been to identify and bring forward additional sites to deliver the new homes required.

## 2.2 Current housing supply

2.2.1 It is clear that the increase in need for new homes in Adur required a step change in housing delivery compared with previous housing requirements. As referred to above, Adur District Council has already responded to the challenge of building more homes and the development strategy in the recently adopted Adur Local Plan (December 2017) seeks to increase and accelerate the delivery of new housing across the District. It has allocated land to accommodate a minimum of 3,718 new homes (177 per annum), including two large strategic greenfield sites and a broad location for development on a large brownfield site at Shoreham Harbour.

2.2.2 As part of the evidence base to support the Adur Local Plan, and to ensure “no stone was left unturned”, a comprehensive review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment was undertaken, which re assessed all potential sites, those sites which had potential for development but were not deliverable within five years, rejected sites, employment land, greenfield sites and land owned by public bodies (including the Council). The aim was to identify further sites (both greenfield and brownfield) with potential for development and to identify any barriers to sites coming forward.



2.2.3 The Inspector in his report accepted that, when calculating the five year housing land supply, a 5% buffer was appropriate as, historically over a period of years, previous housing targets had been met. The adopted Local Plan housing strategy relies on a small number of strategic sites to deliver new homes and, as these have longer lead-in times, are anticipated to start delivering in the middle part of the Plan period. It was clear that, for the early part of the Plan period, annual targets would not be met and, as predicted, although Adur has granted enough permissions/allocated sufficient sites to meet our housing targets over the Plan period, the number of homes actually built over the last seven years has fallen short of the adopted annual housing target. The introduction of the Housing Delivery Test in 2018 has meant that, in failing to build sufficient homes in the last three years and pass the Housing Delivery Test, the five year housing land supply has had to be recalculated with a 20% buffer, resulting in the Council now only being able to demonstrate a 4.9 year supply of housing.

2.2.4 Current housing supply is made up of the following sources:

*Dwelling completions* - using local and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) data to determine the level of completions each year.

*Commitments* - Those sites identified as commitments at 1st April of the monitoring year in the Housing Land Supply Study produced annually by WSCC are those sites that can accommodate five or more units, which have planning permission but have not commenced or are under construction.

*Small sites of less than five dwellings (previous threshold was 6 across the County)* - these sites continue to come forward. It is not practical to identify and assess all of these sites in terms of their deliverability. Therefore, in forecasting house building on these small sites, it is assumed that all dwellings under construction and 45% of those with planning permission but not yet started will be built. This is based on past evidence of completion rates and this approach was accepted by the Inspector at Examination.

*Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites* - The Council's SHLAA has provided the mechanism through which the quantity and suitability of land potentially available for housing development has been determined. Informed by a number of 'calls for sites' the SHLAA has been monitored and updated regularly to give the most up to date picture of housing delivery for Adur. As part of the assessment a small number of sites have been identified as having potential for residential use but are not currently available for development. These sites are monitored on a regular basis and officers continue to work with landowners and other stakeholders to bring these sites forward.

*Strategic Allocations* - two strategic sites have been identified in the Local Plan which, together, will deliver a minimum of 1080 new homes.

*Shoreham Harbour Broad Location* - a Joint Area Action Plan has been through Examination and has recently been found sound and will be adopted by the relevant Councils over the next few months. It will deliver a minimum of 1100 new homes in that part of the Harbour falling within Adur District.

*Windfall Allowance* - A windfall allowance takes account of housing development on sites which it is not possible to identify in advance (e.g. conversions, changes of use etc.). Historic small sites housing delivery data over a ten year period has been used to calculate a windfall allowance of 32 homes per year. To avoid double counting with the small sites commitments, the windfall allowance is not applied to the first three years of the projections.

2.2.5 This Action Plan has been prepared to try and identify why the delivery rate has slowed and how the Council is responding to the challenge of building more homes at a faster rate. It sets out the challenges being faced and the actions the Council proposes to take to address housing delivery.

## 2.3 Housing delivery analysis

2.3.1 The Council has used the Data Standard spreadsheet, produced by the Planning Advisory Service, to bring together all existing evidence to help understand the components of housing supply and delivery performance. This integrates the planning pipeline, recent delivery and future supply of housing to identify barriers slowing down or preventing delivery. All sites of 5 or more dwellings have been included.

2.3.2 The first step has been to identify those sites where there are barriers to development or where sites have stalled completely.

2.3.3 The development strategy for Adur is largely dependent on the delivery of a small number of large sites. The two strategic allocations were identified as having potential to deliver a minimum of 1080 new homes during the early stages of the Local Plan process and officers have continuously worked with the developers, infrastructure providers and other interested parties to develop masterplans for each site. Each site has a specific policy in the Local Plan to guide development.

2.3.4 When the Local Plan was examined in early 2017, masterplanning for both strategic sites was well underway and indications from the developers was that outline planning applications would be submitted to coincide with the examination and to help demonstrate the viability and deliverability of the sites. The projected delivery of both sites was reflected in the trajectory at that time. This did not happen and, whilst planning applications have now been submitted for both strategic sites, to date neither has been granted planning permission (although one has a resolution to grant subject to a s106 planning obligation).

2.3.5 These two sites provide a significant proportion of planned new homes in the District and their delivery is critical to achieving the overall strategy of the Plan (the submitted applications propose a total of 1,120 new homes). Delivery of each site has been delayed slightly and the Council continues to work with the developers and other interested parties to bring these sites forward as quickly possible.

*Land at West Sompting* - The strategic allocation comprises a minimum of 480 dwellings together with mitigation for off-site traffic impacts. The main reasons for the delay in the applicants submitting a planning application was due to undertaking public consultation and stakeholder engagement, preparing the necessary supporting statements and completing pre-application consultation with the Council. This has resulted in a hybrid planning application being submitted and validated in February 2019 to deliver 520 new homes in two phases (part detailed permission for 100 dwellings, part outline for 420 dwellings). A decision is anticipated in October 2019.

*New Monks Farm* - The strategic allocation comprises a mixed use development of 600 homes, a minimum of 10,000 sqm employment generating floorspace, land to accommodate a 2 - form entry primary school, infrastructure improvements and the relocation of a Gypsy and Traveller site.

2.3.6 Good progress had been made to bring this site forward prior to the adoption of the Local Plan, including discussions with the West Sussex County Council regarding the

relocation of the Gypsy and Traveller site and discussions with Highways England on infrastructure provision. A planning application was submitted in June 2016 (validated in July 2017) proposing the development of a 33,000 sqm Ikea store together with 600 new homes, a country park, land for a new school and a community facility just as the examination into the Local Plan commenced. The Inspector did not consider the significant increase in employment floorspace as part of the examination process. However, the Inspector recognised the potential viability concerns with the development and recommended that the development should deliver a minimum of 600 dwellings and 10,000 sqm of commercial floorspace.

2.3.7 The planning application generated a considerable number of objections from stakeholders, statutory consultees and residents, particularly with regard to the proposed increase in employment generating floorspace through the construction of an Ikea store. The Adur Planning Committee resolved to grant permission in October 2018, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement and the Secretary of State agreeing not to call in the application for his determination. This was the largest and most controversial development proposal to be considered by Adur District Council and the planning process had taken 15 months to secure a Committee resolution.

2.3.8 In view of the level of retail floorspace proposed the application was referred to the Secretary of State. A subsequent holding direction was issued and after 7 months, the Council was notified on 22nd May 2019 that the Secretary of State was not going to "call-in" the application and the decision notice could be issued.

2.3.9 Whilst waiting for the call in decision, work progressed on the detailed s106 agreement. Unfortunately West Sussex County Council remain concerned about the level of contribution being made towards the cost of the new school and have, at a very late stage in the process, started its own viability review despite the District Council undertaking its own very detailed viability review employing independent Consultants (and the LEP being satisfied that the scheme requires public funding - over £5 million to deliver the new A27 roundabout). This review is due to be completed by the end of August 2019. The applicant is also seeking to agree a land deal with West Sussex to facilitate the relocation of the Gypsy and Traveller site. It is anticipated that planning permission will be granted by the end of September 2019.

#### *Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area*

2.3.10 A number of sites within this broad location for development are now starting to come forward. One site has planning permission to develop 540 flats and demolition, remediation works and flood risk measures have been completed/are underway (Free Wharf). This site has secured Housing Infrastructure Funding of approximately £10 million to deliver the new flood defence works and public realm.

2.3.11 To ensure the regeneration of Shoreham Harbour the Council has worked in partnership with West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and Shoreham Port Authority using funding secured from previous Government initiatives (Growth Funding and Eco Town Funding). The Partnership has developed a Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) which has been through Examination and has recently been found sound and will be adopted by the relevant Councils over the next few months. A delivery strategy is being prepared and the Partnership has an active Delivery Sub Group taking a proactive approach towards bringing the various brownfield sites forward for development.

2.3.12 A planning application is shortly to be submitted by the Hyde Group for up to 255 dwellings and commercial floorspace at Kingston Wharf. The Hyde Group has entered

into a strategic partnership with Homes England and this site has been earmarked to deliver 100% affordable homes.

#### *Other large sites*

2.3.13 An additional 16 sites have been identified in the SHLAA as having potential for development. Eight of these sites are currently under construction or have a recent planning consent with no obvious barriers to their completion.

2.3.14 There has been a delay in bringing forward five sites, all in public ownership. The Council's Major Projects Team are actively engaged in progressing these sites through negotiation/marketing etc. It is anticipated that these sites will start delivering within the next five years:

*Adur Civic Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea*

*7-27 Albion Street, Southwick*

*Community Buildings, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea*

*Land at Eastbrook Primary School, Southwick*

*Lancing Police Station*

2.3.15 Of the remaining sites, one is currently the subject of an appeal (yet to be determined) and the remaining two have essentially stalled:

*Land north of Firle Road, Lancing – an appeal is pending.*

*Former Laundry Site, Alma Street, Lancing - a planning application was submitted but was never been registered because additional information required was not submitted and the landowner has not responded to requests for updates*

*Land at Highview, Lancing - dependant on land assembly.*

2.3.16 The Council is continuing to liaise with landowners to bring these sites forward.

## **2.4 Potential barriers to delivery**

2.4.1 The physical and environmental constraints of the District strongly influence its capacity to accommodate new dwellings, with the sea to the south, the South Downs National Park to the north and Local Green Gaps forming an important component of the landscape setting of towns/villages in Adur. A key challenge is to balance the need for development against the need to minimise the impact on the countryside and landscape character. There are also flooding and key infrastructure constraints which impact on the availability of land for development.

2.4.2 Additionally, many parts of the District are already intensely developed or the local characteristics are such that they make it very difficult to facilitate further significant development; for example there is a predominance of suburban housing with relatively few areas where larger scale growth and change can be easily accommodated.

2.4.3 There is also a significant reliance on a relatively small number of larger sites in the District. An associated problem is that the housing market in the area is dominated by a relatively small number of key landowners and major developers, reducing possibilities for

the smaller developers or other arrangements. Additionally some sites are subject to complex planning histories or other planning complexities such as multiple ownership. As a consequence, many opportunities for development tend to come forward at a slow pace.

2.4.4 The provision of appropriate infrastructure is important to support new development, particularly on the strategic sites and was and continues to remain a key aspect of Local Plan preparation and progression. The Council continues to update its Infrastructure Delivery Plan working with key bodies as required.

2.4.5 There is also a long standing underprovision of affordable and social housing.

#### *Development costs and viability*

2.4.6 The latest MHCLG report Land Value Estimates for Policy Appraisal 2017 (published May 2018) showed that, with the exception of the adjoining authority of Brighton & Hove City Council (in East Sussex), the land values in Adur (£5405,000 per hectare) were the highest compared with the other authorities in West Sussex.

2.4.7 The Adur Whole Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Assessment 2017, which supported the Adur Local Plan, provided an appraisal of the viability of the Plan in terms of the impact of its policies on the viability of development expected to be delivered during the plan period. It concluded that the key strategic sites (both greenfield and brownfield) which are key to the delivery of the housing strategy are viable, provided that zero Community Infrastructure Levy is applied, should this be introduced by the Council (due to high infrastructure costs).



### **3. Key Actions & Responses**

3.0 The Council has already undertaken a significant amount of work to identify the barriers to bringing forward some of the key sites in the District as discussed above. It will continue to be proactive in searching for additional opportunities to bring forward both existing and new sites. The following are those identified areas where it is considered that regular reviews are undertaken to ensure that potential opportunities are identified, robustly assessed and delivered expediently:

#### **3.1 Ensure housing delivery remains a Council priority**

3.1.1 Housing delivery is already a high level corporate and political priority for Adur, as detailed in the Council's new Corporate Plan - Platforms For Our Places which is currently being updated. Strong corporate leadership will be an ongoing requirement to ensure housing delivery remains a focus across the Council.

3.1.2 The Council will therefore undertake to:

- Continue to provide a Council wide strategic approach to housing delivery, and ensure the delivery of new homes is a primary consideration in decision making.
- Ensure existing policies, strategies and other relevant documents and databases are updated in place to support housing delivery and are implemented to achieve specified goals.
- Ensure that Councillors are fully aware of the importance of delivering new homes and supporting related policies and strategies.

#### **3.2 Review of Local Plan**

3.2.1 The policies in the adopted Local Plan are continually kept under review to monitor their effectiveness. This is reported through the Annual Monitoring Report. In accordance with the NPPF the Council will undertake a review of policies to assess whether they need updating within five years (by 2022), and update as necessary. To inform this review, the evidence base is currently being updated, in many cases jointly with Worthing Borough Council, including the Strategic Market Housing Assessment, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study. The Affordable Housing policy is currently being updated to bring it in line with national policy.

#### **3.3 Planning policy**

3.3.1 There are a number of policy approaches that can help with the delivery of more new homes whilst balancing the wider sustainable, community and economic needs of the District. In order to deliver sites and respond to changes in the economy the Council takes a flexible approach to the application of its adopted policies. This includes residential tenure mix, loss of employment and other land use, where appropriate.

### *More effective use of land*

3.3.2 A key policy in the Adur Local Plan 2017 encourages the most efficient use of land which will usually mean, where appropriate, developing at densities above those of the surrounding areas. The optimum density of a site should be achieved through a design led approach to determine the capacity of a site.

3.3.3 The expectation is that residential development of a family housing scheme should achieve minimum densities of 35dph whilst flats, mixed residential developments in or close to town centres or near public transport hubs should be achieving densities in excess of this. Where developments do not demonstrably optimise the housing density of a site then permission will be refused. The Council has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document "Space Around New Dwellings and Flats" which sets out the minimum external space standards for new development.

3.3.4 The regeneration of Shoreham Harbour provides a unique opportunity within the District to provide a high density housing led mixed use development. The Joint Area Action Plan therefore proposes a minimum density of 100 dpa within this defined area, which is considered appropriate for this waterside development.

### *Specific Site Policies*

3.3.5 These policies identify the key strategic sites and set out the requirements for delivery. This provides developers and landowners with clear guidelines of the mix of uses, level of development, infrastructure etc. with the aim of speeding up the decision making process.

### *Supplementary Planning Documents*

3.3.6 There are a number of Supplementary Planning Documents relevant to the delivery of housing:

*Planning Guidance for Infrastructure Provision 2013* - this document gives clarity as to how infrastructure is to be provided as part of development proposals in line with the Local Plan and NPPF. This is an interim document pending the production of an updated SPD (work commencing in 2019).

*Development Management Standard No 1: Space Around New Dwellings and Flats SPD (Updated January 2018)* - sets out external space standards required around all new build homes.

*Demonstrating Genuine Redundancy of Employment Sites 2019* - Supports the employment policy in the Local Plan which seeks to ensure that employment sites are developed for alternative uses (including residential) only when they are demonstrated to be no longer required for employment use.

*Shoreham Harbour Flood Risk Management Guide (2015)* - developed to ensure a consistent approach to flood defence infrastructure delivery in the Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area. It aids developers of sites allocated in the Shoreham Harbour JAAP to identify the flood defence and mitigation measures required to demonstrate that a development will be safe for its lifetime and that flood risk has been reduced. Since the SPD's adoption, wider policy and guidance has continued to evolve. The Council will therefore prepare a factual update to ensure the SPD remains up to date.

*Affordable Housing (to be produced)* - Adur has a high level of need for affordable housing. An SPD will provide more guidance on how the affordable housing policy in the Adur Local Plan 2017 will be implemented in order to deliver affordable homes and help provide mixed and sustainable communities. The timing of this document is under review (and may be incorporated into the wider Infrastructure Provision SPD referred to above).

#### *Development briefs*

3.3.7 Development briefs are prepared, where appropriate, to guide the future redevelopment of specific sites. By providing more detailed site analysis and development principles they provide landowners and developers with a clear indication as to what which proposals are likely to be granted planning permission which, in turn, reduces uncertainty.

3.3.8 The purpose of development briefs is to:

- Improve the quality and consistency of advice provided to developers;
- Improve the efficiency of the planning and development process; and
- To improve the quality of the built environment.

3.3.9 The Council will continue to review its guidance in response to changes in policy to ensure there is adequate information for a developer to know what is expected from new development, including at the stage of the initial investment/land purchase, and to ensure the relationship between local and national policy guidance is clear.

### **3.4 Improving our planning application processes**

3.4.1 Whilst the Council has not identified the Development Management planning process as a barrier to delivery it does recognise the importance of monitoring its performance and addressing any issues that may arise swiftly.

3.4.2 It can be seen from the data below on determining planning applications that the Councils performance and the speed of decision making is good and delays in the system are minimal. It can therefore be concluded that the authority has an efficient decision making process in place.

#### *Percentage of applications determined within the prescribed timetable*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>Majors %</b>	<b>Minors %</b>	<b>Others %</b>
2014/2015	541	100%	67%	86%
2015/2016	541	100%	75%	84%
2016/2017	436	100%	82%	90%
2017/2018	414	100%	85%	90%
2018/2019	444	80%	96%	93%



### *Appointment of Principal Planning Officer (Major Applications)*

3.4.3 There are a number of major development sites that are due to come forward over the Plan period. In order to ensure that are dealt with in the most efficient manner the Council has recently appointed a Principal Planning Officer (Major Applications) with responsibility to provide detailed pre-application advice, enter into early stage negotiations in respect of s106 Agreements and liaise with other Council departments and other stakeholders. The aim is to ensure that the application process through to decision making is as smooth as possible by providing continuing and greater certainty for all parties involved.

### *Pre-Application Advice Service*

3.4.4 To save unnecessary delays in the planning application process the Council has successfully introduced a Pre-Application Advice Service.

### *Planning Performance Agreements*

3.4.5 In the last few years the Council has entered into planning performance agreements with a number of applicants to provide a tailored project management framework for handling a development proposal from pre-application stage through to decision and any compliance with conditions. These have been used successfully on some of the major development schemes and will continue to be used where appropriate.

### *Standardised Legal Agreements*

3.4.6 It is recognised that the drawing up of legal agreements has the potential to delay the decision making process. In addition to the pre-application service and the appointment of the dedicated Major Applications Officer the Council is undertaking a review of its s106 process to standardise the format of the legal agreements. This will speed up this stage of the process.

### *Establishment of Major Projects & Investments Team*

3.4.7 An experienced cross-discipline Major Projects & Investments team has been set up to allow the Council to be more proactive in identifying issues and barriers to housing delivery on major sites. Part of their remit is to develop close working relationships with land owners/developers of the key sites across the District together with infrastructure providers and other departments in the Council in order to unlock barriers to delivery. This includes a full review of the Councils' own estate and a more proactive land assembly and 'commercial' approach to site delivery if required. They have been successful in leveraging public funding where available and developing business cases to help unlock sites.

3.4.8 The Council is in the process of appointing a Senior Development Manager to oversee both the delivery of council owned sites and to identify any opportunities to acquire land in the private sector which could be developed for new homes.

### **3.5 Other initiatives to support housing delivery**

#### *Council Owned Land*

3.5.1 The Council as a landholder has identified a number of its own sites that may be surplus to requirements and is currently considering further sites to bring forward additional homes as part of an asset management review. This allows the Council to prioritise and use resources to unblock any barriers to delivery as well as providing more delivery certainty.

#### *Asset Management Working Group*

3.5.2 The Asset Management Working Group was formed to focus on the review of the Councils' own land and property holdings in terms of identifying any surplus land or buildings which could potentially be suitable for residential development. The Council is keen to maximise the use of its own land and property assets to drive regeneration forward.

#### *Land in Private Ownership*

3.5.4 A number of the major/strategic sites, which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy, are controlled by the volume/national housebuilders who are also developing large sites in neighbouring local authorities. This could be a significant factor in slowing delivery rates as volume housebuilders are known to limit the release/commencement of development sites in order to maintain strong demand within the housing market area. The Council continues to work closely with these key developers/landowners and others to ensure the housing trajectory reflects the most realistic delivery timescales.

#### *Affordable Homes Delivery Group*

3.5.5 The Council has recently set up a cross service group to address the significant shortfall of affordable housing provision across the District. The primary focus of the Affordable Homes Delivery Group is to identify opportunities for the delivery of affordable homes through more efficient use of Council owned land, together with the acquisition of land and premises for redevelopment. For example, seventeen Council owned houses in Albion Street, Southwick have been demolished and are to be replaced with 50 affordable flats.

#### *Working Groups*

3.5.6 Planning Officers meet regularly with other districts and boroughs in West Sussex as part of Duty to Co-operate and to consider a range of cross boundary issues, including addressing the delivery of housing. This has allowed for best practice to be disseminated that when implemented could help to 'unblock' delivery constraints.

3.5.7 The Council is also a member of the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board which seeks to jointly address strategic planning and development issues. It maintains a close working relationship with the Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership. Housing delivery is a key consideration and the District Council has made it known at each relevant stage that, despite taking a very positive approach to development, Adur will not meet its housing needs. As a consequence, requests were, and will continue to be made to neighbouring authorities to ask whether they had any potential to help meet some of Adur's housing shortfall.

### *Agents Forum*

3.5.8 The Council's Place and Investment Team has recently set up an Agents Forum comprising key residential and commercial agents. The purpose is to create an open forum for dialogue about trends and issues impacting on development arising across the District.

### *Corporate Marketing*

3.5.9 The Council has sought to raise the profile of the authority and the key development opportunities it offers. Initiatives include a dedicated website. Adur and Worthing Invest and the production of magazine 'Building Adur and Worthing' which is published regularly.

3.5.10 This keeps residents, businesses and prospective investors up-to-date with all the latest developments.

### *Relationship with developers, landowners and agents*

3.5.11 The Council recognises the fundamental importance of building relationships with the developers, landowners and agents within the District.

3.5.12 Contact with these partners is an essential part of assessing whether sites are available for development as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This is carried out on a regular basis to ensure that only those sites that are genuinely available can be considered as part of the potential housing land supply. As part of this, a 'Call for Sites' exercise is undertaken regularly.

## **4. Monitoring and Next Steps**

### **4.1 Monitoring**

4.1.1 Housing delivery is monitored jointly by West Sussex County Council and Adur District Council and is reported through the Annual Monitoring Report published each December (to cover the preceding financial year). This includes an update on sites identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Register. In addition the Council maintains and updates annually the Brownfield Register.

4.1.2 Whilst the Council has excellent monitoring systems in place, as good practice, the Housing Delivery Test Root Cause Analysis Datasheet, produced by the Planning Advisory Service, has been used in an effort to improve this. This tool will continue to be populated as information on the progression of individual sites through the planning process becomes available.

4.1.3 The results of the Housing Delivery Test will be reported through the Adur Local Development Framework Members Working Group and, where necessary, the Action Plan will be reviewed and published in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. Any changes in legislation, government policy or practice guidance will also be reflected in any update.

### **4.2 Next Steps**

4.2.1 This is the first Action Plan produced by the Council and annual reviews are anticipated in future years. To help increase future housing delivery, the Council would welcome suggestions on any future actions from interested stakeholders.

## 5. Conclusion

5.1.1 This Housing Delivery Action Plan demonstrates the proactive approach being taken by the Council and its partners to increase the level of housing delivery in the District. Significant steps have been taken within the Planning Service and beyond to help bring forward identified development sites and identify new ones. Some of the key steps identified in this Action Plan include:

- Commitment to review the Local Plan;
- A focussed approach to bring forward existing development through land assembly, improved marketing and partnership working (often led by the Council);
- A regular 'call for sites' to ensure that none have been 'missed';
- A full and positive review of all potential development opportunities (including greenfield sites) with a robust and comprehensive Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment;
- Improved Development Management processes;
- The appointment of a Principal Planning Officer (Major Applications) and the establishment of a Major Projects & Investments Team;
- Alignment of plans and strategies (internal and external) to deliver housing objectives;
- A clear Corporate commitment to deliver development on its own sites and to work with partners and other landowners to facilitate delivery on theirs;
- Continued co-operation with neighbouring local authorities.

5.1.2 Despite these efforts being taken by the Council and its partners it is very apparent that the level of housing delivery, whilst forecast to be higher than many previous years, will still fall significantly short of meeting the housing requirement established using the Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rulebook. As demonstrated, although actions and interventions have been put in place that will help to increase housing delivery in the District, the Council has no way of addressing the main constraint which is a tightly drawn District boundary, environmental constraints and very limited land availability.