

Changes to the 5 Year Housing Land Supply Position following publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024); related changes in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and the Housing Delivery Test results.

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1. The current position with respect to housing supply and delivery is crucial in determining whether policies for the provision of housing (i.e. in the Joint Core Strategy 2017 and Cheltenham Plan) are considered out of date and consequently whether Paragraph 11d of the NPPF (the so called 'tilted balance') is to be engaged in the determination of an application for additional housing.
2. Footnote 8 to Paragraph 11 of the NPPF (December 2024) is clear that where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, or where the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) indicates that the delivery of housing has been substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years, policies for the provision of housing are to be considered out of date.
3. With regards to the latest HDT results for Cheltenham Borough these were published by the Government on 12th December 2024 and showed that Cheltenham's delivery over the three-year period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023 was at 65%. This is therefore below the NPPF paragraph 79c threshold. The presumption in favour of sustainable development already applied as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework on the basis that the Council didn't have a 5-year housing land supply. Due to the publication of the HDT results, the Council added a 20% buffer to their housing requirement and also need to produce an action plan.
4. As the JCS is now more than five years old, the NPPF (December 2024) at Paragraph 78 requires the 5 year housing land supply (5YHLS) calculation to be based on the output of the 'Standard Method' calculation as opposed to the Council's adopted annual housing requirement in the JCS. The Standard Method itself has recently been updated in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment section of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The local housing need figure for Cheltenham was until recently 545 dwellings per annum but as a result of the changed approach in the PPG is now 824 per annum.
5. In terms of delivering a sufficient supply of homes, paragraph 61 of the updated NPPF (December 2024) states that "*...the overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.*" Previously this paragraph aimed to meet "*...as much need as possible.*"
6. NPPF (December 2024) paragraph 78 b. states that a 20% buffer should be used to ensure choice and competition in the market. The inclusion of this buffer has been factored in resulting in a change to the supply in years number below.
7. Cheltenham Borough Council's published 5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement for 2024 gave the position as of 31st March 2024. It was based on the process of annual monitoring for the monitoring year 2023/24; the 2023 NPPF, and the housing delivery test results published in December 2023. Given the very recent publication of the updated NPPF (December 2024) and the need to apply it to decision making, the 4.57 years figure is no longer up to date. The 5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement will be updated in the new year 2025.
8. Following the publication of the NPPF (December 2024) along with the PPG changes as well as the most recent HDT results, Cheltenham Borough's 5 Year Housing Land Supply figure is **2.52 years**. For the avoidance of doubt, the total deliverable housing supply (factoring the lapse rate for small sites) has not been altered. This updated figure of 2.52 years will therefore be used in determining planning applications.