

**Tamworth Core Strategy
Development Plan Document
2006-2026**

Housing Policy Consultation



Local Development Framework

February 2011

Tamworth
Borough Council

www.tamworth.gov.uk

Introduction

What is the Local Development Framework?

The Local Development Framework or LDF is a collection of documents which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for an area. The key document in Tamworth's LDF is the Core Strategy, which is a Borough wide plan that identifies the key strategies and policies for its future development. It will replace the Tamworth Local Plan, which was adopted in 2006.

Update

The Council has been keeping the public, partners and stakeholders up to date on progress with the LDF, with the most recent consultation on the Proposed Spatial Strategy taking place in October 2009. The results of the consultation revealed general support for the overall strategy, particularly town centre regeneration, preference for brownfield development before greenfield and a new leisure centre. There was still opposition to the Anker Valley proposal due to impact on the conservation area, highway network and loss of agricultural land, however, it was regarded by many as preferable to building on the Green Belt.

Since then, the Council is continuing to update its evidence base on a range of topics including employment land availability, strategic housing land availability, linkages between the town centre and Ventura/Jolly Sailor Retail Parks, open space, water infrastructure, flooding, renewables and affordable housing viability.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS) was revoked by the Government in July 2010. However, a challenge by Cala Homes to the High Court was successful and in November 2011, it was announced that the revocation was unlawful. The effect of this was to temporarily reinstate the Regional Spatial Strategy, although the Government still intends to revoke the RSS through the Localism Bill which is currently making its way through Parliament.

What is this document?

The Council has re-drafted the housing policies and is issuing them for consultation before publishing the Submission version of the Core Strategy later this year. The housing policies now comprise the following, with targets set where appropriate and evidenced:

- H1 - Revised policy on housing delivery
- H2 - Unchanged policy for Anker Valley
- H3 - Revised policy on affordable housing
- H4 - New policy on housing need
- H5 - New policy on housing density
- H6 - Revised policy on Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople accommodation

Consultation process

The Council is making the housing policies available for consultation for a period of 6 weeks from 24th February to 7th April 2011. We welcome comments on the content of the policies and you will see that each amended or new policy is followed by one or two questions to guide discussion.

We have been using Limehouse consultation software to collate consultation responses, however, from now on we will be using our own systems. Contact details have been transferred across and it is assumed that they are correct. Please contact us if you are no longer interested in being involved in the Tamworth LDF or if it is more appropriate for someone else in your organisation to act as contact.

You can fill in the comments form at the back of this document and email or post it to us at the following address:

Development Plan Team
Tamworth Borough Council
Marmion House
Lichfield Street
Tamworth
B79 7BZ

Email us at: developmentplan@tamworth.gov.uk

If you would like to speak to someone about the current consultation or the LDF in general please contact the Development Plan Team on: 01827 709279, 709276, 709278 or 709384. Please contact us if you require a Word version of the comments form.

Future timetable

The intention is to publish the Submission version of the Core Strategy in the summer, with a view to submitting it to the Secretary of State in the autumn and an examination taking place in spring 2012.



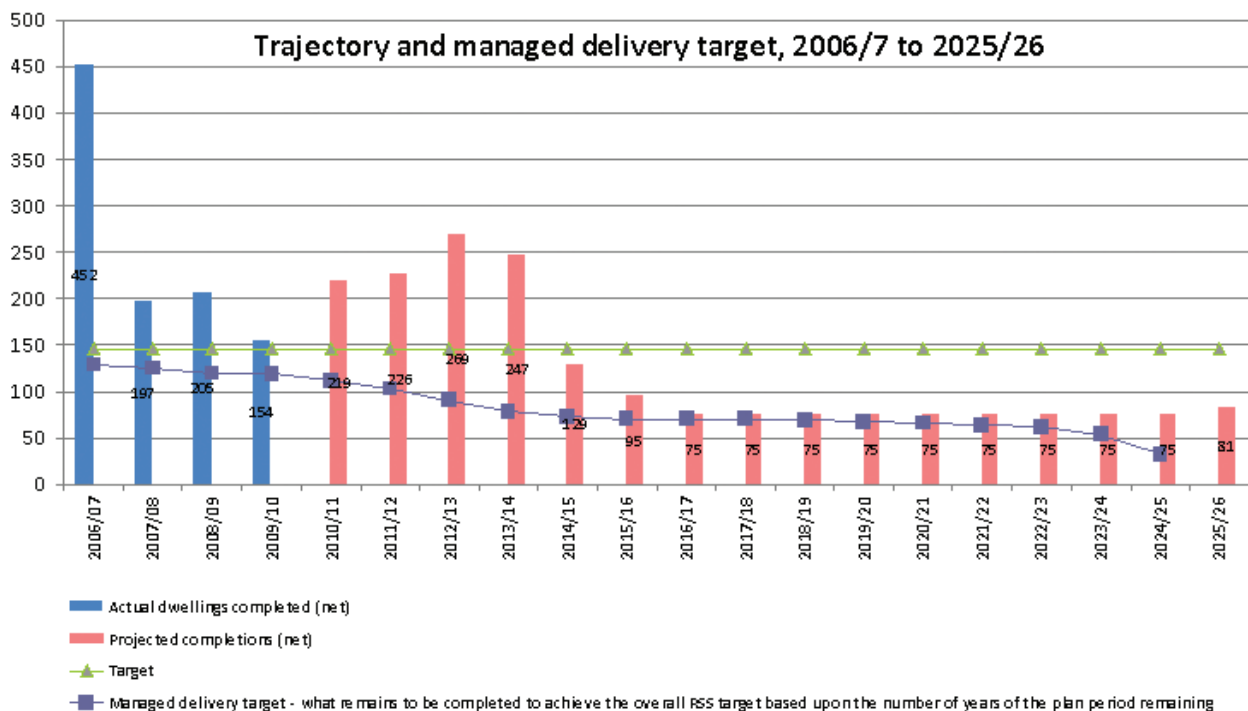
H1 - Housing Delivery

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of a net increase of at least 2,900 dwellings in the period 2006 – 2026 at an average of 145 units per annum. A minimum of 900 dwellings will be provided for as a sustainable urban neighbourhood to the north east of the town centre in the Anker Valley. The remaining will be provided within the existing urban area. Tamworth will seek to provide 60% of new housing on previously developed land.

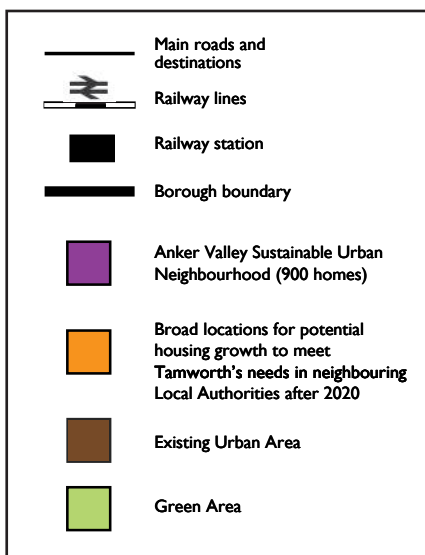
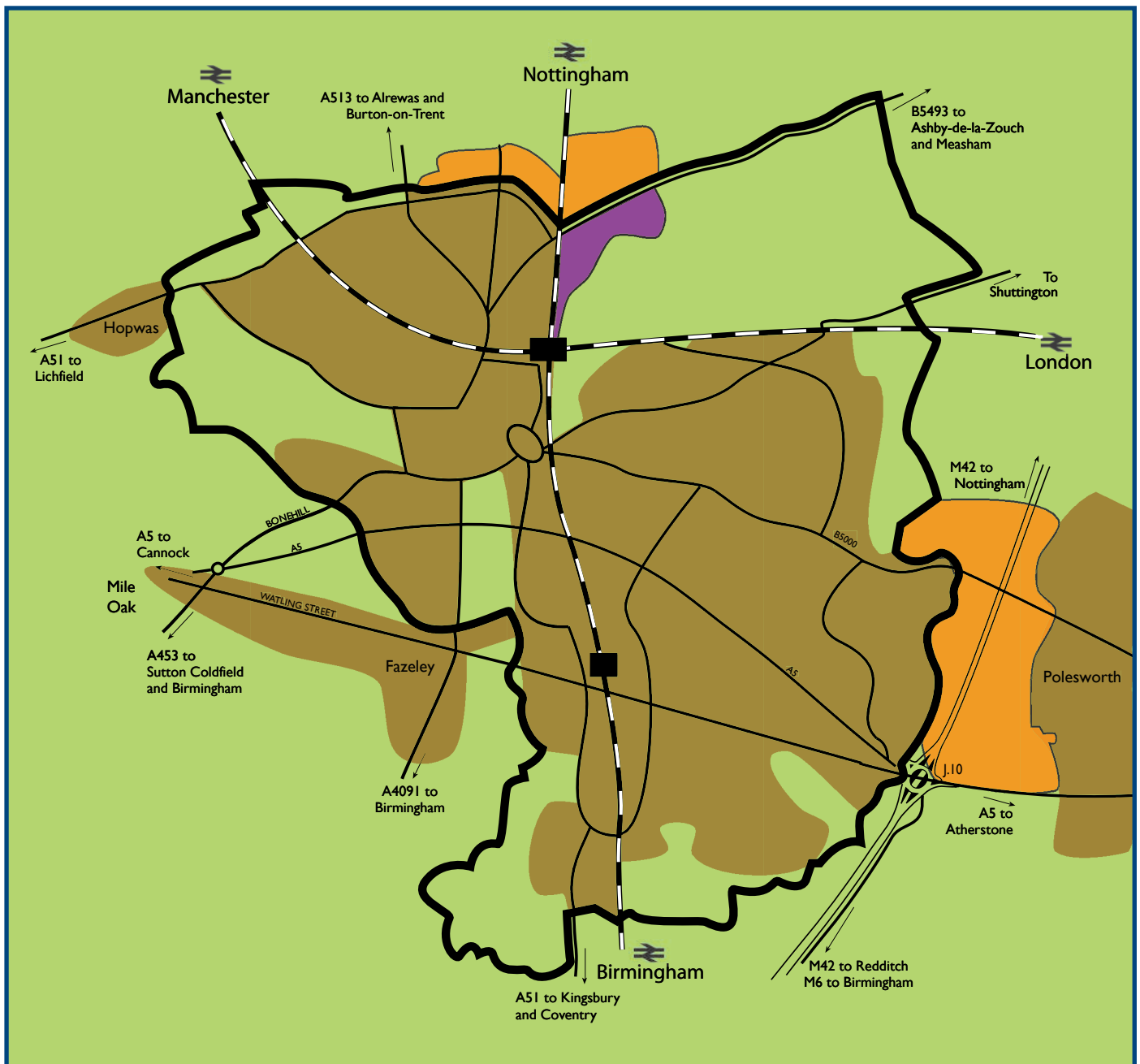
The release of land for housing will be managed in order to achieve a balanced delivery over the plan period to 2026 as indicated in the housing trajectory below.

The Council will work closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure if further housing is required to meet Tamworth’s needs that this is planned in the most sustainable location and that the infrastructure needs arising from that development within Tamworth are identified and provided for. Development to meet Tamworth’s needs in neighbouring authorities could be met in the broad locations identified on the Housing Key Diagram to the East of the town or to the north of the town as part of the sustainable urban neighbourhood in the Anker Valley. It is envisaged that if this growth in neighbouring authorities is needed it will not be until after 2020 and will be considered by a review of the Core Strategy in 2017.

Housing development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable communities through sustainable development that gives priority to new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than the private car with good accessibility to community services and facilities. Tamworth Borough Council will secure housing development, including development affecting the existing housing stock, that is of a high quality and design that contributes to creating inclusive mixed communities and tackling health inequalities and improving health outcomes for the people of Tamworth. This will be achieved by providing a mix of dwellings of the right size, type, affordability and tenure to meet local needs. New housing development will be required to be of high quality design and this policy should be read in conjunction with Policy DH1 Design.



Housing Key Diagram



Explanation:

Based on the evidence available the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase Two Revision Preferred Option (Dec 2007) required Tamworth to make provision for 2,900 dwellings over the period 2006 to 2026. This equates to an average annual provision of 145 dwellings a year. At present the evidence available is that which supported the RSS Preferred Option and it is considered that 2,900 dwellings is an appropriate figure for Tamworth to plan for. It is recognised that further development to meet Tamworth's needs may be required in either Lichfield District or North Warwickshire Borough.

In the period 2006-2010, 1040 (gross), 1008 dwellings (net), have been completed and there are a further 584 dwellings either under construction (174) or with planning permission (416).

A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has identified a significant amount of land, suitable for housing development. However, further work on availability and achievability has been undertaken in the Tamworth Future Development and Infrastructure Study that has identified capacity within the urban area for at least a further 400 dwellings that are confirmed as available and deliverable within the first 10 years of the plan. These include sites at Land off Pennine Way (153 units), Land off Cottage Farm Road (49 units) and the Stormking site (47 units). This leaves a residual requirement of a minimum of 900 units to be found from outside the urban area.

The Tamworth Future Development and Infrastructure Study, carried out jointly with Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough Councils, in accordance with the WMRSS Preferred Option, examined options for delivering a further 900 dwellings outside the urban area. In identifying options the Study also took into account the need to provide for a further 600 dwellings which represented a 20% flexibility allowance on the WMRSS provisions.

Two of the options identified were within the Borough boundary, the remainder were outside. It was considered that the Anker Valley option was the most sustainable option within the Borough boundary to deliver the Spatial Objectives for the town, providing that the necessary infrastructure and linkages are delivered.

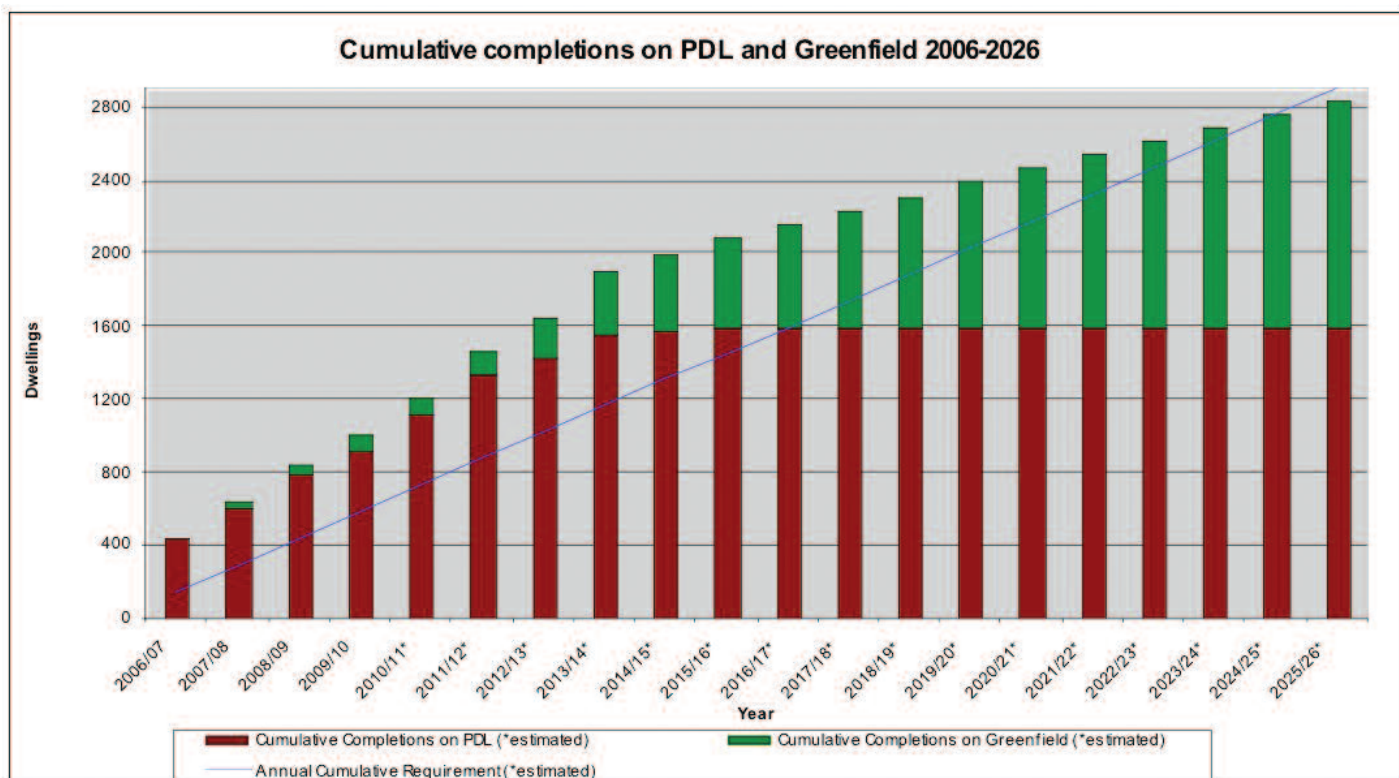
These are required to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to serve the development as a whole and that the development contributes to creating sustainable inclusive communities. Development in this location will enable the provision of a park and ride facility which is accessible for a significant part of the town and provides a sustainable link to the Learning Zone and town centre. This will reduce congestion to the north of the town centre. A sustainable urban neighbourhood that seeks to maximise internal trips by providing services and facilities, and by having a high degree of public transport accessibility will minimise travel by the private car and minimise congestion.

Of the other options identified in the Joint Study, land to the East of Tamworth Urban area and West of the M42 was considered to be the most sustainable location to meet Tamworth's needs. Land east of the M42 was also considered to have sustainability benefits as was land at Mile Oak and land North of the Anker Valley which all scored closely. However, land at Mile Oak is within the Green Belt and Lichfield District Council has indicated that this would not be a preferred option. Lichfield District Council has indicated that 400 houses could be built in Fazeley, which is part of the Tamworth Housing Market Area and could further meet Tamworth's needs. If further land is required to meet Tamworth's needs the most appropriate locations would either be to the East of Tamworth or to the North, particularly if the appropriate links to Anker Valley were made. The 2010 Annual Monitoring Report identifies a housing supply in excess of 9 years within Tamworth and therefore future growth in neighbouring authorities is not expected to be required until after 2020. The location of future growth will be considered through a review of the Core Strategy in 2017.

There are a number of sites identified in the SHLAA which have not been included in the 10 year supply due to limited information on availability. It is likely that some of these sites will come forward earlier than envisaged and so will increase the number of units delivered in this period.

There are also sites identified, particularly in the town centre, which may come forward for other uses or as part of a mixed use development which may result in fewer dwellings being delivered. For this reason, the Anker Valley allocation should be seen as a minimum to allow for flexibility. The Tamworth Future Development and Infrastructure Study highlighted that the site could accommodate over 1100 dwellings (potentially in excess of 1400 units if employment was not allocated on the site) so there is flexibility to accommodate further growth if required and capacity for further growth beyond the plan period.

Within the urban area, land off Pennine Way is the largest opportunity to accommodate housing growth. The majority of further housing development within the urban area will be located on previously developed land, to stimulate regeneration, improve accessibility and to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities. It is projected that 60% of this housing delivery will be on previously developed land. In the period 2006 to 2010, 1008 (net) dwellings have been completed, 91% of which was on previously developed land (using definition in PPS3 prior to the revisions in June 2010). Therefore, previously developed land is expected to be a significant source for new housing development during the early parts of the plan period. However, as the Anker Valley development is built out, the proportion of Greenfield land for housing development will increase. The timing and delivery of Greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time.



It is important to ensure that new housing meets the needs of the people of Tamworth. Needs data and information from partner organisations show a need for supported units that facilitate independent living to a range of client groups.

Question 1: Do you agree with the approach to housing delivery? Please explain your answer.

H2 - Anker Valley Strategic Allocation Policy

No changes are proposed to the Policy that was consulted on in the Proposed Spatial Strategy Document (October 2009) at present.¹

H3 - Affordable Housing Provision

The Council will seek to provide a target of 43 affordable housing units per annum. The provision of Affordable Housing to meet local needs will be maximised through working in partnership with developers, Registered Social Landlords, the Homes and Communities Agency and other public bodies by:

- a) requiring new residential development involving 15 or more dwellings (gross) to provide a target of 30% affordable dwellings on site;
- b) requiring new residential development involving 5 – 14 dwellings (gross) to provide a target of 20% affordable dwellings on site;
- c) requiring new residential development involving 1 – 4 dwellings (gross) to provide a financial contribution equivalent to a target of 10% affordable dwellings;
- d) requiring a target of 80% of affordable housing to be for social rent and 20% for intermediate housing;
- e) the release and development for affordable housing of Council, Registered Social Landlords and other public bodies surplus land holdings;
- f) requiring a range of sizes of residential dwellings to be provided to meet local requirements;
- g) requiring a range of housing to meet the needs of older persons, persons with disabilities and those with special needs where there is a proven need and demand.

The Council will monitor development activity and land values to ensure it adopts a flexible approach to negotiations to achieve the above targets. This monitoring will also inform discussions over viability issues which will also need to consider the overall planning obligation requirements and local needs. Supplementary Planning Document will be produced to outline the framework for negotiations, how the targets will be applied to developments with a construction programme over 2 years long and the role of the Council in assisting to secure finance or land to ensure development remains viable.

Explanation:

Tamworth's housing market is relatively self contained, however, there are strong ties with settlements surrounding Tamworth but within other Local Authority areas. Tamworth loses population to Lichfield District and North Warwickshire but gains considerable population from Birmingham, demonstrating the historical links with the city. To a lesser extent there are also links beyond the West Midlands to South Derbyshire and North West Leicestershire. In the period 2006

¹ http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/pdf/Proposed_Spatial_Strategy_v3.pdf

to 2010, 269 gross Affordable Housing units were completed, on average 69 a year. As at the 31st March 2010 there were a further 28 units under construction and a further 10 commitments.

Although Tamworth is more affordable than other parts of the sub region, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates a net housing need of 204 dwellings per annum. Within Tamworth there are differences in terms of house type and house price. The SHMA also highlights that there is an undersupply of smaller properties, particular apartments. The SHMA identifies an annual housing demand of 265 dwellings per annum and the housing needs model implies affordable housing targets of between 77% and 100%.

The Council has undertaken an Affordable Housing Viability Assessment that indicates that achieving these targets is likely to make the delivery of a site unviable. However, the targets proposed above are considered to be deliverable although it is recognised that the Council will need to be flexible on a site by site basis and seek to maximise the proportion of affordable housing.

There is a recognition that the delivery of affordable housing can not rely on market driven residential schemes and other key organisations including the Council have a role to play in increasing the supply of affordable units.

Question 2: Do you agree with the affordable housing targets? Please explain your answer.

H4 - Housing Needs

The Council will ensure that the size and type of housing reflects local needs. This will be achieved by providing a mix of dwellings of the right size, type, affordability and tenure to meet local needs. In particular, the Council will seek to deliver smaller dwelling types as follows:

- 80% of new housing will be 1 or 2 bedroom sized units, with a focus on achieving a greater proportion of 2 bedroom units
- 15% of new housing will be 3 bedroom sized units
- 5% of new housing will be 4 bedroom or more sized units

The Council will encourage in sustainable locations the provision of an additional 823 units of Flexi Care accommodation to 2030 to meet identified needs of the projected elderly population in Tamworth in mixed tenure and mixed dependency schemes as follows:

	To 2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2030	Total
Owned	213	39	57	152	461
Rented	168	30	45	119	362
Total	381	69	102	271	823

All proposals for housing development should ensure that they meet the requirements of different groups within the population, where there is a proven need and demand and provide an appraisal of the local community context and housing need of that community.

Explanation:

In 2001 over 75% of the housing stock in Tamworth was 3 or more bedrooms. By 2010 this percentage was estimated to have remained fairly static at 74%.

In planning the provision of a housing stock that meets the need of all households in the future we need to consider changes which are taking place in both demographic structure and household formation and preferences. The data in relation to household formation is extremely important as those households requiring smaller units are those which are growing most significantly.

In March 2009, Communities and Local Government published updated household projections to 2031 to take account of revisions to the Office for National Statistics 2006-based population projections, published by the Office for National Statistics in June 2008. These estimate that in 2006 the number of households in Tamworth was 31,000 and by 2026 this will increase to 37,000. It is also estimated that the average household size is getting smaller. Nationally one-person households are projected to grow by 52.2%, but this differs considerably between age bands. Households consisting of 55-64 year olds (growth of 80.2%) and 45-54 (up 66.1%) will grow the most. Also older single person households (65+) will also grow by more than younger households. The significant growth in one person households and the age of these new one person households suggests an increased requirement for smaller properties, but not so small that they cannot accommodate overnight guests or space to work at home; in other words at least two bedrooms will be needed.

In Tamworth the Housing Needs Survey concludes that the needs of new forming households are certainly more basic than aspirational in that very high proportions are looking for small units of accommodation. Key facts from the Housing Needs Assessment Study show that 55% of all new forming households need two bedroomed units and 33% of all new forming households need one bedroomed units.

It is evident therefore that around 88% of new forming households are looking to occupy one or two bedroomed units which represent only 25.9% of the housing stock. Waiting list data since 2006 also shows demand for 1 bed properties has been at 53% or higher and for 2 beds at 25% or higher and consistently at 80% for 1 and 2 beds.

The impact of the stock imbalance in Tamworth is to create further difficulty for new forming households attempting to access the housing market in Tamworth Borough. The rate of turnover required in the smaller one and two bedroom stock is excessive.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
Stock in 2001:	2556	4554	16482	5788	29380
	8.7%	15.5%	56.1%	19.7%	
Units built since 2001	184	853	633	400	2070
Estimated total stock 2010	2740	5407	17115	6188	31450
% of total stock	8.7%	17.2%	54.4%	19.7%	

Since 2001 it is estimated that the total housing stock has increased by 2070 as shown above. Of these 1000 units were completed between 2006 and 2010. 586 units benefit from planning permission and are yet to be completed, leaving 1314 to be accommodated (assuming 2900 from the WMRSS Preferred Option). This represents 4% of the total estimated 2026 stock (34,000) in 2026 which is a small opportunity to change the overall mix of the stock.

Since 2001, 50% of new completions have been 1 or 2 bedroom units, meaning that 25.9% of all stock is in smaller units but the maximum percentage this could be increased to is 30%. It is recognised that despite the scale of future demand, it is not sustainable or deliverable in market terms to build all new stock in one or two sectors of the market.

The provision of extra care accommodation units will release a substantial amount of stock (in excess of 800 units to 2030), much of which may be family housing. Extensions to existing properties will also increase the 3 and 4 bed stock.

Therefore it is proposed to focus future building on smaller unit sizes. If 80% of future completed units are 1 or 2 bed, this would be 1050 additional units. This would lead to approximately 9200 1 and 2 bed units, approximately 27% of the total stock an increase of 3% from the 24% in 2001. This is considered to be a modest change in addressing the overall housing market for Tamworth. Needs will vary within Tamworth and developers are expected to show how the proposed mix is meeting local needs.

Staffordshire County Council Flexi Care Strategy estimates that the growth in population of those aged 65 and over between 2010 and 2030 will be 72% in Tamworth, the largest growth in Staffordshire. Flexi Care Housing provides an opportunity for people to live in their own accommodation with the security of care and support being available when needed. The Strategy identifies the level of units required to meet demand in Tamworth (823) and how many need to be available for rent or purchase. At the 1st April 2010, 118 Flexi Care Housing units were already available for rent. It is expected that Flexi Care Housing will lead to a diversion from residential placements reducing the number of residential care beds required and limiting the growth in nursing beds.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed targets for each size of unit? If not, what would you suggest and why?

Question 4: Do you agree with the approach to meeting the need for Flexi Care Accommodation? Do you think these needs can be met and how? Please explain your answer.

H5 - Density

New development will make efficient and effective use of land. Housing development will seek to enhance the character and quality of the area it is located in, and where viable and appropriate achieve an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare or more based on the net developable area of the site. Housing schemes located in the town centre, close proximity to neighbourhood centres and public transport corridors will be expected to achieve higher densities.

Net developable areas will be applied as follows:

Site size	Net developable area
Up to 0.4 ha	100%
0.4 - 2 ha	80%
2 ha and above	60%

Explanation:

Tamworth has a limited supply of unconstrained available land that is suitable for development and in contrast to a growing need for development. Therefore it is imperative to make the most effective and efficient use of the land resources in the Borough. The SHLAA (2008) included 6 sample schemes based on actual sites in Tamworth to reflect the variety of sites found in Tamworth. These sites had densities ranging from 43 dph to 133 dph. The SHLAA also identified a range of typical urban areas (TUA's) reflecting different building phases in Tamworth's history. There were 136 identified TUA's totalling 1171.95ha and containing approximately 30459 units, an average of 26 dwellings per hectare. The SHLAA is currently being revised and densities are being examined through that process. However, the SHLAA panel have advised that a net developable area should be established for each site based upon providing open spaces, community facilities etc. These are calculated as follows:

If these net developable areas are applied to the TUA's then the average dwellings per hectare in Tamworth is 39.45, with the majority of homes (17,346, 57%) being in a TUA with a dwelling per hectare ratio between 30 and 50. 15% of all units were in TUA's with a density of below 30 dwellings per hectare, and 28% of all units were in TUAs with a density ratio of over 50.

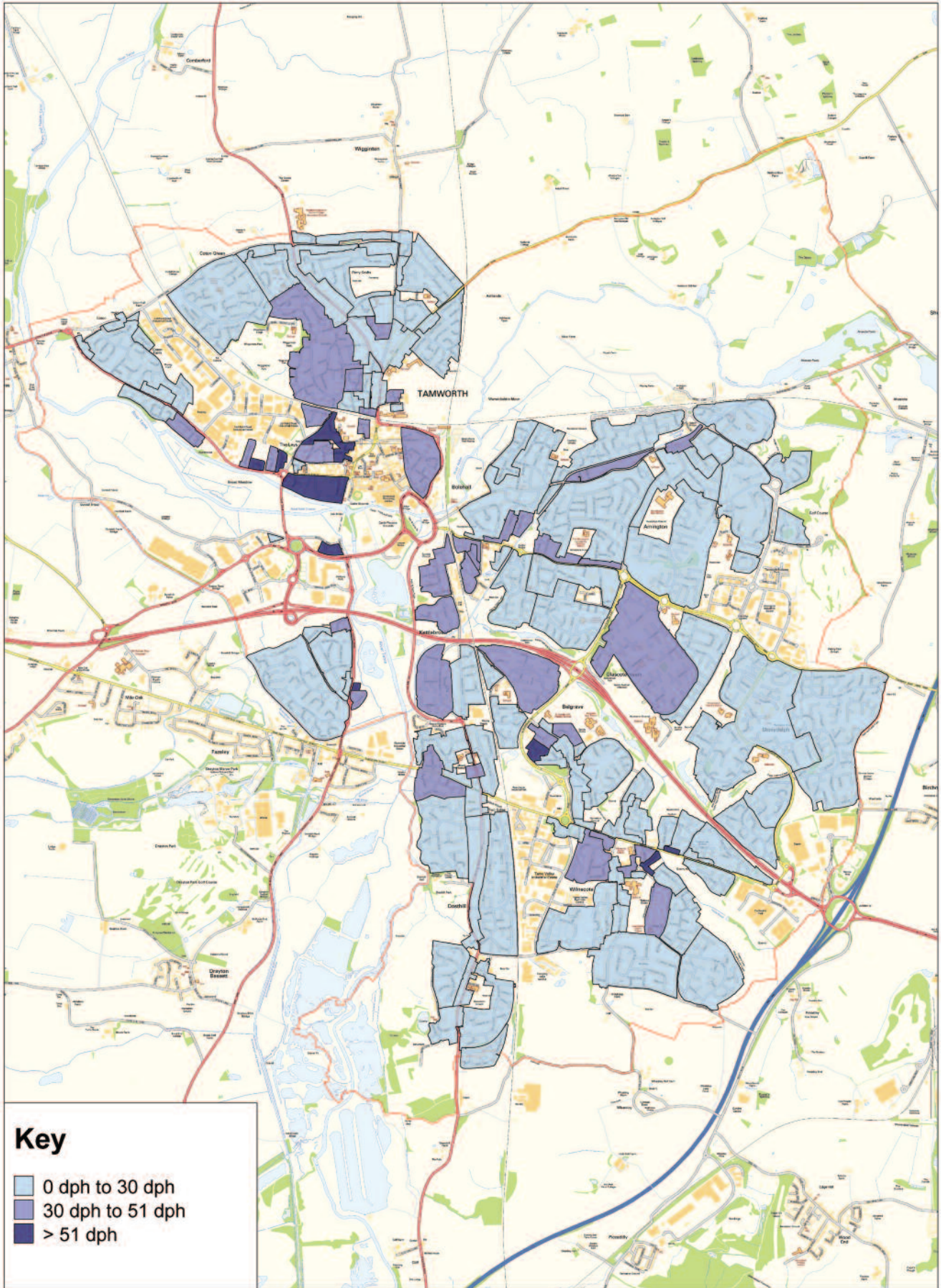
After completions and commitments have been taken into account, 1150 additional units are required to deliver the 2900 identified in the RSS Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option. The Development and Infrastructure Study identified sites with a total supply of 1350 (to allow for some flexibility), at an average of just over 30 dwellings per hectare (gross site size). When applying the net developable areas to these sites, the average density required to meet 1350 is 50dph. If these sites only delivered 1150 units then the average density would be 40dph.

Future development will need to take account of and seek to improve the existing character and quality of the area in which it is located. This will need to be balanced against meeting the identified housing needs of Tamworth and the market.

Question 5: Do you agree with the suggested density targets? If not, what would you suggest and why?

Question 6: Do you think we should seek to identify different density targets for different parts of the Town ?





Key

- 0 dph to 30 dph
- 30 dph to 51 dph
- > 51 dph

Density of Typical Urban Areas



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H6 Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Tamworth Borough Council will work with surrounding Local Authorities, the County Council, landowners, Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople communities and other interested parties to enable the development of pitches in accordance with the sub regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) as below:

	2007-2012	2012-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026	2007-2026
Residential pitches	6	1	1	1	9
Transit Pitches	5				5
Travelling Showpeople					0

Proposals will be expected to contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities and have regard to the existing levels of provision and identified need. In addition to the relevant National and Regional guidance, the following considerations will be taken into account in the determination of locations for gypsy and traveller sites:

- a) There should be safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;
- b) The site must be large enough to provide for adequate on site facilities for parking, storage, play and residential amenity dependent on the number of pitches;
- c) The development should provide the appropriate infrastructure required, both on and off site.
- d) There should be convenient access to schools, shops and other local facilities, preferably pedestrian, cycle or by public transport;
- e) The site should be able to be landscaped and screened to provide privacy for occupiers and maintain visual amenity; and
- f) It should have no significant detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of adjoining properties or neighbouring land.

Explanation:

A sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) has been undertaken with local authorities from across the southern Staffordshire and northern Warwickshire area. These figures are based on a 'need where it arises' methodology, it does not take account of opportunities or constraints within each local authority area. The report suggests that following this methodology Tamworth should provide 9 additional residential pitches. However, the report recognises that it should not necessarily be assumed to imply that those needs should actually be met in that specific locality. Decisions about where need should be met should be strategic, taken in partnership with local authorities, the County Council and the Regional Bodies involving consultation with Gypsies and Travellers and other interested parties which will take into account wider social and economic planning considerations such as equality, choice and sustainability.

Proposals for pitches and sites will be subject to the same criteria as any other type of development. This will mean that sites should be located in suitable and sustainable locations, that are well connected to services and facilities and minimise potential impacts. Tamworth has a limited supply of unconstrained suitable land and as such opportunities in neighbouring Districts to accommodate development to meet Tamworth's needs will be sought.

Question 7: Do you agree with the approach to meeting the needs of Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?

We welcome your feedback and comments on the content of the housing policies. Please fill in the form below, detach and send it to the following address by the 7th April 2011.

Development Plan Team
Tamworth Borough Council
Marmion House
Lichfield Street
Tamworth
B79 7BZ

**Question 1: Do you agree with the approach to housing delivery?
Please explain your answer.**

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**Question 2: Do you agree with the affordable housing targets?
Please explain your answer.**

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**Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed targets for each size
of unit? If not, what would you suggest and why?**

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**Question 4: Do you agree with the approach to meeting the need
for Flexi Care Accommodation? Do you think these
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Question 5: Do you agree with the suggested density figures? If not, what would you suggest and why?

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Question 6: Do you think we should seek to identify different density targets for different parts of the town?

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Question 7: Do you agree with the approach to meeting the needs of Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?

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Contact Details

Name

Organisation (if relevant)

Address

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Postcode

Telephone number

Email address

If you are an agent, please specify the name of the organisation you are representing:

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