

Note:

This Action Plan has been produced in response to the results of the Housing Delivery tests for Calderdale of 2019 and 2020. The Housing Delivery Test compares the number of dwellings completed over a rolling three year period with a target. The result is expressed as a percentage. The test is applied to all planning authorities annually. Authorities achieving 95% or less are required to prepare a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. Calderdale scored less than 50% in both tests and this Action Plan is a response to those results. It examines the reasons behind Calderdale's low scores and suggests ways in which the housing completion rate might be improved. This includes the adoption of the Local Plan and the increase in allocated housing sites.

The Council is open to suggestions and comments regarding ways in which its completion rate might be improved. In the first instance these should be directed to:

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Calderdale Housing Deliver Test Action Plan 2020



Calderdale Housing Deliver Test Action Plan Draft

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Contents

1. Introduction

- 1.1 What is the Housing Delivery Test?
- 1.2 How did Calderdale perform?
- 1.3 How does this compare with other authorities?
- 1.4 Does the Housing Delivery Test reflect the true situation?
- 1.5 What penalties does Calderdale face?
- 1.6 What advice is available on Housing Delivery Test?
- 1.7 Purpose, objectives and status of the document

2. Housing Delivery Analysis

Are the sites identified for development suitable?

- 2.1 Is the low completion rate a recent development?
- 2.2 Have previously allocated sites been developed?
- 2.3 Are suitable sites come forward?

Are sufficient planning permissions being granted and are they determined within the statutory time limits?

- 2.4 Are sufficient planning permissions granted within the statutory time period?
- 2.5 What types of housing sites are being permitted?

What are the barriers to early commencement?

- 2.6 Are permissions being implemented?
- 2.7 What is the impact of the housing market on delivery?
- 2.8 Is there a misalignment between supply and demand?
- 2.9 Do land values deter development?
- 2.10 Do infrastructure costs constrain development?

2.11 Does the local development industry have capacity to build sites?

3. Summary of root causes

4. What is the Council doing about low housing delivery rates?

- 4.1 Increase the supply of sites.
- 4.2 Development of Council owned land.
- 4.3 Affordable housing delivery.
- 4.4 Ensure Infrastructure is provided to promote growth.
- 4.5 Promotion of small sites.
- 4.6 Master planning of sites.
- 4.7 Increased densities.
- 4.8 New housing strategy.
- 4.9 Work closely with government bodies.
- 4.10 Monitor housing delivery.
- 4.11 Place making and Promotion of Calderdale

5. What else could we do?

- 5.1 Collection of further evidence.
- 5.2 Increase the number of allocated sites.
- 5.3 Further promotion of small sites.
- 5.4 Promotion of self-build/custom build.
- 5.5 A dedicated officer to deal with stalled sites.
- 5.6 Promotion of sites with planning permission for housing
- 5.7 Additional funding to unlock stalled sites and strategic sites.
- 5.8 Use of Legal Powers to unlock suitable housing sites.
- 5.9 Prioritise housing in the planning process.

Conclusion

COVID 19

At the time of writing the impact of the Coronavirus on the housing market, wider economy and Government policy is uncertain. In addition the White Paper Planning for the Future published in August 2002 could have a significant impact on the operation of the planning system. The Action Plan is therefore largely based on the situation as it existed in March 2020.

1. Introduction

Key Facts

- The Housing Delivery Test is an annual measure of housing delivery carried out by Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government.
- The first test was published in February 2019. The second test was published in February 2020.
- Over the period 2015/16 to 2017/18; 899 new homes were built in Calderdale compared to a requirement of 2473; a Test Score of 36%.
- For the second test, 2440 homes were required of which 1160 had been delivered between 2016/17 and 2018/19, a score of 48%.
- Calderdale had the second lowest score in England in 2019 and the 10th lowest score in 2020
- If Calderdale continues to fail to have test scores of less than 95% it will face a range of penalties.

1.1 What is the Housing Delivery Test?

The Housing Delivery Test is an annual measure of housing delivery in plan making authorities for a three year period. It is produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with the first test published in February 2019. The second test was published in February 2020. The Test measures the number of actual homes built against the number of homes required within a LPA:

$$\text{Housing Delivery Test} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three years}}{\text{Total number of homes required over the three years}}$$

The aim of the test is to ensure that Local Planning Authorities meet their housing requirements by planning for and building new homes over a rolling three year period. The results will be published annually by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The total net homes delivered figures is drawn from:

- Net additional dwellings 2015/16 to 2017/18 (2016/17 to 2018/19 for the second test);
- Housing Supply in Communal accommodation;
- Number of bedrooms in student only accommodation;

- Number of adults in households.¹

The number of homes required is drawn from:

- Annual average household growth over the previous ten years (derived from household projections);
- Unmet need from the most recent local plan.²

1.2 How did Calderdale perform?

In 2018 Calderdale achieved 899 homes delivered in the years 2015/16 to 2017/18 compared with a need over the same period of 2,473 homes; a score of 36%. The following year Calderdale had delivered 1160 new homes over the previous three years compared to a need of 2440; a score of 48%.

1.3 How does this compare with other authorities?

Calderdale has some of the lowest test scores nationally. For the 2019 test, only New Forest District was lower at 35%. The situation had improved by 2020 when Calderdale was tenth from lowest. However, it had the lowest score of any authority in the North of England. Nevertheless, the housing delivery figures for the second test show a significant increase compared to a need that slightly decreased.

Most authorities facing penalties because of low scores are in London and the South East. Two other authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside scored less than 95% and face penalties (Kirklees and Bradford). Across the border in the North West there are clusters of authorities on the edge of the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations whose HDT score was below 95% for both tests; Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Tameside, Trafford.

Councillor Daniel Sutherland Calderdale's Cabinet then member for Planning, Housing and Environment said in response to the 2019 result:

"We are aware of the implications of the housing delivery test and are taking a number of actions to step up our delivery. Most significantly we submitted our local plan for examination on 11 January 2019. As we pass the various local plan milestones we are confident that delivery will increase and the test will be met" (Inside Housing 4th February 2019)

1.4 Does the Housing Delivery Test Result reflect the true situation?

The completions figure in the Housing Delivery Test is based on the net additional dwellings figures for each local authority published by MCHLG in

¹ MHCLG Housing Delivery Test 2019 Measurement Technical Note; Calculating the Homes Delivered

² MHCLG Housing Delivery Test 2019 Measurement Technical Note; Calculating the Homes Required

October (Table 122).³ This is adjusted by adding the net communal accommodation built over the three year period. This results in a figure which differs only slightly from the Councils own figures⁴:

Table One Net Additional Dwellings Calderdale 2015-2018				
Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Housing Delivery Test	310	326	263	571
Net Additional Dwellings (MHCLG Table 122)	329	376	292	555
Monitoring by CMBC	352	289	289	576

The Housing Delivery Test Target is based on the average annual household growth over ten years (based on household projections) plus the unmet need divided by the Local Plan period to give an annual figure. This differs from the standard method for calculating housing need⁵.

Table Two Annual Housing Delivery Test Target				
Housing Delivery Test Requirement	2015/6	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	849	846	779	816

The Publication version of the Local Plan included a housing need figure of 840 dwellings per annum (based on the Standard Method for calculating housing need). The Local Plan is currently at examination and, in response to the Inspector’s letter following the Stage One hearings; the Council has revised its housing requirement figure to an average of 997 dwellings per annum, or a total of 14,950 dwellings over the 15 years of the Plan. The revised figure reflects additional work on the SHMA in order to ensure that the relationship between housing provision and planned job growth is clearly understood on the basis of the latest available information. There remains the potential for the housing requirement figure to be revised further before the plan is adopted with consequential implications for the Council’s five year housing land supply requirement⁶.

Although there are some differences, the Housing Delivery Test completion figures broadly accord with the Council’s evidence, although it is significantly lower than that required for the Five Year Housing Land Supply.

³ MCHLG Live tables on dwelling stock (including Vacants) Table 122: housing supply; net additional dwellings, by local authority district, England 2001-02 to 2017-18

⁴ CMBC Calderdale Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report 2017- 2018 January 2019

<https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/environment-planning-and-building/planning-policy>

⁴ Turley Economics Shaping the Housing Future of Calderdale Strategic Housing Market Assessment November 2015

⁵ Set out in MCHLG Housing and Economic Needs Assessment July 2019 Paragraphs 2-7

⁶ Letter CC22 from Calderdale Council to the Inspector 28th October 2019

1.5 What penalties does Calderdale face?

The Guidance on Housing and Economic Land Availability⁷ and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁸ contains the following penalties for authorities failing the Housing Delivery Test:

- If delivery falls below 95% then a Housing Delivery Action Plan (HDTAP) will have to be produced.
- If delivery falls below 85% then a twenty percent buffer is added on the local planning authority's five year housing land supply requirement.
- Where the HDT indicates delivery was less than 75% of requirement over the past five years there will be a presumption in favour of sustainable development in making planning decisions (the "tilted balance"). This means planning permission for housing will have to be granted unless;
 - i. The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing proposed development; or,
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

This will apply regardless of whether or not Calderdale has an up to date Local Plan

The twenty percent buffer and the need to produce a HDTAP will apply immediately. The "tilted balance" applies to the February 2020 test unless the score is more than 45% (see below).⁹ Calderdale has just missed this penalty this year but risks being subject to it after the next Housing Delivery Test when it applies to authorities scoring 75% or less. The White Paper "Planning for the Future" proposes to continue to drive supply through the Housing Delivery Test.¹⁰

⁷ Paragraphs 036 to 054

⁸ MHCLG National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 Annex 1

⁹ Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework explains the transitional arrangements

¹⁰ MHCLG White Paper Planning for the Future paragraph 2.27 August 2020

	February 2018	February 2020	November 2020	November 2021
	100%	100%	100%	100%
	95% + <i>Pass</i>	95% + <i>Pass</i>	95% + <i>Pass</i>	95% + <i>Pass</i>
	85-95% <i>Action Plan</i>	85-95% <i>Action Plan</i>	85-95% <i>Action Plan</i>	85-95% <i>Action Plan</i>
	25% to 85% <i>Twenty Percent Land Buffer</i>	45% to 85% <i>Twenty Percent Land Buffer</i>	75% to 85% <i>20% Land Buffer</i>	75% to 85% <i>20% Land Buffer</i>
2019 HDT Score 48%			<i>Under 75% Presumption in favour of Sustainable development</i>	<i>Under 75% Presumption in favour of Sustainable development</i>
2018 HDT Score 36%				
		<i>Under 45% Presumption in favour of Sustainable development</i>		
	<i>Under 25% Presumption in favour of Sustainable development</i>			

Figure One Housing Delivery Test Penalties

A Presumption in Favour Of Sustainable Housing Development will make it harder create high quality development and will undermine the implementation of the Local Plan. Nationally, 34% of authorities face penalties by the time the transition period have finished (with 10% of authorities having to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development as well as a twenty percent buffer and preparing a HDTAP).

1.6 What Advice is there on Housing Delivery Test Action Plan?

MCHLG’s Guidance on Housing Supply and Delivery sets out what barriers to delivery the Action Plan should review and potential actions the local authority might consider.¹¹ This Action Plan addresses those potential issues emphasising those which are peculiar to Calderdale.

The Planning Advisory Service of the Local Government Association held workshops on producing a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan early in 2019. As a result a template was produced for Action Plans. This Action Plan is

¹¹ MHCLG Housing Supply and Delivery Guidance July 2019 Paragraphs 047 to 054

based on that template, plus examples of Action Plans from elsewhere adapted to meet Calderdale's particular needs.¹²

1.7 Purpose, Objectives and Status of the Document

The MHCLG has not specified a penalty if a Local Authority fails to prepare a HDTAP. However, placing an HDTAP on the Councils website has a number of advantages:

- It shows that the Council is taking the problem seriously.
- It provides a focus for the Council to investigate problems of non-delivery.
- It sets out for scrutiny and debate the proposed solutions to the problem.
- It will underpin and support the delivery of the Local Plan.

The first part of the plan (Housing Delivery Analysis) will look at those factors which might cause under delivery. The second part ("What is the Council doing about low housing delivery rates?" and "What else could we do?") will set out what the Council is already doing to promote housing development across the Borough and suggests some ways in which the Council could do more to promote sustainable housing development in Calderdale. These are responses to MHCLG Guidance which suggests actions that Councils might consider to boost delivery.

The action plan will be placed on the Council's website as with a request for responses and suggestions from development stakeholders. It is expected that it will be reviewed to incorporate further research and HDT results.

Because of time constraints and the need to focus resources on the Local Plan examination, this study relies on existing published sources combined with monitoring of planning permission and completion that are carried out quarterly. Fortunately, the Council has assembled a large amount of data to support the Publication Draft Local Plan and this has been used where possible.

¹² www.local.gov.uk/pas

2. Housing Delivery Analysis

Key Facts

- Net completions have fallen from over 1000 p.a. between 2005/6 and 2007/8 to 554 homes in 2018/19.
- At the end of the third quarter 2019/20 there were 479 completions recorded (gross).
- The Council approved 86.5% of applications for housing between 20016/7 and 2018/9.
- Calderdale lacks large unconstrained sites that can be allocated for housing.
- Sites with planning permission for homes tend to be small, brownfield and heavily constrained which makes them expensive and slow to develop.
- In June 2019 there were 3081 homes with planning permission but only 26% were under construction.
- The Housing Technical Paper 2020 discounts some 38% of dwellings with planning permission to reflect the likely rate of non-delivery

Are the sites identified for development suitable?

2.1 Is the low completion rate a recent development?

Historically, the annual Authority Monitoring Reports shows net completions at a much higher level than in the last three years, rising to 1372 in 2006/07 before falling steadily to the current low level. Since 2011/12 the completion levels have lagged behind published targets (initially from the Regional Spatial Strategy (670 dwellings pa) and then the Objectively Assessed Need of the 2015 SHMA.¹³ There are signs however, that the trend of the past three years is being reversed with a net increase to 554 dwellings completed in 2018/19.¹⁴

¹³ Turley Shaping the Housing Future of Calderdale Strategic Housing Market Assessment November 2015 Paragraph 65.44

¹⁴ Calderdale MBC Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10 to 2013/14 and Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report 2017/18

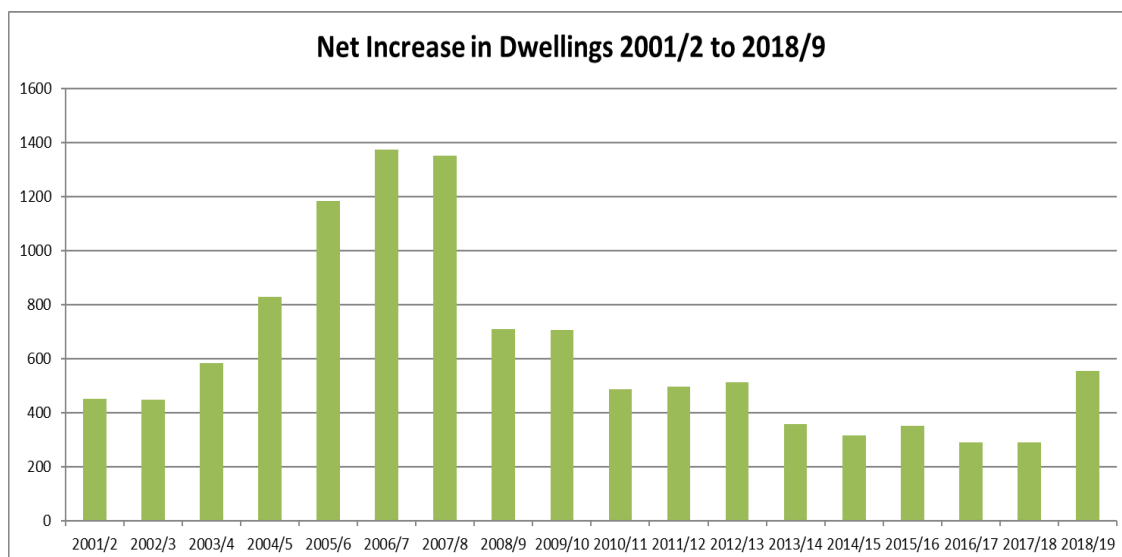


Figure Two Completions 2001/2 to 2018/19

The Housing Delivery Test has been instituted at a challenging time for Calderdale with an unadopted Local Plan subject to an Examination in Public. The drop in completions from 2008/9 may have been due to the effects of the recession and particularly the diminished role of smaller regional and local housebuilders. The lack of an up to date Local Plan may have some bearing on the continued reduced rate of completions¹⁵.

2.2 Have previously allocated sites been developed?

The adopted Unitary Development Plan¹⁶ made provision for 6750 additional homes between 2001 and 2016. The allocation of new sites was phased so as not to overload the market. The first phase was for the release of four sites with a capacity of 1199 homes up to 31st March 2006 (Policy H5). All sites were granted planning permission for development and work has been largely completed on all of them.

Sites in the second phase (up to March 2011) would only be released for development if all the homes in phase one were built out. This phase comprised eight sites of which only three were given planning permission during the plan period, producing 201 homes.

The third phase was due for release between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2016. This comprised eight mixed use sites. None have been completely developed for housing.

The successful development of phase one and the subsequent lack of development in later phases may have been due to the recession in 2008/09. Another factor may have been the relatively small size of sites

¹⁵ Turley Updated Review of Objectively Assessed Housing Needs in Calderdale Strategic Housing Market Assessment April 2018 Paragraph 6.29

¹⁶ Calderdale MBC Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan 2006

which averaged 53 homes for Phase 2 and 65 for Phase 3. These may have been too small to attract volume housebuilders while too large for smaller housebuilders that have survived the recession. Sites in the third phase may also have been unattractive to volume housebuilders because they were on previously developed land .

2.3 Are suitable sites coming forward?

In order to identify potential sites for allocation, the Council has been running a “call for sites” exercise since 2008. This invites landowners and the public to submit details of sites for housing and employment uses. Additionally, to prepare the Local Plan, sites were identified from the Spatial Planning Evidence Base, a review of allocations in the previous development plan (the Reviewed UDP), officer recommendations, and sites in the Councils ownership and from consultation exercises. Once sites were rationalised to avoid duplication, 2472 ha. was identified as potential housing sites.

These sites were initially filtered on the following basis:

- Is the site under 0.25ha?
- Is the site within Flood Zone 3b?
- Does the site have an existing planning permission?
- Is the site within a nationally designated area of nature conservation or heritage importance?
- Is the site located more than 500m from the urban area?

The questions regarding site size is particularly significant. The threshold for allocation was reduced from the 0.4ha. used nationally to 0.25ha.in recognition of the role that small sites have played in the Borough. Even so the majority of were rejected because they were below even this lower threshold. Allocated sites averaged 3.5ha. with 64% of site area is developable

Further filtering exercises revealed the range of constraints that sites in Calderdale face. These do not necessarily prevent the allocation of sites or their development but most constraints increase development cost or reduce the developable area. Analysis of this stage indicated that the main constraints on submitted were:

- Flooding issues (60% of sites);
- Nature Conservation (56% of sites);
- Heritage (37% of sites);
- Adjacent uses (27% of sites).



Figure 3 A beautiful landscape but not easy for housebuilders

Are sufficient planning permissions being granted and are they determined within the statutory time limits?

2.4 Are sufficient planning permission granted within the statutory time period?

Between 2016/17 and 2018/19 there were 611 applications for housing of which 528 were permitted (86.5%). This compares to 85% nationally for applications for major residential developments.¹⁷ Only one of the refusals was subsequently permitted on appeal.

Average time to deal with the applications was 110.07 days compared to a national target of 91 days (although 93% of major decisions were within the national target).¹⁸ Only six applications were determined as “mindful to permit subject to a legal agreement” which would have delayed the actual grant of permission.

Up to the end of December 2019 153 applications had been considered of which 82% were permitted. Of these 86% were decided within the national target.

¹⁷ MHCLG Table P120A Table P120A: district planning authorities – residential planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, England (time series - quarterly and financial years' data)

¹⁸ MHCLG Table P120 Table P120: district planning authorities - planning applications received, decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, England (time series - quarterly and financial years' data)

2.5 What types of sites are getting permitted?

As with sites put forward for allocations, land with planning permission for housing is likely to be heavily constrained. The constraints that apply to most sites with planning permissions for housing are as follows:

- Size of site; Between April 2015 and March 2019 sites of fewer than four dwellings made up 73% of sites with permission and provide 22% of dwellings. Average size of site was 0.65ha with 18 dwellings. The highest number of homes on any one site was for 90 flats. Of the dwellings completed in 2018/9, 85% were on sites with fewer than 10 dwellings. In the third quarter of 2019/20 79% of homes with outstanding permission were on sites of 4 or fewer dwellings. Small scale developments are generally unattractive to volume housebuilders and do not allow economies of scale.

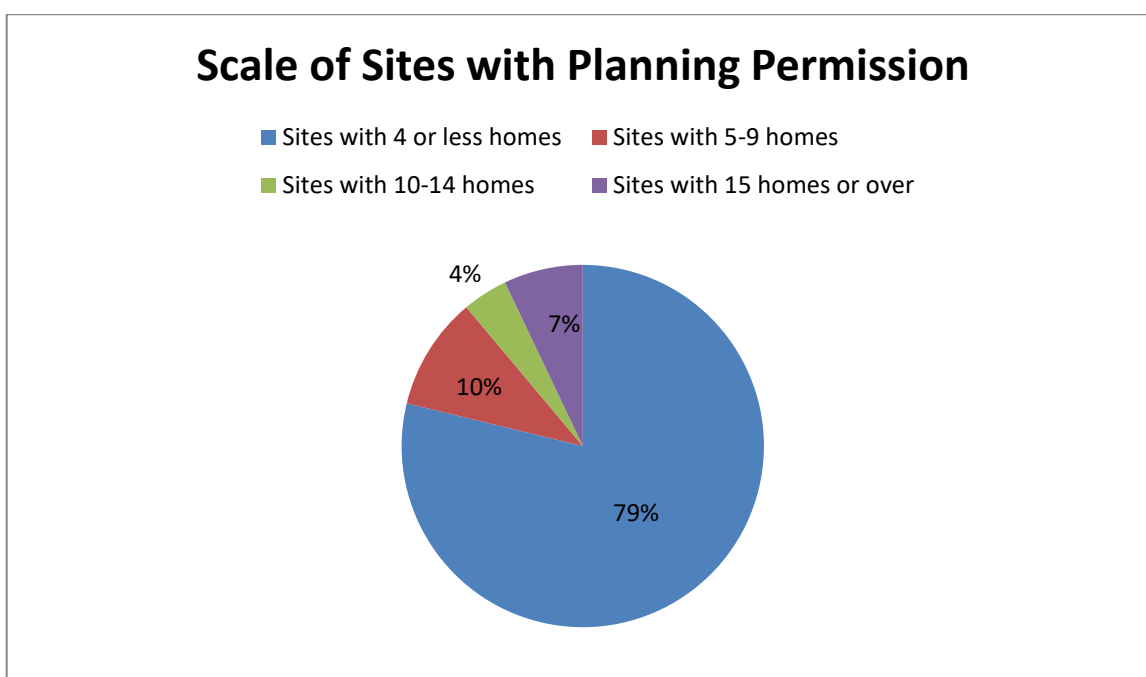


Figure 4 Scale of sites with Planning Permission 3rd Quarter 2019/20

- Brownfield/Greenfield Calderdale has a good record in developing previously built-on land; 82% of permission and 86% of completions between 2001 and 2018 were on brownfield sites. Development of brownfield sites play an important role in protecting the countryside and removing dereliction but, by their nature, previously developed sites are likely to have more constraints than greenfield ones.
- Conversions Reuse of buildings (mainly of agricultural and industrial structures) made up 44% of completions between 2001 and 2018. Such conversions can be expensive and difficult to carry out. Planning applications and conditions take longer to process and development

may be slower than new build. The number of conversions have been inflated by changes to permitted development rights removing the need for planning permission for conversions from Office uses (B1a) to residential (C3).

- Site constraints. Many sites in Calderdale are heavily constrained. In order to allow development to proceed, the Local Planning Authority requires further information or additional work to be carried out after grant of permission, often on the advice of other agencies. These requirements are set out as conditions attached to planning permissions. The average number of conditions added to permissions in 2018/19 was 14. This is in part due to the high proportion of outline permissions where further details are required as “reserved matters” but also reflects site constraints. Conditions relating solely to the site made up 28% of all conditions of permissions for more than ten dwellings in 2018/19. The most common theme of conditions overcoming site constraints were;
 - Protection of the amenity of adjacent residents,
 - Protection of wildlife,
 - Access considerations; for example improvement of sight lines and making up of roads,
 - Allowance for existing services and watercourses across sites,
 - Land conditions; usually risk of contamination,
 - Protection of trees on site.

Average time to discharge conditions was 145 days.

Generally, Calderdale is permitting a large proportion of applications for housing. The application process is slower than some other authorities. This partially reflects the lack of resources within the Council (which will be addressed through a restructure of the planning service) but also the need to involve other agencies in overcoming site constraints.



Figure 5; A mix of flats and family housing, Millbank Close Todmorden

What are the barriers to early commencement?

2.6 Are permissions being implemented?

In the third quarter of 2019/20 there were a total of 3433 dwellings with planning permission and slightly over a third of these were under construction. This includes dwellings where work may have started but then been abandoned. It is nevertheless an improvement on previous years. About 1% of outstanding permission expires each quarter with no work started (that is they exceed the time limit for start of developments set in the planning permission).

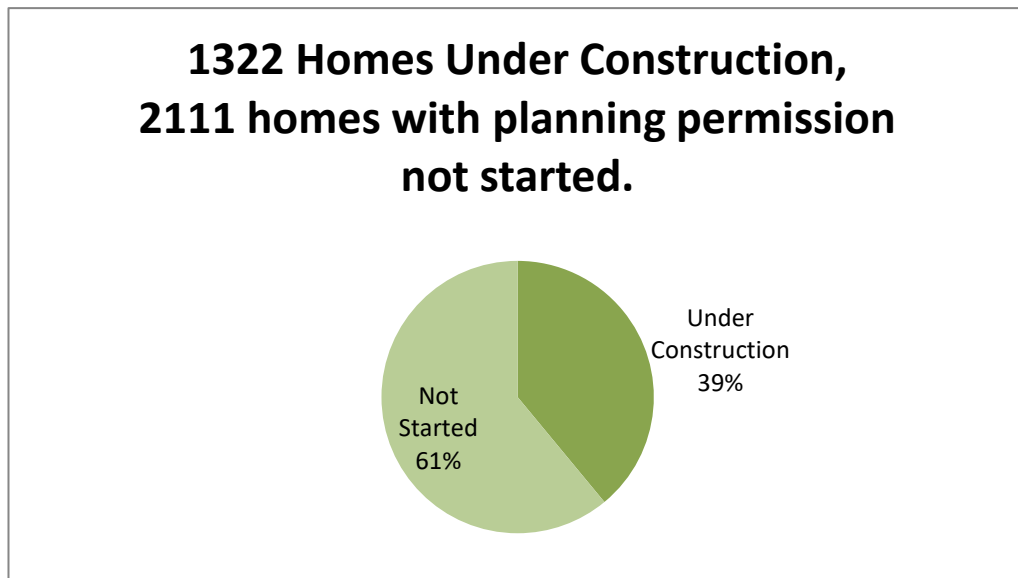


Figure 6 Planning Permissions 3rd Quarter 2019/20

The Housing Technical Paper gave an overall discount of 38% to extant planning permissions to represent the proportion that would not be implemented. This was based on:

- Stalled sites based on evidence in the Housing Land Availability database.
- Sites with outline permission for major development unless there was clear evidence they would come forward. Where sites with outline permission were not due to lapse for sometime but there was no evidence the developer was proceeding towards a reserved matters application they were excluded.
- Long term commencements with only a few plots remaining where it was clear the site was effectively built out and no further units would be completed.
- Local Plan allocations with planning permission in order to avoid double counting as these are recorded under allocations in the housing trajectory¹⁹.

This represents a loss of 1353 dwellings from extant permissions largely due to factors outside the Councils control.

In 2018 a survey was undertaken of housing sites with planning permission where development had started but had stalled or where no development had started at all, focussing on sites where planning permission had apparently expired. These made up 196 sites with the potential for 1832 dwellings. Of these sites, 36 (18%) had apparently had no work carried out on them while on a further 32 work had started but not been completed. This represents a loss of 952 potential dwellings, although in 13 cases the original permission had been superseded by a new one.

Surveys of owners of these sites were carried out and those who replied produced the following reasons for these sites being undeveloped:

- Lack of capital;
- Difficulties with planning (both in terms of delays in deciding applications and in agreement of conditions);
- The level of remedial work to develop the site;
- Slow economic growth;
- Personal reasons.

It does seem that Calderdale has a particular problem with permission being granted but not implemented. This may be due to the scale of sites. Small sites do not generate economies of scale and tend to attract small local and

¹⁹ Housing Technical Paper 2020 Paragraphs 6.8 and 6.9 and Table 13

regional builders who lack capital to carry out remedial work. Personal factors are also a significant reason for not developing sites; house building is often undertaken by individuals who are not developers.



Figure 7 Calder View Sowerby Bridge With 148 homes this is a large development by Calderdale standards and one of the few sites to be developed by a national developer; Taylor Wimpey

2.7 What is the Impact of the housing market on delivery?

In order for developers to bring forward sites, they need to be sure of selling the homes they build and generating a sufficient return to cover the cost of building and buying land while providing a reasonable profit. This return will largely be determined by the house prices prevailing in the area. New homes have a small premium in price over existing homes of the same size but the average house price can generally be judged to indicate the strength of the local market.

Calderdale is a travel to work area with a largely self-contained housing market. The Borough is an important centre for financial services and advanced engineering bolstered by a growing visitor economy. The Borough enjoys good transport connections, although some of these are in need of investment. Tenure is dominated by owner occupation although growth rates in this sector are low due to the difficulty of many households in obtaining a mortgage. House prices are a factor of population growth and economic stability. Calderdale's population has shown a steady growth since 2001 and the 2014 Household Projections suggests that the population will increase by 10.3% over the Local Plan period (revised to 8.7% in the 2016 based household projections).^{20 21}

²⁰ Turley Updated Review of Objectively assessed housing needs in Calderdale April 2018 Table 3.1

House prices in Calderdale have consistently been lower than either the national or regional average (around 60% of the average for England). This is partially a reflection of lower incomes (which bring problems of affordability) but also because the Borough has a large stock of small Victorian terraced homes which continue to provide comfortable homes in the twenty first century.

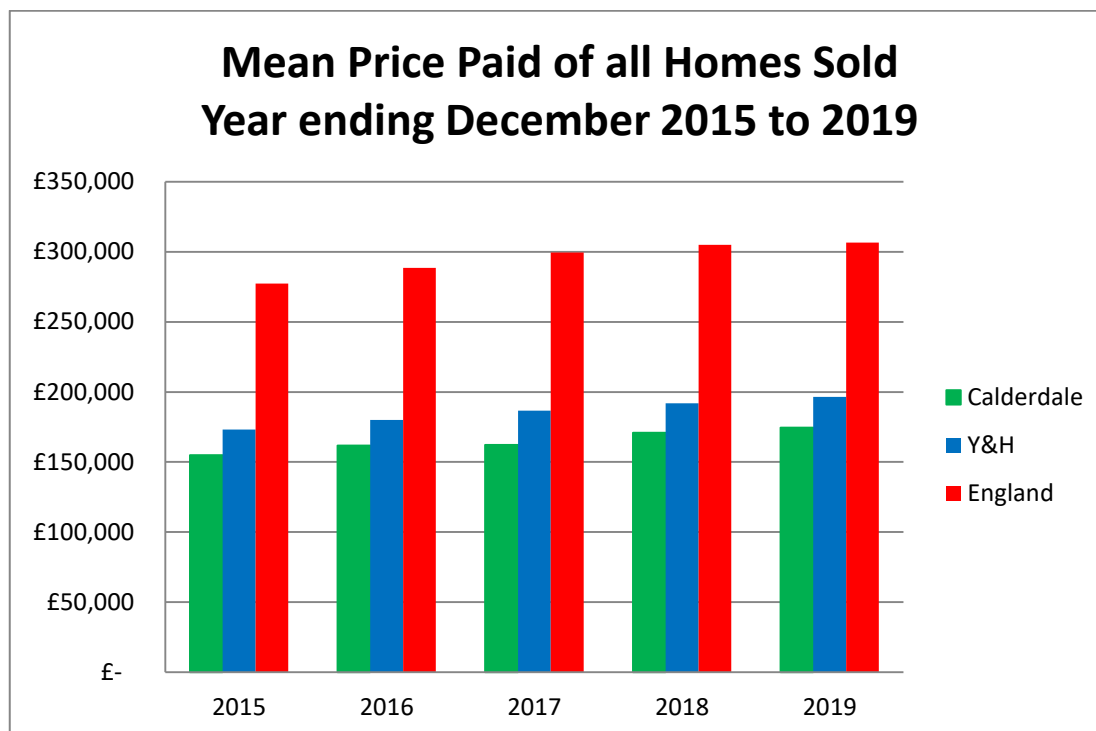


Figure 8 House Prices 2015-10198²²

Residential transaction volumes in Calderdale, Yorkshire & the Humber and England have yet to recover to the levels recorded before the onset of the recession in 2007. The level of activity has, however, increased over recent years, although recovery in Calderdale still lags behind England and the wider region.²³

The market varies between the different towns that make up the Borough. There is however one commonly agreed factor; that there is relatively little new build occurring in the District:

- The Valley Towns; (Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge). Agents report the key gap in the market is for larger housing to allow families to move out of the smaller terraced homes that predominate. Equally lacking are homes for older people. Hebden Bridge has a problem of high prices which make the market difficult for first time

²¹ ONS Household Projections for England released May 2016

²² ONS Mean House Prices for administrative geographies: HPSSA dataset 12

²³ Turleys Updated Review of Objectively Assessed Housing Need in Calderdale, Strategic Housing Market Assessment May 2018 Paragraph 6.11

buyers. Sowerby Bridge and Todmorden are cheaper although demand is likely to rise in both towns.

- Halifax; Agents cited a weak local economy and lack of incoming buyers as being a factor which keep prices low. However the economy also makes it difficult for first time buyers to save for a deposit.
- Elland and Brighouse; There is a shortage of larger houses for “first time movers” to buy. There is also a gap in move-on housing for older people. There is strong demand from people from outside Calderdale, particularly in Brighouse.²⁴

Outstanding planning permissions in the third quarter of 2019/20 were concentrated in wards in Halifax, and the Valley Towns.

Agents felt there was a need for larger family homes to allow home owners to “move up” together with housing suitable for the elderly which would also release under occupied family homes. Agents and other stakeholders also feel that the high proportion of terraced houses and mill conversions in some parts of the Borough was slowing the market. Prior to 2015/16, the market responded to this need with 90% plus of completions being of 4 or more bedrooms. However in 2015/6 and 2017/7 the size of completions has been more evenly spread.²⁵

Policy HS3 of the Publication Draft Local Plan requires the housing mix of developments of over ten dwellings to be determined by the latest SHMA. The 2018 SHMA suggests a slightly different mix of housing to that suggested as needed by the agents. This is because it is intended to accommodate the needs of additional households rather than all households:

Table Three Indicated Size of housing required 2012-2033				
Size	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Beds
% households requiring	17%	37%	33%	13%

Outstanding permission tends to be for small and medium sized homes (1 to 3 bedrooms) and for flats and terraced homes. Some of this may be planning permissions for social housing providers who are faced with a demand for smaller units because of the Spare Room Subsidy (the “Bedroom Tax”). Another source of smaller units may be “prior approvals” for the conversion of offices into small flats. However, it may be that the market for smaller homes is saturated and therefore planning permission

²⁴ Arc4 Specialist Housing Evidence Base of Calderdale MBC Chapters 5 Interviews with estate agents and stakeholders

²⁵ Arc4 Specialist Housing Evidence Base of Calderdale MBC Chart 4.7

are not being implemented. There are relatively few permissions for large family homes.

Low house prices and a low transaction rate suggests that the housing market in Calderdale is relatively weak, although there are honey pots such as Ripponden and Hebden Bridge where house prices are closer to the national average. There is also a need for larger accommodation to allow existing owner occupiers to trade up and for specialist housing for the elderly to release some under-occupied family housing. Paradoxically, there are also problems of affordability due mainly to low incomes and uncertain employment which are preventing first time buyers getting onto the housing market who then have to rely on the private rental market.

The relatively weak housing market is one reason why planning permissions are not being built out. There may also be a mismatch with the size of homes permitted, with a strong emphasis on smaller houses and flats which do not meet the needs of the market and which are competing with large numbers of existing terraced houses and flat conversions.

2.8 Is there a misalignment of supply and demand?

The relatively low market price and lack of properties coming onto the market suggest that supply and demand do not match. Another indicator is a high level of vacant property and under occupation (in the case of low demand) and overcrowding and homelessness (if demand is high). Although there are pockets in certain wards where overcrowding is a challenge, generally overcrowding is not a serious issue in Calderdale affecting just 7% of homes, the same as the regional average. Under occupation much more common (see figure 4). This reflects comments made by agents that a lack of housing suitable for elderly people is preventing them from downsizing and releasing larger properties for occupation by families.

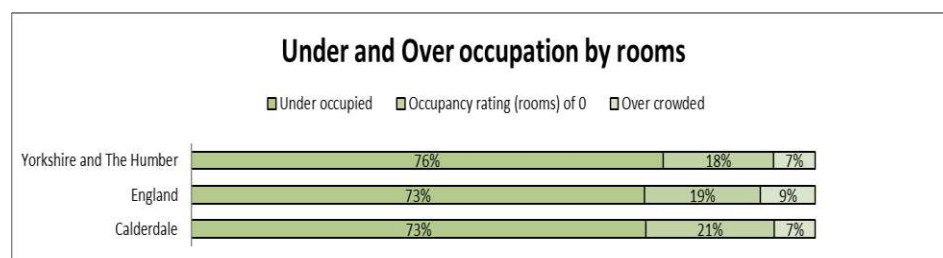


Figure 9 Under and Over Occupation by Rooms 2011²⁶

The proportion of vacant homes is declining but in December 2019 there were 2712 empty homes of which 56% had been empty for more than six

²⁶ Office for National Statistics Census Data 2011

months. The total number of empty homes represents about 2.8% of the total stock in the Borough

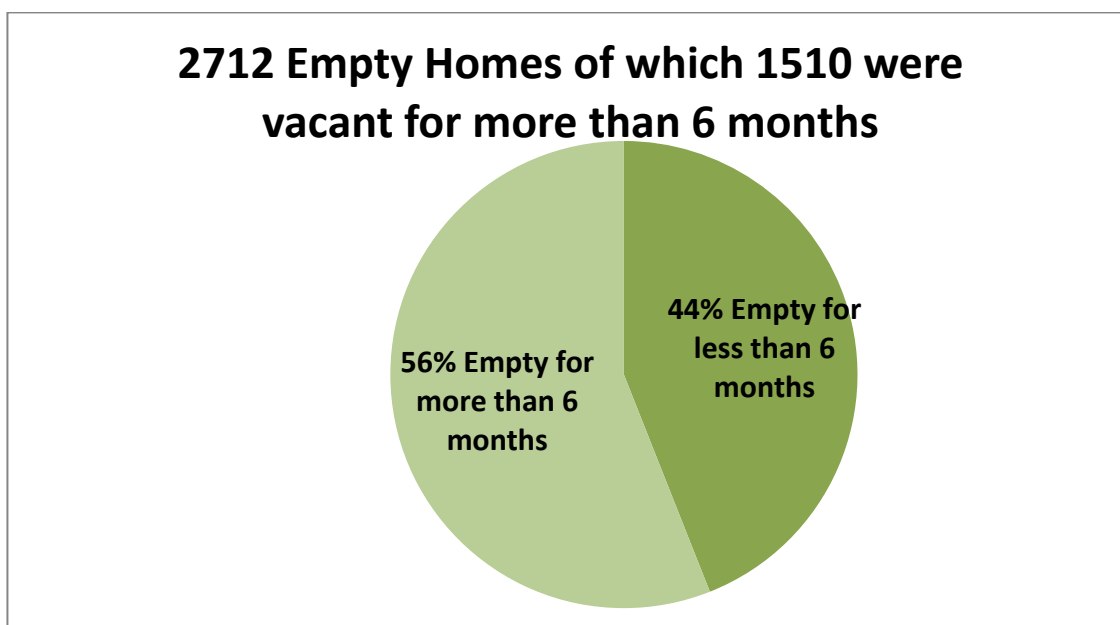


Figure 10 Empty Homes December 2019 ²⁷

Lack of pressure on housing resources means that the increase in concealed families (households sharing homes who might otherwise have a home of their own) has been less than the average for England.²⁸ Equally, the level of homelessness has been kept lower than the average for England.²⁹

The high level of under occupation and vacant homes suggest that there is a mismatch of supply and demand, with supply of certain types of property outstripping demand. This also reinforces the evidence provided by relatively low prices. High levels of under occupation may reinforce the views of agents that there is a lack of housing suitable for older people to move onto thereby releasing larger homes for family occupation.

2.9 Do land values deter development?

In theory, land values for residential development are determined by the difference between development costs (including profit for developers) and the return from the sale of homes (the development value). This is the “residual value”. Only when the development value is higher than development costs can a positive land value be produced and a landowner will release land for development. A modest positive residual value may not be sufficient to entice landowners to release their land for developers.

²⁷ MCHLG Live tables on dwelling stock Table 615 All vacant dwellings by local authority district, England, from 2004

²⁸ Office for National Statistics Census Data 2011

²⁹ MCHLG Statutory Homelessness Live Tables

Landowners may also have unrealistic expectation, expecting the value of their land to far exceed the residual value and therefore sites will not be released. It would be expected that the Borough's low average house price and higher development costs would result in lower land prices than in other areas

Residential land prices in the Yorkshire Humberside Region have historically been lower than the average values for England. Estimates from Land Value for Policy Appraisal published in 2019 puts residential land value in Calderdale at £1,140,000 per hectare compared to £2,686,981 per hectare for England (excluding London).³⁰ Even in comparison with other authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside, Calderdale has low land prices. The 2015 SHLA concluded that there was no evidence of a significant price premium for residential development land in Calderdale (although it did note a lack of recent data).³¹

The viability assessment for the Local Plan³² calculated the residual value of allocations in the Publication Draft Local Plan before the costs of policies and the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions had been added. Values varied significantly across the Borough and also varied according to whether a site was brownfield or greenfield. A minimum benchmark value was set as the price at which a reasonable landowner would release their land for development. This was £463,125 per hectare for residential land (compared to a £24,700 for agricultural land)³³. A benchmark value for brownfield was not calculated as value would be influenced by abnormal costs. In Table 4 below green shading indicates areas where residual returns are theoretically sufficient for landowners to be willing to release their land for development.

³⁰ MCHLG **Land value estimates for policy appraisal 2019** The valuations have been undertaken using a truncated residual valuation model. This assumes 100% private housing. The figures on this basis may be significantly higher than could reasonably be obtained for land in the actual market.

³¹ Turley Updated Review of Objectively Assessed Housing Need in Calderdale Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2018 Paragraph 6.36

³² GVA Local Plan and Preferred Sites for Allocation Viability Assessment January 2018

³³ GVA Local Plan and Preferred Sites for Allocation Viability Assessment January 2018 2.40

Table 4 Residual Valuations for sites allocated in the Publication Draft Local Plan 2018³⁴		
Area (based on Affordable Housing Zones)	Average Residual Value Greenfield (per ha) ³⁵	Average Residual Value Brownfield (per ha)
1. Hebden Bridge	£1,519,050	£913,900
2. Todmorden	£691,600	£259,350
3. Sowerby Bridge and Luddendenfoot	£531,050	£61,750
4. Rishworth	£1,259,700	£1,224,000
5. Elland	£617,500	£98,800
6. Shelf	£1,272,050	£666,900
7. Central Halifax	£679,250	£172,900
8. Brighouse	£802,750	£456,950
9. North Halifax	£209,950	£259,350 ³⁶

Generally, greenfield sites across the Borough were able to achieve a residual value in excess of the benchmark value (except in North Halifax). This suggests that prices are not too high for this type of site (although landowners may seek more than the benchmark). On the other hand, 44% of brownfield sites were not viable due to high development costs compared to development value.

2.10 Do infrastructure costs restrain delivery?

Infrastructure is the facilities and services essential to the well-being of communities; ranging from major transport systems to play areas. Matching development to infrastructure capacity is a key part of the planning process. Completions will be determined, in part, by the availability and capacity of infrastructure, particularly sustainable transport. Developers are expected to bear some of the cost of infrastructure in a number of ways:

- Connections to utilities and highway. Generally, utilities have an obligation to connect services to new development but will charge for this. Similarly, the Council as highway authority will require suitable connection to the highway network and may require roads within the development to be to an adoptable standard.
- Planning Agreements In order to make development acceptable, developers will be required to provide infrastructure for their site or

³⁴ GVA Local Plan and Preferred Sites for Allocation Viability Assessment January 2018

³⁵ GVA Local Plan and Preferred Sites for Allocation Viability Assessment January 2018 Chapter 5

³⁶ Value for the only brownfield site that was viable

contribute to new provision or increased capacity in the wider community. This will be secured by conditions on the planning permission or by the grant of permission subject to an agreement with the Council to make provision or a contribution for infrastructure (a S.106 agreement). Contributions may be linked to commencement on site, therefore requiring a payment before any return.

- Affordable Housing Additionally, developers are expected in most circumstances to contribute to affordable housing provision (as set out in policy HS6 of the Publication Draft Local Plan). This is generally through provision of affordable homes on site although alternatively they may make a contribution on another site. This is predicted to have an impact on the viability of housing sites, although the development of greenfield sites remain viable after taking into account the impact of policy HS6³⁷.

In order to fund improvements to infrastructure that are not directly linked to any one development the Council has submitted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule to the Secretary of State on 11th January 2019 for independent examination.³⁸ The CIL is a tariff system that local authorities charge on new developments in their area by setting a Charging Schedule. The CIL is levied on new buildings and extensions to buildings according to their floor area. In this way money is raised from developments to help the Council pay for infrastructure such as schools, public transport improvements, greenspace, highways, and other facilities to ensure sustainable growth. It can only be spent on infrastructure needs required as a result of new growth and will be a mandatory charge. The CIL will replace the Section 106 'tariff' approaches which have been used for this purpose. Section 106 agreements will continue to be used for affordable housing and anything required for the specific development site to make it acceptable in planning terms. It is anticipated that CIL will have a negative impact on the viability of residential sites, although the Draft Charging Schedule has been adjusted to mitigate this.

The requirement for a contribution to CIL and affordable housing plus other Local plan requirements has a significant impact on the viability of development, particularly on brownfield sites. The Council has responded by varying the charging schedule for different market areas and generally removing it for brownfield sites.³⁹

³⁷ GVA Local Plan and Preferred Sites for Allocation Viability Assessment January 2018 para 6.34

³⁸ CMBC Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule August 2018.

³⁹ Calderdale MBC Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule August 2018

2.11 Does local development industry have capacity to build sites?

Of the consents granted in 2015 to 2019, only three were for nationally based volume builders with 20% going to Registered Providers. The balance went to local/regional developers and landowners. The 2015 SHMA recorded that the low delivery rate could also be linked to the diminished role of smaller regional and local housebuilders. Many of these went out of business in the last recession and have not been replaced.⁴⁰

Smaller, more locally based, developers may be able to respond to the challenges of Calderdale's constrained sites and the local market better than larger companies. In doing so they may produce more individual designs of homes but are likely to lack the capital to deal with constrained sites typical of much of Calderdale.

⁴⁰ Turley Shaping the Housing Future of Calderdale Strategic Housing Market Assessment 5.44

3. Summary of root causes

- 3.1 The development industry is failing to deliver sufficient homes to meet objectively assessed need in Calderdale. The root cause of this is a combination of the nature of development sites and the market. The typical site being brought forward for development in Calderdale will be situated in or close to high quality countryside and have good links to local and regional amenities. However, it is likely to be located in a valley bottom close to a river that presents flood risks or impedes access. Alternatively, it may be on a hillside which provides design and construction challenges. It may have been previously occupied by an industrial use which has left a legacy of contamination, underground services or watercourses. Access into the site may be by narrow convoluted roads designed for the horse and cart era. Most sites will only have a capacity for a few houses and are not attractive to large developers who have the financial resources to overcome constraints. It says much for the vision of developers that they have been willing to take on difficult sites in Calderdale.
- 3.2 However, such sites require funding to deal with high upfront costs before development can take place. This means that such sites are more difficult to finance and slower to produce units on the ground. The market does not usually provide sufficient premium to make development an attractive proposition. If sites can be developed, overcoming the physical challenges can result in distinctive and attractive new homes which stand out from mass produced homes built elsewhere.
- 3.3 The Calderdale housing market is complex but overall prices and transaction rates are comparatively low. There are indications too of a mismatch between supply and demand. Low house prices are reflected in low land values which may deter land owners from releasing sites for development.
- 3.4 There is no particular evidence that the development management is restricting housing development through refusing planning permission. However, site constraints may require a larger than usual number of conditions to be attached to planning permission presenting developers with a more than usual number of hoops to jump through before work can start.

4. What is the Council doing about low housing deliver rates?

Key Facts

- The Council currently relies on private developers and Registered Providers to achieve its housing targets.
- The Publication Draft Local Plan sets challenging targets for housing delivery and allocates land for 11882 dwellings concentrated on large strategic sites .
- The Council is promoting the development of Council-owned land by private developers, registered providers and community builders.
- The Council has set up its own development company to get Council owned sites developed.
- Leeds City Region LEP and West Yorkshire Combined Authority are joining the Council in creating infrastructure to support growth.
- Calderdale is increasingly becoming a tourist area and a location for film and TV production which may make it more attractive to house builders.

4.1 Increase the Supply of Sites

The Calderdale Local Plan is currently at the Public Examination stage with adoption programmed for 2020. The Plan set a net minimum requirement for 14950 new homes over the Local Plan period or 997 dwellings per year. To achieve this it allocates land for 11,882 dwellings (in Housing, Mixed Use or Garden Suburb allocations)⁴¹. This may be revised upwards as a result of the Examination in Public into the plan. Housing allocations have been largely focussed on Halifax and Brighouse in large scale strategic allocations rather than pepper potting small sites throughout the Borough. The landscape in in the eastern part of the Borough is less physically constrained and unlike the Upper Valley is not part of the internationally important South Pennines SSSI. This scale of development is more attractive to larger developers and will provide a significantly increased rate of development. It also allows the provision of services and amenities.

⁴¹ Table 2 Housing Requirements and Sources of Supply Calderdale Local Plan Housing Requirement Update January 2020

4.2 Development of Council owned land

The Council has a modest portfolio of land and has conducted a number of reviews of its holdings to “comb out” sites suitable for development. By its nature much of the land is undevelopable; it is in operational use, provides valuable open space or sites are too small for development. Council owned sites also suffer from the same market and physical constraints as privately owned land. There are a number of initiatives to get Council owned land developed to provide housing:

- Calderdale Together Housing Investment Partnership (CTIP). This is a partnership between the Council and Together Housing Group (THG), the stock transfer organisation and largest Registered Provider in the Borough. The partners will develop Council and THG sites to provide a minimum of 500 new homes. To date, five sites have been developed providing 37 new homes with a further 13 sites and 460 homes already in the pipeline. One of the largest of these involves the demolition of vacant tower blocks in Halifax town centre and replacing it with affordable housing. £2.197m WYCA funding has been approved/agreed in principle to contribute towards demolition and remediation costs;



Figure 11 Beech Hill Halifax. Demolition of empty tower blocks and development of 100 homes will make a significant contribution to housing delivery.

- North Halifax Transformation Programme. This involves four Council owned sites. An overarching masterplan and implementation plan is being developed for these sites, three of which are previously developed. The intention is to market these sites to a private developer or registered provider to build housing to meet local needs (particularly for an aging population).
- The Council has determined that it needs to take a more proactive approach to meeting housing needs in the Borough. It has therefore established a Local Development Company to deliver high quality new homes for sale on Council owned land, as part of a viable business model. The homes will contribute to local aspirations for home

ownership (including first time movers) and should influence the pace and type of developments in the Borough. It is an independent company wholly owned by the Council.

- The Council is working with registered providers to develop affordable Extra Care homes on sites in Calderdale, together with affordable homes to rent
- The Council is working with Calder Valley Community Land Trust to develop two Council owned sites in the Upper Valley for affordable housing. One of these sites was completed in February 2020.
- The Council in partnership with the existing Calder Valley Community Land Trust will offer support and advice to help community-led groups develop homes. This is being funded through the Community Housing Fund.

One of the major barriers to developing Council owned land is the need to get approval from the relevant Government Department before putting the land on the market.

4.3 Affordable Housing Delivery

As of August 2019, over 5158 households were registered on KeyChoice- the Council's housing waiting list.⁴² This reflects the continued need for affordable homes which cannot be met by the market. Calderdale has struggled to meet its affordable housing need following the economic downturn.

Increased efforts from the Council, closer partnership working with over ten Registered Providers and more flexible and strategic grant programmes from Homes England have had a positive effect on the forecast number of new affordable homes coming forward in Calderdale over the next few years with 68 affordable homes being provided in 2018/19.

The Council will continue to support Registered Providers through the Homes England programmes and our Affordable Housing Supporting Guidance to secure new affordable homes on new private developments.⁴³ The Supporting Guidance sets out processes for off and on site provision of affordable housing and stipulates average transfer values, size requirements. Overall, it delivers a commitment to providing much needed affordable housing across the borough.

⁴² Keychoice 9th August 2019

⁴³ Calderdale MBC Affordable-Housing-Supporting-Guidance

4.4 Ensure infrastructure Provision to Support Growth

One of the functions of the planning system is to balance the needs for development and the capacity of infrastructure. Promoting development on allocated sites brings a responsibility on the Council to support the enhancement of infrastructure.

The Calderdale benefits from being part of the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority which have access to Central Government Funding to support the growth agenda. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁴⁴ analyses the capacity of all forms of infrastructure to support development set out in the Local Plan.

- Investment in transport infrastructure is based on the Council's Transport Strategy 2016-2031 which aims to support growth, overcome blockages in the transport network and improve the quality of life by ensuring investment in sustainable transport options. Policy IM1 of the Local Plan sets out a programme of strategic transport intervention. The Council is working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to improve transport to cope with higher rates of housebuilding. This includes increasing the capacity of strategic roads in the Borough, improvements to Halifax Station and a new station at Elland.⁴⁵ The Council is also pressing for the electrification of the Calder Valley line.
- Generally, gas, water and electricity suppliers have sufficient capacity to meet the anticipated level of growth over the first five years of the Local Plan period. The Council is endeavouring to obtain faster broadband across the whole Borough. The Council is also supporting sustainable energy schemes such as Combined Heat and Power.
- By the end of the Local Plan period there will be some capacity gaps in the waste management system. The Local Plan identifies suitable sites for waste treatment plants.
- An extensive programme of flood defence work is already underway. This will impact on planning decisions by protecting potential developments sites. Further flood protection may be required as the impact of climate change becomes apparent.
- Calderdale is a statutory education authority with a duty to ensure there are sufficient school places. Additional capacity will be required during the plan period including new schools in the South East Calderdale Garden suburbs. Central Government funding may be available to assist this. Implementation of the Local Plan will require at least two further GP surgeries (or their equivalent).

⁴⁴ Draft Calderdale Infrastructure Delivery Plan: 2018

⁴⁵ Local Plan Evidence Library

- Calderdale Council does not have sufficient funding to pay for the creation of new areas of open space so developers will be expected to pay contributions to meet open space needs

Funding restrictions present real challenges in matching infrastructure to growth. The Government have also promised to extend the Housing Infrastructure Fund administered by Homes England.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, developers are likely to have to make a contribution through CIL charges and other means. However, the public sector can contribute funding from a variety of sources:

- Prudential Borrowing against Council assets,
- New Homes Bonus,
- Business Rate Retention,
- City Deal funding from the Leeds City Region,
- Regional Growth Fund grants or loans to businesses,
- Receipts from sale of Council assets,
- One Public Estate funding to maximise value from Council assets.

4.5 Promotion of Small Sites

As has been noted above there is an abundance of small development sites with permission but a lack of developer and building firms with the capacity to deal with these. In an attempt to encourage local building companies, the Council has obtained outline planning permission for four of its smaller sites and has marketed them with particular emphasis on getting smaller developers interested.



Figure 12 Brewery Street Todmorden. One of the sites in the pilot project to make small Council owned sites attractive to SME builders and developers by obtaining outline planning permission for housing prior to selling the site

⁴⁶ MHCLG March 2020 Planning for the Future para 12

4.6 Master planning of sites

Masterplanning can bring landowners, stakeholders and the public together to identify issues and develop a shared vision for major development sites. Masterplans can provide the basis for planning applications and give certainty over housing numbers and infrastructure provision.

The Council is already working with Kirklees Council to masterplan the three major garden suburb development sites in South east Calderdale and North Kirklees. The Council is also masterplanning smaller sites to encourage their development. Masterplans may also be used as part of the development of other major sites particularly where sites are in multiple ownerships.

4.7 Increased densities

Given that there is a lack of easily developable sites in the Borough it is necessary to make the best use of all housing land. At the time of the first UDP, a density of 25 dph (dwellings per hectare) was deemed appropriate by the planning inspector for forward planning purposes. Average densities over the past six years were 33.6dph for new build schemes (excluding sites where over 100dph was achieved).⁴⁷ The Publication Draft Local Plan Policy HS2 sets a minimum density of 30 dph for non-allocated sites but expects higher densities for sites in town centres, and close to main public transport routes, bus and rail stations. It also provides an indicative density for allocated sites aimed at obtaining best use of the site.

4.8 New Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy is currently being drafted. It will identify the Council's wider housing priorities, including homelessness and existing homes, with a focus on housing delivery and sustainability. The strategy will reflect the Local Plan and Calderdale Vision 2024 priorities.

4.9 Work closely with government bodies

The Council works closely with Homes England and West Yorkshire Combined Authority to assemble funding packages to support challenging sites. Recent examples include the Beech Hill estate regeneration scheme and Halifax Living programme through Growth Fund and the Accelerated Construction programme. The Council will continue to do this. However, government focus on volume delivery presents a challenge as this is more suited to areas with higher land and property values.

⁴⁷ CMBC Housing Technical Paper 2018 Paragraph 7.3

4.10 Monitor housing delivery

A specific group has been established with senior representation from the Housing and Planning teams within the Council to monitor the implementation and delivery of residential sites with planning permission. A more proactive approach as new sites receive permission will ease this time intensive task.

4.11 Place making and Promotion of Calderdale



*Figure 1 Will "Gentleman Jack" get more homes built in Calderdale?
Photo from Lookout Point*

Calderdale is increasingly recognised as a tourist and visitor destination. It is estimated that 240,000 trips were made to the Borough by domestic visitors in 2017 to venues such as The Piece Hall in Halifax which has been transformed into a retail and cultural venue capable of accommodating audiences of up to 7000. Outside Halifax, the small towns host cultural events which bring visitors from within the Borough and outside.

The area is gaining a reputation as a location for films and TV most recently with the broadcasting of "Gentleman Jack" based on the life of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall and new series of "Ackley Bridge" and "Last Tango in Halifax". The Council has recently approved a visitor economy strategy which aims to build on the area's strengths and develop further the visitor economy. Promotion of Calderdale through tourism can also benefit the housing market. If visitors like what they see and associate Calderdale with pleasant cultural experiences, they are more likely to consider it when they are seeking a new home, thus boosting the local housing market. The Leeds City Region is also taking a central role in promoting the region as a place to invest, develop and live. This is evident

in the Leeds City Region Housing Vision document.⁴⁸ The trick will be to direct some of this demand to areas of Calderdale which do not normally attract visitors.

5. What else could we do?

Possible action

- Collect more evidence about why development is not happening.
- Support the development of small sites.
- Promotion of self-build and custom build housing.
- Additional funding and staff to unlock stalled sites.
- Promotion of sites with planning permission for housing.
- Use of legal powers to unblock sites with planning permissions.

5.1 Collection of further evidence

MCHLG suggested possible actions to deliver more housing in its Guidance on Housing Supply and Delivery⁴⁹. There are also a growing number of local authorities with initiatives to support the development of sites with planning permission for housing. Calderdale may be able to use some of these examples to develop its own programs.

Calderdale is likely to have to update its HDTAP annually. There is scope for further investigation into why planning permission is not being implemented in the Borough, particularly into the nature of the development industry and comparison with the situation in adjoining authorities. This could include a survey of landowners/developers who have sites with planning permissions for major housing developments but who have not yet implemented those permissions. Additionally, placing the HDTAP on the Council's website will provide an opportunity for the public to make their views known. The results can be incorporated into future action plans.

5.2 Increase the number of allocated sites through a new call for sites and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Adoption of the Local Plan will vastly increase the number of allocated sites providing certainty for developers and the community alike. Regular reviews

⁴⁸ Leeds City Region Housing Vision

⁴⁹ MCHLG Housing Supply and Delivery Guidance July 2019 Paragraphs 047 to 054

of both the Plan and the housing land supply may require further sites to be made available for development and possible additional sites to be identified through a new call for sites and a SHLAA. However, the work carried out for the Publication Draft Local Plan has identified sufficient potential sites to meet the current Objectively Assessed Housing need together a buffer for the plan period and this is not a course of action proposed at present.

5.3 Further promotion of small sites

Given the need to make the best use of small sites, there is scope to develop a better relationship with developers and builders to encourage them to take them on. The pilot small sites project has already been mentioned and this could be developed further if it is a success. Other initiatives might include:

- Training for small developers in both business and the planning system.
- A support officer for small site developers to work with builders to get sites developed.
- Use the Local Development Company to develop small Council owned site.

5.4 Promotion of self-build and custom build on small sites

There may also be scope to develop the self-build/custom build market. As at October 2018 there were 94 entries on the Self Build Register of individuals interested in building their own home in the Borough. The preferred location of sites was spread throughout the Borough and generally self-builders were willing to accept a plot on a shared site (or at least consider this). The main house type preferred was for a detached dwelling which would require a larger plot than average but might in a small way meet the demand for “move on” housing.

The Local Plan policy HS5 requires all sites of over 100 plots to set aside 5% of capacity for self-build and custom build. This policy is subject to review at the Examination in Public but if realised in full could create 281 serviced plots for self/custom builders. The majority of these would, however be in the garden suburbs in Brighouse.

Elsewhere local authorities have led on support for Self-build/custom build:

- At Penkull in Stoke on Trent the Council used their own land to provide service plots for self-build.
- At Newton Close Bicester the Council had weathertight shells build for self-finish by occupiers in return for a discount.

The changes proposed in the White Paper “Planning for the Future” are aimed in creating a planning system which is easy for self builders and small developers to navigate in f⁵⁰.

The Council might also work with housing associations and community housing trusts to provide sites:

- In Bristol conversion of a building by a community land trust included the provision of six homes for finishing off by occupiers.
- In Bearly in the Highlands, a community land trust provided serviced plots.⁵¹

However, experience with the project to support the development of Council-owned small sites shows that this project can be resource intensive.

5.5 A dedicated officer to deal with stalled sites

At present Calderdale has no osingle person researching and achieving development on stalled sites. Wakefield Council has a dedicated officer to progress sites that have stalled by helping find new developers and funding. They also have a more general program, “Wakefield Builds” to support the development of housing in the borough particularly by SME Developers.

5.6 Promotion of sites with planning permission for housing development

One of the roles of a dedicated officer could be to promote sites with planning permission to local builders, self-builders, developers and registered providers, to supplement commercial estate agents. This is already done on an ad hoc basis but could be expanded with a dedicated staff member.

5.7 Additional Funding to unlock stalled and strategic sites

The Welsh Government, East Sussex and Greater Birmingham and Sollihull Local Enterprise Partnership have schemes which offer funding to support the development of stalled sites. Homes England operates the Home Building Fund which may be applied to stalled sites where development has been prevented by lack of funding for site preparation and other works. This is in the form of a low interest loan. The Council could work with Homes England can help fund the release of some sites that have planning permission for housing but which is unable to proceed. The Council will need to work closely with regional leads and northern bodies

⁵⁰ MHCLG Planning for the Future August 2020 para.1.25

⁵¹ Examples from www.righttobuildtoolkit.org.uk/#

such as the Northern Housing Consortium to emphasize the type of funding local authorities in the north require to deliver large strategic and/or challenging sites compared to the different challenges the south face.

5.8 Use of Legal powers to unlock suitable housing sites

Powers to enforce completion of a stalled site are limited but the following might be used:

- Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act: This is used to get owners to repair eyesores. Calderdale Council has had some success in using it for vacant buildings. However, Sheffield City Council has developed an award winning program using Section 215 notices to get owners to tidy or demolish derelict buildings with planning permission for housing. Often the threat of enforcement was enough to goad owners into taking action, often resulting in development. The program was funded by the New Homes Bonus and charges attached to sites where the Council took direct action
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 94; Completion Notices: The purpose of completion notices is to encourage developers/owners to complete developments which have been interrupted or left unfinished. The Notices states that the planning permission will cease within a minimum of 12 months. The use of this power by local planning authorities is discretionary and in some circumstances may be used in conjunction with other powers, for example, repairs notices in respect of listed buildings or dangerous structures notices. Local planning authorities need to consider the condition of the site and its impact on the surrounding. However, the Notice only revokes the permission; it does not compel development or sale.
- Compulsory Purchase through Section 226(1) Town and Country Planning Act 1990: This can be used where there is a compelling case in the public interest;

“the authority think that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, re-development or improvement on or in relation to the land” or “required for a purpose which it is necessary to achieve in the interests of the proper planning of an area in which the land is situated”

Section 226(1A) can be used if the authority think purchase is likely to improve economic, social or environmental well-being of area. Compulsory Purchase might be useful in situations where a landowner clearly has no intention to develop a site and there is no good reason why it should not be developed. However, it is a

resource hungry option and one that puts the Council at risk of lengthy legal action. There is also a risk that the Council acquire a site which it then finds that it cannot develop. Therefore, the Council would also need to be confident of its ability to get the site developed once it passed into their hands.

The White Paper Planning for the Future commits the Government to consult on options for “improving the data held on contractual arrangements used to control land”⁵².

5.9 Prioritise housing in the planning process

Stakeholders who contributed to the Specialist Housing Evidence Base⁵³ saw planning in Calderdale as an obstacle to getting sites developed. Improvements to planning practice may not get sites which already have permission developed but may help provide certainty to developers seeking permission for new sites. There is potential for the Council to ease the process especially for smaller developers and strategic sites.

- Prioritise strategic housing applications in the planning process.
- Planning Performance Agreements for key housing sites
- Pre-application discussion for key housing sites (although this is already taking place with regard to some strategic sites).
- Corporate sign-up to the importance of housing delivery.
- Training sessions for Planning Committee and consultees on the priority of housing delivery in the Borough.
- Better coordination and a cohesive response from both internal and external planning consultees

The nature of sites available in Calderdale and the increased need to deal with the effects of climate change and other environmental concerns probably mean that the burden of planning conditions on developers is unlikely to be reduced. Pre application discussions and agreements could reduce some of this need and avoid unpleasant surprises.

⁵² MHCLG Planning for the Future August 2020 paragraph 1.20

⁵³ Arc4 Specialist Housing Evidence Base of Calderdale MBC

Conclusion

The Housing Delivery Test has been applied when house completions are lower in Calderdale than they have been for two decades and before strategic sites are released through the adoption of the Local Plan. A number of reasons for the low delivery rate have been suggested:

- A slow housing market in parts of the Borough
- A mismatch between supply and demand which means there is an over-supply of some types of homes
- The difficult nature of many sites in Calderdale which makes them expensive to develop and unattractive to developer
- Lack of capacity in the local development industry

The Council recognises the need to meet its housing needs and has started a number of initiatives to address the problem. There is scope for further action both through the operation of the planning system and through other projects. These will however require more resources to be directed at the problem.

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