

The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP), September 2022 and the Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery.

Planning Policy Committee – 22 September 2022

Report of: Interim Chief Planning Officer

Purpose: For decision

Publication status: Unrestricted

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

- The Council has prepared a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP), September 2022, (see Appendix 1) in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The HDTAP includes an Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery setting out a consistent Planning Policy approach to the determination of planning applications for new housing development in the short-term.
- The Interim Policy Statement being part of the HDTAP will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for new housing development in the short-term.

This report supports the Council's priority of:

Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need but prudently managing financial resources.

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Recommendations to Committee:

It is recommended that:

- A. The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP), September 2022, is agreed for publication;
- B. The Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery is adopted for development management purposes; and
- C. Future Housing Delivery Test Action Plans (HDTAPs) be presented to the Planning Policy Committee for approval and adoption as a material planning consideration in the determination of applications for housing development, prior to publication, to ensure elected members have the final decision on behalf of the Council.

Reason for recommendations:

All local planning authorities that deliver less than 95% of their central government prescribed housing requirement over the previous three years are required to produce an HDTAP in line with Paragraph 76 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021).

Tandridge is a highly constrained district in planning policy terms with 94% coverage by Green Belt, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty at the north and south of the district and access via strategic routes (that is M25 junction 6 and A22) that have existing capacity problems.

The Council has no scope to meet housing requirements defined by central government without encroaching into highly constrained areas in planning policy terms and without creating severe difficulties in terms of infrastructure capacity.

The HDTAP and its Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery will be material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications for housing development and this Committee should properly make the decision as to its acceptability.

Introduction and background

1. In response to the publication 'Fixing our broken housing market', the Government sought to demonstrate its commitment to improve the delivery of housing through various programmes. One of these, 'The Housing Delivery Test' (HDT) is an initiative that the Government introduced in November 2018 to measure current delivery and encourage an increase in housing development nationally. It is included as part of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021). The HDT is a percentage measurement of the net number of homes delivered against the number of homes required by the central government within the area of the relevant plan-making authorities.

2. The results of the "Test" are published on an annual basis. The consequences of not meeting the HDT are set out in the revised NPPF. All local planning authorities that deliver less than 95% of their housing requirement over the previous three years, are required to produce an Action Plan in line with Paragraph 76 of the NPPF, 2021. As the adopted housing requirement figure for the Council is more than five years old, the 'minimum local housing need figure' (defined by central government in the HDT) is applied.
3. On 14 January 2022 the results of the 2021 HDT became available. The Council was identified as having delivered 38% of the required level and, in accordance with the process, must produce an Action Plan and add a 20% buffer onto the Five-Year Housing Land Supply.

Purpose, objectives and status of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP)

4. The purpose of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP), 2022 is to present an update to the previous HDTAP, 2021 (not approved by this Committee). Most importantly, the HDTAP has to identify what additional measures the Council will take to improve housing delivery (defined by central government). The HDTAP, 2022 analyses the District's housing delivery to date and the resultant Action Plan will act as a material planning consideration in the assessment of planning applications. The scope of the Action Plan includes housing delivery analysis; identification of root causes of current delivery position; responses and action plan; and project management and monitoring arrangements.
5. The HDTAP 2022 focus is to update the Council's approach to housing supply and delivery with full cognisance to the planning constraints, environmental and in terms of infrastructure, Districtwide.

Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery

6. An Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery has been drafted for Planning Policy Committee consideration to provide a consistent approach for Development Management for the determination of housing applications in the District going forward.
7. The Interim Policy Statement sets out from the Council's perspective the criteria that will be applied to a planning assessment of applications for residential development.
8. The primacy of the protection of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the High Weald AONB, candidate areas for AONB status and the Green Belt, together with recognising the limitations of infrastructure constraints, will be the key planning consideration in determining planning applications under this interim policy.

9. The Interim Policy Statement is Appendix 1 to the HDTAP 2022.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. A degree of housing growth based on past trends is built into our annual Council Tax Base projections (i.e. the number of properties that pay council tax) and has a financial impact through increased council tax income and increased demand for Council and other local services and infrastructure.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

As set out in this report, The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DfLUHC) in 2018 to ensure that local authorities are held accountable for their role in ensuring new homes are delivered. The new policy is designed to prove a consistent approach to enabling development to take place within District.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The preparation of an action plan where housing delivery has fallen below 95% over the previous three years is a requirement of the NPPF (paragraph 76). The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and must also be taken into account in the preparation of Local Plans. The Housing Delivery Action Plan would similarly form a material consideration in decision making

The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2021. The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development is set out in the NPPF, 2021

Equality

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal, the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposal would have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

Climate change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Housing Delivery Test Action Plan, September 2022, including the Interim Policy Statement for Housing Delivery.

Background papers

None