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## SERVICE UPDATE

<b><u>Name of Cluster:</u></b>	Strategic Place Planning
<b><u>Date:</u></b>	5 March 2025
<b><u>Title of Update:</u></b>	Publication of Housing Land Audit 2024
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### **UPDATE:**

#### **Publication of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit 2024**

The latest Housing Land Audit has been published. Copies of the report and site specific details are attached and the documents can also be viewed online at [Housing Land Audit | Aberdeen City Council](#).

The Housing Land Audit is a joint report prepared by officers of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. It is published annually and provides an overview of the housing land supply in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as at 1 April each year. It monitors activity in the supply and development of land for housing since the previous version of the audit was published in 2023.

The audit is used to monitor proposals in the Local Development Plans (LDPs) of both Councils, which allocate a range of sites for housing land in line with the requirements of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). It is used to determine if there is sufficient land available for housing development, to monitor delivery of housing land, and to inform the planning of future infrastructure such as roads, schools and drainage. It also provides an indication of trends and changes in patterns of development.

National Planning Framework 4, published in February 2023, introduced significant changes to Scotland's development planning system. These changes included establishing a minimum all-tenure housing land requirement (MATHLR) for all local authorities and removing the need to maintain a five-year effective housing land supply. Local Development Plans are now expected to identify a Local Housing Land Requirement (LHLR) to ensure sufficient land is available to meet the Housing Supply Target. The Housing Land Audit will then monitor the delivery of this housing land.

The Scottish Government published new guidance "Housing Land Audit Guidance" on 20 January 2025. This replaces the Housing Land Audit section

of Planning Advice Note 2/2010 and reflects the new legislative and policy context within the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, and National Planning Framework 4. Key changes made to the audit this year include a change of the base date from 1 January to 1 April, moving to financial rather than calendar years, the change of minimum site size to four units rather than five and changes in terminology and definitions for the land supply categories. These changes have been made to align with the new guidance.

As the Housing Land Audit 2024 was nearing completion when the new guidance was published, it has been prepared in a hybrid approach incorporating elements of the new guidance where practicable. The Housing Land Audit 2025 will be prepared and published in line with the new guidance and methodology.

The preparation of the audit continues to be informed by regular monitoring of housing completions, planning consents and local development plans. In addition, developers, agents and landowners are contacted and asked to confirm the details held on housing sites and to provide anticipated future build rates.

From the City's perspective, one of the main updates since the previous audit is that the constrained housing land supply has seen a 37% decrease from 5,475 in 2023 to 3,460 in 2024 – this is mainly due to three Aberdeen City Council owned housing sites moving into the deliverable supply - at Greenferns OP28, Greenferns OP33 and Greenferns Landward OP22.

The greenfield/brownfield split of housing development sites remains the same as in 2023, with 24% brownfield and 76% greenfield. 80% of the total housing land supply is classed as deliverable and the audit demonstrates that both Councils exceed the NPF4 Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) for a 10 year period.

With respect to longer term trends, the audit notes that generally completions had been on an upward trend between 2014 and 2018. 2021 saw a peak as a result of the number of affordable housing and flatted developments seeing higher completions rates. Over the 10 year period the average number of completions per year was 999.

An online discussion, chaired independently, took place on 13 November 2024. Attendees included Homes for Scotland, local and national housebuilders, and representatives from Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), NatureScot, Scottish Water and the two councils. Four Aberdeen City Council sites were disputed by Homes for Scotland and this has been noted in the report at Appendix 7.

The Audit findings will form an important part of the evidence base for the next Aberdeen Local Development Plan and will assist in the formulation of policies and site allocations for housing land.