

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Cluster:</u>	Strategic Place Planning
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<u>Author:</u>	Andy Brownrigg– Team Leader
<u>Chief Officer:</u>	David Dunne – Chief Officer Strategic Place Planning
<u>Author email address:</u>	ABROWNRIGG@aberdeencity.gov.uk

UPDATE:

Publication of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit 2025

The latest Housing Land Audit has been published. Copies of the report and site specific details can 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 of 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.

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 the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The audit is also used to determine if there is sufficient land available for housing development, to monitor the 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.

This year's audit has been prepared in the context of the Scottish Government publishing its Housing Emergency Action Plan in September 2025 which identifies immediate and medium-to-long term measures to deliver affordable, quality homes of all tenure, and to unlock land and investment to meet the needs of communities now and in the future. Critically, the Action Plan requires implementation of National Planning Framework 4 where relevant policy and material considerations, including the existence of a national and/or local housing emergency, inform appropriately balanced planning decisions.

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. The Housing Land Audit 2025 has been prepared and published in line with the new guidance and methodology. Changes made to the audit this year include a revised site template which offers new columns capturing additional information for analysis.

Some insights from the City’s section of the audit show that 85% of the housing land supply is classed as deliverable. The greenfield/brownfield split of housing development sites remains similar to 2023 and 2024, with 26% brownfield and 74% greenfield. 9 new sites entered the main audit and 33 new sites entered the small sites section, totalling 132 windfall units. 12 sites were completed and removed from the audit from a mixture of windfall and allocated sites. Of the 1015 units completed, on sites of 4+ units, 459 were affordable completions, equating to 45% of all completions in 2024/2025. Finally, the audit demonstrates a continuity of completions arising from allocated sites, as opposed to windfall sites, at a rate of 89% to 11% in 2024/2025.

The audit indicates that we can demonstrate a 9.8 year housing land supply, which falls slightly below the NPF4 Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) over a 10 year period. It is worth highlighting, however, that the audit programming shows that completions fall below the MATHLR target of 700 units per annum only from 2030/2031 and, by then, a new Local Development Plan will have been adopted. It is also not unexpected to see a housing land supply decreasing over the lifetime of a Local Development Plan, as this indicates effective delivery. Officers are confident that, subject to Member approval, the next Local Development Plan will be able to identify any additional housing land allocations required to ensure MATHLR and Housing Supply Targets are met.

There are other ways that the housing land supply can be increased between audits. The Council will also, for example, continue to work with stakeholders to help remove barriers to constrained sites and bring these forward to augment the deliverable supply. It is also highly likely that further windfall sites will come forward.

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.

A well-attended online discussion, chaired independently, took place on 9 September 2025 to discuss comments received on a draft of the audit. Attendees included representatives from Homes for Scotland and Scottish Water, local and national housebuilders, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and the Cairngorms National Park Authority. Notably, the engagement process undertaken resulted in no disputed sites in either the Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire parts of the Housing Land Audit.

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.