

# **Five-year housing land supply statement**

For period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030

**Swindon Borough Council**

## 1. What is the purpose of this statement?

- 1.1. This statement sets out the Council's assessment of the housing land supply position for Swindon Borough. The purpose of this statement is to establish the extent to which the Council will fulfil the requirement to identify and maintain a five-year land supply for housing and the extent to which this supply meets Swindon's local housing need, as stipulated by Paragraph 78 of the NPPF (2024). The five-year period examined in this statement is from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030.
- 1.2. This statement concludes that Swindon Borough has a housing land supply position of **4.90 years** for the five-year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030.

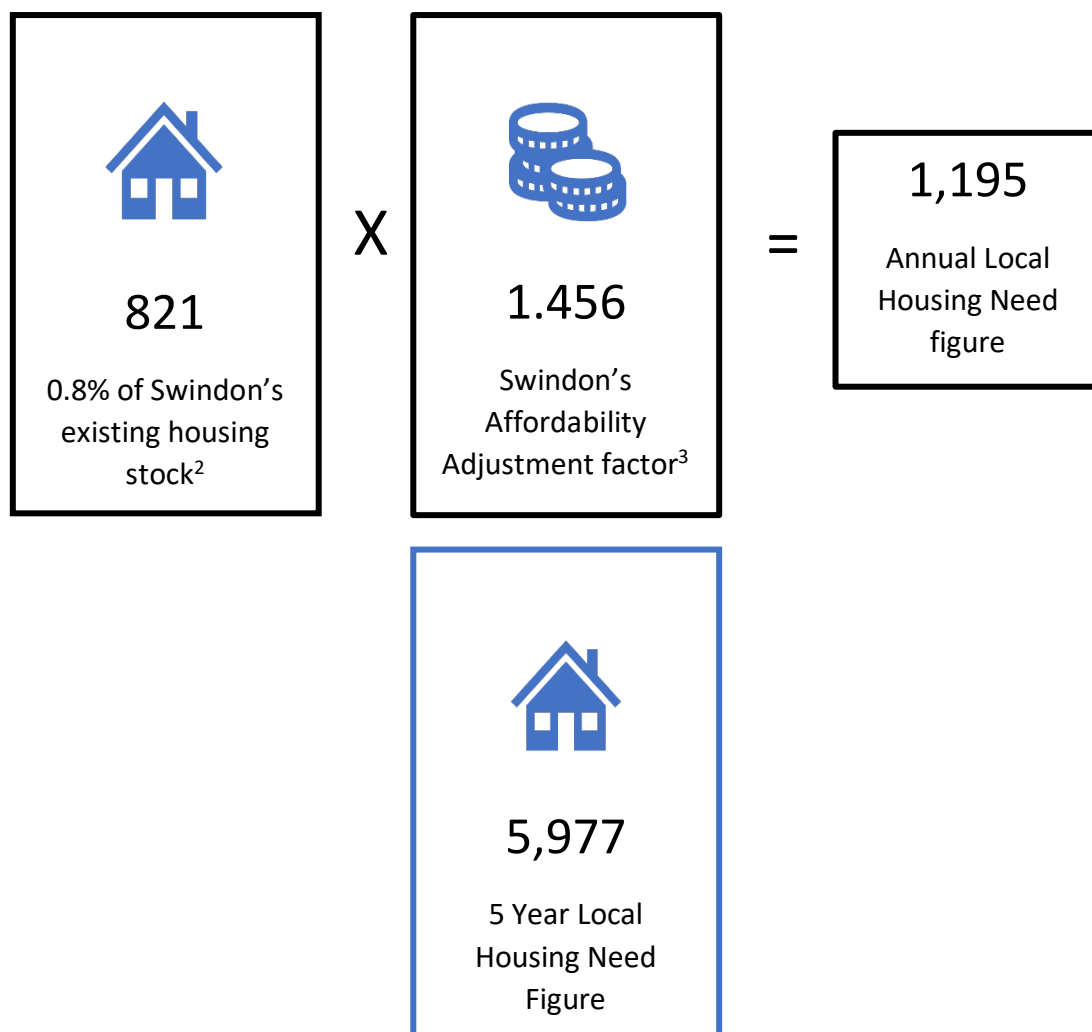
## 2. How much housing does Swindon need to plan for?

### Swindon's Housing Requirement

- 2.1. The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 was adopted on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015. As part of the Local Plan's strategic planning policies for the Borough, Policy SD2: The Sustainable Development Strategy establishes a housing requirement for the Borough. It set an ambitious requirement of delivering 22,000 new homes over the plan period from 2011 to 2026. The requirement is stepped with the expectation that greater numbers of housing would be brought forward towards the latter end of the plan period.
- 2.2. When a Local Plan has been adopted in the last five years, a local authority's land supply should be measured against the Plan's housing requirement. However, when strategic policies are more than five years old, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024, Para 78) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) makes clear that housing land supply should instead be measured against the local housing need figure. As Swindon's Local Plan is more than five years old, Swindon's housing land supply will thus be measured against Swindon's local housing need figure.

## Swindon's Local Housing Need Figure

2.3. The 'standard method' has been used to determine Swindon's Local Housing Need figure.<sup>1</sup> The 'standard method' calculation is illustrated below in Figure 1 and sets out an annual housing need of 1,195 dwellings (equalling 5,977 dwellings over the five-year period).



**Figure 1: Swindon Borough's Local Housing Need standard method calculation**

<sup>1</sup> MHCLG Guidance, 'Housing and economic needs assessment', Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 2a-004-20241212 (Revised 12-Dec-24)

<sup>2</sup> MHCLG Dataset, Table 125: Dwelling stock estimates by local authority district, England, 2001 – 2024 (Revised 22-May-25) as set out by 'Step 1' of the 'standard method'.

<sup>3</sup> ONS Dataset, Table 5c: Ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2024 (Revised 24-Mar-25) as set out by 'Step 2' of the 'standard method'.

### **3. Housing delivery**

3.1. The housing delivery performance of each plan-making authority is measured by the Central Government through the Housing Delivery Test. The Housing Delivery Test provides a measure of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required for each local authority over a rolling three-year period.

3.2. The most recent Housing Delivery Test results (published December 2024), covering the three-year period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, shows that the amount of housing delivered within the Borough was at 97% of the amount required. A Housing Delivery Test with a base year of 2024 will not be published until December 2025. As the PPG titled 'Housing supply and delivery' advises, the last published Housing Delivery Test results should be used to establish an appropriate buffer for calculating the total five-year housing land supply requirement (Para 13 Reference ID: 68-023-20241212 (Revised 12-Dec-24)). The Council acknowledges that the housing requirement fell short during this period. However, the 2023 measurement is above the 85% threshold and therefore is not considered 'significant under delivery' as any HDT result below 85% is defined as by the NPPF (2024, Footnote 40).

#### **Past housing delivery shortfalls**

3.3. In this statement, there has been no allowance made for any past shortfalls in housing delivery prior to the base date of the five-year period (before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025). The 'standard method' has been used to assess Swindon's local housing need. As the PPG titled 'Housing supply and delivery' notes, the standard method already considers past shortfalls in the affordability ratio, and when this is used for calculating the local housing need figure, local planning authorities are not required to address shortfalls separately in this calculation (Para 22 Reference ID: 68-031-20190722 (Revised: 22-Jul-19)).

## 4. Housing buffer

4.1. Paragraph 78 of the NPPF (2024) states:

*“The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:*

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*
- b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or*
- c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.”*

4.2. Footnote 40 of the NPPF (2024) outlines that ‘significant under delivery’ is established through the Housing Delivery Test and corresponds to a Housing Delivery Test result below 85%.

4.3. In the Council’s interpretation of NPPF (2024) Paragraph 78, it is the view that a 20% buffer is not applicable as the Borough has not experienced a significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years (defined as less than 85% of need over the three-year period). A 20% buffer also does not apply, as this statement has been written before 1 July 2026 and Swindon has not adopted a housing requirement in the last five years. A 5% buffer has therefore been applied.

## 5. Swindon Borough's supply of housing land

- 5.1. The NPPF (2024) Paragraph 78 requires for local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing set against their housing requirement. Both the NPPF (2024) Para 78 and the PPG's 'Housing supply and delivery' emphasise the need for these sites to be 'deliverable' for housing (Para 7 Reference ID: 68-007-20190722 (Revised 22-Jul-19)).

### Deliverable sites

- 5.2. According to Annex 2: Glossary of the NPPF (2024), sites with full or detailed planning permission are considered 'deliverable' until permission expires or there is clear evidence otherwise. Further, the NPPF glossary states:

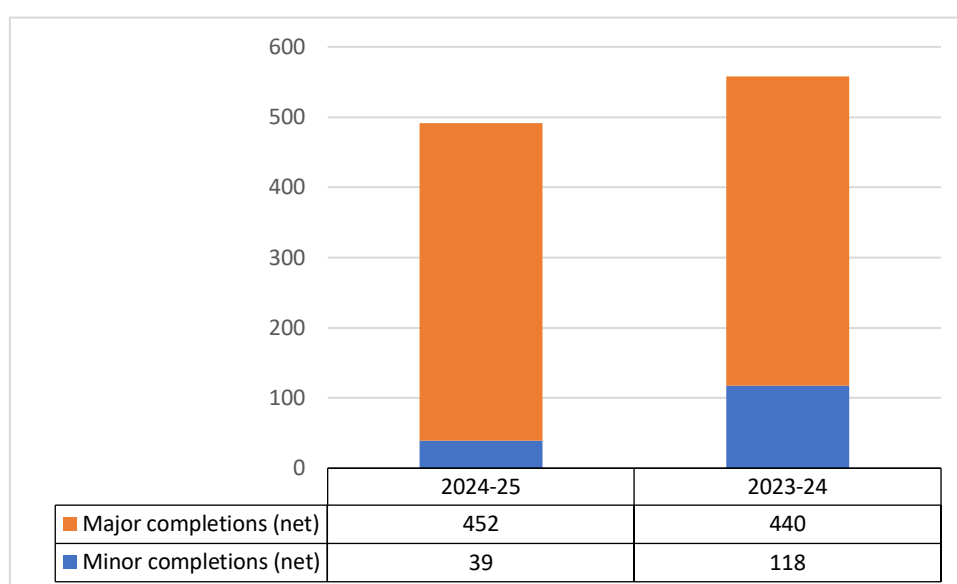
*"Where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years."*

- 5.3. A trajectory of deliverable sites for the five-year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030 is provided in the annexes of this statement. This trajectory has been informed by:

- Empirical analysis of lead in times for different sizes of development
- Empirical analysis of build out rates
- Information gathered from site agents, developers, and Development Management colleagues through focused housing delivery questionnaires and follow-up correspondence to arrive at lead-in times and build out rates for higher risk sites in the housing supply.

## Inclusion of a windfall allowance

5.4. Paragraph 75 of the NPPF (2024) allows a windfall site allowance to also be included in a local authority's housing land supply where there is compelling evidence that this is a reliable source of supply. An empirical review of windfall minor developments (10 dwellings or fewer) over the current and most recent monitoring years has been undertaken to understand the contribution that small windfall sites make to overall net housing completion figures. Figure 2 sets out a breakdown of the 2024-25 and 2023-24 monitoring years. Across these monitoring years, there was an average of 78.5 (rounded up to 79) net completions composed of minor windfall developments, demonstrating a small but important contribution to overall housing completions.



**Figure 2: Proportion of minor windfall net completions of overall windfall net completions across monitoring years**

5.5. It is anticipated that as the larger strategic sites increase output, larger windfall sites may reduce, yet minor windfall developments will continue to contribute to the Borough's housing land supply. As such, the Council has included a windfall allowance of 79 dwellings in years 3, 4 and 5 of the Borough's 5 Year Housing Land Supply, considering a two-year lead-in time before development will begin.

## Inclusion of non-implementation rate

5.6. The Council recognises that not all planning permissions result in units being delivered. Some are unimplemented.

5.7. An empirical review of planning applications has been undertaken for the 2024/25 monitoring period (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) which indicates that 4.9% of applications expired prior to and during the monitoring year. The number of expired planning applications prior to or during the monitoring year 2023/24 was not captured. However, an empirical review has been undertaken for the previous two monitoring years which shows that 7% expired prior to or during the 2022/23 monitoring year and 2.5% expired prior to or during the 2021/22 monitoring year. A comparison of non-implementation across these monitoring years is illustrated in the figure below. Across these three years, an average of 4.8% of planning permissions expired. Therefore, a non-implementation rate of 4.8% has been subtracted from the Borough's land supply position.

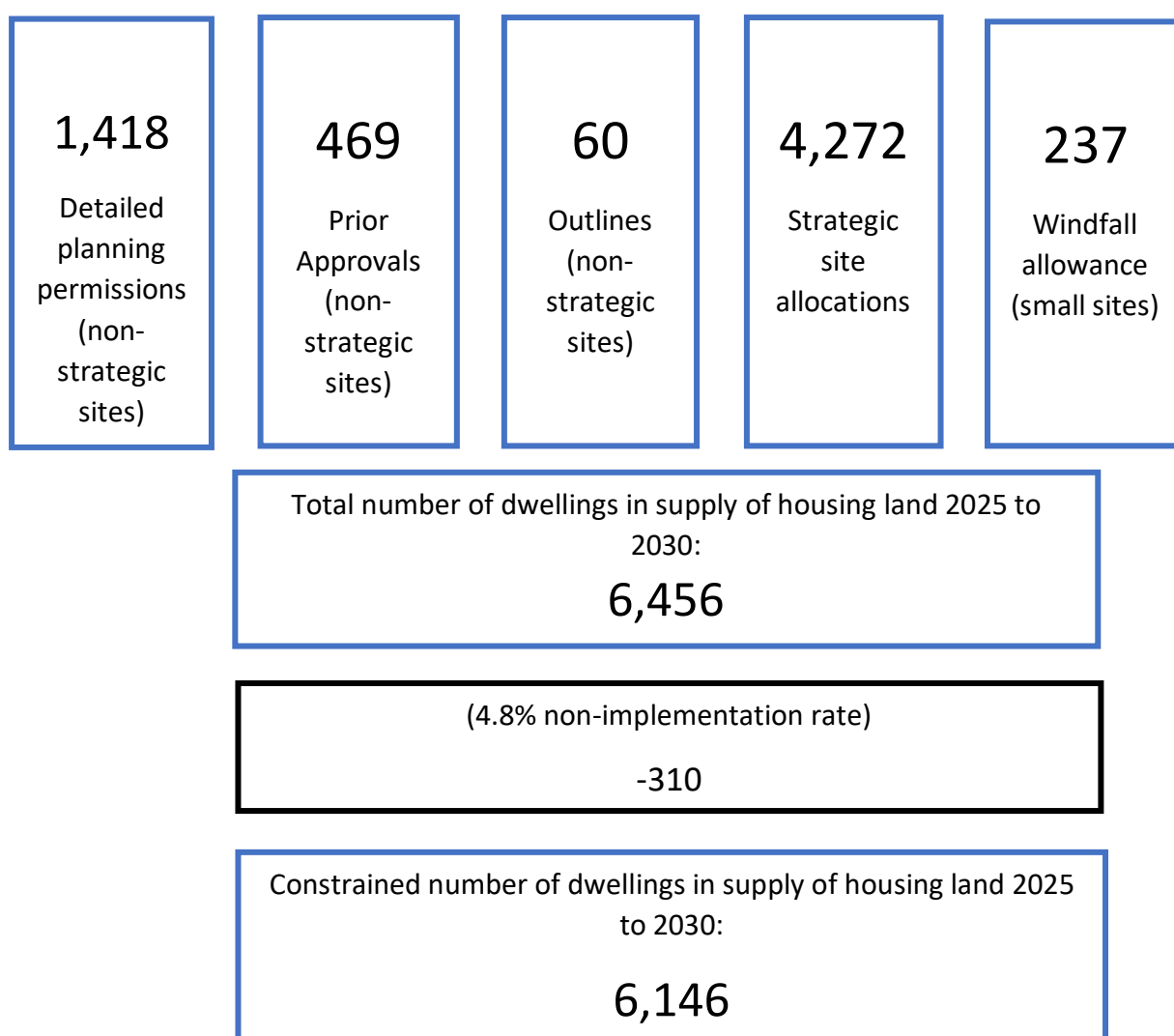


**Figure 3: A comparison of non-implementation rates over the current and previous monitoring years**



## Overview of Swindon's supply of housing land

5.8. Swindon Borough's supply of housing land for the five-year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030 is 6,146 dwellings. Figure 4 outlines the breakdown of the housing land supply for the five-year period. Annexes A to D of this statement provide a detailed list of planning permissions for the 2024-25 monitoring year.



**Figure 4: Housing land supply breakdown with non-implementation rate applied**

## 6. Swindon's five-year housing land supply position

6.1. The figure below sets out Swindon's five-year housing land supply calculation for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030. The calculation establishes the minimum housing need figure that the Borough requires over the five-year period and sets this against the number of homes due to be completed within this period on 'deliverable' sites across the Borough.

	Calculation element		Dwellings
(A)	Minimum annual local housing need figure	2025-26	1,195
		2026-27	1,195
		2027-28	1,195
		2028-29	1,195
		2029-30	1,195
(B)	Minimum local housing need figure for period 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2030:		5,977
(C)	Delivery shortfall		N/A
(D)	Housing buffer: 5% of (B) + (C)		299
(E)	5-year housing land supply total requirement:		6,276
(F)	Swindon's supply of housing land for period 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2030:		6,146
(G)	Swindon's supply of housing land in years:		<b>4.90 years</b>

**Figure 5: Swindon's five-year land supply calculation for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2030**

6.2. The figure shows a land supply position of **4.90 years**. This is a healthy figure, demonstrating that if all sites are completed, the Borough will be close to meeting its five-year housing requirement. The position has improved from the previous 2023 statement when a supply of 4.87 years of housing land was projected.