

Conwy Deposit Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022 (Revised edition 2011)



REVISED BACKGROUND PAPER 41 – SUBMISSION

Release of Contingency Sites

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper is one of a series of Background Papers produced to accompany the Conwy Local Development Plan (LDP) submission. When the Council submits its LDP it must explain how each policy has been formulated and the evidence base supporting it.
- 1.2 The LDP assumes that a high degree of housing and employment development will come forward from permissions, allocations, and in the case of housing, windfalls, as a source of supply over the Plan period. While sites have been appraised to assess their deliverability within the period, for flexibility the Plan does include an additional element of housing and employment land (above the identified supplies) which has also been appraised and is included within the Plan as a contingency to be released should some of the allocated sites not come forward as anticipated.

2. Housing Land Supply

- 2.1 The revised housing requirement figure in the LDP is 6350 units over the Plan period 2007-2022. Actual housing completions in the Plan Area since the base date (to 31/3/2010) have totalled 968 dwellings. This gives a residual housing requirement figure for the remainder of the LDP period of 5382 dwellings. To meet this residual requirement the LDP incorporates a housing land supply totalling 5561 dwellings, comprised as indicated in Table 1 below. The various sources of supply as referenced in Table 1 are detailed in revised BP4 'Housing Land Supply'.

Table 1: Sources of residual housing supply

Sources of housing supply	Dwellings
Commitments (with pp) as at 1/4/2010)	1063
Windfall allowance	1662
Empty Homes Strategy	509
LDP allocations	2327
RESIDUAL SUPPLY	5561

2.2 While this supply does exceed the residual requirement of 5382 dwellings, to provide increased flexibility, the Plan includes additional land for a further 665 dwellings in the form of a contingency allowance, as indicated in table 2 below. This increases the residual supply to 6226 dwellings and the overall supply (including completions) to 7194 dwellings, as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Total Housing Supply

RESIDUAL SUPPLY (from Table 1)	5561
Add Contingency	665
TOTAL RESIDUAL SUPPLY	6226
Completions (01/04/2007-31/03/2010)	968
TOTAL HOUSING SUPPLY	7194

2.3 Section 3 below details the justification for the choice of the contingency figure and explains the basis upon which the contingency sites will be considered for release.

3. Housing Contingency Figure

3.1 The Council acknowledges that the contingency figure of 665 dwellings now proposed is lower than the figure contained in the 2011 Deposit LDP. At Deposit stage the Council received a number of representations regarding the housing land supply, the contingency allowance, and the extent of Greenfield land release proposed. Following Deposit stage the Council has carried out further analysis, relating to both the housing land requirement and potential sources of supply. As a consequence amendments have been made to the requirement figure and to the housing land supply figure. A number of proposed allocations have been removed as their delivery was considered to be at risk, and on other sites the capacity has been amended. The revised supply now proposed is therefore considered to be more robust and deliverable while being less reliant on the release of greenfield sites.

3.2 The revised contingency allowance of 665 dwellings does however still provide an over supply which equates to over 10% of the housing requirement. A 10% level of contingency provision is generally accepted as providing a reasonable element

of flexibility in development plans. Certainly the percentage figure used is comparable to the contingency allowances used in other LDPs currently being, or recently produced by other local authorities in North Wales.

- 3.3 The Council considers that the contingency figure proposed will provide adequate flexibility in the housing supply to enable the delivery of the housing requirement over the Plan period.

4. Contingency Housing Sites

- 4.1. This Background Paper also sets out the Council’s approach regarding the contingency sites, including the methodology for their release. The contingency sites are considered suitable for residential development and will be held in reserve to be brought forward should a need for their release be demonstrated via the Annual Monitoring Report.

- 4.2 The contingency sites are listed in Table 3 below, which also incorporates information on the approximate dwelling capacity of each site. Given that the purpose of the contingency sites is to increase the land supply it follows that a contingency site should be deliverable within the period anticipated. These contingency sites have generally been put forward for development by developers/ landowners/agents indicating a desire and willingness to develop them and are considered to be deliverable. All contingency sites have, as with the allocated sites, been the subject of a sustainability appraisal and SEA. Further information on the site assessment process is included in BP21 ‘Site Deliverability Assessment’.

Table 3 Housing Contingency Sites

Site No.	Site address	Dwgs
78	Llanfair Road, Abergele	100
67	Glyn Farm, Colwyn Bay	130
335	Dolwen Road, Old Colwyn	40
502	Llysfaen Road, Old Colwyn	20
SR85	Nant Y Gamar Road, Llandudno	60
SR43	Henryd Road, Gyffin, Conwy	10
37/38	Off Derwen Lane, Penrhyn Bay	175
135	Conway Road, Penmaenmawr	15

384	West of Penmaen Park, Llanfairfechan	45
457	Site C NE of Llanrwst	70
	Total	665

5. Release of Housing Contingency Sites

- 5.1 The Plan states (para. 5.4.3) that the contingency has been applied to ‘take account of housing development which may not come forward over the Plan period’. It follows therefore that the release of a contingency site (or sites) should be related to either the level of housing completions or the identified housing land supply, or preferably both (as completions measure actual delivery while the land supply measures what land is genuinely available for development).
- 5.2 It is also considered necessary to allow opportunity, following adoption of the Plan, for the new allocated LDP housing sites to contribute, before considering the release of a contingency site. Further, given the fluctuations in housing completions which can occur year on year it is considered that release of contingency sites should not be based on a single year’s completions.
- 5.3 Having regard to the above it is proposed that the basis for the release of housing contingency sites be as follows:

If it is demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Reports that annual housing completions over a consecutive three year period are consistently 15% or more above or below the annual housing requirement and the Council is unable to achieve a five year housing land supply, the Council will release a site (or sites) from the list of contingency sites in Table 2, in order to increase the housing land supply.

- 5.4 Assuming the above triggers have been reached and as a consequence there is a need to release one or more contingency sites it is proposed that sites be considered for release based primarily on the following criteria :

i) Location: If a shortfall is identified in a specific area then priority will be given to releasing one or more contingency sites in the same general area. It is appreciated however that if, for example a specific infrastructure constraint affects

a settlement there would be little point in releasing a contingency site in that settlement if it was subject to the same constraint.

ii) Capacity: As the release of a site or sites will be related to an identified shortfall, then the contingency site(s) released should be capable of providing the approximate dwelling numbers required (though it is appreciated that achieving an exact match will be difficult).

iii) Deliverability: Given that the purpose of releasing a contingency site is to increase the available land supply it follows that a contingency site should be deliverable within the period anticipated.

6. Employment Land Supply

6.1 To meet demand generated from predicted population change the Plan establishes a need for some 20.5 hectares of employment land with a further 15.5 hectares required to contribute to meeting out-commuting levels (see BP42). This takes the overall employment land requirement to 36 hectares, of which 33 hectares will be met in the Urban Development Strategy Area and 3 hectares in the Rural Development Strategy Area.

6.2 In addition, and for flexibility, as with the housing supply, a further 4.2 Hectares of employment land (equating to just over 11% of the employment land requirement) is provided via contingency sites, to be released should some of the allocated employment sites not come forward as anticipated. The Employment Contingency Sites are identified and assessed in BP 21 and listed in Table 3 below.

7. Employment Contingency Sites

7.1 The Employment Contingency Sites comprise the following:

Table 4 Employment contingency sites

Location	Proposed Site	Use	Size
Urban Dev. Strategy Area	Abergele South East	B1/B2/B8	3.7 ha
Rural Dev. Strategy Area	MS9 Orme View Filling Station, Dwygyfylchi	B1/B2/B8	0.5 ha
		Total	4.2 ha

- 7.2 It is intended that the release of any contingency sites will be related to the annual level of employment land coming forward for development throughout the Plan period. Again it is considered reasonable to allow opportunity, following Plan adoption, for the allocated employment sites to contribute before considering the release of a contingency site based upon the trigger points identified in the monitoring framework contained in Section 5 of the LDP.
- 7.3 The monitoring framework in the LDP incorporates annual employment land take up trigger levels for the County Borough of over 10 Hectares or under 1.5 hectares per annum for two consecutive years.
- 7.4 Having regard to the above it is proposed that the basis for the release of the employment contingency sites be as follows:

If it is demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Reports that the annual rate of employment land take up is less than 1.5 ha per annum or greater than 10 ha per annum for two or more consecutive years the Council will release one of the employment contingency sites listed in table 3, in order to increase the employment land supply.

- 7.5 In deciding which of the contingency sites to release, as with the housing contingency sites, the Council will again have regard to issues of capacity, deliverability and location, and in particular whether the shortfall in land supply is identified as being within the Urban or Rural Development Strategy area (or both).

8. Summary

- 8.1 This Paper outlines the Council's approach to the issue of Contingency in relation to both the housing and employment land supplies in the LDP and explains how the contingency sites can be released to increase the supplies if necessary. On this basis the Council considers that the identified supplies, supported by the contingency sites, are sufficient to enable the housing and requirement figures contained in the LDP to be achieved within the Plan period.