

MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN 2041: EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC 2026

PROPOSED STEPPED HOUSING REQUIREMENT AND LAND SUPPLY: EXPLANATORY NOTE

17 September 2026

The table presented alongside this note sets out the relationship between the proposed stepped housing requirement, forecast housing delivery across the plan period. It also considers housing land supply in the first five years after adoption.

Stepped Housing Trajectory

The proposed stepped requirement reflects national policy and guidance. Paragraph 62 of the Framework requires strategic policies to be informed by a local housing need assessment, and, in Medway's case, this results in a housing requirement of 1,636 dwellings per annum.

The Council is not seeking to reduce that requirement. Rather, it is proposing a stepped trajectory that alters the timing of delivery whilst ensuring that the full housing requirement is met across the plan period. This approach is expressly supported by Planning Practice Guidance (Housing Supply and Delivery, Paragraph 012), which states that a stepped requirement may be appropriate where there has been a significant change in housing requirements, where strategic sites will have a phased delivery, or where strategic sites are likely to deliver later in the plan period. All of these circumstances are satisfied in this case.

The table therefore applies a stepped requirement of 1,309 dwellings per annum during Years 1-5, increasing to 1,963 dwellings per annum during Years 6-10, before returning to 1,636 dwellings per annum during Years 11-15.

This reflects the expectation that many of Medway's strategic allocations will not deliver at full capacity in the early years because of infrastructure requirements, lead-in periods and build-out constraints, but that delivery will increase substantially once those sites come forward. The approach is consistent with PPG guidance, as set out above.

Supply adjustments

The trajectory also reflects updated evidence since preparation of the Housing Delivery Topic Paper (B22.5). In particular, the Hoo Consortium's Matter 3 Hearing Statement (E.184/E.31) and Statement of Common Ground (MLP/ED24B) identifies revisions to delivery assumptions, with some sites expected to come forward earlier and others later. In addition, the Statement of Common Ground for Site SNF1 (Land West of Strood) (MLP/ED24F) records a one-year delay to delivery. In response, the Council has prepared the revised stepped trajectory to reflect the latest assumptions regarding lead-in times, infrastructure provision and build-out rates.

Relationship between requirement and supply

The table demonstrates that forecast supply broadly follows this delivery profile. Supply exceeds the stepped requirement through most of the first ten years of the plan period, generating a substantial cumulative surplus. Although annual shortfalls emerge in some later years, these are more than offset by earlier over-delivery. From Year 3, cumulative supply is always ahead of cumulative requirement. This builds in year on year flexibility. Overall, at the end of the plan period cumulative supply is forecast to reach 26,316 dwellings against a total requirement of 26,176 dwellings, providing an overall surplus of 140 dwellings by 2040/41.

Housing land supply on adoption

The final columns illustrate the effect of addressing the 2025/26 shortfall and applying the housing land supply buffer. Under paragraph 9(d) of Annex D to the 2026 Framework, authorities with a Housing Delivery Test result below 85% must apply a 20% buffer when calculating five-year housing land supply. Medway's latest HDT result is 60% and therefore a 20% buffer will apply following adoption. The table demonstrates that, notwithstanding both the need to address the 2025/26 shortfall and the application of this buffer, the Council can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply at and immediately following adoption.