Housing

Evidence Report

September 2013

Fenland District Council

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The Government Standard

Housing Evidence Report

September 2013

Contents

1 Introduction

Context

1.1 Fenland District Council is producing the Core Strategy which sets out the framework for how development will be considered across the district to 2031. Until recently, the East of England Plan, also known as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), set out the regional strategy for planning and development in the East of England. It included growth targets for Fenland District of approximately 11,000 new homes and an indicative target for net growth in jobs for the period 2001-2021 for Cambridgeshire (including Fenland) of 75,000 (see East of England Plan (2008) Policy E1). The RSS has now been revoked. Therefore, in order to inform future development in Fenland, the Council and the wider Cambridge Housing Market Area authorities have undertaken a series of evidence studies to consider the most appropriate level of growth in the district to 2031 and to thus inform the development of the Core Strategy.

1.2 This Evidence report is one of several evidence studies. It seeks to draw together a number of sources to demonstrate what Fenland District Council consider to be the most appropriate level of housing growth for inclusion in its Core Strategy.

2 Role of this report

2.1 The overall aim of this report is to set out the Housing target for Fenland.

2.2 It draws upon best practice guidance and the NPPF to:

- Provide an overview of past and recent housing development trends;
- Examine a range of approaches to establish the most appropriate housing target to 2031;
- Set out the housing trajectory, through estimating what, when and how housing sites will come forward over the plan period;

2.3 This report concludes with a housing growth scenario that will be taken forward by the Core Strategy.

3 Current Baseline Housing Position in Fenland

3.1 Annual monitoring of development in the district provides us with a picture of how development has changed since 2001. It allows us to consider the extent to which past trends will continue into the future. It also helps us to understand what sites are in the planning 'pipeline' and are likely to come forward. This baseline helps to inform the strategy for housing growth to 2031.

3.2 Each year, annual monitoring of housing development provides information on sites that have been completed, sites that have been granted planning permission but may not have been started, or those that have only been partially built out.

Housing Completions 2001-2012

3.3 Since 1 April 2001, there have been a total of 6,084 net housing completions in the district. The figure below illustrates that the highest peak of delivery in Fenland was reached in 2007/08 when 921 dwellings were delivered. From 2001–2008 the average delivery rate was sustained at about 720 net additional dwellings a year.

3.4 However, as witnessed across much of the country, there has been a significant decline in housing delivery rates; the average over 2008-2012 has fallen to approximately 264 dwellings - a reduction of just over 60% from the period 2001-2008. Figure 1 clearly illustrates the impact the economic downturn has had on housing delivery in Fenland. (Note: for information 209 dwellings were completed in 2011/12).

3.5 Table 1 (overleaf) does however also demonstrate that when housing completions are considered since 2001 as a whole, the overall delivery rate is at about 553 average annual dwellings. Whilst the economic situation remains uncertain, historic trends suggest that Fenland is able to deliver around 550-600 dwellings a year over a sustained period.

Figure 1 – Housing completions in Fenland 2001-2012

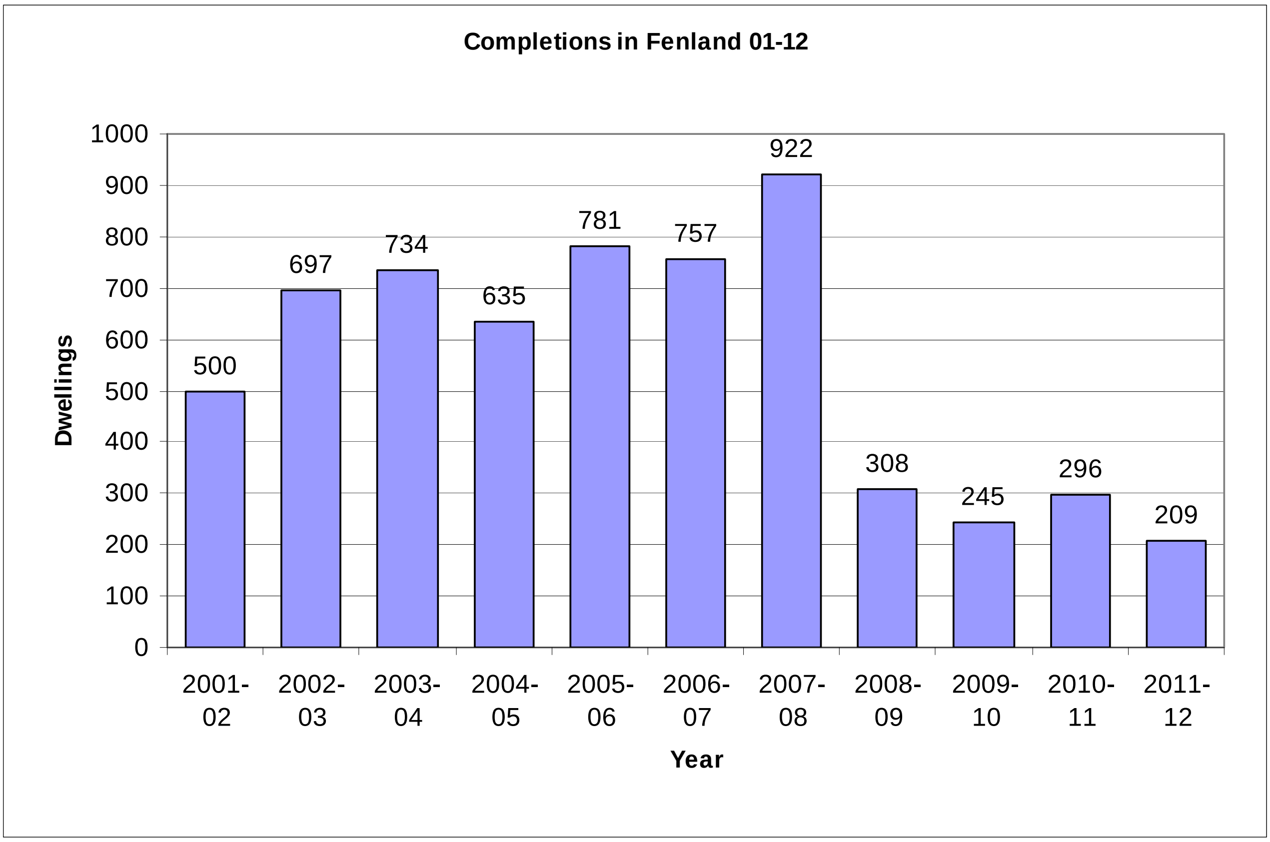


Table 1 – Cumulative and annual average totals

Monitoring Year (1st April – 31st March)	Cumulative total	Annual Average
2001/2002	500	500
2002/2003	1,197	599
2003/2004	1,931	644
2004/2005	2,566	642
2005/2006	3,347	669
2006/2007	4,105	684
2007/2008	5,027	718
2008/2009	5,335	667
2009/2010	5,580	620
2010/2011	5,878	588
2011/2012	6,084	553

Location of housing completions

3.6 Over the last ten years, the majority of housing completions (about 3,800 - or approximately 70%) were located in the four market towns of Wisbech, March, Chatteris and Whittlesey. These completions are on sites comprising a combination of allocated local plan sites, windfall developments and infill or replacement dwellings.

3.7 Significantly, this means that the remaining 30% of completions across the period have come forward in the villages or rural areas. The villages of Elm (260), Leverington (249), Wimblington (227) and Wisbech St Mary (306) have seen, relatively, high levels of growth. This is a reflection of the 1993 Local Plan policy H7 which sought to allow development within the defined development area boundaries and through identified allocations within the villages defined as limited rural growth settlements.

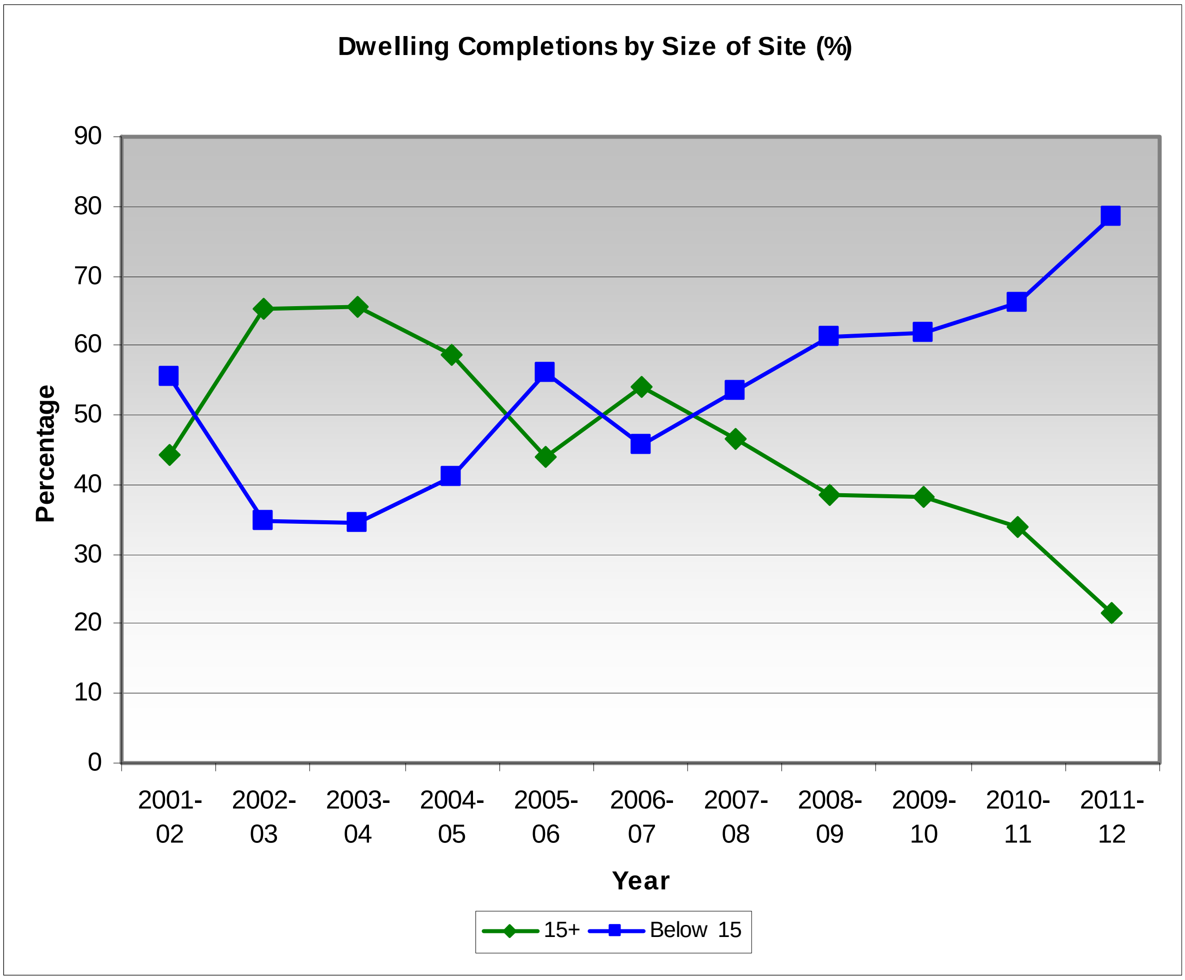
Table 2 – Main Locations of Growth 2002-2012 (by Parish)

Settlement	Benwick	Chatteris	Christchurch	Doddington	Elm	Gorefield	Leverington	Manea	March	Newton	Parson Drove	Tydd St Giles	Whittlesey	Wimblington	Wisbech	Wisbech St Mary	Total Fenland
	97	800	69	73	260	94	249	216	1341	19	102	72	555	227	1104	306	5,584

Dwelling Completions by size of site

3.8 The monitoring data provides information from 2001 on the size of the site that completed dwellings are located. Figure 2 shows that from 2006-07 there has been a shift from the highest proportion of completions on sites over fifteen dwellings, to the majority of completions being on sites below this threshold. For example, in 2011-12 around 80% of dwellings were completed on sites with permission for fewer than fifteen dwellings, this is in contrast to around 35% in 2003-04. This simple analysis may suggest that since 2006-07 there has been a gradual decline in the number of large sites contributing towards housing delivery. This could partly be explained by the economic downturn and the lack of finance for larger schemes; however, it is also likely that as many of the allocations from the 1993 Local Plan are used up, there has been a limited supply of sites capable of accommodating dwellings above this threshold.

Figure 2 – Dwelling Completions by size of site

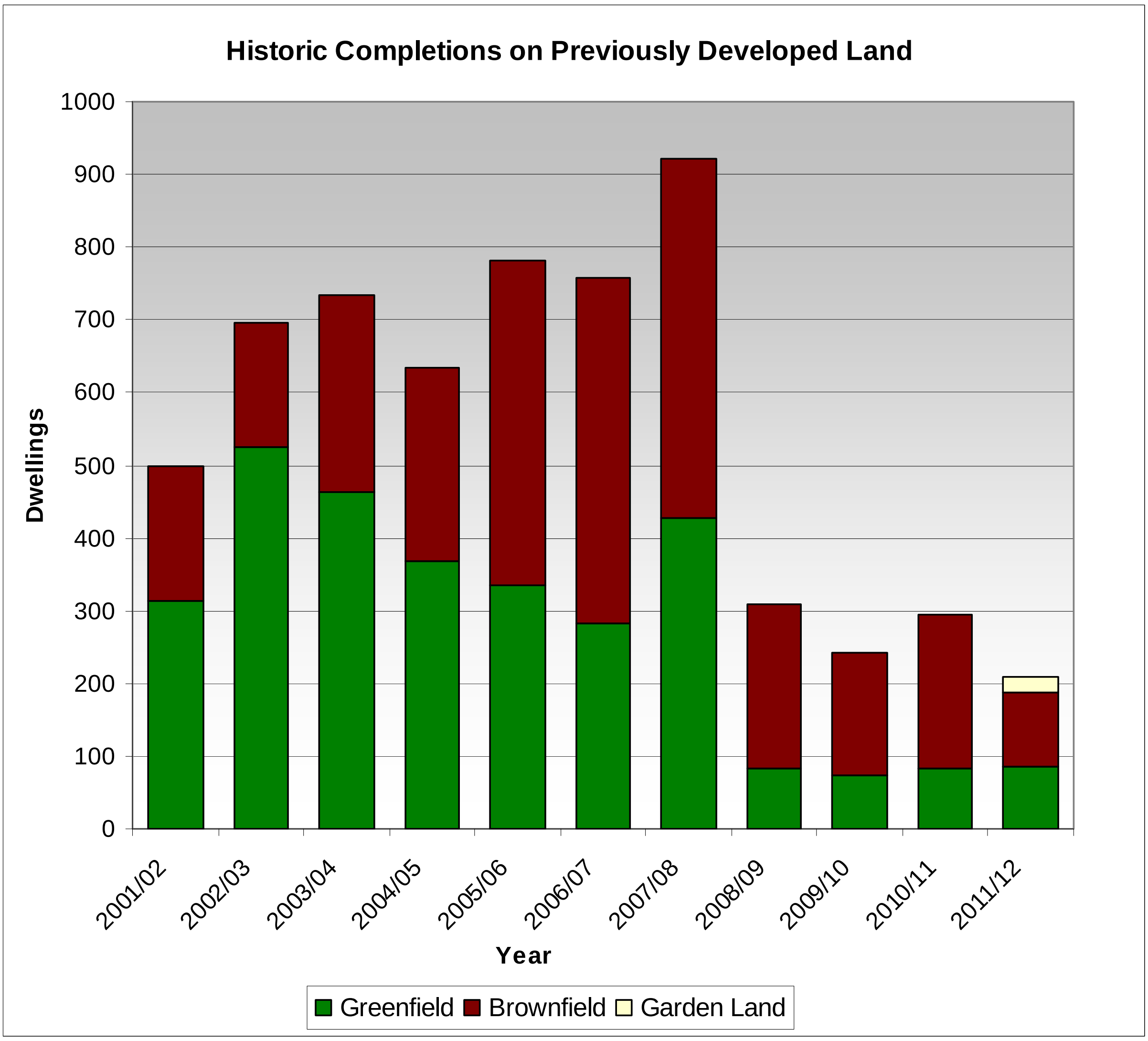


Housing Completions on Previously Development Land (also known as Brownfield Land)

3.9 There is a long standing national direction that local authorities should maximise the re-use of previously developed land in order to promote regeneration and minimise the amount of green field land being used for development. As illustrated in Figure 3, there has generally been a high proportion of green field development in Fenland. This is likely to be a reflection on Fenland being a predominately rural district with limited brownfield industrial areas coming forward for redevelopment. In contrast to this general trend, the last few years have seen a higher proportion of development on previously developed land. This may be due to development largely coming forward on smaller infill plots, or development in private residential gardens[1] (as described above).

[1] Private residential gardens were removed from the definition of previously developed land in June 2010

Figure 3 – Historic completions on Greenfield and Brownfield Land



Affordable Homes

3.10 Figure 4 below illustrates that, unlike market housing, the level of the development of new affordable housing[2] has been relatively constant over the period 2001–12, peaking at 104 in 2007-08.

3.11 The graph also shows that as a proportion of market housing, affordable housing has not seen significant increases in peak years. This may suggest that there is potential for the greater delivery of affordable housing in peak periods; this will be explored through the development of the Core Strategy.

[2] Note: This report focuses on dwellings developed as new build or through a change of use of an existing property. Affordable homes can also be provided through other means, such as conversion of an existing home, which are not included here.

Figure 4 – Historic proportion affordable housing completed

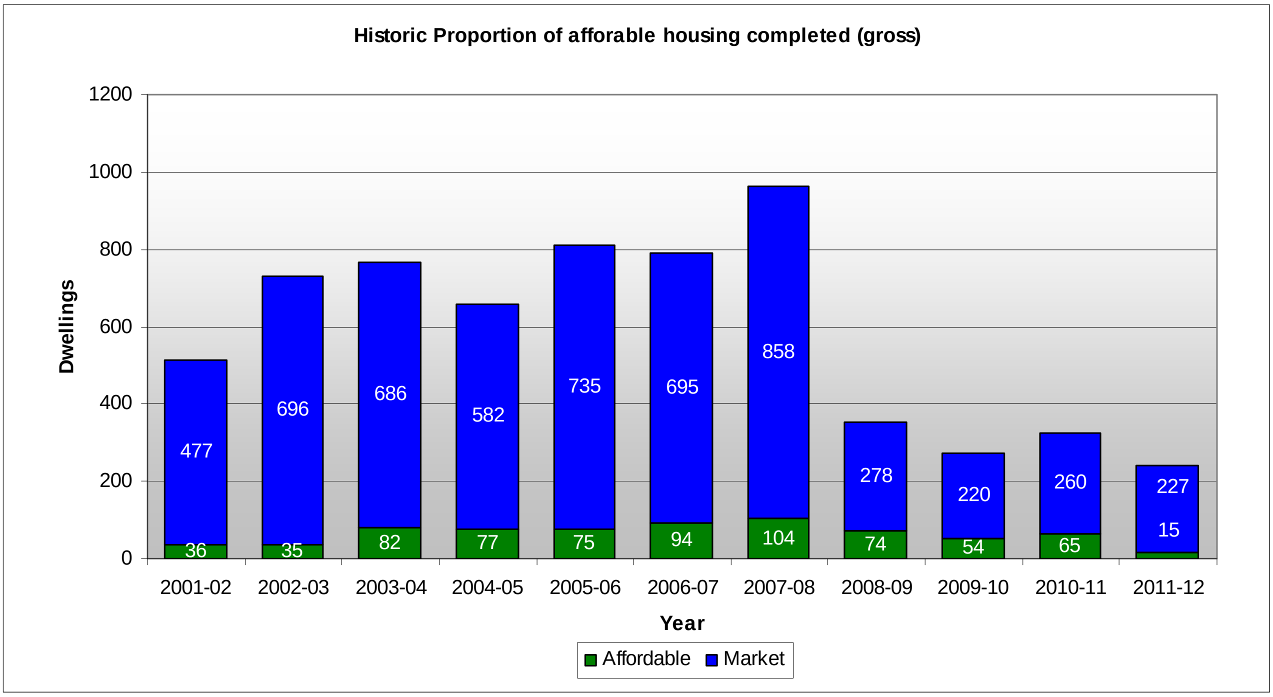


Table 3 – Proportion of Affordable Housing (Gross)

	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	Total
Affordable	36	35	82	77	75	94	104	74	54	65	15	711
Total	513	731	768	659	810	789	962	352	274	325	242	6,425
% Affordable	7	5	11	12	9	12	11	21	20	20	3	12

Committed Sites

3.12 Committed sites are those that are known through having one of the following types of planning status;

a) Sites currently under construction
b) Sites with full planning permission on which development has not yet started
c) Sites with outline planning permission on which development has not yet started

3.13 At 31 March 2012 there were 1,630 (net) dwellings with outstanding planning permission. Outstanding permissions give an indication of where future development may occur, though it should be noted that not all proposals will be implemented. Even if it is assumed that most of the sites will be implemented, the commitment figures demonstrate that only limited growth could be accommodated through existing supply of sites.

Fenland Local Plan – Allocations

3.14 The 1993 Local Plan policies allocate land in Fenland for residential development. It remains the statutory planning document for Fenland and as such the identified sites remain committed. However, through the development of the emerging Core Strategy, it is not currently proposed to allocate small scale sites and as such, upon adoption of the Core Strategy, the smaller (usually less than 250 homes) outstanding allocations will no longer have any formal planning status, though the flexible nature of the Core Strategy is likely to mean they will still be looked at favourably.

3.15 Many of the allocated sites in the 1993 Local Plan have either been developed or already have permission (and are therefore counted above). However, some of the allocated sites have residual areas that are still available for development. As such they represent an indication of land supply that may come forward in the future. Monitoring data on these allocated sites comes from the Cambridgeshire County Council team who produce an estimate of the residual capacity. Through this monitoring work, and taking into account planning history of these sites, these 'residuals' could deliver around 700-750 dwellings.

Summary

3.16 The analysis of past completions in the district demonstrates that Fenland has witnessed sustained periods of significant levels of growth. It also shows that consistent with the national trend, housing delivery rates have tailed off in the last few years. It is therefore clear that whilst the district is capable of achieving sustained high levels of housing growth, new allocations, interventions and careful monitoring will be required to buck the trend of lower growth as seen in recent years.

3.17 The completion data also suggests that Fenland has in the past seen large proportions of housing on Greenfield land, but recent trends suggest that a higher proportion have been on smaller brownfield sites. This combined with a limited supply of committed sites suggests a shift towards housing delivery relying on windfall developments rather than planned strategic sites.

4 Future housing growth

4.1 The Coalition Government has revoked the East of England Plan which included established housing targets. Local authorities are responsible for setting their own housing targets, and determining how many dwellings are needed in their area.

Approach to defining housing targets in Fenland

4.2 In order to consider the options for a housing growth target, a range of sources have been used. These are grouped under three main headings: Historic targets, Projections and Delivery. These are summarised below –

Table 4

Scenario	Description
1. Recent Targets	
Regional Spatial Strategy (2008)	Regional recommended / Government confirmed housing growth targets
Regional Spatial Strategy Review (draft 2010)	Regional recommended housing growth targets to Government (not confirmed by Government)
2. Objectively assessed need	
3. Deliverability	
Land Capacity -	FNPV[3] assessment of land capacity for strategic growth
Market Delivery	Consideration of past delivery rates
Infrastructure Capacity	Infrastructure based approach

4.3 Used together, these approaches inform a target that is not only the most appropriate to meet predicted needs, but one that is considered to be deliverable and achievable in the context of a rapidly changing economic climate.

[3] Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision Study produced by consultants Aecom

Scenario 1: Recent Targets

Regional Spatial Strategy (now revoked)

4.4 The first, and adopted, Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (also known as the 'East of England Plan') of 2008 set a housing for Fenland at 11,000 dwellings between 2001-2021.

4.5 Such a target was derived from extensive and robust evidence, and tested by an independent Panel. That RSS also indicated that, beyond 2021, a similar level of housing growth should be planned for, on an annual average basis (i.e. 550 pa for Fenland).

4.6 Whilst the RSS is now obviously revoked, the evidence behind it remains.

Draft Regional Spatial Strategy

4.7 Whilst now abandoned, a revision to the RSS commenced almost immediately after the adoption of the first RSS. This reached a stage whereby, in March 2010, it was submitted by the Region to the Secretary of State. No further action has or will be taken on it. Nevertheless, considerable work, consultation and appraisal (including Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment) accompanied the revised RSS, and therefore weight can be attached to what it proposed.

4.8 This revised RSS was to cover the period 2011-2031 (i.e. the same as the Fenland Core Strategy), and proposed a housing target of 11,000 dwellings for Fenland, at the annual average of 550 dwellings per year (i.e. the same as the adopted RSS).

Summary

4.9 Whilst the RSS has been revoked it had clearly been through significant scrutiny and review in order to establish the 550pa housing figure for Fenland. Furthermore, the update draft RSS, albeit not tested or 'signed off' by a Panel or Government, revisited this work and considered that it remained a valid figure that should be projected forward.

Scenario 2: Objectively Assessed Need

4.10 To fill the gap left by the revoked RSSs, government set out in the NPPF its approach to how housing targets should be calculated at the local level. Paragraphs 47 (first bullet) and 159 (first part) are the most relevant, as follows:

47. To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- *use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period;*

And

159. Local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should:

- *prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which:*
  - *meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change;*
  - *addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes); and*
  - *caters for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand;*

4.11 As set out in the Duty to Cooperate evidence report (available separately), the authorities in the Cambridge Housing Market Area took up this challenge set by the NPPF and prepared two key evidence base documents, and a landmark Memorandum of Understanding endorsed by all Councils in order to agree the individual targets for each council for their Local Plan reviews. The two evidence base documents are:

- A housing technical report, available here: http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/current-version/PopHseEmp_TechReport2013
- An updated SHMA, in particular an update to chapter 12 and 13 of the SHMA, available at http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/current-version . Please note the SHMA is a web based only document and not published as a single hard copy, with different chapters updated from time to time

4.12 The Memorandum of Understanding is available as a separate evidence document as submitted for examination.

4.13 Whilst the above three elements should be read in full in order to understand the methodology and assumptions made, the key conclusion is that Fenland should plan for 11,000 new homes between 2011-2031, a target endorsed by all Cambridgeshire districts and Peterborough City Council.

Scenario 3: Deliverability

Housing Delivery – trend based projections

4.14 To understand the context of whether the housing targets are deliverable, it is appropriate to consider the actual delivery of dwellings in Fenland. This demonstrates what has been achieved in the past, which in turn can help inform what is achievable in the future.

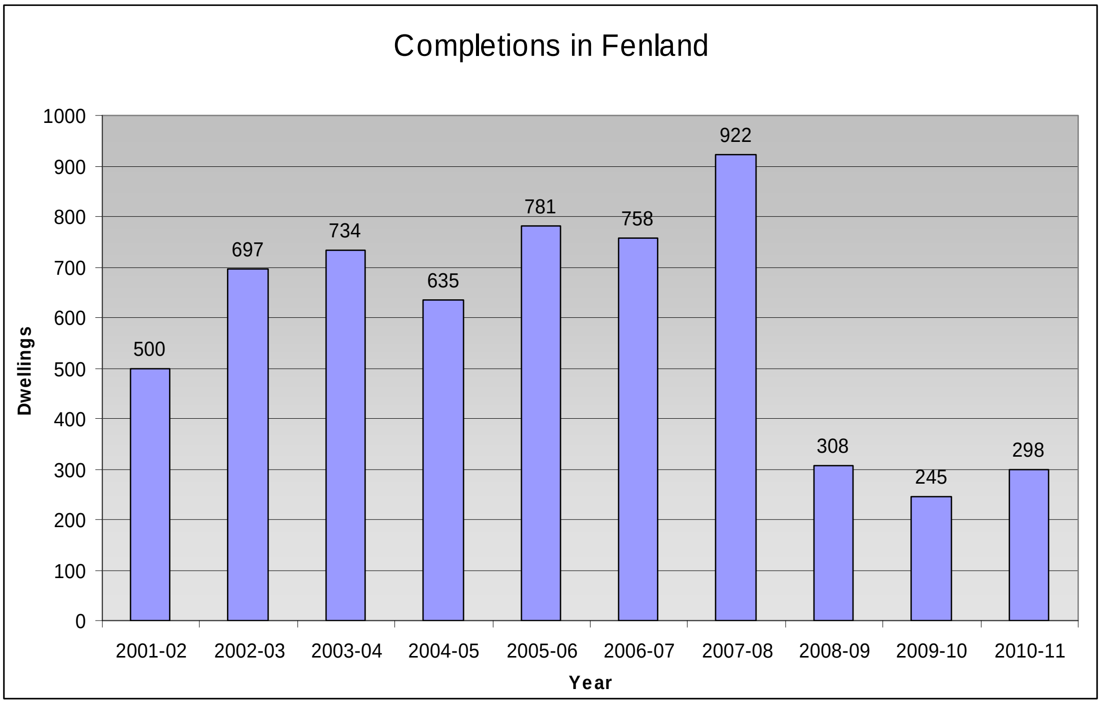
4.15 As seen in Section 3, there has been a total of 5,878 dwelling completed over the period 2001-2011. The delivery rate of these completions is set out in Table 5 and Figure 5 below.

Fenland net completion totals: Table 5

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Completions in Fenland	500	697	734	635	781	758	922	308	245	298

Source: AMR 2010/11

Figure 5: Fenland net completion totals



Source: AMR 2010/11

4.16 The above table and chart clearly demonstrate a fluctuating level of housing delivery over the past 10 years, largely in line with the national situation (though perhaps even more extreme than the national 'average').

4.17 What it demonstrates is that in very weak conditions (such as 2008 to present), the market struggles to deliver up to 300 dwellings per year. However, in strong markets, at least double, and exceptionally treble that level can be achieved.

4.18 The annual average achieved over the above 10 year period is 588 dwellings.

4.19 Forecasting the economic future in Fenland is extremely difficult, and to some extent we are only able to make a 'best guess' at how long the undersupply of housing will continue. However, positive impacts through the adoption of the Core Strategy are certain to improve delivery: housing land supply will be dramatically improved, enhanced certainty of the plan and a clear strategy will help reduce risks for investing and building in Fenland. Fenland will therefore be in the right position for when investment levels pick up. Furthermore, large strategic sites, as proposed through the Strategic Allocations and broad locations, are likely to create a step-change in delivery as phasing creates a reliable supply of dwellings.

4.20 As such, it seems entirely reasonable to reach the conclusion that the market is capable, over the 20 year plan period, of continuing to deliver dwellings at around this average of 500-600 per year, leading to a 10,000 – 12,000 range.

4.21 But it is clearly not 'impossible', and may if the right conditions come together, exceed more than 11,000. As demonstrated above, when the market is strong (2005-08) an annual average of 820 dwellings is possible, the equivalent (if sustained long term) of around 16,000 dwellings over a 20 year period. Over the past 10 years, including the downturn of the last 3 years, 6 out of 10 years have exceeded 550 dwellings. However, when the market is weak, around 300pa is achieved, or only 6,000 over a 20 year period, giving a total 'deliverability' range of 6,000 – 16,000 homes, with a most likely range being 10,000 – 12,000.

Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision (FNPV) - Housing Land Supply

4.22 The Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision focused on the potential capacity of the four market towns in Fenland to support strategic housing and employment growth. It considered the physical capacity, opportunities and constraints and provided the basis for establishing three growth scenarios. These growth scenarios were then taken forward as 'book-ends' of growth and used to inform population, employment and infrastructure requirements [which are expanded upon elsewhere].

4.23 Section 8 of the FNPV study provides the basis for developing an estimate for the potential housing growth that could be physically accommodated in Fenland, based on an assessment of risk of opportunity. In order to convert land into dwellings, a basic assumption of 30 dwellings per hectare has been used. Further work, including exact site boundaries, developable area ratios and densities will be completed at the application stage. A summary of each site assessment is set out in the sustainability appraisal.

This process identified three main growth scenarios:

Table 6

a)	A minimum target –	11,000;
b)	Upper Target	15,000
c)	A maximum target	21,000

4.24 These three growth scenarios are based on the categorisation of the broad locations as Option 1 – 3 Low to High Risk[4]. The options are cumulative. Therefore scenario c for each of the four Market Towns will include the locations identified in Option 1, 2 and 3.

4.25 Added to the identified broad locations are assumptions on the amount of capacity likely to come forward within, or adjacent to, the existing boundaries of the town. This includes sites with extant planning permission, an assumption on exception and windfall sites and a broad assumption on capacity sites. Since the completion of the Aecom report, the approach to windfall, exception and capacity sites has been refined. For the purposes of this report, the overall figures remain valid as indications of growth.

4.26 As the FNPV study considered options by market town, a hybrid option of scenario either a, b or c was eventually recommended. It also demonstrated that for broad locations alone, around 5,200 – 14,800 dwellings could come forward.

4.27 The FNPV study concluded that through considering land capacity alone, there is broadly sufficient and appropriate land to potentially allow for growth of up to 21,000 dwellings (subject to overcoming detailed site specific constraints).

[4] 'Risk' in terms of non-delivery due to constraints

Other Issues to impact on Housing Growth

The loss of housing land

4.28 Losses of housing can occur through the redevelopment of a site such as where a single detached dwelling is demolished and replaced by two smaller properties on the same plot. Across the district, the loss of dwellings has been high at about 30 annually or 300 over the last 10 years. It is expected that this trend will decline on adoption of the Core Strategy as the increased availability of land supply in the district will offer a greater range of sites, and thus potentially reducing the need for intensification of existing sites. The extent of this effect will be difficult to predict. As such, the trajectory has not made an allowance for losses of dwellings. Dwelling losses will be monitored, with action taken if the minimum trajectory is not being met as a result of significant losses.

Infrastructure Provision

4.29 When considering the level of housing growth in the district regard must also be had to the capacity of infrastructure to cope with this growth. Key stakeholders have been involved in the emerging Core Strategy and have been part of steering groups for the production of evidence studies such as the Water Cycle Study and the emerging Area Transport Studies. Infrastructure provision has been considered through the Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan which suggests that whilst phasing of certain sites may be required, there are likely to be no fundamental infrastructure constraints that will restrict housing growth.

Conclusion to Section 4

4.30 Undertaking a series of approaches provides a comparison of a range of forecasts or possible scenarios. It demonstrates the difficulty involved in predicting future housing need, deliverability and growth and particularly illustrates that all forecasts are a product of their base data and assumptions. No one approach should therefore be relied upon in isolation in setting a future housing target.

Table 7 – Housing Scenarios

Source	2011-2031	Annual Delivery Rate
Historic		
Adopted RSS	11,000	550
Draft RSS	11,000	550
Forecasts / objectively assessed need / apportionment of targets within a market area		
Cambridge HMA Memorandum of Cooperation	11,000	550
Delivery		
Completions (trend –base)	10,000-12,000	588
Aecom land capacity	Up to 21,000	1,050

4.31 These sources of evidence clearly point to a housing target of 11,000 in the Core Strategy is appropriate and, using the Aecom FNPV work, deliverable in terms of land availability and, using historic data, deliverable in terms of the market ability to build the dwellings.

5 Housing Trajectory

5.1 A Housing Trajectory illustrates the expected rate of delivery of new dwellings over the Core Strategy plan period 2011 – 2031. It demonstrates how the housing target of 11,000 additional homes could be achieved.

5.2 Following the letter from the Secretary of State, Bob Neil on the 30th March 2011 withdrawing national guidance on local plan monitoring, it is now the responsibility of each council to decide how to approach their monitoring reports. For Fenland, the trajectory will continue to be updated annually through the production of an Authorities' Monitoring Report (AMR), taking into account completions and updated intelligence from specific site data.

Source of Sites

5.3 The Fenland trajectory is split into the five main sections:

5.4 **Completions** – The completion part of the trajectory illustrates the net additional dwellings to have been built over the period 2001-2012. This approach takes into account the 'net' gains i.e the remaining total after dwellings lost to other uses or demolished are taken from the total new dwellings built. The inclusion of completions on the trajectory graph allows a direct comparison of the historic rate of delivery against the proposed future rate of delivery.

5.5 **Committed Sites** – are those that are currently known through having one of the following types of planning status:

a) Sites currently under construction
b) Sites with full planning permission on which development has not yet started
c) Sites with outline planning permissions on which development has not yet started

5.6 **Strategic Allocations** – these sites are proposed to be formally allocated through the Core Strategy and are set out in policies CS7-11. It is expected that these sites will come forward as part of developer-led masterplans. The evidence for the selection of these sites is set out in a separate report.

5.7 **Broad Locations of Growth** – these sites do not have planning permission but through policies CS7-11 are identified as having capacity to deliver large comprehensive areas of growth.

5.8 **Policy CS4 Part B Sites** - These sites reflect the criteria based approach as set out in Part B of Policy CS4 that allows appropriate new housing sites to come forward that fit with the Council's spatial strategy. It estimates the dwellings that will come forward on sites which meet the criteria but are of a scale too small to identify as Strategic Allocations or Broad Location of growth as defined on the key diagrams linked to policies CS7-11. This allowance is expected to include those remaining sites previously allocated through the 1993 Local Plan, those that come forward on the redevelopment of vacant sites, and small scale proposals in the Market towns and villages. To ensure that this approach brings forward sites as predicted, careful annual monitoring will be undertaken. It is expected that at least 2,265 dwellings will come forward through this approach.

Housing Trajectories

5.9 The trajectories are prepared on the basis of the perceived relative strengths of the housing market across the district and broad assumptions as to the time needed to allow significant levels of growth in housing completions in the four market towns. The following principles were applied:

- The completions are not simply spread at an even rate to accommodate capacity. They are instead spread to reflect the likelihood of economic cycles and the capacity of the market to deliver.

- Where rates of delivery exceed that of previous trends, it is assumed that transformational conditions are such that a higher level can be met.

- The trajectories will be annually monitored to ensure sufficient progress is being made to deliver the housing target. Should the annual rate of delivery exceed that of which is likely to be achieved by the market as a result of successive years of under delivery, contingency measures, as described in the emerging Core Strategy, will be triggered.

Description of trajectories in each of the Market Towns

5.10 The following sections describe the housing trajectories by location. Detailed graphs and housing figures are in the appendices.

5.11 **District** – Completions in the district over the last ten years have regularly exceeded the regional target of 550 per year. The peak in 2007/2008 of 921 demonstrates that in a good market Fenland is capable of delivering a high completion rate [discussed in more detail in Section 3].

5.12 The trajectory seeks to make a realistic estimate of the likely delivery rate over the plan period. It assumes that for the next five years completions will only steadily rise as the economic market improves. It is envisaged that throughout this period completions will mainly come forward through existing commitments, but as the market picks up the broad locations of growth will have gained planning permission and will begin to deliver. Combined with the district wide improvements as an outcome of the Core Strategy, it is anticipated that the market will achieve a sustained level of around 650 dwelling pa; a level that had regularly been met leading up to the national economic difficulties. The impact of the market is difficult to predict but based on forecasting above it is assumed that demand for dwellings will be sufficient to enable the delivery of the trajectory.

5.13 **Wisbech** - as one of the two principal market towns in Fenland, Wisbech witnessed a peak of housing completions in 05/06 of 186 dwellings, with a gradual decline to 165 in 06/07 towards the most recent total of 54 dwellings. These completions were in the context of an ageing plan (1993 Local Plan) and the resulting limited supply of sites.

5.14 Looking to the future, Wisbech is predicted to maintain a steady trend of completions over the next five year period as commitments are built out and the economic market recovers. From 2016/17 it is assumed that the impact of the adoption of the Core Strategy will begin to bring forward the Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations of Growth, which will boost the annual delivery rate towards 150. The peak is expected during the period 2020/21 to 2022/23 where market conditions and the impact of the Core Strategy policies come together to result in a sustained period of 190 annual dwelling completions. The completions beyond this period begin to decrease as identified areas of growth begin to build out. However, it is expected that through the flexible criteria based approach as defined by Policy CS4, further sites will come forward towards the end of the period to provide continuity of supply beyond 2031.

5.15 **March** – has seen the highest levels of completions of the market towns in the District, with a peak 2007/8 of 265 dwellings, it has also seen the sharpest decline of completions with a total of only 22 dwellings in 2011/12. As stated above for Wisbech, it is likely that this is a direct impact of not only the international economic climate but also the limited supply of sites resulting from the age of the 1993 Local Plan.

5.16 It is projected that for the first years of the plan period there will be a steady increase of completions towards a peak of 280 and over in 2025/26 to 229/30 as the impact of policies create an improved market that allow for a delivery rate that exceeds a level reached in the proceeding years. This level is then expected to have a slight decline towards 230 completions at the very end of the plan period as the strategic allocations are built out.

5.17 **Whittlesey** – is one of the smaller two market towns in Fenland. Completions from 2001-2012 have fluctuated between a high of 147 in 2007/08 to a low of 16 in 2008/9. This is largely a result of one or two large sites coming forward in a particular year. The forward trajectory for Whittlesey assumes a continued general trend of between 40 – 60 dwellings pa over the course of the plan period. As above, the first five years consist mainly of existing commitments. Beyond this period the area to the east of the town is expected to deliver most of the housing, with the CS4 – Part B allowance covering those smaller sites that have not been formally identified.

5.18 **Chatteris** – completions in Chatteris have also fluctuated with a peak of 160 dwellings in 2004/05. In recent years there have been between 45 and 50 completions pa. The trajectory continues this trend forward, anticipating that commitments will predominately make up supply as the larger extensions come forward through the planning process. From 2016/17 it is anticipated that most commitments will be built out and the broad locations will continue to supply, levelling off at a rate of 80/90 dwellings per year with a peak of 115 in years 2026/27-– 2028/29.

5.19 **Rural Areas** – including settlements defined as Growth Villages, Limited Growth Villages, Small Villages and other rural locations, have in peak years delivered over 280 dwellings pa (02/03-07/08). In recent years this has decreased to around 60-80 dwellings per year.

5.20 The Council is not proposing to allocate specific areas for growth in the Villages. Instead, it is predicted that small proposals will come forward that meet the criteria as set out in the settlement hierarchy and rural areas policy. Exceptional larger proposals will only come forward if they have local support and as such cannot be predicted through this trajectory. It is anticipated for the first five years of the plan the existing commitments consented through the 1993 Local Plan will come forward (this produces a high initial build out rate of up to 144 in 12/13.) Beyond this period as the Core Strategy is implemented the trajectory only allows for a small rate of development. This trajectory may be exceeded if individual parishes or villages come forward that are in favour of growth. Careful monitoring will be undertaken to understand the implications and impact of this approach on the rural areas.

5.21 **Brownfield Land** – The majority of future growth in the district will on non-previously developed land (Greenfield). The reasons for this are two fold; firstly, the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan and the associated restricted land supply, has led to many potential brownfield sites being built out in the district over the last 10-15 years. Secondly, as a rural district, Fenland does not have large areas of historic brownfield land that may be available in larger settlements with a history of manufacturing and industry.

5.22 It is anticipated that sites with the settlements that come through as part of the criteria base approach, will continue to deliver on Brownfield sites but the amount is difficult to predict. As growth will be directed to the broad locations on the edge of the market towns, these will be predominately Greenfield.

Summary

5.23 The District Wide Trajectory and the individual location trajectories demonstrate that the housing growth target of 11,000 dwellings 2011-2031 can be met. Furthermore, it illustrates that the annual build rate required to achieve this target is below that actually achieved in previous years in the context of an ageing local plan. By location it also demonstrates that the annual build rate can be met. In both March and Wisbech, where previous trends are marginally exceeded in peak years an improved market brought about by the implementation of the Core Strategy is expected to enable delivery of the housing target to be met. The flexible approach as set out in the Core Strategy will also enable additional smaller sites to come forward to contribute to delivery.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This evidence report brings together a wide range of evidence and can confidently conclude that a target of 11,000 dwellings is considered to be the most appropriate for Fenland over the plan period 2011-2031. This target is deemed to meet the need and demand for dwellings in the district, through population growth and affordable housing need and also provide housing growth that will be used as a catalyst for addressing deprivation issues in the district.

6.2 To ensure that the Core Strategy is effective and that housing growth is delivered the following issues will need to be carefully addressed:-

- Intelligence through evidence gathering and interaction with market stakeholders is essential to understand the local housing market and to support implementation
- Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations will need to be master-planned to ensure housing growth is planned strategically.
- Monitoring should be undertaken to understand housing delivery. Contingencies should be triggered where there are significant and sustained departures from the planned delivery.

7 Reasonable Alternatives

7.1 This section considers the reasonable alternatives that were considered as part of this report but were rejected in preference of the preferred approach as set out in the section above.

1. Higher Housing Growth – this option would be contrary to the agreed Cambridge HMA apportionment and be contrary to the evidence regarding market deliverability. Other than 'land supply' there is no sound evidence to suggest a target above 11,000.

2. Lower Housing Growth – this option would be contrary to the agreed Cambridge HMA apportionment and be contrary to the evidence regarding market deliverability. It also does not represent Fenland's aspiration to address issues of deprivation in the district through capturing the benefits of housing growth.

3. Using a range of growth – the Core Strategy consultation July – Sept 2011 included a range of growth 11,000 – 16,000. It was however, rejected for the following reasons:

a) Consultation comments made clear that this 'range' approach was confusing and lead to uncertainty for infrastructure providers.
b) Whilst the higher figure was seen as aspirational it is unlikely to be delivered unless there is a significant step change in the demand for dwellings in the district.
c) this option would be contrary to the agreed Cambridge HMA apportionment.
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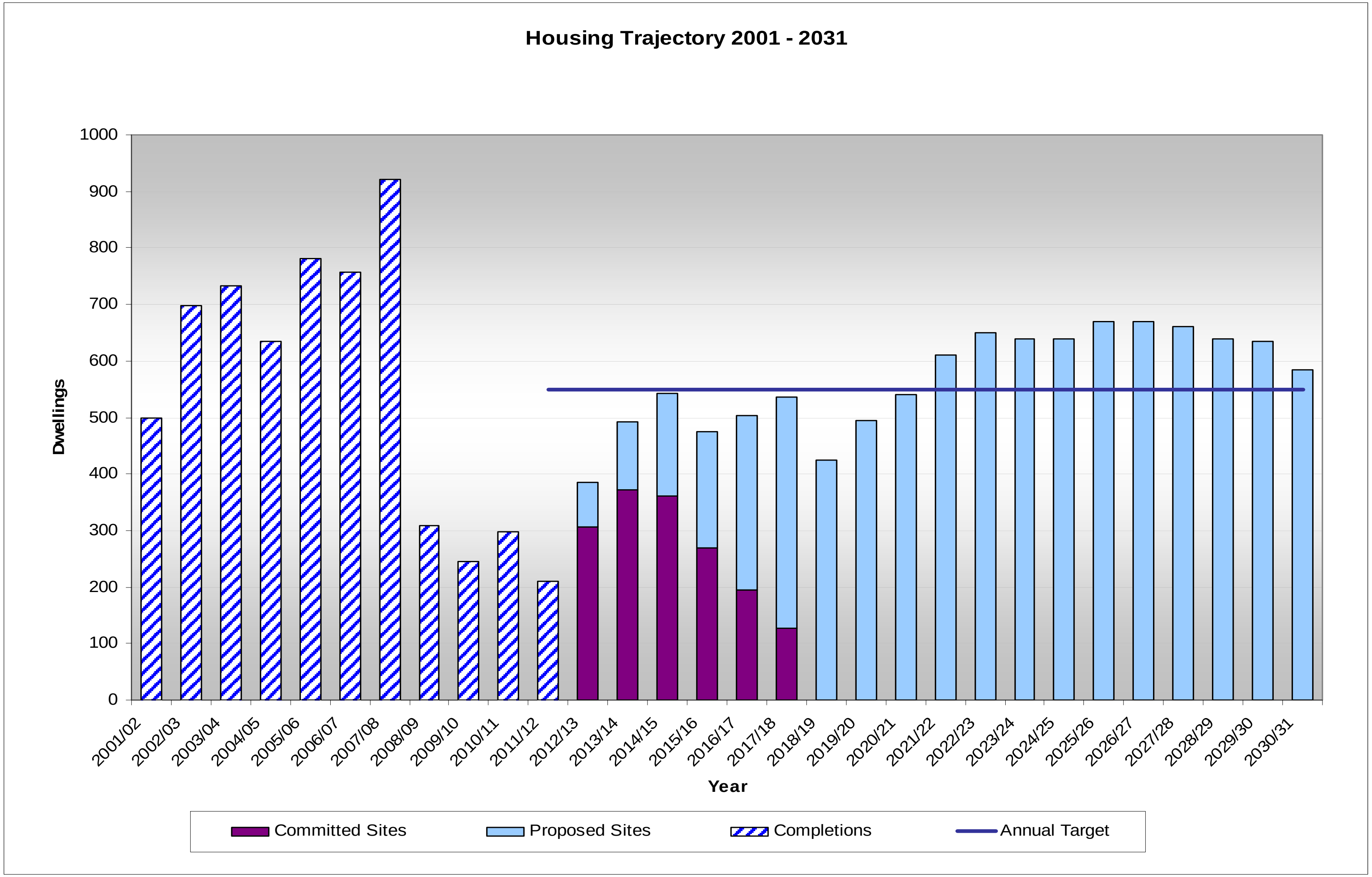
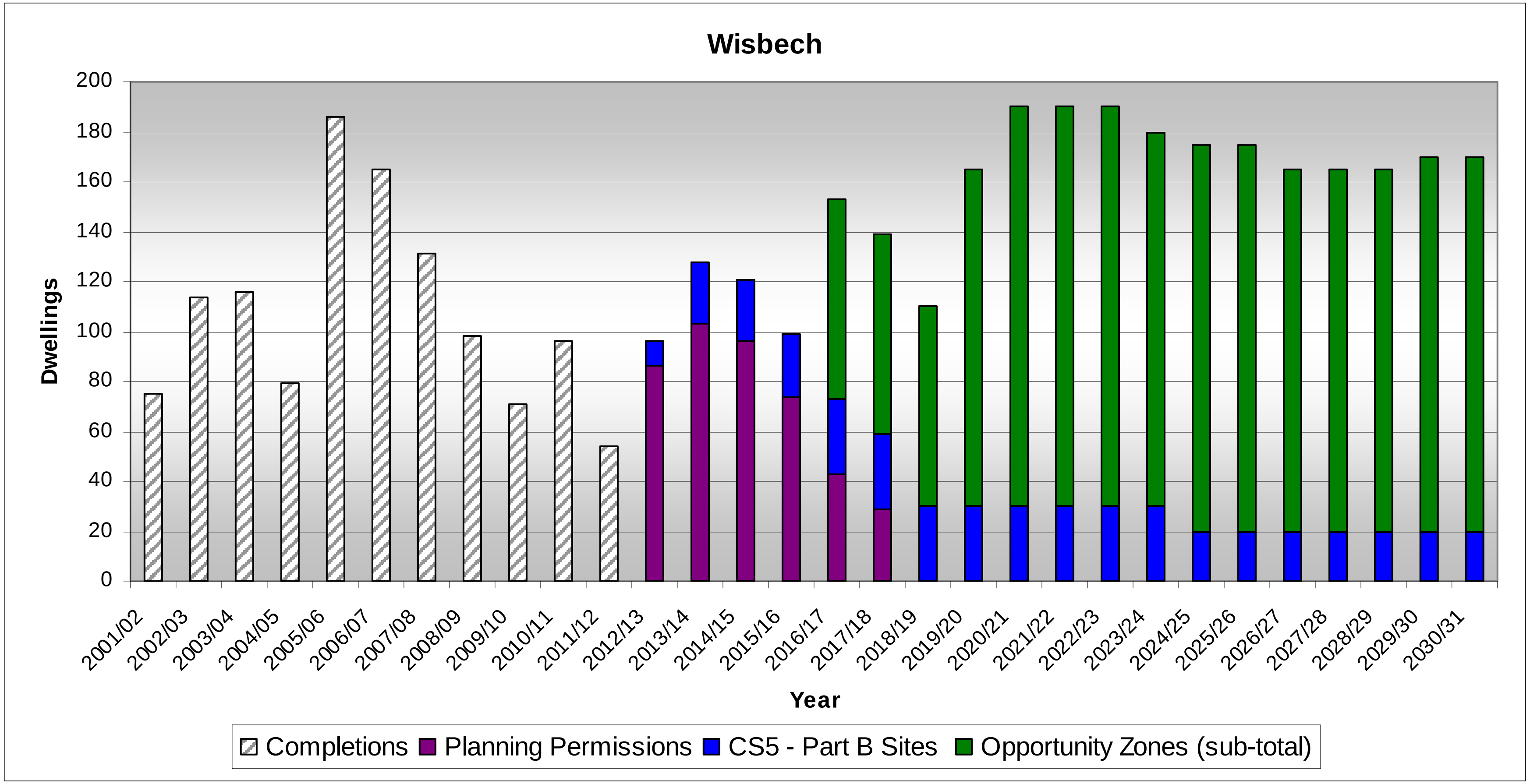
District Wide



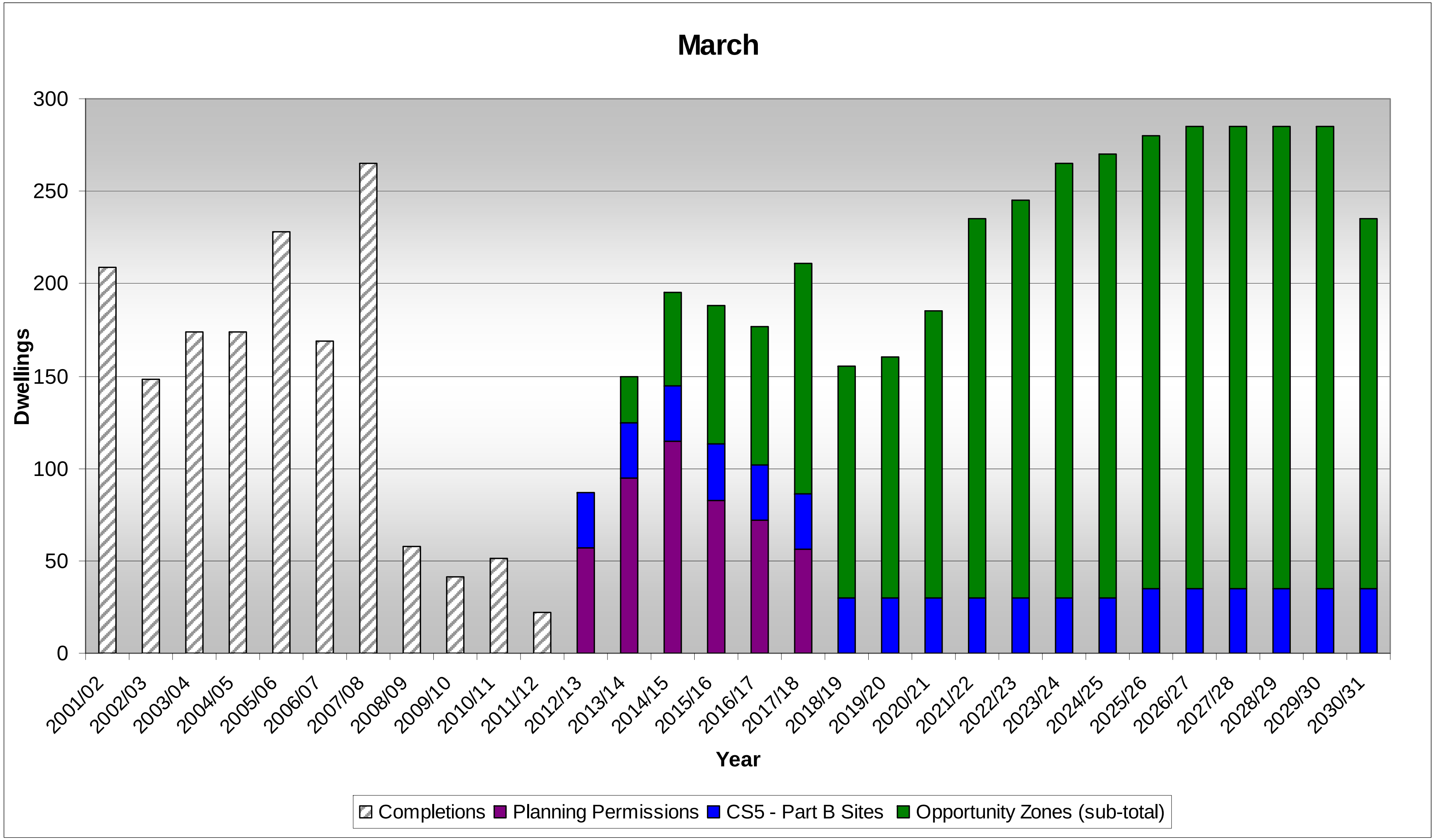
	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
District-wide Total																															0
Completions Totals	500	697	734	635	781	758	922	308	245	298	209																				209
Strategic Allocations												0	25	80	105	175	275	285	300	340	340	360	370	375	380	390	380	350	340	280	5150
Broad Locations												0	0	0	0	30	30	30	85	85	135	140	140	145	160	150	150	150	155	165	1750
Opportunity Zones	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	80	105	205	305	315	385	425	475	500	510	520	540	540	530	500	495	445	6900
CS5 - Part B Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80	95	100	100	105	105	110	110	115	135	150	130	120	130	130	130	140	140	140	2265
Planning Permissions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	306	373	362	269	194	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1630
Total												366	473	557	489	519	581	495	560	580	600	635	625	630	665	670	635	615	575	525	11004

Wisbech

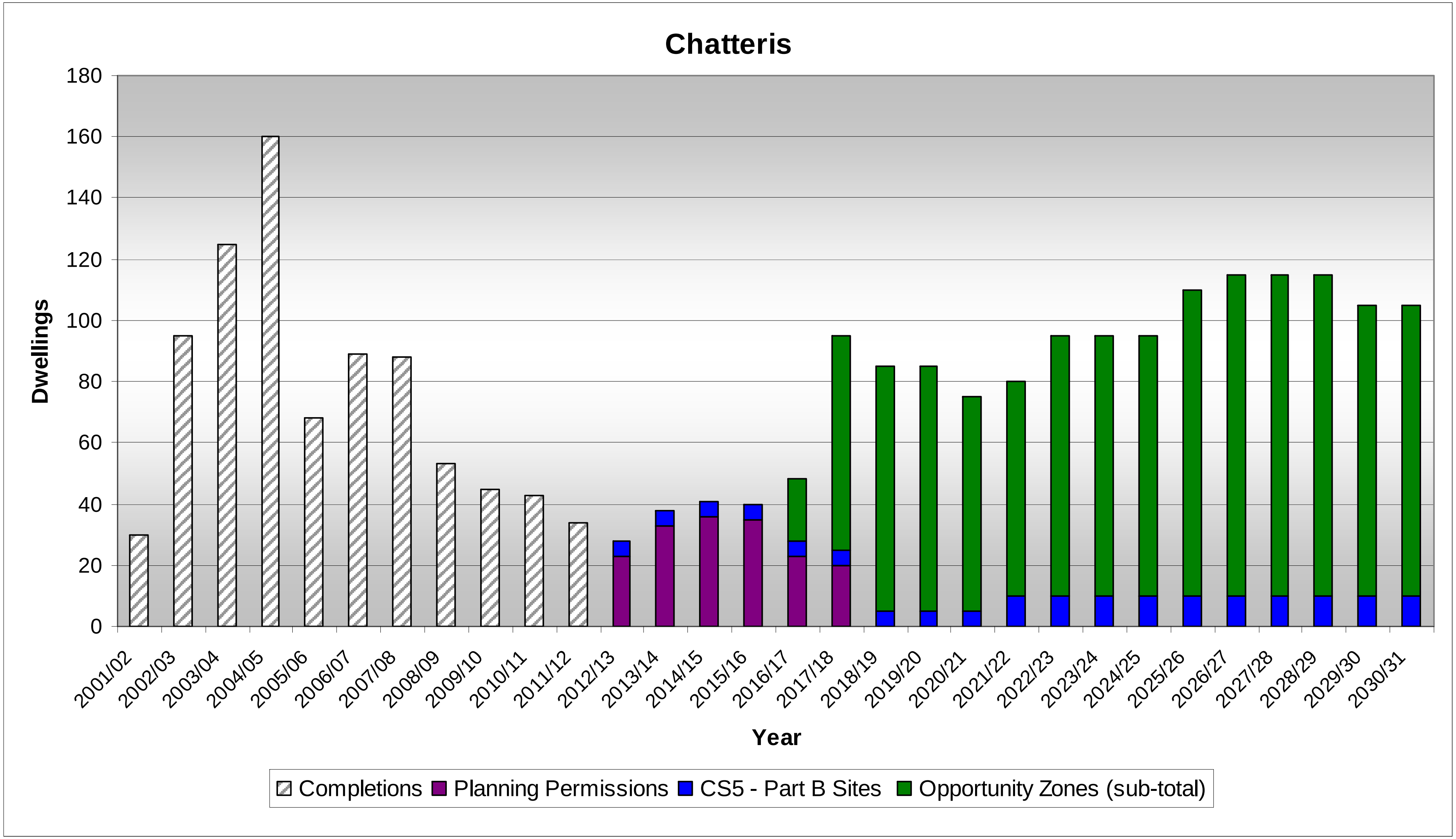


Wisbech
Dwellings
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2022/23
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26
2026/27
2027/28
2028/29
2029/30
2030/31
Year
Completions
Planning Permissions
CS5 - Part B Sites
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)

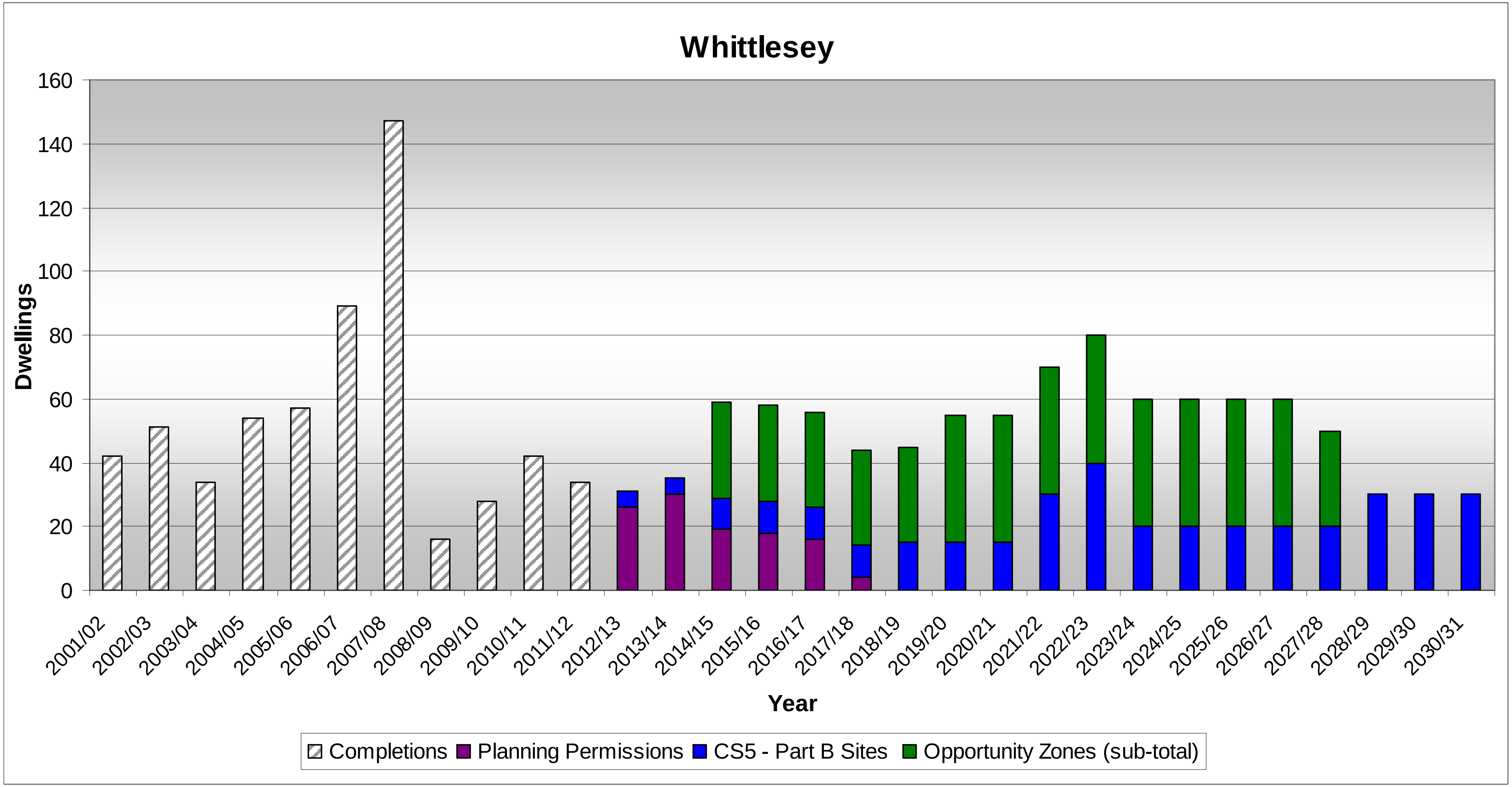
	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
WISBECH																															
Strategic Allocations																															
East Wisbech												0	0	0	0	50	50	50	50	75	75	70	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	900
Broad Locations of Growth																															900
West Wisbech																															
South Wisbech												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	55	55	60	60	65	65	65	65	65	70	70	750
Nene Water-Front and Port Area												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	20	20	20	100
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)												0	0	0	0	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	300
CS5 - Part B Sites																															1150
Planning Permissions												0	0	0	0	80	80	80	135	160	160	160	150	155	155	145	145	145	150	150	2050
Completions 11/12												10	25	25	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	465
Total												86	103	96	74	43	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	431
Completions	75	114	116	79	186	165	131	98	71	96	54																				54
												96	128	121	99	153	139	110	165	190	190	190	180	175	175	165	165	165	170	170	3000


March
Dwellings
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2022/23
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26
2026/27
2027/28
2028/29
2029/30
2030/31
Year
Completions
Planning Permissions
CS5 - Part B Sites
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)

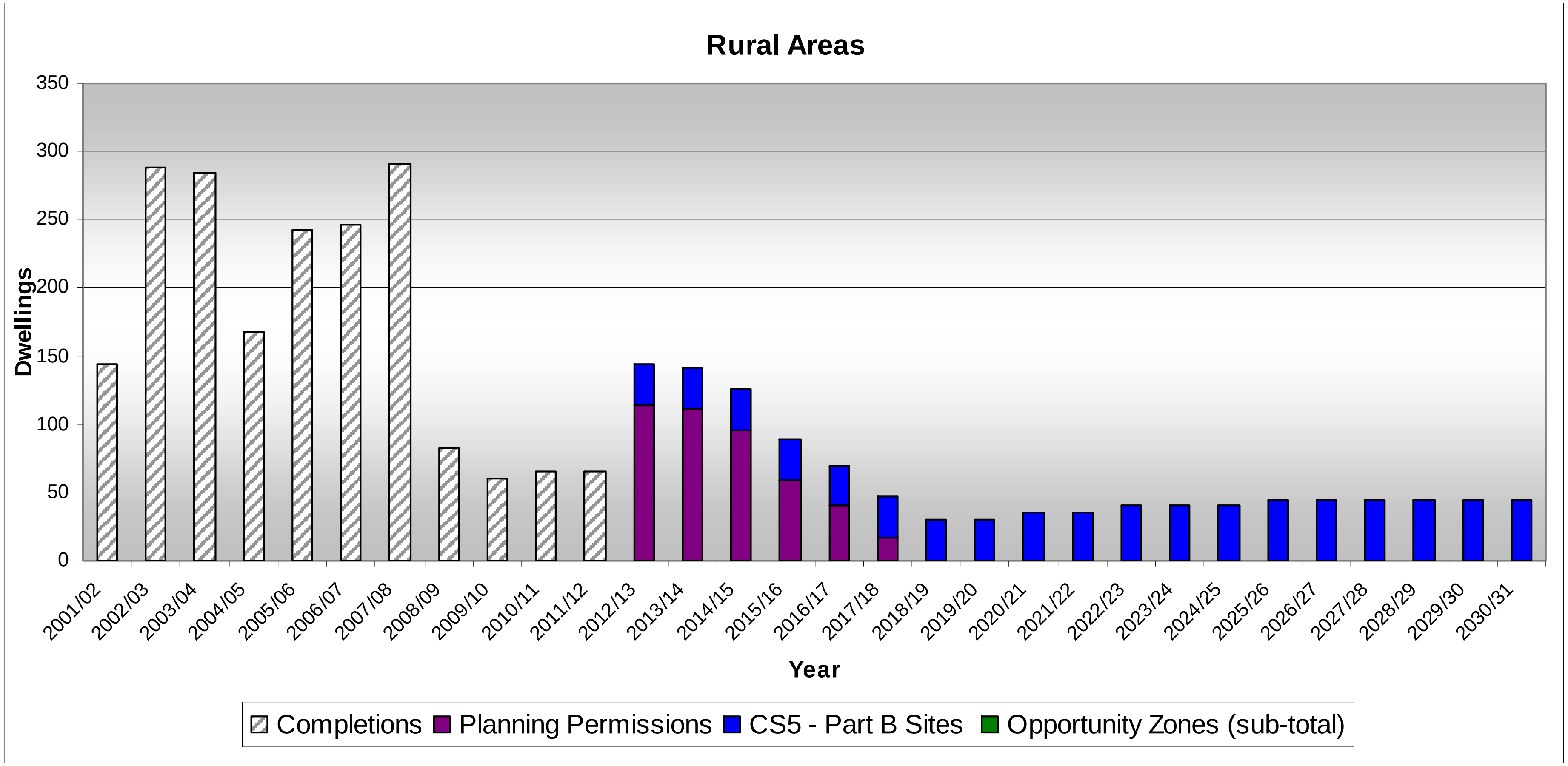
	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
MARCH																															
Strategic Allocations																															
South-East March												0	0	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	35	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	0	600
North-East												0	25	25	50	50	100	100	100	125	125	130	135	140	145	150	150	150	150	150	2000
West March												0	25	50	75	75	125	125	130	155	155	165	185	190	195	200	200	200	200	150	2600
Broad Locations of Growth																															
North March [trading estate]												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South-West March												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
CS5 - Part B Sites												0	25	50	75	75	125	125	130	155	205	215	235	240	245	250	250	250	250	200	3100
Planning Permissions												30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	35	35	35	35	35	35	600
Completions 11/12												57	95	115	83	72	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	478
Total																															22
Completions	209	148	174	174	228	169	265	58	41	51	22	87	150	195	188	177	211	155	160	185	235	245	265	270	280	285	285	285	285	235	4200


Chatteris
Dwellings
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
180
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2022/23
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26
2026/27
2027/28
2028/29
2029/30
2030/31
Year
Completions
Planning Permissions
CS5 - Part B Sites
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
CHATTERIS																															
Strategic Allocations																															
South Chatteris												0	0	0	0	0	40	50	50	50	50	65	65	65	65	70	70	70	70	70	850
East Chatteris												0	0	0	0	20	30	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	10	0	300
Broad Locations of Growth												0	0	0	0	20	70	80	80	70	70	85	85	85	85	90	90	90	80	70	1150
North Chatteris																															
(sub-total)												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	15	15	15	25	100
CS5 - Part B Sites												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	15	15	15	25	100
Planning Permissions												0	0	0	0	20	70	80	80	70	70	85	85	85	100	105	105	105	95	95	1250
Completions 11/12												5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	145
Total												23	33	36	35	23	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	170
Completions	**30**	**95**	**125**	**160**	**68**	**89**	**88**	**53**	**45**	**43**	**34**																				34
												28	38	41	40	48	95	85	85	75	80	95	95	95	110	115	115	115	105	105	1599
																															0


Whittlesey
Dwellings
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2022/23
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26
2026/27
2027/28
2028/29
2029/30
2030/31
Year
Completions
Planning Permissions
CS5 - Part B Sites
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
WHITTLESEY																															
Strategic Allocations																															
East Whittlesey												0	0	30	30	30	30	30	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	30	0	0	0	500
Broad Locations of Growth																															
NA												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)												0	0	30	30	30	30	30	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	30	0	0	0	500
CS5 - Part B Sites												5	5	10	10	10	10	15	15	15	30	40	20	20	20	20	20	30	30	30	355
Planning Permissions												26	30	19	18	16	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	113
Completions 11/12																															34
Total												31	35	59	58	56	44	45	55	55	70	80	60	60	60	60	50	30	30	30	1002
Completions	42	51	34	54	57	89	147	16	28	42	34																				



Rural Areas
Dwellings
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2022/23
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26
2026/27
2027/28
2028/29
2029/30
2030/31
Year
Completions
Planning Permissions
CS5 - Part B Sites
Opportunity Zones (sub-total)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
OTHER																															
Opportunity Zones												0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS5 - Part B Sites												30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	35	35	40	40	40	45	45	45	45	45	45	700
Planning Permissions												114	112	96	59	40	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	438
Completions 11/12																															65
Total												144	142	126	89	70	47	30	30	35	35	40	40	40	45	45	45	45	45	45	1203
Completions	**144**	**289**	**285**	**168**	**242**	**246**	**291**	**83**	**60**	**66**	**65**																				0

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