

Castle Point Housing Capacity Research

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Quality Statement: In preparing this Technical Note, the authors have acted with objectivity, impartiality, without interference and with reference to all appropriate available sources of information. No performance-related or contingent fees have been agreed, and there is no known conflict of interest in advising the client group about the delivery of sites in the Castle Point and surrounding areas.

Approved by: Russ Porter, Director, 30/10/25

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Introduction

1. This technical note discusses Porter Planning Economics Ltd (Porter PE) research into market absorption rates and the implications this may have for meeting future housing delivery rates in Castle Point borough. This is intended to help inform the Council's discussion about how best to plan strategically to help meet the Government's aim to build 1.5 million new homes over five years using a combination of increased housebuilding targets, planning reforms and public investment.

Background

2. Changes were introduced to the housing targets through the revised NPPF, as published in December 2024. This is resulting in local planning authorities being set mandatory housing delivery targets, along with stricter consequences for failing to meet the allocated delivery rates. To support its housing delivery objectives, the Government has also implemented a policy change to facilitate the release of Green Belt land through the introduction of "Grey Belt". This refers to Green Belt land which has previously been developed or does not significantly contribute to the core purposes of the Green Belt as defined within the NPPF.
3. For Castle Point, the new mandatory requirement is 11,662 homes to be delivered over 17 years. This would be an average of 686 homes delivered per annum. Owing to its historical housing delivery rates and the characteristics of the local housing market absorption, the Council has a concern that the required volume of new homes may not align with the local market demand, potentially leading to a delivery mismatch within a relatively small borough. There is also a concern that meeting the target number of homes will require delivery outside the urban regeneration areas, and the oversaturation of new homes will undermine the Council's ability to deliver its renewal and regeneration ambitions on its urban sites in sustainable locations, which make the best use of brownfield land.
4. To help ascertain whether the 686 dwellings per annum average is achievable, it is necessary to understand how the local housing market functions. In this note, we explore the national and local housing market in relation to build rates, covering market absorption rates and local developer behaviour. This includes a review of recent studies and reports about build out rates, covering both historical and projected future rates, looking at local market factors. We bring the information together to project local housing delivery rates within Castle Point, and to assess how well this aligns with the Government's prescribed housing target for Castle Point.

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Literature Review

5. It has been observed that the number of new dwellings coming forward has not been keeping up with the defined housing needs across the country over the past few decades. Consequently, the rate at which sites are built out has been a common research topic in recent years.
6. Here we consider the key findings from a literature review of the key studies following the government commissioned Letwin Review in 2018. This is to help understand market behaviour and preferences, including what developers are currently doing and/or looking for, and to identify the drivers for any potential future changes to this behaviour.

The Letwin Review, 2018¹

7. The 'Independent Review of Build Out: Final report' was authored by Rt Hon Sir Oliver Letwin MP and published in 2018. It is often more colloquially referred to as the 'Letwin report', and is an important contributor to recent discussions about the market's lack of delivering sites and new homes.
8. The review sought to explain the gap between housing completions and the land allocated or permitted to deliver them. It is mainly focussed on the larger strategic sites with capacity for more than 50 dwellings, and particularly very large sites with capacity for more than 1,500 dwellings. This is because, as the report states, just one house will take only as long as required to build one unit, and because the largest sites are dominated by the major housebuilders, there is a concern about 'land banking' and 'intentional delay', which best fits with the housebuilders' strategies.
9. In summary, from a sample of 15 large sites (with 1,500 or more dwellings), the median percentage of annual site delivery through the build out period was 6.5% of the housing numbers. So, for illustration, a site with 1,500 dwellings will deliver 98 dwellings per year, and take more than 15 years to be delivered.
10. But also, the review states that we cannot rely solely on small individual sites to meet housing requirements, and that a need for more new housing is required on both smaller and larger sites.
11. The government commissioned review concluded that the primary constraint on the build out rate of housing developments is not planning policy or technical issues, but the speed at which homes can be sold at current prices, which is known as the market absorption rate. Amongst other findings, it concluded that the slow build out rates in the UK were mainly driven by market absorption of relatively homogeneous for sale products.
12. The report recommends that larger sites offer a greater variety of designs, tenures and types of dwellings that could be absorbed by the market more quickly. This would lead to the delivery of new homes being sped up on the large sites by increasing the diversity of market buying/renting/leasing groups. Therefore, local authorities are encouraged to subdivide large sites² to support this action.
13. The report also identified supply side constraints as having a significant impact on slowing delivery rates. The report identified that such constraints, including those emerging from the lack of construction workers, notably bricklayers, were leading housebuilders to slow their delivery so that high prices did not increase beyond market absorption rates.

¹ Ministry of Housing, C.& L.G. (2018 to 2021) (2018) Independent Review of Build Out: Final Report, GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-build-out-final-report> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

² Large sites are defined as being proposed for 1,500 or more dwellings.

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Local Authority Direct Provision of Housing: Fourth Research Report, 2024³

14. This report into the delivery of housing is in response to local authorities, Shelter and the LGA having noted concerns regarding the non-implementation of planning consents after approval. It states that since 2022, there has been a decline in housing completions corresponding to decreased demand.
15. It notes that local authorities do not have the authority to enforce the implementation of planning consents or influence how unimplemented consents impact further applications from the same or other developers. Instead, the reported delays were linked to market conditions, noting that housebuilders may be reluctant to construct homes without sufficient demand or if only lower sale prices can be achieved.
16. It was noted by one of the major housebuilders that planners should not be blamed because housebuilders are controlling their supply to maintain prices in a challenging market. Housebuilders do not want to build homes they cannot sell or can only sell at a reduced price, which significantly impacts the conversion rates of planning permissions to delivery.

Housebuilding Market Study⁴

17. The Competition and Market Authority (CMA) published in 2024 also provided a market study into housebuilding in England, Scotland and Wales, which also considered housebuilding and inhibitors to delivery. This was published in response to the then Secretary of State and other requests from Members of Parliament and industry bodies to carry out a review.
18. For context, the CMA's assessment of the LPA Housing Delivery Test (HDT) targets shows that the majority of LPAs in England meet or exceed their HDT targets, with 70% having achieved more than 95% of their housing need. Also, the CMA notes that there is variation in regions, with the London, South East, and East (where Castle Point is located) accounting for the majority of the areas where there has been significant under-delivery. We look further into this below.
19. Similar to the findings from the Letwin Report, it notes: *"...evidence shows housebuilders tend to build them [houses] at a rate that is consistent with the local absorption rates, ie, the rate at which houses can be sold without needing to reduce their prices"*. That is, the study indicates that housebuilders will determine what they build based on how much they can sell the houses for, rather than in setting prices to meet need. Consequently, there are cyclical variations in demand and housebuilding to reflect the performance of the national and local economies. Whereas 'need' tends to be more stable, with long term changes tending to reflect the changes in population growth and household size and composition.
20. The report also identifies a possible disconnect in the types of homes housebuilders are incentivised to build, with lower incentives to build housing aimed at consumers on low incomes. Therefore, while there may be a high need for housing choice among lower income households, the likelihood is that future housing sites will not be able to deliver the housing they can afford, thus lessening wider societal benefits.
21. It comments that innovation in the housebuilding industry is lower than expected in a dynamic, well-functioning market. This is likely to result in the slow take-up of new methods of construction that may build houses faster. Also, it notes that there is weak competitive pressure in the market to drive high

³ Morphet and Clifford (2024), Local authority Direct Provision of Housing: Fourth Research Report.

⁴ Housebuilding market study (February 2023) GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/housebuilding-market-study> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

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levels of quality and innovation. Consequently, innovation is being driven by regulation change rather than by the market through housebuilder research and development.

22. The CMA report does not consider that competition in the land market, or the land banks held by different housebuilders individually or in aggregate, either locally or nationally, is significantly distorting competition between housebuilders in delivering houses. But they comment that the amount of land being held in housebuilders' land banks is above the level that should be expected in a well-functioning market. They note this to be a consequence of broader issues, especially the complexities of the planning system, with the lengthy and uncertain nature of obtaining planning permission being a major factor. In this regard, the CMA found that the significant time and uncertainty involved in the planning process led housebuilders to hold large land banks, and recommended reforms to the planning system to address this.
23. It also notes that the industry has seen a reduction in SME housebuilders since the 1990s. Those SMEs that remain are also experiencing a disproportionate negative impact from the planning systems, which is largely due to the nationally introduced requirements placed on future housebuilding. They are also finding it disproportionately more difficult to secure land for development.
24. Overall, the CMA reports "*...the housebuilding market is not delivering well for consumers*" and that "*...it has consistently failed to do so over successive decades*", noting that too few dwellings are being built and that delivery "*...has persistently fallen well short of successive government targets and other assessments of need.*"
25. The CMA provides options for the government to consider, including three key suggestions in relation to improving higher build out rates. These are:
 - Option 2.8: LPAs could require a greater diversity of housing tenure for larger sites to be granted planning permission.
 - Option 2.9: LPAs could be incentivised by governments to increase the number of homes that are delivered through smaller sites.
 - Option 2.10: LPAs could require housebuilders to increase the diversity of the types of homes they build on larger sites.

Lichfields Start to Finish, 2024⁵

26. Lichfields, a planning and development consultancy, provides further research in their report 'Start to Finish: How Quickly Do Large-Scale Housing Sites Deliver?'. This research, which started in 2016 and is in its third edition, considers a sample of sites⁶ across the UK (excluding London) to provide a more focussed discussion on timelines and build out rates. Lichfields note that their research provides real-world benchmarks to assist planning for the effective delivery of large-scale housing sites, which can be helpful in locations where there is limited experience of such developments to inform housing trajectories and land supply assessments.
27. This report provides a useful insight into the timescales of the development cycle. Of most relevance here, which reflects on development strategies and behaviors, is the period between planning approval and the build of the first home, along with the build out rates following the start of the first home. The research focusses only on sites with 50 or more dwellings.

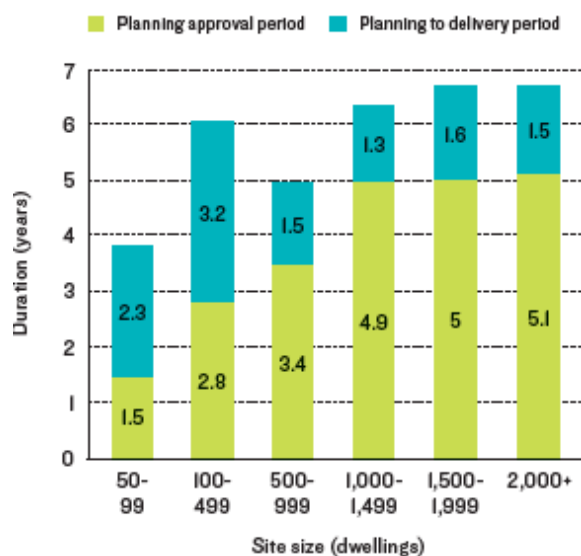
⁵ Start to finish 3: How quickly do large-scale housing sites deliver? (March 2024) Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd 2025, Third Edition. Available at: <https://lichfields.uk/content/insights/start-to-finish-3> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

⁶ 297 with a yield of more than 387,0000 dwellings, including 170 with a yield of 500+ dwellings per site.

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28. The research also refers to the ‘lead-in time’ that precedes planning approval and delivery. This additional period, which can include site promotion, local plan allocation and examination, securing planning permission and discharging of conditions, and a period of works to ‘open up a site’ before the first completion. So, the actual identification of a site for housing to its delivery can be a long process. Lichfields states that the research shows the planning period to delivery period has been increasing, and references the increased complexity of planning requirements and resourcing in LPAs. Lichfield reports that the ‘lead-in’ details are harder to obtain consistently, so their research data focuses on the ‘build period’.
29. A Lichfields’ research chart copied in **Figure 1** below, shows that the larger the site, the longer the time lapse for achieving planning approval; albeit the time duration tends to plateau to around 5 years for sites with around 1,000 or more dwellings. This compares to 1.5 years for sites with between 50 and 99 dwellings. Again, this reflects the complexities of planning larger sites, which will often seek planning in outline and reserved matters for detailed approvals, often with a land promoter breaking the chain by selling to a developer in the period before detailed planning⁷. This compares to smaller sites that will seek full planning permissions, which speeds the delivery process.
30. Conversely, the time between planning approval and the delivery of the first dwelling tends to reduce as sites are permitted for delivering more dwellings. We suspect this reflects the preparation speed of the larger developers, who will have established supply chains and can reduce the supply side lags in materials and labour that may impact smaller sites.
31. **Figure 1** shows that only sites with fewer than 100 dwellings can be expected to deliver anything within five years, taking an average of 3.8 years to obtain planning approval (=1.5 years) to deliver the first dwelling (=2.3 years). Sites with 1,000 or more dwellings take an average of 5 years to obtain detailed planning permission, and then a further 1.3 to 1.6 years to deliver the first dwelling.

Figure 1: Mean average timeframes for planning validation to completion of the 1st dwelling



Source: Lichfields analysis

⁷ As a result of this relationship, duration can vary significantly due to low interest in the site, protracted price negotiations, withdrawal from a sale and multi-phased sales.

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32. Lichfields Research defines 'build out rates' as the period from the completion of the first to the last home (i.e., the 'build period'). They note that the market absorption rate is a key driver of build out rates, and will generally determine the build out rate more than any other factor.
33. Similar to the Letwin report, Lichfields Research identified that delivery will generally vary by the scale of development. **Table 1** is a copy of their research findings for build out rates by scale, which is based on the annualised mean and median average rates across the various editions of their cumulative research. The latest research (as did the previous editions) shows build out rate increases with site yields, with medium sized sites (with 50 to 99 dwellings) achieving an average build out of 18 dwellings per annum (dpa), which keeps rising to an average of 136 dpa on larger sites with 2,000 or more dwellings. The reported range for these large sites was between 100 to 188 dpa.
34. The research also reports that tougher market conditions have caused build out rates to slow in recent years. As **Table 1** below shows, the build out rates are slowing over time in every size category. This is particularly evidenced among the sites with fewer than 1,000 dwellings.

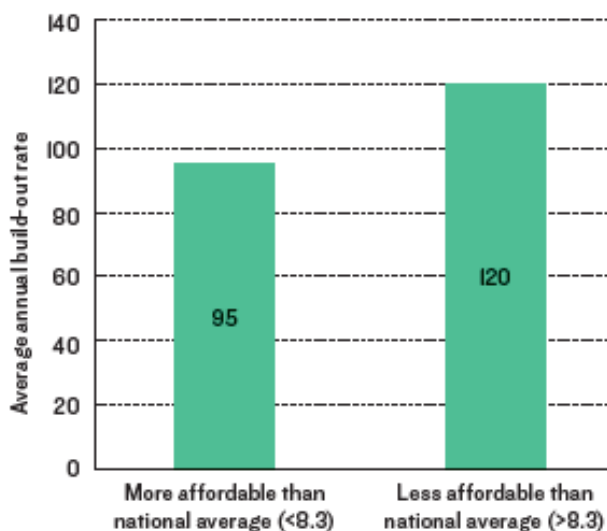
Table 1: Build out rates

| No. of dwellings | Mean build out rate (dpa) | | | Median build out rate (dpa) | |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| | 1st Edition | 2nd Edition | 3rd Edition | 2nd Edition | 3rd Edition |
| 50-99 | 27 | 22 | 20 | 27 | 18 |
| 100-499 | 60 | 55 | 49 | 54 | 44 |
| 500-999 | 70 | 69 | 67 | 73 | 68 |
| 1000-1499 | 117 | 107 | 90 | 99 | 87 |
| 1500-1999 | 129 | 120 | 110 | 104 | 104 |
| 2000+ | 161 | 160 | 149 | 137 | 136 |

Source: Lichfields Research

35. The Lichfields Research refers to the CMA report finding that housebuilders generally respond to the incentive to sell at prevailing market values by building homes at a rate that is consistent with the rate at which homes can be sold locally (i.e., reflecting the local absorption rate). Their research from a sample of sites with 500 or more dwellings showed that the build out rate is 26% higher on sites within local authority areas with median affordability ratios higher than the national average of 8.3. This is reflected in the research chart copied in **Figure 2** below.

Figure 2: Build out rates by demand using the national median 2022 workplace-based affordability ratio



Source: Lichfields Research

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36. Lichfields Research also found that favourable market conditions for house buying tend to align with favourable conditions for housebuilders. Conversely, worsening conditions, such as higher mortgage costs and the recent removal of policy incentives⁸, contributed to lowering build out rates.
37. The research also identified the following differences in build out rates:
 - Greenfield sites delivered dwellings 34% faster than their brownfield equivalents.
 - Schemes with no affordable housing delivered at a faster pace than those with affordable housing.
 - Conversely, schemes with affordable housing had higher delivery rates at higher proportions of affordable housing (defined by Lichfields Research to be at 30% or more).
 - Large-scale apartment schemes can achieve significantly higher annual build out rates than most schemes.
38. The better delivery on sites with more affordable housing (bullet point 3 above) may reflect the local sales values. This is because higher affordable housing rates are normally achieved where sales values are higher. Similarly, higher sales value areas achieve faster build out rates.
39. While large scale apartments achieve better delivery rates (bullet point 4 above), Lichfields Research found that brownfield apartment schemes with 500-999 flats took three times longer from planning to delivery compared to their conventional housing counterparts. We would also add that the protracted planning to delivery periods compared to conventional housing schemes of the same size are likely to worsen due to the changes coming through the Building Safety Act, with shortages of principal designers, fire engineers, safety professionals, including the Regulator required for the Gateway 2 building control approval stage. The Lichfields Research also noted that large scale housing schemes are more susceptible to market downturns and other development constraints, leading to unfulfilled delivery of their planning permission.
40. Lichfields Research also reviewed market trends in sales outlets (i.e., a sales centre or agent, which is either a building/cabin on site or an off-site estate agency where a sales advisor facilitates the sales of homes to customers). This is reflected in the Lichfields Research chart that is copied as **Table 2** below.
41. The research notes that sites with a single outlet achieve an average of 69 dpa sales completions, whereas sites with two outlets have a 62 dpa per outlet, and sites with three outlets have an average of 55 dpa per outlet. Consequently, the research noted that the average number of homes sold diminished with an increased number of outlets.
42. Lichfields Research also carried out case studies on a sample of five very large sites, ranging from 2,188 to 15,000 dwellings. The research found that the average annual build out rate on these sites averaged between 162 dpa to a maximum of 255 dpa, with the latter being on the largest site, which is Ebbsfleet in North Kent, which has permission for 15,000 dwellings.

⁸ including the Help to Buy programme, which was introduced in 2013 and lasted until October 2022, and the stamp duty holidays between July 2020, which came to an end in March 2025. However, the post 2022 changes post dated the Lichfields Research.

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Table 2: Average annual completions per outlet⁹

| No of outlets | Average annual completions | Average completions per outlet |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 69 | 69 |
| 2 | 123 | 62 |
| 3 | 164 | 55 |
| 4 | 230 | 57 |
| 5 | 286 | 57 |

Source: Lichfields analysis

Savills Research

- *A New Normal for Housebuilding¹⁰*;
- *Land Matters: The Critical Role of Sales Outlets in Boosting Housing Supply¹¹*; and
- *Unlocking the Potential of Large Sites¹²*

43. These three reports, prepared for the Land, Planning and Development Federation (LPDF) and Richborough Estates, consider historical, current and projected future trends for building sales rates and outlets. The first report, *A New Normal for Housebuilding*, was published in March 2023, and the second, *Land Matters: The Critical Role of Sales Outlets in Boosting Housing Supply*, was published in June 2024.
44. The report comments that housing delivery in England relies on sales of new homes to owner-occupiers through sales outlets on development sites. The Savills Research found that the number of outlets is approximately equivalent to the number of sites, with only a relatively small number of large sites supporting more than one outlet.
45. Savills Research found that the number of sales outlets across England reached its lowest level in at least 20 years in 2022. This is shown in **Figure 3** below, which is taken from Savills Research. Savills also expects that outlets are likely to continue to fall as the number of sites gaining planning consent has fallen every year since 2017¹³.
46. Housebuilder sales rates have remained at between 0.5 and 0.6 sales per outlet per week (i.e., 26 and 31.2 dwellings per annum (dpa)) since mid-2022, down from an average of around 0.7 (36.4 dpa) over the previous seven years that were supported by Help to Buy (which was introduced in 2013). If the

⁹ This research is derived from 114 data points from 15 sites.

¹⁰ *A New Normal for Housebuilding? The importance of sales outlets in a market without Help to Buy (March 2023)* Savills Research Report for Richborough Estates and LPDF. Available at: <https://www.lpdf.co.uk/wx-uploads/files/newsletters/Richborough%20Estates%20and%20LPDF%20-%20a%20new%20normal%20for%20housebuilding.pdf>

¹¹ *Land Matters: The Critical Role of Sales Outlets in Boosting Housing Supply (June 2024)* Savills. Available at: https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/363288-0.

¹² *Unlocking the potential of large sites (February 2025)* Savills. Available at: https://www.savills.com/research_articles/255800/372148-0 (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

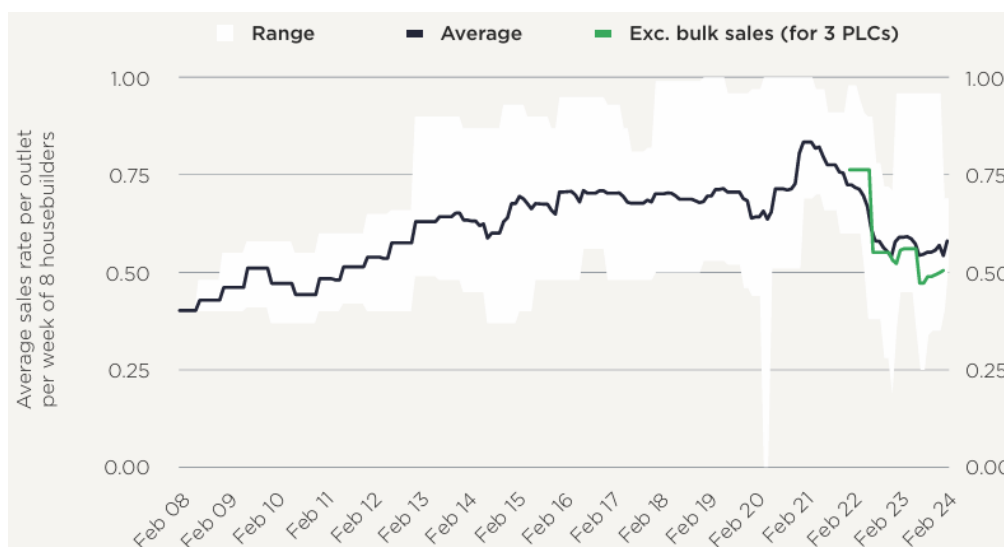
¹³ Savills note that a 31% fall in the number of sites gaining planning consent over the last five years has prevented housebuilders from opening more outlets.

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number of outlets remained constant at 2021/2 levels, a sales rate of 0.5 (26 dpa) would reduce the annual number of new dwellings' sales from 145,000 to 90,000.

47. With interest rates falling and housing market conditions improving, Savills expected the sales rates to stabilise at around 0.6 (31.4 dpa). Based on their analysis of eight major housebuilders in Savills' second report, they note their expectations to be well-founded. As shown in their research chart copied in **Figure 3** below, sales rates averaged 0.55 per outlet per week (28.6 dpa) in 2023 and reached 0.58 (30.2 dpa) in February 2024.
48. However, Savills expects that sales rates above the 0.6 level are likely to need demand support (i.e., government incentives) or bulk sales to Build to Rent investors and affordable housing providers. If a sales rate of 0.6 per outlet per week (31.2 dpa) can be achieved, this would result in a total of 110,000 new home sales from the same number of outlets.

Figure 3: Average sales rates of major housebuilders



Source: Savills Research using housebuilder trading statements and annual reports (based on eight major housebuilders)

49. New home sales have averaged 70% of total new housing delivery in England over the last decade, so this would have a substantial impact and make the Government's target to deliver 300,000 new homes per year unattainable. Savills' view is that the rates of new homebuilding would need to increase by 13% each year between 2025 and 2030, but given the slow pace of recovery in housebuilding after previous downturns, they note that this will be challenging.
50. According to research in their Land Matters report, Savills identifies that one million new homes on sites of under 250 plots will need planning consent over the next five years to support the total delivery target of 1.5 million homes between 2025 and 2030. It also comments that at the time of the research, the number of sites gaining planning consent had fallen to its lowest level for at least 15 years, and the lack of available sites means that the number of sales outlets remains close to a 20-year low. Consequently, housebuilders would like to open more outlets to compensate for lower sales rates and maintain total delivery volumes, but the lack of available sites means that the number of sales outlets remains close to a 20-year low.
51. Savills also notes that there has been a decline in smaller sites gaining planning, which is a major barrier to growth for housebuilders of all types, but especially for SMEs and new entrants. This is because smaller sites are less complex and less expensive to deliver, and they reach completion quickly. This will help release capital for new investment at a faster rate than larger sites. Consequently, Savills suggests

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that a wider variety of sites, especially smaller sites, would increase overall delivery and cater for a range of developer types, supporting SME housebuilders and new entrants.

52. Savills Research on the Potential of Large Sites, published in January 2025, further continued this discussion, finding evidence that sites in well-connected and high-demand locations delivered houses at a faster rate. It also supported the findings set out in the Letwin report that a greater distribution of types and tenures, and Savills highlights Built to Rent (BtR) units in particular, will lead to a faster delivery of homes.

BCIS Briefing: 2024 – a review of the year in the construction industry

53. The Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) is the largest source of house building data in the UK. The BCIS comments in their annual review of the construction industry that there is doubt about the Government's ability to deliver its commitment to build 1.5 million homes in England over the next five years.
54. It notes several leading figures and economists casting doubt on how the targets will be achieved, while its survey of developers identifies skepticism that the Government's plans to overhaul the planning system will enable it to be achieved. In the main, they highlight the lack of power that a government can wield in this area because, ultimately, it is property developers that influence the supply of housing to maximise their returns.
55. This is reflected by the early trend in delivery rates. Dividing 1.5 million homes by 20 quarters over the course of the Parliament gives a target of 75,000 per quarter. We are already six months in, and the latest ONS statistics show that in the second quarter of 2024, only 25,510 homes were started and 44,550 were completed in England.
56. From ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East to elevated borrowing costs, and tax increases, it is clear the industry is not yet free of inflationary pressure. Also, in the BCIS tender price index – estimate of tender price inflation (June 2025) briefing note, there are concerns about supply shortages in materials, but especially in construction labour.
57. Labour cost increases are the main driver, although material costs are still rising, albeit more steadily. This is because the demand will significantly outweigh the supply of skilled labour. This is especially an issue in the Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) provider and skilled labour shortages (especially in green-collar work), high demand, and long lead times, especially for key equipment. With the fast increasing demand for skills to reflect the increasing improvements required for Future Homes Standards, and especially with the number of LPAs seeking reduced carbon operational homes (green collar workers), but also in securing skilled labour to help developments meet the increased regulatory requirements under the Building Safety Act.
58. The concern raised by the BCIS is that the supply side shortages of labour and materials will hamper the speeding up of the delivery of sites across the UK.

Surveys of Developers in South Essex

59. The research thus far has been concerning the national picture. To better understand delivery and market absorption rates within Castle Point, we sought to obtain information from local developers. This included a survey regarding sites that had been delivered or were being delivered within the past

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five years within South Essex¹⁴, and a survey regarding sites within Castle Point that may be delivered subject to planning approval by the Council.

60. In doing so, we prepared two questionnaires: one for five major developers who had delivered or were delivering sites in South Essex, and the other for 18 site promoters of potential sites in Castle Point. The links to the surveys were emailed by Castle Point Council to the named site contacts, and emailed reminders were sent before the deadline elapsed two weeks later. The emailed questionnaires are shown in **Appendix A** to this note. Owing to the lack of responses, the process was repeated but with a much shorter questionnaire, which was followed up with telephone calls to any named contacts with a known contact number.
61. Unfortunately, only three participants gave any responses, which are summarised below.

Survey Responses

Developers of Completed/Developing Sites in South Essex

62. One respondent was a major developer of a mixed greenfield/brownfield site, which delivered 850 dwellings. The site benefited from an equal mix of buyers, including first-time buyers, families, retirees and downsizers and investors (for letting purposes).
63. This site received planning permission in February 2014 and was completed in three phases by January 2023. This site therefore delivered an average annual build rate of 94.4 dpa, which is above the average rate for larger sites that was identified in Lichfields Research. The developer felt that they could have delivered at a faster rate, but were hampered by planning approval delays, infrastructure provision and labour/material shortages.

Promoters of Proposed Sites in Castle Point Borough

64. Another respondent was a promoter of a development site that is yet to gain planning approval for a scheme that would deliver between 40 and 60 dwellings. It is at the pre-planning application stage. The developer describes themselves as a regional house builder, and are active in other areas in Essex, Kent and London. They typically build a mix of dwelling types and tenures, including mixed-use (including commercial) spaces. They deliver between 100 to 199 dwellings per annum.
65. Their stated average project delivery timeframe (from planning approval to full build out) is 2 to 3 years, and they note that they have not experienced delays in housing delivery in the past 3 years. They are expecting the same will apply to their site in Castle Point should they be granted permission by the Council. They aim to deliver within 2 to 3 years following a planning approval, with only one phase and one outlet for this site. Based on their timescales, the expectation is that the site will be delivered at an annual build rate of around 25 dpa. This would also reflect a per outlet sales rate of 25 dpa.
66. Another respondent, through a telephone conversation, noted the following points. They are a landowner and promoter of a development site in Castle Point, with a plan to deliver 14 flats in two blocks. Their stated project delivery timeframe (from planning approval to full build out) is 18 months following planning approval. There will be two phases, with one outlet through sourcing a local estate agency.
67. Based on their timescales, the expectation is that the site could deliver homes at an average build rate of around 10 dpa. This would also reflect a per outlet sales rate of 10 dpa.

¹⁴ Owing to the lack of recent new build schemes during the past five years within Castle Point borough, the survey was extended to developers of residential schemes in the South Essex area to help identify local delivery rates.

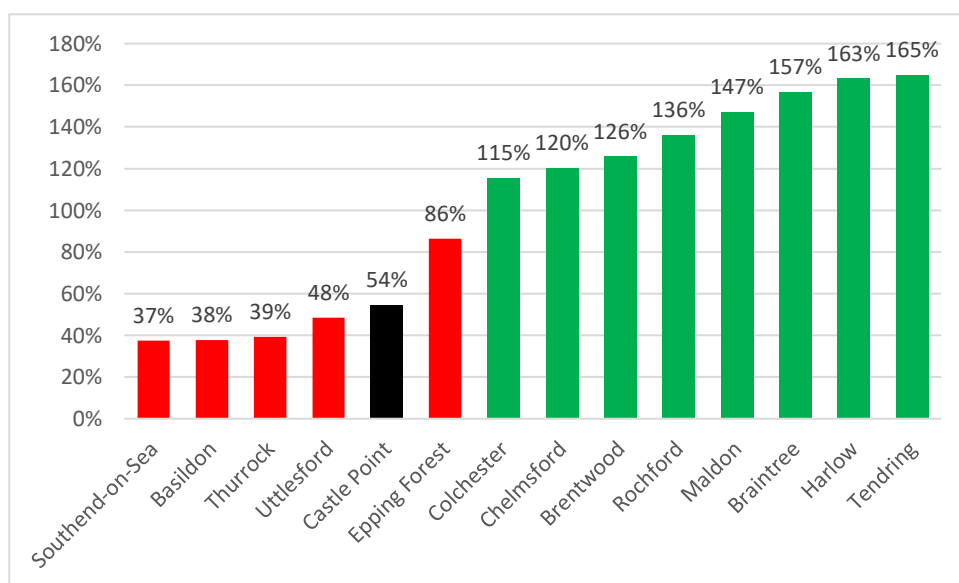
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Analysis of the Potential Housing Delivery Rates in Castle Point

Historical Housing Delivery

68. The government Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced in 2018 as an annual measurement of housing delivery across the country. It assesses the number of homes built in each English local authority area in relation to its housing need target over the previous three years. The last HDT was published in December 2024, and looks back over the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.
69. In **Figure 4**, we show the comparable latest HDT results for all the authorities within Essex. This is based on the percentage of homes built over the last three reporting years (between 2020/21 to 2022/23) compared with their annual target number of homes to meet need during this time.
70. The results shows a north south divide across the county, with all the local authorities within the north of Essex, except Uttlesford, meeting or exceeding their housing need (as highlighted by the green bars in **Figure 4**), while all the local authorities in the south of Essex experienced delivery rates below the required number of homes to meet need (as highlighted by the red bars in **Figure 4**).
71. This difference across the county is more significant when you consider how far housing delivery is below meeting the need within the south of Essex authorities, including Castle Point. Castle Point, which, for easy reference, is highlighted in black, delivered an average of 154 dpa over the most recently measured three years, so it was able to meet around only half (54%) of the need due to too few new homes being delivered. The Council has also noted that their most recent delivery has been 99 dpa. We consider the factors that may have influenced this below.

Figure 4: Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

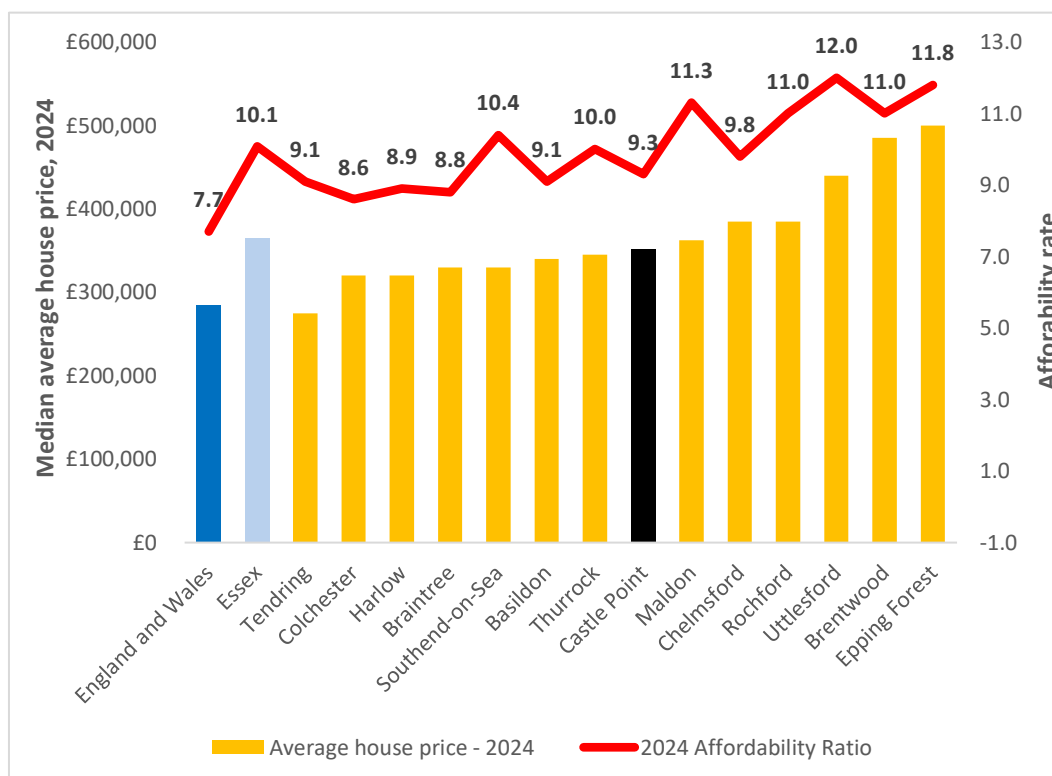
Relative Sales Values Affecting Market Absorption and Delivery

72. Castle Point and five of its more immediate neighbours have experienced delivery rates significantly below meeting need. This may be linked, in part, to the need for regeneration in what was previously the Thames Gateway area, along with 180-degree markets, which combine to lower the market absorption rates. As noted in the above literature reviews, the local market absorption rate is a key factor behind housebuilders releasing sites and dwellings forward that will support their required price points.

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73. As noted in Lichfields Research findings, market absorption is also closely linked with average sales values and local affordability. As shown in **Figure 5** below, in 2024, the average house price in Castle Point was below the Essex average. Also, **Figure 5** shows the ONS reported figures for housing affordability, which measures how much the average house price over a year is as a multiple of the median average earnings of a full-time employee over the same year. Affordability in Castle Point is 9.3, which is above the England average at 7.7, although it is slightly below the Essex average of 10.1¹⁵. The Lichfields notes that large sites that have a median affordability ratio higher than the national average have a 26% higher build out rate than those below the national average affordability rate. The combination of relatively low sales values and low housing affordability compared with the Essex average is likely to reduce any local housebuilder investing in Castle Point relative to other local locations in Essex.

Figure 5: Median average housing prices and affordability ratios, 2024



NB: Owing to no Essex affordability ratio being provided by the ONS, we estimate using the unweighted average from all the local authorities in Essex.

Source: House Price Statistics for Small Areas, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings from the Office for National Statistics

Relative Build Costs Affecting Market Delivery

74. High development costs relative to house prices may also influence housing delivery in Castle Point. According to the BCIS, a project's location can have a big influence on the end cost. Different topographies bring unique challenges, so do accessibility constraints, overcoming limited site access and transporting labour to remote areas can both increase the final project cost. Therefore, the BCIS provides a reweighting of their build costs by local authority areas, known as the 'BCIS adjust location

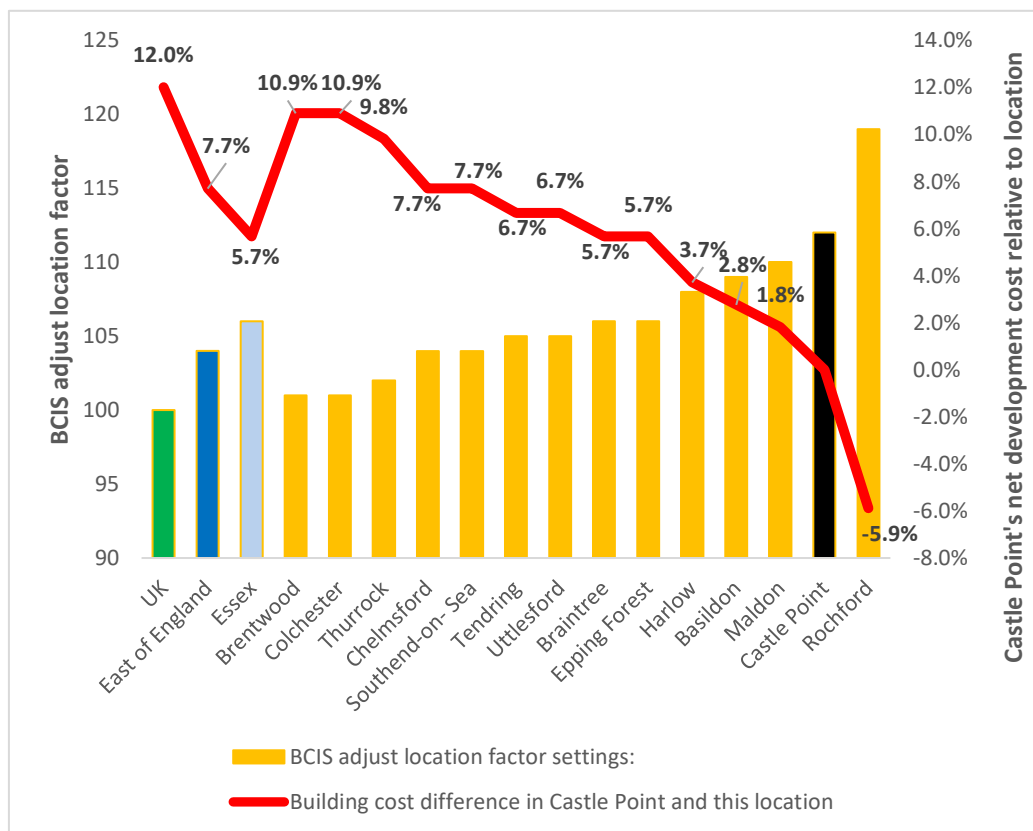
¹⁵ Owing to no Essex affordability ratio being provided by the ONS, we estimate using the unweighted average from all the local authorities in Essex.

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factor settings'. This is presented as an index that measures price differences between different locations, independent of design considerations.

75. The BCIS location factors are set in relation to a UK mean factor of 100. This is used as a benchmark to assess whether location-specific project prices will be higher or lower than the national average. We present the location factors for all the Essex local authorities in **Figure 6** below.
76. As the results in **Figure 6** show, Castle Point has the second highest build costs in Essex, with a location index of 112. Therefore, the build costs are about 12% higher than the national average, and 1.9% above the Essex average. It is reasonable to assume that the higher the build costs in a location relative to other locations, with everything else being equal, the lower the likelihood of housebuilders investing in that location.

Figure 6: Build cost comparison and difference to build costs in Castle Point



Source: BCIS

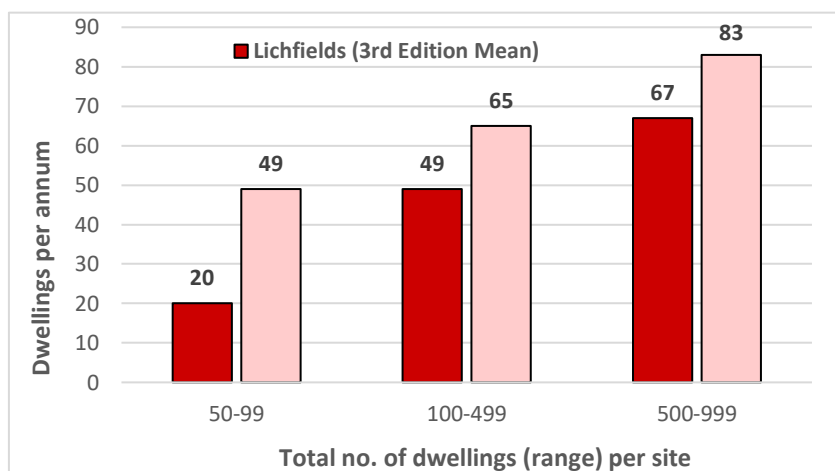
Planned Housing Delivery in Essex

77. We have identified achieved and potential delivery rates from a sample of 30 sites from nearby local authorities, namely in Basildon, Southend-on-Sea, Chelmsford and Maldon. This data has been sourced from HELAAs, 5-year land supply reports, Annual Monitoring Reports and, in some instances, from evidence submitted in associated planning applications. They therefore reflect the expected delivery, which is often more ambitious than the actual delivery rate of the potential site. We would also note from the research evidence reported above that the mirrored delivery rates from the other Essex local authorities are likely to be very optimistic for Castle Point to replicate. This is because of the relatively low sales values, high affordability ratio and relatively high build costs in Castle Point compared to most other authorities in Essex. Such factors will affect housebuilders' willingness to invest here instead of elsewhere in Essex.

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78. We have sought to compare how ambitious these localised rates are with the Lichfields Research findings on build out rates at the national level (as discussed in the earlier section). Since the Lichfield’s Research only discusses the rates for sites with 50 or more dwellings, and the Castle Point and the neighbouring authorities have no reported sites delivering more than 1,000 dwellings, we have concentrated on the delivery rates for sites between 50 and 99, 100 and 499 and 500 to 999 dwellings.
79. **Figure 7** plots the averages from the annualised delivery rates of the identified 30 local sites and compares them with the national average delivery rates from the research in the latest edition of Lichfields Research¹⁶. This shows that the expected delivery rates are significantly more ambitious than the national average delivery rates reported in Lichfields Research. The difference in the local expected rates rises from 25% for sites with 50 to 99 dwellings, to 33% for sites with 100 to 499 dwellings, and a substantial 143% higher rate for the largest sites with between 500 and 999 dwellings.

Figure 7: Comparison of build out rates from Lichfield’s and Porter PE’s research



Source: Porter PE research informed by Lichfields Research

Forecasting Housing Delivery in Castle Point

80. Based on the evidence of the build out rates from the Lichfields Research (3rd Edition) findings and the localised rates from the sample of sites within other Essex authorities, which were discussed above, we seek to understand what such delivery rates within Castle Point may look like.
81. For this purpose, we use the latest version of the emerging Castle Point Plan (as of April 2025) allocated sites. These potential allocations may not reflect the full housing supply over 17 years, but, in line with the NPPF, they should at least cover the first 10 years of supply¹⁷. They also do not account for sites already with planning approval, which sum to 480 dwellings, or the expected windfall from small sites with less than five dwellings per site, which the emerging Castle Point Plan notes to have been delivering an average of 45 sites per annum.
82. For this illustrative research, we treat these sites as being a suitable representation of the future delivery foreseen over the emerging Castle Point Plan planning period¹⁸, minus the committed sites and

¹⁶ Using ‘mean’ average rather than ‘median’ average data.

¹⁷ The NPPF expects Local Plans to identify deliverable and developable sites to meet the needs of the local plan area for at least ten years after the adoption of the Plan, and if possible, for the final five years of the plan period.

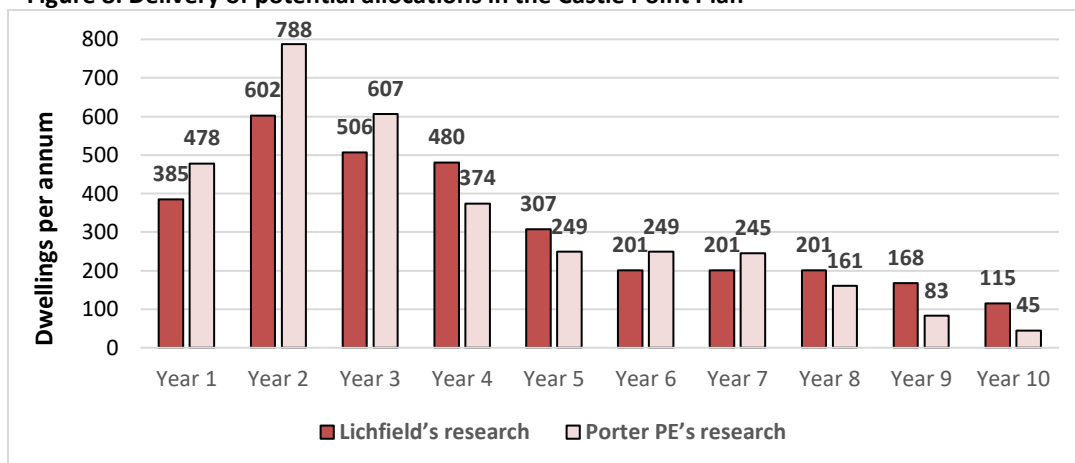
¹⁸ The emerging Castle Point Plan includes two sites within ‘Policy C1 Canvey Town Centre’ and ‘Policy HAD1 Hadleigh Town Centre’ where the policies do not detail the combination of sites that make up the total but notes there will be 536 new homes and 200 new homes. This is because the Council are allocating some sites in these policy areas with

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any windfalls. Also, for illustrative research, we assume each site has planning approval and there is a 6-month period before the first house is completed. Based on these assumptions, **Figure 8** shows the expected comparable annualised delivery of the allocated dwellings.

83. The results show that if the average delivery rates from either Lichfields Research findings or our more positive research findings of likely rates from a sample of Essex sites, there will be a significant shortfall below the target average rate of 686 dwellings per annum in Castle Point. Based on the localised build out rates, only one year shows the potential delivery to meet or exceed the Government’s target of 686 dwellings per annum. Based on the Lichfields Research build out rates, no years would deliver or exceed the Government’s target rate.

Figure 8: Delivery of potential allocations in the Castle Point Plan



84. Another consideration for Castle Point housing delivery may be reflected in the large development of 15,000 dwellings in Ebbsfleet Garden City on the opposite side of the River Thames in Kent. The Lichfields Research reports that its average annual build rate has been 255 dpa, which was the highest of all the large new place schemes that they researched. Yet, at this rate of delivery, the 15,000 homes, which is similar to the Government’s target for Castle Point, will take nearly 60 years to be delivered.
85. To further emphasise the difficulties facing Castle Point in meeting the Government’s target, we again refer to the findings in the Lichfields Research that a typical development will have one sales outlet per say 62 dwellings to be sold per annum. For Castle Point to reach the mandatory housing target of 11,662 homes to be delivered over 17 years, there would be an average of 11 outlets operating within the borough throughout the life of the Plan. Although unconfirmed, we would expect that this number of outlets has never been achieved in any year to date in the Castle Point borough.

Conclusions

86. The findings in this study identify a significant underperformance of housing delivery against targets in a relatively small number of LPAs nationally, concentrated in the South East, East of England or London regions, where Castle Point is located. However, it is in these locations where there is the greatest housing need, as there is in Castle Point.
87. It is acknowledged that meeting housing need in Castle Point will be dependent not only on the Council allocating suitable sites with the right potential for delivering this number of homes, but this will also

the intention that additional masterplanning will identify further sites for development. For this research purpose, we have treated the two policy areas as two single sites, with 536 and 200 dwellings coming forward. The impact of this is that it would have a higher and quicker build out rate than if it was many smaller sites.

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require housebuilders to build. This is because the evidence shows that securing planning permission is just one part of the housing delivery process, with build out rates relating to market absorption rates having a far greater influence in determining actual outcomes. Also, constraints on delivery from the supply side rather than the demand side are having implications through relatively high build costs in Castle Point. Consequently, it may not be due to a lack of planning approvals that the housing target is being missed, but because the market simply cannot sustain the volume or pace of development required that will allow developers to meet their expected returns on investment, i.e., profits.

88. The Letwin report, and other studies, acknowledged the differences in build out rates by scale, noting that “...large sites will almost always deliver a higher absolute number of homes per year than sites with only a few hundred homes in total”. The consequence is that the larger sites will generally have more housebuilders on a site, known as ‘outlets’, compared to smaller sites. In this regard, it is acknowledged that having additional outlets on site also has a positive impact on build out rates. But the larger housebuilders are incentivised to hold back on releasing too much supply at any time, which reduces the potential build out rates on their sites. This is to avoid wasteful competition.
89. While reducing the supply of housing through land banking was clearly stated in the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) report to not be uncompetitive, it was also acknowledged that reducing delivery based on market absorption to maintain prices is one of the reasons that the housebuilding market was not efficiently clearing the market. It is also important to note that any question of national housebuilders operating land banking strategies has been authoritatively rebutted by the CMA.
90. Based on the findings of this review, we conclude that the size of the Castle Point borough and its potential housing absorption rates raise concerns that developers may stagger construction and phase developments cautiously. This is reflected in the annual housing output and will impact the Council’s ability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply under the new housing target of 11,662 homes over the next 17 years, which is 686 homes per annum.

Realistic Delivery within Castle Point

91. The ability to deliver new homes at the scale required by national policy is fundamentally constrained by a complex interplay of local market capacity and local economic conditions. In Castle Point, the expectation to deliver 11,662 homes within 17 years is ambitious and must be considered in light of the borough’s market dynamics within the context of its relatively perceived low return on investment.
92. This is related to the high cost of building dwellings within Castle Point and the relatively low revenue market compared with neighbouring authorities. This, in part, reflects the physical constraint of its 180-degree market (due to the restriction of the River Thames), leading to physical severance, along with environmental conditions and designations, which are causing low market entry of housebuilders wanting to address such issues. Also, while new dwellings will typically have a lower sales price compared to neighbouring authorities and at the county-wide level, they are still unaffordable to residents who are working.
93. Similar conditions and experiences of low build rates have been shown elsewhere, such as through extensive work on the Isle of Wight Housing Delivery by the University of Portsmouth. We would expect similar concerns from that study about the severance of the IoW from the mainland may also apply to Castle Point. As this study neatly summarises, “...the low expected return on investment also magnifies other indirectly related issues and limitations of building on the Island, such as the underfunded Planning department, or the limited infrastructure in some areas, as developers are less able to take on any additional risk. In other words, if the returns on a project are already tight, and there are other

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opportunities elsewhere to take advantage of, then a developer will not have the capacity to take on more risk, or jeopardise already tight profit margins.”¹⁹

94. Castle Point has low historical delivery patterns and, currently, there is insufficient interest from large housebuilders in delivering homes within the borough. Even with public sector intervention and planning reform to push sites forward, the relatively low sales values compared to the rest of the East of England places Castle Point in danger of achieving low market delivery, which then places Castle Point at further risk of not meeting the Government’s housing target.
95. The latest Housing Delivery Test (2023) shows a 154 dpa average in Castle Point between 2021 and 2023, and the Council’s own recent monitoring identifies this to have reduced to 99 dpa. It has also been identified from our review that it would be rare, and possibly very unlikely, for any single development site in Castle Point to achieve an average delivery of more than 250 dpa. But even if this were possible, then there would still need to be an average of 11 outlets operating within the borough throughout the life of the Plan, which is unrealistic.
96. Given the size of Castle Point’s borough and its location, even if the land were available, we would therefore question the market reality of meeting the target number of 686 homes per annum. This is before setting further national building requirements for meeting higher standards, reducing carbon requirements, in addition to delivering lower value affordable units through social rented tenures.
97. The literature review refers to ways that Castle Point could improve delivery rates. This included investment in infrastructure and strategic interventions to support delivery, allocating a variety of sites, especially smaller sites, and diversification in the types and tenures of dwelling accommodation that might attract a wider range of developer types. However, the Local Plan viability evidence identifies that flatted schemes have poor viability, and the BtR market does not exist here. Also, smaller sites are less likely to contribute to meeting the affordable housing needs within the borough.
98. For Castle Point to effectively respond to meeting housing need while protecting the character and sustainability of its communities, then a more locally nuanced target and approach is required; one that ensures infrastructure keeps pace with growth, and also recognises market absorption rates within different areas, which is a commercial imperative faced by developers when operating in Castle Point borough. It would also require a significant increase in the number of sites being allocated, and seeking to secure different types and tenures of dwellings on larger sites.
99. Following such changes, we would expect that the latest average Housing Delivery Test rate of 154 dpa between 2021 and 2023, and the Council’s identified recent delivery rate of 99 dpa, can be exceeded. But the required changes to even double these rates would be significant because they are heavily constrained by Castle Point’s market absorption rate and developer interest. Even if delivery were to double to say 300+ dpa, there would need to be at least five operating sales outlets selling houses at the national rate every year within Castle Point borough. But even this would still be significantly short of meeting the Government’s housing target.

¹⁹ Phase 2: Housing Delivery on the Isle of Wight, Dr Adam Cox, Dr Alan Leonard and Professor David Pickernell, from the University of Portsmouth (November 2019).

Appendix A: Questionnaire sent to developers of completed sites in South East Essex

Developer Survey Questions on Housing Market Absorption Rates

Introduction:

We are working for Castle Point Council in researching housing delivery and market absorption rates from a developer's perspective. Your organisation has been identified as a developer of the XXXXXX site in XXXXX, and we would like to answer some questions about your experiences in the delivery of homes on this site and more generally. Your responses will assist Castle Point Council in developing the Castle Point Plan, informing future planning and policy improvements.

Section 1: Project Overview

1. What is the name and location (postcode) of your development? (Text Box)
2. What type of site was this: (Choice – single answer)
 - a. Greenfield
 - b. Brownfield
 - c. Mixed
3. When was planning approval granted? (Text Box)
4. When was the scheme completed or is expected to complete? (Text Box)
5. What is the total number of residential units that have been completed? (Text Box)
6. What was the tenure mix proportions?
 - a. Open market units (% Box)
 - b. Affordable units (% Box)
7. What was the rough average price point? (£ Box)
8. What type of developer are you? (Choice – single answer)
 - a. SME housebuilder
 - b. Major PLC developer
 - c. Housing association/development arm
 - d. Build-to-rent operator
 - e. Other (please specify)

Section 2: Sales & Absorption Metrics

9. From planning approval to full build out, how long did it take to complete? (# Box)
10. How many phases were there? (# Box)
11. How many outlets were there? (# Box)
12. What was your monthly absorption rate (units sold per month)? (# Box)

-
13. What was the average time between completion and sale/reservation? (# Box)
14. If there were multiple outlets, did they generally achieve similar, higher or lower market absorption rates? (Choice – single answer)
- Similar (Go to Q16)
 - Higher
 - Lower
15. If more or less, approximately how many units did they sell per month? (# Box)
16. Rate the significance of the following constraints to your delivery pipeline at this site: (Likert scale –1 to 5)
- Planning system delays
 - Land availability
 - Infrastructure funding
 - Development finance
 - Utility connection delays
 - Other (please specify)

Section 3: Market Dynamics

17. How would you describe buyer demand in this area (Choice – single answer)
- Strong
 - Moderate
 - Weak
18. What was the main buyer demographics? (Choice – single answer)
- First-time buyers
 - Families (typically in a chain)
 - Retirees/downsizers
 - Investors
 - An equal mix
 - Other? (Please specify)
19. What proportion of buyers do you expect to be mostly local to this area? (Choice – single answer)
- 0–25%
 - 26–50%
 - 51–75%
 - 76–100%
20. What unit types sold the quickest? (Select all that apply)
- 1-bed flats
 - 2-bed flats
 - 2-bed houses
 - 3-bed houses

-
- e. 4+ bed houses

21. Were there competing developments nearby?

- a. No (Go to Q23)
- b. Yes

22. If so, how do their absorption rates compare? (Choice – single answer)

- a. Similar
- b. Better
- c. Worse

23. Did you notice any seasonal or changing market trends in absorption?

- a. No (Go to Q25)
- b. Yes

24. If yes, what affected the absorption rate? (Text Box)

Section 4: Development Strategy

25. How do absorption rates influence your build out schedule? (Text Box)

26. Have you delayed or accelerated construction based on sales performance? (Box)

- a. No (Go to Q28)
- b. Yes

27. If yes, please explain how you changes the build out? (Text Box)

28. Do you use local absorption data to inform pricing and release strategies? (Box)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes

Section 5: Delivery Performance

29. As a developer, what is your average annual delivery rate (units/year) per site over the past 3 years? (Choice – single answer)

- a. 0 to 9 units
- b. 10 to 19 units
- c. 20 to 29 units
- d. 30 to 39 units
- e. 40 to 49 units
- f. 50 to 59 units
- g. 60+ units

30. How has the market absorption rate changed over the past 3 years?

- a. Increased significantly
- b. Increased moderately
- c. No change
- d. Decreased moderately
- e. Decreased significantly

31. What proportion of your sites experience delays beyond the projected delivery timeline? (Choice – single answer)

- a. 0–25%
- b. 26–50%
- c. 51–75%
- d. 76–100%

32. What are the primary causes of delivery delays? (*Rank or select top 3*)

- a. Planning approval delays
- b. Infrastructure provision
- c. Labour/material shortages
- d. Market demand/absorption rates
- e. Utility connections
- f. Other (please specify)

33. Are you currently using or considering modern methods of construction (MMC)? (Choice – single answer)

- a. Yes, actively using
- b. Piloting on select sites
- c. Considering
- d. No

Section 8: Planning & Policy Feedback

34. What challenges have you faced in aligning delivery pace with market demand? (Text Box)

35. Did you think the local planning policy adequately considered absorption rates? (Choice – single answer)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes

36. Please include any further comments that you would like to add here. (Text Box)

Thank you for taking part in our survey.

Appendix B: Questionnaire sent to potential developers of sites in Castle Point

Developer Survey Questions on Housing Delivery and Market Absorption Rates

Introduction:

We are working for Castle Point Council in undertaking research about the challenges and opportunities in housing delivery within Castle Point borough from a developer's perspective. Your organisation has been identified as a site promoter of XXXXXX site in XXXXX, and we would like to answer some questions about your strategy for delivering homes at this site and more generally. Your responses will assist Castle Point Council in developing the Castle Point Plan, informing future planning and policy improvements.

Section 1: Project Overview

1. What is the name and location (postcode) of your promoted site? (Text Box)
2. What is the potential number of residential units at this site? (# Box)
3. What is the current planning status of the site? (Choice – single answer)
 - a. Pre-planning application
 - b. Submitted application
 - c. Permitted in outline
 - d. Hybrid permission
 - e. Full permission

Section 2: Developer Profile

4. What type of developer are you? (Choice – single answer)
 - a. SME housebuilder
 - b. Major PLC developer
 - c. Housing association/development arm
 - d. Build-to-rent operator
 - e. Other (please specify)
5. In which regions and local authorities do you currently operate? (Text Box)
6. What type(s) of housing does your company typically develop? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Flats
 - b. Houses
 - c. Open market homes
 - d. Affordable housing
 - e. Mixed-use developments
 - f. Other (please specify)
7. On average, how many housing units does your organisation deliver annually? (Choice – single answer)
 - a. Less than 50
 - b. 50–99
 - c. 100–199

-
- d. 200–499
 - e. 500–999
 - f. 1,000+
8. What has been your average project delivery timeframe (from planning approval to full build out)? (Choice – single answer)
- a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1–2 years
 - c. 2–3 years
 - d. 3–5 years
 - e. 5+ years
9. What are the main factors influencing your housing delivery timeline? (Rank or select top 3)
- a. Planning approval delays
 - b. Infrastructure provision
 - c. Labour/material shortages
 - d. Market demand/ absorption rates
 - e. Utility connections
 - f. Other (please specify)
10. Have you experienced delays in housing delivery in the past 3 years? (Choice – single answer)
- a. No (Go to Q12)
 - b. Yes
11. If yes, please provide the primary causes (Text Box)
-

Section 3: Sales & Absorption Metrics for the Promoted Site in Castle Point

12. Should you obtain planning approval, how long do you anticipate it to take to complete? (Choice – single answer)
- a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1–2 years
 - c. 2–3 years
 - d. 3–5 years
 - e. 5+ years
13. How many phases are being planned? (Choice – single answer)
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4+
14. How many outlets are proposed? (Choice – single answer)
- e. 1
 - f. 2
 - g. 3
 - h. 4+
-

-
15. What is your expected monthly absorption rate (units sold per month)? (# Box)
16. If there are likely to be multiple outlets, do you consider that they will generally achieve similar, higher or lower market absorption rates? (Choice – single answer)
- Similar (Go to Q17)
 - Higher
 - Lower
17. Are there any thresholds of delivery (units per month) beyond which you believe absorption will slow significantly? (Choice – single answer)
- No (Go to Q19)
 - Yes
18. If yes, please give the threshold number (# Box)
19. How would you describe buyer demand in this area (Choice – single answer)
- Strong
 - Moderate
 - Weak
20. What unit types do you think will sell the fastest (Select all that apply)
- 1-bed flats
 - 2-bed flats
 - 2-bed houses
 - 3-bed houses
 - 4+ bed houses
21. Are you considering using MMC (Modern Methods of Construction) to accelerate delivery? (Choice – single answer)
- Yes
 - Considering
 - No

Section 4: Location Specific Insights

22. Why did you choose this location for development? (Text Box)
23. Are there any local constraints (e.g., flood risk, heritage, green belt)? (Text Box)
24. How do local amenities (schools, transport, shops) affect sales velocity? (Text Box)
25. What proportion of buyers do you expect to be mostly local to this area? (Choice – single answer)
- 0–25%
 - 26–50%
 - 51–75%
 - 76–100%
26. How does this area for development compare to other sites in your portfolio? (Text Box)

Section 5: Planning & Policy Feedback

-
27. What would enable you to increase your delivery rate? (Text Box)
 28. Are there policy changes or incentives that would help improve market absorption or accelerate delivery? (Text Box)
 29. Please include any further comments that you would like to add here. (Text Box)

Thank you for taking part in our survey.

