

**Housing Advice Note
Weston and Basford**

**August 2016
Report**

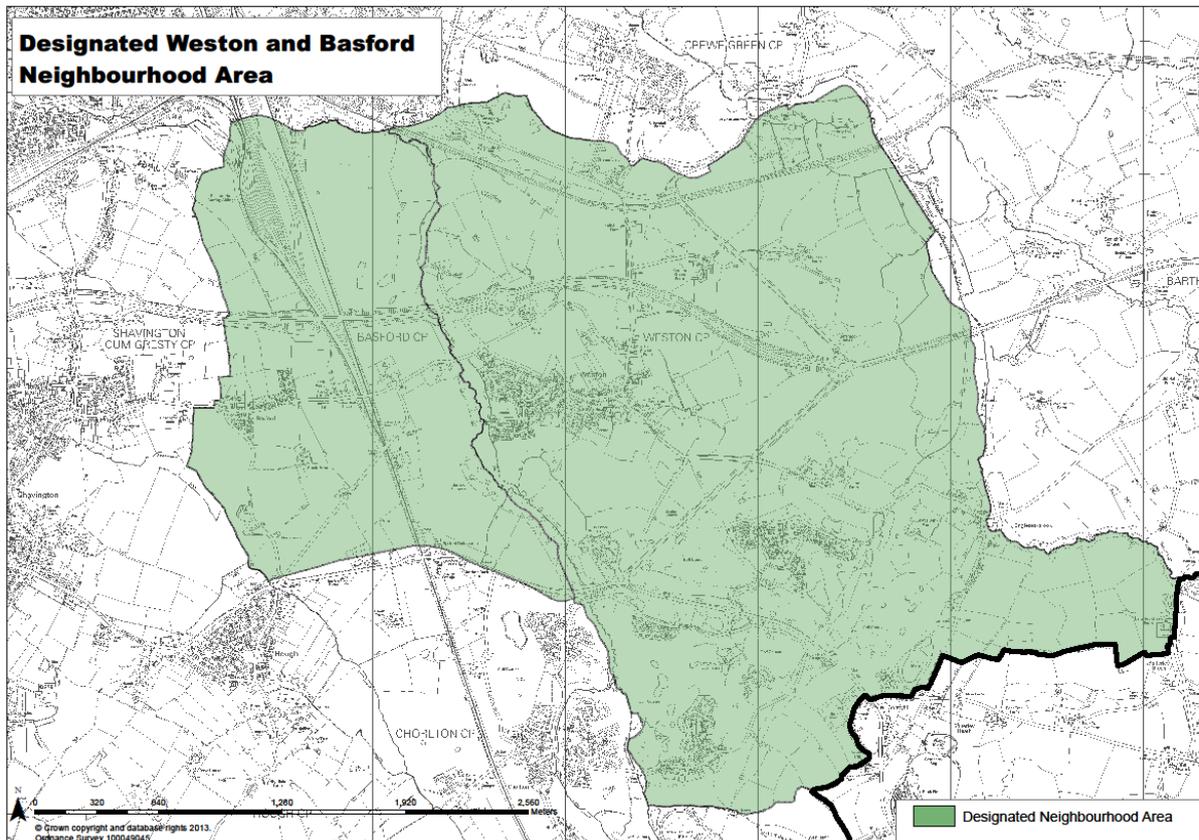
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Weston and Basford Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. This advice note is to provide information to allow the group to support housing policies.
- 1.2. The Neighbourhood area covers the parish of Weston and Basford in its entirety. A map of the study area is included below.

Figure 1: Map of Neighbourhood Area



2. Methodology

- 2.1. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) outlines that “*establishing future need for housing is not an exact science. No single approach will provide a definitive answer.*” Whilst you cannot establish Objectively Assessed Need at such a small local level, this Housing Advice Note will be underpinned by a methodology endorsed by PPG and best practice.
- 2.2. A robust assessment will need to assess a range of evidence sources including local data and be capable of being considered in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan in order to satisfy Basic Condition E. Basic Condition E requires the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.
- 2.3. Whilst the adopted Local Plan for Weston and Basford is the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Local Plan, the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) is currently under examination and once adopted will form the Development Plan for the area. Therefore it is important that to ‘future-proof’ the NDP, it considers the emerging Strategic Policies.
- 2.4. A balance needs to be struck within the evidence base when assessing housing need at the neighbourhood level, between the requirement to be in general conformity with the strategic policies and the demographic and other evidence which may give a different view at the very local level.

2.5. Therefore the relevant policies relating to housing supply will need to be conformed with.

2.6. The following evidence sources have been relied upon to prepare this assessment:

- **Emerging Local Plan**
- **DCLG Household Projections**
- **Dwelling completion rate 2001-2011**
- **Local housing waiting list**
- **LEP Strategic Economic Plan**
- **Local Authority Employment Land Review**
- **Census Data (demographic and housing data)**
- **Local house and rental prices**

2.7. The methodology for determining the quantity of housing need is to assess the range or the average of the household projections and formation for the Plan period and then adjust this upwards or downwards dependent on market signals. As this is subjective, any judgements should be reasonable and the process to come to them, clear and transparent.

2.8. The approach endorsed in this report is to assess the level of housing required based on need rather than any assessment of the supply of housing/housing land. This is in line with PPG. No supply or policy constraints have been applied to the figure. It is advised that further stages are undertaken to assess the conclusions in the report against available capacity such as policy constraints, landscape constraints, local factors, availability of land etc.

2.9. A range of local demographic factors and market signals have been assessed and applied to the recommended figure to balance any housing need requirements.

2.10. The report will focus on analysis of trend data and comparisons with Cheshire East averages to ascertain how market indicators and characteristics of housing need in Weston and Basford may need to be addressed in the Plan. The report will seek establish an appropriate housing figure for Weston and Basford based on evidence available, including DCLG household projections and the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Submission Version evidence base.

2.11. The HNA has interrogated a range of evidence sources and has calculated three possible figures for an appropriate quantum of housing for Weston and Basford, these include;

- *The emerging Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) housing allocation based on a proportionate approach.*
- *DCLG 2012 household projections.*
- *The dwelling completion rates 2001-2011.*

3. Characteristics of Weston and Basford

3.1. The following section will characterise the population of Weston and Basford as well as analyse the degree, if any, to which it may differ from the Cheshire East average. This will help ascertain the features of the housing need that may need to be addressed in the Plan.

3.2. Weston and Basford are two separate administrative parishes, however there is one Parish Council. The parish area of Weston and Basford is covered by the Neighbourhood Plan area. The full range of datasets for the Parish of Weston at the 2001 Census are not available and some of the information is only available at LSOA and MSOA level. Therefore some data comparisons have been amended to reflect this. The analysis of trend data is limited due to this fact.

3.3. Table 1 below illustrates the population and households of Weston and Basford. The average household size is broadly the same as the Cheshire East average.

Table 1: Population and Household figures for Weston and Basford Parishes

	Weston and Basford Neighbourhood Area	Cheshire East
Population	2111	370,127
Households	867	159,441
Average household size	2.43	2.29

(Source: ONS, Census, 2011).

- 3.4. Between 2001 and 2011 the Parish experienced an increase in its population from 1240 to 2111, representing an increase of 70%. Weston and Basford have received substantially higher growth than the Cheshire East average. This increase could largely be attributed to the development of Wychwood Park and Wychwood Village, large residential developments in the Parish of Weston.
- 3.5. Figure 2 demonstrates the age structure in Weston and Basford compared with Cheshire East and England. Table 2 illustrates the rate of change in the age of the population between 2001 and 2011. The rate of increase across age groups is significant compared to Cheshire East averages where there has been a decrease in younger and middle aged population groups and significant increase in the older population. The rate of change in the age of population is somewhat anomalous because of the significant increase in population (70%) due to the large housing developments in the Parish.

Table 2: Rate of change in age of population Weston and Basford 2001-2011

	Weston and Basford
0-15	66.14%
16-24	163.49%
25-44	74.61%
45-64	67.13%
65-74	42.00%
75 and over	60.82%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2001 and 2011).

Table 3: Rate of Change in age of population Cheshire East 2001-2011

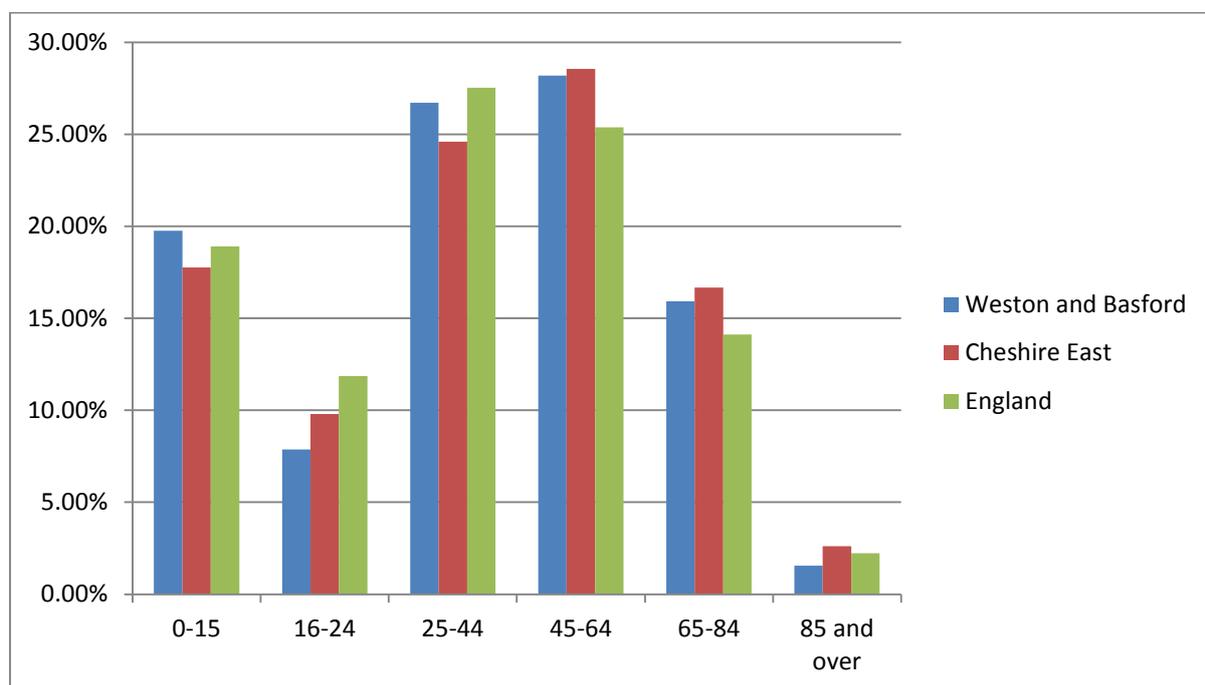
	Cheshire East
0-15	-4.1%
16-24	14.9%
25-44	-7.6%
45-64	12.9%
65-84	17.8%
85 and over	34.7%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2001 and 2011).

- 3.6. Table 2 and Table 3 show the largest growth rate experienced in the Parish was in 16-24 age group and was notable. This could be because of the growth in family housing witnessed between Census periods. Whilst Cheshire East also experienced

growth in this age group, the increase in older categories over the period was more significant.

Figure 2: Age Structure 2011



(Source: ONS, Census, 2011)

3.7. The proportion of the Parish in the older age categories is slightly lower than the Cheshire East and National averages. The largest age groups in the Parish are 45-64 and 25-44 representing 28.19% and 26.72% respectively, followed by 0-15 age group at 19.75%.

Table 4: Tenure of Households and rate of change in Weston and Basford 2001-2011

	Weston and Basford 2011	Cheshire East 2011	Weston and Basford rate of change 2001-2011	Cheshire East rate of change 2001-2011
Owned; Total	78.32%	74.49%	62.05%	2.9%
Owned; Owned Outright	36.56%	37.53%		
Owned; Owned with a Mortgage or Loan	41.75%	36.95%		
Shared Ownership (Part Owned and Part Rented)	0.46%	0.49%		
Social Rented; Total	4.84%	11.38%	61.54%	-2.1%
Social Rented; Rented from Council (Local Authority)	0.81%	2.69%		
Social Rented; Other Social Rented	4.04%	8.69%		
Private Rented; Total	15.34%	12.50%	111.11%	92.7%
Private Rented; Private Landlord or	14.07%	11.44%		

Letting Agency				
Private Rented; Employer of a Household Member	0.35%	0.14%		
Private Rented; Relative or Friend of Household Member	0.58%	0.75%		
Private Rented; Other	0.35%	0.17%		32.7%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2001 and 2011).

- 3.8. Due to the comparable data available for Weston Parish between 2001 and 2011 Census, we are unable to assess change for all tenure categories however comparisons can be drawn between tenures. The above table shows there has been across the board growth in Weston and Basford, dissimilar to Cheshire East which has seen decline in the Social Rented sector overall and limited growth in the proportion of those who own their homes.
- 3.9. Weston and Basford has less than half the Cheshire East proportion of households living in the social rented sector and a slightly higher proportion of households living in private landlord rented properties.
- 3.10. The increase in the private rented sector is significant and notable, experiencing a 111 % increase. This reflects both local and national trends.
- 3.11. Overcrowding, concealed and shared households can demonstrate an un-met need for housing and longer term increase in the number of these households may be a signal to consider increasing planned housing numbers. Due to the unavailability of data for Weston in 2001, the below table only illustrates the rate of change witnessed in Basford Parish compared with Cheshire East averages. In this instance Basford is taken as a proxy for the Neighbourhood Area as a whole.
- 3.12. Occupancy ratios are useful to ascertain the levels of overcrowding or under-occupancy in an area and whether adjustments are required. Table 5 shows the level of occupancy in Weston and Basford at the 2011 Census and also the rate of change in Basford between Census. It is clear in Weston and Basford there is a higher proportion of households with an occupancy rating of +2, meaning these households have 2 or more rooms greater than their requirement. This suggests overcrowding is less of an issue in Weston and Basford.
- 3.13. The figures have limitations due to the reliance on the Basford rate of change. Basford parish has no households with an occupancy rate of -1 or -2 or less at either the 2001 or 2011 Census.

Table 5: Occupancy Rates

	Weston and Basford 2011	Cheshire East 2011	Basford rate of change 2001-2011
Occupancy rating of + 2 or more	74.86%	62.81%	34.33%
Occupancy rating of + 1	15.80%	20.72%	-56.76%
Occupancy rating of 0	7.15%	12.91%	-28.57%
Occupancy rating of -1	1.73%	2.89%	0%
Occupancy rating of -2 or less	0.46%	0.67%	0%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2001 and 2011)

- 3.14. Table 6 shows Household composition for Weston and Basford and Cheshire East as well as the rate of change. All household types have seen an increase

between the Census period for Weston and Basford, this could be due to the high level of dwelling increase seen during the Census period.

- 3.15. The proportion of single households in Weston and Basford is lower than the Cheshire East average, however this has seen significant growth, as has couple households with no children. The Parish is home to higher proportions of families with dependent children.

Table 6: Household Composition

	Weston and Basford 2011	Weston and Basford rate of change 2001-2011	Cheshire East 2011	Cheshire East rate of change 2001-2011
One Person household - Pensioner	10.03%	22.54%	13.43%	1.38%
One Person household - Other	12.46%	151.16%	16.26%	30.90%
One Family and no others - All pensioner households	10.61%	15.00%	10.16%	6.68%
One family and no others - Couple households with no children	25.61%	93.04%	19.67%	5.14%
One family and no others - Couple households with dependent children	24.45%	75.21%	20.49%	-3.09%
One family and no others - Lone parent households with dependent children	4.61%	185.71%	5.87%	31.54%
One family and no others - All children non-dependent	7.61%	46.67%	9.68%	8.16%
Other households	4.61%	73.91%	4.44%	15.96%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2001 and 2011)

- 3.16. Table 7 shows that the rate of economic activity in Weston and Basford compared with Cheshire East. Whilst the proportion of economically active in Weston and Basford is comparable with Cheshire East, there is a slightly higher proportion of the population in full time employment in Weston and Basford and a lower percentage of unemployed.

- 3.17. Amongst the economically inactive population, the majority of residents are retired, slightly higher than the average across the Borough. Compared with Cheshire East there is a slightly lower than average in long-term sick or disabled and broadly comparable levels of those looking after the home or family.

Table 7: Economic Activity

		Weston and Basford 2011	Cheshire East 2011
Economically Active	Total	71.98%	70.59%
	Employee: Full time	43.24%	39.44%
	Employee: Part time	11.90%	14.37%
	Self-Employed	11.96%	10.72%
	Unemployed	2.34%	3.23%
	Full-time Student	2.54%	2.82%
Economically Inactive	Total	28.02%	29.41%
	Retired	18.40%	17.14%
	Student	3.32%	4.19%
	Looking after home or	3.45%	3.54%

	family		
	Long-term disabled	sick or	1.69%
	Other		1.17%
			3.07%
			1.47%

(Source: ONS, Census, 2011).

4. Local Housing Register Data and Affordable Housing Need

- 4.1. Weston and Basford parish is located in the Haslington and Englesea sub-area for the purposes of the SHMA update 2013. This identified a net requirement for 44 affordable homes per annum or 220 dwellings over 2013/14 - 2017/18 period. This should be provided as 1 no. 1 bed, 11 no. 2 bed, 19 no. 3 bed and 10 no. 4+bed general needs units as well as 1 no. 1 bed and 1 no. 2 bed older persons accommodation.
- 4.2. Cheshire Homechoice is the choice based lettings and housing register system used by Cheshire East. As at November 2015, there were 29 applicants who had selected the Basford or Weston lettings area as their first choice. The majority of these applications were in housing bands D and E suggesting they had no housing need or were adequately housed. 7 were in housing need bandings, 6 in Band C and 1 in Band A.
- 4.3. No assessment was undertaken of the applicants' local connection to Weston or Basford, however the majority of those who have registered for housing did not have a registered address in the Parish.
- 4.4. There have been no affordable completions since 2013/14.
- 4.5. Analysis of data from Cheshire Homechoice has shown that 3 properties have become available for rent in Weston and Basford over the past 2 years, these were:
 - 3 1bed bungalows – 18 bids each
 - 2 bed house - 15 bids
 - 2 2bed bungalow - 26 bids and 9 bids respectively
- 4.6. The rate of turnover of stock is limited, with 6 properties becoming available during the SHMA period. This may explain the number of bids on each property when they become available.
- 4.7. The Council operate an affordable housing policy, which seeks to deliver 30% of dwellings as affordable. This policy would operate on schemes of over 3 dwellings or 0.2 hectares in this location.

5. Local rental and house prices

- 5.1. Property market information from home.co.uk was accessed in November 2015 to assess the current rental market situation in Weston and Basford.
- 5.2. The average house prices and rental prices can be assessed at postcode area, the Parish falls within the CW2 postcode area, which also covers other settlements and villages to the south of Crewe and parts of Crewe itself. CW2 is used as a proxy for Weston and Basford, however it is recognised there are limitations with using postcode geographies as they encompass wider areas than the Parish. Much of Cheshire is covered by the CW postcode and in this instance is it taken as a proxy for the Cheshire East average.
- 5.3. The average rental price for CW2 postcode is £631pcm and the average time on the market is 61 days. The average for the CW postcode is £744pcm and 59 days spent on the market.
- 5.4. The average house price in Weston is £283,359¹

¹ This is based on 46 transactions (Zoopla, 2016) – as this is based on less than 50 transactions caution should be applied to this figure.

6. Cheshire and Warrington Matters: A Strategic Economic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington

- 6.1.1. Cheshire East forms part of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The LEP has prepared a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which details the areas of growth and development for the Cheshire and Warrington area.
- 6.1.2. The vision from the SEP for Cheshire and Warrington is to, by 2030, grow the population by 100,000, create 75,000 new jobs and deliver 70,000 new homes.
- 6.1.3. Integral to this growth and a key intervention priority in the plan is the Crewe High Growth City accelerated by HS2 hub as key driver.
- 6.1.4. The enhanced connectivity through the delivery of HS2 super-hub will impact on the sub-region.

7. Employment Land

7.1. The Alignment of Economic, Employment & Housing Strategy report (AEEHSR) , which Ekosgen undertook for the Cheshire East Local Plan, suggests there is a requirement for around 380ha of additional employment land over the Local Plan period (2010-30). This estimate - which the Council accepted for its resumed (2015) Local Plan examination hearings - provides for:

- net jobs growth, which is estimated to require a net increase of 195ha of employment land; and
- a potential annual loss of employment land to non-employment uses of 6ha per annum on average, or 120ha over the Plan period (the 6ha average is taken from the 2012 Cheshire East Employment Land Review's analysis of 1997-2011 employment land losses); and
- a 20% flexibility factor, to ensure that future land supply is flexible enough to provide a range and choice of land to meet demand, and to act as a buffer in the event of sites no longer being delivered, land losses or the need to reallocate employment uses.

8. Housing Development Study 2015

8.1. It is useful to consider the growth expected across Cheshire East as part of the CELPS.

8.2. As part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, a Housing Development Study was prepared to establish the Full Objectively Assessed Need for the Borough. This predicts that a dwellings provision of 1,800 per annum in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy will result in:

- The population growing by 15.7% (58,100) over the Plan period, from 369,100 (2010) to 427,100 (2030).
- The number of households growing by 20.4% (32,400) over the Plan period, from 158,600 (2010) to 190,900 (2030).
- Increases, over the Plan period, of 64.9% in the population aged over 65 and above, 133.8% in the population ages 85 and above. This highlights that older people are expected to make up an increasing proportion of the Borough's population.

9. Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Submission Version

9.1. The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) includes a revised Full Objectively Assessed Needs (FOAN) figure of 36,000 homes during the Plan period, 2010-2030. This is an increase on the 27,000 figure included in the submission version of the plan. The Spatial Distribution work undertaken by AECOM on behalf of the Council outlines that the 'Other Settlements and Rural' should take 2950 homes over the Plan period. The geographical distribution and the proportion of the 2950 homes that each settlement and rural area will take are not decided. Distribution

must take into account the various physical and policy constraints of each area and its ability to take housing development.

- 9.2. An approach which distributes development on a proportional basis may reasonably act as a starting point. This approach means establishing the percentage share of households that each settlement currently holds and distributing development on a percentage basis for each settlement.
- 9.3. There are 20,656² households within the 'Other' areas. Weston and Basford Parish comprise 867 households (756 in Weston and 111 in Basford). Taking a proportional approach based solely on the number of households, Weston and Basford could reasonably be expected to take 4.2% of the 2950 dwellings, equating to **124 dwellings**.

10. DCLG Household Projections

- 10.1. Guidance dictates that DCLG household projections are a robust evidence base and that the most recent projections available should be used as a starting point for any assessment of need.
- 10.2. The most recent household projections are the 2012 based household projections that were released in February 2015. These project that by 2030 Cheshire East households will increase to 180,000 from 159,000 in 2010. This equates to an average increase of 1,050 households per annum.
- 10.3. It would be presumable to calculate that as at the 2011 census the number of households was 867 in Weston and Basford, a 0.54% share of all households, as a proportion then Weston and Basford would notionally have had 859 households in 2010.
- 10.4. On a theoretical assumption that Weston and Basford will continue to comprise a 0.54% share of Cheshire East population, it would be reasonable to project that Weston and Basford would have 972 households by 2030, an increase of 113 households over the Plan period.
- 10.5. In 2011 census Weston and Basford had 915 dwellings and 867 households. This gives a ratio of 0.947 households per dwelling, when applied to the 113 household increases, this equates to **119 dwellings**.
- 10.6. This can be taken to evidence the level of need arising from household increases from Weston and Basford.

11. Dwelling growth 2001-2011

- 11.1. Comparing the number of dwellings in the Parish at both the 2001 and 2011 Census and establishing the dwelling increase, we can project forward a theoretical dwelling growth rate to 2030.
- 11.2. Between 2001 and 2011 there was increase of 393 dwellings in Weston and Basford or 39 dwellings per annum. If the dwelling completion rate is projected forward and assuming the same number of dwellings per annum, then **741 dwellings** could be projected.
- 11.3. The majority of this increase in dwellings has come from the Wychwood Park and Wychwood Village developments.
- 11.4. This figure is much higher than both the Local Plan derived target and the Household Projections, which equate to 6.2 and 5.9 dwellings per annum respectively. This suggests this level of housing growth is exceptional and unlikely to be sustained over the Plan period, particularly given the rural nature of the Parish.
- 11.5. An additional 81 dwellings were completed during 2011 – 2015, or 20 dwellings per annum and whilst less than the previous rate of development, this is still high compared with the projected growth from household projections suggesting this increased level of housing growth is continuing in the Parish. This could be

² Source: 2011, ONS, Census.

difficult to sustain over the longer period of the Plan and risks associated with oversupply of housing.

12. Quantity of housing

12.1. The range of housing targets derived for Weston and Basford are 119-741 dwellings. This is made up of:

- DCLG Household projections – 119 dwellings
- The Local Plan derived – 124 dwellings
- Unconstrained projection forward of dwelling completions – 741 dwellings

12.2. The very wide range between the potential housing figures suggests more detailed analysis is required to determine a recommended housing figure. The housing need number may need to be adjusted to reflect the appropriate market signals in accordance with PPG.

12.3. Table 8 shows how factors specific to Weston and Basford may have an impact on the theoretical housing figure derived from the quantitative data. The Neighbourhood Plan group may wish to consider the below factors to form a judgement on the projections.

Table 8: Market Signals

Factor/Evidence	Possible impact on figure	Rationale
Impact of high rate of growth and level of new supply	↓ ↓ ↓	The high rate of dwelling growth in recent years as largely been delivered through 'new village' developments at Wychwood Village and Wychwood Park particularly. There has been limited growth within the many small villages in the Parish, reflecting the rural nature of the Parish. The dwelling completion rate between 2001 and 2011 Census was high, whilst there was some decrease in actual completions between 2011 and 2015, the rate of increase still remains significantly higher than anticipated household projections and growth through the CELPS. PPG suggests that development rates should be considered a market signal to adjust household projections.
Impact of overcrowding/ concealed households	↓ ↓	Households have become less overcrowded between the 2001 and 2011 Census, with an increase in the occupancy rating +2 and a higher than average number of households with up to 1 person per room. This suggests that over-crowding is not a factor in Weston and Basford.
Local rental and house prices	↔	The rental market within the Parish is broadly in line with the Cheshire East average. Time spent on the market is slightly longer than the average for Cheshire East.
Affordability	↔	The SHMA and Cheshire Homechoice, illustrate that overall there is no compelling evidence to suggest affordable housing is so significant an element of need, over and above that which can be addressed through the Local Plan policies and approach. However this is discussed further below.

- 12.4. Consideration needs to be given to the previous dwelling completions rates. Recent rates of growth have been much higher than both the Local Authority average and comparable rural locations, which suggest the projection figure, should potentially be decreased.
- 12.5. The rate of development in previous years has been rapid, averaging 39 dwellings per annum compared with between 5 and 6 dwellings per annum for the Local Plan and Household projection derived targets. Furthermore continuation of this trend may not be sustainable in the longer term and most importantly the completions since 2010 have already accounted for 87% of the Local Plan derived target, with 15 years still remaining within the Plan period. Furthermore it is not considered likely or desirable to have a target which would result in a requirement for no further residential development for the remainder of the Plan period.
- 12.6. Discussion with the Parish Council has identified that recent supply has comprised of large planned development, heavily marketed as a design concept, for instance housing within a golf course and country park setting. They did not evolve through organic growth across all of the other settlements within the Parish and were limited in providing the type of housing identified by the group as required to meet the needs of the communities. Therefore all the projection figures, as based on a proportion of households, have been heavily influenced by the high rates of housing growth in recent years.
- 12.7. It is noted that the development of these 'new villages' were not directly related to need arising from the rural communities, and driven by factors external to locally arising need, such as supply of land and therefore a cautious approach is required of these figures.
- 12.8. Furthermore the Parish Council have represented a desire in their Plan to focus on the sustainable growth of the smaller settlements which contribute to the rural character of the Parish and establish a housing figure at the very local level and wish to establish a figure for the small villages.
- 12.9. Given this, it is considered one approach to a more appropriate figure for Weston and Basford would be to assess a Local Plan derived target with a discount for the Wychwood developments applied.
- 12.10. An approach to establishing this would be to discount the households that fall within these developments from the calculation of the need figure.
- 12.11. Using Census output areas to establish the number of households, the Wychwood developments account for 1.8% of households within the 'Other Settlements and Rural'. When this is applied as a discount to the local plan derived figure, a housing target of 70 dwellings could be reached for the rural villages of the Parish.

13. Completions and Commitments

- 13.1. The position in Weston and Basford at 31st March 2015 there has been 128 commitments and completions. This does not include the Strategic Sites that fall within the Parish. The Basford East site will largely become part of the larger settlement and South Cheshire Growth Village will comprise a new sustainable settlement, therefore these have not been included.

Table 9: Completions Weston and Basford

	Completions
2010/11	27
2011/12	20
2012/13	23
2013/14	24

2014/15	14
2015/16	7
Total	115

- 13.2. Housing monitoring information for the period 2010 to March 2016 illustrates there has been 115 completions in Weston and Basford parishes and there are a further dwellings 11 committed in Weston and Basford. In addition to this, since the end of the monitoring period, there has been an appeal allowed on the edge of Weston for 99 dwellings, taken the total completions and commitments position to within the region of 225 dwellings. There is also currently an application at appeal for up to 900 dwellings adjacent to the existing Wychwood development, the outcome of the appeal is not yet known.
- 13.3. During the Plan period there have been 4 completions which were not within the Wychwood Park or Wychwood Village developments, representing the small scale growth the rural Parish has witnessed outside of these developments.
- 13.4. Of the 11 committed dwellings, the majority are for single dwellings and a small scheme of 8 dwellings within the Parish at Snape Lane.
- 13.5. This recognises how the rural villages dispersed across the Parish have experienced small scale development and the desire of the community is to see this organic growth continue.

14. Characteristics of Housing Need

- 14.1. Taking into account census data on demographics and population change, conclusions can be drawn to show the possible impacts on the type of housing required. Table 10 summarises these characteristics. It should be noted that the very high level of development in recent years means that analysing trends is limited due to the significant increase in population in all age ranges.

Table 10: Characteristics of Housing Need and potential impact on housing type

Factor/Evidence	Possible impact on type of housing need	Possible policy response
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Factor/Evidence	Possible impact on type of housing need	Possible policy response
Tenure	<p>The Parish has a higher than average proportion of private rented tenure than the Cheshire East average and the rate of increase between Census periods are notable.</p> <p>There is high level of owner-occupation in the Parish and this has significantly increased between Census periods.</p>	<p>The very high level of renting could potentially be an indicator of unmet housing demand and requires further thought. Information available on the rental market is limited however consideration should be given to the longer term balancing of the tenure profile to provide a range of housing options to residents and how newly arising housing need will be addressed, such as the children and young adults who may require housing over the life of the Plan period.</p>
Under-occupancy	<p>The Parish has a higher than average proportion of properties where the occupants are under-occupying. This could be due to a range of factors, including the type and size of housing built as part of the new Wychwood developments, potential downsizers or the availability of smaller housing stock within the Parish.</p>	<p>Consider policies which deliver smaller accommodation at either end of the housing market, such as both starter homes and downsizer accommodation.</p>
Higher rate of increase in families and younger children	<p>The increase in children and younger age groups is notable compared to Cheshire East. This may largely be due to the development at Wychwood. Over the Plan period they will move into different housing requirements and the Plan will need to be flexible in this regard.</p>	<p>Consider how need for more affordable housing/ starter homes may arise over the Plan period and whether there is desire to address this locally.</p>
Ageing Population	<p>The increase in the older age groups is greater than the Cheshire East average. It should be noted that some of this increase may have come about through the significant population increase seen in the Parish and an influx of different age groups rather than simply related to an ageing population.</p>	<p>Consider policies which address the needs of the older population in terms of housing offer and services.</p>

Factor/Evidence	Possible impact on type of housing need	Possible policy response
Facilities	The large population increase has largely been at the Wychwood development with very little change in the smaller rural villages within the Parish.	Consider policies which address increase in facilities and service provision including local shops and community infrastructure and the longer term sustainability of the Parish.
Impact of high level of development	<p>The very high level of housing development in recent years will impact on the nature and characteristics of housing need over time and the impacts of the development on any housing need are not yet fully realised or captured in data analysis at this time.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the further need that may arise from these developments in the future as well as maintaining the longer term sustainability of the smaller rural villages.</p>	The NDP should plan for a range of house types, including smaller market housing to attract and retain a younger population as well as providing family housing and accommodation for older populations. This could be supported by a housing mix policy.

15. Recommendations

15.1. As discussed the high level of development seen through the planned new village concept has led to the Parish changing rapidly. In terms of any housing requirements, this has been influenced by the changing household numbers and demographic and this has been assessed in the report. Largely the existing completions and commitments exceed any locally derived need for housing and therefore the Neighbourhood Plan may wish to focus on supporting small scale growth to meet any specific needs arising from the small villages, such as older persons or affordable housing.