

# HAVERING HOUSING ACTION PLAN 2020

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Housing Action Plan sets out Havering's housing delivery performance under the Government's Housing Delivery Test. The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced as part of the new National Planning Policy Framework 2019. This is an update of the Council's 2019 Action Plan.

The Action Plan identifies some of the barriers to housing delivery and outlines the current and future actions that the Council is taking as part of its proactive and comprehensive approach to improving the delivery of high quality, sustainable homes in the borough. In line with Government requirements, the focus in the HDT is to consider overall housing delivery against the relevant housing target rather than address matters linked to tenure, dwelling mix and size.

## INTRODUCTION

The delivery of a sufficient supply and range of homes to meet the needs of present and future generations is a key national issue. The persistent failure to deliver these homes has an impact on the health, economy, productivity and wellbeing of both individuals and the nation as a whole. This is emphasised by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who sums up the position:

*“For decades, the pace of house building has been sluggish at best. As a result, the number of new homes has not kept pace with our growing population. And that, in turn, has created a market that fails to work for far too many people”.*

This is particularly true in London, which faces immense pressure for housing provision. Havering's population is expected to grow to over 299, 000 by 2031<sup>1</sup>. As outlined in this Action Plan, the Council is taking a pro-active approach to housing delivery as it recognises the importance of ensuring that there is the necessary provision of homes to accommodate this population growth, as well as the jobs and critical infrastructure needed to support and sustain new and existing communities. This should be done in a way that also preserves and enhances the borough's most valuable assets and maintains its long established and strongly supported character and appearance as an Outer London sub-urban borough.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.haveringdata.net/population-demographics/>

## THE HOUSING DELIVERY TEST

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) introduced a 'Housing Delivery Test' (HDT). The HDT serves as a mechanism to monitor housing delivery locally and set out consequences for local planning authorities that fail to deliver sufficient homes. The test measures **net additional homes delivered** against the **local requirements for new homes** resulting in a percentage of delivery.

$$\text{Housing Delivery Test (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three year period}}{\text{Total number of homes required over three year period}}$$

The results are issued annually and the latest results for 2019 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2019-measurement>

The consequences of failing the Test are set out in paragraphs 11, 73, 75, and 215 of the NPPF and apply until subsequent Test results demonstrate that delivery has recovered:

### Consequences of failing the Housing Delivery Test

- a) All local planning authorities (LPAs) with a delivery performance of less than 95% must prepare an Action Plan.
- b) All LPAs with a delivery performance of less than 85% must provide a 20% buffer to the Five-Year Land Supply
- c) The housing policies are deemed to be 'out of date' and the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' (the Presumption) applies if the test result is less than
  - (i) 25% in November 2018
  - (ii) 45% in November 2019
  - (iii) 75% from November 2020 onwards

The application of the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' would mean that planning permission for new homes would have to be granted unless:

- NPPF policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF

## **HAVERING'S HOUSING TARGET**

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The housing targets used for the HDT calculations are those set out in the borough Local Plan unless the plan is more than five years old or where the plan has been reviewed and found not to require updating.

In Havering's case, its local plan documents (the housing targets are set out in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2008) are more than ten years old.

Therefore, the targets used for the HDT calculations are drawn from the London Plan 2016. Policy 3.3, Table 3.1 of the London Plan identifies annual monitoring targets for London boroughs. Havering's annual target is **1,170 net new homes**. The HDT does not consider matters linked to tenure (including affordable housing), dwelling mix and size.

An emerging Local Plan for Havering is currently the subject of an Examination in Public. The Inspector has set out a number of Proposed Main Modifications and evidence base updates required to make the plan 'sound' in line with planning legislation and guidance. Subject to Cabinet approval in August 2020, these modifications will be published for public consultation for eight weeks. The Inspector will then consider the responses and, if satisfied, will issue a report to the Council recommending adoption of the Plan subject to the modifications being made. It is anticipated that the Local Plan could be adopted in late 2020 / early 2021.

In line with the London Plan 10 year housing target for Havering, the Local Plan sets out that at least 11,701 new homes will be built in the borough over the first 10 years of the Plan period.

Further to the discussions at the Local Plan Examination with the Inspector, the Local Plan includes a 'stepped' approach to housing delivery which involves having phased housing targets that are lower in the first 5 years of the plan period then increase in the second phase of the plan period. The 'stepped' approach is being used to reflect the fact that Havering has a number of strategic sites which have a phased delivery or are likely to be delivered later in the plan period.

2016/17-2020/21 – 700 net new homes p.a.

2021/22 – 2024/25 – 1640 net new homes p.a.

2025/26 -1641 net new homes p.a.

2026/27 – 2030/31 – 1, 170 net new homes p.a.

The Mayor of London is also in the process of preparing a new London Plan which sets out revised housing targets for the borough. The Examination in Public into the draft London Plan concluded in mid - 2019. The Mayor responded to the report from the Panel of Inspectors by publishing his 'Intend to publish' version of the new London Plan and that was submitted to the Secretary of State in late 2019. The Intend to Publish version included a ten year housing target for Havering of 12,850 homes from 2019.

In response to the submission of the Intend to Publish version of the Plan, the Secretary of State has identified a number of significant concerns linked to the preparation and delivery of the Mayor's planning strategy including the delivery of housing. He has asked the Mayor to take a collaborative approach to this and to work with Government officials to revise the London Plan. It is unclear at this stage when the new London Plan will be adopted and what the final housing targets will be.

## **HAVERING'S HOUSING DELIVERY TEST PERFORMANCE**

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National Statistics for net additional dwellings is sourced from the Greater London Authority (GLA). London Boroughs are expected to provide their starts and completions to the GLA by August, following the end of the financial year in March. The GLA then submits this information to MHCLG in September. The GLA maintain statistics in the London Development Database (LDD).

The 2018 HDT results were the first set of results to be published and found that Havering's housing delivery (when measured against the London Plan housing targets) over the previous three years was 49%.

The Council was expected to apply a 20% buffer to its 5-year land supply. In addition it was expected to prepare a Housing Delivery Action Plan, outlining the barriers to housing delivery and the ways in which the Council will look to improve delivery.

The Council prepared and published its first Housing Delivery Test Action Plan in 2019. The key actions outlined in the Action Plan were:

- to progress the Local Plan to adoption;

- to actively seek to deliver new housing (for example through Mercury Land Holdings and Joint Ventures);
- to facilitate development through the development management process including early and positive engagement with developers and setting up a new planning committee structure; and
- to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure (for example through the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy)

The 2019 HDT results were published in early 2020. Based on housing delivery over the past three years against the London Plan annual housing target of 1,170 Havering’s Housing Delivery Result for 2019 is 33%.

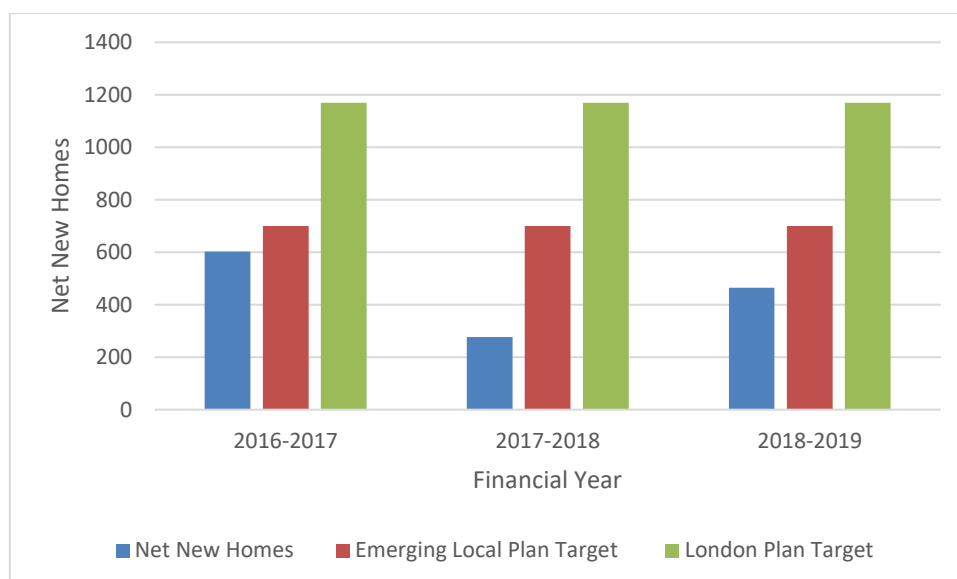
The results mean that Havering will be expected to:

1. Apply a 20% buffer to its 5-Year Land Supply. (This has already been applied through the Housing Trajectory for the Local Plan);
2. Prepare a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan; and
3. Apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Table 1: 2019 Housing Delivery Test Results – MHCLG figures

	Number of Homes Required (Annual Housing Target)	Number of Homes Delivered	Shortfall/ Surplus	Housing Delivery Test Result
2016-17 Financial Year	1,170	436	-734	
2017-18 Financial Year	1,170	265	-905	
2018-19 Financial Year	1,170	465	-705	
Total	3,510	1,167	2, 343	

**Figure 1: Net new homes delivered against Housing Targets**



## HAVERING’S PAST AND PREDICTED HOUSING DELIVERY

Table 2 shows that over the period 2004/05 to 2018/19 Havering has met or exceeding its target in 5 years, and under delivered in 10 years. Havering’s delivery record is characterised by a mixture of over and under delivery connected to the peaks and troughs of the housing market cycle. Many of the years in which Havering under delivered were in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis or in the recession which followed. Since this period, the number of dwellings completed has increased and moved in a positive direction.

It should also be noted that Havering has significantly increased its level of housing delivery since 2013/14, although the last few years housing delivery has dropped off. Overall, this marks a step change from the level of housing delivery in the decade before this and demonstrates that Havering is making serious efforts to boost its housing delivery. Nevertheless, average annual completions remain below the current annual London Plan target of 1,170. The only year this target has been exceeded is in 2015/16 where completions were 1, 391. That year saw a large number of unit completions from major schemes.

The Council has been proactive in granting permissions for new development. Figure 4 shows that in recent years the number of planning approvals for new housing has substantially increased. There are a number of factors influencing whether and when

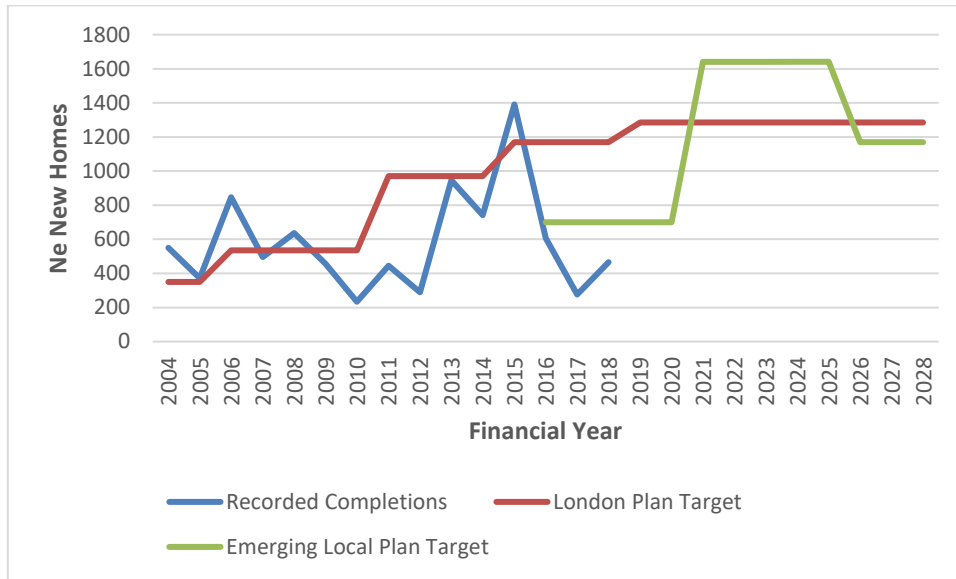
these approvals are implemented. Some of these are within the Council's control, particularly where it is the developer, however, most are determined by the market, individual developer and landowner circumstances and/or national policy.

**Table 2: Previous Completions 2004/2005 – 2018/19 Financial Years**

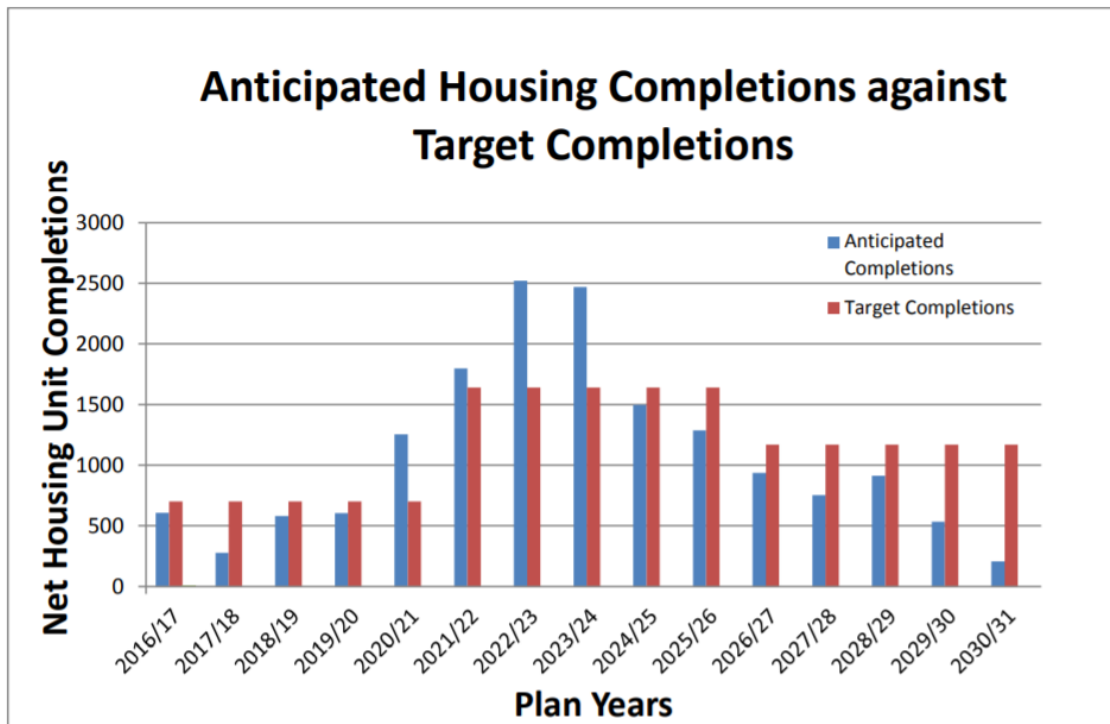
	Recorded Net Completions (net completions using MHLCG criteria which includes non-conventional completions)	London Plan Target
2004	551	350
2005	371	350
2006	847	535
2007	495	535
2008	637	535
2009	457	535
2010	234	535
2011	445	970
2012	289	970
2013	947	970
2014	741	970
2015	1391	1170
2016	607	1170
2017	277	1170
2018	465	1170



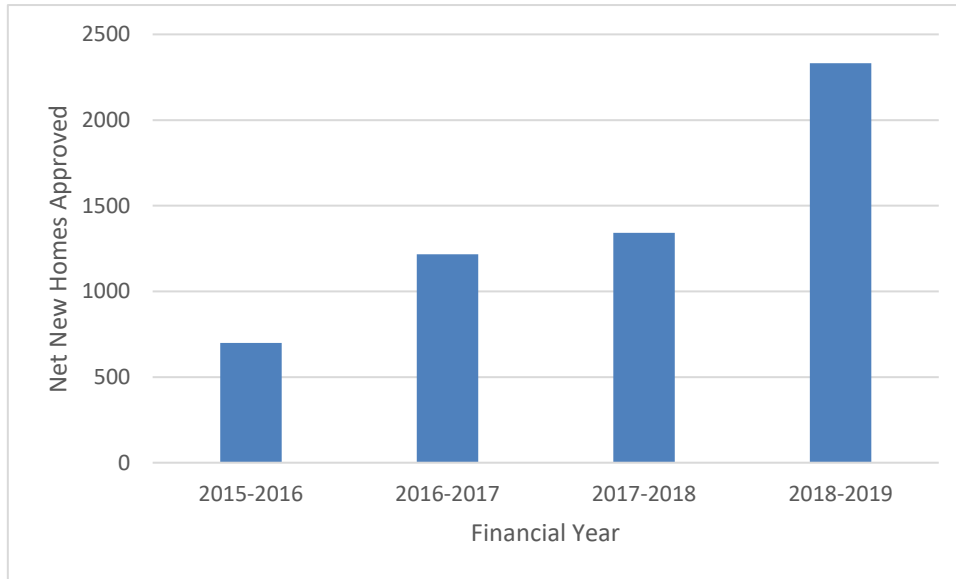
**Figure 2: Recorded completions 2004/2005 – 2018/2019 (MHCLG) and Emerging Local Plan/London Plan targets**



**Figure 3: Anticipated Housing Completions against Target Completions**



**Figure 4: Net new homes approved 2015/6-2018/19 financial years**



<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>New Homes Approved</b>
2015-2016	699
2016-2017	1216
2017-2018	1342
2018-2019	2332

## BARRIERS TO HOUSING DELIVERY

There are a number of barriers/ factors that can impact housing delivery not just in Havering but across the country. Some of these are able to be influenced by local authorities, while others are determined by the market, individual developer and landowner circumstances and/or national policy.

<p><b>Commercial Factors</b></p>	<p>The strength of the local housing market in Havering impacts on a developer's decision to invest in sites to bring forward new housing. Havering's Local Plan Viability Assessment notes that, with regard to the housing market, the economic outlook remains uncertain and largely dependent on the UK's terms of exit from the EU.</p> <p>London's average house prices increased by 4.7% over the year to March 2020; this is the largest 12-month growth London has seen since.<sup>2</sup> Prices in Havering dropped by 0.9% in the same period.<sup>3</sup> The borough remains attractive due to its comparably low land values and the anticipated major infrastructure improvements coming through the new Beam Park Station and Crossrail.</p>
<p><b>Planning process</b></p>	<p>While the planning process aims to enable sustainable development, there is a perception that individual planning decisions do not always reflect this. The process is sometimes seen as too uncertain and time-consuming, resulting in delays to the pace of housing delivery. This is a national issue.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure delivery</b></p>	<p>Havering has a quickly growing population and it is important to ensure that growth is supported by the necessary infrastructure such as transport, education and healthcare facilities.</p> <p>Planning for and funding this infrastructure can be a difficult process. Delays relating to the completion of Crossrail, for example, may have had an impact on the implementation of planning permissions and submission of planning applications.</p>
<p><b>Site Specific Issues</b></p>	<p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex landownership with multiple land parcels</li> <li>• Reliance on other sites to come forward for development first</li> <li>• Environmental and heritage constraints</li> <li>• Land contamination</li> <li>• Access issues</li> <li>• Legal issues i.e. covenants, right to light, lease arrangements</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/housepriceindex/march2020>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theweek.co.uk/99093/london-house-prices-which-boroughs-are-on-the-rise>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viability and planning obligations</li> </ul>
<b>Local Authority and Housing Association contribution</b>	<p>Local authority contribution to new housing supply in England has historically been a significant component of delivery however this has been contracting since the early 1980s.</p> <p>This is a national issue and the need for local authorities to step back into this role has been emphasised by the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs<sup>4</sup>:</p> <p><i>To achieve its target the Government must recognise the inability of the private sector, as currently incentivised, to build the number of homes needed.</i></p> <p><i>Local authorities and housing associations need to make a much bigger contribution to housebuilding if it is to reach required levels.</i></p>
<b>Land owner and developer circumstances</b>	<p>The individual circumstances of landowners and developers have an effect on the speed at which sites are developed. This is a national issue. Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whether the landowner intends to build themselves or sell the site and secure a profit following grant of planning permission</li> <li>- Ability to secure finance</li> <li>- Land value expectations</li> <li>- The extent of their motivation to develop the site</li> </ul>
<b>Land supply</b>	<p>Available urban land is a scarce resource as its supply is inherently limited and fixed. Havering has a limited supply of urban land to develop which leads to developers competing for land and prices increasing. The increase in value that planning permission offers can result in strategic land trading rather than actual development, benefiting the land owner rather than developers.</p>
<b>The Construction Industry</b>	<p>The ability to build new homes relies on the availability of skilled construction workers.</p> <p>Currently there are challenges regarding the availability of skilled workers at a national level due to a declining number of people joining the sector, workers retiring early and a heavy reliance on non-UK born workers. However, the Council is engaged in construction-centred apprenticeships in its joint venture with Waites Residential.</p> <p>Havering is also in a partnership with the Construction Skills Board and part of an 8-borough sub-group, LL Construction Sub Group set up by LL Local.</p>

<sup>4</sup> Select Committee on Economic Affairs, 1<sup>st</sup> Report of Session 2016-17, Building More Homes, HL Paper 20, 15 July 2016, para 85 and 56

	<p>Havering's Economic Development and Regeneration teams (amongst others) promote and support schemes that have elements of recruiting local people as part of the sustainability goals. There is an emphasis on actively upskilling and capacity-building with the local community.</p>
<b>Covid-19</b>	<p>Covid-19 appears set to provoke an economic recession and there is uncertainty over the severity. This could result in a potential impact on house building in the borough.</p> <p>There has also been an adverse financial impact on Havering Council (and all Local Authorities). This stems from a loss of income caused by the pandemic. The direct impact on the Planning service could mean that less vacancies are filled.</p> <p>This is a national issue and the Council recognises that the Government sees planning and plan making as central to economic recovery and is committed to contributing to this, subject to resources being available and other competing priorities.</p>

## CURRENT ACTIONS TO BOOST HOUSING DELIVERY

The Council is committed to meeting its housing needs by supporting the delivery of quality new homes. In recent years it has undertaken a number of steps to boost the delivery of homes. These actions can be grouped into the following five categories:

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| A. | Developing new Local Plan documents                                 | ✓ |
| B. | Active involvement in housing delivery                              | ✓ |
| C. | Facilitating development through the development management process | ✓ |
| D. | Infrastructure delivery   | ✓ |
| E. | Expanding the Council Planning Service                              | ✓ |

## A. Developing new Local Plan documents

### Adopting a new Local Plan

An emerging Local Plan for Havering is currently the subject of an Examination in Public. The Inspector has set out a number of Proposed Main Modifications and evidence base updates that she considers are required to make the plan 'sound' in line with planning legislation and guidance. Subject to Cabinet approval in August 2020, these Proposed Main Modifications will be published for consultation for eight weeks. The consultation period is longer than usual due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 which has required the Council to bring forward temporary changes to how it undertakes public consultation and ensures that the community has a meaningful opportunity to contribute towards plan-making in Havering. The Inspector will then consider the responses and if satisfied will issue a report to the Council recommending adoption of the Plan subject to the modifications being made. It is anticipated that the Local Plan could be adopted in late 2020 / early 2021.

The emerging Local Plan sets out an ambitious spatial strategy for 'good growth' to occur in sustainable locations across the borough. The spatial strategy identifies two parts of Havering as the main areas for accommodating growth; Romford and the Rainham and Beam Park areas. These are referred to as Havering's 'Strategic Development Areas'. Both areas have been identified as Opportunity Areas within the Draft London Plan and have been granted Housing Zone status by the former Mayor which will help to accelerate residential development.

The Proposed Main Modifications set out that in line with the London Plan 10 year housing target for Havering, at least 11,701 new homes will be built in the borough over the first 10 years of the Plan period. The adjusted figures in the Proposed Main Modifications will include the delivery of at least:

- 5,000 homes on major sites in the Romford Strategic Development Area;
- 3,000 homes on major sites in the Rainham and Beam Park Strategic Development Area;
- 300 homes through the intensification and renewal of existing Council housing estates outside the Strategic Development Areas;
- 1,500 homes on other major sites outside of the Strategic Development Areas and Council housing estates; and

- 1,500 homes on small sites across the borough and through vacant units returning to use.
- The existing projection of 3,000 homes on major sites in the Rainham and Beam Park Strategic Development Area remains unchanged.

In addition it sets out that over the course of the whole Plan period, Havering will aim to deliver at least 17,551 new homes. Delivery will be phased over the 15 year plan period.

### **A Masterplan for Romford**

The Council is currently preparing a masterplan for Romford, which will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Local Plan. The Romford Masterplan will:

- a) Enable the Council to influence, manage and co-ordinate the future character, design and layout of strategic development and infrastructure on key sites, particularly in light of the arrival of Crossrail and the enhanced profile of the area.
- b) Provide an opportunity for the Council to directly engage with relevant landowners and developers through the process to facilitate bringing forward these sites, build relationships with developers and other important stakeholders, and articulate the Council's aspirations for the area.
- c) Facilitate development coming forward by providing greater certainty to developers as to what is expected for proposals within Romford as well as helping to ensure that development outcomes achieve the Council's place-making objectives.
- d) Enable the Council to identify what investments in infrastructure and the public realm are required to encourage development within the area. It will use this information in discussions with stakeholders such as the Mayor of London in the context of bringing forward improvements in public realm through measures such as 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' projects. Resolving infrastructure issues and enhancing the market attractiveness of the area will of course support overall housing deliverability.

The Council has committed to completing a Romford Masterplan. There will be further public consultation work on the Masterplan and this is expected in late 2020.

The intention is to seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of the Romford Masterplan in 2021.

## **B. Active involvement in housing delivery**

The Council has significantly increased its role in housing provision within the borough through the establishment of its Housing Company, Mercury Land Holdings, and the formation of a number of Joint Ventures to enable the development of large areas/ sites within the borough.

### **Mercury Land Holdings**

On May 2015, the Council's Cabinet agreed in principle to the establishment of the Housing Company, Mercury Land Holdings (MLH), which would be a wholly Council owned, arms-length commercial entity which would participate in the development of market rent and market sale homes in the borough.

MLH has already completed the development of 65 units at Cathedral Court, and completed 44 PRS units at 75 North Street in March 2020.

### **12 Estates Regeneration Programme**

The Council is building a significant number of new homes in one of the most ambitious local authority home building programmes in the country. The initial programme focuses on 12 sites across the borough, delivering over 2,000 additional homes. The 12 sites are both inside and outside the Strategic Development Areas. In March 2018, the Council entered into a joint venture agreement with Waites Residential in order to deliver the programme.

In October 2019 the New Napier and Plymouth site in Rainham was approved. The site will include 126 affordable homes and a further 71 homes for private sale. In June 2020, plans were approved for a retirement village as part of the project. The former Solar, Serena and Sunrise Courts site in south Hornchurch, previously provided sheltered accommodation for local residents and will now be redeveloped to provide 175 high quality homes. The plans will now be considered by the Mayor of London before the final decision is issued.

The overarching vision for the programme is to successfully establish vibrant and connected communities, supported by the provision of good quality new homes, tenure diversity, high quality public spaces, and well-used community facilities within safe and secure environments where people want to live and participate in local activities.

A key objective of the programme is to contribute to meeting the wider housing needs of Havering through the regeneration and transformation of the Council's existing stock for predominantly residential use; to provide a choice of good quality housing for people at all stages of life (including older persons), increasing tenure



diversity through affordable rent, shared ownership, private rent, market sale and sheltered housing.

The initial 12 sites were identified as offering the greatest potential for the provision of new affordable homes or requiring intervention due to the costly or unacceptable quality of housing.

### **Bridge Close Estate Redevelopment**

The Council is planning to build over 1,000 new homes on Bridge Close, a poorly maintained industrial estate within the Romford Town Centre. The Council has formed a Joint Venture with First Base Bridge Close Redevelopment LLP (a JV between First Base Ltd and Savills Investment Management).

The overarching vision for the programme is to successfully establish vibrant and connected communities, supported by the provision of good quality new homes, tenure diversity, high quality public spaces, and well-used community facilities within safe and secure environments where people want to live and participate in local activities.

The proposed development is currently at the pre-application stage and will also include a new primary school, with associated pre-school nursery, health hub and public open spaces for the local and wider community.

The pre-application scheme has been considered by a design review panel, the Havering Quality Review Panel (QRP) on three occasions (December 2018, June 2019 and September 2019). The aim of the panel is to increase the design quality of proposals through engagement with developers and their advisers and to provide feedback on the proposal. The developers have engaged with this feedback and overall the design quality of the scheme has improved.

A public consultation process on the Bridge Close proposals took place in September 2018 and concluded with a final public exhibition in September 2019. The Council is currently in discussions with its partners on how best to progress with the regeneration of Bridge Close. An update on the project is expected to come forward soon.

### **A1306 Developments**

The Council is planning to build around 866 new homes on brownfield sites within the Rainham and Beam Park Strategic Development Area. The Council's vision for the Rainham and Beam Park Housing Zone is the transformation of a declining industrial area into a vibrant new urban extension providing much needed new housing, including affordable and family homes, social, physical and green infrastructure with good access to public transport and employment opportunities. The regeneration proposals include the construction of a new railway station, with

direct transit to central London, significant works to remodel the A1306 to a residential scale street, and the creation of a new linear park within the Housing Zone. The Council has entered into joint venture partnerships to deliver this project.

The sites that comprise this development have been submitted for planning permission and form part of the wider regeneration and transformation of the area from a post-industrial landscape to high quality residential area.

### **C. Facilitating development through the development management process**

The Council is committed to working early and collaboratively with developers to secure good planning outcomes for Havering and enable an efficient planning approval process.

The Council's pre-application service offers a range of services, including meetings, written exchange of correspondence and site visits. Alongside this, for large or complex proposals, the Council offers Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) with the aim to work with applicants to get the proposal to an acceptable form prior to the submission of the planning application. This involves a development team approach working to a project plan.

The development management system was further refined from 2018 in the following ways:

- **Introduction of a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) from May 2018** – the role of the committee is to determine major strategic planning applications. Part of the remit of the committee is to receive developer presentations at pre-application stage – ideally at an early stage and then closer to submission. The aim of the developer presentations is twofold. Firstly, it means that when applications are put before Members for decision they are already familiar with the proposal. Secondly, the early engagement allows Members to give feedback on the proposals at an early stage and later for the developer to explain how the scheme has evolved, including response to feedback given. The process is now well established and SPC member welcome the opportunity to engage with developers an early stage. The presentations to SPC form part of any PPA.
- **Introduction of Havering Quality Review Panel (QRP) from December 2018.** In accordance with Paragraph 129 of the NPPF, Havering have set up a design review panel. The QRP has a pool of 20 built environment professionals who have a record of achievement in their field. A panel, consisting of a Chair and 4 members from the pool of professionals, review development proposals, ideally at an early stage of the process with the aim

of increasing the design quality of any proposal through feedback on the proposal. It is expected that for large major developments there would be a second presentation once the design has been further developed. The use of QRP is embedded in the PPA. The QRP has been providing expert feedback on a number of key housing schemes such as Bridge Close, Beam Park, Quarles Campus and Waterloo Road (12 Estates).

- **PPA's** – From January 2019 the pre-application service was re-launched with proposals over 25 units requiring a Planning Performance Agreement and benefitting from a project managed Development Team approach. The aim is to ensure that a proposal is developed from early inception stage through to application submission so that it has the greatest possibility of being considered acceptable and granted planning permission.
- From Spring 2019, the pre-application process for developments less than 25 units was revised and relaunched with specified timescales for response and differing level of service in terms of meetings, site visits and correspondence. The aim is to give applicants certainty in developing their proposals through to planning application submission.
- The Council notes that the new Government legislation amending the Use Classes in England and expanding the process of Prior Approval will facilitate development, helping to boost the numbers of new homes. The impact of these changes will be monitored and reported in future updates to the Housing Action Plan and the Havering Authority Monitoring Report.

#### **D. Infrastructure delivery**

Havering's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) was published in 2018 and submitted as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, sets out the type and scale of infrastructure required to underpin the Local Plan's vision and framework for the future development of Havering. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identified that the cost of the infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the Local Plan is in the region of £580m.

The housing strategy for the Local Plan identified its Strategic Development Areas as the key source of future delivery. On this basis, the IDP sets out a number of priority projects within the SDA's in addition to other priority projects elsewhere in the borough.

#### **Priority projects in the Rainham and Beam Park SDA**

**Utilities:** diversion of electric cables, sewer and gas main

**Transport:** new Beam Park Station

<b>Transport:</b> Beam Parkway, improving connectivity along A1306
<b>Education:</b> new and expanded primary and secondary schools
<b>Health:</b> New primary care facilities, one in Beam Park development and one near Rainham Town Centre
<b>Flood Protection:</b> Opening up culverts and flood storage improvements

Priority projects in the Romford SDA
<b>Transport:</b> Crossrail serving Romford
<b>Transport:</b> Romford Station improvements
<b>Transport:</b> East West Link and improved accessibility for walking and cycling
<b>Transport:</b> Improved permeability of the Romford Ring Road through the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme
<b>Education:</b> New and expanded primary and secondary schools in Romford
<b>Health:</b> Primary and community care hub in Romford Town Centre

The IDP identifies the main funding sources likely to be available to support delivery of Havering's infrastructure needs. These include:

- London Borough of Havering capital funding;
- Greater London Authority/ Transport for London;
- Developer contributions;
- Lotteries and charities;
- Direct charges for services, as in the case of utility companies.

An IDP review is currently underway and an updated version of the document will reflect a more recent picture of projects and service areas.

It is also important to note that Havering contains two Housing Zones in (1) Romford and (2) Rainham and Beam Park. The provision of homes in these areas is supported by a range of planning and financial measures. Housing Zone programmes are funded by a combination of local authority funding, GLA direct and recoverable grant, and external funding. Housing Zone finance will be used predominately to delivery physical infrastructure in advance or parallel to development, which will significantly increase viability and hence improve Community Infrastructure Levy/ section 106 contribution potential.

The Council has adopted the Havering Community Infrastructure Levy in mid-2019. The Levy helps the Council secure financial contributions from developers towards the cost of providing infrastructure necessary to support change and growth in Havering. The Levy will secure funding from specific types of development depending on the location of development within Havering (as set out in the Charging Schedule). Although the Levy will help secure funding towards the cost of

infrastructure this will only be a proportion of the overall cost of infrastructure and it will remain necessary for infrastructure funding to be secured through several sources including other contributions from developers secured through planning obligations (in appropriate circumstances).

## E. Expanding the Council Planning Service

In light of current and anticipated growth in planning applications and an ambitious plan-making programme, the Council expanded its planning service to ensure that it is able to meet this challenge.

The growth plan has brought about a step-change in the nature of the work undertaken by the planning service, helping to improve its efficiency so that it is fit to deal with the anticipated workload over the next few years.

14 permanent staff members have been successfully recruited and joined the service this year. They will be joined by an Infrastructure Planning team currently in the recruitment process.

## FUTURE ACTIONS TO BOOST HOUSING DELIVERY

In addition to the actions identified above, the Council will be undertaking the following actions to improve its housing delivery and ensure that new quality homes are planned for and constructed in a way that contributes to good place-making.

A.	Developing new Local Plan documents	✓
B.	Active Involvement in Housing Delivery	✓
C.	Improvements to monitoring	✓
D.	Engaging with landowners and developers	✓
E.	Infrastructure Planning	✓

### A. Developing new Local Plan documents

#### Local Plan Early Review

The Local Plan will require an immediate update when it is adopted in line with the requirement of the Local Plan Inspector and as reflected in the Proposed Main

Modifications. It will provide the Council with an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the policies of the Local Plan and adjust them where necessary to be in general conformity with the housing policies of the new London Plan and in line with the latest NPPF (2019) so as to meet Havering's identified housing need.

#### **A plan for Rainham**

The Council is currently undertaking scoping work to assess opportunities for regeneration in Rainham.

### **B. Active Involvement in Housing Delivery**

#### **North West Romford**

The Council has been looking into opportunities for regeneration and place-making in North West Romford. At a cabinet meeting in November 2019, the Members endorsed a vision to bring forward the North West Romford Development Proposal (NWRDP) as a residential led comprehensive development. They also approved the Council entering into consultation with land owners, stakeholder and other third parties to identify the detail of the development area and design principles that will underpin the scheme.

The Cabinet has also approved the Council entering into direct negotiations with land owners and holders of third party interests located within the area proposed for development. In addition the cabinet approved authorisation for the Director of Regeneration (subject to budget provisions) to enter into private treaty arrangements to enable the acquisition of land, interests and rights within a Red Line Plan area. And to also appoint surveyors, barristers and other professionals required to promote land acquisition.

The Council has approved the project to go ahead with homebuilder, Berkeley Group Holdings. The Council is acting as an enabler of site assembly and has an interest in a number of commercial assets. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is planning to purchase affordable units.

#### **Estates Regeneration Programme**

The Council is currently undertaking one of the most ambitious local authority home building programmes in the country. The initial programme, discussed above, focuses on 12 sites across the borough. However, the Council is also looking into potential redevelopment across its other existing housing sites, as well as opportunities to redevelop areas adjacent to the 12 Estates Sites.

#### **Mercury Land Holdings**

MLH has acquired 34 PRS units and 10 Private Sale units at Crow Lane – anticipated to be completed by October this year. It is also due to build 121 units for private sale and affordable on Quarles campus in the next two years (application has

been submitted in June 2020). A key objective for 2020/221 is to seek new opportunities in the market which will add to the MLH portfolio.

### **C. Improvements to monitoring**

Through the Local Plan examination process the Council has produced a large evidence base to support its housing trajectory. The Council will continue to update the housing trajectory and monitor sites on it. This includes developing a 'traffic light system' to identify sites that are under construction, progressing towards development or have stalled.

### **D. Engaging with land owners and developers**

The Council will look to be more active in engaging with land owners and developers. Where sites are identified as stalled the Council will contact land owners/ developers to understand why and discuss how any barriers can be addressed.

### **E. Infrastructure Planning**

As part of the expansion of the Council planning service, a new Infrastructure Planning team has been created to ensure that the Council is well equipped to plan for infrastructure needs given the anticipated growth in the borough. The recruitment process is underway with interviews for the Team Leader and Deputy positions taking place in August 2020.

In the interim, a temporary team consisting of an Infrastructure Project Lead and two Planning Officers with additional capacity are facilitating the process. An Infrastructure Planning and Delivery Board (IPaDB) an Infrastructure Steering Group for Officers (ISGO) have been formed, with meetings already taking place.

The Planning Officers are currently assisting with the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan Review. They are meeting with services areas across the Council to discuss the necessary updates. The review work will be one of the first tasks that the permanent Infrastructure Planning team will pick up and this will support the early review of the Local Plan.

The Council must publish information on the funding that it secures from the Havering Community Infrastructure Levy. It will keep the Levy under review to ensure that it remains well suited to development economics and securing funding towards the cost of necessary infrastructure.