

**Rhondda Cynon Taf
Revised Local Development Plan
2022 – 2037**

**Housing Supply Paper
2023**



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1. Introduction

This paper has been prepared as part of the evidence base to inform the Revised Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2022-2037 for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Its purpose is to broadly quantify the land that is required for housing development in order to successfully deliver the objectives of the RLDP. This paper, and the evidence within it, has been informed by and in turn helped inform, the growth and spatial strategy options and ultimately what is proposed in the Preferred Strategy.

2. Revised LDP Housing Landbank

A landbank of known housing development sites needs to be identified at an early stage of LDP preparation to determine how much housing supply RCTCBC already has. This itself will contribute to housing delivery in the earlier stages of the RLDP plan period; whilst informing how much further land needs to be identified in the RLDP for specific new housing allocations.

2.1 Large Housing Sites Landbank

The housing landbank for large sites was formulated from the base date of the Revised LDP of 1st April 2022. This report sets out in detail in Appendix A those large sites (10 or more dwellings) that are considered to comprise our large housing site landbank. These include sites that are currently under construction with remaining units to be built, and other sites that have planning permission to begin development soon. New large site permissions have been added to the landbank since the base date, although only up to 31st August 2023.

Accordingly, as of then, the Council has a current large site landbank of 3,502 dwellings, either on sites that are under construction or with existing planning permission which can be reasonably expected to be built during the RLDP Plan Period up to 2037.

2,534 of these dwellings are on existing allocations, meanwhile the remaining 968 dwellings were permitted on large windfall sites. However, they now have equal status as 'landbank sites'. 1,893 of the landbank dwellings can be reasonably expected to be delivered within the first five years of the Plan Period (2022-27), with the remainder within the following years.

Table 1: Breakdown of large landbank sites by sub-region

Sub-region	Dwellings in landbank	To be completed in first five years of Plan Period	To be completed from year six of the Plan Period
Rhondda	338	324	14
Cynon	766	401	365
Taff East	109	109	0

Taff West	2,289	1,059	1,230
Total	3,502	1,893	1,609

2.2 Small Housing Sites Landbank

The small housing sites landbank is comprised of dwellings either permitted or under construction at small sites (fewer than 10 dwellings) as of 31st August 2023. The landbank contains 621 dwellings that can be reasonably expected to be developed within the plan period of the RLDP. A summary of the spatial distribution of these sites is provided in Table 2. Almost 75% of small sites occur within the Northern Strategy Area.

Table 2: Breakdown of small landbank sites by sub-region

Sub-region	Dwellings currently permitted	% of small sites
Rhondda	254	40.90
Cynon	203	32.69
Taff East	116	18.68
Taff West	48	7.73
Total	621	100.00

2.3 Non-delivery allowance

Though the landbank sites (small and large sites combined) hold a fair degree of certainty regarding their deliverability, it is acknowledged that challenges may arise in the future (such as those that we have seen in recent years e.g. Covid, and the general economic climate following that). It is therefore appreciated that not all schemes within the housing land bank may be developed as anticipated.

In light of the above, a non-delivery allowance has been implemented into the housing supply calculation to allow for sites not coming forward as anticipated. Though there is no method of accurately predicting how many dwellings or schemes within the landbank may not be developed, it is considered that an allowance of 20% can provide a reasonable degree of flexibility. Accordingly, 825 of the landbank dwellings will be deducted from the overall 4,123 (621 small sites and 3,502 large sites) figure to allow for greater flexibility and (appropriately) less reliance on landbank sites in the housing supply.

3. Urban Capacity Study (2023)

The Urban Capacity Study (UCS) sought to identify sites for residential development in sustainable locations within or nearby defined centres of the settlements in RCT. The approach followed the retail hierarchy set out in policies NSA18 and SSA16 in the current, adopted LDP, seeking land within 400 metres to Key Settlement and Local and Neighbourhood Retail Centres, and 800 metres to Principal Towns. The wider

buffer area was chosen for Principal Towns as these are the most sustainable locations for development, expected to perform a sub-regional retail role. Alongside this, sites were identified within 800 metres of existing train stations that will be future new stations for the South Wales Metro.

In initially identifying sites, the UCS dismissed any sites that were: within TAN 15 flood zones; formal public open space; of designated ecological importance (e.g. SINC, SSSI, SAC) and outside the settlement boundary. Following this, assessments of these sites removed any sites which were significantly physically constrained, considering factors such as topography, contamination, and land stability.

The Study found that there is generally a lack of good quality sites in these types of locations. The spatial distribution of the sites points towards greater capacity for windfall sites (both large and small) in the Northern Strategy Area (NSA), with a fairly even split between the Rhondda and Cynon valleys. Only 28.4% of sites and less than 15% of potential dwellings were located in the Southern Strategy Area. The findings are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Spatial distribution of UCS sites

Sub-region of RCT	No. of Sites	Hectares	Potential housing units within retail centre	Potential housing units within buffer zones of the retail centres and Metro stations
Rhondda	69	14.29	18	283
Cynon	67	12.44	4	247
Taff East	42	2.96	15	64
Taff West	12	1.44	1	28
Total	190	31.13	38	623

This suggests that a majority of windfall sites are likely to occur in the NSA, albeit still at a relatively low number and generally smaller sites. This is also supported by the sub-regional splits for large landbank and small landbank sites (table 1 and table 2), which show that around 75% of small sites currently with permission are in the NSA whereas 69% of large sites with current permission are located within the SSA.

NB. It should be noted that the sites and housing figures identified in the UCS are not directly used to predict future windfall allowances, but it is fair that they give some weight to the reasoning, and the likely spatial distribution of where they may arise.

4. Windfall Sites

4.1 Past Windfall completions and Abnormal trends impact

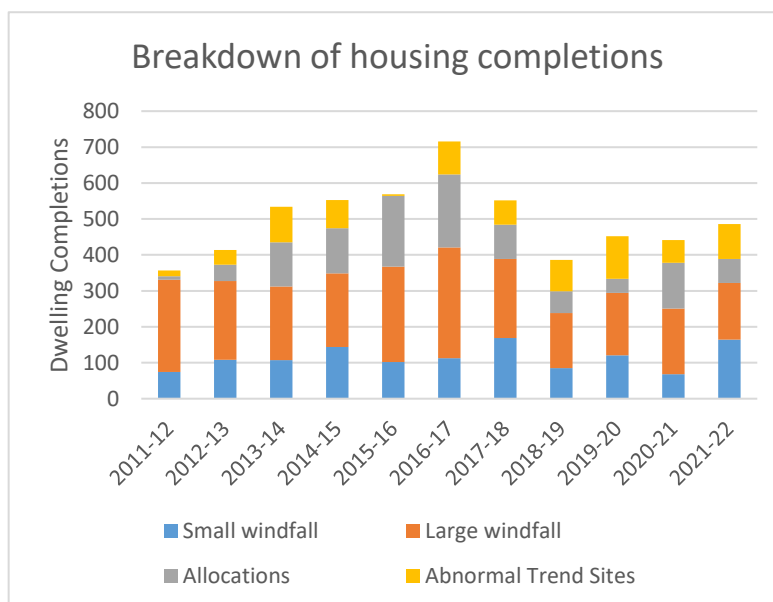
Past windfall sites are considered to be housing development sites that were not allocated in the current plan, but planning permission for them and their development has occurred since the adoption of the LDP in 2011. Between then and 2022, RCT has been seen an average of 397 dwellings built on windfall sites per year, which includes an annual average of 293 on large windfall sites specifically.

However, with regards to large windfall sites, RCT has witnessed a series of large brownfield, former school sites being demolished or converted for new housing development. This is related to the new 'superschool' at Aberdare, which replaced 4 previous comprehensive schools, and located on a new site. As this may be considered a unique event, this trend and scale of windfall site is not likely to happen frequently in RCT in the near future.

Such sites may therefore be skewing historic data to an extent, making future predictions for large windfall figures more challenging. These abnormal types of windfall sites have contributed on average 70 dwellings per year since the adoption of the current LDP, although have been as high as 118 dwellings in a year. It is therefore considered necessary to remove the influence of these abnormal trend sites to better understand past windfall completion rates; and to determine more reasonable likely completions.

Table 4: Impact of abnormal trend sites per year since 2011

Monitoring Period	Dwellings completed on Abnormal Trend Sites
2011-12	16
2012-13	41
2013-14	99
2014-15	79
2015-16	5
2016-17	92
2017-18	68
2018-19	87
2019-20	118
2020-21	63
2021-22	97
Average	69.5



4.2 RLDP Large windfall sites

Upon refining the large windfall sites by removing any abnormal trend sites, RCT averaged 177 housing completions on large windfall sites across the last 5 years (2017-18 to 2021-2022 – as this is considered a more up to date pattern of delivery).

These large windfall completions are not considered likely to increase throughout the RLDP plan period, partially due to the revocation of Technical Advice Note 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies in March 2020, alongside the topographical challenges, mining legacy, and scarcity of land in the County Borough. This is especially the case in the Rhondda and Cynon Valleys, where the UCS indicates that the windfall sites are most likely to occur. Indeed, since the adoption of the LDP, the number of dwellings delivered on these large windfall sites has declined on average by 26 dwellings per year (excluding 2015-16 and 2016-17 as anomalies).

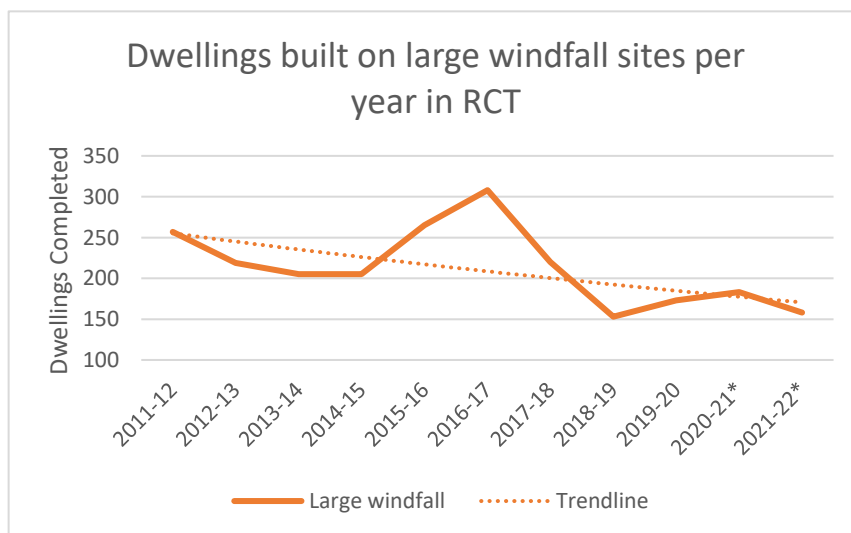
It is clear that large windfall completions during 2015-16 and 2016-17 are anomaly years running contrary to the general trend between 2011 and 2022. The time period chosen to base future windfall allowance rates on therefore avoids these two years, focusing on the most recent 5-year period. On average, 177 dwellings have been built on large windfall sites in this period.

In light of the declining trend of large windfall sites in the County Borough, a 25% reduction has been applied to future large windfall allowance. Given that the landbank is currently accurate up to 31st August 2023, no small windfall allowance has been included within the first two years from then, in order to avoid any overlap of sites (i.e. it is not expected that a site would come forward, gain permission and start delivering houses at any significant rate within 2 years).

As windfall sites are unknown, it is the intention for large windfall sites to provide extra flexibility to reaching the housing requirement, on top of existing commitments and any new allocations. An allowance is therefore made for the remaining 12 years of the RLDP plan period up to 2037, at a rate of 133 dwellings per annum.

Table 5: Large windfall site completions since 2011

Monitoring Period	Large Windfall Sites
2011-12	257
2012-13	219
2013-14	205
2014-15	205
2015-16	265
2016-17	308
2017-18	220
2018-19	153
2019-20	173
2020-21	183
2021-22	158



4.3 RLDP Small windfall sites

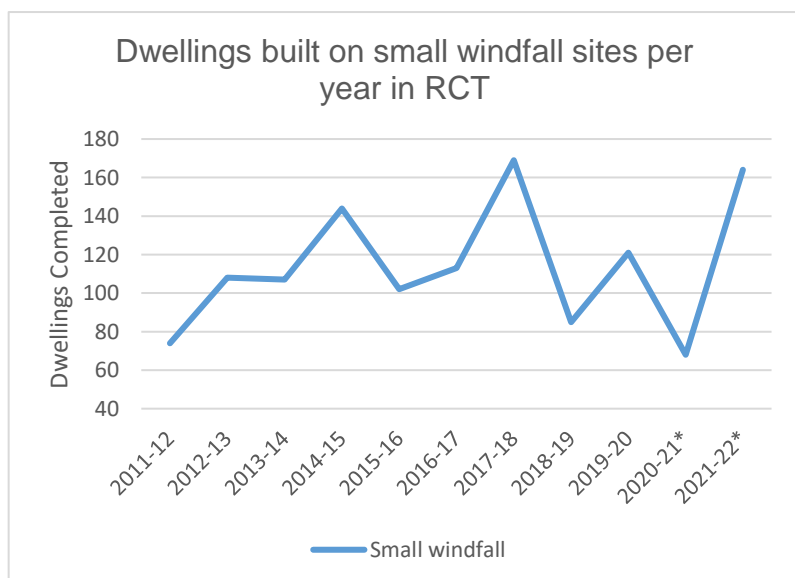
Since the adoption of the current LDP (2006-2021) in 2011, RCT has seen 1,255 dwellings built on small windfall sites (sites of 10 units or less). This is at an average rate of approximately 114 dwellings per year, though this has ranged between 74 dwellings in 2011-12, to 169 dwellings in 2017-18.

It should be noted that the low result of small sites in the below table in 2020-21 was due to an incomplete small site housing survey due to the coronavirus pandemic, whereas the high result in 2021-22 is (maybe) due to some of the small sites that were not able to be surveyed during 2020-21 being shown as completed in 2021-22. Therefore, it is fair to say that the average between the two years is probably more realistic.

The landbank is currently accurate up to 31st August 2023. In order to avoid any overlap with dwellings covered in the existing landbank of housing supply, no small windfall allowance has been included within the first two years of the base date of the landbank (i.e. up to August 2025). An allowance is therefore made for the remaining 12 years of the RLDP plan period up to 2037, at a rate of 114 dwellings per annum. However, this allowance is also subject to a 25% reduction to allow for some degree of depletion, and less reliance on windfall sites which are, by nature, difficult to predict and rely upon. As with the large windfall sites, it is the intention that small windfall sites are to provide extra flexibility, supplementary to the existing landbank commitments and future allocations. Following the 25% reduction, an allowance of 86 small windfall dwellings per year is made to the RLDP housing supply.

Table 6: Small windfall completion since the adoption of the LDP

Monitoring Period	Small Windfall Completions
2011-12	74
2012-13	108
2013-14	107
2014-15	144
2015-16	102
2016-17	113
2017-18	169
2018-19	85
2019-20	121
2020-21	68*
2021-22	164*
Average	114.1



4.4. Accordingly, it is determined that a total of 2,628 dwelling are to contribute to the RLDP housing land supply from Large and Small Windfall sites. This may be seen as a very significant figure when set against the findings of the Urban Capacity Study which determined around 623 dwellings. However, it should be acknowledged that the concept of windfalls sites is that they are unknown at the time of preparing the RLDP.

Conversely, it appears more appropriate when considered against past trends of delivery of windfall sites in RCT, particularly when considered against ‘abnormal’ levels of windfalls which are significantly higher. It remains that windfall sites are indeed unknown, whilst circumstance may arise in the future where they come forward in unexpected numbers and scale. Accordingly, given the above consideration, a central figure of forecast such as this seems most appropriate.

5. Empty Homes

RCTCBC is committed to reducing the number of longer-term empty properties in existence across the County Borough, and has led on the Valleys Taskforce Empty Homes Grant Scheme for Welsh Government. There are currently 2,894 empty properties across the County Borough, 2,120 of which are located in the Northern Strategy Area, while the remaining 774 are located in the Southern Strategy Area. The Council’s commitment and interventions to bring long-term empty properties back into use has resulted in 905 empty properties becoming suitable starter homes at affordable rates since 2018, including 273 properties during 2021/22.

Although the Council’s interventions to reducing long-term empty properties is successfully bringing housing stock back into use, this is only affecting the existing housing stock rather than generating new housing stock. It is therefore not proposed to make an allowance for empty homes to formally contribute to the RLDP housing supply to 2037.

6. Affordable Housing

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Housing Market Assessment Draft Findings 2024 found that over 5,672 new affordable dwellings are needed across RCT up to 2037, which would equate to an average rate of 378 affordable dwellings per annum. This figure is derived from the Welsh Government 2018 Principal Projections of population forecasts.

The table below indicates the spread of this need across four areas of RCT.

Table 7: Spatial Distribution of Affordable Housing Need in RCT

Sub-region	Affordable Housing Need
Rhondda	1,175
Cynon	1,318
Taff East	2,165
Taff West	1,014
Total	5,672

Set out below is an outline of the estimated affordable housing delivery associated with the RLDP provision, including landbank dwellings, windfall allowances and new allocations.

6.1 Landbank

A total of 943 affordable dwellings are included within the overall housing landbank for large sites and small sites (see sections 2 above for the overall housing landbank and further details in Appendix 1). Of these dwellings, 365 are split across 20, 100% affordable housing sites. Much of the further landbank is associated with developer contributions on larger developments. A total of 384 (or 40.72%) of affordable dwellings in the landbank are located in the Northern Strategy Area, while 559 (or 59.28%) are located in the Southern Strategy Area.

Following a non-delivery allowance of 20% (explained in section 2.3), we might expect 754 affordable dwellings from the landbank to be built within the plan period.

Table 8: Spatial Distribution of Affordable Housing Landbank

Sub-region	Affordable Housing Landbank
Rhondda	269
Cynon	115
Taff East	23
Taff West	536
Total	943
Total (including non-delivery allowance)	754

6.2 Windfall opportunities

Table 9 gives the number of affordable dwellings funded by Welsh Government's Social Housing Grant (SHG) each year over past years. Since the adoption of the current LDP, RCT has averaged 84.3 dwellings built per year through the SHG. Applying this windfall rate as a measure of future windfalls (covering 12 years of the plan period to avoid double counting with the landbank), an estimated 1,012 affordable dwellings may be considered a fair assumption for developed on windfall sites up to 2037.

Table 9: Social Housing Grant dwellings since the adoption of the LDP

Monitoring Period	Social Housing Grant funded dwellings
2011-12	23

2012-13	51
2013-14	57
2014-15	77
2015-16	44
2016-17	178
2017-18	69
2018-19	72
2019-20	135
2020-21	164
2021-22	57
Average	84.3

6.3 Allocations

The following calculations are based on the adopted LDP’s affordable housing policies for 10% affordable housing in the Northern Strategy Area, and 20% affordable housing in the Southern Strategy Area. These policies however may be subject to change upon further review.

Of the Candidate Sites that have passed the stage 1 assessment, 15.2% of dwellings are in the north and 84.8% are in the south. Applying this spatial distribution to the final identified need of dwellings from allocations (see table 11 below), 512 dwellings may be allocated in the North (51 affordable) and 2,854 in the South (571 affordable). A total of 622 affordable dwellings may therefore be hypothetically possible from future allocations.

6.4 Total

Given the above reasonable analysis, a total of 2,388 affordable dwellings may be considered to be built during the plan period of the Revised LDP to 2037. This equates to approximately 25% of all the housing provision or over 28% of the housing requirement (as set out further below in the conclusion), which closely aligns with historical rates of RCT’s affordable housing as a proportion of total housing development.

Table 10: Affordable Housing Provision During The Plan Period

RCT Affordable Housing Provision 2022-2037		
1	Landbank	943
2	Non-delivery allowance	-189
3	Windfall/SHG allowances	1,012
4	Allocations	622
5	Total	2,388
	% of the total housing provision	25.69%
	% of the identified affordable housing need (table 7)	42.11%

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper has set out in detail the key elements that will meet our required housing supply over the Plan period of the RLDP. The landbank figures and windfall allowances set out in this paper are reasonable and robust, and allow a fair degree of flexibility in order for the RLDP to ensure that the dwelling requirement is met over the course of the Plan period.

A summary of the housing supply up to 2037 is provided in table 10 below, including a final figure for the minimum number of dwellings required from new allocations based on the Preferred Strategy's housing growth option. The Preferred Strategy determined that the most appropriate housing requirement for the Revised LDP was that which is associated with the Welsh Governments Principal Population Projection 2018. The wider reasoning for this is set out in the Growth Options Paper, and the Preferred Strategy itself. However, this paper and its overall conclusions have helped determine the decision in terms of the realistic delivery of the housing requirements associated with that projection.

Accordingly, in considering all background evidence interdependently, and determining the best approach for the Preferred Strategy; it is now concluded that a minimum of 3,366 dwellings will need to be sought via new allocations to meet the total housing provision of 9,295.

It is recommended that the landbank and windfall rates be reviewed as preparation of the RLDP progresses. This will ensure that the housing supply sustaining the RLDP remains up-to-date as an important part of a sound evidence base.

Table 10: Housing Provision, (Supply, Allowances and Further Allocations Needed)

Rhondda Cynon Taf RLDP 2022-2037 Housing Provision			
Housing Provision	1	Dwelling Requirement	8,450
	2	10% Flexibility Allowance	845
	3	Total Housing Provision 2022-2037	9,295
Landbank Supply	4	Small sites landbank	621
	5	Large sites landbank	3,502
	6	Non-delivery allowance (20% reduction)	-825
	7	Current 'Landbank' sub total	3,298
Windfall Allowances	8	Small windfall sites	1,032
	9	Large windfall sites	1,596
	10	Windfall allowances sub total	2,628
Allocations Needed	11	Dwelling needed from allocations in order to meet the housing provision. i.e. Total Housing Provision, minus the landbank supply and windfall allowances.	3,369

Appendix A – RCTCBC’s Large Sites Housing Landbank

Site no.	Strategy Area (Principal Town / Key Settlement)	Site Name	Remaining Units	Under Construction	Year 1 2022-23 (including units under construction)	Year 2 2023-24	Year 3 2024-25	Year 4 2025-26	Year 5 2026-27	Total Years 1-5 (2022-2027)	Completion of site beyond 5 years (2027-2037)
10	North / Mountain Ash	Pavilion Estate, Darran Road	25				5	10	10	25	
51	North / Hirwaun	South of Rhigos Road	15								15
72	North / Treorchy	Land rear of Delwen Terrace, Blaencwm	33				10	10	13	33	
115	South / Llanharan	Brynna Woods (The Green)	22	2	2	5	5	5	5	22	
129	South / Tonyrefail	Hillside Club site, Capel Hill	28	6	14	14				28	
590	North / Hirwaun	Aman Metal Spinners site, Groesfordd, Hirwaun	9	4	9					9	
594	South / Tonyrefail	Parc Eirin	126	12	42	42	42			126	
867	North / Hirwaun	Nidum factory site, Manchester Place / Langland Close	22			8	14			22	
872	North / Aberdare	Lower River Level Tips (ex Richmond Gardens), Abernant	61					31	30	61	
1075	North / Aberdare	Nant y Wenallt, Abernant	75						25	25	50
1078	North / Aberdare	Godreaman Street, Godreaman (Maes Fach)	24	0	8	8	8			24	
1092	South / Tonyrefail	Hafod Wen / Concorde Drive	76				16	20	20	56	20
1100	North / Aberdare	Aberdare Hospital site, Abernant	299					19	40	59	240
1104	South / Llanharan	Llanilid Strategic Site (ex enabling)	1396	42	100	100	100	100	100	500	896
1108	North / Hirwaun	Elm Grove	4	0			2	2		4	
1498	North / Aberdare	The Former Rates Buliding, 42/43 High Street, Aberdare, CF44 7AA	10			10				10	
1508	South / Llantrisant	Llantrisant School, School Street	14	14	14					14	
1530	South / Llantrisant	Cefn yr Hendy, Mwyndy, Pontyclun	460				50	80	80	210	250
1531	South / Llantrisant	Llantrisant New Town Centre, Talbot Green	64								64

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Site no.	Strategy Area (Principal Town / Key Settlement)	Site Name	Remaining Units	Under Construction	Year 1 2022-23 (including units under construction)	Year 2 2023-24	Year 3 2024-25	Year 4 2025-26	Year 5 2026-27	Total Years 1-5 (2022-2027)	Completion of site beyond 5 years (2027-2037)
1650	North / Aberdare	Ynscynon Farm, Cwmbach (large area)	60								60
1839	North / Aberdare	Cwmbach Infants School site, Bridge Rd, Cwmbach	17					7	10	17	
1913	North / Tonypany	Old Town Hall, 15 De Winton Street	18						18	18	
1953	North / Treorchy	Land at Abergorki Industrial Estate, Treorchy	11	11	11					11	
1972	South / Tonyrefail	Rhondda Bowl Skittle Alley, Waunrhydd Road	20					10	10	20	
2002	North / Aberdare	Coleg y Cymoedd, Cwmdare Road	23	11	23					23	
2192	North / Aberaman	Former Blaengwawr Comprehensive School, Aberaman	70	16	35	35				70	
2202	South / Beddau	Gelynog Depot, Castellau Road, Beddau	14	2	8	6				14	
2218	South / Tonyrefail	The Meadows, Coed Ely, Tonyrefail	55	55	55					55	
2219	North / Porth	St Ann’s Church, Ynyshir, Porth	18			8	10			18	
2220	North / Tonypany	Former Penygraig Junior School, Tonypany	27			10	17			27	
2244	South / Pontypridd	Former Clariant Site, Llantwit Fardre	95	2	20	20	20	20	15	95	
2289	North / Ystrad	Land to the South of Cross Street and Trafalgar Terrace, Ystrad, Pentre	30				8	8		16	14
2306	North / Ystrad	Former Gordon Hotel, 60 Gelli Road, Gelli, Pentre	14	14	14					14	
2309	North / Porth	Dan y Mynydd Care Home, Bronwydd Avenue, Cymer, Porth,	60	60	60					60	
2323	North / Tonypany	Former Co-operative, Dunraven Street, Tonypany	52	52		26	26			52	

Appendix A – RCTCBC’s Large Sites Housing Landbank

Site no.	Strategy Area (Principal Town / Key Settlement)	Site Name	Remaining Units	Under Construction	Year 1 2022-23 (including units under construction)	Year 2 2023-24	Year 3 2024-25	Year 4 2025-26	Year 5 2026-27	Total Years 1-5 (2022-2027)	Completion of site beyond 5 years (2027-2037)
2324	North / Aberdare	Former Aberdare Girls' School (lower), Gadlys Road, Aberdare	31	0			16	15		31	
2320	North / Tonypandy	122 - 126 Dunraven Street, Tonypandy	13				13			13	
2322	North / Tonypandy	Penygraig Infants School, Hendrecafn Road, Pen-y-Graig, Tonypandy	12				12			12	
2325	South / Pontyclun	Former Miskin Primary School, School Road, Miskin	11				11			11	
2340	North / Aberdare	The Old Granary and Post House, Farm Road, Aberaman, Aberdare	10				10			10	
2369	North / Aberdare	Bute Chambers, 54-55 Bute Street, Aberdare, CF44 7LD	11					11		11	
2372	North / Porth	Land at former Porth Infants School, Mary Street, Porth, CF39 9UH	15					15		15	
2401	South / Tonyrefail	Land to the rear of 68-72, High Street, Tonyrefail, CF39 8PL	17					17		17	
2411	North / Treorchy	Ystrad English Congregational Church, 1 Church Road, Ton Pentre, Pentre, CF41 7AD	11					11		11	
2416	North / Tonypandy	Site of former Conservative Club, Berw Road, Tonypandy	10					10		10	
2417	North / Porth	WR bishop and co fruit and vegetable wholesale, penrhiwfer road, Tonyrefail, porth, CF39 8EY	14					14		14	
Total			3,502	303	415	292	395	415	376	1,893	1,609