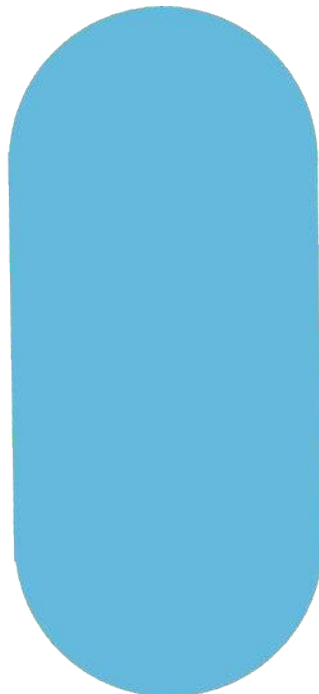




LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN, SOUTH TYNESIDE

LOCAL HOUSING MIX ASSESSMENT

Prepared on behalf of Story Homes Limited



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1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Introduction

- 1.1 This local housing mix assessment has been prepared by Marrons national socio-economics team on behalf of Story Homes Limited. The report presents evidence which supports Story Homes preferred housing mix for their proposed development of 205 new dwellings on Land off Mill Lane, Whitburn, South Tyneside.
- 1.2 Our assessment is embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) objectives to significantly boost the supply of homes; to create sustainable, mixed, balanced and inclusive communities; and enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- 1.3 Story Homes proposal is for 205 new dwellings, of which 82 (40%) are proposed to be affordable, and 123 (60%) will be available on the open market.
- 1.4 At the outset the provision of 40% affordable housing should be considered in the context of Policy 18 (Affordable Housing) of the emerging South Tyneside Publication draft Local Plan 2023-2040 which only requires the provision of 25% affordable housing in the Whitburn area of South Tyneside.
- 1.5 This over-provision of affordable housing against policy requirements should be given significant weight in the consideration of this proposal regardless of the proposed housing mix in the context of Government aspirations for the provision of affordable housing.
- 1.6 Notwithstanding the affordable housing provision, which is a significant advantage of the scheme, this report considers the overall proposed mix (market and affordable housing combined) in terms of bedroom sizes for Story Homes site in Whitburn. This proposed mix is set out in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Story Homes Proposed Housing Mix (All Tenures)

Bedrooms	% of overall mix
1 bed	3.9%
2 bed	14.6%
3 bed	31.7%
4/5/6 bed	49.8%

Housing Delivery in South Tyneside

- 1.7 At the outset it should be noted how South Tyneside Council have an acute need for new housing when set in the context of past delivery and housing need.
- 1.8 The most recent 'Authorities Monitoring Report 2023-2024' (AMR) states that *“between April 2015 – March 2023, 83% of South Tyneside’s housing requirement was delivered. During the 2023/24 monitoring period, only 62% of the annual housing requirement was delivered. Housing delivery has shown a consistent year by year decline since 2018.”*¹ (our emphasis)
- 1.9 Furthermore, the AMR continues, *“The Council failed the 2022 Housing Delivery Test, and the average delivery has fallen below 75%, therefore the borough is subject to the presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*² (our emphasis)
- 1.10 In this context it should be noted how the most recent 2023 Housing Delivery Test (HDT) result was only 60%, and prior to this the HDT results were 72% in 2022) and 74% (2021) meaning the borough has been subject to the presumption in favour of sustainable development since the publication of the 2021 HDT results on 19th January 2021.
- 1.11 The Council’s latest five-year housing land supply position is also important, and the most recent position is that the Council only has 3.1 years supply against its housing requirement of 309 dwellings per annum.³
- 1.12 Because the Council are unable to provide five years housing land supply, and their housing delivery test is below 75%, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies in accordance with footnote 8 of the NPPF. It is important to note that only one of these (lack of five year supply or a housing delivery test below 75%) is required to engage the tilted balance.

¹ Paragraph 6.3, page 10, South Tyneside Authorities Monitoring Report 2023-2024

² Paragraph 6.4, page 10, South Tyneside Authorities Monitoring Report 2023-2024

³ Page 34, South Tyneside Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2024 (March 2025)

South Tyneside 2023 SHMA Final Report (November 2023)

- 1.13 In the context of the housing mix proposed by Story Homes, it should be noted that the most recent evidence base document to address housing mix is the South Tyneside 2023 SHMA Final Report (November 2023) which has been prepared to support the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.14 The emerging Local Plan is currently at the examination stage, albeit only stage 1 hearings have been completed, and stage 2 hearings are not set to begin until November 2025.
- 1.15 This is important in terms of the status of the 2023 SHMA which has not yet been endorsed through the adoption of the Local Plan despite the Local Plan examination proceedings having begun.
- 1.16 This means that the weight which can be afforded to the SHMA, and the emerging policy is reduced, and evidence to challenge the SHMA (such as the report presented here by Marrons) holds equal weight.
- 1.17 This was established by the High Court Judgment between William David/Bloor Homes/Jelson Homes/Davidsons Homes/Barwood Homes and Charnwood Borough Council (23 November 2017, Case No: CO/2920/2017).
- 1.18 In this Judgment, Gilbert J quashed Charnwood Borough Council's new housing mix policy on the basis that it should have been adopted as part of a Development Plan Document (DPD), requiring independent examination by the Secretary of State, instead of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which only requires consultation.
- 1.19 The policy prepared and implemented by Charnwood Council prescribed the appropriate mix of home sizes in a housing development, with any departure from the specified percentages requiring justification through evidence taking into account a list of factors.
- 1.20 The judgment emphasised the importance of Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) correctly categorising their policy documents to ensure the right legal requirements for public participation are followed.
- 1.21 Given the primacy accorded to the development plan in the planning system, it is a core tenet of the system that DPDs are subject to independent examination at which the

soundness of the document is tested and at which individuals who wish to secure changes to the document are given the opportunity to appear before and be heard by the examiner.

- 1.22 As SPDs carry less weight in planning decision-making, they only have to be subject to public consultation. The Judgement meant that LPAs must carefully consider whether statements in their documents can reasonably be said to fall within the description of policies which are prescribed to be DPDs rather than SPDs.
- 1.23 This therefore confirms that the evidence on housing mix we have prepared in this report holds equal weight to the 2023 SHMA until such time as the Local Plan is adopted.
- 1.24 Notwithstanding the status of the 2023 SHMA, it recommends an overall mix of housing for the Borough as a whole which we have compared to that proposed in Whitburn by Story Homes in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Story Homes Proposed Housing Mix vs. 2023 SHMA recommendations

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Story Homes	3.9%	14.6%	31.7%	49.8%
2023 SHMA	9.7%	32.7%	42.0%	15.6%
Story Homes vs 2023 SHMA	-5.8%	-18.1%	-10.3%	+34.2%

Source: Figure ES1, page 9, South Tyneside 2023 SHMA Final Report

- 1.25 Story Homes therefore propose a lower proportion of smaller 1-bed 2-bed, and 3-bed properties and a higher proportion of larger 4+ bed properties than is recommended across the Borough for all tenures.
- 1.26 However, the mix required in one part of the Borough is likely to differ from another part of the Borough because of local circumstances. The SHMA recognises this by dividing the Borough into the four sub-areas of East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn; Hebburn; Jarrow; and South Shields.
- 1.27 For the area in which Story Homes proposed development is located (East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn) the SHMA's online stakeholder survey revealed that, *"Many of the more desirable market areas within South Tyneside (e.g. Boldon, Cleadon, and Whitburn) have a limited amount of family market housing due to planning constraints, such as green belt. The effect of these constraints have significantly restricted new supply and thereby supply has remained flat, being outstripped by demand. This*

situation forces up prices of existing homes and creates affordability issues in high-demand areas of the borough.”⁴ (our emphasis)

- 1.28 This is reiterated in paragraph 2.26 of the emerging Local Plan which states, “*The evidence from engagement through the SHMA suggests that the inner urban areas have a more challenging housing market and that many of the more desirable market areas within South Tyneside (e.g. the Boldons, Cleadon, and Whitburn village) have a limited amount of family market housing due to planning constraints such as Green Belt.*”⁵ (our emphasis)
- 1.29 In this context section 2(I) of Policy 19 (Housing Mix) in the emerging Plan states how development should also “*increase the supply of detached homes in the borough*” which Story Homes proposed development will do.
- 1.30 In the Whitburn area of the Borough there is therefore a clear lack of supply of family homes for which Story Homes proposed development will provide for in their mix.
- 1.31 The SHMA goes on to address mix by tenure and by sub area on page 153. The key figures here relate to the proportion of open market housing recommended for 4 or more bedrooms.
- 1.32 For East Boldon, Cleadon, and Whitburn, 35-40% of all open market housing is recommended as 4+ bedrooms. This compares with only 15-20% in the other three areas of the Borough. The proposed delivery of Story Homes is therefore less than 10% above this recommendation.
- 1.33 Furthermore, the recommendation for affordable home ownership is 25-30% as 4 or more bedrooms, the same as the Jarrow sub-area, but compared to only 5-10% in Hebburn and 2-5% in South Shields.
- 1.34 The final tenure is social/affordable mix and again there is a significantly higher recommended proportion for 4 or more bedrooms (25-30%) in East Boldon, Cleadon, and Whitburn which compares with only 2-5% for all other sub areas.
- 1.35 The SHMA therefore recommends a significantly higher proportion of larger homes of 4 or more bedrooms for all tenures in the Whitburn sub area compared with the remainder of the Borough.

⁴ Paragraph 2.16, page 29, South Tyneside 2023 SHMA Final Report

⁵ Paragraph 2.26, page 19, South Tyneside Publication draft Local Plan 2023-2040 (January 2024)

- 1.36 It should be noted how the evidence contained in the SHMA is more recent than the 2018-based data referred to in the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan. This is important as it has considered 2021 Census data which is a key dataset which we analyse later in this report.

Whitburn Housing Need Assessment (February 2018)

- 1.37 The Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in September 2022, however the evidence of the Whitburn Housing Need Assessment which underpinned its policies is dated February 2018 and at the time of writing is nearly 8 years old.
- 1.38 The assessment includes thorough analysis for the time of its publication, but by virtue of its 2018 publication date this analysis is now significantly outdated. In the intervening period there have been updates to a range of data included in the assessment, and to national planning policy and guidance.
- 1.39 There have also been major events such as the COVID-19 pandemic which have significantly altered consumer behaviour in the housing market, and in terms of data the results of the 2021 Census.
- 1.40 In this context the evidence we present in this report is the most recent available and is far more robust than the 2018 assessment which underpinned the Neighbourhood Plan.

Summary

- 1.41 In summary this section has highlighted how South Tyneside Council have an acute need for housing, in the context of them being unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and having failed the housing delivery test.
- 1.42 In respect of the housing mix proposed by Story Homes in Whitburn, the Council's most recent housing evidence (2023 SHMA) indicates a more acute need for larger family housing in the Whitburn sub area of South Tyneside than the other three sub areas assessed by the SHMA.
- 1.43 This was emphasised by stakeholder events in support of the SHMA at which attendees highlighted the lack of family sized housing in the part of the Borough in which Whitburn is located.

- 1.44 However, the SHMA holds equal weight to evidence such as that we have presented in this report, as it is yet to be formally adopted through the examination process. In the following sections of this report, we provide up-to-date housing market trend and demographic trend analysis which addresses Whitburn in isolation from the surrounding area used by the SHMA's sub-district analysis.
- 1.45 Furthermore although Whitburn has a 2022 Neighbourhood Plan this is underpinned by a housing need assessment which is almost 8 years old, the data for which cannot be relied upon and which we provide updates to in this report.

2. HOUSING MARKET TRENDS – WHITBURN

Introduction

- 2.1 Housing market trends data is available from the home.co.uk web site and we have utilised that source to consider what recent trends indicate about demand in Whitburn.
- 2.2 We have considered the past three years (August 2022 – August 2025) in terms of trends to provide a representative period since the UK came out of all COVID-19 measures, in the context of these measures having some influence on the housing market and movements within it.

Market Trends – Time on Market

- 2.3 The trends we have provided are measures of the time that different types and sizes of property remain on the housing market for. Tables 2.1 to 2.2 consider the time on the market of properties by bedroom size.

2.1: Average Time on Market by Number of Bedrooms in Whitburn (days)

	Aug 22	Aug 25	Change
5+ Bedrooms	79	66	-16%
4 Bedrooms	143	99	-31%
3 Bedrooms	61	100	+64%
2 Bedrooms	46	113	+146%
1 Bedroom	n/a	62	n/a

2.2: Median Time on Market by Number of Bedrooms in Whitburn (days)

	Aug 22	Aug 25	Change
5+ Bedrooms	79	88	+11%
4 Bedrooms	69	102	+48%
3 Bedrooms	47	92	+96%
2 Bedrooms	8	67	+738%
1 Bedroom	n/a	62	n/a

- 2.4 Table 2.1 reveals quite a clear pattern, with the number of days spent on the market declining for 4-bed and 5+ bed but increasing for smaller properties. Furthermore, 4 and 5+ bed properties stay on the market the least number of days as of August 2025. This indicates most demand for these larger family homes in Whitburn.

- 2.5 Table 2.2 shows a similar pattern, with the median measure indicating most demand for larger properties. This is borne out by 5+ bed showing the lowest increase in time on the market, followed by 4 bed properties.

Market Trends – Selling Prices

- 2.6 Tables 2.3 and 2.4 provide data on the change in property prices over the same 3-year period as the time on market data.

2.3: Average Asking Prices by Number of Bedrooms in Whitburn (days)

	Aug 22	Aug 25	Change
5+ Bedrooms	£799,000	£1,966,650	+146%
4 Bedrooms	£493,977	£573,317	+16%
3 Bedrooms	£185,175	£249,060	+34%
2 Bedrooms	£174,970	£243,325	+39%
1 Bedroom	n/a	£110,000	n/a

2.4: Median Asking Prices by Number of Bedrooms in Whitburn (days)

	Aug 22	Aug 25	Change
5+ Bedrooms	£799,000	£2,500,000	+213%
4 Bedrooms	£495,000	£660,000	+33%
3 Bedrooms	£179,950	£190,000	+6%
2 Bedrooms	£139,950	£205,000	+46%
1 Bedroom	n/a	£110,000	n/a

- 2.7 Tables 2.3 and 2.4 illustrates how all household sizes have increased in price over the past three years whether based on the average or median measure. Within this the largest category (5+ bed) has increased by a significantly higher margin than all other sizes indicating a need for larger family homes. Indeed, the data indicates similar demand for 3 and 4-bed properties across the two measures.
- 2.8 It should be noted how the average for 5+ bed properties has been exacerbated by the sale of a very small number of properties priced at over £1m in the wider area surrounding Whitburn's built-up area and not within the settlement itself.
- 2.9 Additional analysis using Right Move shows an average sale price in the last 12 months of £607,857 for a detached property which aligns more with the 4-bedroom data set out

in the tables above. Similarly semi-detached sale prices have been an average of £191,650 which aligns with the 2 and 3-bed data above.

Summary

- 2.10 The analysis of market trends data set out above illustrates how demand has increased most for larger family housing of at least four bedrooms over the past three years. This is shown by this size of property experiencing the largest % decline in time on the market, and biggest % increase in property price. This aligns with the findings of the 2023 SHMA which recommend larger proportions of family sized housing in the sub area in which Whitburn is located.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS – WHITBURN

Introduction

- 3.1 To complement the market trend data in the previous section of this report we have also looked at demographic indicators of need by considering changes between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. This provides another strand of evidence informing what the appropriate housing mix for Whitburn is.
- 3.2 We have used the same geographical area used by the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) by utilising the lowest level of geography – output area – recorded by the 2021 Census. Whitburn is formed of 20 output areas which emphasises the detail of this data.
- 3.3 It is imperative to place this analysis in the context of the vision for Whitburn set out in the WNP ('made' in September 2022). The Plan's vision is to ensure Whitburn village will continue as a sustainable and well-supported, thriving community in line with NPPF policies to ensure rural areas maintain their vitality.
- 3.4 Furthermore, Policy SP3 of the emerging Local Plan states that the spatial strategy of the Plan will seek to *"secure the sustainability and vitality of the villages of Cleadon, Whitburn and the Boldons."*⁶ (our emphasis)
- 3.5 The emerging Plan also classifies Whitburn as a 'Local Centre' and Policy SP20 (The Hierarchy of centres) states *"Local Centres: Cleadon Village, East Boldon Village, Harton, Westoe Road, Whitburn Village serve the everyday needs of local communities and are the focus for small scale shops and services accordingly."*⁷ (our emphasis)
- 3.6 To achieve these objectives will require demographic growth in Whitburn which can continue to support shops and services and meet the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure Whitburn remains a 'thriving' community.

Population Change

- 3.7 The first indicator we have looked at is how the population of Whitburn has changed between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. This provides an indication of whether there is a need for housing in general, and if so what age groups in particular should be targeted. Table 3.1 sets out this change by broad age groups.

⁶ Policy SP3, page 33, South Tyneside Publication draft Local Plan 2023-2040 (January 2024)

⁷ Policy SP20, page 108, South Tyneside Publication draft Local Plan 2023-2040 (January 2024)

Table 3.1: Population change (2011-2021) in Whitburn

Age Group	2011	2021	Population change 2011-2021 (persons)	% change 2011-2021
0-19	1,095	1,048	-47	-4%
20-29	456	425	-31	-7%
30-44	907	853	-54	-6%
45-64	1,551	1,505	-46	-3%
65+	1,261	1,419	158	13%
All ages	5,270	5,250	-20	0%

Source: ONS

- 3.8 Table 3.1 summarises the change in broad age groups in the local study area and shows there to have been an overall decline in population between 2011 and 2021.
- 3.9 This has been made up by a decline in all age groups apart from the over 65s.
- 3.10 This reflects the historic lack of housing delivery against need which we identified in the introduction to this report in general across South Tyneside between 2011 and 2021, and shows how this is a local issue in Whitburn which means people of all ages who would have liked to have located in Whitburn have had to seek housing elsewhere in the Borough, or beyond.
- 3.11 If this demographic trend continues it would mean the vision of the WNP and the objectives of the emerging Local Plan and NPPF for rural areas would be impossible to achieve.
- 3.12 For example, a continuation in the decline of the child age population would make it difficult for a service such as Whitburn Village Primary School to remain sustainable due to falling pupil numbers.

Household Reference Persons (HRP)

- 3.13 The data in Table 3.1 is emphasised by the change in all Household Reference Persons (HRP) in the area between 2011 and 2021. The HRP is the householder, who is the household member who owns the accommodation; is legally responsible for the rent; or occupies the accommodation as reward of their employment, or through some relationship to its owner who is not a member of the household. If there are joint

householders, the one with the highest income is the HRP. If their income is the same, then the eldest one is the HRP.

- 3.14 This data is set out in Table 3.2. This data is not available for the same age groups as the population data however it is broadly comparable.

Table 4.2: Household Reference Person (HRP) change (2011-2021) in Whitburn

Age Group	2011	2021	HRP change 2011-2021 (persons)	% change 2011-2021
Under 24	25	21	-4	-16%
25-34	150	185	35	23%
35-49	580	498	-82	-14%
50-64	708	747	39	6%
65+	913	998	85	9%
All ages	2,376	2,449	73	3%

Source: ONS

- 3.15 As Table 3.2 illustrates, there has been a decline in HRPs aged under 24 and in the 35-49 age group. The 35-49 age group is considered to represent the age group most likely to need larger family sized housing and emphasises the total population change insofar as this data indicates this section of the population has been unable to form a household in Whitburn over the past decade.

- 3.16 The increase in the 25-34 age group indicates that some smaller properties have become available over the 2011-2021 period and that these are less in demand locally.

Occupancy Rates (Bedrooms)

- 3.17 The bedroom occupancy rates of properties in the study area can reveal important characteristics and link to the population analysis set out above. The data from the 2021 Census reveals several issues related to under-occupancy, i.e., where one or more bedrooms are not being used, and the property is under-occupied.

- 3.18 A value of +1 means there is one bedroom unoccupied, and +2 or more means there are 2 or more bedrooms unoccupied. The home is therefore under-occupied. A minus rating means the property is overcrowded and more bedrooms are needed.

- 3.19 Table 3.3 shows the occupancy ratings in Whitburn compared with South Tyneside Borough, the North East region, and England averages.

Table 3.3: Occupancy Rating (Households) in 2021

Occupancy Rating	Whitburn	South Tyneside	North East	England
Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of +2 or more	39%	32%	36%	36%
Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of +1	36%	40%	33%	39%
Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of 0	24%	26%	27%	23%
Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of -1	1%	2%	4%	2%
Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of -2 or less	0%	0%	1%	0%

Source: nomisweb.co.uk (Table TS052 – Occupancy rating for bedrooms)

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

- 3.20 Table 3.3 shows that 39% of households in Whitburn were under-occupied (i.e., bedrooms are unused) by at least 2 bedrooms at the time of the 2021 Census. This compares with only 32% across South Tyneside Borough.
- 3.21 The difference in Whitburn compared with the wider Borough is a marked contrast and highlights that there are a significant number of larger properties in Whitburn which are under-occupied by older residents. The figure is also higher than the regional and national average (36%).
- 3.22 These larger family properties are unlikely to come back onto the market due to residents' financial status, when considered in the context of Whitburn's place as a more affluent area in comparison to the wider Borough and beyond.
- 3.23 For this reason, without new development to provide for families with children, Whitburn will continue to become unbalanced in terms of the age of its population without new family housing.

Households with Dependent Children

- 3.24 The trends already discussed are emphasised by the number of homes with dependent children in Whitburn, compared with South Tyneside, North East, and England averages. This data is set out in Table 3.4 as recorded by the 2021 Census.

Table 3.4: Dependent children in households

Household Type	Whitburn	South Tyneside	North East	England
No dependent children	76.1%	73.8%	73.9%	71.5%
Dependent children	23.9%	26.2%	26.1%	28.5%

Source: nomisweb.co.uk (Table RM132)

- 3.25 As Table 3.4 highlights, as of the 2021 Census Whitburn was the only area analysed where less than a quarter of households had dependent children. This is a further indicator that more family sized housing is needed to fulfil the NPPF objective of creating mixed and balanced communities and continue the sustainability of the village.

Retirees

- 3.26 The number of retirees in the study area is also of use in building a demographic picture of the area. Table 3.5 sets out the proportion of retirees in the study area compared with wider geographies.

Table 3.5: Retirees (% of total population)

Area	%
Whitburn	32.1%
South Tyneside	24.7%
North East	24.6%
England	21.5%

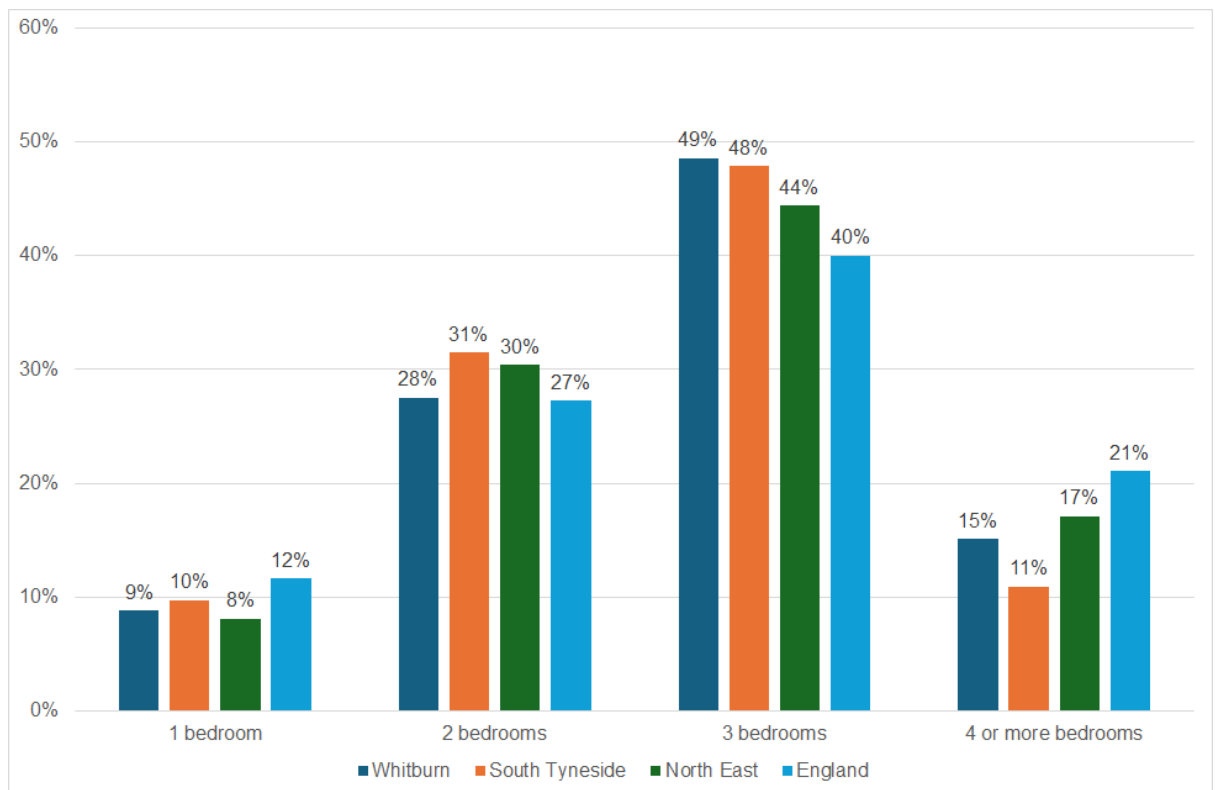
Source: nomisweb.co.uk (Table TS066)

- 3.27 As Table 3.5 illustrates, the high level of under-occupancy in the area set out above is partly explained by the higher-than-average proportion of retirees in Whitburn (32.1%) which is significantly higher than the South Tyneside (24.7%), North East (24.6%), and England (21.5%) averages.
- 3.28 This also reflects the population data in Table 3.1 which showed the only change being in the 65+ age group between 2011 and 2021.
- 3.29 Housing capable of bringing in economically active people is therefore more in demand in Whitburn than in the remainder of South Tyneside and across the region.

Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms

- 3.30 The housing stock by bedroom size for Whitburn is compared with South Tyneside, the North East, and England, in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Housing stock by bedroom size



Source: ONS, 2021 Census

3.31 Figure 3.1 illustrates how there are less large 4+ bedroom properties in Whitburn and in South Tyneside than across the North East, and across England. Indeed, the proportion of 4+ bed homes is over 100% higher across England than in South Tyneside, and 50% higher across England than in Whitburn.

3.32 This indicates more of a need for larger family housing than starter family housing of 2 or 3-bed.

Summary

3.33 In summary the key points to note from this demographic analysis are as follows:

- Whitburn has experienced population **decline** between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses in all age groups except for the 65+ age group. This indicates a lack of suitable housing provision for all ages.
- HRP change over the same period has seen a **decline** in the 35-49 age group – the age group most likely to be requiring larger family housing. This indicates a particular deficit for this type of housing in Whitburn.

- In Whitburn, 39% of properties are **under-occupied** by 2 or more bedrooms. This is a higher proportion than the comparator areas and means a higher proportion of larger family homes are occupied. In a relatively affluent area such as Whitburn, this stock is unlikely to come back onto the market and new stock is needed.
- Whitburn has a noticeably **lower** proportion of households with dependent children when compared with South Tyneside, the North East, and England. This emphasises the decline of the child age population.
- As of 2021 Whitburn has a significantly **higher** proportion of retirees when compared to the other comparator areas listed.
- Whitburn and South Tyneside have a **lower** proportion of larger homes with 4 or more bedrooms than the North East and England.

3.34 Together these demographic trends experienced between 2011 and 2021 indicate a lack of housing delivery of all types of housing in Whitburn. This has led to population decline which conflicts with Neighbourhood Plan and emerging Local Plan policies and objectives for Whitburn as a 'local centre' and to maintain its vitality. It also conflicts with NPPF policies to ensure the vitality of rural communities is maintained or enhanced.

3.35 Within South Tyneside, Whitburn has a higher proportion of larger under-occupied properties than the rest of the Borough. Furthermore, Whitburn has experienced a decline in HRPs aged 35-49, i.e., those most likely to require larger family properties. This has meant people of this age would have needed to look elsewhere for suitable housing.

3.36 The proportion of the retired population in Whitburn is also noticeably higher than across South Tyneside, the North East, and England.

3.37 Taken together, a continuation of these trends will lead to a continuing unbalancing of Whitburn's population, meaning the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and emerging Local Plan won't be realised, and the objective of the NPPF to create mixed and balanced communities will not be achieved either.

3.38 The demographic evidence therefore complements the market trends evidence in the previous section of this report, and the sub-district recommendations of the 2023 SHMA which showed highest need for larger properties in the East Boldon, Cleadon, and Whitburn area.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 South Tyneside Council do not have a five-year supply of housing, have failed their housing delivery test in the three most recent years, and have under-delivered against their housing requirement for several years. The need for housing across the Borough is acute for these reasons.
- 4.2 In this context this housing mix assessment provides robust evidence of housing market and demographic trends for Whitburn to illustrate how the proposed housing mix of Story Homes on Land off Mill Lane, Whitburn, is appropriate and meets need.
- 4.3 The proposed mix will help to achieve the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, the emerging Local Plan, and the NPPF objectives for rural settlements such as Whitburn.
- 4.4 Our evidence also provides an update to the outdated 2018 Whitburn Housing Need Assessment, which at the time of writing is nearly 8 years old and fails to incorporate important data such as that from the 2021 Census.
- 4.5 The proposed mix will help to attract families capable of contributing to the local economy and ensuring that existing services in Whitburn remain sustainable and satisfy the housing mix policy of the emerging Local Plan in respect of increasing the supply of detached homes in the borough.
- 4.6 The key conclusions of our analysis are summarised below.

Housing market trends

- 4.7 The analysis of market trends data set out in section 2 illustrates how demand has increased most for larger family housing of at least four bedrooms over the past three years.
- 4.8 This is shown by this size of property experiencing the largest % decline in time on the market, and biggest % increase in property price.
- 4.9 This aligns with the findings of the 2023 SHMA which recommend larger proportions of family sized housing in the sub area in which Whitburn is located.

Demographic trends

- 4.10 The demographic analysis supports the need for housing of all types in Whitburn but particularly of larger family housing. Population decline (all persons and household reference persons) has been most notable in the age group with the greatest propensity to be requiring larger family housing, and under-occupancy levels locally in Whitburn are high in larger family sized properties meaning none of this stock is available.
- 4.11 Furthermore, Whitburn has a lower proportion of dependent children and a higher proportion of retirees than the comparator areas we have analysed, emphasising the unbalancing of the population which will only be exacerbated without the delivery of new family sized housing such as that proposed by Story Homes.

Overall conclusion

- 4.12 The evidence set out in this report is considered to justify the proposed housing mix of Story Homes proposals in Whitburn. A higher proportion of larger family housing in this part of South Tyneside is also supported by the sub-district analysis of the Council's 2023 SHMA which recommended higher levels of larger family housing in the sub-area where Whitburn is located.
- 4.13 Failure to provide this type of housing will mean the child age and working age population of the village will continue to decline as it has over the 2011-2021 period. This will in turn unbalance the population in favour of older residents, making it very difficult for local business and services to remain viable. This will mean the vision of the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan will not be achieved, and neither will the objectives of the emerging Local Plan for South Tyneside.
- 4.14 The scheme therefore accords with paragraph 60 of the NPPF in supporting the delivery of a mix of housing types which will foster a mixed and balanced community in Whitburn. It will also provide 205 acutely needed homes in a local authority which does not have a five-year supply of housing and has failed to deliver its housing requirement for several years. This includes detached homes which the emerging Local Plan seeks to increase across the borough.