

Appendix 1:
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
Outline Methodology

Stage 1: Planning the Assessment

- Follow the methodology established by CLG Practice Guidance with the detailed approaches refined to address local circumstances.
- As recommended in the Practice Guidance, the SHLAA will be prepared in partnership with key stakeholders such as house builders, RSLs, local property agents, parish councils and other agencies through a Housing Market Partnership (HMP). We will consult the HMP on the proposed methodology.
- Issue a 'call for sites'. This will make clear the level of detail that the Council will expect a promoter to provide in support of their site, including delivery and viability information.

Stage 2: Determining which sources of sites will be included in the Assessment

- The sources of sites will be identified at the beginning of the Assessment. For South Cambs, these are as set out in Stage 3 and not repeated here to avoid repetition.

Stage 3: Desktop Review of existing information

- Undertake a desktop survey looking at all relevant data sources identified in Stage 2 to identify as far as possible all sites with potential for housing either under existing policies or may be potentially suitable if certain policies were changed eg. framework boundaries.
- A. Suitable sites consistent with current planning policy:
 - Existing housing allocations – review the deliverability of these sites and confirm capacity and timescales for delivery with landowners/developers.
 - Planning permissions for housing that are under construction – from annual monitoring.
 - Unimplemented/outstanding planning permissions for housing – from annual monitoring.
 - Other sites consistent with current planning policies – to identify other sites where housing would be acceptable in principle under

current policies, eg. brownfield sites within frameworks where existing use has ceased.

- B. Potentially suitable sites if planning policies were altered (Note: the development strategy will be determined through the plan making process, which may or may not include any or all of these sources)
 - New strategic scale locations/sites
 - New settlements
 - Urban extensions to Cambridge
 - Major village expansion.
 - Greenfield sites on edge of most sustainable rural settlements
 - Rural Centres
 - Minor Rural Centres
 - Better served Group villages.
 - Land allocated for other uses
 - Consider whether any existing allocations for other uses such as employment are no longer suitable / needed for that use, and whether they have potential for residential.
 - Assess all potentially suitable sites in a 3 level process. Each level will contain a number of criteria which will be subject to an assessment that will result in the site being assigned a green, amber or red light for each criteria. This will determine whether a site should be subject to the next level of assessment:

Level 1: Strategic considerations - Identify specific types of land that will be excluded from the assessment. The Practice Guidance suggests mapping clear-cut designations and ascribing a nil housing potential to them at the initial stage. It gives SSSI as an example.

Level 2: Significant Local Considerations - These will be local level considerations, important in the South Cambridgeshire context, that have the potential to have the greatest impact on whether or not a site can be considered developable.

Level 3: Local and site-specific factors - These have the potential to affect the sustainability of a site, such as access to services, facilities and sustainable modes of transport, along with other factors that may affect the deliverability of a site, such as the presence of contaminated land and air quality issues.

- Rejected sites will be recorded in a suitable way.

Stage 4: Determining which sites and areas will be surveyed

- Practice Guidance recommends that all sites identified by the desktop review are visited to make sure information held is consistent and that an up-to-date view on development progress can be reached.
- Site survey should be used to identify further sites with potential for housing that was not identified by the desktop review.

Stage 5: Carrying out the survey

- Check the desktop assessment and record other key site characteristics eg. boundaries, current use, surrounding land uses, physical constraints etc. Make initial assessment of whether is suitable for housing or potentially suitable with change to policy, eg. framework.

Stage 6: Estimating the housing potential of each site

- Take a reasonable and consistent approach for South Cambs to establish potential capacity of sites.

Stage 7: Assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed

Stage 7a: Assessing suitability for housing

- The planning policy judgement having regard to policy restrictions, physical problems or limitations, potential impacts (on environment, etc) and environmental conditions.

Stage 7b: Assessing availability for housing

- When, on best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems and the owner/developer has confirmed its potential availability. If problems are identified then an assessment must be made as to how and when they can be realistically overcome.

Stage 7c: Assessing achievability for housing

- If there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed at a particular point in time. Use an assessment tool such as the HCA Area Wide Viability Model to assess the economic viability of a site and

capacity of developer to complete the housing over a certain period, affected by market factors, cost factors and delivery factors.

Stage 7d: Overcoming constraints

- Consider what action would be needed to remove any identified constraints for sites consistent with planning policies, eg. investment in infrastructure, etc.
- For sites that would need a change in policy, check that the assessment is clear on the change that would be needed. Whether such a change should be made is a matter for the plan making process and not for the SHLAA.

Stage 8: Review of the Assessment

- Produce an indicative housing trajectory which includes all sites identified in the SHLAA as having potential for housing with an overall risk assessment of whether sites will come forward as anticipated. The trajectory will deal separately with sites consistent with planning policy and those where a change in policy would be needed. There will be no ranking of sites or any indication of which are preferred which is a policy decision for plan making. The purpose of producing a trajectory as part of the SHLAA is simply to get an overview of potential deliverable provision through the plan period compared with the housing requirement. The consideration of suitable site options and the decision on which sites should be allocated is for the separate plan making process.
- Guidance says if there are insufficient sites it will be necessary to investigate how shortfall should best be planned – a. identifying broad locations; and/or b. use of a windfall allowance (see below)

Stage 9: Identifying and assessing the housing potential of broad locations (where necessary)

- Guidance describes these as area where housing is considered feasible and will be encouraged but where specific sites cannot yet be identified. Identifies examples as within and small extensions to settlements, and then major urban extensions, new settlements etc.
- Suggests focusing search by establishing set of criteria eg. where significant infrastructure exists or is planned, or to avoid coalescence of settlements, and possibly areas identified earlier in the assessment.
- Not clear at this stage whether this will be needed for South Cambs.

Stage 10: Determining the housing potential of windfall (where justified)

- Consider case for including a windfall allowance.