

SHELAA Methodology

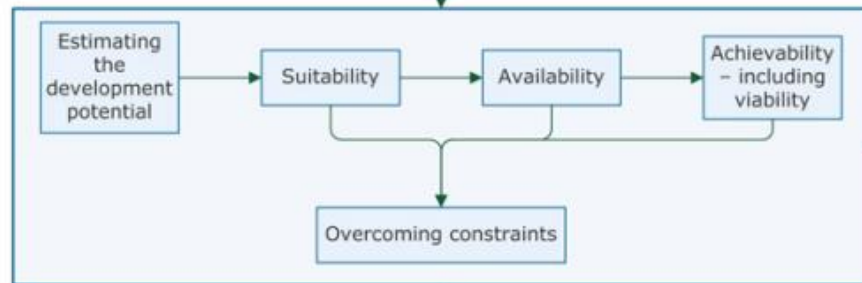
1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) is a technical evidence-based document which Local Authorities are required to produce, as outlined in paragraph 68 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to provide a clear understanding of the land available within their area.
- 1.1.2 The SHELAA will identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable and may have potential for housing and economic development for the period 2023/24-2037/38. The assessment will be an important source of evidence to inform plan-making and decision-making.
- 1.1.3 The role of a SHELAA is to provide information on the range of sites which are available to meet a Local Authority's requirements, but it is the role of the Local Plan itself to determine which of these sites are the most suitable to meet those requirements. The assessment should therefore:
 - Identify sites and broad locations with potential for development;
 - Assess their development potential; and
 - Assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forwards (the availability and achievability)
- 1.1.4 The SHELAA will supersede both the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2014) and the Employment Land Review (2013).
- 1.1.5 The Council will be following the methodology approach as set out in the Government Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUCH).
- 1.1.6 The guidance sets out a five-stage assessment process (Figure 1).

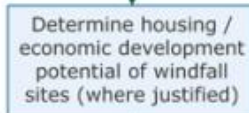
Stage 1 - Site / broad location identification



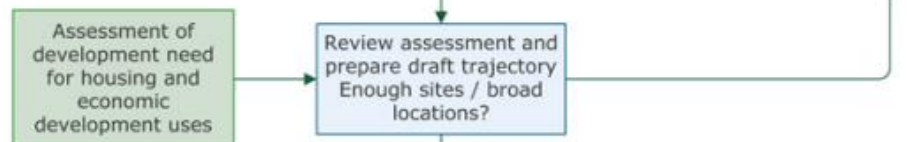
Stage 2 - Site / broad location assessment



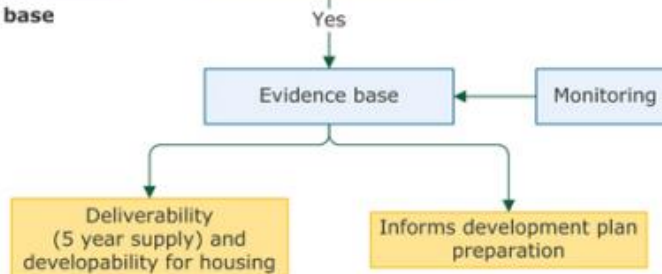
Stage 3 - Windfall assessment



Stage 4 - Assessment review



Stage 5 - Final evidence base



2 Stage 1: Site/Broad Location Identification

2.1 Determine assessment area and site size

- 2.1.1 In accordance with the PPG, the area covered by the SHELAA will be the plan-making area, which is the Harlow District Council area. Although paragraph 2.3.2 states that if over 50% of the promoted area falls within the Harlow area, this will also be considered.
- 2.1.2 The PPG recommends that consideration is given to all sites and broad locations capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares (or 500 sqm of floorspace) and above. Given the nature of the Harlow District, many sites that come forward for development are either small sites or for conversions. Thus, there will be no minimum size of site threshold for the assessment.

2.2 Desktop review of existing information

- 2.2.1 The PPG sets out that plan-makers need to be proactive in identifying as wide a range of sites and broad locations for development as possible. The guidance also sets out potential data sources for a comprehensive list of sites that will be assessed, including through existing sites that could be improved, intensified, or changed as well as those that have particular constraints.
- 2.2.2 The Council will therefore:
- Collate those sites already known to the Council and undertake a desktop review of data sources to identify new sites, including:
 - Existing housing and economic development allocations and site development briefs not yet with planning permission
 - Planning permissions for housing and economic development that are unimplemented or under construction
 - Planning applications that have been refused or withdrawn
 - Land in the local authority's ownership
 - Surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land
 - Vacant and derelict buildings
 - Additional opportunities for un-established uses
 - Business requirements and aspirations
 - Potential urban extensions
 - Carry out a Call for Sites to provide landowners and developers an opportunity to submit their sites

2.3 Call for sites/broad locations

- 2.3.1 A Call for Sites will be open for submission over an eight-week period which will enable any landowner or developer to submit sites to be considered for inclusion within the SHELAA. The submission form requires the provision of contact details, site location details including an OS map outlining the site, site ownership details, site details, proposed use/s, site constraints, infrastructure and interventions, site availability and delivery timescales.
- 2.3.2 Sites will be considered for the SHELAA providing most of the site (over 50% of the promoted area) falls within the Harlow area.

2.4 Site/broad location Survey

- 2.4.1 Sites identified through the desktop review and Call for Sites will be compiled and mapped as well as detailing key information to assist in the initial survey.
- 2.4.2 The initial site survey assesses potential sites and broad locations prior to a more detailed survey. As set out in the PPG, this aims to:
- ratify inconsistent information gathered through the call for sites and desk assessment;
 - get an up to date view on development progress (where sites have planning permission);
 - obtain a better understanding of what type and scale of development may be appropriate;
 - gain a more detailed understanding of deliverability, any barriers and how they could be overcome; and
 - identify further sites with potential for development that were not identified through data sources or the call for sites.
- 2.4.3 Sites will be assessed individually, initially checking whether they fall within the scope of the study or not. The following are reasons for exclusion of sites at Stage 1:
- If the site has planning permission and is near completion or completed
 - If the site is located entirely outside of the study area

3 Stage 2 Site/broad location assessment

3.1 **Estimating the development potential in parallel with assessing suitability, availability, achievability including viability**

- 3.1.1 Information on development potential, suitability, availability and achievability will be collected and analysed through a combination of the desktop assessments site surveys, engagement and information submitted by landowners, agents and developers in response to the Call for Sites process.
- 3.1.2 The PPG advises that the estimation of the development potential of each identified site can be guided by the existing or emerging plan policy including locally determined policies on density. When assessing development potential, plan makers should seek to make the most efficient use of land in line with policies set out in the NPPF.
- 3.1.3 A site or broad location can be considered suitable if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated. Sites in existing development plans or with planning permission can generally be considered suitable for development although it may be necessary to assess whether circumstances have changed which would alter their suitability. Other factors that will be taken into account are:
- national policy
 - appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;
 - contribution to regeneration priority areas;
 - potential impacts including the effect upon landscapes including landscape features, nature and heritage conservation.
- 3.1.4 A site appraisal form will be completed for each site to ensure consistency when assessing the suitability of the sites. It will use a traffic light method of assessment as well as a scoring system. Whilst this does allow some comparison to assist in sites suitability, it must be weighed against the other factors of availability and achievability.
- 3.1.5 A site can be considered available for development, when, on the best information available (confirmed by the Call for Sites and information from land owners and legal searches where appropriate), there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership impediments to development.
- 3.1.6 A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time.
- 3.1.7 Information on suitability, availability, achievability and constraints can be used to assess the timescale within which each site is capable of development.

3.2 Overcoming constraints

- 3.2.1 The PPG sets out that where constraints have been identified, the assessment will need to consider what action could be taken to overcome them. Examples of constraints include policies in the NPPF and the adopted or emerging development plan, which may affect the suitability of the site, and unresolved multiple ownership, ransom strips tenancies or operational requirements of landowners, which may affect the availability of the site.

4 Stage 3 windfall assessment

4.1 Determine housing/economic development potential of windfall sites

- 4.1.1 As set out in the PPG, an allowance for windfall may be justified in the anticipated supply if there is compelling evidence as set out in paragraph 71 of the NPPF. This sets out that any allowance should be realistic and have regard to past delivery rates and expected future trends.
- 4.1.2 The SHELAA, along with the Council's Monitoring Report, will assess housing completions and come to a judgement as to whether there has been a pattern of windfall development that could be reliably used to predict future supply.

5 Stage 4 assessment review

5.1 Review assessment and prepare draft trajectory

- 5.1.1 The PPG sets out that once the sites and broad locations have been assessed, the development potential of all sites can be collected to produce an indicative trajectory including an indication of when development is likely to happen (i.e. within years 1-5,6-10 and 11 and beyond). An overall risk assessment will be made as to whether sites will come forward as anticipated.

6 Stage 5: final evidence base

6.1 Evidence base and monitoring

6.1.1 The outputs of the assessment will be:

- A list of all sites or broad locations considered, cross-referenced to their locations on maps;
- An assessment of each site or broad location, including:
 - Where these have been discounted, evidence justifying reasons given;
 - Where these are considered suitable, available and achievable, the potential type and quantity of development, including a reasonable estimate of build out rates, setting out how any barriers to delivery could be overcome and when;
 - An indicative trajectory of the anticipated development based on the evidence available

6.1.2 The SHELAA will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan review and will be a key document informing a separate site selection process for allocations to meet the identified needs for the plan in line with its vision and objectives. The SHELAA may need to be reviewed during the Plan preparation process as new information becomes available.