

Draft Land Availability Assessment Methodology

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Document Information

Document Information

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Document availability: The Draft Huntingdonshire Land Availability Assessment Methodology 2023 can be found on the Council's [consultation portal](#). Copies can be downloaded from the portal and responses to the consultation may be entered directly into the portal. A hard copy can be viewed at Customer Services Reception, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. This office is open from 8:45 to 17:00 Mondays to Thursdays and 8:45 to 16:30 on Fridays.

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Document Information

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The primary objective of this Land Availability Assessment (LAA) Methodology is to establish how sites promoted to the Council for some form of allocation in the Local Plan update will be systematically assessed. The outcomes of the assessments will indicate approximately what development sites could be available to meet Huntingdonshire's growth needs, what their capacity is, the constraints which would need to be overcome to deliver them and when they could be completed. This is to show whether it is possible to accommodate the development and other land use needs of Huntingdonshire during the next Local Plan period. It is proposed to provide an assessment of sites promoted uses beyond the traditional assessment of residential and employment proposals and include those such as sites for open space uses, flood mitigation or renewable energy.
- 1.2** An assessment of land availability identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period. It can also identify other uses such as sites for recreation, green infrastructure, flood mitigation or renewable energy generation. The assessment of land availability includes the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment requirement as set out in paragraph 68 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The assessment of land availability will form a key part of the evidence being used to prepare the next Huntingdonshire Local Plan.
- 1.3** The role of the Land Availability Assessment Methodology is to provide a consistent approach to the consideration of sites put forward for development. This document sets out how the Council proposes to assess land and present the outcomes of these assessments. This is a consultation version published for the purpose of seeking input from individuals and organisations on the approaches proposed; it will be available for comment for six weeks between March and May 2023. All comments received will be reviewed and proposed changes balanced against each other as it is recognised that conflicting views may be put forward. Where appropriate amendments will be made to the Methodology to finalise it for use.
- 1.4** By including sites that are potentially suitable for a wide range of development types the proposed LAA Methodology provides the opportunity to consider both the potential benefits and impacts of development as a whole on the surrounding area and acknowledges the range of uses that are necessary to maintain viable, mixed and sustainable communities. This approach ensures that all land is assessed together as part of plan preparation to identify which sites are the most suitable and deliverable for a particular use.
- 1.5** This proposed LAA Methodology includes all potential land uses in one comprehensive document so that a full picture of the development opportunities across the district can be identified. It is acknowledged that this may become unwieldy if very high numbers of sites are put forward and so the final format will remain flexible to maximise its accessibility to users.

What is a Land Availability Assessment?

- 1.6** Paragraph 68 of the NPPF states that *'strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability....'*
- 1.7** To fulfill this requirement, an assessment of land availability needs to be undertaken. The purpose of this is to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period. These terms are defined in national guidance and are set out in Chapter 2 under the 'Detailed assessment' information. It can also identify other uses such as sites for recreation, green infrastructure, flood mitigation and renewable energy generation.
- 1.8** It is important to note that the assessment does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development. It is the role of the assessment to provide information on the range of sites which are potentially available to meet the Council's requirements, it is for the development plan itself to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet those requirements.

Introduction

1.9 The three main purposes of the assessment are to:

1. establish the approximate deliverable capacity of potential development sites;
2. determine whether it is possible to accommodate in full the development needs of Huntingdonshire;
and
3. appraise the suitability, availability and achievability of potential development sites and consider how they can contribute to a sustainable development strategy in the next Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

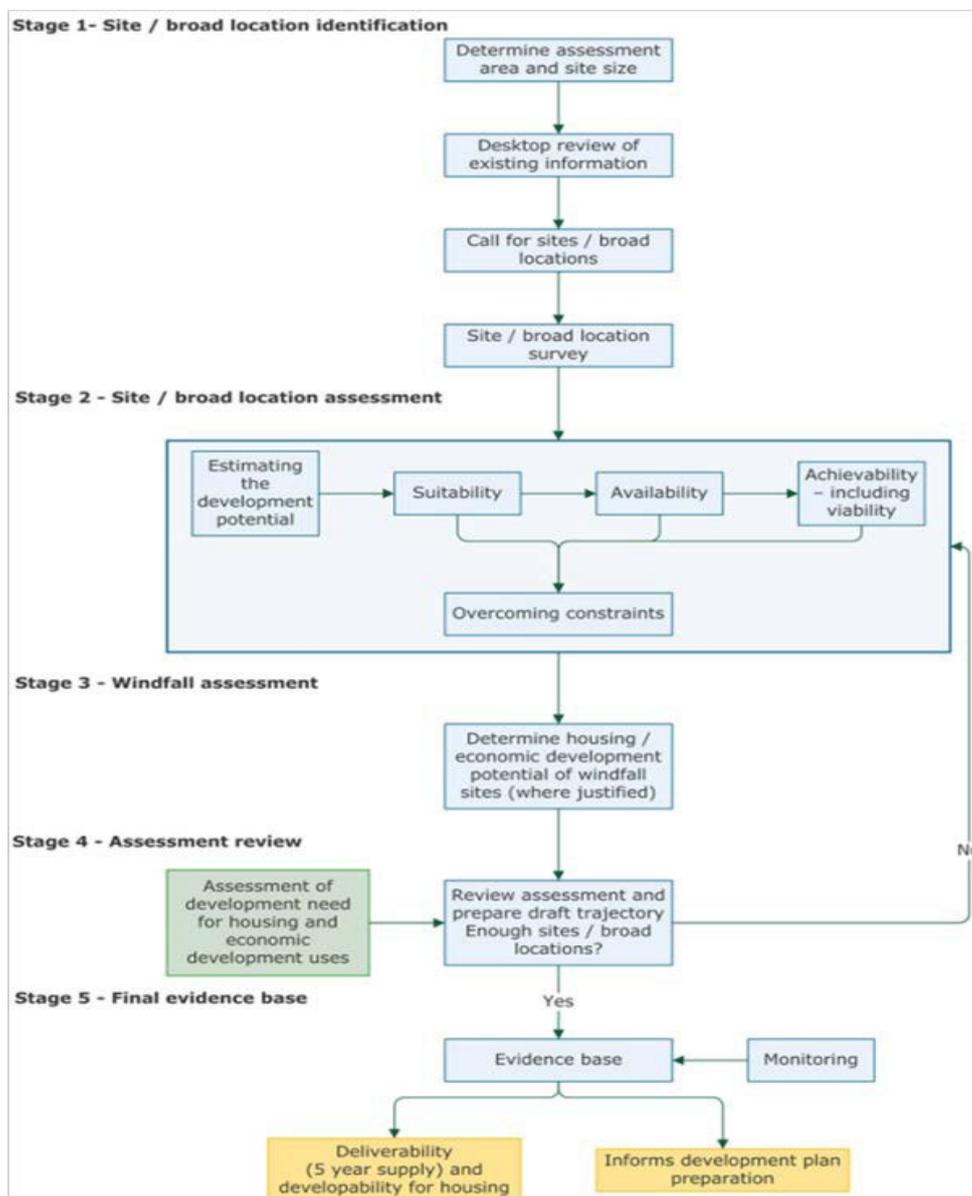
2 Methodology

2.1 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out a methodology for land availability assessments, it consists of five stages (also shown in the flowchart in Figure 2.1):

- 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

2.2 Huntingdonshire's proposed methodology follows the steps identified in the NPPG. Where there have been alterations to the national methodology, these have been highlighted and reasons for the differences between them set out.

Figure 2.1 Land Availability Assessment



2 Methodology

Stage 1 - Site / broad location identification

What geographical area is the assessment covering?

- 2.3** This assessment is proposed to cover the whole administrative area of Huntingdonshire. Huntingdonshire is a large district covering some 913km² with four market towns providing core services, one other town, almost 100 villages and a scattering of hamlets and properties in the countryside. The population for Huntingdonshire at the 2021 Census was 180,800, there is approximately 80,020 dwellings.
- 2.4** The district has long pursued a strategy of focusing development in the larger, more sustainable settlements and carefully limiting growth within small villages and the countryside. This was continued in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 whereby the vast majority of the plan's growth were focused within the larger settlements in the district and their immediate environs defined as spatial planning areas (these were Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey) or key service centres (these were Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley). No allocations were made in the remaining settlements due to their more limited levels of sustainability and access to services and facilities. The growth strategy did however set out a role for a limited amount of sustainable development in contributing to the social and economic sustainability of these settlements and in supporting a thriving rural economy. A proposed Settlement Hierarchy Methodology for assessing the sustainability of settlements throughout the district is published for consultation concurrently with this document. Together the finalised methodologies will provide assessments to help shape the future development strategy for Huntingdonshire.
- 2.5** The proposed LAA Methodology looks to work in conjunction with the Call for Sites to seek proposals throughout the district. This is considered appropriate to allow for comprehensive assessment of the sustainability of different locations, the changes to people's lifestyles and aspirations arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and the wide scope of site types and uses this methodology proposes may be considered. It is acknowledged that there is the possibility that sites maybe put forward that include land beyond Huntingdonshire in adjoining districts. As it is outside the scope of a single district Local Plan to allocate sites that span district boundaries assessments will only be carried out in detail for the portion of any such site within Huntingdonshire. The Council will, however, liaise with neighbouring authorities to raise awareness of any cross-boundary proposals.

Question 1

Geographical Scope

Do you agree that sites throughout the whole district should be considered within the Land Availability Assessment?

If not, how do you think the scope should be refined?

What types of sites should be considered in the assessment?

- 2.6** National guidance requires assessment to be undertaken of potential land for residential and economic development uses. However, a Local Plan covers a far wider range of issues than this to promote overall sustainable development and seeks to facilitate strong, healthy communities that will meet the needs of current and future residents. This methodology proposes to include assessments for:
- residential uses across many tenures and types of homes
 - commercial uses including employment, retail, commercial leisure, logistics and distribution

- infrastructure uses including community uses such as schools and community centres, health care uses, transport and parking and renewable energy production facilities
- open space uses including green spaces such as woodland planting, sports and recreation grounds and allotments, land for biodiversity net gain facilitation and land to safeguard against flooding

Question 2

Types of Sites

Do you agree with the list of types of sites that should be considered in the Land Availability Assessment?

If not, please suggest any extra types of sites you think should be included, or any of those suggested that you think should be excluded.

What size of sites should be considered in the assessment?

- 2.7** National guidance states that it may be appropriate to consider all sites and broad locations capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares (or 500 square metres of floor space) and above. The Council can also consider alternative site size thresholds.
- 2.8** For this land availability assessment, the site size threshold stated in national guidance is proposed to be used for residential and economic development. Any development sites that could accommodate fewer than five dwellings or fewer than 500 square metres of business floor space would not be included. For proposed housing developments, sites below the threshold would instead be accounted for under the windfall assessment shown in stage 3 of Figure 2.1 and provide additional diversity to supply. Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 used a housing threshold of at least 0.2 hectares of land and provision of 10 or more new homes so the proposed threshold could allow for consideration of significantly more sites but could include small-scale sensitively designed sites in locations which may not have been suitable using the previous threshold. For economic development uses 0.25 hectares or 500 square metres of floor space is considered small enough to cover sites at a scale capable of supporting small/ medium size enterprises but large enough to allow for create of jobs opportunities on site should development take place.
- 2.9** Sites promoted for other uses such as green infrastructure, renewable energy generation, community uses or flood mitigation will also be assessed. It is suggested that 0.25 hectares will be the minimum threshold appropriate for these uses too. For instance, for renewable energy schemes it is proposed that only sites suitable large scale standalone renewable and low carbon energy projects are appropriate rather than those attached to an existing building many of which do not require planning permission.

Question 3

Site Sizes

Do you agree with the proposed site size thresholds for residential and economic development uses?

Do you agree with the proposed 0.25 hectare minimum site size for other uses?

If not, please suggest your preferred site size(s) and which use(s) it should be applied to.

2 Methodology

Desktop review of existing information

- 2.10** In accordance with national guidance, use of a comprehensive range of sources is proposed in order to identify and assess as many potential sites as possible. It is proposed that sites be identified from:
- sites that were assessed in detail and thought potentially suitable for development in the last iteration of the Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) published in December 2017
 - currently undecided planning applications for major development ⁽¹⁾
 - recently refused or withdrawn planning applications for major development
 - currently undeveloped allocated sites from the Local Plan to 2036
 - redevelopment opportunities identified within the Markets Town Programme
 - permission in principle and brownfield register sites that are above the site threshold
 - council owned sites that are not currently being effectively used
- 2.11** As well as a desktop review to identify land, a Call for Sites will also be undertaken. This is an opportunity for landowners, developers, agents, individuals and other interested parties to suggest sites for development, and to let us know when they may be available for development. To ensure equitable assessments, those who promoted their site(s) previously would be required to resubmit using the revised call for sites form if they wish for the site to be reconsidered. The Council will endeavour to contact known sites owners and agents.
- 2.12** To avoid duplication of sites identified through more than one source (such as a recently withdrawn major application also put forward during a call for sites consultation), a cross checking exercise will be undertaken.

Question 4

Identifying Sites

Do you think that the list of desktop sources coupled with a call for sites will be sufficient to identify the number and range of sites required?

If not, please suggest any additional sources that could be used.

Call for sites consultation and survey

- 2.13** It is anticipated that the Call for Sites consultation will run for 10 weeks during March to June 2023 on our [online consultation portal](#). Further details on this will be able to be found on our website where a document summarising the requirements will also be provided setting out what information will be ask for in the call for sites form. The form will be finalised once the outcomes of this LAA Methodology consultation are analysed and an appropriate changes made to the methodology that may have consequential impacts on the form.
- 2.14** The Call for Sites consultation is an opportunity for the Council to gather evidence on a wider range of potential development opportunities located across the district to assess whether needs can be met and where they can be met. It is an opportunity to gather up to date information and evidence on potential sites and identify previously unknown development sites.

1 Defined in the NPPF as being for housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

- 2.15** To assess whether needs can be met over the plan period, the Council requires evidence on the suitability, availability, achievability and deliverability of each potential site. To gather this information, a form has been created whereby landowners, developers, agents, individuals and other interested parties can provide us with this information. The form has the following sections:
- **Current land status** - includes questions relating to the site's name, location, size, land type, current use and planning history
 - **Land ownership and legal status** - includes questions on the promoter's relationship with the site, site ownership, land control arrangements, legal restrictions and site visit contact information
 - **Proposed land use and delivery** - includes questions on the intended use of the site, when it will be available for development and how long the site will take to build
 - **Assessment of site and constraints** - includes questions on access and servicing, constraints and how constraints may be overcome
 - **Further evidence** - asks for any supporting information, surveys or assessments to be submitted alongside a completed form
- 2.16** The consultation form asks for location plans and where possible for respondents to provide a shapefile of the boundary of the site. This is so that each site can be accurately mapped onto our GIS database and compiled onto an interactive map of sites. It will also assist with site visits.

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Stage 2 - Sites assessment

- 2.17** Following the desktop review and the call for sites consultation, it is proposed that all potential sites will be inputted into a GIS database using the location plans and shapefiles provided. This will show their spatial distribution across the district and also store key information in a single place that will be made viewable via an interactive map published on our website.
- 2.18** Parish/settlement maps will also be created and be made available in the LAA to show the spatial distribution of potential sites across each parish area. These will include all proposed land uses in order to provide a comprehensive review of potential opportunities for each parish. Detailed settlement assessments detailing the sustainability of each settlement will also be available in a series of profiles which will be completed following finalisation of the settlement hierarchy methodology and evidence gathering.

Question 5

Mapping of Sites

Do you agree that sites involving all proposed uses in a parish/ settlement is an appropriate way of showing the location of sites?

How do you think larger sites that cross parish boundaries should be shown?

- 2.19** Following identification of a site, an initial filter based on fundamental constraints is proposed to determine if a detailed assessment of the site should be undertaken or not. If fundamental constraints are identified then the site would be discounted. The relevance of different constraints will vary according to the proposed use of the site. Otherwise, the site would progress to a detailed assessment.

Identification of fundamental constraints

- 2.20** For step one of the proposed site assessment methodology, it is suggested that the following significant environmental and policy constraints be considered, if any of these apply to a site, then it will be discounted and not taken forward for detailed assessment:
- the land is classed as Grade 1 agricultural land unless the proposed use is compatible with this such as being for community orchard / garden or flood mitigation purposes
 - more than half the site is within flood zone 3b (functional floodplain) determined by consideration of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and the Environment Agency's flood zone maps unless the site is proposed for water compatible development or flood mitigation purposes
 - the site is a local green space as designated via a neighbourhood plan
 - the land is designated as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or other important nature designation such as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a Special Protection Area (SPA) or Ramsar Site
 - development of the site would involve the loss of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland or veteran trees
 - as per the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan (July 2021), unless proposing a compatible use, the site lies within a:
 - Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) or within 250m of one – see policy 5
 - Mineral Development Area (MDA) or within 250m of one - see policy 6
 - Mineral Allocation Area (MAA) and the proposed development does not meet the criteria for which it is allocated - see policy 6
 - Waste Management Area (WMA) or within 250m of its boundary – see policy 10
 - Water Recycling Area (WRA) or within 400m of its boundary – see policy 11

- Transport Infrastructure Area (TIA) or within 400m of its boundary – see policy 15
- Consultation Area (MAAs, MDAs, WMA, TIA or WRAs) or within 250m of one or 400m for WRAs, and does not meet the criteria for which it is allocated – see policy 16
- the site is below the stated site threshold

2.21 If fundamental constraints are identified, the site would be discounted from further detailed assessment. If a site does not have any fundamental constraints environmental or policy constraints, then it progresses to detailed assessment. Tables will be prepared ordered by parish listing all sites identified and to clearly show whether the site has been discounted or not and what the relevant fundamental constraints were for any decision to discount a site from the detailed assessment stage. An example of how this will be presented is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Outcomes of assessment of fundamental constraints

Site reference	Site name and address	Proposed use	Fundamental constraints identified?	Continue to detailed assessment?
HLAAXXXX	XXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXX	Green infrastructure	None	Yes
HLAAXXXX	XXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXX	Employment	Over half the site is situated in Flood Zone 3b	No
HLAAXXXX	XXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXX	Housing	There are two veteran trees within the site but the site is of sufficient size that these could be incorporated into a landscaping scheme	Yes
HLAAXXXX	XXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXX	Housing	The site is within 400m of a water recycling centre	No
HLAAXXXX	XXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXX	Biodiversity net gain	SSSI within the site but the proposed use could support this	Yes

Question 6

Fundamental Constraints

Do you agree with the list of fundamental constraints identified based on which sites would be eliminated from progressing to a detailed assessment?

If not, what constraints do you think should be added to or removed from the list?

Detailed assessment

2.22 Once it has been decided that a site shall progress to a detailed assessment, to accord with government guidance the site will then be assessed for their **suitability** (can the site be physically developed for the proposed use); **availability** (is the site available for development); and **achievability** (is there a reasonable

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prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site) for future development as whether it is **deliverable** (is suitable, available and achievable and can be delivered within five years) or is **developable** (is in a suitable location with a reasonable prospect of its availability and achievability).

- 2.23** These terms are explained further alongside how they will be assessed in the following subsections.
- 2.24** Also set out below are the proposed capacity assumptions that will be made when estimating the potential capacity for each development site. These in combination with the site promoter's own anticipated capacity figures (depending on the nature of the use proposed) will be displayed in the final assessment.
- 2.25** At the end of this section is a template setting out how all the above is expected to be presented in a future Land Availability Assessment document.

Suitability assessment

- 2.26** National guidance states that a site can be considered **suitable** if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated. Thus, the assessment of a site's suitability for development is a high-level assumption about whether the site physically could be developed, rather than whether the site should or would be developed. While the assessment of a site's suitability is only one aspect of the land availability assessment, it is a critical aspect of the assessment.
- 2.27** Just because a site is considered potentially suitable for development or its proposed use does not mean it will necessarily come forward for allocation as it is the role of the Local Plan to determine a sustainable strategy for growth based on a settlement hierarchy supported by proposals for complementary uses such as green infrastructure and community uses. The land availability assessment serves to inform that, and to assess whether the development needs of the district can be accommodated in the plan period.
- 2.28** A site that has been discounted is not considered suitable for development. A site that has progressed to a detailed assessment may still be considered unsuitable for development particularly if any physical or environmental constraints present cannot be mitigated. Within the assessment for suitability, there will be a statement of whether or not the site is considered to be potentially suitable for development, and if so for what form and quantity of development, including an overview of measures that would be necessary as part of the development to overcome constraints. Details on how capacity will be calculated can be found in the 'Calculating capacity' subsection to this methodology.
- 2.29** When assessing the suitability of a site against constraints, national guidance states that information collected as part of a call for sites survey, as well as other relevant information should be utilised, such as:
- existing 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.
- 2.30** The suitability assessment is free from assessment against current local planning policies to allow for consideration of a new growth strategy and settlement hierarchy.
- 2.31** Where a site is already allocated or has planning permission, it is generally considered suitable for development although it may be necessary to assess whether circumstances have changed which would alter the site's suitability particularly if the permission has been extant for several years or a planning application has not come forward on an allocated site at all or for the originally identified use.
- 2.32** Following a review of a site's potential suitability for development, it will be categorised into one of three groups as set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2 Suitability categorisation

Potentially suitable for development	+
Potentially suitable although constraints to overcome	~
Not suitable for development	-

Question 7**Suitability Assessment**

Do you agree with the proposed suitability categorisation?

If not, please suggest your preferred form of categorisation for assessment of the suitability of a site.

Availability assessment

- 2.33** The Council needs to ensure that there is a supply of sites that will contribute towards meeting the identified needs of the area and enabling a robust land supply for future development during the plan period. If a site has been assessed as being potentially suitable for development, then an **availability** assessment will be undertaken.
- 2.34** Using the information available through the call for sites submission, a judgement on a site's availability will be made based on whether there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership impediments to development, and when it is likely to deliver the proposed development. Where further information is needed or clarification required, we will get in touch with the site promoters and other stakeholders as appropriate. This could include details on legal or ownership impediments or the programme for known infrastructure needed for development of the site.
- 2.35** In submitting sites for consideration, site promoters will be asked to indicate the following on the call for sites submission form:
- Details of land ownership and legal constraints;
 - What the current and proposed land uses are for the site;
 - Reasons for the site promoter submitting the site for the proposed use(s);
 - When the site is expected to become available for development;
 - Issues to resolve before development; and
 - Whether there are any known constraints that could restrict the development of the land.
- 2.36** If there is no reasonable prospect that the site will become available for development over the lifetime of the plan, then it will not be included as a realistic option for development.
- 2.37** For residential and employment use proposals national guidance states that the existence of planning permission can be a good indication of the availability of sites. Sites without permission may be considered available within the first five years depending on site specific circumstances; further guidance to this is contained in the government's 5 year housing land supply guidance. Sites meeting the definition of deliverable should be considered available unless evidence indicates otherwise. Consideration can also be given to the delivery record of the developers or landowners putting forward sites, and whether the planning background of a site shows a history of unimplemented permissions. A similar principle of considering the existence of planning permission and development history of the site may be applied to other proposals for built development. For community, open space, infrastructure and other similar uses the assessment of availability will be based on the details provided.

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- 2.38** Following a review of a site's potential availability for development, it will be categorised into one of three groups as set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3 Availability categorisation

Available for development	+
Potentially available for development although constraints to overcome	~
Not available for development	-

Question 8

Availability Assessment

Do you agree with the proposed availability categorisation?

If not, please suggest your preferred form of categorisation for assessment of the availability of a site.

Achievability assessment

- 2.39** For sites considered potentially suitable, a statement of the **achievability** of development including consideration of viability and any infrastructure dependencies will be made.
- 2.40** National guidance states that a site for residential or employment use 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. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period. Similar judgements about achievability will be made on other proposals for built development regarding likely viability and market attractiveness to assess their potential achievability. For community, open space, infrastructure and other similar uses the assessment of achievability will be based on the details provided.
- 2.41** To assist us in this assessment, site promoters will be asked to indicate the following on the call for sites submission form:
- Details on land ownership, legal restrictions and land control arrangements
 - Details on access and servicing constraints
 - Identification of any issues that could affect the site being developed
 - Details on how constraints can be overcome
- 2.42** Following a review of a site's potential achievability for development, it will be categorised into one of three groups as set out in Table 4 below:

Table 4 Achievability categorisation

Development is considered to be achievable	+
Development is potentially achievable although there are constraints to overcome and / or infrastructure requirements	~
Development is not considered to be achievable	-

Question 9

Achievability Assessment

Do you agree with the proposed achievability categorisation?

If not, please suggest your preferred form of categorisation for assessment of the achievability of a site.

Deliverability / developability assessment

2.43 National guidance states that information on suitability, availability, achievability and constraints can be used to assess the timescale within which each site is capable of development. This may include indicative lead-in times and build-out rates for the development of different scales of sites. On the largest sites allowance should be made for several developers to be involved in housebuilding elements. The advice of developers and local agents will be important in assessing lead-in times and build-out rates by year. Assessment of local lead-in times and build-out rates will also be used to reflect local market circumstances.

2.44 Relating to residential development, paragraph 68 of the NPPF states that planning policies should identify a supply of:

- a. specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and
- b. specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.

2.45 The NPPF also provides a definition of **deliverable**:

To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

- a. *sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).*
- b. *where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.*

2.46 The NPPF states that to be considered **developable**, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

2.47 Sites that are considered to be suitable, available and achievable and also meet the tests set out in the NPPF will be considered to be deliverable.

2.48 Sites that are considered to be suitable, available and achievable but do not meet the tests set out in the NPPF will be considered to be developable over the plan period.

2.49 The call for sites form asks how many years that the site promoter considers it will take to build out the site once planning permission has been granted. For both deliverable and developable sites, where appropriate, we will get in touch with a site promoter if we need to discuss the expected delivery rate and timings.

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- 2.50** National guidance on deliverability and developability focuses on residential development. However, it is proposed that the LAA will consider potential sites for a far wider range of uses. Insofar as it is practicable similar principles will be applied to proposals for other uses, particularly those for built development, to provide a consistent form of assessment. This is proposed to assist in understanding the potential timescales of potential proposals coming forward to help in providing certainty to local communities when being asked to consider possible options for the next Local Plan.

Question 10

Deliverability/ Developability Assessment

Do you agree with use of the national definitions of deliverability and developability for non-residential uses as well as for proposals for residential use?

If not, please suggest your preferred form of assessment of the deliverability and developability of non-residential uses.

Calculating capacity

- 2.51** In accordance with national policy, plan makers should seek to make the most efficient use of land and plan for sustainable forms of development.
- 2.52** National guidance does not set out a specific methodology for undertaking capacity studies. It does state 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. Therefore, calculating the potential capacity of sites should not solely rely on rigid calculations to maximise density and development potential but should balance this development potential with ensuring capacities respond to their context and incorporate appropriate amounts of landscaping, infrastructure and any flood mitigations where necessary.
- 2.53** The guidance produced by the Urban and Economic Development Group (URBED) in their 1999 report 'Tapping the Potential: best capacity' is still considered a best practice source. This guide informed the approach taken in the capacity study for Huntingdonshire's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (December 2017) which applied the guidance locally. An assessment has also been undertaken of recently completed development schemes within Huntingdonshire to compare actual capacities delivered to those based on 'Tapping the Potential'. The approach taken in the last HELAA has been reviewed and although has formed a starting point, it is proposed to update this based on locally specific information where feasible.
- 2.54** Huntingdonshire's proposed LAA Methodology will seek to quantify deliverable capacity on sites as relevant to the proposed use to help inform preparation of options for the next Local Plan. This is a high level estimate of potential capacity to provide a guide to the existence of sufficient capacity to ensure there is enough land to meet future needs in the Local Plan update and enable exploration of alternative growth strategies. The capacity figures calculated are indicative only and will be subject to variation dependent upon the precise details of proposed development schemes. Where appropriate these calculations have been influenced by detailed site specific knowledge of Development Management and Urban Design Officers and planning permissions that have already been granted and any initial site assessment / masterplanning undertaken by the site promoter. The character of the surrounding area as well as the site's location and context in terms of the natural, historic and built environment will also be taken into account when considering an appropriate capacity. Guidance from Huntingdonshire's [Landscape and Townscape SPD](#) and [Design Guide SPD](#) will also be applied.

- 2.55** The potential capacity figures arise from a combination of the developable area of a site and the density of development appropriate in the site's specific location. Density means the intensity of land use, that is, how much development is built on a site or area. Density can be calculated using the net site or gross site area. Both net and gross densities are calculated using the basic formula: the number of dwellings or building floor space divided by the area of land that they occupy.
- 2.56** The developable area for the purposes of calculating capacity includes only the area which will be used for housing, employment, retail and other built development and directly related uses (the net area). Table 5 below summarises what is included within the net developable area and what is excluded:

Table 5 Net developable areas

Net developable area includes	Net developable area excludes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access roads within the site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major distribution roads
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private garden space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car/ lorry parking areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports pitches or open spaces serving a wider area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidental open space and landscaping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant landscape buffers including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's play areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas within flood zone 3b ⁽²⁾

- 2.57** Where some or all of a site lies within flood zone 2 or 3a the capacity will be modified to reflect the potential need to allow additional land for flood mitigation.
- 2.58** The following developable area percentages in Table 6 are proposed as the starting point for assessment of a site's capacity although they are always subject to the individual site specific circumstances and detailed design proposals may reflect differing proportions if the site is brought forward for development. These have been derived from page 21 of 'Tapping the Potential' and adapted to take into account local examples of development within Huntingdonshire.

2 unless the development proposed is water compatible

2 Methodology

Table 6 Developable areas

Site size	Developable areas
0.2 - 0.4ha	100%
0.41 - 1.99ha	80-95% depending on the nature of surrounding uses and anticipated site specific requirements
2 - 5.99ha	70-80% depending on the nature of surrounding uses and anticipated site specific requirements
6 - 9.99ha	60-70% depending on the nature of surrounding uses, anticipated site specific requirements and the potentially higher infrastructure requirements of the development
10 - 49.99ha	50-60% reflecting the need for substantial landscaping and the potentially higher infrastructure requirements of the development. On sites towards the larger end of this range, there is likely to be a range of developable areas across the site reflecting the need to accommodate a mix of sustainable uses and densities.
Over 50ha	For sites at this strategic scale, it is anticipated that there will be a range of developable areas across the whole site to accommodate a sustainable mix of uses and densities, local centres and supporting infrastructure. For these sites, the developable area will be calculated on a site by site basis taking into account the proposed uses and any environmental constraints and site specific considerations.

- 2.59** We will consider the use or uses being proposed and calculate the capacity of different types of development accordingly. Typically, in larger sites the proportion of developable land is lower, as there is greater need for land for uses such as landscape buffers and schools.
- 2.60** In this methodology details on how density calculations will be applied for residential and employment developments have been provided. These will also be applied accordingly for mixed use developments. It is important to note that densities and net developable area will also be dependent on the context and site specific considerations for each site.
- 2.61** For other land uses such as those relating to renewable energy, flood mitigation, infrastructure and green infrastructure will be calculated on a case by case considering the specifics of the site and proposal taking into account the nature of the potential use and the individual site characteristics and physical constraints.

Question 11

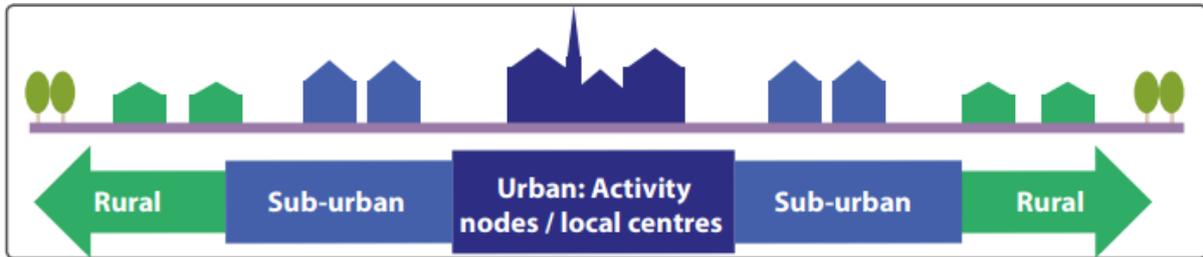
Developable Area

Do you agree with the proposed approach for calculating the net developable area of a site?

If not, please suggest your preferred approach.

Residential development

- 2.62** Within Huntingdonshire the highest building densities are typically located at the centres of the market towns and larger villages, while rural areas and development nearer the edges of settlements are typically built to lower densities.



- 2.63** Examples of existing residential areas commonly found across Huntingdonshire have been identified and assessed to inform potential densities of the number of dwellings per hectare (dph) that may be appropriate in different types of location. These have informed a series of categories of residential densities found across the district:
- Very high - 145 dph
 - High - 85 dph
 - Moderate - 50 dph
 - Low - 35 dph
 - Very low - 25 dph
- 2.64** These residential density categories are set out in detail in the following tables. These have been identified as being an appropriate way of estimating potential capacity for sites in Huntingdonshire. Alongside each category are a series of examples of residential developments across the district. Emphasis has been placed on examples of recently completed developments, to indicate what has actually been achieved and has potential to be replicated elsewhere in the district.
- 2.65** These provide an illustration of the densities achieved and the potential capacity of sites when also applying their developable area. However, it is important to note that when applying these categories a degree of flexibility is required to reflect the characteristics of the individual site and its context. Densities used for each site are guided by many factors such as the characteristics of the area, the site location, surrounding context, potential flood risk, landscape and heritage constraints, biodiversity / ecology and the site's market potential.
- 2.66** Also, it is important to note that this LAA Methodology only provides an indicative capacity for a site, it does not establish an appropriate mix of homes for a particular site. It is the role of the Housing Needs of Specific Groups study, other policy requirements, and information regarding potential site constraints that will inform the mix of any future development. The identified site capacities therefore represent an estimate of an appropriate amount of development for a particular based on the best available information in order to assess whether development needs over the plan period can be met.
- 2.67** Where mixed use developments are proposed regard will be had to the potential reduction resulting from a mix of uses on the developable area available for new homes. These will be considered on a case by case basis. In town centre locations it is assumed that the mixed use element would be incorporated as an integral part of the development. For strategic scale sites like new settlements, it will be anticipated that there will be a range of densities and developable areas across the whole site to accommodate a sustainable mix of homes, employment opportunities, local centres, leisure, green infrastructure and supporting infrastructure. For such sites, a appropriate capacity for the various proposed uses will be calculated on a site by site basis taking into account the proposed uses and any environmental constraints and site specific considerations.

2 Methodology

Very high - 145 dwellings per hectare

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Generally very high densities will be found on sites in close proximity to town centres maximising their sustainable location. In most cases these will be opportunities for regeneration. Examples include retirement or sheltered apartments or care homes where the individual dwellings typically have 1 or 2 bedrooms, there are some communal facilities and limited car parking provision and the scheme comprises at least 3 storeys overall. May also be general market apartment blocks where undercroft car parking can be accommodated.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apartments or residential homes, typically of 3-5 storeys. • Provision of predominantly 1-2 bedroom units where some communal facilities may be incorporated. <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of undercroft parking for cars and bicycles avoids dominance by surface level parking. • Limited car and bicycle parking may suffice for residential homes provided adequate space is allowed for carers and support workers. Provision should be made to accommodate ambulances and other patient transport vehicles. <p>Open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dependent on the site's context; landscaping may be necessary to integrate or screen development from its surroundings. • Limited usable open space may suffice where the site is in close proximity to existing public open space.
<p><u>Examples</u></p> <p>Walden Road/ Princes Street, Huntingdon</p> <p>This is a town centre, previously developed site where a very high density, high quality scheme incorporated 110 apartments adjacent to the replacement library and the grade II listed Lawrence Court. There are 27 1-bedroom apartments and 83 2-bedroom apartments. The density is achieved by provision of undercroft car parking at ground floor level beneath the apartments with security fencing screened by limited soft landscaping. There is limited soft landscaping with preference given to the provision of interconnecting footpaths to help integrate the development into the town centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 110 homes • 0.73ha land (residential element only) • density of 150 dwellings per hectare <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>	

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
	<p data-bbox="145 412 549 443">Osier House, New Road, St Ives</p> <p data-bbox="145 472 1449 595">Located on the edge of St Ives town centre, this was formerly an office unit that was demolished to provide 14 one and two bedroomed apartments. The scheme was completed in 2021. The site's sustainable location being in close proximity to the town centre provided an opportunity to maximise density on the site. Its redevelopment also provided a modest scale regeneration opportunity that enhanced the local built environment.</p> <ul data-bbox="145 624 1027 723" style="list-style-type: none">• 14 apartments• 0.1ha net site area (0.1 gross) giving a net developable area of 100%• density of 140 dwellings per hectare 

2 Methodology

High - 85 dwellings per hectare

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Sites within towns for general market apartments with surface level car parking or mixed schemes with some apartments and some houses typically of 2.5 or three storeys. Also, sheltered schemes with substantial communal facilities.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly apartments but may involve mixed schemes with some apartments and some houses of 2.5 or 3 storeys. Sheltered housing schemes comprising apartments or smaller houses with substantial communal facilities. <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface level car parking for at least one space per dwelling and some visitor spaces may be accommodated. Communal covered cycle parking may be provided adjacent to clusters of properties to avoid the need for individual storage facilities. <p>Open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apartments and sheltered housing schemes will have some usable communal open space, the amount depending on the nature of the scheme and level of accessibility to public open space. Mixed schemes will include some properties with private open space.

Examples

Drovers Place, Huntingdon

Drovers Place is a high density edge of town centre redevelopment of a previously developed site in Huntingdon. The general arrangement sees groups of 2.5, 3 and 4-storey units incorporating a mixture of houses and flats. The site incorporates a mixture of parking courts, parking bays and integral car ports for residents, accessed via a central spine road. The site's redevelopment has provided an improved gateway into the town centre and conservation area and is part of a wider regeneration of the Huntingdon West area. The site was completed in 2020.

- 79 houses and apartments
- 0.8ha net site area (1ha gross) giving a net developable area of 80%
- density of 99 dwellings per hectare



Former Police Station, Ramsey

Located within a residential area, the former police station offices have now been converted to flats. There is one parking space for each flat. Under a separate application, two semi-detached homes were built to the rear of the building. The whole site was completed in 2021. The existing building was built in 1910 and has not been altered externally.

- 13 flats within the former police station and two houses to the rear
- 0.2ha net site area (0.2 gross) giving a net developable area of 100%
- density of 75 dwellings per hectare



2 Methodology

Moderate - 50 dwellings per hectare

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Sites within an existing built up area either a town or larger village for housing, or a mixture of housing with some apartments. Housing is likely to be predominantly in terraced form, including a proportion of smaller properties to meet the needs of older people wishing to downsize or of smaller households.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing, predominantly in terraced form, or a mixture of houses and apartments. May include a mixture of mainly 2 and 3 storey properties with a substantial proportion of smaller properties to meet the needs of older people wishing to downsize or smaller households. <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface level car parking for all properties may be accommodated. Cycle parking may be communal or some provided with individual properties. <p>Open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private open space will be included for the majority of properties; apartments may include terraces. Larger schemes will include on site children's play space.

Examples

Huntingdon Street, St Neots

Located to the north of St Neots town centre. The site formerly consisted of a former petrol filling station, commercial buildings and a significant amount of hardstanding before it was redevelopment for affordable housing consisting of 24 homes and 15 apartments. Building heights range from two to three storeys. The site was completed in 2021.

- 39 homes
- 0.72ha net site area (0.76 gross) giving a net developable area of 95%
- density of 54 dwellings per hectare



Cades Close, Ramsey

This site was completed in 2022. The site was formerly a storage/warehousing site that has been cleared and redeveloped for 32 homes in the centre of Ramsey. The properties are arranged in terraces and semi-detached pairs with some flats over garages. Parking provision are two spaces per dwelling.

- 32 homes

- 0.6ha net site area (0.7 gross) giving net developable area of 85%
- density of 53 dwellings per hectare



Victorian terraced housing

These traditional terraces are typically of four to eight homes, predominantly two storey with occasional use of attic rooms creating a third storey. Generally properties have a small set-back from the road and can have substantial rear gardens and usually on street parking only. Victorian terraced housing is found across the district in towns and villages but in greatest quantities in the market towns. Two examples are provided below:

Cambridge Road, Godmanchester

- 12 homes
- 0.25ha of land
- density of 48 dwellings per hectare of built form



Hartford Road, Huntingdon

- 8 homes
- 0.14ha of land
- density of 57 dwellings per hectare of built form



2 Methodology

Low - 35 dwellings per hectare

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Sites in larger villages which need to reflect the lower density context provided by surrounding housing. The development form is likely to be detached or semi-detached housing.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing will typically comprise detached and semi-detached properties with some short terraces. Two storey properties will predominate. <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface level car parking throughout the development; many properties may have garaging. Cycle parking provided for individual properties. <p>Open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual garden space for each property will be normal. Some communal open space/ play space will be incorporated to meet the needs of residents depending on the scale of the development.

Examples

Lucks Lane, Buckden

Greenfield site located on the edge of Buckden village adjoining the A1(M). The development provides a mix of one to four bedroomed dwellings designed to reflect local character and the density is consistent with the lower densities found across the village. The site's location in proximity to the strategic transport network and within the wider landscape has resulted in a lower net developable area (50%) which increased the density. The site is anticipated to complete in 2023.

- 180 homes
- 5.3 net site area (10.7 gross) giving a net developable area of 50%
- density of 34 dwellings per hectare



North of Glatton Road, Sawtry

80 new homes on a triangular greenfield site located at the edge of the village of Sawtry. Homes range from one to four bedroomed homes arranged within five distinct islands within the site. There are a mixture of terraces with parking to the front of these properties and larger detached homes. All have modest gardens. The site completed in 2021.

- 80 homes

- 2.75ha net site area (3.8 gross) giving a net developable area of 72%
- density of 29 dwellings per hectare



2 Methodology

Very low - 25 dwellings per hectare

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Sites in the more sustainable smaller settlements which need to reflect the lower density context provided by surrounding housing. The development form is likely to be detached or semi-detached housing.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing will typically comprise detached and semi-detached properties with some short terraces. Two storey properties will predominate. <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface level car parking throughout the development; many properties may have garaging. Cycle parking provided for individual properties. <p>Open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual garden space for each property will be normal. Some communal open space/ play space will be incorporated to meet the needs of residents depending on the scale of the development.

Examples

Dutton Gardens, Great Gransden

Greenfield site located on the edge of Great Gransden providing 40 new homes ranging from one to four bedrooms with modest gardens. Parking is either on plot or for terraced homes are located to the front of the property. The density is reflective of the generally low densities found across the village. The site completed in 2022.

- 40 homes
- 1.26ha net site area (1.8 gross) giving a net developable area of 70%
- density of 29 dwellings per hectare



The Green, Great Staughton

12 homes consisting of a mixture of one to three bedroomed affordable flats, houses and bungalows. All dwellings have two parking spaces and well proportioned garden space. The site was brought forward by the Great Staughton Community Land Trust with development of the site by Chorus Homes and home builders Aspen Homes. The site is anticipated to complete in 2023.

- 12 homes

- 0.45 net site area (0.6 gross) giving a net developable area of 75%
- density of 27 dwellings per hectare



Kym View Close, Kimbolton

This is a triangular greenfield site comprising of 21 homes (13 four and five bedroom detached homes with generous garden space and eight affordable semi-detached homes for social rent and shared ownership). Due to the site shape, plots are an irregular size and shape. There is some public open space provided within the development.

- 21 homes
- 1.37 net site area (1.4 gross) giving a net developable area of 98%
- density of 15 dwellings per hectare



Question 12

Residential Development Capacity Estimates

Do you agree with the residential development density categories proposed?

If not, please suggest your preferred residential development density categories.

2 Methodology

Economic development

- 2.68** Following the approach taken for residential developments, several categories have been devised relating to economic forms of development. Again, these have utilised examples of recently completed and under construction employment development to guide an appropriate range of plot ratios (gross floorspace to site area) for various locations across the district.
- 2.69** There are limited up to date national guides on calculating economic development capacities. The HELAA (2017) referred to plot ratios for employment use based on the now somewhat aged publications by Roger Tym (1997), the national guidance note on Employment Land Reviews (2004) and from other local authorities. The categories used are shown below in Table 7:

Table 7 Examples of plot ratios for employment use (gross floorspace to site area)

Employment use	Roger Tym (1997)	Other studies
Business park	0.25 to 0.30	0.25 to 0.40
Industrial	0.42	0.35 to 0.45
Warehouse	-	0.40 to 0.60
Town centre office	0.41	0.75 to 2.00

- 2.70** In the HELAA (2017), it was recognised that the range of plot ratios can vary significantly depending upon the site specific circumstances of an individual site and specific employment use. This can lead to significant variations in the number of jobs created and proportion of parking required. Additionally, since then, on 1 September 2020 amendments to the Use Classes Order have come into effect with the introduction of Class E which encompasses commercial, business and services as well as uses formerly covered under A and D. This allows for the change of use of a building to another use within class E without necessarily the need for planning permission.
- 2.71** To reflect recent permissions, an assessment of the delivered floorspace on sites providing employment uses has been undertaken to provide categories of:
- Business parks - 0.35 plot ratio
 - Industrial areas - 0.40 plot ratio
 - Retail (food stores) - 0.25 plot ratio
 - Retail parks - 0.20 plot ratio
- 2.72** These economic development categories are set out in detail in the following tables. When calculating the percentage of land taken with the built form, the gross site area has been used. This is due to there usually being minimal differences between net and gross site areas in schemes providing purely employment uses due to the need for large amounts of hardstanding for parking, manoeuvring and deliveries and more incidental landscaping.
- 2.73** The review of recent permissions also highlighted that many proposals for business uses falling under B1, B2 or B8 include all three uses within the description to enable a flexible approach to lettings and sales. This means that the buildings could be occupied for either or all of the uses specified. This makes setting out floorspace ratios more challenging, therefore general categories have been devised illustrating the types and variations of economic development that are being delivered across the district.

- 2.74** To facilitate flexibility in economic development uses where they are included as a potentially suitable use for a site, or part of a site, the potential capacity is given as indicative figures only to acknowledge the requirement for economic uses on the site to promote sustainability or where constraints make the site unsuitable for residential development. The ultimate decision on the proportion of the site area to be used for employment purposes will be determined through the Local Plan and planning applications.

Town centres

- 2.75** For economic development within town centres, many will relate to existing buildings and either involve a change of use or demolition and rebuild. The built form could utilise a higher percentage of the site area due to the reduced need to provide parking and landscaping for example as these may be provided already in close proximity to the site. There are also greater opportunities to maximise floorspace by building on several floors. As such there are likely to be greater site specific considerations and constraints so no typology has been provided here. If a town centre site was identified through the desktop review or call for site consultation, then we will assess on a case by case basis seeking views of there Council specialists such as urban design, conservation and those working on the market towns programme.

- 2.76** Two major town centre regenerations to have completed recently are provided as examples below:

1. The redevelopment of Chequers Court within Huntingdon town centre has helped to rejuvenate the retail offer of the town. An application for the redevelopment of the 1960s units for modern units on 0.93ha of land saw the built form occupying some 50% of the site area. The site is now occupied by 11 businesses including shops and cafes. Minimal landscaping and parking were provided as a multi storey car park providing 406 spaces was built on adjoining land within an existing car parking area. This allowed for a higher plot ratio to be achieved on site. The site was completed in 2018.
2. Within St Neots, the redevelopment of land formerly comprising of a household waste recycling centre, old fire station, car park and recreation ground has increased the leisure offer within the town. The mixed use development includes a cinema, three restaurants, gym and three flats. The site is 1.08ha with the built form occupying 30% of the site. The scheme also provided some 105 car parking spaces and 65 cycle spaces as well as some open/play space to mitigate the loss of the recreation ground. The site specifics here resulted in a lower plot ratio for the site.

New units in Chequers Court, Huntingdon



St Neots Priory Quarter Rowley Arts centre



Economic development within new settlement and urban extension proposals

- 2.77** As with the residential typologies, a typology for strategic scale economic development has not been devised here reflecting the site specific considerations and opportunities that will vary between sites and proposals. Some new settlement or urban extension proposals will be economic led, others may be residential led which will impact the mix of appropriate uses to create sustainable communities, neighbourhoods and environments and to achieve the objectives/priorities of the development.

2 Methodology

- 2.78** Alconbury Weald is currently the key example within the district of economic development being built as part of a new settlement. The economic elements of Wintringham Park, the district's other strategic expansion location, have not yet received detailed planning approval so details on the floorspace and uses provided are yet to be determined.
- 2.79** Alongside 5,000 new homes and associated community, transport and green infrastructure, Alconbury Weald is planned to provide some 290,000sqm of employment floorspace (B uses). The majority of this will be within the 150ha Enterprise Zone designation meaning that part of the site is focussed for employment development. The Enterprise Zone is intended to encourage investment, attract innovative companies and create around 8,000 jobs within the site.
- 2.80** Of the approximately 106,500sqm of non-residential floorspace already completed across Alconbury Weald since 2012, the vast majority have been for a mix of B1 and B2 development (96,500sqm) for offices, research and development, industrial and manufacturing. B8 warehousing and storage is low at some 5,000sqm providing ancillary storage capacity on site only. Other uses relating to food & drink, a small shop, community facilities, primary school and leisure have provided some 5,000sqm. These support the needs of the growing population as the site is being developed. The development of the site and incorporation of such uses is also responsive to site specific matters such as the heritage on the site. The conservation and enhancement of heritage within the site is a key feature particularly seen in the renovation of the Watch Office into a café. These opportunities exemplify how economic development can be used as a tool to regenerate and engage people, as such there should be flexibility in how development is brought forward in these cases.
- 2.81** Across the reserved matters and full applications currently made on the site for new build economic uses, the range that the built form occupied for each application area was between 10 and 61% with the overall built form across the cumulative site areas being 41%. The quite significant range reflects that these applications are part of a wider site where parking, landscaping and access roads are in some cases shared.

Boulevard, Alconbury Enterprise Zone



Swynford Stores



The Club, Alconbury Enterprise Zone



Alconbury watch office, now café



Business Parks - 0.35 plot ratio

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Purpose built business parks are usually located on the edges of towns and larger villages providing distinct concentrations of employment uses. They can also be found within or as extensions to existing business locations where they have been introduced to rejuvenate an area or meet changing business needs.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominantly focused on provision of offices with B2 and B8 uses integrated • Units often arranged within business courtyards with large central car parking areas <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive surface level car parking and some dedicated bicycle parking • Parking usually provided as one space per 0.01ha of land • Increasing amounts of electric vehicle charging points <p>Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually incidental landscaping to break up car parking areas and soften development edges • some areas have more significant amounts of landscaping if adjoining residential areas or open countryside

Examples

Eagle Business Park, Yaxley

Following outline approval, phase 2 of the Eagle Business Park in Yaxley has been delivered via reserved matters applications and full applications related to particular plots/parcels within the site. Each provide a range of units for B1/B2/B8 uses with associated parking and some soft landscaping. Across the reserved matters and full applications currently made on the site for new build business units, the range that the built form occupied for each parcel was between 25 and 45% with the overall built form across the cumulative site areas being 37%. Parking provision works out at approximately one space per 0.01 of land. Site has been building out since 2016.

- 6.59ha of land across with reserved matters and full approval
- approximately 24,000sqm of floorspace completed or approved
- overall built form uses 37% of the site area (parcels range between occupying 25 and 45%)



Lakes Business Park, Fenstanton

Following outline approval, the Lakes Business Park in Fenstanton parish has been delivered via reserved matters and full applications related to particular plots/parcels within the site. Each provide a range of units for B1/B2/B8 uses with associated parking and some soft landscaping. Across the reserved matters and full

2 Methodology

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>applications currently made on the site for new build business units, the range that the built form occupied for each parcel was between 40 and 46% with the overall built form across the cumulative site areas being 42%. Parking provision works out at approximately one space per 0.01 of land. The lowest percentage was observed on a parcel for a scaffolding depot which due to operational reasons required more open land. Site has been building out since 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.87ha of land across with reserved matters and full approval approximately 12,000sqm of floorspace completed or approved overall built form uses 42% of the site area (parcels range between occupying 22 and 46%) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Hinchingbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon</p> <p>Kingfisher Court is an example of an infill development within an existing business park providing a courtyard of 3 terraces with centrally located building entrances and service areas. 8 units built falling within B1a/B2/B8 uses. The Falcon Way development is another example of an infill development of six units for B1/B2/B8 uses with associated parking and manoeuvring areas. Both include some soft landscaping. Both sites were completed in 2018.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="140 1384 790 1921"> <p>Kingfisher Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.48ha of land 45 vehicle parking spaces built form uses 34% of the site area  </div> <div data-bbox="790 1384 1458 1921"> <p>Falcon Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.49ha of land 47 vehicle parking spaces built form uses 40% of the site area  </div> </div>	

Industrial Areas - 0.4 plot ratio

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Industrial estates occur both within and on the peripheries of all the main towns, and some larger villages. These are commonly close to housing providing jobs accessible by sustainable modes of transport. Some industrial areas date back to the 1950s and now are in need of some regeneration/rejuvenation to enhance their appearance or to comply with changing operational standards. There have been instances of trade counters and retail units for trades and home improvements diversifying industrial areas.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many units focused on manufacturing or warehousing but some include trade counters and space for offices • Usually smaller brick built or metal framed units and larger factory premises • Usually large expanses of steel security boundary fencing <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large expanses of tarmac road surface and car/lorry parking • Parking usually provided as one space per 0.01ha of land • Frequently have heavily engineered road layouts • Heavily trafficked by cars and heavy goods vehicles, but generally few pedestrians <p>Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually very minimal landscaping with only incidental soft landscaping to soften development edges • Some industrial areas located with more urban areas have grass verges
<p><u>Examples</u></p> <p>Tower Close, St Peter's Road, Huntingdon</p> <p>Located within an established employment area, this application saw the demolition of the existing large scale commercial building on site and the erection of two large commercial buildings to provide B1, B2 and B8 uses with associated car parking and servicing. Approximately 100 vehicle parking spaces are provided for cars and motorbikes with additional spaces for cycle storage and four electric vehicle charging points. Modern design with features to increase biodiversity have been incorporated and some landscaping where the site site adjoins St Peter's Road. Site completed in 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1ha of land • 5,175sqm of floorspace across two units for B1/B2/B8 use • built form uses 47% of the site area <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>	

2 Methodology

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
	<p>Somersham Road Industrial Area, Nuffield Road, St Ives</p> <p>Located on a prominent corner plot within in an established employment area, this was a redevelopment of a vacant plot following the demolition of pre-existing buildings in around 2006. The site was completed in 2020 and has provided 10 new B1/B2/B8 units. The whole of the site is covered with hardstanding. Very minimal soft landscaping measures and fencing due to the site's location within a pre-existing industrial area. Has incorporated approximately 20 car parking spaces with disability spaces and cycle parking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.27ha of land • 10 B1/B2/B8 units totalling 966 sqm • built form uses 36% of the site area with the remaining site being covered in hardstanding 

Retail (food stores) - 0.25 plot ratio

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Large food stores usually located on the edge of towns, maximising connections to the strategic road network and supporting a wider network of communities. Some smaller food stores and other retail units have been built on brownfield sites within towns adding greater market choice and being in closer proximity to the local population for those who may not be able to travel via car to settlement edges.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food stores are often stand-alone units, other goods often clustered into retail parks <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive surface level car parking and some dedicated bicycle parking Parking is usually provided at 1.3 spaces per 0.01ha of land Increasing amounts of electric vehicle charging points Segregated rear servicing yards Fairly well trafficked, with bustling pedestrian movement at busy periods <p>Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually integrated landscaping and around the edge to provide some softening of development edges

Examples

Aldi and Lidl, Huntingdon

Both were previously industrial sites that were cleared for medium sized food stores and associated parking. Aldi was completed in 2017 and is located on a parcel of land along the Edison Bell Way link road forming part of the wider regeneration of the Huntingdon West area. Lidl is located along Stukeley Road to the west of the railway line several hundred metres from Aldi. The site was completed in 2016. Both have large parking areas and landscaping within and along the site edges.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.56ha of land 89 vehicle parking spaces with cycle spaces built form uses 33% of the site area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.77ha of land 97 vehicle parking spaces built form uses 24% of the site area |
|---|---|



Aldi and Morrisons in St Ives

These are well placed in relation to the strategic road network via access onto the A1123 and A1096. Aldi site is a redevelopment of a former factory site within a business park. There is an expansive car park with minimal soft landscaping, service yard to the north of the site and signage. The site was completed in 2021. The Morrisons

2 Methodology

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>is a larger unit by some 500 sqm than the other examples here is also accompanied by a petrol filling station and non-food retail unit with servicing, parking and associated landscaping. It also has substantially more parking. The site was completed in 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 0.79ha of land ● 126 parking spaces with 8 cycle spaces ● built form uses 22% of the site area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2.74ha of land ● 303 parking spaces with 40 cycle spaces ● built form uses 18% of the site area 

Retail Parks - 0.20 plot ratio

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
<p>Retail parks with clusters of large retail units are generally found on the outskirts of settlements or as redeveloped or reused industrial areas. Larger 21st century residential led developments often incorporate smaller retail units.</p>	<p>Development form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale units, mostly in coloured cladding Directional road frontage and internal signage <p>Parking provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive surface level car parking with some dedicated bicycle parking Parking is usually provided at 1.05 spaces per 0.01ha of land Segregated rear servicing yards Increasing amounts of electric vehicle charging points <p>Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated soft landscaping

Examples

Quora Retail Park, Howard Road, Eaton Socon, St Neots

This was a redevelopment of a brownfield site that had formerly had an industrial unit and offices but had been vacant for several years. It is located in the south of St Neots. The retail-led regeneration of the site saw the additional of a food store, two other large retail units (non-food products), three other units for food outlets and small retail. There is soft landscaping breaking up the expansive parking area and footpaths. The site completed in 2016.

- 1.7ha site
- 203 car parking spaces
- built form uses 27% of the site area



Abbey Retail Park, St Ives

The Abbey Retail Park is located on the eastern edge of St Ives, approximately 2 kilometres north east of St Ives town centre. It is an irregular shape with quite significant vegetation around the edges of the site particularly where it adjoins residential neighbourhoods. The irregularity of the site makes building on parts of the site impractical

2 Methodology

Typical locations where this may be found	Characteristics
	<p>resulting in a lower net developable area. The retail park consists of several drive thrus, restaurants and small shops including a McDonalds, Costa Coffee, Eric's Fish Bar and a Subway with units added over time intensifying the retail park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.15ha site • Approximately 106 car parking spaces • built form uses 13% of the site area 

Question 13

Economic Development Capacity Estimates

Do you agree with the economic development density categories proposed?

If not, please suggest your preferred categories and density estimates.

Presentation of detailed site assessments

- 2.82** The suitability, availability, achievability and deliverability / developability of each site, as well as details of the site will be recorded in a standard template. The proposed template for the assessment is provided on the following page.
- 2.83** To provide consistency, use of the same assessment template is proposed no matter the scale or use of the proposed development. However, it is recognised that the level of detail is likely to vary and be proportionate to the scale and nature of the use proposed. For example, for a new settlement proposal, it would be expected that a greater amount of information will be provided by which to assess it and thus more commentary will be included in its assessment when compared to a site proposing development of 10 dwellings.

Question 14

Detailed Site Assessments

Do you agree with the proposed layout for presentation of the detailed site assessments?

If not, please suggest how the detailed site assessments might be improved.

- 2.84** It is proposed that sites which are demonstrated to be deliverable or developable through the detailed site assessments would then progress through to a separate Sustainability Appraisal phase. This would look at detailed aspects of the proposed site and its relationship with its surroundings including aspects such as access to services and facilities, impact on designated sites of biodiversity significance, and likelihood of experiencing pollution and its ability to contribute towards national priorities such as reusing previously developed land and reaching net zero carbon emission targets.

Question 15

Progression to Sustainability Appraisal

Do you agree that only sites which are assessed as being deliverable or developable progress to the more detailed scrutiny applied through the Sustainability Appraisal approach?

If not, please suggest on what basis sites should progress through for this more detailed scrutiny.

2 Methodology

Site reference	HLAAXXXX
Site name	

Site address	Parish	Site area (ha)	Promoter's stated use(s)	Promoter's stated capacity	Potential capacity
			Site promoter's anticipated use(s)	Site promoter's anticipated capacity	LAA capacity calculations

Location and constraints	Aerial and key features
MAP	MAP

<p>How was the site identified?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose from options bulleted in paragraph 2.10
<p>Relevant planning history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State any relevant planning history on the site - applications or appeals that have been approved, refused, withdrawn
<p>Land type and character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State here if it is greenfield, previously developed land, garden land etc. Also detail here if the site is a regeneration opportunity

<p>Suitability and constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State here commentary on the potential suitability of the site for development. Include here any physical, environmental or policy constraints including how these constraints could be overcome or mitigated. 	<p>Suitability grouping</p> <p>Score will either be + , ~ , -</p>
<p>Availability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State here relevant commentary such as if the site is being promoted actively / submitted as part of call for sites, planning history and landownership 	<p>Availability grouping</p> <p>Score will either be + , ~ , -</p>
<p>Achievability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State here commentary on what progress has or is being made towards bringing forward the proposed development such as any agreements in place, progress on a planning application, infrastructure requirements and constraints to overcome etc. 	<p>Achievability grouping</p> <p>Score will either be + , ~ , -</p>
<p>Deliverability / developability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State here the site promoter's anticipated delivery of the proposed site and provide assessment whether this is considered to be achievable. 	<p>If all above are + or ~ then the site can be considered deliverable or developable. Choose when: in 1-5, 6-10, 11-15 or 15-25 years</p>

Progression of Site through to Sustainability Appraisal

Should the site progress to the sustainability stage?	Yes or No
Reason for outcome	

2 Methodology

Stage 3 - Windfall assessment

- 2.85** Windfall housing development is defined by the NPPF as being development taking place on sites not identified in the development plan. Paragraph 71 of the NPPF 2021 states that *'where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends....'*
- 2.86** The delivery of housing on unidentified small sites has been and will continue to be an important source of housing supply within the district. Current windfall developed in Huntingdonshire mostly derives from enabling policies in the current Local Plan. For example, through rural exceptions housing and permissive policies such as LP 8 Key Service Centres and LP 9 Small Settlements that allow for development proposals on land within the built up area of key service centres and small settlements and on land well-related to the built-up area as long it accords with other policies in the Local Plan. These policies include but are not limited to, avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, or recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. In addition, some windfall development can be enabled through the National Planning Policy Framework, or via planning appeals.
- 2.87** Development on windfall sites provides additional flexibility to housing supply and to the types of housing found across the district. In accordance with national guidance on undertaking a land availability assessment, an assessment of potential housing supply from windfall sites is outlined below.
- 2.88** To understand the potential future windfall supply for the district we are proposing to look back at the historic rate of delivery in the district since 1 April 2011 (the start of the current Local Plan period). This approach was also used to identify windfall delivery during the examination of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and was approved by the Planning Inspector. In this instance windfall supply was broken down into three categories: sites which received prior approval, rural exceptions sites and all other sites providing between 1 and 9 dwellings. This windfall delivery is documented in the Council's Housing Trajectory which can be found in Part One of the [Annual Monitoring Report](#).
- 2.89** This time we are proposing to identify historic windfall on sites containing between one and four homes, this is because the LAA will be looking for potential development sites of five or more homes and therefore available, suitable and achievable land for the delivery of homes on sites that can accommodate five or more homes will have been identified via an alternative method.
- 2.90** To assess the historic rate of delivery on sites containing one to four homes officers will use past housing completions data, this data shows planning applications that have been granted permission and the number of homes that have been delivered within a specific monitoring year. Housing completions data is gathered annually in collaboration with the Cambridgeshire County Council's Research and Monitoring Team, it is a tried and tested data gathering exercise used across the country by Local Planning Authorities. This housing completions data is also used to inform the Government of housing delivery rates across the County and feeds into the district's Annual Monitoring Reports, Housing Trajectories and Housing Delivery Test calculations.
- 2.91** When assessing the historic windfall housing delivery rate on sites containing 1 to 4 homes, applications for prior approval and any planning applications relating to rural exception sites will be assessed separately to other planning applications. This is so that we can identify three types of windfall allowance: one for prior approvals, one for rural exceptions housing and another for 'mainstream housing supply' (all other sites containing 1 to 4 dwellings). The findings of this windfall analysis will help to inform what windfall allowance may be appropriate to use for the new Local Plan.

Question 16**Windfall Assessment**

Do you agree with the proposed approach to assessing the supply of windfall housing?

If not, please suggest your preferred approach for assessment of the windfall housing supply or indicate if you think such an assessment should not be undertaken.

2 Methodology

Stage 4 - Assessment review

- 2.92** National guidance states that once the sites and broad locations have been assessed, the development potential of all sites can be collected to produce an indicative trajectory.
- 2.93** This trajectory should set out how much housing and the amount of economic development can be provided, and at what point in the future (i.e. within years 1 to 5, 6 to 10, and 11 and beyond). An overall risk assessment should be made as to whether sites will come forward as anticipated. This will utilise the evidence gathered through the desktop review, officer knowledge, call for sites consultation and communication with site promoters.
- 2.94** The guidance states if there are insufficient sites to meet needs then the assessment should be revisited to reconsider the assumptions made on the development potential of sites to make the most efficient use of land including physical and policy constraints, this may also include applying a range of densities to reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, especially for sites in town centres, and other locations that are well served by public transport. This also includes sites for possible new settlements.

Question 17

Assessment Review

If insufficient sites are identified through the desktop review and the first call for sites to meet needs throughout the next Local Plan period, please suggest whether priority should be given to:

- a. increasing densities within identified sites to accommodate the necessary scale of development, or
- b. attempting to identify additional sites.

If not, please suggest your preferred approach to obtaining sufficient land to meet needs.

Stage 5 - Final evidence base

- 2.95** National guidance expects the following standard outputs to be produced as part of the land availability assessment:
- 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 anticipated development based on the evidence available.

Question 18

Final Evidence Base

Do you agree that the methodology set out in this paper would fulfill these expectations?

If not, please suggest what additional elements you think are required.

3 Next steps

- 3.1** After the consultation closes all responses received will be considered and suggested approaches balanced against each other. Amendments will be made and the LAA Methodology finalised before it is used to assess sites submitted through the Call for Sites. The responses and any changes made will be summarised in the Council's Statement of Consultation.
- 3.2** The Land Availability Assessment outcomes will help inform options for preparation of the development strategy for the updated Local Plan. It will be used in conjunction with several other studies including but not limited to:
- Settlement Hierarchy
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessments
 - Strategic Transport Assessments
 - Housing Need Assessment - based on the government's [Standard Method](#)
 - Infrastructure Needs Assessment
- 3.3** Collectively these will identify the amount of land required for different uses, constraints and opportunities which affect their prospects of being brought forward and their appropriateness in the local context. Potential sites will be put forward for engagement through the Council's Local Plan Options Document with the Land Availability Assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal forming key parts of the evidence base for the next Local Plan.

4 Glossary

4 Glossary

Achievable

A site can be 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.

Ancient or veteran tree

Tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient woodland

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Available

A site's availability will be judged based on whether there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership impediments to development, and when it is likely to deliver the proposed development.

Best and most versatile agricultural land

Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Biodiversity

All aspects of biological diversity.

Brownfield

See Previously Developed Land (PDL).

Community infrastructure

Facilities available for use by the community that provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, leisure, recreational and cultural needs of the community. Examples include village halls, doctors' surgeries, pubs, churches, museums, libraries and children's play areas. It may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.

Conservation Area

An area "of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"

Deliverable

To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

- a. sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence

Glossary

that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).

- b. where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

Density

The amount of development on a given piece of land.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, is the UK Government department for housing, communities, local government in England and the levelling up policy.

Developable

Sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Economic development

Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

European site

This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Geodiversity

The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green infrastructure

The network of green spaces such as parks, playing fields, allotments and cemeteries; these may have public access or be private spaces. Traditionally including water features such as rivers and lakes these are increasingly referred to as blue infrastructure.

Green space

Publicly accessible spaces, including local parks, sports grounds, cemeteries, school grounds, allotments, commons and historic parks and gardens.

Green space buffer

An area of vegetation or open space that provides visual and/ or physical enclosure or creates a distinct break between contrasting land use areas.

Habitat

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

Habitat site

4 Glossary

Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing and employment development in an area, including the identification of specific housing and employment sites with development potential over a 15 year time span. See also LAA and SHLAA.

Heritage assets

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic environment

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Infrastructure

A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity

All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Land Availability Assessment (LAA)

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing development in an area, including the identification of specific housing sites with development potential over a 15 year time span. See also HELAA and SHLAA.

Land use

The broad functions land is used for such as industrial, residential or commercial.

Landscape

The character and appearance of land including its shape, form, natural features, biodiversity and colours and the way these components are combined.

Local plan

A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Mitigation measures

These are measures requested/ carried out in order to limit the damage by a particular development/ activity.

Mix

Glossary

The range of uses present within a given piece of land.

Neighbourhood plans

A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Open space

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Playing field

The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Pollution

Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

Previously developed land (PDL)

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Public rights of way

The network of footpaths on which access on foot is legally protected and bridleways to which access on foot, cycle and horseback is legally protected.

Priority habitats

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ramsar sites

Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Registered Park and Garden

A site included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.

Renewable and low carbon energy

Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites

4 Glossary

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Scheduled Monument

A scheduled monument means any monument which is for the time being included in the schedule [compiled and maintained by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport].

Setting

The context in which something sits.

Setting of a heritage asset

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Special Areas of Conservation

Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

Special Protection Areas

Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Green Space

These are areas of green space that serve a wider population than just the district, for example Paxton Pits and the Great Fen.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing development in an area, including the identification of specific housing sites with development potential over a 15 year time span. See also HELAA.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

A study intended to review the existing housing market in an area, consider the nature of future need for market and affordable housing and to inform policy development.

Suitable

A site can be considered suitable if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated. Thus, the assessment of a site's suitability for development is a high-level assumption about whether the site physically could be developed, rather than whether the site should or would be developed.

Sustainable development

Glossary

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

These cover a range of approaches to surface water drainage management including source control measures such as rainwater recycling, infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns, filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed and basins and ponds to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding.

Sustainable transport modes

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Town Centre

Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Transport assessment

A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and measures that will be needed deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement

A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

An order made and confirmed by a local planning authority to protect trees from lopping, topping or felling without prior written consent.

Vitality and viability

In terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.