

CABINET

10 NOVEMBER 2011

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA) – UPDATE

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB 2094](#) – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – Update , 6 December 2010

[CAB 1992](#) – Winchester District - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – Update, 17 March 2010

[CAB 1901](#) - Winchester District – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – Update, 14 October 2009

[CAB 1773\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Initial Results, 16 December 2008

[CAB 1522\(LDF\)](#) – Winchester District Local Development Framework – Review of Urban Capacity Study and Proposed Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 11 September 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This is the annual update to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Production of the SHLAA was agreed by the Cabinet (Local Development Framework (LDF)) Committee in September 2007. Work was finalised on the draft SHLAA and reported to the LDF Committee in December 2008.

The draft SHLAA was published for consultation between March and April 2009 and

comments were subsequently reported to Cabinet in October 2009. Cabinet resolved to undertake additional areas of work on the SHLAA, primarily in relation to the assessment of those sites sent in by landowners, agents and developers that lie outside the current settlement boundaries, and for the results of that work to be reported back prior to publication of a revised SHLAA. The Revised SHLAA showing the gross area of SHLAA sites outside the settlement boundary was agreed for publication by Cabinet in March 2010 and subsequently published in April 2010. Given the emphasis on housing delivery and the importance of the SHLAA to the Local Development Framework evidence base, an update to the SHLAA was published in December 2010. It continues to be important for the Council to refine and update this information and the 2011 SHLAA updates previous documents to an April 2011 base date and reflects national SHLAA guidance.

This report presents an update of the SHLAA which will inform the assessment of 5 year housing land supply in the 2011 Annual Monitoring Report. It includes a number of changes since the previous SHLAA publication:-

- It includes new sites submitted up to July 2011.
- It removes any sites given planning permission between April 2010 and March 2011 as these are now set out elsewhere in the Annual Monitoring Report's housing figures.
- The estimates of the housing capacity of all sites are now based on net developable areas, having removed any areas with development constraints from the total (gross) site area.
- The site development ratio has been retained and applied to the net developable area of all sites to account for other requirements on-site (infrastructure, open space provision, etc). However, where it is clear that the result does not take account of other factors, such as the surrounding character of the area, an independent assessment of the capacity of the site has been made.
- The working assumption for densities on sites inside the settlement boundaries is 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) for settlements apart from Winchester, Bishops Waltham, New Alresford and Whiteley.
- The site initially submitted in relation to the Hedge End SDA is now dealt with as part of the 'other settlements' section and not separately. This is because the SDA is no longer being planned for and if the City Council were to allocate the area it would count towards the Winchester District housing target.

Neither this report nor the SHLAA document will allocate sites for development: if additional land is required for housing purposes this will be undertaken through the preparation of the Development Management and Allocations DPD to follow the Core Strategy. The SHLAA is purely an identification tool and a key part of the LDF evidence base. The SHLAA may need to continue to be updated annually to feed into the Annual Monitoring Report which is published every December.

Officers have now assessed all the sites submitted to the Council for consideration both within and outside current settlement boundaries and produced more refined

capacity estimates in accordance with SHLAA guidance and it is recommended that these form the 2011 SHLAA. It is recommended that this is now published on the Council's website and that the SHLAA be updated as necessary in future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the 2011 SHLAA be published as part of the evidence base for the LDF.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning to add summary sheets for each site and to make any minor editorial changes necessary, prior to publication, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement.

TO COUNCIL:

3. That with regard to the Notice of Motion by Councillor Cook relating to the SHLAA (considered by Council on 20 July 2011), no changes be made to the SHLAA or the criteria for inclusion of sites in it in response to the Notice of Motion, and that the designation of land uses continues to be made through the statutory Local Development Framework/Local Plan process, following the necessary procedures, consultation and examination.

CABINET (LDF) COMMITTEE

10 NOVEMBER 2011

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REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

DETAIL:

1 Background and Introduction

- 1.1 An assessment of potential housing sites within settlement boundaries was presented to LDF Committee on 16 December 2008 (report [CAB 1773\(LDF\)](#) refers) and subsequently published for consultation in March 2009. The results of the public consultation on this draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) were reported to Cabinet on 14 October 2009 and included various recommendations for changes relating to sites within the built-up areas.
- 1.2 Following a review of deliverability and capacity of sites within the draft SHLAA and the inclusion of potential sites outside the current settlement boundaries sent in by landowners, agents and developers, this SHLAA was published in April 2010. The document showed the gross area of the sites outside the settlement boundaries, from which a rough overall housing capacity was calculated. An update to the SHLAA was then published in 2010, which refined the capacity assessment for all the sites, added any new sites submitted up to July 2011, and removed sites which had gained planning permission. The 2011 update carries forward and further refines and updates this work.

2 Government requirements

- 2.1 The assessment of housing land supply is a key requirement of Government Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) to show that the Council can maintain an adequate 5 year supply of housing land. The draft National Planning Policy Framework proposes to increase the requirement so that local authorities would have to be able to demonstrate land availability for 5 years + 20%. The SHLAA is also fundamental to the 'evidence base' needed for the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Council is required to consider the different opportunities for housing throughout the whole District, including all sites put forward by landowners and developers outside existing settlement boundaries, in village and rural locations. Whilst these sites are assessed in this report, it should be emphasised that housing development on them would currently be contrary to policy under the adopted Local Plan Review 2006. The SHLAA will not change this policy but is a crucial part of the LDF evidence base in terms of determining five year land supply and the identification of potential deliverable housing sites.

3 Status of document

- 3.1 As stated above, no sites will be allocated for development through this Assessment and existing statutory policies (including the settlement boundaries defined in the Local Plan Review) continue to apply. Therefore, this Assessment does not change the prospect of planning permission being granted on the sites identified and neither does it invite such applications. If any sites need to be allocated in the future to meet the District's housing needs (currently in the process of being established through the Core Strategy), then this will be subject to further assessment which would take place through the process of preparing the Development Management and Allocations DPD. If any sites are recommended for allocation, then this process requires that the Council consult with all interested parties at the appropriate time.

4 Council Notice of Motion 20 July 2011

- 4.1 The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Cook to the Council meeting on 20 July 2011:

"That this Council remove the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) designation from green field land when it can be demonstrated that it is in the public interest for such land to be used for public recreation or sport or where it can be demonstrated that such land is not required to meet the agreed housing targets."

There was some discussion of the Notice at the meeting (see Minutes of 20.7.11 Council), following which it was agreed that the Notice of Motion be referred to a future meeting of the Cabinet (LDF) Committee for consideration, with a request that it make recommendations back to Council. The following sections provide background information to the issues raised by the Notice of Motion.

- 4.2 The Notice seeks the removal of greenfield land from the SHLAA when it is in the public interest to use it for recreation, etc and shown not to be needed to meet housing requirements. The process of assessing whether or not any of the greenfield sites which are included in the SHLAA should be developed (including whether they are needed to meet the housing requirements or would be better suited to other uses), would be undertaken through the Development Management and Allocations DPD (or 'Local Plan Part 2'). As noted above, the SHLAA is an evidence document which is intended simply to identify the maximum extent of potentially available land - it is not a policy document which decides on whether that land is needed or suitable for development.
- 4.3 The SHLAA does not, therefore, 'designate' land, it simply maps sites which have been put to the Council for consideration as potential future allocations. As such, it does not directly affect land value and any 'hope value' that an

owner may attribute to their land would apply regardless of whether a site is identified in the SHLAA.

- 4.4 Government advice on the production of SHLAAs is very clear that all potentially available sites (including greenfield) should be included, but that the SHLAA is not where the judgement on whether they should be allocated is made. The Council's first draft SHLAA failed to identify greenfield sites and this was the subject of much criticism at the consultation stage. It was concluded the SHLAA must consider all sites if it is to be a robust part of the evidence base and both of the previous final published versions of the SHLAA have, therefore, included greenfield sites.
- 4.5 The process that the Notice of Motion promotes, of making a judgement on whether it is in the public interest to allocate sites for housing or other uses, is not one that is intended to form part of the SHLAA process. The overall scale of development required, and the strategy for accommodating it will be determined through the Core Strategy/Local Plan Part 1. The adoption of the Core Strategy is programmed for December 2012. Following this, the Development Management and Allocations DPD/Local Plan Part 2, or Neighbourhood Plans, will need to determine whether further land needs to be allocated in any particular settlement and for which uses. This process will need to follow clear procedures and criteria and be subject to consultation and independent examination.
- 4.6 The SHLAA is not, therefore, the mechanism by which to undertake the process sought by the Notice of Motion. This needs to be done through a statutory development plan document and to be open and accountable, not undertaken through an evidence document. It is, therefore, recommended that Council be recommended to make no changes to the SHLAA or the criteria for inclusion of sites, in response to the Notice of Motion, and that the designation of land uses continues to be made through the statutory Local Development Framework/Local Plan process, following the necessary procedures, consultation and examination. In the meantime, it is widely understood by landowners, developers and the Planning Inspectorate that the SHLAA does not allocate or designate sites for development and that inclusion of a site is not intended to imply this.

5 Summary of information

- 5.1 In total, 1 new site in the settlements and 12 additional sites in the countryside were submitted by landowners, developers and agents to be considered by the Council since the publication of the last SHLAA. Officers have mapped all the different sites submitted to the Council for consideration and for each site have considered the different constraints which would affect how 'deliverable' those sites are. For a site to be 'deliverable', it must be available now, in a suitable location for development which would also contribute to sustainable, mixed communities and be achievable within the estimated timescale. Appendix B shows the sites submitted to the Council. This is a summary of the information contained within the full SHLAA, which is being recommended

for publication. Appendix B has been reproduced for committee members only, and can be viewed on the Council's website under the Report for this committee. The full document would include a map and schedule for each site but is very large so is not appended.

- 5.2 All sites which have been sent in to the Council are considered as 'available', as they have been promoted by landowners/developers. For the November 2011 SHLAA, all owners/agents of sites with contact details were contacted to ask if the site was still available and when it could come forward to be developed. Responses on 162 of the sites were received and 5 stated that they no longer had any intention of developing the site. These sites were deleted and, since then, 11 additional sites have been submitted for the Council's consideration.
- 5.3 For all remaining sites, the different constraints that may affect how suitable they are to develop have been identified. Areas of the sites that have development constraints have been removed from the gross site area to enable a more accurate estimate of capacity to be produced. To account for the fact that not all of some sites will be developed for housing (as infrastructure, open spaces, etc. will be provided on-site), a 'development ratio' has then been applied. The remaining net developable site area is then subject to a density multiplier (as in the previous SHLAA) to provide a more accurate housing capacity for each site. Each site has then been 'reality checked' and in a small number of cases the housing capacity has been amended to take into account the character of the surrounding areas.
- 5.4 The evidence in the current (December 2010) SHLAA has been examined during the course of several key appeals over the last year (e.g. Barton Farm, Winchester and Spring Gardens, Alresford). In these cases the Inspectors concluded that the estimated availability or capacity of some sites was over-optimistic and these results of these further examinations have been taken into account in updating the SHLAA. In particular, the standard density applied in some of the larger villages has been reduced from 40 dwellings per hectare to 30dph to reflect their rural character and several sites have been removed from the SHLAA as they either have now received planning permission or are no longer considered to be available. In some cases the estimated timing of sites being developed has been adjusted. The overall effect has been to substantially reduce the number of sites which are available within the next 5 years, but overall housing land supply will be considered in more detail in the Annual Monitoring Report, due to be published at the end of 2011.
- 5.5 While the document identifies constraints to development, it does not aim to make any decisions on whether the sites are suitable for allocation. This is not the purpose of the SHLAA and, in any event, there will be other important factors which need to be taken into account, such as visual and landscape impact.

- 5.6 The Core Strategy/Local Plan Part 1 will determine the level of housing provision needed and the Development Management and Allocations DPD/Local Plan Part 2 Neighbourhood Plans will determine whether housing land needs to be allocated outside current settlement boundaries. It may be that further consideration through the Development Management and Allocations DPD etc would show that certain constraints could be overcome, or that new ones are identified through more detailed work. Some of the 'policy' constraints (e.g. allocations for other uses) may potentially be reviewed through the Core Strategy or other DPDs. Therefore, it does not automatically follow that sites which currently appear to be less constrained will be allocated (if needed) in advance of other sites.
- 5.7 One of the purposes of this SHLAA is to assess whether adequate deliverable sites are likely to be available to meet the housing needs of the District. As expected, the number of available sites within settlement boundaries, which could be developed within current policies, will not provide adequate housing to meet expected requirements. The Core Strategy/Local Plan Part 1 will make a number of 'strategic allocations' and the total number of sites submitted (including greenfield) is much higher than the number that are needed to meeting housing requirements, enabling choices to be made between the sites:

Capacity of SHLAA sites submitted in settlement boundaries

	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026
PUSH	26	100	92
Non-PUSH	169	190	120

Capacity of SHLAA sites submitted outside settlement boundaries

	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026
PUSH	9,583	3,312	2,353
Non-PUSH	3,429	17,421	1,125

It should be noted that the above figures include some very large areas of land outside settlement boundaries. The total contribution of these sites has been spread over several five-year periods but their delivery has not at this stage been profiled in detail, given that they may not be needed and are not currently allocated. In addition, a number of sites outside settlement boundaries are expected to be developed/completed beyond 2026.

- 5.8 As noted above, the SHLAA does not indicate which sites should be allocated, but taking all those sites which appear to be available, including sites outside settlement boundaries, the capacity is considerably more than the likely housing requirement. Therefore future work on site allocations will discount many of the sites, but it is clear that adequate potential sites exist at a strategic level to meet housing needs and that, in practice, only a small proportion of the sites put forward by landowners/ developers are likely to be

needed. The precise level of housing needed will be determined through the LDF Core Strategy/Local Plan Part 1, with the Development Management and Allocations DPD/Local Plan Part 2 then using the adopted housing targets to consider which SHLAA sites need to be allocated.

6 Publication of the SHLAA

- 6.1 The SHLAA is part of the evidence base for the LDF and it should provide information on the sites, the constraints that exist and an estimation of potential capacity. It not an allocations document and there is not a statutory requirement to consult on this document. Consultation has taken place on earlier draft SHLAA documents focussing on the methodology. This annual update uses this methodology, but has refined it further to provide a more accurate picture of how many houses could be provided on these sites.
- 6.2 The SHLAA may still need to be updated to inform future Annual Monitoring Reports and to include any new sites, or changes in the site information. It would not be realistic to undertake consultation each time the SHLAA is updated. It is therefore recommended that the SHLAA be published and that interested parties including Parish Councils be notified of this. Any formal consultation would take place if and when allocations are needed, as part of the process of producing the Development Management and Allocations DPD/Local Plan Part 2.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

7 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

- 7.1 The SHLAA is a key part of the Council's evidence base which informs both the LDF and Sustainable Community Strategy and other corporate publications as necessary.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 The key resources for undertaking work on the LDF have been approved as part of the budget process. However, the nature and scale of the LDF will require shared resources in terms of utilising skills and expertise from other divisions within the Council, this is now even more critical given the emphasis on delivery and viability of development schemes, and the need for up-to-date evidence such as the SHLAA.
- 8.2 Meetings of the Cabinet (LDF) Committee can be serviced from within existing resources in the Democratic Services Division.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 9.1 The SHLAA, whilst being a key part of the LDF evidence base, also informs the District's five-year housing land supply assessment which is required by

PPS3. This must assess whether there is sufficient land both available and deliverable in five year periods and failure to undertake such an assessment will put the Council in a very weak position when defending refusals of planning permission.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Methodology and summary results by settlement/area

Appendix B - Map illustrating sites submitted to the Council. Appendix B has been reproduced for committee members only, and can be viewed on the Council's website under the Report for this committee.