
Meeting of Local Development Framework
Working Group

18th December 2007

Report of the Director of City Strategy

**City of York Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment –
Phase 1**

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to report back to Members the additional work that has been completed and the subsequent amendments made to the draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) following the LDF Working Group (LDFWG) meeting on 13th November. At this meeting Members requested that additional work be carried out in a number of key areas particularly regarding housing densities. This report summarises the main changes made to the draft report and annex 1 to this report presents the revised draft SHLAA report with the changes highlighted as tracked changes.

Background

2. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) are a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's needs for new homes.
3. Housing has gained rising prominence on the Government's agenda since the Barker Review of housing supply and is now a top national priority as demonstrated by the Prime Minister's recent announcement of plans for three million more homes by 2020. Local Authorities will have to identify enough land to deliver the homes needed in their area over the next 15 years by rapidly implementing new planning policy for housing (PPS3¹). On 23rd July 2007 the Government published new guidance on how Council's can find the housing land they need. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments: Practice Guidance is clear that SHLAAs will be an essential part of the evidence base for Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) and Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs). A top priority for Government is to ensure that land availability is not a constraint on the development of more homes. Planning policy, as set out in PPS3, underpins the Government's response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply² and the necessary step change in housing

¹ Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (Communities and Local Government 2006).

² Review of Housing Supply, Delivering Stability: Securing Our Future (HM Treasury, 2004).

delivery, through a more responsive approach to land supply at the local level. It requires local authorities to:

- **Identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan that are ready for development** and to keep this topped up (this means five years from the adoption of the site allocation development plan document);
 - **Identify specific, developable sites for years 6-10**, and ideally years 11-15, in plans to enable the five year supply to be topped up;
 - Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11-15 of the plan, **indicate broad locations for future growth**; and
 - **Not include an allowance for windfalls in the first ten years of the plan** unless there are justifiable local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.
4. The information in this assessment will, along with the other key evidence base studies, help to inform the Core Strategy Development Planning Document (DPD) and the subsequent Site Allocations DPD. The Core Strategy will set out the key strategic elements of the planning framework for York, including a spatial vision for York and the policies required to deliver that vision. Primarily this assessment will be used to inform the Allocations DPD, which will identify and allocate sites for development to meet communities' needs for homes jobs and services whilst protecting valued environmental assets. SHLAAs constitute a robust method by which all potential housing sites within a defined area can be identified. Sites are then assessed on the basis of when and whether they are likely to be developed and a forward trajectory of housing supply can be defined as a result. Following the review if there are insufficient sites in relation to the area's future requirements, then the SHLAA outlines methods by which the shortfall can best be planned for.

Revisions made to the SHLAA following LDFWG

5. Table 1 shows the comments received at the LDFWG meeting on the 13th November and the suggested officer response. All changes to the report are highlighted as tracked changes including any deletions.

Member Comments	Officers suggested response
Provide more information on the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and link to the SHLAA, particularly the housing mix and reference to the 66/34 flat to house ratio	Information added to the report regarding housing mix achieved in York 2003-2007 and the key findings of the SHMA are highlighted including housing need and housing mix. The report draws out the links between the SHMA and the SHLAA and how the two parts of the evidence base together will help to inform members' decisions regarding future housing policy to be taken

	forward in the Core Strategy. Policy options regarding mix, size and type of housing, housing density, local affordability and the needs of particular groups will need to be developed through the LDFWG and incorporated into the emerging Core Strategy. See paragraphs numbers 7.9 to 7.21.
Check definition of net site density and make sure it is used consistently throughout the report	Net site densities have been clarified throughout the report and are based on the definition of net site density used in PPS3 (housing). This definition is now included in the report (Paragraph 7.33)
Include more local examples of 'good' sites, particularly larger sites and sites identified as high quality by CABE ³ .	A section has been added to the report on local density and design exemplars. This includes examples such as: Germany Beck and Derwenthorpe highlighted by the Planning Inspector as 'rare examples of pioneering approaches to large scale residential development'; sites highlighted by CABE in its housing audit of design quality in the region and local schemes recognised by the York Design Awards. Photos of these sites have been included along with information on density, mix and type of dwellings and other community facilities and open space included in the schemes. See paragraph numbers 7.37 to 7.58.
Check ward boundaries	All ward boundaries in the tables have been checked and amended where appropriate.
Add strays to primary constraints	The Strays are included within the Open Space designations in the primary constraints but the text has been amended to specifically refer to Strays as a primary constraint. See Figure 7.
Try to 'plain English' the report and remove technical jargon	Attempts have been made throughout the document to simplify the text and remove unnecessary jargon but this remains a technical evidence report and is not what will be used to present the information to the public. A short, simplified summary version will be used when consulting the public through the Allocations DPD Issues and Options consultation.
Look at buffer zones around nature designations	At this stage in the SHLAA we have included national and local nature designations as primary constraints. As the sites progress through the Allocations process it will be necessary to undertake a more detailed Appropriate Assessment of any sites which are close to national or local nature designations to assess suitable buffer zones. This process will need to involve consultation with Natural England to ensure a consistent and appropriate approach.
Make density ranges clearer	Following the LDGWG meeting (13/11/07) the density ranges used in the report have been re-

³ Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.

	<p>assessed. The low and high density ranges have been removed and instead we have looked at the median density achieved in the past ten years and also the appropriate minimum density from the existing Local Plan policy (H5a). These indicative yields have been included for the identified sites but the report is caveated to stress that the approach to housing density, housing mix and type and other policy approaches will need to be progressed through the Core Strategy DPD. This report forms part of the evidence base along with other key studies such as the Housing Market Assessment and the PPG17 Open Space Study, which will help to inform members decision making on policy issues. In addition to this more detailed assessments of sites' deliverability including the use of stakeholder panels will take place in Phase 2 of the SHLAA to add to the evidence base.</p>
<p>Look at the dwelling assumptions for York Central and British Sugar (York Northwest)</p>	<p>Further detailed information has been added to the report regarding York Northwest. To create a sustainable community in York Northwest it will be necessary to create a mixed development including residential and employment uses. In order to create a community with a low ecological footprint and which is desirable to live in, it will also be necessary to provide other facilities such as shops, schools, health facilities, open space and sports/leisure facilities. These facilities will need to be easily accessible by all using public transport & sustainable travel modes.</p> <p>The Draft Local Plan (April 2005) identified York Central as having an estimated site capacity of 600 residential units up to 2011, at a density of between 100 to 150 dwellings per hectare. Assumptions were made about the future development of York Central, which were that the site could provide up to a maximum of 3,000 dwellings to 2029. This figure does not take into account subsequent emerging site constraints and will be subject to re-assessment as work on the York Northwest Area Action Plan (AAP) progresses.</p> <p>A broad indicative figure of up to 1325 dwellings has been include for the British Sugar site which assumes that approximately 75% of the site will be used for residential development and the 75% figure should not be seen as a 'given' as the need for open space, community facilities and employment uses will de determined through the AAP. The land requirements for housing and other uses will emerge as work on the AAP progresses. This assumption will be reviewed to reflect this.</p>

Next Steps

6. The next stage of the SHLAA will begin with the Call for Sites as part of the consultation on the Issues and Options Report for the Allocations DPD. This will give key stakeholders and local residents the opportunity to assess the sites identified so far through Phase 1 of the SHLAA and to suggest alternative sites for development. Once the call for sites is completed and the sites have been collated and individual site surveys completed (using the same proformas as in Phase 1) then Stage 7 of the methodology advocated in the guidance will be undertaken.
7. Stage 7 (Assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed) will involve assessing the suitability, availability and achievability of a site and will provide the information on which the judgement can be made in the plan making context as to whether a site can be considered deliverable, developable or not currently developable for housing. It is proposed by officers that consultants should be engaged to undertake stage 7 of the assessment using a number of stakeholder panels to enable a thorough assessment of each identified site. Paragraphs 8.1 to 8.5 of the main report gives more details about what stage 7 of the assessment will require.
8. Once the assessment of deliverability/developability has been completed for all sites, the housing potential of all sites will be collated to produce an indicative housing trajectory that sets out how much housing can be provided, and at what point in the future. Once the second phase of the SHLAA has been completed then it may be concluded that insufficient sites have been identified and that further sites need to be sought, or that the assumptions made, for example on the housing potential of particular sites, need to be revisited. Following this review, if there are still insufficient sites, then it will be necessary to investigate how this shortfall should best be planned for. The two options advocated in the guidance and in PPS3 are: the identification of broad locations for housing growth within and outside settlements and/or the use of a windfall allowance. Further consideration of these stages will be included in phase 2 of the SHLAA if a shortfall is identified.

Timescales

9. It is important that the SHLAA is completed to provide part of the key evidence base for the progression of the Core Strategy and the Allocations DPD. Any delay in progressing with the SHLAA will have implications for meeting the timetable for the Core Strategy and Allocations DPD's as set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Consultation

10. The initial methodology for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment went out to consultation during February 2007. Members, statutory consultees and internal members of staff from across the council were given the opportunity to comment on the methodology. The Strategic

Housing Land Availability Assessment Phase 1 Report has incorporated any comments made at the methodology consultation stage.

11. Members gave comments at the LDF Working Group on the 13th November 2007. Annex 1 has incorporated these comments into a revised document, the main changes of which are outlined in the 'Background' section of this report. The tracked changes version of the main document showing the amendments is appendix 1 to this report.

Options

12. To approve the amendments made to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Phase 1 to allow progression phase 2.
13. To defer the approval of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Phase subject to further amendments.

Analysis

14. The strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Phase 1 Report (SHLAA) forms part of the key evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's needs for new homes. The SHLAA will be used to feed into a wide range of policy documents for the LDF. The SHLAA Phase 1 document is appendix 1 to this report.
15. The Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) uses the SHLAA as part of its key evidence base to inform the Issues and Options Stage of the DPD process. The Allocations DPD is due to go before members at the LDF Working Group in January 2008. The DPD is then timetabled to go out for consultation in early 2008.
16. Should the SHLAA Phase 1 report be deferred for further amendments, this will stop the progression of the Allocations DPD in accordance with the timescales outlined above.
17. If members approve this document, progression with the Allocations DPD will occur in accordance with the stated timetables.

Corporate Priorities

18. The SHLAA accords with the following corporate priorities:
 - Improving the quality and availability of decent, affordable homes in the city.

Implications

The following implications have been assessed:

- **Financial** - The study work was carried out within the City Development budget.

- **Human Resources (HR)** - None
- **Equalities** - None
- **Legal** - None
- **Crime and Disorder** - None
- **Information Technology (IT)** – None
- **Property** - None
- **Other** - None

Risk Management

19. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

That Members agree:

20. To publish, subject to the recommendations of this Working Group, Phase 1 of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as part of the LDF Evidence Base.

Reason: To inform decisions on the policy options for future housing sites for York as part of the LDF.

21. To delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy and the Shadow Executive Member, the making of any other necessary changes arising from the recommendation of the LDF Working Group, prior to its publication as part of the LDF Evidence Base

Reason: So that any recommended changes can be incorporated into the SHLAA prior to its publication.

Contact Details

Author:

*Rachel Macefield
Principal City Development Officer
01904 551356*

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill Woolley
Director of City Strategy
City Strategy
01904 55 1330

**Report
Approved**



Date

04/12/07

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial – Report author

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

1. *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments: Practice Guidance, Communities and Local Government* (July 2007)
2. *PPS3: Housing, Communities and Local Government* (November 2006)
3. *PPS12: Local Development Frameworks, Communities and Local Government* (September 2004)
4. *Review of Housing Supply, Delivering Stability: Securing our Future*, HM Treasury (2004)
5. *City of York Draft Local Plan incorporating the fourth set of changes: Development Control Local Plan*, City of York Council (April 2005)
6. *City of York Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment*, City of York Council (June 2007)

Annexes to the Committee Report:

Annex 1: City of York Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Phase 1, City of York Council, November 2007.

Annex 2: Annex 1 to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 3: Annex 2 to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 4: Annex 3 to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 5: Annex 4 to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 6a: Annex 5a to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 6b: Annex 5b to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Annex 7: Annex 6 to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment