

## **5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK MEMBER WORKING GROUP**

### **STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT: UPDATE**

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#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the LDF Member Working Group on the progress of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and to indicate the next steps. Members are asked to note that work on the SHLAA is continuing. The final results will be published as part of the evidence base supporting the subsequent Issues and Options exercises. Until this time any output from the SHLAA should be treated as confidential.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The requirement to undertake a SHLAA is set out by Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006) which underlines the desire of the Government to ensure that the planning system delivers a flexible and responsive supply of land for housing. This is of particular relevance given that the Inspector for the RBWM Core Strategy highlighted housing supply as a major area of concern in his report.
- 2.2 An update on SHLAA was provided to Members in March 2008. This report therefore sets out the work that has been completed over the last two months.
- 2.3 Members will recall that through a specific consultation exercise an initial trawl for potential development sites was undertaken during November and early December 2007. This was successful in identifying a number of sites both within the developed areas and the Green Belt. Since that initial exercise was completed, pro-forms have continued to be submitted.
- 2.4 In addition to the sites identified from the pro-forma exercise further sites have been identified from the following sources:
- Sites allocated by the RBWM Local Plan
  - The Urban Potential Review (2006) including those sites omitted from the final study
  - The HEmpSA document (2006)
  - Sites identified during the course of site visits (approximately 10 sites) / and Ordnance Survey maps
  - Sites raised by development control officers
  - Sites subject to planning permission refusals / dismissed appeals \*
  - Sites which had been the subject of pre application discussions over the past three years
- *These sites are currently in the process of being analysed and added to the existing database of sites*
- 2.5 Since March for each site identified, its extent has been plotted on GIS. An entry for each one has also been made in an Access database which contains information such as the source of the site, its address, planning history, site area, constraints information etc. Through the course of site identification, duplicate entries for the same site have been identified and removed. This has resulted in a database of consisting currently of 386 sites.

- 2.6 In line with the SHLAA methodology, an initial sieving of all the identified sites was then undertaken to remove those that are affected by the following criteria:
- A Statutory Designated National and International Nature Conservation Sites. (National Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Special Areas of Conservation (or located within 400m of SPA), Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  - Land within flood zone 3b
  - Land within Airport Public Safety Zones (Heathrow & White Waltham)
  - Land within explosion safety zones
  - Sites allocated for strategic priority transport projects (Crossrail)
- 2.7 This has resulted in a number of sites being removed from the study with no further action on them being undertaken. Following this, all of the remaining sites (some 340) have been individually visited during April / May and assessed against a standard pro-forma to gather additional more detailed information. Through the site visit process, additional sites have been removed from the study where for example they have been recently redeveloped or existing buildings recently significantly extended.
- 2.8 For the purposes of analysis, the remaining sites have been separated into those located within the developed areas and those within the Green Belt. Up to this point all sites have been considered regardless of site size. However in line with the SHLAA methodology, those sites under 0.25 hectares have been excluded. The potential dwelling yield has been examined for the remaining sites in the developed areas using the following development scenarios: 30 dwellings per hectare, 52 dph (the average yield from sites currently in the housing commitments) and 100 dph. It should be noted that to assume that all sites are developed at 100 dph is unrealistic as this would not be desirable for some of the larger sites. For example Poundfield (Cookham) and Ockwells Farm (Maidenhead) which together would contribute 1428 dwellings at 100 dph.

**Table 1: Dwelling yields for developed areas**

<b>Yield at 30 dph</b>	<b>Yield at 52 dph</b>	<b>Yield at 100 dph</b>
<b>2551</b>	<b>4454</b>	<b>8610</b>

- 2.9 It should be noted that the figures contained in Tables 1 and 2 are purely indicative at this stage and give an insight into the potential yield from the sites identified so far. The density scenarios give blanket coverage only and do not yet take any account of site specific matters such as site constraints or shape. Also a significant number of the sites are within flood zone 3a, which whilst not excluding them from the study, will nevertheless make them less likely to be developed.
- 2.10 A further factor that will significantly effect yield is that a significant proportion of the sites identified by the SHLAA study consist of potentially sensitive sites or are existing employment uses. In order for such sites to come forward there would need to be an acceptance that the loss of such areas would be appropriate. To illustrate this point Table 2 below shows the yield from these types of sites over 0.25 ha in size using the three density scenarios.

**Table 2: Dwelling yields for sites within employment and other sensitive sites**

	<b>SHLAA Yield at 30 dph</b>	<b>SHLAA Yield at 52 dph</b>	<b>SHLAA Yield at 100 dph</b>
<b>Employment sites</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>918</b>
<b>Other sensitive sites</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>1,218</b>	<b>2,345</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>1,693</b>	<b>3,263</b>

2.11 **Emerging South East Plan** - To put the figures in Tables 1 and 2 into perspective they must be compared against the housing requirements set out by the South East Plan. The South East Plan Panel Report (issued in August 2007) sets out a recommendation that the housing requirement up until 2026 should be equal to 346 dwellings per annum. For the purposes of the new Core Strategy it will be necessary to plan for a minimum of 25 years (equating to a housing requirement of 8,650 dwellings) and more likely a 30 year period (which would equate to a requirement of 10,380 dwellings). On the basis of the initial study results, the dwelling yield taken together with up to date housing commitments, would result in a significant shortfall in housing supply over the projected plan period for most of the scenarios. This is set out in detail in Tables 3A, B and C below.

**Table 3: Housing supply shortfall measured against South East Plan Housing requirements**

**A: Shortfall assuming yield of 30 DPH**

SEP figure	Yield at 30dph	Housing commitments*	SEP Shortfall
25 years: 8,650 dwellings	2551	1710	4389
30 years: 10,380 dwellings	2551	1710	6119

**B: Shortfall assuming yield of 52 DPH**

SEP figure	Yield at 52dph	Housing commitments*	SEP Shortfall
25 years: 8,650 dwellings	4454	1710	2486
30 years: 10,380 dwellings	4454	1710	4216

**C: Shortfall assuming yield of 100 DPH**

SEP figure	Yield at 100dph	Housing commitments*	SEP Shortfall
25 years: 8,650 dwellings	8610	1710	-1670
30 years: 10,380 dwellings	8610	1710	60

\* approximate figures have been used as commitments data analysis is not yet complete

2.12 For the scenarios looking at the yield from sites at both 30 and 52 dwellings per hectare, there is a substantial shortfall in housing supply from the sites identified and combined with housing commitments. The 100 dph scenario in Table 3C shows a surplus of supply at 25 years and a small deficit at 30 years. However as raised in paragraph 2.8 above to assume that all sites would be developed at a rate of 100 dph would be unrealistic and so this scenario has been included for illustrative purposes only.

2.13 **Green Belt sites** - There are a number of Green Belt sites which have been promoted as part of the SHLAA process. However whilst the sites have all been site visited no analysis of these have been undertaken as many are in isolated locations unsuitable for housing development. However they do represent a stock of locations that may be viewed in relation to the Green Belt Analysis which is currently being

undertaken and reported elsewhere on the LDF Member Working Group meeting agenda.

### **3.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 Additional scrutiny will be undertaken to examine each site within the developed areas on the basis of the information gained from the site visits to refine potential dwelling yield.
- 3.2 A further key aspect of the study will be to test each site against the suitability, availability and achievability criteria set out by the SHLAA methodology. The individual criteria contained within each of these categories will need to be weighted so that so that its importance for a particular site may be identified. This will enable the sites to be ranked and identify those that are most likely to come forward for development.
- 3.3 A separate assessment of how economically viable it would be to develop each site will also need to be made. A SHLAA Panel is currently being set up to assist and test assumptions made with respect to these matters. However it is possible that additional input may be required for assessing the viability of unusual / particularly complicated sites that the Panel would be unable to assist with. A budget has been put aside for this type of additional assessment process should the need arise. Work on refining site yields and the ranking of the sites using suitability, availability and achievability criteria is currently underway and the progress on this will be reported to Members at the next LDF Member Working Group meeting.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The work undertaken for the SHLAA gives a broad indication as to the potential dwelling yield that could come from the sites identified so far. However the results available to date should be viewed with caution as once the tasks detailed under paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 have been undertaken the dwelling yield identified is likely to fall. This will continue to leave a significant shortfall between the yield from sites identified by the SHLAA / the existing housing commitments and the housing supply requirements set out by the South East Plan. Further examination of the developed areas of the Borough is likely to yield more sites which are likely to be actively in employment use or are garden areas. Thus policy considerations will need to be weighed up carefully and addressed as part of the Issues and Options papers for the Core Strategy and Delivery and Development Principles DPDs.

#### Background Papers:

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing - (November 2006) CLG  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Practice guidance - (July 2007) CLG  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Development Plan document preparation - (January 2008) Planning Advisory Service

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