

Report for: ACTION
Item Number: 04



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	Part 1
Title	HELAA Methodology
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For Consideration By	Local Plans Working Group
Date to be Considered	1 October 2015

Report Summary

A Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is a technical study which considers the availability of land to meet housing and economic development uses over a plan period. Previously a similar study has been undertaken solely considering housing land called the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

This paper presents the emerging methodology for undertaking the HELAA. The intent is that a common methodology will be used across all local authorities found to be part of the functional housing and/or economic market area within which RBWM is located.

The HELAA methodology sets out the criteria and stages which an authority will complete when undertaking their study.

It is recommended that the council continues to develop a HELAA methodology on behalf of the Berkshire authorities and South Bucks District Council, which are current considered to represent those authorities within the functional housing and/or economic geography and therefore those with which the council must work most closely on strategic planning matters.

1. Details of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION: That the Local Plans Working Group:

- 1. Supports the preparation of common HELAA methodology (Appendix A) for to be used by this council and other local authorities within the wider functional housing and economic geography within which the council is located.**

2. Reason for Recommendation and Options Considered

Introduction

1. The production of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is an evidence requirement that is needed to support the emerging Borough Local Plan. The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is effectively a SHLAA which has been expanded to include economic land uses. A HELAA is thus an assessment of land availability which identifies the future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period. Such an assessment should therefore:
 - identify sites and broad locations with potential for development
 - assess their development potential
 - assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability).
2. Moreover, the HELAA is a prerequisite for any future consultation on the Borough Local Plan and is part of the critical path to the Plan's progression. As well as forming a key component of the evidence base for the emerging Borough Local Plan, it will also, together with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Functional Economic Market Assessment (FEMA), underpin the housing and economic development policies in the Plan, including supporting the delivery of land to meet identified need for these uses.
3. The existing RBWM SHLAA methodology is heavily based upon the joint methodology agreed between the Berkshire authorities in 2007. The Berkshire authorities' view is that this joint SHLAA methodology is now out of date and that there are strong benefits in moving towards developing a joint HELAA methodology so that land supply for housing and economic land are considered together. Such an approach aligns to the Planning Practice Guidance which states that *"the assessment should be undertaken and regularly reviewed working with other local planning authorities in the relevant housing market area or functional economic market area, in line with the duty to cooperate."* Accordingly, following this Council's recent 'Call for Sites' consultation, now is the opportune time to encourage a joint methodology across the area and so provide a robust context for the emerging Borough Local Plan. Taking all of these points into account, officers believe it would be ill advised to continue to update the SHLAA based on the existing methodology and would recommend that the Council leads in the preparation of a joint HELAA methodology.

Background

Reasons for completing a HELAA and associated methodology

4. Both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) indicate that a local planning authority's inputs and processes should lead to a robust assessment of land availability. The PPG sets out a general methodology for completing such assessments but acknowledges that local planning authorities may depart from this where appropriate. Where this occurs the PPG expects the reasons for doing so to be clearly set out.
5. It is important to emphasise that there is no great change in terms of the general approach that has been used in undertaking the SHLAA and that proposed to be used for undertaking the HELAA. The following table compares the exclusion criteria (at stage 1 of the assessment) for existing national guidance on SHLAA methodology to that proposed to be used within the HELAA methodology.

National guidance	Existing RBWM SHLAA methodology	Proposed HELAA methodology
Consider all sites and broad locations capable of delivering five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25ha (or 500m ² of floor space) and above. Where appropriate, plan makers may wish to consider alternative site size thresholds.	Sites of 0.25 hectares or more, or with potential for 10 or more dwellings,	Sites less than five dwellings or under 0.25ha/500m ² of economic development floor space ¹ The methodology allows an authority to vary from this threshold where appropriate. This would allow this authority to retain the 0.25ha threshold used for potential housing sites.
Sites, which have particular policy constraints, should be included in the assessment for the sake of comprehensiveness but these constraints must be set out clearly, including where they severely restrict development.	Land within Flood Zone 3B	Land within Flood Zone 3B

¹ As set out in the PPG - 3-010-20140306.

This HELAA methodology allows for local variances to account for local circumstances or site specific circumstances. Unless another threshold is defined by each local authority. To do this a local authority may take its own view on local development characteristics and proportionality of evidence.

	<p>National and International nature conservation sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Nature Reserves • Ramsar • Special Areas of Conservation • Special Protection Areas • Land within 400m of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA • Sites of Special Scientific Interest 	<p>-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar • Special Areas of Conservation • Special Protection Areas • Land within 400m of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA • Sites of Special Scientific Interest
	-	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
	-	Ancient Woodlands
	-	Local Green Spaces
	Airport Public Safety Zones	Airport public safety zones
	Land within Explosion Safety Zones	-
	Sites allocated for strategic priority transport projects	-
		<p>In addition to the above, the following circumstances will be explored at the desktop assessment stage and may result in sites being excluded from Stage 2 due to their impact on potential development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High pressure gas pipelines. • Oil pipelines, national grid transmission lines. • Immovable communications links, such as high speed fibre optic cables utilised by business in the area. • Major hazard site. • Land safeguarded for strategic infrastructure. • Consultation Zones for AWE Establishments. • Consultation zones for the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield and Aldermaston. • Scheduled Ancient Monuments • Historic Parks and Garden

6. Please note that the exclusion criteria suggested for the HELAA methodology also takes account of the criteria set out for the Edge of Settlement: Part 2 Constraints, Opportunities and Deliverability Assessment. The proposed approach to reporting site assessments in full within the HELAA will aid in transparency of approach, clarity and decision making.
7. The proposed HELAA methodology is clearly based on the general methodology outlined within the PPG, but builds upon this by seeking to explain how it would be applied within the local context. It is anticipated that the HELAA will look significantly different in format to the previous SHLAA reports as a result of including site pro-forma to improve transparency, however, the fundamental approach and methodology is not a significant departure to that already applied.
8. In terms of local variances to the general methodology set out in the PPG, Officers propose to:
 - Retain the existing threshold for sites of 0.25ha for potential housing sites rather than a dwelling threshold. Such a threshold is deemed appropriate based on the typical site characteristics found within the borough.
 - Continue to include an allowance for the delivery of homes on small sites based on historical delivery rates.

Authority views on production of a joint HELAA methodology

9. Officers representing the Berkshire authorities and South Bucks District Council have already acknowledged the benefits of agreeing a joint HELAA methodology as set out below.

Reading

Reading Borough Council would be happy to sign up to a joint methodology with South Bucks, as long as agreement on that methodology can be reached by all in the Housing Market Area/FEMA within which Reading sits.

West Berkshire

A common methodology could be useful and would need to be agreed by all in the Housing Market area.

Wokingham

A common methodology could be useful and would need to be agreed by all in the Housing Market area.

Bracknell Forest

Bracknell Forest is currently developing a HELAA methodology, which subject to consultation/agreement with other authorities, may be able to be used within the West Berkshire HMA area. Bracknell Forest would wish to retain opportunity to comment on RBWM draft HELAA methodology.

Slough

Happy to proceed with RBWM co-ordinating and updating the proposed joint HELAA methodology to take on board as many of the comments made by the HMA group as possible.

South Bucks

South Bucks was working on and requested a joint HELAA Methodology to be considered, and ideally agreed, across South Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

10. With the agreement of the other local authorities, Officers from this Council have now taken the lead in drafting the methodology.

Next Steps

11. The next step is to invite views from the other authorities. It is important to re-consult on the draft HELAA methodology as the document has generally been made more concise (compared to an initial version circulated by South Bucks) and has been restructured to align more closely to the stages suggested in the PPG. Amendments have also been made to the exclusion criteria which are a key area where agreement should be reached.
12. Through seeking to progress this work this Council is demonstrating its commitment to working jointly with other local authorities as required under the Duty to Cooperate.

Supporting information to this report:

Appendix A – Emerging Draft Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology, September 2015.

Draft Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) formerly known as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a technical study which forms a critical component of the evidence base for emerging Local Plans. The assessment of land availability is an important step in the preparation of Local Plans. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies the advantages of carrying land assessments for housing and economic development as part of the same exercise, in order that sites may be considered, and where found suitable and achievable, allocated for the use which is most appropriate.
- 1.2. This draft HELAA methodology has been prepared by the Berkshire authorities and South Buckinghamshire District Council in recognition that the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advocates assessing land supply over the relevant functional geography. Evidence published by a group of Buckinghamshire local authorities recommended that the Berkshire local authorities and South Buckinghamshire District Council formed both a functional Housing Market Area and a Functional Economic Market Area. Subsequent research commissioned by the Berkshire authorities and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) suggests that there are two Housing Market Areas relevant to the county, a Western HMA comprising West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council; and a Eastern HMA comprising Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and South Buckinghamshire District Council. Similar research to identify the relevant Functional Economic Market Area is also being commissioned by the Berkshire authorities and the LEP. Whilst the output is not available at this time, the geography is expected to focus on a similar number of local authorities.
- 1.3. The draft HELAA methodology is proposed to act as “base methodology” to assist in achieving consistency in approach across the functional geography. Notwithstanding this, it is recognised that each local authority has different characteristics and that some local variation is appropriate. Where this is the case those local authorities will set this out clearly within their HELAA report.
- 1.4. The renaming of the study to the HELAA does not preclude existing SHLAA sites already within the study. All previous sites will be considered as part of the HELAA.
- 1.5. This HELAA Methodology replaces the partner authorities previous SHLAA Methodology, adopted in November 2007. This document has been altered to reflect the Government’s introduction of the PPG.

2 National policy and guidance

- 2.1. The NPPF¹ requires local planning authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing, and to support sustainable economic growth. Paragraph 158 identifies that local planning authorities should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.
- 2.2. Paragraph 159 identifies that authorities should “*prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.*”
- 2.3. Paragraph 161 identifies that local authorities should assess the existing and future supply available for economic development and its sufficiency and suitability to meet the identified

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

needs. Reviews of land available for economic development should be undertaken at the same time as, or combined with, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and should include a reappraisal of the suitability of previously allocated land. The Planning Practice Guidance identifies that the assessment area should be the housing market area and functional economic market area.

- 2.4. Detailed guidance on how local authorities should undertake housing and employment land availability assessments is set out in the PPG².
- 2.5. It is important to note that the HELAA does not itself, determine whether a site should be allocated for development as this will be done through the local plan process to identify which sites are the most suitable to meet development needs.

3 Purpose of the HELAA

- 3.1. The purpose of the HELAA is set out below.

Housing Land

- To identify sites and broad locations for assessment;
- To assess their development potential;
- To assess their suitability for development and the likelihood and timing of development coming forward (availability, achievability and deliverability).
- Identify and update annually a supply of specific, deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites for growth, for years 6–10, and where possible, years 11–15. Local Planning Authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.

Economic Land

- 3.2. Similarly to housing land, local authorities should use the HELAA to assess the suitability of land for economic uses against their economic requirement / vision.
- 3.3. It is also important for the partner authorities to continue to work with relevant authorities and bodies regarding competing land uses in the future to ensure the best use of a site.

Core Outputs

- 3.4. For the purposes of this methodology, the following land uses are suggested to be covered:

² <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/about-the-assessment/>

Figure 1: Definition of uses covered in the HELAA

Housing	All types of housing (Use Classes C2 and C3) including travellers (Gypsies and Travelling Showpeople) and for specialist housing including that for older people and residential institutions.
Economic	All B use Classes and main town centre uses as set out below: A1 (shops), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants and Cafes), A4 (Drinking Establishments), A5 (Hot Food Takeaways), B1 (Business), B2 (general Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution), C1 (Hotels), D1 (Non-residential institutions), D2 (Assembly and Leisure).

- 3.5. Individual authorities may vary the extent of use classes covered by the HELAA. Where this is the case those local authorities will set this out clearly within their HELAA report.
- 3.6. The core outputs from the HELAA will be:
- A list of sites, cross-referenced to maps showing locations and boundaries of specific sites.
 - An assessment of the deliverability / developability of each identified site (i.e. in terms of its suitability, availability and achievability, to determine when an identified site is realistically expected to be developed.
 - The identification of the potential quantity of development that could be delivered on each identified site or within each identified broad location (where necessary) or on windfall sites (where justified).
 - The identification of constraints on the delivery of identified sites.

Keeping the Assessment up-to-date

- 3.7. The assessment of sites should be kept up-to-date. The annual updates to the HELAA will account for changes which have taken place during reporting periods.
- 3.8. Whilst there is no formal requirement for an annual update of economic land, the update should cover both land for housing and economic uses so to provide a comprehensive picture.

4 Engagement on HELAA methodology

- 4.1. This draft HELAA methodology has been published for consultation.

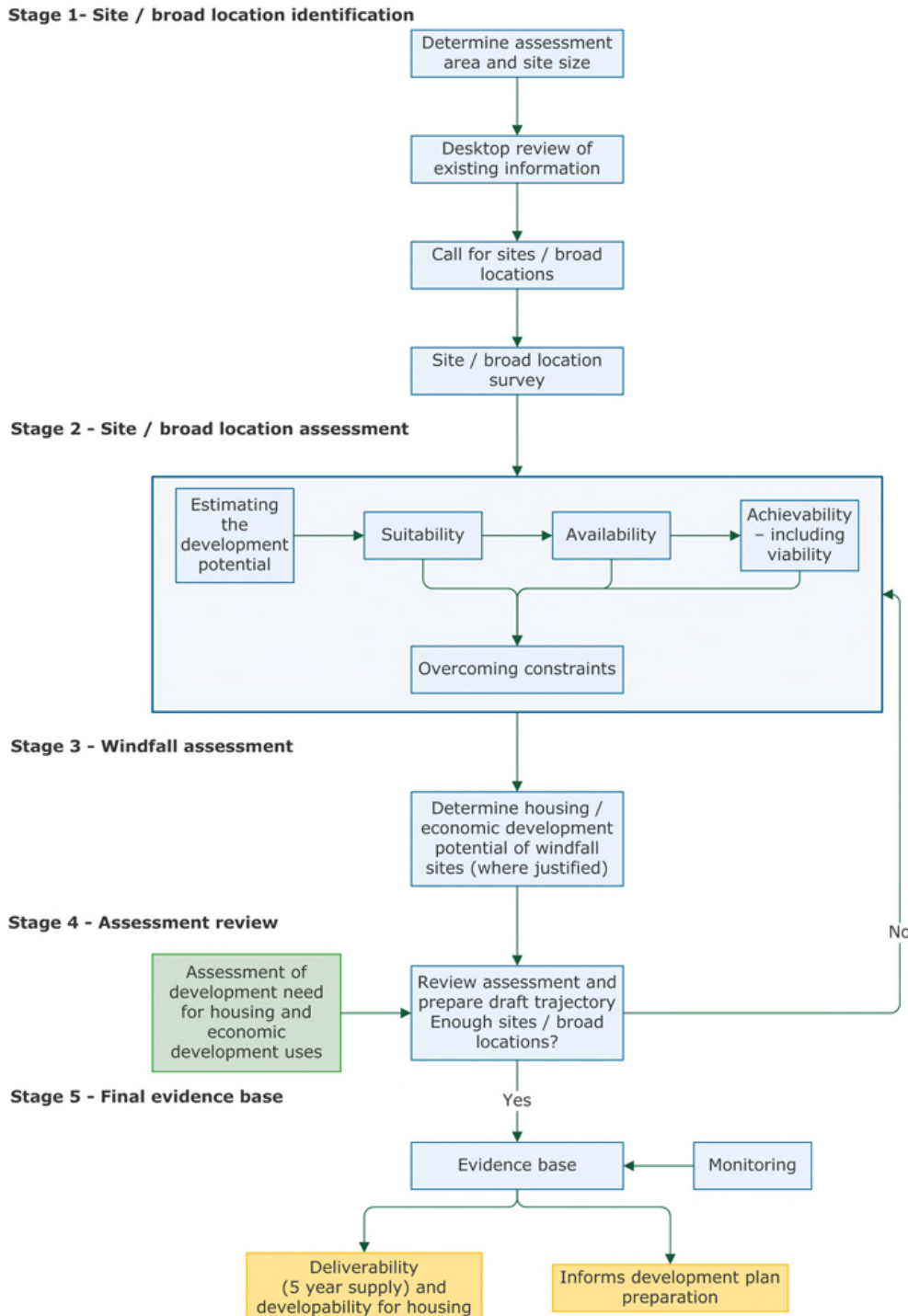
DETAILS OF CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS TO BE INSERTED ONCE CONFIRMED

- 4.2. Following the closure of the consultation the local authorities will consider the comments received and move to publish a final HELAA methodology. This will include a summary of the engagement process on the draft methodology and a summary of comments received and how these have been addressed.

5 Methodology

5.1. This draft HELAA methodology is based upon the standard approach set out in the national PPG, expanding upon this to provide additional clarification of approach. Unless otherwise stated each stage relates to the assessment for both housing and economic uses.

Figure 2 - Planning Practice Guidance Land Availability Assessment Flow Chart (PPG ID 3 - 006)



5.2. To ensure proportionality of evidence³, the partner authorities propose that each sites must pass each stage before being assessed in the following stage, for example deemed to be suitable before a site is assessed against availability and achievability criteria. .

³ As per Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 12-014-20140306, "Appropriate and proportionate evidence is essential for producing a sound Local Plan, and paragraph 158 onwards of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the types of evidence that may be required. This is not a prescriptive list; the evidence should be focused tightly on supporting and justifying the particular policies in the Local Plan."

Proposed engagement with stakeholders in HELAA process

- 5.3. The PPG identifies a range of stakeholders who should be engaged in the land availability process. Each council will identify stakeholders relevant to their area and engage appropriately.
- 5.4. Potential stakeholders in this process have been identified as:
- Developers
 - Those with land interests
 - Land promoters
 - Local property agents
 - Local communities
 - Partner organisations
 - Neighbouring local authorities
 - Local Enterprise Partnerships
 - Businesses and business representative organisations
 - Parish and town councils and
 - Neighbourhood planning groups.
- 5.5. Engagement will take place at different stages in the HELAA process, although the notable stages are deemed to be:
- Consultation on draft Methodology and/or alterations to the Methodology;
 - *Stage 1* - Fact Checking with landowners and agents of sites undergoing full assessment, prior to the Council making its assessment of Suitability, Availability and Achievability; and
 - *At Stage 2* - Viability Testing, where the valuable knowledge of professionals, developers, registered providers, house builders, land agents and other informed parties is used to determine the variables to be used in assessing the viability of sites.
- 5.6. Involvement of stakeholders at these times will assist in ensuring that the assessment process is realistic and informed.
- 5.7. Quality control is important to ensure that the outcomes of each site are as accurate as possible. For this reason, a 'Fact Checking' exercise with the registered submitter of a site to ensure that there is general agreement with the data collated. This not only ensures more robust assessments, but also ensures that submitters of sites are appropriately involved in the process and that changes of circumstances can be accounted for between review periods.

Stage 1 – Identification of Sites and Broad Locations

Desktop Review of existing information

- 5.8. A desktop review of existing information will be carried out which will identify from existing information and records any known potential sites for development. Table 3 sets out the data sources which will be reviewed. These data sources are based upon those suggested in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Figure 3: Sources of Sites/broad locations

Sites already assessed by the Council's (anticipated / deemed to be acceptable)

Type of site	Potential data source
Planning permissions that are unimplemented, including those subject to S106	Planning application records. Sourced from the Authorities Monitoring Reports and other published statistics.
Planning permissions that are under construction, including those subject to S106	Planning application records. Development starts and completions records.
Prior Approval Certificate including Office to Residential, Retail to Residential and any other updates to permitted development rights	Planning application records.
Planning applications that have been refused or withdrawn	
Pre-application inquiries (where it is not confidential or where the landowner agrees to publicise the site)	
Undetermined planning applications, including those subject to S106	
Expired planning permissions where there is reasonable prospect of a new application being submitted to the local planning authority	

Sites yet to be judged as acceptable by the Council's

Type of site	Potential data source
Existing or emerging Local Plans /Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Plan allocations that have not received planning permission.	Local and neighbourhood plans. Planning applications records. Development briefs.
Housing and economic development sites put forward during a "Call for Sites" consultation and throughout the Local Plan production.	HELAA records.
Sites already within the SHLAA (HELAA) process	
Land in the local authority's ownership	Local authority records.
Surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land	National register of public sector land. Engagement with strategic plans of other public sector bodies.
Sites recommended for residential or mixed use in any recent Employment Land Review	Local authority records.
Vacant and derelict land and buildings	Local authority empty property registers. English House Condition Survey. National Land Use Database Commercial property databases (e.g. estate agents and property agents). Valuation Office database. Active engagement with sector.
Additional opportunities in established uses	Ordnance Survey maps.

Type of site	Potential data source
	Aerial photography. Planning applications. Site surveys.
Business requirements and aspirations	Enquiries received by local planning authority. Active engagement with sector.
Sites in rural locations	Local and neighbourhood plans. Planning applications. Ordinance Survey maps. Aerial photography. Site surveys.
Large scale redevelopment and redesign of existing residential or economic areas	
Sites in and adjoining villages or rural settlements and rural exception sites	
Potential urban extensions	
Internal site suggestions from Planning Officers and other Officers	Local authority records.
Sites put forward by Registered Social Landlords	
Broad Locations ⁴	

- 5.9. Please note that a full re-survey of all sites/broad locations will only be carried out when the development plan has to be reviewed or other significant changes make it necessary, for example, if a local planning authority is no longer able to demonstrate a five year land supply of specific deliverable sites for housing.
- 5.10. Broad locations will only be considered once a full assessment of sites (up to end of stage 2, as defined in this methodology) has been undertaken.

Call for Sites

- 5.11. An initial 'call for sites' will be undertaken. This will be based on contacting those on local plan consultation databases which includes landowners, agents, developers and town and parish councils, along with engagement with relevant internal sections of each local authority, and other known interested groups and individuals. This process will seek to identify sites that are not currently within the planning process. Targeted mail will be sent out, information will be placed on the local authority's websites and a press release will also be made available.
- 5.12. A example pro-forma seeking the following information will be used to support the call for sites:
- Site address and an OS plan showing site boundaries
 - Contact details
 - Type and scale of development suggested
 - Site ownership
 - Current use of the site
 - Potential development timeframe/phasing
 - Known site constraints
 - Other information

An example pro-forma has been included in Appendix A.

- 5.13. The HELAA will set out which data source the sites has resulted from.
- 5.14. Supplementary 'call for sites' may be undertaken by local authorities at their discretion..

⁴ The Planning Practice Guidance allows for the investigation of potential broad locations where identifiable sites will not provide sufficient land for housing and economic land to meet the land supply requirement for 15 years (or more). This is part of the stage 4 assessment /review process. Where the Council is forced to consider broad locations, the methodology used to identify and assess locations will be comprehensively set out in the HELAA Report.

Assessment of sites

- 5.15. All sites identified in both the desktop review and call for sites will be included in a comprehensive list of sites which will be used for the site assessment process in Stage 2, unless they fall within the defined exclusion criteria. All sites will be mapped and recorded on a database to ensure comprehensive records are maintained.
- 5.16. Particular types of land or areas may be excluded if justified. Cases of a site's exclusion from the entire HELAA process will only normally arise where no feasible development potential can be demonstrated due to overwhelming constraints on the site for the long term. For the purposes of the HELAA, sites will be excluded at Stage 1 where they are subject to the following requirements/designations⁵:

Figure 4: Sites proposed to be excluded at Stage 1

Sites less than five dwellings or under 0.25ha/500m ² of economic development floor space ⁶	Exclusion at these thresholds of housing and economic development is in accordance with the PPG. Sites of less than 5 dwellings or under 0.25ha/500m ² will be included as part of a windfall assessment for housing, although where justified. The PPG recognises that alternative thresholds may be suitable. Where an alternative threshold is used this will be clearly set out in that local authorities HELAA report.
Sites within functional flood plains (Flood Zone 3B) will not be considered for housing or economic development purposes.	Land that is in flood zones 3b proposed for residential development or zone 3b for economic development will not be included in the HELAA unless it can be demonstrated, through a planning application, that satisfactory mitigation measures can be put in place. The Framework advises that inappropriate development in areas of flood risk should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Where development is necessary it should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
Ramsar	Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. National legislation and the Framework advise that planning permission should not normally be granted for development which is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and that RAMSAR sites should be protected similarly.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	These are important, statutorily protected biodiversity resources used for recreational, amenity and educational purposes. National legislation and the Framework state that planning permission should not normally be granted for development which is likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other development).
Special Areas of Conservation	These are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. National legislation and the Framework advise that planning permission should not normally be granted for development which is likely to have an adverse

⁵ For sites falling within these designations, no further details on environmental or policy constraints will be recorded.

⁶ As set out in the PPG - 3-010-20140306.

This HELAA methodology allows for local variances to account for local circumstances or site specific circumstances. Unless another threshold is defined by each local authority. To do this a local authority may take its own view on local development characteristics and proportionality of evidence.

	effect on the integrity of a European site (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and that RAMSAR sites should be protected similarly.
Special Protection Areas	These are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Birds Directive.
Sites within 400m of the Thames Basins Heath Special Protection Area are excluded for consideration of housing	National legislation and the Framework advise that planning permission should not normally be granted for development which is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and that RAMSAR sites should be protected similarly.
Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace	Open space meeting specific guidelines on quantity and quality for the purpose of providing recreational alternatives to the Special Protection Area. The Framework advises that sites identified as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites should be given the same protection as the European sites themselves.
Ancient Woodlands	These are irreplaceable historical assets and are protected by law. The Framework advises that planning permission should not normally be granted for development which results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland.
Local Green Spaces	The NPPF states these sites rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.
Airport public safety zones	Development is unlikely to be suitable due to safety concerns.

5.17. The use of exclusion criteria will help ensure the efficient use of resources. Whilst recognising that significant amounts of new housing delivery takes place on small sites, the partner authorities recognise that surveying all sites (particularly where a large number are small) will be a resource-intensive process. In order to strike a balance between work that is feasible and the consideration of small sites through the HELAA, a minimum site size threshold will be set.

5.18. In addition to the above, the following circumstances will be explored at the desktop assessment stage and may result in sites being excluded at Stage 1 due to their impact on potential development:

- High pressure gas pipelines.
- Oil pipelines, national grid transmission lines.
- Immovable communications links, such as high speed fibre optic cables utilised by business in the area.
- Major hazard site.
- Land safeguarded for strategic infrastructure.
- Consultation Zones for AWE Establishments.
- Consultation zones for the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield and Aldermaston.
- Historic Park and Garden.
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

5.19. A conclusion will be provided to confirm which criteria a site has been excluded upon.

Site visit surveys

5.20. Ideally, all sites that meet the inclusion criteria will be visited. However, this may not be possible given the resources available, particularly if a significant number of sites are

identified. Sites that have planning permission may not need a visit, if the necessary information can be obtained from planning and building control records.

5.21. Where sites are visited, site surveys will be carried out for sites using a standard pro-forma to ensure consistency in the assessment process will cover the following information:

- Development progress (where sites have permission)
- Site boundaries
- Relevant land uses/site features
- Physical and environmental constraints
- Assessment as to the appropriate type and scale of use(s)
- Possible opportunities on adjoining sites

5.22. At Stage 1, no sites will be excluded with the exception of those which fall within the criteria in Figure 4 and if relevant paragraph 5.18. The assessment of the suitability of each site will take place under Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Site Assessment

5.23. Stage 1 results in a list of identified sites for further assessment for housing and economic development. Stage 2 assesses the suitability, availability and achievability of each site/broad location.

Estimating the development potential

5.24. The PPG advises that the estimation of the development potential of each site should be guided by existing or emerging plan policies including locally determined policies on density (where they exist).

5.25. Factors to be taken into account include site context and local circumstances such as character and open space. Authorities can approach obtaining development yields in a number of ways in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance. The partner authorities will consider which of the following approaches is best suited to their area.

- Use the yield detailed in any planning permission or Local Plan allocation unless there is evidence to support an amendment to this (such as a revised application under consideration)
- Have regard to the yield detailed as part of the submission of a site if a notional layout and supporting information had been provided
- Use density assessments based on local circumstances within each Council and different locations. The NPPF (paragraph 47) states that housing densities should reflect local circumstances and will therefore be based on:
 - The nature of the area
 - Comparable schemes
 - Consistency with policies in the NPPF and PPG
 - Other local policies and guidance in Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents
- Test assumptions on development potential through a local Stakeholder Group

5.26. Given the diversity of townscape and landscape character found across the partner authorities it is not considered appropriate to utilise a common approach to estimating site yields. As a consequence each authority will set out its approach to estimating site yields within their individual HELAA reports.

5.27. In estimating site yields it is recognised that the whole of a proposed site may not be developable. This will be exacerbated on larger sites as there may be a need to provide supporting infrastructure (particularly for housing developments).

5.28. It should be noted that the potential yield of sites in the HELAA is indicative only and are presented without prejudice to assessments made through the planning application process.

Assessing the Suitability of the Site

5.29. The PPG provides guidance on factors which should be considered when assessing the suitability of sites/broad locations for development. The guidance makes it clear that suitability should be guided by the development plan, emerging plan policy and national policy and market and industry requirements within the HMA and FEMA.

5.30. The partner authorities will consider and identify both the negative and positive implications/opportunities which could be achieved or may result from the proposed development as part of this process. This may include matters such as regeneration projects, etc.

5.31. Suitability on sites will be assessed against a range of criteria, which have been identified in the example Pro-forma (Appendix B). The desktop assessment phase of the HELAA is

imperative to establish whether a site is suitable and/or available for development. In addition to these 'standard' considerations, authorities will have particular regard to additional suitability criteria for economic development which is likely to have the greater impact upon their overall suitability as an employment site.

Stage A and B for assessing the suitability of the Site

- 5.32. A two stage approach will be used to assess the suitability of a site. Stage A consists of assessing sites against a range of strategic considerations. If a site fails at Stage A, it is deemed to be in an unsuitable location for such development and does not proceed to the more detailed Stage B Assessment.
- 5.33. Those sites that pass the Stage A Suitability Assessment will be examined in detail through a Stage B Suitability Assessment. The Stage B Assessment involves undertaking a variety of technical investigations and surveys for each site. A great deal of information on heritage characteristics, biodiversity, land use, flood risk etc. is accessible on each Council's geographic information system (GIS). Site characteristics recorded include site size, site boundaries, current uses, surrounding land uses and characteristics of the surrounding area, physical constraints (e.g. slope, access, flood risk, natural, archaeological and historic features) and development progress (where applicable). If a site fails at Stage B, it is deemed to be an unsuitable location for such development and is not subject to tests for availability and achievability.
- 5.34. The results of the suitability assessment will be used to classify each site into the following levels of suitability.

Suitability Criteria	
Site is deemed suitable	No significant constraints to the proposal have been identified. A site is suitable for development if it offers a suitable location for uses that would meet the needs of community. These uses may include housing or economic development.
Site deemed not suitable	Significant constraints to the proposal have been identified which prevents development.

How Local Authorities will view the significance of impacts upon certain site constraints

- 5.35. To assist with the assessment process, certain constraints have been identified below with a brief description of the general approach which will be applied. These are as follows:
- **Green Belt:** *In order to consider the impact on the Green Belt, sensitivity testing will be carried out through a separate Green Belt Study. This will identify any areas which, over the years, have lost or retained their function as Green Belt. This will, in turn, enable the Council to make informed observations where potential land release could take place. However all Green Belt studies or consideration of the Green Belt will be in line with national guidance.*

Only those HELAA sites within, or partially within, areas deemed as suitable, or potentially suitable for release from the Green Belt, will be assessed in detail. Those HELAA sites located entirely within an area found to demonstrate a clear Green Belt function will be found unsuitable at that time on Green Belt grounds and will not be considered any further in the assessment process.

It is important to note that those sites which are located within areas which serve a Green Belt function will not be excluded in the HELAA in perpetuity, but will continue to be found unsuitable until such time as revised evidence alters this.

Further information on the application of the Green Belt Study will be set out in the relevant HELAA Report.

- **Heritage:** *development will be deemed suitable where development does not affect the identified heritage asset. The Framework recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance⁷. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Substantial harm or loss to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of a designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, should be wholly exceptional⁸.*
- **Flooding:** *development will not be deemed suitable if it is located within flood zones 2 and 3a unless evidence suggests the site is capable of passing the sequential and exceptions texts set out in the NPPF/PPG*
- **AONB:** *development will not be deemed suitable where there is likely to significant harm may be caused to the primary purpose of the designation of that AONB. It is noted that the primary purpose of AONB designation is 'conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area', although to assist in clarity the specific reasoning for the two relevant AONB's have been stated below.*
 - *North Wessex Downs AONB:*
 - *Chilterns AONB:*
- **Employment land:** *Sites will be assessed to ascertain whether any of the promoted HELAA sites serve an employment function. Site on designated employment locations will be retained in such uses unless a review of employment land suggests that the site is not suitable to employment use and/or not required to meet economic needs in the long-term.*
- **Public open spaces:** *Open spaces and recreation grounds will not be considered suitable to ensure that they are not unnecessarily lost to development. Consideration will be given to the current public function which the site provides alongside any opportunities that the proposed development may present.*

Assessing availability

5.36. Each site will be assessed against the criteria in the following table to determine one of three levels of availability.

Availability Criteria	
Deemed available	Developer owns site or has secured options/agreements Any known legal issues have been/are being resolved.

⁷ NPPF, paragraph 126.

⁸ NPPF, paragraph 132.

Potentially available in the future	<p>Developer is interested in developing the site and is negotiating with the landowner.</p> <p>Landowner is willing to dispose of land for development during the next 15 years but has yet to involve developer.</p> <p>Land in multiple ownership which could result in site assembly issues.</p> <p>Significant relocation issues yet to be resolved.</p>
Not deemed available	<p>Landowner has not expressed an interest in developing the site and is unknown.</p> <p>Developer has expressed an interest in developing the site but details of owner are unknown or owner is known but reluctant.</p> <p>Known legal issues such as restrictive covenants have yet to be tackled. These currently act as barrier to residential development.</p>

Assessing Achievability

- 5.37. A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that it will be developed at a particular point in time.
- 5.38. This assessment requires a judgement on the economic viability of a site and the ability of a developer to develop the site over a certain period. It is impractical to do detailed viability assessments of all HELAA sites. Instead the following information will be used to determine achievability, including likely phasing of delivery:
- **Market Factors:** *such as adjacent uses, economic viability of existing, proposed and alternative uses in terms of land values, attractiveness of the locality, level of potential market demand, reaching conclusions on the net developable area, yield potential, likely dwelling mix and projected rate of sales*
 - **Cost Factors:** *Including site preparation costs relating to any physical constraints, any exceptional works necessary, strategic infrastructure, relevant planning standards or obligations, prospect of funding or investment to address identified constraints or assist development*
 - **Delivery Factors:** *Including phasing, realistic build out rates, whether a single developer or several developers offering different housing products and the size and capacity of the developer*

- 5.39. Achievability and deliverability assessments will only normally be undertaken on sites which have are deemed to be 'suitable' and 'available', as there is little merit in considering sites which have failed to meet either of these stages. Such assessments may be supplemented with site specific discussions, which may include overview from selected development industry representatives.

Deliverability and Developable criteria

- 5.40. The 'deliverability' of a site can only be determined once the assessment of all three key tests of the HELAA has been carried out across stages 1 and 2. The 'deliverability' of a site is important to helping establish a housing and economic supply and in particular is necessary to identifying whether there is sufficient supply for the first five years of a plan period. The assessment will indicate whether or not a site can be delivered within the first five years of the plan period, or within a longer timeframe, or not at all having regard to current constraints (i.e. policy, environmental or economic).

Deliverability Criteria	
Site is deliverable Years 1 to 5	Sites 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 and in particular that development of the site is viable.
Site is developable Years 6 to 10 (and possibly 11 to 15)	Sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.
Site deemed undeliverable or undevelopable	Sites is not available now, does not offer a suitable location for development now, prospect that housing will be not delivered on the site within a 15 year period or that the development of the site is unviable.

5.41. If 'deliverability' cannot be established, sites should not be included within the five year housing supply but set out in the later timeframes of a housing trajectory for the District/Borough. A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time in the plan or land supply period.

5.42. Each housing site will be assigned to one or more time periods. These will be:

- Within 5 years
- Within 6 – 10 years
- Within 11 – 15 years
- Beyond 16 years

Overcoming constraints

5.43. The outcome from Stage 2 will result in a list of sites which are considered to be suitable, available and achievable. Where insufficient land is identified to meet needs, consideration will be given to ways of over coming constraints which prevented sites being deemed suitable, available and achievable. Such actions will need to be consistent with NPPF/PPG.

Stage 3 Windfall Assessment (where justified)

- 5.44. The term 'windfall sites' is defined as sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available⁹.
- 5.45. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five year supply based on the following criteria:
- They have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and
 - These sites will continue to provide a reliable source of supply
- 5.46. Each Council will individually determine how windfall is applied by looking back at the windfall completions for sites of less than 5 dwellings (or a different threshold as justified in individual authorities HELAA) over a period of at least 5 years to identify past trends and compare this with what is expected to happen for the plan period having regard to national and local issues, for example the Government's intention to support small builders. This information may need to be adjusted to reflect changes in definitions, but will be used to determine the annual windfall allowance. Such an approach must account for the local circumstances.

Stage 4 – Assessment Review and Stage 5 – Final Evidence Base

- 5.47. Following completion of previous stages, the partner authorities will use the HELAA to determine whether sufficient sites have been identified to meet the objectively assessed housing need identified in the SHMA. For economic uses, the identification of sufficient sites will be closely linked to evidence on economic development needs to determine whether there is a need to identify additional sites over the plan period or whether there is some flexibility enabling identification for other uses.

Overcoming constraints and assessment of Windfall Sites

- 5.48. Where the outcomes of stages 1 to 3 provide insufficient sites to meet the defined objectively assessed need for the Council, then the site assessments in terms of suitability, availability and achievability will be revisited. At this point considerations will be given to overcoming identified constraints as detailed in paragraphs 5.44 to 5.46. Initially this will focus on the sites which have previously failed the assessment and/or viability stages to establish whether anything can be done to alter the outcome of assessment. This may include discussions with the landowner/agent and further work on their part in terms of research and or overcoming constraints. If there is still a shortfall of potential housing sites resulting from these stages, then broad locations and windfalls may need to be considered. Details of the proposed methodology for windfall assessment have been covered in detail in paragraphs 5.44 to 5.46.
- 5.49. Consideration of these matters shall occur alongside appraisal of other influential evidence, such as economic needs assessments, landscape studies and green belt reviews. A review may also include revisiting other assumptions such as densities. Any actions made at this stage would need to be consistent with the NPPF/PPG.

Broad Locations

- 5.50. The PPG allows for the investigation of potential broad locations where identifiable sites will not provide sufficient land for housing and economic land to meet the land supply requirement for 15 years (or more). Identification of broad locations is supported by the NPPF where they enable housing and economic targets to be met and which cannot be otherwise identified through HELAA sites.

⁹ Annex 2, NPPF includes the definition of Windfall sites.

- 5.51. Broad locations are essentially areas where housing and economic development is considered feasible but where specific sites cannot yet be identified and may include town centres, urban extensions and/or intensification/redevelopment/expansion of settlements.
- 5.52. In identifying broad locations, it will be necessary to follow the sustainability principles of Government identified through the NPPF, and have regard to the Sustainability Appraisal process. Consideration will be given to develop in areas where there is already infrastructure or where it can be easily established/ expanded. Site surveys would be undertaken and a process of cumulative assessment would be carried out on each broad location to ensure that all relevant factors are balanced against one another rather than independently. Other evidence based documents and relevant criteria will also be valuable to the broad location assessment process.
- 5.53. Where consideration must be given to broad locations, the methodology used to identify and assess locations will be comprehensively set out in the HELAA Report.
- 5.54. It is important that all potential sources of land are looked at to ensure that the HELAA is comprehensive, this includes the need to consider parcels of land located within the Green Belt, and just as with specific, identified sites, there is no guarantee that an area identified as a broad location will be allocated for development.
- 5.55. Although a call for sites exercise will be completed at the discretion of the local authority, sites may be accepted at any time.

Appendix A - Example 'Call for Sites' pro-forma

2. Site details					
Site Name					
Site address					
Site postcode (Insert Grid ref if not available)	Postcode		Easting		Northing
What is the estimated area of site? (hectares)					
Are you the Sole owner?	Yes				
	No – please list all land owners				
Does your site have any previous planning history?	Yes		If yes, what is/are the planning reference number(s)?		
	No				
Has development started on site yet?	Yes				
	No				
Please attach a map in Appendix B (at 1:1,250 scale) outlining the precise boundaries of the whole site and the part that may be suitable for development (if this is less than the whole). Without this mapped information we are unable to register the site. Map has been attached in Appendix B. Please tick: (✓)					
Has this site previously been nominated as part of a planning policy 'call for sites' process in the last 5 years?					

3. Market Interest: Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site. Please tick: (✓) and provide details where		
Site is owned by a developer		<u>Details:</u>
Site under option to a developer / operator		
Enquiries received		
Site is being marketed		
None		
Not known		

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL USE

4. What is the current use of the site?					
Please tick all that apply					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leisure		
Vacant or derelict (please state historic use)					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	% of site coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	%
Waste or minerals site					
Other (please state)					

5. Do you think the site would be viable for the following types of development?					
Please tick all that apply					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing Go to Q6a	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Go to Q6b	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retail Go to Q6c
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tourism Go to Q6c	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leisure Go to Q6c		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waste Go to Q6d	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minerals Go to Q6d	Other Go to Q6e.	

6a. For proposed residential uses:				N/A (✓)		
How many dwellings do you think could be realistically provided on this site? (taking full account of site constraints and surrounding uses and character?)			dwellings		
What type of dwellings? (for gypsy, travellers and travelling showpeople, please see below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Houses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flats and maisonettes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Live-work units
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cluster flats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheltered housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bedsit/ studios
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communal accommodation without significant care (e.g. hotels)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential institutions with significant care (e.g. nursing homes, boarding schools)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (e.g. mobile homes, gypsy and traveler pitches, houseboat moorings)
Gypsy, travellers and travelling showpeople – please state number of pitches if the site is proposed for this use			pitches		
Specialist residential uses – please give details if the site is proposed for any other type of residential use, e.g. specialist accommodation for the elderly, self build, live/work units						

Please also complete phasing, possible constraints sections, utilities and survey and other issues sections which form part of this proforma.

6b. For proposed employment uses:		N/A (✓)	
What floor space could be accommodated in total (sq m)?			
What type of employment could be accommodated? Please tick: (✓)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	General industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage / distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please also complete phasing, possible constraints sections, utilities and survey and other issues sections which form part of this proforma.

6c. For proposed retail, leisure, tourism, community facilities uses:		N/A (✓)
What floor space could be accommodated in total (sq m)?		
Please give further details if the proposed use is to contain any of these components.		
Please also complete phasing, possible constraints sections, utilities and survey and other issues sections which form part of this proforma.		

6d. For proposed waste facilities or minerals:		N/A (✓)
Details of type of use and indicate the mineral / wastes to be won / processed / deposited at the site		
Mineral development	Type	
	Quantity over lifetime of operation	
	Total voidspace	
Waste management development	Type	
	Volumes managed annually (tonnes or cubic metres)	
	Intended sources of waste	
	Method/technologies used as part of waste management operations	
Transport	Likely transportation methods	
	Resultant traffic volumes	
	Likely vehicle routes for transportation	
Please include any further details for any proposed waste or minerals sites in the additional section provided in appendix A. Please also complete phasing, possible constraints sections, utilities and survey and other issues sections which form part of this proforma.		

6e. For proposed other uses:		N/A (✓)
What floor space could be accommodated in total (sq m)?		
Please give further details if the proposed use is to contain any of these components.		
Please also complete phasing, possible constraints sections, utilities and survey and other issues sections which form part of this proforma.		

PHASING

7. Please indicate below how many dwellings or how much floorspace you estimate will be completed within each timeframe:

		Housing (no of units)	Employment (sq. metres)	Retail (sq. metres)	Tourism (sq. metres)	Leisure (sq. metres)	Other <small>For e.g. please state whether using tonnage or cubic metres for minerals or waste</small>
Within the following 5 years	April 2015 to Mar 2016						
	April 2016 to Mar 2017						
	April 2017 to Mar 2018						
	April 2018 to Mar 2019						
	April 2019 to Mar 2020						
5-10 years (April 2020 to March 2025)							
10-15 years (April 2025 to March 2030)							
15-20 years (April 2030 to March 2035)							
20 years + April 2035 onwards							

POSSIBLE CONSTRAINTS

8. To the best of your knowledge, are there any constraints that may affect development on the site? Please provide brief details, including whether any technical studies have been undertaken to inform your understanding:

	Please tick (✓):	Do you believe the constraints on site can site can be overcome? If so, please explain how and by when:
Access (i.e. existing site access, proposed haulage routes to primary road network)		
Agricultural Land Classification		
Contamination		
Detrimental impact on Air Quality Management Area		
Detrimental impact on Historic Park		

Detrimental impact on Landscape		
Detrimental impact on Townscape		
Cables, pylons, electricity lines, oil pipelines and gas		
Environmental constraints (i.e. local landscape wildlife designations, protected species, loss of mature woodland, open space, public rights of way or tree protection order)		
Flood Zone / risk		
Hazards		
Highway		
Impact on Residential Amenity		
Sewerage / Drainage		
Topography / Adverse Ground conditions		
Water		
Legal / operational constraints (i.e. ownership Issues)		
Legal Issues		
Infrastructure/utility requirements		
Market viability		
Planning policy constraints		
Other considerations		

9. Utilities

Are any of the following utilities available to the site? Please tick: (✓)

Mains water	Yes		No		Unsure	
Mains sewerage	Yes		No		Unsure	
Electricity	Yes		No		Unsure	
Gas	Yes		No		Unsure	
Telephone Lines	Yes		No		Unsure	
Broadband	Yes		No		Unsure	

Have you consulted any infrastructure providers regarding provision of utilities to the site? Please tick:

	Yes		No	If yes, please provide further details:
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SURVEY AND OTHER ISSUES

10. In identifying a site you are giving permission for an officer of the Council to access the site in order to ascertain site suitability. In this context would there be any access issues to the site?

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11. If you have answered yes to Q10, please provide contact details of the person who should be contacted to arrange a site visit.

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12. Do you know of any other relevant issues that we should be aware of?

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Appendix B – Example HELAA site suitability, availability and achievability assessment pro-forma

Site reference number	
Site Name and address	
Parish	
MAP (including location points of photographic evidence taken on site visits)	
Gross site area	
Proposed land use	
Current land use	
Planning history	
Topography of site	

Part A: Exclusion criteria

Category	
Sites less than five dwellings or under 0.25ha/500m ² of economic development floor space ¹⁰	
Sites within functional flood plains (Flood Zone 3B) will not be considered for housing or economic development purposes.	
Ramsar	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	
Special Areas of Conservation	
Special Protection Areas	
Special Protection Area : Thames Basins Heath. Sites within 400m are excluded for consideration of housing	
Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace	
Ancient Woodlands	
Local Green Spaces	
Airport public safety zones	

¹⁰ As set out in the PPG - 3-010-20140306. This HELAA methodology allows for local variances to account for local circumstances or site specific circumstances. These thresholds remain unless another threshold is defined by each local authority within their HELAA. Local variances may be based upon local development characteristics and proportionality of evidence.

Potential Exclusion criteria¹¹

Category	
High pressure gas pipelines.	
Oil pipelines, national grid transmission lines.	
Immovable communications links, such as high speed fibre optic cables utilised by business ¹² in the area.	
Major hazard site ¹³	
Land safeguarded for strategic infrastructure.	
Consultation Zones for AWE Establishments.	
Consultation zones for the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield and Aldermaston.	
Historic Park and Garden	
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	

Conclusion

Site has been [not been] excluded due to:

Part B: Consideration of Strategic matters

Development plan considerations	
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Part C: Estimating the development potential

<i>Estimated development yield</i>	
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¹¹ Depends on size/location within site.

¹² More substantial businesses

¹³ As defined by Health and Safety Executive. Major hazard sites are industrial sites that manufacture, process or store dangerous chemicals and substances in quantities that could pose a risk to workers, people in the vicinity of the site, and the environment in the event of a major accident. These 'major accidents' include fires, explosions or incidents in which dangerous substances are released. Major accidents are rare, but can occur at sites ranging from large petrochemical plants to chemical storage warehouses.

Part D: Suitability criteria (in terms of negative and positive impacts)

Physical limitations or problems / practicalities of site¹⁴	
Land status	
Flood zone	
Biodiversity	
Landscape and Townscape	
Heritage	
Land use compatibility	
Resources	
Access and highways	
Regeneration and economy	
Infrastructure	
Summary of constraints, opportunities and deliverability	
Where relevant, provide notes on development progress	

¹⁴ Consider both impacts upon onsite designations, as well as proximity to further designations.

Ongoing employment site: suitability criteria

<i>Strategic Access</i>	
<i>Local road access</i>	
<i>Proximity to urban areas and access to labour & services</i>	
<i>Site characteristics and development constraints</i>	
<i>Proximity to incompatible uses</i>	
<i>Market attractiveness</i>	
<i>Potential uses</i>	
<i>Planning and deliverability factors</i>	
<i>Sites resulting in the loss of employment land</i>	

<i>Actions required to overcome such constraints</i>	
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Conclusion

Site is deemed suitable	
Site deemed not suitable	

Part E: Availability criteria

Deemed available	
Potentially available in the future	
Not deemed available	

Part F: Achievability criteria

Market Factors	
Cost Factors	
Delivery Factors:	

Deliverability Criteria	
Site is deliverable Years 1 to 5	
Site is developable Years 6 to 10 (and possibly 11 to 15)	
Site deemed undeliverable or undevelopable	

Conclusion

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Allocation	Sites specifically identified on Local Plan policies map for development – e.g. for housing, business, etc.
Ancient Woodland	<p>Ancient woodland is an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. Ancient woodlands are of prime ecological and landscape importance. Many rare and threatened species are associated with this habitat. Furthermore relatively undisturbed woodland often contains features of historical, archaeological and landscape importance.</p> <p>Ancient woodland is listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in England.</p>
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	<p>The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance that natural beauty. This is the responsibility of the local authorities covering the AONB.</p> <p>Each of the 37 AONBs in England is designated for special attention by reason of its high qualities. Natural beauty includes the flora, fauna, historical and cultural associations as well as geological and physical characteristics of the area and the scenic views.</p> <p>The North Wessex Downs AONB is located in the south of England, in an area covering 668 sq miles between Reading and Swindon to the East and North, and Andover and Devizes to the South and West.</p> <p>The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 324 square miles of countryside, stretching from the River Thames in southern Oxfordshire up through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire.</p>
Brownfield	Land that has been previously developed.
Deliverable sites	<p>Deliverable sites for housing could include those that are allocated for housing in the development plan and sites with planning permission (outline or full that have not been implemented) unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years.</p> <p>However, planning permission or allocation in a development plan is not a prerequisite for a site being deliverable in terms of the five-year supply. Local planning authorities will need to provide robust, up to date evidence to support the deliverability of sites, ensuring that their judgements on deliverability are clearly and transparently set out. If there are no significant constraints (e.g. infrastructure) to overcome such as infrastructure sites not allocated within a development plan or without planning permission can be considered capable of being delivered within a five-year timeframe.</p> <p>The size of sites will also be an important factor in identifying whether a housing site is deliverable within the first 5 years. Plan makers will need to consider the time it will take to commence development on site and build out rates to ensure a robust five-year housing supply.</p>
Developable sites	Developable sites or broad locations are areas that are in a suitable location for housing development and have a reasonable prospect that the site or broad location is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged. Local planning authorities will need to consider when in the plan period such sites or broad locations will come forward so that they can be identified on the development trajectory. These sites or broad locations may include large development opportunities such as urban extension or new settlements.

Term	Definition
Department Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	The central Government department with responsibility for Planning. Formerly DTLR / DETR / DoE / ODPM.
Conservation Area	Areas of Towns or Villages which have special architectural or historic interest and deserve to receive careful protection are designated as Conservation Areas. Conservation areas give broader protection than listing individual buildings: all the features listed or otherwise, within the area, are recognised as part of its character.
Designation	Areas shown on the Local Plan Policies Map to which specific policies apply.
Designated Local Green Spaces	Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Economic Development	Economic Development, is any development for the following Use Classes A1 (Shops), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants and Cafés), A4 (Drinking Establishments), A5 (Hot Food Takeaways), B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution), C1 (Hotels), D1 (Non-residential institutions), D2 (Assembly and Leisure) and Sui Generis uses (other than Houses in Multiple Occupation and Hostels).
FEA/FEMA	The purpose of the document is to objectively assess and evidence development needs for economic development (which includes main town centre uses).
Flood Zone	A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas. There are two different kinds of area shown on Flood Maps for Planning rivers and the sea. The extent of the natural floodplain if there were no flood defenses or certain other manmade structures and channel improvements.
Green Belt	A restrictive land use designation around major built up areas that have existed since 1947 to restrict urban growth and safeguard the countryside for agriculture, forestry and recreation. They are protected by the national and local policies.
Greenfield	Land that has not been previously developed.
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)	An assessment of land availability which identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over a Local Plan Period.
Housing	For the purposes of HELAA, 'housing' is defined as includes market housing, affordable housing, C2 uses for care homes and student accommodation, land that could be used for self build homes, sites for gypsies and travellers and housing for older people.

Term	Definition
Housing Market Area	<p>A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. It might be the case that housing market areas overlap.</p> <p>The extent of the housing market areas identified will vary, and many will in practice cut across various local planning authority administrative boundaries. Local planning authorities should work with all the other constituent authorities under the duty to cooperate.</p> <p>Where there is a joint plan, housing requirements and the need to identify a five year supply of sites can apply across the joint plan area. The approach being taken should be set out clearly in the plan.</p>
Intensification	The process of increasing housing densities in urban areas through redevelopment, infill development, conversions or change of an existing land use.
Listed Building	Buildings designated to be of 'special architectural or historic interest' by the Secretary of State under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1991.
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Local enterprise partnerships are partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They decide what the priorities should be for investment in roads, buildings and facilities in the area.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Local Nature Reserves are for both people and wildlife. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment.
Local Plan	Policy Plan for the Council area setting out detailed planning policies, proposals and Policies Maps for use when determining planning applications and spatially guiding strategic development.
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	Local Wildlife Sites previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or County Wildlife Sites (CoWS) are areas of land with significant wildlife value. Local Wildlife Sites support both locally and nationally threatened wildlife.
Mixed Use	A site that is developed for more than one use, e.g. retail, residential, business, leisure etc.
Monitoring Report	Survey, monitoring and review are crucial to the successful delivery of Development Plans. Local Planning Authorities must undertake a number of monitoring tasks, the results of which are published annually in monitoring reports.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. It was published March 2012.
National Nature Reserves (NNR)	NNRs are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Neighbourhood Plan	A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. A neighbourhood plan must address the development and use of land.
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	National planning guidance to support the NPPF.

Term	Definition
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	<p>Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. It excludes agricultural/forestry land, landfill sites, private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds, allotments and playing fields.</p> <p>It also excludes land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time, to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of natural surroundings.</p>
Ramsar sites	Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention
Registered Social Landlord	<p>The vast majority of Registered Social Landlords are also known as Housing associations.</p> <p>Housing associations are independent, not-for-profit organisations that provide homes for people in housing need. They are now the UK's major providers of new homes for rent. Many also run shared ownership schemes to help people who cannot afford to buy their own homes outright. Over recent years a number of local authorities have transferred all or part of their housing stock, including their sheltered housing, to RSLs.</p>
Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)	'Scheduling' is shorthand for the process through which nationally important sites and monuments are given legal protection by being placed on a list, or 'schedule'. A schedule has been kept since 1882 of monuments whose preservation is given priority over other land uses.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	SACs are areas which have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	<p>SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of national and international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the 'Birds Directive 1979'. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (referred to in this document as the Habitats Regulations) which provides statutory protection for the SPA.</p> <p>The Thames Basin Heaths were designated as a Special Protection Area under EC Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC. These European regulations have since been transposed into UK national legislation through.</p>
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	SSSI's are the country's very best wildlife and geographical sites. There are over 4,000 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in England, covering around 7% of the land area. More than 70% of these sites by area are internationally important for their wildlife, and are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	An assessment required by EU legislation that predicts and evaluates the effects of implementing a plan, project or programme and identifies mitigation measures necessary to make the plan, project or programme acceptable in environmental terms.
Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)	Open space meeting specific guidelines on quantity and quality for the purpose of providing recreational alternatives to the SPA.

Term	Definition
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	An appraisal of economic, environmental and social effects of a plan to allow decision to made in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
Sustainable Development	International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
S106	Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as s106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions'.
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. An Order prohibits the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage, wilful destruction of trees without the local planning authority's written consent. If consent is given, it can be subject to conditions which have to be followed. In the Secretary of State's view, cutting roots is also a prohibited activity and requires the authority's consent.
Town centre	Area defined on the local authority's proposal 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 town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Contacts

Contact details for each individual authority participating in this base HELAA methodology are listed below:

Bracknell Forest Borough Council
 Reading Borough Council
 Slough Borough Council
 South Buckinghamshire District Council
 West Berkshire Council
 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
 Wokingham Borough Council