

# South Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Report August 2013

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### August 2013 Update

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is one of a number of evidence base and supporting studies produced or commissioned by the Council to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan. The Local Plan will set out the planning policies to guide the development and use of the land in the district up to 2031.

The SHLAA is a technical assessment of the potential suitability, availability and achievability of sites for housing development. The sites assessed through the SHLAA were those submitted to the Council through:

- The Call for Sites undertaken in Summer 2011;
- The Local Plan Issues & Options Report in Summer 2012;
- The Local Plan Issues & Options 2 Report in early 2013.

The SHLAA was first published in July 2012 and a supplement was published in December 2012. The SHLAA (June 2013) replaced both of these previous documents.

We have found that the updated SHLAA (June 2013) issued at the start of consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan did not include some of the most up-to-date information which was used when compiling the Local Plan. We have taken the decision to publish an updated SHLAA.

Changes made to the site proformas in this update are clearly identified with the date of the update. The main following types of update were:

- For major sites over 100ha, the Developable Area row should not have included a figure. This is because the promoters' estimates of housing capacity were used for the Issues and Options consultation rather than applying the formula used for smaller sites. This approach is explained in the Assessment of Capacity part of Section 3.0 of the SHLAA document. The strategic sites included in the plan have been subject to high level checks of capacity by the Council.
- Additional detail has been added to the proformas reflecting comments received from County Education and Highways officers in Spring 2013 that helped inform the selection of sites included in the draft Local Plan.
- Notes have been included in the proformas where there has been a material change in circumstances e.g. a site gaining planning permission.
- For sites north of Waterbeach village that lie in the area now proposed as Green Belt to maintain separation from the new town, the proformas have been updated to reflect this strategic constraint that renders the sites unsuitable for development. The proformas (and summary tables in

the Sustainability Appraisal) have been updated to show the sites as having no development potential (i.e. Red).

- For reference, a box has been added to the end of each proforma that states the status of the site in the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

**The SHLAA (August 2013) replaces all previous versions.**

## **Background**

This Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) considers the potential supply of housing land across the District. The SHLAA is a technical assessment of sites to determine whether they may have potential to be suitable for housing. Sites which may have potential have also been subject to an assessment of their sustainability and together with other evidence, the SHLAA has helped to inform which sites should be put forward for consultation in the Local Plan Issues and Options consultations and included in the draft Local Plan as site allocations. Note that the SHLAA does not determine by itself whether a site should be allocated or granted permission for development.

The primary role of the SHLAA is to:

- I - Identify whether sites have the potential for housing;
- II - Assess their housing potential; and
- III - Assess when they are likely to be developed.

The SHLAA has been produced in-house by the Planning Policy Team of the Council and has been informed by input from the County Council and other agencies. This has included work with the Housing Market Partnership- an advisory group including local agents, house builders, and social housing providers who have informed elements of the assessment, particularly in relation to the viability of housing sites. Our first SHLAA was published in July 2012 and was updated in December 2013 and June 2013. This August update includes all the most up-to-date information which was used when compiling the Local Plan, not all of which was included in the June 2013 SHLAA.

## **Purpose of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

Paragraph 7 of the Government's Guidance on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (DCLG, July 2007), states that the aim should be to "identify as many sites with housing potential in and around as many settlements as possible in the study area".

Further guidance has since been published on behalf of the Government by the Planning Advisory Service (July 2008).

Specifically the SHLAA should:

- Identify specific sites for the first 5 years of a development plan, that are available for development and that can be delivered;
- Identify specific developable sites for 6-10 years, and ideally up to 15 years in plans, to allow the 5 year housing land supply to be continuously topped up; and
- Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11-15 of the plan, to indicate broad locations for future growth.

## **2.0 POLICY CONTEXT**

### **National Policy Context**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) requires at paragraph 159 the preparation of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA), by local planning authorities, to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability, and likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. At paragraph 158 it emphasises that Local Plans must be based on evidence that is proportionate, adequate, up-to-date and relevant.

### **Practice Guidance**

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: Practice Guidance (July 2007) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and gives practical advice on how to carry out an assessment to identify land for housing and assess the deliverability and developability of sites, it also includes consideration of sites for possible urban extensions and new freestanding settlements where appropriate. Our assessment has not been undertaken at a sub-regional or housing market area level, as advocated in the practice guidance, because the various local authorities are at different stages in the preparation of their Local Plans.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **Background**

The original methodology is set out in the 'Call for Sites Documentation' included at Appendix 1. It follows that recommended by the Government guidance and so was not itself subject to public consultation. The main stages of the work have been:

- Asking the public to submit sites for assessment via a call for sites
- The desktop assessment of sites to identify those with potential for development including an assessment of site viability
- Site surveys to supplement the desktop assessments of sites

The site assessment pro-forma has been subject to a number of refinements since 2011.

The July 2012 SHLAA considered sites in Group Villages but the documentation stated that “there may or may not prove to be a planning policy case for including housing sites at Group villages in the Issues and Options consultation. Some sites at Group villages have been identified as sites with limited development potential (amber) but were not identified as options for allocation through the Local Plan (unless they were in villages consulted on to be placed in a higher category e.g. Minor Rural Centre), as a sufficient range of sites were identified at more sustainable locations higher in the development sequence.

Appendix 2 sets out a series of frequently asked questions and answers about the SHLAA. Appendix 3 consists of the call for sites questionnaire which was completed by those putting sites forward for consideration.

The December 2012 SHLAA update and subsequent site assessments have only considered sites in or adjoining our most sustainable settlements (Cambridge Edge, Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres and settlements to be included as such in the Local Plan). Sites that would provide less than 10 dwellings have been excluded. This is in order to help deliver a more sustainable pattern of future development in the District. These later proforma assessments were slightly streamlined from the earlier assessments but covered the same criteria.

### **The 2011 Call for Sites**

The call for sites period ran between June and July 2011 and resulted in the acceptance of nearly 300 sites which met the Council criteria that it should be a site of at least 0.25 ha, which could provide 10 or more homes, and if not a strategic scale development, be in or adjacent to a reasonably sized settlement (including those classified as a rural centre, minor rural centre or group village). The call for sites process was widely advertised in the local press, and on the Council’s website.

A list of registered sites is included in Appendix 4, and details of the Council assessment of each site, can be found at Appendix 7i together with subsequent updates. Note that sites in the Green Belt on the edge of Cambridge were not assessed for the July 2012 SHLAA as the Issues & Options 1 consultation was to include questions about the potential for the release of land from the Green Belt in 10 broad locations around Cambridge. Site location maps can be found in Appendix 8.

### **Sites arising from the Issues & Options 1 Consultation**

The Issues and Options 1 consultation ran from July 2012 to September 2012 and resulted in the submission of 18 sites which meet SHLAA “Call for Sites” criteria, the resubmission of sites already considered through the 2012 SHLAA, and the submission of new sites in villages and locations which do

not meet SHLAA criteria. The later sites were not considered further, and for the great majority of resubmissions relating to existing SHLAA sites, the resubmission has not led to a review of the existing SHLAA technical assessment. All representations to the Issues and Options 1 consultation have been considered as part of the plan making process.

A list of assessed sites is included in Appendix 4, and details of the Council assessment of each site, can be found at Appendix 7ii together with any subsequent updates. Site location maps can be found in Appendix 8.

### **Assessment of sites in the Cambridge Green Belt Fringe**

Sites in the Cambridge Green Belt fringe were assessed jointly with Cambridge City Council using a common site assessment pro-forma. A list of the assessed sites is included in Appendix 4, and plans showing site boundaries and details of the Council assessment of each site can be found at Appendix 7iii together with any subsequent updates.

This is where site assessments of SHLAA sites submitted in the Green Belt Broad Locations consulted on in the Issues and Option 1 consultation can be found. For ease of reference these consist of SHLAA sites:

- SC232, SC299 at Barton Road
- SC68, SC69 at Hauxton Road
- SC105, SC294, SC295 at Shelford Road
- SC111, SC283, SC284 for land south of Cambridge Road / Fulbourn Road
- SC296 at Cherry Hinton
- SC036, SC060, SC061, SC159, SC160, SC161, SC254 at Fen Ditton
- SC298 for land south of the A14 and west of Cambridge Road

### **Sites arising from the Issues & Options 2 part 2 Consultation**

The assessments of the sites submitted to the Council through the Issues & Options 2, part 2 consultation in January – February 2013 that met the SHLAA criteria can be found at Appendix 7iv. Site location maps can be found in Appendix 8.

The sites included are:

- Site 334: Fen Road, Cambridge
- Site 335: Land to the rear of 12-18 Teversham Road, Fulbourn
- Site 336: Land off Lone Tree Avenue, Impington
- Site 337: Land adjacent to Bannold Road, Waterbeach
- Site 338: Bannold Road, Waterbeach
- Site 339: High Ditch Road, Fen Ditton

## Assessment of Suitability

Qualifying sites were assessed for their suitability for housing. In assessing suitability, officers considered:

- The location of the site;
- Existing policy restrictions and planning history;
- The existence of any physical constraints on development of the site;
- the potential impact of development of the site (in relation to Green Belt purposes, heritage, townscape and landscape setting);
- The environmental conditions which would be experienced by residents of the development; and
- The capacity of local infrastructure and the scope for providing additional capacity.

This exercise was informed by:

- Consultation with key partners, and the outcome of consultation on the July 2012 SHLAA, for example the Council's Environmental Health Officers (in respect of local air quality, noise or land contamination constraints), Conservation Officers and English Heritage (in respect of protecting the historic environment from inappropriate development); Engineers (in respect of knowledge of drainage and flooding constraints on sites), Local Highway Authority Officers (in respect of the ability to secure access to sites), Education Authority Officers (in respect of schools), Utility providers, the Local Health Authority and the Highways Agency;
- Other evidence used by the Council to inform local planning, including the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; Biodiversity data; and previous Green Belt and landscape studies;
- Existing environmental and historic designations; and
- Existing planning policy designations designed to constrain development, e.g. Green Belt which were noted but (in accordance with the Best Practice Guidance) not used to automatically dismiss sites on grounds of suitability.

Full use was made of:

- GIS Mapping systems and constraints layers;
- Google Street View and aerial photography;
- Information on gas, water and electricity infrastructure;
- Information on flooding provided by Environment Agency;
- Property history information in terms of planning applications;
- Historic maps and historic environment records;
- Records of Tree Preservation Orders;
- SHLAA submission proformas, representations to Issue & Options consultations and any additional information provided;
- Material in the Councils existing evidence base such as the Village Services and Facilities Study.



In order to undertake thorough and informed appraisals of the sites and ensure the same research was undertaken each time, a proforma was designed for desktop use to gather and record the information. Completed site proformas can be seen in the appendices. The assessments record the degree to which a site has development potential. The assessment of potential suitability in the SHLAA in no way replaces the need for more detailed surveys and assessments which may be required as part of the Development Management process should a site be formally allocated for development by the Local Plan and progressed through the planning process by the landowner or developer. The site proforma used has been refined since 2011 but remains consistent with the original. Sites on the Cambridge fringe were assessed using a different assessment proforma that was developed jointly with Cambridge City Council. This presents the same type of information in a different format.

Site visits have helped to confirm whether a site was potentially suitable for housing development and whether or not it could contribute towards the creation of sustainable, mixed communities as required by national planning policy. To avoid as much disturbance to residents and/or landowners as possible officers undertook site visits from roadside visits or by viewing land from adjacent sites and footpaths.

Officers engaged with key infrastructure and service providers to assess whether there is sufficient capacity or potential capacity within the local infrastructure to meet the demands generated by the new homes.

Some infrastructure providers found it difficult to comment given their lack of resources and the absence of certainty about which sites might be developed. Furthermore, their own service plans often do not extend beyond two or three years. However, the key conclusions from the consultees were as follows.

**Anglian Water** who deal with the treatment and movement of waste water and sewage, have commented on the capacity of Waste Water Treatment Works (WWtW). Where sites are operating close to capacity mitigation measures will be required before a site could be connected to the system. It has often been the case that the sewerage network is operating at capacity and will require a developer impact assessment to ascertain the required upgrades. This assessment and any mitigation required will be funded by the developer.

**Cambridge Water** who provide clean drinking water, have commented that spare capacity will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Development requiring an increase in capacity will require either an upgrade to existing boosters and / or new storage reservoir, tower or booster plus associated mains. It is clear that such mitigation measures will be required in parts of the District to cope with cumulative growth as well as in relation to individual sites.

The **Environment Agency** have commented that sites should be reviewed against strategic environmental baseline information:

- Water Cycle Study (WCS) - To inform us of the availability of the water services infrastructure (water provision, foul water treatment capacity etc.)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) - To inform us of the level of flood risk to the site.

All sites will be required to provide to incorporate sustainable drainage systems.

The **Highways Agency** have commented at a high level stating that current uncertainties regarding the A14 make those sites heavily reliant on the A14 the most difficult to assess. As it currently stands the A14 corridor cannot accommodate any significant additional levels of new development. Currently proposed minor improvements to the A14 corridor in the short term (within 2 years) are expected to release a very limited amount of capacity, but precise nature of these improvements and, hence, the scale of the additional capacity has yet to be determined. A long term remedy to the A14 corridor is currently the subject of a strategic corridor study being conducted by the DfT, the aim of which is to identify one or more potential successor schemes for the withdrawn Ellington to Fen Ditton scheme.

The A428 corridor is seriously limited in capacity between the A1 and A1198. At present there is no realistic prospect of resolving this.

The **Internal Drainage Boards** have commented that drainage capacity is limited, that flood risk assessments will be required before development, and that surface water run off rates need attenuation on site.

**National Grid** provided mapping of its gas pipelines, but officers are aware that they do not supply gas to the whole District.

**Natural England** provided a general response covering its existing policies and sources of information.

The **National Health Service** have provided a schedule of facilities and indicated which ones have physical room to expand on site. In physical terms there is limited capacity available. Any additional major developments on the Cambridge fringe are likely to need new infrastructure. The NHS cannot say what until they know which sites are likely to come forward and the timing and phasing.

Significant developments in virtually all the villages are likely to require expansion in infrastructure. Depending on size and location of the growth, some existing facilities could be expanded but in some cases replacement or additional facilities may be required.

Any major new settlements outside of Cambridge will almost certainly require significant Health infrastructure, depending on size. Assessment of any local capacity to provide services to early residents cannot be sensibly undertaken until clearer proposals emerge.

Space for Community Health services is limited and the NHS seeks to co-locate these with GP facilities wherever possible although some elements, such as childrens services are in a large part delivered in other settings such as Childrens Centres and schools, Older peoples facilities, and Community facilities. The NHS therefore has an interest in how all Community Infrastructure is planned and in the type of housing, as it needs to ensure that the right type of housing is going to be available to meet people's needs.

For dentistry, the NHS generally have quite good capacity although a lot of South Cambs residents tend to access NHS dentists in Cambridge.

For Pharmacy, the NHS is required to do a Pharmacy Needs Assessment every 3 years which takes account of housing growth. Generally a new Pharmacy is required for 5,000 people.

There will of course also be continuing impact on the whole range of Health and Social Care services. Although there is continued pressure to move care and services into community settings and manage more people in their own homes rather in hospitals, there will be capacity issues for Acute Hospital services. To assess the requirements, the NHS needs to know the cumulative planned growth, demographic forecasts and timings.

**UK Power Networks** who supply electricity have commented that individual village sites can generally be accommodated, but that the largest sites will require new infrastructure and network reinforcement which can also arise from the cumulative impacts of growth.

**Cambridgeshire County Council** comments on archaeology, education capacity and highways access have been incorporated into the proforma assessments. It is clear that the scale of development proposed will require the provision of additional schools and expanded schools where the likely increase in school age children arising from new developments cannot be accommodated. The County Council has prepared a draft Transport Strategy for the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire area that sets out the transport challenges and issues for the area and how these will be addressed in future. Work on the Transport Strategy has been undertaken alongside the new Local Plan and Cambridge City's Local Plan to ensure it takes full account of the proposed growth and development expected in the area to ensure that current and future transport needs are met. It modelled the emerging strategy options for both Local Plans and helped inform the most appropriate spatial strategy to maximise use of sustainable transport modes and to ensure that transport impacts can be properly mitigated.

## **Gypsy and Traveller Sites**

The Call for Sites questionnaire invited submissions for sites to be considered for Gypsy and Traveller use. Three sites were submitted (SHLAA sites 266, 184, and 94 of which the first two were submitted either for residential development or Gypsy and Traveller use and site 94 (Fen Road) only for Gypsy and Traveller use. The latter site has been considered before for Gypsy and Traveller use and rejected.

None of the sites are considered suitable for either residential development or Gypsy and Traveller occupation. Sites assessments for Gypsy and Traveller use of each site can be found at Appendix 5.

## **Assessment of Availability**

The assessment of availability has relied upon the evidence given by landowners and their agents in response to the Council's consultation. Where such availability is reliant upon third party land or an existing use re-locating, consideration has been given to the implications this might have on the timing of any possible development.

## **Assessment of Achievability**

The assessment of achievability considered factors such as the likely cost of the development, market factors and delivery rates. Our approach to viability testing is set out in Appendix 4. This element of the site assessment was partly informed by site constraints and land ownership / availability in so far as they impact on development costs and the timetable for delivery. The expertise of the Housing Market Partnership was also important, particularly in respect of our approach to the assessment of the viability of development.

The analysis show that **viability** is strongest close to Cambridge and in the areas to the south of the city, and least strong in the areas to the north and at a distance from the city. Each of the SHLAA sites has been allocated a viability score to reflect the prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. The appraisal was undertaken against a set of standard assumptions which examined whether there would be an uplift in land value against the assumed existing use. The higher the uplift the more interest is assumed from developers to acquire and build and for the landowner to dispose of the site in the current market. The general outcome of the exercise is that development in the district is viable but that land values in some outlying Parishes may not be high enough in current market conditions to provide for a full level of affordable housing, planning obligations and potential community infrastructure levy payments.

This high level exercise was unable to account for the individual aspirations and personal circumstance of each landowner and as a result, whilst a scheme may be considered to be viable (or unviable) that would not necessarily guarantee or prevent its delivery. For all sites the assessment findings should be seen as the start of a process of viability assessment.

For **strategic scale sites** (new settlements and large urban extensions) much depends upon the extent, cost and phasing of the infrastructure to be funded by the development, the amount of housing that can actually be accommodated on site, and the timing of its provision in relation to that of the accompanying infrastructure. It is not possible to undertake a detailed review of the viability of the largest new settlement proposals. These will need on-going review and monitoring of their capacity to deliver growth and associated infrastructure through varying market cycles. The Council will explore the extent to which infrastructure requirements can be supported by the development of the site directly and the scope for external funding sources to contribute, such as City Deal.

Edge of Cambridge SHLAA sites are also excluded because there is strong evidence of the viability of sites in this location given the nature of the planning obligations agreed for similar sites in Cambridge and the start of development on those sites in recent years.

In terms of the current housing market, the SHLAA considers that it is not possible to predict when the current downturn in the housing market will reverse, that the local housing market remains relatively strong and that the majority of greenfield and brownfield sites in the District will be achievable over the plan period given the demand for housing in the area.

### **Assessment of Capacity**

All sites were assessed in terms of the amount of housing that they might reasonably accommodate if developed. The assessment of capacity was informed by:

- The site's constraints;
- The proportion of the site which would be required for other supporting uses; and
- Density.

The assessment of constraints gave an indication as to whether any parts of the site would be undevelopable because of, for example, the risk of flood. This area was then discounted from the capacity exercise.

In the case of larger sites, a proportion of the site would be required for other supporting uses such as employment, open space and allotments, community facilities, landscaping and major roads. For the purposes of this study it was generally assumed as a guide that, in the case of sites over 10 hectares, 50% of the site would be required for other supporting uses and, for sites over 50 hectares that 60% would be required for other uses. On smaller sites a greater proportion of the site would be available for residential development reaching a level of 100% for sites smaller than 0.4 ha. For smaller sites this approach was informed by analysis of the developable areas of approved schemes in the District over recent years. The approach for large strategic sites was informed by the recent planning application for the phase 1 of the

Northstowe development and is also consistent with Cambourne. Note that the actual amount of development that could come forward on sites at any scale is likely to vary from site to site reflecting the nature of each site and its location. Our approach is summarised in the following table.

	Site Area Ha		Site Area Ha	Gross to net proportion	Net site area as a % of gross site area
		<=	0.4	1	100.00%
>	0.4	<=	2	0.9	90.00%
>	2	<=	10	0.75	75.00%
>	10	<=	50	0.5	50.00%
>	50			0.4	40.00%

Sites of less than 2 hectares of an irregular shape were discounted to a level of 75%. The assessment of constraints and the need for supporting uses gave an indication of the area which is developable for housing.

Two possible density levels (30 and 40 dwellings per hectare) were then applied to the developable area to give an indication of capacity. These densities are consistent with current car parking standards, could accommodate increased levels of car parking, do not require bespoke design, and are likely to allow development that is consistent with local character. Higher and lower densities may be possible on some sites and the SHLAA approach would not rule out such proposals coming forward.

On large sites densities are likely to vary across the site and for new settlements sites the SHLAA assumed density and so site dwelling capacity may prove to be too low or too high. For this reason for sites above 100 ha the SHLAA has followed the dwelling capacity figures proposed in the Call for Sites questionnaires and not that generated by use of the gross to net figure multiplied by the density of 40 dph figure otherwise assumed for new settlements. A further exception related to Waterbeach where the Council proposed a number of alternative site options. These provide dwelling capacity figures derived pro-rata by site area from the 12,750 homes originally proposed in 2011 for the full site. The site capacities included in the draft Local Plan provide a more refined estimate of site capacity which will differ in some cases from those assumed in the SHLAA.

The densities otherwise assumed for SHLAA purposes are as follows. Note that previous versions of the SHLAA have assumed a density at Rural Centres of 40dph. The density reduction reflects the outcome of consultation on the Issues & Options reports, Member comments at Local Plan workshops held in 2013 and the density characteristics of villages in the District.

Location	Average Density (dph)
Edge of Cambridge	40
New Settlement	40
Northstowe	40
Rural Centre	30
Minor Rural Centre	30
Group Village	30

### Assessment of timing of delivery

The assessment of the timing of when this housing development might take place on these sites has been informed by the assessments of constraints, availability and achievability as well as local experience as to the time taken to deliver large scale housing developments and new settlements. The assessment is based on earliest practical delivery. In general the SHLAA assumes that the larger the site the longer the time period needed before house completions can be expected. Small village sites will be quicker to deliver than large sites which consideration is important to the deliverability and achievability of the Local Plan. Having regard to the time required in planning and preparing sites for development, including delivering infrastructure, it is not envisaged that any significant numbers of houses would be built on the largest sites (new settlements and strategic scale urban extensions) before 2020/2022. This would allow in the most favourable circumstances, for the following time periods after plan adoption in 2015:

Pre-application discussions	2016-18
Planning obligation negotiations and outline planning permission	2017-19
Discharge of conditions and first infrastructure applications	2018-20
Reserved matters applications, infrastructure site works	2019-21
Start on site, first completions	2020-22

Ultimately, however, this will depend on the size and nature of the sites identified in the Local Plan and their phasing. The draft Local Plan assumes that development to the west of Cambourne could start to be delivered to a quicker schedule given the infrastructure and delivery mechanisms already in place with regard to Cambourne. It can be noted that the rate of house completions on new settlement and strategic scale sites often takes a number of years to build up to their maximum rate after the first completions are achieved.

The SHLAA Call for Sites Questionnaires almost all state that sites are available immediately, and that development could commence within 5 years from 2011, even for new settlement and strategic scale urban extension sites which is considered to be unrealistic.

The SHLAA will be fully reviewed to support future plan making and read alongside Annual Monitoring Reports that examine housing completions and

the overall rate of housing delivery. If evidence is provided which demonstrates that an identified constraint can be overcome, this will be taken into account in the review of the SHLAA and may result in a site that was currently non-developable to be deemed developable or deliverable.

#### **4.0 ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SUPPLY**

The Council already has a significant housing land supply, standing at 14,000 dwellings. Nevertheless housing supply and delivery has been and will be affected by the recession. This is both in terms of the overall stock of planning permissions and the type and size of sites that make up that total and it is clear that the recession has delayed progress in bringing forward sites for housing. Nevertheless, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire have fared better than many areas and work has progressed on major sites as market conditions allow.

The implications of options for housing growth need to be considered in the context of the current development strategy and the amount of housing that already has planning permission or is allocated for housing development in current plans. The draft Local Plan at figure 3 includes a housing trajectory that shows that at the end of March 2012 there were 3,070 dwellings with planning permission (plus another 221 dwellings on sites with a resolution to grant planning permission awaiting resolution of outstanding issues). It also shows another 185 dwellings have been granted planning permission or have the benefit of a resolution to grant planning permission since April 2012. The total of these sites being 3,476 dwellings.

The housing trajectory also shows 9,857 dwellings allocated for development in current plans that were predicted to have been built by 2031, and 696 completions in 2011/12 giving a total supply of 14,029.

It is important to be as realistic as possible about the delivery of housing from current proposals so that sufficient housing land is allocated to meet housing needs and the Local Plan housing trajectory has been updated with this in mind. Within this context, it is considered reasonable to continue to rely on the majority of the current allocations to have been completed by 2031. These include major commitments at Trumpington Meadows, on land between Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road and Huntingdon Road and Histon Road (NIAB2). To ensure realism, the 2011-2012 Annual Monitoring Report figure of 15,424 has been revised to 14,029 dwellings to reflect known changes in circumstances. The key changes are set out below.

**Cambridge East** – A total of 1,301 dwellings by 2031. The capacity of the land north of Newmarket Road has been reduced to 1,200 and an allowance of 110 dwellings made for some development to the north of Cherry Hinton. No other allowance has been made for any housing development at Cambridge Airport which will be safeguarded for development after 2031.



**Northstowe** is the second major site where a change of circumstances has been reflected in the current housing supply. There has been a delay in the start of completions in the first phase of development at Northstowe compared with the AMR housing trajectory. The delay has the effect of reducing the amount of the new town that is anticipated to be built by 2031 to 5,965 dwellings with the remaining 3,535 dwellings coming after that date. This is the only development in current adopted plans that is expected to continue providing housing after 2031, hence its particular relevance to housing supply.

Taking permissions and latest predicted delivery from allocations in the adopted plans together gives a total existing housing supply of 14,029 that will go towards meeting our objectively assessed housing needs.

**New sources of housing supply** identified through work on the SHLAA and from Issue and Options representations since 2011 are examined in section 5.0 'Findings'. Over the plan period reliance will be placed on housing delivery arising from a variety of sources and sites. The NPPF requires that potential development sites be characterised as either deliverable or developable. The definitions of each type of site are as follows:

***Deliverable:***

*A site is deliverable if it is available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. Sites with planning permission should be considered to be deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years, for example they will not be viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans. A deliverable site is automatically assigned as a developable site also.*

***Developable:***

*A site is developable if in a suitable location for housing development and there is a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.*

## **Windfall Housing Completions**

The National Planning Policy Framework allows local authorities to make an allowance for windfall sites in their five-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available and will continue to provide a reliable source of housing supply. In calculating any allowance, local authorities should take account of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens.

Further analysis of windfalls has been carried out since the Issues & Options 1 consultation in Summer 2012. This records the number of windfalls completed each year between 2006 and 2012, excluding any windfalls completed on garden land as required by the NPPF. The analysis shows that

on average 208 windfall homes have been completed each year. Rural exceptions sites for affordable housing have contributed significantly to windfall completions over the last 6 years.

*Analysis of Historic Windfall Completions 2006-2012*

Year	Total dwellings completed	Windfall dwelling completions
2006-07	924	170
2007-08	1,274	471
2008-09	610	170
2009-10	595	265
2010-11	655	217
2011-12	695	220
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,753</b>	<b>1,513</b>

[All figures are based on net dwelling completions.]

*Summary Data using all 6 years from 2006-2012*

Windfall dwelling completions excluding gardens: average per year 252

*Summary Data using 5 years excluding 2007-2008*

Windfall dwelling completions excluding gardens: average per year 208

Based on this analysis, and excluding the windfalls that are already included in existing commitments (counting sites with planning permission that were not allocated in existing adopted plans), it is anticipated that windfalls could provide **2,900** dwellings in the plan period (as shown on the housing trajectory included in the draft Local Plan). The policies in the Local Plan will control the level of windfall development that takes place in the least sustainable areas of the district whilst enabling the recycling of land and delivering new homes to meet local housing needs.

**Housing Supply 2011 to 2016**

For the period 2011-2016, including the first year of the new Local Plan, the Council is required to draw on information in the SHLAA to help identify sufficient, specific deliverable sites. To be considered deliverable, sites must be suitable, available and achievable within the first five year period which includes sites with planning permission. Delivery within this plan period can be characterised as generally low risk.

It is assumed that housing supply in this period will be provided by sites with planning permission (currently 3,476 and assuming a continuing flow of new planning permissions), together with development on existing allocations, from windfalls, and on a number of small easily deliverable sites identified through the SHLAA process and allocated in the new Local Plan. Northstowe will start to contribute to housing delivery and delivery of the additional 950 homes at Cambourne will commence.

The Council has continued to maintain up to date development plans and has a significant level of identified housing supply. The development strategy in

the Local Development Framework 1999-2016 was always expected to deliver fewer than the annualised average number of homes in the first part of its plan period, with higher than the annualised average in the later years once construction started on the major developments which have longer lead-in periods. This strategy was beginning to be delivered when the recession hit in 2008 and progress on the major sites stalled temporarily. The severe slow-down in house building and the short length of the period to 2016 remaining had the effect that in recent years the Council has not had a 5 year land supply against the Core Strategy 2007 target.

The Council considers that the up to date evidence provided by the SHMA on objectively assessed needs and that there is no backlog to make up, means that it is appropriate to now use the proposed submission (draft) Local Plan housing target and plan period for the purposes of 5 year supply. Under these circumstances the Council considers that the normal 5% buffer is the appropriate buffer for the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan with an end date of 2031. A 5-year supply of housing land, on the basis of the average annual figure of 950 homes required to meet the 19,000 housing requirement in the draft Local Plan, is 4,750 homes. A 5% buffer would therefore be 238 homes capable of being brought forward from later in the plan period if needed.

The housing trajectory included in the Local Plan (Figure 3 in Chapter 2) shows that looking ahead from 2014 when the Local Plan will be subject to public examination, there will be a 5 year housing requirement of 5,015 homes and a 5 year housing supply of 6,380 homes including 200 windfall which amounts to a 6.36 year housing supply.

The plan will provide sufficient flexibility in the range, size, type and location of housing allocations to enable a 5-year land supply to be maintained. The Council has fully allocated its housing requirement (the housing trajectory shows that existing completions and commitments and new allocations could provide 19,289 homes in the plan period against an objectively assessed need of 19,000 homes) and a number of the allocations could be brought forward in the plan period if needed, including the new village at Bourn Airfield. The Council has not relied on windfall sites in lieu of site allocations even though it is confident that there will be a continuing supply of housing on such sites and therefore these sites could help make up the 5% buffer if needed or any shortfall if that were to occur at any point during the plan period.

### **Housing Supply 2016 to 2021**

The Council must also identify sufficient developable sites for the second five year period of the plan (2016-2021).

It is assumed that housing supply in this period will be provided by sites allocated in the new Local Plan (which will include sites already allocated in previous plans), outstanding planning permissions, including edge of Cambridge sites, the continued delivery of Northstowe and at Cambourne and from windfalls. Existing allocations and small to medium village sites will

provide many of the completions during this period. Delivery within this plan period can be characterised as generally low risk.

Work on the proposed additional new settlement(s) and strategic scale village extension at Cambourne will be on-going but with the exception of Cambourne West are unlikely to deliver a substantial number of housing completions during this period.

### **Housing Supply 2021 to 2026**

The Council must also identify sufficient developable sites or broad locations over the period (2021-2026). It is assumed that housing supply in this period will be provided by sites allocated in the new Local Plan (which will include sites already allocated in previous plans), outstanding planning permissions, from windfalls and from the final stages of the edge of Cambridge sites and from the continued delivery of Northstowe. Development at the Bourn Airfield new village is planned to start in this period and Cambourne West will continue to deliver. Existing allocations and small to medium village sites included in the Local Plan as site allocations will provide a smaller proportion of the completions during this period as they will mainly have been delivered. Delivery within this period can be characterised as generally low risk to medium risk, with a higher level of risk attached to the delivery of the new settlement(s) and other strategic scale developments.

Future updates to the SHLAA will be informed by annual monitoring of housing completions included in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which will record the pace of delivery at major sites including Northstowe which is currently assumed to step up over a 5 year period to a consistent level of 400 completions per year. Until this figure can be refined it will be taken as a reasonable upper rate of delivery for the new settlements. Delivery rates for smaller sites can be assumed to have a reasonable delivery rate of around 300 completions per year (which has been the rounded average rate of delivery at Cambourne).

### **Housing Supply 2026 to 2031**

It is assumed that housing supply in this period will be provided by in a similar way to the previous period but with a growing proportion coming from new settlements with Waterbeach starting to deliver. Delivery within this period can be characterised as generally medium risk, with any issues addressed through the next review of the Local Plan.

## **5.0 FINDINGS**

The SHLAA has been prepared initially as a part of the plan making process. Detailed site assessments over 300 sites have been completed and considered alongside Sustainability Appraisal and other evidence to identify potential housing site options for public consultation. These included both sites that are consistent with planning policy in the adopted plans and those

that are not and would require a change in planning policy to be suitable. In particular, sites that are outside the frameworks in the adopted plans, in the Green Belt or allocated for another use such as employment were not ruled out in the SHLAA assessment process, and these constraints were highlighted in the assessments. The SHLAA 2012 informed the selection of site options for consultation through the Issues and Options 2012 and an update to the SHLAA informed some additional site options included in the Issues and Options 2 consultation 2013. A total of 63 site options were consulted on.

Taking account of the SHLAA assessments, the sustainability assessments, and the result of public consultation, the most suitable sites to meet the housing needs of the district to 2013 have been identified and included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan. The audit trail for the Local Plan in the Annex to the Sustainability Appraisal explains why the sites included as site allocations were selected. The remaining site options consulted on have not been included in the Local Plan. Appendix 6 indicates for all site options consulted on, whether they are included in the Local Plan, and if not allocated what the key policy and physical constraints are. Sites that remain outside the village framework, in the Green Belt or allocated for another use are not suitable for housing development under the policies of the adopted or proposed submission Local Plan, although the SHLAA assessment may inform a view on whether they may be suitable for an affordable housing exception site at an appropriate scale to the level of need and character of a village.