



# Local Development Framework

## SLAA Next Steps

November 2011

### Introduction

This statement sets out the next steps in the Council's approach to undertaking its Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). It should be read in conjunction with the SLAA Project Plan dated July 2011 available at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/sl原因](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/sl原因) which explains that the SLAA is an ongoing technical process that is informing both the East Herts Local Development Framework (LDF) and its housing trajectory.

### Aims and Objectives

Specifically, this statement sets out in more detail the assessment criteria that the Council will apply to the SLAA sites in order to assess their deliverability. It follows an initial series of SLAA meetings held throughout September 2011 and takes on board feedback from these meetings by seeking to maximise the contribution from a range of local stakeholders. The initial round of SLAA engagement has provided useful information both in terms of understanding the sites in their strategic context as well as site specific comments which will be reflected in the more detailed assessments that follow.

### Purpose of the SLAA

The purpose of the SLAA is to assess the deliverability of sites for development. A site is considered deliverable if it is suitable for development, available for development and development is achievable on site. The information in the SLAA will inform the Council's housing trajectory to ensure a continuous supply of housing.

- A site is considered suitable for development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. In considering suitability, policy restrictions, physical constraints, potential impacts of developing the site and the environmental conditions which would be experienced by prospective residents should all be considered.
- A site is considered available for development, when on the best information available there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems. This means that the site is controlled by a housing developer who has expressed an intention to develop or the land owner has expressed an intention to sell.
- A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. Achievability is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site and the capacity of the developer to complete and sell the site.

## Stakeholder Engagement

The Council will engage representatives of the following various stakeholders to assist in the preparation of the next stages of the SLAA:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Civic Societies
- Campaign for the Protection for Rural England (CPRE)
- East Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils (EHAPTC)
- EHDC District Councillors
- EHDC Economic Development
- EHDC Engineers
- Estate/Land Agents
- Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC)
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Housing Associations
- Large Agents/Developers
- Local Agents/Developers
- Neighbouring District Councils
- Parish Councils
- Town Councils

## Which sites will be considered?

Sites identified through the Local Plan Inquiry Omission Sites consultation 2005, Housing Capacity Assessment 2007, Employment Land Review 2008, Call for Sites 2009, will be considered in the SLAA. These sources are available to view on the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies).

## Site Size Filter

The following site size thresholds will be applied to identify those larger sites more relevant to the LDF plan-making process. The lower threshold of 3 dwellings acknowledges the fact that in the rural areas, it is often smaller sites that come forward for development. It should also be noted that sites below the thresholds may still come forward for development through the planning application process.

- 5 or more dwellings or 0.16 hectares in the Six Main Settlements
- 3 or more dwellings or 0.09 hectares elsewhere

## Overall Approach

Because the SLAA is an ongoing piece of work it is being undertaken in rounds:

- Round 1 (Autumn 2011) - *strategic context and site specific information gathering* (Completed - September 2011)
- Round 2 (Winter 2011/12) - *assessment of sites within settlement boundaries*
- Round 3 (Spring 2012) - *assessment of sites outside settlement boundaries*
- Round 4 (Ongoing) - *annual review of SLAA*

Round 2 will consider those sites where there is currently no in-principle objection to their development i.e. they are located within the development boundaries of the Six Main Settlements and Category 1 Villages. An initial SLAA Report will then be published that will inform the Council's housing trajectory. The third round will then consider sites outside of existing settlements as well as sites in Category 2 Villages. An updated SLAA Report will then be published. The fourth round will be an annual review of all SLAA sites. Within each round, the following approach will be followed:

### **Stage 1: Initial Assessment**

Undertaken by officers, sites will be assessed against the criteria set out in Appendix A. Each criterion will be assessed to determine whether, based on the information available, it is reasonable to assume whether: it is deliverable (green); there may be issues that will need to be overcome (amber); or there are major constraints and the site is likely to be undeliverable (red). For more clear-cut criteria, the assessment will be between red or amber and green. Where information is unavailable the assessment will be recorded as unknown.

### **Stage 2: LDF Executive Panel Ratification**

The initial officer assessment of the SLAA sites will then be considered by the LDF Executive Panel in order to seek authorisation to engage stakeholders and seek comments on the officers' initial assessment.

### **Stage 3: Stakeholder Engagement**

The stakeholders listed above will be asked to comment over a specified four-week period on the officers' initial assessment, bearing in mind the assessment criteria. Owing to resource issues, hard copies of the assessments will not be sent to stakeholders directly. Instead, all information will be made available on the Council website as well as being available at the Council offices in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford.

### **Stage 4: Publication of Final Report**

Comments received will be taken on board and amendments made, as appropriate, before a final SLAA report is published. This report will be endorsed by East Herts District Council.

### **Outcomes**

The final outcome of the SLAA will be a report listing each site accompanied by a 1:1250 scale Ordnance Survey map and an assessment of its deliverability. This information will then feed into the Council's housing trajectory to help maintain a continuous supply of housing.

### **Queries / Contact Us**

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