



District Plan

SLAA Site Assessment Criteria

November 2012

How to use this assessment

The purpose of the SLAA is to assess the likelihood of a site coming forward for development by considering the issues that may affect development in respect of suitability, availability and achievability. The assessment criteria conform with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The use of red/amber/green provides a simple visual tool for understanding the issues that may affect a site from coming forward for development.

However, the purpose of this assessment is not to 'score' sites by simply adding up the number of 'green' assessments since this could skew the results as the criteria have not been weighted, although the assessment of suitability has been grouped into the three levels of constraint so as to further understand the likelihood of developability. Equally, a 'red' assessment would not necessarily preclude development since it is possible that some constraints could be mitigated. Furthermore, Government guidance recommends sites should not be ruled out simply based on current policy designations. Where information is unavailable the assessment will be recorded as unknown and regarded as undeliverable since deliverability should not be assumed.

Importantly, the SLAA is about determining whether a site **could** be developed; **not** whether a site **should** be developed. That is the role of the planning system either through the establishment of the principle of development in the District Plan or through the determination of a planning application, which would be based on the individual merits of the application.

Site Details

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|----------------|--|-----------|------|------------------|--|
| Site Reference | | Site Area | | No. of Dwellings | |
| Site Name | | | | Site Postcode | |
| Site Address | | | | | |
| Parish | | | Ward | | |
| Proposed Use | | | | | |

Assessment of Suitability

Major Constraints - critical or national designations that are likely to prevent development

| Topic | Criteria | Comment | Assessment |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Biodiversity | Would development affect a European or Nationally designated wildlife site? | The NPPF affords significant protection to these important wildlife sites including RAMSAR, NNR, SAC, SSSI and undesignated ancient woodland. Development that causes harm to the geological and conservation interests on such sites will not be permitted. | Onsite - RED Offsite but potential to impact wildlife site - AMBER Offsite no impact - GREEN |
| Environmental | Is the site in an area of flood risk? | The NPPF sets out a sequential approach to development in areas of flood risk with the aim to steer new development away from areas of highest risk (Zone 3). Surface water flooding could also act as a constraint on development on sites identified as being at risk. Information from the Environment Agency Flood Maps and Surface Water Inundation Maps and East Herts Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). | Zone 3 high probability – RED Zone 2 medium probability OR Any site identified to be at risk of surface water flooding – AMBER Zone 1 low probability – GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect a Scheduled Monument? | The NPPF seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Substantial harm to registered parks and gardens should be wholly exceptional. | Onsite - RED Offsite but potential to impact scheduled monument - AMBER Offsite no impact - GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect a Registered Historic Park and Garden? | The NPPF seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Substantial harm to or loss of a registered parks and gardens should be exceptional. | Onsite - RED Offsite but potential to impact park and garden - AMBER Offsite no impact - GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect a Listed Building? | The NPPF seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II Listed Building should be exceptional and in respect of Grade I or Grade II* Listed Buildings, wholly exceptional. | Development would require demolition - RED Development would affect setting - AMBER No impact - GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)? | The affect of development on protected trees is a material consideration. Trees provide amenity value and are an important feature of the townscape and landscape. | Area TPO onsite - RED Single TPO onsite - AMBER No TPOs - GREEN |
| Policy | Is the site allocated in the Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan? | Minerals and Waste planning is undertaken by the County Council. The District Council has responsibility to ensure that development does not affect identified sites. | Allocated / safeguarded for minerals or waste - RED Development would affect minerals or waste sites / site identified for potential minerals or waste development - AMBER No affect on minerals or waste sites - GREEN |
| Policy | Is the site in the Green Belt? | PPG2 sets out the presumption against inappropriate development to maintain the openness of the Green Belt. | Yes - RED No - GREEN |
| Policy | Is the site in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt? | Local Plan Policy GBC3 sets out a similar presumption against inappropriate development. Government guidance also directs development to the more sustainable locations. | Yes - RED No - GREEN |

Local Constraints - local policy designations that may constrain development

| Topic | Criteria | Comment | Assessment |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Biodiversity | Would development affect a locally designated wildlife site? | Local Plan Policy ENV14 prevents development that would have an adverse impact on a local wildlife sites. | Onsite - RED Offsite but potential to impact wildlife site - AMBER Offsite no impact - GREEN |
| Environmental | Are there problems with noise? | Consideration needs to be given to whether there are any existing noise sources that could impact on the suitability of the site for development? | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Environmental | Will development of the site affect, or be affected by Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)? | Development should not adversely affect or be adversely affected by air quality. Where any issue arises, an air quality assessment may be required. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Environmental | Is the site likely to be affected by contaminated land? | The presence of contaminated land may affect the viability of sites being developed. Information will be obtained from Appendix A of the East Herts' Contaminated Land Strategy Please note, for those sites assessed as: RED - a further assessment will be required. AMBER - there could still be the potential for localised contamination and further assessment is required. GREEN - there could still be the potential for localised contamination and further assessment is required. | Historical data has identified that the site was previously used as a potentially contaminative industrial land - RED Previously developed land where historical data has not identified a potentially contaminative industrial land use - AMBER Sites where there is no record of previous development. These sites are considered to be less likely to be contaminated - GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect a locally listed historic park and garden? | Local Plan Policy BH16 seeks to ensure that development proposals do not harm the special historic character or appearance of the park or garden. | Onsite - RED Offsite but potential to impact Historic Park and Garden - AMBER Offsite no impact - GREEN |
| Heritage | Would development affect a Conservation Area? | Local Plan Policy BH6 seeks to ensure that development in conservation areas or that affects the setting of a conservation area should be sympathetic to the character of the conservation area. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Heritage | Is the site designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance? | Local Plan Policy BH1 seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect archaeological sites. Where development affects an area of archaeological significance, further assessment and mitigation will be required. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Policy | Is the site designated for leisure, recreational or community use in the Local Plan? | Local Plan Policies STC8, LRC1, LRC11 and OSV8 seek to prevent the loss of facilities which contribute to sustainable mixed communities. | Yes – AMBER No - GREEN |
| Policy | Is the site in employment or former employment use? | Local Plan policies EDE1 and EDE2 seek to prevent the loss of sites in or previously in employment use in order to maintain a sufficient supply of employment land across the district. | Designated Employment Area - RED Employment Site - AMBER Non-employment use - GREEN |

Accessibility Constraints¹ - accessibility to day-to-day services that may constrain development

| Topic | Criteria | Comment | Assessment |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Buses² | Is the site accessible to a bus stop? | Within 400m (5 mins) walk of a bus stop. Sites closer to passenger transport facilities are regarded as being in more sustainable locations. | Outside threshold – RED Within the threshold but where the bus stop has a low service frequency – AMBER Within threshold - GREEN |
| Trains³ | Is the site accessible to a railway station? | Within 1.2km. Sites closer to passenger transport facilities are regarded as being in more sustainable locations. | Outside threshold - RED Within threshold - GREEN |
| Education⁴ | Is the site accessible by public transport to primary schools? | Lower threshold = 15mins Upper threshold = 30mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between higher and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |
| Education⁵ | Is the site accessible by public transport to secondary schools? | Lower threshold = 20mins Upper threshold = 40mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between upper and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |
| Health⁶ | Is the site accessible by public transport to GP facilities? | Lower threshold = 15mins Upper threshold = 30mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between upper and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |
| Health⁷ | Is the site accessible by public transport to hospital facilities? | Lower threshold = 30mins Upper threshold = 60mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between upper and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |
| Retail Centres⁸ | Is the site accessible by public transport to district and town centre locations? | Lower threshold = 15mins Upper threshold = 30mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between upper and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |
| Employment⁹ | Is the site accessible by public transport to employment facilities? | Lower threshold = 20mins Upper threshold = 40mins | Outside thresholds - RED Between upper and lower threshold - AMBER Within lower threshold - GREEN |

¹ - Accessibility data for education, health, retail and employment based on travelling to the destination by bus or rail, or a combination of both. The travel time also allows for a maximum walk of 800m / 10mins to the initial bus stop or station. Information is provided by Hertfordshire County Council Accession software using the Information Transport Network (ITN) i.e. roads, and excludes pedestrian only routes. Information is for outbound routes only. It should be noted that this does not provide a complete picture of accessibility since no information is given for return journeys.

² - Distance calculated 'as the crow flies' based on GIS. It should be noted that whilst a site may be in proximity to a bus stop, the service provided may not be frequent

³ - Applying threshold of 1.2km calculated 'as the crow flies' based on GIS, allows flexibility for an overall walking time of 20mins (1.6km). 1.6km (1 mile) is considered to be the maximum distance that the majority of people will walk. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁴ - Includes Middle Schools and assumes an arrival time of between 8-9am. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁵ - Assumes an arrival time of between 8-9am. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁶ - Assumes an arrival time of between 10-11am. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁷ - Includes community hospitals and A&E services and assumes an arrival time of between 10-11am. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁸ - Includes town and district centres (including Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets and the Thorley Centre, Bishop's Stortford) and assumes an arrival time of between 10-11am. Also see footnote 1 above.

⁹ - Super Output Areas generating over 500 jobs and assuming an arrival time of 8-9am. Also see footnote 1 above.

Site Constraints - other planning and environmental considerations that may affect development

| Topic | Criteria | Comment | Assessment |
|------------------|---|---|--|
| Access | Is there direct access to the site? | Sites require adequate access to the existing road network. | No direct access - RED Direct Access onto a classified road - AMBER Direct access - GREEN |
| Access | Does access to the site affect its development? | Need to ensure that the access for the site (whether existing or proposed) meets or is likely to meet current highway standards. Major highway works include new roads, major changes to junctions etc. | No access to site/Unlikely to meet current standards – RED Requires major highway works – AMBER Access acceptable/minor highway works required - GREEN |
| Access | Does the site form access to other sites? | Use of the site to access other properties may affect whether it comes forward for development. | Yes, provides access to existing development - RED Yes, but could be developed in tandem - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Character | Does the topography of the site affect development? | Flatter sites are easier to develop and often have less of a visual impact. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Character | How well does the site relate to existing development? | Development should integrate well with the existing development. | Poorly - RED Subject to appropriate landscaping / mitigation - AMBER Well - GREEN |
| Site | Does the planning history of the site affect the potential for development? | The site may have been assessed through previous plan-making or planning application processes. Planning history may provide information as to whether the principle of development is acceptable. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Site | Does the shape of the site constrain development? | e.g. Irregular shaped site. Narrow sites may pose problems with access. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Site | Could the site form part of a larger development? | It is important that the development is co-ordinated and the development of one site should not prejudice a strategic site. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Site | Is the site affected by neighbouring uses? | e.g. overlooking / incompatible neighbouring use | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Site | Previously Developed Land (PDL) | There is a presumption in favour of the development of previously developed land. | Greenfield - RED Garden Land - AMBER Brownfield - GREEN |

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| <p>Suitability Conclusion</p> |
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Assessment of Availability

| Topic | Criteria | Comment | Assessment |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Legal | Are there any known legal issues? | Legal issues such as multiple land ownerships or ransom strips may affect the site coming forward for development in the short term. | Yes - AMBER No - GREEN |
| Ownership | Has the owner of the site been identified? | This could determine when the site comes forward for development | No - RED Yes - GREEN |
| Ownership Intentions | Is there an intention by the landowner to sell and/or a developer to bring forward this site? | This could determine when the site comes forward for development | No - AMBER Yes - GREEN |
| Use | Is the site in current use? | Sites that are currently in use are less likely to come forward for development in the short-term as the current occupier will need to be relocated. There may also be less in-principle objection to vacant sites coming forward for development. | Occupied - RED Vacant - AMBER Derelict / undeveloped - GREEN |

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| Availability Conclusion |
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Assessment of Achievability

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| Achievability Conclusion | | |
| Short-term (0-5 years) | Medium-term (6-10 years) | Long-term (11-15 years) |

Overall Assessment of Deliverability

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