

# **Shropshire Council**

## **Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)**

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# Introduction

## Background

- 1.1. The Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) is a technical assessment of the suitability; availability; and achievability (including viability) of land for housing and employment development. As such, the SLAA incorporates the process formerly known as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 1.2. The SLAA represents a key component of the evidence base which will support the Shropshire Council Local Plan Review. It will also contribute towards informing Shropshire Council's approach to the delivery of development, particularly housing and employment development; across Shropshire (all references to Shropshire within this document exclude the Telford and Wrekin Council area).
- 1.3. *Please Note: Whilst the SLAA is an important technical document, **it does not allocate land for development or include all locations where future housing and employment growth will occur.** The SLAA ultimately provides information which will be investigated further through the plan-making process.*
- 1.4. *Furthermore, the SLAA is a very strategic assessment of an individual sites suitability, availability and achievability (including viability). It is **not intended to be an exhaustive exercise** and has not been informed by a direct assessment from officers from other relevant services areas such as development management; heritage and design; natural environment; public protection; highways; or flood risk management. It has also not been informed by a landscape or visual impact assessment; viability study; assessment of protected species; flood risk or water cycle study; or screened through Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Therefore, further constraints may become apparent during a more comprehensive site assessment exercise, such as during the process of considering sites for allocations or considering a Planning Application on a site”.*
- 1.5. *Any conclusions reached about the suitability, availability and achievability (including viability) of a site for residential or employment development within the SLAA are not intended to imply that Shropshire Council will or will not grant planning permission for residential or economic development upon a site. All Planning Applications for housing and economic development will continue to be considered against the appropriate policies in the Local Plan and have regard to any other material considerations.*
- 1.6. *The inclusion of potential housing and economic development sites within the study does not preclude them from being considered for other purposes. Similarly, the identified boundaries of sites are based on the information available at the time of the assessment and may be subject to change for the purpose of a planning application or development plan allocation.*
- 1.7. *References to the suitability of a site for open market residential development or residential development within this assessment relate to open market residential development which provides an appropriate affordable housing contribution at the relevant prevailing rate; assume an appropriate design and layout reflecting site constraints/opportunities present and compliant with Local Plan policies; and provides appropriate contributions to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).*
- 1.8. *References to the suitability of a site for employment development within this assessment relate to employment development of a use class appropriate to the site and its setting.*
- 1.9. *Site assessments undertaken within the SLAA are proportional, with the greatest detail provided for those sites that are not subject to clear and significant constraints and are located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate*

location for sustainable development. This has been informed by the Shropshire Council: Hierarchy of Settlements Assessment:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/evidence-base/>

- 1.10. *Estimations of capacity, lead-in times and delivery-rates within this assessment are based on best available information and circumstances or assumptions may change.*
- 1.11. *The base date for this assessment is the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, sites submitted for consideration after this date will not be included within this assessment.*

## **National Policy**

- 1.12. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifies that Local Planning Authorities should assess the availability; suitability; and achievability (including viability) of land for development, and its ability to contribute towards meeting needs for the duration of the plan period.
- 1.13. Specifically, paragraph 67 of the NPPF states that *“Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a SHLAA. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:*
- a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and*
  - b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan”.*<sup>1</sup>
- 1.14. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF states *“significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”.*<sup>2</sup>
- 1.15. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) provides further detail, supplementing the NPPF. It advocates a concurrent review of the potential of land for housing and employment development, to ensure an integrated approach. Specifically, it states *“The NPPF identifies the advantages of carrying out land assessments for housing and economic development as part of the same exercise, in order that sites may be allocated for the use which is most appropriate”*<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.16. The NPPG also provides a methodology for undertaking a SLAA. It identifies the key stages as:
- *Identifying sites and broad locations with potential for development;*
  - *Assessing their development potential;*
  - *Assessing their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability)*<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.17. This assessment methodology has been utilised as the basis for this assessment in Shropshire.

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<sup>1</sup>CLG, (2018), The NPPF - Paragraph 67

<sup>2</sup> CLG, (2018), The NPPF - Paragraph 80

<sup>3</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 001, Reference ID 3-001-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014

## ***Local Policy***

- 1.18. The Shropshire Council Local Plan consists of the adopted Core Strategy (2011); the adopted Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (2015); and any adopted formal Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.19. The Shropshire Core Strategy (2011) sets out the Council's vision, strategic objectives and broad spatial strategy to guide future development and growth in Shropshire to 2026.
- 1.20. The SAMDev Plan (2015) sets out proposals for the use of land and policies to guide future development in order to help to deliver the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy for the period up to 2026.
- 1.21. Shropshire Council is currently progressing a Local Plan Review. This SLAA forms part of the evidence base for this partial review.

## ***Promotion of Sites***

- 1.22. SLAA site data for Shropshire is stored in a 'live' database. Sites can be submitted to Shropshire Council for inclusion within its SLAA database at any time, using the SLAA Site Proforma available on the Shropshire Council website.
- 1.23. The SLAA Site Proforma allows identification of:
  - General information on the site and its location;
  - Information on the sites ownership;
  - The sites suitability for various forms of development;
  - The sites availability for various forms of development; and
  - The site achievability (including viability) for various forms of development.

## ***'Call for Sites'***

- 1.24. A 'Call for Sites' is a request to private; public; and voluntary sector bodies and individuals to submit potential development sites for consideration within the SLAA. Shropshire Council undertook a 'Call for Sites' exercise alongside the consultation on its Issues and Strategic Options Document of the ongoing Local Plan Review between Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 and Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- 1.25. This exercise was publicised on the Shropshire Council website; within notifications issued to consultees on the Planning Policy consultation database; within all libraries across Shropshire; and within Shropshire Council's main office buildings. Consultation responses were accepted both by email and post. During this exercise around 850 sites were received.
- 1.26. Further sites were also submitted for consideration during the Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development Consultation, which occurred between Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017.
- 1.27. Numerous sites have also been submitted outside the 'Call for Sites' and Local Plan Consultations using the SLAA Proforma available on the Shropshire Council website.

## ***Reviews and Reports***

- 1.28. Shropshire Council undertakes and publishes the results of SLAA assessments periodically. Therefore, whilst the SLAA site data is stored in a 'live' database and sites can be submitted at any time, it will only be incorporated into a SLAA review, if received

prior to the base date of the review itself. If a site is received after the base date for the SLAA review, it will be recorded within the SLAA 'live' database, for consideration within a future SLAA review.

1.29. The base date for this SLAA assessment is the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### ***Purpose of this Report***

1.30. This report summarises the methodology and conclusions reached by Shropshire Council in its review of strategic land available in Shropshire. The key aspects of this assessment are:

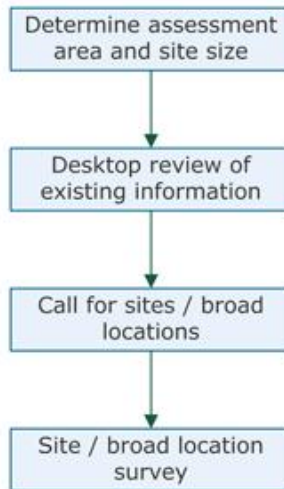
- A summary of the methodology utilised to undertake the assessment of SLAA sites;
- Provision of details of the sites considered within the SLAA database, as at the base date for the report. Including:
  - Summary details of each site;
  - A map of the location of each site;
  - A summary of the assessment of the suitability of each site for development;
  - A summary of the availability of each site;
  - A summary of the achievability (including viability) of each site for development; and
  - A notional development capacity that could be delivered on each site, based on standard assumptions.
- Calculation of the potential for the delivery of housing on windfall sites in Shropshire. *Windfall development is development delivered in the plan period on unidentified sites or on sites that fall below the minimum threshold to be included in the SLAA); and*
- Provision of an indicative trajectory of anticipated development and consideration of associated risks.

## 2. The SLAA Methodology

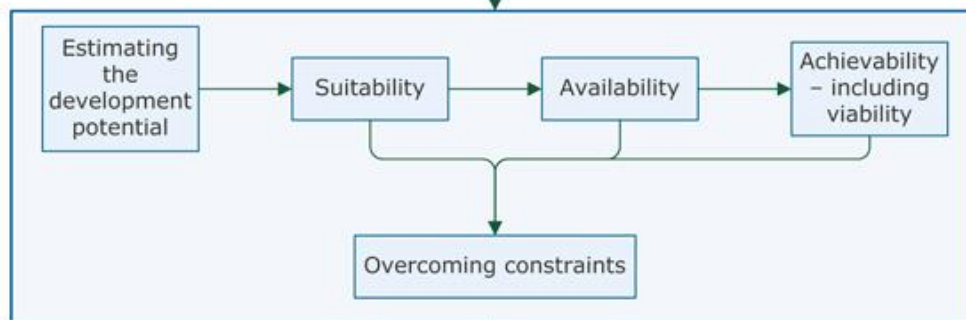
### The Process

2.1. The diagram below identifies the key stages in the SLAA:

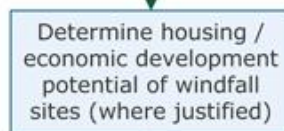
#### Stage 1 - Site / broad location identification



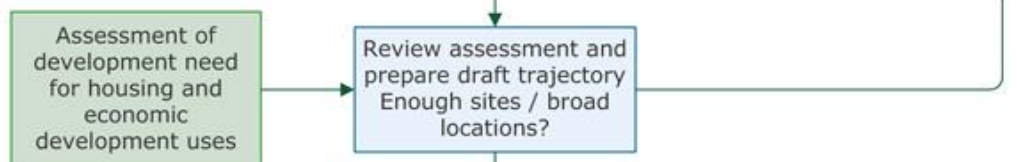
#### Stage 2 - Site / broad location assessment



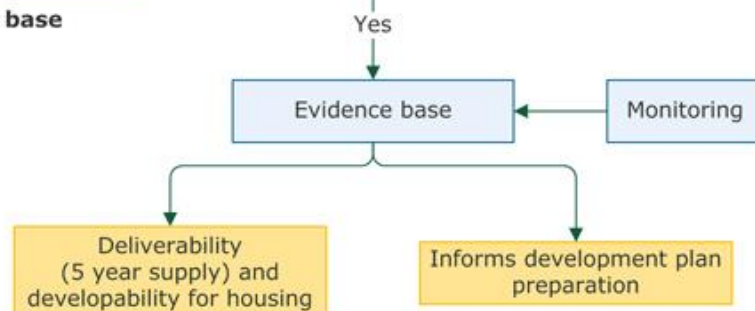
#### Stage 3 - Windfall assessment



#### Stage 4 - Assessment review



#### Stage 5 - Final evidence base





### 3. Stage 1: Site Identification

#### Introduction

- 3.1. Stage 1 of the assessment sought to identify:
1. The assessment area;
  2. Site size thresholds; and
  3. Sites and broad locations for inclusion within the SLAA assessment.

#### Assessment Area

- 3.2. The assessment area for the SLAA is the Shropshire Council administrative area, which has been defined as a self-contained housing market area.
- 3.3. However, recognising that Shropshire is a very large and diverse area, site assessments undertaken are proportional, with the greatest detail provided for those sites that are not subject to clear and significant constraints, located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development. This has been informed by the Shropshire Council: Hierarchy of Settlements Assessment: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/evidence-base/>
- 3.4. This approach is consistent with the NPPG – HELAA, which states “Site surveys should be proportionate to the detail required for a robust appraisal. For example, the assessment will need to be more detailed where sites are considered to be realistic candidates for development”.<sup>4</sup>

#### Settlement Hierarchy

- 3.5. The table below summarises the settlement hierarchy proposed for Shropshire within the ongoing Local Plan Review:

<b>Settlement Type</b>	<b>Settlement</b>	
<b>Strategic Centre:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shrewsbury</li> </ul>	
<b>Principal Centres:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridgnorth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oswestry</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludlow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whitchurch</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market Drayton</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Centres:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albrighton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ellesmere</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bishop’s Castle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highley</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broseley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much Wenlock</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Stretton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifnal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleobury Mortimer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wem</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craven Arms</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Hubs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alveley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinstock</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baschurch/Newtown/Prescot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hodnet/Hodnet Heath</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bayston Hill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kinnerley</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bicton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knockin</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bomere Heath</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Llanymynech</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brockton (Worthen with Shelve)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longden</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bucknell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minsterley</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burford</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nesscliffe</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chirbury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pant/Pen-y-Coed</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 014, Reference ID 3-014-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014



Settlement Type	Settlement	
	• Clee Hill/The Knowle	• Pontesbury
	• Clive	• Prees / Prees Wood
	• Clun	• Ruyton XI Towns
	• Cosford/Donington	• Shawbury
	• Cressage	• St Martins/Ifton Heath
	• Cross Houses	• Trefonen
	• Ditton Priors	• West Felton
	• Dorrington	• Weston Rhyn/Preesgweene
	• Ford	• Whittington
	• Gobowen/Rhewl	• Woore/Irelands Cross
	• Hadnall	• Worthen (Worthen with Shelve)
	• Hanwood	

### Site Size Thresholds

3.6. The SLAA considers sites and broad locations for residential or economic development where they are capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings or 500m<sup>2</sup> floorspace of economic development. Generally, sites of less than 0.2 hectares are unlikely to achieve these thresholds.

### Types of Sites

3.7. The types of site considered within this assessment and examples of where data was sourced from is summarised below:

Type of Site	Examples of Data Sources
<b>Existing housing and economic development allocations within the Local Plan*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shropshire Council Local Plan</li> <li>• Adopted and emerging Neighbourhood Plans</li> </ul>
<p><i>*Where land has been allocated for residential or residential-led mixed use development within the current Local Plan, their suitability, availability and achievability (including viability) is considered when determining their deliverability<sup>#</sup> and developability<sup>##</sup> within the delivery framework that informs the Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply. Therefore, these sites have not been re-assessed within the SLAA.</i></p> <p><i>Similarly, where sites have been allocated for employment or employment-led mixed use development, their suitability, availability and achievability (including viability) is considered when determining their deliverability<sup>#</sup> and developability<sup>##</sup> within the delivery framework which informs the Shropshire employment land reservoir. However, to ensure robustness, those employment allocations which have not been subject to a Planning Application will be re-considered within the SLAA exercise to determine if alternative uses may be appropriate.</i></p>	
<b>Planning Permissions for housing and economic development that are unimplemented or under construction**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shropshire Council housing delivery framework</li> <li>• Planning Application records</li> </ul>
<p><i>**These sites have not been subject to assessment within the SLAA, as their suitability, availability and achievability (including viability) is considered when determining if sites are deliverable<sup>#</sup> or developable<sup>##</sup> within the delivery frameworks which informs the Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply and reservoir of employment land. Where a site with Planning Permission is considered deliverable or developable it will be included within the housing or employment trajectories for Shropshire, as appropriate.</i></p>	
<b>Planning Applications that have been refused or withdrawn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Application records</li> </ul>

Type of Site	Examples of Data Sources
<b>Land in the Local Authority ownership and other public sector owned land</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Authority records</li> <li>• Call for sites</li> </ul>
<b>Vacant, derelict or under-utilised land and buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for Sites</li> <li>• Shropshire Council housing delivery framework</li> <li>• Planning Application records</li> </ul>
<b>Business requirements and aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for Sites</li> <li>• Enquiries received by local planning authority</li> <li>• Active engagement with sector</li> </ul>
<b>Sites adjoining villages, rural settlements and in rural locations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites identified through previous SHLAA exercises</li> <li>• Call for sites</li> <li>• Local Plan</li> <li>• Adopted and emerging Neighbourhood Plans</li> <li>• Planning application records</li> </ul>
<b>Large scale redevelopment/redesign of existing residential or economic areas, potential urban extensions and new free-standing settlements.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites identified through previous SHLAA exercises</li> <li>• Call for sites</li> <li>• Local Plan</li> <li>• Adopted and emerging Neighbourhood Plans</li> <li>• Planning application records</li> </ul>

*#The NPPF specifies that “to be considered deliverable, sites for housing 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. Sites that are not major development and sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (e.g. they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans). Sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified on a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years”.<sup>5</sup>*

*###“To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged”.<sup>5</sup>*

3.8. Using the above sources, in excess of 2,000 sites were identified for inclusion within the SLAA.

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<sup>5</sup>CLG (2018), NPPF

## 4. Stage 2: Site Assessment

- 4.1. Stage 2 of the assessment represented a proportional appraisal of the development potential; suitability; availability; and achievability (including viability) of the sites and broad locations identified through Stage 1 of the assessment. As these factors are inter-related, assessment of each site against each factor was carried out in parallel.
- 4.2. The assessments undertaken were proportional, with the greatest focus on those sites that are not subject to clear and significant constraints and are located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development. This has been informed by the Shropshire Council: Hierarchy of Settlements Assessment: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/evidence-base/>
- 4.3. This approach is consistent with the NPPG – HELAA, which states “Site surveys should be proportionate to the detail required for a robust appraisal. For example, the assessment will need to be more detailed where sites are considered to be realistic candidates for development”.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Assessing development potential***

- 4.4. Development potential is the consideration of a sites capacity for various forms of development. This should be informed by current and emerging planning policy.
- 4.5. For the purpose of this assessment, standard assumptions have been applied to calculate development potential. Specifically:
  - Residential capacity = 30 dwellings per hectare, except for the limited number of small sites of less than 0.2 hectares which are considered capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings or 500m<sup>2</sup> floorspace of economic development.
  - Employment capacity = 40% of the total site area.
- 4.6. Where a site is accepted within the SLAA (considered suitable, available, achievable and viable), a more refined development potential has been provided, accounting for obvious constraints to a sites capacity. However, given the strategic nature of the SLAA exercise, the potential for further constraints to be identified as part of a more comprehensive review must be recognised.
- 4.7. As it is recognised that the standard assumptions/indicative development potential represent a starting point for assessing the capacity of a site. They will be reviewed as sites progress through the site allocations process, which will involve consideration of any information submitted in relation to the site; relevant existing development schemes; consideration of surrounding land uses and users; consideration of the impact on surrounding constraints; consideration of best practice guidance and Government policy on site densities; and most importantly sites specific characteristics and constraints.

### ***Assessing suitability***

- 4.8. Suitability is the consideration of the appropriateness of a use or mix of uses on a site. However, it is not an assessment of what should or will be allocated/developed on a site.
- 4.9. The SLAA includes a very strategic assessment of a sites suitability. As such it is not intended to be an exhaustive exercise and has not been informed by a direct

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<sup>6</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 014, Reference ID 3-014-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014

assessment from officers from other relevant services areas such as development management; heritage and design; natural environment; public protection; highways; or flood risk management. It has also not been informed by a landscape or visual impact assessment; viability study; assessment of protected species; flood risk or water cycle study; or screened through Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Therefore, further constraints may become apparent during a more comprehensive site assessment exercise, such as during the process of considering sites for allocations or considering a Planning Application on a site”.

4.10. Determination of a sites strategic suitability was undertaken through consideration of numerous factors, including:

- The sites consistency with the Local Plan.
- The sites location and surroundings, including proximity to the development boundary/built form.
- The sites boundaries and the extent to which these boundaries are defensible.
- Site specific factors, including physical limitations to the development, such as:
  - The topography of the site;
  - The sites ground conditions;
  - The ability to access the site;
  - Flood risk to the site or its immediate access;
  - The agricultural land quality of the site;
  - Hazardous risks, pollution or contamination of the site;
  - Whether the site has overhead or underground infrastructure, such as pylons, water/gas pipes and electricity cables which may impact on development/levels of development;
  - Other physical constraints, which may impact on development/levels of development.
- The potential impact on natural environment assets; heritage assets and geological features on and in proximity of the site\*. Including consideration of factors such as:
  - The impact on internationally and nationally designated sites and assets;
  - The impact on important trees and woodland, including ancient woodland; and
  - The impact on public open spaces.
- Whether the site is located within the Green Belt.
- Legal covenants affecting the site.
- Market/industry and community requirements in the area.

*\*Historic environment assets considered for the purpose of this exercise were: Conservation Areas, Registered Battlefields; World Heritage Sites and their buffers; Scheduled Monuments; Registered Parks and Gardens; and Listed Buildings. Sites were considered to be in proximity of an asset where they were within 300m of the site.*

*\*Natural environment assets considered for the purpose of this exercise and the distance used to determine where a site was in proximity of an asset were: Trees subject to TPO Protection; (30m); Veteran Trees (30m); Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (50m); Local Nature Reserves (100m); Local Wildlife Sites (250m); National Nature Reserves (500m); Sites of Special Scientific Interest (500m); Ancient Woodland (500m); Special Areas of Conservation (1km); Special Protection Areas (1km); and Ramsar Sites (1km).*

4.11. Reflecting upon the above factors:

- If following the very strategic assessment of the suitability of a site it is concluded that it has **no known constraints or restrictions** that would prevent development for a particular use or mix of uses, or these constraints could potentially be suitably

overcome through mitigation\*, then it was viewed as being **currently suitable – subject to further detailed assessment** for the particular use or mix of uses.

- If following the very strategic assessment of the suitability of a site it is concluded that a site does not currently comply with the Local Plan\*, but is located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development **and** is not known to have other constraints or restrictions that would prevent development for a particular use or mix of uses, or any known constraints could potentially be suitably overcome through mitigation\*\*, then it was viewed as being **not currently suitable but future potential – subject to further detailed assessment**.
- If following the very strategic assessment of the suitability of a site it is concluded that a site is subject to known constraints and it is considered that such constraints cannot be suitably overcome through mitigation, then it was viewed as being **not suitable**.
- If following the very strategic assessment of the suitability of a site it is concluded that a site does not currently comply with the Local Plan, but is not located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development, then it was viewed as being **not suitable**

*\*As this is a very strategic assessment, where sites are currently contrary to Local Plan policy but are located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development, no judgement is made about whether such a change to policy would be appropriate, this is the role of the Local Plan Review.*

*\*\*As this is a very strategic assessment, where sites are subject to known constraints and it is considered that the constraints present could potentially be suitably overcome through mitigation, further detailed assessment will be required to confirm if such mitigation is effective and the impact of this mitigation on the developable area.*

## **Assessing availability**

- 4.12. The NPPG – HELAA defines availability as follows: *“A site is considered available for development, when, on the best information available (confirmed by the call for sites and information from land owners and legal searches where appropriate), there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners. This will often mean that the land is controlled by a developer or landowner who has expressed an intention to develop, or the landowner has expressed an intention to sell”.*<sup>7</sup>
- 4.13. Reflecting this guidance, sites were generally considered to be available where they had been actively promoted for the relevant use during:
- The ‘Call for Sites’ exercise.
  - The ongoing Local Plan Review
  - Preparation of the current Local Plan (Core Strategy and SAMDev Plan).
- 4.14. Or where:
- There has been a recent Planning Application (whether successful or not) for the relevant use.
  - Officers have particular knowledge about a sites availability.
- 4.15. Shropshire Council has applied the precautionary principle within its assessment of site availability and any uncertainty about availability is reflected within the assessment.

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<sup>7</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 020, Reference ID 3-020-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014



## **Assessing achievability (including viability)**

- 4.16. The NPPG – HELAA defines achievability as follows “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. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period”.<sup>8</sup>
- 4.17. As this SLAA is a very strategic assessment, Shropshire Council has used very general assumptions to inform its assessment of the achievability and viability of a site, specifically:

### **Residential development**

- 4.18. For a scheme to be ‘viable’ it must make financial sense to both the developer and the landowner, within the constraints imposed by the market; planning policies; and any required infrastructure obligations. It is within this context that the NPPF defines a viable scheme as one that provides competitive returns to a willing landowner and developer.
- 4.19. Shropshire’s geographical location and rural character make it a desirable place to live. Like many other Counties, Shropshire has a diverse housing market. However, despite this within Shropshire residential development is generally considered viable, unless there are any known site-specific issues which impact upon viability.
- 4.20. Consequently, residential development upon a site is generally considered achievable and viable unless there are site specific issues evident.

### **Employment development**

- 4.21. Shropshire has a diverse economy, reflecting both the agricultural base of the countryside and the diverse industrial/commercial history of its settlements. The main employment areas are located within Shrewsbury and the Market Towns where the majority of additional demand and provision is likely to arise. Outside of these areas new employment development will generally be in response to a specific need or business use.
- 4.22. For the purpose of this exercise, where a site is actively promoted for employment use within a settlement or a specific occupier is apparent for a site in a rural location, it is assumed that the site is viable for employment development. In other locations where viability is less certain the viability of the site will be identified as unknown.

### **Viability Assessment**

- 4.23. The documented approach is considered accurate and proportional. However, to support the Local Plan Review a separate viability assessment will be undertaken.

## **Conclusion**

- 4.24. Once the assessment of a sites development potential; suitability; availability; and achievability (including viability) was undertaken and conclusions reached on each of these categories, an overall conclusion was reached.
- 4.25. Appendices A - F of this document provide a summary of the assessment undertaken for each of the sites included within the SLAA. Specifically:
- Appendix A summarises the assessment of those sites in and around the Strategic, Principal and Key Centres in Shropshire.

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<sup>8</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 021, Reference ID 3-021-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014

- Appendix B summarises the assessment of those sites in and around the proposed Community Hubs in Shropshire.
- Appendix C summarises the assessment of those sites in the wider rural area.
- Appendix D summarises the refined residential capacity and delivery trajectory of accepted sites.
- Appendix E summarises the refined employment capacity and delivery trajectory of accepted sites (where they are not also accepted for residential development).
- Appendix F consists of an interactive map illustrating the location, site boundaries and overall residential conclusion reached on each site included within the SLAA, available at:  
<https://shropshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3fdc4125b78641c2a5c7a1c48d77d504>
- Appendix G consists of an interactive map illustrating the location, site boundaries and overall employment conclusion reached on each site included within the SLAA, available at:  
<https://shropshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=919ace4dac2a4d27adf1293f8e509417>



## 5. Stage 3: Windfall Assessment

- 5.1. A windfall site is one which has not been identified within the Local Plan. Paragraph 70 of the NPPF specifies that “*where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area*”.<sup>9</sup>
- 5.2. In Shropshire, small-scale windfall sites of less than five dwellings have always represented a significant component of the housing land supply in Shropshire, and it is anticipated that this will remain the case.
- 5.3. The current Local Plan recognises the importance of windfall development in Shropshire and makes allowances for appropriately located windfall sites (where they accord with the policies within the Local Plan) and it is expected that this approach will continue through the Local Plan Review. This supports the conclusion that windfall development does and will continue to represent an important part of the housing land supply.
- 5.4. Furthermore, the average completion rate on all small-scale windfall sites of less than 5 dwellings over the plan period thus far (2006/07-2016/17), is some 382 dwellings per annum. The actual rate for 2016/17 was some 330 dwellings. This is summarised within the table below:

Year	Total dwellings completed on windfall sites of less than 5 dwellings
2006/07	493
2007/08	558
2008/09	404
2009/10	330
2010/11	345
2011/12	308
2012/13	312
2013/14	293
2014/15	433
2015/16	401
2016/17	330
<b>Average</b>	<b>382</b>

- 5.5. These rates of delivery again support the conclusion that windfall development does and will continue to represent an important part of the housing land supply.
- 5.6. The importance of small scale windfall housing in Shropshire is not surprising given the nature of the area. Specifically, Shropshire is a large rural County containing the strategic centre of Shrewsbury, 16 other smaller settlements identified as principal or key centres; and hundreds of other villages and hamlets.
- 5.7. Consequently, there is a constant and significant recycling of previously developed land; significant numbers of infill developments; high numbers of conversions of barns and other rural buildings; and high uptake of affordable housing under the ‘build your own’ affordable housing scheme (supported by Shropshire Council within Policies CS5 and CS11 of the Core Strategy; MD7a of the SAMDev Plan; and supplementary guidance within the Type and Affordability of Housing SPD).

<sup>9</sup>CLG, (2018), NPPF – Paragraph 70.

## 6. Stage 4: Assessment Review

6.1. Following the completion of the assessment of sites; broad locations; and windfall allowance, an indicative trajectory can be produced to set out how much housing and the amount of economic development that can be provided, and at what point in the future.

### **Residential**

6.2. The table below provides an indicative housing trajectory for Shropshire over the proposed Local Plan Review period from 2016 – 2036. This table includes completions already achieved in 2016/17; sites with Planning Permission as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; sites with Prior Approval as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; sites with a Resolution to Grant Planning Permission as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; sites allocated within the current Local Plan without Planning Permission as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; emerging affordable housing sites identified as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; sites accepted within the SLAA; and an appropriate windfall allowance:

Time Period	Dwellings								
	Completions*	Sites with Planning Permission*	Sites with Prior Approval*	Sites with a Resolution to Grant*	Allocated in current Local Plan*	Emerging affordable housing sites*	Accepted SLAA Sites	Windfall sites**	Total
<b>2016/17</b>	1,910	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,910
<b>2017/18-2021/22</b>	N/A	10,056	140	201	2,155	78	343	598	13,571
<b>2022/23-2026/27</b>	N/A	1,218	0	16	2,015	0	697	1,495	5,441
<b>2027/28-2032/33</b>	N/A	51	0	0	858	0	158	1,495	2,562
<b>2033/34-2035/36</b>	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	897	897
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>11,325</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>5,028</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>4,485</b>	<b>24,381</b>

\*Information sourced from the Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply available on the Shropshire Council website at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/monitoring-and-site-assessment/five-year-housing-land-supply-statement/>. The base date for this information is the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

\*\*To ensure robustness, only a very modest small-scale windfall allowance of 299 dwellings per annum has been applied, significantly less than the average and any individual years rate of delivery during the current Local Plan period. To add further robustness, this has also not been included for the first three years of the trajectory (2017/18 to 2019/2020).

6.3. A more detailed housing delivery framework for Shropshire is provided and updated annually within the Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement, available on the Shropshire Council website at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/monitoring-and-site-assessment/five-year-housing-land-supply-statement/>

6.4. The Local Plan Review will seek to identify further appropriate residential site allocations and continue to support small and large-scale windfall development on appropriate sites consistent with the Local Plan. These sites will contribute to the housing land supply and housing delivery in Shropshire. As such there is confidence that the housing need in Shropshire can be delivered.

## ***Employment***

- 6.5. The majority of the sites accepted within the SLAA (considered suitable, available, achievable and viable) for employment development (excluding sites accepted for both residential and employment sites) are existing employment allocations that have not been subject to a Planning Application. As such, these sites are considered within the employment delivery framework and employment land reservoir provided within the Shropshire Council Authority Monitoring Report, available on the Shropshire Council website at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/monitoring-and-site-assessment/authority-monitoring-report-amr/>
- 6.6. The Local Plan Review will also seek to identify further appropriate employment site allocations and continue to support appropriate windfall employment development on appropriate sites consistent with the Local Plan. As such there is confidence that sufficient land is available to deliver the employment necessary to achieve growth aspirations and balance future housing growth.

## 7. Stage 5: Final Evidence Base

- 7.1. This stage of the assessment involves the production of the SLAA report, to provide a summary of the assessment undertaken. This document represents this SLAA Report.
- 7.2. The SLAA report provides a standard set of outputs to ensure consistency, accessibility and transparency. These outputs include:
- A list of all sites and broad locations considered.
  - Where appropriate, a summary of the assessment of each site and broad locations suitability; availability; and achievability (including viability).
  - Where appropriate, a summary of the assessment of the conclusion reached for each site and broad location.
  - An interactive map showing the location and overall conclusion reached for each of these sites and broad locations.
  - An indicative housing trajectory of anticipated development and consideration of associated risks.

*Please Note:* The assessments undertaken were proportional, with the greatest focus on those sites that are not subject to clear and significant constraints and are located within or in proximity of a settlement potentially considered an appropriate location for sustainable development. This has been informed by the Shropshire Council: Hierarchy of Settlements Assessment: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/evidence-base/>

This approach is consistent with the NPPG – HELAA, which states “Site surveys should be proportionate to the detail required for a robust appraisal. For example, the assessment will need to be more detailed where sites are considered to be realistic candidates for development”.<sup>10</sup>

### **Monitoring**

- 7.3. Consistent with the recommendations within the NPPG – HELAA, assessment of sites will be kept up-to-date as part of the annual monitoring process within the Shropshire Council assessment of its Five Year Housing Land Supply and its Authority Monitoring Report.

### **Review**

- 7.4. Shropshire Council undertakes and publishes the results of SLAA assessments periodically.
- 7.5. SLAA sites can be submitted at any time and will be stored in the ‘live’ SLAA database. However, they will only be incorporated into a SLAA review, if received prior to the base date of the review itself. If a site is received after the base date for the SLAA review, it will be recorded within the SLAA ‘live’ database, for consideration within a future SLAA review.

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<sup>10</sup>CLG, NPPG – HELAA, Paragraph 014, Reference ID 3-014-20140306, Last updated 06/03/2014

## **Appendix A: Summary of the SLAA assessment of sites in and around the Strategic, Principal and Key Centres**

## **Appendix B: Summary of the SLAA assessment of sites in and around the proposed Community Hubs**

## **Appendix C: Summary of the SLAA assessment of sites in the wider rural area**



## **Appendix D: Summary of the refined residential capacity of accepted sites\***

\*Where a site is accepted within the SLAA (considered suitable, available, achievable and viable), a more refined indicative residential development potential has been provided, accounting for obvious constraints to a sites capacity. However, given the strategic nature of the SLAA exercise, the potential for further constraints to be identified as part of a more comprehensive review must be recognised.

## **Appendix E: Summary of the refined employment capacity of accepted sites\***

\*Where a site is accepted within the SLAA (considered suitable, available, achievable and viable) for employment development (excluding sites accepted for both residential and employment sites) a more refined indicative employment development potential has been provided, accounting for obvious constraints to a sites capacity. However, given the strategic nature of the SLAA exercise, the potential for further constraints to be identified as part of a more comprehensive review must be recognised.

**Appendix F: Interactive map illustrating the location, site boundaries and overall residential conclusion reached on each site included within the SLAA, available at:**

<https://shropshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3fdc4125b78641c2a5c7a1c48d77d504>

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