

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Draft Methodology 2018

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Island Plan Core Strategy (including Waste and Minerals) and Development Management Development Plan Document, was adopted in March 2012. The Isle of Wight Council is now proposing to replace the Island Plan Core Strategy, the proposed Area Action Plans and the proposed Rural Area Plan with a single Island Planning Strategy. This strategy will be a key document in the delivery of the council's Regeneration Programme and Strategy.
- 1.2 To underpin the new Island Planning Strategy the council is required to have a robust evidence base. The housing and economic land availability assessments (HELAA) are studies that form part of this evidence base. They help identify potential sites that may be deliverable¹ and developable² for new housing and employment over a period that looks forward over the next 15 years (or the period of the Local Plan which is anticipated as 2035).
- 1.3 To address this requirement the council intends to comprehensively update its housing element of the HELAA known as the strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA).
- 1.4 This update will include a comprehensive call for sites and a revision to the existing methodology in assessing potential housing sites submitted through the call for sites process. This is to ensure the methodology remains robust and fit for purpose.

2.0 About Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments

- 2.1 Following updated Government guidance the SHLAA has become an assessment for both housing and economic sites and is now known as housing and economic land availability assessment (HELAA). This is an assessment of land in a specific area that is likely to be available and capable of development for new housing or employment within a certain timeframe. The period covered by HELAA is typically 15 years (or the period of the Local Plan), beginning from the following April.
- 2.2 The HELAA has two purposes, first, it identifies suitable sites with potential for housing and/ or employment and second, it assesses the five year supply of deliverable housing sites. This second aspect is a key requirement under national policy and also enables the local authority to set out a housing trajectory for the plan period.
- 2.3 The assessment of sites for new housing and employment or the inclusion within the HELAA report does not indicate that the sites will be allocated within the Island Planning Strategy or be granted planning permission. The HELAA instead as stated forms part of the evidence base to inform plan-making. Any sites deemed suitable, available and achievable by the HELAA process will still be subject to public consultation, sustainability appraisal and independent examination if they are taken forward through the Local Plan preparation process. However, the HELAA may be a material consideration in the determination of planning proposals.
- 2.4 In 2015 the council undertook an Employment Land Study to establish and understand the employment needs of the council. In this study, land was identified and proposed for employment uses and safeguarding. It is considered that this study is robust and will form the economic part of the HELAA process.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance: Housing and economic land availability assessment (March 2014) paragraph 3-031

² Planning Practice Guidance: Housing and economic land availability assessment (March 2014) paragraph 3-032

2.5 The council has therefore concentrated on the housing part of the HELAA, referred to in this document as the SHLAA.

3.0 2018 SHLAA Update

3.1 A comprehensive call for sites was launched by the Council on 20 October 2017 and closed 4 December 2017, details of which are set out below.

3.2 The previous SHLAA assessment methodology has been reviewed and amended to ensure it remains robust and fit for purpose.

3.3 All sites will be assessed or reassessed as appropriate using the updated methodology to determine their suitability, achievability and deliverability.

Process

Call for sites 2017/2018

3.4 To encourage as many people as possible to put potential sites forward the Council:

- Updated its SHLAA webpage – www.iwight.gov.uk/SHLAA
- Uploaded a new specific 'Call for Sites' webpage www.iwight.gov.uk/callforsites with details and downloadable form
- Sent press releases including a 'reminder' to the local press – all of which resulted in articles in the local paper
- Included the press release on its own website, as a page, a headline and as a link/story on social media including Facebook
- Contacted elected Members and all town and parish councils
- Undertook a desk top survey of potential sites³
- Advised the Agents and Architects Forum
- Sent letters/emails to all agents and landowners of sites submitted in previous SHLAAs
- Reviewed existing allocations and planning permission where relevant

3.5 Agents and landowners of all previously submitted sites⁴ were contacted to ensure the sites were still available and appropriate for consideration. This allowed further information to be submitted and changes of circumstance to be updated if relevant. Where no response was received a reminder letter/email was sent. If there was still no response sites were removed from consideration as there was no certainty that the site was still available⁵ for consideration.

3.6 All new sites were submitted with a map readily identifying the land being put forward and a completed standardised form detailing relevant information. All previously submitted sites were required to proactively re-register to reconfirm availability. This enabled updated information to

³ Resulted in letters to a number of potential sites

⁴ All previously submitted sites include those that had previously been considered, deliverable, developable, constrained or removed in previous SHLAAs.

⁵ A site is considered available for development, when, on the best information available (confirmed by a call for sites and information from land owners and legal searches), there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems.

be included for example, changes to land ownership, site boundaries or overcoming potential site constraints.

4.0 Methodology – How the sites will be assessed

- 4.1 The purpose of this methodology is to give a robust evidence base to the likely levels of development on the Island in the plan period.
- 4.2 All sites will be assessed against the standard methodology and be assessed for their suitability, availability and achievability.
- 4.3 This assessment will also determine whether sites are considered deliverable, developable, currently not developable or currently not suitable for housing development. The definitions for each are:
 - **Deliverable⁶** – These are sites that are available now, offering a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect of being delivered within five years.
 - **Developable⁷** – These sites offer a suitable location for development and offer a reasonable prospect that they will be available to be developed from years 6 to 10 and years 11 to 15 of the plan period.
 - **Currently not developable** – These sites are considered to have a constraint that is currently not able to be overcome. In most instances the constraint is fundamental at this time, for example, the location not being appropriate. In some instances however, it may be as a result of access issues or landscape concerns or similar that subject to more information or detail may be able to be overcome.
 - **Currently not suitable** – These sites are considered not appropriate or suitable for development at this time. In these instances sites have not met the assessment criteria to be considered beyond Stage A and B of the methodology. Sites discounted at Stage A or B are generally those that are wholly located within an environmental designation, high agricultural classification or flood risk area. In some instances sites have been discounted because the site or resultant area will not be capable of delivering 5 or more homes.
- 4.4 This assessment will be reviewed on a regular basis, potentially as part of the annual monitoring report to support the updating of the housing trajectory and the five-year supply of deliverable sites. It may also review sites that are currently considered not developable to ascertain whether there is new information or a change in circumstances that alters the site's conclusion to deliverable or developable.

Initial registering of sites

- 4.5 Once a site has been submitted or confirmed as available all sites will be acknowledged with a standard response.
- 4.6 All sites will be given a new reference number and will be inputted into a new access database. Sites will be plotted onto a GIS layer and checked for updates where they relate to re-registered sites. Historic information will be cross-referenced as appropriate.

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance: Housing and economic land availability assessment (March 2014) paragraph 3-031

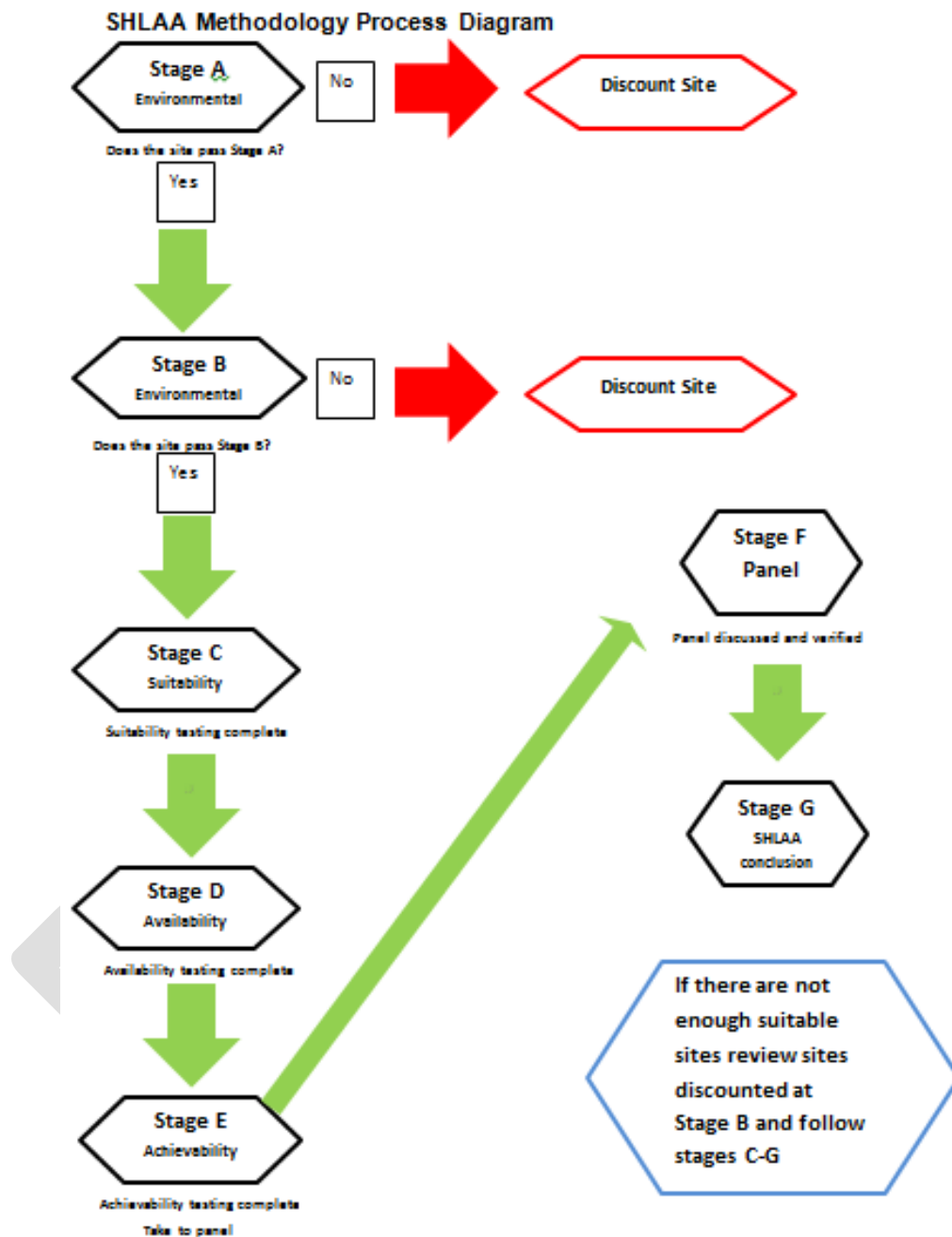
⁷ Planning Practice Guidance: Housing and economic land availability assessment (March 2014) paragraph 3-032

- 4.7 To ensure the SHLAA is credible and robust the assessment will consider all sites that are either 0.25 hectares or above or capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings. This will potentially allow smaller sites to be considered.

Site visits

- 4.8 All sites will be visited from public vantage points by a council planning officer using a standard site visit form (Appendix 1). This form reflects and extends the site information documented on a site visit undertaken for a planning application.
- 4.9 If a particular issue is noted on site (such as a mature tree, important hedgerow, listed building) these will be noted for discussion with the relevant specialist within the council. Additional site visits may be undertaken by relevant specialists (such as conservation officers) where it is felt additional clarification is needed.
- 4.10 Following the site visit each site will be subject to a staged assessment to determine the suitability, availability and achievability.

Figure1 Process flowchart/ diagram



Discounting – Stage A – Environmental Designations

Designations with buffers

4.11 Any site located in one or more of the following designations will be discounted at Stage A. That is, if the site is wholly located within one of the following designations it will automatically be discounted from the SHLAA process. This is because it is not considered to be in accordance with the purpose of the designation. This is considered an automatic and exclusionary criterion.

Environmental Designations resulting in sites being discounted at Stage A

The following designations are subject to an additional 5m buffer

Ramsar site
Special Protection Area (SPA)
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGG)
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
Ancient Woodlands
Ancient Monument
Marine Conservation Area

4.12 All sites above, with the exception of Ancient Woodlands, will be subject to a 5m buffer. This 5m buffer will be applied from the boundary of the designation. Ancient Woodlands will have a 15m buffer in line with Natural England advice. These buffers are incorporated to ensure protection and continued integrity of the designation. This is considered an automatic and exclusionary criterion. As such any site that wholly falls within the 5m or 15m buffers will be discounted from the SHLAA process.

4.13 Where a site incorporates part of the designation or buffer this area will be removed from the potential site area and the resultant area will move to the next stage to be assessed.

Designations without buffers

4.14 Any site located wholly in one of the designations set out below will automatically be discounted from the SHLAA process. This is because it is not considered to be in accordance with the purpose of the designation. This is considered an automatic and exclusionary criterion.

Environmental Designations and other constraints resulting in sites being discounted at Stage A
No additional buffer
Heritage Coast
Historic Park or Garden
Publically accessible open space
Local Green Space
Land safeguarded as biodiversity mitigation

4.15 Where a site incorporates part of the designation this area will be removed from the potential site area and the resultant area will move to the next stage to be assessed.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

4.16 The purpose of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁸ recognises this level of protection and sets out that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty.

4.17 The Isle of Wight AONB, however, has **not** been included as an exclusionary environmental designation in the SHLAA methodology. This is because the Isle of Wight AONB covers approximately 50% of the Island's surface area. Therefore there would be a significant number of sites within and adjacent to rural service centres and villages which would automatically be excluded from the SHLAA process.

4.18 The council recognises that there will be a need for housing across the Island and that some development may be acceptable in certain places and could help meet identified local needs within the AONB. However, the council also appreciates that there is no presumption in favour of sustainable development within the AONB⁹. Therefore any development in this area will need to be carefully considered to ensure the ongoing protection of the AONB and purpose of the designation.

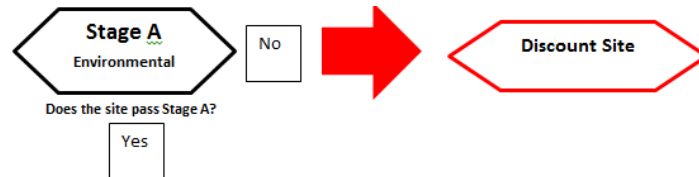
4.19 In regards to this SHLAA methodology, any site that is located within the AONB (providing it meets Stage A and B tests) will be assessed on overall suitability (Stage C). This will include an initial officer assessment on potential impacts on the AONB based on location, site topography and character of the area. Should a site be considered suitable following Stage C and included in the SHLAA, the council recognises that the impact on the designation may require further testing at any application/allocation stage. This will be discussed with the AONB officers.

⁸ The NPPF paras 115, 116

⁹ The NPPF paragraph 14 footnote 9

Open and Local Green Space

4.20 Open space is an important resource and facilitates healthy communities. Where a site is located within or on public open space or local green space the site will be discounted at Stage A as an absolute constraint on development and is considered an automatic and exclusionary criterion. For the purposes of the assessment, public open space is considered as space that is readily accessible to any members of the public without the need for payment or membership. This includes, for example villages greens and locally important open space.



Discounting – Stage B – Other constraints

Constraints resulting in initial discounting
Flood Zones 2 and 3
Grade 1 Agricultural Land
Grade 2 Agricultural Land
Site or subsequent site area too small to deliver 5 dwellings

Approach to flooding

4.21 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁰ sets out that development in areas of flood risk should be avoided by directing development away from areas of highest risk. It further sets out that where development is necessary it should be safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. As with local plans, the SHLAA will apply a sequential risk based approach to considering the location of development.

4.22 In the first instance any site that is located in Flood Zone 1 (areas with a low probability of river or sea flooding) will move to the next stage for further assessment providing it passes Stage A and the rest of Stage B.

4.23 Any site that is wholly located within Flood Zones 2 or 3 will be discounted at Stage B as an absolute constraint on development and is considered an automatic and exclusionary criterion. This is because any development located within this area would not be in accordance with the sequential approach.

4.24 Where a site incorporates parts of Flood Zones 2 or 3, the areas at risk of flooding will be discounted from the assessment and the resultant area will move to the next stage.

¹⁰ NPPF Para 100-102

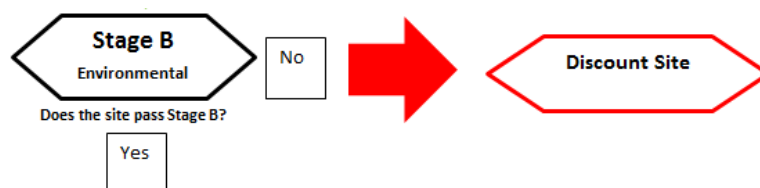
- 4.25 This general approach is designed to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding from any source are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. Application of the Sequential and Exceptions Tests will help ensure that development can be safely and sustainably delivered and developers do not waste their time promoting proposals which are inappropriate on flood risk grounds.
- 4.26 The flood zones as defined by the Environment Agency and by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the area provide the basis for applying the Tests (i.e. Flood Zones 2 & 3 and the SFRA for the 2115 scenario).
- 4.27 There may be exceptions where sites located in Flood Zones 2 and 3 are considered appropriate for further investigation. These sites are likely to be on brownfield land, located in regeneration areas where there is potential for undertaking works that will incorporate flood prevention measures that have wider sustainability and environmental benefits beyond the site. Such sites will be considered on a site by site basis, through the steering group, the SHLAA panel and discussion with the Environment Agency.
- 4.28 Discounting at Stage B enables further investigation and appropriate tests to be carried out where there are not enough appropriate sites in Flood Zones 1 and 2. Where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 1, we will consider reasonably available sites¹¹ in Flood Zone 2 (areas with a medium probability of river or sea flooding), applying the Exception Test if required.
- 4.29 Only where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zones 1 or 2 should the suitability of sites¹² in Flood Zone 3 (areas with a high probability of river or sea flooding) be considered, taking into account the flood risk vulnerability of land uses and applying the Exception Test as appropriate.
- 4.30 This part of the assessment process may require consideration of a more detailed Level 2 SFRA and this will be determined in partnership with the Environment Agency.

Agricultural Classification

- 4.31 Grade 1 excellent quality and Grade 2 very good quality agricultural land is considered an exclusionary criterion due to the little amount of available 1 and 2 Grade land on the Island. Furthermore, it is considered that as these areas have little or no limitations in agricultural terms they should be safeguarded unless there are no alternative options. Consequently any sites within Grade 1 or 2 will be initially discounted at Stage B. If there are no suitable alternative sites and a need is recognised then such sites may be reviewed.

Minimum site yield

- 4.32 Where it is clear, from a site visit and taking account the character and or density of the nearby area, that a site is too small to accommodate 5 dwellings then the site will be discounted from the SHLAA process at this stage. This does not preclude the site coming forward through the standard planning application way and could still help deliver housing as a windfall site.

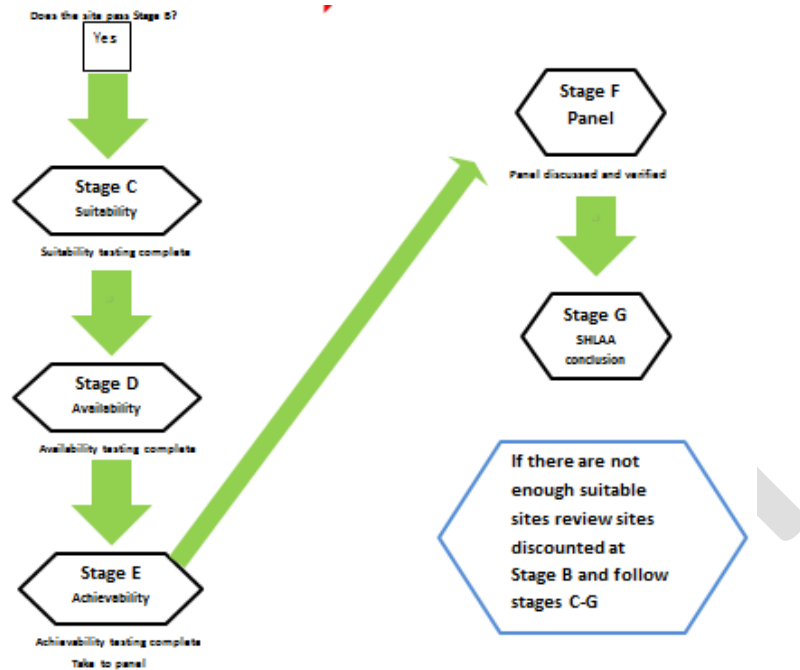


¹¹ These sites will be flagged as 'Review Status' to enable further investigation if applicable

¹² These sites will be flagged as 'Review Status' to enable further investigation if applicable

Progression to Stages C to G

4.33 Sites that pass both Stage A and B will progress onto Stages C to G. All sites at this point will be assessed for their suitability, availability and achievability. Stage C (Suitability), Stage D (Availability) and Stage E (Achievability) will each have a pass / fail step to facilitate an overall understanding of development potential.



4.34 A site's suitability (Stage C) will consider a number of measures to ascertain the general suitability of a site being put forward.

4.35 Availability (Stage D) will be ascertained from the information received in the submission.

4.36 Initial achievability (Stage E) will be undertaken by a steering group of council officers who will also verify the initial suitability and availability conclusions.

4.37 Once sites have completed stages A to E they will be taken to a panel (see section below) who will comment on the overall achievability of a site.

4.38 The panel will provide constructive comments and advice on the achievability of sites put before them. The achievability will be based on the council's initial conclusions and assessment of the "suitability," "availability" and "achievability" of submitted sites and any relevant commercial and industry information from the development sector.

4.39 On completion of those assessments Stage G will conclude whether the site is deliverable, developable, currently not developable or currently not suitable. It may also identify whether the site may be further considered for allocation.

Stage C – Assessment – Suitability

NPP Guidance

4.40 The Practice Guidance on assessing suitability for housing sets out that "a site is suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. Sites allocated in existing plans for housing or with planning permission for housing will generally be suitable, although it may be necessary to

assess whether circumstances have changed which would alter their suitability.” For other sites, the following factors will be considered to assess a site’s suitability for housing:

- Policy restrictions – current or emerging,
- physical problems or limitations,
- potential impacts and environmental conditions.

Suitability assessment

- 4.41 Each site will be assessed against a series of themes that will establish whether the site is suitable for development. This assessment will also be the basis of understanding deliverability of the site.
- 4.42 The site assessment themes were developed by considering planning policy objectives and sustainability strands contained within the Development Plan.

Each of the following themes will be considered for each site:

- Location in relation to settlement.

Elements to consider

Is the site located within, outside but immediately adjacent, or outside the settlement boundary? If outside the settlement boundary is the site close to other built development? Consider context/continuity.

Rationale

Each site will be considered in terms of proximity to the existing settlement boundary in order to guide development inside the settlement boundary and focus development in locations where there are better opportunities to access jobs, public transport, local shops, services and facilities. This is in line with the principles of the council’s policy objectives to encourage sustainable patterns of development.

- Brownfield / Greenfield / Mix.

Elements to consider

Is the site brownfield/previously developed land (PDL), part PDL, or wholly Greenfield?

Rationale

Whether a site is considered PDL will be determined by the recognised definition as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework¹³ and verified by a site visit.

- Impact on landscape/seascape character

Elements to consider

Is the site within the AONB, where is the site in relation to the designation? What is the topography and character of the immediate area?

Consider the landscape / seascape of the area? Is there potential for mitigation for small scale development that will reduce impact?

Rationale

¹³ NPPF definition – Annex 2: Glossary

The Isle of Wight is well known for the quality of its environment, with its landscapes and coastlines enjoying a high level of special designation and protection. Over 50% of the Island is designated as an AONB and 28 miles of coastline is designated as Heritage Coast.

Whilst a site being in the Heritage Coast leads to a removal from the SHLAA process, a site in the AONB will be considered further. When assessing sites in the AONB, consideration will be given to the purpose of the designation, that is to conserve and enhance and:

- The proximity to settlement boundary
- Character of the immediate area
- Density of adjacent development
- Topography
- Potential views into and the site from the wider area
- Views out from the site.

Any site considered suitable in terms of proximity to or within the AONB may be subject to further sensitivity assessment at the allocation/application stage.

Sites outside the AONB will also be considered in terms of potential landscape impact and account will be taken of the bullet points above.

- Impact on Biodiversity

Elements to consider

Are there any substantial trees, hedges within or bounding the site? Is there a watercourse? Are there any other aspects to the site that may have a biodiversity interest or require further investigation?

Does the site have any protected trees on the site? Where a site has trees subject to a tree preservation order (TPO), the area of the TPO plus a 5m buffer will be removed from the site area so as to protect the tree or trees.

Rationale

The Isle of Wight has a wealth of designations and biodiversity assets across the island that need to be protected/conserved and where possible enhanced. Furthermore, as there are fewer introduced species there are more stable populations of native animals that need consideration. The NPPF¹⁴ sets out that local planning authorities should plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale and should minimise impacts on biodiversity.

Sites will initially be assessed by a planning officer but sites will also be assessed by ecology officers in relation to appropriate aspects of the Habitat Regulation Assessment. Depending on timings of the ecology assessment, conclusions may affect the final overall suitability of a site.

- Impact on Historic Environment including archaeology

Elements to consider

Is the site within:

¹⁴ National Planning Policy Framework para 117

- The grounds of a listed building or immediately adjacent to one?
- Or adjacent to a:
 - Scheduled Ancient Monument?
 - Historic Park or Garden?
 - Conservation area?

Will any development impact on the setting of a heritage feature?

Does the site have any impacts on archaeological assets?

Rationale

The Island's Historic Landscapes are all around us and contain the sites, settlements, fields, lanes and roads, houses and landscapes which survive from every period of our human past. The NPPF¹⁵ sets out that consideration should be given to heritage assets and their conservation and that any potential development should make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness.

Deliverable/ developable sites will also be checked by the Archaeology Service to ascertain any potential impacts on the Island's archaeology. Depending on timings of the archaeology assessment may affect the final overall suitability of a site.

- Highway access

Elements to consider

Is the site close to the main road network, does it have road frontage, potential for visibility splays? Is there a clear right of access to the site? Does it require additional land to gain access to the road? Is the road leading to the site narrow, unmade? Are there any right of access issues, for example does the access incorporate a public right of way?

Rationale

Sites with poor accessibility can increase the cost of highway infrastructure required to develop the site and thus the likelihood of development diminishes. Sites with good accessibility require little or no highway infrastructure to develop and can be developed over the plan period.

Deliverable/ developable sites will also be checked by officers at Island Roads to ascertain any potential impacts on the Island's road network. Depending on timings of this assessment, the results may affect the final overall suitability of a site.

4.43 The following criteria will facilitate an understanding of how close a site is to certain services and how sustainable it might be as a result. This can be verified by a site visit and ARC GIS layers.

- Access to public transport

Elements to consider

Is the site close to a bus stop or other public transport mode? Is it walkable and is there a footpath? Does the public transport service operate on a regular basis? Is there a

¹⁵ National Planning Policy Framework para

structure for inclement weather? Is it located in an area that would encourage use of the bus as opposed to the car?

Rationale

Sites located close to a bus stop can give residents realistic alternatives to the car. This though to an extent will be determined by the frequency of the bus and the ability to walk to the bus stop.

- Pedestrian/cycle links

Elements to consider

Is the site located close to a recognised public right of way, cycleway or footpath? Is there a pavement or footpath to the road for safe public access?

Rationale

Sites located close to pedestrian or cycle links can facilitate and encourage realistic alternatives to the car making the site more sustainable.

- Access to services and facilities

Elements to consider

Is the site located close to facilities such as shops, schools and other community facilities? Is the site well related to services facilities or well-placed so that the use of walking and cycling can be maximised?

Rationale

Sites located close to community services will help sustain those services and may reduce the pressures on services elsewhere whilst at the same time reducing the need to travel by private car.

- Access to open space and recreation

Elements to consider

Is the site located close to open space, play space or other recreation facilities?

Rationale

Sites located close to open space and recreation areas can reduce the need to travel.

4.44 The following themes will facilitate a wider understanding of other aspects that may affect a site's overall suitability.

- Air Quality sensitivities

Is the site in an air quality management area, are there any known air quality issues in the area, or is there potential for issues to arise as a result of additional development?

- Minerals Resources

Is the site is a mineral safeguarding area or in a known mineral area? Can the mineral be safeguarded or be extracted beforehand?

- Agricultural land classification

What is the agricultural land classification for the site? This relates to sites not in Grade 1 or 2 as these are considered elsewhere.

- Loss of employment site

Will development result in the loss of an employment site, is it a safeguarded employment site or is the potential for redevelopment/mix of uses?

- Potential for mixed use

Does the site have potential for a mix of uses? If so likely uses?

- Constraints to delivery

What are the potential constraints to delivery, for example;

- Is there more than one landowner, if so how many, are all in agreement on availability?
- Is the site subject to any covenants/ lease terms?
- What is the topography of the land, is it steep/ level/ etc., will this have an impact on delivery?
- Are there any pylons on the site?
- Does the site rely on another site coming forward; has this land been put forward through the SHLAA process?

- Infrastructure requirements/ capacity

Is the site connected to any services/ utilities? Is it adjacent to sites that are connected to services/ utilities? What is the likely infrastructure required? Will this impact the potential site yield?

- Compatibility

If residential development is provided in this location, is it compatible with existing uses? Are there neighbouring uses that may impact or be impacted by residential development? If there any pylons/telegraph poles within the site are these in a location that may affect layout or yield? Will there need to be a buffer to other uses or areas?

- Planning history

Is there anything in the planning history that affects potential for development, has it previously been allocated, declined permission, if so for what reasons?

Only recent planning history will be looked at, that is from March 2012, when the last Core Strategy was adopted.

- Policy Context

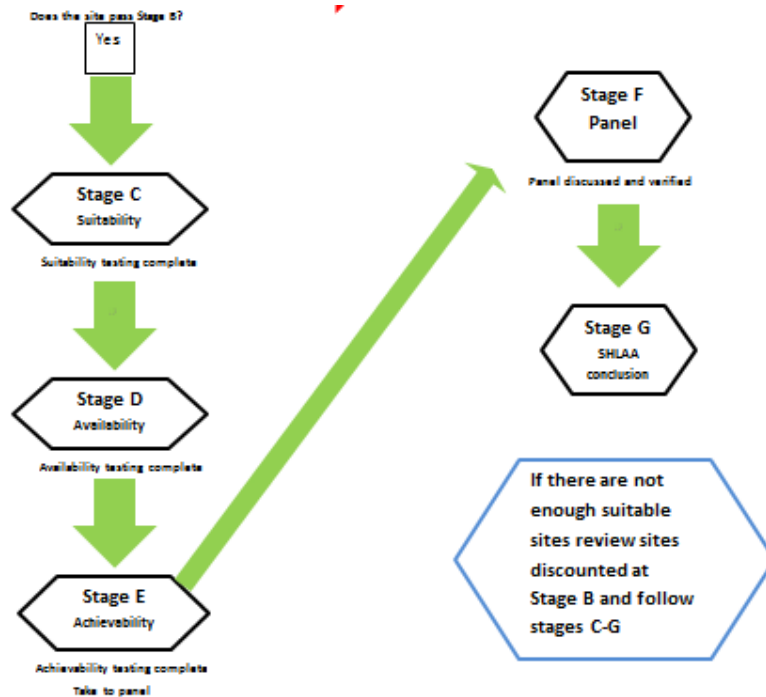
Overarching policy consideration including, is it affected by an adopted neighbourhood plan or supplementary planning document.

4.45 The above themes will be considered by planning officers through:

- Site visits
- Readily available documents including the completed site pro-formas

- ARC GIS layers including the council's current adopted Local Plan.

4.46 Once this stage is completed, sites and the information contained above will be discussed by the steering group to ensure consensus on suitability. If further information is required from a specialist, it will be sought at this stage, if possible or before final conclusions are undertaken.



Stage D – Assessment – Availability

4.47 Once the suitability of a site has been established by the steering group, the availability of the site will be further assessed. Generally a site is considered available, for development when, on the best information available there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownership, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of the landowners.

Availability will also consider the following aspects:

- Information contained within the pro-forma
- Whether the site is immediately available for development
- Whether the site is available for other uses
- Whether the site is available as a rural exception site
- If the site contains a property, could this be included, sub divided, converted

4.48 For the purposes of SHLAA the pro-forma and local knowledge will determine the basis on availability initially. Should there be any concern with regards to any aspects on the potential for availability further clarification may be sought.

Stage E – Assessment – Achievability – Steering Group Comments

4.49 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 of time. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site and the capacity of a developer to complete and sell the housing over a certain period.

4.50 Initial achievability will be considered by the steering group. This will facilitate the SHLAA process and be further considered by the panel. The steering group will consider the following aspects:

- Overall suitability, availability and achievability
- Any factors that may affect the potential of the site coming forward including costs on development, market factors and any delivery factors.
- Is the site developable / deliverable in the Plan timeframe?

Capacity Testing

4.51 In determining the potential yield of a site the following factors will be considered:

- Information included within the pro-forma
- The density of the surrounding area
- The character of the surrounding area
- The proximity to the settlement boundary
- The infrastructure that may be required. This will be especially relevant to larger sites and may include the need for facilities, open space, internal roads, etc.
- Where there are more sensitive and larger sites some initial concept plans may be undertaken to determine potential yields.

Build out rates

4.52 Build out rates for sites will vary depending on the nature and size of site including what is the likely yield given access and other requirements and constraints. The council will consider that sites can be delivered at a rate of 40-50 dwellings per annum but will be guided to an extent by market factors and any relevant information given by the panel.

Stage F – Assessment – Panel Comments

4.53 Once a site has progressed through the preceding stages it will be taken to a SHLAA panel for discussion and further consideration on achievability. The panel will consider and provide impartial advice and constructive comments on whether:

- The steering group's conclusions on suitability, availability, and achievability are fair and reasonable.
- There are any impacts to the deliverability/ achievability of a site within a certain timeframe, and
- There is any potential mitigation to facilitate delivery of a site that the council is unaware of.

Stage G – Conclusion – progression to SHLAA, Brownfield Land Register or potential allocation

Inclusion in the 2018 SHLAA

- 4.54 The council will consider the panel's comments on the overall achievability of a site. However, the conclusion of a site as being deliverable, developable, currently not developable or currently not suitable will be the decision of the council.
- 4.55 Any site that is considered deliverable and developable will be included in the Council's 2018 SHLAA update. Any site that is considered currently not developable or currently not suitable will not be included in the SHLAA as a site but will be listed as currently not developable or currently not suitable for clarity.

Brownfield Land Register

- 4.56 To facilitate the planning process any site that has been submitted as a brownfield site for inclusion on the Brownfield Land Register (BFR), will follow the same assessment as above. This is because all sites on the BFR must be suitable for development.
- 4.57 All sites will be identified as to whether they have requested SHLAA, BFR or both. They will all be given an Island Planning Strategy number when registered.
- 4.58 Sites that meet the criteria for inclusion on the Brownfield Land Register will then be given a BFR number and be included on a separate database for inclusion on the annual BFR. The annual BFR will be held both on the council website and central government's website.
- 4.59 For a site to be included on the BFR it must be at least 0.25ha or capable of supporting at least 5 dwellings and be suitable, available and achievable. Sites must also meet the definition of previously developed land as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Progression to potential allocations

- 4.60 Sites of an appropriate size and scale may then be considered for potential allocation in the upcoming Island Planning Strategy. Such sites will be identified on the database and further assessment work may then be required.

Facilitation of the SHLAA Methodology

The Steering Group

- 4.61 The steering group will consist of senior council officers in both planning policy and development management.

The Panel

- 4.62 The preparation of a SHLAA can generate significant public interest and expectation as to what site may have the potential for development. As a result the council considers that the inclusion of a panel in its methodology for assessing sites will facilitate clarity and transparency in the overall SHLAA process and is considered as an important stage.
- 4.63 The panel will provide constructive and impartial comments and advice on the achievability of sites put before the panel. The achievability will be based on the council's initial conclusions and assessment of the "suitability," "availability" and "achievability" of submitted sites and any relevant commercial and industry information from the development sector.

- 4.64 The panel will consist of representatives from a broad cross section of appropriate industries and organisations and will be bound by a constitution and terms of reference to assist management and ensure effective transparency.
- 4.65 The overall panel will be made up of members from:
- Organisations / companies / individuals that are representative of the broad spectrum of the housing and economic development industries in the HMA.
To be representative, each will need to be actively engaged in the development of land for housing and/or economic development, for example as a land agent (i.e. national, regional or local) or developer (e.g. volume or small scale house builder), Registered Provider, architect, planner or urban designer or other related profession that may usefully inform the assessment of potential sites for housing and economic development;
 - The community represented by elected members/portfolio holders for housing and regeneration. Community representatives will be required to provide area wide input to the process.
- 4.66 Membership by representatives of the development sector will be through acceptance of an offer of appointment made by the steering group, in accordance with the selection criteria set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.67 All panel members will be expected to sign a memorandum of understanding to set out that they will comment on sites in a fair, impartial and reasonable manner.
- 4.68 A panel member that has an interest in a site will need to declare that interest. They may still comment on a site for the purpose of clarity and discussion but the conclusions on that site will be the decision of the council.
- 4.69 The panel will not vote on whether a site should be included in the SHLAA as deliverable or developable, currently not developable or currently not suitable. It is there to facilitate an understanding on the potential achievability of a site within a certain timeframe.
- 4.70 The panel will convene at the council offices on as many occasions as required and consider sites that have been submitted and assessed by the council's steering group.
- 4.71 Where there is any difference of opinion on the conclusions of a site, these will be discussed in an open and constructive manner, chaired by officers of the council.
- 4.72 In some instances further consideration of a site may be undertaken and may include additional site visits by council officers. In these circumstances or where specialist officers are called upon, the site may be taken back to the panel for further discussion.
- 4.73 If the panel do not agree with the conclusions of the steering group either at the time of the meeting or following further discussion/ consideration but no specialist officer is called upon, it is at the discretion of the steering group as to whether the site is taken back to the panel.
- 4.74 The inclusion of a site in the SHLAA as deliverable, developable, currently not developable or currently not suitable will be the decision of the council.
- 4.75 Panel members will provide advice and comments to the council on the understanding that:

The assessment of sites for new housing through the SHLAA process and the identification of potential housing sites in the SHLAA does not indicate that the sites will be allocated for new housing within the Island Planning Strategy or be granted planning permission. The SHLAA

instead forms part of the evidence base to inform plan-making. Any sites deemed suitable, available and achievable by the SHLAA process will still be subject to public consultation, sustainability appraisal and independent examination if they are taken forward through the Local Plan preparation process. However, the SHLAA may be a material consideration in the determination of planning proposals.

Other aspects

- 4.76 When developing the methodology discussions took place with a number specialist council officers and consultants, including officers from the conservation, ecology and AONB teams. This ensured the approach was appropriate to their specialist areas and included some consistent statements to incorporate.
- 4.77 The methodology was also considered by the Environment Agency to ensure the approach to flood risk was appropriate and proportionate.
- 4.78 Other utility providers and agencies have been involved through the process as a result of general workshops and evidence gathering on the quantum and location of development needed across the Island.

Appendix 1 – Site visit form

SHLAA / BFR Site Visit Pro-forma			
SHLAA Ref No BFR No: Site Address	Date of Visit	Officer	
Location		Photographs taken	Yes /No
Existing use(s) of the site -			
Description of existing buildings/structures on site (inc features, materials etc) -			
Existing boundaries and vegetation (eg fences, walls, significant trees etc), indicators of who may control boundaries -			
Biodiversity features – streams, tree groupings -			
Heritage features – listed building, archaeology –			
Topography (inc ground conditions/levels/drainage/flooding) –			
Existing neighbouring uses and potential impacts on these uses (eg overlooking, overshadowing etc). Any neighbouring heritage/biodiversity features to consider? -			
Character of the area (materials, features, styles etc) and impact upon character of area/street scene -			
Parking/access/highway issues/visibility – Can you get access to the main road network? Is it landlocked or does it need other land to come forward? Is it close to the SRN? Bus stop/footpath location?			

General comments/observations -
Additional info/consultations/revisions required -
Potential further information required following visit –

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Appendix 2

Selection Requirements and Process for Panel Membership for representatives of the house and economic development industries

Eligibility

The candidate will need to be actively engaged in the development of land for housing for example as a land agent or developer, registered provider of affordable housing, architect, planner or urban designer or other related profession that may usefully inform the assessment of potential sites for housing.

Composition

The panel must be representative of the broad cross section of the house and economic development industries on the island. The council will seek to achieve a balance in the professions / nature of business undertaken by panel members. The panel will include at least one of the following:

- National volume house builder (if possible)
- Regional house builder
- Small scale house builder
- Developer of elderly persons accommodation (if possible)
- Professional with knowledge and/or experience of developing sites for the Gypsy and Traveller community (if possible)
- Land Agent representing the housing development industry
- Registered provider of affordable housing involved in new build projects
- Architect, urban designer, planner or other professional
- Community representation (local elected member)

Process

The selection process for making an offer of appointment will be undertaken by the steering group with the aim of achieving an optimal mix of panel members.

The steering group will make an offer of appointment in writing to each candidate for panel membership. It will require a written confirmation of acceptance from each candidate.

If a candidate declines to confirm their acceptance of panel membership, or where a panel member elects to leave the panel, the steering group will select an appropriate alternative candidate.