



# Strategic housing land availability assessment

Methodology

September 2011

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**Wiltshire Council  
Strategic Land Availability Assessment  
Proposed Methodology**

**September 2011**



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## Clarification

For the avoidance of doubt the council makes the following clarification with regard to the Wiltshire Strategic Housing Land Availability (SHLAA):

- The inclusion of sites within the deliverable or developable supply of this study should not be taken to imply that the Council would automatically consider planning applications favourably. Conversely, the exclusion of a site from this supply does not mean that it could not come forward, providing that the constraints identified could be satisfactorily overcome;
- Although the assessment will inform housing allocations, it will not in itself determine the allocation of land for housing development. It will also not prejudice the use of land for purposes other than residential development. All future planning applications will be considered individually and assessed through policies in the most up to date development plan;
- The estimated timescale for the delivery of a site does not mean that a site could not come forward sooner, providing that any constraints were managed. Similarly, it does not mean that the site could not be delivered later in the plan period;
- This assessment seeks to identify the potential delivery of new housing sites. It must be recognised that this differs from a realistic trajectory in that it is aspirational;
- The boundaries of sites identified in the assessment do not preclude any extensions to these sites or any part sites being developed;
- The densities in the SHLAA are intended to provide a tool for comparison and may not reflect the final density of specific sites;
- Judgements concerning whether sites should be allocated in future Local Development Documents (LDDs) will be made through the statutory planning process which will further test the sustainability of any site identified in this assessment. This will include Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisals; and,
- The information that accompanies the SHLAA is based on information available at the time of the Study.

## **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Proposed Methodology**

### **1.0 Non-technical summary**

#### **What is the purpose of this document?**

- 1.1 A top priority for Government is to ensure that land availability is not a constraint to the delivery of homes. To this end Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to prepare Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) in order to identify and assess potential sites for housing to meet future requirements.
- 1.2 The role of the Wiltshire SHLAA is to:
- Identify sites with potential for housing;
  - Assess their housing potential; and
  - Assess when they are likely to be developed.
- 1.3 This document sets out the proposed methodology which will be used to deliver a SHLAA for the whole of Wiltshire. This methodology has been developed in liaison with the Housing Market Partnership (HMP).

#### **What are we trying to achieve?**

- 1.4 On the 27 May 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the intention to “rapidly abolish Regional Strategies”. The intention to revoke Regional Strategies will mean that *“Local Planning Authorities will be responsible for establishing the right level of local housing provision in their area, and identifying a long term supply of housing land without the burden of regional targets”*.
- 1.5 On this basis work has been undertaken to establish Wiltshire’s long-term strategic housing requirement through a comprehensive review as part of the development plan process and will be tested through consultation. Future housing requirements have been identified within the context of the ‘localism agenda’ and with the publication of the ‘Localism Bill’ in mind. The Localism Bill started its passage through Parliament during December 2010 and will return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local authorities.
- 1.6 In the context of housing numbers the SHLAA will provide a mechanism to ensure that proposed figures are deliverable. The SHLAA will be monitored annually and reported through a monitoring report informing the housing trajectory for Wiltshire.

#### **Where will the sites be identified?**

- 1.7 The SHLAA Practice Guidance (paragraph 7) states that the purpose of the SHLAA is to identify as many sites “in and around as many settlements as possible”. This requires sites to be identified that can contribute toward delivering sustainable mixed communities. Development in locations



unrelated to settlements defined through existing and emerging development plan policies will therefore not be included within the assessment.

- 1.8 On this basis sites will need to be within 100 metres of current settlement boundaries in order to be considered to relate to existing settlements. Sites will also be considered to be part of an extension where they are beyond this 100 metre buffer but adjoin another (suitable) site that is within 100 metres of the settlement boundary. Sites that have planning permission will not be subject to this restriction as suitability is no longer a constraint.

#### **What are the characteristics that identified sites should have?**

- 1.9 A **minimum site size threshold of 0.15 hectares** will be applied for sites to be included within the SHLAA and will fall into the following categories:
- Land allocated for employment or other land uses which are no longer required for those uses;
  - Existing housing allocations and site development briefs;
  - Unimplemented / outstanding planning permissions for housing;
  - Planning permissions for housing that are under construction;
  - Vacant and derelict land and buildings;
  - Surplus public sector land;
  - Land in non-residential use which may be suitable for re-development for housing, such as commercial buildings or car parks, including as part of mixed use development;
  - Additional housing opportunities in established residential areas, such as under-used garage blocks;
  - Large scale re-development and re-design of existing residential areas; and,
  - Urban extensions

#### **How will you determine how many houses can go on a site?**

- 2.0 The number of houses that could go on each site will be estimated using a standard density assumption of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph). The final development layout may not necessarily reflect this estimate and is likely to be guided through emerging planning policy. Where information is provided from site representatives as to the capacity of a site this will be used rather than the standard density assumption.

#### **What status will sites included in the SHLAA have?**

- 1.10 It is the role of the Local Development Framework (LDF), and not the SHLAA, to determine the distribution strategy and to identify which sites should be allocated for housing development.
- 1.11 The inclusion of sites within the SHLAA should not be taken to imply that the council would automatically consider planning applications favourably, nor will it determine the allocation of land for housing development. It will also not prevent sites being brought forward or allocated for purposes other than

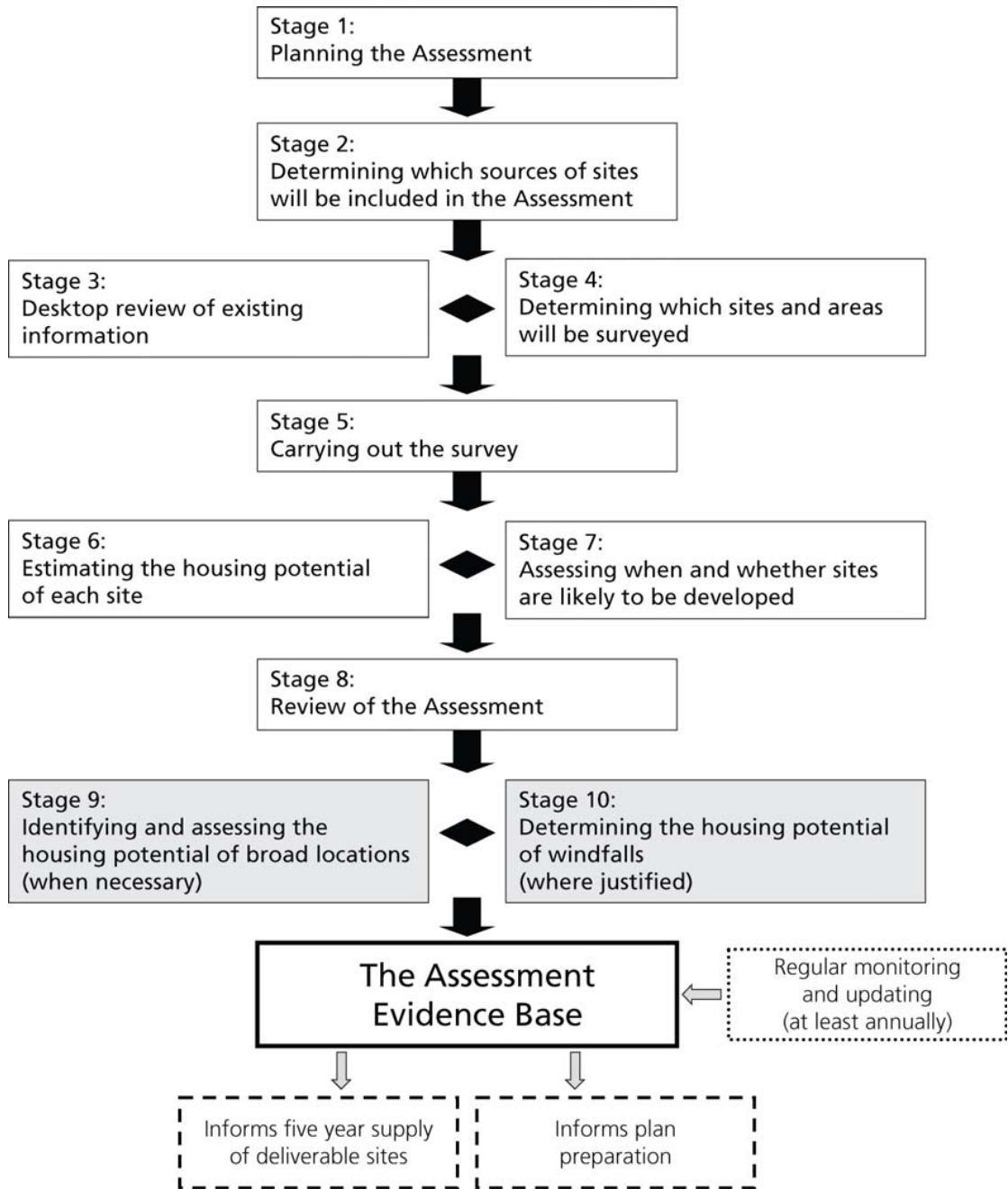
residential development. All future planning applications will be considered individually and assessed through policies in the most up to date development plan.

**How will I know the outcome?**

- 1.12 When finalised, the Council will publish a draft of the SHLAA to be made available to site representatives for consultation.
- 1.13 The SHLAA should be dynamic and regularly updated through effective monitoring on an annual basis.

**What method will you use?**

- 1.13 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published guidance on how to undertake a SHLAA in July 2007. This will be used as the basis for the Wiltshire SHLAA methodology.



**Wiltshire Council**  
**Strategic Land Availability Assessment**  
**Proposed Methodology**

**Full Technical Version**

**2.0 Introduction, Policy Background and Purpose**

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

- 2.1 PPS3: *Housing* highlights the Government's objective for everybody to have access to a decent home, as well as providing a greater choice of housing to ensure that the needs of all in the community are met. It is also a top priority to ensure that land availability is not a constraint to the delivery of homes.
- 2.2 PPS3 sets out the national policy basis for undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). All local authorities are required to complete a SHLAA in order to:
- Identify sites with potential for housing
  - Assess their housing potential
  - Assess when they are likely to be developed.
- 2.3 The identification of sites in this report will not automatically determine allocations for housing development. However the findings will form an important part of the evidence base and therefore inform the allocation process through Wiltshire's Local Development Framework (LDF).
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 2.4 The draft NPPF is currently subject to consultation. The requirement for a SHLAA remains within this consultation draft.

**The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Practice Guidance (July 2007)**

- 2.5 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published guidance on how to undertake a SHLAA in July 2007. Paragraph 5 of the SHLAA Practice Guidance requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to:
- **Identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan that are ready for development** and to keep this topped up over-time in response to market information;

- **Identify specific, developable sites for years 6-10**, and ideally years 11-15, in plans to enable the five year supply to be topped up;
- Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11-15 of the plan, **indicate broad locations for future growth**; and
- Not include an allowance for windfalls in the first **10 years of the plan** unless there are justifiable local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.

2.6 This Practice Guidance sets out the broad methodology and various stages that should be followed by Local Planning Authorities when undertaking a SHLAA. It states that:

*'the use of this standard methodology is strongly recommended because it will ensure that the Assessment findings are robust and transparently prepared. When followed, a local planning authority should not need to justify the methodology used in preparing its assessment, including at independent examination'.<sup>1</sup>*

#### **Purpose**

2.7 A SHLAA should, as a minimum, provide the following core outputs:

- A list of sites, cross-referenced to maps showing locations and boundaries of specific sites and broad locations (where necessary);
- An assessment of the deliverability and developability of each identified site, in terms of suitability, availability and achievability (PPS3 para 54) to determine when a site is realistically expected to be developed;
- The potential quantity of housing that could be delivered on each identified site or within each identified broad location (where necessary) or on windfall sites (where justified);
- The constraints on the delivery of identified sites; and
- A recommendation on how these constraints can be overcome and by when.

2.8 The practice guidance also provides the following checklist:

- The survey and assessment will involve key stakeholders including house builders, social landlords, local property agents and local communities. Other relevant agencies may include the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships (a requirement in areas where they are particularly active).
- The methods, assumptions, judgements and findings should be discussed and agreed upon throughout the process in an open and transparent way, and explained in the Assessment Report. The Report will provide an explanation as to why particular sites or areas have been excluded from the Assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Practice Guidance, Communities and Local Government, 2007- Paragraph 15

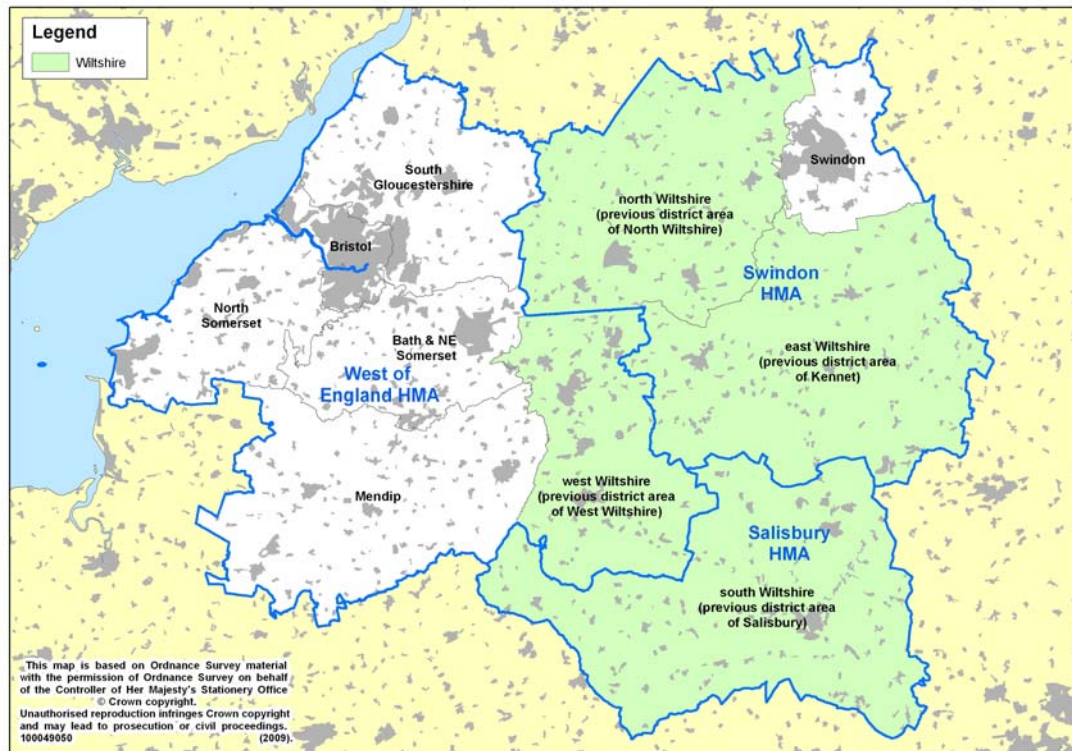
### **Relationship with the Wiltshire Local Development Framework**

- 2.9 The findings of the SHLAA will inform the Wiltshire Core Strategy and any subsequent Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). The Core Strategy will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Wiltshire including the spatial vision for the area and the strategic policies required to deliver that vision.
- 2.10 The Core Strategy will also allocate strategic housing land which is required to secure a continuous rolling five year supply of housing across Wiltshire. The SHLAA is not a DPD as it simply identifies potential sites; the ability of sites to deliver housing; and constraints to development.
- 2.11 The SHLAA is an important evidence source that will inform plan-making through the LDF Process. The method for selecting sites for the Core Strategy or other site specific DPDs will rely on separate site selection methodologies, including constraints mapping and the emerging settlement strategy. Once these sites have been identified, the SHLAA will be used as evidence that they are deliverable and developable.

### **Previous Housing Land Availability Assessments in Wiltshire**

- 2.12 The guidance states that '*Assessments should preferably be carried out at the sub-regional level, for separate housing market areas*'. These Housing Market Areas (HMA) were defined by DTZ in 2004, and have been approximated to conform to local authority boundaries. Since then, Wiltshire has undergone Local Government Re-organisation, and the previous district and county authorities have ceased to exist, being replaced by a single unitary authority.
- 2.13 There are three HMAs that coincide with Wiltshire as displayed in Map 1.
- 2.14 The West of England HMA includes the local authorities of Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, Mendip, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and the former district area of West Wiltshire. It was agreed, through the West of England Housing Market Partnership, that each authority should produce an assessment separately, and that it should be possible to aggregate individual assessments, which would be undertaken by the West of England Housing Market Partnership.
- 2.15 The Swindon HMA includes Swindon and the former district areas of Kennet and North Wiltshire. Again it was agreed that each authority would produce SHLAAs separately, that will be capable of aggregation.
- 2.16 Kennet District Council, North Wiltshire District Council and West Wiltshire District Council in partnership with Wiltshire County Council commissioned Roger Tym and Partners to undertake an assessment, covering the three previous district areas. This was published in March 2008.

Map 1: Housing Market Areas in Wiltshire



- 2.17 The Salisbury HMA is coterminous with the former district area of Salisbury, and an assessment was carried out for this authority alone. The South Wiltshire SHLAA was published by Wiltshire Council in May 2009 following on from the preparatory work undertaken by Salisbury District Council.
- 2.18 This SHLAA methodology is the first that covers the whole of Wiltshire, replacing previous methodologies for the component areas. In light of further best practice guidance (*Land Supply Assessment Checks, Communities and Local Government, 2009*), previous SHLAA methodologies have been revised.
- 2.19 This revision will enable Wiltshire Council to monitor potential delivery in-house, to produce an assessment that is consistent with the assessments produced by those authorities in the HMAs that cover Wiltshire but lie outside of Wiltshire, as well as facilitating dialogue between the council and potential developers.
- 2.20 In August 2011, a draft SHMA was published for Wiltshire. This identifies revised HMAs within the County that are consistent with Community Area boundaries. The SHLAA results will be presented at this level and these are presented in Map 2. Results will also be made available at the former district level, in order that data can be aggregated for the HMAs in the DTZ assessment.



**Map 2: Revised Housing Market Areas**



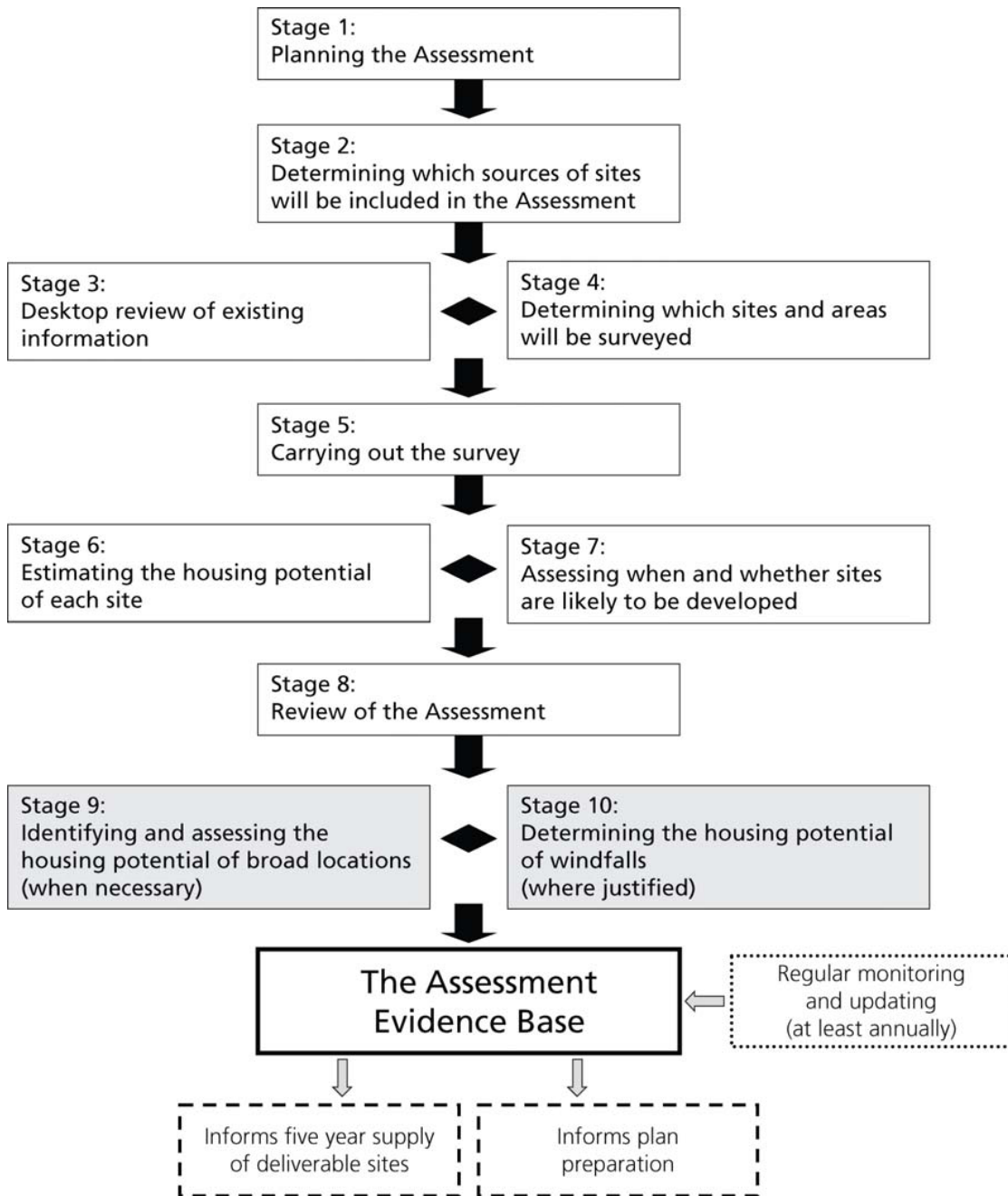
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### **3.0 Methodology**

3.1 Figure 1 outlines the key stages in the SHLAA. This process is detailed in the guidance and constitutes the methodology used in the production of this SHLAA.



**Figure 1: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Process**



**Stage 1: Planning the Assessment**

3.1.1 This assessment has not been carried out at Housing Market Area (HMA) level identified within the DTZ assessment, but has been designed to be broadly consistent with those assessments carried out by the authorities within the three HMAs but outside of the area considered by this assessment. This means that the results for each HMA should be obtainable through the aggregation of results from broadly consistent assessments.

The role of the Housing Market Partnership

3.1.2 The SHLAA Practice Guidance emphasises the importance of taking a partnership approach when undertaking assessments to ensure a joined-up and robust approach.

3.1.3 In October 2009, a Wiltshire and Swindon Housing Market Partnership (HMP) was established in order to ‘..promote housing delivery and give a strategic view of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and housing policies.’ The HMP is intended to provide a forum for representatives with a particular interest in Wiltshire which includes the following:

- Local Government
- House Builders
- Planning Consultants
- Estate Agents
- Registered Social Landlords
- The Housing Corporation
- The Ministry of Defence
- The Government Office
- House Builders Federation
- Other Interested Parties

3.1.4 Wiltshire Council has worked closely with the HMP as its key partner in the preparation and publication of the SHLAA. The HMP has provided important critical analysis of the methodology employed to assess the suitability, deliverability and viability of sites by providing expert technical and local knowledge.

3.1.5 The Viability Assessment is a particular aspect of the SHLAA which has benefited considerably from the input of the HMP. Indeed, paragraph 12 of the Practice Guidance recognises the value of engagement with key stakeholders with their technical and specialist knowledge. The indicative nature of the SHLAA viability assessment means that it is important to ensure this approach has the endorsement of the HMP.

3.1.6 There has been various stages in the preparation of the SHLAA where the HMP or HMP sub-group<sup>2</sup> have been directly involved in order to test the robustness of the approach to the SHLAA. In particular the HMP has been engaged at the following stages:

First draft of SHLAA methodology, including the Viability Assessment presented to the HMP for consultation.	January 2011
Discuss with HMP sub-group the viability of individual	March 2011

<sup>2</sup> The HMP Sub-group is a Stakeholder Panel made up of representatives from the HMP and is charged with providing critical analysis of the SHLAA Viability Assessment. Once the viability model has been run the results will be analysed with any sites that have a ‘borderline’ viability status presented to the Stakeholder Panel for consideration. The input of the HMP and the Stakeholder Panel will help to deliver a robust a credible assessment of sites.

sites and the viability methodology.	
Present outputs of draft Viability Assessment to HMP Stakeholder Panel.	July 2011
Present findings to site representatives for a one month period to address information gaps or to update with site specific information.	September 2011
Produce final draft assessment.	October 2011

3.1.7 It was considered appropriate to engage with the HMP in order to deliver the SHLAA, providing that the other authorities within the HMAs are made aware of ongoing work, and as such they have been invited to maintain a watching brief on progress. The results from this assessment will be made available to the West of England HMP and Swindon Borough Council, for aggregation to the DTZ HMA level data as required.

#### Document Review

3.1.8 A full review of methodology and guidance has been undertaken, considering the following documents:

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments Practice Guidance (Communities and Local Government, 2007);
- Land Supply Assessment Checks (Communities and Local Government, 2009);
- North Wiltshire, Kennet and West Wiltshire Joint Housing Land Availability Assessment (Roger Tym & Partners, 2008);
- South Wiltshire SHLAA (Wiltshire Council, 2009); and,
- A number of other SHLAAs from across the country, particularly focussing on those undertaken by authorities within the HMAs that cover Wiltshire.

3.1.9 The data used to assess individual sites has come from the previous district councils of Kennet, North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire, as well as data generated by Wiltshire Council. Due to the inconsistency between previous datasets, there exist some data gaps. These are being addressed and as such the SHLAA will evolve to reflect better evidence as it comes to light.

3.1.10 This SHLAA methodology covers all of the area within the new Wiltshire Council, including South Wiltshire, as shown in Map 1 and will replace the previous SHLAA methodologies for the area.

3.1.11 The work for the project will be undertaken in-house by Wiltshire Council, complemented by regular engagement with the HMP. This will utilise capacity, skills and resources effectively, allow quality control and project management to be implemented and, importantly provide value for money. This will further ensure that a high quality SHLAA is produced in line with the deadlines detailed within the Local Development Scheme and the team's work programme.

**Stage 2: Determining which sources of sites will be included in the Assessment.**

- 3.2.1 All of the sites included in the previous assessments have been carried forward to this assessment, providing that they have not been developed in the interim. A number of additional sites were received through Wiltshire Council’s continuous Call for Sites exercise, between the 2008 assessment and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011, and are included in this assessment.
- 3.2.2 The Wiltshire SHLAA must align previous methodologies to ensure a consistent approach across the County. Previously SHLAAs have applied different site thresholds to determine which sites should be included in the assessment.
- 3.2.3 The previous joint SHLAA undertaken by the former districts of North Wiltshire, West Wiltshire and Kennet, applied a universal site size threshold of 0.15ha. This contrasts with the previous Salisbury SHLAA which applied a variable site size threshold of 0.25ha for the urban areas of Salisbury City and Amesbury, with a greater threshold of 0.3ha applied elsewhere across the former Salisbury district.
- 3.2.4 The Wiltshire SHLAA will apply the consistent site size threshold of 0.15ha for all sites in order to capture a comprehensive pool of potential sites. It is acknowledged that the higher site thresholds applied in Salisbury previously will mean that potential smaller sites (i.e. above 0.15 ha but below 0.25 or 0.3ha) may not have been promoted in the past due to the thresholds applied.
- 3.2.5 Officers have concluded that this is a reasonable position to take as it will ensure a consistency of assessment across the County. Initial analysis of the scale of sites which have not been promoted due to the higher thresholds in the south suggest that this is minimal. The Council operates a continual Call for Sites exercise and so the small number of sites above 0.15ha that were previously not submitted will now be accepted.
- 3.2.6 Table 1 below identifies the potential sources of supply and briefly describes the method which will be used to collect the data. It should be noted however, that some sources may not be readily available or appropriate for Wiltshire, or difficulty may be experienced in finding some sources of supply.

**Table 1: Sources of sites with potential for housing**

Source of Supply	Data Collection Method / Further Information
<b>Sites within the planning process</b>	
Review of existing housing allocations	<p>There may be land within the County that benefits from a housing allocation which is likely to be implemented or could be developed to a higher density than originally considered. Alternatively, there may also be reasons for non-delivery, which need to be investigated and taken into account.</p> <p>Outstanding housing allocations and those that are dropped within development plan reviews will therefore be reviewed in order to undertake an audit of the anticipated housing yield and</p>

Source of Supply	Data Collection Method / Further Information
	delivery timescale.
Unimplemented / outstanding permissions	<p>There is likely to be a large amount of land that benefits from planning permission for housing, which has not yet been implemented.</p> <p>An analysis of outstanding permissions/ commitments will be undertaken using data from the councils monitoring data. This will be used to make an assessment of sites coming forward.</p>
Review of other existing allocations in plans	<p>Allocations for other land uses that are not realistically likely to be taken up in the quantities envisaged will also be reviewed. This is to assess whether these might be released for residential purposes instead.</p> <p>The guidance note on employment land reviews and PPS3 both encourage the review of employment allocations to ascertain whether they might be appropriately reused for housing purposes.</p> <p>A review of employment land will be undertaken to identify whether the allocation sites have been regarded as important commercial sites that should be retained.</p>
Planning permissions for housing that are under construction	Wiltshire Council monitoring data will be used to identify the number of dwellings currently under construction to try and identify the forthcoming supply.
<b>Sites not currently in the planning process</b>	
Previously-developed vacant and derelict land and buildings (non housing)	<p>Previously-developed land comprises those sites that have been used for other purposes and that have now become available for beneficial redevelopment.</p> <p>Building on the previous urban capacity study and NLUD PDL database, information will be requested from landowners, developers and agents to identify sites available, as well as walking round settlements when the study is undertaken in order to determine possible further sites.</p>
Surplus public sector land	Surplus public sector land will be identified through English Partnerships register of surplus public sector land, available at <a href="http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/rspsl.htm">http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/rspsl.htm</a> . Site availability will also be confirmed through consultation with public sector bodies such as the NHS and MoD. Only those sites which are promoted for housing have the potential to contribute to the overall supply. Assessment of deliverability will be consistent with the approach identified at Stage 7c.
Land in non-residential use which may be suitable for re-development for housing, such as commercial buildings or car	Potential may exist within employment or commercial areas for land that may have future residential potential. Conversions are a good example of how shifts in the market can affect housing supply, as this source has become increasingly significant following an acceptance of the potential to convert former office buildings into residential schemes. Indeed, Employment Land Reviews are now required to assess the potential to re-develop or convert existing commercial buildings for residential purposes

Source of Supply	Data Collection Method / Further Information
parks, including as part of mixed-use developments	<p>and any such commercial building should be referred to as being suitable for re-development or intensification in the Employment Land Review.</p> <p>Vacant office data from the council and the main commercial agents that operate in the County will also provide an indication of the presence and location of any under-utilised commercial floor space in the area. Of any proposed sites floor space data will need to be estimated in order to assess the housing potential. Potential may also be available through redevelopment of commercial to mixed use schemes, thereby intensifying the area or redeveloping commercial sites for more appropriate employment uses.</p> <p>In many urban areas, the presence of large car parking facilities can represent an inefficient and unsustainable use of land. Existing public car parks will only be considered where they have been identified as surplus to requirements through an up to date Local Transport Strategy which has been adopted by the Council.</p>
Additional housing opportunities in established residential areas, such as under-used garage blocks	<p>Intensification is about making a more efficient use of land within a particular area. It comprises housing output from the development of additional dwellings within existing residential areas. Typical sources of capacity might involve single houses with large suburban back gardens, the development of garage courts, or incidental open space. However, it might also involve the redevelopment of the original house and development of new units in the grounds.</p> <p>This source of supply is again difficult to survey. Historical data of permissions from within the County for the last 10 years will be analysed to establish trend. Attention again needs to be paid to physical form and character of the area.</p> <p>The recent change in national Government will make this source of supply less reliable as back gardens no longer constitute brownfield land and there is a clear agenda from the Coalition Government to prevent further cases of “garden grabbing.”</p> <p>Maps and site visits will be used to identify other opportunities in established residential areas such as disused garage blocks.</p>
Large scale redevelopment and re-design of existing residential areas.	<p>Capacity is usually released through two possible mechanisms: the re-development of unfit or derelict housing, or the re-development of low-density housing. Care needs to be taken to ensure only additional housing numbers, on top of those that already exist are accounted for.</p> <p>Given the characteristics of the local area, it is unlikely that significant capacity will be available through the redevelopment of low density housing or unfit housing.</p>

Source of Supply	Data Collection Method / Further Information
Sites in rural settlements and rural exception sites	<p>In order to promote more sustainable settlements in rural areas, housing sites in rural settlements should also be identified. These can be made up from other sources of supply identified here, as well as small greenfield sites or the identification of possible land to accommodate rural exception sites. Provided that potential sites relate well to existing settlement and settlement boundaries their inclusion will provide a comprehensive geographical coverage.</p>
Land not previously developed including Greenfield sites	<p>There is sometimes also vacant land in urban areas that is not being used, such as agriculture, playing fields, parks or allotments and is not previously developed. It may be shown on Ordnance Survey maps as 'white' areas without annotation.</p> <p>Initially Ordnance Survey maps will be used to identify these sites; information will also be requested from landowners, agents and developers.</p> <p>The assessment will also identify greenfield sites adjacent to, or within existing settlements to identify site potential. This is to assess developability and identify sustainability issues in advance of the plan making process.</p>
Urban extensions and new freestanding settlements	<p>No new settlements were identified in the revoked RSS for the County. Such options will only be considered where an overriding local need and benefit has been identified and all other options have been exhausted without finding the requisite housing numbers.</p> <p>Land around settlements will be assessed to see if there is scope for urban extensions.</p>

3.2.7 Certain types of land or areas may be excluded from the Assessment. Where this is the case the reasons for doing so will need to be justified. In such a case these areas should be mapped and ascribed a nil housing potential. For all categories the council will be assisted by landowners / agents / developers in the identification and assessment of potential sites.

3.2.8 The scope of the assessment should not be narrowed down by existing policies designed to constrain development (unless there are clear cut designations such as SSSI's) this is to ensure that the council is in the best possible position when it comes to decide the strategy for delivering housing objectives.

**Stage 3: Desktop review of existing information**

3.3.0 Wiltshire Council has access to a large range of datasets that are indicative of the deliverability of a site for housing. Each site has been reviewed with respect to these datasets and its deliverability assessed. This data includes the geographical extents of a number of constraints, the ownership details of a

large number of sites (or part sites), and the recent development history of the majority of sites.

- 3.3.1 All information gathered will be mapped in GIS systems for use in the site survey. Any inconsistencies between sources of information will also be resolved; landowner, developer and agent details will also be recorded for follow up information.

**Stage 4: Determining which sites and areas will be surveyed**

- 3.4.0 All sites with potential to be developed in line with the proposed settlement strategy as presented in Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (assuming that the settlement boundaries from existing Local Plans are maintained) should be surveyed. Indeed, sites included in this SHLAA (with the exclusion of those received since April 2011) have been surveyed, either at the time of the previous assessment, immediately prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 for those sites submitted between these assessments, during the development of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, in order to develop the strategic site options for the Wiltshire 2026 consultation in the summer of 2009, or at April 2011 for the remainder. For those few sites that have not been surveyed, this will be noted within the assessment and surveys carried out in the forthcoming year.
- 3.4.1 This survey provides a site specific assessment for each site that has been considered in the analysis of the potential deliverability. In order to maintain an accurate awareness of sites in the future, assessments will revisit sites where changes are known, ensuring that these are recorded accurately. There is also the opportunity for representatives of each site to inform the council about relevant changes or misinformation.
- 3.4.2 The settlement strategy outlined in the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June – August 2011) identifies a number of towns and villages which are considered suitable and sustainable locations to accommodate development of various scales. These are presented in Table 2 and fall into the following categories, namely:

**Table 2: The Settlement Strategy for Wiltshire**

<b>1. Principal Settlements;</b>	
Chippenham	Trowbridge
<b>2. Market Towns;</b>	
Bradford-on-Avon	Calne
Corsham	Devizes
Malmesbury	Marlborough
Melksham	Tidworth & Ludgershall
Warminster	Westbury
Wootton Bassett	
<b>3. Local Service Centres;</b>	
Cricklade	Market Lavington
Pewsey	
<b>4. Large Villages;</b>	
Aldbourne	Ashton Keynes
Atworth	Baydon



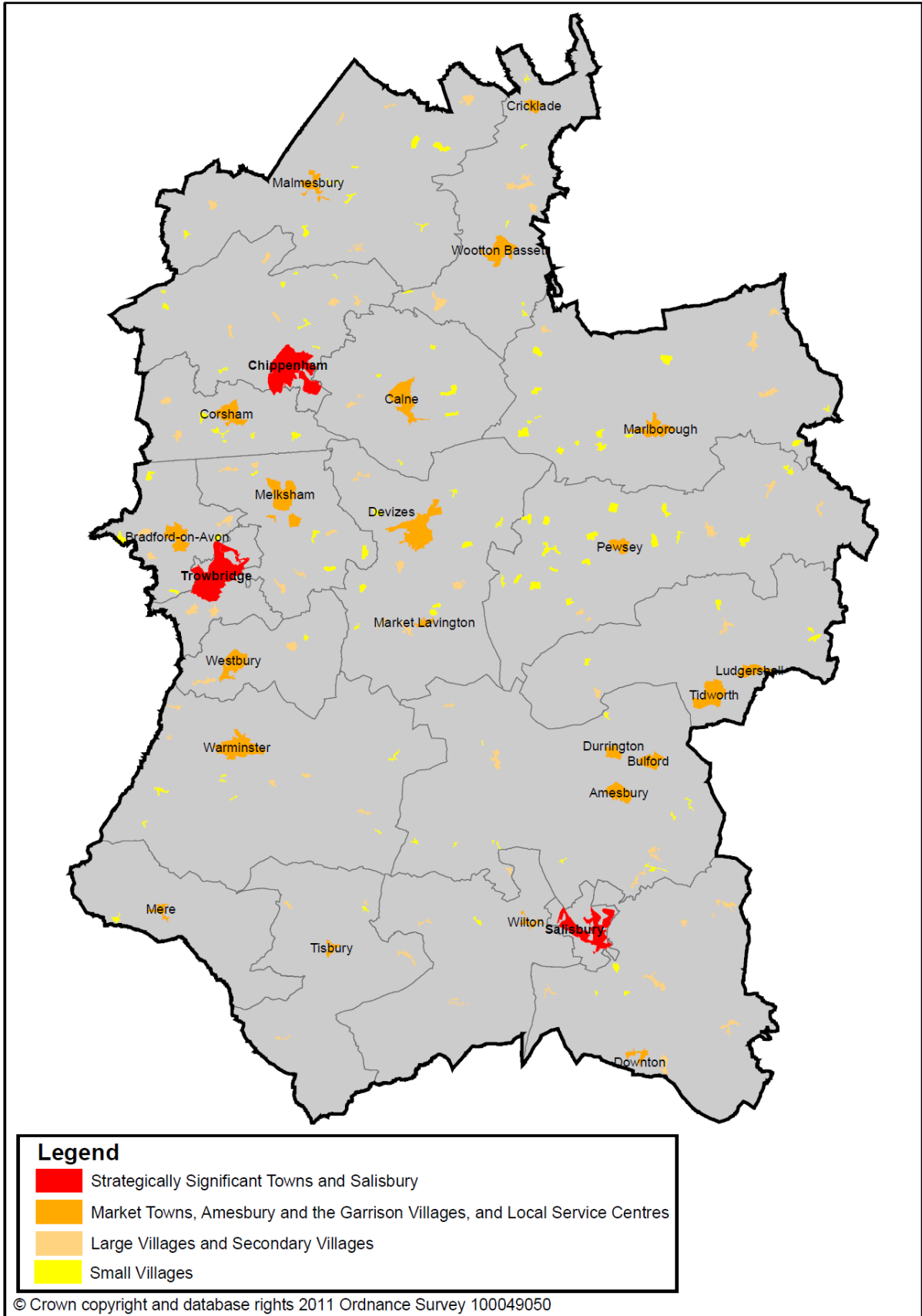
Box	Bratton
Broad Hinton	Bromham
Burbage	Chapmanslade
Christian Malford	Codford
Colerne	Collingbourne Ducis
Corsley	Crudwell
Derry Hill/Studley	Dilton Marsh
Great Cheverell	Great Bedwyn
Heytesbury	Great Somerford
Holt	Hullavington
Kington St Michael	Keevil
Littleton Pannell	Lydiard Millicent
Lyneham	Netheravon
North Bradley	Oaksey
Potterne	Purton
Ramsbury	Seend
Semington	Shalbourne
Sherston	Southwick
Steeple Ashton	Sutton Benger
Sutton Veny	Upavon
Urchfont	West Ashton
West Lavington	Westwood
Whitley	Winsley
Yatton Keynell	
<b>5. Small Villages;</b>	
All Cannings	Allington
Alton Priors/Alton Barnes	Avebury/Trusloe
Beckhampton	Biddestone
Bishops Cannings	Bradenstoke
Bremhill	Brinkworth
Broad Town	Broughton Gifford
Bulkington	Burton
Charlton	Cherhill
Chilton Foliat	Chirton
Chitterne	Chute Cadley
Chute Standen	Collingbourne Kingston
Compton Bassett	Corston
Crockerton	East Kennett
East Grafton	Easterton
Easton Royal	Edington
Enford	Erlestoke
Etchilhampton	Froxfield
Fyfield	Gastard
Ham	Heddington
Hilcott	Hilmarton
Hook	Horningsham
Kington Langley	Lacock
Langley Burrell	Latton
Lea	Limpley Stoke
Little Bedwyn	Lockeridge
Longbridge Deverill	Lower Chute
Lower Stanton	Luckington
Maiden Bradley	Manningford Bruce

Manton	Marden
Marston	Milbourne
Milton Lilbourne	Minety/Upper Minety
Monkton Farleigh	Neston
Nettleton	Oare
Ogbourne St George	Poulshot
Purton Stoke	Rowde
Rudloe	Rushall
Seagry/Upper Seagry	Seend Cleeve
Shaw	Stanton St Bernard
Stanton St Quintin	Staverton
Stockton	West Overton
Westwells	Wilcot
Wilsford	Wingfield
Winterbourne Bassett	Winterbourne Monkton
Woodborough	Wootton Rivers

3.4.3 Furthermore, the submission draft of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies a settlement strategy for this area. This classifies all settlements into the following groups:

<b>Salisbury;</b>	
Salisbury City	
<b>Amesbury and the Garrison Villages;</b>	
Amesbury	Bulford
Durrington	
<b>Local Service Centres;</b>	
Downton	Mere
Tisbury	Wilton
<b>Secondary Villages;</b>	
Alderbury	Broad Chalke
Coombe Bissett	Dinton
Fovant	Great Wishford
Hindon	Ludwell
Morgans Vale/Woodfalls	Pitton
Porton	Shrewton
Tilshead	Whiteparish
The Winterbournes	The Winterslows
<b>Small Villages;</b>	
Barford St Martin	Bodenham
Britford	Chilmark
Figcheldean/Ablington	Gomeldon
Middle Woodford	Newton Toney
Odstock	Orcheston
Stapleford	Steeple Langford
Wylve	Zeals

Map 3: The location of settlements



- 3.4.4 As such, the sites considered to be suitable for development must lie in or adjacent to one of these settlements<sup>3</sup>. Sites will also be considered to be part of an extension where they are beyond this 100 metre buffer but adjoin another (suitable) site that is within 100 metres of settlement boundary. However, sites that have planning permission will not be subject to this restriction as suitability is no longer a constraint.
- 3.4.5 The SHLAA Practice Guidance (paragraph 7) states that the purpose of the SHLAA is to identify as many sites “in and around as many settlements as possible”. This requires sites to be identified that can contribute toward delivering sustainable mixed communities. Development in locations unrelated to settlements defined through existing and emerging development plan policies will therefore not be included within the assessment.
- 3.4.6 Furthermore, all sites that have been developed since 2001 are excluded, as it is considered unlikely that these sites will be redeveloped in such a short time period.

#### **Stage 5: Carrying out the survey**

- 3.5.1 Where new sites are promoted and site surveys required, all surveys will follow consistent practice in site assessment and recording of information. Officers will also be briefed to ensure they know how to deal with members of the public or property owners who approach them to minimise misinformed speculation.
- 3.5.2 A site survey form has been developed which will be used to determine or check site characteristics and this includes information regarding:
- Site size
  - Site boundaries
  - Current uses
  - Surrounding land uses
  - Character of surrounding area
  - Physical constraints eg access, topography, flood risk, natural features of significance and location of pylons).
  - Development progress
  - Initial assessment of whether the site is suitable for housing or housing as part of a mixed-use development.
- 3.5.3 The site visit will also be used to identify any further constraints, opportunities, strengths, weaknesses or threats which may exist on the site. A standard reporting protocol will ensure a clear audit trail.
- 3.5.4 Site promoters / agents / developers or landowners also have the opportunity to inform the Council of any opportunities or constraints.

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<sup>3</sup> The Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document states that development at Small Villages will consist of limited infill only, and so sites adjacent to these settlements will be excluded.

**Stage 6: Estimating the housing potential of each site**

- 3.6.1 The housing potential of each site will be assessed. The Practice Guidance identifies that such estimates of housing supply should be guided by existing or emerging plan policy. In order to estimate the housing potential of each site, the developable area has been determined, excluding all areas that are subject to a significant constraint as detailed in Table 5.
- 3.6.2 A gross to net factor has then been applied to the site area. The gross to net factor takes account of any requirements to provide supporting facilities on the site. It should be noted that, in reality, each site will be considered individually as and when it is taken forward for allocation or proposed for development.
- 3.6.3 Nevertheless, the gross to net ratios that will be applied for the purposes of the yield assessment are as set out in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Gross to net ratios**

Gross Site Area (ha)	Percentage Net
Up to 0.4ha	90%
0.4ha to 2ha	80%
2ha to 10ha	75%
Over 10ha	50%

- 3.6.4 It is assumed that small sites (up to 0.4ha) could potentially be developed entirely for housing, however there may be site specific issues which will mean that this is not always possible. Therefore it is considered appropriate to assume that a minimum of 90% will be developable. This is because most of these small sites will not require any more supporting infrastructure than is listed in PPS3, and so any reduction from the gross figure should be minimal. For the largest sites (above 10ha), the net to gross factor that will be applied is 50%, to allow for significant additional infrastructure such as schools, community facilities, and so on. A less severe ratio will be applied to sites between 0.4ha and 10ha.
- 3.6.5 Once the developable area of a site has been identified a density multiplier can then be used to ascertain the potential yield of specific sites. The most up to date advice on net density has been used, namely that contained in Annex B of PPS3 which states that net dwelling density is calculated by:
- “..those site areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping and children’s play areas..”*
- 3.6.6 On the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010 the Minister for Decentralisation re-issued PPS3 and confirmed that the national indicative minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare is deleted from paragraph 47 of PPS3. Previous SHLAAs have used this indicative minimum outside of the main urban areas and market towns as the basis for the assessment of yield.
- 3.6.7 In light of the consultation responses and the revision to PPS3 removing the minimum density requirement, it is considered appropriate to apply a single

density assumption of 30dph across the board as show in Table 4. A density assumption provides the basis for a comparative assessment of sites, albeit an indicative one.

**Table 4: Density assumptions**

	Town Centre	Urban Area	Urban Extension
Significant Town including Salisbury	30dph	30dph	30dph
Market Towns			
Small Towns			
Small Villages			

- 3.6.8 Where further information has been provided by developers / landowners in respect of the potential capacity of a site, this will be used as a more accurate indicator of potential yield. In circumstances where a range is proposed the higher end of this range will be used as this is likely to represent the aspirations for the site, providing that the resulting density is reasonable. However, that is not to say that this scale of development may necessarily be suitable on the site.
- 3.6.9 It is not the purpose of the SHLAA to determine the density of specific sites which should be determined at the time of allocation or through the planning process.
- 3.6.10 Within the assessment there are a number of mixed use sites, which are proposed for development including a mix of uses (primarily retail, residential and employment uses). For such areas it is unreasonable to assume a standard density and so in these cases the capacity has been estimated based on advice from officers.

**Stage 7: Assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed**

- 3.7.1 This stage of the SHLAA is to assess whether a proposed or identified site is suitable, available and achievable as outlined in PSS3 paragraph 33. This helps to determine whether the site can be considered deliverable and developable for housing development or not as the case may be.
- 3.7.2 By considering the availability, suitability and achievability of a site an assessment can be made as to whether the site is:
- Deliverable** – it is available now, at a suitable location and there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years of the adoption of the plan.
- Developable** – again should be a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that it will be available and developed at a specific point in time.
- 3.7.3 The SHLAA seeks to assess the suitability, the achievability and the availability of each site individually. A 'fail one fail all approach' will be used in

the assessment of sites. This approach means that if a site fails in relation to particular criteria it should not continue through the rest of the process. The suitability of sites will be assessed initially in Stage 7a, and sites failing to be considered as 'suitable' will not progress to Stages 7b and 7c in line with the 'fail one fail all approach', but these sites may be re-examined if a 15-year supply can not be demonstrated, The approach to this assessment is detailed below.

- 3.7.4 Site specific information has been incorporated and is considered in conjunction with the results of this assessment, and the judgement of council officers in order to provide an accurate and comprehensive assessment.

**Stage 7a: Assessing suitability for housing**

- 3.7.5 In order to assess suitability, the extent of each site has been cross referenced against a number of policy and environmental constraints. This information has been aggregated with site specific information obtained either through site surveys through engagement with site representatives, or through a review of desktop information.
- 3.7.6 A site is suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. Sites with planning permission are automatically considered suitable as constraints will have been identified and addressed prior to planning permission being granted. Similarly, existing Local Plan allocations areas considered suitable, unless specific information indicates otherwise, as such sites have been subject to the Local Plan Inquiry process.
- 3.7.7 Each site will be assessed on the basis of whether it is suitable, has the potential to be suitable with appropriate mitigation, or whether it is unsuitable. Some examples of potential mitigation measures include the remediation of contaminated land or the provision of a compensatory area of open space.
- 3.7.8 Paragraph 21 of the Practice Guidance is clear that the scope of the assessment should not be narrowed down by existing policies designed to constrain development with the exception of clear-cut designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 3.7.9 Depending on the status of these constraints and upon discussions with appropriate parties, including the Housing Market Partnership, sites will be:
- assessed as being suitable;
  - reduced as part of the site is considered unsuitable;
  - reduced to allow for mitigation of identified constraints;
  - identified as having constraint(s) but still considered suitable for development; or
  - assessed as being unsuitable.
- 3.7.10 The constraints considered and the effect that each has on the suitability of a site is presented below. Any further suitability constraints that have been identified through the Call for Sites exercise or through discussion with site

representatives, development control officers or spatial planning officers have also been taken into consideration.

**Table 5: Suitability constraints**

<b>Policy Constraints</b>	
<p>Employment allocations</p>	<p>Sites identified as strategic employment sites have been excluded as they are identified within policy or emerging policy as key to the delivery of employment land. Such sites should not be developed for other uses.</p> <p>In order to assess these sites, several sources will be used, including the Delivery Plan of the Wiltshire Workspace Strategy (DTZ). This identifies a number of employment sites to be retained, protected, allocated or reserved. These will be excluded from the assessment, unless they were identified as having potential for mixed use by the Spatial Planning Service.</p> <p>Furthermore, all sites identified as employment allocations in the existing Local Plans, and those that lie in Protected Employment Sites (as identified in the Kennet Local Plan) or Employment Policy areas (as identified in the West Wiltshire Local Plan) will be excluded.</p> <p>As employment policy develops existing Local Plan allocations may no longer be considered to be suitable for employment purposes. In such circumstances this will be compensated for through the regular updates to the SHLAA.</p>
<p>Open Space Designation</p>	<p>Those sites that should be protected or retained for their recreational uses are also excluded or at least sites have been reduced to avoid these constraints.</p> <p>In both North and East Wiltshire all areas classified as Protected Recreation Sites (in the existing Kennet Local Plan) or identified (in the North Wiltshire Open Space Study) have the potential for development provided that alternative recreation sites are provided elsewhere. In South Wiltshire, all sites identified as Important Open Space within the adopted Salisbury Local Plan, would not normally be permitted, but this is not considered an absolute constraint. As such, any potential development sites that coincide with these policy areas are identified and their developability considered on a site by site basis.</p> <p>In West Wiltshire, those areas that are identified as high quality and/or high value in the West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document are excluded. This includes all sites that are covered by policy LP1 of the West Wiltshire District Plan 1<sup>st</sup></p>



	Alteration (2004) which will be protected from development for other uses. Sites that are covered by policy LP2, that are of low value, are not excluded but are identified and their developability considered in the light of this policy.
Green Belt Designation	All sites or parts of sites that are located within the Green Belt are excluded.
Wildlife Designation	<p>All sites have been reduced to account for any Sites of Special Scientific Interest. They have also been cross-referenced with County Wildlife Sites. Any sites that are partly within one of these constraints have been individually considered by ecologists at Wiltshire Council, in order to provide advice as to whether they are suitable for development. Some sites have been excluded due to this constraint, and some have been reduced to allow for lower densities or other forms of mitigation.</p> <p>Sites within Local Nature Reserves and Special Areas of Conservation have been identified but are not excluded. Such sites may be less well suited to future development than others, but with sensitive development they may be able to contribute to housing delivery.</p>
Minerals Preferred Area	All sites that lie within Minerals Resource Zones, Minerals Safeguarding Zones or Minerals Preferred Areas have been identified, as prior to development Council Officers will have to be consulted.
Other policy constraints	Any further suitability constraints that have been identified through the Call for Sites exercise or through discussion with site representatives, development control officers or spatial planning officers have also been taken into consideration.
<b>Physical / Environmental Constraints</b>	
Health & Safety consultation zones	<p>Zones designated by the Health &amp; Safety Executive as requiring consultation as a result of particular hazards have been excluded (or reduced).</p> <p>Sites located within close proximity to hazardous substances such as oil and gas pipelines and other installations will be assessed in accordance with the Planning Advice for Developments near Hazardous Installations (PADHI). At present these have been identified based on the information available to the Council but have not been discounted.</p>
Flood risk	<p>All sites or part sites within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 will be excluded. Those sites, or small part sites entirely surrounded by a substantial area in these flood zones will also be excluded, as access will be a substantial constraint. However, that is not to say that this could not be overcome with appropriate mitigation.</p> <p>If there is insufficient land in flood zone 1 to accommodate development, then sites within flood</p>

	<p>zone 2 can be reassessed where appropriate.</p> <p>The residual developable area of larger sites will also be excluded where such sites fall below the thresholds of this assessment. In cases where the residual developable area is above the threshold and is regarded as being adjacent to a sustainable settlement as identified, then this site will continue to be assessed through the SHLAA.</p>
Contamination	Such as former industrial land or landfill sites are identified.
Poor ground conditions	Such as areas liable to subsidence are identified
<b>Potential Impacts</b>	
Landscape Value	Sites within Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Parks and Gardens (including the Cotswold Water Park), or with Listed Building Status, archaeological issues or schedule ancient monuments have been identified. Such sites may be less well suited to future development than others, but with sensitive development they may be able to contribute to housing delivery.
<b>Accessibility</b>	
	All sites that are beyond 400m of a bus stop or of a town centre have been identified as this may affect the suitability of the site. However, this has not ruled sites out as it is possible that this could be addressed by changing bus routes or adding new bus stops.

### **Stage 7b: Assessing availability for housing**

- 3.7.11 In order to assess the availability of sites a number of factors have been considered in line with the Practice Guidance. A site is considered available for development when it has been demonstrated that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners. Furthermore the current use of the site will need to be assessed.
- 3.7.12 Where sites are identified through a Call for Sites exercise the contact information provided will be used to assess these constraints. For those sites that have been identified by the local authority, every practicable step will be taken to identify the landowners and to discuss and determine the availability of each site.
- 3.7.13 For all sites for which contact details are not known additional information will be generated through a review of Land Registry records.
- 3.7.14 Where responses concluded that a site is no longer available for housing development then the site is considered unavailable and excluded from this assessment entirely. All other sites are assumed to have potential for residential development.

- 3.7.15 Pro-forma responses and details from the Land Registry will be used to determine whether each site is considered to be under multiple-ownership. In such circumstances it is assumed to present an availability constraint.
- 3.7.16 It is assumed that a site is under multiple-ownership if a single plot is owned by multiple owners or if the site is split into several properties, each of which is owned by different owners. Where it can be demonstrated that a site under multiple-ownership is continuing to be promoted and is likely to come forward then the availability constraint can be demonstrated to no longer exist. In such circumstances clear evidence will be required to support the assessment of availability. Information has been sought from officers to establish if this is the case.
- 3.7.17 For sites for which ownership details can not be established, it is assumed that the site is under multiple-ownership, which is a cautious approach. All sites that are determined to have an ownership availability constraint are not discounted but rather are considered developable (in 5+ years) rather than deliverable (within 5 years).
- 3.7.18 Another issue that is considered under availability is that of continuing uses. If it is known that a site is currently subject to an alternative continuing use that may delay development or if the site is subject to leasehold, then once again the site is considered to be currently unavailable. Those continuing uses that are considered to be likely to slow development include all sites that are likely to require relocation of the current use (such as commercial, education, recreation uses) or sites that will require remediation given their current use.
- 3.7.19 The sites that are assessed as being unavailable are not discounted entirely, but rather are assessed as having limited availability at present, and are considered as having the potential for development in 5 or more years time.
- 3.7.20 These assessments of availability have been presented to and agreed with officers. In future assessments, communication will be maintained with site representatives to ensure that any changes are included in the assessment.

#### **Stage 7c: Assessing achievability for housing**

- 3.7.21 The achievability of a site is determined to be an assessment of the economic viability of site delivery and the capacity of a developer to deliver at a particular point in time as detailed in paragraph 40 of the Practice Guidance. As such a viability assessment has been undertaken for a sample of sites considered to be suitable (Stage 7a) and available (Stage 7b) for which site specific information is unavailable. This sample has been agreed with the HMP, and the results will be presented in the SHLAA report. The methodology employed to assess the viability of sites is attached as appendix 1.
- 3.7.22 The other element of achievability, not considered in the viability assessment, is the delivery capacity of developers, which is very hard to assess, as in the majority of cases a specific developer is unknown or has not yet been identified. However, in those instances where several concurrently developable sites are attributable to a single developer, the council has liaised

with this developer to ensure that there is both the ambition and the capacity to deliver.

### **Estimates of delivery timetable**

- 3.8.1 The constraints to development have been identified as well as the site representative's ambitions for delivery for those sites that responded to the pro-forma. This, along with historic development rates, has been used to estimate when a site is likely to start to be developed and how long the development is likely to take, reflecting the approach taken through the AMR.
- 3.8.2 Actual delivery will be dependent upon the timing and the rate of the anticipated housing market recovery. However, this is very difficult to predict and so it is assumed that the developer's current delivery timetables are accurate, unless there is some obvious constraint to this.
- 3.8.3 The Wiltshire SHLAA is not a one-off study rather it is an on-going assessment of housing land availability and will be updated annually. Therefore any divergence from the proposed delivery will be recognised and compensated for in future updates to the SHLAA, consequently the deliverability of sites may change over time.
- 3.8.4 For the majority of sites for which site representatives have not been identified, or do not respond to the annual pro-formas, delivery will be assessed based solely upon the council's knowledge of constraints. If further information is provided by site representatives this will be used to update future assessments.
- 3.8.5 The delivery timetable of the remaining sites will be estimated according to the assessment of whether each site is deliverable or developable. If a site is deemed to be deliverable then it is possible that development could begin in the following five years. Such sites can be divided into three distinct categories, namely, those with planning permission, those subject to an outstanding Local Plan allocation, and all other sites.
- 3.8.6 Those large deliverable sites with a planning permission will have delivery estimates from the applicants or their agents. Where this information is not available an estimate will be undertaken using the best knowledge of officers. For all small sites delivery estimates are generated based on historic rates.
- 3.8.7 Those deliverable sites subject to a Local Plan have been individually estimated based on the expertise of officers, except in the few cases where developers are known and have contributed to the delivery timetable.
- 3.8.8 All other deliverable sites have once more been assessed by appropriate officers within the council, and are assumed to be developed towards the end of the five year period, allowing for planning consent to be achieved and the development to commence.

3.8.9 For all developable sites, similar assumptions have been used. If a site has suitability, availability and/or achievability constraints this is considered to delay the development of the site.

3.8.10 Where a site has been identified as having suitability constraint(s) which are not considered to preclude development, or when a site is under multiple-ownership or continuing uses, or indeed has a borderline viability then historic development rates and officer knowledge will be applied to determine the likely delivery timetable for such sites.

3.8.11 As the SHLAA is reviewed on an annual basis site specific circumstances will be reappraised which may result in revisions to the anticipated deliverability of sites over time.

#### **Stage 7d: Overcoming constraints**

3.8.12 When constraints have been identified the SHLAA will consider what action would be needed to remove the constraints. Actions could include the need for investment in new infrastructure, dealing with fragmented land ownership, environmental improvement, or a need amend planning policy which is currently constraining housing development.

3.8.13 At the end of Stage 7, there will be a list of sites which are considered to be suitable, developable and deliverable with the following information:

- A site plan at a relevant scale;
- A completed checklist;
- An estimate of housing potential;
- An assessment of whether the site is deliverable, developable or not currently developable; and,
- Suggestions on how to overcome any identified constraints, including current policy constraints which narrow down the scope of the assessment.

#### **Stage 8: Review of the Assessment**

3.9.1 Once the initial survey of sites and the assessment of the deliverability / developability have been completed, the housing potential of all sites can be collected to produce an indicative housing trajectory that sets out how much housing can be delivered and at what point in the future. This information will be supplemented with a full analysis of the constraints applying to each site.

3.9.2 It may be concluded that insufficient sites have been identified and that further sites need to be sought or that assumptions made eg the housing potential of particular sites, need to be re-visited.

3.9.3 Following the review, if there are still insufficient sites, then the council will investigate how a shortfall should be planned for. The four options are:

- the identification of broad locations for future housing growth, within and outside settlements (stage 9): and / or
- the use of windfall allowance (stage 10)
- radical solutions such as a new settlement or major urban extensions.

- review of sites within flood zone 2 too see if they have potential

3.9.4 Again it should be noted that the outcomes of the study do not give a presumption towards development. Any development site will need to be assessed through the planning process and also be subject to sustainability appraisal.

3.9.5 It is proposed that those that submitted sites will be contacted on an annual basis to assess the continuing delivery aspirations of each suitable site. Information from ongoing engagement between LDF officers and developers, landowners and agents, will also be used to review the housing land supply.

### **Stage 9: Identifying and assessing the housing potential of broad locations**

3.10.1 The guidance allows the identification of broad locations where there are not enough specific sites to demonstrate a supply for 11-15 years. Assessing the housing potential of broad locations will only be undertaken if additional locations are required to meet Wiltshire's housing requirements.

3.10.2 The need for broad locations will be quantified upon completion of the assessment. If a need is identified then the location of such sites will be assessed through additional work beyond the remit of this paper.

### **Stage 10: Determining the housing potential of windfalls**

3.11.1 Windfall sites are those sites that have not been specifically identified in the local development plan process as being available. PPS3 sets a clear expectation that the supply of land for housing should be based upon specific sites, and where necessary, broad locations.

3.11.2 The SHLAA Practice Guidance indicates that where a windfall allowance can be justified this should be based on an estimate of the amount of housing that could be delivered in an area on land that has not been identified in the list of deliverable and / or developable sites, or as part of broad locations for housing development.

3.11.3 The Wiltshire 2010 SHLAA report will identify whether or not there are genuine local circumstances in the administrative area that could prevent sufficient potential housing sites being identified. If such circumstances exist, and if the SHLAA identifies a shortfall in the number of dwellings needed to meet the Development Plan provision, a windfall allowance may be used.

## **4.0 Monitoring and Review.**

4.1 Monitoring of housing delivery is undertaken on an annual basis. The resulting Wiltshire monitoring report is published in December each year.

4.2 Future monitoring reports will continue to include an up to date housing trajectory reflecting the current situations and expectations of identified sites. In addition Wiltshire Council will monitor information on: whether sites have been completed or are under construction; whether sites are the subject of planning applications or permissions; progress on any identified constraints

which affect the deliverability or developability of a site; the identification of any new constraints; whether any previously unidentified sites have come forward.

## **Appendix 1 – Viability assessment**

### **A1.0 Introduction**

- A1.1 The viability assessment is undertaken in order to provide strategic conclusions on the viability of sites which have the potential to deliver housing in accordance with identified need. In circumstances where site specific information has been provided by a site representative, demonstrating the viability of the development scheme, this will supersede any assessment of deliverability undertaken through the SHLAA process.
- A1.2 In addition, any detailed assessment of viability undertaken after publication will supersede the SHLAA assessment and be used to inform subsequent updates. Regular updates to the SHLAA and assessment of deliverability ensures that conclusions on the viability, and the associated implications on overall housing delivery, will be up-to-date and based on the latest information.
- A1.3 A review of other SHLAAs has been undertaken, this review analysed the assumptions employed in the various assessments and identified those which were transparent and of sufficient detail to provide reliable outputs. Following this work, a residual land value methodology (as recommended in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Practice Guidance) has been employed. This methodology, and the assumptions used are outlined this appendix.

### **A2.0 SHLAA viability assessment methodology** **Developing a methodology**

- A2.1 The process of finalising the assessment methodology began in October 2010 through targeted consultation with the Wiltshire and Swindon Housing Market Partnership (HMP). During the course of this consultation it became apparent that the SHLAA assessment process should be stripped back in order to provide a simple and indicative assessment of viability and deliverability.
- A2.2 The basis of this revision is to take the approach back to first principles, namely to provide an assessment of a site to ascertain whether there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on a site at a particular point in time. This is in essence a judgement on the economic viability.
- A2.3 On this basis Wiltshire Council began a review of established viability/deliverability models in order to deliver an assessment process consistent with the outcome of the consultation with the HMP. The SHLAA Practice Guidance is clear that stakeholders should be involved at the outset of the Assessment in order to help shape the approach to be taken. In order to do this a HMP Sub Group was established and met in March 2011 in order to take forward the SHLAA and in particular the assessment of the likely deliverability of sites. The HMP Sub-group proposed that a sample of sites should be taken forward to full assessment, rather than undertake an assessment of each site submitted. This has the dual benefit of proceeding with the SHLAA in an expedient manner whilst also providing a detailed knowledge of the factors that will affect site deliverability.
- A2.4 The sample sites were identified to represent a range of site typologies and have been determined in accordance with the considerations in the HCA AWVM Transparent Assumptions note. The typologies are identified as follows:
- Large town centre previously developed land
  - Small town centre previously developed land
  - Large urban previously developed land



- Large urban Greenfield site
- Small urban previously developed land
- Large rural previously developed land
- Large rural Greenfield site
- Small rural previously developed land
- Small rural Greenfield site

A2.6 An alternative to the HCA Model is one developed by Roger Tym & Partners (RTP) in partnership with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS)<sup>4</sup>. This model provides a broad assessment based on limited assumptions. Discussions with the HMP Sub-group concluded that whilst the RTP model provides adequate coverage for an initial broad assessment, the HCA model provides a more robust assessment.

A2.7 The HCA AWVM provides the facility to input additional assumptions and is widely used across the industry in assessments of viability and as such is considered the most appropriate assessment model. Nevertheless, for the small number of sample sites, both the HCA and RTP models are used, not least because many of the required assumptions can be applied to both models, but also because it provides additional sensitivity testing.

### **Residual land value methodology**

A2.8 In very basic terms a development is considered to be viable where the estimated land value from development exceeds the existing use value, or alternative use value, for a site. Alternative use value is a subjective assessment which will be influenced by landowners / developers aspirations for the site. Given this subjectivity it is considered appropriate to consider residual land value against existing use value only for the purposes of this assessment.

A2.9 The calculation of Residual Land Value is based on the following equation.

Estimated Development Value
<b>Less</b>
Estimated Development Costs
<b>Plus</b>
Estimated Interest Payments
<b>Plus</b>
Required Level of Profit
<b>Equals</b>
<u>Estimated Residual Land Value.</u>

A2.10 The existing use values are heavily influenced by a number of factors, including:

- The existing use
- Whether the site is being marketed for housing
- The location of the site
- The size of the site

<sup>4</sup> Planning Advisory Service, *Viability Training Course*. Roger Tym & Partners with Michael Beaman Limited. August 2010

- A2.11 Each of these factors has been assessed using other assessments nationally as well as localised data.
- A2.12 The primary impact on the land value is whether or not the site is being marketed for housing (or another change of use). For example, in considering a sample of vacant sites currently for sale, those that are being marketed for a change of use range between £342,000 and £2,333,000 per acre, whereas those that are not being marketed for a change of use range between £17,000 and £45,000.
- A2.13 The difference between the existing and alternative use values is due to the aspirations of the landowner. The market value for the land is the existing use value, and whilst the potential development may increase the cost of land it is at the developers' discretion as to whether this would render the site unviable. As such the existing use value is used within the assessment with any increased cost being the responsibility of the developer. However, a premium is applied to the existing use value to accommodate some expectation value.
- A2.14 The existing use, the location and the size of the site are all site specific and so result in a range of land values depending upon particular circumstance. In this light, it is considered more robust to assume a range of existing values against which to assess each site. This should accommodate any site specific issues (in general terms).
- A2.15 The following table identifies the existing use values used in the assessment. However, further site specific knowledge should be used in the assessment where available. These assumptions have been taken from a search for development land for sale across Wiltshire at April 2011.

**Table 1: Existing use values**

Existing use	Low value per hectare	High value per hectare
Agricultural (>0.5 acres)	£10,000	£30,000
Office/Industrial	£600,000	£800,000
Small vacant sites (<0.5 acres)	£20,000	£100,000

### **A3.0 Assumptions**

A3.1 Within either model a large number of assumptions will be required. Wiltshire Council has developed estimates for these assumptions using;

- The guidance notes circulated with either model;
- Additional HCA guidance;
- A review of similar assessments nationwide;
- Emerging evidence from the SHMA;
- Emerging evidence from the Core Strategy topic papers;
- Localised data, where available.

A3.2 The proposed assumptions are as follows

**Table 2 - Assumptions**

Assumption	Actions
Dwelling mix	The dwelling mix is taken from all permitted sites since 2006 by site typology. The outputs are presented in Table 3.
Dwelling size	Analysis of homes being developed on large sites in Wiltshire has been undertaken. The results are attached in Table 4. This analysis is based on a

	sample. It is assumed that the size of affordable units is the average of the minimum HQIs.
Existing use values	Wiltshire Council has set out its existing use value (rather than its alternative use value) assumptions following paragraph in Table 1. These assumptions have been generated by assessing a range of sites for sale across Wiltshire from internet sources and cross-referencing these with other assessments nationally to provide some validation.
Existing use value premium	The HCA model allows a premium to be input. The HCA guidance note explains that this could realistically range from 10-30% in urban areas. It is assumed that 20% provides a realistic estimate.
House prices	House prices by Community Area has been procured from the Land Registry reflecting data from 2010-11. These have been used within the model with a differential applied based on the average sale value within the town centres (where available), the urban remainders and the rural areas. These average house prices are set out in Table 5 and the locational variance in Table 6.
Affordable percentage	The models will be tested using two affordable housing delivery scenarios. Firstly a 0% affordable housing rate will be applied to test the viability of sites without the requirement for affordable housing. Secondly, the rate within the emerging core strategy consultation document will also be tested. This requires 35% affordable housing on all sites of 5-14 dwellings, and 40% on all sites of 15 dwellings or more. Furthermore, using evidence from the emerging SHMA, the affordable percentage will be split 60% affordable rent and 40% shared ownership.
Social and affordable rent - Capitalised rent per unit	The Housing team at Wiltshire Council have provided information in order to develop these assumptions. In the case of affordable rent, the capitalised rent per unit is considered to be 80% of the market rent detailed in the emerging SHMA. For social rent, the average levels determined within the existing SPDs for North and West Wiltshire have been used subject to inflation. For the remainder of the area, the capitalised social rent is considered to be in line with that in North Wiltshire alone due to the lower house prices in West Wiltshire. For three and four bedroom flats (which have no specific level) an assumption has been made that for each additional bedroom the capitalised rent increase by 20%. This assumption should have little effect given that 3 and 4 bedroom flats are rare in Wiltshire.
Social rent - Indicative HCA funding per unit	An assumption of zero grant is made, as the HCAs latest framework document states that they will no longer grant fund S106 units.
Intermediate – Equity + rent	The Housing team at Wiltshire Council has informed that the value achieved from intermediate properties could reasonably be assumed to be 50% of the market value. Therefore, this will be assumed to be equal to 50% of the average house price for each Community Area (with the differential applied depending upon location).
Intermediate – Indicative HCA funding per unit	An assumption of zero grant is made, as the HCAs latest framework document states that they will no longer grant fund S106 units.
Ground rents from flats (& Capitalisation Rate)	An analysis of comparable assessments and HCA guidance has been undertaken which identifies a range for this assumption. The rentable income from each unit varies based upon the size of the unit, but in the absence of more detailed information it is considered appropriate to apply a single average rental income for all flatted units. The analysis identifies a range of £200 to £600 per unit, and Wiltshire Council will assume the midpoint of this range (£400) to provide a reasonable estimate. Furthermore there seems to be a general consensus on the capitalisation rate applied to this income of around 6%, which has been used in this assessment.
Build costs	A review of up to date assessments has been undertaken. In all cases, the average build costs range from £711 to £1,428 per square metre (some of which include external costs). It is considered that in Wiltshire a cost of £950 per square metre is appropriate.
External costs	External works are generally calculated as a percentage of the basic build costs (assuming that the build costs do not include an allowance for external

	costs). A review of similar assessments, suggests that somewhere between 7% and 20% is appropriate. It is proposed that Wiltshire Council maintain an assumption of 10%.
Timings	The base date of this assessment is April 2011 and so builds and sales timings will be estimated from this date. This will vary on a site by site basis, and evidence used within the assessment will be used to estimate the build timings for each sample site. The sales timing is more difficult to estimate but a generic assumption of sales lagging behind builds by 2 quarters will be used.
Developer contributions	Wiltshire Council has assumed a very broad average of £10,000 per dwelling is required for developer contributions on the advice of Council officers.
Developer return	Wiltshire Council initially assumed that the profit margin on sites is of the order of 20% of the total build costs. This is in line with information provided by the sub-group.
Design/sustainability standards	The emerging policy proposes that in 2011 all housing should meet Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. CLG have undertaken a cost analysis of the Code for Sustainable Homes, and the outputs from this have been used to assess the additional costs (£2,622 for a flat and £4,020 for a house).
Professional fees	An assumption of 12% of the build costs (including externals) has been made for professional fees. This accords with the HCA assumption (10-15%) in the Transparent Viability Assumptions.
Marketing and sales	A brief analysis of other assessments and the HCA guidance indicates that this should be 3%.
Legal fees	In addition many other assessments include an allowance for legal fees, which is also recommended in the HCA guidance. It is considered appropriate to assume an allowance of £600 per dwelling, unless the sub-group disagrees with this assessment.
Site acquisition costs	The HCA guidance also recommends an allowance for site acquisition costs. This includes agency fees, legal fees and stamp duty. In accordance with the guidance it will be assumed that 1.75% of the existing use land value (including a premium) will be allowed for the legal and agency fees and a further 4% stamp duty for sites over £500,000.
Finance costs	In line with other assessments it will be assumed that the finance costs are 7.5% of the total build costs (including the extra costs above). The Roger Tym model assumes that these costs are halved as developers manage equity and debit to reduce finance costs. This assumption will be carried forward in this assessment.
Inflation	Given the current uncertainty in the market and little available evidence, it is considered appropriate to assume that inflation will not occur. This will in effect assume that the ratio of house prices to build costs will be maintained. The future standards uplift will reflect any evidence emerging from the design and sustainability standards analysis.

**Table 3 – Dwelling mix**

	Flats				Houses			
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Large town centre previously developed land	40%	46%	1%	0%	1%	4%	5%	3%
Small town centre previously developed land	43%	27%	2%	0%	3%	13%	10%	2%
Large urban previously developed land	10%	33%	0%	0%	0%	13%	27%	17%
Large urban Greenfield site	7%	11%	0%	0%	0%	15%	31%	36%
Small urban previously developed land	22%	17%	1%	0%	3%	22%	24%	11%

Large rural previously developed land	4%	39%	3%	0%	1%	17%	12%	24%
Large rural Greenfield site	4%	3%	0%	0%	1%	27%	32%	33%
Small rural previously developed land	5%	3%	1%	0%	3%	22%	34%	33%
Small rural Greenfield site	4%	4%	0%	0%	4%	31%	29%	28%

**Table 4 – Dwelling size**

	Flats (square metres)				Houses (square metres)		
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Private dwellings	40	55	75	N/A	70	95	130
Affordable dwellings	47	56	90	108	56	90	108

**Table 5 – Average House Price**

Community Area	Average House Price
Amesbury	£262,257
Bradford-on-Avon	£286,177
Calne	£213,038
Chippenham	£214,269
Corsham	£254,562
Devizes	£219,702
Downton	£302,908
Malmesbury	£309,026
Marlborough	£337,154
Melksham	£214,333
Mere	£297,717
Pewsey	£355,724
Salisbury	£224,076
Tidworth	£221,935
Tisbury	£385,328
Trowbridge	£183,686
Warminster	£215,589
Westbury	£184,461
Wilton	£312,828
Wootton Bassett & Cricklade	£229,194

A3.3 Depending upon where within a Community Area a site lies the sales value will differ. This is reflected by assuming a differential for sites within the town centre/s, sites within the urban remainder and sites within villages. Analysis of the location and price of house price sales from 2009 to 2010 was undertaken and where sufficient information was available the following house price differentials were generated.

**Table 6 – Locational variance**

Area	Differential from average for CA
Amesbury Rural	117.93%
Amesbury Urban	83.93%
Bradford-on-Avon Rural	116.37%
Bradford-on-Avon Town Centre	94.21%
Bradford-on-Avon Urban	94.90%
Calne Rural	144.46%
Calne Town Centre	87.62%

Calne Urban	88.55%
Chippenham Rural	164.19%
Chippenham Town Centre	77.60%
Chippenham Urban	92.35%
Corsham Rural	116.35%
Corsham Urban	88.24%
Devizes Rural	107.93%
Devizes Town Centre	80.20%
Devizes Urban	93.54%
Malmesbury Rural	112.53%
Malmesbury Town Centre	95.53%
Malmesbury Urban	84.21%
Marlborough Rural	109.33%
Marlborough Town Centre	78.72%
Marlborough Urban	88.35%
Melksham Rural	127.09%
Melksham Town Centre	71.96%
Melksham Urban	78.49%
Mere Rural	97.83%
Mere Town Centre	143.09%
Mere Urban	99.97%
Pewsey Rural	100%
Pewsey Town Centre	100%
Pewsey Urban	100%
Salisbury Urban	128.39%
Salisbury Town Centre	108.69%
Salisbury Urban	96.16%
Southern Rural	111.14%
Southern Urban	76.08%
Tidworth Rural	114.34%
Tidworth Town Centre	83.75%
Tidworth Urban	76.39%
Tisbury Rural	119.87%
Tisbury Town Centre	49.83%
Tisbury Urban	72.93%
Trowbridge Rural	132.08%
Trowbridge Town Centre	60.85%
Trowbridge Urban	95.56%
Warminster Rural	166.22%
Warminster Town Centre	59.54%
Warminster Urban	93.38%
Westbury Rural	130.41%

Westbury Town Centre	86.46%
Westbury Urban	93.54%
Wilton Rural	126.71%
Wilton Town Centre	103.62%
Wilton Urban	87.58%
Wootton Bassett & Cricklade Rural	117.60%
Wootton Bassett & Cricklade Town Centre	70.08%
Wootton Bassett & Cricklade Urban	93.45%

A3.4 These assumptions were used to assess the viability of the sample sites, and the following conclusions can be made:

- The outputs demonstrate that the two models (RTP and HCA) are in general conformity. This provides confidence on the assessments. Furthermore, the sample assessments have been agreed by the HMP sub-group and they are considered robust.
- The majority of sites within Wiltshire are viable in the current market. There are some sites which are less viable but the assessments demonstrate that with lower affordable requirements many of these sites could be viable.

A3.5 The HCA Model includes additional assumptions in terms of the nature of the affordable housing contribution, the differential size of units, the breakdown of dwelling types and sizes etc. The appropriateness of these more detailed assumptions used in the HCA Model will ultimately determine the robustness of this approach. These will continue to be compared through open book exercises, and reviewed where this is felt appropriate.

#### **A4.0 Assessing viability**

A4.1 The deliverability of each site will consist of an assessment of financial viability, and the developer's capacity to deliver. The financial viability is considered using the methodology above. The key determinant of whether a site will be financially viable is its location. Indeed, all sites in many areas are demonstrably deliverable, whilst in others viability will compromise the ability to deliver. This does not mean that no development will be forthcoming, but rather that the Council may be required to negotiate on policy requirements in some areas.

A4.2 The viability assessment will not be attributed to individual sites but rather a summary of the cumulative deliverability in locations will be made. So, for all sites in a particular location, x% will be considered to be viable.

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