



Background Paper: HOUSING SITE SELECTION

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1 Introduction

- 1.0 The purpose of this paper is to explain, in broad terms, the processes undertaken to inform the selection of housing sites for the Draft Fareham Local Plan 2036.
- 1.1 As an overview three main stages were used to inform the selection of sites: (a) the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA); (b) the Sustainability Appraisal (SA); and (c) refining stage (refining the site options).
- 1.2 It is important that site allocation decisions are supported by clear reasoning. To this end, the process has been designed to:
- Take account of national planning policies, principles and objectives
 - Identify, early into the site selection process, those that are unsuitable, unavailable or undeliverable (i.e. discounted sites)
 - Improve transparency so that anyone can have a clearer idea of how a particular outcome has been arrived at
 - Ensure that site selection takes account of the need to achieve sustainable development
 - Where possible, ensure the sites selected provide the best match to the Site Selection Priorities/Refining Points (as outlined in Section 3 of this paper)
 - To ensure a consistent approach is undertaken to the assessment and consideration of potential housing sites
- 1.3 There will be multiple considerations and factors that will inform the overall assessment of sites and the outcome in terms of whether it is selected as a draft housing allocation. This paper is intended to increase transparency in how complex evidence base documents and planning considerations have been used in establishing the preferred approach to housing site allocation. It is not intended to provide a detailed overview or assessment of individual sites. A 'planning balance' often has to be used to consider the various factors that act in favour or against a site.

2 Key Evidence

2.0 As part of formulating the Fareham Local Plan 2036 a large amount of evidence documentation has been compiled. Many of these look at and assess individual potential housing sites and some look at Borough wide issues and sensitivities.

2.1 Some of the key evidence base used to inform site selection include: -

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2017)

This includes an assessment of each potential housing site. It is a government required document compiled in accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance. It utilises other evidence base when understanding and assessing constraints. The SHLAA is not a static document. It should be regularly reviewed and the assessment/outcome for individual sites can change if the circumstances, constraints or new evidence arises to justify a change in the assessment outcome.

Sustainability Appraisal

This is a nationally prescribed requirement for plan preparation. It assesses both the overall development requirements for the Borough, a number of delivery options, the individual sites and the proposed policies in terms of their sustainability. It balances a number of sustainable factors as outlined in the Council's Scoping Report.

The results of the SA can significantly help in site selection as it gives indications as to which sites are more appropriate when taking into account a balance of issues. It considers an array of matters from accessibility to landscape and transport. It is a qualitative report and, although the outputs are expressed as double positives, positives, negatives etc., it should not be used to provide a numerical ranking of sites.

Landscape Evidence

Detailed evidence on landscape and the integrity of gaps between settlements has been undertaken. It is important to clarify that landscape value and Strategic Gaps are different issues. Landscape looks at the landscape value of individual sites/areas whereas the integrity of gaps focuses on a sites role in preventing settlement coalescence.

This evidence together with the sites promoted suggests there are sufficient deliverable and developable sites to meet the Council's housing requirements without needing to consider sites in the most sensitive landscapes or those that will detrimentally impact the integrity of the gap. This evidence has been used in the assessment of sites suitability in the SHLAA (to effectively discount sites with higher landscape sensitivity). The evidence has also been used in the SA assessment on landscape impact and the refining stage so that landscape sensitivity is weighed in the planning balance for site selection (i.e. those at lower sensitivity typically more favourable than those with some, albeit not high, sensitivity) and that issues relating to the integrity of the gaps are considered.

Other constraints

There are many other constraints that have been considered throughout the site selection process. Most significantly this has been part of the SHLAA process.

Further details are explained in the SHLAA but, as an example, the other constraints include matters such as flood risk, Birds and Habitat Directives, unacceptable loss of open space etc.

- 2.2 The SHLAA, SA and the landscape evidence are available on the Council's website alongside consultation on the Draft Fareham Local Plan 2036. What this paper will now focus on is the refining stage in how the developable sites from the SHLAA have been considered using the SA and other refining points to establish the preferred site selection for allocation in the Draft Plan.

3 Site Selection Priorities/Refining Points

- 3.0 The SHLAA has established those sites considered to be developable based on a consistent approach to site assessment. The SA has also identified the relative sustainable merits of each site in relation to the Scoping Report. In addition it has considered a combination of site options to look at the cumulative impact as part of the SA. In order to then further inform the choices of which site to take forward Refining Points were established.
- 3.1 The Refining Points are based on the Vision for the Draft Plan, the Key Priorities for the Draft Plan, the NPPF and also achieving various other factors to support the most appropriate (or least damaging) approach to site selection. In many instances they marry up with some of the SEA Objectives used in the SA process. They are presented in no particular order.

Site Selection Priority/Refining Point	Reason
1. Maximise any developable brownfield opportunities inside the existing urban area.	Encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously development (brownfield) is a Core Planning Principle of the NPPF. Brownfield sites in the urban area are often in more sustainable locations where the re-use of land can have wider positive impacts (such as regeneration).
2. Look positively at any developable brownfield opportunities outside of the urban area.	Encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously development (brownfield) is a Core Planning Principle of the NPPF.
3. Consider and include regeneration and redevelopment opportunities inside the urban area.	To ensure the continued vitality of areas (particularly the town centre) as supported by Section 2 of the NPPF. The NPPF also recognises how residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres (NPPF paragraph 23).
4. Achieves housing supply in the short/medium term in order to address housing need.	To boost housing supply and with regard to the need to provide five years worth of housing sites (NPPF paragraph 47)
5. Avoid further sites that rely on wider significant infrastructure delivery where the timing of the work and/or funding are beyond the control of the site	To minimise risk on the timing and or potential issues on how developable/achievable a site is.

promoter/developer.	
6. Achieves ‘place-making’ (i.e. not just homes without community benefits such as open space, infrastructure and creating an attractive place to live).	To achieve sustainable development and ensure the built environment contributes positively to making places better for people (NPPF paragraph 56) and makes a contribution to local character and distinctiveness (NPPF paragraph 131).
7. Cumulatively and individually lessen the impact on traffic whilst delivering the new homes. Maximises opportunities for the cumulative highway impacts to be addressed.	To achieve sustainable development and consider the impacts of traffic from development (albeit recognising that may be focused on minimising and mitigating impacts rather than avoiding them all together).
8. Avoids more sensitive landscapes.	To protect and enhance valued landscapes (NPPF paragraph 109 and 156).
9. Minimises any detrimental impact to settlement definition/coalescence.	To maintain/achieve sense of place and retain settlement definition and identity. Having regard to the Gaps and associated evidence base.
10. Provide a sensible and logical urban extension with the ability to provide and maintain a defensible urban edge following development.	To reinforce settlement identity in a sustainable manner and avoid isolated homes or sites in the countryside. To consider features (natural or manmade) that could provide an logical and defensible urban edge into the future.
11. Considers any correspondence with key infrastructure providers such as education capacity or the ability to provide education provision (as an example).	To have regard to the need for infrastructure to support development. Some sites will be able to benefit from capacity of existing infrastructure; others may need additions or new provision.
12. Facilitates a diverse housing market with sites ranging in location and size (including housing supply in both the east and west Housing Market Areas of Fareham Borough).	To address the varying housing needs in the Borough and provide a range of development site size, particular the provision of some small sites in accordance Government indications through the Housing White Paper (Feb 2017).
13. Consider the accessibility of sites to services and shops to minimise the reliance on private vehicle use.	To achieve sustainable development that minimises the reliance on private vehicle use with the corresponding issues this gives rise to (pollution, congestion, etc.).



14. Consider whether the site will deliver any wider community infrastructure or benefits in addition to the basic policy requirements.	To improve the social role arising from development.
15. Avoid sites where there are indications that the site will be unable to deliver a policy compliant development.	The policies are designed to achieve sustainable development. Sites that can achieve a policy compliant scheme will be more favourable than those that cannot. Where uncertainty exists due to viability concerns this may result in a site not being preferred.

3.2 The use of the refining points will be a balance between all the different issues and it is not expected that sites will contribute to all of the individual points. Section 5 of this paper provides a broad summary/qualitative assessment of the developable housing sites in relation to the SA and the Site Selection Priorities/Refining Points.

4 Overview of Submitted Sites

- 4.0 In total approximately 200 possible housing sites were considered as part of the SHLAA process. Many of these sites were discounted in the SHLAA process or were likely to yield a number of dwellings below the SHLAA study threshold in line with Government guidance. This left approximately 100 sites to be considered through the Sustainability Appraisal and the refining process. Some of these sites were variations of the same (e.g. different size options for the same location/site or combinations of individual sites). In respect to those sites that were considered 'developable', some are in Fareham Town Centre and/or already have planning permission.
- 4.1 It is worth noting at this stage that a small number of further sites have not been specifically proposed for possible allocation as part of the preferred development strategy in the Draft Local Plan but have instead been proposed for incorporation into the urban area through the Settlement (Urban Area) Boundary Review process. The Background Paper: Settlement Boundary Review also will be a document available for comments as part of consultation on the Draft Local Plan.
- 4.2 The full SHLAA and SA are available separately to this document as part of the evidence base to inform the Draft Local Plan.

5 Individual Broad Site Summaries

- 5.0 This section gives a broad qualitative overview of potential housing sites to improve the understanding of how, based on the SHLAA, SA and Refining Points certain sites have been taken forward as a potential allocation (i.e. proposed site as part of the preferred development strategy) and others have not (i.e. developable sites but not preferred) as part of the Draft Local Plan for consultation purposes. This is split into two sub-sections:
- Section 5A: Broad Site Summaries – Sites proposed to be included in the Draft Local Plan’s preferred development strategy; and
 - Section 5B: Broad Site Summaries – Other Potential Developable Housing Sites
- 5.1 Not all sites have been assessed as part of Sections 5A and 5B. As the developable sites in Fareham Town Centre all have a good sustainability appraisal outcome and positively reflect so many of the Refining Points (e.g. developable brownfield in the urban area, regeneration/redevelopment opportunity, highly accessible to services and public transport, etc.) an individual summary of each of those sites has not been provided at this stage except those applicable for Section 5B, where an explanation of why it has not been ‘preferred’ has been given. In addition, the majority of sites that have planning permission, or those that will be brought into the urban area (through small alterations as part of the urban area boundary review), have not been individually detailed. This leaves nearly 70 sites that have been outlined in Sections 5A and 5B.
- 5.2 Section 5A details those proposed sites to be included in the Draft Local Plan (i.e. ‘Preferred’ sites) excluding those in Fareham town centre and the majority of those sites that already with planning permission. Section 5B details those sites that have not been proposed to be included in the preferred development strategy in the Draft Local Plan but which are considered developable (‘Developable’ sites).
- 5.3 The sites in Section 5B could have provided alternative allocations or could be the starting point should further housing sites ever be required in the future. However, they are not part of the preferred development strategy in the Draft Local Plan.

5A Broad Site Summaries – Sites included in the Draft Plan

Site Name: North and South of Greenaway Lane	
Allocation Policy: HA1	SHLAA Reference: 3126 (incorporating SHLAA sites 1263,1382, 2849,3005,3019, 3046, 3056 and 3122)
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: The potential individual phases that make up this overall site have a good sustainability appraisal outcome overall with low landscape sensitivity and good accessibility. The size of the site can achieve place making principles, provide good accessibility to services and shops, and provide open space and facilities which will benefit the wider community. Infrastructure (including highway matters) can be addressed and some phases of the site could develop in the short term. The site provides a logical extension to the urban area with Brook Lane remaining a strong defendable urban edge into the future. The development of the site will increase public accessibility over an area currently with limited public access.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Newgate Lane South	
Allocation Policy: HA2	SHLAA Reference: 3133 (incorporating SHLAA sites 3002, 3028 and 3057)
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: Overall this site has a good sustainability appraisal outcome when taken on balance and considering mitigating opportunities. Accessibility to services and schools will principally be into the adjacent urban area (Gosport Borough Council). Although the site is in the current Strategic Gap the evidence has suggested that its development would not harm the integrity of the gap (the gap area can be refined to accommodate this development site). The new Newgate Lane bypass will provide a logical and defensible urban edge into the future. The site also has the potential to deliver new homes in the short/medium term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Southampton Road	
Allocation Policy: HA3	SHLAA Reference: 3128 (incorporating SHLAA sites 2976, 3020, 3044 and 3125)
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: Overall this site has a good sustainability appraisal outcome with low landscape sensitivity. Mechanisms to facilitate pedestrian/cycle access westwards from the site will be required as part of the development and this could improve overall accessibility for the wider community. The site provides a logical urban extension being largely surrounded by built form. It provides an opportunity for high density development and place-making in order to make best use of the land. The site is capable of delivering new homes within the short/medium term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Downend Road	
Allocation Policy: HA4	SHLAA Reference: 3030
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: Overall this site has a good sustainability appraisal outcome with low landscape sensitivity and minimal highway works required to support this quantum of development. The site has no detrimental impact to settlement definition and is capable of delivering new homes within the short/medium term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Romsey Avenue	
Allocation Policy: HA5	SHLAA Reference: 207
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: Subject to satisfactory discussions with Natural England and any survey work relating to Brent Geese and Waders then this site provides a logical urban extension adjacent to the urban area alongside the Cranleigh Road housing site (allowed on appeal). The site has low landscape sensitivity, requires minimal highway work and has good accessibility. Therefore, subject to the satisfaction of Natural England this site is capable of delivering new homes in the short/medium term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Cranleigh Road	
Allocation Policy: HA6	SHLAA Reference: 3014
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: The development of this site was allowed on appeal in August 2017. It therefore contributes toward the housing supply in the Borough and should form a preferred housing allocation. Overall it has a good sustainability appraisal outcome. The site is capable of delivering new homes in the short term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred

Site Name: Warsash Maritime Academy	
Allocation Policy: HA7	SHLAA Reference: 3088
SHLAA Status: Developable Housing Site	
Overview: This site is part of the wider Maritime Academy that is no longer required and will therefore be disposed of for housing development (which will in part involve the conversion of existing buildings at the site). It utilises a brownfield site outside of the urban area and is accessible with low landscape sensitivity. The site is capable of delivering new homes in the short/medium term.	
Overall Conclusion of Site:	Preferred