

# Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Methodology

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## Preface

This document can be made available in large copy prints, audio cassette or Braille. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact:

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### Purpose of the Paper

**1.1** This Paper sets out the methodology that the Borough Council intends to use to undertake the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for Tunbridge Wells Borough. The methodology follows the guidance provided by the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Practice Guidance](#) August 2007, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The SHLAA will be a key component of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF).

**1.2** The main LDF documents that it will inform are:

- Core Strategy (Submission Stage)
- Town Centres Area Action Plan (TCAAP)
- Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

**1.3** The SHLAA may also inform other planning policy documents, such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

**1.4** Significantly, the SHLAA will be used to help the Borough Council to ensure that there is an adequate housing land supply to meet the South East Plan strategic requirement to 2026. It will ensure that sites are identified, considered and safeguarded, through the plan-making process, for all necessary development in appropriate and sustainable locations.

**1.5** It should be emphasised, however, that the SHLAA will essentially provide information about sites. It will not be a site allocations document. The SHLAA Practice Guidance specifically states that: "*The SHLAA is an important evidence source to inform plan-making, but does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development*" (para 8).

**1.6** Sites that are to be allocated, either in the Site Allocations DPD or the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD will, in due course, be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) and Appropriate Assessment, where necessary.

**1.7** The SHLAA will be a material consideration. In this regard, it will provide robust evidence about housing land supply and the nature of sites to inform decision making.

**1.8** In order to ensure that the methodology for undertaking the SHLAA is robust, key stakeholders were consulted on a draft version of this Paper and their comments taken into consideration in producing this methodology.

If you wish to suggest any sites within the Borough (whether previously developed land, buildings or greenfield sites) that the Borough Council should consider for future development when preparing the Local Development Framework, please contact [strategy@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:strategy@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

Please note that specific site allocations will be made through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document or Town Centres Area Action Plan Development Plan Document.

## Background

**1.9** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, introduced a new system of spatial planning. Spatial planning broadens planning's traditionally narrow focus on land use in order to facilitate the delivery of wider objectives that impact on the nature of places and the people who live and work in them. Under this system, the development plan for the Borough will consist of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (which, for this region, will be provided by the South East Plan) and a Local Development Framework (LDF), which will replace the County Structure Plan and Borough Local Plan prepared under the previous system.

**1.10** The emerging South East Plan was subject to Examination in Public during 2006/07. The Panel Report was published in August 2007 and has now been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Report contains housing target recommendations for the Kent authorities. These are shown in Table 1 below. Due to the geographical location of Tunbridge Wells Borough, Table 1 also includes figures for Wealden District Council, a neighbouring authority in East Sussex. The South East Plan may be subject to change following consideration by the Secretary of State.

**Table 1 Draft South East Plan Panel Report: August 2007 Housing Provision Levels**

Local Authority	Panel Recommendation	Dwellings per annum
Ashford Borough Council	22,700	1,135
Maidstone Borough Council	10,080	504
Rother District Council	5,600	280
Sevenoaks District Council	3,300	165
Tonbridge & Malling District Council	9,000	450
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	6,000	300
Wealden District Council	8,000	400

## Planning Policy Statement 3

**1.11** National planning policy on delivering new housing is provided by [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing 2006 \(PPS3\)](#). PPS3 requires local planning authorities to prepare a SHLAA to identify a deliverable supply of housing. Specifically, the Borough Council is required to:

- identify sufficient **specific deliverable** sites to deliver housing in the first five years. Effectively, however, a rolling five-year supply of deliverable sites must be maintained at any point in time, whether this be from 1 April 2008, for example, or from the point of adoption of the relevant Local Development Document. PPS3 states that "*To be considered deliverable, sites should be:*
  - *Available – the site is available now*
  - *Suitable – the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities*
  - *Achievable – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site*" (PPS3, para 54)

**1.12** Local Planning Authorities should also have regard to the following:

- The need to identify **specific developable** sites for years 6-10 (and, ideally, years 11–15) from the point of adoption of the Plan (PPS3, para 55)
- If it is not possible to identify sites for years 11-15, then broad locations for growth may be indicated (PPS3, para 55)
- Windfall projection allowances are not intended to be included within the first 10 years of the Plan unless there are justifiable circumstances that prevent specific sites from being identified (PPS3, para 59)

**1.13** *"To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site will be available for development and could physically be developed, at the point in time envisaged"* (PPS3, para 56).

### Practice Guidance

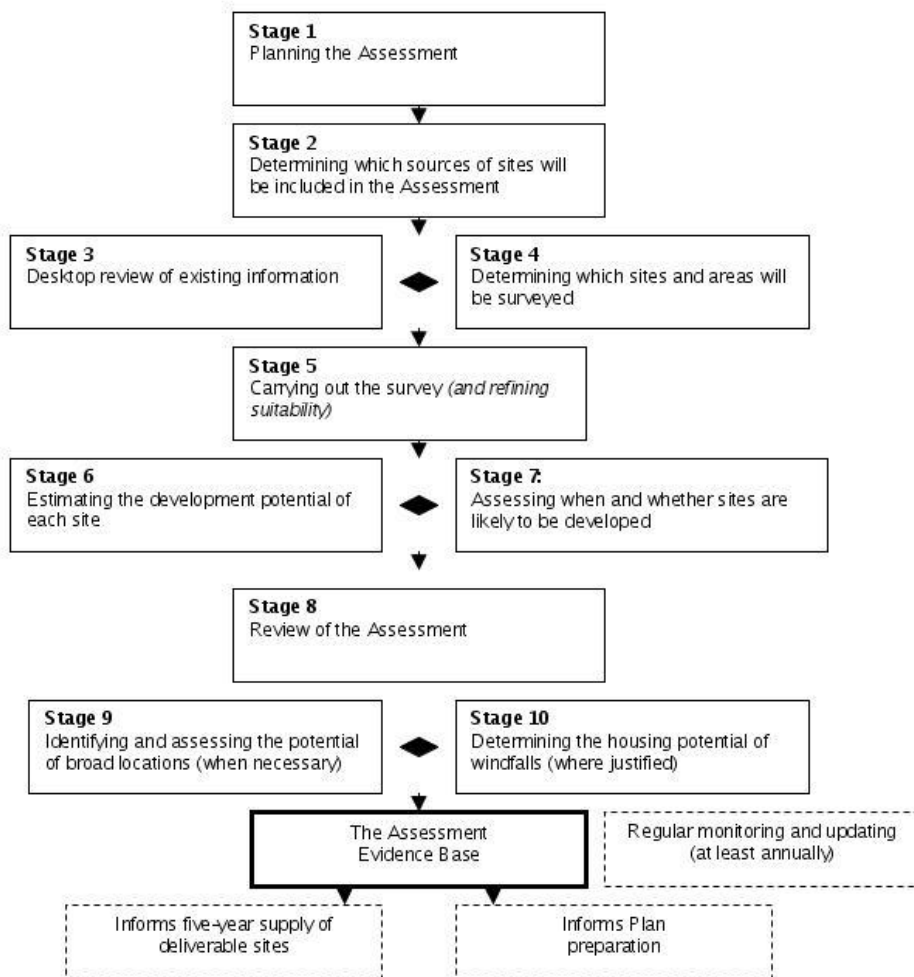
**1.14** The [SHLAA Practice Guidance](#) sets out eight main stages for undertaking the assessment, with two further optional stages covering broad locations and windfalls (para 18).

**1.15** Whilst the SHLAA Practice Guidance sets out the stages as broadly linear tasks, the process must, in fact, be iterative. For example, it may be necessary to refine the development potential of the site undertaken as Stage 6 if certain constraints cannot be overcome (referred to as Stage 7d).

**1.16** Figure 1 shows the approach that the Council will take. This approach follows that set out in the Practice Guidance.

**1.17** Chapter 4: Methodology, explains in more detail how each of the stages will be implemented.

Figure 1 Structure of LDF



## Other Possible Uses

**1.18** The SHLAA Practice Guidance recognises that there are advantages to undertaking land availability assessments for housing in parallel with those for employment, retail and other uses (such as schools and health centres), in order that land availability and suitability can be considered across the whole range of land requirements (para 10). Government guidance, including that contained in PPS1; PPS6; and PPG13; the draft South East Plan; the Kent and Medway Structure Plan; the Local Plan; and the emerging Core Strategy, all indicate that a mixture of uses may be most appropriate on certain sites.

**1.19** Local evidence studies have identified a specific need for particular uses in the Borough. For example, the [Tunbridge Wells Retail Study](#) 2006 demonstrated that there is a need for additional comparison retail floorspace to 2017 and the [Tunbridge Wells Employment Land Study](#) 2006 found that a continued reduction in overall employment floorspace would not be appropriate.

**1.20** In light of the above, the Tunbridge Wells Borough SHLAA will not only consider the deliverability of housing, but also the deliverability of retail and employment uses in particular, as well as other uses, where appropriate.

## Chapter 2 Joint Working/Timetable

### Joint Working

**2.1** The SHLAA Practice Guidance advocates a partnership approach to the Assessment, preferably to be carried out at the sub-regional level by housing market partnerships (where established).

**2.2** Housing Market Areas have not yet been defined in relation to either the South East region or Kent and Medway. However, Map H6 of the draft South East Plan does illustrate sub-regional Housing Markets and sets Tunbridge Wells Borough within the West Kent sub-region (broadly incorporating Sevenoaks District and Tonbridge & Malling Borough). It would also appear, from other studies, that there is certainly an influence on Tunbridge Wells Borough from Wealden District, which lies within East Sussex.

**2.3** Of the two West Kent authorities, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council has adopted a sound Core Strategy, which it produced prior to the requirements of PPS3, and has not programmed a SHLAA at this stage. Sevenoaks District Council has recently sought Expressions of Interest (December 2007) from consultants who can undertake a SHLAA on its behalf.

**2.4** Wealden District Council is anticipating commencing work on the SHLAA prior to consulting on its Core Strategy Preferred Options Report in September 2008. Whilst Sevenoaks District Council and Wealden District Council have both been kept informed of the development of the Tunbridge Wells Borough SHLAA, neither is in a position to participate in undertaking a joint SHLAA at this stage.

**2.5** In the absence of a formal partnership approach, a robust and coordinated approach has and will continue to be undertaken:

- Round table discussions with infrastructure and service providers were held prior to consulting on the methodology
- The Home Builders Federation (HBF) were also met prior to consulting more widely on the methodology, to utilise their expertise and knowledge
- Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft SHLAA methodology from 25 February to 24 March 2008. During the consultation period, a workshop was held on 6 March 2008. Further details can be found at [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk). The broad list of organisations who were consulted is contained in Appendix 1 (this list is not all-encompassing, but is rather to give an indication of the type of organisations with whom the Borough Council consulted).
- To progress the SHLAA, it is the intention to use a SHLAA Panel, which will include representatives from the Council and which may include house builders, social landlords, local property agents, local communities and other agencies. The Panel will provide expertise and local knowledge to inform the approach to assess the suitability, availability and deliverability of sites and how market conditions may affect economic viability.

### Timetable

**2.6** As set out in Chapter 1, the SHLAA must be completed prior to the Core Strategy being submitted to the Secretary of State, which according to the approved Local Development Scheme (April 2007) is timetabled for October 2008.

**2.7** The timetable for producing the SHLAA is set out in Appendix 2.

## Chapter 3 Assessment Outputs

**3.1** The outputs from this Assessment will consist of:

1. Identifying progress to date towards meeting the Borough's strategic housing requirements and the amount of land remaining to be identified to maintain a rolling five-year supply of specific deliverable sites
2. A list of potential development sites, in terms of their relative deliverability/developability (i.e. their suitability, availability and achievability), cross-referenced to maps, showing the locations and boundaries of specific sites
3. The estimated development potential of each potential site, using a Typical Urban Character Area Analysis
4. An assessment of broad locations in terms of their deliverability/developability, should it not be possible to identify specific sites beyond year 10
5. Identifying the constraints on the delivery of identified sites (and broad locations)
6. Providing recommendations on how these constraints could be overcome
7. An indicative housing trajectory of sites over the period to 2026
8. An assessment of the implications of including, or excluding, a projected windfall allowance for allocating land

**3.2** As far as possible, the above information will be contained on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and linked to a Microsoft Access database. Information about the role of GIS and the database is contained within Chapter 4: Methodology.

## Chapter 4 Methodology

### Stage 1: Planning the Assessment

4.1 The following issue has been considered at the outset of the planning of the Assessment:

- Whether it is possible to carry out the Assessment with the other local planning authorities in the housing market area

4.2 Whilst the Practice Guidance suggests that a SHLAA should be undertaken within the sub-regional housing market (SHMA), no advice yet exists at the regional or local level as to the definition of housing market areas, which could be a relevant geographical unit to undertake a SHLAA. As set out in Chapter 2, whilst no other local planning authorities are to participate in a joint SHLAA at this stage, the following cross-boundary issues will need to be considered:

- Wealden District, in respect of the southern edge of Royal Tunbridge Wells
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough, in respect of joint Regional Hub status and any implications for housing land release
- The boundary with Maidstone Borough, although this is rural and therefore is unlikely to be suitable
- The boundaries with Sevenoaks District and Rother District are also rural, as well as being designated landscape, and are unlikely to create cross-boundary issues

4.3 The Practice Guidance indicates that a district-level study is acceptable, provided that all settlements where housing could be provided are included. Further information about which settlements will be considered is set out in Stage 4: Determining which sites and areas will be surveyed.

### The Plan Period

4.4 The emerging South East Plan will set out the strategic housing requirement for the Borough. As set out in Table 1, Chapter 1, the Inspectors' Panel Report into the draft South East Plan recommended that 6,000 dwellings should be provided over the Plan period (2006 to 2026) - an average requirement of 300 dwellings per annum. The original draft South East Plan target of 5,000 dwellings was predicated upon outstanding commitments (permissions and unused allocations at 2006) and also, a projected windfall allowance of 100 dwellings per annum. The final target in the South East Plan, however, may change following consideration of the Panel Report by the Government.

4.5 As explained in Chapter 1, to fully accord with PPS3 requirements, LDF documents must identify specific deliverable sites for housing for the first five years (and a rolling supply thereafter); plus specific developable sites for years 6-10; and, if possible, for years 11-15. It is therefore logical to count the horizon date for the SHLAA as 2026, which will be in accordance with the period covered by the South East Plan.

### Progress in Meeting Strategic Housing Requirements

4.6 The [Annual Monitoring Report](#) (AMR), produced in December 2007, reported upon the progress made towards meeting the Borough's strategic housing requirement during the period from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007. The information contained in the AMR has been used to inform Tables 2 to 4 of this Paper. However, please note that the 'additional permissions' of 100 dwellings per annum (projected windfall allowance) shown in the AMR are not included in Tables 2 to 4 of the Paper as it is not the intention to try to count windfalls in the first five years.

**4.7** Table 2 shows the number of dwellings that need to be provided from 2006-2026 as per the requirement in the draft South East Plan. This takes the base date as 1 April 2006 and shows that 5,483 dwellings remained to be provided as of 1 April 2007.

**4.8** Table 3 draws on information contained in the Annual Monitoring Report 2007. It is anticipated that, of those planning consents outstanding (as at 1 April 2007), 204 will be completed by 31 March 2008, factoring in a lapse rate of 10%. It is also anticipated that part of the allocated site at Goods Station Road will deliver 20 completed dwellings by 31 March 2008. It is therefore assumed that 5,236 dwellings will remain to be provided from 1 April 2008. Over the remaining 18-year period of the draft South East Plan to 2026, this would require an average of 292 dwellings to be completed annually.

**4.9** Table 4 shows likely progress towards achieving a five-year housing supply taking a base date of 1 April 2008. As of 1 April 2008, it is assumed that 1,460 dwellings will be required to be completed by 31 March 2013. Table 4 draws on information contained in the Annual Monitoring Report 2007 and monitoring information upto 29 February 2008. It is anticipated that, of those planning consents outstanding, 1,199 will be completed within the five-year period. It is also anticipated that the allocated sites (not including the Kent & Sussex Hospital site) will deliver 340 dwellings within the five-year period. Therefore, table 4 shows that there is a five year supply of deliverable sites.

**Table 2 Progress in meeting strategic housing requirements in the South East Plan**

Draft South East Plan Panel Report August 2007 Housing Provision Level (2006-2026)		6,000
Completions (1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007)	Minus	517
Outstanding Draft South East Plan Panel Report Target to 2026 (19 remaining years)	Equals	5,483

**Table 3 Annual requirement in meeting strategic housing requirements in the South East Plan from 1 April 2007**

Outstanding draft South East Plan Panel Report Target to 2026 (from 1 April 2007 to 2026)		5,483
Estimated completions (from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008) taken from outstanding planning consents	Minus	204
Estimated completions on allocated sites (from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008) - Goods Station Road	Minus	20
Outstanding draft South East Plan Report Target to 2026 (18 remaining years)	Equals	5,259
	Divided by	18
Average annual requirement (approx) over 18 years	Equals	292

**Table 4 Five-year supply of deliverable sites as of 1 April 2008**

Average requirement (approx) over 18 years (to 2026)		292
Five years supply of deliverable sites needed	Multiplied by	5
Total five years' supply needed from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2013	Equals	1,460
Estimated completions (1 Apr 2008 to 31 March 2009) taken from outstanding planning permissions	Minus	501
Estimated completions (1 Apr 2009 to 31 March 2010) taken from outstanding planning permissions	Minus	440
Estimated completions (1 Apr 2010 to 31 March 2011) taken from outstanding planning permissions	Minus	258
Estimated completions on allocated sites (from 1 Apr 2008 to 31 March 2009) - Goods Station Road; Medway Depot / Medway Road	Minus	56
Estimated completions on allocated sites (from 1 Apr 2009 to 31 March 2010) - Medway Depot / Medway Road	Minus	64
Estimated completions on allocated sites (from 1 Apr 2010 to 31 March 2011) - Travis Perkins; Stormonts, RTW; Springfield Garden Centre, Hawkhurst	Minus	160
Outstanding total - number of dwellings required to demonstrate five-year housing supply by 31 March 2013 from base date of 1 April 2008	Equals	<b>-19</b>

**4.10** In terms of planning consents outstanding, historically less than 10% of planning consents for dwellings tend to expire without being implemented due to the popularity of the Borough as a residential area and the consequent high demand for housing. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the vast majority of these permissions will be implemented, although the above table factors in a lapse rate for outstanding permissions. Furthermore, having regard to previous trends, it is also reasonable to expect that planning consents outstanding at 1 April 2007 will be completed by 31 March 2011.

**4.11** It should also be recognised that further planning permissions will have been granted since 1 March 2008 and that these permissions will count towards the five-year housing supply. However, neither Table 3 nor Table 4 has made an allowance for this.

**4.12** Similarly, it is important to note that the original draft South East Plan target of 5,000 dwellings was predicated not only upon outstanding commitments and unused allocations at 2006, but also a projected windfall allowance of 100 dwellings per annum. In accordance with PPS3 and the SHLAA Practice Guidance, no allowance for windfalls has been made in these tables.

**4.13** The five-year supply of deliverable sites will be set out in the Annual Monitoring Report and updated on an annual basis.

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

**4.14** In accordance with the SHLAA Practice Guidance, the assessment will include sites already in the planning process (Table 5) and sites not currently in the planning process (Table 6). The types of sites set out in Tables 5 and 6 have been selected from those given in Figure 4 of the SHLAA Practice Guidance, as those which are relevant to this Borough (see the document for a full list).

**Table 5 Sites in the planning process**

Land allocated (or with permission) for employment or other land uses, which is no longer required for those uses
Existing housing allocations and site development briefs
Sites which have planning permission that are under construction or not yet started for housing, retail and employment or a combination of these and other uses

**Table 6 Sites not currently in the planning process\***

Vacant and derelict buildings
Surplus public sector land
Land in non-residential use which may be suitable for redevelopment, such as commercial buildings or car parks, including as part of mixed use development
Rural exception sites
Sites submitted for consideration as part of the Local Plan Review process
Sites submitted for consideration as part of the Local Development Framework process

*\*Note: where sites have been promoted by landowners/developers/consultants, these will be considered even if they fall outside the proposed approach set out in Stage 4 and even if the sites would ordinarily be counted as windfalls (refer to Table 8: type of land to be considered as part of the Borough's windfall supply).*

**4.15** Stage 3 of this Methodology sets out the sources of information that will be used to identify whether any of the types of sites set out above, which may have development potential, exist within the Borough.

### Types of land to be excluded from the Assessment

**4.16** The SHLAA Practice Guidance states that: "*Particular 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 and agreed by the members of the partnership. It may be useful to map excluded areas and ascribe a nil housing potential to them. Except for more clear-cut designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the scope of the Assessment should not be narrowed down by existing policies designed to constrain development, so that the local planning authority is in the best possible position when it comes to decide its strategy for delivering its housing objectives*" (para 21).

**4.17** The following types of land will be excluded from the Tunbridge Wells Assessment and will thus be ascribed a nil housing potential. If, however, a site which *does* contain land lying within one or more of these designations has been submitted through the LDF process, the Borough Council will still assess what the developable area of that site is.

**Table 7 Types of land to be excluded from the Assessment**

Type of Land	Justification
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	SHLAA Practice Guidance (para 21); PPS9; Sustainability Appraisal
Areas of Ancient Woodland	Ancient Woodland, which once lost cannot be replaced, is referred to in PPS9. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has identified areas of Ancient Woodland, as directed by PPS9, through detailed surveys in 2007. Ancient Woodland is an important natural and historical feature of the Borough, important for landscape character and biodiversity and is therefore unlikely to be acceptable for significant development proposals
Local Nature Reserves	These have been declared by the Council under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and have been subject to continual investment and improvement by the Council and are therefore extremely unlikely to be the subject of significant development proposals
Land within, or forecast to be within, Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain)	PPS25 Annex D: <i>"only water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure that has to be there (subject to the exceptions test) should be permitted in this zone"</i> ; <i>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</i>

**4.18** There are other types of sites, in addition to those which are specifically excluded from the assessment, that the Borough Council does not consider it appropriate to identify through the SHLAA, due to their small size or their nature, for example. These types of sites, set out in Table 8, will therefore form part of the Borough's windfall supply. Please note, however, that these types of sites are not ascribed a nil development potential.

**Table 8 Type of land to be considered as part of the Borough's windfall supply**

Type of Land	Justification
Residential curtilages	These will be considered as part of the Borough's windfall supply
Sites below 0.2ha	These will be considered as part of the Borough's windfall supply
Sites outside of our strategy (refer to Stage 4: determining which sites and areas will be surveyed) <sup>(i)</sup>	These will be considered as part of the Borough's windfall supply

- i. This means those sites that are not contiguous with the Limits to Built Development of settlements and which have not been submitted to the Local Planning Authority to be considered as part of the SHLAA.

**4.19** Further explanation about some of these types of land are referred to in Stage 4 of this Paper.

### Stage 3: Desktop review of existing information

**4.20** The following data sources will be used to assist with identifying sites that have potential capacity for housing and other uses, as well as providing other relevant information, including about constraints on development:

**Table 9 Sources of information to help identify sites**

Sources	Purpose
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 Housing Allocations	To identify sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 Employment Allocations	To identify sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 Other Allocations	To identify sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 Designations	To identify sites and constraints
Planning commitments for housing and other uses as at 1 April 2006	To identify sites
Planning refusals for housing and other uses back to 1 April 2003	To identify potential sites, particularly any applications rejected on grounds of prematurity. To identify potential sites where there was an 'in principle' acceptance for development and where reasons for refusal may be overcome by subsequent application

Sources	Purpose
Planning appeals for housing and other uses back to 1 April 2003	Similar to above
Site-specific development briefs	To identify sites and any constraints
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Vacant Employment Sites	To identify vacant sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 Representations/Inquiry submissions	To identify sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF Core Strategy: Issues & Options representations	To identify sites
Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF Core Strategy: Preferred Options representations	To identify sites
Sites suggested by Landowners/Developers/Agents	To identify sites
Neighbouring authorities' Local Plans/LDF documents	To identify sites and constraints
Kent County Council LDF documents	To identify sites and constraints
Conservation Area Appraisals	To identify sites and buildings
Kent County Council land holdings	To identify sites and buildings
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council land holdings (both maintained and owned) / Land Terrier	To identify sites and buildings
Parish/Town Council land holdings	To identify sites and buildings
Other key land holdings, e.g. Network Rail; ecclesiastical land; Registered Social Landlords	To identify sites and buildings
Urban Capacity - vacant sites/opportunity sites, including car parks	To identify sites and buildings
PPG17 Sport, Recreation and Open Space Study 2007	To identify sites and constraints, particularly Areas of Important Open Space and Areas of Landscape Importance
Kent Habitat Survey 2003	To identify constraints
Development Control rural exceptions site data and Affordable Housing Programme	To identify sites suitable for rural exceptions housing
Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum Position Statement on Planning ( <a href="http://www.townforum.org.uk/planning/tf_positionstatement_planning_june2007.pdf">http://www.townforum.org.uk/planning/tf_positionstatement_planning_june2007.pdf</a> )	To identify sites and buildings
Gypsy site data	To identify constraints
Ordnance Survey mapping (1870 to present)	To identify sites

Sources	Purpose
Aerial photography	To identify land
Vacant Property Register	To identify vacant buildings
National Land Use Database returns	To identify buildings and land, and any constraints to delivery
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	To identify constraints
Contaminated Land Register	To identify constraints
Revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory 2007	To identify constraints
Air Quality Management Areas	To identify constraints

**4.21** A significant amount of information, such as Local Plan designations, is already contained on the Council's Geographical Information Systems (GIS). As well as making full use of GIS, the Council intends to produce a database of sites in Microsoft Access to provide a powerful query tool. The tables within the database will include information about:

1. The Site, e.g. address details
2. Suitability, e.g. physical constraints identified through desktop review and site survey
3. Availability, e.g. owner details
4. Uses, e.g. what use is likely to be suitable and deliverable
5. Deliverability, e.g. information relating to the viability of the site

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

**4.22** Stage 3 consists of a desk-top review of existing information to identify a list of sites with the potential to accommodate housing. Stage 4 seeks to determine which of these sites will be surveyed in order to make an assessment of their capacity.

##### Determining the geographical extent of the survey

**4.23** In determining within which geographical areas will be surveyed, the Council will consider:

- Previously developed sites within the main urban area (Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough); the small rural towns (Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst) and those villages with a limits to built development
- Certain types of greenfield sites within the Limits to Built Development of these settlements
- Sites around the edge of the main urban area and the small rural towns
- Sites that are outside the Limits to Built Development but are contiguous with or are within 400m of the Limits to Built Development, but only for rural exceptions affordable housing

**4.24** Sites that developers/landowners/agents submit for consideration will be considered even where these fall outside these geographical areas. However, this does not mean that such sites will automatically be considered appropriate for development.

## Justification for Approach

**4.25** Paragraph 7 of the SHLAA Practice Guidance states that "*the aim should be to identify as many sites with housing potential in and around as many settlements as possible in the study area*". Paragraph 27 of the Practice Guidance states: "*the site is suitable for housing if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities*".

**4.26** Whilst the Practice Guidance does not clearly prescribe a definition of 'settlements', the Local Planning Authority has a well established hierarchy of settlements in line with the Kent & Medway Structure Plan (KMSP) and the emerging LDF. Settlement boundaries identified in Local Plans are an acceptable guideline for looking at site availability within, and abutting, settlements. As the Limits to Built Development were recently reviewed and confirmed in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, they represent an appropriate basis upon which to proceed.

**4.27** In the Core Strategy: Preferred Options Report and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council set out which settlements are the most suitable in terms of offering a sustainable location and which, therefore, fulfil the requirements of paragraph 37 of the SHLAA Practice Guidance.

**4.28** The definition of "*around settlements*" is likewise not defined in the guidance. However, government guidance, including that in PPS1, PPS3, PPS12, PPG13, the Kent & Medway Structure Plan, the Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework, all point to accommodating housing and town centre uses principally within existing urban areas. The planning policy framework also refers to planning for increased intensity of development for both housing and other uses at locations that are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, e.g. paragraph 6 of PPG13. Furthermore, a key planning objective is to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling (para 19 of PPG13).

**4.29** As part of the Core Strategy: Preferred Options stage, the Council undertook accessibility modelling. Destination data consisted of different data sets, including hospitals, neighbourhood centres, retail areas, schools and employment areas. Output data consisted of various points representing the time taken to travel by public transport to the nearest relevant destination. These points were converted to provide contour maps, which show the relative accessibility of areas of the Borough.

**4.30** In light of the above, the areas that will be surveyed outside of the Limits to Built Development will include sites where the boundary is contiguous with the Limits to Built Development. Clearly, some of these areas may not be accessible to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling. Therefore, accessibility of these locations will be tested through the use of accessibility information.

## Determining sites to be surveyed: a summary

### Potentially exclude land

**4.31** In determining which sites will be surveyed, the first step will be to consider whether any types of land should be excluded from the Assessment, as set out in Table 7, Stage 2 of this Paper. For example, if the site contains land that is designated as an Area of Ancient Woodland, then it may be excluded from the Assessment.

### Identify PDL sites within Settlements

**4.32** Identify sites that fulfill the following criteria:

- are greater than, or equal to 0.2ha in area and
- lie within the Limits to Built Development (LBD) of the main urban area (Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough); the small Rural Towns (Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst) and the villages, and
- are on previously developed land (PDL)

### Identify greenfield sites within the main urban area, small rural towns and the villages

**4.33** The [PPG17 Sport, Recreation and Open Space Study 2007](#) established that there is not a surplus of open space with the Borough's settlements. However, the Study did highlight that the designation of certain sites as 'Important Open Space' and/or as 'Areas of Landscape Importance' should be reconsidered. The Council will consider those sites highlighted by the Study and, potentially, any similar sites where the existing use could be easily relocated.

### Identify sites around Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and the small rural towns

**4.34** Identify sites that fulfill the following criteria:

- are greater than, or equal to 0.2ha in area and
- are contiguous with the Limits to Built Development of the settlement and

### Identify sites around villages with a LBD

**4.35** The approach to sites outside the villages will be similar to the above. However, it should be recognised that these sites will only be regarded as being potentially suitable for rural exceptions housing. Sites will be identified, which fulfill the following criteria:

- are capable of accommodating 1 or more housing units (even if the site is below 0.2ha)
- are contiguous with or are within 400m of the Limits to Built Development

**4.36** There is already a rolling programme to determine which rural parishes will be assessed in terms of identifying suitable sites for rural exceptions sites to provide housing for local needs. Within the built up areas of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough and Paddock Wood, affordable housing needs will be sought through an affordable housing target for new housing developments.

### Consider sites submitted for consideration

**4.37** Sites that developers/landowners/agents submit for consideration will be considered even where these fall outside these geographical areas. However, this does not mean that such sites will automatically be considered appropriate for development.

## Stage 5: Carrying out the survey

**4.38** In order to ensure that surveys are carried out on a consistent basis, a standard pro-forma will be used. Aerial photographs of each site will be used, as will a site plan (probably at 1:1250 scale). Each site will be visited, relevant characteristics recorded (where not already known) and an assessment made as to whether the site is suitable for housing, employment, retail or a combination of these or other uses.

## Stage 6: Estimating the development potential of each site

**4.39** As stated in the SHLAA Practice Guidance, an estimation of the development potential of each identified site should be guided by existing or emerging Plan policy, particularly the approach to setting housing densities at the local level.

**4.40** The development potential of sites will therefore be guided by the constraints/positive attributes as shown in Appendix 5.

**4.41** One of the factors set out in Appendix 5 relates to the Typical Urban Character Area Analysis (TUCA) that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has undertaken. The TUCA will indicate what density ranges are likely to be appropriate within any given Character Area. The Council will also have regard to other relevant sources of information to guide development potential such as the [Kent Design Supplementary Planning Document](#). Furthermore, it is the intention to draw on information from landowners/developers/agents to inform this stage of the process.

**4.42** As set out elsewhere in this Paper, the SHLAA will not solely consider whether a site is suitable for residential use. In this respect, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will have regard to other information, such as the initial capacity estimates for the Local Plan employment allocations, in order to inform the likely potential of the site for employment uses.

**4.43** Using the TUCA and other information relating to real schemes as comparators, should provide a robust assessment of the likely potential of each site. At this stage of the process, it is envisaged that the SHLAA will take a fairly broad approach in terms of estimating the development potential of the site; for example, that the site is capable of accommodating 30 dwellings or 3,000sqm of retail development. This approach will be refined later (refer to Stage 7c: Assessing achievability for development).

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

**4.44** The purpose of this Stage is to assess whether a site is deliverable, developable or not currently developable for housing, retail, employment development or a combination of these and other uses.

**4.45** This involves assessing whether sites are 'suitable' for development, 'available' for development and whether any known constraints can realistically be overcome. According to paragraph 36 of the SHLAA Practice Guidance, the assessment of deliverability/developability of specific sites should be made irrespective of the level of housing provision that is actually needed over the Plan period.

### Stage 7a: Assessing suitability for development

#### Assessing Suitability (Stage 7a)

**4.46** Stage 7a of the guidance states: "A site is considered suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities" (para 37). "Sites allocated in existing plans for housing or with planning

*permission for housing will generally be suitable - although circumstances may have changed which would alter their suitability" (para 38). The same considerations will apply to those sites allocated for and/or with planning permission for other built uses.*

**4.47** The SHLAA Practice Guidance goes on to state: *"For other sites, the following factors should be considered to assess a site's suitability for housing, now or in the future:*

- **policy restrictions** – *such as designations, protected areas, existing planning policy and corporate, or community strategy policy*
- **physical problems or limitations** – *such as access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risks, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination*
- **potential impacts** – *including effect upon landscape features and conservation; and*
- **the environmental conditions** – *which would be experienced by prospective residents" (para 38).*

**4.48** This stage of the Assessment will individually assess identified sites against the test of suitability. It is proposed that this will be reported in the Assessment through an 'assessment matrix'. The suitability criteria that will inform this matrix is shown in Appendix 4. The criteria will not be prioritised. The justification column is not intended to be all encompassing, but rather to signpost other guidance, which indicates why the criteria will be used. The implication column shows that the suitability criteria are likely to broadly affect three issues:

- **the use of land:** for example, if the land is within an employment allocation then this may dictate the type of land use that might be appropriate
- **the developable area of land:** for example, if the site contains land that is designated as, or is adjacent to, a national nature reserve, then this may potentially restrict the developable area
- **the amount of development:** clearly, the developable area of land will affect the amount of development that might be able to be accommodated. Furthermore, the amount of development that could be accommodated might be dictated partly by accessibility to key destinations. For example, a site that is within 30 minutes' public transport time of key destinations, such as a hospital, may be more suited to higher densities, although please also refer to information relating to character areas.

**4.49** When assessing suitability, the ideal situation is that sites do not have any constraints and have positive attributes, such as good access to key destinations, e.g. to neighbourhood centres. However, it is recognised that this is unlikely to be the case. The purpose of the matrix is to establish which sites are potentially most suitable.

## Stage 7b: Assessing availability for development

**4.50** The SHLAA Practice Guidance states that: *"a site is considered available for development, when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners. This means that it is controlled by a housing developer who has expressed an intention to develop, or the land owner has expressed an intention to sell. Where problems have been identified, then an assessment will need to be made as to how and when they can realistically be overcome" (para 39).*

**4.51** The criteria that will be used to determine the 'availability' of sites for housing, retail, employment or other uses are set out in Appendix \*\*.

**Table 10 Availability Criteria**

Sites where ownership is known
Sites known to be free of potential ownership problems, e.g. number of freehold owners; leases; whether leases can be terminated
Sites not containing current land uses requiring relocation
Sites known to be free of potential access/operational issues, e.g. across ransom strip
Sites where a developer has expressed an intention to develop
Sites where the owner has expressed willingness to sell
Sites allocated for housing in Development Plan
Sites allocated for retail, employment or other built uses in Development Plan
Sites with valid planning permission for housing, retail, employment or other built uses
Sites currently under construction
Timeframe

**4.52** To determine availability of sites, existing desktop information will be utilised in the first instance, e.g. if the site has been put forward through the LDF process. If this information is not available, or is likely to be out of date, then attempts will be made to update it e.g. by contacting planning agents.

**4.53** Those sites that are most suitable will, subject to other considerations, be the first sites to be considered in terms of their availability according to the criteria shown in Table 12. Whilst overcoming constraints is covered under Stage 7d, even at this stage it will be appropriate to consider whether any constraints regarding availability can be overcome. For example, if there has been no previous developer interest, this is likely to be easily overcome. Conversely, multiple ownership is less likely to be easily overcome.

## Stage 7c: Assessing achievability for development

### Achievability

**4.54** The 'achievability' of development is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of the site, i.e. that there is a reasonable prospect that housing, retail, employment or a combination of these and other uses will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. The SHLAA Practice Guidance states: "*this will be affected by:*

- *Market factors – such as adjacent uses, economic viability of existing, proposed and alternative uses in terms of land values, attractiveness of the locality, level of potential market demand and projected rate of sales (particularly important for larger sites);*
- *Cost factors – including site preparation costs relating to any physical constraints, any exceptional works necessary, relevant planning standards or obligations, prospect of funding or investment to address identified constraints or assist development; and*
- *Delivery factors – including the developer's own phasing, the realistic build-out rates on larger sites (including likely earliest and latest start and completion dates), whether there is a single developer or several developers offering different housing products, and the size and capacity of the developer" (para 40).*

## Residual Land Valuation

**4.55** The SHLAA Practice Guidance also states: "*There are a number of residual valuation models available to help determine whether housing is an economically viable prospect for a particular site. In addition, the views of housebuilders and local property agents for example will also be useful where a more scientific approach is not considered necessary*" (para 41).

**4.56** The Council will assume that sites submitted for consideration are viable and evidence may be requested. Where the Council has identified potential sites that are suitable and available, then the Council intends to use a residual land valuation approach, as this is the approach that most housebuilding companies use. The Council may draw on the expertise of the SHLAA Panel.

**4.57** The residual valuation methodology is summarised below. A residual valuation methodology will be applied to those sites that are suitable and available.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \textbf{Gross Development Value (Market Value of Completed Schemes)} \\
 \text{minus} \\
 \textbf{Development Costs and Required Target Profit Requirement} \\
 \text{equals} \\
 \textbf{Potential Land Price}
 \end{array}$$

**4.58** It is recognised that the value of land is determined by a large number of factors, which affect both the value of development and the cost of the development, as set out in the [Callcut Review](#) (N.B. please note that reference to this document does not indicate that the Council necessarily concurs with the assumptions/conclusions contained therein). Further information about the different factors to be considered is contained in Appendix 5 of this Paper.

**4.59** Some of these factors should be relatively easy to ascertain. For example, fees for professional advisors are typically a certain percentage of build costs. Other factors will be more difficult to ascertain, e.g. the cost of dealing with actual contamination.

**4.60** The Council will consider all those factors where it can be relatively certain that a correct figure or percentage can be established. The Council will also note of other factors where the cost (or percentage) is currently unknown. If the site is likely to be required for allocation purposes at a later date, then the Council will consider whether it is necessary to commission more detailed information prior to making such an allocation.

## Comparison Method

**4.61** In the first instance, the Council will use the comparison method for a number of sites in order to confirm that the values and costs used in the residual valuation method are realistic. As set out in the Callcut Review of Housebuilding Delivery: "*The comparison approach assigns a value to a site by comparing it with the prices obtained in the market for the sale and purchase of sites with similar characteristics*" (p143).

## Stage 7d: Overcoming constraints

**4.62** Where constraints have been identified, the SHLAA Practice Guidance states that the Council "*will also need to consider what action would be needed to remove them, e.g. new infrastructure, dealing with fragmented land ownership, environmental improvement, or a need to amend planning policy which is currently constraining housing development*" (para 42).

**4.63** Details of site surveys and assessments will be recorded in a Microsoft Access database, linked to the Council's GIS software, as previously stated. Using the criteria relating to suitability, availability and achievability, it will be possible to identify those sites that are most likely to come forward for development.

**4.64** Some of the issues that may need to be overcome could relate to suitability. In this instance, whilst consideration will be given to whether the issue can be overcome, it is unlikely that it could be overcome quickly. For example, even if it was regarded as necessary to amend planning policy, there are clearly timescale implications.

**4.65** In other instances, the issue may relate to availability, e.g. fragmented land ownership. It would therefore be necessary to consider whether this could be resolved, either by negotiation or ultimately, whether compulsory purchase order powers should be utilised. Again, it is unlikely that this could be done quickly.

**4.66** Where the issue relates to achievability, it will be necessary to review the assumptions made. For example, could the site accommodate more development than was originally estimated? Clearly, this will have been guided by the site's suitability. Furthermore, whilst increasing the density of development will tend to support higher land values, there is a point at which higher densities may become uneconomic if issues of 'cramming' reduce sales values. The issues relating to achievability should be able to be considered relatively quickly.

**4.67** If sufficient sites are suitable, available and achievable, then the need to overcome constraints may not be such a crucial issue. This is explained further in Stage 8: Review of the Assessment. However, it is clear that the SHLAA process is iterative.

## Stage 8: Review of the Assessment

**4.68** Following the assessment of site deliverability/developability, the housing potential of all sites will be collated to *"produce an indicative housing trajectory that sets out how much housing can be provided, and at what point in the future. An overall risk assessment should be made as to whether sites will come forward as anticipated. At this stage it may be concluded that insufficient sites have been identified and that further sites need to be sought, or that the assumptions made, for example on the housing potential of particular sites, need to be revisited"* (SHLAA Practice Guidance, para 43).

**4.69** Stage 7d: Overcoming Constraints and Stage 8: Review of the Assessment are clearly closely linked. Having considered how constraints can be overcome, it will be possible to identify those sites that are most likely to come forward.

**4.70** It is anticipated that there will be a number of groups of sites. The top group will consist of those sites that are most likely to be delivered with limited intervention within five years, for example.

**4.71** The middle group will consist of sites that are likely to be delivered, but will require closer monitoring, particularly with regard to the actions identified to promote delivery.

**4.72** The bottom group will consist of sites that are likely to be heavily constrained and require rigorous intervention to promote delivery, if, indeed, the constraints are capable of being overcome. These sites should only be included in the housing trajectory after careful consideration of their likely developability.

**4.73** The SHLAA Practice Guidance states: *"Following the review, if there are still insufficient sites, then it will be necessary to investigate how this shortfall should best be planned for. The two options are: the identification of broad locations for future housing growth, within and outside settlements (see Stage 9); and/or the use of a windfall allowance (see Stage 10)"* (para 45).

## Chapter 5 Further Work

### Stage 9: Identifying and Assessing the development potential of broad locations

**5.1** The SHLAA Practice Guidance suggests that broad locations may be identified where specific sites cannot be identified. Examples of broad locations, according to the guidance, include:

- **"Within, and adjoining, settlements** - for example, areas where housing development is, or could be, encouraged and small extensions to settlements
- **Outside settlements** - for example, major urban extensions, growth points, growth areas, new free-standing settlements and eco-towns. The need to explore these will usually be signalled by the Regional Spatial Strategy" (para 46). Whilst Tunbridge Wells is identified in the draft South East Plan as a Regional Hub with Tonbridge, it would not fall under the categories identified by the guidance

**5.2** The SHLAA Practice Guidance states: *"The options for, and housing potential of, broad locations may be considered as part of the Assessment. It may be useful to focus the search by establishing a set of criteria. For example, for broad locations adjoining settlements, such criteria might include: to direct development into areas where significant infrastructure exists or is planned; or to avoid the coalescence of settlements"* (para 47).

**5.3** If necessary, broad locations will be identified partly based on the criteria identified above and in areas where significant infrastructure currently exists, or is planned (whilst avoiding the coalescence of settlements). Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will also use the methodology, as set out in this Paper, to help refine such broad locations.

**5.4** The SHLAA Practice Guidance also states: *"Where broad locations have been identified, estimates of potential housing supply should be developed, having regard to:*

- *any evidence underpinning the Regional Spatial Strategy*
- *the nature and scale of potential opportunities within the broad location*
- *market conditions* (para 48)
- *the need to include land for other uses such as shops, offices and schools"* (para 49)

### Stage 10: Determining the housing potential of windfall (where justified)

**5.5** Paragraph 59 of PPS3 states "Allowances for windfalls should not be included in the first 10 years of land supply unless Local Planning Authorities can provide robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. In these circumstances, an allowance should be included but should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends".

**5.6** Historically, windfall projections have played a crucial role in the housing land supply for the Borough and have enabled the Council to limit release of greenfield land in more sensitive areas. The draft South East Plan recognises the extent of the environmental constraints that exist in the Borough. In referring to the Regional Hub of Tonbridge - Tunbridge Wells, Policy CC8c of the Draft South East Plan states *"...The prime consideration at the urban area of Tunbridge Wells will be the conservation of the built and natural environment, the setting of the town and its location within the Green Belt and High Weald AONB"*. The Panel Report (August 2007) also acknowledged *"the extent of the environmental constraints in and around Tunbridge Wells"* although the Panel Report did *"recommend the deletion of the reference to the Green Belt in the policy itself"* due to the *"likely need for a small scale Green Belt review at Tunbridge Wells"* (p431).

**5.7** As set out in Tables 2-4 of this Paper, the Council is not proposing to count windfalls within the first 5 years although clearly windfall sites that come forward will be included within the housing supply once they have planning permission. PPS3 does recognise that in some circumstances a windfall allowance may be justified. The Council does not intend to count windfalls in the first 10 years of housing supply unless it transpires that the LPA can provide robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.

## Chapter 6 Monitoring

**6.1** As already stated in Stage 8: Review of the Assessment, it is anticipated that there will be a number of different groups of sites, according to their deliverability.

**6.2** PPS3 requires that the five-year supply of deliverable sites is set out in the Annual Monitoring Report and updated on an annual basis. To meet this requirement, the SHLAA itself is not a one-off exercise and its updating is an integral part of the AMR exercise. The Council will therefore maintain a five-year rolling supply of deliverable sites although it is recognised that, over time, factors may change, which affect the deliverability of sites.

**6.3** In terms of a site's suitability, this is unlikely to change, although there may be instances, e.g. extending a Conservation Area, which might affect this. Where this happens, it will be necessary to re-assess the suitability of the site and the implications of this. It is also recognised that a site's availability may change, particularly in respect of existing commercial buildings, e.g. a new lease may be granted. Finally, with regard to a site's achievability, some factors are likely to remain constant, e.g. stamp duty is unlikely to alter, whereas the sales value of properties is more likely to vary.

## Appendix 1 Broad list of organisations to be consulted

Please note that this list is not all-encompassing. It is provided to give an indication of the type of organisation with whom the Borough Council consulted on the SHLAA methodology.

Adjoining Local Authorities

Developers/Planning Agents/Estate Agents

Chamber of Commerce

Campaign to Protect Rural England

NHS Hospital Trust

East Sussex County Council

English Heritage

Environment Agency

Government Office for the South East (GOSE)

Highways Agency

Housing Corporation

Homebuilders Federation

Kent County Council

Natural England

Parish/Town Councils

Registered Social Landlords, including Housing Associations

Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council - other Services

South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)

South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)

Significant landowners

Utilities

## Appendix 2 Timetable

Key Tasks	Timetable
Internal Consultation	Jan-Feb 08
Initial meetings with infrastructure providers; service providers and Home Builders Federation (HBF)	Feb 08
Consult with wider stakeholders	Feb-Mar 08
Undertake desktop review / site visits / produce report	Apr-Jun 08
Produce final report	Aug 08
SHLAA to be submitted as part of the evidence base for Core Strategy	Oct 08

Please note that because undertaking the SHLAA is an iterative process, the timetable above broadly indicates the month(s) during which it is anticipated that the majority of the work will be done.

## Appendix 3 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

SO1	To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home
SO2	To improve the health and wellbeing of the population and reduce inequalities in health
SO3	To reduce poverty and social exclusion
SO4	To raise educational achievement across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the lifetime skills needed to find and remain in work and support the long term competitiveness of the Borough
SO5	To reduce crime and the fear of crime
SO6	To improve accessibility to all services and facilities, including employment, education, health services, shopping, green space, culture, leisure, recreation (CLR) facilities and a sustainable tourism sector
SO7	To improve efficiency in land use through the reuse of previously developed land and existing buildings, including reuse of materials from buildings, and encourage urban renaissance
SO8	To reduce pollution (to land, air and soil) and maintain and improve the water quality of the Borough's rivers, and to achieve sustainable water resources management
SO9	To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases
S10	To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity
S11	To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside and historic environment
S12	To improve travel choice and to reduce the need for travel, particularly by car to reduce road congestion
S13	To reduce the impact of resource consumption by using sustainably produced and local products and reducing general waste generation and disposal
S14	To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Borough
S15	To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can benefit from economic growth of the Borough
S16	To stimulate and sustain economic growth and competitiveness across the Borough

## Appendix 4 Suitability Criteria

Suitability Criteria	Justification	Potential Implications for:
Sites that are equal to, or above, 0.2ha	Majority of residential planning permissions are on small sites	Strategy - sites that are below 0.2ha will be considered as windfalls
Sites that lie within the Limits to Built Development (LBD)	PPS1, PPS3, LDF	Strategy - will look at sites within the LBD before looking at sites that lie outside the LBD
Sites containing Previously Developed Land (PDL)	PPS1; PPS3; PPS4 (consultation); PPS7; LDF	Strategy as will look at PDL sites before greenfield sites
Sites not containing land within the Green Belt	PPG2; Local Plan (Policy MGB1)	Strategy as only applies to sites that lie outside the Limits to Built Development
Sites not containing land within Rural Fringe	Local Plan (Policy RF1, RF2)	Strategy as only applies to sites that lie outside the Limits to Built Development
Sites not within, or affecting, a Conservation Area	PPG15; Local Plan (EN4, EN5)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing, or affecting, a Scheduled Ancient Monument	PPG16	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not within, or affecting, archaeological sites	PPG16	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not within, or affecting, an Historic Park and Garden	Local Plan (EN11)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders	Local Plan (EN13)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	Local Plan (EN15)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing Sites of Local Nature Conservation Value (SLNCV)	Local Plan (EN15)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing, or adversely affecting, groundwater and other watercourses	Local Plan (EN16)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites that have sufficient capacity for sewerage and water supply services	Local Plan (EN17)	Strategy potentially - if insufficient capacity
Sites not within Flood Zone 2	PPS25; Local Plan (EN18); Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Strategy/type of use as more vulnerable uses may not be appropriate - exception test required

Suitability Criteria	Justification	Potential Implications for:
Sites not within Flood Zone 3a	PPS25; Local Plan (EN18); Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Strategy/type of use as more vulnerable uses may not be appropriate - exception test required
Sites not within Flood Zone 3a (including climate change)	PPS25; Local Plan (EN18); Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Strategy/Type of Use as more vulnerable uses may not be appropriate - exception test required
Sites not containing contaminated land	PPS23; Local Plan (EN19)	Developable area/amount of development/viability
Sites not containing, or affecting, Areas of Important Open Space	Local Plan (EN21)	Strategy as may need to reconsider sites in terms of their designation. Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing, or affecting, Areas of Landscape Importance	Local Plan (EN22)	Strategy as may need to reconsider sites in terms of their designation. Developable area/amount of development
Sites not within Important Landscape Approaches	Local Plan (EN23)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not within Arcadian Areas	Local Plan (EN24)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	PPS7	Type of Development - major development unlikely to be suitable. Developable area
Sites not within Kent Special Landscape Area	Local Plan (EN27)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites not containing the best and most versatile agricultural land	Local Plan (EN28)	Strategy potentially
Sites allocated for retail or mixed use; within the primary shopping area; within neighbourhood centres	Local Plan (CR1 - CR13)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for retail and other town centre uses
Sites allocated for housing	Local Plan (H6, H7)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for housing
Sites allocated for employment; within economic development area	Local Plan (ED1, ED3 and ED4)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for B1, B2 or B8 employment
Sites allocated for recreation or in existing recreation use	Local Plan (R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for recreation
Allocations for new primary school provision	Local Plan (CS2)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for new primary school
Redundant school premises	Local Plan (CS5)	Type of use - sites may be more appropriate for B1 or residential use

Suitability Criteria	Justification	Potential Implications for:
Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone (residential) and (commercial) Parking Standards	Local Plan (TP6 - TP7)	Developable area/amount of development
Sites allocated/retained for transport and parking	Local Plan (TP10 - TP27)	Strategy potentially
Typical Urban Character Area Analysis	Urban Character Area Analysis	Amount of development
Sites within an Air Quality Management Area/Air Quality Levels	The Environment Act 1995; PPS23	Developable area/amount of development/type of use
Aquifer Zones / Source Protection Zones	Environment Agency's National Groundwater Protection Policy	Developable area/amount of development
Areas at risk of overland flow	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development
Artificial Sources	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development
Potential Archaeological Importance	PPG16	Developable area/amount of development
Common Land	Commons Act	Strategy
Five Oak Green Culvert Area	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development
Flood warning areas	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development
Fluvial Flooding Problems	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development
High Pressure Gas Pipeline	Guidance from National Grid	Developable area/amount of development
Land contamination	PPS23	Type of use; developable area/amount of development
Listed Building	PPG15	Developable area/amount of development
Priority Habitats	Biodiversity Action Plan	Developable area/amount of development
Pylons	Guidance from National Grid	Developable area/amount of development
Public Right of Way	PPG13	Developable area/amount of development
Sewer Flooding	PPS25; SFRA	Developable area/amount of development

Suitability Criteria	Justification	Potential Implications for:
Thurnham Exclusion Zone	General Permitted Development Order 1996	Developable area/amount of development
TWBC Quarry / Landfill Site	The Environment Act 1995	Strategy potentially; developable area/amount of development
Transport Infrastructure	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Strategy potentially
Topography	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Water features	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Important landscape features	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Trees and hedgerows	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Utilities		Developable area
Overhead power lines		Developable area
Siting of telecommunications masts	PPG8	Developable area
Ground conditions	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Existing buildings/structures	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Access/footpaths	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Views/vistas out	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Views into site	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Boundaries	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Adjacent land use	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Character of neighbouring development	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Type of use
Future links and connections	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Noise	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Type of use
Smells	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Type of use
Unightly/screening visual intrusion	Local Plan (Policy EN1)	Developable area
Other		
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of primary schools run by the Local Education Authority (Kent County Council or East Sussex County Council)	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of secondary schools run by the Local Education Authority (Kent County Council or East Sussex County Council)	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development

Suitability Criteria	Justification	Potential Implications for:
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of GP surgery	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of a hospital	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of the centroids of Super Output Areas with more than 500 jobs that fall within Tunbridge Wells Borough, Rother and Wealden Districts	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of indoor sports facilities	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of Knights Park	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of retail areas	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 30 minutes' public transport time of neighbourhood centre	PPS1; PPG13; LTP2; LDF	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of primary schools run by the Local Education Authority (Kent County Council or East Sussex County Council)	PPG13	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of secondary schools run by the Local Education Authority (Kent County Council or East Sussex County Council)	PPG13	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of GP surgery	PPG13	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of the primary shopping area	PPG13	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of neighbourhood centre	PPG13	Amount of development
Sites within 571m walking distance of a place of worship	PPG13	Amount of development

## Appendix 5 Factors Affecting Viability

### Value of Development

*"In terms of factors affecting the value of dwellings, this will include:*

- *Geographic location*
- *Locality*
- *Density*
- *Second hand housing supply*
- *Volume of housing land supply"*

(Callcut Review, p143-144)

In some instances, information relating to the above factors is already available to guide the value of development. For example, in terms of geographic location, it is known that the average house price within the Borough is the second highest in Kent (average of £313,084 from October-December 2006). Housing delivery has exceeded targets in recent years due to the strength of the market (see the [Annual Monitoring Report 2006/07](#)). This is likely to continue due to the existing labour market situation and limited spare housing capacity. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that, for the majority of potential sites within the Borough, viability for residential uses is unlikely to be an issue.

Not all the factors will apply to other types of use but there may be other considerations. For example, when considering the 'achievability' of a site that is regarded as being suitable for retail use, it will be necessary to consider retail rents.

### Costs of Development

In terms of the costs of development, *"the principal factors affecting development costs include:*

- *Costs relating to the land acquisition*
- *Site preparation costs including, for example, demolition, decontamination and remediation*
- *Site assembly*
- *Reclamation and remediation, which may include assessing and then dealing with actual or potential contamination*
- *Requirement to decant existing occupiers*
- *Off-site infrastructure*
- *Construction costs*
- *Fees for professional advisors*
- *Marketing and sales costs"* (Callcut Review, p144-146)

### Additional Potential Costs

*"There may be additional potential costs, which need to be taken into account and managed. This may include:*

- *Finance although this may be mitigated by the use of options*
- *Taxation*
- *Acquisition fees*
- *Surveys*
- *Planning requirements*
- *Other rights, such as easements*
- *Vacant possession*

- *Maintenance and security*
- *Purchase price" (Callcut Review, p146-147)*

### **Cost Effective Development**

*"In arriving at the most cost effective development concept, it is recognised that there may be a range of alternatives, some of which developers will determine, some of which it can influence and some of which are external. Companies will seek to create the highest land value. In particular, they may consider:*

- *planning application stance – including design, mix and density;*
- *delivery methodology, such as choices of procurement and materials*
- *sales and marketing strategy, including establishing pricing*
- *development profit*
- *the residual value which is based on an assumption of the dates of payment for the site. If these are in the future, they are discounted back to the valuation date" (Callcut Review, p143-147).*

With regard to the SHLAA process, in terms of arriving at the most cost effective development concept, some of these factors will already have been considered at an earlier stage. For example, as part of Stage 6: estimating the development potential of each site, the mix and density of development will have been considered.

## Appendix 6 Glossary

For the purpose of this Paper, the following terms and definitions apply:

Glossary and Abbreviations	
AONB	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) and, along with National Parks, they represent the finest examples of countryside in England and Wales
Adopted	In the case of the Development Plan Documents such as the Core Strategy, the final stage is where the document is 'adopted' by the Council
Affordable Housing	Housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
Air Quality Management Order	Imposed in areas where there is a likelihood that the air quality objectives set out in the Air Quality Regulations 2000 will not be met
Brownfield Land	Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface  infrastructure (Also see 'Previously-Developed Land')
Conservation Area	An area designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of special architectural or historic interest, the character and interest of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance
DPD	Development Plan Document – A Local Development Document which forms part of the statutory development plan, including the Core Strategy, Proposals Map and Area Action Plans
Employment Land	Land reserved for industrial and business use awaiting development
Green Belt	Green Belt is land, which has been specifically designated for long-term protection. Green Belt land exists to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land free from development
Greenfield Land	Land (which can be a defined site) that has not been previously developed
LDD	Local Development Document – comprising two main types: Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, which together form the Local Development Framework
LDF	Local Development Framework – the portfolio or folder of Local Development Documents, which set out the planning policy framework for the district. The Core Strategy is a Local Development Document
Limits to Built Development (LBD)	A Local Plan designation in order to restrict the encroachment of built form into the surrounding area and to ensure sustainable development patterns
Listed Building	A building included on a list of buildings of architectural or historic interest, compiled by the Secretary of State, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Glossary and Abbreviations	
LNR	Local Nature Reserve – a habitat of local or regional significance that makes a useful contribution both to nature conservation and to the opportunities for the community to see, learn about and enjoy wildlife
LWS	Local Wildlife Sites (formerly SNCIs) – identified by Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT), whilst not of national status, have a county-wide significance. Each site identified provides a high-grade habitat for a diverse range of flora and fauna meriting careful conservation. Sites are evaluated according to criteria, including: diversity of species; features of wildlife importance; rarity of habitat and species in local and county context; management and current use; public access and linkages with other sites and areas
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure <sup>(i)</sup>
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance – Guidance documents which set out national planning policy
PPS	Planning Policy Statement – Guidance documents which set out national planning policy. These are gradually replacing PPGs
Rural Exception Site	Small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in rural communities that would not normally be used for housing, because they are subject to policies of restraint. Rural exception sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity (PPS3)
Rural Fringe	Land between built up areas and the Green Belt that has been reserved to meet longer-term development needs
Saved	Certain documents, such as the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, are ‘saved’ for the time being. This means that the policies in that document have to be taken into consideration
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
South East Plan	This is the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East Region. The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with it
Spatial Planning	System to integrate land use planning policies with the policies of other plans, programmes and strategies, which also influence the nature of places and how they function
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document – a Local Development Document that is part of the Local Development Framework but does not form part of the statutory development plan. SPDs elaborate upon policies and proposals in a Development Plan Document or ‘saved’ policies and include development briefs and guidance documents
SLA	Special Landscape Area – strategically important landscape character areas identified at the County level. Designated for their high scenic quality and distinctive local character
SLNCV	Site of Local Conservation Value – sites designated high-grade habitat value within, or adjacent to, built up areas where the greatest development pressure exists

## Glossary and Abbreviations

Sustainable development	Development that simultaneously ensures social progress that recognises the needs of everyone; protects the environment; makes prudent use of natural resources and maintains high and stable levels of economic growth and employment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest – the best sites for wildlife and geological features in England, as designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Windfall Sites	Windfall sites are those which have not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. They comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available

- i. For full definition, see Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing

## Appendix 7 Bibliography

Documents	Website Link
<b>National Planning Policy</b>	
<u>Planning Policy Statements</u>	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">http://www.communities.gov.uk</a>
PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)	
Consultation - Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1	
PPS3: Housing	
PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development	
PPS6: Planning for Town Centres	
PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas	
PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	
PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control	
PPS25: Development and Flood Risk	
<u>Planning Policy Guidance Notes</u>	
PPG2: Green Belts	
PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms	
PPG13: Transport	
PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment	
PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation	
Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17	
<u>Urban Design Guidance and Good Practice</u>	
Protecting Design Quality in Planning	<a href="http://www.cabe.org.uk">www.cabe.org.uk</a>
By Design - better places to live, A Companion Guide to PPG3	
By Design - urban design in the planning system, towards better practice	
Councillor's Toolbox: making the best use of land	
Buildings in Context	

Documents	Website Link
Creating Successful Masterplans	
Urban Design Compendium	<a href="http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk">www.englishpartnerships.co.uk</a>
Kent Design Guide	<a href="http://www.kent.gov.uk">www.kent.gov.uk</a>
<u>Public Realm Guidance and Good Practice</u>	
Living Places: Caring for Quality	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">www.communities.gov.uk</a>
Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention	
Manual for Streets	
Green Space Strategies: a good practice guide	<a href="http://www.cabe.org.uk">www.cabe.org.uk</a>
Paving the Way	
Streets for All, South East	
<u>Other Government Guidance</u>	
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments Practice Guidance	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">http://www.communities.gov.uk</a>
<b>Regional Planning Policy</b>	
Draft South East Plan	<a href="http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk">www.southeast-ra.gov.uk</a>
<b>County Documents</b>	
Kent & Medway Structure Plan	<a href="http://www.kmsp.org.uk">www.kmsp.org.uk</a>
Kent Minerals & Waste Development Framework	<a href="http://www.kent.gov.uk">www.kent.gov.uk</a>
<b>Borough Council Documents</b>	
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan, adopted 2006	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
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Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Leisure Strategy: 'Delivering for the Future' 2006-2012	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
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Tunbridge Wells Borough Employment Land Study 2006	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>

Documents	Website Link
Tunbridge Wells Borough Retail Study 2006	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy 2003	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Housing Strategy 2006-2011	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Survey 2005/2006	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>
Air Quality Management Area Order	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>