

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA) AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (ELAA) - PROGRESS REPORT

Planning Advisory Committee - 2 February 2016

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by: N/A

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder Cllr Piper

Contact Officer Emma Boshell, Senior Planning Officer Ext.7358

Recommendation to Planning Advisory Committee:

To consider progress on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA).

Reason for recommendation: In order to enable discussion and advice on progress with the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA).

Introduction and Background

- 1 Following consideration of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) by this committee on 13 October 2015, and by Cabinet on 5 November 2015, the evidence base study was approved. The SHMA is based on the Government's latest population and household projections and identifies the objectively assessed housing need across the District. However, the objectively assessed need is an **unconstrained figure** and is **not the District's housing target**. The SHMA will be used as a starting point for developing the new Local Plan and without prejudice to the Local Plan assessment process, the high number of significant local constraints would clearly suggest that the final housing target for new homes to be built in Sevenoaks District will be lower.
- 2 Subsequently, there are a number of steps we must take to arrive at a robust and deliverable housing target for the District - these steps were discussed and agreed by this committee on 7 July 2015.
- 3 The first of these steps is to assess the supply of land in the District to establish how much of the identified need can be realistically delivered over the plan period. This study is known as a Strategic Housing Land Availability

Assessment (SHLAA). A similar process for employment land is also being undertaken, known as an Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA). These studies are a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 159).

SHLAA and ELAA Progress

- 4 A call for sites was advertised in order to establish initial land availability for all types of development including housing, employment and retail. Local landowners, developers, businesses, Town and Parish Councils and other interested parties were invited to submit sites to the District Council. Two sessions were also held with the Developers Forum and the Rural Landowners Forum to promote and explain the process. The call for sites ran from September to November 2015 and approximately 250 sites were submitted across the District. The call for sites will remain open throughout 2016 so as not to limit opportunities, however there is no guarantee that sites submitted after the November 2015 deadline will appear in the forthcoming iteration of the SHLAA and/or ELAA.
- 5 In addition to the call for sites, the District Council is required to explore other elements of supply in order to boost the supply of housing, in accordance with the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This list is not exhaustive, but should include the below. Officers are currently undertaking this exercise:
 - Existing housing and economic development allocations without planning permission / with unimplemented planning permission;
 - Planning applications that have been refused or withdrawn;
 - Land owned by the District Council including surplus / likely to become surplus council land;
 - Vacant and derelict land and buildings;
 - Additional opportunities e.g. making productive use of under-utilised facilities;
 - Business aspirations within the District;
 - Large scale redevelopment.
- 6 All sites submitted and identified for assessment have been logged and acknowledgement letters have been sent to each applicant. Officers have begun visiting the sites which will inform their assessments. The three key considerations in assessing the sites are suitability, availability and achievability. Where issues such as noise, contamination, air quality or heritage impact arise on sites, comments will be sought from the relevant expert officers. The site visits, along with a desktop analysis and stakeholder comments where appropriate, will ensure that the development potential of the sites is robustly considered.

Timescales

- 7 It is anticipated that the site visits will be completed by the end of March 2016. Officers will then engage with local members to discuss the sites in their areas. Following this, the full assessments will be written up incorporating stakeholder comments where appropriate.
 - 8 A further progress report will be reported to this committee at its April meeting. It is anticipated that the SHLAA and ELAA will be completed in the summer of 2016, at which point it will be made public and reported to this committee for consideration.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

The preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) is required by Government and provide key evidence to support the new Local Plan. Not preparing these studies would risk the Local Plan being found unsound at examination and is not recommended.

Key Implications

Financial

The production of the SHLAA and ELAA will be funded from the LDF budget.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Preparation of a Local Plan is a statutory requirement. There are defined legal requirements that must be met in plan making which are considered when the plan is examined by a Government Planning Inspector. Risks associated with local plan making are set out in the Local Development Scheme.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Background Papers:	Report to Planning Advisory Committee - 7 July 2015 - Local Plan work programme
Appendices	None

Richard Morris

Chief Planning Officer