



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Great Yarmouth Borough Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Methodology Consultation

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November 2008

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1.0 Preface

- 1.1 The Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to establish a long-term spatial planning strategy to create sustainable communities. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is the overarching document in the LDF and sets out the overall vision and spatial planning strategy for the Borough. The Site Specific Allocation DPD will allocate land for development in accordance with the Core Strategy.
- 1.2 The Council consulted on the Core Strategy Preferred Options Development Plan Document (DPD) in August 2006 and Site Specific Allocation Issues and Options DPD in June 2007. Due to the high number of complex responses for both documents there will be an additional consultation for the Core Strategy Preferred Options and the Site Specific Allocations DPDs.
- 1.3 The Core Strategy requires 7,200 dwellings to be built between 2001 and 2025. Currently, approximately 4,000 dwellings have been accounted for by previous unconstrained Great Yarmouth Borough-Wide Local Plan (2001) allocations, existing housing completions and expected planning permissions. This leaves approximately 3,200 dwelling which still need to be delivered. The broad locations for housing development will be identified in the Core Strategy DPD and allocated in the Site Specific Allocation DPD.
- 1.4 Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing requires that Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments are undertaken to inform the LDF. The Council published a joint Housing Market Assessment with Waveney District Council in September 2007 and is undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This document is the proposed methodology for undertaking the SHLAA which is being published for consultation.
- 1.5 During the preparation and consultation for the Site Specific Allocation DPD, adequate sites have been put forward for consideration for residential development to reach the required dwelling targets. However, the majority of sites put forward for consideration will be unsuitable for development as they are in unsustainable locations.
- 1.6 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) will be part of the necessary evidence base that looks to filter out sites deemed unsuitable for development and will go further to suggest appropriate timescales for sites which are suitable for residential development. **Please note that the SHLAA will not be allocating sites for development.**
- 1.7 It is important that the SHLAA is undertaken fairly and transparently. Therefore, this draft methodology is published for consultation with key stakeholders such as housing developers, property agents, registered

social landlords and public sector organisations or any group with a vested interest in potential housing development in the Borough.

- 1.8 The Council is inviting comments on this methodology over the 4 week period commencing **Friday 14 November 2008**.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) published in 2006 seeks a responsive approach to land supply at the local level in regard to recommendations set out in the *Barker Review of Housing Supply* (2004). In particular it sets out a framework that aims to improve affordability and the supply of homes in all communities by ensuring that land availability is not a constraint on the delivery of homes. The changes require local authorities to:

- identify specific, deliverable sites for a five year period that are ready for development and to keep this sustained over time in response to market information
- identify specific, deliverable sites for 6-10 years and where possible for years 11-15
- where it is not possible to identify sites for years 11-15, to indicate broad locations for future growth

2.2 The Great Yarmouth Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (hereafter to be referred to as the Assessment) will be a comprehensive study undertaken by the Council to assess the deliverability and developability of housing land and is in response to PPS3's requirement that a robust evidence base should inform the preparation of Local Development Documents.

2.3 This draft methodology report is published as an opportunity to engage with key stakeholders such as national and regional house builders, social housing landlords, public sector organisations and other bodies with an interest.

3.0 Context and Key Principles

3.1 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

3.1.1 In 2007 the Government published a standardised methodology for conducting the Assessment within their *Practice Guidance*¹, it articulates that the purpose of the SHLAA is to:

- identify sites with potential for housing
- assess their housing potential
- determine a realistic timescale when they are likely to be developed

¹ Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments; Practice Guidance 2007: Department for Communities and Local Government. www.communities.gov.uk

3.1.2 **The Assessment does not allocate land for development.** The Assessment is a background evidence document to inform the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) on future development and the allocation of land for housing. The Assessment will consider a wide range of possible options for residential development, however, in being undertaken it does not pre-empt or prejudice any decision the Council may make in the future with regard to potential housing designations. Sites that could be allocated in future Local Development Documents will be made through the statutory plan process.

3.1.3 To remain a useful planning tool for the delivery of housing, the SHLAA will need to be thorough in its identification and assessment of potential sites and updated on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report.

3.2 Core Requirements of the SHLAA

3.2.1 As a supporting document, and as part of a robust and credible evidence base for the LDF, the Assessment must demonstrate a minimum range of core outputs that are defined by the *Practice Guidance*. These are summarised below:

- a list of sites, cross-referenced to maps showing locations and boundaries of specific sites (and showing broad locations, where necessary)
- assess the deliverability/developability of each identified site (i.e. in terms of its suitability, availability and achievability) to determine where an identified site is realistically expected to be developed
- identify the potential quality of housing that could be delivered on each identified site or within each identified broad location (where necessary) or on windfall sites (where justified)
- comment on the constraints on the delivery of identified sites
- recommend how identified constraints could be overcome and on what timescales

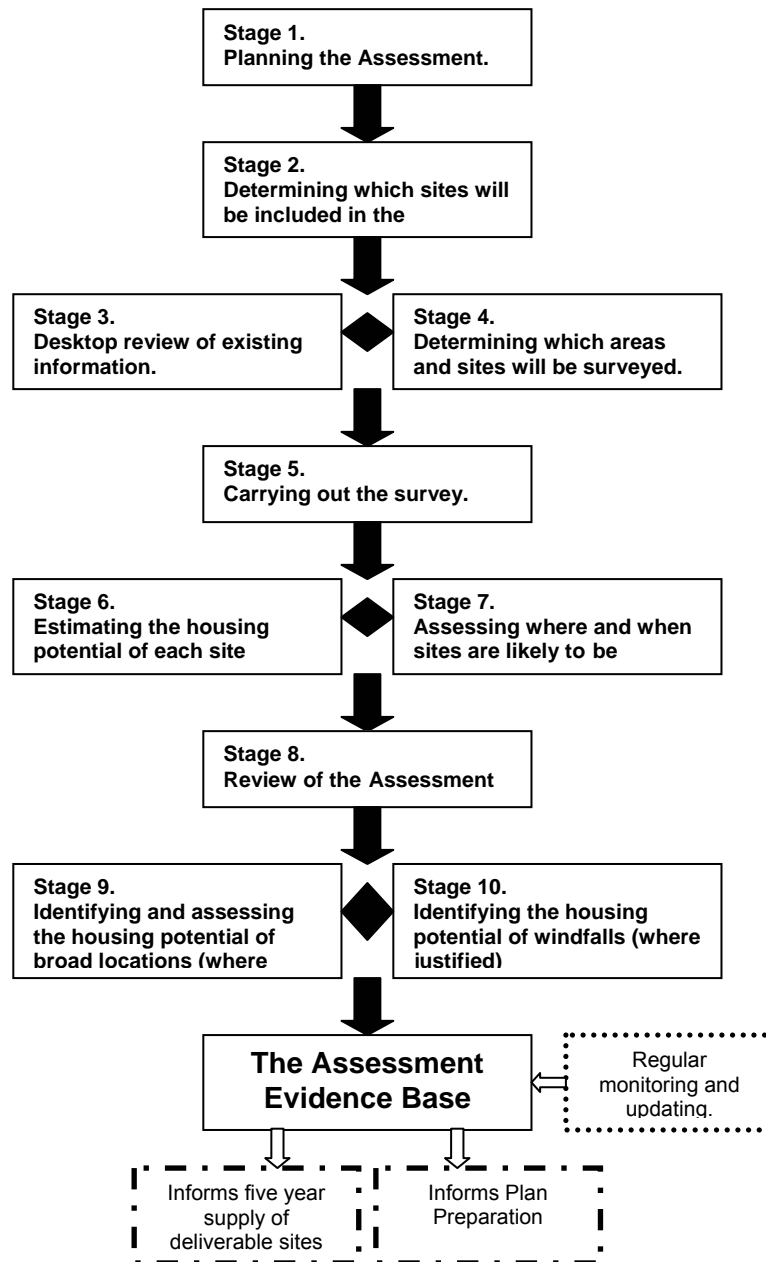
SHLAA Practice Guidance, 2007

4.0 The Assessment

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 The method used in assessing available sites will closely follow the approach outlined in DCLG's SHLAA Practice Guidance which is portrayed in the flowchart below. This will ensure that the "Assessment findings are robust and transparently prepared"² and will not need to demonstrate or justify the methodology approach that has been sought.

Figure 1: SHLAA Approach



² SHLAA Practice Guidance, DCLG 2007, Para 15.

4.2 Stage 1: Planning the Assessment

4.2.1 There have been a variety of SHLAAs undertaken in neighbouring districts including North Norfolk, Breckland and the Greater Norwich area. Current Practice guidance suggests that the Assessment should be undertaken in conjunction with other local planning authorities that share a sub regional housing market area. However Great Yarmouth Borough Council will undertake the Assessment, as Waveney District completed their Assessment in November 2007.

4.3 Stage 2: Determining the Sources of Sites

4.3.1 The Assessment will be thorough and holistic in its approach to identify sites through a variety of different sources (see Table 1). However the practicalities of surveying the entire Borough would be too resource intensive and may not yield suitable results as a significant proportion would be of little value in terms of suitability and deliverability and most could not be developed in a sustainable way. Therefore, the areas of search will be loosely based upon the urban areas in the Borough.

Table 1: Site Sources

Source	Additional Notes
Sites in the Planning Process	
Land allocated (or planning permission granted) for employment or other land uses which is no longer required for those uses.	There may be an over allocation of land in plans or a reduction in levels of employment take up. Any parallel employment studies will help to inform the relevant findings.
Existing housing allocations and site development briefs.	Consideration given to increasing density capacities in line with latest Planning guidance.
Unimplemented/ outstanding planning permissions for housing.	Potential given to unimplemented planning permission with consideration given to increasing density capacities.
Planning permissions for housing that are under construction.	Due consideration given to increasing capacities through amended design.
Sites that have been put forward through the Site Specific Allocations DPD.	
Sites not currently in the Planning Process	
Vacant and derelict land and buildings.	Refer to Annex B of PPS3 (Housing).
Surplus Public Sector land.	Local Planning Authorities often retain a register of land that is in their own ownership and is surplus to past requirements. Some may have the potential for housing development.

Source	Additional Notes
Land in non-residential use which may be suitable for redevelopment as housing.	This may include feasible options of redeveloping car parks or the conversion of commercial buildings and mixed use schemes.
Large scale redevelopment and re-design of existing area.	This may include the potential to re-intensifying the housing capacity of existing areas still in design stages.
Rural settlements and exception sites.	Small areas of greenfield land outside of existing development limits that have the potential for housing development.
New free standing settlements.	No new free standing settlements are proposed in the RSS in the Great Yarmouth Borough.

4.4 Stage 3: Desktop review of existing information

4.4.1 A number of existing resources and studies have already been undertaken and where these are relevant, will be reviewed and used to inform the Assessment and demonstrate the transparency of the information used to generate results, these are listed below:

Table 2: Desktop Review

Source	Purpose/Sites
Urban Housing Potential Study (2004).	To identify buildings and land, and any constraints to its delivery.
National Land Use Database (NLUD).	To help assess and support the potential of housing.
Housing Land Availability Schedule (2008).	Identifies sites in the Borough with outline and planning permissions. Identifies the number of completions and those yet to commence.
Sites identified through new surveys (emerging LDDs).	To identify sites and any constraints to delivery.
Housing Condition Survey.	To identify, alongside <i>Empty Property Register</i> , residential pockets suffered from small scale market collapse that could make way for regeneration or clearance programmes.
Register of Surplus Public Sector Land.	To identify surplus buildings and land.
Ordnance Survey Maps.	To identify potential vacant sites through local knowledge and utilising Development Control Officer knowledge.
Aerial Photographs.	To identify potential vacant areas of land.

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

- 4.5.1 Inconsistencies or duplications are likely to become apparent through the desktop review which are likely to be remediated through visits to each site.
- 4.5.2 This will also allow sites, particularly ones which have planning permission, to be updated with regards to their development progress and identify the possibility of future constraints.
- 4.5.3 Particular sites or areas of land may fall within or adjacent to national policy designations that are considered unsuitable for housing by Government Policy or law; where this is applicable, these sites will still be included within the Assessment, but filtered out accordingly.
- 4.5.4 National policy designations that may be applicable to potential sites in the Borough include: Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM); Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs); Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Ramsar sites, Historic Parks and Gardens, Ancient Woodlands, Flood Zone Risk 3b and Health and Safety Executive inner Control Of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) areas.
- 4.5.5 Minimum thresholds (see below) are important to prioritise the Assessment as to only consider sites that are of strategic importance. Main towns and Key Service Centres will look to allocate a smaller site size threshold due to the higher potential densities that would be achieved as opposed to the villages and rural settlements.

Table 3: Minimum Thresholds

Settlement*	Size of Site Threshold
Main Towns	0.1ha, equivalent of 5 dwellings @ 50dph
Key Service Centres	
Larger Villages	0.15ha, equivalent of 5 dwellings @30dph
Smaller Villages	
Rural	

(* Main Towns denotes Great Yarmouth and Gorleston; Key Service Centres denotes Caister and Bradwell; Larger Villages denotes Belton, Hemsby, Hopton-on-Sea, Martham and Ormesby St Margaret; Smaller villages denotes Burgh Castle, Filby, Fleggburgh, Fritton with St Olaves, Ormesby St Michael, Repps with Bastwick, Runham, Stokesby, Thurne, Winterton-on-Sea, West Caister and West Somerton))

4.6 Stage 5: Carrying out the survey

4.6.1 To ensure that the Assessment remains consistent, the survey will be conducted by the Council's Planning Policy Team, who will carry out the survey using a standardised survey pro-forma. (see Appendix 2)

4.6.2 The necessary criteria is derived from the Practice Guidance as follows:

- **Site size**
- **Site boundaries**
- **Current use(s)**
- **Surrounding land use(s)**
- **Character of surrounding area**
- **Physical constraints; e.g. access, steep slopes, potential for flooding, natural features of significance and location of pylons**
- **Development progress; e.g. ground works completed, number of homes started and number of homes completed**
- **Initial assessment of whether site is suitable for housing and housing as part of a mixed use development**

4.6.3 The above factors will also be combined with further information influenced from each site's desktop review that is likely to include local implications and/or issues prevalent to the Borough.

4.6.4 Whilst a proportion of the research will be conducted by the Borough Council's Planning Policy Team, other nominal issues regarding highways, flooding or conservation will be discussed at internal stakeholder workshops with the relevant agencies or departments involved.

4.6.5 Additional Key Factors to be surveyed:

- **Flood risk**
- **Coastal erosion**
- **Contaminated land**
- **Additional planning policy/history**
- **Landscape and conservation**
- **Infrastructure/access to services limitations**

4.7 Stage 6: Estimating the Housing Potential

4.7.1 The housing potential and yield for each site should be guided by existing or emerging planning policy. The Great Yarmouth Borough Wide Local Plan (2001) suggested an average net density of 25 dwellings per hectare (dph) for residential development. However this is contrary to PPS3 Housing's minimum requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare.

4.7.2 The Core Strategy Preferred Options to Great Yarmouth’s Local Development Framework does not contain housing density figures as this will be included in the forthcoming Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, however the Urban Housing Potential Study (2004)³ contained approximate potential densities with regard to specific location and site characteristics. These are represented in the table below (see Table 4).

4.7.3 Table 4 has been amended to include potential development within the implementation areas of the Urban Regeneration Company Area Action Plan. The figure of 100+ dph is derived from the average number of dwellings per hectare in the 1st East URC Area Action Plan.⁴

Table 4: Housing Densities

Density	Location and Site Characteristics
30	Housing towards the periphery of settlements, more than 800m from town/local centre.
30-50	Housing predominantly mixed use, within 800m of town/local centre.
50-100	Housing in town centres, within 400m of retail and commercial facilities.
100+	URC regeneration areas such as Cobholm, North Quay, South Denes, Southtown and Runham Vauxhall.

4.7.4 The Assessment will use the above fixed multipliers as an initial basis to predict the housing potential, however the final yield for each site will be informed by a number of complex variables (see Stage 7).

4.7.5 The Practice Guidance illustrates an alternative scope to assessing the housing potential through a “pattern book” approach. Here, recent examples of developments within the Borough are examined and substituted as potential starting points to demonstrate the housing potential for different sizes and locations of sites.

4.7.6 The findings from this methodology could be beneficial in assessing the future housing potential in other areas, with necessary adjustments related to individual site characteristics and physical constraints.

4.7.7 In each approach, a detailed or site specific calculation of density and yield will be informed by the workshops, providing an accurate representation and housing potential for each site.

4.8 Stage 7: Assessing when or whether sites are likely to be developed

4.8.1 The timescales and appropriateness of prospective sites coming forward will be largely dependant on their suitability, availability and

³ Great Yarmouth Urban Housing Potential Study, 2004; Baker Associates

⁴ 1st East URC Area Action Plan Preferred Options (2007) www.1steast.co.uk

achievability of implementation and will subsequently inform either the deliverability, developability (or both) of sites. *Practice Guidance 2007*

4.8.2 To ensure that all sites are assessed in a transparent and unbiased manner, the methodology relating to the Assessment criteria shall take the form of a checklist of ranked indicators of constraints. By assessing against indicators that progress against a level or type of constraint; rather than through a rudimentary “Yes/No” questionnaire, it will help to determine which sites are more likely to be brought forward for development before others and/or may have mitigating issues that could constrain timescales.

Table 5: Assessing Suitability (Stage 7a)

Suitability	Constrained -----Unconstrained					Information Sources		
						Survey	Desktop	Stake holders
Sites excluded from Assessment as Unsuitable								
Excluded Sites; any of the following designations	SSSI; SAC; Ramsar, NNR, SNCI; SPA; AONB, Historical parks/gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments						√	
	The site is wholly located outside or is not related to the defined Core Strategy settlement hierarchy list, except for rural exception sites.						√	
National Policy Restrictions;								
Existing Designations	In or adjacent to the curtilage of a Grade I and II* Listed building	In or adjacent to the curtilage of a Grade II Listed building	Within a locally distinctive designation E.g. Conservation Area	Adjacent to a locally significant designation E.g. Conservation area	No existing designations		√	
Physical problems or limitations;								
Flood Risk,	Site in EA Flood Risk Zone 3b	Site in EA Flood Risk Zone 3a	Site in Flood Risk Zone 2	Site in Flood Risk Zone 1 and 2.	Site in Flood Risk Zone 1		√	
Hazardous Risk	Within the inner consultation zone of a notifiable hazardous installation defined by the HSE	Within the intermediate consultation zone of a notifiable hazardous installation defined by the HSE	Within the outer consultation zone of a notifiable hazardous installation defined by the HSE		Site not covered by any hazardous installation protected zones	√	√	
Site Contamination	Highly contaminated Site	–	Contaminated site	–	No contamination identified	√	√	

Suitability	Constrained -----Unconstrained					Information Sources		
						Survey	Desktop	Stake holders
Service Infrastructure Provision	No services available	Some services available. Known capacity issues	Some services in place however not all. Potential capacity issues	All services in place but some capacity issues	All services in place with capacity to allow development	√	√	
Highway Improvements	Impact on the County highway network. Need for off site works costing over £100,000	Impact on the County highway network. Need for off-site works costing between £50,000 and £100,000	Impact on the County highway network. Need for off-site works costing between £10,000 and £50,000.	Impact on the County highway network. Need for off-site works costing under £10,000	No improvement at all			
Access	Do not meet minimum safety standards with no reasonable expectation that matters can be resolved. The propensity for personal injury is regarded as unacceptable.	Subject to reasonable off-site works as maybe necessary, sites that are able to achieve minimum safety standards but for which everyday journey will be made by the private car	Offer neither a benefit nor disadvantage to the highway		Provides a net gain to the highway e.g. remove existing source of danger; improvement to safety; significant opportunity to encourage sustainable travel; beneficial change in traffic type or patterns of movement; reduction in congestion.			
Access to Services	No services from core list within 10min walk		1-4 services from core list within 10min walk	–	5+ services from core list within 10min walk		√	
Access to Public Transport	No bus service to market town or Norwich within 800m OR bus service to market town or Norwich where journey time in + 60mins	Within 800m of bus service to market town or Norwich where journey time is 46-60mins	Within 800m of bus service to market town or Norwich where journey time is 31-45mins	Within 800m of bus service to market town or Norwich where journey time in 16-30mins	Within 800m of bus service to market town or Norwich where journey time under 1-15mins		√	

Suitability	Constrained -----Unconstrained					Information Sources		
						Survey	Desktop	Stakeholders
Potential Impacts;								
Townscape/Landscape Character	Development at this site may have a negative impact on the townscape or landscape characteristics on the area.	–	–	–	Development at this site may have a positive impact on the townscape or landscape characteristics on the area.	√	√	
Environmental Considerations;								
Effect on Prospective Residents	Site is significantly affected by road noise, industrial and waste uses	–	Site is affected by road noise, industrial and waste uses	–	Site is not affected by road noise, industrial and waste uses	√	√	

Table 7: Assessing Availability (Stage 7b)

Availability	Constrained -----Unconstrained					Information Sources		
						Survey	Desktop	Stakeholders
Land Value	Previously developed land with existing building remaining	Previously developed site but has been cleared	Part greenfield/ brownfield site some constraints	Greenfield site with minimal constraints	Greenfield site with no known constraints			
Availability	Site in multiple ownerships	–	–	–	Site in single ownership		√	√

4.8.3 Assessment criteria that assess the availability of housing land is limited as it is dependant on consultation with land owners, agents and developers to help establish the answer to the following questions. (Stage 7b)

- Is the site available either now, in 5 or 10 years time?
- Are there any legal issues or covenants that preclude development?
- What is preventing the site from being available and what measures need to be taken to address this?

4.8.4 The Council will consult with key stakeholders in the private sector, including property owners, agents and developers in assessing the viability of potential housing sites. This evidence base will be collated in the potential housing site pro-forma which will aim to answer the following (Stage 7c):

- Are there any particular features of the local housing market that may impact upon achievability?
- Are there any particular cost factors associated with developing the site?
- Is the necessary infrastructure in place to permit the development of the site?
- Are there any adjacent uses to the site that may have a marked effect on the marketability of the site?
- Are there any delivery factors which may impact on the achievability of the development?

4.8.5 Where constraints have been identified, the Assessment will consider ways in which to overcome them. This might include the needs for new infrastructure investment, environmental improvement or an amendment to a planning policy that is constraining future housing supply. (Stage 7d)

4.9 Stage 8: Reviewing the Assessment

4.9.1 Once the initial survey of sites and the assessment of their deliverability/ developability have been made, the housing potential of all sites will be collected to produce a housing trajectory for the Borough which will set out how much housing can be provided and at what intervals in the future.

4.9.2 An overall risk assessment will also be required to assess whether sites will come forward as anticipated. Where insufficient sites may not have come forward and further sites may need to be sought to meet the planned housing requirement, it will be necessary to investigate how the shortfall should be best planned for.

4.9.3 As an overall measure, the SHLAA will be kept up to date on an annual basis as part of the LDF monitoring.

4.10 Stage 9: Identifying and assessing the housing potential of broad locations (where necessary)

4.10.1 If the Borough Council is unable to identify sufficient housing sites to meet the longer term housing requirements, it may be feasible for the Council to identify broad areas and locations where future housing could be directed.

4.10.2 Examples of broad locations suggested by the SHLAA guidance include;

- Within and adjoining Settlements. For example, areas where housing development is or could be encouraged, and small extensions to settlements, and

- Outside Settlements. For example urban extensions with major housing supply potential will be identified having had regard too:
 - a) any evidence underpinning the RSS
 - b) the nature and scale of the opportunity within the broad locations; and
 - c) market conditions.

4.10.3 In the event that insufficient housing sites are found at Stage 8 of the Assessment, the Council will undertake this work (Stage 9) in line with guidance expressed by the DCLG's SHLAA methodology.

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

4.11.1 Although PPS3: Housing has a clear expectation that the supply of land for housing should be based upon specific sites, it does recognise that there may be local circumstances where assessing windfalls can be justified.

4.11.2 Again, in the event that insufficient housing sites are found at Stage 8 of the Assessment, the Council will look to undertake this work (Stage 10) in parallel with Stage 9 in line with guidance expressed by the DCLG's SHLAA methodology.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Consultees

The following organisations have been consulted on this methodology:

Public Sector

Go-East
East of England Regional Assembly
East of England Development Agency
Norfolk County Council
Waveney District Council
North Norfolk District Council
Broadland District Council
South Norfolk District Council
Breckland Council
The Broads Authority
Norfolk Primary Care Trust
Norfolk Police Authority
The Highways Agency
Anglia Water
Essex and Suffolk Water
Natural England
English Heritage
Environment Agency
National Grid
BT

Local House Builders/Developer interests:

1st East
Acourus Rural Properties
Aldreds Chartered Surveyors
Badger Building
Barratt Homes
Barton Wilmore
Bidwells
Bloor Homes
Bovis Homes Ltd Eastern Region
Broadlands HA
Brown & Co
Cripps Developments LTD
De Pol Associates
Defence Estates
Evans Chartered Planning Consultancy
George Wimpey East Anglia – Taylor Wimpey
Hayes Affordable Homes LTD
Home Builders Federation
Hopkins Homes
Howards Estate Agents
Iceni Developments Limited
Keys Professional Services
Land and New Homes

Level
McCarthy and Stone
Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
Norfolk Homes Limited
NPS Property Consultants
NWA Planning Group
Paul Robinson Partnership
Pegasus Planning Group
Persimmon Homes
Planning Solutions
Reedling Consultants
Savills
Strutt and Parker
Tetlow King