



Report of	Meeting	Date
Joint LDF Officer Team	Central Lancashire LDF Joint Advisory Committee	29 January 2009

## **STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To explain the purpose and overall content of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and summarise the approach being followed in Central Lancashire.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2. That the report is noted.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

3. The Assessments are required by Government and are a key part of the evidence base for LDFs, particularly for informing the preparation of Site Allocations documents. Central Lancashire is a single housing market area so it is appropriate for the Councils to work jointly on the Assessment. The national guidance also requires partnership working with developers and other bodies involved in housing provision and a Panel of such representatives has been set up to consider the sites and assumptions proposed. It is necessary to assess a wide range of possible housing sites so that the most appropriate ones can be identified in a transparent way.

### **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**(if the recommendations are accepted)**

4. To raise Members awareness of this work.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

5. None

## **BACKGROUND**

6. National planning policy requires local planning authorities to produce a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to help to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing. The purpose of a SHLAA is to:
  - Identify sites with potential for housing
  - Assess their housing potential
  - Assess when and whether sites are likely to be developed.

The aim is to identify sites where housing could be deliverable within five years and sites that could be developed for housing in the longer term.

7. SHLAAs are a key component of the evidence base for the LDF and are used to inform plan-making. However, SHLAAs do not in themselves allocate sites for housing development. They only indicate potential housing sites. Allocation of sites will take place in a proposed Site Allocations document or documents, in accordance with growth locations identified in the Joint Core Strategy. The Site Allocations process will be subject to community engagement and independent examination.
8. Housing and Planning Delivery Grant may be awarded for completion of a SHLAA before the end of March this year, but this has not yet been confirmed. The Government Office for the North West have indicated that the Government are hoping to consult on a proposed Housing and Planning Delivery Grant allocation mechanism in January/February this year.

## **THE CENTRAL LANCASHIRE APPROACH**

9. Chorley, Preston City and South Ribble Districts form part of the same housing market area and work is well advanced on a joint SHLAA, which will be completed before the end of March. A partnership approach is recommended for SHLAA production and views have been sought from the Central Lancashire Housing Market Partnership during its preparation.
10. Government guidance indicates the types of sites that should be included within the assessment. This includes sites for housing development that are currently in the planning process and sites that are not currently in the planning process, such as vacant land and buildings identified in the National Land Use Database. The three Councils have also received a considerable number of site suggestions for development, as part of a call for sites to inform future site allocations. These sites have fed into the process and are being assessed. The assessment includes greenfield and brownfield sites in both urban and rural areas.
11. The characteristics of each site have been recorded and assessed and their housing potential then worked out taking account of any site constraints and site location. Different housing density ranges have been developed for different types of locations, reflecting typical densities that can be found in these locations. For example, higher densities have been assumed appropriate for more sustainable locations, such as Preston City Centre, with lower housing densities assumed for suburban and rural locations.
12. Assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed involves assessing their suitability, availability and achievability for housing.

13. In terms of suitability, factors such as policy restrictions, physical problems and limitations (such as access, flood risk and contamination), the potential impacts of development on environmental features and the environmental conditions which would be experienced by prospective residents are all considered.
14. A site is considered available for housing development when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems that would prevent its development. Therefore, sites need to be controlled by a housing developer who has expressed an intention to develop, or a land owner who has expressed an intention to sell.
15. A site is considered achievable for housing development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This is affected by market factors, site cost factors and delivery factors relating to a housing developer. GVA Grimley were commissioned to assist in this assessment and they have assessed all of the sites in the Central Lancashire SHLAA for achievability.
16. POS Enterprises are also assisting with the SHLAA work and are offering advice on the work done so far. They are also facilitating the first of two Housebuilder Panel Meetings that are planned in January and February this year. This will enable further developer input into the process and help to ensure that the SHLAA is as robust as possible.

There are no background papers to this report.

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