



Charnwood

Leading in Leicestershire

Charnwood Borough Council

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Report

March 2009

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I.1. Introduction

I.1.1. This Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has been produced in partnership with the other Local Planning Authorities in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.

I.1.2. The SHLAA report provides background evidence on the potential supply of housing land in Charnwood Borough. It is a technical report and is not a decision making document, and does not allocate land for housing. It will however contribute to the Charnwood Borough Council Core Strategy which is currently being produced and it will also feed into the Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

I.2. Regional Spatial Strategy Background and Current Housing Position

I.2.1. The East Midlands Regional Plan was adopted in March 2009. It says that Charnwood's share of the regional housing requirement is 15,800 between 2006-2026 or 790 per year. This is a drop from the 19,300 houses previously published in drafts but the base date has been rolled forward from 2001 to 2006 to take account of the latest information. The residual requirement to be found in Charnwood after taking account of current commitments is around 9,800 houses.

I.3. The SHLAA Process/Findings

I.3.1. The methodology used for the SHLAA process was produced in April 2007. The methodology included re-examining known sites (e.g. Local Plan omission sites); new sites put forward through invitation to parish councils, developers, and landowners; and desktop studies of sites within /adjacent to settlements. In total 360 sites were considered.

I.3.2. Of the sites examined 131(192.34ha) were excluded from consideration due to a number of reasons:

- Development on the site is already complete
- The site was a duplicate of another site that was submitted
- The site is being assessed as a potential Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) through the Borough Councils Core Strategy.
- The site is not suitable, available, achievable (within the terms of Government guidance).

I.3.3. Officers used their judgement to categorise sites into three times frames:

- 168.33 hectares (potential 4638 dwellings) were available in 0-5 years.
- 669.33 hectares (potential 13,244 dwellings) were available in 6-10 years.
- 63.85 hectares (1,343 dwellings) were available 11-15 years.

1.4. Settlement-by-Settlement Breakdown

1.4.1. Table I provides a settlement-by-settlement breakdown of all the identified land that could be delivered and developed within the next 5 years, 6-10 years and 11+year timeframes.

**Table I:
Settlement-by-Settlement Breakdown**

Settlement	Total Deliverable and Developable (within 5years)		Total Developable (6-10 years and 11+years)	
	Overall Deliverable Area (ha)	Overall deliverable housing numbers	Overall developable area (ha)	Overall developable housing numbers
Anstey	5.2	9.2	33.27	686
Barkby/Barkby Thorpe	0	0	33.87	729
Barrow upon Soar	12.85	410	31.94	627
Birstall	37	829	1.85	35
Burton on the Wolds	0	0	18.11	343
Cotes	0	0	3.87	62
Cropston	0	0	1.94	48
East Goscote	0	0	0	0
Glenfield	0	0	0	0
Hathern	0	0	3.13	63
Hoton	0	0	3.26	68
Loughborough	53.26	1818	49.38	1120
Mountsorrel	16.43	317	10.55	269
Newtown Linford	0	0	20.48	387
Queniborough	0.27	16	15.29	281
Quorn	0	0	8.6	196
Ratcliffe on the Wreake	0	0	0.32	9
Rearsby	0	0	16.48	328
Rothley	13.52	225	47.6	890
Seagrave	0	0	1	25
Shepshed	1.7	52	98.18	1743
Sileby	3.1	102	51.25	843
Swithland	0	0	0	0
Syston	18.44	455	147.83	2404
Thrussington	0	0	0.99	28
Thurcaston	0	0	62.18	1029
Thurmaston	4.26	341	34.54	670
Walton on the Wolds	0	0	0.49	12
Wanlip	0	0	11.8	218
Woodhouse/Woodhouse Eaves	0	0	6.43	101
Woodthorpe	0	0	5.64	114
Wymeswold	2.3	64	12.24	238
	Total Deliverable Area (ha)	Total deliverable housing numbers	Total developable area (ha)	Total developable housing numbers
	168.33	4638.2	732.51	13566

- 1.4.2. The additional developable housing number of 13,566 combined with the total deliverable figure (4638) provides the basis for housing supply in the Borough up to 2026 and far exceeds the Draft East Midlands Regional Plan requirement of 15,800 homes up to the same period.
- 1.4.3. A full comprehensive breakdown of sites assessed is provided in appendix 1 and a copy of all site assessment proformas with maps is provided in appendix 2.
- 1.4.4. It should be noted that no policy considerations have been overlaid on these figures, so this does not imply that this amount of development will take place on these sites or that planning permission would be granted.
- 1.5. **Updating**
- 1.5.1. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a continuous process that will need to be updated on a regular basis. It provides background information on a pool of potential housing sites that can inform the Charnwood Borough Core Strategy. It will also provide background evidence for the subsequent site allocations and monitoring of a 5 year housing land supply.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Background

- 2.1.1. A Government priority, as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) is to ensure that land availability is not a constraint on the delivery of more homes. Charnwood Borough Council already continually assesses potential housing land supply through Urban Capacity Studies and through monitoring. The Government is now promoting Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA's) to widen the geographical search for sites and to consider supply over a longer timeframe.
- 2.1.2. The Government view SHLAA's as; "a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meeting the community's need for more homes" (SHLAA Practice Guidance, DCLG 2007).
- 2.1.3. The primary role of the SHLAA is to;
- Identify sites in Charnwood Borough with the potential for housing
 - Assess their housing potential; and
 - Assess when they are likely to be developed.
- 2.1.4. Completion of the SHLAA should enable local planning authorities to
- Identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of plan that are ready for development;
 - Identify specific, developable sites for 6-10 years that are ready for development
 - Identify specific, developable sites for years 11-15 years in plans to enable the five year supply to be topped up.
- 2.1.5. The SHLAA assessment will form a critical part of the evidence base for future Development Plan Documents. It will support the updating of the housing trajectory and the five year supply of specific deliverable sites and will inform the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). It will give a picture of potential housing land supply at a specific date, but it will be regularly monitored and reviewed as sites become available or are taken out of the pool of sites.
- 2.1.6. The allocation of housing land must be based upon a strong evidence base. In particular, site allocations for housing must be suitable, available and achievable. The SHLAA will provide this evidence. Please note, however, the SHLAA does not represent policy and will not be used to determine whether a site should be allocated or granted permission for development, it will simply determine which sites are suitable, available and achievable for housing development. The Site Allocations DPD will then determine which of these sites should be allocated.
- 2.1.7. This Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is based on a methodology jointly by local planning authorities comprising the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area including:

- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Blaby District Council
- Harborough District Council
- Melton Borough Council
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council,
- North West Leicestershire District
- Leicester City Council.

2.1.8. The report, whilst focusing on the Borough of Charnwood, has been produced in accordance with the SHLAA Leicestershire and Leicester Housing Market Area methodology paper, which has been produced collaboratively with all participating authorities and agreed upon by stakeholders and partners during consultation in November-December 2007. These partners are identified in the methodology and include the House Builders Federation, national, regional and local house builders and developers, regional and local land owners and agents and registered social landlords.

2.2. **Policy Context**

National Policy Context

2.2.1. Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing (November 2006) sets out the requirement for local authorities to undertake Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, in consultation with key stakeholders as part of the evidence based in the preparation of Local Development Documents. Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Local Spatial Planning (June 2008) also highlights the need for a sound evidence base. PPS3 re-iterates the Government's commitment to achieving a high standard of design and the most efficient use of land. This Planning Policy Statement and the related guidance provide the framework within which this study has been prepared.

Practice Guidance

2.2.2. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: Practice Guidance (July 2007) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and supersedes Housing Land Availability Assessment: Identifying appropriate land for housing development- Draft practice guidance and Tapping the Potential. This document gives practical advice on how to carry out an assessment to identify land for housing and assess the deliverability and developability of sites. It refines the earlier advice and extends it to include consideration of sites for possible urban extensions and new freestanding settlements where appropriate.

Regional Strategy Background

2.2.3. The East Midlands Regional Plan provides housing figures for the Leicestershire Housing Market area for District Council areas up until 2026. It states that housing provision will be monitored annually and reviewed every 5 years, as such a rolling 5 year housing land supply is required from adoption of the SHLAA.

2.2.4. The East Midlands Regional Plan was published in March 2009 requires an overall requirement of 15,877 homes in Charnwood over the period 2006-2026 with an annual requirement of 790 homes.

Local Policy

The Borough of Charnwood Local Plan adopted January 2004

2.2.5. The saved policies of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan provide the current policy context for decision making on the use of land and buildings within the Borough. Saved policies have been included within the SHLAA as a potential policy constraint to development however planning policy constraints have not been used to determine the deliverability or developability of sites. The saved local plan policies, which this study has had regard to, are illustrated in Appendix 3.

2.3. **Current Housing Position**

2.3.1. At 1st April 2008, Housing Land Availability figures indicate that there were 1891 completions since 2006 and 4107 commitments (planning permission's not yet implemented or completed). Therefore, in order to meet the Regional Plan requirements, around 9,900 homes will be needed. It is however important to recognise that the Council will need to plan for more that to ensure that there is a good supply of sites if larger sites are not completed by 2026.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Background

3.1.1. The methodology utilised for the Charnwood Borough SHLAA is the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Methodology paper which has been produced collaboratively with all participating authorities and agreed upon by stakeholders. This can be viewed at :

http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_methodology/strategichousinglandavailability.pdf

3.1.2. Figure 1 has been set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), in order to produce the core outputs for the assessment. According to the DCLG's SHLAA Practice Guidance, the use of this standard methodology is recommended as 'it will ensure that the assessment findings are robust and transparently prepared.'

3.1.3. In addition, the guidance goes on to state that, when followed a Local Planning Authority should not need to justify the methodology used in preparing its assessment (including at independent examination).

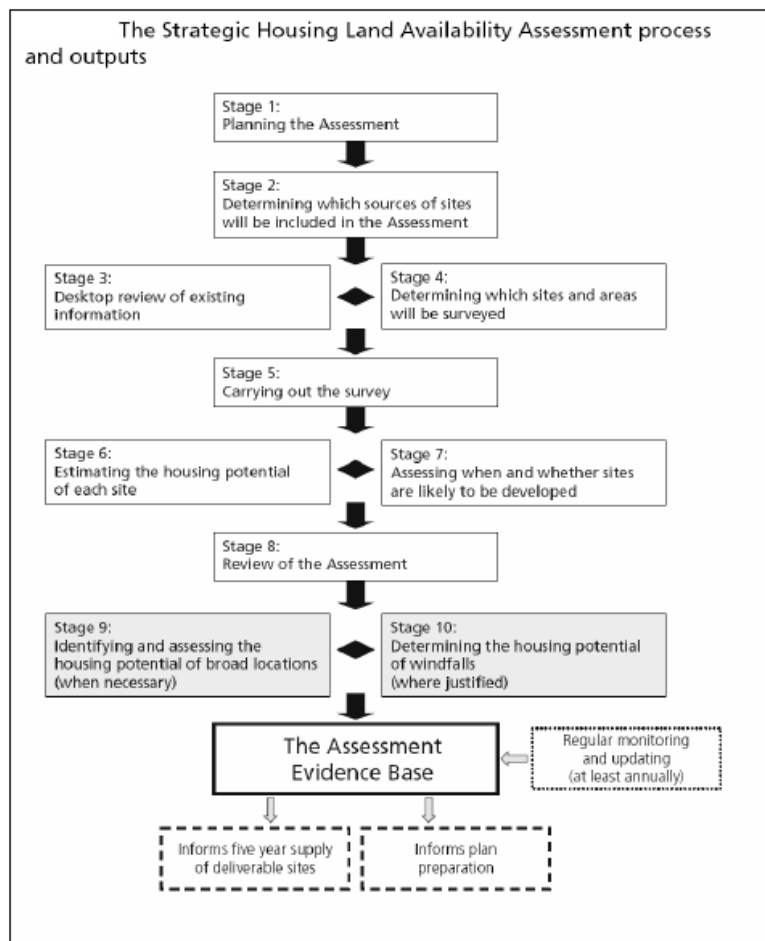


Figure 1:

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Process and outputs

Source: Communities Local Government (2007) *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: Practice Guidance*

- 3.1.4. The Leicester and Leicester Local Planning Authorities have therefore conformed closely with the standard methodology with the exception of some minor deviations to take local circumstances into account.
- 3.1.5. The SHLAA has been undertaken through an officer Project Group with planning and housing officers from each Council represented and including transport, archaeology and ecology officers from the County council and representatives from Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) and the House Builders Federation (HBF).
- 3.2. **Site Source**
- 3.2.1. Sites for assessment have been identified through the following sources;
- Local Development Framework Housing Expression of Interest sites (189 sites)
 - Housing Land Availability Assessment sites (21 sites)
 - Employment Land Study sites (19 sites)
 - Commitments (86 sites)
 - Vacant Council Tax Land (22 sites)
 - National Land Use Database sites (9 sites)
 - Sites from other sources (6 sites)
- 3.2.2. Sites identified in the Employment Land and Premises Study have been included for assessment regardless of the classification.
- 3.2.3. Expression of Interest sites have been submitted by members of the public, developers and agents and collated over a six year period for the Site Allocations DPD. Council owned sites have also been included as Expression of Interest sites.
- 3.2.4. A total of 360 sites have been included within the SHLAA covering some 4,332.87 hectares of land. If a crude indicative density figure is used at 30 dwellings per hectare, these sites could potentially deliver 129,986 houses.

**Table 2:
Distribution of all Sites by Settlement**

Settlement	No. of Sites	Ha
Anstey	27	115.47
Barkby/Barkby Thorpe	5	1129.81
Barrow upon Soar	12	47.79
Birstall	11	238.92
Burton on the Wolds	8	29.86
Cotes	3	246.69
Cropston	2	1.94
East Goscote	2	6.12
Glenfield	1	27.9
Hathern	5	96.24
Hoton	3	3.26
Loughborough	90	1049.72
Markfield	1	1.79
Mountsorrel	14	28.09
Newtown Linford	5	28.91
Queniborough	6	17.88
Quorn	11	49.06
Ratcliffe on the Wreake	1	0.32
Rearsby	4	16.48
Rothley	19	106.23
Seagrave	3	4.28
Shepshed	23	117.9
Sileby	25	73.13
Swithland	2	1.3
Syston	19	173.08
Thrussington	6	22.55
Thurcaston	3	62.18
Thurmaston	23	396.61
Walton on the Wolds	2	7.11
Wanlip	8	66.04
Woodhouse/Woodhouse Eaves	6	7.55
Woodthorpe	2	5.64
Wymeswold	8	153.02
Total	360	4332.87

4. THE SHLAA PROCESS

4.1. Background

- 4.1.1. The joint methodology set out a minimum site size of 10 dwellings for site to be included in the assessment. However, during the assessment it was considered that all sites should be assessed irrespective of the size.
- 4.1.2. During the desktop review, sites which are completely affected by constraints have been classed as undeliverable and have not been given a time frame for development. These constraints are described as 'red constraints' and defined in the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire SHLAA methodology as:
- Flood Zones 3a and 3b
 - Non-inert landfill sites
 - Active mineral extraction sites
 - Hazardous installations
 - Oil and high pressure gas pipelines and 400kv
 - (National grid) overhead electricity lines
 - SSSI's and scheduled ancient monument
- 4.1.3. Agricultural land grade has been removed as a red constraint because it is considered that it should not be used as a constraint against development. This does not assume that development would be acceptable in these cases, however.
- 4.1.4. Sites that have been affected by red constraints will be considered at each review to see if the constraint can be overcome. It is important to note that the SHLAA uses strategic assessment of flood risk and any affected housing sites may need to be subject to a more detailed Flood Risk Assessment.

4.2. Carrying Out the Survey

- 4.2.1. Site assessments have gone through a three-tier assessment process:
- Desktop review
 - Site visits
 - Site re-assessment on the basis of submitted final consultation comments.
- 4.2.2. In addition to recording general site characteristics and constraints, sites were also mapped individually and overlaid onto an overview map of the settlement.
- 4.2.3. All of the sites have been assessed against the following;
- Land constraints,
 - Environmental constraints.
 - Accessibility constraints
 - Planning policy constraints
 - Ownership constraints

4.3. **Land Constraints**

- 4.3.1. Land constraints refer to previous land uses on site, which may have adversely impacted upon the quality of the land and soil. Sites with identified land and soil constraints may be required to undertake ground investigation before commencement of residential development.
- 4.3.2. The Councils geographical information system (GIS) has been used to identify sites with land constraints;
- Landfill buffers
 - Historic landfill sites
 - Previous land uses of the site

4.4. **Environmental Constraints**

- 4.4.1. Environmental constraints were identified through the desktop review and site visits. A site has an environmental constraint if the following are present;
- Mature or ancient woodlands, trees or hedgerows, identified through Borough council records on tree preservation orders and observation on site visits. Woodland has been a consideration in the SHLAA however it has not excluded a site from assessment or determined its suitability, availability or achievability.
 - An area of open space, or land providing sport and recreation. This was identified as a constraint through site visit observation.
 - Ecology sites (Parish, District, County) and sites with ecological interest. Ecology sites have been previously identified and categorised into district and county level sites although an ecology site's designation has not been highlighted within the SHLAA, it is simply referred to as an Ecology site.
 - Impact on biodiversity; water, river, ponds
 - Archaeological and Heritage potential
- 4.4.2. Further information on the ecological potential of a site has been provided by the Historic and Natural Environment Department at Leicestershire County Council and through consultation with the Borough Councils Senior Ecologist.
- 4.4.3. If water, rivers or ponds were identified on site, these were recorded as an environmental constraint.
- 4.4.4. Sites, which have grade 1 or 2 agricultural land within them, have been identified as an environmental constraint but have not been excluded from consideration.
- 4.4.5. The potential of a site to be constrained by heritage and archaeological remains has been identified and supplied by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team specifically for this SHLAA. Each SHLAA site has been assessed for its heritage potential and graded into the following four categories

Grade 1: High

- 4.4.6. This grade refers to SHLAA sites with a high likelihood of heritage potential. A site has defined in this category it is within 100m of a statutorily designated heritage asset such as;
- A registered battlefield
 - Conservation Areas
 - Scheduled Monument
 - Listed Building
 - Registered Park or garden
- 4.4.7. It is possible such sites will prove undevelopable due to the significance of the heritage asset especially where they impact upon a scheduled monument, or Grade I listed building.
- 4.4.8. Sites which directly affect a designated asset or lie within 100m of its boundaries and may have an impact upon its setting and curtilage are material considerations. As such should be considered as early as possible in the preparation of any development proposal. Early consultation with English Heritage, the local authority and where appropriate their heritage advisors would be advisable.
- 4.4.9. The appraisal has taken an arbitrary 100m line to define whether or not the setting/curtilage may be a consideration; however, both issues can only be judged on a case-by-case basis with a specific understanding of the heritage asset and the development proposal.
- 4.4.10. Development that affects a Scheduled Monument or its setting will require Scheduled Monument Consent from the Secretary of State as advised by English Heritage.

Grade 2: Significant

- 4.4.11. This grade refers to SHLAA sites which are expected to have significant potential for archaeological remains predicated on the site being greater than or equal to 1ha in size
- 4.4.12. Development should only be considered for sites identified as having significant heritage potential in the context of a completed archaeological assessment. It is expected that with appropriate consideration and pre-application investigation, the site would prove developable.

Grade 3: Uncertain

- 4.4.13. This grade refers to SHLAA sites with uncertain but potentially significant archaeological potential predicated on the site being less than 1ha in size.
- 4.4.14. Development should only be considered in the context of a completed archaeological assessment. The assessment should comprise, as a minimum detailed site-specific desk-based assessment, and where appropriate should include both non-intrusive and intrusive field evaluation. It is expected that with appropriate consideration these sites will prove developable.

Grade 4: Low

- 4.4.15. This grade refers to SHLAA sites with limited archaeological potential due to their small size, or the absence or limited significance of the known archaeological remains within their immediate proximity.
- 4.4.16. It is expected these sites will represent deliverable development opportunities.
- 4.4.17. References to deliverable and developable within the environmental constraint and the comments supplied by the Natural and Historic Environment Team at Leicestershire County Council are in the context of heritage and archaeology and not the overall assessment.
- 4.4.18. The current appraisal does not represent a definitive statement of the archaeological implications of any given site and has not examined the details of any given development proposal. Consequently, it is strongly recommended that as a development proposal is being considered early consultation with the local authority and their heritage advisors, including where appropriate English Heritage is undertaken to establish the precise implications of any scheme.
- 4.4.19. The current appraisal has been undertaken using the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER). Additional archaeological information, which may either raise or lower the archaeological potential of a given area, is being added to the HER on a regular basis, consequently, specific consultation to clarify the implication of a particular site is recommended and the current appraisal should not prejudice a future detailed assessment.

4.5. Topographical Constraints

- 4.5.1. Topographical constraints refer to surface level site attributes which might affect development on site such as;
- Gradient of land and site levels
 - Flood risk (including flood zones)
 - location of pipelines and electricity lines
- 4.5.2. Charnwood Borough Council commissioned ENTEC to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Borough in March 2007, in line with the requirement set out in Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25). The aim of the assessment is to refine the information available from the Environment Agency on river flooding, in particular taking account of other sources of flooding and the impacts of climate change.
- 4.5.3. The assessment defines the following flood plains.

**Table 3:
Definition of SFRA Flood Zones**

Flood Zones		
1	Low Probability	Land with a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (<0.1%)
2	Medium Probability	Land with between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%)
3a	High Probability	Land with a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%)
3b	Functional Floodplain	Land which would flood with an annual probability of 1 in 20 (5%) or greater in any year or is designed to flood in an extreme (0.1%) flood

4.5.4. The study advises that residential development should only be acceptable in flood zones 1 and 2; and should only be acceptable in flood zone 3a if an Exceptions Test is passed. Therefore sites within flood zones 3a and 3b have been identified as a red constraint and have been classed as ‘not developable’ if the entire site is affected. Sites which are partly affected by these zones will remain in the assessment but will be assessed against a lower housing capacity. Developers/owners of sites will need to ensure that sites affected by flood zone 3a will pass an exceptions test before it is assessed further.

4.5.5. Oil and high pressure gas pipelines and 400Kv and 275Kv (National Grid) overhead power lines have also been identified as topographical constraints and red constraints. The presence of these constraints has only excluded a site from consideration if they affect the site in its entirety.

4.6. **Accessibility**

4.6.1. Accessibility provides an indication to the distance of a site to the following key services and amenities:

- Bus Stop
- Primary School
- Local Centre
- Post Office
- Health Centre
- Secondary School
- Open Space

4.6.2. Distance to the above services and amenities have been measured as the crow flies from the centre of the site (if the site is not a conventional shape an approximate centre has been taken).

4.6.3. Accessibility is designed as a guide to the most suitable and sustainable locations for development and has utilised the centre and access measurements to provide a more rounded view the sites location relative to key services.

4.6.4. Accessibility Standards in Barton et Al (2003) Shaping Neighbourhoods: A guide for health, sustainability and vitality defines the benchmarks in relation to walking distances as follows:

- Sites within 400m are within a 5 minute walking distance;
- Sites within 800m are within a 10 minute walking distance;
- Sites over 800m indicate the potential requirement for the private car or public transport.

4.6.5. The document highlights that the average walking distance is 1km. 'Shaping Neighbourhoods' identifies a reasonable accessible distance to a health centre as within 1000 metres and a secondary school as within 1500 metres. These measurements have been used as the benchmark for these two services within the SHLAA.

4.6.6. Accessibility has been provided as a guide to indicate the distances of sites to relevant services. Accessibility is not a determining factor on the suitability or sustainability of sites and the findings of accessibility are not defined as a constraint to development.

4.6.7. Additionally Accessibility information has recorded further accessibility information that has been identified through the desktop review and site visits. The information has identified, where relevant, the location of pre-defined cycle routes and bus stops.

4.7. **Accessibility Constraints**

4.7.1. Accessibility constraints refers to problems or limitations relating to site access, access to other sites or facilities as a result of development on site, potential infringement of public rights of way and the impacts of and on adjacent highways.

4.7.2. Accessibility constraints have been identified through the desktop review, site visits and comments from Leicestershire County Council Highways Department.

4.7.3. County Council comments referring to 'no apparent fundamental reason for this site to be excluded' is not an indication that access could be provided.

4.7.4. Sites described as being in a 'rural location' indicates that the speed limit is greater than 40 mph and access from such a road would generally be contrary to the County Councils "Highway, Transportation Development" and "Access to the Road Network" policies contained in the Design Guide Htd.

4.7.5. Sites with 'no comments from the Highway Authority' have not been assessed for their suitability for residential development in the context of transport implications.

4.7.6. Sites referred to by the highway authority as 'not appropriate for consideration' have not been excluded from assessment in the SHLAA process. However, the opinions of the highways authority have been included within site assessments. Sites have been found unsuitable, unavailable or unachievable based on these comments in conjunction with data and observations taken during sites visits and the desktop review along with additional information supplied by site submitters.

4.7.7. Accessibility constraints may be overcome upon submission of further evidence such as a Transport Assessment or the submission details showing a valid access can be achieved, which was not evident previously.

4.8. **Planning Policy Constraints**

4.8.1. The following planning policy constraints have been taken into account;

- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings and their setting
- Employment Land and Premises Study classification and advice
- Current planning policy

4.8.2. These constraints have been noted as possible constraints to development but have not influenced the assessment. They are included as a guide to developers and the public as possible constraints to development should the site go forward. Current planning policy refers to saved Borough of Charnwood Local Plan policies which can be found at in appendix 3.

4.9. **Ownership Constraints**

4.9.1. Ownership constraints refer to any legal ownership issues including:

- Multiple ownership;
- Tenancies;
- Ransom strips; and
- Operational requirements

4.9.2. These constraints have been identified through consultation information, site submissions, desktop review and site visits.

4.10. **Estimating Housing Potential**

4.10.1. The estimation of housing potential is a significant factor affecting a site's economic viability and an essential indicator in determining the level of housing land supply in the Borough to meet the Regional Plan's housing requirement.

4.10.2. PPS3 indicates that a density of 30 dwellings per hectare (net) should be used as a national indicative minimum to guide policy development and decision making until local density policies are in place.

4.10.3. The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area SHLAA Methodology paper advises that this assessment will use the density figures as set out in the Structure Plan. However, Housing Policy 5 expired on the 7th March 2008 and so no longer carries any material weight in determining planning applications. Housing density needs to be addressed through the Local Development Framework. Until then, the Borough Council will require new developments to use the minimum density as set out in PPS3 unless a material consideration indicates otherwise.

- 4.10.4. A formula has been applied to the site area to determine a site's net developable area and its residential capacity. The formula discounts a percentage of a sites size in order to take account of highways, open space provision and other infrastructure requirements for residential development:

If a site is up to and including 0.4 ha in area, then the developable area calculated will remain unchanged i.e. $0.4ha \times 30dph = 12$ dwellings.

If a site is between 0.4ha- 2ha, then 82.5% of the site area will be considered developable. i.e. $1.5ha - 17.5\% \times 30dph = 37$ dwellings.

If a site is between 2ha- 35ha then 62.5% of the site will be considered developable. i.e. $3ha - 37.5\% \times 30dph = 56$ dwellings.

If a site is over 35ha then 50% of the site will be considered developable. i.e. $40ha - 50\% \times 30dph = 600$ dwellings.

- 4.10.5. This formula was initially drawn from Blaby District Council's Urban Housing Capacity Study and was developed and the agreed by the developer panel.
- 4.10.6. The housing numbers are stated as a guide to what would be expected if the site were suitable for development but maybe subject to change depending on site specific circumstances.
- 4.10.7. Residential capacity has not been reduced for constrained sites unless they are affected by high flood risk. Where site already benefit from planning permission, the approved housing numbers have been used as a proxy for net capacity and density.

4.11. **Assessing Suitability, Availability and Achievability**

- 4.11.1. PPS3 states that for sites to be considered deliverable they need to be available, suitable and achievable within a five year period (para. 54).
- 4.11.2. In order to provide a consistent approach to site assessment, a sites suitability, availability and achievability has been determined from a list of assumptions produced by the Borough Council and agreed upon by members of the developer panel.
- 4.11.3. Evidence was derived from the Borough Council's planning and building control records combined with site visits and consultation with applicants, agents and landowners.

4.12. **Availability**

- 4.12.1. '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 ownership, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements' (DCLG, July 2007).

A site is **Available** if it;

is under construction,

OR

is a Local Plan Allocation,

OR

has planning permission in full, outline or reserved matters with the intention to implement,

AND

Is owned by a developer with an intention to develop, there is known developer interest or is advertised for sale.

4.13. **Suitability**

4.13.1. The site must offer a suitable location for housing development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities. For those sites with planning permission or allocated in the adopted Local Plan this assessment of suitability will have formed part of the decision to grant planning permission or allocate the site. However, it may be necessary to assess whether circumstances have changed which would alter their suitability.

A site is **Suitable** if:

- it has no irresolvable physical/environmental constraints preventing development such as:
 - A significant flood risk
 - Active mineral extraction sites
 - Oil and high pressure gas pipelines and 400kv (National grid) overhead electricity lines
 - SSSI's and scheduled ancient monuments

AND

- it is a suitable location for housing development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities in terms of:
 - the Borough Council's guidance on development in rural communities <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/newdwellingsincharnwoodsruralcommunities>,
 - its accessibility to services and facilities, and
 - whether it is within or adjoining the settlement boundary or can be combined with another site that is itself within or adjoining the settlement boundary

AND

- A suitable access can be achieved. Access to the site may be suitable if it is provided from an adjacent site if it is within the control of the applicant or landowner.

4.14. **Achievability**

4.14.1. For sites to be considered **Achievable** there should be a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site in 5 years. Sites are considered achievable if:

- there are no irresolvable market factors affecting development such as:
 - land values
 - market demand

AND

- there are no irresolvable cost factors affecting development including:
 - site preparation costs
 - any necessary work to comply with planning conditions or planning obligations
 - Funding issues to address identified constraints or assist development.

AND

- there are no irresolvable delivery factors affecting development including
 - the developers own phasing,
 - whether there is a single developer or several developers offering different housing products, or
 - The size and capacity of the developer.

4.14.2. The developer panel considered that there was very little variation in market interest across the Borough and so site should not be affected by market demand.

4.15. **Deliverable, Developable and not Developable Assumptions**

4.15.1. For a site to be deliverable it should be available now, offer a suitable location for housing development and there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years from the date of adoption of the Borough Council's Core Strategy or Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

4.15.2. For a site to be developable a site should be in a suitable location for housing development, and there should be a reasonable prospect that it will be available for, and could be developed, at a specific point in time. The site may not fulfil all of the suitable, available and achievable criteria and so will be put in the later stages of the plan.

4.16. **Timeframe for Development**

4.16.1. Time frame for development reflects the most likely timeframe in which a site will be completed for residential development. It is dependent on whether the site has planning permission and if there are any ownership or physical constraints.

4.16.2. Each site has been classified based on their ability to come forward;

- Within 0-5 years
- Within 6-10 years
- 11+ years

4.16.3. Although the Borough is experiencing a severe downturn in house building as a result of the wider economic situation, it is not proposed to make any adjustments to the development time frames as market conditions are expected to improve within 2-3 years.

Within 0-5 years

For sites to be allocated within the 0-5 year time frame they must be realistic development opportunities. Sites will be put in this time frame if:

- They have full or reserved matters planning permission and the developer intends to develop.

AND

- The site is suitable, availability and achievable as set out in the previous criteria.

Within 6-10 years – site will be put in this time frame if:

- The site has full or reserved matters planning permission, but, after discussion with the applicant, it is no longer their intention to develop the site within 5 years.

OR

- The site is within the settlement boundary, it has an existing use and the owner has put forward the site (it is assumed that the owner must be interested in relocating but that it will take time to find new premises).

OR

- The site adjoins the settlement boundary but lies outside in the countryside because there would be an assumption that they are unlikely to be granted planning permission prior to this time due to existing policy restrictions.

11+ years – site will be put in this time frame if:

- The site has an existing use but a 3rd party has put forward the site. It is assumed that there is interest in the site, but that those occupying the site would need to move prior to any development occurring.

4.17. **Estimated Build Rate**

4.17.1. The estimated build rate indicates the average number of houses likely to be developed on a site within 1 year by one builder. This is a general assumption drawn from the developer panel and is subject to change based upon specific site conditions.

4.17.2. The annual build rate of 50-80 dwellings per annum is the estimated build rate assigned by the developer panel. Estimated build rate will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect market changes.

4.18. **Overcoming Constraints**

4.18.1. The SHLAA will be reviewed annually. If evidence is provided which demonstrates that an identified constraint can be overcome, this will be taken into account in the review of the SHLAA and may result in a sites assumptions and timeframe for development being changed.

5. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

5.1. Background

- 5.1.1. Although direct consultation is not a statutory requirement for the SHLAA, guidance advocates collaborative working between local authorities and key stakeholders including landowners, developers and registered social landlords to ensure a robust and joined-up approach.

5.2. Leicester and Leicestershire SHLAA Steering Group

- 5.2.1. This Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has been undertaken for Charnwood Borough and follows the joint Leicester and Leicestershire SHLAA methodology. In addition the SHLAA has been guided and informed by the joint Leicestershire SHLAA steering group, comprising of:

- Local Authority Planning Officers;
- Local Authority Housing Officers;
- District and County Planning Officers;
- A representative from the Home Builders Federation;
- A representative from English Partnerships;
- A representative from the Housing Corporation; and
- A registered social landlord.

- 5.2.2. Regular meetings were held to update members with current progress, share insights and discuss issues relating to the SHLAA. These meetings were conducted on the following dates:

26th October 2007
11th December 2007
14th January 2008
8th February 2008
19th March 2008
15th April 2008
27th June 2008
1st August 2008
5th September 2008
10th October 2008

5.3. Developer Panel

- 5.3.1. A key stakeholder Developer Panel was established to develop a robust view of the deliverability and developability of the sites within the SHLAA. Its other purposes were to;

- assess the achievability of housing sites in relation to:
 - i) Market factors that may affect sites such as the market demand for housing in that particular area

- ii) Potential costs associated with site development, including physical/ infrastructure constraints, contamination.
- iii) Delivery factors such as developers own views on site phasing.
- iv) Potential financial viability of site for housing development
- Discuss how constraints could be overcome such as buffer zones around flood risk zones or power line areas.
- Discuss the average build rate.
- Discuss the expected timeframe for development in terms of years (available now, within 5years etc.)
- Agree a density value to set for certain developments and potential no. of dwellings on a site
- Agree housing numbers based on required support facilities

5.3.2. The Developer Panel was made up of representatives of the local house building industry.

5.3.3. The developer panel convened on 9th October 2008 and consisted of;

- A national a planning consultancy representing major local and national home builders and who have a number of sites in the SHLAA
- A local planning consultant representing a variety of sites submitted by individuals.
- A regional estate agent who makes representations to local planning authorities representing primarily sites submitted by individuals.
- A regional home builder which as traditionally focused on residential development in the East Midlands region.
- A representative from a housing association operating in Charnwood
- Local Authority planning officers

5.3.4. Because of the amount of sites in the SHLAA, individual sites were not assessed but instead the panel focused on the assumptions that planning officers would use to assess the deliverability of sites.

5.4. **Other Consultation**

5.4.1. In addition to the steering group, the SHLAA has undergone a further three stages of consultation to further reinforce the joined-up approach advocated in the guidance.

5.4.2. The joint Leicester and Leicestershire SHLAA methodology paper setting out the joint methodology approach for the Leicestershire housing market area was published for a 4 week consultation in November 2007. The results of this are available at :

http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/responses_to_consultation_comments/responsestoconsultationcomments.doc.

5.4.3. In addition to sites already collated through the previously mentioned sources, a request for sites to be put forward for assessments for residential development was placed in the Leicester Mercury and Loughborough Echo in January 2008 for a 6 week consultation. Both of these consultations provided additional sites for assessment within the SHLAA

- 5.4.4. After the initial completion of desktop reviews, site visits and the developer panel, completed site assessment proformas were sent out to all site submitters for consultation in March 2009.
- 5.4.5. During the final round of consultation the Borough Council received 77 responses, which were then acknowledged and, where appropriate the assessment was amended.

6. GLOSSARY

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report submitted to the government by local planning authorities or regional planning bodies assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Development Framework.

Brownfield Land

Land which has previously been developed. The term may encompass vacant or derelict land, infill sites, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings, and developed land within the settlement boundary where further intensification of use is considered acceptable.

Core Strategy

Spatial vision and strategy for the Borough including key policies and proposals to deliver vision.

Development Plan Development

Plan Documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy make up the Development Plan. Under the Planning Acts the Development Plan is the primary consideration in deciding planning applications.

Development Plan Document (DPD)

Documents prepared by the local planning authority setting out the main spatial strategy, policies and proposals for the area.

Greenfield Sites

These are sites which have never been previously developed or used for an urban use, or are on land that has been brought into active or beneficial use for agriculture or forestry i.e. fully restored derelict land.

Housing Market Area (HMA)

A geographical area which is relatively self-contained in terms of housing demand; i.e. a large percentage of people moving house or settling in the area will have sought a dwelling only in that area.

Issues and Options

The preparation of issues and options papers are the first step in preparing the Local Development Framework. They suggest different ways to address the issues facing the Borough and help guide the preparation of Local Development Documents. All Issues and Options papers are open for public comment before the Preferred Options stage is reached.

Local Development Documents (LDDs)

These will be Development Plan Documents (which form part of the statutory development plan) or Supplementary Planning Documents and will be contained within the Local Development Framework. Together they will deliver the spatial planning strategy for the area.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, which includes all the local planning authority's local development documents. An LDF is comprised of:

- Development Plan Documents (which form part of the statutory development plan)
- Supplementary Planning Documents

The local development framework will also comprise of:

- the Statement of Community Involvement
- the Local Development Scheme
- the Annual Monitoring Report

Principal Urban Area

Identified in the Draft East Midlands Regional Plan as settlement conurbations that can develop into sustainable urban communities where people will wish to live work and invest. They are areas where significant levels of new development will be located. In Leicestershire the Principal Urban Area is Leicester.

Regional Plan

Statutory document that replaces Regional Planning Guidance and sets out regional strategies and policies.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Spatial planning Spatial

Planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means.

Sub Regional Centre

Centres identified in the Draft East Midlands Regional Plan for their ability to perform a complementary role to the Principal Urban Areas. They have been selected on the basis of their size, the range of services they provide, and their potential to accommodate further growth. They have the capacity to support sustainable development which should support the individual role and function of the Sub Regional Centre. Development in Sub Regional Centres should not be of a scale and character that prejudices the urban renaissance of the Principal Urban Area (Leicester).

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Documents that expand on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainable Development

Meeting our own needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Sustainable urban extension (SUE)

The Planning Portal glossary defines an urban extension as development that involves the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities.

7. References

Charnwood Borough Council's guidance on development in rural communities
<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/newdwellingsincharnwoodsruralcommunities>

Charnwood Employment Land Study (September 2006)
<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/environment/employmentlandstudy.html>

Housing Land Availability Assessment (March 2007)
http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/housing_land_availability_assessment_2007/housinglandavailabilityassessmen.pdf

Local Development Framework Evidence Base Studies
<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/environment/evidencebase.html>

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (November 2006)
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/planningpolicystatement3.pdf>

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (August 2004)
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/147402.pdf>

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Practise Guidance (July 2007)
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/399267.pdf>