

Test Valley Borough Council

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Main Report

Final Version as at January 2024

SHELAA Figures as at December 2023



This document forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan DPD. It provides information on available land, it does not allocate sites

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Disclaimer:

i) The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) document is an important component of the evidence base for the Test Valley Local Plan. It seeks to identify and assess land available with housing and economic potential to inform future allocations for housing and employment, including sites for gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople use. The Council is required to carry out, maintain and update its SHELAA.

ii) The key points that should be acknowledged when referring to this document are:

a. The SHELAA only identifies sites with development potential, it does not allocate sites

b. The SHELAA is based on the most up to date information available (supplied and researched) at the time of the document's preparation. Therefore, factors may be subject to change over time and may have an effect on any site. This may include (but not be limited to):

** Site boundaries

*** Assessment information

**** Constraint may be mitigated/overcome or additional factors may be identified

iii) Any anticipated development timescales may be subject to change

iv) Site capacity or densities may be subject to change as additional information is developed and as detailed masterplanning takes place

v) The availability of the site may be reassessed by the landowner

vi) The inclusion of a site within this document does not imply that the Council would necessarily grant planning permission for residential or employment use

vii) The inclusion of a site within the document does not preclude them from being developed for other uses

viii) The information is based on submissions received from landowners and agents.

ix) The base date of the most recent call for sites which has resulted in this document is August 2022. However, information submitted subsequently or through queries to the Council may be included after this date.

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Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) is a technical document that provides an assessment of land availability. The purpose of the assessment is to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses. It also seeks to estimate the development potential of the land identified and when the development is likely to occur.
- 1.2 The SHELAA is a key part of the evidence base which will inform the preparation and development of options for the spatial strategy of the draft Local Plan 2040. Its purpose is to test whether there is sufficient land to meet local housing and employment needs and to identify where this land may be located. The SHELAA is one aspect of the evidence base and should be considered collectively with other technical documents, datasets and assessments to inform the identification and delivery of future housing and economic development in the plan area. The SHELAA will also inform the preparation of other Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP).
- 1.3 The methodology for the SHELAA is set nationally. The requirement for SHELAA evidence is outlined in Paragraph 69 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ and the process is informed by guidance set out in National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)².
- 1.4 This statement details the processes the Council has undertaken and the methodology followed during the preparation of the SHELAA together with the high level SHELAA outcomes which will feed into detailed site assessments informed by the strategic factors, other evidence and assessments and sustainability appraisal, which will inform allocations in the draft Local Plan 2040.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this SHELAA, housing development is defined as sites for all types of housing, including housing for older people and student accommodation and sites promoted for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites/plots. Economic development refers to employment uses, not just those within B use classes³. This includes main town centre uses as defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF.

¹ [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-planning-policy-framework)

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

³ B class uses or equivalent categorisation under The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into effect on 1 September 2020 and includes a transitional period.

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- 1.6 The SHELAA will cover the period to 2040, to accord with the plan period for the draft Local Plan 2040. The main purpose of the SHELAA is to support and perform the following functions:
- Identify sites and broad locations with potential for housing and / or economic development from a variety of sources;
 - Assess and provide a high level indication of the housing and economic development potential of sites and broad locations, based on the intentions of site promoters; and
 - It provides some high level details on the likelihood and timing of development coming forward;
 - It will inform the assessment of sites through plan preparation and enable the Council to compare reasonable alternative sites to maintain an adequate supply of land in order to meet identified future development needs, which are identified in the draft Local Plan 2040.
- 1.7 The Council has taken a stepped approach to the selection of sites for allocation in the Local Plan for residential and economic development. The SHELAA is the first stage in this process. The approach taken seeks to ensure that all land with development potential is identified for assessment and allows the most suitable and deliverable sites to be identified through the next stages of plan preparation, including through Sustainability Assessment. The Site Selection Summary Paper describes this process undertaken. Various technical reports have fed into the process and are set out in the detailed evidence base, alongside the SHELAA evidence.
- 1.8 The SHELAA does not allocate land for housing or economic development. It also does not determine whether land should be allocated or given planning permission for development. The SHELAA provides information on the range of sites which are available to meet need. Sites are allocated through Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.9 The inclusion of a site as being 'suitable' with identified development potential does not mean or guarantee that planning permission will be granted if any specific development proposals come forward. Any proposed development must be considered through the planning application process in consultation with interested parties.
- 1.10 In accordance with national guidance, the SHELAA is reviewed on a regular basis.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

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- 1.11 The PPG⁴ recognises that it is important to involve developers, public bodies, local communities and other stakeholders. They can provide valuable information and input into the evidence base regarding land availability. The PPG⁵ also states that the SHELAA must be a transparent process, stating that the assessment should be consistent, accessible and transparent.
- 1.12 The Council has requested updates on all SHELAA sites from various parties, including clarification on whether or not sites are still being promoted for development. The Council has also sought technical and other information to help demonstrate site deliverability, including timescales of when a site may come forward for development.

⁴ Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 3-007-20190722

⁵ Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 3-012-20190722

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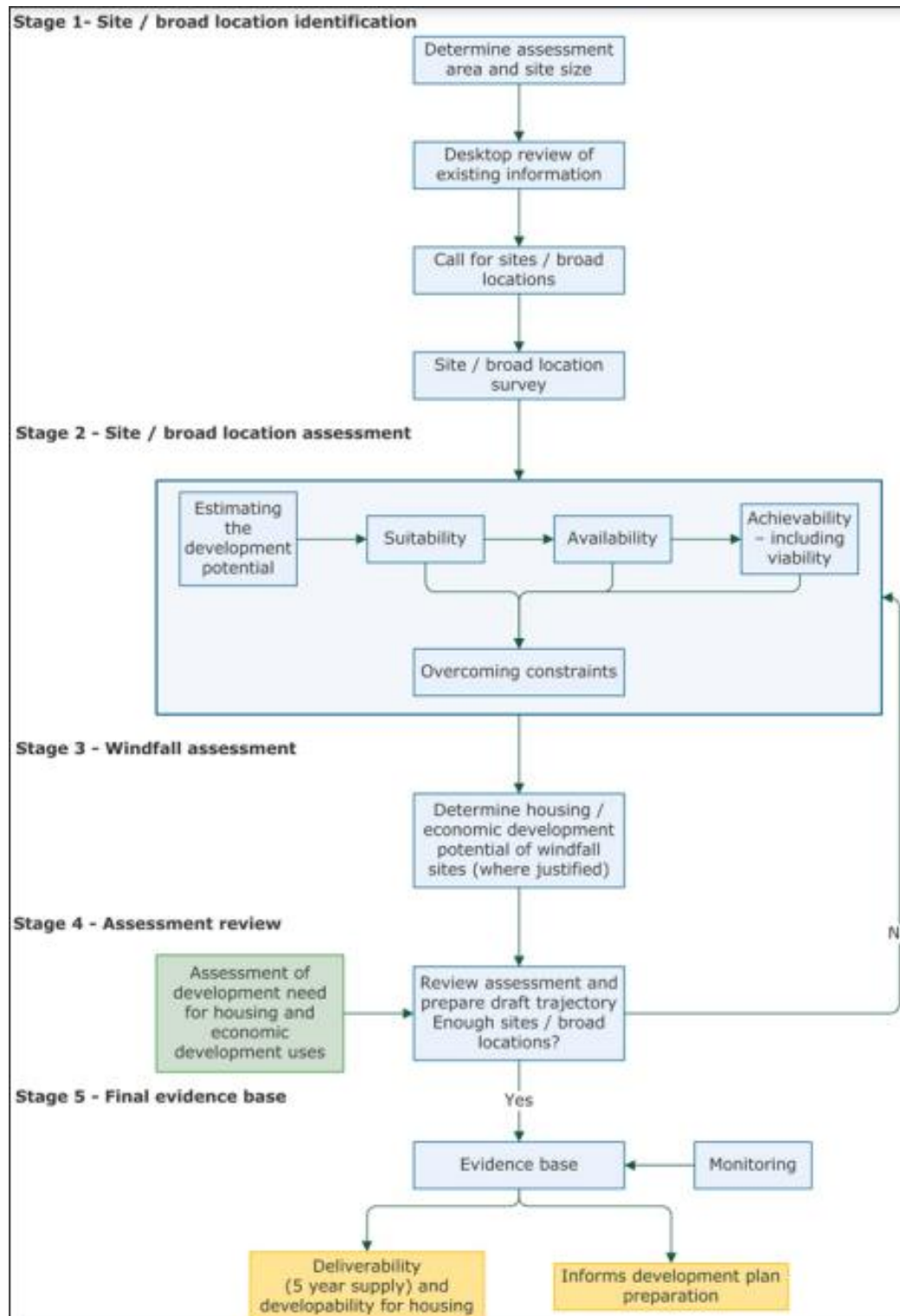
2. Key updates since the last published SHELAA

- 2.1 The last published SHELAA was published in November 2021, with a base date of June 2021. There have been a number of key updates since the November 2021 SHELAA which are set out below:
- The draft Local Plan 2040 Regulation 18 Stage 1 was published for public consultation between 11 February and 8 April 2022.
 - A call for sites took place in July and August 2022. The Council also enables the submission of new sites and updates on existing sites with an open invitation on the Councils website.
 - The call for sites involved the Council writing to all planning agents and landowners who have promoted sites for inclusion in the previous SHELAA document.
 - The Council also identified a range of additional sources of information about potential land, to seek to ensure that the SHELAA evidence allows full consideration of a broad range of sites, over and above those promoted through the call for sites or in response to local plan consultations.
 - A methodology for assessing SHELAA sites and their capacity has been developed through the Local Plan preparation, starting with the site information that has been submitted to the Council.

3. Methodology and Findings

- 3.1 The purpose of this section is to provide a summary of the methodology adopted by the Council in preparing the SHELAA and towards the identification of potential sites, for their assessment and sustainability appraisal. This SHELAA Report provides evidence of the first and second stages of the methodology of Land Availability Assessment, as described by Government in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Stages 3 – 5 of this process are undertaken as part of the site selection process. The methodology flowchart from Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is set out below (Figure 1) and sets out each stage of the process:

Figure 1: PPG Land Availability Assessment Flowchart



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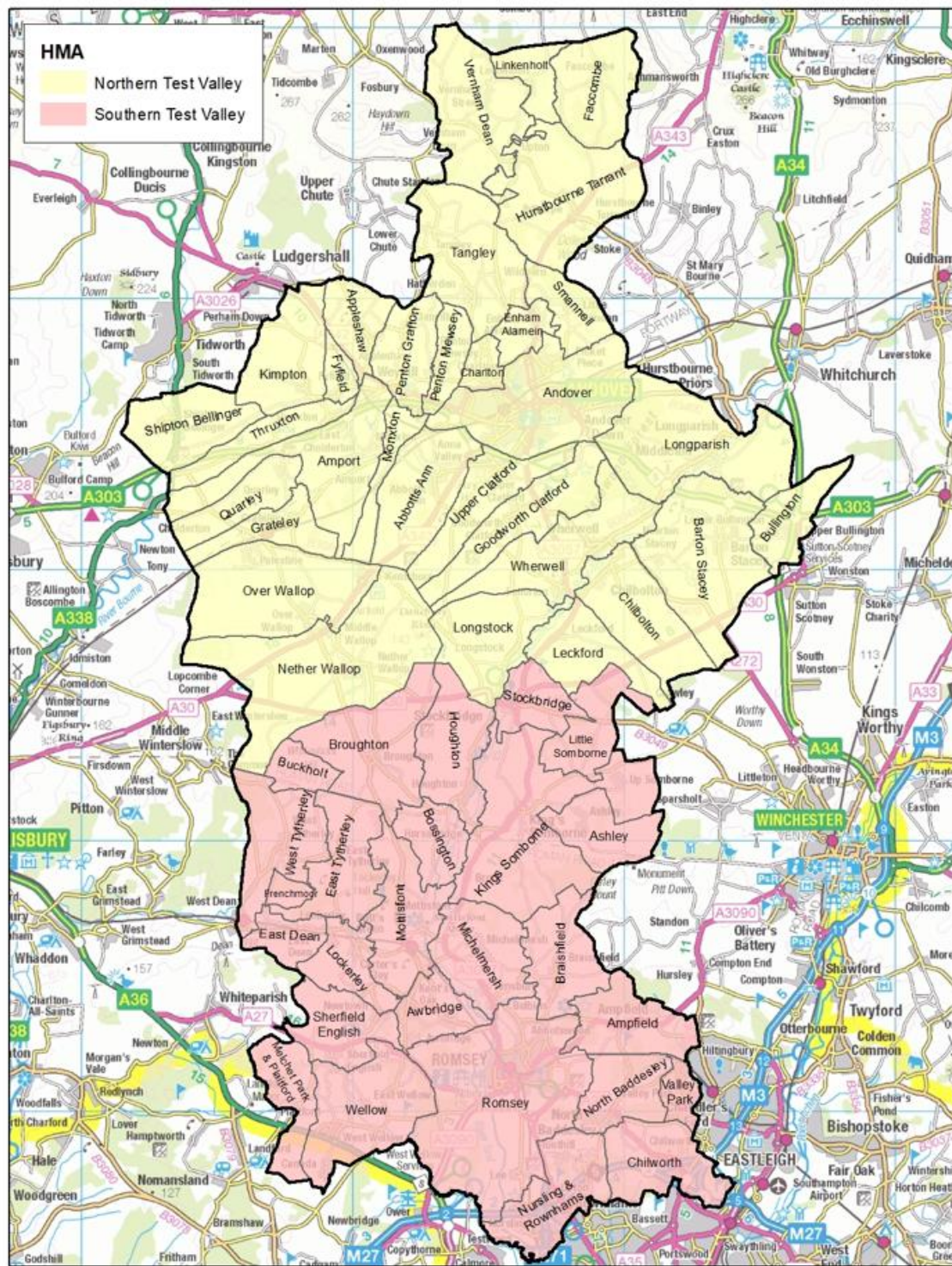
Stage 1: Identification of Sites / Broad Locations

- 3.2 The paragraphs below set out how this SHELAA has been undertaken to reflect the methodology set out in National PPG, following the steps shown in the flowchart at Figure 1.

Site Assessment area

- 3.3 The study area for this assessment is the Test Valley Borough administrative area, except for the part of the Borough that lies within the New Forest National Park. Land to the south of the A36, within the parishes of Melchet Park & Plaitford, and Wellow is within the designated boundary for the New Forest National Park Authority which is the planning authority for the National Park and is therefore excluded from the SHELAA. This accords with National PPG which advises that the area selected for the assessment should be the plan-making area.
- 3.4 Test Valley Borough is split into two separate Housing Market Areas (HMAs), as shown within the draft Local Plan 2040. The HMA and parish boundaries are shown in the map at Figure 2. The detailed site / land evidence in the SHELAA appendices is set out by HMA (Northern and Southern Test Valley) and by Parish area.

Figure 2: Housing Market Areas (and parishes) in Test Valley Borough



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Site size

- 3.5 National PPG states that sites and broad locations capable of delivering five or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500 m of floorspace) should be assessed through the SHELAA. The Council has therefore applied a minimum site size in line with this guidance. Any sites submitted or identified below these area thresholds are not included within the SHELAA.

Desktop Review of Existing Information

- 3.6 The Council has used a variety of data sources, as set out in paragraphs 3.10 – 3.11, to seek to identify a range of potential development sites and locations within the SHELAA. At this early stage in the process (Stage 1 in the PPG Land Availability Flowchart) it is important to include all potential options. Consideration is given to the high level suitability, availability and achievability of sites and land at Stage 2).
- 3.7 A key source of sites data is submissions to the Council through the call for sites. Other sources of information include the Councils Brownfield Land Register, planning application records, records of surplus and other land that is in Council or public ownership and desktop research, including GIS data have been investigated.

Call for Sites

- 3.8 The call for sites process is a fundamental stage in site identification, which also seeks to ensure that any information about land availability is up to date for the plan area.
- 3.9 The Council undertook an initial call for sites exercise early in 2021 in preparation for the 2021 SHELAA, which was prepared between June 2021 and November 2021. The 2021 SHELAA had a base date of June 2021 and superseded the 2019 SHELAA. A further call for sites exercise was undertaken in July and August 2022 to inform the 2024 SHELAA update. This SHELAA will therefore supersede the Council's 2021 SHELAA. In addition, the Council enables the submission of new sites, as well as any further information about existing sites (such as potential development types and constraints to development), through an open invitation on the Council's website.

Other sources of Information

- 3.10 In addition to the call for sites, the Council has undertaken a desktop exercise to identify any further potential sites or areas of capacity within and around the settlements of the Borough. The approach aligns with National PPG, which states that the Council should be proactive in identifying as wide a range of sites and broad locations for development as possible (including those

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existing sites that could be improved, intensified or changed). The Council's search included;

- Council identified sites, e.g. town centre regeneration and Masterplan sites, brownfield sites
- Records of land in the ownership of the local authority
- Surplus public sector land - using the National Register of Surplus Land⁶
- Vacant and derelict land and buildings
- Review of recent planning application records for major developments (including applications refused or withdrawn), reviewing Five Year Housing Land Supply data and recent pre-applications
- Ordnance survey maps and aerial photography

Site/Broad Location Survey:

- 3.12 At this stage, SHELAA evidence has been collated within a database for further assessment. The database collates evidence from SHELAA call for sites and from the Councils own analysis and research.
- 3.13 Sites have been mapped using GIS and reviewed against high level criteria, in line with PPG advice. A proforma has been used to record details of each site, including mapping. The proforma evidence is set out in the Appendices (2-6) by Area (North and South HMA) and by Parish and type of development (sites for housing, mixed, employment, gypsy and traveller, and travelling showpeople).
- 3.14 During the survey stage, the following information has been recorded and reviewed and checked against GIS information and other datasets (where relevant). The data includes:
- site size, boundaries, and location;
 - current land use and character;
 - physical constraints (eg access, contamination, steep slopes, flood risk, natural features of significance, location of infrastructure/utilities);
 - potential environmental constraints;
 - consistency with development plan;
 - proximity to services and other infrastructure, such as public transport;
 - where relevant, a high level development trajectory
- 3.15 It is important to note that sites with particular constraints, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), are also considered during this stage. However, the purpose is to identify the sites and their constraints and not to rule any sites out at an early stage.

⁶ <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/28c593bf-85fa-4676-a47b-45189d396ed9/land-register-of-surplus-land>

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Stage 2: Site/broad location assessment

- 3.16 In undertaking a high level assessment of sites and locations, the Council has sought to check any inconsistent information gathered through the call for sites and desk assessment. National PPG sets out that the suitability, availability and achievability of sites should be assessed at this stage.

Development Potential

- 3.17 The estimation of development potential considers the information, where provided, through the call for sites on the quantum of development that can potentially be achieved.

Suitability

- 3.18 Site evidence is reviewed at this stage. However, site suitability is assessed more comprehensively at later stages in the site selection process, having regard to a wide range of constraints, such as built, ecological or natural environment constraints, location, NPPF and PPG guidance, further technical evidence and statutory consultee advice. It is important that all sites with potential constraints or deliverability issues are not excluded where these constraints might potentially be overcome. This complies with PPG which highlights the importance of identifying sites and constraints, rather than ruling out sites which are known to have constraints.

Availability

- 3.19 Sites promoted in response to the call for sites are considered to be available for development, provided that the Council is satisfied that there are no obvious or known underlying legal or ownership impediments to development.

Achievability

- 3.20 In assessing achievability of sites, it is appropriate to consider the reasonable likelihood of development taking place. This is linked to viability and timing considerations. The existence of planning permission can offer an indicator of achievability. Sites already in the planning process (for example, with a planning permission for development) and including allocations in the adopted plan, are included within the Council's Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement. The SHELAA takes account of planning permissions which form part of the Council's housing trajectory. The principle of development has already been determined for these sites, so they do not therefore progress through the site selection assessment but are reflected in the report and SHELAA evidence.
- 3.21 The SHELAA sites are further assessed for achievability through subsequent stages of site assessment and consultation, including through viability

assessment. This will form part of the technical evidence base for the draft plan.

- 3.22 Two promoted sites have been discounted from the Local Plan site assessment because they have a recent planning permission for development, or because they are within a strategic allocation in the adopted local plan. As such, the principle of development is firmly established. These sites are:

- SHELAA 440 – Land at Southampton Road, Romsey
- SHELAA 249 – Land adj. Abbotswood House, Romsey

4 Summary and outcomes

- 4.1 The Council has sought to demonstrate that this SHELAA has been carried out in full accordance with Government guidance. The evidence within this report sets out the first stages of this process (Stages 1 and 2, as described in PPG (see Figure 1)) to support the preparation of the draft Local Plan 2040. This evidence will be taken forward for site assessment and sustainability appraisal.
- 4.2 The detailed results of the SHELAA are set out in the Appendices to this report. They are set out by HMA and development type, for Northern and Southern Test Valley. Detailed pro forma setting out site details are contained in the Appendices, together with summary lists of sites.
- 4.3 In total, the SHELAA identifies approximately 346 sites⁷. This evidence indicates there are a number of sites that are available to meet our needs. This evidence provides a sound basis for the identification of sites, through detailed site assessment, to support the preparation of the draft Local Plan 2040.

⁷ Note that for a small number of sites, land is promoted for a mix of uses, or for use alternatives. The alternative options are considered through the SHELAA process, but this may mean that the total number of SHELAA is marginally greater than the overall number of sites. This document forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan DPD. It provides information on available land, it does not allocate sites

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 : Glossary of Terms

Ancient woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: An area designated of national importance for its distinctive character and natural beauty. They are designated by Natural England and are protected under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. The North Wessex Downs AONB covers part of Test Valley. On the 22 November 2023, the North Wessex Downs AONB was re-named as the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Brownfield land register: A register of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulations 2017.

Development plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Housing Delivery Test: Measures net homes delivered in a local authority area against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The Secretary of State will publish the Housing Delivery Test results for each local authority in England annually.

HMA or Housing Market Area: A HMA is a broad geographical area in which generally most people will both live and work. There are two HMA identified within Test Valley Borough, for the North (NTV) and South (STV). See Figure 2 in main report.

Local housing need: The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 61 of the NPPF).

Local plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The NPPF set out national planning policy for plan making and decision taking. The NPPF was first published in 2012, with revised versions published in 2018, 2019, 2021, and twice in 2023.

Neighbourhood Plan: A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

PfSH Partnership for South Hampshire (previously Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)): An organisation comprising East Hampshire, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Hampshire County, Havant, New Forest, Portsmouth, Southampton, Test Valley and Winchester Councils, and New Forest National Park. The organisations have come together through PfSH to improve the economic performance of South Hampshire and enhance it as a place to live and work.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG): An online resource published by Government which provides detailed national planning practice guidance on how to apply the NPPF.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape

Priority habitats and species: Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA): A technical document that provides information on potential

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housing and/or economic development sites promoted by landowners/developers. It provides details on whether the promoted sites are available, suitable and achievable.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): An assessment that considers the need and demand for specific types of housing (including affordable housing), as well as the mix of housing, within the Borough. It forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan

SEE SEPARATE APPENDIX REPORT FOR APPENDICES 2 – 6

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