

Tyne & Wear Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA)

Sub-Regional Addendum Concept Paper and Supplementary Guidance

(Revised July 2008)

The five Tyne & Wear local authorities are proposing to undertake their first Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) during 2008/09. The Government view SHLAAs as “a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community’s need for more homes”.

The primary role of SHLAAs is to plan for and enable the continuous delivery of a flexible supply of land for new housing over a period of at least 15 years, including managing a continuous 5-year supply of deliverable sites. SHLAAs will form a critical part of the comprehensive evidence base for future Local Development Framework (LDF) development plan documents which, alongside other information, will be used to inform decisions in plan making, including future land allocations. The SHLAAs will identify sites with potential for future housing development, assessing their suitability, availability and how soon development could be achieved, as well as an assumption of how many homes they could yield (their indicative dwelling capacity). However, SHLAAs do not represent planning policy or determine whether or not a site should be allocated or granted planning permission. SHLAAs are required to be regularly kept up to date as part of the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

A **SHLAA Practice Guidance** note was published by **Communities & Local Government (CLG)** in July 2007 [<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/landavailabilityassessment>], in support of the requirement in **PPS3 Housing** (November 2006 – para.40-61 and Annex C) [<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps3housing>].

Further guidance on preparing SHLAAs and implementing them through the development plan process has since been published by the **Planning Advisory Service** (January/April 2008) [<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelid=54317>], in partnership with the Planning Officers Society, together with a series of SHLAA Frequently Asked Questions arising from PAS LDF seminars (January/February 2008). The **Planning Inspectorate** has also published related CLG advice on **Demonstrating a 5 Year Supply of Deliverable Sites** [http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/pins/advice_for_insp/advice_produced_by_dclg.htm] in accordance with PPS3 requirements, and the performance monitoring of new **National Indicators NI154 and NI159**.

Regionally, the North East Assembly (NEA) has worked with local and county council planners, the Government Office for the North East (GO-NE), One NorthEast (ONE) and the Homebuilders Federation (HBF) since October 2007 on the production of a **North East England SHLAA Regional Implementation Guide** and an associated Regional SHLAA Sites Database (in Microsoft Access). This was finalised in March 2008 [<http://www.northeastassembly.gov.uk/document.asp?id=806>]. This implementation guide is written as a common framework for the North East region and seeks to ensure a reasonable degree of consistency across the region in the way data is collated and recorded. This is designed to enable the SHLAA data to be potentially integrated across local authorities and thus more easily inform future planning for housing in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and enable disaggregation across cross-district Housing Market Areas. The guidance also includes an indicative timeline for the production of a SHLAA.

The Tyne & Wear SHLAAs will be produced in line with this national and regional guidance.

CLG have recently clarified (via the North East Assembly) that all local authorities are now required to have a SHLAA in place by a cut-off date of 31 March 2010 at the latest in order to qualify for the related

funding awards under the new **Housing & Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG)**. It has nevertheless been suggested that a greater share of potential annual HPDG funding may be available for those authorities that complete their SHLAAs a year earlier by 31 March 2009.

The North East Assembly (NEA) have also subsequently advised that, in order to feed into the forthcoming housing-led review of the **Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS consultation draft provisionally scheduled in February 2009, with a revised draft in October 2009), they would like to be in a position to collate district-wide SHLAA results (or at least headline data) during Autumn/Winter 2008.

The sub-regional SHLAAs will also be taken into account in the preparation of the **Tyne & Wear Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**, which is being prepared by the Tyne & Wear Housing Partnership. Individual authorities are also undertaking their own District-wide SHMAs and housing needs studies which, in combination with the SHLAAs, will also inform decisions on housing land allocations in Local Development Frameworks.

The SHLAA work also has interrelationships with **English Partnerships' Local Brownfield Strategies** work, the **National Land Use Database (NLUD)** [<http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/nlud.htm>], and the **Register of Surplus Public Sector Land (RSPSL)** [<http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/rspsl.htm>] which will bring up some key sites for inclusion in the SHLAA database.

It is also recognised that many of the sites surveyed for the SHLAA will also be relevant to local **Employment Land assessments** and work on **Open/Green Space Strategies**, such that there will be undoubted opportunities in the recording of site survey data to minimise or avoid potential duplication of work. Hence there may be potential for the SHLAA sites database to hold much of the data for these other studies too, or at least to use common site reference numbers to enable ease of cross-referencing and for exporting site data between databases.

Tyne & Wear SHLAA Partnership Working

A planning-based **Tyne & Wear SHLAA steering group** was set up in February 2008, and met again in March and April 2008. The purpose of this group is to enable and coordinate collaborative sub-regional working on the SHLAAs and to ensure an element of sub-regional consistency within the flexibilities provided by the regional guidance. Individual authority working groups would then manage the practical aspects of the SHLAA work in each district.

The steering group has also discussed aspects of establishing the required wider **sub-regional key stakeholder partnership**. In accordance with the national and regional guidance, a key stakeholder partnership was subsequently established comprising local authority planning and housing officers together with representatives of housebuilders/developers, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), local estate/property agents, and other agencies such as the North East Assembly (NEA), ONE NorthEast, English Partnerships and private sector consultants, as well as the Government Office for the North East (GO-NE), Environment Agency, Highways Agency, utilities companies and other local interests as appropriate. The partnership were given an introductory presentation on SHLAAs in June 2008, at which it was agreed that a core **sub-regional SHLAA key stakeholder panel**, comprising the lead local authority officers and about 5 others from different sectors, should be established. This group would perform an overview role in acting as a 'sounding board' for final agreement on sub-regional aspects of the SHLAA methodology, as well as serving as a critical panel for the site assessment workshops. The partnership could also meet on an annual basis if appropriate to review the approach and processes, membership of the panel and longevity, etc.. Partnership members would also be encouraged to inform the panel of lessons learnt from other SHLAAs elsewhere in the region and elsewhere.

The Tyne & Wear Housing Partnership is also supportive of this sub-regional approach, similar in some ways to a stakeholder group being established to oversee the sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). However, it was suggested by the SHMA group that, regardless of some inevitable overlapping of personnel, the two groups should be kept distinct from each other rather than merged to perform a dual SHMA and SHLAA role.

The pre-established key stakeholder partnership would then be called upon 'ad hoc' by each local authority at key stages of their respective SHLAAs when necessary, primarily in terms of holding **stakeholder workshops** to assess the developability/deliverability and indicative housing yield/capacity of identified potential housing sites. The internal and external workshops would generally be held on an individual authority basis to discuss and draw upon expert advice for the detailed assessment of major sites that have been identified as being potentially suitable for housing development. This would ensure that the assessments' findings are as robust and accurate as possible. Any sites where the wider partnership is unable to reach consensus about indicative site yield/capacity and timeframe for deliverability would be taken to the key stakeholder panel for a final decision. Details for each site to be assessed by the partnership would need to be circulated 6-8 weeks in advance of the external workshops taking place. The workshops could be in the form of an open day for partners to attend, or could take a more formal format. Workshop and panel participants would nevertheless be required to raise any declarations of interest (eg. as landowners, developers or agents) when assessing individual sites. Whilst authorities may wish to arrange their own individual workshops with the partnership, it has been suggested that Tyne & Wear Research & Information (TWRI) might be in an appropriate position to help coordinate and oversee these workshops, having previously had experience of running the joint meetings with the House Builders Federation (HBF) under the old-style land availability studies, although this would need to be confirmed.

A sub-regional version of the NEA-based timetable has been broadly agreed (as updated at Annex 1), which schedules for these workshops to take place during Autumn 2008 with the findings of the first SHLAAs being published in early 2009. **The key stakeholder panel has recommended that the following timetable should be adhered to in order to target the initial March 2009 deadline:**

- Site surveys and data collation and input – July-September 2008
- Sub-regional call for any new sites to be put forward* – August 2008
- Internal workshops – September 2008
- External workshops – October-December 2008 (NB. circulate site details 6-8 weeks in advance)
- Panel workshop – end January 2009
- Initial SHLAA findings (to inform 5-year housing land supply report) – end March 2009
- Final SHLAA reports – March-May 2009

[* Sites previously put forward as part of LDF consultation exercises will usually be automatically included in the SHLAA for consideration, so there would be no need for these to be submitted again.]

The steering group has also discussed matters around staffing, time and financial resources for undertaking the SHLAA work required, not only in terms of the initial survey work, but also for the annual updating of the SHLAA required by the national and regional guidance. The Planning Advisory Service generally recommend keeping the SHLAA work in-house as opposed to commissioning consultants, although this is not ruled out as an option. It has been mooted that there may be a possibility of TWRI hosting a sub-regional SHLAA database if this was considered necessary, as well as utilising their IT skills in terms of transferring and converting existing Urban Capacity Study database data to automatically populate corresponding fields in the SHLAA database as the starting point. They may also be able to assist through their GIS skills in mapping the surveyed sites, and possibly placing the SHLAA sites on the internet for wider consultation if that was considered appropriate given the SHLAA's relative status in terms of not being a development plan site allocations document (eg. similar to that done for Sedgfield Borough Council's major allocations consultation [<http://www2.sedgfield.gov.uk/MajorAllocations/?accept=true>]).

Sub-regional Data Consistencies

Several detailed aspects of the regional database have also been discussed by the steering group and partnership to agree on a consistent sub-regional approach.

Under the initial **Site Details** section, it was agreed that:

- it should be left to the individual discretion of each local authority as to whether any site area or likely housing yield threshold should be applied to the size of sites to be surveyed as part of their SHLAA.
- the **National Grid Reference coordinates** and **postcode** should be recorded consistently for either the centre point of the site, or alternatively for the main entrance (as per the North East Business Accommodation Project guideline).

Within **Category 2 of the Site Designations** section, it was agreed that:

- within Tyne & Wear there are no County Wildlife Sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or National Parks.
- **Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)** – or **Local Wildlife Sites** in the case of South Tyneside's current review –, sites including a **Great Crested Newt Pond**, **Green Belt** land, **allotments** and **designated open spaces** (generally regarded as formal parks and major areas of strategic open space), and possibly also **non-designated open spaces**, could be excluded from further assessment (ie. as if Category 1 zero potential designations) at each authority's individual discretion – if excluded to start with, they could still be reviewed at a later date should the initial results of the SHLAA suggest that there are likely to be insufficient deliverable or developable potential housing sites to meet RSS allocations and identified local Housing Market Area needs.

It was also considered that Historic Landscape designations are likely to be excluded in other ways anyway (eg. through being part of the designated Green Belt or nature conservation sites).

As regards obtaining **utilities information**, it was considered that the most appropriate way would be to approach the utilities companies on a joint Tyne & Wear basis, submitting only the larger potential development sites once these had been identified (eg. >0.4ha site area or >10 dwellings indicative capacity). The collation of **utilities and infrastructure capacity information** was also raised as an issue of concern since this has previously been rather difficult to obtain. However, informal discussion with English Partnerships suggests that they might be in an appropriate position to be able to assist with collating such utilities information on a Tyne & Wear basis once all the potential development sites have been identified.

Discussion around the **Services Proximity** section concluded with general agreement that:

- the focus should be on measuring proximity to **city/town/district centres** as defined in LDFs/UDPs (since these will in most cases include many other services), as well as **Metro/train stations** (including proposed new stations), given the sequential approach to focussing higher density development in the most accessible locations.
- proximity to **primary and secondary schools** may be worth measuring, although this could prove unworkable in areas undergoing school reorganisation aimed at reducing surplus places and ensuring that future schools capacity is broadly in line with likely future population distribution taking into account the RSS housing allocations. Hence, this may be left to individual authority's discretion.
- it will also be left to individual authority's discretion whether to include measuring **proximity to supermarkets, local shops, banks/cash machines** (less of an issue given their increasing presence in pubs and supermarkets, together with online banking), **libraries** (often located in main centres anyway), **GPs/doctors and dentists, employment sites, the trunk road network and bus stops** (frequency/destination of services is not guaranteed, being dependent on commercial service operation, although there may be potential to consider including bus stops that form part of a SuperRoute network).
- **distances** should be measured simply using 'as-the-crow-flies' straight line distances (much easier for GIS mapping) from the centre point or main entrance of the site, and plotted using the gazetteer.

It was also noted that **scoring** of these factors was specifically deterred at a recent PAS regional seminar event, and had subsequently been removed from the regional guidance. Hence, it was agreed that any such use of scoring or weighting would not be appropriate.

The group also agreed that in measuring the indicative **Housing Yield** in the final section, the initial local authority yield estimate should be based on the following indicative housing densities for the four distance zones (as derived from the proximity to a city/town/district centre or Metro/train station, or other service proximity category included above):

- <500m = 75 dwellings/ha
- 500-750m = 50 dwellings/ha
- 750m-1km = 40 dwellings/ha
- >1km = 30 dwellings/ha

It is also worth noting that in ascertaining the indicative net developable area for applying the above densities, the **multipliers** cited in the regional guidance (as derived from the old 'Tapping the Potential' guide for urban capacity studies) suggest a possible range, but that comparison with actual development proposals and planning applications suggests that the upper percentage multiplier is likely to result in a more realistic assessment:

- <0.4ha total gross site area = 100% net developable area
- 0.4-2ha gross total site area = 90% net developable area (range 75-90%)
- >2ha gross total site area = 75% net developable area (range 50-75%)

Nevertheless, consideration also needs to be given to the regional housing aspirations and local demands for more family housing with gardens and areas of public open space, which will also impact on the residual developable area for housing.

These aspects have been reflected in the site survey proforma that has been drawn up for use by each authority, designed to reflect the sections in the database's site data input form (see Annex 2). The proforma also includes the option to indicate which phase of the RSS plan period a site is likely to be achievable within, in addition to the basic SHLAA 5-year assessment periods – this may assist with planning which phase of the plan period a site should ultimately be allocated in through the LDF where the SHLAA periods do not necessarily coincide with the plan periods.

Annex 1: Indicative timescale for activities for local authorities and partnerships

First Tyne & Wear SHLAAs:	
April - June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish partnerships (Stage 1) - Define partnership structures and management systems (Stage 1) - Plan project and identify key timescales (Stage 1) - Identify sites from defined sources (Stage 2, 3 and 4) - Invite submission of candidate sites (Stage 2, 3 and 4) - Commence desktop study of sites (Stage 3)
June - August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete desktop exercise (including submitted candidate sites) (Stage 3) - Sieve out sites to produce final list for assessment (Stages 3 and 4) - Undertake site visits and on ground survey (Stage 5)
September 2008 - January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and external workshops (Stages 6 and 7) - Partnerships assess developability and deliverability (Stages 6 and 7)
January - March 2009 [Autumn/Winter 2008 to inform RSS review – consultation draft February 2009?] [March 2009 at latest for HPDG?]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tie up loose ends - Identify further land if necessary (Stages 8, 9 and 10) - Publish SHLAA findings
Tyne & Wear SHLAA Reviews:	
March - April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish lessons learned and responses - (Sub-)Region evaluates successes of approach and improvements that could be made - Make improvements
April - May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan SHLAA review incorporating any procedural improvements
Spring 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify any new sources of land - Invite submission of further candidate sites not provided last time
Spring/Summer 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desktop study (update information on existing sites including those previously sieved out) - Reconsider all sites including those previously sieved and repeat the sieving exercise (policy changes may mean some sites are no longer constrained or vice versa) - Site visits and on ground survey
Spring - Autumn 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and external workshops - Partnership assesses developability and deliverability
Summer/Autumn/Winter 2009 [RSS review – revised draft October 2009?] [March 2010 at latest for HPDG]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish SHLAA findings

Annex 2: Potential Development Sites Database Site Survey Proforma (overleaf) ...

Tyne & Wear Potential Development Sites Database

- Site Survey and Initial Assessment Proforma -

Local Authority area:	
Newcastle upon Tyne	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Tyneside	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gateshead	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Tyneside	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunderland	<input type="checkbox"/>

Site to be included on databases for (tick all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Land Availability Study
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open/Green Space Strategy

1. Site Details:

Site Ref. No.:		Site Survey Date (DD/MM/YY):	
Site Photo Ref. No.:		Date Survey Data Input (DD/MM/YY):	
Specific Site or Broad Area? (delete as applicable)		Grid Coordinates (site centroid): Easting:	
Site Area (ha):		Grid Coordinates (site centroid): Northing:	
Site Name:			
Site Address:			
Settlement:			
Postcode:		Medium Super Output Area (MSOA):	
Housing Market Area (HMA) (if SHLAA site):			
Present Land Use(s):		Use Class(es):	
Is the Property Vacant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the Site Derelict?	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Is the Site Cleared?	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Bad Neighbour?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbouring Land Uses:			
Previously-Developed 'Brownfield' Land?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Previously-Undeveloped 'Greenfield' Land?	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Mixed %:	/

2. Site Categorisation:

RSS Sequentiality:		Brownfield Land within RSS Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Land within RSS Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brownfield Land adjoining RSS Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Land within Other Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outside Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
RSS Locational Tier:		Conurbation / Main Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration Town / Rural Service Centre:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secondary Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tertiary Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Settlement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Countryside:	<input type="checkbox"/>

3a. Site Constraints:

Site Topography:					
Prevents Development:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mitigation would Enable:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Obstacle:	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Unknown:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contamination Issues:					
Prevents Development:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mitigation would Enable:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Obstacle:	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Unknown:	<input type="checkbox"/>

3b. Site Designations (Category 1 – zero potential for development, exclude from subsequent assessment):

Designation Details:					
Ramsar Site:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Protection Area (SPA):	<input type="checkbox"/>		
National Nature Reserve (NNR):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Area of Conservation (SAC):	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ancient Woodland:	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Scheduled Ancient Monument / World Heritage Site:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic Park or Garden:	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Flood Risk Zone 3B (Functional Floodplain):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Inner Zone:	<input type="checkbox"/>		

3b. Site Designations (Category 2 – include for subsequent assessment, subject to any local exclusions):

Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) / Local Wildlife Site (LWS):		Green Belt:	
Conservation Area / WHS Setting:	Great Crested Newt Pond:	Designated Open Space:	
Grade I Listed Building/Structure:	Historic Landscape:	Non-designated Open Space:	
Grade II* Listed Building/Structure:	Archaeological Site:	Allotment:	
Grade II Listed Building/Structure:	Minerals Safeguarded Area:	Car Park:	
Flood Risk Zone 3A (High Vulnerability):		Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Middle Zone:	
Flood Risk Zone 2 (Medium Vulnerability):		Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Outer Zone:	

4. Planning History:

Present Planning Status:			
Land Use of this Status:		Use Class(es):	
Planning Application No.:		Date Permitted:	
Not Started / Under Construction / Completed (delete as applicable)		Date Completed:	
Total Dwellings:	No. Not Started:	No. Under Construction:	No. Completed:

5. Site Ownership:

Landowner:			
Land Ownership Details:			
Is the site on the National Land Use Database (NLUD)?		NLUD Ref. No.:	
Is the site on the Register of Surplus Public Sector Land?		RSPSL Ref. No.:	
Has the site been put forward for development by the owner?		Council Disposal Notice (if applicable)?	
Owner's Preferred Use:		Use Class(es):	

6 & 7. Utilities and Infrastructure Capacity Constraints (Sewerage, Water, Electricity, Gas, Telecoms; Highways, Schools):

Utilities Capacity Issues:			
Prevents Development:	Mitigation would Enable:	No Obstacle:	Unknown:
Highways/Access and Schools Capacity Issues:			
Prevents Development:	Mitigation would Enable:	No Obstacle:	Unknown:

8. Proximity to Key Services:	<500m = 75/ha	500-750m = 50/ha	750m-1km = 40/ha	>1km = 30/ha	Unknown
City/Town/District Centre:					
Local Shops / Supermarket:					
Library / Bank/Cash Machine:					
GP/Doctor / Dentist:					
Primary / Secondary School:					
Employment Site / Trunk Road:					
Metro/Train Station / Bus Stop:					

9. Housing Yield and Deliverability (Suitable, Available Now, Achievable in 5yrs) / Developability (Suitable, Achieve Later):

Developable Area (ha) (<0.4ha = 100%; 0.4-2ha = 90%; >2ha = 75%):		Housing Yield Estimate:	
Is it Suitable for Housing?	Is it Available Now?	Is it Deliverable?	Is it Developable?
When is Housing Achievable?	Next 5 years:	Years 6-10:	Years 11-15:
2004-2011:	2011-2016:	2016-2021:	2021-2026:
PPS3 and Yield Details:			