

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

Date of Meeting: 26th March 2012
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Update
Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement to the publication of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Update as part of the evidence base for the Cheshire East Local Plan.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity approves:
- (1) the publication of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Update; and
 - (2) the use of the document as part of the evidence base for the Cheshire East Local Plan.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2011 Update is a key component of the evidence base; and to inform the development of housing policy within the Cheshire East Local Plan. This assessment is required by national planning policy, set out in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3).

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a technical document that assesses the potential of sites for housing development and will form part of the evidence base for the Cheshire East Local Plan. It does not include any

recommendations about the selection of potential sites for future housing development.

- 6.2 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also includes an assessment of the 5 year supply of sites, which is also reported in the AMR. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Update currently identifies that the Council has less than a 5-year supply of identified 'deliverable' housing sites. This has lead to the Council producing a Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land, which is currently subject to review.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 None.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 This report has to meet the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, paragraph 55 states that Local Planning Authorities should:
- Identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan that are ready for development, and to keep this up to date over time in response to market information;
 - Identify specific, developable sites for years 6–10, and ideally years 11–15, in plans to enable the five year supply to be updated;
 - Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11–15 of the plan, indicate broad locations for future growth; and
 - Not include an allowance for windfalls in the first 10 years of the plan unless there are justifiable local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.
- 8.2 Paragraph 57 goes on to state that 'once identified, the supply of land should be managed in a way that ensures that a continuous five year supply of **deliverable** sites is maintained i.e. at least enough sites to deliver the housing requirements over the next five years of the housing trajectory.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has been undertaken following the methodology set out in Government guidance. Consultation has been undertaken with the Housing Market Partnership and with the Housing Market Partnership Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Task Group on more detailed issues in relation to the specific sites. This has returned a significant number of responses many of which the Council has been able to take on board. However, there are areas of disagreement (these are set out in Appendix A) and consequently there remains a high level of risk that the document will continue to be subject to scrutiny at planning application appeals.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The primary role of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to:
- Identify sites with potential for housing;
 - Assess their housing potential; and
 - Assess when they are likely to be developed.
- 10.2 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is an important evidence source to inform plan-making, but does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for housing development. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment provides background evidence on the potential availability of land in Cheshire East for housing and the choices available for delivering housing, through the Local Plan, particularly the Site Allocations and Policies document.
- 10.3 The study includes sites that have been put forward by landowners and developers, with a capacity for 10 or more dwellings (generally sites of approx 0.3ha or more), both previously developed (PDL) and greenfield, within settlements and adjacent to their limits. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has been undertaken to:
- Provide a consistent assessment of potential sites that have been submitted by land owners and developers;
 - Consider factors affecting the developability of the site (e.g. flood risk, access);
 - Assess the sustainability of the site in terms of accessibility to services; and
 - Consider the deliverability of the site in terms of the need for / timescales for delivering infrastructure required (e.g. highway schemes).
- 10.4 The decision making process for the allocation of sites for housing and other development will be the Cheshire East Local Plan Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies DPDs. The Cheshire East Core Strategy will consider options for the future development strategy for the Borough and may allocate strategic sites for development based on the evidence set out in this Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The Cheshire East Sites and Policies Document will then allocate specific sites to deliver the Core Strategy.
- 10.5 Planning permission will also be required for development. Planning applications will continue to be treated on their own individual merits. They will be determined in accordance with planning policies contained within the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.6 A housing requirement of 1,150 net additional new dwellings per annum has been agreed by the Council, on the 18th October 2010, on an interim basis pending the preparation of the Local Plan Core Strategy. This equates to a 5 year supply figure of 5,750.

- 10.7 Just under 2,000 sites were considered as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, of these approximately 1,400 sites are considered suitable for housing during the next 15 years. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also identified 4,783 deliverable dwellings that were expected to come forward within the 1-5 year period, this equates to 3.94 years supply.
- 10.8 Therefore there are currently insufficient 'deliverable' sites to meet the five year supply requirement, consequently the Council is reviewing the Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land, to identify broad locations for future housing growth, pending the preparation of the Local Plan which will allocate areas and sites for future development.
- 10.9 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment document will continue to be reviewed and updated annually.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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