

Lichfield District Council

Housing Site Selection Methodology Paper

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2.0 Introduction & Purpose of paper

2.1 Purpose of paper

This paper sets out the site selection process undertaken by Lichfield District Council in the identification of housing sites for the Local Plan Allocations (LPA) document. The site selection process for the proposed allocations document builds upon the significant existing evidence base as well as national policy and guidance.

The site selection process takes place alongside the evidence base gathering and Sustainability Appraisal work which has taken place alongside the formulation of the LPA document. The paper has been updated to reflect changes to the LPA document made ahead of the consultation which is scheduled to take place between January and February 2018.

2.2 Policy context

The LPA document will form the second part of the Local Plan for Lichfield District. The first part, the Local Plan Strategy, was adopted in February 2015 and provides the strategic context for planning decisions within the District. The Local Plan Strategy (LPS) sets the spatial strategy for the District which is to provide a minimum of 10,030 dwellings between 2008 and 2029, it does this through the allocation of a number of strategic sites, known as Strategic Development Allocations (SDAs) and a Broad Development Location (BDL), which provide for approximately 5,850 dwellings. Alongside developments completed within the plan period the remaining homes are to be allocated through the LPA.

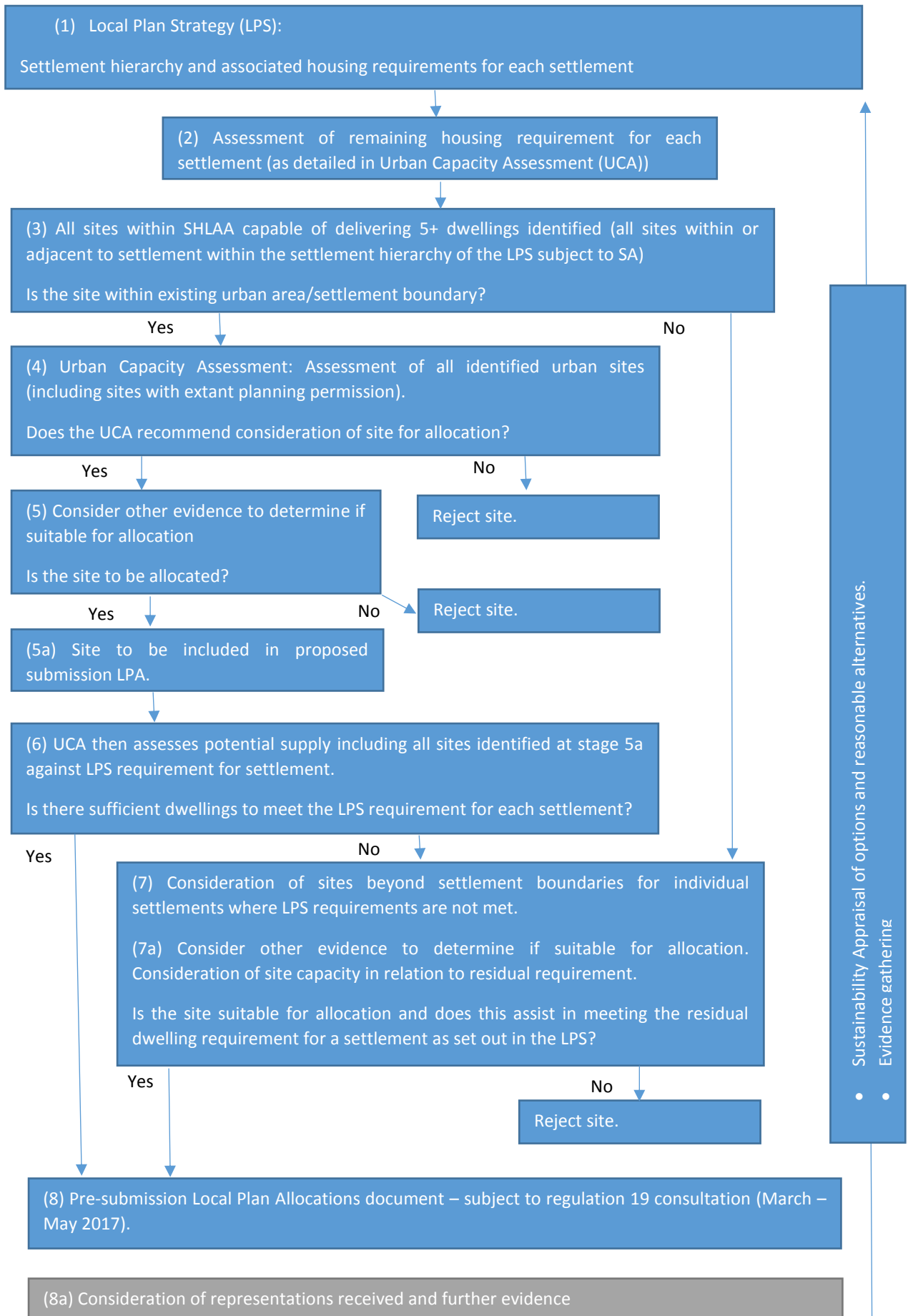
Given that the LPA document is the second part of the Local Plan the site selection process has been framed by the overarching spatial strategy agreed through the Local Plan Strategy. That Strategy focuses development to the District's most sustainable settlements, Lichfield City, Burntwood and the identified Key Rural Settlements. In addition to these settlements the LPS also includes growth to assist neighbouring authorities (Cannock and Tamworth).

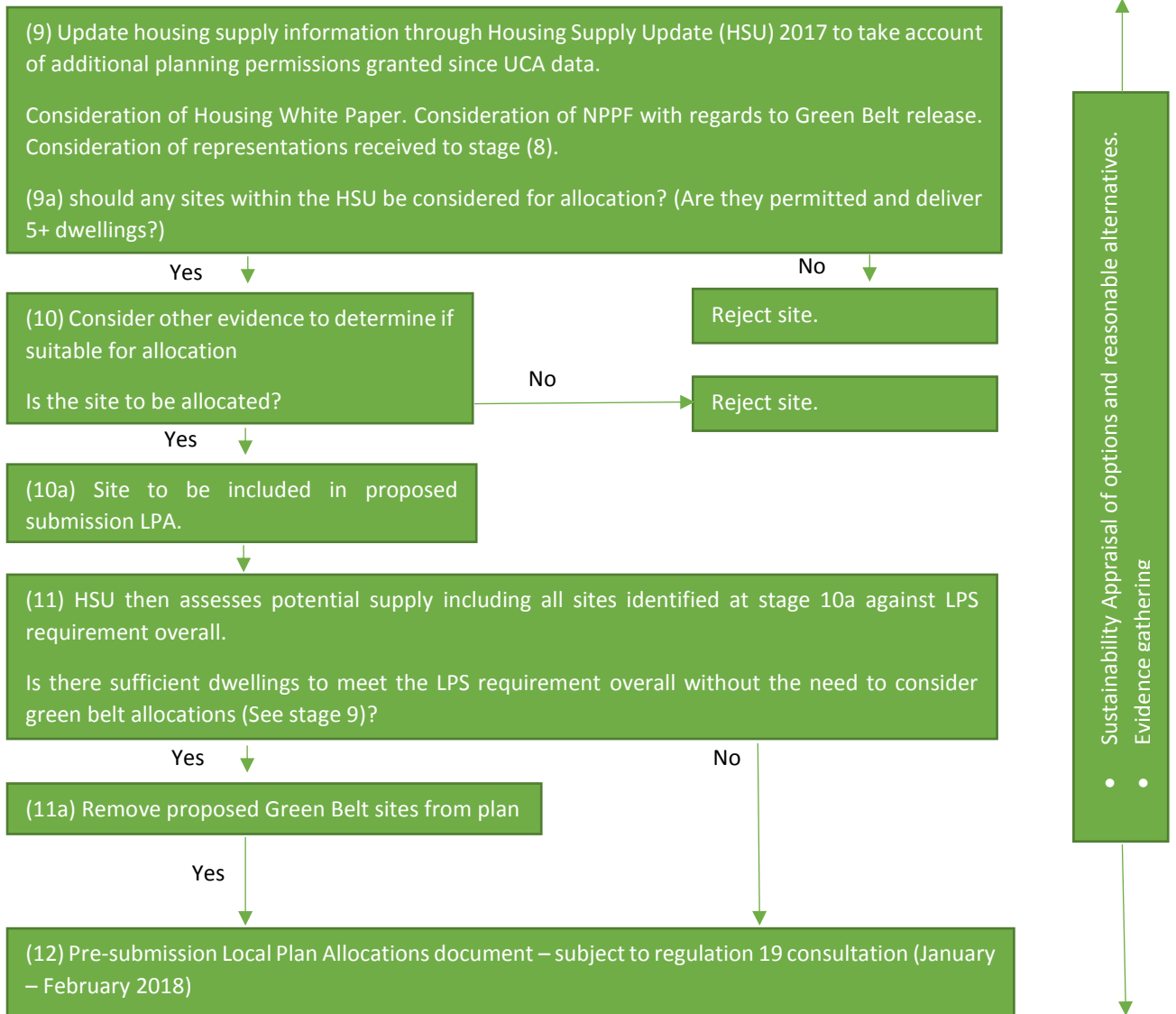
3.0 Site selection process

3.1 Methodology

Figure 1 provides a flow chart illustrating the site selection process for the LPA document. Elements of the process are numbered with further written explanation provided in section 3.2 of this paper. Figure 1 is for illustrative purposes only, it must be read in conjunction with section 3.2 of this document. It should be noted that the site selection process is an iterative process which is conducted alongside evidence base gathering and the sustainability appraisal.

Figure 1: Site selection flow chat





3.2 Site selection process stages

The following paragraphs provide detail to the individual stages outlined within figure 1.

Stage (1) Local Plan Strategy:

The Local Plan Strategy set the spatial strategy for the District including providing approximate dwelling requirements for Lichfield City, Burntwood, Fradley and each of the remaining Key Rural Settlements (Alrewas, Armitage with Handsacre, Fazeley, Mile Oak & Bonehill, Shenstone and Whittington) along with a figure of approximately 500 dwellings across the remaining rural areas. The site selection process uses the spatial strategy and settlement requirements as a starting point.

Stage (2) Assessment of remaining housing requirement:

The Urban Capacity Assessment (UCA) undertook an analysis of the committed and delivered developments within each settlement within the settlement hierarchy of the LPS and assesses this against the dwelling requirements as set out within the LPS. This process totalled the completions, sites with planning permission (including those under construction), sites allocated through the LPS and 'made' neighbourhood plans for each individual settlement and compared this to the requirement set out within the LPS. This analysis demonstrated that additional sites were required to meet the overall housing requirement of the plan and specifically in the following settlements:

- Lichfield City;
- Burntwood;
- East of Rugeley;
- Alrewas;
- Fazeley, Mile Oak & Bonehill;
- Shenstone; and
- Whittington.

Stage (3) Identification of sites (SHLAA):

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was used to identify all potential sites which were within or adjacent to the adopted village settlement boundaries or existing urban areas of the District. A threshold was applied of sites which were capable of delivering of 5 or more dwellings, this threshold is explained within the UCA.

This provides a schedule of all known sites which could be considered to be broadly in conformity with the spatial strategy of the LPS. The LPS focuses development on existing urban areas through Core Policies 1 and 6. Therefore of the schedule of potential sites all potential urban capacity sites were identified to be assessed through the UCA. These sites are then progressed to stage (4). Those sites not within the urban area are then considered at stage (7) where it be demonstrated that the dwelling requirements of the LPS are not met through stages (4), (5) and (6).

Stage (4) Urban Capacity Assessment:

Urban Capacity Assessment is progressed which considers all identified potential urban capacity sites, including sites with planning permission (including those under construction). The detailed methodology of this assessment is set out within the UCA document. The UCA also includes a detailed assessment of the supply of sites with urban areas which benefit from planning permission (including sites which are under construction). Each site is assessed in terms of its suitability, achievability and availability using the SHLAA and information collected through the UCA. The UCA then concludes whether sites should be included within the identified urban capacity which it is then concluded that should be considered for potential allocation. A number of sites including all sites in excess of five dwellings with planning permission (including those under construction) are recommended to be considered for allocation.

Where a site is assessed and it is concluded that the site should not be considered for allocation then these are rejected at this stage.

Stage (5) Consideration of other evidence:

Where sites have passed through stage (4) consideration of a particular site with regards to all evidence supporting the Local Plan. This evidence includes, but is not exclusive too, the following:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA);
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) & Employment Land Capacity Assessment (ELCA);
- Open Space Assessment;
- Green Belt Review;
- Rural Settlement Sustainability Study (RSSS); and
- 'Made' neighbourhood plans.

A planning judgement is required as to whether a specific site is appropriate for allocation, having regard to the evidence base as described above and national policy and guidance. Where it is considered that a site is suitable for allocation these are selected (as shown at stage 5a of Figure 1). Such sites will be included within the pre-submission draft Local Plan Allocations document.

Stage (6) Assessment of housing requirement:

The UCA provides an assessment of the residual housing requirement for each settlement once potential urban capacity sites have been assessed and where these have been concluded to be appropriate for allocation. An assessment of whether sufficient sites have been identified to meet the overall housing requirement for the District and the individual settlement requirements is then carried out and detailed within section 5 of the UCA. This concludes that there are still insufficient sites and as such sites beyond the existing settlement boundaries and urban areas will need to be considered for allocation.

Stage (7) Consideration of sites beyond settlement boundary:

Sites beyond existing settlement boundaries/urban areas as identified at stage (3) are considered in the context of the Local Plan evidence base and the sustainability appraisal (as is described at stage (5)). Taken into account at this stage alongside the evidence is the residual housing requirement for each settlement and a planning judgement is made in terms of the site/or combination of sites which could best meet this residual requirement. Sites which would deliver significantly in excess of the requirement are rejected. As with stages (5) and (5a) planning judgment is made in terms of which sites are suitable for allocation. Such sites will be included within the pre-submission draft Local Plan Allocations document.

Stage (8) Pre-submission consultation (Regulation 19):

Consultation on the draft Local Plan Allocations document is undertaken for a six week period between March and May 2017. Following the close of the consultation the District Council considers

all representations received. The District Council resolved to re-consider its housing supply position following the consultation. Since the preparation of the pre-submission document there were two significant factors which altered the planning landscape within Lichfield District. The first was the receipt of three appeal decisions from the Secretary of State, one of these decisions was for 750 dwellings at Land at Watery Lane which was approved despite not being in conformity with the Local Plan Strategy. The second factor relates to the Governments consultation on the Housing White Paper which seeks to clarify the government's policy position in relation to the Green Belt.

Stage (9) Housing supply update:

The District Council produced the Housing Supply Update 2017 document which updates the data contained within the UCA. This document assessed the committed supply at 1st October 2017. The Housing Supply Update provides the housing position for each settlement within the settlement hierarchy and a District wide position taking account of the following:

- Completions data 2008-2017;
- Net committed supply at 31st March 2017 (as detailed within the SHLAA and Five Year Housing Land Supply Paper);
- Strategic Development Allocations (as identified within the adopted LPS);
- Net additional committed supply from 1st April 2017 to 30th September 2017); and
- Additional identified capacity – sites identified in the pre-submission LPA (see stage 8) which are not within the Green Belt.

Where any additional sites identified were in excess of five dwellings then these are progressed to the next stage. Sites below this threshold are rejected at this stage.

Stage (10) Consideration of other evidence:

Where sites have progressed through stage (9) then consideration to site is given having regard to all evidence supporting the Local Plan as is outlined at stage (5). A planning judgement is ultimately required as to whether a specific site is appropriate for allocation, having regard to the evidence base as described above and national policy and guidance. Where it is considered that a site is suitable for allocation these are selected (as shown at stage 10a of Figure 1). Such sites will be included within the pre-submission draft Local Plan Allocations document.

Stage (11) Consideration of whether identified supply meets the overall housing requirement:

An assessment of all identified sites including those identified through stage (10a) is undertaken and included within the Housing Supply Update. This assessment demonstrated that through the supply identified above there was sufficient dwellings to meet the overall housing requirement of 10,030 dwellings as set out within the LPS. As such previously proposed sites in the Green Belt are removed from the draft Local Plan Allocations document as there is considered to be sufficient sites to meet the LPS requirement without having to identify sites currently within the Green Belt.

Stage (12) Pre-submission consultation (Regulation 19):

Consultation on a revised draft Local Plan Allocations document will take place for a six week period in early 2018 subject to member approval.