

Summary of Background Studies

1. Update to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Consultants GVA Grimley were instructed by the Council in September 2010 to undertake an update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The purpose of the SHLAA is to identify and assess potential sites for housing development. This process helps to inform the aggregate housing capacity of the City and to indicate when an appropriate supply of housing land/sites are likely to be developed over a 5, 10 and 15 year timeframe. The information will inform the process of determining local housing targets for the provision of new housing in the city.

A total of 275 sites were fully assessed for their suitability, availability and achievability. Sites were assessed against the following criteria:

- Policy Alignment;
- Physical Constraints;
- Market Attractiveness;
- Ownership;
- Current Use;
- Accessibility and
- Sustainability.

The study identifies a total potential capacity for up to 7,425 dwellings over a fifteen period 2010 – 2025. This equates to an annual average of 495 dwellings per annum although the study indicates that delivery is likely to be far lower in the first five year period reflecting the ongoing impacts of economic recession. The study also anticipates that overall supply will be further boosted by development on small 'windfall' sites.

In terms of the outstanding South East Plan targets for housing in the city (which stands at 8,935 dwellings for the remaining plan period) the identified SHLAA capacity falls approximately 1500 dwellings short despite a comprehensive review of sites and further 'call for sites' exercise with local developers and landowners.

The final report notes that the housing potential identified in the study is a 'snapshot' position based on current assumptions regarding deliverability and the methodology set out in the report. The assessment should be viewed as a starting point only in identifying a rolling five year supply of suitable housing sites and part of the process to help derive a locally driven housing target should the council wish to do so.

2. Open Space Study Update

Consultants JPC Strategic Planning & Leisure Ltd were instructed by the Council in September 2010 to undertake an open space study to progress the findings of the 2008 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study. The need for this update study has been prompted by :

- recent appeal decisions that related to open space where a citywide blanket approach to resisting the loss of open space, in accordance with the adopted Local Plan policy QD20, was not well received by the Planning Inspectorate; and,
- advice from the Planning Inspector at the exploratory meeting into the Core Strategy on 20 May who indicated further evidence was required to support the council's approach to land supply for new housing.

The purpose of this study is to provide further analysis of the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study in the light of emerging practice and to develop a scoring system to assess the offer of all the city's open space and then to apply the scoring system to non Brighton & Hove City Council open spaces.

The study endorses the local open space standards as recommended in the 2008 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study after considering their practicality and appropriateness, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility/distance thresholds. It provides open space data at ward and sub area levels. The findings of the scoring system applied to non Brighton & Hove City Council open space were fed into the update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This was to ensure that should the loss of open space be required that this happens within a planned strategic approach which reflects the city's open offer rather than on an ad hoc basis.