

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **SITE ASSESSMENT FORM**

If you are considering allocating sites for development you need to carry out a site identification and assessment exercise. You need to be able to justify why the site you have selected is appropriate and also be able to demonstrate that you have considered alternative options.

You can use this form to record information about sites and start to assess which might be appropriate for the type of development you wish to promote. Use a separate form for each site. Complete the form as far as possible, using local knowledge supplemented by information from other sources. Potential information sources are listed in schedule 1 at the back of the form, together with a glossary of terms.

The first section of the form is concerned with the general site location, as well as existing and previous uses. The later sections focus on identifying whether a site is:

- **Available** – Is the landowner willing to bring the site forward for development?
- **Suitable** – Is the site free of significant constraints to development?
- **Deliverable** – Would development lead to a requirement for additional infrastructure? Would development of the site be financially viable?

This should enable you to identify those sites which are potentially more appropriate for development and should be investigated in further detail. It should also help to identify those sites which are not suitable (or less suitable) and which can be discounted. It is important to keep clear records detailing the reasons for discounting sites as part of the assessment process.

Following the initial assessment of sites, for those sites that you wish to explore in further detail, additional information is likely to be required. For example:

- a view from traffic engineers about whether the site can be safely accessed from the highway,
- information from infrastructure providers such as utility companies, and
- further information about the potential viability of development, etc.

**Where sites included in your study have previously been included in the Cheshire West and Chester Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), that document will provide a useful starting point. Sites included in the HELAA have already been through an initial assessment to explore their development potential for housing and employment uses. The HELAA is available via the Council's website (see attached schedule for details).**

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN			
SITE ASSESSMENT FORM			
Completed by:		Date:	

1. GENERAL LOCATION AND USE				
Site reference				
Site Name and Address				
Site Size (hectares)				
Site Description				
Surrounding Land Uses				
<b>Is the site:</b> (select one option – you can refer to the definitions in the glossary for help with this)	Greenfield <input type="checkbox"/>	Brownfield <input type="checkbox"/>	Mixture <input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Existing Use</b> (eg agricultural land, vacant land, mixed use, open space).  Are there existing buildings which could be converted or would need to be demolished?				

1. GENERAL LOCATION AND USE	
If the land is currently vacant, what was the last known use?	
Are you aware of any previous planning permissions (or refusals) affecting the site?  Are there any current planning applications?	

2. AVAILABILITY	
Is the land owner willing for their site to come forward for development?	
If yes, do you have any written evidence to support this?	
Are there any factors which might prevent or delay development, eg tenancies, leases, (if known)?	
Overall conclusions on availability	

3. SUITABILITY			
Where is the site located in relation to the built up area of the nearest town or village?	Within the settlement <input type="checkbox"/>	On the edge <input type="checkbox"/>	Outside <input type="checkbox"/>
Would development of the site relate well to the existing built up area?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure <input type="checkbox"/>

3. SUITABILITY	
<p><b>How is the site currently accessed?</b></p> <p><b>Is the site easily accessible from the highway?</b></p> <p><b>Is there access for pedestrians?</b></p> <p>(further information from Council highways officers may be required)</p>	
<p><b>How close is the site to local services such as shops, school, health centre?</b></p> <p>(in metres)</p>	
<p><b>Is the site within easy walking distance of a bus stop?</b></p> <p>(ideally within approx 800m)</p>	

**There may be planning designations which affect the site and its potential for development. Refer to the relevant Local Plan for details.**

3a. SUITABILITY - PLANNING POLICY			
Is the site affected by any of the following?	Yes	No	Comments
<p><b>Is the site in the Green Belt?</b></p> <p>Small scale affordable housing may be appropriate in green belt areas. Other development would require 'exceptional circumstances' to be demonstrated which is difficult. Redevelopment of previously developed land may be acceptable.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Is the site designated in the Local Plan as Greenspace?</b></p> <p>(See Local Plan proposals map, policy SOC 6)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Is it within a Conservation Area?</b></p> <p>(this would not necessarily preclude development but would have implications for design, materials, cost)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3a. SUITABILITY - PLANNING POLICY			
Are there any landscape designations affecting the site? (such as Area of County Value)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any other Local Plan designations affecting the site or close by?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you already have a made neighbourhood plan, are there any designations in the neighbourhood plan which affect the site? (eg Local Greenspace)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Other constraints may affect the potential of the site for development. Some sources of information about these constraints can be found in the attached schedule.

For sites which are shortlisted as being potentially suitable for development, it may well be necessary to obtain further information from other sources (such as Council records which are not available online).

3b. SUITABILITY - OTHER SITE CONSTRAINTS				
Is the site affected by any of the following?	Yes	No	More information required	Comments
Flood risk?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contamination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3b. SUITABILITY - OTHER SITE CONSTRAINTS				
Is the site affected by any of the following?	Yes	No	More information required	Comments
Topography – is there steep ground that may affect how the site could be developed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any power lines, pipelines or other infrastructure crossing or affecting the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Could development result in conflict with surrounding uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any mature trees (which may be the subject of Tree Preservation Orders) which would need to be retained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any listed buildings on or close to the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any other known heritage features, such as archaeological remains?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the site have ecological value (known or potential)? Could the site to be home to protected species such as bats, great crested newts, badgers etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3b. SUITABILITY - OTHER SITE CONSTRAINTS	
Are you aware of any other factors which could affect development?	
Overall conclusions on suitability	

For sites that have been identified in sections 1-3 as being potentially available and suitable for development, the next stage is to consider whether development can realistically be achieved, taking account of potential costs, returns and any major infrastructure requirements.

This part of the form includes some of the issues to start thinking about. There may be some information already available to help start to complete this section, but it is likely that further information will be required from relevant experts and service providers (eg utility companies, highways engineers, education providers).

4. DELIVERABILITY	
<p><b>Estimate the developable area of the site (in hectares).</b></p> <p>Work out the overall site size. Then if there are any parts of the site which could not be developed, eg areas of steep ground, mature trees which would need to be retained etc, take these areas off. This will leave the developable area. You can use the measuring tool on Google Maps to work out distance and area.</p>	<input type="text"/>
<p><b>If you are looking at allocating land for residential development, estimate how many houses could be accommodated on the developable area of the site.</b></p> <p>There may be specific policies relating to density in the area, or you may wish to look at density in the surrounding area to assess what would be appropriate on the site. Alternatively, as a guide you can use an estimated density of 30 dwellings per hectare.</p>	<input type="text"/>



#### 4. DELIVERABILITY

##### Infrastructure Requirements:

Is there capacity within existing infrastructure to support new development, or would development of the site require additional infrastructure to be provided? You will probably need to contact utility companies and the Council's highways department to provide this information.

**Highways?**

**Water supply?**

**Sewerage?**

**Is there sufficient capacity at local schools or would additional places be required?**

##### Development Costs

Taking account of the issues you have identified above, are there likely to be any major financial costs associated with preparing the site for development?

**Potential timescale for development on the site**

Think about the issues identified above when estimating when development could happen on site.

**0-5 years**

☐

**6-10 years**

☐

**11-15 years**

☐

## Schedule of Information Sources

Document or information source	Where to find it	Provides information about...
Local Plan  Interactive Local Plan map	Council offices, libraries, <a href="http://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan">http://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan</a>  <a href="http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/cwac/localplan/">http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/cwac/localplan/</a>	Planning policies and designations
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)	<a href="http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/land/helaa2017?tab=files">http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/land/helaa2017?tab=files</a>	Assessments of sites for development potential
EA flood maps  CwaC Strategic and Area flood risk assessments	<a href="https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/">https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/</a>  <a href="http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/sfra2016">http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/sfra2016</a>	Flood risk
CWaC interactive mapping	<a href="http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/CWAC/interactive_mapping/">http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/CWAC/interactive_mapping/</a>	Archaeology, listed buildings, conservation areas, local services
Defra MAGIC	<a href="https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx">https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx</a>	Environmental information, National and international nature conservation designations
CWaC planning applications search	<a href="http://pa.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/online-applications/">http://pa.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/online-applications/</a>	Previous and current planning applications

## Glossary of terms

### 1. Greenfield land

Land on which no development has previously taken place.

### 2. Brownfield land (also known as 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.

### 3. Green Belt land

An area of land defined in a Local Plan, which is largely rural in character, adjacent to the main urban area and which is protected from development by permanent and severe restrictions on building.

Green Belt is a specific planning policy. Its aim is to restrict the sprawl of urban areas, prevent neighbouring towns merging together, and preserve the individual character of settlements. Development in Green Belt areas is highly restricted, although these areas may provide suitable locations for outdoor recreational development. In rural areas, small developments of affordable housing may also be acceptable.

**Areas of Green Belt land are defined in Local Plans. Local Plans do not define whether land is brownfield or greenfield.** This must be decided on a case by case basis depending on the characteristics of the site.

**Green Belt land can be either greenfield or brownfield.** Although most land in Green Belt areas will be undeveloped and therefore greenfield, there will also be areas of brownfield land. These could include villages which are included in the Green Belt, as well as rural industrial or business, former institutions such as old hospitals, transport depots, infrastructure like wastewater treatment facilities etc.

### 4. Affordable Housing

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). For a full definition please see the glossary in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#).