

Cheshire East Local Plan

Site Allocations and Development Policies Document

Site Selection Methodology Report

[ED 07]

August 2020

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Report is the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document Site Selection Methodology Report (“SSMR”). Its purpose is to set out the Site Selection Methodology (“SSM”) that has been used by Cheshire East Borough Council (“the Council”) to identify the sites for development (including safeguarded land) in the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (“SADPD”).
- 1.2 The SADPD forms the second part of the Local Plan for Cheshire East, and it will provide detailed policies and allocate sites for future development over the Plan period (2010 to 2030). An initial consultation on the issues to be addressed through the SADPD took place between 27 February and 10 April 2017, alongside a separate ‘call for sites’ exercise to inform the allocation of development sites, and a Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. A further consultation took place between 11 September and 22 October 2019 on the First Draft SADPD. Consultation on the initial Publication Draft SADPD took place between 19 August and 30 September 2019. An extensive series of background evidence and reports was produced to support both the First Draft SADPD and the initial Publication draft SADPD, which included the Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment and the Site Selection Methodology Reports ([FD 07] and [PUB 07] respectively).
- 1.3 The Local Plan will consist of two other parts; the first being the Local Plan Strategy (“LPS”), which was adopted at Council on 27 July 2017; the LPS is the strategic part of the Local Plan and sets out planning policies and allocates strategic scale sites for development up to 2030. Its vision, objectives and strategic policies are overarching and form the basis of the Local Plan. The third part of the Local Plan is the Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document, which is in the process of being produced. The Crewe Hub Area Action Plan, once adopted, will form part of the Local Plan and is a bespoke planning document that will set out a planning framework for the works at Crewe Railway Station and its environs.
- 1.4 This SSMR explains the way in which sites have been selected for inclusion in the SADPD to achieve the overall development requirements set out in the LPS. ‘The provision of housing and employment land and the approach to spatial distribution’ report [ED 05] explains the approach taken in the SADPD towards housing and employment development. The ‘Local Service Centre safeguarded land distribution report’ [ED 53] considers the approach to be taken to determine the spatial distribution of safeguarded land around the Local Service Centres (“LSCs”).
- 1.5 Individual settlement reports [ED 21] to [ED 44] identify how the SSM has been applied to determine the proposed site allocations included in the Revised Publication Draft SADPD. The SSM and its outcomes have been

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informed by Sustainability Appraisal (“SA”) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (“HRA”) work on an iterative and ongoing basis.

- 1.6 Documents referenced with the ‘ED’ prefix are available to view in the Revised Publication Draft SADPD consultation library.

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2. Site Selection Methodology

- 2.1 The SSM sets out the steps undertaken to determine the sites that should be selected, where necessary to do so, to address the indicative housing and employment figures identified in LPS Policy PG 7 “Spatial Distribution of Development”, along with a sufficient amount of safeguarded land. The majority of land has already been identified in the LPS, with a proportion of the remainder to be allocated or designated in the SADPD and/or Neighbourhood plans.
- 2.2 This SSM is a refined version of that used for the LPS, and closely reflects the approach used previously and accepted by the LPS Inspector. Key differences include:
- a new Stage 1 to establish a pool of sites, encompassing work carried out in Stages 1 and 2 of the LPS version
 - the addition of a decision point (at Stage 3)
 - merging the site assessment and SA/HRA Stages
- 2.3 The site selection process was carried out on a settlement-by-settlement basis. For those LSCs in the Green Belt that require land to be safeguarded, the ‘Local Service Centres Safeguarded Land Distribution Report’ [ED 53] is used as the starting point.

Consideration of Green Belt sites in the Site Selection Methodology

- 2.4 The Green Belt Assessment Update (2015) (“GBAU”) shows what contribution parcels of land make to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt; it does not identify parcels of land for removal from the Green Belt. The SSM includes Green Belt Site Assessments (“GBSA”) to aid decision-making when considering potential sites for development that are located in the Green Belt (see Stage 5 of the SSM).

Stages in the Site Selection Methodology

- 2.5 The SSM is comprised of a series of Stages, set out in Figure 1 and detailed in this SSMR. It has proved necessary in practice to move between Stages on an iterative basis, for example where further evaluation of sites at Stage 6 of the SSM has meant that it has been necessary to return to Stage 5 of the SSM to consider sites for short listing again. Or where there were not enough non-Green Belt sites identified to meet the remaining development requirements of a settlement (Stage 5 of the SSM) it was necessary to return to Stage 4 of the SSM.

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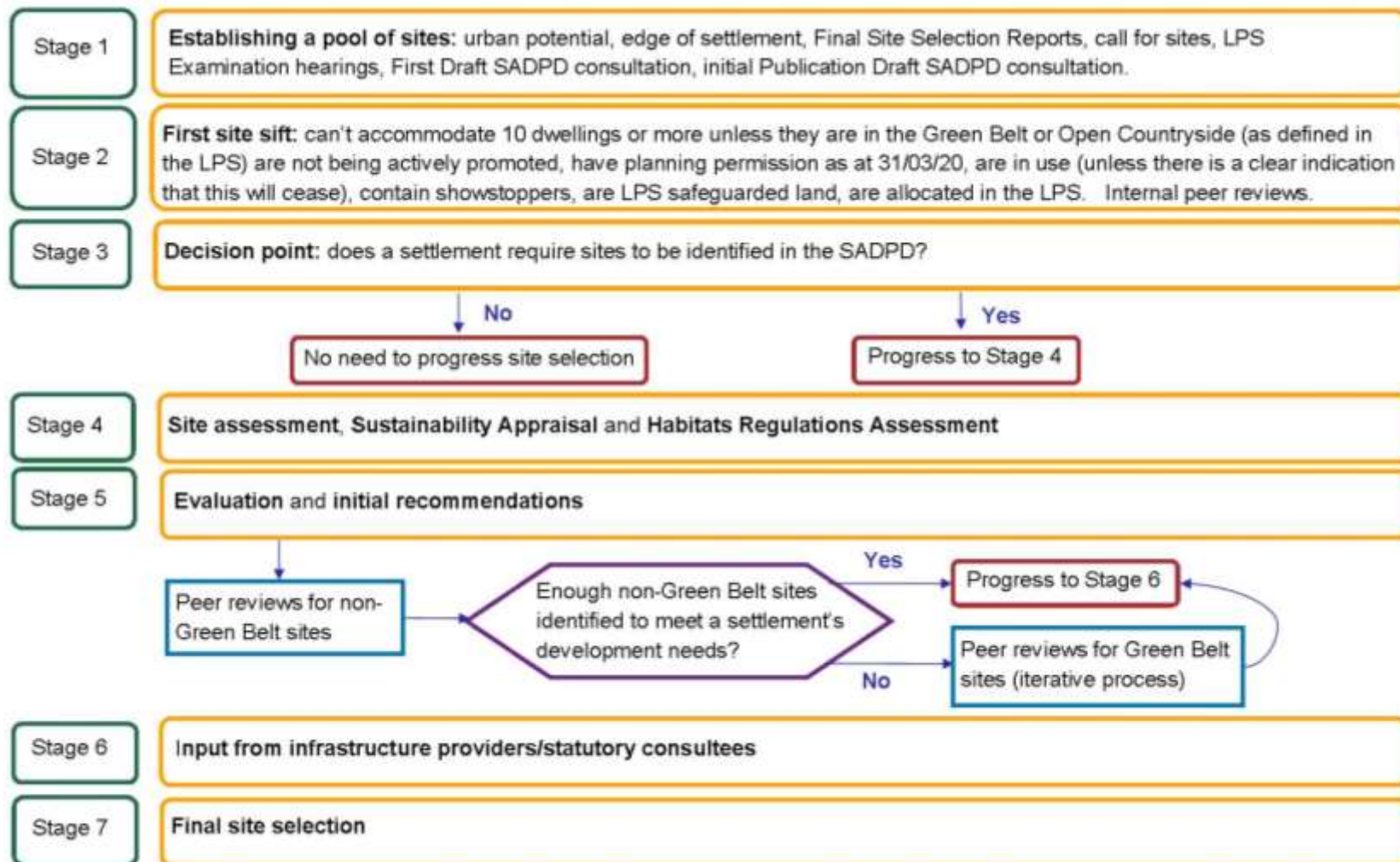


Figure 1: Key stages in the site selection process

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Stage 1: Establishing a pool of sites

- 2.6 This work involved utilising existing sources of information including the results of the Assessment of the Urban Potential of the Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres and Possible Development Sites Adjacent to Those Settlements (August 2015)¹, sites submitted to the Local Plan Strategy Proposed Changes Version that were not considered to be large enough to be a strategic site (as detailed in the Final Site Selection Reports), and sites submitted through the call for sites process, the First Draft SADPD consultation and the initial Publication Draft SADPD consultation. The list of sites that make up Stage 1 can be found in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].
- 2.7 In terms of determining which settlement's site supply a site could contribute towards, a site must be directly adjacent to the existing settlement boundary (or very close - generally those separated only by a road, canal, railway line or such like) or the site must be adjacent to a site with planning permission, which itself directly adjoins the settlement boundary (or is similarly very close). This is considered in more detail in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44] and involves an element of planning judgement.

Stage 2: First site sift

- 2.8 The aim of this Stage was to produce a shortlist of sites for further consideration in the site selection process. This entailed taking the long list of sites from Stage 1 of the SSM and sifting out any that:
- can't accommodate 10 dwellings or more, unless they are in the Green Belt or Open Countryside (as defined in the LPS) and are not currently compliant with those policies²
 - are not being actively promoted
 - have planning permission as at 31/3/20
 - are in use (unless there is clear indication that this will cease)
 - contain showstoppers (a Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, Ramsar, Site of Special Scientific Interest, functional floodplain (flood zone 3b), or historic battlefield)
 - are LPS Safeguarded Land
 - are an allocated site in the LPS³

¹ Sites with potential for development during the plan period, and representation sites to be considered at Site Allocation stage.

² If the site is likely to be compliant with Green Belt/Open Countryside policy (for example limited infilling in villages) then it should be screened out to avoid double counting with the small sites windfall allowance of nine dwellings or fewer in the LPS (¶E.7).

- 2.9 The reasons as to why any sites were sifted out were provided, which included an element of planning judgement in some instances, and the results subjected to an internal peer review. The list of sites, including the reasons for sifting out can be found in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].
- 2.10 The results of Stage 2 of the SSM were also considered as part of the work on the distribution of safeguarded land to the LSCs, the findings of which are set out in the 'LSC safeguarded land distribution report' [ED 53].

Stage 3: Decision point

- 2.11 This Stage took into account the most up-to-date employment and housing land supply information as at 31/03/20, the LPS spatial distribution of development, and the work produced on the approach to spatial distribution and provision of housing and employment land [ED 05], as well as safeguarded land [ED 53], to determine whether or not a settlement required sites to be identified in the SADPD.
- 2.12 If a settlement did not require employment and/or housing sites, or safeguarded land to be identified in the SADPD there was no need to progress the site selection work any further. Further information can be found in 'The provision of housing and employment land and the approach to spatial distribution' report [ED 05], as well as the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].
- 2.13 In terms of the Other Settlements and Rural Areas ("OSRA") it was considered that the remaining housing land to be identified could be met by existing completions and commitments, further windfall sites and allocations through Neighbourhood Development Plans; therefore no formal allocations at the OSRA tier were necessary in the SADPD. The Council's approach to OSRA is set out in the OSRA Report [ED 46].

Stage 4: Site assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.14 All sites remaining from the site sift (Stage 2 of the SSM) were assessed in a consistent way for those settlements where there was a residual amount remaining against the figure for employment and/or housing land, or were there was a requirement for safeguarded land (Stage 3 of the SSM):
- site visits to all non-Green Belt sites, red/amber/green traffic light assessments, and site commentary

³ Sites in Strategic Location LPS 1 Central Crewe, and Strategic Location LPS 12 Central Macclesfield were not sifted out if they were being promoted for employment use.

- site visits and GBSAs for those sites located in the Green Belt, if Green Belt sites are required (see Stage 5 of the SSM)
- where required, red/amber/green traffic light assessments and site commentary for Green Belt sites, with sites previously-developed and/or are well-served by public transport considered first, followed by those sites that had the lowest contribution to Green Belt purposes identified in the GBSAs.

2.15 The information resources used are listed in Appendix 1 of this SSMR.

Red/amber/green traffic light assessment and site commentary

2.16 Sites were assessed against a detailed series of site assessment criteria using a traffic light system, whereby all of the criteria were given a red, amber or green rating based on set factors. The traffic light system considered site specific criteria based on two broad areas, taken from the NPPF - whether the site was achievable, and whether it was suitable. In terms of availability, all the sites that came through the site sift (Stage 2 of the SSM) were considered to be available and therefore it was not considered necessary to have a traffic light criterion for this.

- achievability – this was based on whether or not development of the site was considered to be economically viable
- suitability – this was based on criteria relating to site characteristics

2.17 Alongside the traffic lights, a commentary was used to pick up significant factors and to evidence the traffic light choices.

2.18 The detailed criteria for the assessments reflected the requirements of national guidance to make sure that all assessments were carried out in a consistent and objective way.

2.19 The detailed criteria for the assessment have not been pre-weighted. The traffic light assessment provides a way of presenting information about the characteristics, constraints, capacities and circumstances of sites in a consistent way that enables this, along with other factors, to form part of the overall site selection process, and ultimately the recommendation of whether or not a site should be included in the SADPD.

2.20 The detailed traffic light criteria (summarised in Table 1), includes a commentary that illustrates how the criteria relates to national guidance and Policies in the LPS (set out in Appendix 2 of this SSMR); blank traffic light site assessment forms for Green Belt and non-Green Belt sites can be found in Appendices 3 and 4 respectively. The completed traffic light forms are set out in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].

2.21 It should be noted that, at planning application stage, more detailed site assessment work will take place; the evidence gathering in the SSM is to inform the site selection process and ultimately the Policy wording for those

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sites recommended for inclusion in the SADPD, which is carried out as part of Stage 7 of the SSM.

	Criteria
Is the site achievable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economically viable?
Is the site suitable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Landscape impact? ● Settlement character and urban form impact? ● Strategic Green Gap? ● Compatible neighbouring uses? ● Highways access? ● Highways impact? ● Heritage assets impact? ● Flooding/drainage issues? ● Ecology impact? ● Tree Preservation Orders on or immediately adjacent? ● In an Air Quality Management Area? ● In/adjacent to an area of mineral interest? ● Accessibility? ● Public transport frequency? ● Brownfield/greenfield? ● Agricultural land? ● Contamination issues? ● Employment land loss? ● Distance to existing employment areas?

Table 1: Summary of traffic light criteria

Green Belt Site Assessments

2.22 For those settlements with a residual development figure and where sites were assessed (see Stage 5 of the SSM), separate GBSAs were produced on a standard form to determine the contribution those sites made to the purposes of the Green Belt defined in the NPPF. The form included details on:

- potential area of Green Belt for release
- Green Belt assessment for potential area of release
- resulting Green Belt boundary
- assessment of surrounding Green Belt
- exceptional circumstances

2.23 The detailed GBSA methodology can be found in Appendix 6 of the LPS Site Selection Methodology (February 2016).

2.24 The completed GBSAs can be found in the individual Settlement Reports. However, it should be noted that the GBSAs do not recommend which sites are to be released from the Green Belt for development; they are one of the

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many factors used in recommending which Green Belt sites should be released for development.

Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.25 The shortlisted sites produced as a result of Stage 2 of the SSM, and carried through to Stage 4 of the SSM, were seen as reasonable alternatives⁸ that needed to be subjected to SA and HRA. In the case of Green Belt sites, they became reasonable alternatives once it was recognised through the SSM process that they would require a traffic light form to be completed (based on the contribution of the site to Green Belt purposes and the residual requirement of the settlement, and not when a GBSA was carried out – see Stage 5 for further information).

2.26 The results of the traffic light assessments were used to carry out the SA. SA and HRA were further carried out on any changes resulting from the public consultation (Stage 7 of the SSM). A separate Revised Publication Draft SADPD SA Report [ED 03] and a Revised Publication Draft SADPD HRA [ED 04] are published for public consultation alongside the Revised Publication Draft SADPD.

Stage 5: Evaluation and initial recommendations

2.27 Stage 5 of the SSM contains a series of sub-Stages (i to iv), as outlined below.

i) Evaluation of the traffic light assessments for the non-Green Belt sites, and internal peer reviews

2.28 This sub-stage also includes the use of the sequential test with regards to flood risk, if required. The peer reviews were an internal Cheshire East member of staff process, carried out for all the sites assessed. They made sure that the approach taken was consistent and explored if additional information about a site was needed - from a site promoter, for example. This information was fed into the site evaluation process, which may have resulted in an updating of the traffic light assessments carried out in Stage 4 of the SSM. It may also have been necessary to consider whether the boundaries of sites could be reviewed, to potentially enable the release of a smaller part of a larger site to meet the remaining development requirements of a settlement. This involved elements of professional planning judgement and may have required further information gathering work to be carried out on smaller site areas, feeding back into Stage 4 of the SSM, to make sure that sufficient information has been gathered.

⁸ It is up to the Council to determine what is considered to be a reasonable alternative.

ii) If there are sufficient suitable non-Green Belt sites to meet the development figure in a settlement, work progresses to Stage 6

2.29 In this sub-Stage a decision point was reached; if enough suitable non-Green Belt sites were identified to meet the indicative remaining development requirements for a settlement (see 'The provision of housing and employment land and the approach to spatial distribution' report [ED 05], as well as the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44]), then initial recommendations were made on those non-Green Belt sites considered most suitable at this stage for inclusion in the SADPD. Work then progressed to Stage 6 of the SSM.

iii) If there are insufficient non-Green Belt sites then an iterative approach was taken to look at Green Belt sites, with a return to Stage 4

2.30 If there were not enough non-Green Belt sites identified to achieve the remaining indicative development figure for a settlement, then an iterative approach was taken to look at Green Belt sites as 'top up', with those sites that have been previously-developed and/or are well-served by public transport considered first, followed by those sites that had the lowest contribution to Green Belt purposes identified in the GBSA.

2.31 This iterative approach to the assessment of Green Belt sites is set out below, with only those sites assessed through the traffic light forms considered to be reasonable alternatives:⁹

- assess sites that have been previously-developed and/or are well-served by public transport
- assess Green Belt sites that make 'no contribution' in the GBSA
- review Green Belt parcels that make 'no contribution' to Green Belt purposes in the GBAU to determine whether any further potential sites could be found in those parcels
- assess Green Belt sites that make a 'contribution' in the GBSA
- review Green Belt parcels that make a 'contribution' to Green Belt purposes in the GBAU to determine whether any further potential sites could be found in those parcels
- assess Green Belt sites that make a 'significant contribution' in the GBSA
- review Green Belt parcels that make a 'significant contribution' to Green Belt purposes in the GBAU to determine whether any further potential sites could be found in those parcels

2.32 Green Belt sites that make a 'major contribution' to Green Belt purposes make the highest contribution possible, and their removal would severely undermine

⁹ It is up to the Council to determine what is considered to be a reasonable alternative.

the purposes. It is also noted that residual indicative development requirements for LSCs are relatively low. Taking these considerations into account it was decided to not assess sites that make a 'major contribution' to Green Belt purposes unless the site was previously-developed and/or was well-served by public transport, in line with national guidance.

- 2.33 This iterative process made sure that the SSM prioritised land within settlement boundaries before considering land that performs the lowest function in Green Belt terms for release.
- 2.34 It is important to note that when considering exceptional circumstances relating to the potential release of land from the Green Belt, a stronger exceptional circumstances case will be required where sites that are considered for release make a 'significant' contribution.

Safeguarded land

- 2.35 The same process in Stage 5 of the SSM was also followed when considering land to be released from the Green Belt for safeguarding.
- 2.36 All sites were considered on a settlement-by-settlement basis, with further information on the iterative process found in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].

iv) Evaluation of the traffic light assessments for the Green Belt sites, and internal peer reviews

- 2.37 See sub-Stage i). Once the internal peer reviews were completed, initial recommendations were made on those Green Belt sites considered most suitable at this stage for inclusion in the SADPD.

Initial recommendations

- 2.38 As mentioned in sub-stages ii) and iv) initial recommendations were made as to which sites were considered most suitable at this stage for inclusion in the SADPD, using an iterative approach of non-Green Belt, and then Green Belt sites if needed. This process enabled the overall performance of each site, in relation to the information gathered in previous stages, to be considered. As stated in Stage 4 of the SSM, the traffic light criteria were not weighted. The consideration of all of the available evidence enabled potentially competing considerations to be assessed and reconciled. For example, a site that had a low impact in terms of Green Belt may be valuable as open space or for biodiversity. It also enabled individual sites to be placed in the broader context of the Plan as a whole and what it is seeking to achieve. This stage involved the use of professional planning judgement when considering all of the information that was gathered in relation to the sites, and the process of site selection.

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Stage 6: Input from infrastructure providers/statutory consultees

- 2.39 Those sites that were initially recommended to be included in the SADPD (Stage 5 of the SSM) were sent to infrastructure providers and statutory consultees¹⁰ for comment. This meant that a realistic pool of sites to consider for a settlement was provided, enabling the combined impact of the potential development sites to be assessed.
- 2.40 The comments received were then evaluated and summarised, and included in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44].
- 2.41 If the findings from the consultation exercise meant that further information was required relating to a site, such as a Heritage Impact Assessment, this was actioned and a further consultation, where appropriate, carried out to confirm if the additional information had dealt with any concerns raised in the initial consultation. Any additional information gathered at this stage was then also fed back to the traffic light assessments (Stage 4 of the SSM).
- 2.42 If the findings from the consultation exercise meant that issues raised could not be resolved and/or could potentially hinder the development of the site, further consideration of the site was made, and if it was no longer considered to be suitable for inclusion within the LPS, a further assessment of potential sites would take place, by going back to Stage 5 of the SSM. Any 'new' short listed sites would then also be subject to consultation with infrastructure providers/statutory consultees.
- 2.43 The information gathered for the sites recommended for inclusion in the SADPD was used to inform the production of a Policy for each site, to make sure that appropriate mitigation, infrastructure and other site specific development requirements are delivered when the site is developed. It is also important to note that, at planning application stage, more detailed site assessment work will take place, which could result in additional site specific requirements that would be secured by condition on any planning approval. These Policies, and indeed the whole of the Revised Publication Draft SADPD, are subject to SA and HRA where required.

Stage 7: Final site selection

- 2.44 The outcomes of the previous Stages of the SSM and the conclusions of all of the site assessment work, in relation to all of the sites that have been assessed, have been comprehensively consolidated in a full report on a settlement-by-settlement basis (Settlement Report), in order to identify a list of sites for inclusion in the Revised Publication Draft SADPD.

¹⁰ Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England

2.45 Following consultation on the Revised Publication Draft SADPD, the council will review all representations received and consider whether any further changes should be made to the site selection as a result.

Public consultation

2.46 Production of the SADPD is an iterative process, informed throughout by public consultation; it is therefore not considered to be a discrete stage.

2.47 A six week public consultation took place between 5 September and 16 October on the First Draft SADPD [FD 01], which included the sites that were initially recommended for inclusion in that document and their accompanying Policies. Also consulted on were the HRA [FD 04], SA [FD 03], Local Service Centre Spatial Distribution Disaggregation Report (“LSCSDDR”) [FD 05], and the individual Settlement Reports [FD 21] to [FD 44]. The results of this consultation were considered and amendments made to the traffic light forms and the individual Settlement Reports, where necessary, as well as any resulting changes to the site policies, the HRA, and SA.

2.48 Consultation on the initial Publication Draft SADPD took place between 19 August and 30 September 2019, and included sites recommended for inclusion in the SADPD and their accompanying Policies. This was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal report [PUB 03] and a Habitats Regulations Assessment [PUB 04]. Also consulted on were the individual settlement reports [PUB 21] to [PUB 44] and the LSCSDDR [PUB 05]. The results of this consultation were considered and amendments made to the traffic light forms and the individual Settlement Reports, where necessary, as well as any resulting changes to the site policies, the HRA, and SA.

2.49 A high level summary of comments received is contained in the initial Publication Draft SADPD Report of Consultation [ED 56].

2.50 The Revised Publication Draft SADPD will be subject to formal public consultation and will be accompanied by the Revised Publication Draft SADPD SA [ED 03] and Revised Publication Draft SADPD HRA [ED 04], as well as an extensive evidence base.

3. Site Selection Methodology outputs

- 3.1 To enable the documentation of the completion of the various Stages of the SSM, a report is produced for each of the Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres. The reports use the Stage headings of the SSM so that the results of each Stage are clearly set out. This is included as a chapter in the individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44]. Chapter 3 of the individual Settlement Reports outlines the settlements' development needs. This includes the residual indicative figure for housing, employment land, and safeguarded land, where relevant, for each settlement, along with the level of housing completions and commitments, and employment land take-up and supply as at 31 March 2020.
- 3.2 The site selection chapter is therefore structured as follows, with further information available in the Settlement Reports' Appendices:
- Stage 1: Establishing a pool of sites – contains a list of sources for the pool of sites and the number of sites in the pool.
 - Stage 2: First site sift – contains the number of sites remaining after the first site sift.
 - Stage 3: Decision point – determines whether or not a settlement required sites to be identified in the SADPD.
 - Stage 4: Site assessment, SA and HRA – lists the remaining sites after the first site sift that are being considered for possible inclusion in the SADPD. If these sites are considered, or not considered, to conform to the LPS Vision and Strategic Priorities, then this is stated. Includes information on how the sites were assessed, as well as SA and HRA.
 - Stages 5 to 7: Evaluation and initial recommendations; input from infrastructure providers/statutory consultees; and final site selection - contains summaries of the traffic light form assessments, broken down into achievability and suitability:
 - Stage 5: Evaluation and initial recommendation - contains an assessment of the performance of sites and provides a comparison to other sites considered, where relevant. Green Belt considerations are summarised (if appropriate). Considers whether the site should go forward to Stage 6 of the SSM.
 - Stage 6: Input from infrastructure providers/statutory consultees – contains a summary of responses from infrastructure providers and statutory consultees.
 - Stage 7: Final site selection – the traffic light assessment, infrastructure providers/statutory consultee responses and Green Belt considerations are taken into account in providing a recommendation as to whether or not the site should be included as an allocated site in the SADPD. This

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makes sure that all of the available evidence has been considered for each site and will enable the sites to be differentiated, taking into account these overall findings. As stated in Stage 5 of the SSM, this part of the site selection process includes an element of professional planning judgement.

- The sites recommended for inclusion in the SADPD are then listed.
 - The concluding sections of the report show how the indicative development requirements for the settlement concerned can be met.
- 3.3 This forms part of a much larger Settlement Report, which includes retail planning and the consideration of settlement boundaries.
- 3.4 Appendices to the individual Settlement Reports in relation to the SSM are, where applicable:
1. Site selection maps and table
 - A. Stage 1 site maps
 - Local Plan Strategy Final Site Selection Reports (July 2016)
 - Urban Potential Assessment (2015)
 - Edge of Settlement Assessment (2015)
 - Call for sites (2017 First Draft SADPD consultation (2018) and initial Publication Draft SADPD consultation (2019)
 - Local Plan Strategy examination hearings (2016)
 - B. Stage 2 site map
 - C. Stage 1 and Stage 2 sites table
 2. Green Belt Site Assessments
 3. Traffic light forms
 4. Heritage Impact Assessments
 5. Infrastructure providers/statutory consultee responses

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4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The SSM provides a framework for the assessment of sites for inclusion in the SADPD. The SSM formalises the site selection process used in the SADPD.
- 4.2 National planning guidance is clearly followed in the SSM and is appropriately referenced in its various stages.
- 4.3 There are seven Stages that comprise the SSM; these are clearly set out in the methodology in chapter 3 of this SSMR. Each Stage is approached in an iterative way, however, the SSM recognises that, in practice, it may be necessary to return to one or more Stages of the SSM; for example, if circumstances change with the availability of a site or responses from the infrastructure providers/statutory consultee consultation mean that a site is no longer considered to be suitable and so on. This makes sure that all sites are subject to SA and HRA at the appropriate stage, and that the SSM is flexible enough to respond to changes in circumstances and/or the receipt of new evidence.
- 4.4 The individual Settlement Reports [ED 21] to [ED 44] include recommendations for each site regarding its potential inclusion in the SADPD. These Reports clearly show how the remaining indicative figure for each settlement, where necessary, can be met, and provide a list of sites at the end of the site selection chapter of each report that are recommended for inclusion in the SADPD.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Information sources

5.1 This list is not exhaustive and other relevant sources of information will be used if considered appropriate.

- i. Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy
- ii. Saved Local Plan Policies from the relevant Local Plans
- iii. Revised Publication Draft SADPD SA [ED 03]
- iv. Revised Publication Draft SADPD HRA [ED 04]
- v. Assessment of the Urban Potential of the Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres and Possible Development Sites Adjacent to Those Settlements (Cheshire East Council, 2015)
- vi. Base maps
- vii. Cheshire East Council housing completions and commitments as at 31/03/20
- viii. Cheshire East Council employment land take-up, commitments and supply losses as at 31/03/20
GIS maps and aerial images/photographs - this can assist in providing further information including constraints; in particular heritage assets, Tree Preservation Orders, wildlife designations, and flooding.
- ix. Cheshire East Employment Land Review 2012
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/employment_land_review_2012.aspx
- x. Cheshire East Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2013)
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_flood_risk_assmnt/strategic_flood_risk_assmnt.aspx
- xi. Cheshire East Council call for sites (2017)
- xii. Settlement Final Site Selection Reports (Cheshire East Council, 2016)
- xiii. LPS Examination Hearings Homework Item RH B002.26
<http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cs/hs/pcmhomework>
- xiv. Cheshire East Council Open Space Assessments (2012)
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/open_spaces_assessment_2012.aspx
- xv. Supplementary information provided by site promoters

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- xvi. Cheshire East Council Geographical Information Systems – Contaminated land, Cheshire East dataset
- xvii. Heritage Impact Assessments (Hinchliffe Heritage, 2018 and 2019)
- xviii. Green Belt Site Assessments (Cheshire East Council, 2018, 2019 and 2020)
- xix. Information from Cheshire East Council's Assets Team relating to potential sites that could be available for development.

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Appendix 2: Detailed traffic light criteria

Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
1. Economically viable?	What charging zone in the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule does the site fall into? Is there anything site specific that could impact on the site's overall viability?	<p>Green = Broad site viability.</p> <p>Amber = Marginal viability/potentially viable.</p> <p>Red = Not viable and unlikely to become viable.</p>	NPPF ¶167– considering deliverable and developable sites. ¶16, ¶35 – plan deliverability NPPG - Viability.
2. Landscape impact?	What would be the likely impact on the local landscape, including views from and onto the site, and degree of visual prominence? The strength of the outer boundary is also a factor. Are there any sensitive receptors – footpaths, bridleways, landscape designations etc.?	<p>Green = No impact or development could improve the landscape.</p> <p>Amber = There will be an impact, but potential to be mitigated through sensitive layout and design.</p> <p>Red = There will be significant landscape impact that will be difficult to mitigate.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶170 – protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. LPS Policy SE 4 Landscape.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage and landscape
3. Settlement character and urban form impact?	<p>What is the relationship to the existing character and form of the settlement?</p> <p>*Substantially – more than 50% of one side of the development.</p>	<p>Green = Site is wholly in the settlement (infill) or is substantially* enclosed by the settlement on 3 sides.</p> <p>Amber = Site is immediately adjacent to the settlement and substantially* enclosed by development on 2 sides.</p> <p>Red = Site is on the edge of the settlement, only adjoining development on 1 side or not adjoining a settlement.</p>	<p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage and landscape
4. Strategic Green Gap?	Does the site fall in a Strategic Green Gap, as defined in Figure 8.3 Strategic Green Gap in the Local Plan Strategy?	<p>Green = No.</p> <p>Amber = In part.</p> <p>Red = Yes (all or most of the site).</p>	<p>LPS Policy PG 5 Strategic Green Gap.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage and landscape

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
5. Compatible neighbouring uses?	Is the proposed use compatible with neighbouring uses?	<p>Green = Site in/on the edge of an established residential area and proposed for residential use. Or Site in/on the edge of an established industrial area and is proposed for employment uses. Or Site in/on the edge of a mixed use area where no known amenity issues exist that would preclude development.</p> <p>Amber = Site in/on the edge of a mixed use area and/or major transport infrastructure where some form of mitigation will be required to minimise any impact.</p> <p>Red = Site in/on the edge of uses that are not considered compatible e.g. residential on the edge of an industrial area, especially where there are known amenity issues.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶127 – planning policies should promote developments with a high standard of amenity</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability.</p> <p>NPPG - Noise.</p> <p>SA themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and human health • Air
6. Highways access?	<p>Is there a physical point of highway access to the site?</p> <p>Is there a possibility of creating an access into the site?</p>	<p>Green = Existing access into the site.</p> <p>Amber = Access can be created in the site.</p> <p>Red = No apparent means of access/access would be difficult to achieve.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶108 –in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.</p> <p>LPS Policies IN 1 Infrastructure, CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport, CO 2 Enabling Business Growth through Transport Infrastructure, CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
7. Highways impact?	Are there any known highways issues that could impact on the site (e.g. narrow access roads or busy junctions nearby) or the road network? Relevant Highway Studies/models can be referenced.	<p>Green = No known issues.</p> <p>Amber = Known issues that could be mitigated by appropriate measures.</p> <p>Red = Significant concerns that impacts will be difficult to mitigate.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶108 – in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, it should be ensured that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.</p> <p>NPPF ¶32 – development should only be prevented on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts are severe.</p> <p>LPS Policies IN 1 Infrastructure, CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport, CO 2 Enabling Business Growth through Transport Infrastructure, CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments.</p> <p>SA themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Climatic factors • Air
8. Heritage assets impact?	<p>Will there be any impact on designated or non-designated heritage assets* and their setting(s)?</p> <p>* A list of designated and non-designated assets is given on</p>	<p>Green = None.</p> <p>Amber = Heritage Impact Assessment or archaeological desk based assessment would need to be carried out to establish the significance of the heritage asset and potential for harm. The appropriateness of the site for development can then be determined based on this</p>	<p>NPPF ¶185 - positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 7 The Historic Environment.</p>

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
	page 141 of the LPS.	information and potential for mitigation defined. Red = Significant concerns over the potential for harm to a designated or non-designated heritage asset.	NPPG - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. SA theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage and landscape
9. Flooding/drainage issues?	Are there any known flooding or drainage issues?	Green = None (majority in Flood Zone 1/no drainage issues). Amber = Some issues but, where appropriate, mitigation is possible (majority in Flood Zone 2/some drainage issues that could be readily mitigated). Red = Significant concerns that impact will be difficult to mitigate (majority in Flood Zone 3/significant drainage issues that will be difficult to address).	NPPF ¶¶155 to165 – planning and flood risk LPS Policy SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management. NPPG – Flood risk and coastal change. SA theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and soil
10. Ecology impact?	Are there any Habitats Regulations Assessment (“HRA”) implications? Are there any known/likely ecological issues in, adjoining or close to the site (e.g. old trees, hedgerows, ponds, watercourses, buildings to be demolished/ converted, areas of scrub or woodland, grassland with a diversity of plants or designated sites)? LPS Policy SE 3 has a list of national/international and local/regional designations.	Green = Unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts. Amber = Likely significant effects but avoidance/mitigation measures are possible. Red = Likely significant effects where avoidance/mitigation would be difficult to achieve.	NPPF ¶¶170 –protect and enhance sites of biodiversity value; minimise impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. NPPF ¶¶174 to 177 Protecting biodiversity and geodiversity LPS Policy SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity. NPPG - Natural environment. SA theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity, flora and fauna

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
	N.B. The SADPD HRA will be published alongside the Site Selection Methodology.		
11. Tree Preservation Orders (“TPO”) on/immediately adjacent?	Are there any TPO’s on or immediately adjacent to the site?	<p>Green = None.</p> <p>Amber = There are protected trees on or immediately adjacent to the site, but they could readily be accommodated in any development with sensitive design/layout, for example trees located on site boundaries or in areas that could become open space.</p> <p>Red = There are protected trees on or immediately adjacent to the site that will be difficult to accommodate or will have a significant impact on any development, for example at the site entrance, or significant numbers in the centre of the site.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶170 – recognise the benefits of trees and woodland</p> <p>NPPF ¶127– planning policies should promote developments with a high standard of amenity</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland.</p> <p>NPPG - TPOs and trees in Conservation Areas.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage and landscape
12. In an Air Quality Management Area (“AQMA”)?	Is the site in an AQMA? https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/environmental_health/local_air_quality/aqma_area_maps.aspx	<p>Green = No part of the site is in an AQMA.</p> <p>Amber = Part of the site is in an AQMA.</p> <p>Red = The entire site is in an AQMA.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶181 – take into account AQMAs.</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability.</p> <p>NPPG - Air quality.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air
13. In/adjacent to an area of mineral interest?	Is the site within or close (within 250m) to an area where there is a known mineral resource as shown on the BGS Mineral Resource map for Cheshire?	<p>Green = The site is not within or close to an area of known mineral resource,</p> <p>Amber = The site is within or close to a known mineral resource or within an allocated Area of Search and so</p>	<p>NPPF ¶¶203 to 208 – facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 10 Sustainable Provision of Minerals.</p>

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
	<p>https://www.bgs.ac.uk/mineralsuk/planning/resource.html</p> <p>If so, is the site identified in the Cheshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan 1999 as an allocated mineral site, Preferred Area or Area of Search and/or has the site been suggested for potential allocation for any of these purposes through the Council's 2014 mineral sites and areas call for sites exercise?</p> <p>https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/minerals-background-evidence.aspx</p> <p>http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/saved_and_other_policies/cheshire_minerals_local_plan/cheshire_minerals_local_plan.aspx</p>	<p>may impact upon it.</p> <p>Red = The site is within or close to an allocated mineral site, a Preferred Area or potential mineral allocation and so is likely to impact on it.</p>	<p>NPPG - Minerals.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and soil
14. Accessibility?	<p>How accessible is the site to open space, local amenities and transport facilities?</p> <p>N.B. The Accessibility Assessment of the SADPD Sustainability Appraisal will be published alongside the Site Selection Methodology.</p> <p>N.B. The commentary here is as</p>	<p>Green = Majority of the criteria are green (11 and over).</p> <p>Amber = A mix of red/amber/green.</p> <p>Red = Majority of the criteria are red (11 and over).</p>	<p>NPPF ¶8 – sustainable development includes accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.</p> <p>NPPF ¶104 – minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping and other leisure activities.</p>

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
	important as the balancing of the traffic lights.		<p>LPS Policies SD 1 Sustainable Development in CE, and SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles.</p> <p>LPS Policies CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport, CO 2 Enabling Business Growth through Transport Infrastructure, CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments.</p> <p>SA themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and human health • Transport • Social inclusiveness
15. Public transport frequency?	<p>Are there any rail and bus services? Are any considered to be commutable? A commutable service is thought to be that which can be used by someone that is working between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Source: http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport/bus/bus-and-rail-maps.aspx</p> <p>N.B. Walking distances for bus stops (500m) and Railway Stations (2km where geographically possible) are taken from LPS Table 9.1 'Access to services and</p>	<p>Green = Commutable service.</p> <p>Amber = Non-commutable service.</p> <p>Red = Service not within walking distance.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶108 – in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be taken up.</p> <p>LPS Policies SD 1 Sustainable Development in CE, SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles, CO1 Sustainable Travel and Transport, CO 2 Enabling Business Growth through Transport Infrastructure, CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments.</p>

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
	amenities’.		SA themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Social inclusiveness • Air • Climatic factors
16. Brownfield/ greenfield?	Is the land brownfield, greenfield or a mix of both?	<p>Green = Brownfield.</p> <p>Amber = A mix of brown and greenfield land.</p> <p>Red = Greenfield.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶117 to 119 – making effective use of land</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 2 Efficient Use of Land.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and soil
17. Agricultural Land?	<p>Does the site protect the best and most versatile agricultural land?</p> <p>Source: Cheshire East Geographical Information Systems – Agricultural Land Classification, Natural England dataset.</p> <p>N.B. Currently there is insufficient evidence to differentiate between Grade 3a and 3b in some settlements. For those settlements that it has been possible to differentiate between Grade 3a and 3b, Magic had been used: http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx</p>	<p>Green = Grade 4, and 5; other; ‘settlement’.</p> <p>Amber = Grade 3, and 3b (where known).</p> <p>Red = Grade 1, 2, and 3a (where known).</p>	<p>NPPF ¶170 – take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 2 Efficient Use of Land.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and soil

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
18. Contamination issues?	Does the site have any contamination issues?	<p>Green = No known /low risk of site contamination issues.</p> <p>Amber = Medium risk of contamination issues.</p> <p>Red = High risk of contamination issues.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶170 - contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.</p> <p>NPPG - Land affected by contamination.</p> <p>LPS Policy SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Stability.</p> <p>SA themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity, flora and fauna • Water and soil • Population and human health
19. Employment land loss?	Is the site used for employment purposes, and is the proposal for a non-employment use?	<p>Green = No.</p> <p>Amber = Mixed use, including an element of employment.</p> <p>Red = Yes.</p>	<p>LPS Policy EG 6 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development

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Criteria	Detailed criteria	Basis of traffic light choice	Commentary
20. Distance to existing employment areas?	How close are existing employment areas to the site? Existing employment areas include allocated employment sites in the Local Plan Strategy, relevant allocations in the former District Local Plans, existing employment areas identified in the Employment Land Review (2012), town centres. The distance thresholds have been carried forward from the LPS Sustainability (Integrated) Appraisal Addendum: Proposed Changes.	<p>Green = Within 500m of an existing employment area.</p> <p>Amber = Between 500m and 1,000m of an existing employment area.</p> <p>Red = Over 1,000m from an existing employment area.</p>	<p>NPPF ¶104 – minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping and other leisure activities.</p> <p>LPS Policy EG 6 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites.</p> <p>SA theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development

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Appendix 3: Blank Green Belt site traffic light proforma

Site name, settlement, ref number GREEN BELT	Gross site area xha, xx dwgs, xxha employment land
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Criteria	Category	Commentary
1. Economically viable?		
2. Landscape impact?		
3. Settlement character and urban form impact?		
4. Strategic Green Gap?		
5. Compatible neighbouring uses?		
6. Highways access?		
7. Highways impact?		
8. Heritage assets impact?		
9. Flooding/drainage issues?		
10. Ecology impact?		
11. TPO's on/immediately adjacent?		
12. In an AQMA?		
13. In/adjacent to an area of mineral interest?		
14. Accessibility?		
15. Public transport frequency?		
16. Brownfield/greenfield?		
17. Agricultural land?		
18. Contamination issues?		
19. Employment land loss?		
20. Distance to existing employment areas?		

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Appendix 4: Blank non-Green Belt site traffic light proforma

Site name, settlement, ref number	Gross site area xha, xx dwgs, xxha employment land
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Criteria	Category	Commentary
1. Economically viable?		
2. Landscape impact?		
3. Settlement character and urban form impact?		
4. Strategic Green Gap?		
5. Compatible neighbouring uses?		
6. Highways access?		
7. Highways impact?		
8. Heritage assets impact?		
9. Flooding/drainage issues?		
10. Ecology impact?		
11. TPO's on/immediately adjacent?		
12. In an AQMA?		
13. In/adjacent to an area of mineral interest?		
14. Accessibility?		
15. Public transport frequency?		
16. Brownfield/greenfield?		
17. Agricultural land?		
18. Contamination issues?		
19. Employment land loss?		
20. Distance to existing employment areas?		

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