

Planning and land availability: summary

This chapter is a key part of the SHMA as it sets out data used in the affordable need calculation to predict affordable housing supply in future.

All homes

- District housing trajectories in 2009/10 showed that across the sub-region around 60,000 homes were planned, to 2024 of which 45,500 in Cambridgeshire and 14,500 in our two Suffolk districts.
- Planned delivery varies widely by year and by district. However the numbers in plans published in 2009/10 are significant, even after the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies and the targets embodied within them.
- Across the whole sub-region, between 2010/11 and each district's chosen end date in their Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) an additional 65,554 homes were to be delivered. However it is important to note that many factors have changed since the submission of these plans in December 2010, which is vital context for this chapter of the SHMA.

Affordable homes

- In 2010/11 and 2011/12 a total of 2,588 affordable homes were planned or proposed for our housing sub-region.

Land availability

- Most districts have a current strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) in place, though two are consulting on and one is planning a full update. The stage reached and outcomes for each district at November 2011 are summarized in Table 8.
- At present there is less uniformity of approach between district in SHLAAs and the housing numbers each district works towards and should compare land availability to, than in the past when more specific guidance was available. Having said that, the district show varying availability of suitable and deliverable land for housing, as described below:
 - Cambridge's assessment is in progress.
 - East Cambridgeshire shows there is enough land available to meet required provision over the next 5 years, estimated at 132% of the target.
 - Fenland estimates a total of 2,754 dwellings can be delivered over the next 5 years, more than the old RSS target of 2,456 and representing 112% of target.
 - Huntingdonshire's trajectory indicates that by 2026 some 16,731 dwellings could be delivered. The five year housing land supply stands at 4,657 which is 194% of the residual RSS target to 2021; 185% of the residual core strategy target to 2026.
 - In South Cambridgeshire the five year land supplies required are 9,480 dwellings for the core strategy and 7,490 dwellings for the East of England Plan. The local trajectory shows 5,155 homes expected between 2011 and 2016. This gives 2.7 years of land supply based on the core strategy, or 54%. Based on the more recent East of England Plan requirement, it gives 3.4 years of land supply (68%).
 - In Forest Heath, of the 2,743 dwellings committed for housing development it is assessed that 1,420 are deliverable between Aug 2009 and Sept 2014. This gives a deficit of 440 dwellings below our five year requirement of 372 dwellings per year. There is sufficient supply of housing land for approximately 3.8 years.
 - St Edmundsbury estimates the capacity of SHLAA sites at 12,915 dwellings. This equates to a just less than a 24 year supply of housing land, based on providing 545 homes a year in accordance with the St Edmundsbury core strategy.

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Section 11.1 Introduction

Chapter 11: Planning and land availability

11.1 Introduction

- This chapter looks at future plans for all homes, for affordable homes, and the land assessed as available to build them on.
- Because of the stage reached in the planning process at the time of consulting on the SHMA (August 2012) this chapter provides links to relevant documents, and acknowledges the stage districts find themselves at; between the abolition of the East of England Plan (our regional spatial strategy or RSS) and removal of its “top-down” targets; securing new evidence based on the East of England Forecasting Model which seeks to provide figures for each district regarding employment, population and households projections; and adopting new targets for each district, based on robust evidence, to feed into the local planning process. More detail will be included in Chapter 12 *Forecasts for homes of all tenures*, on this model.
- The sources for these figures are the Districts’ annual monitoring reports (AMRs) and trajectories and the districts Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) forms, submitted by housing authorities each year to set out performance and plans for strategic housing activities, including provision of affordable housing. These are available from the CLG website – see section 11.4 for links.
- However at the outset, it is important to remember that future development rates do not necessarily reflect past trends, and that the recent economic and building rate slow-down experienced across the country has had a radical, and reasonably unpredictable effect on housing delivery across the Cambridge housing sub-region. Predicting future building rates is not an exact science and depends on a wide variety of factors.
- Bright yellow highlighting in tables denotes data used in Chapter 13, *Identifying affordable housing need*. Pale yellow shading denotes data used “behind” calculations in Chapter 13. These tables, a note after the table explains which other table(s) these figures feed into, to feed the Chapter 13 calculation.
- This chapter brings together two chapters of our previous SHMA, namely
 - Chapter 23: Past and future housing delivery
 - Chapter 24: Strategic Land Availability Assessments
- Sections of Chapter 23 about past housing delivery can now be found in Chapter 4: *Current dwelling profile and condition* which includes recent additions to our overall housing stock.
- Previous chapters 22, 25 and 26 have been archived as useful accounts of regional plans, which have since lost favour from government; a summary of good practice on delivering new homes and on creating mixed and balanced communities. This information helps us assess districts’ plans and the need to accelerate housing delivery to meet our targets and housing needs.

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

11.2 Facts and figures

11.2.1 Future plans for all homes

District housing trajectories were updated in December 2010. At that time, all districts were planning to 2024/5 and some beyond this date. For consistency this section includes district figures only up to 2024/25. Table 1 sets out the trajectories included in each district's annual monitoring return at December 2010. Please note the changes outlined in the Introduction which have happened since that date. However it is useful to include this "time sequence" as part of the SHMA's annual update.

Table 1. Annual Monitoring Report trajectories, 2010/11 to 2024/25

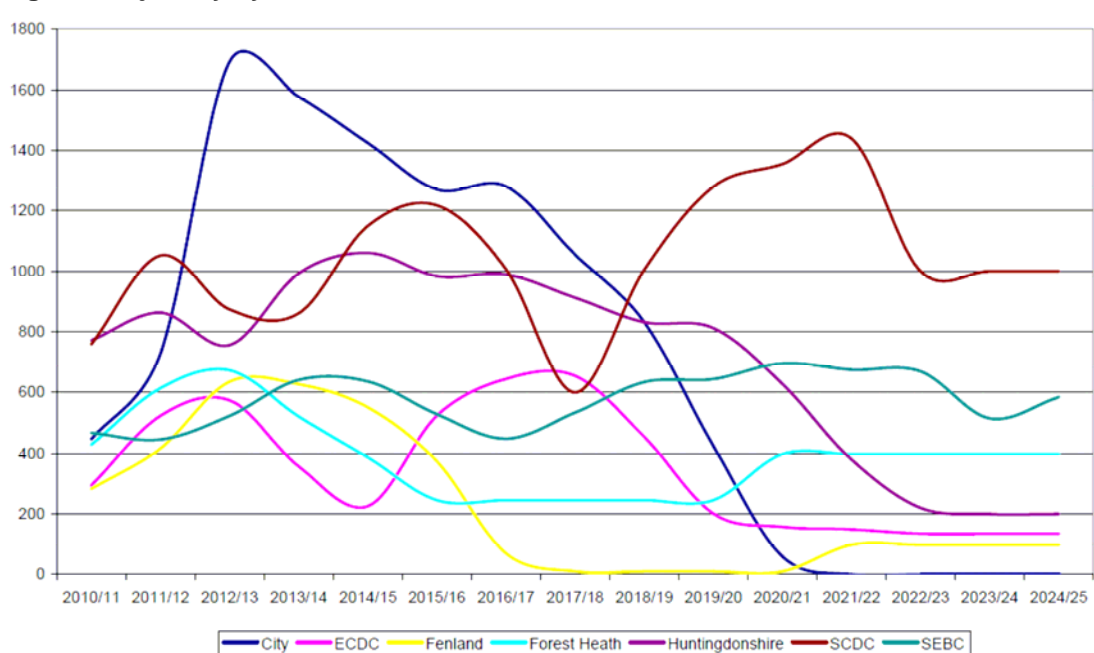
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total 2010/11 to 2024/25
Cambridge City	447	728	1694	1577	1425	1271	1281	1055	832	425	60	0	0	0	0	10795
East Cambridgeshire	295	524	574	357	226	524	644	654	455	201	157	149	135	135	135	5165
Fenland	283	417	635	627	551	374	70	10	10	10	10	98	98	98	98	3389
Huntingdonshire	772	863	756	993	1061	984	989	913	832	812	628	380	220	200	200	10603
South Cambridgeshire	759	1052	874	861	1150	1218	1007	600	1005	1280	1355	1440	1000	1000	1000	15601
Total for Cambridgeshire	2556	3584	4533	4415	4413	4371	3991	3232	3134	2728	2210	2067	1453	1433	1433	45553
Forest Heath	429	614	673	521	387	246	246	246	246	246	398	398	398	398	398	5844
St Edmundsbury	468	446	523	641	636	529	449	534	634	644	696	675	669	515	585	8644
Total for 2 Suffolk districts	897	1060	1196	1162	1023	775	695	780	880	890	1094	1073	1067	913	983	14488
Total for housing sub-region	3453	4644	5729	5577	5436	5146	4686	4012	4014	3618	3304	3140	2520	2346	2416	60041

Source: District annual monitoring returns, December 2010

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

District trajectories as at December 2010 are shown in Fig 1 as trendlines, showing variation by district and year.

Fig 1 Trajectory by district, 2010/11 to 2024/25



Source: District annual monitoring returns, December 2010

Fig 1 shows that each district predicts a very different future, in terms of delivery of homes. Naturally this is a local issue, with new sites coming forward at different times, with different numbers of homes delivered on each site, and each phase of a site. However the numbers involved continue to be significant, even after the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies and the national targets embodied within them.

Local authorities in their 2010 returns, had to balance news of planned revocation of regional spatial strategies and the targets contained within them, against plans to continue to deliver homes needed for local communities, for employers and to support business growth. Table 2 summarises the total number of homes planned and the end date used in AMRs at December 2010. It adds the average delivery rate needed to achieve these local targets; and a comparison to the build rate actually achieved between 2001/2 and 2009/10 for comparison. This comparison does not imply any judgment, it simply aims to highlight where districts are planning either significantly more or less homes than delivered in the past.

Table 2. District plans for number of homes to be delivered and end date

	"All homes" to be delivered from 2010/11 to end date	By which year	Years left to run till end date	Average rate of deliver from 2010/11 to end date provided	Compared to average annual build rate 2001/2 to 2009/10
Cambridge	10,795	2020/21	11	981	484
East Cambridgeshire	5,165	2024/25	15	344	591
Fenland	3,487	2025/26	16	218	622
Huntingdonshire	10,803	2025/26	16	720	659
South Cambridgeshire	15,601	2024/25	15	780	781
Forest Heath	7,329	2029/30	20	458	265
St Edmundsbury	12,364	2030/31	21	589	417
Sub-regional total	65,544				

Source: Programme for development, 2010

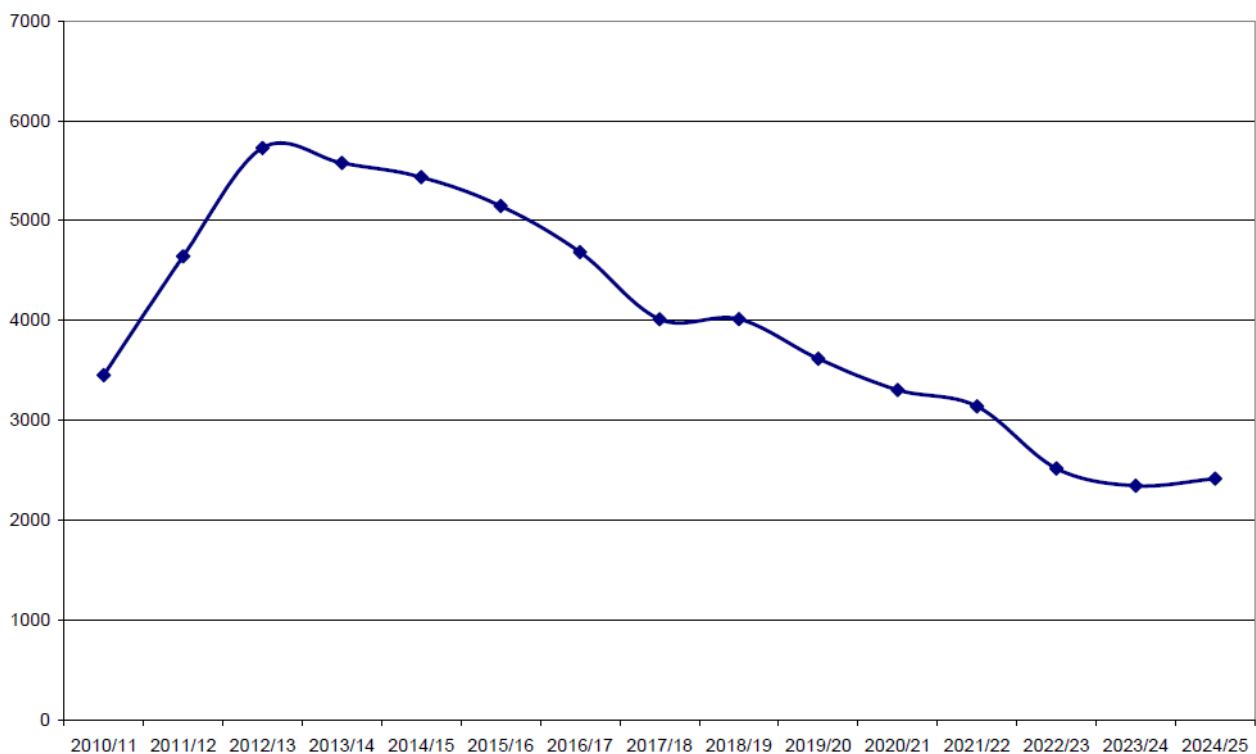
Section 11.2 Facts and figures

The Cambridgeshire authorities remain committed to the strategy for planning in the County, including the provision of housing, as originally established by the Structure Plan and as now partially set out in saved Structure Plan policies and as reflected by the policies and site proposals in the Cambridge Local Plan and District Councils' Development Plan Documents and developing strategies for market towns.

The key objective of the strategy is to locate homes in and close to Cambridge, following a comprehensive review of the Cambridge Green Belt, and to other main centres of employment, while avoiding dispersed development which increases unsustainable travel and makes access to services and community facilities difficult. Further sustainable locations for growth focus mainly on Cambridgeshire's market towns. A joint statement by the Chief Planning Officers (July 2012) is included in Section 11.7.3.

The total number of homes projected across the sub-region to 2024/25 is shown in Fig 2 below.

Fig 2 Overall housing trajectory across the sub-region, 2010/11 to 2024/25



Source: District annual monitoring returns

Fig 2 shows that the total completions projected into the future increase rapidly from 2010/11 to 2011/12, then drop more-or-less steadily to 2024/25.

11.2.2 Future plans for affordable homes, as at 2009/2010

The 2008 Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix, Section N: *Provision of affordable housing* has been used to identify each district's individual plans for new affordable housing for the next two years. It is important to remember that at the time of submitting the HSSA form, there may be no clear indication of the resources available for new housing provision from the Homes and Communities Agency, so these figures represent plans and proposals rather than guaranteed schemes. Tenures finally achieved can change subject to the availability of funding, to market conditions, and to changes to the products available. Tenure conversions are possible and can help meet prevailing housing needs, which may transpire after a scheme is completed.

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

Table 3. Number of additional local authority dwellings - social rented and shared ownership

	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total
Cambridge	7	0	7
East Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
Fenland	0	0	0
Forest Heath	0	0	0
Huntingdonshire	0	0	0
South Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
St Edmundsbury	0	0	0
Total	7	0	7

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1782859.xls>.

Table 4. Number of additional RSL dwellings: social rented, intermediate rent and shared ownership/shared equity

	Social rented			Intermediate rent			Shared ownership/ shared equity		
	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total
Cambridge	120	78	198	290	0	290	13	22	35
East Cambridgeshire	108	61	169	0	0	0	6	35	41
Fenland	126	94	220	0	9	9	0	9	9
Forest Heath	116	79	195	0	0	0	22	47	69
Huntingdonshire	245	163	408	56	0	56	34	92	126
South Cambridgeshire	133	251	384	1	0	1	76	52	128
St Edmundsbury	44	84	128	0	0	0	39	36	75
Total	892	810	1702	347	9	356	190	293	483

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1782859.xls>.

Table 5. Number of additional non-LA/RSL – social rented, intermediate rent and shared ownership/shared equity

	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total
Cambridge	0	0	0
East Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
Fenland	0	0	0
Forest Heath	0	0	0
Huntingdonshire	20	20	40
South Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
St Edmundsbury	0	0	0
Total	20	20	40

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1782859.xls>.

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

Table 6. Total additional affordable dwellings

	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Average of 2010/11 and 2011/12 plans ¹
Cambridge	430	100	265
East Cambridgeshire	114	96	105
Fenland	126	112	119
Forest Heath	138	126	132
Huntingdonshire	355	275	315
South Cambridgeshire	210	303	257
St Edmundsbury	83	120	102
Total	1456	1132	1294

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1782859.xls>.

Table 7. Rural homes (of total shown in Table 6)

	Provided in settlements with populations of 3,000 or less			Provided in respect of rural exception sites		
	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total	2010/11 planned	2011/12 proposed	Total
Cambridge	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Cambridgeshire	10	46	56	8	45	53
Fenland	0	50	50	10	15	25
Forest Heath	32	4	36	0	4	4
Huntingdonshire	8	0	8	0	0	0
South Cambridgeshire	51	150	201	39	168	207
St Edmundsbury	12	16	28	0	16	16
Total	113	266	379	57	248	305

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1782859.xls>.

11.2.3 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments

DCLG issued guidance on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, or SHLAAs, in July 2007. They are seen as a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for more homes and are required by Planning Policy Statement 3: *Housing* (PPS3) and go hand-in-hand with SHMAs. The National Planning Policy Framework updates, but does not reverse, guidance on these issues.

DCLG guidance gives practical suggestions on how to carry out an assessment to identify land for housing and assess the deliverability and develop-ability of sites. This chapter provides links to each district's individual assessments and a summary of each SHLAA as at November 2011. These will be updated as they develop further.

¹ These averages form stage 5.3.3 of the calculation described in Chapter 13, namely "committed supply of new affordable units"

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

11.2.4 Summary of SHLAAs for the Cambridge housing sub-region

Table 8 sets out the overall position for each district's SHLAA; however the evidence base is being continually updated so it is wise to check with the Local Planning Authority concerned to find out the current situation.

Table 8. Progress on SHLAAs at November 2011 with headline outcomes

Local Planning Authority	Link to SHLAA, November 2011	Headline outcomes
Cambridge City Council	http://cambridge.jdi-consult.net/ldf/	In progress
East Cambridgeshire District Council	http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/masterplans	The delivery of 2,205 dwellings against a target of 1,668 dwellings means that there is enough land available to meet required provision over the 5 year period. It is calculated that East Cambridgeshire has a five year supply that meets 132% of the target.
Fenland District Council	http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/3420/Fenland-Housing-Land-Supply-Report-2011 (reports on delivery in 2010/11)	In 2010-11 the target set is 512 dwellings per year or 2,561 in total; identified supply is 2,189. This equates to 85% or 4.25 years; and "shows that Fenland almost has an adequate supply of sites to meet the 5 year supply as required by PPS3."
Huntingdonshire District Council	http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Planning/Planning%20Policy/Pages/Strategic%20Housing%20Land%20Availability%20Assessment.aspx	The SHLAA at December 2010 indicates that by 2026 16,731 dwellings could be delivered, which is 2,731 in excess of the 14,000 Core Strategy requirement. The 5 year housing land supply stands at 4,657 which is a healthy 194% of the residual East of England Plan target to 2021 and 185% of the residual Core Strategy target to 2026.
South Cambridgeshire District Council	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/SHLAA.htm	The five year land supply required are: for Core Strategy Policy ST/2 = 9,480 dwellings; and for East of England Plan Policy H1 = 7,490 dwellings. The housing trajectory shows 5,155 homes are expected to be provided in the district between 2011 and 2016 on the basis of current planned development. This gives 2.7 years of land supply or 54.4% of the five year supply requirement. However, based on the more recent East of England Plan Policy H1 requirement, this gives 3.4 years of land supply or 68.8% of the five year supply.
Forest Heath District Council	http://www3.forest-heath.gov.uk/shlaa/SHLAA%20Final%20Website.pdf	Of the 2,743 dwellings committed for housing development we have assessed that 1420 dwellings on large sites are deliverable within the five year period between August 2009 and September 2014. This assessment gives us a deficit of 440 dwellings below our five year housing provision requirement of 372 dwellings per annum. There is sufficient supply of housing land for approximately 3.8 years

Section 11.2 Facts and figures

Local Planning Authority	Link to SHLAA, November 2011	Headline outcomes
St. Edmundsbury Borough Council	http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/Strategic-Housing-Land-Availability-Assessment.cfm	The estimated capacity of SHLAA sites is 12,915 dwellings. This equates to a 23.7 year supply of housing land based on providing 545 homes a year in accordance with the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy.

Source: District websites, November 2011

Table 8 shows the significant progress has been made to bring forward district based housing land availability assessments across the sub region.

Section 11.3 Analysis

11.3 Analysis

11.3.1 Headlines

Future plans for all homes

District housing trajectories were updated in December 2010. All districts now plan up to 2024/5 and some beyond this date. Across the sub-region around 60,000 homes are in the trajectory for this period; 45,500 in Cambridgeshire and 14,500 on our two Suffolk districts.

Future plans for affordable homes

For 2010/11 and 2011/12 a total of 2588 affordable homes are planned or proposed for our sub-region. Within this plan, 379 homes would be in rural settlements (3,000 population or less) and 305 on rural exception sites (that is, outside the village envelope).

SHLAAs: progress and key highlights from across our sub-region

Most of our districts have a current SHLAA in place. Stages and outcomes are summarized in Table 8.

While there is a hiatus in guidance on regional targets and what might replace them, there is little uniformity of approach between district in SHLAAs and the housing numbers each district is working towards and should compare land availability to. Two districts are currently consulting on their SHLAAs.

11.3.2 Changes over time

The next SHMA update for 2012 will include commentary on district plans for all homes, for affordable homes, and for SHLAAs.

These are in turn affected by the NPPF and changes to housing monitoring systems such as the HSSA being replaced by ELASH, which involves changes to some of the questions being asked.

11.3.3 What does all this data, combined, tell us?

At the time data was gathered for this SHMA update, district had not yet responded to changing requirements under the NPPF, and other data collection systems.

Districts are working together under the Duty to Cooperate, to agree on the numbers of homes, households and jobs likely to be forthcoming in future years, and upon which all will base their local plans and frameworks. More information on this is included in Section 11.7.3.

During this period of change and adjustment the SHMA compares and clarifies the stage each district has reached, and looks to the future when new plans and locally-based targets are confirmed.

Section 11.4 Links and references

11.4 Links and references

- Government guidance
 - CLG SHLAA guidance:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/399267.pdf>
- District annual monitoring reports:
 - Cambridge: <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/content/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/annual-monitoring-report.en>
 - East Cambridgeshire: <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/annual-monitoring-report>
 - Fenland: <http://www.fenland.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2355&p=0>
 - Huntingdonshire:
<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Environment%20and%20Planning/Planning/Planning%20Policy/Pages/Monitoring%20and%20Research.aspx/Environment+and+Planning/Planning/Planning+Policy/Monitoring+and+Research.htm>
 - South Cambridgeshire:
http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/Annual_Monitoring_Report.htm
 - Forest Heath: http://www.forest-heath.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/230/annual_monitoring_report_2009-10&sa=U&ei=FB7BTs_BNZGm8gPh8eWkBA&ved=0CBMQFjAA&usq=AFQjCNGdHpx24Zm33ya5PkYKGLzKBI7NjQ
 - St Edmundsbury: <http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/Annual-Monitoring-Report.cfm>
 - Cambridgeshire AMR: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/551D91D2-377A-4D0A-9A55-ACB8E1F34C67/0/CCCAMR2010.pdf>
 - Links to each SHLAA are provided in Table 8.

Section 11.5 Definitions

11.5 Definitions of terms

Term used	Abbreviation	Meaning	Link for further information
Annual Monitoring Report	AMR	A report completed each year by each district planning authority, on various planning related issues. County Councils may also validate and combine district AMRs into one consolidated report.	Provided in Table 8.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	SHLAA	<p>The SHLAA is a key component of the evidence base for a Council's Local Development Framework (LDF).</p> <p>It is required by PPS3¹ and provides information on the opportunities that exist to meet housing targets and the choices available for delivering housing in sustainable locations.</p> <p>PPS3 requires Local Authorities to identify specific deliverable sites to deliver housing in the first five years from the adoption of the Core Strategy. In addition, Local Authorities are required to identify a further supply of specific, developable sites for years 6-10; and, where possible, years 11-15. This should draw on information from the SHLAA. The SHLAA seeks to demonstrate that there is enough land that could be delivered when required.</p> <p>The fundamental purpose of the SHLAA is to understand the level of housing opportunities within each individual District. This is achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying sites with potential for housing ▪ Assessing their potential suitability for housing ▪ Identifying any constraints to development ▪ Indicating whether suitable sites are deliverable and developable and available for allocation if needed 	Please also see Section 11.7.1

Section 11.6 Data issues

11.6 Data issues

- Planned changes to data
 - The HSSA form has been replaced by a new form known as ELASH – still gathered annually by districts for DCLG.
 - Loss of regional level of government means that checking and combining AMRs and the East of England Data Atlas for this purpose has now been removed at a regional level.
 - The East of England forecasting model is being re-run in 2010 which will inform our future SHMA regarding all homes, all households and all jobs numbers, and will help to provide evidence for districts to set their own targets in local plans.

Section 11.7 Background Information

11.7 Additional information

11.7.1 Core requirements of the SHLAA

An assessment should, as a minimum, provide the core outputs and follow the process requirements set out below.

SHLAA core outputs

- A list of sites, cross-referenced to maps showing locations and boundaries of specific sites (and showing broad locations, where necessary).
- Assessment of the deliverability/developability of each identified site (i.e. in terms of its suitability, availability and achievability) to determine when an identified site is realistically expected to be developed.
- Potential quantity of housing that could be delivered on each identified site or within each identified broad location (where necessary) or on windfall sites (where justified).
- Constraints on the delivery of identified sites.
- Recommendations on how these constraints could be overcome and when.

SHLAA process checklist

- The survey and Assessment should involve key stakeholders including house builders, social landlords, local property agents and local communities. Other relevant agencies may include the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships (a requirement in areas where they are particularly active).
- The methods, assumptions, judgments and findings should be discussed and agreed upon throughout the process in an open and transparent way, and explained in the Assessment report. The report should include an explanation as to why particular sites or areas have been excluded from the Assessment.

The use of this standard methodology is strongly recommended because it will ensure that the Assessment findings are robust and transparently prepared. When followed, a local planning authority should not need to justify the methodology used in preparing its assessment, including at independent examination. However, where a different methodology is used, the Assessment report will need to explain the approach chosen and the reasons for doing so, and the approach may need to be justified at independent examination.

11.7.2 Keeping the SHLAA up-to-date

The Assessment, once completed, should be regularly kept up-to-date (at least annually) as part of the Annual Monitoring Report exercise, to support the updating of the housing trajectory and the five-year supply of specific deliverable sites. The main information to record is whether:

- Sites under construction have now been developed, or individual stages have been developed.
- Sites with planning permission are now under-construction and what progress has been made.
- Planning applications have been submitted or approved on sites and broad locations identified by the Assessment.
- Progress has been made in removing constraints on development and whether a site is now considered to be deliverable or developable.
- Unforeseen constraints have emerged which now mean a site is no longer deliverable or developable, and how these could be addressed.
- The windfall allowance (where justified) is coming forward as expected, or may need to be adjusted.

Section 11.7 Background Information

11.7.3 Joint Statement on the Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities²

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2010 the Coalition Government announced its intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (and by extension any 'saved' Structure Plan policies) and introduce a wholly locally-based planning system. In response to this changing policy environment the Cambridgeshire authorities issued a joint statement in autumn 2010 to set out their position in support of the existing, established development strategy for the County.
- 1.2 This statement updates and replaces that earlier one in the light of events since its publication in 2010. It is expanded to cover Peterborough in addition to Cambridgeshire, reflecting the history of joint working between the two areas, the shared objectives within the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the recent agreement to co-operate effectively and work together on strategic planning issues.

2 Background

- 2.1 The existing development strategy originated in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and with the support of all of the Cambridgeshire local authorities was incorporated in the East of England Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy) published in 2008. These strategic plans informed the development of the City and District Councils' Local Plan and Local Development Frameworks, which currently are being implemented.
- 2.2 The key objective of the strategy is to secure sustainable development by locating new homes in and close to Cambridge and Peterborough and to other main centres of employment, while avoiding dispersed development which increases unsustainable travel and restricts access to key services and facilities. Further sustainable locations for growth focus mainly on Cambridgeshire's market towns and Peterborough's district centres, with one large new town (Northstowe) to be connected to Cambridge and other key locations through a new dedicated public transport option, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway.
- 2.3 Implementation of the strategy is on-going, with new urban extensions being delivered in Cambridge and Peterborough. With the Busway now up and running, significant development activity is underway in Cambridge's southern and north-west fringes and an application for a first phase for the new town of Northstowe has been submitted. Major developments, essential regeneration and infrastructure provision in Cambridgeshire's market towns continue to make positive progress.

3 National and Local Developments

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework, published recently, requires all local authorities to plan for sustainable development including planning positively for economic growth, with their local plans being prepared on the basis that objectively assessed development needs should be met. With the enactment of the Localism Act in 2011, all local authorities are now under a Duty to Co-operate in the preparation of their plans, both with each other and a range of other bodies.
- 3.2 The national economic situation has presented significant challenges in maintaining the pace of growth and the delivery of sufficient investment where it is most needed. In the face of these challenges, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities have continued to take a positive attitude to delivery of the development strategy and have taken innovative approaches to funding challenges - for example, the equity investment in the southern fringe sites. This has enabled development to start earlier than would otherwise have been the case, whilst still securing a future financial return for the authorities, which can then be reinvested to support future high quality growth for the benefit of local communities.

² Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Peterborough City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Section 11.7 Background Information

3.3 The Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership is now well-established and has secured the designation of an Enterprise Zone at the former Alconbury airfield. The County Council has also announced it is putting in place the funding to deliver a new rail station in the north of Cambridge, which will enhance public transport accessibility and provide some relief to congestion within the city. Work is now underway, led by the Department for Transport but working in partnership with the County and District Councils, to find a way forward for delivering improvements along the A14 corridor. The outcomes are critical in order to support a range of key development locations, including at Northstowe. An announcement from Government on the way forward is expected this summer.

4 The Response to these Challenges

4.1 Despite the clarity of and support for the existing development strategy, the local authorities realise the need to keep the broader, strategic perspective under consideration. As a result, all authorities except Peterborough City Council, which last year adopted a Core Strategy running to 2026, are undertaking a review or roll forward of their local plans.

4.2 The need for this work results from a range of factors, including fostering continued economic growth, providing sufficient housing and the need for delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support the development of sustainable communities. The review or roll forward of plans will also need to take account of the fundamental changes that are likely to impact on the existing strategy – for example, the current unavailability of Cambridge Airport for housing development or the introduction of the Enterprise Zone at Alconbury. With regard to the Enterprise Zone the local authorities will need to consider and effectively respond to the wider spatial implications of that designation as a matter of urgency. Nevertheless, it is critical that a combined clear focus and effort remains on the effective delivery of the existing ambitious strategy and the major developments that are part of it; and to recognise that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, as a whole, still have more than adequate land coming forward to effectively deliver sustainable growth, which can be continued as the strategy is updated.

4.3 Preparation of these updated plans will take account of policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, including wide community engagement in accordance with the principles of localism. This will enable engagement around a range of development needs, including community-based, locally-generated proposals as well as those of more strategic significance. Furthermore, the local authorities will continue their long history of close collaboration and joint working as part of their Duty to Co-operate. This will include jointly gathering appropriate forms of evidence to both inform their plans and to shape the formulation of their strategies. Their work will be supported and constructively challenged at a strategic level by a newly-formed Joint Strategic Planning Unit. Close links to the Local Enterprise Partnership will also be further developed.

4.4 In undertaking the review or roll forward of their plans, the local authorities are clear that fundamentally they will continue to be guided by the strategic principles which underpinned the original growth strategy, first set out in the 2003 Structure Plan. Locating homes in and close to urban areas and to other main centres of employment is critical to ensure appropriate, sustainable development. It is essential, therefore, that the future development needs of the wider area are considered and agreed through a strategic planned approach, which takes account of identified local and national priorities.

4.5 Pending this review of the strategy, the local authorities are clear that they remain committed to delivering the existing planned strategy, and that significant capacity exists in terms of housing and employment land supply as we recover from the recession. During the transition period leading up to the introduction of their new, updated local plans, the local authorities will continue to give full weight to current, adopted planning policies.

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