

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

October 2025

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1 Introduction

What is a SHELAA?

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all strategic policy-making authorities to have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. Further, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out that plan-making authorities may carry out land availability assessments for both housing and economic development as part of the same exercise in order that sites may be identified for the use(s) which is most appropriate. In addition to housing and economic development, this SHELAA 2025 also considers land for Gypsy and Traveller use and community uses.
- 1.2 Sevenoaks District Council has therefore prepared a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which considers land for housing and economic development, using a methodology that is consistent with that set out in the PPG. It is a technical assessment of the amount of land that is available and suitable to meet the District's housing and employment needs. It is an important evidence base document that informs plan-making, but it does not determine whether a site should be allocated for development in the future, nor does it influence the likelihood of gaining planning permission on a particular site.

What is included in the SHELAA?

- 1.3 The SHELAA includes an assessment of potential sites for housing growth (capable of accommodating 5 or more residential units and/or over 0.15Ha) and for economic growth (500sqm or more and/or over 0.25Ha) that have been promoted to the District Council by landowners, agents or developers or have been identified by the Council. The assessments have considered whether each site is suitable, available and achievable (as defined in the PPG), taking into account any identified constraints to development, as well as identifying the potential number of residential units and/or area of economic development that could be accommodated on each site.
- 1.4 The previous SHELAA, which was prepared to accompany the Regulation 18 Part 1 (Autumn 2022) version of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan, proposed a strategy that sought to make the best and most efficient use of land in existing settlements. As such, the SHELAA assessed potential sites which were located within existing settlements only.
- 1.5 A further SHELAA was then prepared in Autumn 2023, to accompany the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation of Plan 2040 – a new Local Plan for Sevenoaks District. This iteration considered development opportunities outside of settlements (i.e. Green Belt sites). Plan 2040 proposed a development strategy for releasing Green Belt land, in exceptional circumstances, in the most suitable and sustainable locations across the

District. These were considered to be sites adjacent to the urban confines of the District's top 8 settlements, as defined by the Settlement Hierarchy 2022. Sites have also been considered where they are large enough to accommodate a new settlement. The Development Strategy sets out three growth options for allocation, which would each meet the District's Housing Need in full.

- 1.6 A new iteration of the SHELAA has now been prepared to inform the Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025) of the new Local Plan for Sevenoaks District.

How will the SHELAA be used?

- 1.7 The SHELAA, alongside other evidence base documents that the District Council has completed, has and will continue to be used to inform the development strategy and potential site allocations in the new Sevenoaks District Local Plan over the plan period up to 2042.
- 1.8 The government provides a standard methodology for calculating housing need, introduced alongside the December 2024 NPPF. This methodology is based on a baseline of 0.8% of the existing housing stock in each local authority area, with an upward adjustment applied to reflect affordability pressures. This replaces the previous standard methodology, which relied on household projections from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and a different affordability adjustment mechanism.
- 1.9 For Sevenoaks District this means the provision of 1,145 homes per year, equating to 17,175 homes over the 15-year plan period. The Economic Needs Study (ENS) 2022, and its 2025 update, identify a need for 40,400 sqm of employment floorspace over the Plan period, whilst the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2025 identifies a need for 192 additional pitches across the District over the Plan period. The SHELAA identifies potential sites to address these needs.
- 1.10 It is important to emphasise that the assessments of the potential sites in the SHELAA are based on the best information available at the current time and that they provide a starting point to inform future decisions in relation to plan-making and the determination of planning applications. The conclusions of the assessments in relation to the suitability, availability and achievability of potential sites do not mean that any final decisions have been taken as to which sites will be identified for housing or economic development in the new Local Plan. In addition, an update to the SHELAA will be prepared ahead of the Regulation 19 publication next Summer 2026, which will take account of any additional information received through the Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025).
- 1.11 Similarly, the conclusions of the assessments for the potential sites do not mean that the District Council has decided whether planning permission should be granted for housing or economic development on those sites. Any planning applications received

for any potential sites included in the SHELAA will be considered on their planning merits, taking into account any adopted planning policies [currently the Core Strategy (2011) and Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP 2015)] and any other material planning considerations.

2 Policy Context

National Policy and Guidance

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places great emphasis on boosting the supply of housing (para 61) and sets out that local authorities should 'have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment' (para 71). Para 127 sets out that planning policies need to reflect changes in the demand for land. Therefore in addition to assessing sites submitted in the 'call for sites' the District Council has undertaken a review of the existing site allocations (both housing and mixed use) that have not yet come forward to explore any potential opportunities and to ensure we are making the best and most efficient use of land in existing settlements.
- 2.2 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a clear methodology for undertaking the SHELAA in the form of a flow chart. This is set out overleaf.

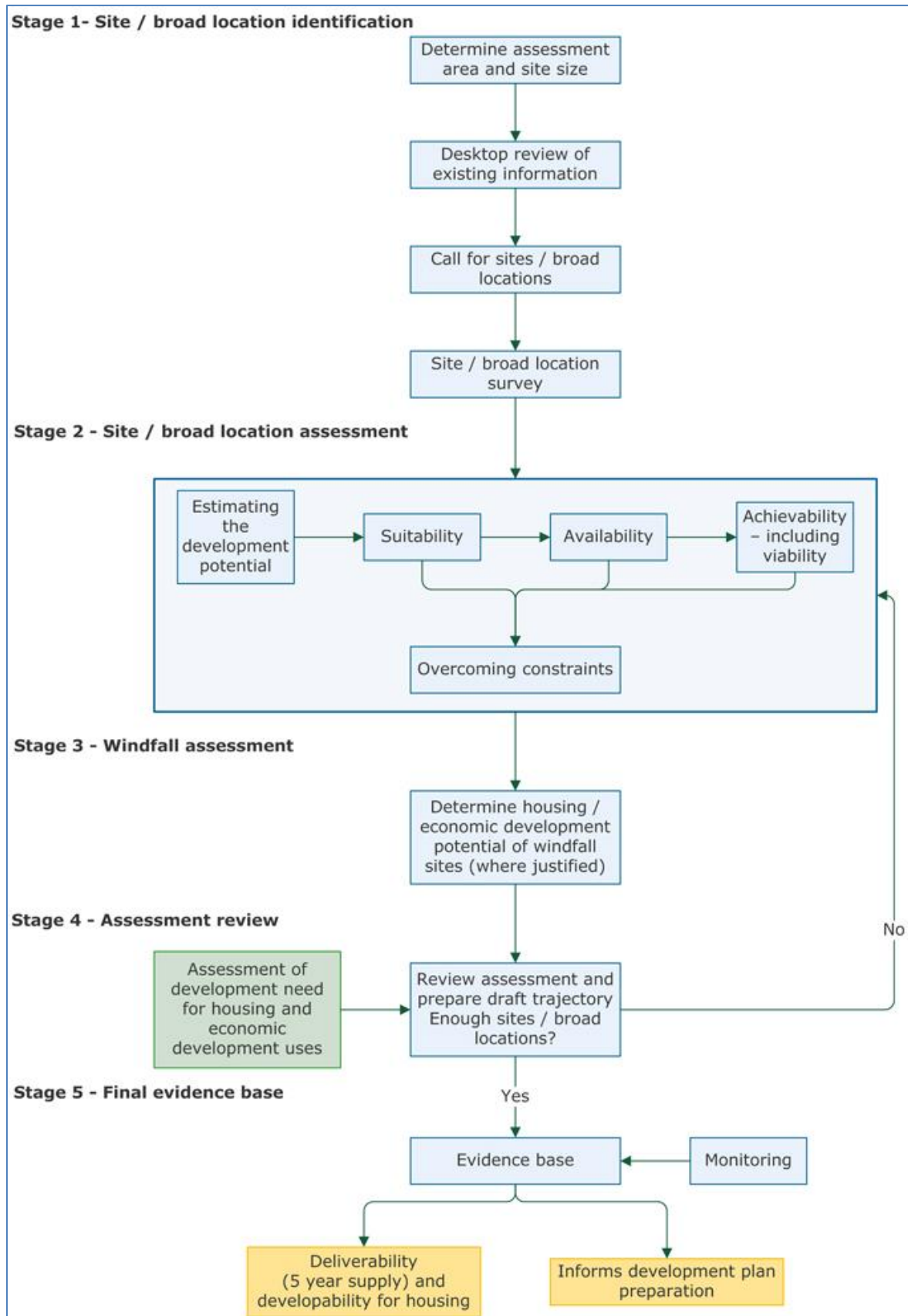


Figure 1: Housing and economic land availability methodology - flowchart
 Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 3-005-20190722

- 2.3 The PPG suggests a five stage approach which, when followed, will lead to a robust assessment of land availability. The assessments should be thorough but proportionate. This methodology and advice were followed when undertaking the site assessments.

Local Policy

- 2.4 The Core Strategy (2011) and Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP 2015) make up the development plan for Sevenoaks District. These documents continue to be used in determining planning applications.
- 2.5 The District Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the Core Strategy and ADMP. The Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025) has recently been published for consultation. The SHELAA forms a key part of the evidence base, identifying available and suitable sites which could help in boosting the supply of housing and other types of development across the District.
- 2.6 The sites identified in the SHELAA have been assessed in a 'policy-neutral' manner. This means that they are not judged in detail against current local planning policies the way a planning application would be. Having said that, regard may be had to current policies to provide appropriate context e.g. if a site is already allocated for a particular use, and evidence indicates that use should be retained.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 Sevenoaks District Council has followed the standard methodology for assessing housing and economic land availability as set out in the PPG and shown on the flowchart at Figure 1.
- 3.2 There are a number of stages to the SHELAA methodology. These are as follows:
1. Determine assessment area and site size;
 2. Desktop review of existing information;
 3. Call for sites;
 4. Site survey;
 5. Site assessment;
 6. Windfall assessment; and
 7. Assessment review.

4 Potential Sites

Step 1 – Determine Assessment Area and Site Size

- 4.1 The extent of the assessment area is the District Council boundaries. Whilst the housing market area extends to the Tonbridge part of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and into Tunbridge Wells Borough Council area, it was considered that keeping the assessment to the geography of the District boundaries represents the most pragmatic approach. Both Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council have undertaken their own SHELAA's, and the three documents can be used to understand the overall potential supply of land by housing market area (HMA) and by functional economic market area (FEMA).
- 4.2 With regard to site size, the PPG states that 'it may be appropriate to consider all sites and broad locations capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares (or 500 square meters of floorspace) and above' (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 3-009-20190722). The District Council has previously applied a site size threshold of 5 or more dwellings and currently makes provision for a windfall allowance (sites that come forward unexpectedly and have not been identified for housing through the Local Plan process) for housing development of 1-4 units. The District Council's approach to site size in the SHELAA is therefore consistent with the PPG.

Step 2 – Desktop Review of Existing Information

- 4.3 The District Council has been, and will continue to be, proactive in identifying as wide a range of potential sites for development as possible. This includes a review of the current allocated sites in the Council's adopted Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP). The information provided in the PPG on the 'type of site and potential data source' (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 3-011-20190722) has been followed to ensure that the District Council considers all available types of sites and sources of data that may be relevant in the assessment process. A summary of this is set out in Table 1 below.

Type of site	Potential investigated
Current ADMP allocations not yet with planning permission	There are 6 sites allocated in the ADMP for housing and mixed-use development that are yet to come forward. These sites have been reviewed and form part of this SHELAA in light of the greater need for housing.
2017/18 SHELAA sites not resubmitted or with planning permission	There are a number of sites within existing settlements that were considered in the previous 2018 SHELAA that have not been resubmitted or gained planning permission.

Type of site	Potential investigated
	These sites remain suitable, but to establish updated information on land availability landowners have been written to as part of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan process and invited to resubmit. Sites not resubmitted do not currently form part of this SHELAA.
Sites on the Brownfield Register	This and the previous 2018 SHELAA have been used to help identify sites suitable for the brownfield register, which is updated regularly to ensure the information remains accurate and up to date.
Refused / withdrawn planning applications	A number of sites located within existing settlements that can accommodate 5 or more units had planning permission refused or their application withdrawn within the last five years. These sites were investigated but it was deemed that none were suitable.
Empty properties register	The Housing Strategy 2022-2027 contains a strategy for bringing empty homes back into use which is ongoing and regularly monitored.
Land within the Council's ownership	The Council has worked closely with its internal teams to identify key sites owned by the Council that have potential for housing and mixed use development. These have been included in this SHELAA.
Exploring potential for increased site densities	The Settlement Capacity Study and District-wide Characterisation Study explore potential for increased site densities, including identifying vacant and underutilised land within settlements and the highlighting the types of areas that are suited to higher density development and have less sensitivity to change. These important evidence based studies have informed the assessment of sites to ensure any future development makes the best and most efficient use of land whilst respecting local character.

Table 1: Desktop review of existing information

Step 3 – Call for Sites

Call for Sites 2021

- 4.4 A two stage call for sites was undertaken in Autumn/winter 2021/22 in order to establish initial land availability for all types of development including housing and economic development. It was aimed at as wide an audience as possible, targeting Town and Parish Councils, local landowners, developers, businesses and other interested parties and relevant interest groups, including all those who are on our Local Plan mailing list.
- 4.5 The Stage 1 call for sites invited the submission of sites in non-Green Belt locations and commenced on 14 October 2021. The Stage 2 process, for all other areas of the District, began on 25 November 2021. The call for sites ended for both stage 1 and stage 2 on 20 January 2022. A total of 371 sites were received into the process and these are the focus of this SHELAA.
- 4.6 The District Council has not assumed that the information relating to sites which were put forward for consideration as part of the previous 2018 SHELAA remains up to date and such sites were therefore not automatically considered as part of this SHELAA. During the call for sites, site promoters were contacted and encouraged to resubmit their sites if they wished them to be considered for assessment through this SHELAA.

Targeted Call for Sites – April 2025

- 4.7 In April 2025, the District Council re-opened a targeted Call for Sites. This provided a further opportunity for landowners and site promoters to suggest potential sites that may be suitable for housing, employment or other uses. Sites submitted to the Targeted Call for Sites needed to be within one of the following three categories, in order to be considered:
- Urban sites (within existing settlement boundaries);
 - Previously Developed Land (PDL) / 'brownfield' land
 - Potential greenfield 'grey belt' land

Step 4 – Site Survey

- 4.8 Potential sites were assessed through detailed surveys in order to gain a better understanding of what type and scale of development may be appropriate as well as any barriers to delivery and how they could be overcome. This was achieved using a two stage assessment process, which was presented to the Development and Conservation Advisory Committee in March 2022 and is set out in Figure 2 below. The detailed site assessment framework can be found at Appendix 1.



Figure 2: Two stage assessment process

4.9 The Stage 1 assessment consisted of an initial sieve of the sites to consider site size and sustainability. Sites were discounted where they did not meet the minimum size threshold as set out in the PPG (able to accommodate 5 or more dwellings or larger than 0.15 Ha), and/or where they were not in a sustainable location. Further information on the methodology used at this stage can be found at Appendix 1. The Stage 2 assessment then consisted of undertaking a full site appraisal for each site, utilising the information provided by applicants, GIS data, site visits and stakeholder involvement in order to establish the suitability, availability and achievability of each site. This information was then used to determine which sites were deliverable and developable.

Step 5 – Estimating the Development Potential

- 4.10 The PPG states that an estimate of the development potential of each identified site can be guided by existing or emerging plan policies including any locally determined policies on density and that, when assessing development potential, plan makers should seek to make the most efficient use of land in line with policies set out in the NPPF (Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 3-016-20190722). The NPPF clearly states that development should make optimal use of the potential of each site, and that densities should be uplifted significantly in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (paragraph 130).
- 4.11 The emerging development strategy for the Sevenoaks District Local Plan Regulation 18 (2025) consultation complies fully with the NPPF in this regard. The Council is firstly focused on optimising development within urban confines, outside of the Green Belt. It is considered that these are the most sustainable locations in the District, well served by public transport and with good access to services and facilities. Focusing development firstly in these areas, in accordance with the NPPF, will promote sustainable transport choices which is key for the Council's commitment of tackling the challenge of climate change across the District. Density options were consulted on in the Plan 2040 Regulation 18 Part 1 in November 2022 and have been used to inform density work through site specific Development Briefs.

- 4.12 Detailed site-specific Development Briefs have been prepared alongside the site assessments for sites which have previously been subject to consultation in the Local Plan process. In addition, a number of larger strategic sites have also been subject to Development Briefs at this Regulation 18 consultation. Further development briefs will be produced for the next Regulation 19 publication, planned for Summer 2026.
- 4.13 The briefs seek to promote design excellence, support an efficient planning process and provide stakeholders, developers and the local community with the opportunity to input into the development vision. The briefs also aim to promote optimised density on sites within existing settlements considering the character of the surrounding area, site sensitivities and proximity to public transport and local services. A 'character-led' approach supports the delivery of appropriate densities that make the best and most efficient use of land in settlements across the District, in accordance with paragraph 124 and 125 of the NPPF. The SHELAA also considers making the best and most efficient use of land through co-location and mixed use development.

Suitability Assessment

- 4.14 Suitability is a high-level assumption about whether a site could be developed, not whether a site should or will be developed. The suitability of a site is one, albeit crucial, aspect of the SHELAA assessment. Determining a site's suitability is done by taking into account the information available to help build up a picture and general understanding of the site in relation to its development potential. Consideration was given to the suitability of all sites that passed the Stage 1 assessment.
- 4.15 The Stage 2 assessment considered both environmental and physical constraints (see site assessment framework at Appendix 1). Where sites were found to be unsuitable due to issues such as flooding, ancient woodland, impact on National Landscapes, unsuitable access or topography, the reasons are clearly set out in the site assessment. Other constraints were also considered and were particularly relevant in respect of existing land and open space allocations. Again, where sites were found to be unsuitable owing to these issues, the reasons are clearly set out in the site assessment. If sites had no known constraints or limitations that would prevent development, then sites were viewed as being suitable.
- 4.16 In line with the NPPF 2024, the SHELAA 2025 introduces the concept of grey belt as a new assessment criterion. This reflects the findings of the updated evidence base on Green Belt land, published alongside the Regulation 18 (2025) consultation. The Green Belt Assessment (2025) identifies certain areas as provisional grey belt, based on their alignment with Green Belt purposes, specifically purpose A, B and D, while omitting a full assessment of Footnote 7 constraints. As such, it is important to clarify that the conclusions relating to grey belt within the SHELAA are provisional and subject to further review.

- 4.17 The NPPF defines grey belt as “land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b) or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey Belt excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development”.
- 4.18 Finally, where sites were discounted as a result of not meeting the requirements of the Stage 1 assessment, these have been listed in the SHELAA so as not to limit opportunities, however the assessment clearly sets out that they are Discounted from the SHELAA (for example, where a site is too small or has been withdrawn or been granted consent), or are contrary to the SHELAA strategy at Appendix A. For clarity, the smaller sites have not been included in the windfall allowance in order to prevent double counting.

Availability Assessment

- 4.19 Availability helps to establish whether a site is a valid option for consideration and relates to a landowner’s willingness to see a site developed. Given the role of the SHELAA in enabling the District Council to establish a land supply for future development, if there is an element of doubt over whether a site will come forward or that certain constraints prevent it from being considered available then it cannot realistically be included as a potential option. Detailed availability work will be undertaken ahead of the Regulation 19 publication (summer 2026) with site promoters and landowners.
- 4.20 Applicants were asked, when submitting their sites, to indicate the following:
- Details of land ownership/land interests;
 - Whether all of the owners/those with a land interest are aware of the submission;
 - Whether there are any known ownership issues;
 - Whether any work has been undertaken on the promotion of the site;
 - Whether any services/utilities are available on or to the site; and
 - Details of when they expect the site to become available for development.

A judgement was then made based on the information submitted by the applicant as to whether the site was available, and when it is likely to come forward.

- 4.21 Sites put forward that are already allocated for a specific use were found not to be suitable, if there is evidence indicating that particular use should be retained. Where this is the case the reason is clearly set out in the assessment.

Achievability Assessment

- 4.22 The PPG states that 'a site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time'. It goes on to explain that 'this is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period' (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 3-020-20190722).
- 4.23 Assessing achievability requires specialist knowledge and an understanding of market factors, cost issues and delivery of development. A high level viability assessment on the Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025) has been undertaken, however this information was not available when the SHELAA assessments were carried out, therefore for the purposes of the SHELAA a judgement was made, based on information submitted by the site promoter, in each assessment as to whether there is likely to be any abnormal costs associated with developing the site.

Overcoming Constraints

- 4.24 Where constraints to development have been identified, the assessment makes it clear whether mitigation measures are appropriate and required. It is acknowledged that such measures may impact the deliverability of sites. The Council has used the information on suitability, availability and achievability, together with that provided by the applicant, to assess the timescale within which each site is capable of development.

Site Capacities

- 4.25 For the purpose of this Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025), units put forward by the site promoter have been utilised, unless otherwise identified through the SHELAA assessments. Further capacity work will be undertaken through site specific development briefs, utilising the emerging Local Plan evidence base, ahead of the Regulation 19 publication (summer 2026).

Developable Areas

- 4.26 The developable area is not always the same as the gross area of the site. This can be due to issues such as (but not limited to) constraints that cannot be overcome e.g. flooding or ancient woodland, the requirement for new infrastructure on the site, topography or potential land contamination. Where this is the case the justification is clearly set out in the assessment.

Density

- 4.27 For the purpose of the SHELAA, site capacity has been informed by information put forward by site promoters as part of the Call for Sites. Where a number of units has

not been identified, or in the case that a site boundary has been altered through the SHELAA by SDC, the densities used have been clearly set out and explained.

- 4.28. As identified at 4.12 site specific Development Briefs have been prepared for sites which have previously been subject to consultation, alongside this Regulation 18 consultation (Autumn 2025), and have tested densities using the emerging Local Plan evidence base, including stakeholder responses from both the Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation in November 2022 and the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation in Autumn 2023. Development Briefs for all other sites will be prepared ahead of Regulation 19 next summer 2026, once these sites have been subject to at least one round of consultation.
- 4.29 The density levels set out in Table 2 below have also fed into the preparation of site specific Development Briefs, in order to assess potential site capacity. These are based on examples of well-designed and high quality development that has recently been delivered within existing settlements in the District. It is not expected that the upper density level will be achieved in all cases, rather recognising that in some instances development schemes will come forward at a lower density than estimated and in other cases at a higher density. Thus allowing a more detailed design to come forward as appropriate. There is certainly potential however, particularly in the District's town centres and locations close to transport hubs, for these areas to exceed the density levels significantly.

Location type	Density range (dph)
Town centre locations and close to transport hubs	150+
Built up areas	50-150
Edge of built up areas	40-60

Table 2: Density typologies

Timing Assessment

Deliverable Sites

- 4.30 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF requires local authorities to identify deliverable sites. Annex 2 of the NPPF sets out that 'to be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years'.
- 4.31 For the purpose of the SHELAA the availability of each site has been determined using information provided by the landowner or promoter in their submission form. Applicants were requested to indicate a broad time frame that they anticipated the site would become available. Sites were considered deliverable if they were found suitable, achievable, and if it was anticipated that the site would come forward within 1-5 years, unless there was other specific information to suggest that the site would not be available within 5 years.
- 4.32 Table 3 below sets out, by settlement, the number of deliverable sites, and the potential number of units these sites could yield.

	No. deliverable sites	Potential no. units
Sevenoaks	17	328
Swanley	9	295
Edenbridge	7	81
Westerham	3	37
Hartley	4	120
Otford	1	7
New Ash Green	5	99
West Kingsdown	2	36
Eynsford	1	5
Kemsing	3	32
South Darenth	7	129
Hextable	6	119
Brasted	1	7
Four Elms	1	12
Halstead	4	78
Chiddingstone Causeway	2	51
Horton Kirby	2	90
Swanley Village	1	9
Noahs Ark	1	40
TOTAL	77	1,575

Table 3: Sites considered deliverable by settlement

Developable Sites

- 4.33 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF requires local authorities to identify developable sites. Annex 2 of the NPPF sets out that ‘to be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged’.
- 4.34 The availability of each site has been determined as per paragraph 4.19 above. Sites were considered developable if they were found suitable, achievable, and if the landowner or promoter anticipated that the site would come forward during years 5-10 or years 11+.
- 4.35 Table 4 below sets out, by settlement, the number of developable sites, and the potential number of units these sites could yield.

	No. developable sites	Potential no. units
Sevenoaks	8	2,795
Swanley	6	1,648
Edenbridge	9	2,050
Hartley	1	114
Otford	1	150
New Ash Green	4	1,090
West Kingsdown	2	264
Kemsing	2	301
South Darenth	1	200
Hextable	4	826
Halstead	1	130
Chiddingstone Causeway	1	300
Standalone	1	2,579
TOTAL	41	12,447

Table 4: Sites considered developable by settlement

Step 6 – Windfall Assessment

- 4.36 Windfall sites are defined as ‘sites not specifically identified in the development plan’ and, in Sevenoaks District, are an important element of the overall housing supply. Paragraph 75 of the NPPF sets out that ‘where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends’.

4.37 The delivery of unidentified small sites in the District has been and will continue to be an important source of housing supply, and therefore the SHELAA should include an estimation of future housing delivery from windfall sites. Given that the SHELAA considers all sites capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, to avoid double counting the windfall allowance includes sites capable of delivering 1-4 dwellings only.

4.38 Table 5 below sets out housing completions on windfall sites in Sevenoaks District over the last 9 years.

Year	Total no. units on sites of 1-4 units
2016-17	80
2017-18	82
2018-19	64
2019-20	92
2020-21	54
2021-22	112
2022-23	82
2023-24	58
2024-25	55
Total	6795
Annual average	75

Table 5: Windfall completions 2016-17 to 2024-25

4.39 The inclusion of these historic delivery rates are considered reasonable because it is an extensive period that corresponds to the early years post the adoption of the Core Strategy (2011) and Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015). Further, there is no evidence to show that supply from this source is diminishing. Therefore, the historic delivery of windfalls from small sites over a lengthy period provides compelling evidence that they will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. The allowance of 75 units per year is realistic being based on the annual average windfall supply from sites capable of delivering 1-4 dwellings over that period. To avoid double counting with extants, the windfall allowance is not applied to years 1-3 of the plan period. Over the plan period, the windfall allowance totals to 900.

4.40 The windfall assessment will continue to be regularly reviewed through future SHELAA updates.

Step 7 – Assessment Review

4.41 The information from this SHELAA forms an important part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, identifying where there are sites that are available, suitable and achievable within the District's settlement boundaries that could be brought forward or allocated for development to assist in meeting the District's development needs over the period 2025-2040.

- 4.42 The SHELAA currently identifies potential for 2,110 residential units to be delivered within existing settlements and 11,912 residential units to be delivered outside of urban confines. However it is important to note that the SHELAA is an evolving evidence base document. It is expected that the SHELAA will be updated throughout the plan-making process to take account of any additional sites that are either identified by the Council or brought to the Council's attention.
- 4.43 As set out in Section 1, this SHELAA has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 18 consultation (2025) of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan 2027-2042, and as such, focuses on the potential to meet development needs in full across the plan period. The SHELAA therefore assesses all potential sites which passed the Stage 1 of the SHELAA process (Figure 2), located within existing settlements, adjacent to urban confines of the District's top 14 settlements, and where sites are large enough to accommodate a standalone settlement.
- 4.44 At the next stage a housing trajectory will be prepared, showing the development potential of sites against the overall housing requirement.

5 Employment Sites

- 5.1 The Economic Needs Study (ENS) was completed in August 2022 and updated in 2025. It identifies a need for 40,400 sqm of employment floorspace, including 14,600 sqm for industrial activity and 25,800 sqm for office activity over the Plan period up to 2042. Using standard plot ratios, this equates to an indicative land need of 6.3 ha. It is recognised that it might be possible to accommodate some of this forecast need through the intensification of uses on existing sites.
- 5.2 The ENS also provides an assessment of the existing allocated employment sites in the District, including consideration of quantity, quality and whether they meet current and expected future demand. It was found that the majority of these sites are performing well, but there is scope for the consideration of alternative uses (e.g. housing) in some cases.
- 5.3 No previously unidentified sites located within existing settlements were submitted through the call for sites for employment use. However, a number of existing employment sites (allocated and non-allocated) were submitted through the call for sites for housing. These sites were assessed in exactly the same way as the housing and mixed use sites, but with the ENS conclusions on the assessment of existing employment sites a key factor in determining whether the existing employment uses on these sites could be lost or not.

6 Gypsy & Traveller Sites

- 6.1 An updated Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was published alongside the Regulation 18 consultation (2025) and identifies a need for 192 permanent pitches over the plan period up to 2042.
- 6.2 A number of sites were submitted through the Call for Sites for Gypsy and Traveller use, and these have been assessed in line with the SHELAA methodology. Sites which have been found suitable are proposed at emerging Policy GT1.

7 Next Steps and Future Updates

- 7.1 Undertaking and updating the SHELAA is an iterative process and as such, any future reviews will incorporate any new information put forward to the District Council. This will include any new sites and any additional information about the identified sites.

Appendix A – Site Assessment Framework

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)
Site Assessment Framework
Autumn 2025

Stage 1 Assessment

Undertake initial sieve of sites. Discount sites that:

1. Are unable to accommodate 5 or more units (sites of 0.15 Ha or less) for housing or mixed use, or 500sqm or more (sites of 0.25 Ha or less) for employment uses.
2. Are not in an appropriate/sustainable location for development, for all development types.

Not appropriate/sustainable location is defined, by the Settlement Hierarchy 2025, as:

- More than 400m from the urban confines of the Principal Town (Sevenoaks Urban Area) and Towns (Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham)
- More than 400m from Greater London built up area
- More than 250m from the urban confines of Primary Service Settlements (Hartley, Otford and New Ash Green) and Secondary Service Settlements (West Kingsdown, Eynsford, Seal, Kemsing, South Darenth, Pratts Bottom and Hextable).
- All sites elsewhere in the District unless the site could be considered a self-sustaining settlement (1,500 units or larger)

Stage 2 Assessment

Undertake detailed site appraisal.

SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT - RAG analysis

Suitability criteria	Green	Amber	Red
Is the site within urban confines?	Yes	Partial or No	
Land use	PDL	Mixed	Greenfield
Existing use to be lost?	No Yes but reprovided	Yes (non-allocated)	Yes (allocated)
Existing allocation / designation?	No		Yes
Proposed use / designation	No		Yes
Is the site in the Green Belt?	No	Partial or Within (adjacent to urban confines)	Within (not adjacent to urban confines)

Suitability criteria	Green	Amber	Red
Green Belt Stage 3 (2025 Assessment)	Not in the Green Belt Grey belt		Strongly performing and not grey belt
Is the site in the National Landscapes?	No	Partial or Adjacent	Within
Landscape sensitivity	Low Low-Medium	Medium	Medium-High High
Agricultural land quality	Grade 4 and 5 / non-agricultural	Grade 3	Grade 1 and 2
Flood risk	None or FZ1	FZ 2	FZ3
SSSI	No	Partial or Adjacent	Within
SSSI impact risk zone	N/A	Requirement to consult KCC	
Local Wildlife Site	No	Partial or Adjacent	Within
Local Nature Reserve	No	Partial or Adjacent	Within
Ancient woodland	No	Partial or Adjacent	Within
Presence of designated and non-designated heritage assets	None	Assets on site or in vicinity and further consideration on impact of significance is required	
Air Quality Management Area	None	Partially within AQMA or adjacent to AQMA	Fully within AQMA
Contamination issues	None	Sites with a previous use	Within or adjacent to a current or former landfill site
Noise pollution	None	Within or adjacent to noise-generating uses	Within or adjacent to significant noise-generating uses
Air Quality	No specific risk	Air Quality Assessment required (Impact on Road Network)	Air Quality Assessment required (Impact on Development and on Road Network)
Mineral safeguarding areas	None	Partial or Adjacent	Within
Site access	Existing access utilised	New/additional access required	Access is difficult
Site capacity	Capacity on transport network	Limited capacity on transport network and requires improvements	No capacity on transport network

Suitability criteria	Green	Amber	Red
Settlement classification	Within/adjacent to towns (400m buffer) and local service centres/service villages (250m buffer)	Within/adjacent to villages	Within/adjacent to hamlets or in open countryside
Proximity to nearest town and local centre (using walking routes)	Up to 800m (walkable in 10 mins)	800m-2km (walkable and cycle friendly)	Over 2km
Proximity to nearest train station (using walking routes)	Up to 800m (walkable in 10 mins)	800m-2km (walkable and cycle friendly)	Over 2km

AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

Determine when the site is available for development, based on the information included within the submission:

- Within years 1-5 and therefore deliverable;
- Within years 6-10 or years 11+ and therefore developable; or
- Not available within plan period 2027-2042 and therefore not currently developable.

ACHIEVABILITY ASSESSMENT

Determine when the development of the site is achievable, based on the information included within the submission:

- Within years 1-5 and therefore deliverable;
- Within years 6-10 or years 11+ and therefore developable; or
- Not achievable within plan period 2027-2042 and therefore not currently developable.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Determine an overall conclusion for the site, based on the assessment of suitability, availability and achievability:

- Site can be considered deliverable overall if it is suitable, available and achievable within years 1-5;
- Site can be considered developable overall if it is suitable, available and achievable within years 6-10 or years 11+;
- Site is considered not currently developable overall if it is not suitable, available or achievable within the plan period 2027-2042.

Determine capacity of site by multiplying developable area by appropriate density range.