

North Somerset Futures
Local Development Framework

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

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Executive Summary

- 1 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) are a key component of the evidence base used to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing. These assessments are required by national planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3). This requires local planning authorities to:
 - identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan that are ready for development,
 - identify specific, deliverable sites for years 6-10,
 - ideally identify sites for years 11-15, but where this is not possible, to indicate broad locations for future growth, and,
 - not include an allowance for windfalls in the first 10 years of the plan unless there are justifiable local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.

- 2 The primary purpose of the SHLAA is to:
 - identify sites with potential for housing
 - assess their housing potential and
 - assess when they are likely to be developed.

- 3 The SHLAA is an important evidence source to inform plan making but does not in itself determine whether a specific site should be either allocated or granted planning permission for housing development.

- 4 The North Somerset SHLAA conforms with current national guidance as set out in Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments: Practice Guidance (DCLG 2007). It reviews and rolls forward the 2008 SHLAA to form a robust evidence base to support the Core Strategy and the Sites and Policies DPD for the period 2011-2026. The SHLAA will be kept up to date through the Annual Monitoring Report process.

- 5 The SHLAA process is co-ordinated at the West of England level by the Strategic Housing Market Partnership (SHMP). This includes the six local authorities and representatives of the house builders, social landlords and other stakeholders. The West of England SHMP has agreed a common methodology (based on the 2007 guidance) so that a sub-regional overview of housing land availability can be determined, and assesses individual SHLAAs to ensure consistency.

- 6 The nature of the housing challenge within North Somerset relates to the scale and location of the district housing requirement. The current development plan context is provided by RPG10 (2001) which provided a housing requirement for the former county of Avon covering the period to 2016. The local requirement is set out in the Joint Replacement Structure Plan (2002) and the Replacement Local Plan (2007) which both cover the

period to 2011. The North Somerset housing requirement of 14,900 dwellings 1996- 2011 (993 pa) has been delivered.

- 7 The housing requirement is currently being rolled forward to 2026. At the time of the 2008 SHLAA the assumption was that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West would provide the strategic planning context. This document proposed 26,750 new dwellings 2006-2026, including two urban extensions at Weston-super-Mare and South West Bristol. However, despite reaching a relatively advanced stage of preparation, the draft RSS was never adopted and has now been effectively abandoned.
- 8 The planning context for the SHLAA is the Core Strategy. This identifies a locally-derived housing figure of 13,400 dwellings 2006-2026 including a strategic allocation at Weston Villages. While one of the principal objectives of the SHLAA is to assess the potential supply to deliver this requirement, the assessment will also provide evidence on what additional potential capacity there may be to assist the plan-making process.
- 9 The role of the SHLAA is therefore to explore the opportunities that exist to meet the demand and need for housing in North Somerset, and to help determine whether the availability of land for housing will be a constraint on delivery. Potential sites are appraised to assess their suitability and the extent of any constraints, as well as actions to overcome such constraints. An indication is then given as to the quantity of supply throughout the plan period from 2011 to 2026. This includes an initial assessment of the suitability, availability and achievability of each site as recommended by the practice guidance and in line with PPS 3 paragraph 54. It must be emphasised again however that it is for the plan-making process to make the decision on the suitability of site allocation.
- 10 A significant part of the methodology was to assess a range of potential sites, derived from the following sources:
 - Review of 2008 SHLAA.
 - Sites with unimplemented/outstanding planning permissions.
 - Replacement Local Plan allocations.
 - Core Strategy strategic allocation at Weston Villages.
 - Sites promoted by landowners/developers (the 2010 'call for sites' and other known opportunities such as SW Bristol).
- 11 These taken together form a 'total assessed capacity' which equated to around 31,061 dwellings, most of which were discounted through the assessment process. The discounted potential included sites in the Green Belt (including SW Bristol urban extension), Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain), and sites in the countryside not adjacent to settlement boundaries. This left a residual potential of around **7,361** dwellings in locations which are broadly consistent with the policy objectives of the Core Strategy.

12 The key findings of the SHLAA are:

Housing requirement

- The residual Core Strategy housing requirement is 13,400 dwellings 2006-2026. Deducting completions of 4,950 dwellings as at April 2011 this leaves a residual requirement of 8,450 dwellings 2011-2016.
- At April 2011 sites with planning permission (less lapse rate) and remaining allocations = 3,731 dwellings.
- Total potential capacity within North Somerset from 2006 to 2026 = **17,171** dwellings.

Five year supply

- The Core Strategy five year supply target is 2,815 dwellings.
- Sites available within 5 years = 4,181 dwellings or 7.4 years supply.
- This also meets the 5 year supply plus 20% target as proposed in the National Planning Policy Framework = 2,815 + 563 (20%) = 3,378 dwellings.

13 The North Somerset SHLAA has demonstrated that there exists a range of deliverable and developable sites to meet the Core Strategy requirement of 13,400 dwellings 2006-2026, and the five year supply target. In addition there exists a range of development opportunities which are broadly in accordance with the spatial strategy and which could be assessed through the plan-making process should further housing capacity be required.

North Somerset SHLAA: Land Availability Summary		
Housing requirement		
A	Core Strategy housing requirement 2006-2026	13,400
B	Completions 2006-2011	4,950
C	Residual dwelling requirement 2011-2026	8,450
Sources of supply		
D	Planning permissions on large sites (10+ dwellings) less a lapse rate of 0.73% (excluding Weston Villages)	1,690
E	Planning permissions on small sites (1-9 dwellings) less a lapse rate of 9.43%	450
F	Weston Villages: sites with planning permission/subject to S106	1,000
G	Weston Villages: remaining strategic allocation	4,500
H	Remaining Replacement Local Plan allocations	591
I	Identified potential (excluding Weston Villages)*	2,270
J	Empty homes (10 dwellings pa)	150
K	Windfall (2021-2026) (See section 12)	1,570
L	Potential supply 2011-2026	12,221
M	Overall potential supply 2006-2026 including completions	17,171
Five year supply		
N	Core strategy five year supply target	2,815
O	Available supply 2011-2016	4,181
P	Years supply at April 2011	7.4 years
Figure 1: SHLAA summary		

* The identified potential represents a range of sites to be assessed in detail through the plan-making process. The inclusion of any specific site does not imply that there is a presumption in favour of any development proposal or that planning permission will be granted should an application be submitted.

1 Introduction

National planning policy context

- 1.1 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) are a key component of the evidence base used to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing. These assessments are required by national planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3).
- 1.2 PPS 3 refers to a conceptual and principled approach towards policy-making¹, including an 'evidence based policy approach', which will contribute to the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents (DPDs). With a strong focus on delivery PPS 3 emphasises the role councils will have in identifying sites and managing the process of housing delivery. This is encapsulated in the following four requirements for local planning authorities:
- Identify specific, deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan that are ready for development,
 - Identify specific, developable sites for years 6-10, and ideally years 11-15, in plans to enable the five year supply to be topped up,
 - Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11-15 of the plan, indicate broad locations for future growth, and,
 - Not include an allowance for windfalls in the first 10 years of the plan unless there are justifiable local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified.
- 1.3 At the time the 2011 SHLAA was being finalised draft guidance was published² for consultation as part of a new national planning policy framework. This retains the PPS3 approach but emphasises:
- The need to significantly increase the supply of housing.
 - Continued importance of the use of SHMA and SHLAA as planning tools.
 - Need to maintain a supply of sites consistent with PPS3 - plus a new requirement to demonstrate an additional 20% in addition to the 5 year supply to ensure choice and competition in the market.
- ### Role and purpose of the North Somerset SHLAA
- 1.4 The SHLAA identifies and records potential housing sites across North Somerset to accommodate additional housing. These are identified as a result of the review of sites assessed in the 2008 SHLAA, sites submitted through the 'call for sites' in 2010, the Core Strategy Strategic Allocation at Weston Villages and other known opportunities. It is closely linked to the housing trajectory which forecasts future housing delivery to meet demand for housing across North Somerset, and provides a mechanism to support the phased delivery of housing sites. The SHLAA supports the 'plan,

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, paragraph 11.

² See Department for Communities and Local Government, (2011) Draft National Planning Policy Framework

monitor, manage' approach towards plan making, and will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report process.

- 1.5 Potential housing sites have been appraised to assess their suitability, availability, and achievability, the extent of any constraints, and possible actions to address them. An indication is then given as to the quantity of supply at each 5 year period from 2011 to 2026. The findings from this Assessment will inform the Council in identifying its supply of a five year supply of housing sites³.

1.6 The SHLAA does not allocate sites; neither does it constitute planning policy. It is an evidence source providing an overall assessment of housing supply including an initial appraisal of specific sites. The identification of particular sites does not imply that there is a presumption in favour of any development proposal or that planning permission will be granted should an application be submitted. All such proposals will be considered through the normal development management process. *“The Assessment is an important evidence source [as part of a wider evidence base] to inform plan-making, but does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for housing development”* (paragraph 8, Practice Guidance).

- 1.7 It is for the plan making process to determine which sites are appropriate for housing through testing against policy objectives. Currently allocated sites are identified in the Replacement Local Plan, and the submitted Core Strategy in respect of the strategic allocation at Weston Villages. Future allocations for housing will be made within the Sites and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).

Partnership approach and consultation

- 1.8 The SHLAA process is co-ordinated at the West of England level by the Strategic Housing Market Partnership (SHMP). This includes the six local authorities and representatives of the house builders, social landlords and other stakeholders. Given that the local authorities were at different stages of plan production and faced different housing challenges, a decision was taken not to produce a common SHLAA. Instead, the West of England SHMP has agreed a common methodology (based on the 2007 guidance) so that a sub-regional overview of housing land availability can be determined, and assesses individual SHLAAs to ensure consistency.

³ The five year supply will include; sites set out in Development Plan Documents, sites with planning permission, and sites that have made considerable progress through the planning system. The 5 year supply will be reported within the Annual Monitoring Report.

Meeting the housing challenge

- 1.9 The nature of the housing challenge within North Somerset relates to the scale and location of the district housing requirement. The current development plan context is provided by RPG10 (2001) which provided a housing requirement for the former county of Avon covering the period to 2016. The local requirement is set out in the Joint Replacement Structure Plan (2002) and the Replacement Local Plan (2007) which both cover the period to 2011. During the RLP plan period 1996-2011 total housing completions within North Somerset were 14,848 just 52 short of the target of 14,900 dwellings 1996-2011 (993 per annum).
- 1.10 The housing requirement is currently being rolled forward to 2026. At the time of the 2008 SHLAA the assumption was that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West would provide the strategic planning context. This document proposed 26,750 new dwellings 2006-2026 to be distributed as follows:
- 9,000 at Weston-super-Mare urban extension
 - 9,000 at South West Bristol urban extension
 - 3,000 within the urban area of Weston-super-Mare
 - 5,750 in the remainder of North Somerset
- 1.11 Following examination in 2007 and a Panel Report in 2008, Government Office published The Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West incorporating the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes for public consultation (July 2008). However, despite having reached a relatively advanced stage of preparation, no further progress was made, the draft RSS was never adopted and has now been effectively abandoned. However, the evidence base which supported the development of the draft RSS remains a material consideration.
- 1.12 The coalition government has indicated its intention to revoke Regional Strategies and the 'top down' housing targets within them, leaving local planning authorities to determine locally derived housing targets. This comes as part of a new localism agenda and is a marked shift in how housing development is planned and delivered. At the same time government has emphasised the importance of planning for growth, particularly the need to support sustainable development needed to support economic growth. At the heart of the system remains a requirement to plan for growth based on objective evidence and where housing is concerned, on an assessment of housing need and land availability and deliverability.
- 1.13 The planning context for the SHLAA is the Core Strategy. This identifies a locally-derived housing figure of 13,400 dwellings 2006 to 2026 based on evidence commissioned in 2010⁴. This work, using a similar methodology

⁴ North Somerset: Determining a locally derived District Core Strategy housing requirement to 2026 – Stage 1 Report (2010)

as the draft RSS approach, was based on an assessment of economic growth and resultant housing requirements, and taking into account revised economic growth forecasts.

- 1.14 While one of the principal objectives of the SHLAA is to assess the potential supply to deliver this requirement, the assessment will also provide evidence on what additional potential capacity there may be to assist the plan-making process.
- 1.15 Based on the Core Strategy housing requirement of 13,400 dwellings and deleting completions, at April 2011 there is a residual requirement of 8,450 dwellings to be identified to 2026. Whilst not introducing a ceiling on the SHLAA, this does provide a useful parameter and guide to the nature of the housing challenge in line with the practice guidance. This has helped to define the search area.

Key challenges facing housing land supply and delivery

- 1.16 There are a number of recognised issues regarding housing delivery including:
- Demonstrating deliverability of housing potential, particularly achievability in the context of uncertain economic/market conditions.
 - Ensuring that sufficient investment in infrastructure can be achieved to facilitate housing delivery (through a combination of Community Infrastructure Levy, Section 106, and other sources of funding), and facilitate quality place-making and community-building.
 - Delivery of Weston Villages taking into account infrastructure required, development economics and wider policy objectives such as the employment-led priority.
 - Identifying supply in Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead as the main urban areas and the impact of additional housing in these locations, for example on infrastructure capacity.
 - Promotion of sites not in accordance with the emerging local development framework.
 - The need for contingency planning in the light of non-delivery or in the event that there is a mismatch between the housing requirement and identified capacity.

5 year requirement

- 1.17 At April 2011 the 5 year requirement target was calculated as follows:

Core Strategy requirement 2006-2026	13,400 dwellings.
Completions 2006-2026	4,950 dwellings.
Remaining requirement 2011-2026	8,450 dwellings.
5 year supply target is 8,450 dwellings/15 years x 5 (years supply) = 2,815 dwellings.	
Figure 2: 5 year requirement	

- 1.18 If the draft National Planning Policy Framework requirement comes into force, the need to demonstrate an additional 20% would increase the 5 year requirement by an additional 563 to 3,378 dwellings.
- 1.19 This Assessment does not assume a specific housing requirement as this is not the role of the SHLAA, nor is it unduly guided by policy-based assumptions. However it is important to have an understanding of the broad housing challenge in order to determine options for meeting those requirements, and to be able to focus the study in the most appropriate areas. For the purposes of drawing conclusions as part of this assessment, the submitted Core Strategy housing requirement is used as a means of comparing against identified potential.

2 Methodology

- 2.1 The North Somerset SHLAA follows the methodology set out in the DCLG SHLAA practice guidelines (2007). Paragraph 15 of the guidance advises that when followed local planning authorities should not need to justify the methodology at independent examination.
- 2.2 The three primary objectives of the SHLAA as set out in the Guidance are to:
- Identify sites with potential for housing;
 - Assess their housing potential; and,
 - Assess when they are likely to be developed.
- 2.3 Figure 1 lists the core outputs from the Assessment as recommended in the Guidance.

1	A list of sites, cross-referenced to maps showing locations and boundaries of specific sites (and showing broad locations, where necessary)
2	Assessment of the deliverability/developability of each identified site (ie in terms of its suitability, availability and achievability ¹⁰) to determine when an identified site is realistically expected to be developed
3	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)
4	Constraints on the delivery of identified sites
5	Recommendations on how these constraints could be overcome and when

Figure 3: Core outputs from the Assessment. Source: DCLG 2007

2.4 Figure 4 reproduces the methodology diagram contained in the 2007 guidance: this provides the overall structure for the North Somerset SHLAA.

Diagrammatic methodology

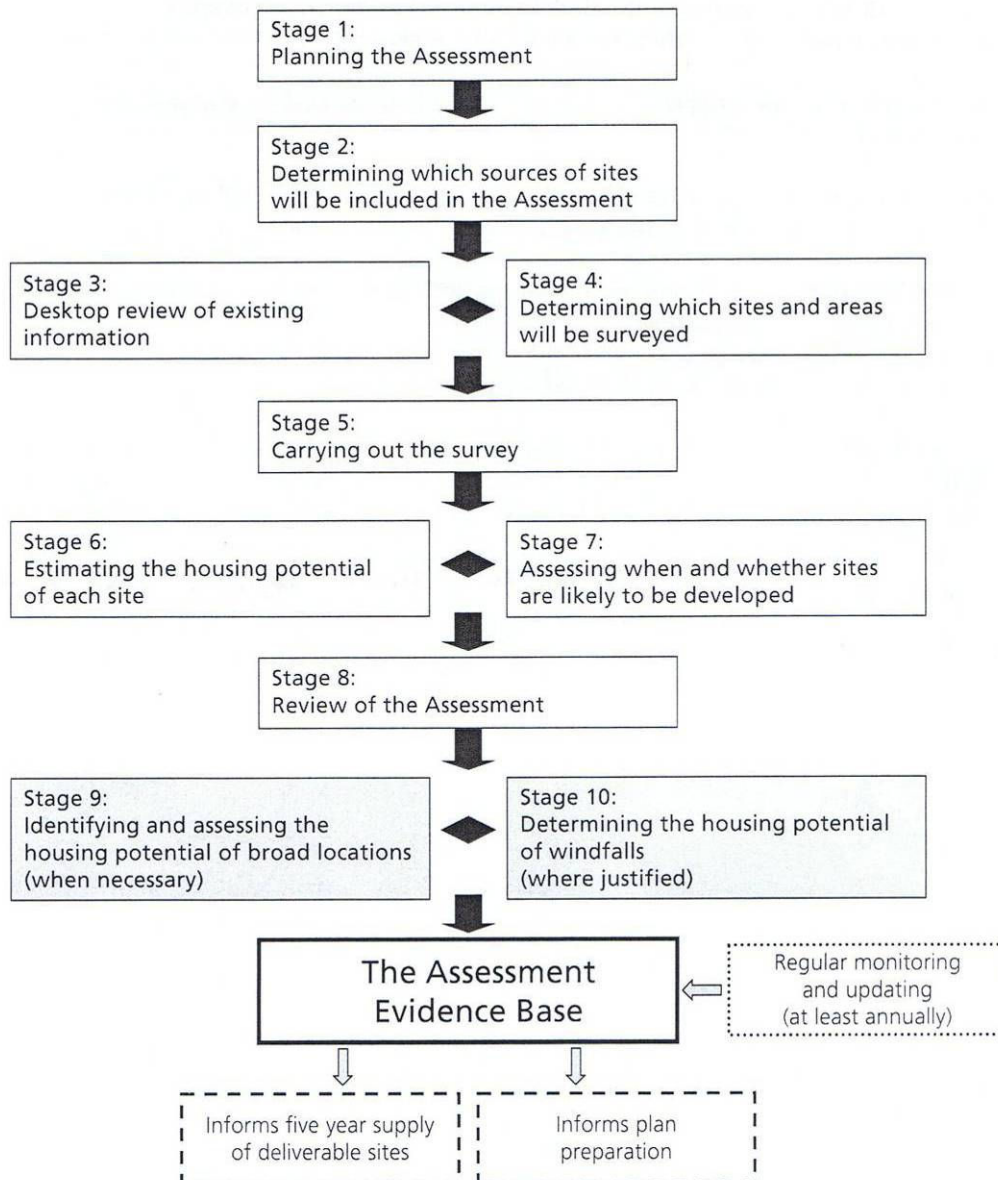


Figure 4: Methodology diagram. Source: DCLG 2007

3 Stage 1: Planning the Assessment

3.1 The overall approach was to start by identifying sites from a range of sources. This is referred to as the assessed capacity. These sites are then assessed at a fairly high level to derive the discounted capacity and the identified potential. The sites comprising the identified potential are then assessed in more detail.

- 3.2 The 2011 SHLAA is a review of the 2008 assessment and uses broadly the same methodology which has been agreed by the West of England Housing Market Partnership.
- 3.3 A specific site size threshold has not been used for the study. Instead a minimum dwelling yield figure has been used, so the SHLAA has not assessed opportunities for specific sites that would yield less than five dwellings. This approach is considered justified given the large amount of housing expected on medium to large sites. During the call for sites however, no parameters were placed on the sites submitted in order to obtain a comprehensive selection of sites across North Somerset.
- 3.4 This SHLAA covers the administrative boundaries of North Somerset. The base date for the Assessment is April 2011, and relates to the LDF time period up to 2026. The dwelling yield is distributed across the plan period reflecting in three 5 year time periods reflecting the PPS 3 approach:
- Initial 5 years (2011-2016)
 - Years 6-10 (2016-2021)
 - Years 11-15 (2021-2026).

4 Stage 2: *Determining which sources should be included in the Assessment*

- 4.1 The 2011 SHLAA considered a range of potential sources:
- Review of 2008 SHLAA.
 - Sites with unimplemented/outstanding planning permissions.
 - Replacement Local Plan allocations.
 - Core Strategy strategic allocation at Weston Villages.
 - Sites promoted by landowners/developers (the 2010 'call for sites' and other known opportunities such as SW Bristol).

Sites currently in the planning process

Unimplemented/ outstanding planning permissions

- 4.2 These will be reviewed in order to assess the likely level of housing development that may come forward in the short term. The Residential Land Survey (RLS 2011) maintains a schedule of sites with an outstanding permission. Using information on past trends a prediction can be made as to the likely level of development that will come forward. Sites with planning permission are not mapped in this Assessment because they are already collated within the RLS, including an address and grid reference.
- 4.3 At April 2011 there were 3,200 dwellings with planning permission, compared to 3,511 in 2007. In order to provide a robust estimate of how many of these 3,200 dwellings are likely to be delivered, analysis of previous lapse rates has been undertaken. Large and small sites have been analysed separately (a large site providing a net gain of 10 or more

units, a small site delivering 1-9 dwellings net gain). On large sites, over the past five years an average of 0.73% potential unit capacity from planning permissions expires each year, evidencing the fact that once planning permission has been granted on these sites, there is an almost definite intention to develop. There is a different picture in respect of small sites where permissions may be sought for valuation/investment reasons, or where finance can be difficult. We have looked at full permissions and reserved matters applications for small sites over the past three years, as this is the standard amount of time that a permission remains extant before expiring. This provides an average lapse rate of 9.43% of total unit capacity to apply to the small sites permission figures. The 3,200 current potential from permissions is made up of 2,703 on large sites and 497 on small sites. Of the large site total, 1,000 units are on the Weston Villages development. Here we do not intend to apply a lapse rate, because as a strategic allocation we are working with developers to bring forward the scheme. After taking this in to account and applying the lapse rates respectively to large and small sites, the figure to be identified as potential capacity from this source is 3,140 units, as set out below.

	Total units with permission	Lapse rate to apply	Total capacity expected
Weston Villages	1,000	0	1,000
Large sites	1,703	0.73%	1,690
Small sites	497	9.43%	450
TOTAL	3,200	-	3,140

Figure 5: Extant planning permissions at 2011

Replacement Local Plan housing allocations

- 4.4 Fifteen allocated sites that have no planning permissions have been included within this source. This is one more site than was assessed through the 2008 Assessment and reflects a site planning permission expiring. These sites provide for a possible 591 units.

Core Strategy strategic allocation at Weston Villages

- 4.5 Land is allocated at Weston Villages in the submitted Core Strategy. This comprises employment-led redevelopment of sites between Weston and the M5 focussed on the former Weston Airfield and RAF Locking. The Weston Villages SPD will provide the masterplanning framework for the delivery of approximately 5,500 dwellings by 2026. Planning permission has been granted for the first phases of development.

Sites not currently in the planning process

Sites promoted by landowners/developers

- 4.6 Landowners were invited to put their sites forward as part of the 2010 'call for sites' undertaken at the start of work on the site allocations element of the Sites and Policies DPD. This was not limited in terms of location, constraints, size of site or dwelling yield. This resulted in a significant

number of sites being put forward that have subsequently been considered as part of this assessment.

- 4.7 The SHLAA has also taken into account other sites that were put forward in the context of representations to LDF documents. These include proposals for a larger scale of development at Weston, proposals at other towns and villages as well as development in the Green Belt at SW Bristol.
- 4.8 All potential sites fall within one or more of the identified categories below. These categories are used in the Residential Land Survey monitoring framework and allow convenient comparisons to be made between future potential and historic activity.

Sources of housing supply based on RLAS classifications	
Category 1	Vacant, previously developed land and buildings
Category 2	Vacant land, not previously developed
Category 3a	Redevelopment of existing housing
Category 3b	Redevelopment of other existing uses
	Development of underused car parks
Category 5	Conversion of commercial buildings
Category 6	Living over the shop
Category 7	Sub-division of existing housing
	Intensification of existing housing
Category 9	Empty homes
Figure 6: Sources of housing supply	

Vacant, previously developed land and buildings

- 4.9 Provision from this source is central to a sustainable approach to housing development. Both national and local policy guidance has put increasing emphasis on development within existing urban areas and in particular the need to make efficient use of previously developed land, particularly where it will support regeneration objectives.

Vacant land, not previously developed

- 4.10 This category covers all greenfield potential. A high proportion of the assessed capacity was put forward within rural locations where there are sustainability conflicts and other constraints. The proposals for large scale development in the Green Belt at SW Bristol are also included within this category.

Redevelopment of existing housing

- 4.11 Redevelopment schemes tend to, but not always, deliver a larger amount of dwellings, along with the potential for a more efficient use of land, a better mix and tenure of housing and support regeneration objectives. It is not anticipated that this category will represent a significant source of housing supply.

Redevelopment of other existing uses

- 4.12 The redevelopment of other existing uses includes commercial property. In instances where an existing use no longer offers a suitable or

sustainable land use or where the viability of an existing non-residential use is problematic, a change of use to residential may provide a more efficient use of land, although this needs to be balanced with wider sustainability objectives.

Development of underused car parks

- 4.13 The redevelopment of underused car parks is not a significant source of potential housing in North Somerset. The majority of car parks generally perform a role in supporting town centre viability and tourism benefits. However there may be instances where non viable car parks could benefit from redevelopment without an adverse impact on the other objectives.

Conversion of commercial/ non-residential land and buildings

- 4.14 Particular types of buildings lend themselves to residential conversion largely depending on their physical characteristics of the building and their location. The use may be either be no longer necessary or can be provided in a more appropriate and contemporary way. The government's intention to relax permitted development to allow change of use from commercial to residential could have an impact on supply from this category. The impacts of this change will need to be monitored and taken into account in any future review of SHLAA.

Living over the shop

- 4.15 Research in conjunction with the 2008 SHLAA suggests that, of the retail units studied within the town centre of Weston-super-Mare, only a very small proportion has residential above, with a higher incidence on units on the periphery of the main shopping street, for example at Meadow Street and St James Street. This tended to be the lower value retail units in lower value premises and is perhaps indicative of a situation where the residential units supplement the income generated from the retail use. Along the main pedestrianised High Street, there was no residential above, only storage and other associated uses. Consideration should also be given to the quantity of empty, underused space which could actively contribute to housing provision, and enhance vitality and viability of town centres. While research has suggested that this can be successful as part of a wider regeneration scheme⁵, it is not considered that this is likely to be a significant source of supply in terms of the overall SHLAA assessment.

Subdivision of existing housing

- 4.16 Historically there has been much sub-division of large stone-built houses developed throughout the 19th and 20th centuries throughout North Somerset, being located mainly at Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, and Portishead, resulting in a large number of flats in certain areas and a consequent increase in net density. Sub-divisions raise issues related to the character of these areas, impact on residential amenity and the demand for car parking.

⁵ ODPM (1997) 'Evaluation of flats over shops', Housing Research Summary No. 067

- 4.17 Future potential from subdivisions should take into account the remaining capacity for subdivisions within the building stock, the economics of conversion, the planning policy context, the impacts on existing areas, and the demand and need for smaller dwellings. Market conditions will be a factor in particular the potential slow down of new build and the effect this may have on this source of supply.

Intensification of existing residential areas

- 4.18 Intensification describes the infilling of additional dwellings into an existing area. In most cases there is a net gain in dwellings thus increasing the density of a given area. An increasingly common form of intensification in North Somerset has been the development of the curtilage of properties to provide additional dwellings, but also includes other forms of infilling in an existing residential area. Any potential intensification proposal has to take into account the existing character of the area, and the existing infrastructure capacity and its ability to absorb additional housing.
- 4.19 Recent Government amendments to national policy have excluded gardens from being classified as brownfield land and this may serve to reduce the rate at which intensification of existing urban areas takes place.

Empty homes

- 4.20 The strategy set out in this Assessment includes empty homes as an important element of bringing existing empty homes back into effective use, although it is recognised that wider strategies are required to encourage the reuse of empty homes. The Council has set out its strategy for empty homes in the Empty Homes Strategy, 2008-2011.
- 4.21 Based on comparable data received from Council Tax returns for June 2011, there are around 1,296 empty homes across North Somerset that have been empty for 6 months or longer (termed non-transactional vacancies), a slight increase on the 1,160 recording in 2008. Whilst some vacancies are down to the normal functioning of the housing market termed transactional vacancies (properties active in the housing market), it is the non-transactional vacancies that may require action to bring them back into active use.
- 4.22 In assessing potential from this source regard should be had to the available mechanisms to ensure empty properties come back into active use. Engagement with property owners to encourage reuse has a key role to play.

5 Stage 3: Desktop review of existing information

- 5.1 The desktop review at the start of the process considered a range of sources including National Land Use Database (NLUD) information, 2008 SHLAA, Residential Land Survey 2011, and other relevant information on potential housing supply including planning applications, other submissions and briefs. This information was factored into the Assessment.

6 Stage 4: *Determining which sites and areas will be surveyed*

- 6.1 Housing potential has been assessed across the whole of North Somerset. This is to ensure that the SHLAA is fit for purpose, is not unduly constrained (as a technical evidence document) by policy judgements, and offers a broad assessment of the options available to the Council to meet its identified housing requirement. The call for sites was not limited to particular areas in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of land availability.
- 6.2 There are a number of broad constraints on developing in North Somerset (see plan below), including Green Belt, large areas at risk from flooding, and the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These together provide some of the main constraints on future development but importantly the balance of these issues or rather the importance attached to each, should be considered as part of an overall strategy to identify land for housing. In the case of flood risk the general approach is to identify sites in areas of least flood risk and secondly to identify and deliver mitigation strategies. The SHLAA does not seek to make judgements on the relative importance of these issues as this is more properly a policy based issue; the SHLAA will however highlight where these issues are relevant.

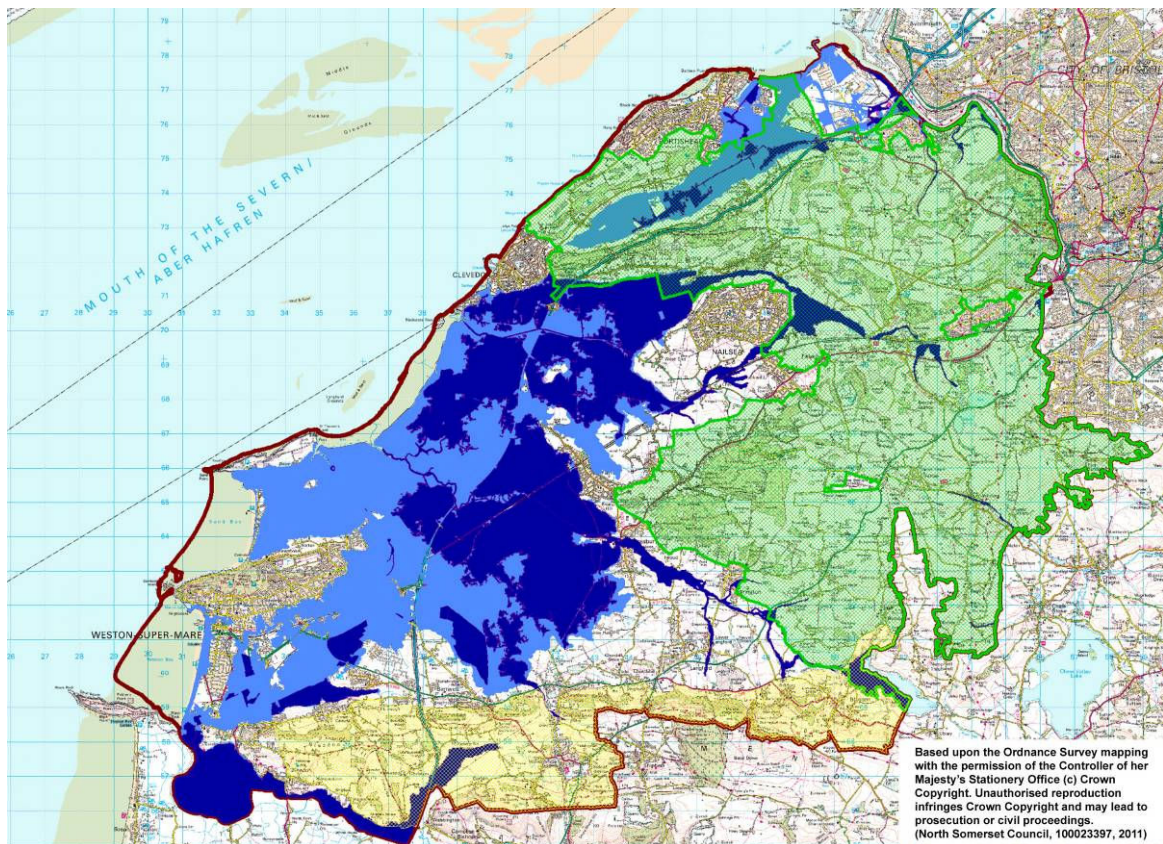


Figure 7: Broad constraints plan

- 6.3 The SHLAA uses the spatial strategy as set out in the submitted Core Strategy to identify the broad geographic areas to be assessed (Weston

Urban Area, Weston Villages, Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea, service villages, infill villages and the countryside) in order to provide both a useful comparator and a means of presenting potential. Housing provided through a mix of settlements will support the strategic objectives set out in PPS 3, including providing opportunity, choice, and sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in urban and rural locations⁶. The identified of the broad geographic areas are shown in the diagram below.

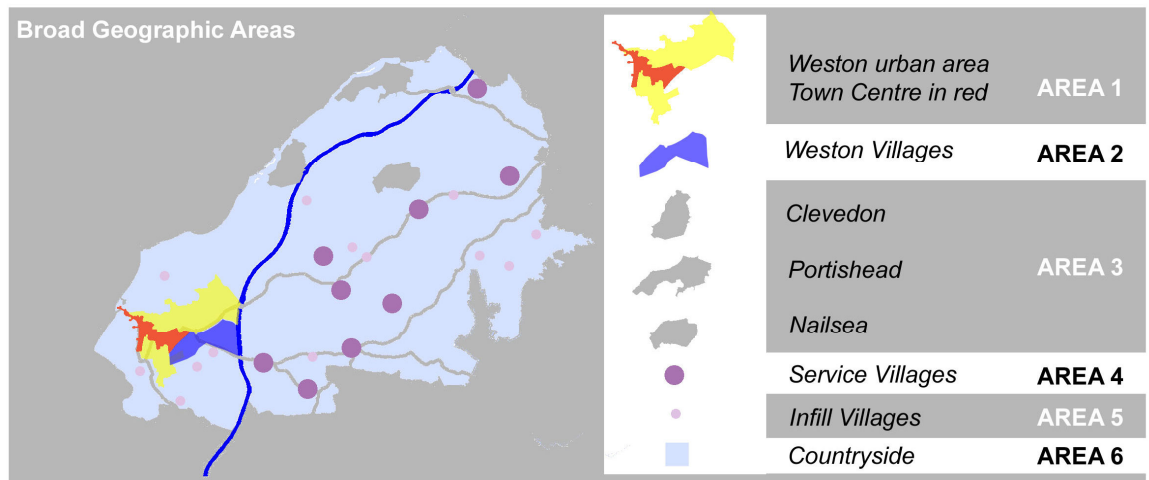


Figure 8: Broad Geographic Areas plan

AREA 1: Weston urban area

- 6.4 Weston-super-Mare is the largest urban area in North Somerset and has been a focus for housing development in recent years including Locking Castle, and West Wick towards the M5. There are a number of sites still allocated for housing development not yet started, some of which have planning permission.
- 6.5 The approach to additional housing development in the town is that it will be employment-led as part of a strategy to rebalance the jobs to homes ratio in the town. This approach was firmly established in the preparation of the adopted Replacement Local Plan (2007) and is a key objective of the submitted Core Strategy.
- 6.6 Significant potential has been identified in the town centre through previous work as part of the Weston Town Centre AAP. This includes a number of regeneration sites suitable for a range of commercial and residential uses.
- 6.7 Some of the most pressing challenges facing housing provision in this area relate to multiple land ownerships, land assembly and dealing with mixed uses. Recent additional investment in the public realm and sea defences should support development and should attract interest in the sites. Already there is anecdotal evidence of increased visitors and spend in the

⁶ PPS 3, paragraph 9.

town (increased footfall and car park usage) following key developments and regeneration particularly around the seafront area.

AREA 2: Weston Villages

- 6.8 The potential of land on the former Weston Airfield and RAF Locking to the south east of Weston has had a long planning history. In 2002 the Weston Vision was prepared as the *Weston Area Development Framework* which explored the development potential of the area, and it was identified as a proposed urban extension in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 6.9 The current approach as set out in the Core Strategy proposes the development of two new communities at Winterstoke and Parklands Villages comprising some 5,000–6,000 dwellings and based on the concepts of place-making and community building. A consultation draft Supplementary Planning Document setting out the masterplanning framework is due to be consulted upon in September/October 2011.
- 6.10 Development of this area must be employment-led and address significant infrastructure constraints such as flood mitigation and transport issues, and deliver sustainable communities. However even given the complexities of the scheme, development activity has started on-site with the permission of 100 units at the Parklands Village, and with up to 900 due to be approved subject to the signing of the accompanying Section 106 Agreement. Alongside this there are active landowners currently pursuing detailed baseline assessments and masterplanning options and are seeking to submit further applications from the end of 2011 through 2012.

AREA 3: Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead

- 6.11 The towns of Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea have traditionally been areas where residential development has been directed as the preferred locations for development⁷.
- 6.12 As part of the baseline SHLAA completed in 2008, assumptions were made, based on analysis of historic activity rates, that there would be an ongoing supply of housing from the urban areas (within the identified settlement boundaries) albeit opportunities for 'new' sites would be limited.
- 6.13 It is envisaged that potential may reduce naturally as opportunities become more limited but this is driven not only by physical opportunities but also by market demand, demographic structure, public policy and wider land use patterns, and government policy on land use such as the exclusion of gardens from brownfield land and the withdrawal of the requirement for a minimum density.
- 6.14 Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea (within the settlement boundaries) do not offer significant potential for additional dwellings over the Core Strategy plan period, although there are expected to be small-scale opportunities

⁷ North Somerset Replacement Local Plan, 2007, Policy GDP/1 *Preferred Locations for Development*

that could come forward, similar to historic trends. In addition redevelopment opportunities from non-residential land uses may provide some supply, potentially increasing in the short term.

- 6.15 The towns in themselves generally have restricted opportunities for future expansion due to recognised constraints, with only Nailsea offering potential directions for growth as explored through this assessment.

AREA 4: Service Villages

- 6.16 Opportunities within the Service Villages are generally limited; however sites for expansion are more numerous, notwithstanding current policy constraint. As part of the 'call for sites' exercise a significant number of sites were submitted adjacent to the settlement boundary, in particular around Banwell, Congresbury, Easton-in-Gordano, Winscombe and Yatton.

- 6.17 A key constraint on additional housing either within or adjacent these settlements is the limited services, facilities and supporting infrastructure available to accommodate further development in a sustainable way. Conversely some small scale development may offer opportunities to provide additional facilities and infrastructure enhancements.

AREA 5: Infill Villages

- 6.18 Opportunities within the Infill Villages are generally more limited than at the Service Villages. As part of the 'call for sites' exercise a significant number of sites were submitted adjacent to the settlement boundary, in particular around Dundry, Kewstoke, Locking, Sandford and Claverham however these have been discounted on sustainability grounds through the Assessment.

- 6.19 A key constraint on additional housing within these settlements is the limited services, facilities and supporting infrastructure available to accommodate further development in a sustainable way. Conversely some small scale development may offer opportunities to provide additional facilities and infrastructure enhancements.

AREA 6: Countryside

- 6.20 The countryside category includes all land outside of a settlement boundary as defined through the Replacement Local Plan. It includes a large area of land designated for Green Belt purposes (15,490 hectares and 38% of North Somerset), and as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (3,939 hectares and 10% of North Somerset). Together these account for 50% of the North Somerset area and a much higher percentage of the countryside. These areas are primarily about maintaining the visual quality of the area and the distinction between urban and rural areas. However much of the countryside outside of these designations is of value also for its intrinsic countryside value. In addition, a large area of land is subject to both fluvial and tidal flooding particularly along the coastal edge of North Somerset.

- 6.21 Development in the countryside is less sustainable as new development would be located away from existing services and facilities, and is likely to contribute to unsustainable travel patterns.
- 6.22 Developers have promoted alternative spatial strategies including development in the Green Belt at SW Bristol. While there is significant capacity in this area as evidenced by proposals at Ashton Park and east of Long Ashton, these are contrary to the Core Strategy spatial strategy and government advice on the protection of the Green Belt.

7 Stage 5: Carrying out the survey

- 7.1 Sites comprising the identified potential were assessed using a common template and the conclusions for each site set out in the SHLAA Sites Schedule. Site boundaries identified through the study process are indicative only and may not address specific ownerships or current uses. Where further information is gained they may be amended, in particular if sites are to be considered for allocation.

8 Stage 6: Estimating the Housing Potential of each site

- 8.1 Density multipliers have been used to give a basic indication of the potential dwelling yield from each site. A standard 40 dwellings per hectare has been used as a benchmark density. In cases where more detailed information is present, specific densities have been applied to sites or where this better reflects the surrounding character. It is recognised that this provides quite a broad identification of dwelling capacity and that further more detailed assessments may be required on certain sites.
- 8.2 A design led approach has not been used for the Assessment at this stage. However further review of the sites will be carried out alongside the plan making process and design scenarios will be used to give a more accurate dwelling yield from each site. Another approach is to use successful sample schemes from elsewhere to inform housing yield. This will be used in particular to support ongoing work in site specific DPDs.
- 8.3 Where more detailed information is gained for example through pre-application discussions, call for sites response supporting documentation or site briefs, then this will be used where appropriate to inform the housing yield of each site. This method is particularly useful for the Weston Villages where significant work has already been done in the context of the masterplanning framework. It is important not to over-estimate the potential yield from each site but to give a balanced assessment reflecting policy considerations and other constraints.

9 Stage 7: Assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed

- 9.1 The practice guidance states that “assessing the suitability, availability and achievability of a site will provide the information on which the judgement can be made in the plan making context as to whether a site can be considered deliverable, developable or not currently developable for housing development.”

- 9.2 To be considered **deliverable**: the site is available now, is a suitable location and there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered within 5 years.
- 9.3 To be considered **developable**: the site should be in a suitable location and there should be a reasonable prospect that it will be available for and could be developed at a specific point in time.
- 9.4 While it is assumed that generally existing planning permissions will be delivered within the current 5 year land supply, it is recognised that some sites may not come forward for various reasons. Landowners/developers of large sites and remaining Local Plan allocations are contacted in order to ascertain deliverability. Also, based on evidence of past trends, a 0.73% lapse rate is applied to large site permissions (excluding those at Weston Villages, as a major development area), and a 9.43% lapse rate is applied to small site permissions, leading to a potential of 3,140 dwellings.
- 9.5 The delivery of the strategic allocation at Weston Villages is critical in terms of meeting the residual requirements from emerging Core Strategy housing targets. A masterplan framework (Weston Villages SPD) has been prepared, with the first phases being granted permission:

Locking Parklands – 100 dwellings.
Weston Airfield – 900 dwellings (subject to S106).

- 9.6 The current anticipated trajectory at Weston Villages is as follows:

	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	2025/26
Locking Parklands (with pp)	50	50													
Winterstoke (with pp subject to S106)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100					
Remainder of Parklands Village		100	150	200	200	200	200	200	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
Remainder of Winterstoke Village				150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150		
Estimated number of homes delivered	50	250	250	450	450	450	450	450	500	500	400	400	400	250	250

Figure 9: Weston Villages trajectory

- Assessing suitability
- 9.7 The general assumption is that a site will be suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities (Practice guidance, paragraph 37).

Assessing availability

- 9.8 The general assumption is that a site is considered available for development when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners (Practice guidance, paragraph 39).

Assessing achievability

- 9.9 A site is considered achievable for housing development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time (practice guidance, paragraph 40). A 10% non-implementation rate is factored into planning permissions and landowners contacted requesting information on anticipated delivery.

Overcoming constraints on sites identified

- 9.10 Many sites identified within the SHLAA will be subject to constraints. Where these are known they are included within the assessment of each site along with some possible actions to overcome them. A more rigorous analysis would be made either at the planning application stage (perhaps as part of early site feasibility studies) or at the plan-making stage where a site is being formally considered for allocation.
- 9.11 The nature of the constraints known on each site has informed its likely timeframe for possible delivery. Further constraints that become evident subsequent to this assessment will be updated within the sites information and its status may be changed in future updates.

10 Stage 8: Review of the Assessment

Assessed land

- 10.1 Total assessed capacity equated to around 31,960 dwellings. The chart below illustrates the broad distribution of the assessed capacity. The largest proportion was defined as countryside, followed by land at Weston Villages. The limited amount of land considered in the other settlement categories reflects the limited opportunities available.

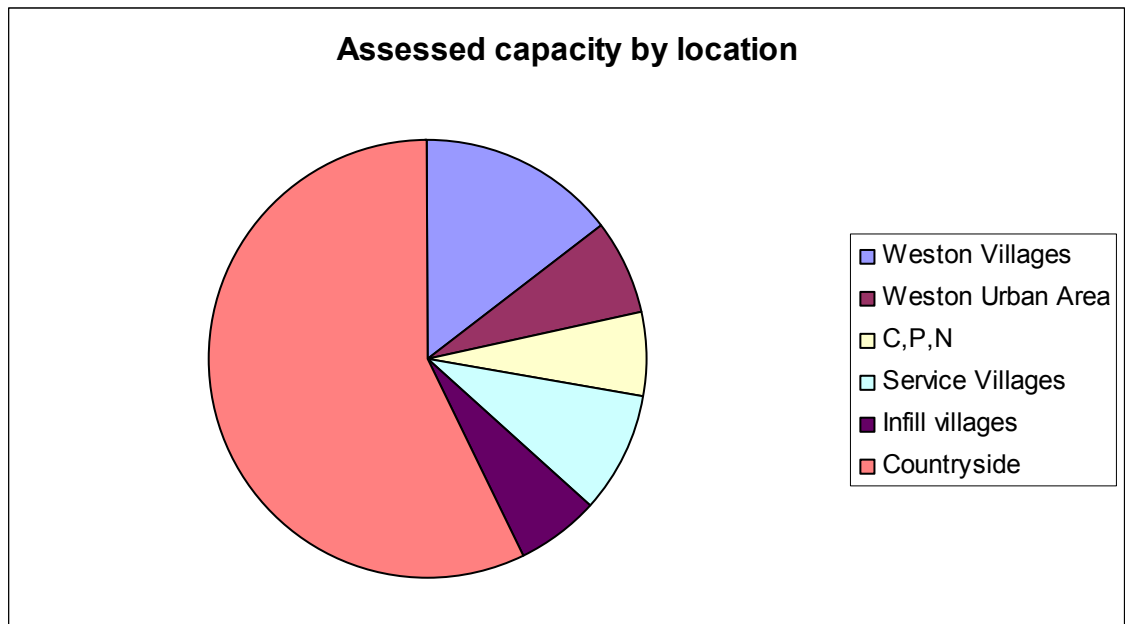


Figure 10: Assessed capacity by location

Assessing deliverability and developability

- 10.2 Most of the assessed capacity was discounted through the assessment process. The discounted capacity includes sites in the Green Belt (including SW Bristol urban extensions), Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) and those in the countryside outside settlement boundaries. While an initial sieve looked at all sites put forward adjacent to settlement boundaries this was subsequently refined in the light of identified constraints. This left a residual identified potential of around **7,361** dwellings in locations which are broadly consistent with the policy objectives of the Core Strategy.
- 10.3 Only 1,041 (including remaining Local Plan Allocations and 450 units at the Weston Villages) of this are considered deliverable in the next 5 years contributing to a total 5 year deliverable pot of 4,181. This includes existing permissions of 1,000 at the Weston Villages, and small and large site permissions elsewhere. The rest of the identified potential would be longer term potential including Weston Villages (see the trajectory below) and other sites that may go on to be assessed through the plan-making process.
- 10.4 Figure 11 below shows a comparison of assessed capacity and corresponding discounted potential. It demonstrates that most discounted sites were in the countryside category.

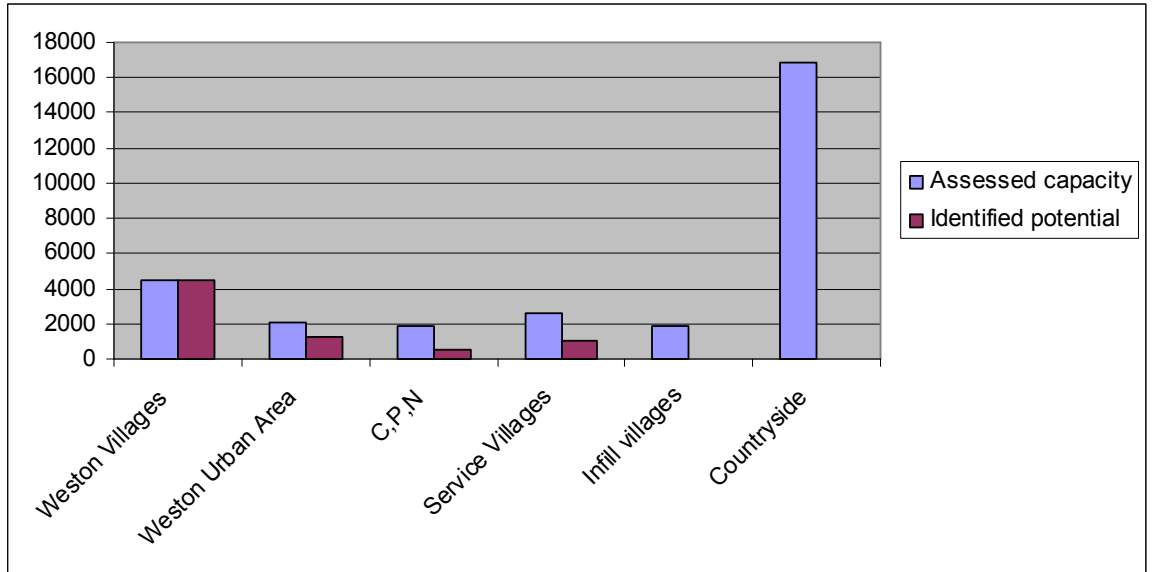


Figure 11: Assessed capacity and identified potential by area

Identified potential

10.5 Following the discounting of sites which were inconsistent with the broad spatial strategy of the Core Strategy, this left an identified potential of 7,361 dwellings on 53 sites, 15 of which are remaining Replacement Local Plan allocations. This identified potential is distributed as set out in the chart below with Weston Villages having most dwellings. A significant of potential has been assessed at the service villages but this is subject to particular constraints and if considered further through the plan making process, should be assessed through the Sites and policies DPD and subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

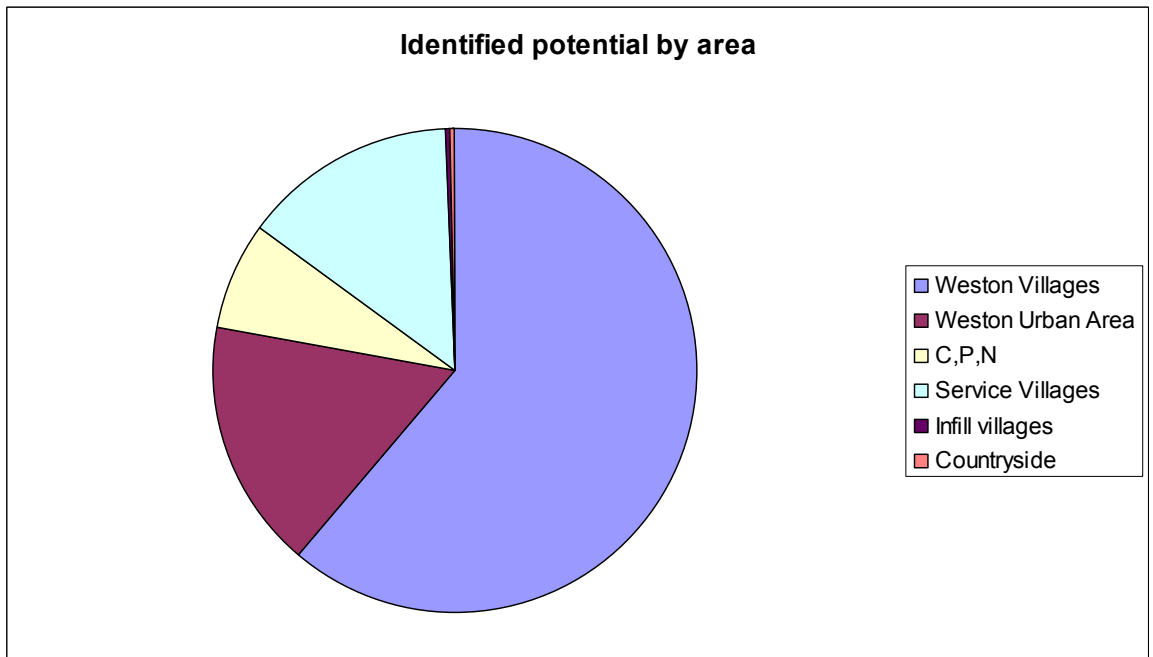


Figure 12: Identified potential by area

10.6 Figure 13 broadly shows the identified potential by source category, where it can be seen that most identified potential is from vacant land, not previously developed followed closely by previously developed land.

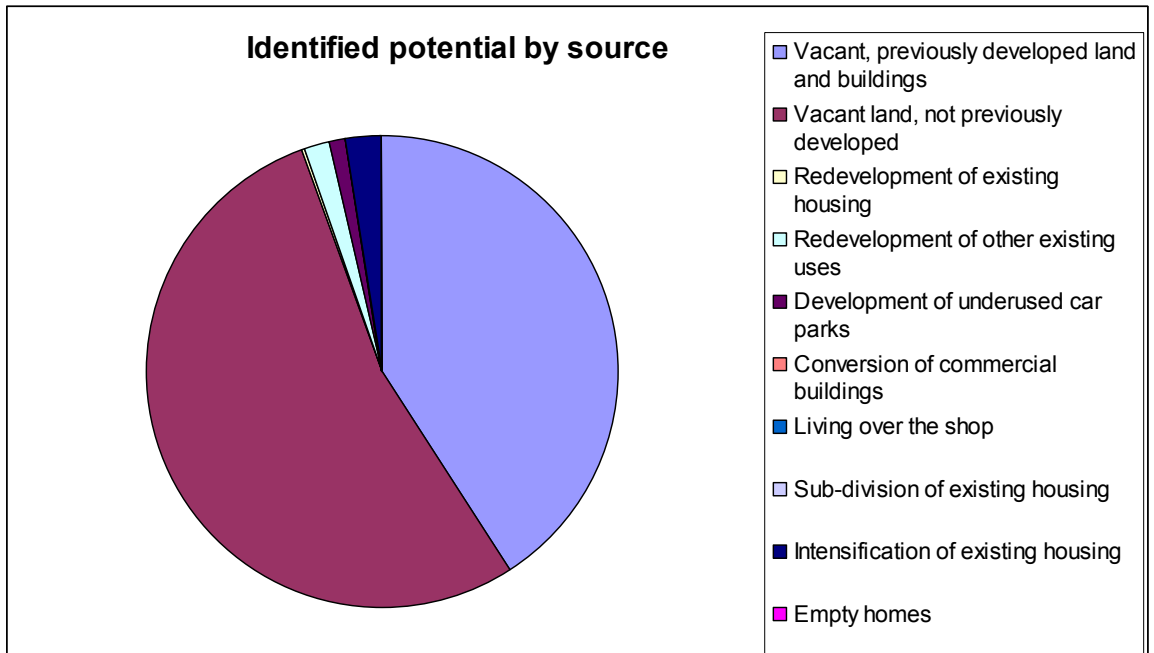


Figure 13: Identified potential by source

10.7 Figure 14 sets out the dwelling potential from all sources 2011 – 2026 divided into three 5 year periods.

Sites in the planning process	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026
Existing housing allocations	591 ⁸		
Unimplemented/ outstanding planning permissions for housing (April 2011, includes both large and small sites) including under construction but excluding sites at Weston Villages.	2,140 ⁹		
Weston Villages strategic allocation (including 1,000 dwellings with planning permission/subject to legal agreement).	1,450	2,350	1,700
Sites not currently in the planning process			
Vacant, previously developed land and buildings	-	294	294
Vacant land, not previously developed	-	640	640
Redevelopment of existing housing	-	-	-
Redevelopment of other existing uses	-	148	-
Development of underused car parks	-	80	-
Conversion of commercial buildings	-	-	-
Living over the shop	-	-	-
Sub-division of existing housing	-	-	-
Intensification of existing housing	-	174	
Total potential by 5 year period	4,181	3,686	2,634
Total	10,501		
Potential 06-26 including completions from 2006-2011	15,451		
Contribution from windfall and empty homes	17,171		
Figure 14: Review of the Assessment			

⁸ Capacity from the remaining allocations falls within one of the source categories and is factored into the initial 5 year supply of deliverable sites. It has been netted off the figures in the individual sources to avoid double counting.

⁹ The assumed permissions figure has allowed for a lapse rate, and excludes Weston Villages, as this is listed separately.

Potential by area and time period						
	Weston Villages		Weston urban area		Clevedon, Portishead, and Nailsea	
Source	2011-16	2016-26	2011-16	2016-26	2011-16	2016-26
1		2,628		550		14
2		1,874				323
3a						
3b				122		
4				80		
5						
6						
7						
8						106
9						
Total		4,500		752		443
Completions	0		2045		2084	
Permissions	1,000		500		1,241	
Minus lapse rate	0		-18		-21	
Allocations	0		463		90	
Total 2006-26	5,500		3,742		3,837	

Source	Service Villages		Infill Villages		Countryside	
	2011-16	2016-26	2011-16	2016-26	2011-16	2016-26
1				24		
2		956				
3a						
3b		26				
4						
5						
6						
7						
8		62		6		
9						
Total		1,044		30		
Completions	821					
Permissions	459 (within 5 year supply)					
Minus lapse rate	-20					
Allocations	38					
Total 2006-26	2,372					

Figure 15: Identified potential by area, time, and source

Completions and 5 year supply

- 10.8 Net completions within North Somerset over the past ten years were as follows:

2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
1066	1206	1265	1058	1253	1132	1474	935	772	637

- 10.9 There was a steady build up from 2001/02 as a result of two major strategic sites at Weston and Portishead being delivered which reached a peak in 2007/8. Since then there has been a significant reduction as a result of the recession.
- 10.10 In order to meet the Core Strategy housing requirement, a 5 year supply of 2,815 dwellings or 563 per year needs to be identified. The 2011 SHLAA demonstrates that there exists a deliverable supply of 4,181 dwellings within the 5 year period from 2011 to 2016. Based on the identified housing challenge set out in the submitted Core Strategy, a 7.4 year supply can be demonstrated (4,181/563). This also represents sufficient capacity to meet the proposed NPPF target of a 5 year supply plus 20% = 2,815 + 563 (20%) = 3,378 dwellings.

Publication draft Core Strategy	SHLAA 06-26	
Weston Villages	5,500	5,500
Weston-super-Mare urban area	3,300	4,219
Remainder of North Somerset	4,600	7,130
Total housing requirement	13,400	15,451 ¹⁰

North Somerset net completions 2006-2011	4,950	
Residual Dwelling Requirement 2011- 2026	8,450	13,017
Figure 16: Review of housing supply against Core Strategy requirements		

Contingencies

- 10.11 The SHLAA makes an assessment of potential supply across the plan period in order to support the plan-making process. If sites do not come forward as anticipated perhaps because of site constraints, economic conditions or policy priorities such as employment-led, then SHLAA can help demonstrate flexibility of choice. Local Development Framework documents should have flexibility built in so that they can best respond to any issues that may affect housing delivery.

11 Stage 9: Broad Locations

- 11.1 Broad locations have not been identified in the 2011 SHLAA because a shortfall of supply has not been identified. If however further capacity is required, then broad locations may have to be identified to direct housing growth.

¹⁰ Does not include windfall or empty homes.

12 **Stage 10: Determining Housing Potential from windfall**

- 12.1 Housing provision from windfall has historically contributed a significant amount of dwellings in North Somerset. However the Guidance suggests that windfall should not be included for the first ten years unless justified by local circumstances.
- 12.2 Between 2006 and 2011, 1,568 dwellings emerged from windfall. Average completions per year equate to 314 dwellings and using this as an annual guide for the remaining plan period gives 4,710 units of windfall. PPS 3 allows local planning authorities to count windfall after the next 10 years of the plan period giving a potential of 1,570 dwellings from 2021 to 2026.

Windfall completions over past 5 years

	Clevedon	Nailsea	Other	Portishead	Weston	TOTAL
Apr-11	9	2	61	3	113	188
Apr-10	60	58	159	51	126	454
Apr-09	-3	9	60	23	192	281
Apr-08	63	9	66	12	214	364
Apr-07	20	11	73	39	138	281
Total 5 years	149	89	419	128	783	1568
5 year average	30	18	84	26	157	314

Figure 17: Windfall completions over past 5 years

13 **Summary of the 2011 SHLAA**

- 13.1 The key findings of the SHLAA are summarised in Table 1.

Housing requirement

- The residual Core Strategy housing requirement is 13,400 dwellings 2006-2026. Deducting completions of 4,950 dwellings as at April 2011 this leaves a residual requirement of 8,450 dwellings 2011-2016.
- At April 2011 sites with planning permission (less a lapse rate) and remaining allocations = 3,743 dwellings.
- Total potential capacity within North Somerset = **17,171** dwellings.

Five year supply

- The Core Strategy five year supply target is 2,815 dwellings.
- Dwellings deliverable within 5 years = 4,181 dwellings or 7.4 years supply.
- This also meets the 5 year supply plus 20% target as proposed in the National Planning Policy Framework = 2,815 + 563 (20%) = 3,378 dwellings.

- 13.2 The North Somerset SHLAA has demonstrated that there exists a range of deliverable and developable sites to meet the Core Strategy requirement of 13,400 dwellings 2006-2026, and the five year supply target. In addition

there exists a range of development opportunities which are broadly in accordance with the spatial strategy and which could be assessed through the plan-making process should further housing capacity be required.

- 13.3 The SHLAA will be subject to regular review and updating. Housing delivery will be monitored through the Residential Land Availability Survey and used during future review of the SHLAA to review the assumptions made, and to determine any changes necessary.
- 13.4 As sites are developed the study will be reviewed and updated to facilitate the necessary supply of housing land. Databases set up to facilitate the project will be kept up-to-date and will provide an efficient way of managing the provision of housing, ensuring that the study remains fit for purpose.