

WARWICK DISTRICT SHLAA PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the Meeting of the SHLAA Partnership held on Friday 15th February 2008 at the Council Offices, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Leamington Spa.

Present

Philip Clarke (Chair)	(PC)	Warwick DC (Planning)
Sally Jones	(SJ)	Warwick DC (Planning)
Alison Simmons	(AS)	Warwick DC (Housing)
Charlotte Abbott	(AS)	Home Builders Federation
Brian Bassett	(BB)	Brian R Bassett Ltd
Reuben Bellamy	(RB)	Cala Homes Ltd
Paul Hanley	(PH)	Jephson Housing
Richard Hardy	(RH)	Evans Hardy Bromwich
Robert Hepwood	(RH)	Miller Homes Ltd
Frances McConnell	(FM)	Servite Houses
Adam Viner	(AV)	Viner Associates

1. Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 PC welcomed the members of the Partnership and thanked them for giving up their time to participate in the SHLAA Project.
- 1.2 By way of introduction to the SHLAA Project, PC outlined the Council's current progress with regards to the forward planning process. The Council had adopted the Local Plan last September and was now commencing work on the new Local Development Framework. The first stage in this process was to produce a Core Strategy which would set out the key elements in terms of spatial planning for the District. The Core Strategy would include strategic land allocations such as major housing and employment sites. Non-strategic sites would be included in an Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). The purpose of the initial SHLAA was to identify a pool of potential housing sites, from which allocations could be made later as part of the Core Strategy/ Allocations DPD processes.

2. Role of the Partnership

- 2.1 PC outlined the role of the Partnership. The main role was to bring to the project specific knowledge and expertise relating to the provision of both market and affordable housing and, in particular, knowledge of the land assembly and economic aspects. The member's role would be one of a "critical friend".
- 2.2 Some members expressed concern about the potential conflict of interest if their companies were actively promoting housing sites in the District. SJ and PC responded that any information regarding the suitability or otherwise of sites would need to be backed up by robust evidence and that, in any event, the SHLAA is not the mechanism whereby sites are selected for allocation in a planning document.

3. Overview of the SHLAA Process

- 3.1 SJ gave a quick overview of the SHLAA process. The Council had produced a draft methodology and a draft site form for consideration by the partnership. Following

agreement by the partnership, the Council would set up a SHLAA page on their web site on which it would place

- the amended draft SHLAA methodology and invite comments from organisations/ members of the public; and
- a site form and invitation to landowners/ developers/ agents to submit to the Council details of potential housing sites for consideration by the partnership

3.2 The deadline for comments and completed forms would be Thursday 20th March and the assessment of submitted sites and area surveys would commence in early April. Planning officers would carry out an initial assessment of submitted sites and invite the Partnership to assist in the final assessment of sites. Members of the Partnership suggested that where sites are obviously suitable for housing development there would be no need for them to be involved in the assessment process. It was agreed, therefore, that the Partnership would only be involved in the consideration of “borderline” cases. This process was likely to take place in June.

4. The Draft Methodology

4.1 SJ explained that the draft methodology was based on that outlined in Government guidance on SHLAAs. Where Councils deviated from the Government methodology they would need to fully justify it at the examination into the Core Strategy/ Allocations DPD.

4.2 AV suggested that, in view of the enormous need for affordable housing in the District (as outlined in paragraph 3.8) the paper should invite “innovation” sites and “creativity” in the identification of sites for affordable/ low cost housing (AV). There was a discussion about the extent to which affordable housing could be provided on innovation sites (such as the “container city” in London). PH and FM explained that affordable homes needed to meet certain standards in terms of design, space and energy efficiency. It was agreed to insert a sentence to the effect that sites capable of accommodating low cost and affordable homes would be particularly welcomed.

4.3 The following further comments were made on the different stages of the draft methodology.

Stage 2

It was agreed to make the following amendments:

- Define “site” and “housing” (AV)
- Ensure that “collaboration” sites are included, where sites straddle District boundaries (AV)
- In Table 1, include sites on the edge of villages with a reasonable level of services (RB)
- In Table 2, include sites with lapsed permissions and previously allocated sites (CA)
- In Table 3, clarify “allocated employment sites” (RB & RH)
- In Table 3, “less than 6” should read “less than 5”

Stage 3

In terms of Officer knowledge, CA pointed out that Enforcement Officers tend to have extensive knowledge of sites in the area.

AV suggested that the Council should consider site database sharing with other authorities/ agencies.

Stage 6

It was agreed that in paragraph 4.21, it should be clarified that the density is net (RB)

Stages 9 and 10

There was some confusion over whether the consideration of windfalls was a last resort **after** the consideration of "broad locations" or whether **either** the broad locations **or** the windfalls option could be pursued if insufficient sites are identified at the review stage. Government guidance clearly states that either, or both, options could be pursued but the PAS guidance states that windfalls can only be taken into account after broad locations have been considered (CA and SJ). SJ and PC were of the opinion that sufficient sites would probably be identified at the review stage.

5. Draft Site Form

- 5.1 It was agreed that the personal details on the form would be kept confidential but that the site details would be available in the public domain unless the promoter of the site specifically requested that it remains confidential as well. The form should be amended to include reference to the inclusion of a site plan.
- 5.2 Under time frames for development, the form should allow for more than one possible time frame to be ticked.

6. Any other Business

- 6.1 There was no other business

7. Date of Next Meeting

- 7.1 It was agreed that the Partnership would next meet at the Site Assessment stage to consider borderline sites. This was likely to be in June depending upon the number of sites which are submitted for assessment. It was agreed that once Officers were in a position to plan the final assessment stage, they would contact members to agree a suitable date for the meeting.