

Strategic Employment Site
Assessment Technical
Document



Appendix C :

Site Assessment

Proforma



Site Assessment Framework for STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT¹

Site Details	
Reference Number	
Site Name	
Site Address	
Settlement	
Size	Submitted Developable Area: Submitted Whole Site Area: Measured GIS Area:
Proposed Use	
Any other information	
Map	Insert Map

STAGE 1 : SUITABILITY AND AVAILABILITY (EXCLUSIONARY STAGE)

This section will exclude any sites which do not pass the exclusionary suitability criteria and they will not be assessed further.

STAGE 1A ASSESSMENT

This stage of the assessment rules out sites that are too small or conflict with national policy designations.

Provisional Site Capacity

1	Does the submitted Developable Area indicate that the site is likely to accommodate less than 40,000Sq/m of floorspace? ²	Yes / No	Quantity of employment land submitted as Developable Area:
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Flood Risk (All sites which reach Stage 2 will be subject to the Sequential Test)

2	Is more than 50% of the site located in Flood Zone 2 or 3?	Yes / No	All sites to be assessed by SFRA Consultants
3	Is more than 50% of the site at risk from surface water flooding?	Yes / No	All sites to be assessed by SFRA Consultants

Nationally significant designations (All sites which reach Stage 2 be subject to detailed assessment)

4	Is more than 50% of the site covered by nationally significant designations? These are: Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens.	Yes / No	Details on designations and coverage
5	Is more than 50% of the site located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?	Yes/ No	Details on coverage

Does the site continue to the next stage (yes answers to questions 1, 4, or 5 prevent progression to the next stage)?			Yes/ No
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¹ Strategic Sites are considered to be those that are either standalone sites or extensions to existing employment areas that would result in a minimum of 10ha being allocated and are likely to meet demand arising within and beyond the immediate area. Sites of less than 10ha are not being considered for employment allocations at this stage.

² Use a plot ratio of 40%.

STAGE 1B ASSESSMENT

This stage of the assessment rules out sites that are not able to meet their critical infrastructure needs³. Intelligent judgement should be used to assess if the site progresses to the next stage.

Critical Infrastructure

6	Can the site meet the critical infrastructure requirements that will enable delivery ⁴ for employment?	R/A/G	Requirements and proposals
Does the site continue to next stage?			Yes/ No

STAGE 1C ASSESSMENT

This stage of the assessment rules out sites that are not available. A site is considered available for development where there are no legal or ownership problems and the landowner has expressed an intention to develop the site. Intelligent judgement should be used to assess if the site progresses to the next stage.

Availability

7	What is the existing use of the site? Would the existing use limit the development potential?	R/A/G	Details
8	Is the land controlled by a developer or land owner who has expressed an intention to develop the site?	R/A/G	Details
9	Are there any legal or ownership problems that could delay or prevent development? If Yes, can these issues realistically be overcome?	R/A/G	Details
10	Does the site already have planning permission for the proposed use? ⁵	R/A/G	Details
Does the site continue to next stage?			Yes/ No

STAGE 1D ASSESSMENT

Consultants will evaluate each site which lies within the Green Belt in terms of how it meets the five purposes of Green Belt. This section records the findings of the Strategic Green Belt Review. Intelligent judgement should be used to assess if the site progresses to the next stage.

Greenbelt

11	Is the site located within the Green Belt?	Yes or No	Details on coverage
12	If answer to question 11 is yes, then does the site lie within one of the parcels which have been identified in the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Green Belt Study as making only a relatively weak, weak, or no contribution?	Yes or No	Details
13	Are there any identified merits to the site or proposed use that may outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and which may contribute to identification of exceptional circumstances?	Yes or No	Details
Does the site continue to next stage?			Yes/ No

³ Critical infrastructure is that which has been identified as infrastructure that must happen to enable physical development. These infrastructure items are often known as 'blockers' or 'showstoppers', and are most common in relation to transport and utilities infrastructure. Failure to provide these pieces of infrastructure could result in significant delays in the delivery of development.

⁴ This is an assessment based on the information known at this stage, a full assessment of infrastructure requirements will be undertaken before any sites are allocated.

⁵ Answers should be based on the criteria of: Red = Planning app for the proposed use; Amber = Planning app, but not for the proposed use; and, Green = No planning app

STAGE 2 : SUITABILITY (DETAILED ASSESSMENT)

STAGE 2A ASSESSMENT

This stage further assesses the site's suitability using detailed desktop assessment. A red rating for any question does not mean that the site will be automatically excluded at this stage as the ratings across Stage 2 will be looked at as a whole using planning balance.

Previously Developed Land

14	Is the site Previously Developed Land in accordance with the NPPF definition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% - 100% (G) • 26 - 75% (A) • 25% - 0% (Greenfield) (R) 	R/A/G	Details
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Community

15	Neighbourhood Planning (only applicable in designated areas) Is the site identified as an employment allocation in an emerging Neighbourhood Plan?	Yes/ No or N/A	Details
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16	Community Consultation Has any community consultation taken place? If yes, provide brief details on the form this consultation took and any overall community response.	Yes / No	Details
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Physical Constraints

17	Are there any physical constraints or permanent features which would mean that less than 40% of the site was developable? For example pylons, gas works, sewage treatment works, topography or wind turbines.	R/A/G	Details
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Relationship to Settlements

18	Not applicable for sites which adjoin Significant Facilities in the Countryside⁶. Would development of the site be complimentary to the existing settlement pattern and would it have a negative impact on any historic unique or distinctive characteristics of the settlement's built or natural form?	R/A/G or N/A	Details
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Agricultural Land Quality

19	Would the development impact on high quality agricultural land? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% or more in non-agricultural land (G) • 50% of more in Grade 3b, 4 or 5 (A) • 50% or more in Grade 1, 2 or 3a (R) 	R/A/G	Any relevant additional detail
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⁶ Significant Facilities in the countryside include Cranfield University and Technology Park, Shuttleworth College, Millbrook Proving Ground, RAF Henlow, DISC Chicksands, ZSL Whipsnade, Woburn Safari Park, Toddington Motorway Services Area, Faldo Road Industrial Estate in Barton-le-Clay, Center Parcs and Lockhead Martin Ampthill.

STAGE 2B ASSESSMENT

This stage further assesses the site's suitability using comments from technical specialists. Intelligent judgement should be used to assess if the site progresses to the next stage. Answers to Q's 25 – 33 will be supplied by CBC.

Transport and Access to Services

20	Distance to Town centre/ Local Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 5km (R) 2km to 5km (A) Under 2km (G) 	R/A/G	Details
21	Distance to bus stops with a frequent service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 400m (G) 400m-800m (A) Over 800m (R) 	R/A/G	Details
22	Distance to nearest train station: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 800m (G) 800m-1200m (A) Over 1200m (R) 	R/A/G	Details
23	What is the site's proximity to the Strategic Road Network (M1, A1, A421, A5) and Local Road Network (e.g. A6, A507)	R/A/G	Details

Drainage and Flooding (All sites subject to Sequential Test)

25	What is the conclusion of the sequential approach to site allocations, in regards to flood risk? The RAG conclusion relates to the sequential approach, e.g. if green – take forward, if amber - consider further assessment, if red – further assessment needed (L2).	R/A/G	To be completed by SFRA Consultants
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Environmental Health

26	Contamination Are there any contamination constraints on site and will there be any remediation required?	R/A/G	Liaison with Environmental Health
27	Adjoining uses Would any adjoining uses have the potential to cause conflict with the proposed use? (for example; noise and smell)	R/A/G	Liaison with Environmental Health

Environmental Constraints

28	Landscape character What would the impacts of development be on the landscape character or setting of the area or any designated landscapes? Would there be any direct or indirect harm to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Nature Improvement Area?	R/A/G	Liaison with Landscape Officer
29	Heritage/ Archaeology What would the impacts of development be on any heritage or archaeological assets and their setting? Are there any opportunities for enhancement of these assets?	R/A/G	Liaison with Archaeology and Conservation Officer
30	Ecological Assets What would the impacts of development be on any biological, geological or ecological assets and are there any opportunities for their enhancement?	R/A/G	Liaison with Ecology Officer
31	Open space/leisure and GI assets Are there any potential conflicts with open space or leisure designations?	R/A/G	Liaison with GI Officer and Leisure team, including consideration of Leisure Strategy.

Minerals and Waste			
32	What would the impacts of development be on safeguarded minerals and waste sites, including mineral safeguarding sites?	R/A/G	Liaison with M&W Officer
Planning History			
33	What is the sites planning history? (For example planning applications and submissions to previous Allocations Plans)		Details
Does the site continue to next stage?			Yes/ No

STAGE 2 ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION			
Is the site suitable for the proposed development?			

STAGE 3 : AVAILABILITY
The section assesses the availability of the site; a viability assessment will be carried out on a shortlist at a later stage.

Achievability			
34	When can the scheme realistically commence delivery? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 to 5 years (deliverable) • 6 to 10 years • 11 to 15 years • 15 to 20 years • Outside Plan Period 		Details
35	Considering the size of the site, what is the indicative build out time?		Details
Market Signals			
36	Are there any market factors which would affect deliverability?	R/A/G	Details
37	What is the extent and success of similar developments in the market area? Is there an over/under supply?	R/A/G	Details
38	Assuming 'normal' market conditions, if the site is offered to the market for its proposed employment use will it be successfully developed and occupied?	R/A/G	Details
39	What is a realistic timeline for the deliverability of the site? Short (0-5 years), medium (5-10 years), or long (10-15 years)?		
Does the site pass this stage?			Yes/ No

SUMMARY – to inform the summary spreadsheet			
Does the site pass the assessment?			Yes/ No
Detail			

The sites that pass through this assessment process will not automatically be allocated for development in the Local Plan.

Sites will be selected with reference to:

- The strategy, vision and objectives proposed in the draft plan
- Technical evidence studies
- The sustainability appraisal process
- The results of public consultation
- Flood Risk Sequential Approach
- Viability and Market Assessment
- Forecast future demand.
- Achieving a suitable balance between demand and supply.