

Epsom & Ewell SHLAA News Issue No 1

Initial Steering Group Consultation Generates Positive Representations

Initial consultation on the SHLAA methodology ended on Friday 4 July 2008. The consultation exercise was well supported by the members of the SHLAA steering group, resulting in 48 separate representations, made by six individual respondents. The representations responded to all fourteen questions posed by the Consultation Paper; covering issues such as the Green Belt, mixed-use developments and housing density. Council Officers found the comments very constructive and many of the changes suggested by the steering group have since been incorporated into the SHLAA methodology.

The most significant change to the methodology relates to the assessment of potential sites located within the Green belt. Previously, the methodology discounted all potential housing sites located within the Green Belt, without making an assessment of their housing potential. Many steering group members thought this approach to be unsound, and recommended that the SHLAA provide an assessment of all sites. So for the purposes of this technical study, sites located within the Green Belt will be technically assessed to determine their potential as housing land. An assessment of the future housing potential of these sites will aid decision making if, in the long term, there is insufficient housing capacity within the existing urban area. However, we are confident that sites within the existing urban area will provide us with a sufficient supply of housing land needed to meet our housing targets.

We have produced a table, which reproduces the representations made during this consultation exercise and the associated Officer recommendation for the Methodology. This Table has been included as an additional Annex (Annex 6) to the latest version of the SHLAA methodology and can be viewed here – <http://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8F625195-256A-4648-BF15-7CF23D1A6542/0/WiderConsultationMethodologyJuly2008.pdf>.

Wider Methodology and Call-For-Sites Consultations Get Going

Following on from the valuable steering group consultation exercise, further consultation on the refined SHLAA methodology started on 25 July 2008 and will run for four weeks until Friday 15 August 2008. This additional consultation exercise seeks the views of a wider stakeholder group made up of the local resident's associations, the development industry, realty agents and local amenity groups. Comments gained from this consultation stage will be used to refine the methodology where appropriate. This consultation exercise forms another element of the 'partnership approach' to SHLAA production set out within the Department of Communities and Local, which has been fully embedded within the Epsom & Ewell SHLAA.

Details of this consultation can be viewed here - <http://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/EEBC/Planning/Planning+Policies/Local+Development+Framework/Strategic+Housing+Land+Availability+Assessment.htm>

At the same time, we have asked people to submit details of potential housing sites for assessment as part of the SHLAA process. These sites will be assessed alongside previously submitted sites. Details of the call-for-sites exercise can be found within Annex 2 of the SHLAA methodology.

Progress on Site Identification

Officers haven't wasted any time in getting to grips with the identification of potential sources of housing land supply. Whilst the methodology has been out for consultation, Officers have compiled and analysed data under Stages 2 and 3 of the SHLAA methodology. This has included an initial desktop GIS based survey and identification of potential sites across the Borough. This process has so far yielded approximately 270 potential sites. We envisage that further sites will come forward through the call-for-sites consultation.

Officers are currently sifting through these initial sites, identifying potential constraints. Whilst all of these sites will be included within the SHLAA, those with clear obstacles to deliverability or developability during the SHLAA period will be discounted from the site survey stage (Stage 5). All identified SHLAA sites will be monitored through our Annual Monitoring Report process.

The site survey stage will start shortly and will continue throughout the summer. Future editions of SHLAA News will provide updates on the progress of the site survey stage.

If you have any questions about the SHLAA, its methodology or SHLAA-related news items set out above, please feel free to contact us at the following address:

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