

Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group	
Meeting Date	29 th April 2026
Report Title	High level Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) findings for newly identified sites
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Lead Officer	Stuart Watson, Project Manager, Planning Policy
Classification	Open
Recommendations	To note the high level HELAA findings for newly identified sites and to agree their inclusion in the next comprehensive update to the HELAA.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the high level Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) findings of new sites identified since the HELAA was published in January of this year.
- 1.2 As part of ensuring that “no stone is left unturned” when seeking sites for the Local Plan, officers have:
 - reviewed sites which have recently come on to the market in the Sittingbourne urban area, reviewed in detail
 - reviewed the sites identified in the Densification Study 2023 (reported to PTPWG on 12th March 2026), and
 - considered new sites that were submitted as representations to the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation carried out in January to February of this year.

2. Background

- 2.1 Full Council on 1st April 2026 Members agreed a growth strategy and non strategic sites to meet the previously considered development targets for housing, gypsy and traveller and employment need for the drafting of the Local Plan. As part of ensuring the site selection process is as robust as possible and that members are informed of all sites they can consider for the drafting of the Local Plan, a high level HELAA has been carried out on a number of new sites.

- 2.2 The new sites in the high level HELAA will be fully integrated into the HELAA process when it is comprehensively updated this autumn as part of the preparation for the examination in public of the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The approach to identifying new sites was presented to members at [PTPWG 12th March 2026](#). New sites for the HELAA have been identified from three sources:
- Officer identification of new sites which have come to the market;
 - Review of the Densification Study 2023 findings and
 - New sites submitted through the Regulation 18 consultation held between January and February 2026.
- 2.4 The methodology behind the HELAA and its findings has been presented a number of times to members of PTPWG through informal briefings and formally at its [PTPWG 22nd January 2026](#). The HELAA is a robust approach that considers both national and local planning policy constraints, officer site surveys and seeks feedback from key stakeholders to inform the planning suitability of sites. Further sites are also assessed to determine whether they are available during a Local Plan time period and whether they are likely to be financially deliverable against the emerging Local Plan policy requirements including affordable housing.
- 2.5 Due to the short time frame from the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation closing and the need to start drafting the Regulation 19 Local Plan for consultation this summer, it is not possible to do a full assessment of the new sites. This is due to the multiple inputs to the process including complete policy constraint analysis, GIS assessments and seeking feedback from key stakeholders. Further, there is the need to comprehensively update the whole of the HELAA to the latest status of sites at 1st April 2026.
- 2.6 Officers are able to provide a high level HELAA of the new sites that includes much of the main assessment. This has included the main national and local policy constraints, officer site surveys, confirming the availability of sites and their deliverability.
- 2.7 There are 11 new sites from the three sources of identification. From those sites two were identified by officers from sites coming to the market, four from the densification study 2023 and five from representations made to the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation.
- 2.8 The high level HELAA findings are set out in Appendix I and in summary the overall conclusions are:
- One site was not suitable for HELAA stage 2 assessment;
 - Six sites were stage 2 unsuitable, and;
 - Four sites were stage 2 potentially suitable.

2.9 A brief summary of the high level HELAA findings is set out in Table 1 below and includes other matters for members to consider. Whilst the high level findings show that there are four potentially suitable sites, the largest (SHELAA/445) has previously been brought to members as part of a wider SHELAA site and not selected for allocation each time. The remaining three potentially suitable sites provide a total of 21 dwellings and whilst could potentially be delivered, are likely to be complicated due to their scale and location in their local communities are likely delivered in the middle to later time frame of the Local Plan.

2.10 Based on:

- the limited dwellings (21) from the three urban potentially suitable sites,
- the continued option to not allocate the wider area of the potentially suitable site at Faversham (SHELAA/445), and
- the fact that a suite of sites sufficient to meet the needs of drafting the Local Plan has been chosen by Full Council..

It is concluded that none of the new sites should be considered for allocation in the Local Plan at this time.

2.11 Whilst the high level HELAA findings may be disappointing the sites will be added to the comprehensive HELAA update that will be prepared ahead of the Local Plan's examination in public.

Table 1. High Level HELAA findings summary and other matters

Site ID	Source	Site address	BF/GF*	Confirmed site area (ha)	Final capacity	HELAA conclusion	Other matters
SHELAA/437	Officer	SMC Ford Crown Quay, Sittingbourne	BF	0.879	42	Unsuitable	Unavailable: 3 attempts have been made to engage with site promoters with no reply
SHELAA/438	Officer	Appleyard	BF	0.328	16	Unsuitable	Unavailable: 3 attempts have been made to engage with site promoters with no reply
SHELAA/439	Densification study site 105	Pedestrian link between North Street and Wyvern Close	GF	0.229	11	Potentially suitable	Well maintained informal green space. Land was transferred to SBC in s106 for open space pursuant to planning ref. SW/96/1056 St Thomas School development
SHELAA/440	Densification study site 139b	Streetscape along Ridham Avenue and Coldharbour Lane, West Green and East Green, open space along The Crescent	GF	0.1	5	Potentially suitable	
SHELAA/441	Densification study site 146	Alley and overgrown sports pitch behind houses on Elm Grove	GF	0.102	5	Potentially suitable	
SHELAA/442	Densification study site 166	Open green space on Rectory Road	GF	0.153	8	Unsuitable	
SHELAA/443	2026Reg18 102-1	Funton Brickworks	GF			Not for stage 2 assessment	
SHELAA/444	2026Reg18 106-1	Land adjoining Vigo Bungalow, Lynsted Lane, Lynsted	GF	7.89	166	Unsuitable	

SHELAA/445	2026Reg18 120-2	Site at Land West of Brogdale Road	GF	14	294	Potentially suitable	This site is a smaller parcel of SHELAA/356 that has been brought to members previously and not selected for allocation.
SHELAA/446	2026Reg18 116-1	Land at Pheasant Farm West (North), Sheppey Way	GF	1.786	43	Unsuitable	
SHELAA/447	2026Reg18 129	Frognal Lane, Teynham	GF	6.38	134	Unsuitable	

*BF = Brownfield, GF = Greenfield

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To note the high level HELAA findings for newly identified sites and to agree their inclusion in the next comprehensive update to the HELAA..

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 The matters in this report concern informing members on the development of the Local Plan evidence base and to agree adding new sites in to the evidence. .
- 4.2 Members could choose to not note the HELAA high level findings for newly identified sites. However, choosing this option should be rejected as the new sites whilst assessed at a high level, provides information to members on the suitability of additional sites.
- 4.3 Members could choose to recommend sites for allocation in the Local Plan. However this is not recommended as the contribution is likely to be minimal as the largest new potentially suitable site is a smaller parcel of a previous site that has not been recommended and is in an area where there is growth planned through site allocations in the Regulation 19 and the recent resolution to grant the South East Faversham strategic site. Adding in new sites will delay drafting of the Local Plan as evidence work underway would need to be amended and the sites would need to be considered by Policy and Resources committee and then Full Council. These matters would make a summer consultation for the Regulation 19 Local Plan likely to be unachievable.

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken on the high level HELAA findings as it forms part of the evidence base of the Local Plan Review. The Regulation 19 Local Plan will be subject to a period of formal consultation at which point comments will be invited on the Plan, its policies and the supporting evidence base.

6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposals in the report align with the following Corporate Plan action: • A Local Plan with local needs and capacity at its heart.

Financial, Resource and Property	The Local Plan work program is fully funded across a combination of base budget, committed reserves and a contribution from the Government's Local Plans Delivery Fund.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	No implications identified at this stage
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No implications identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.
Local Government Reorganisation	The current Local Plan timetable expects the Local Plan to be submitted for its Examination in Public and to be adopted before local government reorganisation is expected to be complete.

7. Appendices

Appendix I: HELAA new sites high level findings

Appendix II: New sites maps

8. Background Documents

- 8.1 [PTPWG report Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment 2025 findings , Local Plan growth strategy and sites for allocation discussion 22nd January 2026](#)
- 8.2 [PTPWG report Densification study and identification of new sites for HELAA 12th March 2026](#)