

---

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

26 October 2021

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor D Welsh

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Methodology Consultation

---

**Is this a key decision?**

No.

Although the matters within the report affect all wards in the city, it is not anticipated that the impact will be significant

---

**Executive Summary:**

This report requests permission to consult on the proposed Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Methodology. This methodology would then be used when assessing proposed employment or housing sites in terms of whether or not they are suitable for development, which is an essential part of the Local Plan process. The proposed consultation will take place simultaneously with the Warwickshire District and Borough authorities who form part of the Housing Market Area (HMA) and who are working together under the statutory Duty to Co-operate.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Cabinet Member is requested to approve that the Methodology contained in Appendix I is taken to public consultation for a period of six weeks, in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix I – Draft HELAA Methodology

**Background papers:**

None.

**Other useful documents:**

None.

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No.

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No.

## **Report title: Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Methodology Consultation**

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 Coventry and Warwickshire Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a long history of constructively working together to address a range of strategic planning matters. This relationship has enabled the LPAs to achieve sound Local Plans, Shared evidence and a collaborative approach is a vital element of being able to fulfil the statutory Duty to Co-operate and needs to be demonstrated to Planning Inspectors when Local Plans are examined.
- 1.2 The evidence base which informs the development of a Local Plan needs to be regularly reviewed and updated. Many of the Local Plans in the Coventry and Warwickshire area are currently being reviewed and updated, all running at different timescales. Similarly, the Government has updated the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), so evidence needs to be reviewed in the light of this.
- 1.3 In delivering sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified requirements it is important that each Local Authority keeps an up to date database of sites, which it needs to assess to see if they are suitable, available and can realistically be delivered to meet the needs of the area. This is especially important in order to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of housing sites (one of the government's key indicators for measuring success of a Local Authority's planning policies in delivering its stated ambitions for housing growth) and in encouraging brownfield opportunities to come forward, reducing pressure upon land which has not previously been developed. It is also important in understanding which sites are being promoted for potential economic use, so that a balanced and sustainable local economy can be achieved across the area.
- 1.4 The database of sites is known as the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). In order to keep this essential evidence up to date, each Local Authority will run its own 'call for sites' process, which in effect is an invitation for land owners, developers and their agents to express their interest in having their site considered for a range of uses such as housing, employment or even a range of other uses they wish to be considered through the local plan process. Inclusion in the HELAA document does not mean they will be developed: that is for the Local Authority to determine through their assessment process.
- 1.5 However, it is important that Local Authorities work together to make sure that they operate consistently. This is especially important when addressing areas where there are strong strategic relationships which stretch across different administrative boundaries such those relating to housing and the economy. This applies to the Coventry and Warwickshire area.
- 1.6 It is therefore essential that when Local Authorities look at the detail of how they plan for growth, they do it in line with a common methodology to ensure consistency of approach and understanding. The attached methodology has been drafted by Coventry and Warwickshire Local Planning Authorities to ensure that sites are being assessed within a common framework which accords with the most up to date National Planning Policy and guidance. It updates the previous agreed version which is now out of date.
- 1.7 Before the methodology is finalised, it is considered good practice to publicly consult for a period of six weeks to provide any opportunity for feedback and make any changes should this be necessary. This will ensure that the Local Authorities are operating within

a robust framework as they develop and progress the detail of their own individual (or joint) local plans.

## **Implementation**

- 1.8 Coventry City Council has committed, through its Local Development Scheme (the project timetable for the Local Plan), to undertake a 'call for sites' in Autumn 2021 which will be specifically focused upon encouraging brownfield sites to come forward for consideration. This updated methodology will greatly assist with this commitment.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 The Council could choose to progress with the HELAA methodology without consultation. This would not constitute best practice, and would be at odds with the other authorities in the Housing Market Area (HMA). It is therefore not recommended.
- 2.2 The Council could choose not to use the HELAA methodology and use the methodology used in the run up to the Local Plan. However, there have been changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance and updating the methodology is appropriate. As per 2.1 this option would mean we were using a process different to the rest of the HMA authorities which, as outlined in section 1, would be contrary to our Duty to Co-operate. This option is therefore not recommended.
- 2.3 Officers recommend consulting on the HELAA methodology in Appendix I, in line with best practice and in conjunction with our neighbouring authorities in the HMA.

## **3 Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 No consultation has been undertaken as part of this report, but consultation is proposed.

## **4 Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 It is proposed to take the Methodology to public consultation at the earliest opportunity. As it is intended for the six Local Planning Authorities in the HMA to consult simultaneously, it cannot be confirmed what date this will commence on.

## **5 Comments from the Director of Finance and the Director of Law and Governance**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **6 Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

Planning policy documents and planning applications help deliver the aims and objectives of the One Coventry Corporate Plan by determining the type and quantum of development needed, where this should be located, areas which should be protected,

enhanced or improved and the infrastructure which should be provided. In line with the Corporate Plan, this document focuses upon supporting local communities and the local economy by gathering information which will help the council to increase the supply, choice and quality of housing and employment land by identifying a range of suitable sites.

## **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

There are no risks associated with this report

## **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

No direct impact.

## **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (ECA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

## **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

There are no implications identified.

## **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

There are no implications identified.

### **Report author:**

#### **Name and job title:**

Clare Eggington  
Principal Town Planner (Planning Policy)

#### **Service**

Streetscene and Regulatory Services

#### **Tel and email contact:**

Tel: 02476 972751

Email: [clare.eggington@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:clare.eggington@coventry.gov.uk)

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

This report is published on the council's website:

[www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				

Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	02/09/21	03/09/21
David Butler	Head of Planning Policy & Environment	Streetscene and Regulatory Services	01/09/21	02/09/21
Rob Back	Strategic Lead Planning and Major Development	Streetscene and Regulatory Services	02/09/21	06/09/21
<b>Names of approvers for submission:</b> (office rs and members)				
Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant, Business Partnering,	Finance	02/09/21	03/09/21
Clara Thomson	Planning and Highways Lawyer, Legal Services	Law and Governance	02/09/21	03/09/21
Andrew Walster	Director of Street Scene and Regulatory Services	-	02/09/21	06/09/21
Councillor D Welsh	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	-	07/09/21	21/09/21