

THE SHEFFIELD PLAN

Our City, Our Future

Issues and Options

Site Selection Technical Note

September 2020



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1. Introduction and purpose of the note

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to set out how we intend to select development sites for allocation in the Sheffield Local Plan (known as the ‘Sheffield Plan’). It should be read alongside the Sheffield Plan Issues and Options document.
- 1.2 Planning legislation enables land to be allocated for specific uses in a Local Plan (housing, offices, open space, for example). Our aim is to ensure enough land is provided, in the right places, to enable the City to develop in line with the Vision set out in the Issues and Options document. As well as ensuring that the land should only be developed for those specific purposes, it also means we can make sure any specific site constraints or requirements are addressed before any development takes place. Even if a site is allocated for a specific use, full planning permission will still be required on the site before development can begin.
- 1.3 We have developed a draft “Site Selection Methodology” to help us decide which sites should be included as allocated sites in the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan¹. As progress on the Plan continues, we will continue to refine and update the methodology as more information and site evidence becomes available.

¹ Due to be published for consultation in July 2021 – see [Sheffield Local Development Scheme](#), (November 2019)



2. Methodology Overview

- 2.1 A flowchart of the proposed methodology is shown below. The remainder of this note will then discuss the various stages in more detail.
- 2.2 When deciding whether a site has potential to be allocated, it is important that we can demonstrate three things:
- The site is **suitable** – there are no constraints that (even with mitigation) would prevent the site from being developed
 - The site is **available** – there are willing landowners that want to see the site developed
 - The site is **deliverable** or there is a realistic likelihood that it will be **developable** within the plan period
- 2.3 Once we have identified the sites with potential, it is likely that we will have a larger pool of sites than we need for the Plan. We will then need to choose which of those sites we've identified we think should be included in the Plan. As the Sheffield Plan will set out how the City should develop (the "spatial strategy"), we will use it and the Plans proposed policies to help us decide which sites are the most appropriate to allocate.



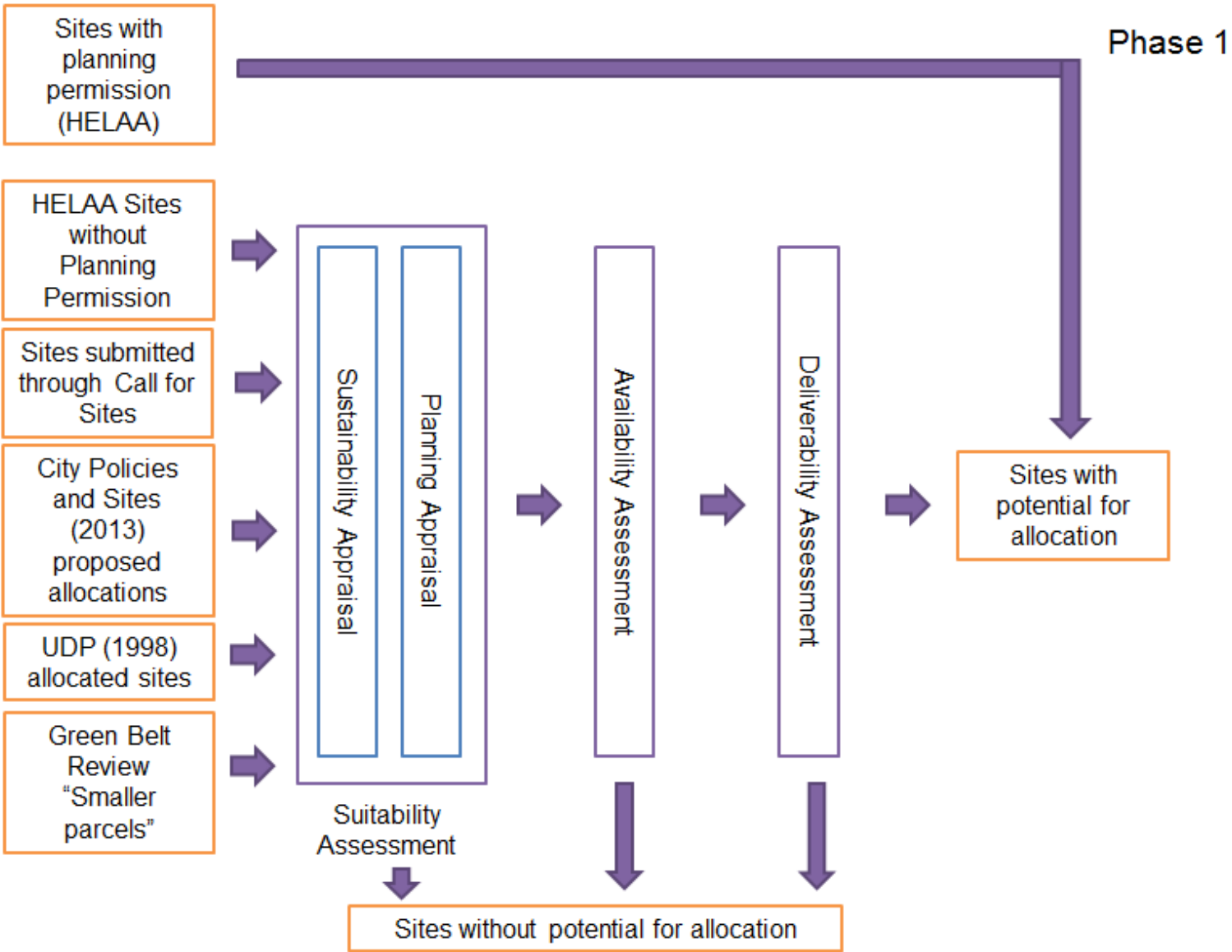
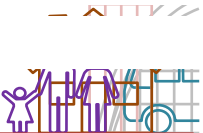


Figure 1 Phase 1 Site Selection flowchart



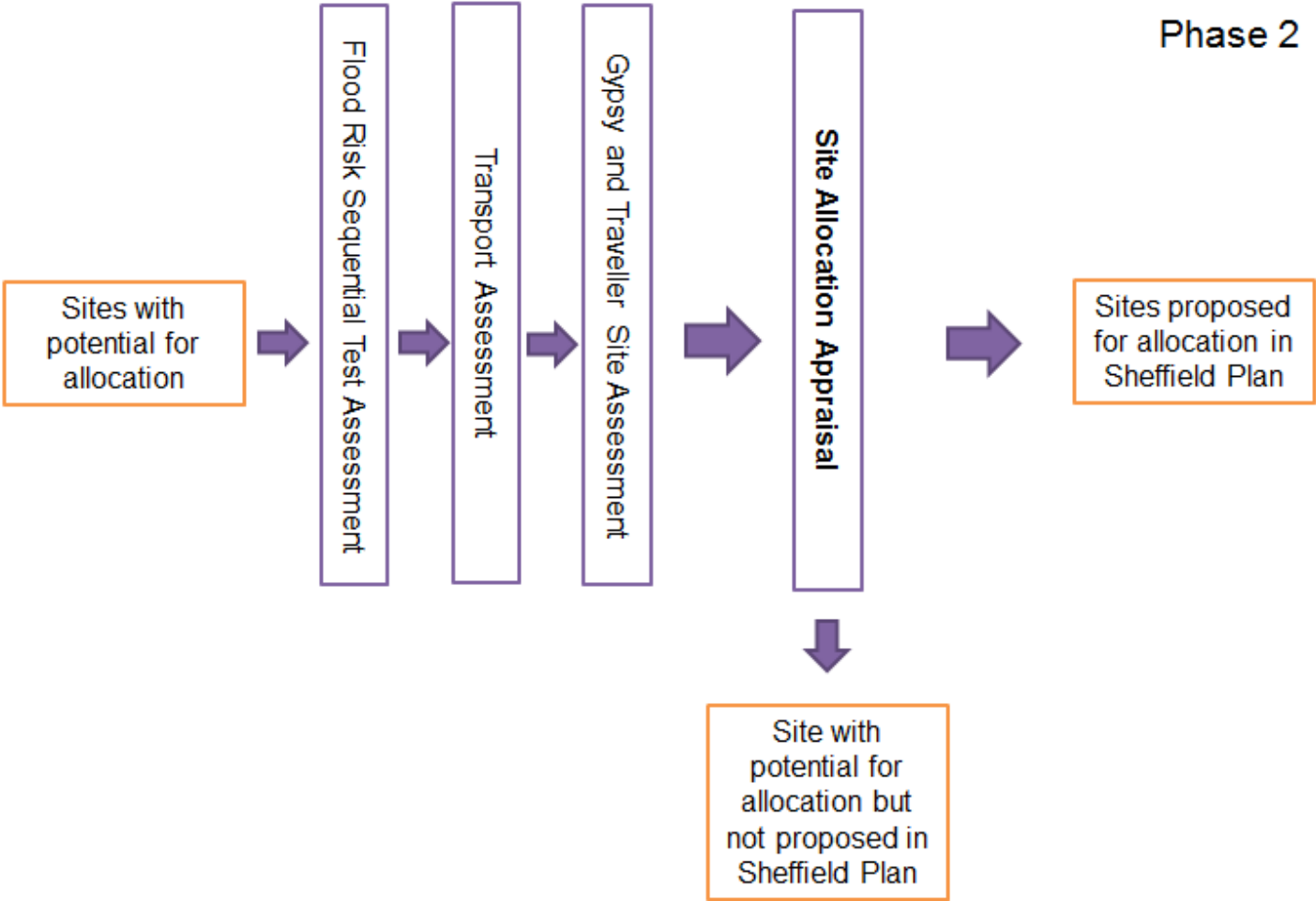


Figure 2 Phase 2 Site Selection flowchart



3. What sites will we assess?

3.1 We intend to use a variety of sources to create an initial list of sites to assess. This will give us a firm base to start from, and will help lead to us identifying the most appropriate sites. The sources we will use to identify sites are:

1. Undeveloped allocated sites from the Unitary Development Plan (1998)

As these sites are currently allocated in the adopted Plan, then we will assess them to see if they should continue to be allocated in the new Plan.

2. Previously proposed allocations in the City Policies and Sites (2013) document

These sites were proposed as allocations before work was stopped on the previous version of the Sheffield Plan.

3. Sites identified in the Sheffield Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2020)

The HELAA identifies a future supply of land which has potential to be suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period. The HELAA includes some sites that have already received planning permission but where development has not yet been completed. These sites will be able to “skip” some stages of the Site Selection Methodology as the availability, suitability and deliverability aspects of developing these sites will already have been tested and considered acceptable through the planning application process. Any sites that are completed prior to the Sheffield Plan being adopted will be omitted from the final adopted plan.

4. Sites identified in the Green Belt Review

Following the Issues and Options consultation, as work on the Sheffield Plan continues, we may need to propose removal of some land from the Green Belt so that it can be developed. If this is the case, we will include sites identified in stage 2 (“Smaller Green belt parcels”) of the Green Belt Review in the list of sites to be assessed

The Green Belt Review identifies parcels of land that have been assessed against the nationally defined Green Belt Purposes. Land in the Green Belt with specific constraints (flooding, ecological designations proximity to powerlines or motorways etc.) has been excluded from the review. However, beyond excluding land with these constraints, the Green Belt



Review itself does not give a view on whether land should be selected for development or not.

It is clear that the Green Belt Review identifies much more land than would be needed to support even the maximum amount of Green Belt development proposed in the Sheffield Plan Issues and Options document under Option C (we estimate 3-4% of the existing Green Belt would be need to be released under this Option). However, reviewing all the sites identified in the Green Belt Review will help us ensure that if land does need to be removed from the Green Belt, the most appropriate land is selected.

5. Sites submitted to us through the call for sites process

A call for sites consultation enables landowners and developers to highlight land they are willing to make available for development. We have run a call for sites periodically but have also received site submissions outside of the formal call for sites consultation periods. Submissions have also been received during consultations on previous Local Plan documents. We will consider all of the sites that have been submitted to us since 2014 (we don't think it is reasonable to assume sites are still available, if they were submitted previous to this date).

- 3.2 We will also take account of any new sites submitted as part of the consultation on the Sheffield Plan Issues and Options document.



4. How will we assess the sites?

- 4.1 The process of assessing sites is quite lengthy and will require the dissemination of a wide variety of information related to each site. The process will be split into two broad phases:

Phase 1: Identifying sites that have the potential to be allocated

Phase 2: Deciding which of the sites identified in Phase 1 should be allocated

- 4.2 As noted in the previous section, it is not necessary to consider sites with existing planning permission in phase 1, as it has already been established that these sites have the potential to be allocated. These sites all move directly to phase 2.

Phase 1 Identifying sites that have the potential to be allocated

- 4.3 Phase 1 will have three separate assessments looking in turn, at the suitability, availability and deliverability of the site. After each assessment, it may be apparent that the site does not have the potential to be allocated. If this is the case, the site will drop out of the process and not be considered further (unless it subsequently receives planning permission in advance of the Sheffield Plan being submitted to Government).

Suitability Assessment

- 4.4 This assessment will have two stages. We will first undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of each site. Specific site level indicators will be drawn from the key Sustainability Issues and Appraisal Criteria identified for Sheffield in the Integrated Impact Assessment. A list of the potential indicators we think we will use is given in Appendix 1.
- 4.5 Each site will be scored on how well it helps achieve each of the Sustainability Aims, or where it may have a negative impact on the Sustainability Aims. If we are considering a site for a variety of different uses, we may use different indicators that are the most appropriate to assessing each use.
- 4.6 Next, a Planning Assessment of the site will use the Sustainability Appraisal to reach a judgement on whether the site is suitable for potential allocation. If a site has been considered for different uses, we will make a judgement on which of the uses is the most appropriate. Any negative sustainability issues will also be addressed. Any mitigation measures necessary to make the site suitable for development will be identified here. These could be things like needing to do specific work before development starts, changing the boundary of the site if only part of it is suitable or



highlighting where more detailed investigation is needed (either before the site can be allocated or later on, when a planning application is submitted).

Availability assessment

- 4.7 We will review the likelihood that the site will become available for development during the plan period (before 2038). Where necessary, this may include contacting landowners of identified sites to establish their availability.

Deliverability Assessment

- 4.8 This assessment will review the likelihood that it will be economically viable to develop the site within the plan period (to 2038). Understanding the viability of future sites can be complex, a list of potential indicators to be used is given in Appendix 2.

Phase 2: Deciding which of the sites identified in Phase 1 should be allocated

- 4.9 As discussed earlier, once the pool of sites with allocation potential has been established, it is likely there will be more sites identified than need to be allocated. To aid making the decision on which sites to allocate, further work will be undertaken on each site.
- 4.10 A sequential, risk based approach to the location development should be applied to the sites, to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change. This will be achieved by applying the Sequential Test and, if necessary, the Exception Test to each site.
- 4.11 An assessment of transport impacts will help highlight local and city wide transport issues or opportunities that either an individual site or a cluster of sites could present.
- 4.12 A Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Assessment will assess whether a site is suitable for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site. This process will reflect the requirements of the potential occupiers, while respecting the interests of the settled community, as required by national policy.

Site Allocation Appraisal

- 4.13 The final stage in the Site Selection Methodology is to select which sites will be put forward as allocations. The Sheffield Plan will set out a spatial strategy and accompanying strategic policies for the City. These will be used as a guide to ensure we select the most appropriate sites that will help us deliver on the aims of the Plan. Whilst the spatial strategy and strategic options are still being developed (this consultation is a key part of



us developing the spatial strategy), it will allow us to take into account things like:

- Performance against the purposes of Green Belt (for sites in the Green Belt);
- Prioritising brownfield land;
- Ensuring a suitable distribution of sites across the City;
- The need for different types of housing in the different housing market sub-areas;
- Potential to improve fairness and social inclusion;
- Potential of cluster sites to form a “strategic site”, which increases the likelihood of delivering supporting infrastructure;
- The duty to cooperate with strategic planning and other prescribed bodies on infrastructure and other cross-boundary issues

4.14 Selection of the sites against the spatial strategy and strategic policies will also be supported by considering all of the evidence collected and appraisals undertaken throughout the process. The aim is to arrive at a balanced professional planning judgement on which sites should be allocated, rather than a mechanistic approach that uses a crude ranking of sites based on a score.



Appendix 1: Sustainability Assessment indicators

5.1 The following table shows the list of indicators we propose to use for the sustainability assessment of each potential site. For each indicator, sites will be categorised, based upon the impact the development is likely to have. Different indicators may need to be used dependent on the use the site is being assessed for.

Table 1 Sustainability Assessment indicators

Indicator	Site use being assessed	Significant positive impact	Minor positive impact	Neutral/Impact	Minor negative impact	Significant negative impact
Is site in Housing Renewal area	Housing	-	Yes	No	-	-
Distance to incompatible uses	Housing	-	None of the site is close (within 50m) of a policy area where incompatible uses would be allowed or are already in existence	Site partially within 50m of a policy area allowing incompatible uses. Unlikely to be a conflict	Site within a policy area that allows incompatible uses	-
Loss of Open Space ²	All	Surplus to all open space functions	No open space on-site	Open Space Surplus for current open space function	Existing open space areas of site required for current function	Whole site required for existing open space function

² Based upon the findings of an Open Space Audit establishing suitable quantities of different types of Open Space, per 1,000 people.



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Appendix 1: Sustainability Assessment indicators

Indicator	Site use being assessed	Significant positive impact	Minor positive impact	Neutral/Impact	Minor negative impact	Significant negative impact
Sufficient existing ² Open Space in the Area	Housing	Sufficient open space	-	-	Insufficient open space	-
Loss of community /cultural/ leisure / recreation facilities ³	All	Facility on-site not required	No existing facility on site	-	Facility on-site – Unknown whether still required	Facility on-site should not be lost
Proximity to local and district centres	Housing	All of site <800m to City or District Centre, or <400m to Local Centre	Some of site <800m to City or District Centre, or <400m to Local Centre	-	All of site >800m to City or District Centre, or >400m to Local Centre	-
Distance to Core Public Transport Network ⁴	All	The site is within Core Public Transport Network (CPTN) buffer	Some of the site is within the CPTN buffer, or within a 400m actual walk from a 3 bus per hour bus stop	-	Site not served by existing CPTN	Site not served by public transport / less than 2 buses per hour

³ E.G: community centres, drop-in centres, meeting places, youth clubs, crèches and nurseries, religious meeting places, non-residential schools and colleges, training centres, medical and health centres, libraries, information and advice centres, lecture theatres, museums and art galleries.

⁴ Core Public Transport Network (CPTN) defined by the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy - includes the medium and high frequency bus corridors (6+ buses per hour), tram and the railway network. Sites will be assessed based upon their centropoints falling within the 400m to a bus service (or 800m of a tram stop or rail station).



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Appendix 1: Sustainability Assessment indicators

Indicator	Site use being assessed	Significant positive impact	Minor positive impact	Neutral/Impact	Minor negative impact	Significant negative impact
Use of previously developed land (PDL)	All Uses except open space	Development on mainly or entirely brownfield land e.g. >90% PDL	Development on site including PDL and greenfield land; or where unclear, development would lead to regeneration of the urban area.	-	-	Development on predominantly greenfield land (<10% Previously Developed Land)
	Open Space	-	-	Whole site is proposed to become open space	-	-
Loss of Grade 2 or 3a Agricultural Land ⁵ <small>(No land has Grade 1 within SCC boundary)</small>	All	Urban or non-agricultural	Site is likely to be Grade 3b, 4, 5,	Site is likely to be Grade 3 but site-specific survey required to determine whether it's 3a	Site likely to include some Grade 2/3a land	-
Conservation Area or Listed Buildings	All	-	Unlikely to affect	No constraint known – no evidence available	Likely to affect	-

⁵ Based upon Natural England Agricultural Land Classification [surveys](#)



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Appendix 1: Sustainability Assessment indicators

Indicator	Site use being assessed	Significant positive impact	Minor positive impact	Neutral/Impact	Minor negative impact	Significant negative impact
Archaeology	All	-	No constraint known - based on available evidence	No constraint known – no evidence available	Major archaeology constraint on some of site; or significant historic landscape objection (all or part of site); or Scheduled Ancient Monument close to site	Major archaeology constraint – all of site
Rural Landscape character	All	Site does not contain a rural landscape	Landscape has higher capacity for absorbing development	Landscape has medium capacity for absorbing development	Landscape has low capacity for absorbing development	Landscape has no/very low capacity for absorbing development
Ecology	All	-	No ecological designation on-site or adjacent	Adjacent to ecological site	Site includes an ecological site or potential ecological value on part/whole of site	Entire site has an ecological designation or identified ecological value
Geology	All	-	No geological designation on-site or adjacent	Adjacent to geological designation	Site includes a geological designation	Entire site has a geological designation
Flood risk	All Uses except open space	The site is in Flood Zone 1	>5% of the site is in Flood Zone 2	>5% of the site is in Flood Zone 3a	>5% of the site is in Flood Zone 3ai	>5% of the site is in Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain)
Flood risk	Open Space	Water compatible use	-	-	-	-



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Appendix 1: Sustainability Assessment indicators

Indicator	Site use being assessed	Significant positive impact	Minor positive impact	Neutral/Impact	Minor negative impact	Significant negative impact
Air Quality ⁶	Housing/ school/ nursery/ hospital	-	-	-	Residential site outside air quality exceedance area	Residential site in or close to air quality exceedance area
	Employment	-	-	-	Employment site	-
	Open Space	-	Open Space benefits air quality	-	-	-
	Other uses	-	-	Significance of development to be determined at planning application stage	-	-
Likelihood of existing land contamination	All	-	Minimal	-	High/Medium/Low	-
Suitability for allocation for Employment ⁷	Employment	-	Recommended for allocation for employment uses	-	Not assessed for allocation or Not recommended for allocation for employment uses when assessed	-

⁶ Sites which are within 200m of roads with more than 17,000 AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic) movements are used as the indicator for areas where air quality may exceed limits (the Exceedance Area).

⁷ Using *The Sheffield Employment Land Review (ELR) 2020*.



Appendix 2: Deliverability Assessment indicators

- Preliminary Viability Assessment –This will be based on the outputs of a Whole Plan Viability Assessment (WPVA). The WPVA is a separate piece of background evidence that will support the Sheffield Plan. Part of the assessment will identify the initial viability of each site allocation, based upon a set of site typologies (based on the type of development and its location)
- HELAA Working Group will be reformed with representatives from housing developers and agents that reflect the varied Sheffield housing market. The Working Group provide a market view on all large sites of 10 or more units and advise on which sites might be constrained due to market or other factors
- The Sheffield Employment Land Review (ELR) 2020 – This review looks at the suitability of sites to be allocated for employment use to contribute to meeting Sheffield’s strategic employment land need, including the attractiveness of the sites to the market. Not all sites proposed for allocation will necessarily have been assessed in the ELR.

