

March 2008

Mendip District Council

**Strategic Housing
Land Availability Assessment**



1. Introduction

1.1. Commission

- 1.1.1. Baker Associates were appointed in December 2007 to undertake a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for the administrative area of Mendip.
- 1.1.2. An inception meeting was held on the 5th December at which time the methodology for the study was set out and agreed. Work commenced on the study immediately following the inception meeting including correspondence with key stakeholders regarding the methodology followed by a widespread "call for sites" to identify all opportunities within the district. Baker Associates also conducted a stakeholder event on the 31st January at which the methodology was discussed and landowners and/or agents had the opportunity to raise queries regarding sites.
- 1.1.3. Sites identified from all sources, including those from the previous Urban Capacity Study and those promoted by landowners/agents were visited and assessed.
- 1.1.4. The SHLAA has developed from the previous Urban Capacity and Urban Potential studies undertaken since PPG3 and Tapping the Potential were produced. However, the methodology has changed over time to increasingly provide evidence on a site specific basis.
- 1.1.5. Housing Land Availability Assessments (HLAAs) present planning authorities and house-builders with the means by which provision to be made for housing through the planning system will be fulfilled. HLAAs are a natural progression from Urban Housing Potential Studies (UHPSs) or Capacity Studies that were required by Planning Policy Guidance 3. The essential differences between HLAAs and UHPSs are that:
 - HLAAs should take full account of local and sub-regional housing markets
 - HLAAs should consider viability and consequentially deliverability of identified sites
 - HLAAs must estimate the yield from current supply in the form of unimplemented planning permissions and allocations, so that the HLAA is an amalgam of a housing land availability study and a UHPS.
 - The major addition in a HLAA is the dwelling supply that will come forward from unimplemented planning permissions,
- 1.1.6. The Baker Associates approach to the study meets the requirements of the recently issued Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing, and has taken into account the advice contained in 'SHLAA: Practice Guidance July 2007', PAS Guidance (January 2008) and the 2004 Good Practice Guide for the South East and significant experience that Baker Associates have acquired from

2.2. Methodology in brief

- 2.2.1. The project commenced with an Inception Meeting. Immediately following this, letters were sent to key stakeholders setting out the proposed methodology. In parallel with this key documents were reviewed and sites from published sources identified.
- 2.2.2. In January letters were sent to landowners, developers and agents seeking the identification of sites which might be suitable for housing development. This is referred to as the "call for sites". Respondents were asked to identify sites which might come forward for housing within Mendip, in the 5 main towns and the 27 villages identified as being 'serviced villages' in the emerging Core Strategy. (Serviced villages are classified as settlements with a school, daily public transport services and a shop or a community facility. West Horrington was, however, discounted due to its location within the AONB)
- 2.2.3. Respondents were given three weeks to reply and in February a series of site visits were undertaken.
- 2.2.4. Following assessment of sites an initial long list of potential housing sites was discussed with the officers of the Council. This resulted in some sites being rejected from consideration and other sites being identified as having potential.
- 2.2.5. Following further assessment of sites and inclusion of sites with planning permission an initial review was undertaken which indicated a shortfall of potential sites against the requirements of the Draft RSS. At this point it was agreed that further work regarding Greenfield sites and windfall should be undertaken.
- 2.2.6. As part of the analysis of Greenfield locations a brief assessment of the landscape and topography was undertaken, as well as a brief assessment of the accessibility to each settlement.
- 2.2.7. The following sections follow the stages set out in the CLG Practice Guidance and set out in more detail the stages followed in completing the study.

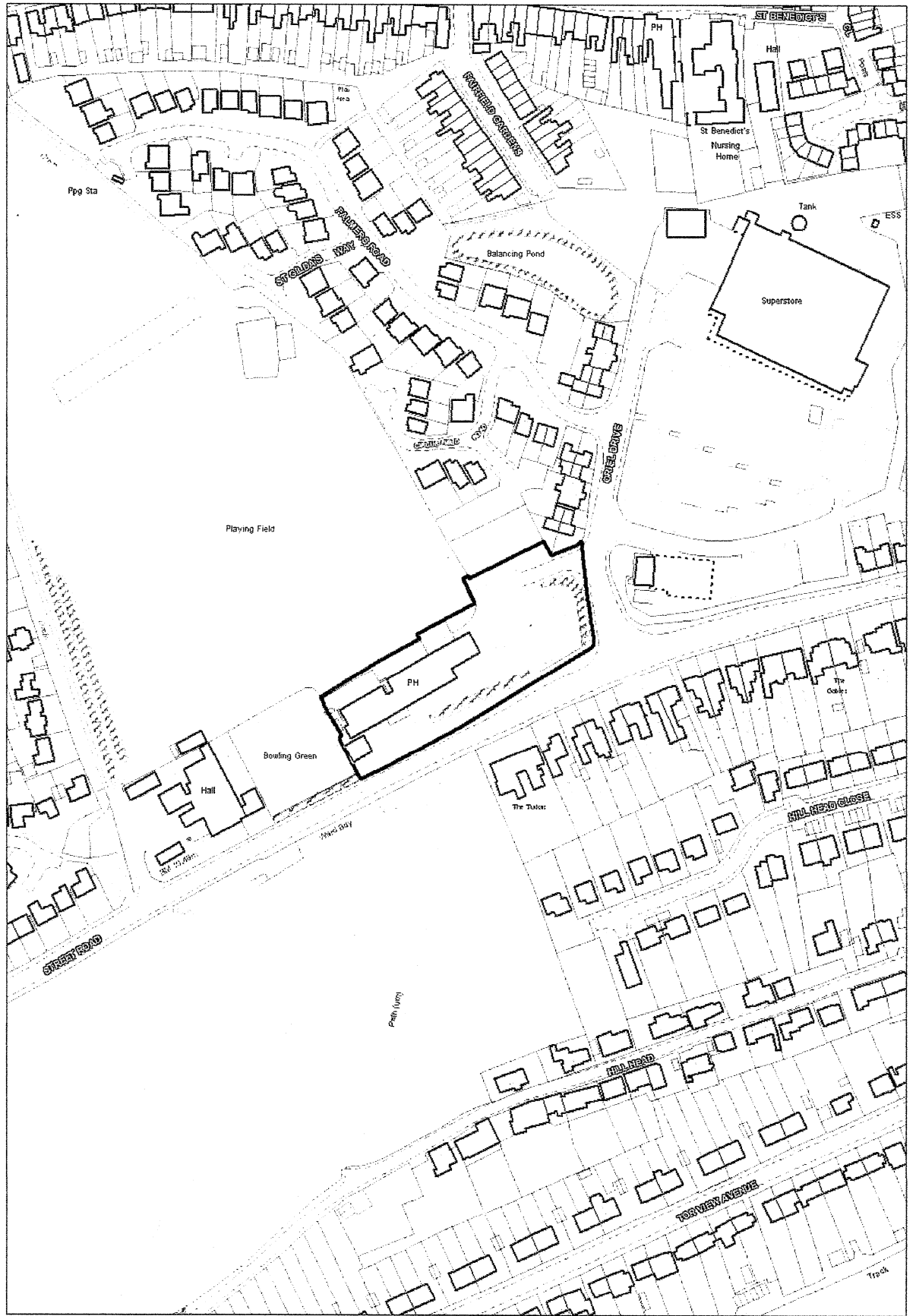
2.3. Stage 1: Planning the Assessment

- 2.3.1. The initial stage relates primarily to the project planning required by the planning authority when scoping the study and considering timescales for outputs. A detailed work programme and project milestones for undertaking the work was prepared for the inception meeting and remained the project programme for the study throughout the preliminary part of the process, though it was later agreed by the Council to extend the consultation period to take into consideration late responses from Parish Councils.
- 2.3.2. In this initial stage of project planning it was also necessary to set all of the study parameters relating to the physical and time extents to be considered.

TIME PERIODS

Site ref	Address	Settlement	Site Area (ha)
GLAS029	Tor Leisure	Glastonbury	0.58
Description of site - physical, including highway access, constraints			
Glastonbury Cricket Club building and parking area, adjacent to the cricket field facilities. The site has good access from existing road infrastructure.			
Background - planning constraints, policy, history			
Market appraisal			
Suitability			
Glastonbury is identified in the Council's Preferred Spatial Strategy as a Town where development would be considered on land within or adjoining the existing settlement. Parts of the town centre are designated as an Area of High Archaeological Importance. Glastonbury has a wide and extensive range of services and facilities that you would attribute to a town of its size, and has good access into the town via A39 and A361. The town would have potential for areas of sustainable growth, despite the extensive flood area to the north, north west and the south (flood risk zone 3 associated with the Somerset levels) and the Regionally Important Geological site at Wearyall Hill, although these do provide obvious restrictions to the areas of opportunity for development on the urban fringe.			
Achievability			
The site has been promoted by Glastonbury Town Council, but so far there has not been a planning application for the site. Should this be retained as community facilities, or can the parking/building be relocated?			
Deliverability			
The site is Glastonbury Cricket Club building and parking area which is adjacent to the cricket field facilities. The site is suitable for residential development in principle, however discussions need to be had relating to the potential relocation of the Cricket Club facilities and loss of car parking for this community facility. The market would be likely to develop this site for a range of housing at high density housing consisting mainly of 1 and 2-bed flats, with some town houses, taking account of the character of the area and surrounding development. The yield for the site is 28 and could come forward in a timeframe of 5-10 years to allow for the relocation of the cricket club.			
Yield and time frame:			
0-5	5-10	10-15	
0	28	0	

Site Plan



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