

Housing Land Availability Assessment

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List of Abbreviations

DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
GIS	Geographical Information System
GOSE	Government Office for South East
Ha	Hectare
HLAA	Housing Land Availability Assessment
LDD	Local Development Document
LDF	Local Development Framework
LPA	Local Planning Authority
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
PUOS	Protected Urban Open Space
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to assess the availability of further land for housing in Spelthorne from 2008 (the anticipated adoption date of the Local Development Framework) to 2026 (the anticipated end date of the forthcoming South East Plan). It is based on data at 1 April 2006.

This assessment will replace the previous Housing Capacity Study of April 2005. A Draft practice guidance on carrying out Housing Land Availability Assessments (HLAA) was published by the Government in December 2005. The approach to build on good parts of previous practice is encouraged by the Draft guidance. Therefore this study follows a pragmatic approach of using the extensive survey of capacity from previous capacity studies as well as following the new methodology.

The study has been carried out at Borough level in the absence of guidance on 'Identifying Sub-regional Housing Market Areas' to be published by the Government. South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) has also undertaken pilot studies in what these areas should be for the South East but the work has not been concluded.

This study is based on comprehensive surveys of the Borough's urban areas. This search area does not include areas of high level constraints over which the Council cannot apply its judgement such as the Green Belt, areas at risk of flooding etc. In the remaining area (70% of the urban area) all possible sources of supply have been considered.

The location just outside London and the compact, dense and heavily constrained character of Spelthorne mean that a large proportion of the Borough's housing supply comprises small sites defined as less than 0.4 hectares (Ha). This special character justifies an element of windfall in Spelthorne as small sites are difficult to identify with any certainty on the ground. Therefore the capacity identified through this assessment is based on trend based forecasts for small sites with a cautionary 5% discount and specifically identified large sites as shown in the table below. Trend based forecasts for conversions are also included. The study assumes that housing supply in the two year period 2006-08 will be met by outstanding commitments at 1 April 2006.

Housing Land Availability Assessment Results

Size of Development (net gain)	Net Units 2006-2026 (SEP Period)	Net units 2008-2026 (LDF Period)
Less than 0.4Ha (based on 7 year trends with a 5% discount)	1393	1393
Greater than 0.4Ha (based on identified sites)	1019	1019
Conversions (1)	252	252
Commitments at 1 April 2006 (2)	637	-
Total	3,301	2,664
Draft South East Plan Outstanding Requirement	3,020	2,383*

The trend based figure of 2,664 is the best estimate of total development between 2008-26 at this time.

The study shows a mathematical surplus of about 9% over the South East Plan overall requirement of 3,020 dwellings in the period 2006-26. This needs to be treated with some caution. Whilst on one hand it suggests a sufficient margin to enable delivery of the Draft South East Plan requirement with some degree of confidence, it would be imprudent to suggest at this stage the Council is certain to exceed its allocation. Future updates of capacity will allow actual completions from 2006 to be monitored and trends to be updated accordingly. This may then allow more robust conclusions to be drawn.