

Option E: Multiple Smaller Green Belt Releases

(a) Develop multiple smaller urban extensions around the built-up areas

And:

(b) Allow redevelopment of existing previously developed (brownfield) sites in the Green Belt for housing.

Typically, developments would have capacity for up to 300 homes though, potentially, with a small number of larger extensions in the four locations identified under Option D.

This option involves making multiple small deletions of land from the Green Belt to accommodate new housing. It also includes the option of redeveloping existing major developed (brownfield) sites in the Green Belt for housing.

URBED's report notes that the usual approach adopted by some local authorities is to make many smaller Green Belt deletions to accommodate growth. They refer to this as 'accretion'. Under this approach, land on the edge of the existing built-up areas which is important for ecological or landscape reasons would be ruled out, leaving a list of unconstrained sites for possible allocation. URBED's view is that this may not

be the most sustainable way of providing new homes. The problem is that the sites may not be in the right place because it may not be possible to serve them by public transport, and they may not be within easy reach of schools and other local facilities.

A significant number of sites on the edge of the built-up area of Sheffield have already been suggested by landowners and developers. Details of these sites can be found in the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment⁶³, *though the Council does not necessarily think that all of them are sustainable or suitable for development.*

Under Option E, we have also included the option of redeveloping large brownfield sites in the Green Belt for housing but without having to specifically remove them from the Green Belt. National planning policy allows existing major developed sites to be redeveloped for other uses, providing that the development would have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development. The current Local Plan indicates that this should only be allowed where it would be sustainable.

Any deletion of sites from the Green Belt will depend on the outcome of the Green Belt Review and Sustainability Appraisal of site options identified through that process. The Sustainability Appraisal will

⁶³ See Sheffield Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2015



assess the environmental, social and economic impacts of each of the site options and will include factors such as:

- Access to local shops, community facilities and public transport.
- Transport connections to the main employment areas.
- Impact on environmentally sensitive areas such as wildlife sites and areas of high landscape value
- Capacity of existing infrastructure and the potential to provide new infrastructure that may be needed (e.g. new tram routes, roads, schools and health facilities).
- Risk of flooding.
- Potential risks to health and safety (e.g. from pollution).

Identifying land through options A to D will reduce the need to rely on Option E to meet Sheffield's housing need. The summary of total potential homes for this option, table 4 page 70, is for illustration only and is not based on analysis of specific sites. It represents the balance required on smaller Green Belt sites to meet the indicative housing need of 40,000 – 46,000 new homes over the period to 2034. This option would include assessing potential Green Belt sites around the edge of the main built up areas. This would include the built up areas of Sheffield, Stocksbridge/Deepcar, Chapeltown/High Green and the three larger villages of Oughtibridge, Worrall and Wharncliffe Side.

We have shown Option D delivering 550 homes. This represents the residual required to meet our best estimate of housing need (43,000 homes, see p.41) in Sheffield (after allowing for options A-D). However, if the capacity from other sources was to deliver less than the need, some additional small Green Belt releases or redevelopment of existing previously developed sites would be needed (or needs would have to be met elsewhere in the City Region).

The main **advantages** of this option are:

- (a) It spreads development more evenly around the city, providing wider housing choice in a range of areas.
- (b) It is more likely to speed up housing delivery because there would be less market competition between sites.
- (c) Areas would grow more gradually than they would with a major extension option.

The main **disadvantages** of this option are:

- (a) It could adversely impact on the landscape of Sheffield, potentially harming the City's character and unique selling points (though the Green Belt Review and Sustainability Appraisal process would rule out sites where the environmental impact of development would be greatest).
- (b) There is a higher risk of ecological damage than with urban options.



- (c) There is a risk that it could lead to numerous small housing estates which are disconnected from the rest of the urban area.
- (d) Development may not be close to public transport or local facilities and services.
- (e) Sites may not be large enough to create the critical mass needed for new infrastructure, such as improvements to the transport network.

Consultation questions

Q43: Do you support the option of multiple smaller urban extensions around the built up areas?

Please provide reasons for your answer

Q44: Should redevelopment of existing previously developed (brownfield) sites within the Green Belt for housing be permitted?

Please provide reasons for your answer

Q45: What factors should be given greatest weight when deciding which sites should be allocated for development?

Please provide reasons for your answer

