



Bradford District Local Plan 2025 to 2043

Regulation 19 (Publication) Draft

Site Assessment Methodology (Revised)

October 2026

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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) is preparing a new single Local Plan to set out the long-term strategy for the growth and development of the area. This includes identifying how it intends to meet the need for housing and employment growth and providing a planning policy framework to protect and enhance the area's natural and built environment alongside ensuring that development is guided to the most appropriate location.
- 1.2 As part of showing how the Council will meet the identified development requirements, one of the Local Plan's roles is to identify and allocate enough suitable, deliverable and developable sites. Accordingly, sites (above a minimum threshold) will be assessed with a view to their potential allocation for a range of uses, most notably residential or employment use.
- 1.3 As part of the process of writing the Local Plan and assessing potential site allocations, the Council has prepared a Site Assessment Methodology. This outlines the end-to-end process and the stages involved.
- 1.4 Versions of this methodology were published along the Regulation 18 (Preferred Options) version of the Core Strategy Partial Review in 2020 and Regulation 18 (Preferred Options) version of the Local Plan in 2021 to allow those with an interest to make comments on its contents. In the case of the latter the methodology was also published alongside details of those sites that have been rejected. In both cases, comments on the methodology itself were very limited.
- 1.5 Following these consultations, the Site Assessment Methodology has been reviewed and updated, and used to inform the finalised list of site allocations for inclusion in the Regulation 19 (Publication Draft) version of the Local Plan.
- 1.6 The methodology has been designed to ensure that the site choices made comply with the requirements of the Government's national planning policy and guidance, reflects the local context and in so doing generate sustainable options for meeting the District's development needs. It also provides a clear rationale for determining which sites were not allocated. These did not form part of the overall spatial strategy and as such were discounted.
- 1.7 Those sites that have been selected as allocations are shown in proformas attached to each of the Local Area Strategies for the District's various settlements as well as on the Policies Map. For sites that have not been selected, separate proformas have been prepared setting out the assessment outcomes and the reasons for rejection. These are published alongside this document.

2. Policy Context

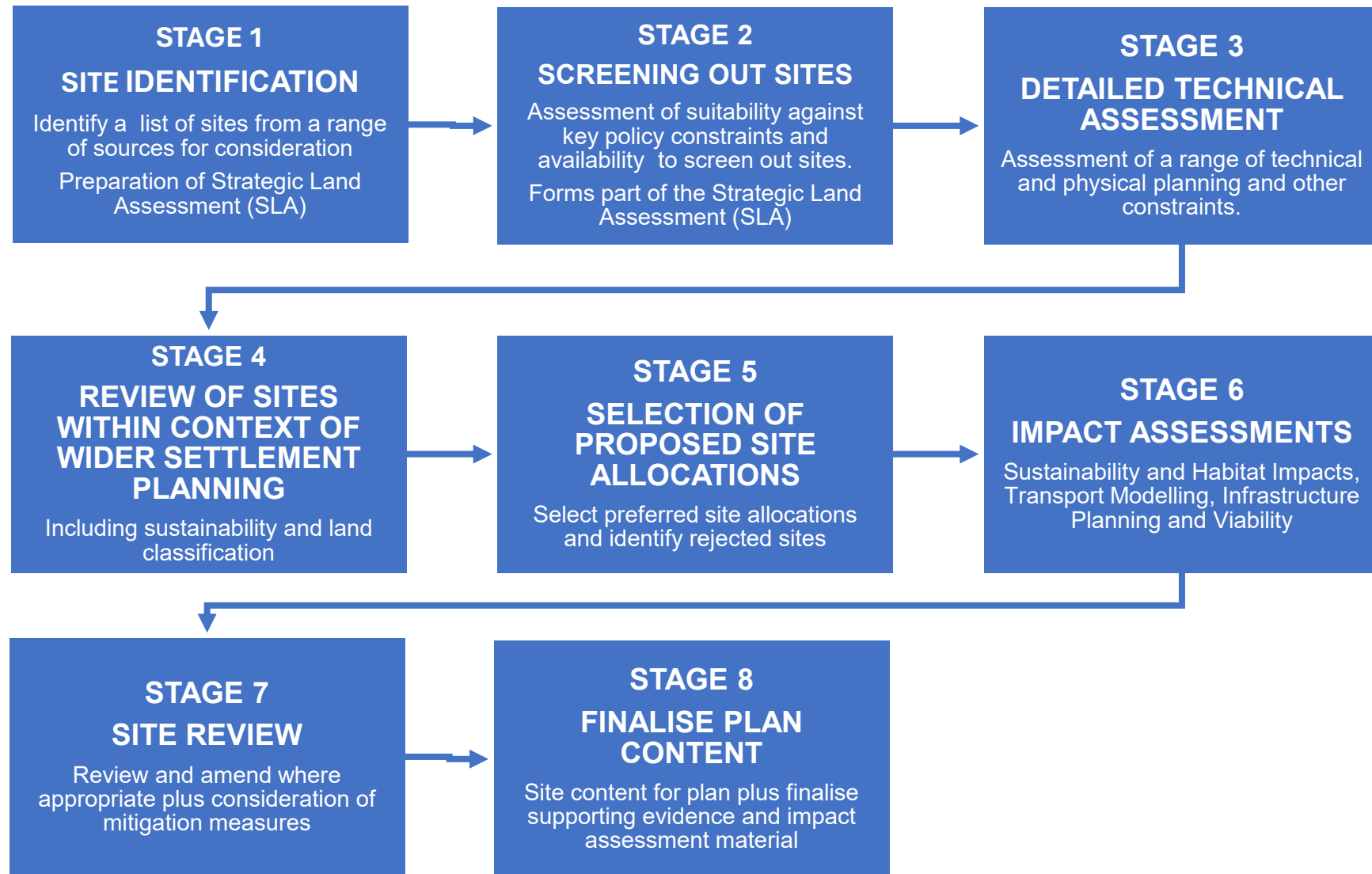
- 2.1 In developing the site assessment methodology and identifying individual site assessment criteria, the Council has had full regard to the Government policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the more detailed advice set out within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 2.2 The NPPF sets out the requirements for producing a Local Plan and states a fundamental part of the Local Plan is to allocate sites to promote development and the flexible use of land to bring forward new land where necessary and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate.
- 2.3 The NPPF requires Local Plans to set out a positive vision to facilitate sustainable development including an overarching framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental policies.

- 2.4 While neither the NPPF nor PPG sets out a specific approach to site assessment they do provide general guidance on the overall result of any site allocations process and set out specific guidance on several topics most notably on Green Belt, flood risk, protecting the natural and built environment and ensuring that plan proposals are deliverable and sustainable.

3. The Site Assessment Process

- 3.1 **Error! Reference source not found.** provides a simple overview of the stages involved in reaching a set of preferred site options. Although stages are presented in sequence some of the stages will be carried out in parallel. The production of a final list of preferred sites was an iterative process with draft site lists being drawn up at several points to allow for stages such as the modelling of cumulative impacts to take place.

Figure 3.1: Site Assessment Methodology Process



4. Stage 1: Site Identification

- 4.1 The starting point, or Stage 1, for the site selection process was to ensure that the Council had as wide and as complete a portfolio of site options as possible so that all reasonable site options were identified and assessed.
- 4.2 The sites assessed were compiled from several sources including:
- Former (unimplemented) development plan (Replacement Unitary Development Plan) allocations.
 - Remaining/unimplemented Bradford City Centre and Canal Road Corridor Area Action Plan sites allocations
 - Historic database of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) listed sites.
 - Sites with planning permission and extracted from the Council's Employment and Housing Land Registers.
 - Review of brownfield register sites.
 - Call for Site submissions – the Council have issued previous calls for sites as part of preparing the Local Plan and received many submissions from landowners, developers, agents, local groups/organisations and members of the public. To date, three Call for Sites exercises have been undertaken:
 1. May 2016 - as part of the Issues & Options consultation on the Allocations DPD.
 2. February/March 2021 - as part of the consultation on Regulation 18 (Preferred Options) version of the Local Plan. This technically remained open until 31 March 2024.
 3. October/November 2025 – a technical Call for Sites exercise covering sites for mineral extraction, processing or transportation, sites for waste disposal and recycling, and sites for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.
 - Sites submitted to the Council on an informal basis.
 - Site survey work and empty homes data.
 - Development Frameworks, City Housing Capacity Study, master plans and neighbourhood plans.
 - Council asset review – land or buildings which the Council considers are surplus to requirements.
 - Other known public estate sites
 - Urban Capacity Study (data to 1 March 2023).
 - Employment Land Review (ELR)
- 4.3 This compiled information was the starting point generally for an updated to the Strategic Land Assessment (SLA) and Employment Land Review (ELR), which is further detailed below.

5. Stage 2: Screening Out Sites

- 5.1 Stage 2 of the methodology was undertaken as part of work to prepare an updated version of the Council's Strategic Land Assessment (SLA), particularly in relation to the suitability and availability of sites. The aim of this was to "screen out" those sites

that had major constraints that would prevent them coming forward, and as such would not be considered as reasonable alternatives for the purposes of creating an appropriate strategy.

- 5.2 Sites were assessed to determine in the first instance, whether they could be considered suitable for development. Those considered to be unsuitable were excluded from any further assessment.
- 5.3 Suitability considerations involved a review of information held by the Council on potential constraints to development. Details of the criteria used are set out in the SLA document. Where a site did not meet any of these criteria or was not highlighted as being completed, committed (i.e. with planning permission or under construction), or unavailable. It was rejected at this point in the process. Sites that met the criteria were viewed as being available and carried forward for more detailed assessment.
- 5.4 A total of 1,678 sites (1,527 for residential; 151 for employment) were considered at this stage. Of these 857 sites were excluded (see Table 5.1, below) resulting in 821 sites being taken forward into the subsequent stages of the site assessment methodology.

Table 5.1: Summary of Stage 1/SLA Outcomes

Proposed Use	Number of Sites Screened	Number of Sites Excluded	Number of Sites Taken Forward
Residential	1,527	785*	742
Employment	151	72	79
Totals	1,678	857	821

*Includes sites which were completed pre-2020 and part sites.

- 5.5 It is possible that the status of such sites could change – for example changes to policy designations, changes in ownership circumstances etc. and therefore the potential to reinstate these sites into the assessment process will be kept under review. Some but not all the information required for this screening process will come from updates to the SLA, ELR and annual monitoring reports.

6. Stage 3: Detailed Technical Assessment

- 6.1 The third stage of the site assessment methodology involved a more detailed appraisal of each potential site against non-absolute constraints. These were based on the range of different policy areas set out in the NPPF. This primarily involved a desk top assessment using GIS mapping to identify potential constraints affecting each site, together with site visits, and, where appropriate, additional more detailed evidence.
- 6.2 The detailed technical assessment for each site centred on various matters relating to:
 - Natural and historic environment,
 - Water and flooding,
 - Environmental protection,
 - Transport/connectivity and
 - Deliverability.
- 6.3 Details of how these were assessed are summarised below. In each case, sites were given a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating, depending on how they performed against the assessment criteria. Table 6.1 (below) provides a broad guide to how the RAG

ratings were applied. These ratings were used to highlight matters/issues where further consideration or assessment may be required as part of any future planning application on any future site allocation.

Table 6.1: Summary of Red, Amber, Green Ratings

Green	Where there would be no adverse impacts or where there is reasonable expectation that impacts can be completely or substantially reduced or mitigated.
Amber	Where there is potential for adverse impacts, but those impacts are can only be partially mitigated.
Red	Where there would significant adverse impacts with only limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

NATURAL & HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

6.4 **Ecology, Biodiversity and Geodiversity** – assessed whether development would be likely to result in any adverse impacts for a site designated as being of importance for its ecological, biodiversity or geodiversity value. The designations were assessed were:

- South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- Local Geological Sites (LGS).

6.5 In assessing potential impacts the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC, this was based on whether it was located within one the three zones of influence - Zone A (400m), Zone B (2.5km) and Zone C (7km).

6.6 In relation to impacts on SSSIs, use was made of the Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), a tool that that allowed a rapid assessment to made of potential risks that may posed by development and whether there is a need to consultation Natural England for advice on how any potential impacts could be avoided or mitigated.

	The site would not have any adverse impacts on a designated site(s)
	The site would have adverse impacts on a designated site(s) and could only be partially mitigated
	The site would have significant adverse impact on a designated site(s) with limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

6.7 **Priority Habitats and Species** – assessed whether records showed the presence of priority habitats or priority species on or near the site.

6.8 Priority habitats are listed in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. These are identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action. Using the Council's GIS mapping, each site was checked in relation to its proximity to any identified areas of priority habitat and an assessment made as to whether development would result in any encroachment into and/or loss of such areas.

- 6.9 In relation to species, each site was assessed to determine whether it was located within or partly within a bat alert area.

	No, there are no such species or habitats identified as being present on, or adjacent to the site
	Yes, but impacts can be partially mitigated via site design, layout or off-site compensatory improvements
	The site would have significant adverse impacts with limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

- 6.10 **Wildlife Habitat Network** – assessed whether the development of the site would result any impact on, and/or the severance of any of the District's wildlife habitat networks, and the degree to which this would take place. The West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) identified the following habitats networks in the area:

- Grassland
- Heathland
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Other

	The site does not lie within a such a network(s)
	The site lies within or in close proximity to such a location and there would be impacts which could only be partially mitigated.
	The site would have significant adverse impacts with limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

- 6.11 **Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** – assessed development of the site be likely to result in the loss of ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, trees or woodland protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), or hedgerows or shrubs protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

	There are no protected trees, woodland, shrubs, or hedgerows on or adjacent to the site or Where there are such features, there is a reasonable prospect that the design and layout of the development could allow for retention or enhancement of those features.
	The site would have adverse impacts which could only be partially mitigated i.e. there would be a partial loss of such features
	The site would result in the loss of features and there would be significant adverse impacts with only limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

- 6.12 **Landscape and Visibility** – assessed whether, within the context of the landscape character type in which the site is situated, development for the proposed use be likely to impact on the wider landscape. It also assessed the site's visibility from public vantage points i.e. roads, railways lines and public rights of way.

- 6.13 The Council prepared a new Landscape Character Assessment to support the Local Plan and provide updated to guidance to decision makers. This was used to identify which landscape character area and type that each site was in, with planning judgement being used to determine the likelihood of any adverse impacts that may result from development.
- 6.14 In assessing site visibility, consideration was given to extent to which it could be viewed from key public vantage points such as roads, railway lines and public rights of way/footpaths. Where appropriate, consideration was also given to key views/vistas identified in neighbourhood development plans and in the Saltaire World Heritage Site Management Plan.
- 6.15 **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA)** – this assessed a selected number of sites, some of which were draft Local Plan allocations and some full or part Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites and potential employment sites. The outputs from this assessment provided the Council with a clear and robust evidence base to inform the decision-making process on site allocations. The aims of the project were to assess the landscape sensitivity of each potential site option against the defined criteria and provide a high-level assessment of potential cumulative impacts of sites which are closely associated with each other.

	No or limited adverse impacts are identified or There is reasonable expectation that impacts can be completely or substantially mitigated via design and layout.
	The site would have adverse impacts which could only be partially mitigated.
	The site would cause significant adverse impacts in a landscape area which is highly sensitive to change with limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

- 6.16 **Open Space, Local Green Space and Green Infrastructure** – assessed whether development would impact on and/or result in the loss of formal or informal open, designated Local Green Spaces (LGS), and/or Green Infrastructure corridors. It also examined whether development would contribute to existing deficiencies in provision.
- 6.17 An Open Space Audit was undertaken to identify the location of open spaces within the District's settlements and make a quantitative and qualitative assessment of this provision. It also identified standards for provision. Local Green Spaces (LGS) have been identified in the "made" Neighbourhood Development Plans.

	The site's development would not result in the loss of any open space site or small open space site.
	The site would result in the loss of open space which could only be partially mitigated, and: The site is located where there is: • not an existing overall deficit of open space in the area and • not a deficit in the typology of open space to be lost. AND: The loss of open space would not result in: • an overall deficiency of open space in the area and • a deficiency of the typology of open space to be lost.

	OR The site contains / is partly covered by a small open space site which may be lost due to development but could be mitigated by replacement provision on-site or off-site.
	The site would result in the significant loss of open space with limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation. The loss would either cause a deficit of open space in either the typology to be lost or overall in the area; or exacerbate an existing deficit in either the typology to be lost or overall in the area. OR The site is wholly covered by a small open space site which would be lost and could not be replaced.

- 6.18 **Local Green Spaces** – assessed whether development of the site be likely to result in the loss of designated Local Green Space (LGS). Many LGSs have been designated in the various “made” (adopted) neighbourhood development plans in Bradford District. These have a stronger degree of protection, akin to that given to the Green Belt.

	The development site would not result in the loss of any Local Green Space
	Not Applicable
	The development site would result in the loss of Local Green Space.

- 6.19 **Green Infrastructure** – assessed whether development of the site would be likely to result in the severance of a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network.

- 6.20 This element initially used Natural England’s published mapping and the Council’s Draft Green Infrastructure Networks to assessed impacts and potential for severance.

- 6.21 A Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy was also commissioned. This assessed the District’s GBI network and identified gaps in provision as well as opportunities for new or enhance provision. It also made evidence-based recommendations to integrate GBI into future planning policies and developments. This strategy has fed into the contents of the site allocations proformas.

	The development site does not fall within or adjacent to a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network
	The development site is partly located within a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network but would not fully sever the network and mitigation could be provided.
	The development site is located in a Strategic Green Infrastructure network and would sever the network resulting in the loss of connectivity.

- 6.22 **Agricultural Land/Soils** – assessed whether development of the site would be likely to result in the loss of agricultural land, in particular the best and most versatile agricultural land.

- 6.23 This classification puts grades 1, 2 and 3a as being the best and most versatile and grades 3b, 4 and 5 as moderate to very poor. Grade 3 land is not subdivided into 3a and 3b by Natural England in the regional maps. The methodology has erred on the side of caution and has classed all sites on Grade 3 land as being in the best and most versatile land.

- 6.24 Where a site has a mix of land that falls in multiple agricultural land classification grades, the agricultural land classification grade of the largest proportion of the area will be used to score the site.

	No loss of agricultural land, development lies within an urban/settlement area
	Development would result in the loss of agricultural land Grades 3 to 5
	Development would result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)

- 6.25 **Green Belt** – sites were noted as being located within the Green Belt or not. A Green Belt Assessment of all sites was undertaken with the findings included in the accompanying report. This assessment identified how a site performed against each of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, as well as an assessment of boundary strength, sprawl and openness. Each site was given a high-level overall rating to obtain an initial understanding of the contribution a site makes to the Green Belt. However, this was used for context rather than as an absolute reason for rejecting or allocating a site.
- 6.26 The Green Belt Assessment was also used to identify the Grey Belt status of each site. This information was used in the site allocation process in line with the NPPF which indicates that where it is necessary to release land from the Green Belt for development, priority should be given to previously developed land, then land considered to be grey belt, which is not previously developed, then other Green Belt locations. Although, consideration must also be given to promoting sustainable patterns of development and taking account of other constraints.
- 6.27 Where a site is removed from the Green Belt for a housing site allocation, any proposal that comes forward it is expected that it will meet the “Golden Rules” regarding affordable housing, open space provision and infrastructure.
- 6.28 **Historic and Built Environment** – assessed whether development of the site could be achieved in a way which conserves and where appropriate enhances the heritage significance and setting of the District's designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.29 This examined whether there were any designated or non-designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the site that would be affected by its development. The presence of such assets was confirmed via a desktop assessment and confirmed, where possible, through site visits. The assets considered were Conservations Area, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Register Parks and Garden, West Yorkshire (Class I and II) Archaeological Sites, the Saltaire World Heritage Site (and its buffer zone), and non-designated heritage assets identified in made neighbourhood development plans.
- 6.30 Where the technical assessment indicated that potential site allocations may have a significant impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings heritage impact assessments were undertaken. The aim of these assessments was to evaluate such impacts and identify any constraints to development as well as any mitigation that may need to be put in place to address them. These have been published as part of the plan evidence base. The methodology was agreed with Historic England.

	The site does not affect any such heritage asset
	The site would have some adverse impacts on a designated or undesignated assets and its setting which could potentially be mitigated

	The site would result in substantial harm to a heritage asset or its setting with no reasonable prospect of adequate mitigation.
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- 6.31 **Air Quality** – assessed whether the site lies within, or in close proximity, to a significant source of air pollution or within an area of poor air quality or a designated air quality management area (AQMA) or the designated Clean Air Zone (CAZ)

	The site is not located within the Clean Air Zone, within proximity of a AQMA or Area of Concern, or adjacent a NO ₂ 30+
	Not Applicable
	The site is located within the Clean Air Zone, within close proximity to an AQMA or Area of Concern, or adjacent to a NO ₂ 30+.

- 6.32 **Land Stability & Contamination** – assessed whether the site is subject to any land stability issues or contamination. It sought to identify whether there are any potential adverse impacts arising from on-site structures, unstable land or culverted watercourse amongst other matters. The site's proximity to a closed or historic landfill site was also considered in terms any potential for contamination.

	Either no issues identified or where there are issues but sufficient information and evidence in the form of surveys is available and there is a reasonable expectation of satisfactory mitigation and remediation. or The site outside the 250m buffer zone of a closed/historic landfill site.
	Issues have been identified which can only be partially mitigated by site remediation or minor engineering works.
	Substantial issues are identified with only limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation such that development would pose a risk to human health, public safety and the environment

- 6.33 **Former Coal Mining Activity** – assessed whether the site could potentially be affected or influenced by former coal mining activities. Bradford District lies on the northern edge of the Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire coalfield and has a history of coal mining. Much of the area is covered by a Coal Mining Reporting Area, meaning that previous historic mine workings could impact upon land stability and public safety. Mining Remediation Authority mapping was to analyse whether a site was within a Coal Mining Report area, or within a development low risk or development high risk area.

	The site is not within a coal mining reporting area.
	The site lies wholly or partly within a Development Low Risk Area
	The site lies wholly or partly within a Development High Risk Area.

- 6.34 **Nuisance, Noise, Bad Neighbours** – assessed whether there was the potential for adjacent land uses to constrain the type of uses that could potentially occupy the site (i.e. in terms of noise and light pollution etc.)

- 6.35 This element of the assessment sought to ensure that any proposed developments did not have a negative impact on the quality of life of those living and working around

development sites. As such it considered whether the site was located close to any existing and proposed uses that may create a nuisance or amenity impacts.

6.36 The type of uses considered to have impacts included:

- Major traffic/transport corridors
- Waste management facilities
- Waste Water Treatment Works
- Certain types of industrial uses
- Intensive livestock units/farms

	No issues have been identified or where there are issues there is a reasonable expectation of satisfactory mitigation any.
	Issues have been identified but could be which could only be partially mitigated.
	Development of the site would cause significant issues in term either of amenity impacts for the users of the site (receptors) or would undermine the operation of the adjoining 'bad neighbour' use and there would be limited or no reasonable prospect of mitigation.

6.37 **Major Hazard Sites & Hazardous Installations** – assessed whether all or part of the site lies within one of the defined Consultation Zones (inner; middle; outer) around a major hazard site or hazardous installation.

6.38 Bradford District has several locations that are classed as being major hazard sites or hazardous installations. Consultation zones have been applied by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to assist them in their role as a statutory consultee. The zones are used to advise planning authorities when developments are proposed close sites or pipelines that may lead to an increase in population around the major hazard.

	The site does not lie within a defined Consultation Zone around a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
	The site lies within such a zone and given the scale and nature of the proposed use the HSE does not advise against development.
	The site lies within such a zone and given the scale and nature of the proposed use the HSE advises against its development.

6.39 **Proximity to Waste Management Sites** - assessed whether development of a site could impact on the operation of an existing operational or permitted waste management facility or site allocations.

6.40 Site allocations were proposed and mapped as part of the Regulation 18 (Preferred Options) version of the Local Plan, whilst existing facilities (proposed to be safeguarded) were also mapped. Locations in relation to waste management facilities were also confirmed through the use of aerial photography and site visits.

	The site is not within 200m of an operational and/or permitted waste management site
	The site lies within 200m of an operational and/or permitted waste management site
	The site includes an operational and/or permitted waste management site

- 6.41 **Minerals** – assessed whether development could potentially lead to the sterilisation of a mineral resource and affect their supply. Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) have been defined for sand and gravel, sandstone and coal based upon BGS Mineral Resource mapping. The second element it sought to determine whether development of a site would affect the operation of active or allocated mineral sites.

	The site is not located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and/or The site is not located within 500m of an operational mineral extraction site or allocation.
	Part of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, but possible impacts could be mitigated and/or The site is located within 500m of an operational mineral extraction site or allocation, but design and mitigation would mean that there would be no significant adverse impacts on the operation of the site.
	Part of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, and impacts could not be mitigated, or the whole of the site is within a mineral safeguarding area and/or The site is located within 500m of an operational mineral extraction site or allocation and could have a significant adverse impact on the operation of the mineral site.

- 6.42 **Major Gas Pipelines/Electricity Transmission and Distribution Cables** – assessed whether the site, or any part of the site, was crossed by or within the buffer zone of a high-pressure gas pipeline (150m) or affected by high voltage overhead or underground electricity transmission cables. It also examined whether there were any other overhead cables present within the site as well as any other known pipelines.

- 6.43 This assessed whether there were any infrastructure constraints that such as the presence of overhead or underground high and low voltage electricity transmission cables or high pressure or other pipelines that could affect development on the site. The assessment used a combination of desktop survey using the Council's GIS constraints mapping, aerial photography and site visits. Engagement also took place with utilities providers.

	Major gas pipelines or high voltage overhead or underground electricity lines do not pose a constraint to the site
	A significant part of the site lies is affected but mitigation is possible.
	The presence of high-pressure gas pipelines and / or overhead or underground cables constrains the site to an extent that makes it unlikely to be developable.

WATER AND FLOOD RISK

- 6.44 The NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change (PPG) emphasise the active role Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should take to ensure that flood risk is understood and managed effectively and sustainably throughout all stages of the planning process.

- 6.45 A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was undertaken for all sites that remained in the site assessment process beyond Stage 1. The Level 1 SFRA provided an overview of the flood risk issues across the District and included a high level, initial assessment of the amount and type (fluvial, surface water or groundwater) of flood risk on each site. This used the most up-to-date flood risk data and modelling data available at the time. It also included an assessment of the impact of climate change on flood risk using the relevant modelling, climate change allowances and discussions with the EA.
- 6.46 Where a site fell in multiple flood zones, then it was scored on the zone covering the largest proportion of the site. If the site was split equally between two zones, then it was assessed on the area of the worst flood zone. This was to maintain consistency with the assessment of sites. Sites fully located within Flood Zone 3b (the functional flood plain) were screened out at Stage 1.
- 6.47 The Level 1 SFRA assigned one of the following strategic recommendations to each site that was assessed:
- Strategic Recommendation A – Further investigation recommended - review and refine developable area based on flood risk
 - Strategic Recommendation B – Level 2 SFRA required. Exception Test may be required
 - Strategic Recommendation C – Site to progress to FRA stage
 - Strategic Recommendation D – development could be allocated on flood risk grounds based on the evidence of this Level 1 SFRA
- 6.48 These recommendations were used to inform how sites were considered in the site assessment and allocation process, and also to help demonstrate the application of the sequential test. It should be noted that sites that were fully located within Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) were screened out at Stage 1.
- 6.49 The assessment in the Level 1 SFRA and the consideration of the choice of sites in each settlement area indicated that not all development could be accommodated in areas of low flood risk. As such, a Level 2 SFRA was therefore required to further apply the sequential test for those sites not located in a low flood risk area.
- 6.50 A further exercise was undertaken using the findings of the Level 1 SFRA to broadly categorise each site by the level/severity of flood risk (both fluvial and surface water) to help narrow down those sites which needed the more detailed Level 2 SFRA. The sites were grouped into three categories
- Low Flood Risk
 - Medium Flood Risk
 - High Flood Risk
- 6.51 Those sites categorised as medium or high flood risk were eligible for a Level 2 SFRA (or as a minimum a nominal risk assessment to confirm that the risk was minimal and that the site could be allocated with appropriate mitigation).
- 6.52 The outputs from the Level 2 SFRA indicated whether a site could pass the exception test (if required) and therefore helped to determine which sites could be allocated, ensuring only those with an acceptable level of risk were chosen (or that where there was higher risk, appropriate mitigation could be achieved). The findings from both the Level 1 and Level 2 SFRA are available in the accompanying reports and should be read alongside this Site Assessment Methodology.
- 6.53 **Groundwater** – assessed whether development of the site would adversely affect a water supply or Source Protection Zone. [Groundwater Source Protection Zones](#)

[\(GSPZ\)](#) ensure that the public drinking water supply is protected. GSPZs are defined by the Environment Agency to protect essential elements of the water supply including aquifers, groundwater flows, wells, boreholes and springs. The GSPZs are split into three main zones, these zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. The closer the activity to the centre of the source of groundwater, the greater the risk. The three main zones are:

- Zone 1 (inner protection zone)
- Zone 2 (outer protection zone)
- Zone 3 (total catchment).

	Site does not lie within a defined Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GPSZ)
	Site lies within Zone 2 of a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GPSZ).
	Site lies within Zone 1 of a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GPSZ).

TRANSPORT & ACCESSIBILITY

- 6.54 The element of the technical assessment sought to establish the ability of a site to accessed, primarily from the highway network and any potential constraints that would affect this. It also examined how well connected each site was to everyday services and facilities.
- 6.55 **Site Access** – an assessment was made regarding the ability to obtain a highway access to each site. This sought to establish whether the site bordered the adopted highway and whether there was an existing access or a new one required. It also examined the width of existing access and whether a minimum width was achievable. The ability to achieve minimum visibility at existing or potential access points was also assessed. Recommendations were made for potential mitigation measures. Engagement also took place with the Council's Highways Development Control team.
- 6.56 **Highway Constraints** – an assessment was made to established whether site was affected by any highway safety issues or constraints that would impact on its development. Potential options for mitigation were also identified. Engagement also took place with the Council's Highways Development Control team.
- 6.57 **Connectivity** – an assessment of connectivity was made using the [Department for Transport's \(DfT\) Connectivity Tool](#). The Connectivity Tool combines transport and land use data to generate a national measure of connectivity for each site. This connectivity score measures how a site is connected to everyday services by walking, driving, cycling and public transport
- 6.58 In the context of Bradford District, the following scores were used to generate a RAG rating:

Score	RAG Rating
< 50 Red	Red
50-69 Amber	Amber
> 70 Green	Green

- 6.59 For employment sites, the Connectivity Tool was used in a similar way to assess connectivity on a site-by-site basis. However, for employment sites the assessment

only looked at a site's connectivity to residential dwellings as this is the main journey to and from the site. The following scores were used to generate a RAG rating:

Score	RAG Rating
< 50 Red	Red
50-69 Amber	Amber
> 70 Green	Green

DELIVERABILITY

- 6.60 An important element in determining whether a site was suitable for potential allocation within the Local Plan was deliverability. This meant understanding the intentions of landowners and developers regarding their sites, and whether there were any issues that would affect them being brought forward for development.
- 6.61 Engagement took place through the plan preparation process with site owners, promoters and agents, using delivery questionnaires. This assisted in helping to discern potential intension and to allow for the Council to ensure development could be phased appropriately.
- 6.62 In addition, the part of the assessment also examined whether a site's topography could be a significant constraint that would affect deliverability and where there made be any abnormal site costs that may affect viability.

7. Stage 4: Review of Sites within Context of Wider Settlement Planning

- 7.1 The fourth stage of the process was to review the potential sites within the context of wider settlement planning. As part of the lead up to the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan, the Council undertook work to examine overall settlement strategies and the relationship of the proposed site allocations to achieve balanced and sustainable growth within the District.
- 7.2 Further work has been undertaken to inform the Regulation 19 version of the Plan. This work is detailed in the Bradford District Settlement Study Report (2026). This approach considered the technical site assessments balanced against broader settlement strategy options to support place-making. Consideration was also given to a series of growth principles and directions including settlement form, function, scale and setting as well as proximity to neighbouring settlements.

8. Stage 5: Selection of Proposed Site Allocations

- 8.1 The fifth stage involved using the detail technical assessment work undertaken as part of Stage 3 and the settlement work undertaken in relation to Stage 4 to select site allocations for inclusion within the Local Plan.

9. Stage 6: Impact Assessments

- 9.1 The sixth stage of the overall site assessment process involved undertaking a several impact assessments of the list of site allocations identified as part of Stage 5 to:
- Review of the cumulative impacts of emerging site options. For example, using a Strategic Transport Model to identify impacts on sites on the highways network.
 - Assessment of cumulative critical infrastructure implications via the Local Infrastructure Plan (LIP).

- Evaluation of settlement level preferred options and reasonable alternatives (including large or clustered sites) through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- Consideration of Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) outputs and mitigation measures.

10. Stage 7: Site Review

- 10.1 The seventh stage involved reviewing the potential site allocations in the light of the impact assessments highlighted as part of Stage 6. This included making any final amendments to sites and/or policies as well as considering potential mitigation measures to address any issues raised by these assessments.

11. Stage 8: Finalise Plan Content

- 11.1 Having followed the stages outline above, the Council identified a range of site allocations for inclusion within the Regulation 19 (Publication) version of the Bradford District Local Plan. Stage 8 involved finalising the Plan content as well as the supporting evidence base and impact assessment material ahead of publication to allow representations to be made on its legal compliance and soundness.
- 11.2 Proformas were drawn up for each site allocation, highlighting key planning matters that should be addressed as part of any future planning application.

12. Other Land Uses

- 12.1 Alongside assessing and identifying site allocations for housing and employment, the Bradford District Local Plan also needed to include sites for other land uses. These included, amongst others, sites and/or locations for:
- Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
 - Community infrastructure such as schools, sports facilities or health facilities
 - Green infrastructure including areas of formal and informal open space, playing pitches and nature conservation sites
 - Mineral extraction, processing and transport
 - Renewable and low carbon energy
 - Retail and leisure facilities
 - Transport infrastructure
 - Waste management including processing, treatment and disposal
- 12.2 Many of these were identified through other areas of the Local Plan evidence base or were subject to other regimes or programmes. For example, green and blue infrastructure networks and sites were likely to be identified through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Study and Open Space Audits, whilst transport infrastructure was likely to be identified via discussions with council officers, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and infrastructure providers as well as through transport modelling. Any schemes were identified in the Local Infrastructure Plan.
- 12.3 However, there were several that required sites to be assessed to determine their suitability. For these most elements of Stage 1 and Stage 2 of this site assessment methodology were used as part of any assessments together with any use specific matters. For the purposes of this methodology, these land uses were accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, mineral extraction, processing and transportation, and waste management,
- 12.4 The assessments for above land uses are contained in separate evidence base documents. In relation to topic/issue specific matters the following has been used to assess the sites listed above:

- Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople - this included consideration of good practice in pitch and site design together with minimum pitch size analysis and particular sensitivities to levels, vehicle access, environmental protection, security and ability to accommodate an integrated design with neighbouring uses.
- Mineral extraction, processing and transportation - instead of using the Stage 1/SHLAA 5 criteria, separately exclusionary criteria were applied for minerals development. These were
 - Is the site available and deliverable within the Plan period?
 - Is there sufficient evidence of availability of the mineral resource?
 - Is the site in or adjacent to internationally or nationally designated nature conservation site (i.e. the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC and SSSI)?
 - Is the site within/adjacent to a Scheduled Monument designation?
 - Is more than 50% of the site within the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b)?
 - Is the site located within an area of Ancient Woodland?
 - Is the site allocated for an alternative use?
- Waste Management – any sites put forward for waste management facilities was based on the Stage 3 from the site assessment methodology.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 Having followed the methodology outlined above, the Council has alighted upon a set of sites that it considers to be appropriate for allocation for residential, employment and other uses in the Bradford District Local Plan (2025 to 2043), and those which it does not.
- 13.2 Proformas are included within the Local Plan for each of the proposed site allocations. These set out details of the site including any potential development considerations that would need to be addressed as part of any future planning application together with a summary of when it would be expected to come forward within the Plan period.
- 13.3 A separate document has been prepared to list details of those sites that were not selected for allocation, together with details of the reasons for doing so.

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