



PROJECT INFORMATION

LOCATION

South Hams, Devon, England

PROJECT TYPE

Design Review Assessment for a Regional Growth Strategy

CLIENT

South Hams District Council

Themes

Sustainable future growth patterns

Accessibility

Reducing Community Footprint

Preserving and enhancing traditional towns in England

STATUS

Completed

The Studio LK team, whist with The Prince's Foundation, were instructed to lead this project by South Hams District Council. (SHDC) The SHDC's LDF Core Strategy required that sites be allocated for 6,000 new dwellings and about 62 hectares of employment land in the period up to 2016.

SHDC established three 'filters' to identify and assess potential development sites in the towns and villages. These were Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Sustainability Threshold Assessment (STA), Strategic Infrastructure Delivery planning (SID).

SHDC went a step further and commissioned the team to lead and deliver a design review assessment (DRA). The assessment acted as a 'sieve', through which to choose and discard potential sites that would/would not be able to create good design and placemaking throughout the District, and to further enhance the robustness of the plans to withstand examination.

It was recognised that the DRA process would involve some significant challenges, particularly its application to a multitude of differing sites and situations across an entire district. This is where the EbD process was used, enabling community involvement to provide the local knowledge needed for the process, thus providing a robust and consistent evidence base for the plans. The DRA process finished by subjecting the best performing sites to a capacity assessment by applying a density estimation.

High level design guidance was then produced for each chosen site, which advised how new development should be considered in terms of its urban structure, urban grain, mix, density, height and its relation to context. This guidance was provided in three parts. The first part is a set of overarching design principles (objectives), which would underpin any new development in the District. The second part was a series of design related assessment principles that could be used to check proposals coming forward. The third is the embodiment of these principles in sketch form for each 2016 site (these were not proposals for each site but were a guide for designers to interpret in a number of ways).

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