



Value My Land

Maximising Returns for Landowners

What is a Call for Sites?

A Practical Guide for Landowners

How to put land forward for future development and strengthen its prospects through the Local Plan process.



Value My Land

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What is a Call for Sites?

A Call for Sites is an exercise undertaken by a local council when it is preparing or reviewing its Local Plan. Landowners, developers and planning professionals are invited to put forward land that may be suitable for future housing, employment or other development.

For a landowner, the process can be an important opportunity to ensure that land is formally considered as part of the council's future growth strategy. A well-prepared submission can establish the site within the council's evidence base and provide a platform for continued promotion through later stages of the Local Plan.

A Call for Sites submission does not grant planning permission. It puts the land forward so that its development potential can be assessed.

Why do councils run Calls for Sites?

Councils need evidence about the land that may be available and capable of accommodating future development. A Call for Sites helps the authority identify potential opportunities before it decides where growth should ultimately be directed.

- Identify potential housing, employment and mixed-use sites
- Understand which land is genuinely available for development
- Inform land availability assessments and Local Plan preparation
- Compare alternative locations against planning, environmental and technical considerations
- Build an evidence base for future allocations and growth strategies

Where does it sit in the planning process?

Call for Sites → site assessment / HELAA or SHLAA → Local Plan consultation → potential allocation
→ planning application

[Read the full online Call for Sites Guide](#)

Why Landowners Should Pay Attention

Many landowners first become aware of their land's development potential when a Local Plan review is already underway. By that stage, an important submission window may be closing or may already have passed.

Putting land forward early gives the council an opportunity to assess it alongside competing sites. It also creates time to identify weaknesses, commission proportionate technical work and respond to questions raised during the authority's assessment.

Missing a submission window can matter

Calls for Sites are often linked to specific stages of Local Plan preparation. If a site is not submitted at the relevant stage, there may be a lengthy wait before the authority formally seeks additional land again. Some councils also operate rolling submission arrangements, so the position should always be checked locally.

Early engagement can improve the planning strategy

A site does not need to be perfect before it is submitted. The more useful question is whether the land has realistic development potential and whether any constraints can be understood and addressed. Early assessment allows the promotion strategy to focus on the matters most likely to influence the council's view.

If a site is not selected immediately

Non-selection at one stage does not necessarily remove all future potential. Housing requirements, settlement strategies, infrastructure proposals and planning policies can change. Keeping the site visible, responding to consultation stages and updating evidence can be important where the land remains a credible long-term opportunity.

The best time to assess a Call for Sites opportunity is before the deadline — not after it.

[Check Current Call for Sites Opportunities in England](#)

What Land Can Be Submitted?

The exact eligibility requirements depend on the individual council's exercise. Subject to those criteria, a wide range of land can usually be put forward for consideration. Planning permission is not required before a site is submitted.

Agricultural & Grazing Land Fields, paddocks and other land in agricultural or grazing use may have longer-term development potential.	Greenfield & Settlement-Edge Land Land adjoining or relating closely to an existing town or village is commonly promoted through Local Plan reviews.
Brownfield & Previously Developed Land Former commercial, industrial or other developed land may present redevelopment opportunities.	Green Belt Land Green Belt land can be promoted through Local Plan reviews, although policy considerations and the council's strategy will be particularly important.
Commercial & Employment Land Councils may seek land for employment, logistics, mixed-use or other economic development as well as housing.	Larger Strategic Sites Larger parcels can be promoted where they may support new neighbourhoods, infrastructure or broader strategic growth.

What will the council assess?

- Relationship to existing settlements, services and public transport
- Safe and suitable highway access
- Flood risk, drainage and ground conditions
- Ecology, biodiversity and environmental constraints
- Landscape, visual and heritage effects
- Infrastructure, utilities and deliverability
- Availability, ownership, timescale and viability

A constraint does not automatically make a site unsuitable. The key issue is whether it can be properly understood, mitigated or treated as a design parameter within a realistic development strategy.

What Makes a Strong Submission?

Simply identifying a parcel of land on a plan may be enough to place it on a council's list, but it will rarely present the strongest possible case. Where numerous sites are competing for a limited number of allocations, the submission should explain clearly why the land is suitable, available and capable of being delivered.

1. Clear site identification — Provide an accurate site boundary, ownership information and a clear description of the land and its surroundings.

2. A realistic development concept — Explain the form of development being promoted and, where appropriate, an indicative capacity or concept plan.

3. Planning and policy case — Set out the site's relationship to the settlement, the Local Plan strategy, housing or employment needs and other relevant planning considerations.

4. Sustainability evidence — Demonstrate access to services, facilities, public transport and existing communities where these factors support the site.

5. Constraints and solutions — Identify access, drainage, ecology, landscape, heritage and infrastructure issues and explain how they can be addressed.

6. Availability and deliverability — Confirm that the land is available and explain why development is realistically capable of coming forward within an appropriate timeframe.

A strong submission does more than say that land is available: it explains why the site should be positively considered when compared with competing opportunities.

Is My Land Suitable for Development?

Technical Evidence That Can Strengthen a Site

The level of technical work should be proportionate to the site and the stage of the Local Plan. The objective is not to commission every possible report immediately, but to address the issues that could materially affect the council's assessment.

Access & Highways An access appraisal can demonstrate that a safe point of access is achievable and identify any visibility, junction or highway improvements that may be required.	Flood Risk & Drainage Early work can identify flood zones, surface-water issues and a credible drainage strategy so that water management is not treated as an unresolved obstacle.
Landscape & Visual A landscape appraisal can test development capacity, sensitive boundaries, views and the mitigation needed to create a defensible development edge.	Ecology & Biodiversity Initial ecological work can identify habitats, protected species considerations and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement or mitigation.
Heritage Where heritage assets are nearby, proportionate assessment can explain the site's relationship to those assets and how setting effects can be avoided or reduced.	Utilities & Infrastructure Early enquiries can identify likely servicing options, infrastructure constraints and whether abnormal works may affect delivery.
Concept Masterplan A concept plan can bring the evidence together and show access, development areas, landscape buffers, open space and drainage in a coherent framework.	Viability & Deliverability Where relevant, high-level viability work can demonstrate that the proposed development remains commercially realistic after infrastructure and mitigation costs.

The strongest evidence is targeted: it answers the council's likely concerns and demonstrates that identified constraints can be managed within a deliverable scheme.

What Happens After Submission?

Once land has been submitted, the local planning authority will normally assess it as part of its evidence base and Local Plan work. The terminology and sequence vary between councils, but the process commonly includes the following stages.

- 1. Submission recorded** — The council logs the site and checks that the basic information needed for assessment has been provided.
- 2. Land availability assessment** — The site may be considered through a HELAA, SHLAA, SHELAA or equivalent assessment process.
- 3. Suitability and constraints review** — Officers consider planning policy, sustainability, access, flood risk, landscape, ecology, heritage, infrastructure and other relevant matters.
- 4. Comparison with alternatives** — The authority considers the site alongside other submitted land and the wider spatial strategy for growth.
- 5. Local Plan consultation** — Preferred options, proposed allocations or alternative strategies may be published for representations.
- 6. Potential allocation** — If the site progresses successfully, it may ultimately be identified for development within the emerging Local Plan.
- 7. Planning application** — Allocation provides policy support, but a separate planning application will normally still be required before development can proceed.

Being assessed is not the same as being allocated — and allocation is not the same as planning permission.

Read: [What is a HELAA or SHLAA?](#)

Read: [Local Plan Allocation Guide](#)

What If the Council Discounts My Site?

A site can be discounted for many reasons: an access concern, landscape sensitivity, flood risk, perceived distance from services, infrastructure issues, a strategic preference for another location or simply because the authority believes it already has sufficient alternatives.

The first step is to understand exactly why the site has been assessed negatively. A generic conclusion should be tested against the evidence. Where the council has relied on an incorrect assumption, incomplete information or a constraint that can be addressed, further work may materially strengthen the planning case.

A focused response can include:

- Reviewing the council's assessment and identifying factual or technical errors
- Commissioning targeted evidence to address the stated concern
- Revising the development concept or masterplan to respond to constraints
- Submitting representations at the appropriate Local Plan consultation stage
- Demonstrating availability, deliverability and a realistic timescale
- Continuing to monitor housing need, site supply, policy changes and alternative strategy options

Continued promotion matters

Many strategic sites progress over more than one stage of plan-making. A site that is not preferred today may become more important if other allocations prove undeliverable, housing requirements change or the authority revises its growth strategy. The promotion approach should therefore be evidence-led and responsive rather than dependent on a single submission.

A negative assessment should be treated as something to understand and respond to — not automatically as the end of the site's prospects.

How Can a Call for Sites Affect Land Value?

Submitting land through a Call for Sites does not itself create development value. Its importance lies in starting — or strengthening — the planning pathway that may ultimately lead to Local Plan allocation and planning permission.

Land with no recognised planning support will often be valued primarily by reference to its existing use. As a site progresses through the planning system, developers and housebuilders may place greater weight on its future development prospects. Allocation can be particularly important because it indicates that the council has identified the land as part of its development strategy, although planning permission and detailed delivery issues still need to be resolved.

The value outcome is site-specific

Location, development capacity, tenure, access, infrastructure, affordable housing requirements, abnormal costs, market conditions and planning risk can all influence value. For that reason, a landowner should avoid assuming that a headline “development land” figure applies automatically to a particular site.

Understand the planning position before selling

Selling too early can mean transferring the benefit of future planning progress to a purchaser. Before agreeing terms, it is sensible to establish whether the land is affected by an active Call for Sites, Local Plan review, land availability assessment or other planning opportunity and to understand what further promotion may achieve.

For many landowners, the most important question is not simply “what is the land worth today?” but “what planning progress could realistically be achieved before a sale?”

Find Out What Your Land May Be Worth

How Value My Land Can Help

Value My Land can assess whether your land is affected by a current Call for Sites or Local Plan opportunity and advise on the most appropriate route for promoting it. The aim is to present a clear, evidence-based case that allows the council to understand the site's strengths, constraints and deliverability.

Initial Development Potential Review We review the site's planning context, settlement relationship, Local Plan position and principal opportunities and constraints.	Call for Sites Submission We can prepare the submission form, planning case and supporting material required to put the land forward professionally.
Technical Team Management Where evidence is needed, we can coordinate specialist work relating to access, drainage, landscape, ecology, heritage, utilities and other matters.	Local Plan Representations We can respond to consultation stages, address adverse assessments and continue to promote the site as the Local Plan evolves.
Promotion Strategy We consider how the Call for Sites submission fits into the wider route towards assessment, allocation and, where appropriate, a future planning application.	Landowner-Focused Approach The strategy is designed around the landowner's objectives, timescale and the realistic planning potential of the individual site.

Promotion Agreements

Where we enter into a Promotion Agreement, we fund and manage the agreed planning process at our own cost and risk. If planning permission is not secured, the agreed promotion costs are written off. Our remuneration is based on a pre-agreed share of the sale proceeds and becomes payable when the land is sold in accordance with the agreement.

The landowner retains ownership and control of the land throughout the promotion process. Because our return is linked to the sale proceeds, our objective is aligned with maximising the value achieved for the land.

[Request a Free Development Potential Assessment](#)



Should Your Land Be Put Forward?

If you own land and would like to know whether there is an active Call for Sites in your area or whether your site has longer-term development potential, contact Value My Land for a free, no-obligation initial assessment.

Telephone: 0800 061 4006
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www.valuemyland.com



**Value
My Land**

Delivering Sustainable Development

Further reading: [Call for Sites Guide](#) | [England Call for Sites Tracker](#) | [HELAA / SHLAA Guide](#) | [Local Plan Allocation Guide](#)

valuemyland.com/call-for-sites-guide

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