B1.5   Stage 3 Assessment

B1.5.1   Categorising Sites for Further Assessment

To determine which of the sites identified as likely or possibly suitable for allocation should be taken forward for further assessment, each site has been given a ranking in terms of preference under three categories:

- Flood risk
- Location (encompassing greenfield/brownfield and urban/Green Belt)
- Agriculture

The sequential approach set in paragraph 4.26 of the SSM was applied as detailed below:

- The sequential flood risk assessment – proposing land in Flood Zone 2 and 3 only where need cannot be met in Flood Zone 1: **Zone 1 = Ranking 1, Zone 2 = Ranking 2, Zone 3 = Ranking 3.**

- Sites located on previously developed land within settlements; **Ranking 1 (4.1 scores ++ and 2.1 scores +)**

- Sites located on open space within settlements. **Ranking 2 (4.1 scores + and 2.1 scores +)**

- Previously developed land within the Green Belt (in anticipation of the NPPF being updated to take account of the proposed changes published in December 2015). **Ranking 3 (4.1 scores ++ or 0 and 2.1 does NOT score +)**

- Greenfield/Green Belt land on the edge of settlements:

  o   Of least value to the Green Belt if the land meets other suitable criteria for development. **Ranking 4 (4.1 scores – and 2.1 scores 0)**

  o   Of greater value to the Green Belt if the land meets other suitable criteria for development. **Ranking 5 (4.1 scores – and 2.1 scores -)**

  o   Of most value to the Green Belt if the land meets other suitable criteria for development. **Ranking 6 (4.1 scores – and 2.1 scores --)**

- **Ranking 7 - ALL OTHER SITES (ie. Green Belt sites not adjacent to settlements)**

- Agricultural land: **4.2 Score 0** (No loss of agricultural land) **= Ranking 1, 4.2 Score (-)** (Loss of Grade 4-5 agricultural land) **= Ranking 2, 4.2 Score (--)** (Loss of Grades 1-3 agricultural land) **= Ranking 3**

Where sites were identified as location Ranking 7, a qualitative sense check was undertaken to identify instances where sites were intrinsically connected to, or would support the development of, adjacent sites that ranked 4, 5 or 6. In such cases, 'clusters' of sites were identified for further testing in Stages 3b and 4 with this exception being noted qualitatively.

The table below sets out the criteria referred to above.

Ref.	Criteria	Score				
		(++)	(+)	0	(-)	(--)
2.1	Level of harm to Green Belt	Site provides opportunities to assist in the active use of Green Belt without any loss.	Site is not located in the Green Belt.	Site is within Green Belt, but the level of harm caused by release of the land for development would be none.	Site is within Green Belt, where the level of harm caused by release of the land for development would be very low, low or medium.	Site is within Green Belt, where the level of harm caused by release of the land for development would be high or very high.
4.1	Brownfield and Greenfield Land	Majority of the site is previously developed land within or adjacent to a settlement	Majority of the site is greenfield land within a settlement	Majority of the site is previously developed land that is neither within nor adjacent to a settlement	Majority of the site is greenfield land adjacent to a settlement	Majority of the site is greenfield land that is neither within nor adjacent to a settlement
4.2	Impact on agricultural land			Development of the site would not result in the loss of agricultural land	Development of the site would result in the loss of poorer quality agricultural land (grade 4-5)	Development of the site would involve loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1-3)