Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority

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Hull and East Yorkshire's
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# Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority - Brownfield Housing Fund: Assessment and Scoring Guidance



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## Contents

# 1 Purpose and scope

This guidance sets out how the Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority (HEYCA) will assess, score and prioritise scheme promoters (‘Applicants’) seeking support from the Brownfield land Housing Fund (BHF). It should be read alongside the HEYCA Single Assurance Framework, the HEY Investment Plan and the relevant national guidance including HM Treasury’s Green Book and government brownfield funding policy.

The guidance applies to all BHF applications within the HEYCA area and is intended for use by local authorities, registered providers, private developers and other eligible applicants, as well as HEYCA officers and decision-makers.

# 2 Relationship to the HEYCA Single Assurance Framework

HEYCA’s Single Assurance Framework sets out how public funding is appraised and approved using a proportionate business case process aligned with the Green Book and the English Devolution Accountability Framework. The BHF process adheres to this by:

- Requiring an evidence-based business case for each project, structured around the five Green Book, cases (strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management).
- Applying a **Stage 1 eligibility** (gateway) test followed by a **Stage 2 prioritisation and scoring**, consistent with the Framework’s stages for scheme development, appraisal and approval.
- Documenting all assessments in written Scheme Assessment Reports to support transparent decision-making, scrutiny and audit.

Within this approach:

- **‘Deliverability’** aligns primarily with the Management Case (and parts of the Commercial Case).
- **‘Strategic fit’** aligns with the Strategic Case.
- **‘Value for money’** aligns with the Economic Case (with links to the Financial Case where affordability is tested).
- **‘Place-based need**’ supports the Strategic Case and the distributional aspects of the Economic Case.
- **‘Quality & Sustainability’** spans the Strategic Case, the environmental elements of the Economic Case and relevant Commercial Case requirements.

# 3 Overview of the assessment process

The BHF assessment follows two key stages.

## 3.1 Stage 1 – Eligibility (gateway tests)

**Stage 1** applies binary pass / fail tests. To proceed to Stage 2, a proposal must:

- **E1 - Brownfield land and geography**: previously developed land within the HEYCA area, evidenced by brownfield land registers, planning history or other PDL evidence.
- **E2 - Housing-led proposal**: housing is the primary outcome with net additional dwellings above the minimum threshold.
- **E3 - Deliverability and programme**: credible route to start on site and completion within the fund timeframe, with realistic milestones.
- **E4 - Market failure and viability gap**: clear abnormal costs or structural constraints, and an appraisal showing the scheme is unviable without intervention but viable with BHF support.
- **E5 - Land control and planning status**: allocation or strong policy support, with appropriate land rights in place or at advanced stages.
- **E6 - Value for money gateway**: BCR ≥ 1.0 or equivalent VfM category, with grant per home and grant per hectare within soft caps.
- **E7 - Subsidy control and compliance**: proposal must have a lawful route under the UK subsidy control regime and the scheme promoter ('Applicant') must accept HEYCA's standard conditions.

If any of these are not met, the proposal will **not be prioritised** for funding, although HEYCA may, at its discretion, provide advice or consider whether other programmes or development support could be appropriate. Stage 1 criteria are fully set out in the separate *BHF eligibility guidance*.

## 3.2 Stage 2 – Prioritisation and scoring

Eligible proposals are then scored against five criteria using a transparent weighted model for **Stage 2**:

| Assessment category | Assessment areas | Weighting |
|---|---|---|
| S2.1 Deliverability | Readiness, planning status, land control, partner capacity, risk | 45% |
| S2.2 Strategic fit | Alignment with SDS/MDZ, Game Plan, Local Growth Plan, housing strategies, Local Plans and other key MSA and LA key strategic plans | 25% |
| S2.3 Value for money | BCR, cost per home, leverage of match/private investment | 15% |
| S2.4 Place-based need | Deprivation, regeneration priority, investment area focus, brownfield clusters | 10% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| S2.5 Quality & Sustainability | Low carbon performance, Contribution to place-making and design quality | 5% |

- Each category is scored using sub-criteria and descriptors set out below, using a 0-5 scoring method.
- The weighted scores are combined to produce an overall score between 0 and 5, or 0–100 if expressed as a percentage.
- HEYCA may adjust the weightings over time in light of strategic priorities, but any changes will be applied consistently to all schemes in a given call for projects and will be documented in the relevant prospectus.
- HEYCA will verify all value-for-money assessments and BCR calculations submitted by applicants and may re-run the analysis or stress-test assumptions as part of the appraisal.
- Stage 1 – Eligibility criteria (summary)

# 4 Stage 2 – Detailed scoring criteria

Category area scoring methodology

## 4.1 Stage 2.1 Deliverability (45%)

Deliverability is assessed through four sub-criteria, each scored 0–5:

- **D1 Land status** – 35% of Deliverability.
- **D2 Planning status** – 25% of Deliverability.
- **D3 Programme realism** – 25% of Deliverability.
- D4 Scheme Promoter capacity and track record – 15% of Deliverability.

Each sub-criterion uses a 0–5 scoring scale, where 0 is not deliverable and 5 is very strong/shovel-ready. The detailed descriptors for D1–D4 are contained in the BHF Working Assessment and are to be used consistently across all schemes.

### 4.1.1 D1 Land status (0–5)

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Freehold or long leasehold ownership by the applicant / delivery partner, or fully signed development agreement granting control of the whole site. No known title disputes or unresolved ransom strips. Site is vacant or there is a clear, agreed vacation strategy (with dates) for existing occupiers. |
| 4 | Legally binding option, development agreement or agreement for lease in place for the full site, with only minor conditions outstanding (e.g. subject to planning but with agreed heads). Any remaining title issues are low-risk and clearly managed. |

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| 3 | Heads of Terms agreed in principle with landowner(s) for the majority of the site, or split ownerships where all landowners are engaged and in advanced negotiations. Some conditions remain (e.g. price subject to appraisal), but there is a credible route to full control. |
| 2 | Landowner(s) identified and early negotiations started (e.g. initial meetings, draft HoTs), but no agreed commercial terms or written commitments. Potential for fragmented ownership or ransom/third-party rights not yet resolved. |
| 1 | Site is understood to be in private or public ownership, but there has been little or no direct engagement with the landowner(s). No draft HoTs or clear acquisition strategy is in place. Significant uncertainty about willingness to transact. |
| 0 | No clear information on ownership or material disputes / legal barriers that exist which currently prevent acquisition or control. No realistic or evidenced route to land control within the programme timeframe. |

### 4.1.2 D2 Planning status (0–5)

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Full planning permission granted (or resolution to grant with S106 heads of terms agreed in principle) covering the whole developable site, with no, known, obstructive conditions or objections outstanding. Any pre-commencement conditions are considered 'standard' and are clearly capable of being discharged within the programme. The approved scheme is consistent with the proposed BHF scheme (no material redesign expected). |
| 4 | Full planning application submitted and validated for the whole site, supported by positive pre-application advice, and the site is allocated or specifically supported in the adopted/emerging Local Plan. All statutory consultees have either provided neutral/positive comments or any issues raised appear resolvable without fundamental redesign. A clear determination timetable is agreed with the LPA and the proposal is broadly consistent with policy and design guidance. |
| 3 | Outline application submitted and validated (or minded-to submit full within a short, defined period) with positive pre-application feedback, and the site is allocated or clearly identified in the adopted/emerging Local Plan or an Area Action Plan/masterplan. Key planning issues (principle of use, scale, access) appear acceptable in principle but detailed matters |

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| | (layout, design, conditions) remain to be resolved. Determination timetable is realistic but subject to some risk. |
| 2 | No application submitted yet, but meaningful pre-application discussions are underway and written pre-app advice (or equivalent officer feedback) confirms that the principle and broad scale of development are policy-compliant. The site is either allocated, identified as a broad location for growth, or clearly consistent with settlement / regeneration policies. Some material issues (e.g. design, access, impact on neighbours) are identified but have plausible mitigation strategies. |
| 1 | Site identified for housing or mixed-use in local work (e.g. SHLAA, brownfield register, internal LA programme) but there has been no formal pre-application engagement with the LPA, or only very early informal discussion. Policy support is not yet clearly demonstrated (e.g. unallocated site relying on windfall policies) and key issues (access, design, constraints) have not been tested. Planning risk is therefore high and programme assumptions are more uncertain. |
| 0 | Planning position is fundamentally uncertain or adverse: no application or pre-app; site is unallocated and in conflict with key policies (e.g. open space, Green Belt, safeguarded employment land), or there are serious unresolved planning risks (e.g. likely refusal based on previous decisions or strong policy objections). Alternatively, critical parts of the scheme depend on planning consents outside the applicant's control with no clear strategy. |

### 4.1.3 D3 Programme realism (0–5)

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Start on site is programmed at least 12 months before fund long-stop; key milestones (planning, procurement, enabling works) are already met or very advanced. Critical dependencies (utilities, land transactions, statutory consents) are either already resolved or have binding agreements in place. Programme includes explicit risk allowances and float and is fully evidenced in a Gantt / phasing plan. |
| 4 | Start on site is programmed 9–12 months before long-stop with a sensible level of float. Most critical path items are under control or at advanced stages (planning submitted/resolution to grant; procurement route defined; key third-party agreements in negotiation with clear timescales). Risks and mitigations are identified and appear proportionate. |

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| 3 | Start on site is programmed 6–9 months before long-stop, with some float but clear reliance on timely decisions by third parties (e.g. planning determination, highways approvals, utility diversions). Dependencies are recognised and mitigations are described, but there is still moderate schedule risk. |
| 2 | Start on site is programmed within 3–6 months of long-stop, with limited float. Multiple unresolved dependencies (e.g. outline planning only, unresolved objections, unprogrammed utility works). Risk register is incomplete or generic; slippage on one or more items could easily push scheme beyond deadlines. |
| 1 | Start on site is programmed less than 3 months before long-stop, or there is no clearly sequenced programme. Major steps (planning submission, land acquisition, procurement) are yet to start or are only at concept stage. No credible float or contingency, and key risks are not addressed. |
| 0 | Programme shows start on site or key spend clearly after the fund long-stop, with no realistic mitigation route (e.g. fundamental dependency on long statutory process, major un-resourced enabling phase). Timescales are not credible in the context of BHF deadlines. |

### 4.1.4 D4 Scheme Promoter capacity (0–5)

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Scheme Promoter (and main delivery partners) have a strong, evidenced track record of delivering similar schemes of similar or greater scale and complexity, including remediation and infrastructure. The core team is fully identified (client, PM, QS, technical, contractor / development partner), with CVs and references. Robust governance and programme management arrangements are in place (e.g. board oversight, dedicated project team, clear decision-making routes). |
| 4 | Scheme Promoter has good experience in similar schemes and some experience of brownfield or infrastructure-heavy schemes, though not always at the same scale/complexity. Key internal roles are identified and external advisers appointed or in procurement. Governance is clear and proportionate, with some evidence of previous successful public-funded projects. |
| 3 | Scheme Promoter has relevant experience but often in less complex or smaller schemes; limited direct experience of large brownfield remediation or major infrastructure. Some team roles are confirmed but there are gaps (e.g. contractor not yet procured, limited in-house development expertise). Governance |

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| | arrangements are described but not yet fully tested on similar programmes. |
| 2 | Limited track record of delivering comparable developments; previous schemes delivered but at significantly smaller scale or with long delays / issues. Project roles are only partly filled; reliance on future recruitment or yet-to-be-appointed partners is high. Governance is high-level only, with limited evidence of structured project management. |
| 1 | Very limited or no direct experience of delivering housing or regeneration schemes. Key roles (client lead, PM, QS, technical designers) are not identified, or there is heavy reliance on speculative partnerships. Governance is unclear and appears ad-hoc. |
| 0 | No credible delivery vehicle identified and no evidence that the applicant has the capability or arrangements to deliver the scheme (e.g. shell company with no track record, or no identified lead organisation). |



#### 4.1.5 The Deliverability score is calculated as:

[ D = D1 * w_D1 + D2 * w_D2 + D3 * w_D3 + D4 * w_D4 ]

Where the sub-weights [w_D1, w_D2, w_D3, w_D4] sum to 1 and are set out in the *Scoring Template*.

### 4.2 Strategic fit (25%)

Strategic fit is assessed through two sub-criteria:

- S1 Policy alignment and location – 60% of Strategic fit.
- S2 Regeneration and inclusion impact – 40% of Strategic fit.

#### 4.2.1 S1 Policy alignment (0–5)

S1 scores how closely the site and proposal align with HEYCA's Economic Framework, Investment Plan, Local Plan and Strategic Place Partnership priorities.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Within a named strategic regeneration area, Mayoral Development Zone / SDS, town centre, Local Growth Plan, growth corridor or transport node explicitly identified in the MSA strategy or, Local Plan, housing strategy or SPP documentation, |

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| | and clearly supporting brownfield-first and compact-growth principles. |
| 4 | Within a defined regeneration area, key employment or housing growth location, or area subject to an Area Action Plan / masterplan, but not the very highest tier (e.g. secondary town centre, district centre, or secondary corridor). Strong policy support in Local Plan and supporting strategies. |
| 3 | In a general urban area with good planning policy support (e.g. within settlement boundary; consistent with housing strategy) but not in a priority regeneration area or corridor. Scheme is clearly policy-compliant and supports identified housing objectives, though not explicitly singled out in strategic documents. |
| 2 | Policy support is partial: the location is broadly consistent with plan policy but may raise some tensions (e.g. scale or mix not fully aligned with preferred pattern of growth, or limited reference in strategic documents). Benefits are mostly local rather than strategic. |
| 1 | Policy support is uncertain or mixed: scheme relies on exceptions, departures, or emerging/unadopted policy with material risk. Limited evidence in Local Plan or other strategies that this location is a priority for growth or regeneration. |
| 0 | Clearly contrary to adopted strategy (e.g. undermines brownfield-first by enabling speculative greenfield that displaces brownfield; inconsistent with spatial strategy; within areas where growth is explicitly constrained). |



#### 4.2.2 S2 Regeneration and inclusion impact (0–5)

S2 scores the degree to which the scheme addresses identified regeneration and inclusion challenges, using evidence from local housing strategies, SHMA, regeneration frameworks and the scheme's housing mix. The 0–5 descriptors for S2 must be supported by quantitative evidence (e.g. affordable housing proportions, specialist units, alignment with specific inclusion priorities).

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Scheme clearly tackles acute housing and inclusion issues evidenced in local strategies: e.g. in a designated regeneration or renewal programme area with documented housing stress (affordability, overcrowding, temporary accommodation) and delivers a high proportion of affordable/specialist housing (e.g. ≥ 40% affordable or significant supported/specialist units). Strong alignment with |

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| | specific inclusion priorities (e.g. homelessness, move-on, older people, key workers) documented in LA / MSA strategies. |
| 4 | Scheme is in an area identified in the housing strategy or regeneration plans as a priority for intervention (but not a flagship) and/or addresses clearly evidenced housing pressures (e.g. high affordability ratio, long waiting lists, under-supply of a key tenure). Delivers a material proportion of affordable/specialist units (e.g. 25–40%) or a smaller scheme that is 100% affordable / specialist. Clear narrative on how the scheme supports inclusion outcomes (e.g. tenure mix, accessibility). |
| 3 | Scheme contributes meaningfully to local housing needs but in a more general way: location is not a top priority regeneration area but shows some housing pressure indicators, or the scheme includes a moderate affordable share (e.g. around policy minimum) and/or introduces tenure types that diversify the local offer (e.g. mid-market rent, family-sized units in a flatted area). Inclusion benefits are present but not particularly targeted. |
| 2 | Scheme is broadly helpful but not clearly targeted at identified regeneration or inclusion priorities. Affordable provision is at or below policy minimum and the mix does not significantly address documented gaps (e.g. mostly small market units where need is for family / accessible homes). Little evidence of specific inclusion outcomes beyond generic housing provision. |
| 1 | Minimal or unclear contribution to regeneration or inclusion: standard market housing in an area with no identified housing stress or regeneration programme; low/no affordable housing without strong justification; no clear link to any priority group or inclusion outcome. |
| 0 | Negative or regressive impact on regeneration or inclusion, e.g. loss of existing affordable/specialist units without adequate replacement; clear risk of displacement or gentrification without mitigation; wholly misaligned with local inclusion priorities. |



#### 4.2.3 The Strategic fit score is calculated as:

[ S = S1 * w_S1 + S2 * w_S2 ]

## 4.3 Value for money (15%)

VfM is assessed through three sub-criteria:

- V1 BCR – 50% of VfM.

- V2 Grant per home – 30% of VfM.
- V3 Leverage and non-monetised benefits – 20% of VfM.

### 4.3.1 V1 BCR (0–5)

V1 bands the scheme-level BCR (Economic Case) into a 0–5 score, with 0 reserved for BCR < 1.0 (which fails the gateway). Applicants must provide full BCR workings and supporting assumptions; HEYCA will verify these calculations.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | BCR ≥ 2.0 |
| 4 | 1.75 ≤ BCR < 2.0 |
| 3 | 1.5 ≤ BCR < 1.75 |
| 2 | 1.25 ≤ BCR < 1.5 |
| 1 | 1.0 ≤ BCR < 1.25 |
| 0 | 0 – BCR < 1.0 (ineligible at gateway) |

### 4.3.2 V2 Grant per home (0–5)

V2 scores the requested BHF grant per net additional home (GPH) against *locally specific benchmarks.* Applicants must provide the total grant ask and net additional units.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | GPH ≤ Benchmark_low |
| 4 | Benchmark_low < GPH ≤ (0.5 × (Benchmark_low + Benchmark_high)) |
| 3 | (0.5 × (Benchmark_low + Benchmark_high)) < GPH ≤ Benchmark_high. |
| 2 | Benchmark_high < GPH ≤ 1.25 × Benchmark_high. |
| 1 | 1.25 × Benchmark_high < GPH ≤ 1.5 × Benchmark_high. |
| 0 | GPH > 1.5 × Benchmark_high (unless exceptional case) |

#### 4.3.2.1 *Practical Scenario Example*

Combined and local authority set regional benchmark for an **Affordable Rent** scheme with these parameters:

- Benchmark_low = £60,000 (TBC)
- Benckmark_high = £100,000 (TBC)

Derive the Benchmark Thresholds:

**Midpoint:** 0.5 x (£60,000 + £100,00) = £80,000

**1.25x Cap:** 1.25 x £100,000 = £125,000

**1.50x Cap:** 1.50 x £100,000 = £150,000

Determining the final score:

- **If the GPH is £55,000**: You receive a **Score of 5** (Highly competitive, falls below the low threshold).
- **If the GPH is £70,000**: You receive a Score of 4 (Falls between £60,000 and the £80,000 midpoint).
- **If the GPH is £90,000**: You receive a Score of 3 (Falls between the £80,000 midpoint and £100,000 high threshold).
- **If the GPH is £110,000**: You receive a Score of 2 (Exceeds the high benchmark, but remains under the 1.25x stretch cap of £112,500).
- **If the GPH is £155,000**: You receive a Score of 0 (Triggers automatic rejection unless explicit brownfield abnormalities or exceptional structural constraints are formally justified).

### 4.3.3 V3 Leverage and non-monetised benefits (0–5)

V3 is composed of:

#### 4.3.3.1 *V3a (0–5): a leverage score based on the leverage ratio:*

[ LR = [P_inv + O_pub] / Grant];

Where [P_inv] is **private investment**, [O_pub] is **other public contributions**, and Grant is the BHF contribution.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | LR ≥ 5 (every £1 grant leverages ≥ £5 other) |
| 4 | 3 ≤ LR < 5 |
| 3 | 2 ≤ LR < 3 |

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| 2 | 1 ≤ LR < 2 |
| 1 | 0.5 ≤ LR < 1 |
| 0 | LR < 0.5 |

#### *4.3.3.2* V3b (0–2): a non-monetised benefits score

Capturing evidenced wider impacts (e.g. health, climate resilience, strategic unlocking) not fully reflected in the BCR. The Promoter (applicant) must: (a) describe the benefit, (b) evidence it with metrics or policy references, and (c) explain why it cannot reasonably be monetised.

| V3b score | Description and evidence (illustrative) |
|---|---|
| 2 – Strong non-monetised benefits | Scheme delivers clearly evidenced wider benefits not captured in the BCR or grant-per-home metrics, *and* these are directly aligned with MSA objectives: for example, substantial public health benefits (e.g. re-provision of poor quality stock with strong clinical evidence), critical climate resilience infrastructure (e.g. significant flood risk reduction, district heat), or strategic infrastructure that unlocks further phases. Applicant explains and evidences them, and these are transformational. |
| 1 – Some non-monetised benefits | Scheme has additional positive impacts that are plausible and aligned with policy but smaller in scale or more generic (e.g. modest public realm enhancement, small but relevant health/education co-benefits). Applicant explains and evidences them, but they are not transformational. |
| 0 – Limited / no additional benefits | No clear non-monetised benefits beyond those already captured in standard housing and regeneration measures, or benefits are asserted but not evidenced. |

Applicants claiming non-monetised benefits must describe and evidence them and explain why they are not monetised within the BCR.

#### *4.3.3.3* ***V3 is then calculated as:***

[ V3 = 0.8 * V3a + 0.2 * V3b]

The overall VfM score is:

[ V = V1 * w_V1 + V2 * w_V2 + V3 * w_V3]

## 4.4 Place-based need (10%)

Place-based need is assessed through three sub-criteria:

- P1 - IMD percentile – 50% of PbN.
- P2 - Investment / regeneration focus – 30% of PbN.
- P3 - Brownfield clusters / opportunity – 20% of PbN.

### 4.4.1 P1 – derivation need

**P1** - IMD percentile (0–5): deprivation score based on the IMD decile(s) covering the site.

Using IMD decile for LSOA where the site lies (1 = most deprived, 10 = least deprived).

| Score | IMD position / description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Site predominantly within IMD deciles 1 - 2 (top 20% most deprived nationally). |
| 4 | Site within IMD deciles 3 - 4. |
| 3 | Site within IMD deciles 5 - 6. |
| 2 | Site within IMD deciles 7 - 8. |
| 1 | Site within IMD decile 9. |
| 0 | Site within IMD decile 10 (least deprived). |

Applicants can evidence this by providing the IMD decile for relevant LSOA(s) using published government tools.

### 4.4.2 P2 – Identified and evidence investment area

**P2** - Investment / regeneration focus (0–5): whether the site sits within an identified regeneration or investment area.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Site lies within a formally designated high-priority regeneration, renewal or investment area (e.g. Regeneration Area, Housing |

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| | Zone, Town Deal boundary, priority growth corridor, SPP focus area) explicitly named in MSA or LA strategies. |
| 4 | Site lies within a locally important regeneration or investment area (e.g. secondary town centre, local growth area, estate renewal area) that is clearly identified in Local Plan, masterplans or economic strategies, though not at the top tier. |
| 3 | Site lies within a settlement or area that is a general focus for growth or renewal (e.g. main town, service centre) but not in a specific designated regeneration zone. |
| 2 | Site lies outside recognised regeneration or growth areas but within a settlement identified for some growth in the plan; contribution is helpful but not targeted. |
| 1 | Site lies in an area not identified for growth or regeneration and with limited investment focus. |
| 0 | Site lies in an area where strategic policy actively seeks to limit growth or is otherwise misaligned with investment priorities. |

### 4.4.3 P3 – Site location and proximity to investment areas

**P3** - Brownfield clusters / opportunity (0–5): whether the scheme contributes to tackling clusters of brownfield land or unlocking wider programmes.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Scheme is part of a clearly defined cluster of brownfield sites within a priority area, and its delivery unlocks or catalyses multiple adjacent sites (e.g. shared infrastructure, remediation, access). There is a clear programme narrative for the wider cluster. |
| 4 | Scheme is one of several brownfield sites in proximity, with some shared issues or infrastructure, and contributes to a visible step-change in a locality (e.g. town-centre quarter, corridor frontage), but is not the single key unlock. |
| 3 | Scheme is an important brownfield site locally but largely stand-alone; it improves the immediate environment and may encourage further investment, but there is no clearly planned cluster. |

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|---|---|
| 2 | Scheme is an isolated brownfield site with limited wider impact beyond its own footprint, though it still brings local benefits. |
| 1 | Scheme is brownfield but small-scale and with negligible impact on wider brownfield patterns or clusters. |
| 0 | Site is not brownfield or its relationship to wider brownfield patterns is unclear/negative (e.g. undermines focus by diverting effort from priority clusters). |

#### 4.4.4 Scoring for Place-based need

Weights are typically: P1 50%, P2 30%, P3 20%.

The Place-based need score is:

[ P = P1 * w_P1 + P2 * w_P2 + P3 * w_P3 ]

## 4.5 Quality & Sustainability (5%)

This criterion captures low-carbon performance and design / place-making quality, via two sub-criteria:

- QS1 Low carbon & sustainability – 60% of Q&S
- QS2 Placemaking contribution – 40% of Q&S

##### *4.5.1.1 QS1 Low carbon & sustainability (0–5)*

Performance against building regulations, energy strategy, climate resilience and BNG.

Applicants can evidence from energy strategy, fabric specs, MEP design, BNG calculations and sustainability statements.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Scheme is an exemplar for low carbon and sustainability: very high fabric efficiency (e.g. on track for net-zero in operation), fossil-free heating (e.g. heat pumps, low-carbon networks), robust embodied-carbon strategy (materials/structure choices), strong SuDS, clear biodiversity net gain above statutory minimum, and credible climate resilience measures (overheating, flood, shading, green infrastructure). Meets or beats local net-zero or |

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| | climate SPD expectations and is likely to be highlighted as best practice. |
| 4 | Scheme goes significantly beyond Building Regulations: improved fabric, low-carbon or hybrid heating, comprehensive SuDS, and demonstrable BNG at or above required levels. Climate resilience is considered (e.g. flood risk mitigation, overheating strategy). Aligns well with local climate and design policies. |
| 3 | Scheme meets Building Regulations comfortably and includes a coherent but modest sustainability package: some fabric improvements, PV or other renewables, basic SuDS, BNG at or slightly above minimum, and some attention to resilience. Not cutting-edge, but clearly better than bare minimum. |
| 2 | Scheme largely focuses on meeting regulatory minimums; any sustainability features are limited, small-scale or poorly integrated. BNG/SuDS commitments are minimal, just sufficient for planning. Little evidence of a coherent low-carbon or resilience strategy. |
| 1 | Bare-minimum compliance with regulations with no credible additional sustainability measures. There are concerns about long-term environmental performance (e.g. reliance on high-carbon heating with no future-proofing). |

#### *4.5.1.2 QS2 Placemaking contribution (0–5)*

Urban design quality, integration with surroundings, public realm and active travel.

Applicants can evidence from layouts, design statements, design codes, SPD compliance, design review feedback.

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 5 | Design is exemplary for its context: clear urban design concept, strong street hierarchy, human-scale blocks, active frontages, high-quality and inclusive public realm, good integration with existing movement networks and facilities. Space standards are generous; play/amenity provision well thought-through. Positive external design review or award-level quality. Suitable and scalable for both large and small sites (e.g. adaptable typologies, good plot-based urbanism). |
| 4 | Very good place-making: legible layout, good connections to surrounding streets and public transport, appropriate density, decent public and private open space, and coherent |

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|---|---|
| | architectural approach. Meets or exceeds local design guides and space standards. Small sites still contribute positively to street/area character without over-complication or over-engineering. |
| 3 | Acceptable and policy-compliant design: functional layout, adequate connectivity and open space, reasonable relationship to neighbours. Meets minimum space standards and design policies but without particularly strong character or public realm. On small sites, design is sensible and fitting but not transformative. |
| 2 | Design only just meets minimum requirements: car-dominated layouts, limited or poorly located open space, weak connections to surroundings, and minimal attention to character or public realm. Risk of long-term quality or management issues if not improved. |
| 1 | Poor place-making: inward-looking or heavily parking-dominated layouts, inadequate or unsafe pedestrian routes, poor relationship to surrounding streets, sub-standard amenity and/or space standards. Likely to be challenged at planning without major redesign. |
| 0 | Unacceptable design that clearly conflicts with local design policies or would create serious amenity, safety or quality issues (e.g. severe overshadowing, unsafe layouts, no usable public or private space). |

#### *4.5.1.3 Quality & Sustainability score*

Weights are set as: QS1 60%, QS2 40%.

The Quality & sustainability score is:

[ Q = QS1 * w_QS1 + QS2 * w_QS2 ]

## 4.6 Overall score and decision bands

#### *4.6.1.1 The overall Stage 2 score (0–5)*

Is calculated as:

**Total** = [ (D * w(Deliverability)) + (S * w(StrategicFit)) + (V * w(VfM)) + (P * w(PlaceNeed)) + (Q * w(Quality)) ]

Where the main criterion weights sum to 1 (e.g. 0.45, 0.25, 0.15, 0.10, 0.05).

For reporting, HEYCA may also express this as a percentage by dividing by 5 and multiplying by 100.

#### *4.6.1.2 Indicative decision bands are:*

| Score band | Prioritisation |
|---|---|
| <50% | Defer to later programmes where current programme can be fully subscribed |
| 51% - 69% | Reserve funding where the programme cannot be fully subscribed from Fundable projects |
| 70% ≥ | Fund in current programme – prioritised by score where subscription exceeds to projects assessed within programme |

These bands are indicative and final decisions will also consider portfolio balance, risk, timing and affordability in line with the Single Assurance Framework.

## 5 Scoring

HEYCA will maintain a standard scoring template which:

- Allows applicants and officers to enter key data (e.g. homes, grant, BCR, leverage inputs, IMD decile, sub-scores for qualitative criteria).
- Reference all weights (main criteria and sub-criteria), so that weightings can be adjusted whilst maintaining calculations.
- Automatically calculates sub-scores for V1, V2 and V3a from BCR, grant per home and leverage inputs.
- Calculates weighted scores for each criterion and the overall total.

HEYCA officers will complete and quality-assure the scoring as part of the Scheme Assessment Report, in line with the Assurance Framework.

## 6 Documentation and audit trail

For each scheme, HEYCA will retain an audit trail including:

- The application / business case and all supporting evidence.
- The completed eligibility checklist and Stage 1 gateway decisions.
- The completed Excel scoring sheet and any sensitivity tests.
- A Scheme Assessment Report summarising the five-case appraisal and the scoring outcomes.
- The formal decision record and funding agreement, including any conditions or clawback provisions.

This will ensure that BHF allocations are transparent, evidence-based and defensible under internal and external audit and scrutiny.

# Appendix A: Policy and programme mapping



## 1 Programme context

The Integrated Settlement policy document states that Strategic Authorities designated at the Established Mayoral level of devolution will receive Integrated Settlements, and that the document sets out policy principles, implementation arrangements, outcome monitoring and accountability arrangements from 2026-27 onwards. This means a brownfield allocations programme should be designed as part of a wider devolved funding and assurance environment, rather than as a standalone grant pot divorced from settlement outcomes, accountability and audit.

Key policy framework:

| Source | What it does | Why it matters |
|---|---|---|
| Homes England, Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land Fund guidance | Defines eligible activity, eligibility criteria, funding routes and prioritisation factors. | Clearest public statement of the central government's current brownfield funding requirements. |
| MHCLG, Integrated Settlement: policy document | Sets policy principles for Integrated Settlements and explains outcomes and accountability arrangements for eligible MSAs. | Frames how devolved brownfield-type allocations sit within the wider MSA funding system. |
| Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 | Places duties on LPAs to prepare, maintain and publish brownfield land registers and ties the meaning of previously developed land to the NPPF. | Clearest statutory route for evidencing that a site is brownfield. |

## 2 Policy guidance on funding allocation

Homes England states that the fund is intended to unlock strategic housing sites, including housing-led, mixed-use opportunities, where brownfield, infrastructure or land projects face delivery and/or viability challenges. The guidance expressly says the funding supports both smaller, locally important sites and larger-scale transformative projects of regional or national significance. HEYCA's allocation programme will therefore reflect the full scope of programme intent.

The guidance lists the following as eligible activity:

- land acquisition,
- preparation and enabling works;
- brownfield site remediation and works to heritage assets;
- on-site and off-site utilities and transport infrastructure;
- placemaking improvements and community facilities;
- section 106-required infrastructure excluding affordable housing; and capitalised fees required to deliver the project.

It should be noted that the guidance also records an update clarifying that eligible activity does **not** include general site development. HEYCA's allocation assessment shall therefore distinguish carefully between enabling expenditure that ***unlocks*** development and ordinary development costs that would normally sit with the scheme promoter.

# 3 Core eligibility

Homes England states a project may be eligible if it meets the strategic aims of the fund, would stall or could not progress without the funding, will lead to the development of new housing, represents value for money and is promoted by an eligible entity. The proposed assessment is designed to provide a practical gateway test for every allocation decision.

A robust eligibility framework therefore requires the following before a scheme enters scoring (these form the core stage 1 eligibility criteria):

- The site is demonstrably brownfield, ideally evidenced through the local brownfield register, planning history, or an equivalent previously developed land assessment linked to the NPPF definition.
- The proposal is housing-led and shows net additional homes rather than merely improving an asset without housing output.
- The scheme would stall, not proceed, or materially under-deliver without intervention, evidenced through viability analysis and a market-failure narrative.
- The applicant is an eligible legal entity, such as a UK-registered corporate entity, LLP, English local authority or other public entity.
- The project can contract to meet funding requirements, with a realistic programme and identifiable conditions precedent.
- The scheme can pass value-for-money review and any local assurance tests.

# 4 Exclusions and limitations

Homes England states that the fund cannot support projects involving new leasehold houses, leasehold flats charged above a peppercorn ground rent, or any proposal where the funding would not comply with UK subsidy control rules under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. These are not soft preferences; they are hard exclusions in the published guidance.

For programme design, every application shall contain a legal and commercial compliance statement confirming tenure structure, proposed lease terms where relevant, and a subsidy control assessment proportionate to the value and structure of support.

Eligibility will include a gateway check confirming that the requested intervention does not simply substitute for ordinary developer obligations or ineligible site development expenditure.

## 5 Funding instruments and commercial terms

Core guidance states that support may be provided as grant, loan, partnership equity, or a combination of these, and that Homes England may also directly acquire and de-risk land for development. Additionally, and where appropriate, dependent on viability, Homes England will consider repayment or profit-share mechanisms, or a combination of both.

The practical interpretation is that a devolved programme should not assume all interventions must be pure grant, even if grant is the dominant instrument locally and should be considered for ongoing programme allocation.

## 6 Prioritisation factors

Homes England states that projects are assessed, prioritised and approved by reference to support for areas with the greatest potential for economic growth or affordability pressure, best value for money, greatest potential for early delivery, scale of development; and alignment with policy priorities such as brownfield development, economic growth, private-sector investment, design quality, sustainability and carbon reduction, housing-market diversification, and local housing and infrastructure needs. This gives a clear national basis for a weighted scoring system.

Greater Manchester material shows a practical local translation of these principles, describing assessment against deliverability, value for money and strategic fit, and noting that projects can be prioritised by readiness to deliver, subsidy amount per home, and how strategic the project is within Greater Manchester's growth framework. This provides a precedent for an MSA and demonstrates that locally weighted scoring is consistent with national guidance, provided it maps back to national priorities.

## 7 Deliverability and programme management

Homes England states that projects must contract by the agreed funding requirements and that prioritisation includes the greatest potential for early delivery.

For programme governance, the proposed assessment includes a formal delivery test covering land control, programme submission, legal dependencies, procurement route and a milestone plan to contract and start on site within the agreed period.

Where uncertainty is material, funding can be approved subject to conditions precedent or phased drawdown rather than fully unconditional allocation.

## 8 Integrated Settlement accountability

The Integrated Settlement policy document outlines the process for agreeing and monitoring outcomes associated with the Integrated Settlements and the accountability arrangements for eligible MSAs. Although high level, the clear implication is that brownfield allocations made within an Integrated Settlement environment **must be traceable to agreed outcomes, monitoring and assurance frameworks**.

A practical programme response is to align the brownfield allocations framework with the MSA's assurance framework, appraisal handbook, delegated authorities and audit trail requirements. Decisions to fund should therefore show how each approval supports settlement outcomes, what outputs and milestones will be monitored, and how non-delivery, underspend or profile change will be managed.

## 9 Risk considerations

The main assurance risks in a brownfield allocations programme are weak evidence of brownfield status, overstatement of abnormal costs, grant awards that exceed the minimum viability gap, weak subsidy control documentation, and optimistic delivery programmes that fail to reach contract or start on time. These issues are foreseeable from the published guidance and from the way programme material describes assessment and prioritisation.

A defensible programme and mitigations will keep a clear audit trail showing: what requirement applied; what evidence was submitted; how officers interpreted it; what score or decision resulted; and what contractual controls were used to manage residual risk.