

## Craven Spatial Planning Sub-Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013



# CRAVEN LOCAL PLAN – HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Report of the Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration

Ward(s) affected: All outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park

1. **Purpose of Report** – To report on feedback from informal community engagement during 2013 on emerging Local Plan approaches to the scale and spread of land for new housing and employment and in relation to specific sites made available by or on behalf of landowners for consideration in the Local Plan process.
  
2. **Recommendations** – Members are recommended to:
  - 2.1 Note the feedback received from the community engagement and to authorise officers to carry out further work including sustainability appraisal and site checklists in order to inform preparation of a Pre-Publication Draft Local Plan document.
  
3. **Report**
  - 3.1 As members will recall from the meeting in June 2013, the Spatial Planning Sub-Committee endorsed proposals for community engagement on the emerging Local Plan housing target, spatial strategy, an employment land discussion paper and SHLAA sites subject to site assessment work. 20 community engagement events took place in summer 2013. Four sub-area events focused discussion on the scale and spread of housing and employment land whilst a further 16 events in towns and villages in the emerging Local Plan spatial strategy had an emphasis on the choice of sites. Feedback was invited on the planning policy pages of the Council's website into the autumn.
  - 3.2 The events were well attended with more than 1000 attendees in total spread over the 20 events. Planning officers generated discussion and feedback with people of all ages as well as representatives of local businesses and landowners. Over 700 comments were received in the form of post-in note recording at event discussion tables, feedback forms and letters. A summary of key points from the feedback is

included in appendix A. Some general reflections on the feedback are in the following paragraphs of this report.

#### Housing: How much?

- 3.3 In total 57 responses were received regarding the proposed annual housing target for Craven (outside the National Park), of these 28 considered the figure to be about right, 20 felt a lower figure more appropriate whilst 9 expressed a preference for a higher housing target.
- 3.4 Comments stating the figure was about right suggested that the lifestyle offer and character of Craven's towns and villages needs to be preserved but younger households need to be enabled to move in / return to Craven. Other notable feedback was that a higher figure could result in many of the new homes, especially lower cost smaller homes being used as holiday cottages. From comments received in favour of a lower figure, reasons focused around a lack of local jobs, infrastructure not being able to cope, a high number of existing empty homes and there are being a lot of houses for sale currently. Comments in favour of a higher housing target related to providing sufficient affordable housing and enabling local people in lower paid jobs to live locally. Consistently at the events a need for more two bedroom homes with outside space was raised although some event attendees commented that there is a need for mid-range properties in Skipton and Glusburn. Substantive feedback was received concerning a need for private rented housing, particularly in Settle and the south sub area where there was feedback that younger people are moving out to private rented housing in Pendle and Bradford districts.
- 3.5 Population and household change information presented at each community engagement event was generally well received. Some comments were made that trends shown for the numbers of families / children in the south sub area are in contrast with school rolls in Skipton and increasing numbers of young families in Cononley and Embsay.

#### Housing: Where?

- 3.6 The engagement feedback realised notable support for the identification of three distinct sub-areas in Craven (outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park) and their particular relationships with other areas. Feedback supports housing market and commuting relationships between the south sub-area and West Yorkshire / Pendle and between the north sub-area and Kendal / Lancaster (including the University). Hellifield was generally considered to be at least as characteristic of the south sub-area as the mid sub-area with a lot of commuting between the village and West Yorkshire / East Lancashire as well as Skipton. Settle was seen as having a stronger relationship with the Yorkshire Dales National Park area than with West Yorkshire and East Lancashire.

- 3.7 More than twice as many respondents considered that the strategy for the spread of new housing should be changed (29 responses) compared to those who considered the strategy for the spread of new housing should be unchanged (14 responses). However, the proposed changes relate to a minority of settlements in the emerging spatial strategy. For most towns and villages in the strategy, respondents considered the amount of housing to be about right. One general suggestion on the spread of housing is to direct family houses to those parts of the district where schools are not oversubscribed.
- 3.8 Comments made in relation to the amount of housing required for specific towns and villages generally considered a lower amount of housing than proposed in the spatial strategy to be appropriate in Embsay, Giggleswick, Hellifield, Sutton-in-Craven and Skipton. In relation to Skipton this feedback specifically made the connection with relative amounts for south sub area villages as well as the town's environmental character and tourism economy. The main reason provided in Sutton was too much affordable housing. There is substantive feedback that Hellifield will take time to assimilate previous concentrated residential development. A response to the community engagement from Cowling Parish Council proposes reducing the amount for the village from 3 per to 2 per year.
- 3.9 Ingleton and Glusburn / Cross Hills attracted the most comments in favour of more housing in the strategy, the most common reason given in relation to both villages was to enable more younger working people to remain in the local area. There is also feedback that the housing figure for Ingleton is too low compared to Bentham in the strategy when taking into account road links serving surrounding rural areas. Some suggestions were made that Carleton could take more housing were infrastructure improvements realised and should employment or retail development at Skipton South result in an improved bus service. There is feedback that Rathmell is an unsuitable settlement to be included in the strategy and that the village needs new housing in order to evolve. Divergent feedback is also evident in relation to Settle, on the one hand proposing less housing for the town to allow more housing to support surrounding villages but also that Settle is better suited to meeting the lifestyle requirements of elderly households.

#### Employment land: How much and where?

- 3.10 There was support for planning for new employment land provision in the north and mid areas in order to retain younger people and that this should be focused on Ingleton, Bentham and Settle. It was pointed out that the amount for Settle needs to have regard to potential nearby employment sites in the Yorkshire Dales National Park including Langcliffe tip (former quarry). New employment land in the south sub-area was viewed favourably and a notable view expressed is its potential to help balance living and working opportunities. Some villages were not considered suitable for employment development – these were Bradley, Burton-in-Lonsdale,

Giggleswick and Rathmell. Reasons provided included mature village populations and road links. Other feedback considers there to be potential for small scale business development in the south sub area villages but that new road infrastructure would be needed to support employment development in Glusburn and Cross Hills. Skipton Rock Quarry and the south of Skipton were viewed as suitable locations for inclusion in the employment land strategy. Some suggestions were made to explore the potential for economic development around Gargrave and Hellifield railway stations.

#### Which sites?

- 3.11 Perhaps the single strongest message arising from community engagement on specific sites in the villages (but not the three market towns) is a clear preference to avoid sites in the older part of villages in favour of sites adjacent existing residential areas with off street parking and access to the main road network avoiding village centres. The only villages where this view has not come out strongly are Burton-in-Lonsdale, Gargrave, Ingleton and Rathmell. In relation to some villages including Burton and Hellifield there is a notable preference for using a number of small sites of parts of sites as opposed to one large site. For other villages it has been pointed out that the redevelopment of care home sites may contribute towards the housing requirement. Comments in favour of specific sites include ideas for incorporating footpath provision, public open space and highways improvements. Many useful points of information have been provided such as localised surface water flooding on sites. Setting aside some sites for low impact self-build housing development was positively suggested. A number of suggestions have been made for how some sites could be developed, including the layout of sites and the type, size, tenure and design of homes.
- 3.12 Notable feedback in relation to Skipton sites includes objections to sites in the north west of the town due to traffic congestion on Gargrave Road. Overall sites in the south and south east of the town appear to have generally been viewed more favourably but these still attracted objections and comments received in relation to Skipton sites tend to be less categorical than those concerning smaller settlements. A number of comments favour the use of the Skipton South site between the A629 bypass and Sandylands for housing as well as employment.
- 3.13 Elsewhere in the south sub area, feedback from Glusburn / Cross Hills and Sutton-in-Craven shows a preference for large sites to the east of the villages. In relation to Cowling, sites on the southeast side of the main road (A6068) including between the existing built-up areas of Cowling and Four Lane Ends appear to be the preferred locations for housing. As for Cononley, the mill appears to be the preferred site for both housing and employment followed by other sites in proximity to the train station. Feedback was received in Gargrave giving preferences for a range of sites for housing and employment. Notable feedback for Gargrave is that it is important to retain existing employment sites and possibly extend such employment areas into adjacent sites.

- 3.14 Notable feedback for Settle includes that sites in the Saworth employment area should be retained for this function rather than be released for housing development. Several comments express concern that the scale of the multiple sites at the south side of Settle could detract from the focused nature of the town.
- 3.15 Feedback from north area settlements includes a preference for sites in the northeast of Ingleton for housing and significant support for employment development here on sites to the south of the A65. For Bentham notable preferences have been expressed for sites in the gap along the B6480 Low Bentham Road between High and Low Bentham as opposed to sites east of High Bentham that attracted ribbon development concerns. Southern High Bentham appears to be a preferred location for employment and land south of the Auction Mart generated a range of comments and ideas regarding housing, employment, landscape, public open space, allotments, a car park and a relief road. Other feedback of note is several comments in favour of redeveloping the High Bentham Primary School site for elderly extra care housing.

#### 4. **Implications**

- 4.1 **Financial and Value for Money (vfm) Implications** – None arising directly from this report.
- 4.2 **Legal Implications** – None.
- 4.3 **Contribution to Council Priorities** – Adoption of the Craven Local Plan will provide a spatial strategy, development policies and land allocations for housing and employment in the area which will directly contribute to the Council's priorities for Affordable Housing and Enterprising Craven.
- 4.4 **Risk Management** – No significant risks identified.
- 4.5 **Equality Impact Assessment** – No new policy or procedure is proposed in this report which would give rise to a requirement for an Equality Analysis.

#### 5. **Consultations with Others** – Financial Services and Legal Services

#### 6 **Access to Information : Background Documents** – None

#### 7. **Author of the Report** – Stephen Brown, Principal Planning Officer; telephone 01756 706228; e-mail [sbrown@cravenc.gov.uk](mailto:sbrown@cravenc.gov.uk)

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

#### 8. **Appendices**

Appendix A – Craven Local Plan Community Engagement Events, Summer 2013 'Key points from feedback'.

