



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR CRAVEN
DISTRICT OUTSIDE THE YORKSHIRE DALES
NATIONAL PARK

Craven District Council

ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY STUDY

Draft for Consultation

12th October – 23rd November 2007

Prepared by Envision Consultants on behalf of
Craven District Council

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CRAVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL: LDF CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY STUDY JULY 2007

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1. Introduction

In order to ascertain whether the small towns and villages identified in the draft plan will have adequate capacity to accommodate the growth needed in the District to 2021, Envision has been commissioned by Craven District Council to carry out an Environmental Capacity Study (ECS) of settlements including Skipton, Settle, Crosshills/Glusburn and Sutton in Craven, High Bentham, Ingleton and Gargrave.

This study has been informed by work undertaken previously by Envision for Corby Borough Council and in particular by the paper prepared by LUC on behalf of the East of England Environment Forum (EEEF) for submission to the Environment and Resources Committee of the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA March 2006). It comprises site surveys and desktop appraisals used to identify environmental constraints for land adjoining the settlement limits of the named towns and villages.

The report describes how the consultants have defined 'environmental capacity' for the purposes of this study, and explains how they identified the environmental constraints applicable to the Craven settlements. It is important to note that the study does not duplicate the concurrent Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments and Urban Potential Studies that are on-going. The findings of the ECS surveys are documented in this report and illustrated by 'cumulative impact' maps and 'sensitivity' diagrams.

2. Definitions of Environmental Capacity

PPS1 emphasises the Government's commitment to protecting and enhancing the quality of the natural and historic environment, in both rural and urban areas. It requires planning policies to seek to protect and enhance the quality, character and amenity value of the countryside and urban areas as a whole. It stresses that a high level of protection should be given to most valued townscapes and landscapes, wildlife habitats and natural resources and explains that those with national and international designations should receive the highest level of protection.

The LUC submission to the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) March 2006 included the following. *'It has become equally apparent during the [RSS] Examination that our understanding of what is meant by limits, thresholds and capacity, is not at all clear, and how to measure them even less so. Given the commitment in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy that we should be 'living within environmental limits', there is now an urgent need to determine what this means in practice, and be clear how it should inform decision-making at both the strategic and local level.*

'All life is ultimately dependent upon the quality of the environment. Without clean air, water and soils we would not survive. But the environment is valuable for much more than just supporting life. It comprises all our surroundings – our landscapes, towns and villages, individual buildings, and historic features, as well as wildlife, and natural resources. How they relate to one another determines the very character of the places where we live. The theory of environmental capacity is therefore important beyond the ecological context in which it was first developed.

This is because there is a finite amount of land in which to accommodate development, and in many cases resources that can be used to construct and service it and the activities that we choose to undertake. The concept of environmental capacity therefore starts to force us (i.e. society) to place values on the environment, and to make judgements about what is and is not acceptable in terms of both the amount and location of development and the way that

development is delivered’.

The following extracts from relevant documents illustrate differing views about the assessment of environmental capacity of settlements. These have been used to inform the selection of survey criteria used in the Craven study.

Extract 1 – Government response to Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution 21st Report Nov. 2000

‘In some cases, there are likely to be limits that should not be breached: the risk of serious environmental damage to aspects of the environment or resources would pose a severe threat to global society. Because it is usually difficult to define such limits with certainty, precautionary action may well be justified.

Environmental standard setting cannot aim to protect every bit of the environment for ever. But the Government aims to prevent further overall deterioration, and to secure enhancements that contribute to an overall improvement in quality of life.

Environmental capital techniques, which help us to understand which aspects of the environment are important, and why, can be useful aids to some types of environmental decision-making’.

Extract 2 – Submission by LUC on behalf of the East of England Environment Forum (EEEE) to the Environment and Resources Committee of the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA March 2006)

‘Whilst at first sight the concepts of environmental ‘limits’ and ‘capacity’ may seem relatively easy to sign up to, trying to define them can be very difficult. This is because the environment is multi-faceted, with often strong but complex links between its constituent parts. For example, a landscape is a reflection of many factors including its underlying geology, natural processes such as river drainage and erosion, the variety of habitats and species that occupy it and the way humans have used it for agriculture and built development over time.

The truth is that some aspects of ‘capacity’ or ‘limits’ are indeed measurable – such as the effects of pollution or flood risk on health and property, or knowing when we are going to run out of water. For many of these aspects we have targets and regulations in place. Some are based on scientific understanding, such as the effect that greenhouse gas emissions are having on our climate. Others, though, are subjective, such as ‘quality of development’ or the ‘quality of a landscape’ – it depends who you ask. Others again we just do not really understand, such as when the functions and services provided by ecosystems have reached the point where they irretrievably break down.

In a sense, this is the point – the environment is complex, it is difficult to understand, and it is even more difficult to measure. But one thing we do all know is that it is important, and that we all place our own values on it. And we also know that some aspects of it are absolutely essential to supporting life. For the most controversial aspects of capacity – concerning the quality, character and cultural importance of landscapes, countryside and settlements – this social judgement is all there is.’

Extract 3 - Michael Jacobs (former General Secretary of the Fabian Society and now on the Council of Economic Advisers at HM Treasury) on ‘Making Sense of Environmental Capacity’

(CPRE 1997)

'Environmental capacity offers a useful framework for development planning. But it cannot be expected to provide precise numbers for the amount of development which an area can accommodate. Environmental thresholds do not translate automatically into development capacity. The latter will depend on the environmental efficiency of development and the infrastructural, management and behavioural context in which it occurs. Different forms of development and environmental management will have different impacts on environmental thresholds. Moreover development capacity will depend on the opportunities identified as much as on the environmental constraints.'

If environmental capacity is to be useful within the planning system, it must be clearly understood. Capacity does not mean that there are immutable constraints given to us by nature and determined by science. Environmental capacity is not simply an application of ecological 'carrying capacity'. The thresholds which determine environmental capacity may (in some cases) be informed by scientific understanding of nature's properties, but they become determinants of decision making through political judgement and social choice.

This judgement is about value: about what society regards as the acceptable form and rate of environmental change. Environmental capacity must therefore be determined by the democratic process, in which formally constituted bodies seek the participation and views of the people affected'

3. Methodology and Selection of Criteria

The Settlement Strategy proposed in the Craven draft Core Strategy apportions housing and employment 'growth' to the larger settlements in the district. The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments and Urban Potential Studies will be used to assess whether these named settlements have the capacity to accommodate growth, within the defined 'settlement limits', at the levels proposed.

The Environmental Capacity Study (ECS) is being carried out concurrently to identify potential 'directions for growth' adjoining the settlement limits. For the purposes of the emerging Core Strategy these are indicative only. They are not intended to be interpreted as site specific land use allocations.

As can be seen above, environmental capacity relates to quality of life as well as to the potential for environmental harm. The criteria that have been used for the Craven study relate to landscape character and quality, heritage and environmental assets and potential for environmental enhancement and/or regeneration. Designations such as National Parks, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, sites of special scientific or geological interest and areas of outstanding natural beauty represent the most valued environmental assets at a national level. However, at a local level, the character of landscapes and historic villages and their rural settings, together with landscape features such as mature woodlands, streams and rivers, mill chimneys or church towers are also highly valued.

The Craven Core Strategy SA/SEA identifies additional issues that are relevant to the scoping of the ECS, including climate change, air quality, water quality, water resources, flood risk, impacts on minerals and soil, waste and biodiversity. Several of these matters will need to be investigated further. The ECS includes a preliminary assessment of local conditions in relation to flood risk, air and noise pollution (proximity to busy roads), water resources (location of watercourses), soils (agricultural land classification) and biodiversity

(potential for wildlife 'corridors'). The ECS has also incorporated the findings of the 'Appropriate Assessment' scoping report, in order to define proximity to European SPA and SAC wildlife protection sites.

Following public consultation on Preferred Options for the Core Strategy it is recommended that the ECS should be further refined to take into account the views of local people. It is implicit in PPS1 that all new development should respect local distinctiveness and sense of place and be of a high design quality so that it is valued by local communities.

It will also be necessary to discuss the ECS with key stakeholders in order to incorporate additional constraints related to health and quality of life in terms of information about water quality (ecological status), water supply, capacity of sewage treatment works, waste and recycling facilities and the potential for improvements to essential infrastructure.

4. Environmental Surveys

The survey forms (Appendix A) were used on site to record the physical characteristics and to identify 'sector horizons' as seen from the built up edge of each of the settlements. Boundaries were drawn where these are clearly marked on the ground by woodlands, watercourses, roads or railways and field boundaries or where they can be defined by topographical features such as ridges. Where there are no clear edges to a sector, the outer edge has not been drawn.

The sector maps and survey forms were then refined using additional environmental information recorded on a series of 'cumulative impacts' constraints maps including LPA records of designated conservation areas, listed buildings and ancient monuments, protected open spaces, recreation land and Environment Agency records of Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3.

The criteria used in the assessment include the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundaries and those areas identified as high quality conservation landscapes in the Craven Landscape Character Assessment (LDA 2005). Green Wedges between settlements are identified in the adopted Local Plan, as are Conservation Area boundaries.

The Council's records, and those of the County Council and other agencies, were used to identify high quality agricultural land. Craven does not contain any ALC Grade 1 and 2 land; other land identified as Grade 3 has not been differentiated as 3a or 3b. Steep slopes were identified on site, as were watercourses, woodlands and potential wildlife 'corridors' including hedgerows. The consultants recorded public footpaths, landmarks and industrial heritage features seen on site and noted noise from busy roads. Eyesores and evidence of previously developed or derelict land were also recorded on site.

5. Environmental Capacity Assessment

The survey forms were used to compile composite tables for each settlement (see below) indicating those constraints that would apply, should any of the defined sectors be developed in future. The format of the tables has been designed to indicate which sectors are more or less capable of accommodating change; it allows the various sectors to be graded (by colour/tonne) to indicate where development could cause significant cumulative impacts, where others may be subject to relatively few constraints and where there are areas that need to be safeguarded because of their acute vulnerability.

These findings will make it possible for the Council to progress the draft Allocations DPD by

considering where to permit future development, the extent of any such development and what mitigation measures may be necessary in each location.

Red:

those sectors where development should not be permitted under any circumstances (eg. National Park);

Orange:

those sectors where development should not be permitted unless there is exceptional over-riding justification and adequate mitigation measures are in place (eg. Zones 2 and 3 Flood Risk);

Yellow:

those sectors where development may be permitted provided adequate mitigation measures are in place to overcome the constraints that have been identified;

Blue:

those sectors where development may be permitted as a means of achieving environmental gains such as remediation of previously developed land.

The table can be used to indicate those areas where development could potentially be accommodated in future, but there has been no attempt to estimate the actual 'capacity' of the environment in each location to accommodate new development. This will inevitably depend on the proposed form of any new development, its proposed environmental performance in terms of use of resources, its ability to make good past damage to the environment by, for example, intensive agriculture, and its ability to meet sustainability objectives.

6. Summary of Findings

The environmental constraints identified on site and on the 'cumulative impacts' constraints maps have been ranked, as described above, and the rankings subsequently reviewed to incorporate the conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment screening report. The findings are recorded in the tables compiled for each settlement. The following summary describes the 'traffic light' analysis and identifies the findings of the study settlement by settlement

'Red' Constraints

(those sectors where development should not be permitted under any circumstances eg. National Park);

The constraints that are considered to be sufficiently important as to prohibit future development under any circumstances include land within the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, where all forms of development are strictly controlled, areas identified as high quality 'landscapes in need of conservation' in the Craven Landscape Character Assessment, designated 'Green Wedge' land as identified in the Craven Local Plan and areas that lie within the setting or the boundaries of designated Conservation Areas.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report recommends that in order to ensure that there are no potential adverse effects on any designated Natura 2000 (SAC/SPA) wildlife protection sites, several sectors should be additionally identified in the 'Red' constraints column. These are locations that would extend the existing built up areas of Ingleton, Sutton in Craven and north Skipton closer to SAC/SPA site boundaries that are already within 3km

and could potentially cause damage to the special biodiversity of such sites. These sectors have been added into the table, although it should be noted that several of those sectors were already identified as being within the 'Red' category.

'Orange' Constraints

(those sectors where development should not be permitted unless there is exceptional over-riding justification and adequate mitigation measures are in place eg. Zones 2 and 3 Flood Risk)

The Environment Agency identifies land in terms of the probability of flooding. Flood Risk Zone 3b is described as the functional floodplain; Zone 3a is land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater chance of river flooding; Zone 2 has between a 1 in 100 and a 1 in 1000 chance of river flooding. Bearing in mind the recent disastrous floods and the increasing potential for extreme weather events, it was decided to include all land within Zones 2 and 3 within this category.

Steeply sloping land is also considered to be unsuitable for development, not only because of construction difficulties but also because such land tends to be highly visible in the local landscape. Hilltop ridges are marked to define the boundaries of sectors, but it is important to ensure that all new development avoids highly visible 'skyline' locations.

Although very few sites are identified, it is also considered important to safeguard degraded sites such as former quarries that have regenerated naturally and now become merged into the landscape, primarily for their ecological value.

'Yellow' Constraints

(those sectors where development may be permitted provided adequate mitigation measures are in place to overcome the constraints that have been identified)

The environmental capacity tables do not identify absolute limits to development. Few of the environmental constraints that have been identified within this category are sufficient to prohibit future development but they will all affect the ultimate capacity of the sectors to accommodate development. For example, cumulative constraints suggest that sectors containing high grade agricultural land, watercourses, woodlands, potential wildlife 'corridors', public recreation land and public footpaths may be less appropriate in terms of the extent and timing of future development than other sectors with fewer and less valued environmental assets.

Environmental capacity may also depend on the location and form of the proposed development and the potential it offers to make good past damage to environmental resources, to improve the environmental performance and sustainability of adjacent estates within the settlement boundaries and to reflect local needs and provide community benefits.

Blue Constraints

(those sectors where development may be permitted as a means of achieving environmental gains such as remediation of previously developed land)

In the table there are no sectors specifically identified as blue. This category should therefore be considered in the balance with other constraints that involve significant harm to environmental assets.

7. Analysis of Sectors

a) Skipton

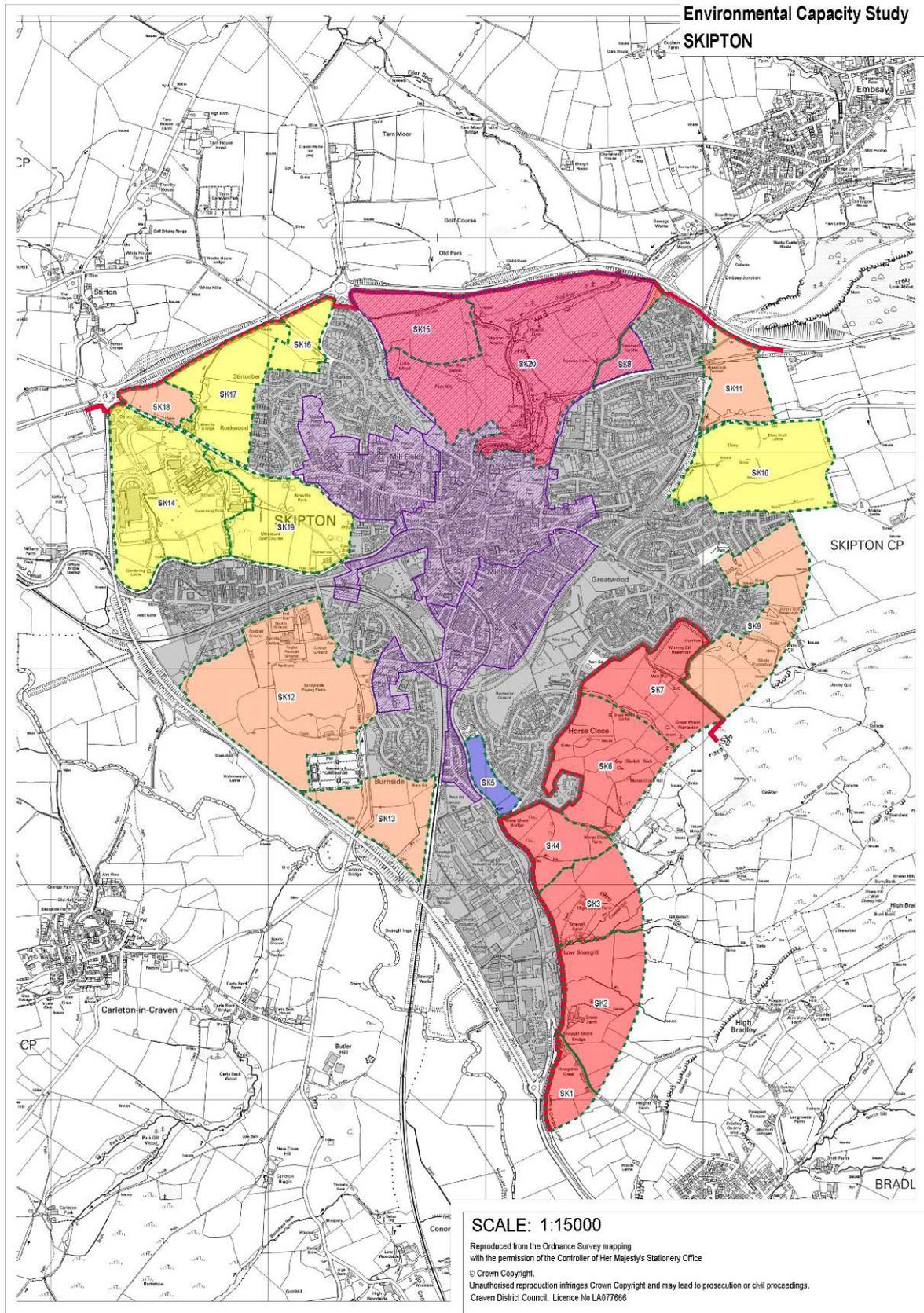
	RED				ORANGE			YELLOW							BLUE				
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
SKIPTON																			
SK3																			
SK2																			
SK7																			
SK6																			
SK1																			
SK4																			
SK20																			
SK15																			
SK8																			
SK11																			
SK12																			
SK13																			
SK18																			
SK9																			
SK14																			
SK17																			
SK16																			
SK10																			
SK19																			
SK5																			

The sectors in the 'Red' category include land to the east of South Skipton within the Landscape Conservation Area defined in the Craven Landscape Character Assessment (SK 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7) and SK20 which is within the Castle Conservation Area. SK8 is also within the designated conservation area although it is not strictly within the setting of the castle and could possibly be moved into the 'Yellow' category. SK15 is in a similar location, historically within the conservation area but concealed by topography from the setting of the castle. This sector should stay within the 'Red' category as its development would extend the built up area closer to the North Pennine Moors SAC/SPA within 3km to the north.

The 'Orange' category includes Sector SK11 to the north-east and SK 12 and SK13 to the south-west which are within high flood risk zones. If development is progressed into these sectors then mitigation measures must allow sufficient space for water to be displaced in the event of flooding. SK18 to the west and SK9 on the eastern side are included in this category because they contain steeply sloping land. Moreover, a decision not to progress development on SK17 could make SK18 less sustainable as it is isolated from the existing settlement boundary close to the by-pass.

The sectors in the 'Yellow' category contain a variety of environmental constraints that would need to be overcome to allow development and, as with SK18 above, the sustainability and accessibility of several of the outer areas should also be addressed.

SK14 and SK19 to the west of the town centre, including the Park, Swimming Pool, Craven College and the Auction Mart sites, offer an opportunity to restructure the area and release surplus land to achieve a comprehensive form of redevelopment. SK10 to the east, SK17 and SK16 to the west comprise logical extensions to the existing built form and together with SK5, which is effectively contained by existing development, these sectors appear to be the most appropriate directions for future development.



b) Settle

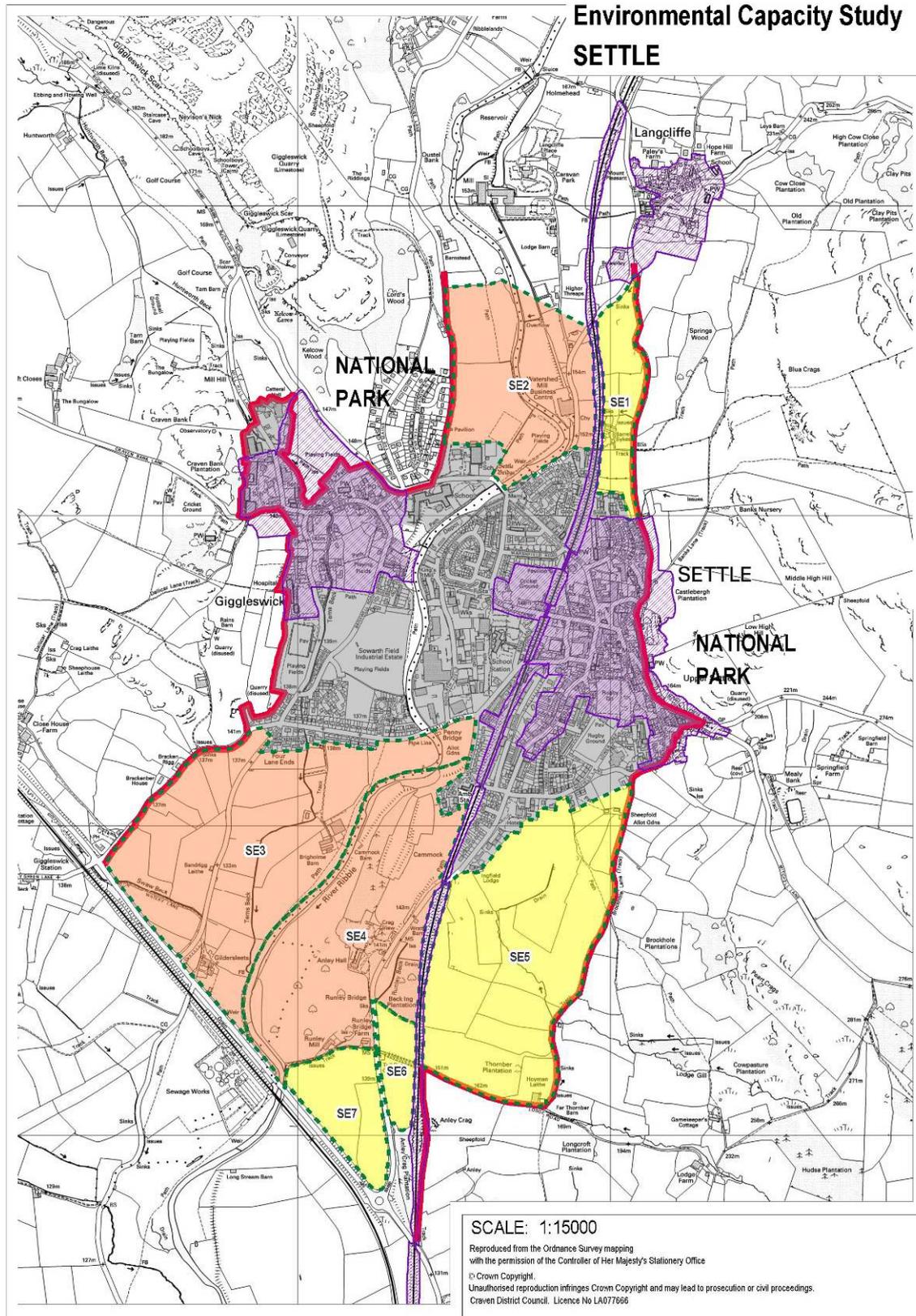
	RED				ORANGE			YELLOW						BLUE					
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
SETTLE																			
SE4						■			■				■						
SE3						■			■				■						
SE2						■				■			■		■				
SE7									■				■		■				
SE5									■				■				■		
SE6									■				■						
SE1									■		■								

None of the sectors around Settle and Giggleswick are included within the 'Red' category. However, land to the east and to the north-west of the towns was excluded from the original surveys as it is within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and/or within the ownership of Giggleswick School. It was therefore assumed that this land would not be available for development in the foreseeable future.

Land in Sectors SE4 and SE3 to the south-west of the centre and SE2 to the north of the town are all included within the 'Orange' category as they are subject to a high probability of flooding.

Although sectors SE6 and SE7 are not included in the 'Orange' category, a decision not to develop on sectors SE3 and 4 could make SE6 and SE7 less sustainable as they are isolated from the existing settlement boundary close to the by-pass. Sector SE1 includes listed buildings, landmarks and heritage features and is located adjacent to the National Park boundary. Therefore it is not a preferred location for new development.

Sector SE5 to the south-east of Settle would therefore appear to be the most appropriate direction for future development.



c) South Craven (Crosshills/Glusburn/Sutton in Craven)

	RED					ORANGE			YELLOW							BLUE			
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
SOUTH CRAVEN																			
SC18																			
SC14																			
SC7																			
SC8																			
SC3																			
SC16																			
SC2																			
SC10																			
SC15																			
SC4																			
SC1																			
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SC5																			
SC17																			
SC13																			
SC6																			
SC11																			
SC12																			

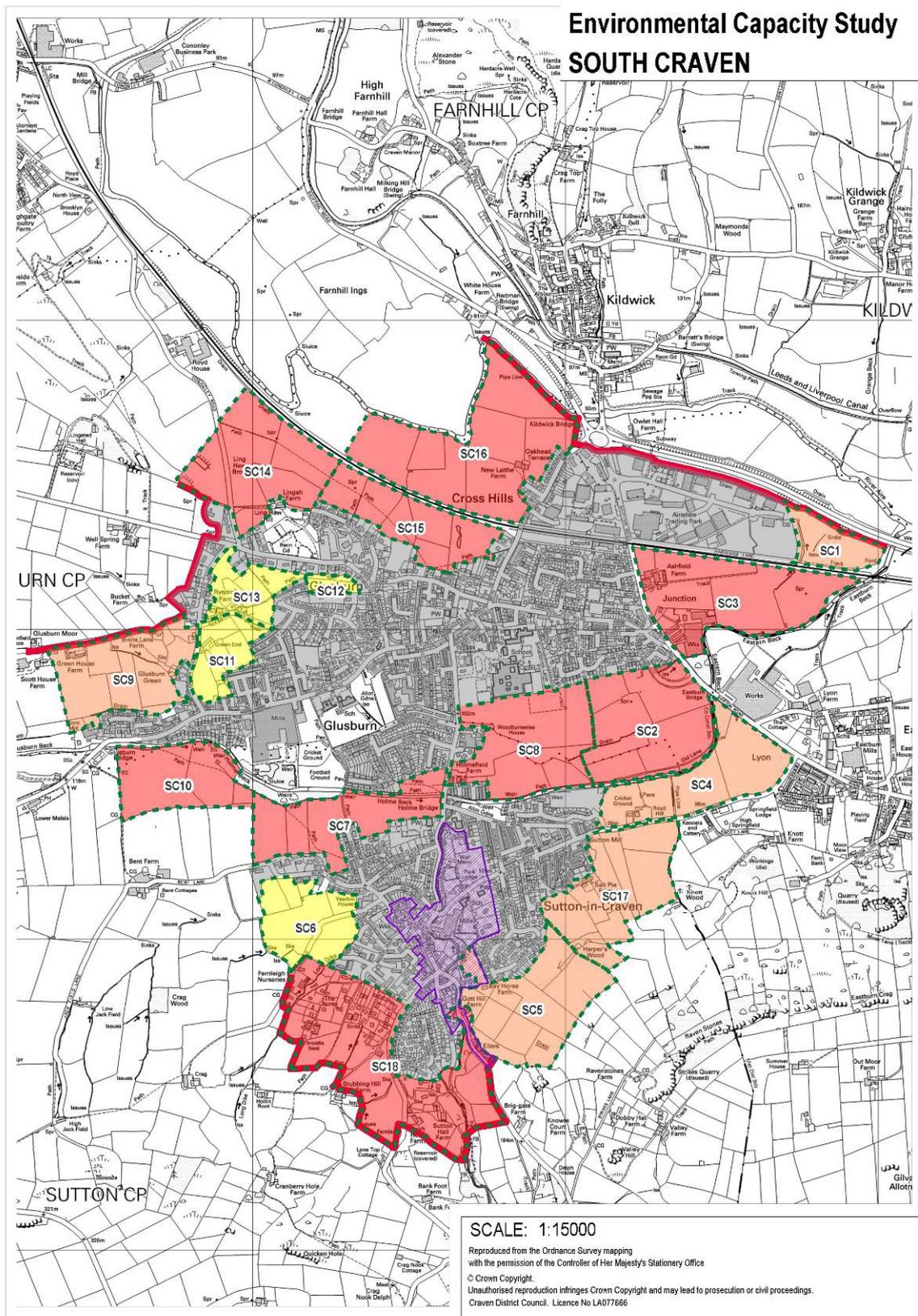
South Craven includes the individual settlements of Crosshills, Glusburn and Sutton in Craven. These have been surveyed together and illustrated as a composite on the sector maps. Land to the south, SC18, is within the 'Red' category as it is located within a Conservation Landscape but it is also identified in the Appropriate Assessment as a location that would extend the existing built up area closer to the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA site boundaries, already within 3km, and could potentially cause damage to the special

biodiversity of such sites.

Other sectors identified within the 'Red' category include SC14, SC15, SC16, SC8, SC7, SC10, SC3 and SC2, as these are all located within the designated 'Green Wedge' between the adjoining settlements.

The 'Orange' category includes sectors SC4 and SC1 to the east of Crosshills, that are subject to flood risk (although SC1 appears to include previously developed land) and sectors SC9 to the west of Glusburn and SC17 and SC5 to the east of Sutton that contain steep slopes.

Sector SC6 to the west of Sutton in Craven and sectors SC11, SC12 and SC13 within the western edge of Glusburn therefore emerge as the preferred locations for future development. However, in order to accommodate the required levels of growth within South Craven, the Council may need to reconsider the 'Green Wedge' boundaries in the adopted Local Plan.

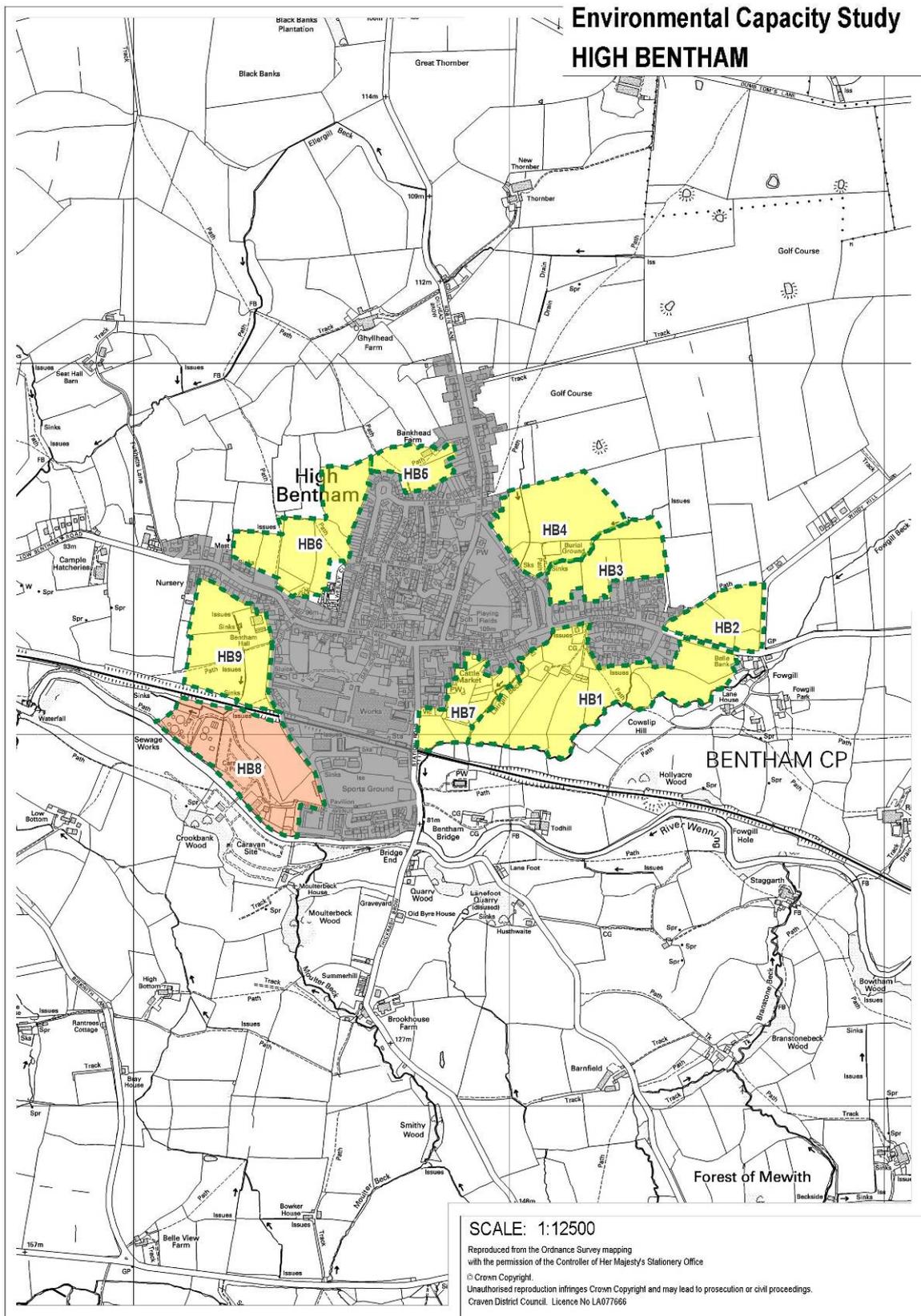


d) High Bentham

	RED				ORANGE			YELLOW							BLUE				
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
HIGH BENTHAM																			
HB8																			
HB7																			
HB9																			
HB4																			
HB1																			
HB5																			
HB6																			
HB3																			
HB2																			

Sector HB8 to the south-west of High Bentham and south of the railway line is subject to flood risk, which brings it into the 'Orange' category. Sectors HB7 and HB9 include or are within the setting of listed buildings, landmarks or locally important heritage features which present visual constraints to development. Sector HB2 and part of HB1 would extend the settlement to the east in a linear form that may not be sustainable.

Therefore, although all the remaining sectors are on Grade 3 agricultural land with watercourses, woodlands and potential wildlife corridors, Sectors numbered HB3, HB4, HB5 and HB6 to the north-east and north-west of the centre appear to be the preferred locations for future development.

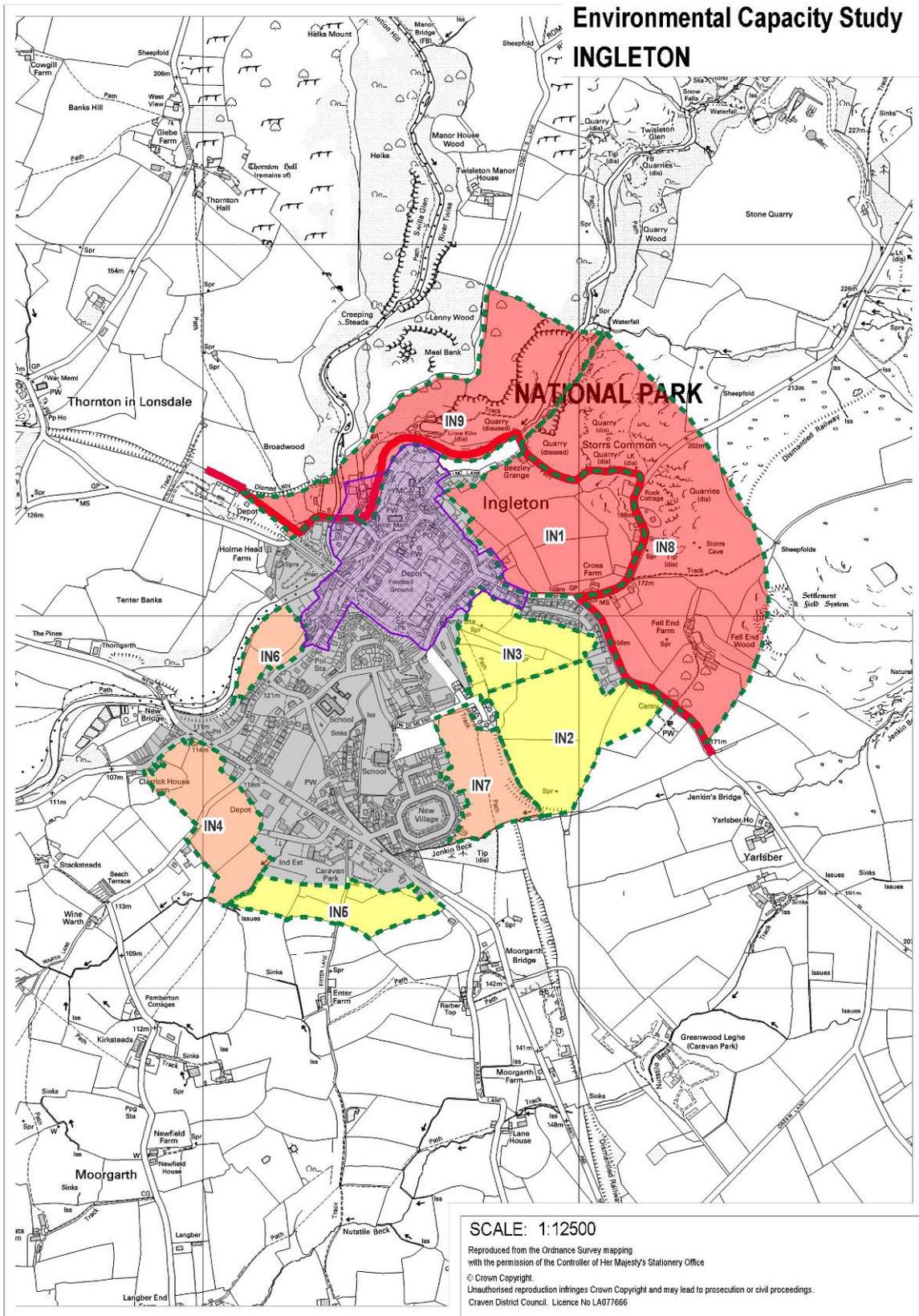


e) Ingleton

	RED				ORANGE			YELLOW							BLUE				
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
INGLETON																			
IN8																			
IN9																			
IN1																			
IN7																			
IN4																			
IN6																			
IN3																			
IN2																			
IN5																			

Land to the north and east of Ingleton (sectors IN8 and IN9) is within the Yorkshire Dales National Park where new development is strictly controlled. Sector IN1 has steep slopes rising up to the National Park boundary and its development would extend the existing built up area closer to the Ingleborough Complex SAC/SPA site boundaries that are already within 3km, bringing it into the 'Red' category. Other sectors fall within the 'Orange' category because of flood risk zones to the south-east and south-west of the settlement (sectors IN7 and IN4). IN6 includes very steep slopes and provides an impressive view out of the town towards the listed railway viaduct, but also includes eyesores that could be remediated by development.

Land to the east and south-east of the centre (sectors IN3 and IN2) appears to be the preferred location for future development, possibly incorporating part of IN7 which is believed to include previously developed and back-filled land.



f) Gargrave

	RED					ORANGE			YELLOW								BLUE		
	National Park	Landscape CA (Landscape Character Assessment)	Green Wedge	Proximity to SAC/SPA site	Conservation Area setting	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Steep Slopes	Regenerated Derelict Land	Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Noise/Light Pollution (busy roads)	Landmarks and/or Industrial Heritage Features	Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites	Watercourses	Woodlands	Wildlife Corridors	Play/Recreation Land	Public Footpaths	Previously Developed Land	Eyesores
GARGRAVE																			
GA7																			
GA4																			
GA10																			
GA5																			
GA2																			
GA6																			
GA9																			
GA8																			
GA1																			
GA3																			

Sectors GA7 to the north of the village centre and GA4 to the south are both within the designated conservation area; GA7 contains a scheduled Ancient Monument. These sectors both fall within the 'Red' category.

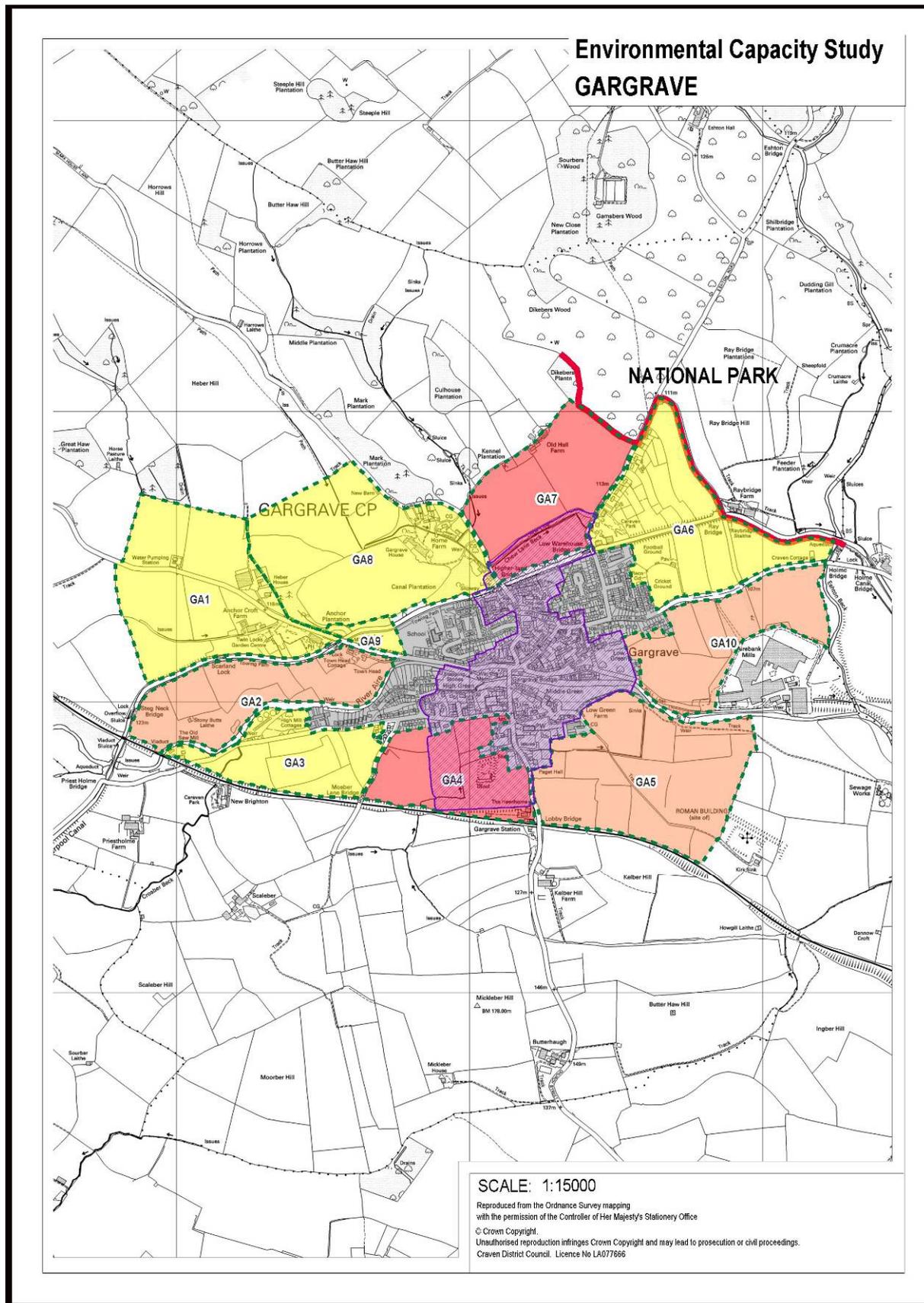
Sectors GA10, GA2 and GA5 fall within the 'Orange' category because of extensive flood risk zones to the east and west of the settlement. If development is progressed into these sectors then mitigation measures must allow sufficient space for water to be displaced in the event of flooding. Land to the east of the village was excluded from the surveys as it is occupied by the Johnson and Johnson industrial complex. It was therefore assumed that this land would not be available for development in the foreseeable future.

The majority of the land around Gargrave up to the boundaries of the National Park to the north-east is relatively flat and, with the exception of Sectors GA2, GA3 and GA4, is described as Grade 3 agricultural land. The sectors in the 'Yellow' category contain a variety of environmental constraints that would need to be overcome to allow development. Although it is outside the existing settlement boundaries, sector GA6 to the north-east of the

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centre would appear to offer a long term opportunity to make the best use of previously developed land and to achieve a more sustainable form of development without unacceptable impacts on the conservation area. Similarly GA9, which adjoins a primary school site, could be incorporated into the adjoining residential area if comprehensive redevelopment is ever considered.

Otherwise, land in the vicinity of the railway station to the south-west of the centre, within Sector GA3 and including part of GA4, appears to be the most appropriate location for future development. Although Sector GA4 is identified within the 'Red' category, the conservation area boundary does not appear to relate to features on the ground and future development in this sector would provide an opportunity to enhance the setting of the ancient monument and to incorporate it into the 'chain' of protected green spaces within the village.



8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Environmental Capacity Study (ECS) of settlements including Skipton, Settle, Crosshills/Glusburn and Sutton in Craven, High Bentham, Ingleton and Gargrave has been carried out to examine whether the small towns and villages identified in the draft plan will have adequate capacity to accommodate the growth needed in the District to 2021. It comprised site surveys and desktop appraisals used to identify environmental constraints for land adjoining the settlement limits. The study does not duplicate the concurrent Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments and Urban Potential Studies that are ongoing.

The Environmental Capacity Study (ECS) is being carried out concurrently to identify potential 'directions for growth' adjoining the settlement limits. For the purposes of the emerging Core Strategy these are indicative only. They are not intended to be interpreted as site specific land use allocations.

The criteria that have been used for the Craven study relate to quality of life as well as to the potential for environmental harm. They include landscape and heritage designations that represent the most valued environmental assets at a national and a local level, together with landscape features that are highly valued.

Several of the matters identified in the Core Strategy SA/SEA, including climate change, air quality, water quality and waste will need to be investigated further. The ECS includes a preliminary assessment of local conditions in relation to flood risk, air and noise pollution (proximity to busy roads), water resources (location of watercourses), soils (agricultural land classification) and biodiversity (potential for wildlife 'corridors'). It has also incorporated the findings of the 'Appropriate Assessment' scoping report, in order to define proximity to European SPA and SAC wildlife protection sites.

The findings of the ECS surveys are documented in this report and illustrated by 'cumulative impact' maps and 'sensitivity' diagrams. The composite tables for each settlement indicate those constraints that would apply, should any of the defined sectors be developed in future. The study indicates areas of land where there may be potential for future development and also identifies land that should be safeguarded from development. These findings will make it possible for the Council to progress the draft Allocations DPD by considering where to permit future development, the extent of any such development and what mitigation measures may be necessary in each location.

Recommendations:

Returning to the quote above from Michael Jacobs 'Making Sense of Environmental Capacity' (CPRE 1997) *'The thresholds become determinants of decision making through political judgement and social choice. This judgement is about value: about what society regards as the acceptable form and rate of environmental change. Environmental capacity must therefore be determined by the democratic process, in which formally constituted bodies seek the participation and views of the people affected'*

Therefore it is recommended that the ECS should be further refined to take into account the views of local people and politicians, possibly during the public consultation period for the Core Strategy Preferred Options. It is implicit in PPS1 that all new development should respect local distinctiveness and sense of place and be of a high design quality so that it is valued by local communities.

It will also be necessary to discuss the ECS with key stakeholders in order to incorporate additional constraints related to health and quality of life in terms of information about water quality (ecological status), water supply, capacity of sewage treatment works, waste and recycling facilities and the potential for improvements to essential infrastructure.

The consultants wish to stress that the sectors indicated as 'potential directions for growth' should not be allocated for development unless and until it becomes clear that the potential for development on land within the settlement boundaries is insufficient to accommodate the identified need. Then and only then can the actual development capacity of the individual sectors be properly assessed, bearing in mind the proposed form of any new development, its proposed environmental performance in terms of use of resources, its ability to make good past damage to the environment and its ability to meet sustainability objectives. Such decisions will be made by means of the subsequent Allocations DPD.

At that stage it will be necessary to bear in mind that future change on the scale proposed in the Core Strategy could have an unacceptable impact on the overall character of these traditional towns and villages. Therefore, in preparing the draft Allocations DPD, it will be necessary to control the scale and timing of developments by phasing the proposed land allocations.

*KMB/DW
July 2007*

APPENDIX A: SITE APPRAISAL FORM

Existing features		Comments
Natural features	Steep slopes	
	Flood land	
	Water courses	
	Woodlands	
	Natural features (geology etc)	
Existing built-up area	Connections (paths etc) in/out	
	Views in/out; landmarks	
	Green/open spaces	
	Wildlife corridors	
	Developed/previously developed land	
	Eyesores/infrastructure (pylons etc)	
Historic features	Railway embankments/cuttings	
	Listed buildings settings/parks	
	Conservation areas	
	Industrial heritage features	
	Archaeological sites	
Cultural features	Green/open spaces	
	High grade agricultural land	
	Regenerated derelict land (quarries)	
	Busy roads - light/noise pollution	
	Informal play/recreation land	

OTHER COMMENTS

