Approaching housing density and mix

Contents

1. Introduction

In April and May 2016, the council consulted on a second pre-publication draft of the emerging Craven Local Plan, which included draft policies on housing density and housing mix (policies SP3 and H4 respectively). These were informed by the council's 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which was the most up-to-date and relevant evidence base document at the time. Since then, the SHMA has been updated in light of new population projections and job forecasts and further progress has been made on refining the council's approach to housing density and mix. The council's aim is to formulate revised draft policies, which:

- Respond to comments made, during consultation, on the initial drafts of policies SP3: Housing Mix and H4: Housing Density
- Take account of updated evidence from the 2016 SHMA and examples of recently approved proposals for housing development
- Recognise more fully and effectively the interrelated nature of housing density and housing mix
- Allow for on-site open space provision in line with local standards recommended by the council's 2016 open space assessment

2. Consultation on the second draft local plan

A number of comments about draft policies SP3 and H4 have particular relevance to this review of the council's approach to housing density and mix. They can be distilled into four main issues:

- The specified mix does not properly reflect evidence from the SHMA
- The proposed housing mix needs to be more specific
- The indicative housing density of 40dph appears to be high
- The indicative density should be flexible and allow for variation

The council recognises these issues and is seeking to address them. Section 3, below, explains how the council is making better use of the SHMA, information from recently approved housing schemes and the open space assessment, to present a more comprehensive, specific and reasoned approach to housing density and mix.

3. Updated evidence and recently approved housing schemes

In 2016, the government released updated 2014 based household projections and the Regional Econometric Model produced revised job forecasts. Both indicated changes in key evidence, so the council commissioned an update to its Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which, amongst other things, gives a general view on the overall housing mix the local population is likely to need over the emerging plan period. Assuming a broad tenure split of 60% market and 40% affordable, the 2016 SHMA recommends that:

- 39.4% of new homes should have 1-2 bedrooms

- 44.0% of new homes should have 3 bedrooms; and
- 16.6% of new homes should have 4+ bedrooms.

The 2016 SHMA also recommends that the majority (87.5%) of affordable homes should have 1-2 bedrooms and the majority (60.7%) of market homes should have 3 or more bedrooms.

As smaller homes tend to produce higher densities and larger homes lower densities, the *mix* of housing to be planned for is likely to influence the *density* of housing to be planned for. In order to explore the relationship between housing mix and housing density, the council has examined ten recently approved proposals for housing development in the plan area, which propose a mix of house-types, sizes and tenures. Broad findings from this work are set out in figures and tables, below, with Table 1 providing basic information about each proposal.

Figures 1-10 illustrate how typical densities (expressed in dwellings per hectare or dph) have been estimated for different house-types in each of the schemes examined[1]. Those densities are then set out in Table 2 and used to create an average density for each of the broad house-type categories specified in the 2016 SHMA, as follows:

- 54dph for 1-2 bedroom homes
- 44dph for 3 bedroom homes; and
- 22dph for 4+ bedroom homes.

In Table 3, the average density for each house-type is combined with the proportion of that house-type in the recommended mix, to produce an indicative dwelling density of 37dph. This means that developments of that density should be capable of providing the mix of housing the local population is likely to need over the emerging plan period.

The 37dph figure includes dwellings, garages, gardens, parking spaces and a nominal allowance for access roads. Table 4 shows that with the inclusion of public open space (POS), this figure drops to a net density of 32dph. The amount of additional land included for POS is based on a 43m^2 per dwelling standard recommended by the council's 2016 open space assessment.

Draft Policy H4: Housing Density, which appeared in the second draft local plan, included a requirement that housing development proposals should achieve 'an indicative dwelling density of 40 dwellings to the hectare (net)'. This preliminary suggestion was based on the need for smaller homes revealed by the 2015 SHMA and reserved consideration of POS for later (i.e. now). Notably, the draft policy allowed for flexibility in the 40dph figure where a lower density could be justified and this principle of allowing appropriate flexibility in density requirements is something that could be carried forward into the next draft of the policy.

4. Brownfield development

This background paper should be broadly applicable to any proposal for new-build housing

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[1] Density estimates are based on the area of plots plus half of the access road across the plot frontages (to provide a nominal minimal allowance for access). Approximate measurements are taken from the approved site layout plans for each scheme.

development on an open site, including a brownfield site where no significant element of conversion is involved (e.g. Figures 1 and 2, below). Where a proposal does involve a significant element of conversion, the proposed density and mix of housing is likely to be affected. For example, a proposed mill conversion is likely to include a larger proportion of one and two-bedroom apartments at a higher density and any accompanying new-build element is therefore likely to include a larger proportion of lower density houses with three, four or more bedrooms. As proposals for brownfield development with a significant element of conversion are likely to be in the minority and affected by site-specific circumstances, it is recommended that they should be approached individually in terms of their housing density and mix.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations address how the council's approach to housing density and mix might be improved in light of the comments, evidence and examples that have been considered.

Recommendation A

In order to meet the district's objectively assessed need for housing, the council should plan for:

- an indicative net housing density of 32dph; and
- an indicative housing mix of 39.4% one and two-bedroom dwellings, 44.0% three-bedroom dwellings and 16.6% four (or more) bedroom dwellings.

Recommendation B

Policy governing housing density and mix should:

- allow for flexibility (upwards or downwards) in the application of indicative figures for density and mix where this can be properly justified on planning grounds; and
- clarify the council's definition of 'net housing density', which would include land for dwellings, garages, gardens, parking spaces and on-site POS, plus a nominal allowance for access roads.

6. Acknowledgements

Examples of recently approved housing proposals, which appear in Figures 1-10 below, are credited to the following designers and developers.

7. Figures and tables

Fig.1: Approved proposal at Back Gate, Ingleton

Figure 1
Approved proposal: Back Gate, Ingleton 45/2010/10758
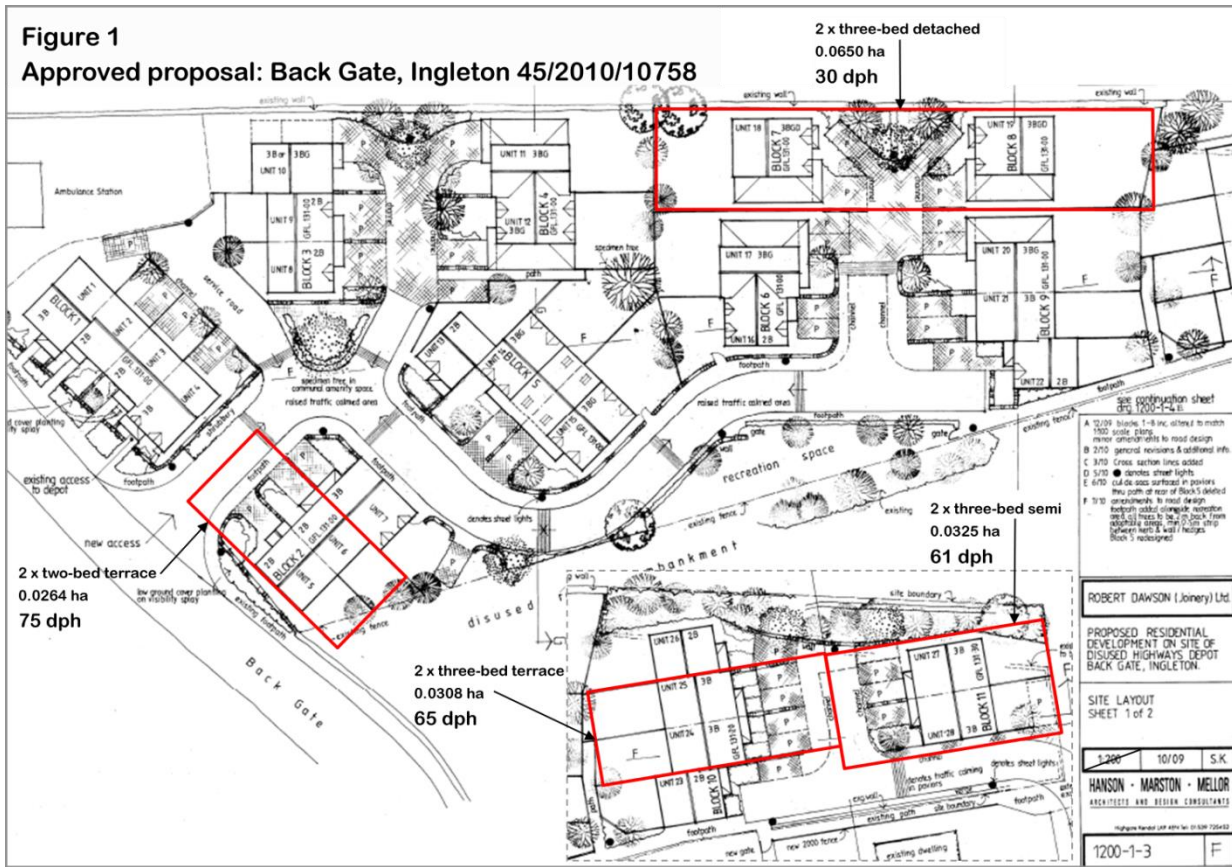
Fig.2: Approved proposal at Dales View, Clapham

Figure 2
Approved proposal: Dales View, Clapham 18/2015/15634
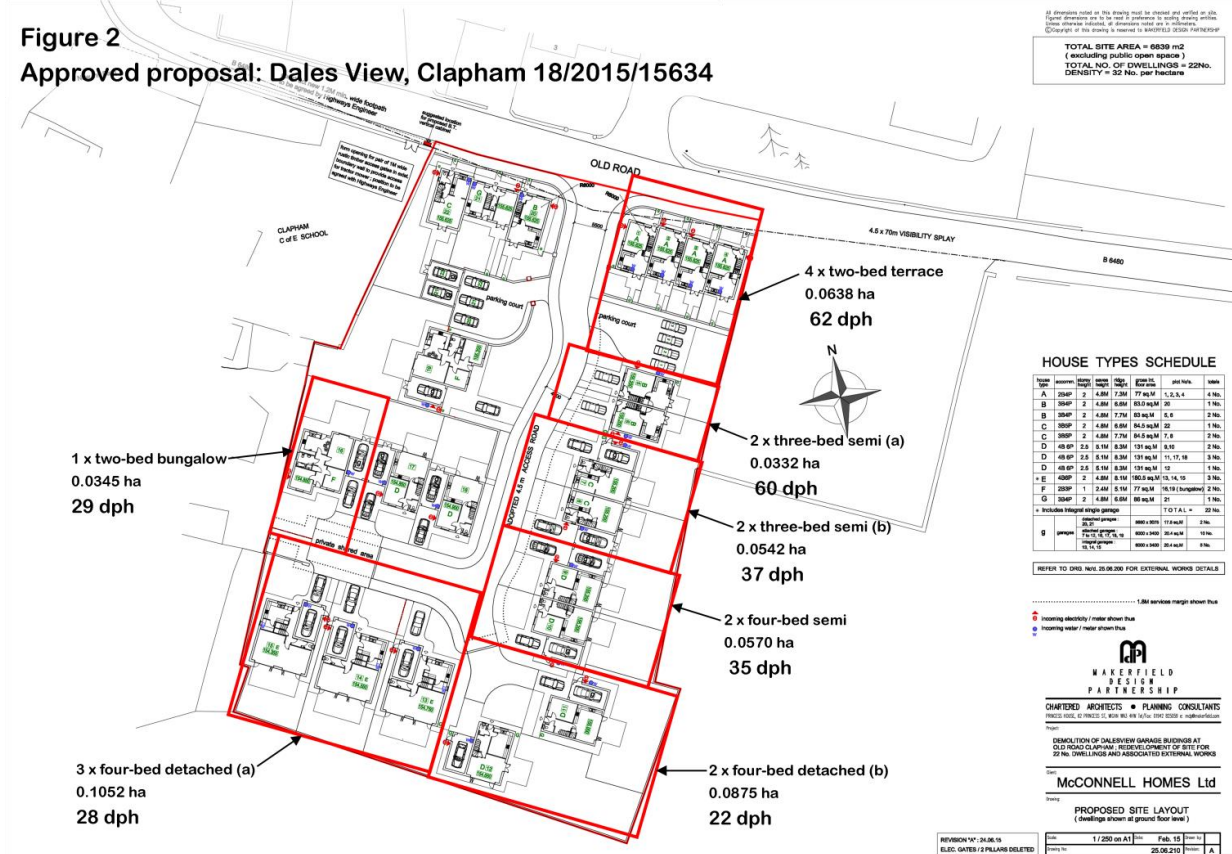
Fig.3: Approved proposal at Ingfield Lane, Settle
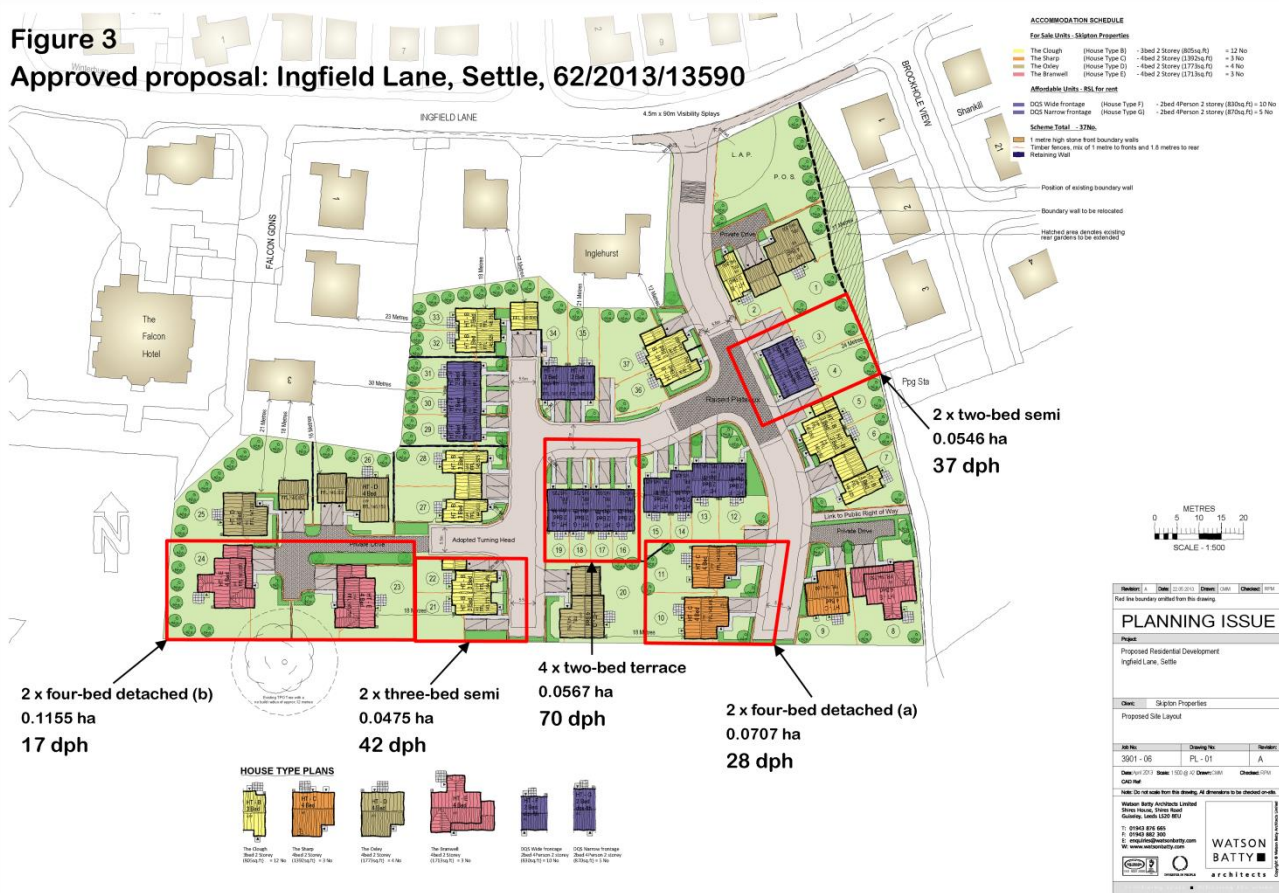
Fig.4: Approved proposal at Hellifield Road, Gargrave
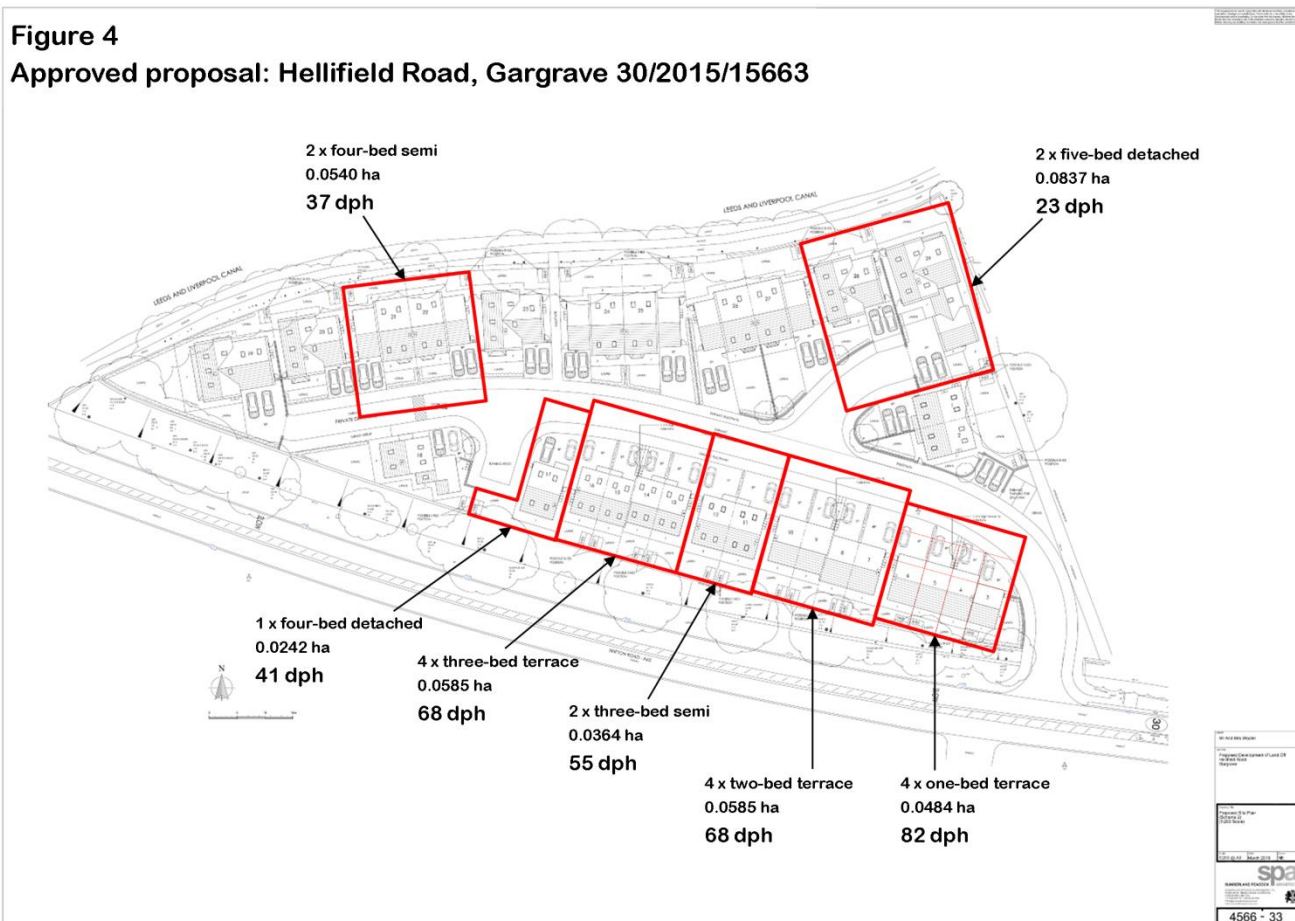
Fig.5: Approved proposal at Shires Lane, Embsay

Figure 5
Approved proposal: Shires Lane, Embsay 26/2016/17299
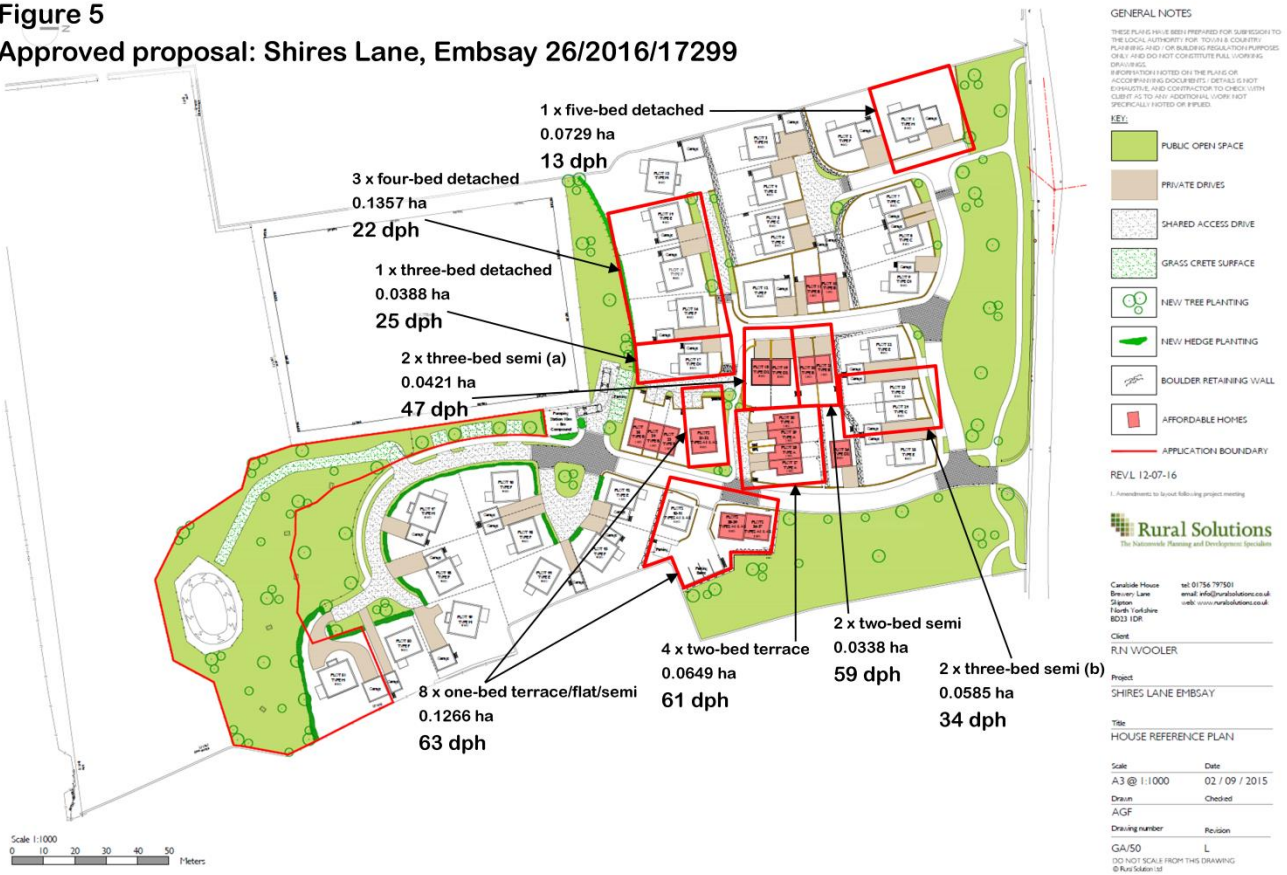
Fig.6: Approved proposal at White Hills Lane, Skipton

Figure 6
Approved proposal: White Hills Lane, Skipton 63/2014/14688
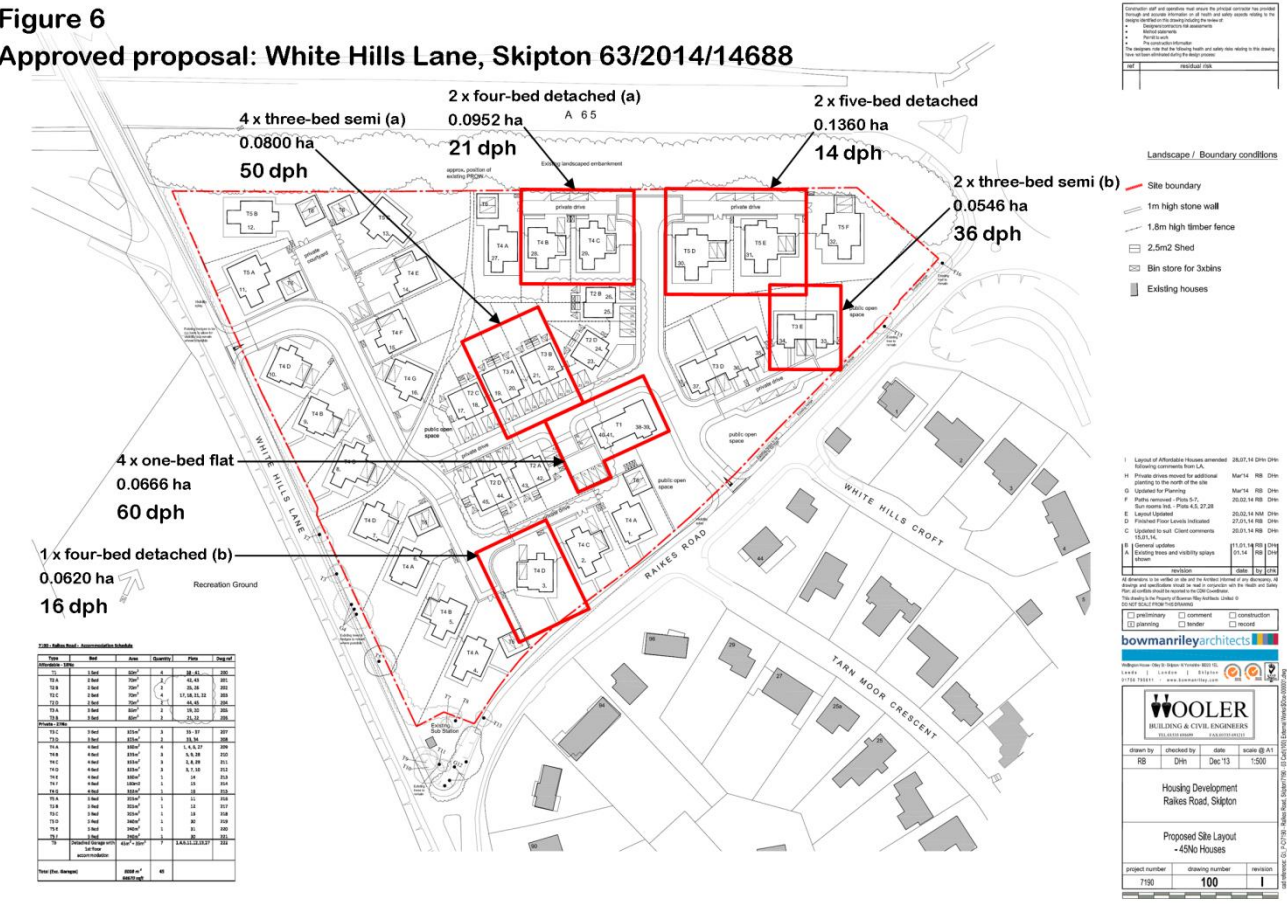
Fig.7: Approved proposal at Corner Field, Skipton

Figure 7
Approved proposal: Corner Field, Skipton, 63/2015/16113

THE CORNER FIELD, SKIPTON - INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN LAYOUT

Fig.8: Approved proposal at North Parade, Skipton

Figure 8
Approved proposal: North Parade, Skipton 63/2012/13167

Fig.9: Approved proposal at Green Lane, Glusburn

Figure 9
Approved proposal: Green Lane, Glusburn 32/2015/15768

Fig.10: Approved proposal at Meadow Lane, Cononley

Figure 10
Approved proposal: Meadow Lane, Cononley 21/2014/14241

Tab.1: Overview of recently approved development proposals

Table 1: Overview of recently approved development proposals including overall density and mix											
	Back Gate, Ingleton 45/2010/10758	Dalesview, Clapham 18/2015/15634	Ingfield Lane, Settle 62/2013/13590	Hellifield Rd, Gargrave 30/2015/15663	Shires Lane, Embsay 26/2016/17299	White Hills La, Skipton 63/2014/14688	Corner Field, Skipton 63/2015/16113	North Parade, Skipton 63/2012/13167	Green Lane, Glusburn 32/2015/15768	Meadow Lane, Cononley 21/2014/14241	SHMA 2016 recommended mix
Site area (ha)	0.77	0.68	1.24	0.88	2.8	2.45	3.22	4.42	2.94	0.643	-
No. of units	28	22	37	29	51	45	83	114	49	15	-
Dwellings per hectare (dph)	36	32	30	33	18	18	26	25	17	23	-
1 bed (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	15.7	8.9	8.5	10.7	4.0	20.0	39.4
(1+2 bed combined)	39.3	27.3	40.0	27.5	37.3	31.1	49.5	64.3	28.5	33.3	
2 bed (%)	39.3	27.3	40.0	24.1	21.6	22.2	41.0	53.6	24.5	13.3	
3 bed (%)	60.7	31.8	33.0	27.6	21.6	20.0	32.5	28.6	16.5	40.0	44.0
4 or more bed (%)	0.0	40.9	27.0	44.8	41.2	48.9	18.0	7.1	55.0	26.7	16.6
Affordable housing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Open space	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-

Tab.2: House-type density in recently approved development proposals

Table 2: House-type density (dph) in recently approved development proposals											
	Back Gate, Ingleton 45/2010/10758	Dalesview, Clapham 18/2015/15634	Ingfield Lane, Settle 62/2013/13590	Hellifield Rd, Gargrave 30/2015/15663	Shires Lane, Embsay 26/2016/17299	White Hills La, Skipton 63/2014/14688	Corner Field, Skipton 63/2015/16113	North Parade, Skipton 63/2012/13167	Green Lane, Glusburn 32/2015/15768	Meadow Lane, Cononley 21/2014/14241	Average house-type density (dph)
1 bed terrace/flat	-	-	-	82	63	60	- (70)	96	80	52	72
2 bed terrace/flat	75	62	70	68	61	-	64	73	80	53	67
2 bed semi	-	-	37	-	59	58	-	44	-	-	49
2 bed bungalow	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
3 bed terrace	65	-	-	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
3 bed semi (a)	61	60	42	55	47	50	42	51	36	53	49
3 bed semi (b)	-	37	-	-	34	36	-	44	-	-	37
3 bed detached	30	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	27
4 bed semi	-	35	-	37	-	-	-	-	29	-	33
4 bed detached (a)	-	28	28	41	22	21	22	33	18	14	25
4 bed detached (b)	-	22	17	-	-	16	18	-	11	-	16
5 bed detached	-	-	-	23	13	14	-	-	-	-	16

Group averages (right-hand column): 54 (1 bed terrace/flat to 2 bed bungalow); 44 (3 bed terrace to 3 bed detached); 22 (4 bed semi to 5 bed detached).

Tab.3: Indicative dwelling density based on approved proposals and recommended mix

Table 3: Indicative dwelling density[2] based on recently approved development proposals & SHMA 2016 recommended mix			
House type	**Average density (dph)**	**Proportion of mix (%)**	**No. per hectare**
1 and 2 bed	54	39.4	21
3 bed	44	16.6	7
4 or more bed	22	44.0	9
All types	-	100.0	**37**

Tab.4: Indicative net housing density

Table 4: Indicative net housing density (including POS in accordance with recommended local standards)[3]	
37 dwellings at 37dph	1.0000ha
POS at 43m^2 per dwelling	0.1591ha
Total area of land required	1.1591ha
Net housing density (dph)	**32**

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[2] The indicative dwelling density, which is highlighted in yellow, indicates the number of dwellings that one hectare of land could yield if developed according to the SHMA 2016 recommended mix.

[3] The indicative net housing density, which is highlighted in green, indicates the number of dwellings that one hectare of land could yield with the inclusion of POS (at 43m^2 per dwelling to cover all POS typologies), in line with recommendations from the council's Assessment of Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sport Facilities (February 2016).

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