

### **Examination of the Craven Local Plan**

Inspector: Matthew Birkinshaw BA(Hons) Msc MRTPI

Programme Officer: Tony Blackburn

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Dear Ms Watson,

#### **Initial Questions for Examination**

I have been appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the Examination of the Craven Local Plan. I have commenced my preparation and have a number of initial questions which are set out below.

#### ***Potential Main Modifications***

As part of the documents submitted for examination is a suggested Main Modification; draft Policy INF7. As required by Section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act, please can the Council confirm if a formal request has been made for the appointed Inspector to recommend modifications to the Plan where necessary in the interests of soundness?

#### ***Alternative (Omission) Sites***

Some representors are seeking a different use of land to the one proposed in the Local Plan. Please can the Council prepare a list of such sites that were put forward in response to the Publication Local Plan? It would be helpful if the list includes details each representor, the allocation proposed in the plan, the allocation/land use being sought and a map showing their location.

#### ***Objectively Assessed Need for Housing ('OAN')***

What are the primary reasons for the variations in the OAN for housing between the 2016 SHMA (4,280 dwellings) and the 2017 SHMA (4,840 dwellings)? Where is this set out in the evidence base?

What is the justification for estimating that 15% of housing growth within the District is likely to take place in the Yorkshire Dales National Park? What cooperation has taken place with the National Park Authority in reaching this figure? How does it correlate with plans for growth in the National Park?

### ***Housing Mix and Density***

Draft Policy SP3 sets out a general guide for the mix of housing and housing density. What are the criteria based on and which evidence based documents support their inclusion in the Local Plan? Does draft Policy SP3 apply to all new residential development, regardless of size or location?

### ***Habitat Regulations Assessment ('HRA')***

The *Habitat Regulations Assessment (Iteration II)* refers to 'buffer zones' of both 2.5km and 7km around the South Pennine Moors SPA and SAC. When considering the need for strategic mitigation arising from allocations and policies in the Plan, which screening distance has the HRA used?

With regard to air quality, the March 2018 HRA confirms that traffic figures have been requested to assess flows on the A6068. It also confirms that additional evidence will be made available to confirm the flow of Heavy Duty Vehicles. What is the status regarding this additional evidence? Has it been completed, and if so, what does it demonstrate?

### ***Strategic Flood Risk Assessment***

It would be helpful to the examination if the Council could provide a list of sites allocated for development which fall within Flood Zones 2 or 3. Has the Local Plan applied a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change? If so, where is this set out?

### ***Highways Infrastructure***

Representations from North Yorkshire County Council ('NYCC') refer to ongoing discussions regarding the "*...detail and deliverability of the identified mitigation measures to address the cumulative impact of development in Skipton. The LHA seeks to continue to work closely with Craven District Council on this matter.*"

Please can the Council confirm if an agreed position has been reached with NYCC regarding any necessary mitigation in Skipton, and if not, what investigations are outstanding? If matters have been agreed it would be helpful if a Statement of Common Ground could be prepared ahead of the hearing sessions.

### ***Next Steps***

In order to progress matters please can the Council provide a written response to the above initial questions by **Monday 4 June**.

At this stage it is not possible to confirm the exact dates for the forthcoming hearing sessions, as this will largely depend on the answers to my questions. However, I understand from the Programme Officer, Tony Blackburn, that potential hearing dates in October have been suggested? I suspect that three weeks of hearings may be required, and believe that Tony Blackburn has discussed weeks commencing the 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October in Skipton.

I will circulate a draft Matters, Issues and Questions paper in due course and a draft Hearing Programme and Guidance Notes once more details are known. Please note that the Council will need to give at least 6 weeks' notice before the start of the first hearing.

I trust that the above questions are all self-explanatory, but should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me through the Programme Officer.

Yours Sincerely,

*Matthew Birkinshaw*

Inspector

18 May 2018