

**Craven Local Plan
Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions for Examination**

Matter 8 – Housing Mix and Density (Policy SP3)

Issue 1 – Housing Mix

Q1. What is the justification for Policy SP3 a) which sets out a specific mix of house types that will be required as part of proposals for new residential development?

Q2. Is it appropriate to apply the same mix of house types across the plan area? For example, how would a decision-maker ensure that proposals for new development made an efficient use of land and promoted or reinforced local distinctiveness, especially in highly accessible urban locations?

Q3. Does Policy SP3 apply to all housing, including proposals for affordable housing?

Q4. Does the Local Plan include sufficient flexibility to allow for changing circumstances in the mix of new housing required?

1. The policy criteria appear to be based on the findings and recommendations of the Council's background paper 'Approaching Housing Density and Mix' (Feb 2017) (Submission Document Ho001), which is based on the recommendations within the SHMA 2017 (Table 7.1). However, Appendix D of the SHMA states that *'the purpose of this analysis has been to consider the likely dwelling type and size requirements of households'* this is not clearly not intended as a definitive proportion, and in fact the conclusion made by Arc is much more general and states that *'there are three key dwelling types particularly required across Craven: 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses'*. It is also clear from the data considered that a small change in assumptions could make a significant difference to the mix required this is particularly the case in relation to link between household type/age of Household Reference Person and dwelling type/size, which the SHMA acknowledges is difficult to ascertain.
2. Whilst the HBF notes that this policy has been amended to increase flexibility and this is generally considered an improvement. There is still potential for significantly more flexibility to be added to the policy. This would help to ensure that development proposals within different parts of the plan area are appropriate to their location, local needs and would allow for changing circumstance. The HBF considers that it is important that any policy is workable and ensures housing delivery will not be compromised or stalled due to overly prescriptive requirements or the need to provide significant amounts of additional evidence.
3. The HBF therefore continues to recommend a more flexible approach is taken regarding housing mix which whilst taking account of the SHMA findings is also cognisant that needs and demand will vary from area to area and site to site and that the need to provide evidence for each and every variation to this very specific mix is likely to delay development and may reduce deliverability of sites.
4. The HBF proposes that the policy is modified as follows:
 - *The mix and density of new housing developments will ensure that land is used in an effective and efficient manner to address local housing needs. ~~This will be achieved in the following ways:~~*

**Craven Local Plan
Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions for Examination**

- a) ~~The local planning authority will use the housing mix set out below as a general guide for achieving an appropriate overall mix of new housing across the plan area and across all tenures;~~
- ~~• Homes with 1-2 bedrooms — 39%~~
 - ~~• Homes with 3 bedrooms — 44%~~
 - ~~• Homes with 4 or more bedrooms — 17%~~
- b) ~~The local planning authority will use 32 dwellings per hectare (net) as a general guide for achieving an appropriate overall housing density across the plan area and across all tenures;~~

The local planning authority will **work with developers to deliver housing that contributes to the identified needs taking** ~~apply the general guides, set out in parts a) and b) above, flexibly to ensure that individual proposals across the plan area are able to take~~ account of local variations in housing need, **local characteristics**, scheme viability or other site-specific circumstances, which may indicate that a different housing mix or density is required in order to achieve local plan objectives.

Issue 2 – Housing Density

Q1. What is the justification for Policy SP3 b) which sets out a standard density of 32dph across the plan area and across all tenures?

Q2. Is it appropriate to set out a density target for the whole plan area given the differences between towns such as Skipton and Settle and more rural areas?

Q3. How does Policy SP3 ensure that development will optimise the use of land, especially in urban locations that are well served by public transport?

Q4. Is it clear to decision-makers, developers and local communities what density of development will be required and where? Is the policy effective?

5. Again, the policy criteria appear to be based on the findings and recommendations of the Council's background paper 'Approaching Housing Density and Mix' (Feb 2017) (Submission Document Ho001). The document highlights that the mix of housing proposed is likely to influence the density of housing, it then goes on to explain that the Council has examined ten recently approved proposals to consider this relationship. Utilising the densities from this small sample and the housing mix set out in SP3(a) the Council has determined an indicative density of 37dph, however, taking into account the Open Space requirement the Council suggests the density would reduce to 32dph.
6. Whilst the HBF notes that this policy has been amended to increase flexibility and this is generally considered an improvement. There is still potential for more flexibility to be added to the policy to ensure that development proposals within different parts of the plan area are appropriate to their location and local needs The HBF considers that it is important that any policy is workable and ensures housing delivery will not be compromised or stalled due to overly prescriptive requirements or the need to provide significant amounts of additional evidence.