

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

Matter 16 – Landscape, Heritage and Design (Policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV3)

Issue 3 – Design – Policy ENV3

Q1. What are sensitive uses for the purposes of Policy ENV3 f)? What is the justification for requiring impact assessments to demonstrate that there would be no detrimental impact on future residential amenity? Is it clear to decision-makers, developers and local communities what is required?

Q2. Does the Local Plan make sufficient provision for inclusive design and accessible environments in accordance with paragraphs 57, 58, 61 and 69 of the Framework?

Q3. Is Policy ENV3 consistent with paragraph 59 of the Framework which states that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area?

Q4. Is it clear to decision-makers, developers and local communities what is required of proposals for new development under Policy ENV3 i)?

Q5. What is the justification for encouraging developers to build new homes to ‘Lifetime Homes’ standards? Is this consistent with national planning policy and guidance?

1. Criterion (i) looks for development proposals to be accessible and inclusive and to everyone. Whilst the HBF is generally supportive of providing for the needs of older people and other specialist groups, it is not clear what this policy is requiring of home builders. PPG (ID 56-07) identifies the type of evidence required to introduce a policy for accessible and adaptable homes, including the likely future need; the size, location, type and quality of dwellings needed; the accessibility and adaptability of the existing stock; how the needs vary across different housing tenures; and the overall viability. It is incumbent on the Council to provide a local assessment evidencing the specific case for Craven which justifies the inclusion of optional higher standards for accessible and adaptable homes. Evidence of an ageing population does not in itself justify the requirements of this policy, without appropriate evidence the HBF would not support the introduction of this policy.
2. Whilst within part (m) developers are encouraged to build new homes to the ‘Lifetime Homes’ standard so that they can be readily adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities and the elderly as well as assisting independent living at home. The Council will probably be aware that the Lifetime Homes standard is no longer applicable following the Government’s Housing Standards review. Lifetime Homes have now been replaced by the optional Building Regulations accessibility standards. These standards can be introduced via a plan but only where there is specific evidence to justify their inclusion, as set out above. The HBF is unaware that the Council can provide the necessary evidence at this stage and as such this criterion is not supported.
3. It is also considered that the Council will also need to consider the potential cost of the requirements set out in parts (i) and (m) as if these principles are taken as

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requirements for development they are likely to impact on the viability and deliverability of development.