



'Plan the Future with Us'

The Sites & Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)

Delivering the Core Strategy



September 2009

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PLANNING DIVISION

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PART ONE

Dear Sir or Madam

The Harrogate District Local Development Framework (LDF)

Thank you very much for your interest in the future development and conservation of Harrogate District. I write because you have commented on the LDF in the past, or have expressed an interest to do so in the future. The Public Examination of the Council's Core Strategy during 2008 took longer than anticipated, but the Council has now adopted it and, as such, is one of the lead planning authorities in the country.

The Core Strategy provides a broad framework for development and conservation in Harrogate District over the next 15 years. Now the task is to complete the LDF and determine exactly where new development should be located and what additional policies are needed to control development and promote conservation during the Core Strategy plan period. Much work and consultation has already been undertaken, but more is necessary. Consultation begins now and will be a continuous process of discussion and debate until the end of 2010.

Rather than continue with the production of a number of different documents to complete the LDF, the Council has decided to consolidate them into a single, comprehensive '**Sites & Policies' Development Plan Document** (DPD). This should simplify consultation and facilitate completion of the LDF ahead of the previous deadline.

The main reasons for contacting you are to:

1. Seek your comments, by 16 October 2009, on the draft content of the 'Sites & Policies' DPD, (See Part Two of this leaflet for details)
2. Inform you how you can contribute to the forthcoming consultations up to the end of 2010. (See Part Three of this leaflet for details)

Much of the proposed content of the DPD should be familiar to you as the Council has already undertaken a lot of public consultation work on aspects such as the drawing up of settlement 'development limits', the review of Special Landscape Area & Green Wedge designations and on the allocation of sites for new homes and new jobs.

Regarding Part Three of this leaflet, I should like to draw your attention to the section which invites expressions of interest in the discussion of options for new sport, open space and recreation to provide for the needs of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon.

Your expressions of interest on this issue should be sent to the email or postal address below by 25 September 2009 (Options for sport, open space and recreation will also be considered for other areas of the District as part of separate preparatory work on the Sites & Policies DPD and Parish Councils will soon be contacted on this matter).

If you have any questions about the contents of this letter, or wish to be taken off our mailing list, please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01423 556586, or email us on ldf@harrogate.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully



D H Sykes, Planning Policy Manager

Please note that our preferred method of communication is via email. If this is not practicable for you please write to us at: Planning Policy Team, Department of Development Services, Knapping Mount, West Grove Road, Harrogate. HG1 2AE.

PART TWO

Background

In June 2008, after the Council completed its last major public consultation (on the site allocations for new homes and jobs, Development Control policies and community sports regeneration), the Government published revised national policy on the Local Development Framework (Planning Policy Statement 12). This made significant changes in emphasis to the plan-making process and a clear message has been given to local planning authorities that they should consider reducing the number of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) they produce.

The Council has taken this advice on board and reduced its previously planned production of four more DPDs down to a single 'Sites & Policies' DPD (in addition to the Core Strategy).

Furthermore, there is also a clear statement from Government that policies within DPDs should be limited to those that don't repeat national and regional planning policies and those that are justified by local circumstances and robust evidence. In setting out the draft content of the Sites & Policies DPD (below), the Council has taken these factors into account as well as considering the responses received on earlier consultations.

More detailed design guidance, conservation area appraisals and operational guidelines for DPD policies will be incorporated in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and these will gradually replace the Council's existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and developer guidelines.

CONSULTATION on the draft content of Sites & Policies DPD (4 September - 16 October 2009)

Chapter 1: Settlement Growth

(To be read in conjunction with Core Strategy DPD Policies SG1 to SG5 on www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Proposal SG 6: Sites for new homes (market and affordable)

Site allocations marked on the proposals map and site specific development and conservation guidelines including likely yield, phasing, infrastructure requirements, constraints and opportunities etc and cross reference to detailed housing trajectory. Cross reference made to Policy HLP 6 and Policy C 8 of this DPD which will also include land allocations for new homes. Proposals justified by the local housing requirement and distribution contained in Policy SG1 of the Core Strategy.

Proposal SG 7: Urban extensions to Harrogate and Knaresborough

If large urban extensions with a mix of land uses are necessary to comply with Policy SG1 of the Core Strategy, and these result in the need for complex phasing arrangements and integration with infrastructure provision, this proposal will set out the master planning principles to guide the development and phasing of land uses.

Policy SG 8: Type and mix of new market homes (including low cost market and park homes)

Policy setting out some general guidelines for housing sites throughout the District justified by local evidence obtained from the Harrogate District Strategic Housing Market Assessment).

Policy SG 9 Development limits

Policy to delineate development limits on the proposals map and cross refer to Policies SG2 and SG3 of Core Strategy which already set out relevant development control criteria and justify the marking of these limits on the proposals map. These limits will define the boundary between planning policy to

strictly control development in the countryside and policy to allow appropriate development within the District's main built up areas.

Policy SG 10: Flood risk areas

Policy to delineate flood risk areas on the proposals map and cross refer to national and regional planning policy. Justified by national planning policy and the need to highlight this important issue when considering planning applications for new development.

Policy SG 11: Unstable land

Criteria-based policy linked to proposals map information. The presence of underlying gypsum and sand and gravel in the District justifies the need for this policy.

Chapter 2: Homes for Local People

(To be read in conjunction with Policies HLP3 & 4 of the Core Strategy (Policies HLP1, 2 and 5 deleted) www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Proposal HLP 6: Sites for new homes (100% affordable – rural exception sites)

Site allocations marked on the proposals map and site specific development and conservation guidelines. Justified by Policy SG1, Policy HLP3 of the Core Strategy and the Harrogate District Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Policy HLP 7: Affordable housing

Policy including site thresholds, type, mix and targets based on the local evidence provided by the Harrogate District Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Economic Viability Appraisal (EVA). The EVA is currently being prepared.

Chapter 3: Jobs & Business

(to be read in conjunction with Policies JB1 to JB4 of the Core Strategy, www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Proposal JB 5: Sites for new jobs

Site allocations for B1, B2, B8 employment land, and retail development with site specific development and conservation guidelines. Justified by Policy JB3 and JB4 of the Core Strategy and accompanying evidence. Cross reference to Proposal SG7 as necessary.

Policy JB 6: Protection and enhancement of existing employment areas

Part One: designations of best and good employment land marked on the proposals map and policy for their protection and enhancement.
Part Two: policy for the protection and enhancement of other employment land. Justified by Policy JB3 of the Core Strategy, the Harrogate District Employment Land Review, a supplementary study on the best and good employment land and local pressures for the loss of employment land to housing.

Policy JB 7: Town and District centres

Generic policy which defines on the proposals map the limits of the existing town and district centres (including existing and extended shopping areas where justified by Policy JB4 of the Core Strategy). Policy will provide the basis for the protection of their vitality and viability through relevant policy clauses and cross reference to primary and secondary shopping streets marked on the proposals map as necessary. Justified by Policy JB4 of the Core Strategy and the acknowledged national and local need to protect and enhance existing centres.

Policy JB 8: Protection and enhancement of business and conference tourism in the town of Harrogate

Site specific designations and related land use changes marked on the proposals map to protect and enhance Harrogate as a leading European conference destination, as necessary. Justified by Policy JB1 & 2 of the Core Strategy.

Policy JB 9: Hotel protection

Generic policy to protect hotels from unnecessary loss to other land uses, justified by the pressures to change to residential use and the importance of conference, business and holiday tourism in the District.

Chapter 4: Travel

(to be read in conjunction with Policies TRA1 to TRA3 of the Core Strategy, www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Proposal TRA 4: Sites and land for new transport infrastructure

Site allocations/land designations/safeguarded routes marked on the proposals map for a Harrogate transport interchange, pedestrian priority schemes, park and ride, road and junction improvements, extensions to bus, cycle and walking routes with site specific development and conservation guidelines as necessary. Justified by Policy TRA3 of the Core Strategy.

Policy TRA 5: Safeguarding of existing transport infrastructure

Protection of existing transport infrastructure through sites and routes marked on the proposals map. Justified by Policy TRA2 of the Core Strategy.

Policy TRA 6: Parking standards and policy

Need for policy and standards for different types and location of development is subject to further discussions with the highway authority, North Yorkshire County Council and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber. A District-wide parking strategy is justified by Policy TRA3 of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 5: Environment & Quality of Life

(to be read in conjunction with Core Strategy Policies EQ1 and EQ2, www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Policy EQ 3: Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change

Policy to accompany and amplify Policy EQ1 of the Core Strategy and RSS policy. Justified by the global and local needs to adapt to, and mitigate against climate change.

Policy EQ 4: Protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure, including Green Wedges, Special Landscape Areas and Amenity Open Space within built up areas

Generic protection policy. If criteria based planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection designations to be marked on the proposals map.

Policy EQ 5: The Green Belt

Policy to delineate the extent of the Green Belt on the proposals map with cross references to national and regional planning policy. In accordance with and justified by Policy EQ2 of the Core Strategy the extent of the Green Belt in the District is to remain unchanged during the plan period.

Policy EQ 6: Conservation of the historic environment

General control policy linked to the marking of all heritage designations on the proposals map and cross reference to Policy EQ2 of the Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Policy EQ 7: Conservation of the natural environment

General control policy linked to the marking of all natural environment designations on the proposals map and cross reference to Policy EQ2 of the Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents.

Policy EQ 8: Townscape and Environmental Improvement Areas

Policy delineating areas on the proposals map where their environmental improvement would have significant benefits to the local community and area and where the Council will work with landowners to secure these benefits.

Chapter 6: Communities

(to be read in conjunction with Policies C1 & C2 of the Core Strategy (Policy C3 deleted) www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176)

Proposal C 4: Sites for new sport, open space and recreation

Site allocations for new sports pitches, open space and recreational facilities marked on the proposals map. Justified by the Harrogate District Playing Pitch Strategy and further work which may identify deficiencies of sports provision and open space.

Policy C 5: Protection of existing sport, open space and recreation facilities

Policy to prevent the inappropriate loss of indoor and outdoor sport, recreation and facilities (existing and last use) and designation of protected open space on the proposals map. Justified by national planning policy, local evidence on provision of sport, open space and recreation, and Policy C1 of the Core Strategy.

Policy C 6: Protection and enhancement of community facilities and local services

Policy to protect the inappropriate loss of community facilities and local services (existing and last use). Justified by pressures to redevelop community facilities for uses of a higher land value, and Policy C1 of the Core Strategy.

Policy C 7: Provision of new infrastructure and community facilities

Policy on the Council's approach to developer contributions for new infrastructure and community facilities with cross references to infrastructure and community facility requirements on sites for new homes and jobs and urban extensions in Policies SG6 and SG7 of this DPD. The preparation of this policy will involve the consideration with stakeholders of the options now being proposed by the government in relation to a Community Infrastructure Levy, and/or other methods of assisting in the provision of infrastructure and community facilities e.g. Section 106 legal agreements. An Infrastructure Plan will provide the evidence to justify this policy.

Policy C 8: Sites for Gypsies' and Travellers' Accommodation

Site allocations marked on the proposals map with development and conservation guidelines. Justified by Policy C2 of the Core Strategy and local evidence on the need for traveller accommodation.

Other policy areas may be needed as new evidence is forthcoming and national and regional planning policy changes: e.g. Evidence is currently being gathered on air quality in the District which may require the formulation of specific development control policies.

Please respond to the Council on ldf@harrogate.gov.uk Responses must be received no later than 16 October 2009.

In your response, please focus on answering the following two questions and use the guidelines in italics to assist:

1. Are there any policies or proposals listed above that are unnecessary, inappropriate, or lacking in substance?

(If your answer is YES, please state

- *the title of the policy/proposal,*
- *your concern about its inclusion,*
- *the reasons for your concern, and*
- *what you suggest should be changed).*

2. Are there other policies/proposals that should be included in the Sites & Policies DPD?

(If your answer is YES, please indicate

- *what subject/issue the proposed policy/proposal would cover, and*
- *why you consider it should be added to the content of the Sites & Policies DPD.)*

Please note that the content of the Sites & Policies DPD must take the lead from the LDF Core Strategy. This can be viewed on www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176.

PART THREE

FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS:

Context - Overall timetable to DPD adoption:

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Informal consultations and community engagement: | Autumn 2009 to Spring 2010 |
| Draft DPD consultation: | Autumn 2010 |
| Assessment of consultation responses and discussions with stakeholders | Spring 2011 |
| Submission Draft sent to the Secretary of State: | Early 2012 |
| Independent Examination of the DPD: | Summer 2012 |
| Adoption of DPD: | Late 2012 |

CONSULTATION: Autumn 2009 - Spring 2010

LDF Working Groups

During this period the Council will continue to work with the two established working groups relating to housing land availability and housing market assessment. These groups will discuss the issues of economic viability of housing sites in the District, land availability for housing and policies on the type and mix of market and affordable housing.

The Council would also now like to establish an additional working group to discuss “**options for new sport, open space and recreation to provide for the needs of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon**”.

We anticipate the discussion of this topic is likely to take the following approach:

- A key means of communication and discussion will be via the internet through a group email address list (please remember to supply your email address if you express an interest in this matter).
- The Council will select about 12 consultees from the expressions of interest to represent a cross section of interests and attend discussion group meetings.

- There will be two or three meetings of the discussion group over the next six months, with the possibility of separate sub group meetings to discuss site options around different settlements.
- Council officers will service and chair the meetings, with papers sent out in advance of the meetings to members of the group and to all those who have expressed an interest in the topic.
- Those not represented on the discussion group itself will have the opportunity to comment on the papers in advance of meetings and these comments will be reported and discussed at each meeting.

If you are interested in being part of *this* discussion please send to us, by 25 September 2009, your name, organisation/interest (as appropriate), email address, telephone number and postal address.

Notes of all LDF Working Group meetings will be published on the Council's website for information and public comment. www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176

Other working groups/partnerships

Over the next six months officers from the LDF team will attend a number of meetings of existing groups/partnerships to promote discussion within those groups on relevant issues and options. For example, the Harrogate District Action for the Environment Group is likely to be interested in discussing how the Local Development Framework (LDF) will address Climate Change and Green Infrastructure; the Ripon City Partnership will be particularly interested in discussing matters relating to the City of Ripon. The District's Chambers of Trade will be interested in discussing retail and town centre issues for their respective main commercial centres.

To ensure a 'joined up' approach to the delivery of local services and the integration of infrastructure with housing growth, the process of preparing the LDF requires active collaboration with a wide range of service providers. The existing Harrogate District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) including organisations such as the police, education, health authority, primary care trust, fire service etc provides the appropriate body to work with to secure the above objectives.

The following are the main issues that are likely to be discussed at these existing groups/partnerships:

- Protection and enhancement of town and District centres.
- Tourism and hotel protection.
- The protection of employment land.
- The transport impact of development scenarios (Harrogate and Knaresborough).
- Car parking and park and ride.
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Green infrastructure.
- Other infrastructure.
- Gypsy and travellers accommodation.

Papers and notes of the LDF issues discussed at these meetings will be published for comment on the Council's website over the next 6 months. www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176

Day workshop(s)

- on the issue of "Development on greenfield land around Harrogate and Knaresborough".

The Harrogate District Core Strategy (Policy SG1) indicates that the loss of greenfield land to development around the two towns must take place sometime during the plan period. A key reason for this is to provide more homes for those local people who can't afford to rent or buy at market prices. Therefore, extensions to the existing built-up areas must be planned for and some countryside around the two towns will inevitably be lost.

The workshop(s) will aim to raise awareness of the competing needs and aspirations for greenfield land around the two towns, and seek some consensus on the best way for the Council to decide which land should:

- be allocated for new homes and jobs,
- be allocated for new sports pitches or other uses, and
- be protected from development during the plan period.

The workshop(s) is/are likely to take place during February or March 2010 and facilitated by external consultants. Invitations to relevant councillors, parish councils, residents groups, amenity societies, and other key stakeholders will be sent out prior to Christmas 2009.

Again papers and notes of these workshops will be published on the Council's website for comment. www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176

Previous LDF consultations

Reports summarising the comments received on relevant earlier LDF consultations which have yet to be published will be published on the Council's website by Christmas 2009. www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176

These are:

- Development Control Policies DPD: Issues and Options Consultation (July/September 2007)
- Site Allocations (Homes and Jobs) DPD: Preferred Options Consultation; Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. (January/February 2008)
- Development Limits: (Part of ongoing consultation on Issues and Options for the Development Control Policies DPD) (January/February 2008)
- Review of Local Landscape Designations: (Part of ongoing consultation on Issues and Options for the Development Control Policies DPD) (January/February 2008)
- Community Sports Regeneration Area Action Plan DPD: Preferred Options Consultation (January/February 2008).

The comments received on these consultations will be taken into account as the Council progresses its work on the Sites & Policies DPD.

Look out for notes and reports of the above meetings, workshops and consultations on www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate-2176

Have your say on the issues raised by writing to us at the email or postal address at the bottom of PART ONE of this leaflet.

Draft DPD CONSULTATION: Autumn 2010

During the summer of 2010, members of the District Development Committee and the Cabinet Member (Planning and Transport) will deliberate on the outcome of earlier consultations and a decision will be made on the content of the Draft Plan for consultation.

A major three month long public consultation will then take place from September to November 2010 and this will involve the circulation of information to households on the LDF, exhibitions, and discussions with key stakeholders across the District. It will bring together all the previous work on individual subjects e.g. sport, new homes, new jobs etc and present a comprehensive set of draft development proposals and policy controls for the District as a whole.