3: Settlement Growth

Introduction

3.1 Some of the key characteristics of the District’s settlements are outlined in this introduction. These and other distinctive characteristics, national and regional planning policy and community involvement, have been particularly important in defining the Core Strategy’s approach to settlement growth. The policies contained in this chapter concentrate on housing distribution and growth. Chapter 5 on Jobs and Business also includes information and policies about the economy and related growth.

3.2 Harrogate is by far the largest town of the District with a population of 73,000 (2005). It experienced a population increase of about 7% between 1991 and 2001. About 350 affordable homes per year up to 2011 would need to be provided to satisfy local needs within the town (Housing Needs Assessment 2006). Harrogate’s shopping centre provides the largest selection of town centre retail outlets and evening entertainment in the District. This and the range of jobs, health services, and schools, make it the most visited town by residents of the District (District Panel 2004). Furthermore, the town’s role as an international conference centre, along with its wide range of visitor attractions and events e.g. the Great Yorkshire Show, make it a very popular place to visit. These roles, combined with high car ownership and limited road capacity, bring with them problems of traffic congestion. Harrogate’s extensive Edwardian/Victorian built form combined with large areas of attractive greenspace and a high quality landscape setting, are key features of the town’s special character.

3.3 The much smaller town of Knaresborough (15,000 pop. in 2005) lies close to Harrogate, but separated from it by statutory Green Belt. Between 1991 and 2001, the town’s population grew by about 6%. The town has one of the highest levels of affordable housing need (per head of population) in the District. The provision of about 125 affordable dwellings per annum (up to 2011) is required to satisfy this need (Housing Needs Assessment: 2006). Knaresborough’s town centre retail floorspace provides a more local shopping and service centre than Harrogate (District Panel: 2004). The town’s history dates back to the 12th century. The town centre’s medieval street pattern, historic built form, and spectacular landscape setting are key features of its special character. This character, its weekly market, cultural events and leisure activities based on the riverside make the town a popular day visitor destination. Parts of the High Street, and pockets of surrounding land, would benefit from regeneration and the traffic flows along this street are a major issue.

3.4 The City of Ripon, some 16 kilometres due north of Harrogate, has a population of 16,300 (2005). Between 1991 and 2001, the City’s population grew by 10%, and a relatively high house building rate since 2001 suggests a continued high rate of population increase. Ripon City centre forms the main service and employment centre for extensive rural areas in the northern part of the District. The City’s Cathedral, its medieval street pattern and historic buildings make up the City centre with its heritage dating back to well before the Norman conquest. However, the built up area is degraded in parts with vacant and semi derelict land in need of regeneration. Significant areas of the City and the surrounding countryside are at risk from flooding. The gypsum rock underlying much of the City means that special consideration of the construction details of new development is often required. The landscape setting of the City is an important part of its character, particularly where this provides views of the cathedral. A weekly market, regular cultural events and tourist attractions, including the Cathedral itself, all contribute to the City’s role as an important centre for tourism.

3.5 The parish of Boroughbridge, which includes the separate villages of Aldborough and Minskip, has a population of 3340 (2005). Between 1991 and 2001, the population grew by about 30%. Although located within the wider rural catchment area of Ripon, Boroughbridge offers an important local service centre function, with a reasonable range of jobs, shops and services, including one secondary school, incorporating a joint use leisure centre. The town is a centre for employment benefiting from proximity to the A1(M). A large employment area lies to the west of the A1(M) in close proximity to, and serving, the town. Boroughbridge is a historic market...
town developed close to the River Ure. Flood alleviation measures reduce the risk of flooding in the town. Along with the surrounding area, it has strong historic links with the Roman era and was the site of the Battle of Boroughbridge in 1322.

3.6 Pateley Bridge with Bewerley has a population of around 2,500 and between 1991 and 2001 only saw a population increase of 1.5%. The town lies at the heart of the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and provides local shops and services for its residents and the northern half of the AONB. It has a secondary school and joint use leisure centre and swimming pool. Recently built flood alleviation measures reduce the risk of flooding in the main built up area.

3.7 Masham’s population stands at 1,250 and between 1991 and 2001 the population increased by 6%. It provides a very localised shopping and service centre to an area which is quite sparsely populated. It is a very important employment centre for the area, with two large breweries, and a number of agricultural related businesses. Its countryside setting, market square, historic buildings, weekly market and annual events attract visitors for day trips and overnight stays.

3.8 Together, the six settlements of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Pateley Bridge, and Masham make up three quarters of the District’s population of 155,300 (2005 estimates). This leaves a sizeable population of about 39,000 living in the many villages and hamlets spread throughout the District. There are about 120 villages and hamlets in the District, ranging from settlements of about 2,000 population with local services and facilities down to small clusters of housing.

3.9 No settlements in the District provide the opportunity for very large amounts of new housing through the use of vacant and underused previously developed land. The subsequent need to consider extensions to settlements where the landscape is often of very high quality and highly valued by local residents makes settlement growth a very sensitive issue in the District.

3.10 The Core Strategy objectives for settlement growth, and the policies in this chapter which help deliver these objectives, are set out in the schedule below. Policies JB1, JB3 and JB4 of Chapter 5, and Policy TRA3 of Chapter 6, also contribute to the delivery of objectives 3 & 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Objective</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 To distribute the District’s housing requirement broadly in proportion to each settlement’s or area’s need for affordable housing.</td>
<td>SG1, SG2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 To seek the use of appropriate previously developed land within the District’s six largest settlements in preference to developing greenfield land.</td>
<td>SG1, SG4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Subject to the provision of appropriate traffic management and new infrastructure, to focus the District’s growth in the town of Harrogate.</td>
<td>SG1 (JB3, TRA3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 To ensure that Ripon, Knaresborough, Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge are the main focus for housing, developing local services and employment in the rest of the District.</td>
<td>SG1 (JB1, JB3, JB4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 To provide small scale housing growth in the District’s smaller settlements, mainly to meet local needs and support local services whilst minimising travel to work by car.</td>
<td>SG1, SG2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 To manage the release of land for housing to prioritise the use of previously developed land and control the pattern and speed of growth in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy and integrated with the provision of infrastructure.</td>
<td>SG5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Note: this objective deleted in accordance with the report on the Examination into the Harrogate District Core Strategy.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 To protect the countryside and Green Belt from inappropriate development.</td>
<td>SG3, SG4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POLICY SG1: SETTLEMENT GROWTH: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION

The Borough Council will make provision for 390 new homes per annum (net annual average) in Harrogate District during the period 2004 to 2023. In doing so it will seek to ensure that (as an interim target) about 160 of this annual provision will be homes for local people at affordable prices and that 70% of these new homes are in new buildings or conversions on previously developed land.

Over this period as a whole, the provision of new homes will be broadly distributed as follows:

- Harrogate (including Pannal) 48%
- Knaresborough (including Scriven) 14%
- Ripon 8%
- Boroughbridge (including Langthorpe) 3.5%
- Masham 2%
- Pateley Bridge (including Bridgehousegate) 3%
- Villages and countryside 21.5%

The majority of new housing built in villages and the countryside will be accommodated in those villages with the best access to jobs, shops and services.

In meeting the requirement, priority will be given to the re-use and re-development of previously-developed land and buildings, principally in the District’s largest settlements of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon. However, the scale of housing land release required by the Regional Spatial Strategy will necessitate the development of greenfield land involving:

- For Harrogate and Knaresborough extensions to the existing built up areas in the broad locations of west Harrogate and east Knaresborough and within smaller scale land releases in sustainable locations elsewhere around the built up areas of the two towns;

- Smaller scale land releases focused around other settlements with the best access to jobs, shops and services that are well related to the form, function and character of the settlement concerned.

Explanation

Introduction

3.11 The building of new housing will be the most obvious feature of settlement growth in the District over the coming years. In accordance with national planning policy, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3), Policy SG1 enables the continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption (2008 to 2023).

3.12 The District’s housing requirement over this period is determined at the regional planning level through the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber (RSS). The RSS is prepared by the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly and approved by the Government. The District’s housing requirement in the adopted RSS is 390 dwellings per annum (net). On this basis, the Council’s annual target for the number of affordable homes to be built for local people will be 160. The building of homes for local people at affordable prices is one of the top priorities of both Community Plans for the area and the Council’s Strategic Plan, ‘Realising the Potential’ (2005 - 2008). Policies H4 and LCR1 of the RSS emphasise the importance of the provision of affordable housing in the District.

This target represents 41% of the total housing provision in line with the provisional estimate for North Yorkshire Districts contained in RSS. The target is justified by the very high level of need and market conditions in the District. More details on this are given in Chapter 4, Homes for Local People. A partial review of the RSS is now underway. Should this lead to significant changes in the housing requirement for this District a review of the development strategy in policy SG1 may be required.

The distribution of housing growth

3.13 Community involvement on the Core Strategy identified general support for an approach to distributing the District’s housing requirement proportionate to the level of affordable housing need in each part of the District. At the time of the preferred options consultation when this support was identified, the Council reflected the results of the 2000/03 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment. This indicated the following distribution:

- Harrogate 48%
- Knaresborough 14%
- Ripon 8%
- Boroughbridge 2.2%
- Masham 0.3%
- Pateley Bridge 1.6%
- Villages/Countryside 26%

See associated documents on: www.harrogate.gov.uk/ldf
3.14 The Council's 2006 Housing Needs Assessment, published in May 2007, now reveals the following distribution of housing need across the District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harrogate</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knaresborough</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripon</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boroughbridge</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masham</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pateley Bridge</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Countryside</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.15 The proportions set out in Policy SG1 have taken account of both sets of housing needs assessment figures, and have addressed the concerns expressed by the Regional Assembly and Government Office at the Preferred Options consultation stage. These concerns were based on whether this approach, and the amount of housing proposed in the District's villages/ countryside, was compatible with national and regional planning policy to achieve more sustainable patterns of development and focus growth in larger settlements with better access to jobs, shops and services.

3.16 The proportions of housing for Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon contained in Policy SG1 reflect exactly those figures that were the subject of two major public consultations during the preparation of the Core Strategy. The proportions for Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge reflect the higher figures from the most recent housing needs assessment. This results in the proportion of housing to be accommodated in the villages/countryside being reduced to 21.5% of the District's total. The Council considers this to be a reasonable balance between that which has been generally supported through local community involvement and the need to take account of the updated housing needs assessment and national and regional planning policy on settlement growth.

3.17 It is important to note that the ability of each area of the District to accommodate exactly the above proportions could be affected by local environmental and other constraints, as well as the release of land unexpectedly coming forward. Hence the policy provides some flexibility to allow for small variations in housing land provision.

The housing trajectory and need for greenfield land

3.18 Appendix 4 sets out the Council's approach to the release of housing over the plan period. This is set out in the form of a housing trajectory which illustrates past performance of the District on housing supply and looks forward to how future supply should be met. In the absence of a local development document which includes firm proposals for, and release of, site allocations for housing, the Council has produced a housing trajectory which sets out in broad terms the anticipated delivery of housing in the 15 years after adoption of the Core Strategy (2023).

3.19 This illustrative housing trajectory has been derived from the information contained in the Council's Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (January 2008). It suggests that up to 2010 the delivery of housing will be about the level of the District's annualised housing requirement of 390 dwellings. If windfalls on small sites and conversions occur at historic rates, this will be more than counterbalanced with a higher rate of development up to 2016. In order to avoid a significant over-supply of housing by 2023 and dependent upon the exact level of windfalls this could be followed by a period of house building below the annualised housing requirement. However, even with windfalls, there will still be a need for some house building on greenfield land.

3.20 Most of the District's new housing will be directed to the two closely related settlements of Harrogate and Knaresborough. Larger amounts of greenfield land will need to be allocated for housing in these towns compared to other settlements in the District. Therefore, the Council has undertaken a study of the environmental and traffic constraints to extending the existing built-up areas of these two towns. The study, entitled 'Harrogate and Knaresborough Urban Extension Study Volume 1 (August 2007) and Volume 2 (June 2008) concludes that land to the West of Harrogate and the East of Knaresborough offers the potential to accommodate new housing sustainably. The broad extent of these Areas of Search is as follows:

- West of Harrogate - from Spruisty Hill in the A61 corridor to the north of the town westwards as far as the Beckwith area to the south of the B6162;
- East of Knaresborough - from the land to the east of the B6165 in the vicinity of Scriven eastwards to the land lying east of Birkham Wood to the south of the town.

This does not preclude smaller-scale sustainable land releases elsewhere around the built-up areas of the two towns.

3.21 Policy SG2 now explains the settlement hierarchy for the District and how the Council has identified those settlements with the best access to jobs, shops and services.
**POLICY SG2: SETTLEMENT GROWTH: HIERARCHY AND LIMITS**

Development or infill limits will be drawn around the settlements listed below to allow the sustainable growth and development of those settlements within the District that have the best access to jobs, shops and services.

**Group A settlements**
The towns of Harrogate and Knaresborough, (including Scriven), and the city of Ripon.

**Group B settlements**
The towns of Boroughbridge, (including Langthorpe), Masham and Pateley Bridge, (including Bridgehousegate) and the villages of Birstwith, Burton Leonard, Darley, Follifoot*, Great Ouseburn, Green Hammerton, Hampsthwaite, Killinghall, Kirkby Malzeard, Marton cum Grafton, Pannal, Ripley, Spofforth, Summerbridge and Tockwith.

**Group C settlements**

Group A settlements will be retained as the District’s main urban areas and be the focus of growth in the District in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy and Policy SG1 of this Core Strategy.

Group B settlements will maintain their roles as local rural centres providing the focus for new housing in the rural areas of the District. Apart from Boroughbridge, small scale 100% affordable housing schemes for local people (rural exception sites) will be allowed outside the development and infill limits of these settlements.

Group C settlements will accommodate only very limited growth mainly in the form of suitable development within their existing built up areas. Apart from very small scale ‘rounding off’ the only expansion of the built up areas of these settlements will be for small scale 100% affordable housing schemes for local people (rural exception sites).

*The settlements underlined lie entirely within the statutory Green Belt and will have ‘infill’ limits drawn around them in accordance with PPG2: Green Belts.*

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**Explanation**

**Introduction**

3.22 The Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber (RSS) identifies the town of Harrogate as a Sub-Regional Town; and Knaresborough and Ripon as Principal Towns. Boroughbridge, Pateley Bridge and Masham are identified as examples of local service centres in RSS and local development frameworks are given the opportunity to identify other local service centres.

3.23 Policy SG2 taken together with Policies SG1, JB3 and JB4 of the Core Strategy reflect the requirements of Policy YH7 of the RSS in respect of location of development. Policy SG2 sets out a settlement hierarchy and approach to growth which is appropriate to the local circumstances of the District and which will form the basis for the preparation of other Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

**Development and infill limits**

3.24 The Council has for many years used development and infill limits around many of the District’s settlements to distinguish existing built up areas and proposed areas for development, from those areas defined as countryside where development should be strictly controlled. This approach has worked well and provides a clear steer to the public and developers about where the

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See associated documents on: www.harrogate.gov.uk/ldf

Adopted Feb 2009
Council, as local planning authority, will protect land from development during the plan period. The pressure for development in the District emphasises the importance of such a policy tool.

3.25 This policy proposes that these limits are again defined around many of the District’s settlements. This will be undertaken in the Development Control Policies DPD. Development and infill limits will be drawn around all settlements identified in Policy SG2. Development within these limits which is compliant with Policy SG4 of the Core Strategy and other relevant DPD policies will normally be permitted so that the loss of greenfield land is minimised. For a small number of villages within the Green Belt ‘infill’ limits will be applied in accordance with PPG2 ‘Green Belts’.

Classification of Group A, B, and C settlements

3.26 Group A settlements are clearly the main urban centres of the District with a reasonably wide range of jobs, shops and services and are appropriate settlements in which to focus growth. This is recognised in the RSS where the District’s largest settlement of Harrogate is defined as a sub-regional town along with towns and cities such as Halifax, York and Bradford. The town of Knaresborough and City of Ripon are identified in RSS as Principal Towns along with other centres such as Thirsk, Wetherby and Northallerton.

3.27 Group B settlements comprise those Local Service Centres identified in the RSS (Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge) and the District’s villages that have the best access to jobs, shops and services by non car modes of transport. These settlements will be the focus of growth in the District’s rural areas.

3.28 Group C settlements are smaller villages with more limited access to jobs, shops and services, but are suitable for limited open market housing within their existing built up areas or as very small schemes which ‘round off’ their existing built up area.

3.29 Those settlements (villages and hamlets) not listed in this policy have very few services and facilities and often no defined built up area. In accordance with national and regional planning policy regarding the promotion of more sustainable patterns of growth, these settlements should not accommodate new market housing apart from the suitable conversion of existing buildings.

3.30 Due to consistently high levels of need for affordable housing throughout the rural areas of the District (Table 5, Appendix 6) and the limited opportunities for new housing in settlements below 3,000 population, it is appropriate to allow small scale 100% affordable housing schemes in many of the District’s smaller settlements. Excluding Boroughbridge due to its population of over 3,000, all Group B and C settlements are suitable for these rural exception sites. Policy HLP3 also allows such exception sites within or adjacent to other small settlements.

3.31 Community involvement during the plan’s preparation showed strong support for this type of approach to settlement classification, particularly in regard to the relatively high number of villages in which to allow limited growth.

3.32 Appendix 5 explains how the settlement hierarchy of this policy has been defined and includes reference to the Regional Settlement Study undertaken by the Regional Assembly in 2004.

Delivering a sustainable pattern of development

3.33 A sustainable pattern of development will be delivered by adopting the following approach to the allocation of land in the Site Allocations (Homes and Jobs) DPD:

- Sites providing a mix of open market and affordable housing will be allocated in Group A & B settlements. To focus housing growth in the District’s most ‘accessible’ settlements this will involve land releases outside the existing built up areas of many of these settlements in accordance with Policy SG1;

- In Group C settlements, only small scale rural exception sites (for 100% affordable housing) will be allocated in the Site Allocations (Homes and Jobs) DPD where appropriate;

- Some small scale rural exception sites will also be allocated on the edge of Group B settlements where appropriate.
POLICY SG3: SETTLEMENT GROWTH:
CONSERVATION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, INCLUDING GREEN BELT

Outside the development and infill limits of the settlements listed in Policy SG2 of this Core Strategy, land will be classified as countryside and there will be strict control over new development in accordance with national and regional planning policy protecting the countryside and Green Belt.

In order to promote a sustainable pattern of rural development in those areas of the countryside outside Green Belt the following forms of development will be encouraged:

1. Affordable homes for local people in accordance with Policies HLP3 and HLP4 of this Core Strategy;
2. Rural building conversions where the building makes a positive contribution to the landscape character of the countryside preferably for economic development uses or affordable homes for local people rather than for market housing;
3. Small scale community facilities and small scale employment adjacent to a development limit where:
   a. they cannot be located within a development limit nor be accommodated in a suitable available rural building; and
   b. they are needed to maintain or enhance the sustainability of that community; and
   c. they are appropriate to the service role of the settlement; and
   d. any adverse impact on the environment and amenity is clearly outweighed by the needs of, and benefits to, that community;
4. Sustainable rural enterprises, including tourism, renewable energy and farm diversification.

Affordable homes referred to in clause 1 of this policy may be allowed within the Green Belt in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts or any subsequent revision of this national policy.

Explanations

Introduction

3.34 The importance of defining development and infill limits in this District has been explained in the text accompanying Policy SG2. The need to protect the countryside from inappropriate development is a key objective of national planning policy: PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas. PPG2: Green Belts sets out national planning policy to maintain the openness of countryside designated as green belt land. The southern and south-eastern parts of the District are designated as statutory Green Belt. This policy seeks to ensure that national and regional planning policy is applied in protecting areas of countryside in a way that reflects the circumstances of this District.

3.35 In defining development and infill limits in the Development Control Policies DPD the Council will illustrate on the Proposals Map the extent of the countryside in the District. National and regional planning policy will be used to protect the District’s countryside and Green Belt marked on the Proposals Map. Local exceptions and/or clarifications of PPS7 and PPG2 are contained in Policy SG3.

3.36 Clauses 1 to 4 of Policy SG3 set out those types of schemes which community involvement on the Core Strategy has indicated should be permitted if rural communities and the rural economy are to remain sustainable.

1: Rural exception sites for 100% affordable housing for local people.

3.37 PPS3 and PPS7 allow the allocation and release of rural exception sites in or adjacent to rural settlements with a population of less than 3,000. PPG2: Green Belts states that the construction of new buildings inside the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is associated with various types of development referred to in paragraph 3.4 of PPG2. Included in this list of types of development is ‘limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies according with PPG3’ (now PPS3).

2: Rural Building Conversions

3.38 The Government’s policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this...
would meet sustainable development objectives. PPS7 states that the re-use of such buildings for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of buildings. Experience in this District suggests that the supply of rural buildings for conversion has been consistently high and far in excess of what is likely to be needed for economic development in the rural area. Often conversions schemes are not in suitable locations for employment development. Many rural building conversions have over the past 10 years been permitted for residential development and through more recent use of the Harrogate District Local Plan (Selective Alteration) Saved Policy H5, these residential conversions have started to assist the Council in meeting the District’s affordable housing need. There has been general support for the re-use of rural buildings during the community involvement on this Core Strategy. The re-use of rural buildings that contribute to the character of the countryside and assist in the provision of affordable housing is considered to meet sustainable development objectives. As in the past, this approach should not prevent rural buildings being approved for conversion to economic development purposes in appropriate circumstances (see Table 1).

### TABLE 1: Permissions for Employment & Residential Conversions within the District’s Countryside

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 – 1999</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 – 2000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 – 2001</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 – 2002</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 – 2003</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 – 2004</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 – 2005</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 – 2006</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 - 2007</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3: Small scale community facilities & employment development, and

### 4: Sustainable rural enterprises

3.39 Subject to satisfying the criteria given in clause 3 of this policy, these types of development should be allowed to maintain sustainable rural communities. Clause 4 reflects those sustainable rural enterprises given support for during community involvement on the Core Strategy.

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**POLICY SG4: SETTLEMENT GROWTH: DESIGN & IMPACT**

All development proposals in the District should comply with the following criteria:

1. The scale, density, layout and design should make the most efficient use of land; and
   - a. be well integrated with, and complementary to, neighbouring buildings and the spatial qualities of the local area;
   - b. be appropriate to the form and character of the settlement and/or landscape character.

2. Visual, residential and general amenity should be protected and where possible enhanced;

3. There should be no loss of greenfield land unless justified by national planning policy, the Regional Spatial Strategy, this Core Strategy or a policy or proposal within the Local Development Framework;

4. The environmental impact and design of development should conform with Policies EQ1 and EQ2 of this Core Strategy.

The travel impact of any scheme should not add significantly to any pre-existing problems of access, road safety or traffic flow and should have been fully addressed in accordance with Policies TRA1, TRA2 and TRA3 of this Core Strategy.
Explanation

Introduction

3.40 Policy SG4 establishes broad criteria against which all development proposals will be assessed. It reflects the importance of design and the need to minimise the environmental impact of development in a District with an exceptionally high quality of environment and level of amenity. The majority of new development will take place within or as extensions to Group A, B and C settlements (Policy SG2) and this policy will therefore mostly be used to assess proposals within the District’s development and infill limits. However, the policy will also apply to development proposals in the countryside.

Efficient use of land

3.41 In accordance with national planning policy, Policy SG4 promotes an efficient use of land for all development. By making the best use of suitable land this will reduce the need to build on greenfield land on the edge of the District’s settlements. In the light of the sensitivity of such land in Harrogate District, the efficient use of land is particularly important.

Layout and design

3.42 Equally important is the need to ensure that development proposals are well integrated with, and complementary to, neighbouring buildings and the spatial qualities of the local area. This does not mean that new proposals should replicate the design, density and character of the surrounding development. Indeed, in terms of new housing development, the Council will be encouraging higher densities than those of typical suburban housing. New development should be appropriate to the form and character of the settlement and/or the landscape. The Council will use the Manual for Streets Design Guide (DCLG/DT 2007) as its highway design guide. Further, design guidance will be given in the Development Control Policies DPD and/or Supplementary Planning Documents.

Visual, residential and general amenity

3.43 Development with a significant adverse effect on visual, residential and general amenity will be resisted. Development should at least maintain existing levels of amenity and will, through siting and land use, and good design, be expected to enhance local amenity where possible. For example, the amenity value of existing footpaths should be maintained and if possible enhanced when affected by new development.

Loss of greenfield land

3.44 Community involvement on the preparation of the Core Strategy identified that the loss of greenfield land is a very sensitive issue throughout the District. Whether it is open space valued for its amenity or recreation use, or farmland adjacent to a settlement’s built up area, it should not be lost unless there are good planning reasons to justify the proposed development. This could include circumstances where national planning policy may allow the loss of open space because it is to be replaced in an equally accessible location and be part of a package which results in significant improvements to the quality and quantity of open space to serve the same local population.

Environmental impact and design

3.45 Policies EQ1 and EQ2 of the Core Strategy provide the Council’s overall approach to the protection and enhancement of the District’s built and natural heritage and set out the Council’s strong emphasis on reducing the likely impacts on, and risks to, the environment. Policy EQ1 reflects national and regional planning policy to tackle locally, the global issues of climate change, the protection of natural resources and waste minimisation. All development should play its part in reducing risks to our fragile environment.

Travel impacts

3.46 Traffic congestion and the pollution of the environment with greenhouse gases are problems throughout the District and particularly within Harrogate and Knaresborough. The traffic impacts of new development should be carefully considered prior to the submission of planning applications and appropriate traffic assessments and plans should form an integral part of the design process. This will be expected at an appropriate level of detail in accordance with Policies TRA1, TRA2 and TRA3 of Chapter 6 of this Core Strategy.

See associated documents on: www.harrogate.gov.uk/ldf
POLICY SG5: SETTLEMENT GROWTH: MANAGED RELEASE OF HOUSING

Housing land will be allocated, released and phased to ensure that the delivery of new dwellings broadly matches the net annual average provision in Policy SG1.

If the housing trajectory in the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report forecasts a 10% or greater under or over-provision of housing completions by 2023, consideration will be given to the need to alter the release of housing land through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document.

Explanation

3.47 National planning policy adopts a ‘plan, monitor and manage’ approach to the provision and release of housing land. Following the publication of PPS3: Housing in November 2006, the key features of this approach for the Local Development Framework are the:

- identification of broad locations and specific sites that will enable the continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption, taking into account the level of housing provision set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- illustration of the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period;
- annual monitoring of how well the actual release of housing land reflects that forecast in the housing trajectory;
- ability to quickly address any significant forecast shortfalls or surpluses of housing land supply by bringing forward or putting back the release of sites through a managed release of housing.

3.48 Policies SG1 and SG5 of this Core Strategy sets out the Council’s overall approach to ‘plan, monitor and manage’ for Harrogate District. Policy SG1 indicates what the broad distribution of housing will be over the 15 year period up to 2023. Specific sites for housing will be identified in the Site Allocations (Homes and Jobs) DPD. The housing trajectory for the Core Strategy is set out in Appendix 4. In the absence of knowing which specific sites are proposed to come forward, this trajectory is by necessity only a broad illustration of the Council’s approach to managing the release of housing during the plan period. A more detailed trajectory will be included in all future development plan documents dealing with site allocations for housing.

3.49 Policy SG5 sets out the circumstances when a review of the timing of release of site allocations should take place so that a flexible and continuous supply of housing can be maintained. In the past, the District has seen a significant oversupply of housing compared to policy requirements. This policy, along with accompanying supplementary planning documents, will allow the Council to consider putting back the release of site allocations in the event of a forecast oversupply above 10%. PPS3 requires local planning authorities to maintain a five year supply of deliverable sites at any given time. Deliverable sites must:

- be available - the site is available now;
- be suitable - the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities;
- be achievable - there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years.

Recent infill development in Harrogate.
The five year supply of deliverable housing sites will be maintained through the publication of the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report and any necessary action to bring forward the release of additional housing on allocated sites or brownfield land identified within the annual update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

3.50 In conclusion, the policies in this Chapter represent an appropriate housing implementation strategy for the District as required by PPS3. Other than the priority given to the release of previously developed land in Policy SG1, the District does not require a detailed strategy for the delivery of previously developed land. It does not contain large amounts of vacant or underused previously developed land which require special consideration in order to secure their development. The last 10 years of housing completions show that previously developed sites have provided significant amounts of dwelling numbers. These have come forward through market demand, without the need for specific intervention from the Council.

**Measuring the success of POLICIES FOR SETTLEMENT GROWTH**

3.51 Chapter 9 of the Core Strategy sets out the Council’s approach to monitoring the success of these policies. It sets out various indicators and targets considered appropriate for this purpose.