

Harrogate District Local Plan 2014 - 2035

December 2020

Harrogate
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Introduction

Introduction

1 Introduction

What is the Local Plan?

- 1.1** The Harrogate District Local Plan 2014-2035 sets out the spatial vision and development strategy for the Harrogate district. Implementing the plan will contribute to realising Harrogate Borough Council's vision and objectives, and will also help external partners develop and deliver their own programmes. The Local Plan includes:
- A growth strategy: this sets out the scale of new development that is planned and a strategy for accommodating this growth;
 - Development management policies: these are detailed policies to be used by the local planning authority when making decisions on applications for planning permission;
 - Site allocations: these are specific sites that are allocated for certain types of development, including for housing development, employment development and mixed use (both housing and employment) development.
- 1.2** It is essential that the Local Plan is read as a whole. While one Local Plan policy may suggest that a proposed development would be acceptable, there may be other policies in the plan that indicate otherwise; all proposals must comply with all relevant policies.
- 1.3** The Local Plan will be supplemented by existing and future documents including:
- Supplementary planning documents: these provide more specific detail on how elements of the strategy and individual policies will be implemented
 - A community infrastructure levy (CIL) charging schedule: this sets out chargeable rates per square metre for development that attracts the levy.
- 1.4** A range of evidence has been commissioned or undertaken by the council to underpin the Local Plan and this can be viewed on the council's website. The preparation of the plan has also been informed by the following:
- Sustainability Appraisal
 - Habitat Regulations Assessment
 - Equality Analysis

Format of the Document

- 1.5** The Local Plan sets out planning policies for the district. Throughout the plan the wording of these policies is provided within policy boxes like the example below:

Used to provide the wording of planning policies

- 1.6** Some policies allocate sites for development or designate sites where specific policies apply. Site allocations and designations are shown within site boxes like the example below:

Used to identify site allocations and designations, and provide basic information associated with them

Chapter Summaries

Introduction

- 1.7** The introduction chapter explains the purpose of a Local Plan and how the plan has been prepared. It identifies the existing documents that the plan will replace and the wider policy context at local, sub-regional and national levels that has influenced the development of the plan.

Vision and Objectives

- 1.8** The vision and objectives chapter presents a vision for what the district will be like at the end of the plan period as a result of implementing the plan. It also sets out a series of objectives to achieve the vision, which has influenced the development of the policies in the plan.

Harrogate District Growth Strategy

- 1.9** The growth strategy sets out the scale of new employment and housing development (including provision for Gypsies and Travellers) that is being planned for. It outlines a strategy for accommodating growth across the district that has been guided by a hierarchy of settlements and the main public transport corridors, and sets out an approach to managing the growth of individual settlements. The chapter includes policies to support the council's economic aspirations, as well as overarching policies for the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the areas of the district designated as Green Belt.

Economy

- 1.10** The economy chapter sets out a range of policies to support business, enterprise and job creation in order to achieve a sustainable and diverse local economy across the district. Policies deal with existing employment areas, expansion and new employment development, the tourism economy, and farm diversification. The chapter also includes policy to ensure the longer-term vitality and viability of the district's town, city and local centres.

Housing

- 1.11** The housing chapter sets out policies to help ensure that new housing meets locally identified needs, including in terms of house size, type and tenure; and has adequate internal space. It includes policies that set out the required proportion of affordable housing on development sites and the provision of land for self and custom build housing. Policies also identify requirements for older people's specialist housing and new Gypsy and Traveller sites, as well as allocating land for five new Gypsy or Traveller pitches. Finally, the chapter includes policies to manage new and replacement dwellings in open countryside and extensions to existing dwellings.

Transport and Infrastructure

- 1.12** The transport and infrastructure chapter sets out policies to help ensure there is adequate infrastructure to support development proposed in the plan. Policy sets out the requirement for developers to provide new infrastructure (such as schools, health and community facilities, and open space) on-site or contribute to improvements off-site. Strategic priorities for investment in transport infrastructure are set out, along with criteria for protecting routes that could accommodate new transport infrastructure. Policies also set out considerations for the level of parking on new developments and support for investment in mobile telephony and broadband, as well as allocating land for school expansion where the schools would otherwise be unable to accommodate growth.

Climate Change

- 1.13** The climate change chapter sets out policy to help mitigate the extent of climate change by reducing carbon dioxide emissions, as well as helping to ensure that development and key infrastructure is more resilient to the effects of climate change. Policies also deal with rivers, flood risk and drainage, as well as renewable and low carbon energy generation.

Heritage and Placemaking

- 1.14** The heritage and placemaking chapter aims to help create successful places that provide quality environments and enable an excellent quality of life. Policies to safeguard the historic environment (including conservation areas and listed buildings), the existing character and sense of place of settlements, residential amenity and public rights of way are included. There are also policies to protect community facilities, as well as open space, recreation and sports facilities, along with policies to manage new provision. Finally, the chapter includes a policy setting out the priorities for improvements to Harrogate town centre.

Natural Environment

- 1.15** The natural environment chapter includes policies to safeguard the natural environment and manage natural resources. Policies to protect air and water quality, landscape character, trees and woodland, and the best and most versatile agricultural land are included. There are also policies to enhance biodiversity and give particular protection to sites designated for their value to nature conservation, as well as to protect green infrastructure and enhance its benefits. The chapter includes a policy setting out criteria to manage the safe development of land that may be suspected of being unstable or contaminated. Finally, policy designates areas that hold particular significance to local communities as Local Green Space.

Delivery and Monitoring

- 1.16** The delivery and monitoring chapter includes policies that allocate land for future housing, employment or mixed use development, as well as setting out the broad location for a new settlement. The chapter also includes a framework for monitoring the delivery of the plan.

What will the Local Plan Replace?

- 1.17** The Harrogate District Local Plan 2014-2035 replaces the Local Plan (2001), Local Plan Selective Alteration (2004) and the Core Strategy (2009). A list of development plan policies replaced by this plan is set out in Appendix 4: Schedule of Replaced Policies.

The Wider Context

- 1.18** The Local Plan has been prepared within the context of other relevant plans and strategies at national, sub-regional and local levels, including:

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.19** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's national planning policies for England. It provides a framework for the preparation of locally distinctive planning policies in the form of a Local Plan. The Harrogate District Local Plan has been prepared and adopted within the policy context provided by the NPPF (2012). It makes clear that local plans should be aspirational but realistic and are the key to delivering sustainable development. Local Plans should be consistent with the principles and policies set out in the NPPF.

- 1.20** Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan (which includes this local plan), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In July 2018 a revised NPPF was published and replaced previous national planning policy. Further revisions were made in February 2019. NPPF (2019) is a material consideration in planning decisions.

North Yorkshire Plan for Economic Growth 2017

- 1.21** The North Yorkshire Plan for Economic Growth outlines the role of North Yorkshire County Council in supporting economic growth over the next five years and beyond. The aim of the plan is to support innovation and growth through a number of key enablers, including the provision of an efficient transport system, enhanced communications technology and a high-quality environment. The county council also recognises its role in helping people to secure high-quality housing and attractive places to live.

Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (2016-2036)

- 1.22** A refreshed strategic economic plan (SEP) was approved in May 2016 and sets out the priorities to deliver the growth agenda across the Leeds City Region. Harrogate district is identified as having a strong and diverse economy; vibrant sectors include financial and professional services (with strengths in financial payments technology) and digital, creative and life sciences. It is also home to a renowned visitor economy offer.
- 1.23** While the district enjoys high employment and strong levels of enterprise, with resident earnings and skills above average, it also faces a significant challenge with average workplace earnings lower than regional and national rates and lower than the rates earned by residents who commute elsewhere. This is compounded by high house prices and a costly private rental market. Harrogate district is one of three areas in the city region with worsening housing affordability. There are also challenges around the availability of suitable business premises, peak hour congestion and transport connectivity.
- 1.24** A key priority of the SEP is to increase housebuilding across the city region, not only to deliver homes but also support economic growth and employment opportunities. Harrogate district is not identified in the SEP as one of the housing growth areas but actions identified in the SEP to accelerate the pace and rate of house building across the region are relevant for the preparation of the Local Plan.

York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Strategic Economic Plan Update 2016

- 1.25** An updated strategic economic plan (SEP) was approved in 2016. The plan sets out the following overarching themes for action in order to maximise the area's economic potential: profitable and ambitious small businesses; a global leader in the bio-economy; inspired people; successful and distinctive places; and a well-connected economy.
- 1.26** Specific actions with particular relevance to Harrogate district include: unlocking the housing growth that the area needs, for example by removing the barriers preventing sites being delivered; ensuring excellent digital connectivity in rural areas; and investment in improved east-west connectivity (both road and rail) across and beyond the Harrogate district, as well as several individual transport infrastructure projects in the district.

Harrogate Borough Council Corporate Plan 2014-2017 and The 2017-2019 Corporate Delivery Plan

- 1.27** The corporate plan sets out the council's ambitions and corporate priorities. It identifies the following ambition for the district: *To build on our heritage and be a progressive and vibrant place to live, work and visit*, which will be realised through four corporate priorities: a strong local economy; supporting our communities; a sustainable environment; and excellent public service. The plan also highlights some key strengths of the district as well key challenges.

Key strengths include a strong local economy with low unemployment and unrivalled natural and built heritage; while key challenges include transport connectivity and a limited supply of affordable housing.

Harrogate Borough Council Housing Strategy 2015-2020

- 1.28** The council's housing strategy sets out the key drivers and issues affecting the district and what the council intends to do to help overcome these challenges, create the right conditions for growth and improve the local housing offer. It recognises that the supply of housing, both affordable and market, has fallen behind household growth. As a result, demand for housing outweighs supply with a significant shortage in the affordable housing available and affordability being a significant issue.
- 1.29** The strategy identifies that creating more balance in the local housing market by increasing the supply of new homes will give local people more choice and the ability to move up or down the housing ladder as their needs or circumstances change. This will also help to promote flexibility by making it easier for local people to pursue employment opportunities and supporting economic growth, which in turn will help to support development and encourage new employers to come to the district.
- 1.30** The strategy sets out a series of aims, including the need to improve access to housing, maximise the supply of decent environmentally sustainable homes that people can afford and create attractive and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Harrogate Borough Council Economic Growth Strategy for the Harrogate District 2017-2035

- 1.31** The economic growth strategy aims to support 'good growth' in the district to achieve a more sustainable and resilient economy that features more higher value jobs, increased gross value added (GVA) and higher average workplace earnings.
- 1.32** To achieve this aim the council will work with partners to deliver prioritised and targeted interventions under the following strategic themes: taking an active role in the development of land and buildings for employment use; supporting investment to retain and develop the skills that businesses require; targeted business support to grow and attract high-value sectors; securing investment to improve the conditions for growth, such as better digital and transport connectivity; and promoting the district as an attractive place to invest. The strategy identifies the following sectors as the focus for interventions: creative and digital; financial and professional services; logistics; and scientific research and development.

Neighbourhood Planning and the Local Plan

- 1.33** Since 2012 local communities have been able to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans for their area, putting in place a vision and policies for the use and development of land. These plans must focus on guiding rather than stopping development and need to be in conformity with both national planning policies and the strategic planning context provided by the Local Plan, including the policies set out in chapter 3. Other local plan policies and the plans of other organisations, together with emerging evidence, will also inform the development of neighbourhood plan policies.
- 1.34** Neighbourhood Plans are prepared in accordance with a formal process and have statutory status. A Neighbourhood Plan that, following independent examination, secures the support of local people through a referendum is 'made' part of the development plan. It will then be used by Harrogate Borough Council to determine planning applications in the relevant area, alongside relevant policies in the Local Plan. The Ripon Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' on 10 April 2019 and now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Harrogate district.

- 1.35** Further information relating to neighbourhood planning, including details about the plans currently being prepared in the Harrogate district, is available on the council's website.

Local Plan Policies

Vision and Objectives

2 Vision and Objectives

- 2.1** The Local Plan contains policies and proposals which will shape the direction of change in Harrogate district up to 2035. The planning decisions that will be made in accordance with the Local Plan will affect the future wellbeing of people living and working in the district as well as others who visit and invest here. The Local Plan vision is drawn from the council's corporate plan and economic strategy.

Vision

Harrogate district will be a progressive, vibrant place to live, work and visit. The district will have a sustainable and resilient economy that features new, higher value jobs. The district's high quality built and natural environment continues to be a defining feature.

- 2.2** Imagine yourself in the year 2035. The following narrative explains what the vision is seeking to achieve through the implementation of this Local Plan and joint working with key stakeholders.
- 2.3** In 2035 Harrogate district continues to be an area with a fully justified reputation for its high-quality environments, and it remains one of the most sought after and desirable locations in Yorkshire, a place where people want to live, work, do business, shop, and spend their leisure time.
- 2.4** Harrogate district has consolidated its position as a key driver of the North Yorkshire economy, whilst the south-east of the district has exploited opportunities arising from its position between the West Yorkshire conurbation and York, in part through improvements to the Leeds-Harrogate-York rail line, to ensure that the district has also remained an important part of the Leeds City Region economy.
- 2.5** The district has enjoyed continued economic growth and, as a result of supporting a wider range of business sectors, now has a more diverse and resilient economy that offers a wider range of jobs, including more jobs requiring higher-level skills. Tourism remains important to local economies across the district and the numbers of visitors to all parts has grown. In particular, increased international recognition, in part due to successfully building on the legacy of the Tour de France Grand Depart in 2014, has led to more overseas visitors enjoying what the district has to offer.
- 2.6** The variety of house types and sizes available in the district has been brought more in line with local needs through increased and sustained delivery of much needed new homes in sustainable locations across the district. The building of housing has achieved the timely re-use of vacant previously developed land (sometimes called brownfield land), while the increased supply of market housing has enabled a significant proportion of the new homes to be available as affordable homes for local people. The creation of a new settlement in the Green Hammerton/Cattal area has begun, providing new homes, jobs and infrastructure, including primary schools and improved public transport facilities.
- 2.7** A better balance between homes and jobs has been achieved and this has meant that less people regularly commute long distances to locations outside of the district. At the same time, more people who work within the district are able to choose to also make the area their home. New housing and employment development has enabled significant investment in the district's transport system, providing benefits to the whole population. In addition to improvements on the Leeds-Harrogate-York rail line, the quality, frequency and reach of bus services has been protected, and there are now greater opportunities to make journeys

safely on foot or by bike. While these improvements have reduced the need to travel by car, investment has also been made in the road network that has achieved reduced levels of congestion and improved air quality.

- 2.8** The quality of the district's natural environment and its diverse landscapes have been preserved and improved, and remain a defining feature of Harrogate district. In particular, the special qualities of the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty have been successfully protected and enhanced. Better management of Green Infrastructure assets (including the Nidd, Ure and Wharfe river valleys) has improved biodiversity and protected geodiversity across the district, especially within internationally protected areas (including the North Pennine Moors), and helped to secure other vital ecosystems services such as carbon storage and sustainable flood risk management. Locally important Green Infrastructure has been recognised and opportunities to improve its quality, extent, connectivity and biodiversity as well as improving multifunctionality and access arrangements have been realised.
- 2.9** Within the district, natural resources are now used more efficiently and less waste is being produced. At the same time the district's carbon footprint has been reduced substantially, showing that Harrogate district is making significant strides to help the UK to meet the legal requirement to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050.
- 2.10** New developments across the district have been well designed. They respect the local character of places and have added to local distinctiveness, successfully integrating into their surroundings. Development has helped to deliver improved local infrastructure benefiting the whole community. At the same time, on-going conservation and enhancement of heritage assets (both designated and non-designated), including historic buildings, has helped to protect local distinctiveness and has led to an increasing understanding of the past.
- 2.11** The district's three largest settlements, (Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon), have retained their different identities, and each has built on its individual strengths and taken full advantage of local opportunities for development. As a result, all three places have benefited from environmental improvements, including enhancements to heritage assets, as well as the provision of a wider range of attractions and activities that have secured their vital roles to local people and seen increasing numbers of visitors.
- 2.12** Harrogate remains the district's primary centre providing the widest range of employment opportunities, services and facilities, as well as the most varied retail and leisure offer. In part this has been achieved because the town has maintained its position as one of the UK's leading conference and exhibition destinations despite stiff competition. Knaresborough has seen considerable town centre improvements. Recent development better reflects the town's character and has made a positive contribution to its appearance while, at the same time, there is less congestion and people are able to enjoy better air quality. Ripon has strengthened its role as the main service and employment centre for an extensive rural hinterland and been successful in regenerating key parts of the city, including the city centre. At the same time, former military land has been transformed into a new 'urban village'.
- 2.13** New development in the district's smaller market towns, (Pateley Bridge, Masham and Boroughbridge), and a wider number of villages has helped to retain essential services in rural areas. Better mobile telephone coverage and improved access to broadband providing Next Generation Access speeds has supported local residents and businesses, including agricultural businesses, whilst enabling greater diversification of the rural economy. Better promotion of these areas, including the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and an increased variety of visitor attractions that both maximise upon and complement their rural locations, have seen greater numbers of leisure visitors choosing to spend time in these parts of the district.

Objectives

Sustainable Development Patterns

Objective 1: Contribute to sustainable patterns of development.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Focusing housing and employment development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable; these are locations that take full advantage of existing opportunities to walk, cycle, or use public transport, or have the potential to increase these opportunities, in order to access jobs, shops, services and facilities.
- b. Protecting and enhancing the roles of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon as places providing a wider range of homes, jobs, shops, services and facilities; and Pateley Bridge, Masham and Boroughbridge as centres providing a good range of homes, jobs, shops, services and facilities.
- c. Facilitating the delivery of a successful and distinctive new settlement that offers a high quality of life and enables the development of a mixed community: with local services and facilities, local employment opportunities, extensive green infrastructure, opportunities for leisure and recreation, and good access to public transport.
- d. Supporting the retention and enhancement of services and facilities in villages and hamlets to protect their existing roles and enable rural communities to thrive.

Relevant policies:

GS2; GS3; GS5.

EC1; EC3; EC4; EC5; EC6; EC7; HS1; HS2; HS4; HS5; HS10; TI1; TI2; TI4; TI5; TI6; HP1; HP2; HP4; HP6; HP7; HP8; HP9; NE3; NE5; NE6; DM1; DM2; DM3; DM4.

Economy

Objective 2: Support business, enterprise, and job creation in order to build a strong and sustainable economy throughout the district that provides a range of employment and training opportunities, including a higher proportion of high-value jobs.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Delivery of sufficient land and premises for employment uses to improve choice and help to enable a thriving economy.
- b. Supporting local investment and inward investment aimed at achieving business growth, particularly in key economic sectors, whilst also supporting business start-ups and the growth of existing small and micro businesses.
- c. Supporting a growing tourism sector that attracts greater numbers of domestic and overseas visitors, and provides a vibrant offer for both business and leisure visitors. This includes maintaining the position of Harrogate as one of the UK's leading conference and exhibition destinations.

Relevant policies:

GS1; GS2; GS3; GS5.

EC1; EC2; EC3; EC4; EC5; EC6; EC7; HS9; TI1; TI2; TI4; TI5; HP1; NE8; DM2; DM3; DM4

Housing

Objective 3: Increase the supply of new housing to address housing needs for all.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Delivery of additional market and affordable housing in sizes, types and tenures, and at a scale that meets locally identified needs.

Relevant policies:

GS1; GS2; GS3.

HS1; HS2; HS3; HS4; HS5; HS6; HS7; HS8; HS9; HS10; DM1; DM3; DM4.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Objective 4: Facilitate the delivery of the infrastructure necessary to support a strong local economy, reduce the impacts of transport on the environment and communities, and enable reliable journeys between key centres regionally, nationally and internationally.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to accommodate and support new housing and employment development.
- b. Enabling greater opportunities to travel on foot and by bike; and supporting improvements to the quality, frequency and accessibility of public transport.
- c. Supporting the expansion of, and improvements to, electronic infrastructure, including broadband providing Next Generation Access speeds, and mobile telephony, across the district.

Relevant policies:

GS2.

EC2; EC3; EC4; HS1; HS4; TI1; TI2; TI3; TI4; TI5; TI6; HP1; HP5; NE1.

Natural Resources and Climate Change

Objective 5: Manage the use of natural resources and respond positively to address climate change.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Encouraging the efficient use of natural resources including through: the re-use of buildings and vacant previously developed land, greater use of sustainable construction techniques, minimising the amount of waste requiring treatment and disposal, avoiding the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral deposits.
- b. Reducing the extent of climate change by encouraging development that minimises greenhouse gas emissions, including through energy efficiency measures and renewable energy generation.
- c. Reducing the impacts of climate change by securing development that is resilient to the consequences of climate change and supports and contributes to the wider resilience of communities and key infrastructure, for example through sustainable flood risk management.

Relevant policies:

EC1; EC3; EC7; HS1; HS6; TI1; TI3; CC1; CC3; CC4; NE2; NE3; NE5; NE7; NE8; NE9.

Heritage and Placemaking

Objective 6: Conserve the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations and create successful places that provide quality environments and enable communities and individuals to enjoy an excellent quality of life.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Promoting the conservation, enhancement and understanding of the historic environment
- b. Encouraging high-quality design that responds positively to local character and contributes positively to local distinctiveness and health and wellbeing, including community safety.
- c. Maximising the contribution of the historic environment to local distinctiveness as well as to achieving wider social and economic objectives.
- d. Facilitating delivery of appropriate sport and recreation facilities, play areas and accessible open space.
- e. Supporting bodies seeking to use neighbourhood planning tools that enable communities as a whole to take greater control of shaping development in their neighbourhoods.

Relevant policies:

GS4.

EC2; EC3; EC4; EC5; EC7; HS1; HS5; HS6; HS7; HS8; HS10; TI4; TI5; CC3; HP1; HP2; HP3; HP4; HP5; HP6; HP7; HP8; HP9; NE1; NE4; NE5; NE6; NE7.

Natural Environment

Objective 7: Safeguard the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Key mechanisms:

- a. Protecting and enhancing landscape character, in particular the nationally designated Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- b. Protecting the widest range of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, lakes and rivers that act as the district's green and blue infrastructure; and enhancing their quality, biodiversity, extent, connectivity and, where appropriate, access arrangements in order to maximise their wider environmental, social, and economic benefits.
- c. Protecting internationally, nationally, and locally designated nature conservation sites and take opportunities to enhance quality, biodiversity and geodiversity.

Relevant policies:

GS3; GS4; GS6

EC2; EC3; EC4; HS6; HS7; HS9; HS10; TI5; CC1; CC2; CC3; HP3; HP6; HP7; NE1; NE2; NE3; NE4; NE5; NE6; NE7; NE8 ; NE9

Harrogate District Growth Strategy

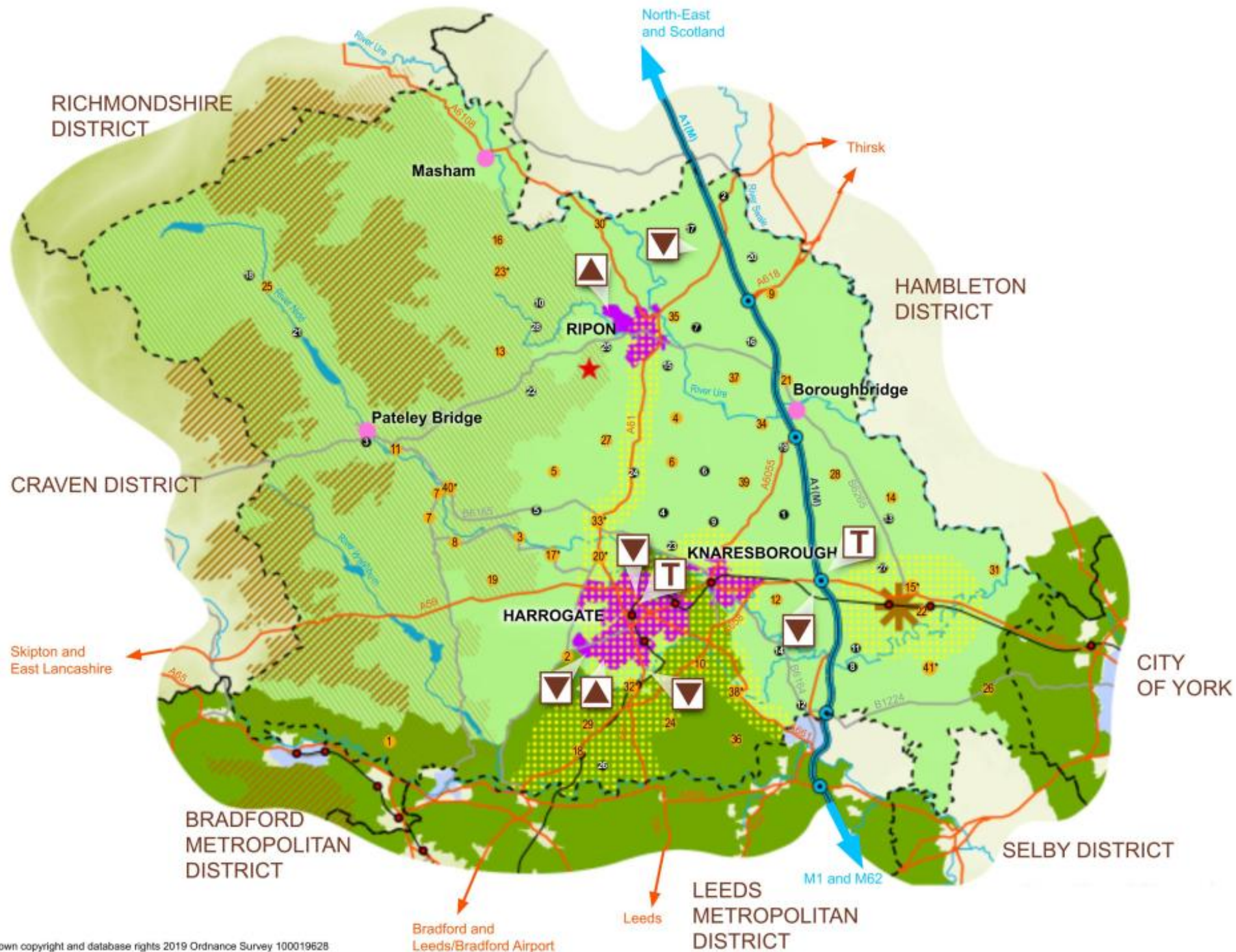
3 Harrogate District Growth Strategy

Harrogate District Growth Strategy: Key Facts

- Household projections show household growth across the district of 11% between 2004-35, which is a lower level of growth than the region (15%) and England (20%).
- The three main urban areas of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon support the largest concentrations of the district's population. Since the previous Local Plan was adopted in 2001 these settlements, together with the market towns of Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge, have accommodated the majority of new growth.
- The district has a large rural area containing villages and hamlets ranging from larger villages with local services and facilities down to small clusters of houses. There is a need to ensure that rural settlements can continue to support local village services.
- The district has high levels of employment and the highest rate of business start-ups of any district within the Leeds City Region. The district's residents are some of the most qualified in the north of England.
- The local economy has a number of prominent high-value sectors (including wholesale, professional services and media) alongside a thriving visitor economy.
- Despite high resident skill levels and average earnings, workplace wages in the district are considerably lower than the regional and national average, with a disproportionate skew in local employment towards low value sectors.
- In the west of the district lies the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which covers some 233 sq miles; more generally the district has high quality natural, built and historic environments.
- Around 11% of the district is designated as Green Belt.
- A higher proportion of residents describe their general health as very good or good compared to national and regional averages.⁽¹⁾
- The district's population includes a greater proportion of people aged over 45 years than the region and England, and a much greater proportion of people aged over 85 years. Life expectancy is higher than the national average.

Key Diagram

- 3.1** The key diagram (figure 3.1) illustrates the main elements of the growth strategy. It includes a broad location for growth within which a site for a new settlement will be identified; the locations for major housing and employment growth; areas for major transport improvements; settlements within the settlement hierarchy as well as key features such as the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Green Belt and the Studley Royal Park (including the ruins of Fountains Abbey) World Heritage Site. It does not show sites allocated for development. These can be found under the following policies: HS10: Providing for the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers; TI6: Provision of Education Facilities; DM1: Housing Allocations; DM2: Employment Allocations; DM3: Mixed Use Allocations, and on the Policies Maps (chapter 11).



LEGEND

Settlement Hierarchy

- Main Settlements**
 - Harrogate
 - Knarborough
 - Ripon
- Local Service Centres**
 - Boroughbridge
 - Pateley Bridge
 - Masham

Service Villages

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Askwith | 11 Glasshouses | 21 Kirby Hill | 31 Nun Monkton |
| 2 Beckwithshaw | 12 Goldsborough | 22 Kirk Hammerton | 32 Pannal* |
| 3 Birstwith | 13 Grantley | 23 Kirkby Malzeard* | 33 Ripley* |
| 4 Bishop Monkton | 14 Great Ouseburn | 24 Kirkby Overblow | 34 Roecliffe |
| 5 Bishop Thornton | 15 Green Hammerton* | 25 Lofthouse | 35 Sharow |
| 6 Burton Leonard | 16 Grewelthorpe | 26 Long Marston | 36 Sicklinghall |
| 7 Dacre and Dacre Banks | 17 Hampsthwaite* | 27 Markington | 37 Skelton on Ure |
| 8 Darley | 18 Huby | 28 Marton cum Grafton | 38 Spoforth* |
| 9 Dishforth | 19 Kettleing Bottom | 29 North Rigton | 39 Slaveley |
| 10 Follifoot | 20 Killinghall* | 30 North Stainley | 40 Summerbridge* |
| | | | 41 Tockwith* |

Service villages marked with * offer a demonstrably wider range of retail, service and leisure businesses (e.g. specialist food shops, other retail, post offices, hair dressers, cafes, pubs, restaurants and hot food takeaways etc.) than other villages in the district.

Smaller Villages

- | | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1 Arkendale | 7 Copt Hewick | 13 Little Ouseburn | 19 Minskop | 25 Studley Roger |
| 2 Balderby | 8 Cowthorpe | 14 Little Ribston | 20 Rainton | 26 Weeton |
| 3 Beverley | 9 Farnham | 15 Littlethorpe | 21 Rams Gill | 27 Whixley |
| 4 Breaton | 10 Galphay | 16 Marton le Moor | 22 Sawley | 28 Winkley |
| 5 Burnt Yates | 11 Hunsingore | 17 Melmerby | 23 Scotton | |
| 6 Copgrove | 12 Kirk Deighton | 18 Middlesmoor | 24 South Stainley | |

Other Local Plan Proposals

Broad Location for Growth
 Around 3000 homes; a range of job opportunities, shops, facilities and services; space for recreation; good public transport links.

Locations for Major Employment Growth
 Station Parade, Harrogate
 Western Harrogate
 Melmerby
 Pannal
 Flaxby Green Park (south of A59)

Locations for Major Housing Growth
 Western Harrogate
 Claro Barracks and Deverell Barracks, Ripon

Major Transport Improvements
 Transport Interchange, Harrogate
 Junction 47 A1(M)

Other Notations

- Studley Royal Park World Heritage Site (Fountains Abbey)
- Green Belt
- Major International Wildlife Sites
- Motorway
- Key Public Transport Corridors
- Non Green Belt Rural Areas
- Main Rivers
- A Roads
- Urban Areas Outside Harrogate District
- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Railway Line and Railway Station
- Major B Roads
- District Boundary

Picture 3.2 Key Diagram Legend

GS1: Providing New Homes and Jobs

Policy GS1: Providing New Homes and Jobs

Provision will be made in the district over the period 2014 - 2035 for:

- A. A minimum of 13,377 new homes, including affordable housing;
- B. Six Gypsy and Traveller pitches; and
- C. A minimum of 40 ha of new employment land.

Justification

- 3.2** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that the objectively assessed need for housing in a housing market area is met in full in Local Plans. The council commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in 2015, which considered housing market geographies, taking account of existing research and analysis of differences in housing costs as well as migration and commuting flows. The analysis identified a complex set of relationships at play across the district and concluded that the district is split across two different housing market areas.
- 3.3** The north of the district, including Ripon, falls within a wider North Yorkshire housing market area, and relates strongly to the Hambleton district. The south of the district, which includes Harrogate town and Knaresborough is more closely related to, and falls within a Leeds housing market area. However, the SHMA analysis concluded that the assessment of housing needs for Harrogate district alone was appropriate given that the district sits across more than one housing market area. Any cross boundary issues will be picked up under the well-established duty to co-operate arrangements that exist between local authorities. It is, however, important to recognise overlaps between other authorities and markets. Although weaker than the core relationships, there are identifiable and important functional interactions in parts of the district with other adjoining authorities, particularly Richmondshire and the City of York. These reflect localised cross-boundary interactions in the northern and south-eastern parts of the district.
- 3.4** The council updated the SHMA through the commission of a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) in 2017. The HEDNA deals specifically with development needs and does not seek to redefine the housing market area due to the relatively recent SHMA.
- 3.5** The HEDNA concludes that the objectively assessed housing need in the district is 637 dwellings per year, which over the plan period equates to 13,377 new homes. In coming to this conclusion the HEDNA considers a range of factors which influence housing need, and in so doing captures the impact of past under delivery of housing through adjustments made to the starting point of the demographic projections. Chapter 10: Delivery and Monitoring sets out how the annual requirement will be delivered over the plan period, including providing a level of flexibility.
- 3.6** The HEDNA also considers the level of affordable housing need in the district and finds that there is a need for 208 affordable homes per annum. National planning guidance, set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), sets out how affordable housing should be considered as part of the plan making process and requires that:

'The total affordable housing need should be considered in the context of its likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, given the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the local plan should be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.'

- 3.7** The analysis set out in the HEDNA does not suggest that there is strong evidence of a need to consider additional housing over and above that suggested by the demographic and economic based calculations to help meet affordable housing need. Consequently an uplift has not been applied to the objectively assessed need for housing. There is, however, strong justification for the inclusion of policies in the Local Plan that seek to maximise affordable housing. Policy HS2: Affordable Housing requires the provision of affordable housing to respond to the identified level of need.
- 3.8** In addition to housing need, the HEDNA provides information on the types and sizes of homes, both market and affordable, that will be needed. Overall it concludes that there will be a need for a mix of house sizes; with an emphasis on the provision of two and three bedroom houses but recognising that larger family housing will also be required. Policy HS1: Housing Mix and Density responds to the need to provide a good mix of new homes over the plan period.
- 3.9** The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (2017) has identified a need for six additional pitches up to 2032 to meet the needs of households who meet the planning definition of a Gypsy and Traveller. Policy HS10: Providing for the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers sets out how this need will be met.
- 3.10** In respect of economic development needs, the HEDNA concluded that the district's economy is expected to grow by 1.9% (gross value added (GVA) growth per annum) between 2014 and 2035. The total number of jobs growth forecast is 11,400, which equates to an annual growth rate of 0.5%. As this baseline forecast is largely trend based and does not reflect local investment or planning growth, the HEDNA adjusted the forecasts to reflect this resulting in additional employment growth of 800 jobs (12,200 jobs in total).
- 3.11** The future GVA growth is particularly driven by growth in the professional, scientific and technical activities and wholesale sectors whilst the agricultural and manufacturing sectors are both expected to see job losses. Based on these job forecasts, the HEDNA concluded that there is a future need for 54.8 hectares of employment land up to 2035, which covers the need for all B-class accommodation as well as sui-generis development on B-class land.⁽²⁾
- 3.12** The HEDNA identifies in the order of 15 hectares of vacant land on existing employment sites, which results in a need to provide for a minimum of 40 hectares of new employment land. However, there is a need to allocate more than this figure to provide for a choice of sites and ensure flexibility of supply.

2 Class B1a/b (offices and research), B1c (light industrial), B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage and distribution).

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Growth Strategy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (GL Hearn, 2017)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (Opinion Research Services, 2017)

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Allocations made under the following policies:
 - HS10: Providing for the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers
 - DM1: Housing Allocations
 - DM2: Employment Allocations
 - DM3: Mixed Use Allocations

GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035

Policy GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035

The need for new homes and jobs will be met as far as possible by focusing growth within:

1. The district's main settlements
2. Settlements on the key public transport corridors and
3. A new settlement within the Green Hammerton/Cattal area

The scale of development will reflect:

- A. The settlement's role (as defined in the settlement hierarchy);
- B. The settlement's character and setting;
- C. The settlement's relationship to the key public transport corridors;
- D. The need to deliver new homes and jobs;
- E. The need to maintain or enhance services and facilities in villages; and
- F. The capacity of infrastructure within the settlement and the time frame for any necessary investment and improvement.

Settlement Hierarchy

Main Settlements: Major allocations of land will be provided to deliver new homes, employment land and other uses where necessary in Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon or on land specifically identified for employment purposes outside of the main settlement.

Local Service Centres: In Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge land will be allocated to deliver new homes to support their service role.

Service Villages: Land will be allocated for new homes to support the continued provision of a basic range of services and facilities; with new village shops and businesses supported to maintain their continued sustainability. Service villages are: Askwith, Beckwithshaw, Birstwith, Bishop Monkton, Bishop Thornton, Burton Leonard, Dacre/Dacre Banks, Darley, Dishforth, Follifoot, Glasshouses, Goldsborough, Grantley, Great Ouseburn, Green Hammerton*, Grewelthorpe, Hampsthwaite*, Huby, Kirk Hammerton, Kirkby Overblow, Kettlesing Bottom, Killinghall*, Kirby Hill, Kirkby Malzeard*, Lofthouse, Long Marston, Markington, Marton cum Grafton, North Rigton, North Stainley, Nun Monkton, Pannal*, Ripley*, Roecliffe, Sharow, Sicklinghall, Skelton on Ure, Spofforth*, Staveley, Summerbridge*, Tockwith*.

Smaller Villages: Small scale infill development on non-allocated (windfall) sites in accordance with policy GS3 will be supported. Smaller villages are: Arkendale, Baldersby, Bewerley, Burnt Yates, Brearton, Copgrove, Copt Hewick, Cowthorpe, Farnham, Galphay, Hunsingore, Kirk Deighton, Little Ouseburn, Little Ribston, Littlethorpe, Marton le Moor, Melmerby, Middlesmoor, Minskip, Rainton, Ramsgill, Sawley, Scotton, South Stainley, Studley Roger, Weeton, Whixley, Winksley.

Development limits for places in the settlement hierarchy are identified under the provisions of policy GS3. Places not identified in the settlement hierarchy are considered to be part of the wider countryside where development will only be appropriate if permitted by other policies of this plan, a neighbourhood plan or national policy.

A broad location for growth is identified in the Green Hammerton/Cattal area, as shown on the key diagram. Within this area a site for a new settlement will be allocated through the adoption of a separate Development Plan Document (DPD). The DPD will be brought forward in accordance with the development principles outlined in policy DM4.

Justification

- 3.13** The key public transport corridors are highlighted on the key diagram and comprise the rail line connecting Harrogate to both Leeds and York, together with the following key bus corridors:
- Ripon to Harrogate and on to Leeds
 - Harrogate to Knaresborough
 - Harrogate to Bradford via Leeds Bradford airport
 - Harrogate to Wetherby
- 3.14** Those settlements within, or located in close proximity to, the key public transport corridors have the best access to public transport and therefore also a wide range of jobs, services and facilities within the district and further afield.
- 3.15** Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon are the district's main urban areas and over the plan period will accommodate most of the district's growth. These are the settlements in the district that offer the greatest range of jobs, shops and services. They are well connected to each other and to areas outside the district by public transport. In Harrogate and Knaresborough this will be accommodated primarily through the release of land on the edge of the settlement to deliver urban extensions (to the west of Harrogate and east of Knaresborough).
- 3.16** In Ripon the majority of new development will come forward as a result of the re-development of the former Claro and Deverall Barracks, and the adjoining Laver Banks for new homes, jobs and community uses. The Ripon Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' on 10 April 2019 and now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Harrogate District. The plan does not allocate sites for housing but includes a number of policies to protect and enhance the environment, including the identification of areas for regeneration, the allocation of Local Green Spaces, protection of the City's skyline, and policies which support the local economy. The plan also includes a number of 'Community Actions' which set out how the local community would like to see development take place. The Harrogate District Local Plan allocates sites for new homes in Ripon including the allocation of the Ripon Barracks sites for a mix of uses.
- 3.17** The district's smaller market towns of Borouhbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge will maintain their roles as local service centres, providing a good range of local employment, shops and services for their rural hinterland. Allocations of land will be made in order to ensure that they continue to thrive.
- 3.18** In addition to the Ripon Barracks sites, the Ministry of Defence have also announced the disposal of that part of Dishforth Airfield no longer required for operational purposes. As the site is not expected to become available until 2031 at the earliest, the consideration of the development potential of the Airfield will be undertaken as part of any future plan review.
- 3.19** Land in the Green Hammerton/Cattal area has been identified as a broad location for strategic growth at which it is proposed new housing, employment and supporting services will be delivered during the plan period and beyond through the development of a new settlement. It is anticipated that around 1,000 dwellings and five hectares of employment land will be delivered by 2034/35. Only a broad location has been identified at present: the council will prepare a separate Development Plan Document (DPD) to guide the detailed planning of the area, including defining the development area. Further information is set out in policy DM4.
- 3.20** There are many villages and hamlets spread across the district; allowing development in all of these would not result in a sustainable pattern of growth as many offer little in the way of local services and facilities, can be in more isolated locations and/or may comprise of little more than a cluster of houses. Service villages offer a range of basic services and community

facilities, and represent sustainable locations for development. Where possible, allocations of land will be made for new development in these villages in order to maintain or enhance the provision of services and facilities. As a minimum, service villages contain at least one key public service (such as a primary school or GP surgery), recreational facilities and at least one meeting place (i.e. a village hall, a place of worship or both). Further to the minimum requirements, most service villages also contain a shop (a general store catering for day-to-day needs) or a pub or a café, and some contain more than one of these businesses.

- 3.21** The nine service villages marked with * in this policy offer a demonstrably wider range of retail, service and leisure businesses (such as more specialist food shops, other retail, post offices, hairdressers, cafés, pubs, restaurants and hot food takeaways etc.) than other villages in the district. With the exception of Ripley and Summerbridge, these villages also contain both a primary school and a GP surgery.
- 3.22** The lowest tier of the settlement hierarchy comprises a number of defined smaller villages that contain only basic community facilities. These settlements offer recreational facilities and at least one meeting place (i.e. a village hall, a place of worship or both). Here new development will be restricted to small scale infill development on non-allocated (windfall) sites. In this context infill development is defined as the development of a gap between existing buildings or a gap between an existing building and the development limit. Any settlements or groups of buildings below this tier are considered to be part of the wider countryside where new development will be restricted to that which is permitted by other policies of this plan, a neighbourhood plan or national policy.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy DM4: Green Hammerton/Cattal Broad Location for Growth
- Policy GS3: Development Limits

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Growth Strategy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper (2018)

GS3: Development Limits

Policy GS3: Development Limits

Development limits, as shown on the policies map have been drawn around those settlements listed in policy GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035. Within development limits, proposals for new development will be supported provided they are in accordance with other relevant policies of the Local Plan.

Outside development limits proposals for new development will only be supported where expressly permitted by other policies of this plan or a neighbourhood plan or national planning policy.

In the absence of a five-year supply of housing land proposals for new housing development on sites outside the development limit of a settlement will be considered in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in national planning policy. Such proposals should be consistent with the role of the settlement in the settlement hierarchy set out in policy GS2, not result in a disproportionate level of development compared to the existing settlement and meets the following criteria:

- A. The site is well related to the existing built form of the settlement;
- B. Development would not result in coalescence with a neighbouring settlement;
- C. There would be no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or heritage assets;
- D. The proposal is of a scale and nature that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and will not significantly harm its character, appearance, and setting.

Justification

- 3.23** Development limits have been drawn around the settlements set out in policy GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035. Development limits are used to define the areas where specific plan policies will apply. They indicate the extent to which each settlement should be allowed to develop during the plan period and where, within the defined area, there will be a presumption in support of development. Any land and buildings outside the defined limit will generally be considered countryside where there is a stricter control over development.
- 3.24** The inclusion of land within a development limit does not indicate that it is suitable for development. There may be areas of open space, woodland, areas at risk of flooding, areas that contribute to a settlement's local distinctiveness and other protected sites that would be inappropriate for development. Additionally, other material considerations may influence whether development within development limits is acceptable or not.
- 3.25** The following principles have been used to define settlement development limits:
- That they are drawn around the 'main' built area of the settlement;
 - On the 'inside' of the development limit land will generally be developed i.e. taken up by buildings, roads;
 - On the 'outside' of the development limit land will generally be used for agriculture, outdoor sport or woodland or other open uses (e.g. allotments, cemeteries) and will include farm buildings extending beyond the main built area of the settlement;
 - Wherever possible the development limit should follow physical features such as roads, walls and field boundaries; and
 - Settlement boundaries do not need to be contiguous. It may be appropriate given the nature and form of a settlement to define two or more separate elements.

- 3.26** In defining the development limits consideration has been given to including land which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities that are physically, functionally and visually related to the existing built up area; and to the opportunity for improvements to the entrance to a settlement.
- 3.27** The development limits defined in the Harrogate District Local Plan (2001) have been reviewed and remain largely unchanged with the exception of:
- Sites proposed for allocation through this Local Plan where they are outside of the 2001 development limit;
 - Where there is a need to reflect development proposals completed or with outstanding planning permission since development limits were last reviewed; and
 - Where previous limits do not address the principles set out above.
- 3.28** Development limits have been defined for the first time around: Arkendale; Baldersby; Beckwithshaw; Bewerley; Brearton; Burnt Yates; Copgrove; Copt Hewick; Cowthorpe; Dacre; Farnham; Galphay; Grantley; Hunsingore; Kettlesing Bottom; Kirk Deighton; Little Ribston; Littlethorpe; Little Ouseburn; Lofthouse; Marton le Moor; Middlesmoor; Nun Monkton; Rainton; Ramsgill; Ripley; Roecliffe; Sawley; South Stainley; Studley Roger; Weeton; and Winksley.
- 3.29** The policy also provides a framework for considering proposals on sites outside of development limits, which may come forward under the presumption in favour of sustainable development in circumstances where the authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, in accordance with national planning policy. In all such cases, the criteria seek to ensure that development is sympathetic to the role and built form of the settlement and will not unacceptably harm the character of the countryside or heritage assets.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035
- Policy GS4: Green Belt
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Settlement development limits.

GS4: Green Belt

Policy GS4: Green Belt

The extent of the Green Belt within the Harrogate district is shown on the policies map. Proposals for development in the Green Belt will be determined in accordance with relevant national policy

Justification

- 3.30** The Harrogate district incorporates parts of two different Green Belts, namely the West Yorkshire Green Belt and the York Green Belt. The purposes of these designations are to check the further growth of the West Yorkshire conurbation, to protect the special character of the towns of Harrogate and Knaresborough and prevent them from merging and to protect the special character of the City of York. The NPPF makes clear that once established the Green Belt boundary can only be altered in exceptional circumstances following a full review. The extent of the Green Belt in the district has been established in earlier development plans and it has not been found necessary to amend the extent of the Green Belt in order to deliver sustainable growth within the district. However, sites K40, K41 and K42 have been allocated (under Policy HS10) for accommodating Gypsy and Traveller needs and removed from the Green Belt. This is in line with national guidance (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, 2015). The extent of the Green Belt is set out on the policies map.
- 3.31** All proposals for development within the Green Belt will need to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which makes clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The council will give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt and 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 3.32** NPPF states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate. Exceptions to this are set out in the NPPF and include limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield sites), whether redundant or in continuing use, (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.
- 3.33** Taking into consideration the importance of protecting and enhancing the natural environment the need to provide sites for new sport, open space and recreation facilities and the need to make the most of opportunities for improving green infrastructure, the council encourages the beneficial use of the Green Belt. Proposals will need to demonstrate that they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it as defined in national policy.
- 3.34** National guidance (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015): paragraphs 16-17) identifies that traveller sites within the Green Belt are inappropriate development. It suggests that where sites are located within the Green Belt the council could consider limited alterations to the Green Belt boundary to meet specific needs (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) but with clear provisions that these are only for meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. Therefore, in relation to the site allocations identified under policy HS10: Providing for the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers these have been removed from the Green Belt and allocated solely for accommodating Gypsy and Traveller needs. These alterations are shown on the policies map.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy HS10: Providing for the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers
- Policy HP7: New Sports, Open Space and Recreation Development
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character
- Policy NE5: Green and Blue Infrastructure

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Growth Strategy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Local Plan: Gypsy and Traveller Background Paper (2018)

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Green Belt

GS5: Supporting the District's Economy

Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy

The council will encourage sustainable economic growth in the district by supporting development proposals that contribute towards the achievement of the following:

- A. Supporting the growth of key sectors including:
 - Creative and digital;
 - Scientific research and development;
 - Financial and professional services; and
 - Logistics.
- B. Providing a range of quality business sites and premises.
- C. Providing a strategic employment site at Flaxby, adjacent to the A1(M).
- D. Delivering Station Parade, Harrogate as a significant mixed-use, employment and commercial development location strengthening the town centre's role as an attractive location for business and contributing to its vitality and diversity.
- E. Encouraging the retention of B1 office space.
- F. Maintaining and enhancing the district's visitor economy.
- G. Supporting the rural and agricultural economy and its diversification.

Justification

- 3.35** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places particular importance on building a strong competitive economy and states that local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st Century.
- 3.36** The objectives of the Local Plan seek to support business, enterprise and job creation in order to achieve a sustainable and diverse economy that provides a range of employment and a higher proportion of high value jobs. This also reflects one of the council's corporate priorities which is to support a strong and diverse local economy.
- 3.37** Harrogate district is a great place to do business, illustrated by its diverse business demography, including world leaders in bioscience, professional/financial service providers and logistics, creative and digital businesses. This is evidenced by the district's above average business start-up rate. Comparatively, its residents are well qualified. The quality of its built and natural environment attracts circa five million visitors a year and boasts excellent motorway and broadband connectivity (with 94% of premises capable of accessing Next Generation Access speeds). All of these factors contribute to high levels of enterprise and employment.
- 3.38** There are other factors, however, that are constraining economic growth, including significantly below average workplace earnings, driven by high levels of employment within lower value sectors and in part-time jobs such as health/social care and hospitality. This is exacerbated by the relatively high cost of housing within the district.

- 3.39** Supporting a strong local economy is a key corporate priority for the council and is reflected in the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2035. Working with private and public sector partners, the strategy identifies priorities for intervention to ensure a sustainable economy, by building upon the district's strengths and developing a business environment in which high-value growth sectors can grow and invest.

Key Sectors

- 3.40** In terms of employment sectors, the council's Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) states that future gross value added (GVA) growth is particularly driven by growth in the professional, scientific and technical activities, wholesale and business support services sectors. The agricultural and manufacturing sectors are both expected to see job losses going forward.
- 3.41** The Economic Growth Strategy places importance on the provision of 'higher value' growth sectors. These sectors are sympathetic to the strong local labour market conditions within the district and reflect: forecast growth and the existing strengths of the district's offer to these sectors with an attractive environment, quality of local services and education facilities, and central location in the UK. With an aim of delivering the largest increases in economic productivity, the target growth sectors are:
- Creative and digital;
 - Scientific research and development;
 - Financial and professional services; and
 - Logistics.
- 3.42** The council's discretionary business rate relief scheme has also been revised to prioritise support for further investment and growth within these sectors, as well as incentivising new high quality office space.
- 3.43** Harrogate district benefits from its location within two local enterprise partnership (LEP) areas: Leeds City Region and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Enterprise Partnership; both of whom acknowledge the importance of the Harrogate economy within their sub-region. The Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (2016) describes Harrogate as having notable strengths in financial and professional services, digital, creative and life science sectors; whilst the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding SEP (2016) highlights Station Parade, Harrogate and Flaxby Green Park as important future development projects. Harrogate Borough Council is committed to working collaboratively with both LEPs to maximise economic opportunities.

Range of Sites and Premises

- 3.44** The success of the Harrogate district as a business location is, in part, due to its attractive built and natural environments and its highly skilled workforce.
- 3.45** It is important for the sustainable growth of the local economy that a range of different sites and premises is provided to accommodate the full spectrum of user requirements. This will be achieved by allocating, promoting and protecting a range of employment sites and premises suitable for start-ups to existing small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with the ambition to grow, and larger businesses looking to establish and invest in the district. Businesses need space to start up, move to and grow and providing a range of business sites and premises is important. There is present demand for co-working office space, small units in rural areas, high-tech business parks, industrial units, (particularly in the 1,000 to 10,000 sq ft range), serviced sites, grade A office accommodation in Harrogate town centre, warehouse units of all sizes, retail premises and workshop space. Enquiries show demand for premises is equally split across these sectors with quality of accommodation, environment and proximity to road and public transport services being important factors.

- 3.46** The importance of a portfolio of the right business premises in the right location has been highlighted by a variety of local companies that are seeking to grow and remain within the Harrogate district but could be prevented from doing so by a lack of available and suitable employment sites and/or premises, particularly office space. This has been evidenced through the council's on-going engagement with local companies, property agents and reports in the regional business press.
- 3.47** Providing a range of sites and premises is central to the district's ability to retain and attract businesses, sustain the important diversity of the local economy and to enable its strong entrepreneurial spirit to flourish.
- 3.48** Given the shortfall in available employment land to meet the projected B1 and B8 need over the period to 2035, there is also sound justification for the continued protection of existing employment areas where their condition and location meet known and future business demand and attract inward investors in the future.

Strategic Employment Site at Flaxby

- 3.49** Flaxby has been identified as the most appropriate location for a strategic employment site as it has excellent access to the strategic transport network and will benefit from planned improvements to Junction 47 of the A1(M). The site benefits from a planning approval for a high quality, landscaped 'green business park', focusing on high quality business uses which will meet a significant proportion of the identified needs in the Harrogate district.

Station Parade in Harrogate

- 3.50** Harrogate's railway station and adjoining facilities on Station Parade, including the town centre's bus station, have long been identified by the council as an area for improvement. A development brief was developed for the site in 2005 but the subsequent downturn in the economy has seen this proposal stall. The current buildings and infrastructure detract from the overall quality of the town centre environment and provide a poor gateway for commuters, and business and leisure visitors. However, a number of recent factors strongly indicate an appetite for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site being a more viable prospect which could be delivered in the plan period. These include the proposed electrification of the Leeds-Harrogate-York railway line and renewed developer interest in parts of the site. The Harrogate Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (2016) sets out a number of key principles for the future development of this area. Working with private and public sector partners, the council is involved in the preparation of a masterplan for the mixed use development of the area, including high quality office accommodation that reflects its landmark location.
- 3.51** Station Parade is also a popular location for office accommodation with its proximity to transport and town centre facilities, including The Exchange and Copthall Bridge House. Property agents and local companies have repeatedly highlighted the attraction of Harrogate town centre as an office location, due to the quality of the environment, accessibility to public transport links, and to facilities such as shops and restaurants and other professional services. The attraction of the town as a place to 'do business', for business owners, their clients and prospective customers, has been highlighted by a range of local companies. As evidenced in the HEDNA and the council's own records, around 40,000 square meters⁽³⁾ of office space is identified to be lost to residential use through the permitted development right changes. The council has acknowledged the potential threat to good quality office floorspace within Harrogate town centre and have confirmed an Article 4 direction affecting properties used as offices on Victoria Avenue in Harrogate, which removes the right of owners of properties

falling within B1(a) use class to convert these properties to residential use. The council will continue to use its Article 4 powers, where appropriate, which may include the area around The Exchange.

- 3.52** The re-development of Station Parade offers the opportunity to provide the modern office facilities that many of these businesses are seeking to relocate to, and strengthen the town's business offer.

Visitor Economy

- 3.53** Supporting a growing tourism sector that attracts greater numbers of business and leisure visitors, and provides a vibrant offer for all visitors is an important objective. This includes seeking to maintain the position of Harrogate as an important conference and exhibition destination with a range of venues and a thriving conference, exhibition and events programme. The Leeds City Region SEP (May 2016) also recognises the district is home to a renowned visitor economy offer but highlights the challenges presented by the associated lower than average workplace earnings.

- 3.54** Tourism is important to the rural areas of the district. This reflects the area's attractive countryside, including the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), historic market towns and villages and range of tourist attractions, including Studley Royal Park (including the ruins of Fountains Abbey) World Heritage Site. Tourism investment and visitor spending makes a significant contribution to the local economy, creating employment opportunities and assisting in attracting investment. Opportunities that sustain and enhance tourism will be supported in principle.

Supporting the Rural Economy

- 3.55** The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity, and encourages planning policies to take a positive approach to sustainable new development. This includes supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, as well as promoting the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses.

- 3.56** The west of the district is largely rural in character, comprised of a high quality and varied landscape that is greatly valued by both residents and visitors. Agriculture and forestry activities have influenced the character and appearance of the countryside and continue to do so. Reliance in these rural areas on limited employment sectors, however, has resulted in a narrow range of job types characterised by low pay and seasonality. The over-dependency upon traditional rural industries, which have suffered in the past due to declining incomes and foot and mouth etc., has also had an effect on the rural economy. While future automation within agriculture and food/drink manufacturing threatens the current high levels of employment. It is increasingly important, therefore, to diversify the rural economy in order to ensure that large parts of the district continue to thrive. Diversification can bring with it development pressures, which if not carefully managed can harm the intrinsic character of the countryside.

- 3.57** Refurbishment of rural buildings also provides valuable opportunities to diversify and strengthen the local economy, and provide accessible employment opportunities for residents. Many rural based businesses start from the back bedroom, garage or vacant farm building. The provision of workspace and office accommodation in converted rural buildings enables these small businesses to expand, diversify and take on staff, whilst remaining local.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy EC1: Protection and Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas
- Policy EC2: Expansion of Existing Businesses in Open Countryside and Outside Established Employment Areas
- Policy EC3: New Employment Development in the Countryside
- Policy EC4: Farm Diversification
- Policy EC5: Town and Local Centre Management
- Policy EC6: Protection of Tourist Facilities
- Policy EC7: Sustainable Rural Tourism
- Policy HP1: Harrogate Town Centre Improvements

Further guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Growth Strategy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (G L Hearn, 2017).
- Harrogate Borough Council: Economic Growth Strategy for the Harrogate District 2017-2035 (2017).
- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (2016).
- Leeds City Region: Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2016-2036 (2016).
- York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership: Better Jobs, New Homes, More Investment: Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Update (2016).
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995: Article 4.

GS6: Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy GS6: Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The natural beauty and special qualities of the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be conserved and enhanced.

Proposals will only be supported where they:

- A. Do not detract from the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB and its setting;
- B. Contribute to the delivery of the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan objectives;
- C. Support the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area or support the understanding and enjoyment of the area.

Applications for major development in the AONB will be refused unless justified by exceptional circumstances. The council will determine such applications in accordance with the approach set out in national planning policy.

The council will require development that is outside the AONB, but that affects land within it, to conserve the natural beauty and special qualities of the Nidderdale AONB and ensure that development does not:

- D. Harm views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints; or
- E. Harm views of the AONB from public viewpoints outside the AONB; or
- F. Introduce an abrupt and/or harmful change of landscape character; or
- G. Result in the loss of biodiversity, particularly of species of importance in the AONB.

Within the areas designated as Dark Skies, development proposals should ensure that lighting is directed and designed so as to reduce obtrusiveness and protect sensitive habitats.

Justification

3.58 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) were originally identified via the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 with the primary purpose to conserve the natural beauty of the landscape. The Nidderdale AONB was designated in 1994 and covers an area of 60117 hectares in the west of the district. It borders the Yorkshire Dales National Park and comprises large parts of upper and middle Nidderdale itself, part of lower Wharfedale, the Washburn valley and part of lower Wensleydale. It includes the town of Pateley Bridge and many villages. A smaller area of the AONB, to the north, is within the Hambleton and Richmondshire districts.

3.59 The AONB's landscape is diverse with the scenery in the west dominated by heather moors: the international importance of these areas to biodiversity is recognised by their identification as Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation. In the east the landscape broadens and flattens and is a more pastoral landscape containing historic parks and gardens and the Studley Royal Park (including the ruins of Fountains Abbey) World Heritage Site.

3.60 The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 (2014), prepared by the Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Committee, is a high level strategy that provides a framework for co-ordinating action to protect the AONB's special qualities in response to existing and future challenges. The management plan contains policies and objectives based on landscape, the natural environment, heritage and the historic environment, understanding and enjoyment

and living and working. The plan is intended to be an aid to more effective and efficient action on the ground and progress against actions is reviewed annually by the joint advisory committee. The policies and objectives of the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan are reflected in this Local Plan.

- 3.61** Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that AONBs should be afforded the highest level of protection in relation to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. Designation does not preclude development but all proposals for development within or adjacent to the AONB will be expected to conserve and enhance its special qualities. In assessing this, the proportion and form of development, how it reflects local vernacular and the distinctive historic and settlement character through design, style, scale, massing and materials used will be considered.
- 3.62** Applications for major development in the AONB will be refused unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated and the development is proven in the public interest. The council will have regard to the principles outlined in paragraph 116 of the NPPF in considering major developments.
- 3.63** There is no national definition of major development and the council do not consider it appropriate to define major development in terms of numbers as this is context specific and dependant on the particular development proposed. Major development will be defined on a case-by-case basis taking account of relevant factors such as the size, scale and setting of the proposed development, the cumulative effect of development in a particular location, the potential for adverse impacts and the extent to which these could be moderated or mitigated.
- 3.64** The surroundings of the AONB are also important to its landscape character and quality. The council recognises that development outside of the AONB, but within its setting, can also have an impact on the AONB. This includes, for example, views out of the AONB into the surrounding countryside. Whilst it is not possible to define the extent of this area, the setting of the AONB is considered to be the area within which proposals for development by virtue of their nature, size, scale, materials or design could be considered to have an impact on the Nidderdale AONB.
- 3.65** Although the district is not within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, it is within the setting of this national park and, where appropriate, development proposals in the AONB should take account of the national park and its management plan.
- 3.66** The AONB includes the local service centre of Pateley Bridge and the service villages of Askwith, Dacre/Dacre Banks, Darley, Glasshouses, Grantley, Grewelthorpe, Kettlesing Bottom, Kirkby Malzeard, Lofthouse and Summerbridge. A number of smaller settlements are identified in the growth strategy settlement hierarchy as smaller villages.
- 3.67** In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account must also be taken of the economic and social needs of local communities within the AONB. These communities have development needs which should be met including: the need for housing (including affordable homes), employment, community facilities, and a population sufficient to enable rural facilities and services to remain viable. The Local Plan seeks to address the needs of local communities, whilst preserving the special qualities, features and character of the AONB, in accordance with the NPPF, through the allocation of modest levels of housing growth in Pateley Bridge, Kirkby Malzeard, Summerbridge, Dacre/Dacre Banks and Darley. The identification of site allocations in the AONB has taken account of the impact of development on settlement character and the special qualities of the wider landscape.

- 3.68** The Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Committee is seeking to join the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's bid for Dark Sky Reserve status. This is public or private land possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage and/or public enjoyment.⁽⁴⁾
- 3.69** In general terms all planning applications must take account of the impact of the development on the environment and this policy seeks to protect the natural beauty and special qualities of the Nidderdale AONB. This includes responding to paragraph 125 of the NPPF, which identifies the need to minimise the impact of light pollution and states 'by encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'. Development proposals in the AONB should ensure that lighting is carefully directed and sensitively designed so as to reduce obtrusiveness.
- 3.70** Proposals for development in the AONB should have regard to the Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Design Guide, as set out in policy NE4: Landscape Character, and if the impact of development on the landscape is considered to be significant, a full landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) will be required. The requirements of policy NE5: Green Infrastructure will also need to be taken into account, including statements of environmental opportunity that identify potential landscape enhancements within the national character areas.
- 3.71** All features that contribute to the beauty and special nature of the AONB, which include man-made features, buildings, walls, parks and gardens, planted woodland etc., and consequently new design (including landscape design), should be of quality and appropriate to its context.

4 The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is evaluating the designation of a Dark Sky reserve and the area that it will include.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS2: Growth Strategy to 2035
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character
- Policy NE5: Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Policy NE7: Trees and Woodland
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Growth Strategy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment (2004)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Landscape Design Guide
- Harrogate Borough Council: Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (2014)
- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019 (2014)
- Natural England: National Character Area Profiles (2014)
- Yorkshire Dales National Park: International Dark Sky Reserve Bid

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Landscape assessment

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Allocations made under Policy DM1: Housing Allocations

Economy

4 Economy

Economy Key Facts

- The Harrogate district has an economy worth £3.7 billion (Gross Value Added) (2017).
- The district boasts a healthy, entrepreneurial economic environment with a high rate of business start-ups and above average number of enterprises and business units per head of population (estimated 13,500 businesses, 2015).
- There are high levels of employment with 95,000 jobs in total and (historically) the highest business start-up rates within the Leeds City Region, with the district's residents some of the most qualified in the north of England.
- House building in North Yorkshire was responsible for 10,664 jobs ,of which 903 were in Harrogate district (HBF Regional Report (Yorkshire and Humberside) Economic Footprint of UK House Building, 2015).
- The local economy is diverse with a variety of business sectors, including: life sciences, financial and professional services, warehousing and manufacturing, and the headquarters for companies that trade internationally, such as: Covance, TSYS, Harrogate Spring Water and Econ Engineering.
- Harrogate district is a vibrant visitor destination that attracts around five million business and leisure visitors per annum, and is home to the Harrogate Convention Centre (HCC).
- The district's rural areas account for a quarter of the district's economy and add to its economic diversity. This includes providing supply chains for retail and catering industries.
- Median workplace wages in the district are considerably lower than the regional and national averages. This reflects the high proportion of part-time jobs and a disproportionate skew in local employment towards low-value sectors, including catering and accommodation.
- A diminishing supply of commercial office accommodation is being experienced as the use of offices is changed to residential use through permitted development.
- There has been an overall reduction in hotel bed spaces across the district since 2011.

EC1: Protection and Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas

Policy EC1: Protection and Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas

The following key employment sites, as identified on the policies map, should continue to be occupied by employment uses:

- a. Cardale Park, Harrogate
- b. Hornbeam Park, Harrogate
- c. Claro Park, Harrogate
- d. Plumpton Park, Harrogate
- e. St James Park, Knaresborough
- f. Manse Lane, Knaresborough
- g. Manse Farm, Knaresborough*
- h. Boroughbridge Road, Ripon
- i. Harrogate Road, Ripon
- j. Dallamires Lane, Ripon
- k. Bar Lane, Boroughbridge
- l. Fearby Road, Masham
- m. Melmerby Industrial Estate/Barker Business Park, Melmerby
- n. Marston Business Park, Tockwith
- o. New York Mills, Summerbridge
- p. Dunlopillo, Pannal**
- q. Flaxby Green Park*

Employment Allocations, once developed

- H16: Playing fields, Harrogate College, Harrogate
- H28: Land at Wetherby Road, Harrogate
- MB3: Land south of Barker Business Park, Melmerby
- MB6: Land at Melmerby Industrial Estate
- MB8: Land West of Barker Business Park, Melmerby
- PN18: South of Almsford Bridge, Pannal

Mixed Use Allocations, once developed **

- H37: Land at Station Parade, Harrogate
- H51: Land east of Lady Lane, Harrogate
- H63: Dragon Road car park, Harrogate
- K17: Former Cattle Market, Knaresborough
- R25: Claro Barracks, Ripon
- M11: Land at Westholme Road, Masham

The development or redevelopment of land and premises within these sites for purposes other than business, general industrial and storage and distribution (as defined by Use Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order) will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposed use is ancillary to the functioning of the employment site and the following criteria are met:

- A. There is no unacceptable impact on the quality and quantity of employment land supply;
- B. There is no unacceptable impact on the operation of the site as a key employment area;
- C. There is no unacceptable amenity impact;

D. The proposal provides a complimentary benefit to the employment area.

Proposals for the use of other employment sites for non business, general industrial and storage and distribution (as defined by Use Class B1, B2, B8 of the Use Classes Order) uses will be resisted unless there is clear evidence provided to demonstrate that:

E. There is no Impact on the quality and quantity of employment land supply;

F. Smaller scale employment requirements cannot be accommodated on site;

G. The site has been actively marketed for employment use for at least 12 consecutive months in line with the provisions of paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8;

H. Continued use of the site for employment is no longer viable in line with the provisions of paragraph 4.7;

I. There is no significant adverse impact on residential amenity;

J. Continued employment use would not cause unacceptable planning problems;

K. The existing business has relocated (or will be able to relocate) to other suitable premises.

* once developed ** this would relate to the area of the site in employment use

Justification

4.1 Employment land can be placed under pressure from alternative uses, therefore, it is important for the wellbeing of the local economy to secure the long-term future of a range of employment opportunities. The approach to site protection set out in this policy applies equally to sites last in employment use but currently unused, as well as those that are allocated for employment use but not yet developed. This policy relates to business, general industrial, and storage and distribution uses, which are currently defined by Use Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order.

4.2 The council has undertaken a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) to inform the employment land requirement up to 2035. This review assessed the employment sites throughout the district and concluded that the majority of existing employment areas are operating effectively and are viable as employment locations. It also found that the district contains a number of employment sites and areas that should be retained in employment use and protected against loss and gradual erosion through the encroachment of alternative uses because they represent the district's key employment sites. Given the shortfall in readily available, viable and deliverable employment sites to meet the projected B1 and B8 need over the period to 2035, it is vital that protection is provided for the existing employment land supply and, in particular, the key sites. For these key sites the change of use to purposes other than B1 (business), B2 (general industrial) or B8 (storage and distribution) will not be permitted, except where the use is considered to be ancillary to the main employment use of the site.

4.3 Whilst the change of use to non B class uses on key sites will be resisted, it is recognised that there are a limited number of non B1, B2 and B8 uses which could be considered as acceptable on key employment sites as they would provide a service to employees and their clients and contribute to the efficiency of the employment site. These are genuine ancillary uses such as small cafés or childcare nurseries which are needed to serve the employees of the area. When determining planning applications for such uses the applicant needs to demonstrate that the proposal does indeed provide a complimentary benefit to the employment area and support the needs of the employees, as well as demonstrating that

there is no unacceptable impact on the quality and quantity of employment land supply, the operation of the site as a key employment area and general amenity considerations. Applications for non B Class uses that are not considered ancillary will be refused.

- 4.4** In terms of other employment sites the council recognises that, although there is a general resistance to change of use, there may be some cases where it might be appropriate to allow re-development when this would create alternative employment opportunities. In considering such proposals the council would have consideration to the following issues:

Impact on the Quality and Quantity of Employment Land Supply

- 4.5** The council regularly monitors employment land in the district and in particular looks at the take up and losses of employment land. In assessing quantitative and qualitative issues, regard will be had to available land and premises in the local area.

Ability to Accommodate Smaller Scale Requirements

- 4.6** Employment requirements are often for small and medium scale development. Therefore, in assessing qualitative impacts for releasing employment land from business, general industrial and storage/distribution uses, regard will be given to the ability of the site to accommodate these smaller scale requirements.

Viability and Marketing

- 4.7** Proposals will have to provide evidence that employment use (B1, B2 and B8) of the site is no longer viable through relevant marketing information, and feasibility or viability studies. The following information will be required:

- Copy of sales particulars, including any subsequent amendments made;
- Details of the original price paid, date of purchase and the new guide price;
- Schedule of advertisements carried out with copies of the advertisements and details of where and when the advertisements were placed, along with an estimate of the expenditure incurred from advertising;
- The confirmed number of sales particulars distributed, along with a breakdown of where the enquiries resulted from, for example, from the "For Sale/To Let" board, advertisements, or websites etc;
- Websites used to promote the property/site together with details of links to other relevant sites, the number of hits, and whether the council's Sites and Premises Service has been used and on what date it was registered;⁽⁵⁾
- Details of the number of viewings, including who and when;
- Resulting offers and comments on the offers;
- Details of the period when a "For Sale/To Let" board was displayed, or if not, the reasons behind the decision;
- Timetable of events from the initial appointment of the agents to current date;
- Details of agency/joint agency appointed including contact details;
- Date property/site brought to the market;
- Copies of accounts for the last five years.

- 4.8** The above information needs to show that the property/site has been actively marketed for a period of 12 months at a value that reflects its existing use. Where there is evidence that a business has been allowed to run-down, an independent viability assessment may be required. Where a mixed-use scheme is proposed the council would wish to be satisfied that the amount of non business, general industrial and storage/distribution uses (B1, B2, B8) is the minimum required to make the scheme viable.

5 Further details of the council's Sites and Premises Service and Property Finder database are available on the council's website.

Amenity Considerations

- 4.9** Where the continued employment use would cause unacceptable planning problems (e.g. residential amenity, traffic) the policy to resist the loss of business on 'other' sites would not apply. This is most relevant with non-conforming uses.

Permitted Development Rights

- 4.10** Permitted development rights are a national grant of planning permission by parliament allowing certain changes of use without the need for a planning application. Recent changes to permitted development rights now allow the change of use from B1a offices to C3 residential, and the change of use from B8 storage and distribution (up to 500 sq m) to C3 residential. The difference between employment and residential value poses a risk of large scale losses of employment stock and, therefore, jobs. The loss of smaller affordable employment units could have an adverse impact on smaller businesses as well as business start-ups. Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 gives local planning authorities the power to remove permitted development rights in some circumstances where they have the evidence to justify that this is necessary to protect the wellbeing of an area. Permitted development rights covering change of use also apply differently within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.⁽⁶⁾
- 4.11** A significant amount of office space is likely to be lost to residential use through the changes to permitted development rights. The majority of these losses are expected to be within Harrogate town centre, which is where office demand continues to be greatest. The council have acknowledged the potential threat to good quality office floorspace within Harrogate town centre and have confirmed an Article 4 direction affecting properties used as offices on Victoria Avenue in Harrogate, which removes the right of owners of properties falling within Use Class B1(a) to convert these properties to residential use. The council will continue to use its Article 4 powers where appropriate.

6 For further information please visit the government's Planning Portal website.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy
- Policy EC2: Expansion of Existing Businesses in Open Countryside and Outside Established Employment Areas
- Policy EC3: New Employment Development in the Countryside
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (G L Hearn, 2017)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Business Premises and Property Finder
- Planning Portal: Permitted Development Rights
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995: Article 4

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Justification, viability and marketing assessment for change of use proposals.
- Justification for ancillary applications.

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Key employment sites.

EC2: Expansion of Existing Businesses in Open Countryside and Outside Established Employment Areas

Policy EC2: Expansion of Existing Businesses in Open Countryside and Outside Established Employment Areas

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses in open countryside and outside established employment areas will be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:

- A. There is a proven need for such development in terms of business opportunity or operational requirements;
- B. The proposed development cannot physically and reasonably be accommodated within the curtilage of the existing site;
- C. The scale of development is appropriate in the proposed location;
- D. There is no unacceptable impact on the character of the countryside, the surrounding landscape, the form and character of the settlement or biodiversity;
- E. There is no unacceptable impact on the operation of the highway network;
- F. There are no significant adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Justification

- 4.12** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that a Local Plan should positively encourage sustainable economic growth and support the expansion of existing businesses, as well as supporting economic growth in rural areas. There are a number of established businesses in the district that are either based on the edges of settlements or within the countryside (outside the defined development limits of settlements). These businesses play an important role in the local economy. Where businesses have 'outgrown' their respective sites and premises and have aspirations to grow they should not be unduly constrained by their location; there are likely to be instances in which their expansion into open countryside may be appropriate.
- 4.13** One of the focuses for supporting sustainable economic growth in the district is meeting the expansion needs of local businesses. The council's economic priorities for the Harrogate district are summarised in the Economic Growth Strategy for the Harrogate District 2017-2035. It is important that existing firms have the opportunity to expand and adapt for the continued success of the business, with regard to normal planning considerations and other policies in the plan.
- 4.14** It is important that the Local Plan enables sustainable economic growth where appropriate. Businesses that are established in a particular location will have invested in a site and may be unwilling or indeed unable to relocate in order to facilitate further growth. Relocation of businesses in rural locations can result in the loss of valuable local employment opportunities that may not be replaced, and indeed loss of the business if the particular location is critical due to issues such as access to staff, suppliers and clients.
- 4.15** Whilst the preference is for development to take place within settlements, the expansion of existing businesses into the open countryside may be appropriate if there are no available sites suitable for expansion as a result of operational and locational requirements. Nevertheless, there must be a demonstrable need for such development and the scale of

the proposal should be appropriate in the proposed location. Equally it is essential that such development does not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the countryside, the surrounding landscape, the form and character of a settlement or biodiversity.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy
- Policy EC1: Protection and Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas
- Policy TI1: Sustainable Transport
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character
- Policy NE1: Air Quality
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness

Further guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Economic Growth Strategy for the Harrogate District 2017-2035 (2017).

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Evidence regarding operational requirements of the business.

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Settlement development limits.

EC3: New Employment Development in the Countryside

Policy EC3: New Employment Development in the Countryside

New employment development will be permitted in open countryside where all the following criteria are met:

- A. It involves either:
 - i. the re-use or adaptation of an existing building, a proposal for farm or other land-based business diversification, or other small-scale proposal requiring a countryside location for operational reasons; or
 - ii. small-scale new building which is well related to a rural settlement, benefits the local economy, and reduces the need for increased car commuting to urban centres.
- B. The local road network can accommodate proposed traffic movements;
- C. It would not have a significant adverse effect on the character, appearance or general amenity of the area.

Outside defined settlement development limits the re-use of existing buildings to employment use from other uses will be supported where:

- D. The building is of permanent and substantial construction, structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction.
- E. The scale, form and general design of the building and its proposed conversion are in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials.
- F. The proposed alterations are of a high quality design, retaining the features that contribute positively to the character of the building and its surroundings.
- G. The building and its curtilage can be developed without an adverse effect on the historic environment, the character of the local landscape or its setting.
- H. It can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on local biodiversity, including protected habitats and species.
- I. The proposed use would not harm the countryside by way of traffic, parking, storage, light and noise pollution, or the erection of associated structures.

Where a future alteration or extension could have a detrimental effect on the character of the converted building or the area, permitted development rights will be withdrawn for such development.

Justification

- 4.16** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports sustainable economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. It supports sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.
- 4.17** The district is largely rural in character, comprised of a high quality and varied landscape that is greatly valued by both residents and visitors. Agriculture and forestry activities have influenced the character and appearance of the countryside and continue to do so. However,

changes in agriculture have meant that it is increasingly important to diversify the rural economy in order to ensure that large parts of the district continue to thrive. Diversification can bring with it development pressures, which if not carefully managed can harm the intrinsic character of the countryside.

- 4.18** Generally new employment development will be directed towards allocations of land specifically for employment purposes and/or existing settlements. However, employment development (B Use classes) within the countryside can be appropriate where it is small-scale and well located to an existing rural settlement, and where it does not have a significant impact on the character of the countryside. Such businesses can help to sustain and diversify the rural economy, and potentially reduce the need for increased car travel to the larger urban centres.
- 4.19** The council will require comprehensive information on the current structural condition of the building and the method by which it is proposed to be converted to the new use in order to assess whether it is of substantial construction, structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction.
- 4.20** Where a future alteration or extension could have a detrimental effect on the character of the converted building or the area, the council may consider the withdrawal of permitted development rights for such development.
- 4.21** Recent legislative changes in relation to permitted development rights have introduced more flexibility about the conversion and re-use of existing agricultural buildings in rural areas without the need for planning permission. These permitted development rights do not apply to listed buildings or buildings located within a conservation area or within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4.22** This policy is, therefore, intended to apply to conversions from agricultural uses outside of the exemptions covered by permitted development, and conversions from non-agricultural uses.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy EC4: Farm Diversification
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: The Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings A Design Guide (1992).
- Harrogate Borough Council: Heritage Management Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2014).
- Planning Portal: changes of use not requiring planning permission.

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany planning applications

- Protected species survey.
- Structural survey of building.

EC4: Farm Diversification

Policy EC4: Farm Diversification

Proposals relating to farm diversification⁽⁷⁾ and other land-based enterprises will be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:

- A. The development will not cause significant or unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the landscape;
- B. There is no unacceptable adverse impact upon amenity, biodiversity or the historic environment;
- C. The proposal should make use of existing buildings wherever possible. Where new or replacement buildings are required they should be closely related to the existing group and their siting, form, scale, design and external materials should be in harmony with existing traditional buildings;
- D. The proposal forms part of a comprehensive diversification scheme (see paragraph 4.26) and is operated as part of a sustainable farming business or appropriate land-based enterprise and will contribute to making the existing business viable;
- E. The approach roads and access to the site have the capacity to cater for the type and levels of traffic likely to be generated by the development;
- F. The proposal will benefit the local rural economy; and
- G. Proposals which generate high levels of visitor traffic or increased public use will only be permitted where they can be easily accessed by public transport, foot and cycle.

Justification

- 4.23** Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The agricultural sector remains a valuable part of the Harrogate district economy and, therefore, the council seeks to support the ongoing viability of agricultural and other land based enterprises because of the benefits to the sustainability of the rural area.
- 4.24** Farm diversification may involve various type of enterprise, including the introduction of different methods of agricultural production, the use of new crops, adding value to farm products, tourism, recreation, farm shops and leasing land or buildings to non-agricultural businesses.
- 4.25** By encouraging economic and agricultural diversification, it is important that the countryside is not damaged by unrestrained and inappropriate development. Therefore, diversification proposals should be of a scale and nature appropriate to the location and be capable of satisfactory integration into the rural landscape. Such proposals should seek to reuse existing buildings wherever possible and have regard to the amenity and impacts on neighbouring uses.
- 4.26** The proposal is accompanied by a farm diversification plan demonstrating that the proposed development forms part of a comprehensive diversification scheme and is operated as part of a sustainable farming business or appropriate land-based enterprise and will contribute to making the existing business viable. A farm diversification plan should include the following:

⁷ Farm diversification is when a farm branches out from traditional farming by adding new money making activities

- Farm profile: details of existing activities of the farm, site area, type of farm, existing buildings on the farm, what wildlife exists on the farm, number of employees.
- Details of why there is a need for the diversification, including what present problems are being encountered on the farm.
- Proposal details: what the proposal is for, landscape plans, traffic data, structural survey of existing buildings, parking, employment information.
- Impacts: what are the implication of the proposal for the environment and rural economy.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy EC3: New Employment Development in the Countryside
- Policy EC8: Sustainable Rural Tourism
- Policy TI1: Sustainable Transport
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: The Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings A Design Guide (1992)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Heritage Management Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2014)
- Historic England: Farmstead Assessment Framework (2015)
- Historic England: The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings: Advice Note 9 (2017)
- Historic England: Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings: Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse (2017)

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Farm diversification plan.

EC5: Town and Local Centre Management

Policy EC5: Town and Local Centre Management

- A. Proposals involving either the loss of existing A1 shop(s) in ground level frontages, or the creation of additional floorspace at ground floor level not intended for a class A1⁽⁸⁾ retail use within the primary shopping frontages of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon will only be permitted where there is no harmful impact on the vitality and viability of the centre.⁽⁹⁾
- B. Proposals for non class A1 uses considered appropriate to a shopping area will be permitted at ground floor level within the secondary shopping frontages of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon; the town centres of Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge; and Harrogate's local centres (Cold Bath Road, High Harrogate, Jennyfield, Kings Road, Leeds Road, Starbeck⁽¹⁰⁾ and Knaresborough Road) provided this would not result in, or add to, a concentration of similar uses, the cumulative effect of which would:
- i. Result in a significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of the centre;
 - ii. Generate levels of traffic that would cause significant congestion and/or road safety problems;
 - iii. Result in three or more consecutive shop units in non A1 use.

In all cases applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have considered all alternative vacant premises last in non class A1 use within the town centres based on availability and suitability and explain why these would not be suitable.

- C. The following proposals will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach in-line with the provisions under paragraph 4.30:
- i. Retail development that does not serve a purely localised need⁽¹¹⁾ outside of the town centres of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge;
 - ii. Non-retail main town centre uses outside the town centre boundaries of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge.
- D. Proposals for retail developments, for the following gross floorspace sizes, outside the town centre but within the settlement's development limit will only be permitted where the application is supported by an Impact Assessment which provides clear evidence that the proposal will not lead to a significant adverse impact on the centre:
- i. Harrogate: convenience retail of 1000 sq m or more and comparison retail of 2500 sq m or more.
 - ii. Ripon: convenience and comparison retail of 1000 sq m or more.

8 Or any definition that replaces this use class

9 Development consisting of a change of use of a building from class A1 (shops) to class A2 (financial and professional services) is classed as Permitted Development.

10 The local centre boundary for Starbeck has been amended to include the former Henry Peacock site

11 Localised need is retail that serves the day-to-day needs of the immediate area rather than a wider catchment area

- iii. Knaresborough: convenience retail of 250 sq m or more and comparison retail of 500 sq m or more.
- iv. Boroughbridge, Pateley Bridge and Masham: convenience and comparison retail of 250 sq m or more.

In all other areas, including the open countryside, an Impact Assessment will be required for convenience and comparison retail proposals of 250 sq m or more.

- E. Proposals for retail development appropriate in scale and type to the size and role of Harrogate's local centres to provide for people's day-to-day needs, will be permitted within, or as an extension to, these centres. Support will also be given to the development of new centres which are necessary to meet the needs of planned or approved new residential and employment development.
- F. Proposals that will enhance the evening and night-time economy will be supported as valuable additions to the vitality and viability of town and city centres, where any amenity issues can be adequately addressed.
- G. Proposals involving residential or office development above ground floor premises within town or city centres will be permitted provided that they will not cause adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In addition, development at ground floor should not compromise the current use, or future reuse of upper floors.

Justification

- 4.27** In order to promote the vitality and viability of town and local centres, national planning policy sets out a strong 'centres' first policy, through a sequential test that directs main town centre uses to existing centres. This is supported by an impact test which requires development that might harm a centre to be assessed against a range of factors. Class A1 is defined as shops where the sale, display or service is to visiting members of the public. Other main town centre uses are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as leisure, offices and arts, culture and tourism development.
- 4.28** The NPPF requires the boundary of each centre and the main shopping area of the centre to be defined. These ensure that a strong retail mix is supported and provides flexibility for defining those areas (primary frontage) that contain a high proportion of retail uses. The Harrogate District Retail Study (2014) provides the evidence base for the policy. Within the core streets of the primary shopping areas of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon there is a concentration of prime shopping facilities where the commercial rental values are highest. It is such facilities which provide the greatest attraction and it is considered important for the continued shopping character of the centre that they are protected from the introduction of non-shopping (i.e. non class A1) uses.
- 4.29** Exceptions to the restriction in primary shopping frontages may be made where it can be demonstrated that the introduction of a non-shopping use is the only means of restoring or improving a building of heritage or aesthetic significance, or it would make an important contribution to the vitality of the shopping centre, and in either case would not have a harmful impact on the shopping frontage.
- 4.30** In order to maintain the vitality and viability of centres, proposals for:

- **Retail development** outside of the town centres of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge
- **Other non-retail main town centre uses** outside of the town centre boundaries of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Masham, Pateley Bridge

will only be allowed if:

- a. It is demonstrated that there are no sequentially preferable sites (including consideration of their availability and viability, and whether operators have demonstrated flexibility in terms of scale and format), or the development has a particular market or operational requirement that cannot be accommodated within a sequentially preferable location. In applying the sequential approach applications for main town centre uses should be directed to sites in a town or local centre before considering edge of centre (within 300m of the town/local centre but not outside the urban area) locations. Where proposals are located in an out-of-centre location, preference should be given to sites well served by a choice of means of transport, which are close to the centre and have a higher likelihood of forming links with the centre. In determining the area of search to be considered through the sequential approach, it will be necessary to consider the form and scale of development. This should recognise that some proposals serve a localised need, such as a local foodstore, whereas others will serve a much wider catchment.
- b. There is clear evidence that the proposal will not lead to a significant adverse impact on a centre. This should involve consideration of the effect that the proposal would have on planned investment and the vitality and viability of a centre, including local consumer choice and trade in the centre (and wider area) up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made. Thresholds have been set to identify when a retail proposal should consider the impact of the development on an existing centre. These reflect the different roles and functions of the centres. Developments above the threshold may have a significant impact upon the centre, or other centres within the catchment area, and planning applications should be accompanied by an impact assessment.

4.31 The council commissioned Peter Brett Associates to produce the Local Retail Impact Thresholds Advisory Note (2014), which looked at whether a locally set threshold is needed for the district and, if so, what size threshold would be considered appropriately proportionate.

4.32 To conduct their assessment Peter Brett Associates considered the findings of the Harrogate District Retail Study (2014) along with data on previous planning applications from 2004 to 2014. They focused their assessment on the following:

- The scale of previous proposals relative to town centres;
- The existing viability and vitality of town centres/vulnerability for local town centres;
- The cumulative effects of recent developments;
- The likely effects of further development on any town centre;
- The strategy/planned investment

4.33 Recent permitted development changes, however, now allow more opportunities to change the use of class A1 units to non A1 uses. In some circumstances (change from A1 under 150 sq m to A3 (restaurants) under 150 sq m) a request for prior approval determination needs to be submitted. This enables local planning authorities to protect valued and successful retail provision in key shopping areas such as town centres, as well as ensure that there are no amenity and highway impacts of the change of use. Prior notification is required where it may be undesirable for the building to change to a use falling within class A3 because:

- There could be an impact on the adequate provision of services of the sort that may be provided by a building falling within class A1, but only where there is a reasonable prospect of the building being used to provide such services or;
- The building is located in a key shopping area and there could be an impact on the sustainability of that shopping area.

4.34 Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 gives local planning authorities the power to remove permitted development rights in some circumstances where they have the evidence to justify that this is necessary to protect the wellbeing of an area. The council may, therefore, look to use its Article 4 powers to remove the permitted development rights in areas where the need to protect valuable and successful retail provision is justified.

4.35 Recent changes to permitted development allow the conversion of agricultural buildings under 500 sq m to uses including retail and, therefore, in these cases there would not be a need to submit a Retail Impact Assessment.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy
- Policy HP1: Town Centre Improvements

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Retail Study Update (Peter Brett Associates, 2016)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Retail Study (Peter Brett Associates, 2014)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Local Retail Impact Thresholds Advisory Note (Peter Brett Associates, 2014)
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995: Article 4
- Planning Portal: change of use not requiring planning permission

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

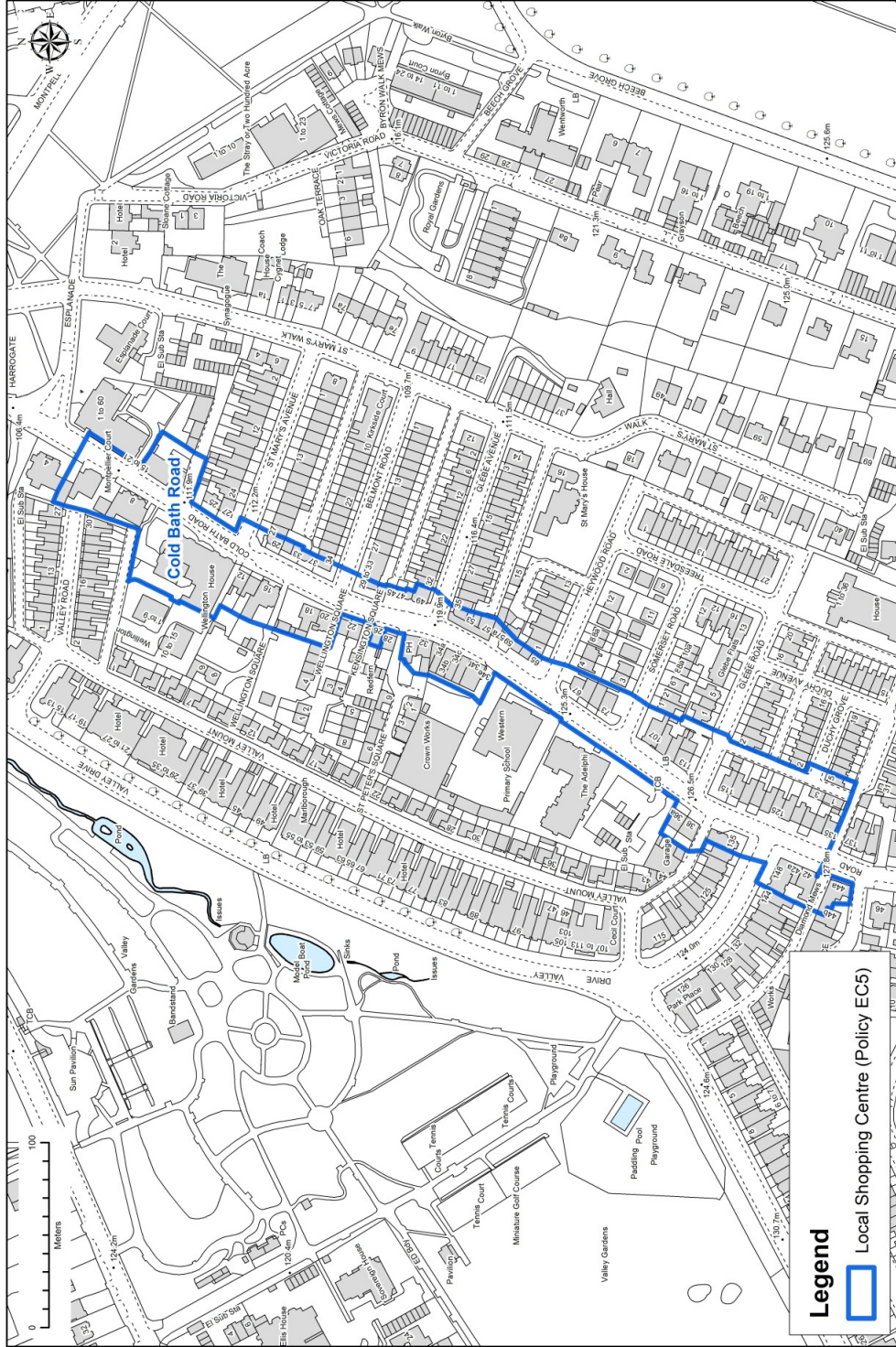
- Sequential Assessment
- Retail Impact Assessment

Designations/boundaries shown on the policies map

- Town centre boundaries: Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge, Masham and Pateley Bridge;
- Primary shopping areas: Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon;
- Primary and secondary shopping frontages: Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon;
- Local centre boundaries: Harrogate⁽¹²⁾.

12 The local centre boundary for Starbeck has been amended to include the former Henry Peacock site

EC5: Local Centre Maps

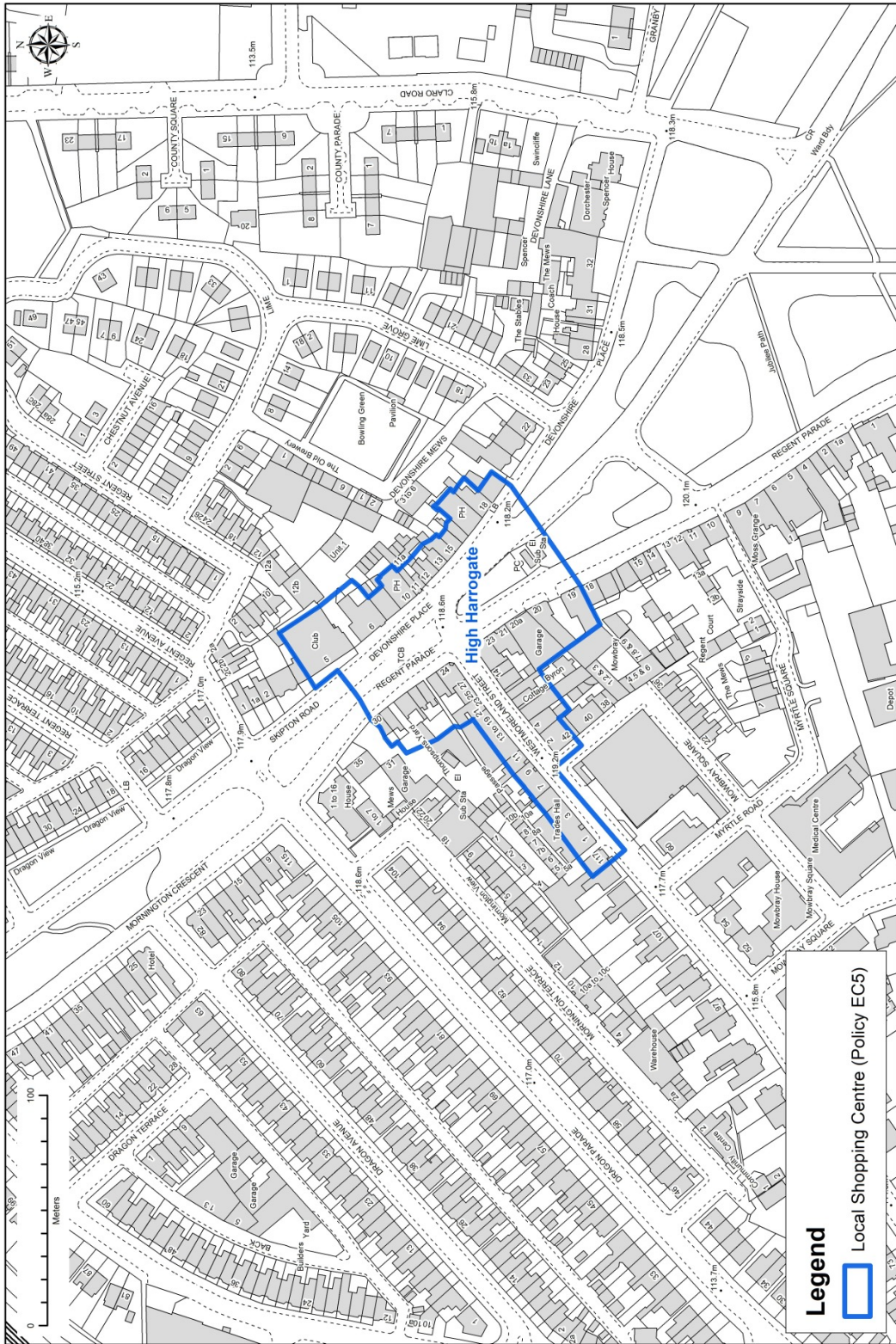


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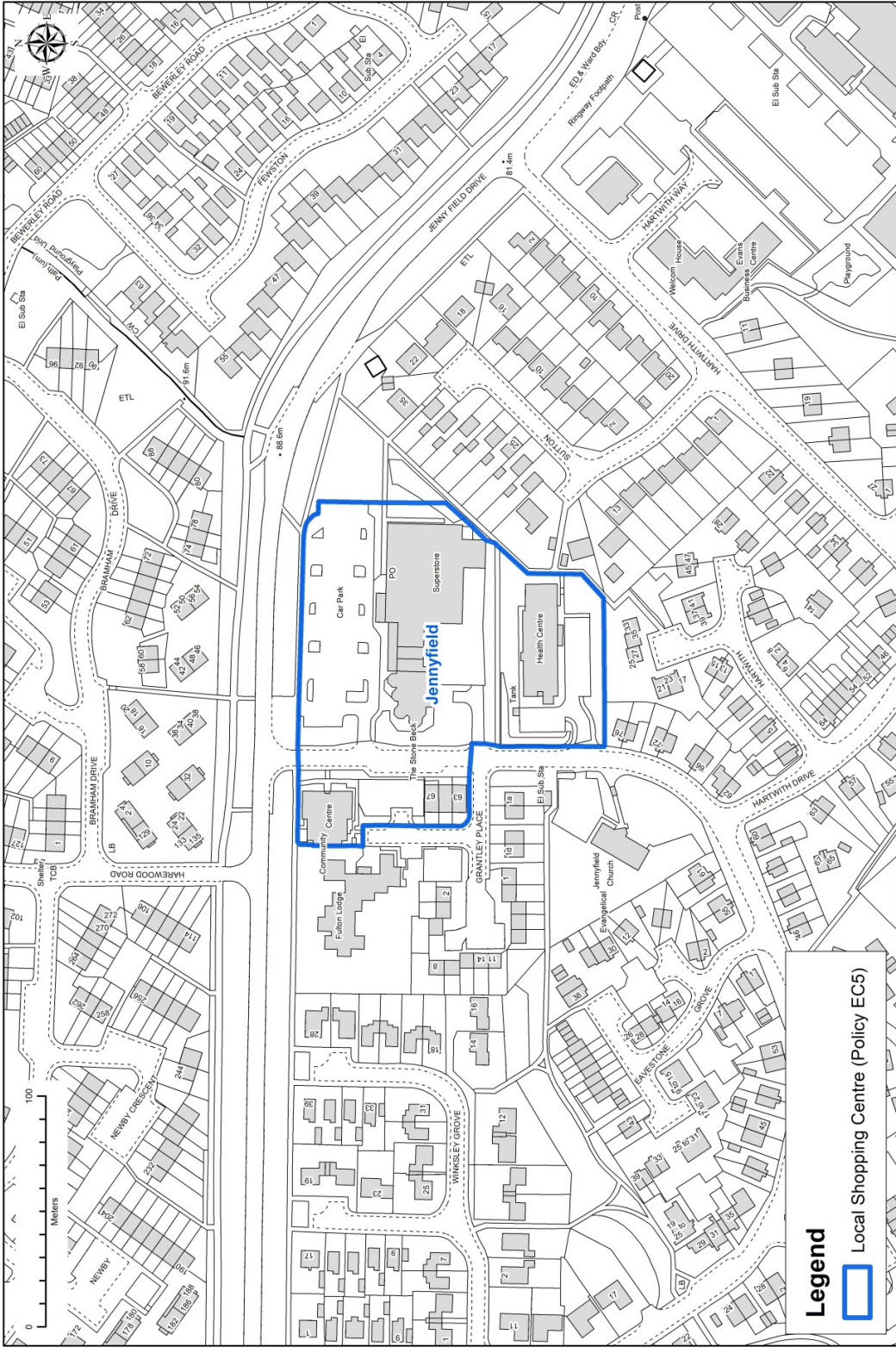
2016

Map 4.1 Local Centre at Cold Bath Road, Harrogate



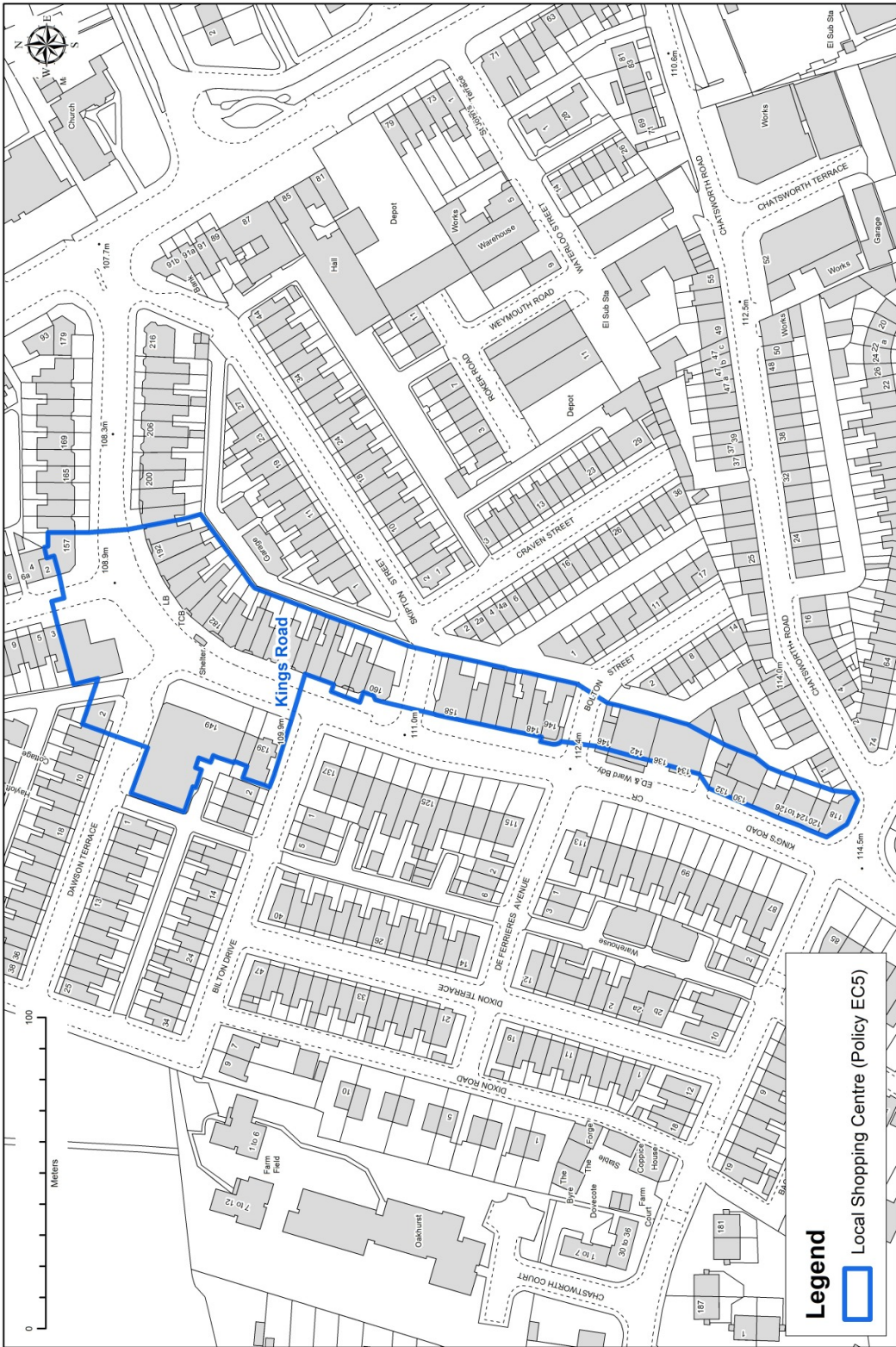
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Map 4.2 Local Centre at High Harrogate



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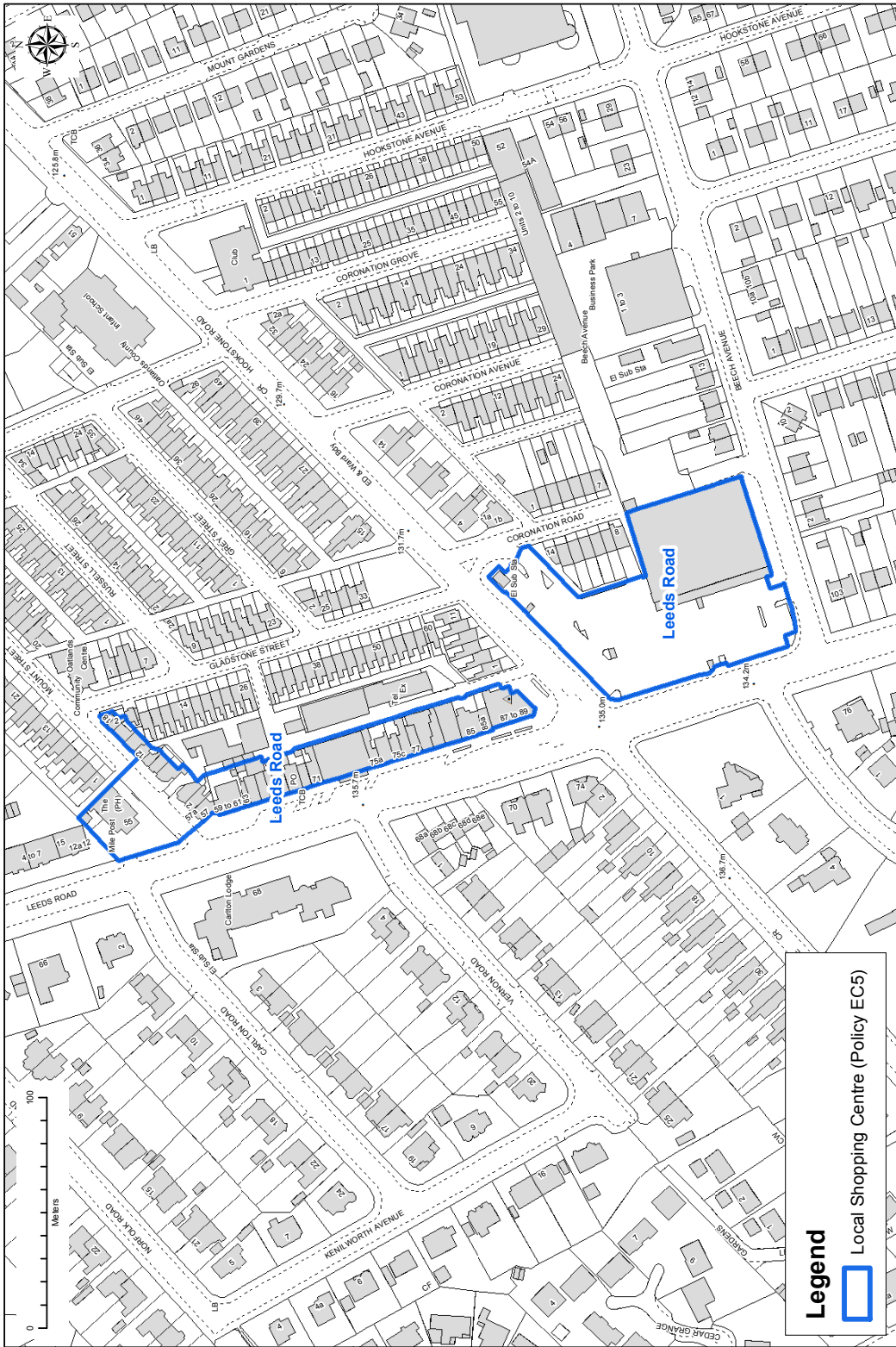
Map 4.3 Local Centre at Jennyfields, Harrogate





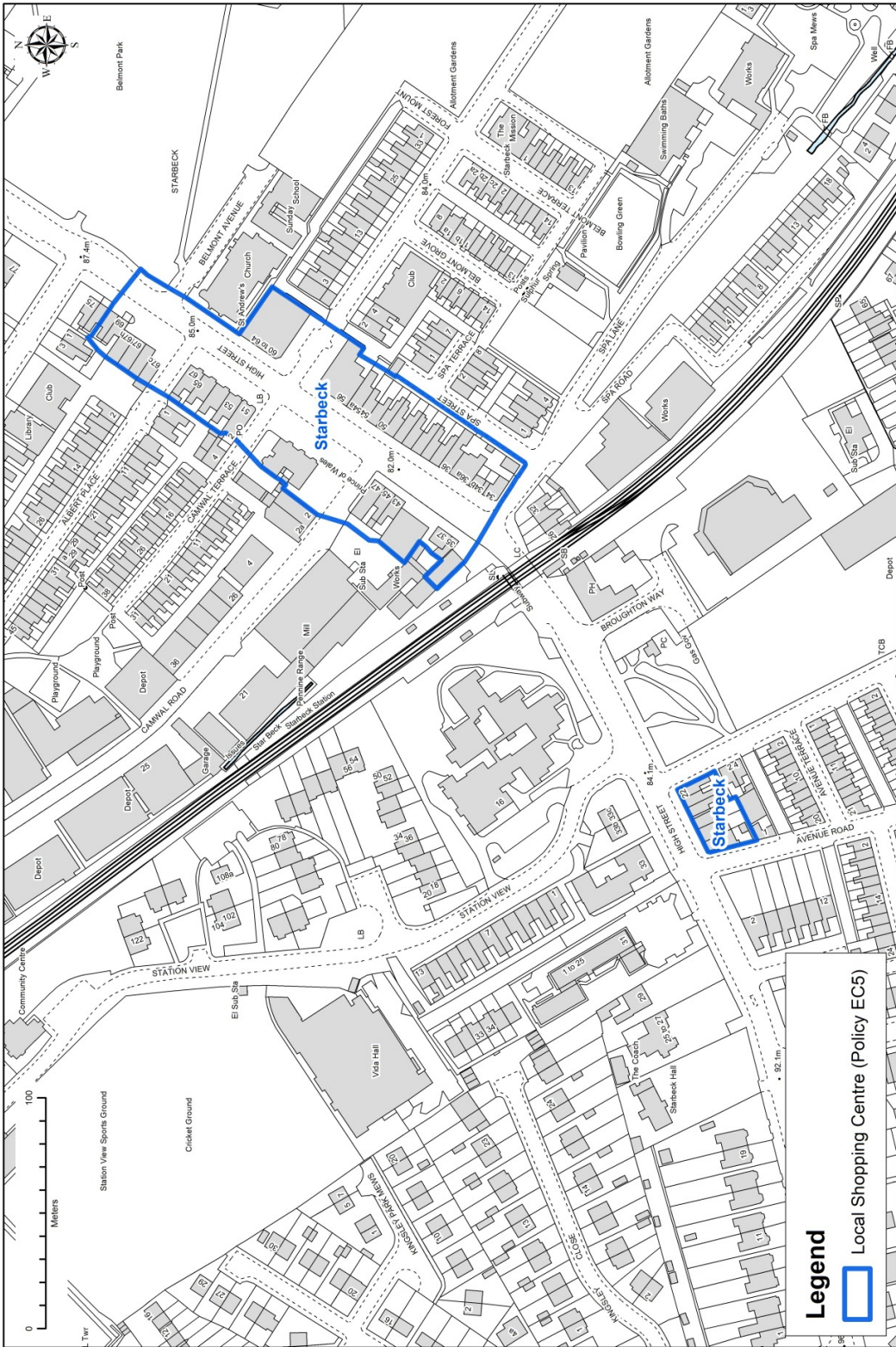
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Map 4.5 Local Centre at Knaresborough Road, Harrogate



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Map 4.6 Local Centre at Leeds Road, Harrogate



Map 4.7 Local Centre at Starbeck

EC6: Protection of Tourist Facilities

Policy EC6: Protection of Tourist Facilities

Hotel Protection

Proposals involving the change of use of hotels in the district with 20 or more lettable bedrooms will not be permitted unless clear evidence is provided to demonstrate that they are no longer viable, including:

- A. Evidence that the hotel has been actively marketed at existing use value for at least 12 consecutive months in line with the provisions under paragraph 4.40;
- B. Occupancy rates for the last three years of operation; and
- C. Capital expenditure in the last five years of operation.

Applicants will also be required to demonstrate that there will be no significant adverse impact on the supply or quality of visitor accommodation available in the area.

Protection of Tourist Attractions

Proposals that would result in the loss of a tourist attraction will not be permitted unless:

- D. Clear evidence is provided to demonstrate that the continued use is no longer viable, including:
 - i. Evidence that the attraction has been actively marketed at existing use value for at least 12 consecutive months;
 - ii. Visitor numbers for the last three years; and
 - iii. Capital expenditure in the last five years of operation; or
- E. The attraction is viable but has been actively marketed at existing use value for two years.

Proposals for non-tourist related development, which would be likely to result in harm to the continued attractiveness and operation of an existing tourist attraction, will not be permitted unless that development would deliver clear public benefits that are incapable of being provided in a less harmful manner.

Justification

- 4.36** Paragraph 28 of the National Planning policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy, particularly in rural areas, and that the planning system should facilitate and encourage development and improvement in tourism provision. Tourism, both for business and leisure, is an important industry for Harrogate district, a largely rural area containing a number of historic market towns and attractive rural villages set in an exceptionally high quality landscape, which includes an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The district boasts a wealth of tourist attractions and activities that draw both national and international visitors to the area, such as the Studley Royal Park (including the ruins of Fountains Abbey) World Heritage Site and the Great Yorkshire Show. Located between the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors national parks, and close to the historic city of York and vibrant cosmopolitan Leeds, the district is an ideal base to explore the wider area. Protecting existing tourist facilities, including ensuring that there is a sufficient

range and quality of visitor accommodation available in the district, whilst encouraging investment in existing and new tourist facilities and supporting infrastructure is, therefore, vital to the continuing success of this sector.

Hotel Protection

- 4.37** The health of the visitor and business tourism industry is important to the continued vitality and viability of the district's towns and villages, and the communities that live and work here. Similarly, the conference and exhibition business in Harrogate plays an important role in the local and regional economy. A good supply and range of serviced accommodation is essential to protect the town's role as one of the country's top conference and exhibition centres and as a recognised holiday tourism destination. The concentration of hotels offering a good range of accommodation within walking distance of the conference centre and exhibition halls or easily accessible by public transport is a unique aspect of Harrogate, which is environmentally sustainable and needs to be protected.
- 4.38** The council developed a hotel protection policy as part of the Local Plan Selective Alteration (2004) in response to pressure to convert hotels to other uses, particularly residential properties, and evidence that the volume and range of visitor accommodation available was inadequate to sustain the business tourism industry in Harrogate town. The need to maintain an adequate supply of visitor accommodation in the district remains because, without this, the overall attraction of Harrogate as a tourist and business destination will be threatened and, as a consequence, the local economy will be harmed. Hotels are also major employers in the district and the policy is therefore also aimed at protecting local job opportunities.
- 4.39** The Harrogate District Visitor Accommodation Study (2015) identified that hotels with 20 or more lettable bedrooms provide in the order of 72% of the total bedroom stock in the district, and also tend to have higher room occupancy rates than smaller establishments. These larger hotels, however, account for only around 19% of the number of establishments offering serviced visitor accommodation in the district. Therefore, the loss of hotels of this size has a significant impact on the availability of visitor accommodation in the district, on local employment opportunities, and on the district economy.
- 4.40** It is accepted that it may not always be reasonable to insist on all hotels remaining in that use. However, to accept any loss it must be demonstrated that the hotel is no longer viable for use as such for the foreseeable future. In order to demonstrate non-viability proof will be required to show that a hotel has been effectively marketed by an appropriate agent at existing use value for at least a year. Evidence will also be required of occupancy rates for at least the last three years, and of capital expenditure in the last five years. The following information will be required:
- Copy of sales particulars;
 - Details of the original price, date of purchase and the new guide price;
 - Schedule of the advertising carried out with copies of the advertisements and details of where and when the advertisements were placed, along with an estimate of the expenditure incurred from advertising;
 - The confirmed number of sales particulars distributed, along with a breakdown of where the enquiries resulted from, for example, from the "For Sale/To Let" board, advertisements, etc.;
 - Details of the number of viewings;
 - Resulting offers and why they were dismissed;
 - Details of the period when a "For Sale/To Let" board was displayed or, if not, the reasons behind the decision;
 - Timetable of events from the initial appointment of the agents to current date.

- 4.41** It must be demonstrated that the loss of the hotel will not undermine the existing supply of serviced accommodation in the area. Specifically the loss of the hotel should not significantly affect the overall number of rooms available or the quality of accommodation in the area. This will be particularly relevant to rural areas outside of Harrogate town where there may be limited choice of alternative accommodation and where accommodation is important to support the local economy.
- 4.42** This policy will apply across the district to applications involving the loss of a hotel in its entirety, and equally to proposals involving the loss of one or more individual bedrooms that would reduce the total number of lettable rooms in a hotel to below 20 rooms.

Protection of Tourist Attractions

- 4.43** The term tourist attractions is used in this policy to define places of interest where tourists visit and includes: theatres, museums, concert halls, botanical gardens, theme parks, wildlife parks, historic buildings, and buildings catering for the needs of visitors to locations of natural beauty, built or archaeological heritage. The definition only includes attractions that are open to the public for at least six months of the year and does not include shopping centres or sport and leisure attractions (e.g swimming pools, gymnasiums, sports grounds or soft play centres etc.). This policy is particularly important in the district's main urban areas where there is greater pressure for change from competing land uses.
- 4.44** Where an attraction is demonstrated to be no longer financially viable the council will consider proposals for a change of use or redevelopment of the land and property on their individual merits, and in accordance with the development plan. Where an attraction remains viable as an ongoing concern an applicant will be required to demonstrate that the property has been actively marketed by providing the same detail as set out for hotels above.
- 4.45** Any commercially sensitive information will be treated in confidence, although specialist financial details may be subject to independent expert assessment.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography under Economy for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Visitor Accommodation Study (2015)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Statement of Community Involvement (2014)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Economic Growth Strategy for the Harrogate District 2017-2035 (2017)
- Department for Culture Media and Sport: Backing the Tourism Sector: A Five Point Plan (2016)

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany planning applications

- Marketing details and evidence of occupancy rates and capital expenditure, as set out in the policy's supporting text.
- Pre-application consultation in line with the council's Statement of Community Involvement.

EC7: Sustainable Rural Tourism

Policy EC7: Sustainable Rural Tourism

Proposals involving the development of new, or extension of existing, tourist and leisure attractions or visitor accommodation in the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- A. It can be demonstrated that proposals for new attractions or accommodation require a rural location and cannot be accommodated elsewhere;
- B. The scale, layout and design of development is appropriate to its location and there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the district's built, natural or historic environment;
- C. They would not cause unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers;
- D. Appropriately located existing buildings are re-used where possible;
- E. They result in an improvement to the range and quality of attractions and/or visitor accommodation in the area;
- F. They will benefit the local economy and help to protect local services; and
- G. They would not generate levels of traffic that would have an adverse impact upon the operation of the highway network or on highway safety or on air quality.

In particular, support will be given to proposals that meet the above criteria and form part of a comprehensive farm diversification scheme that is in accordance with policy EC4 or are directly linked to the long-term conservation and enjoyment of publicly accessible natural and cultural heritage assets.

In addition to the above criteria, proposals for caravan, holiday chalets and camping development (either new or extensions to existing sites) should be accessible to existing local services and connections to public utilities but should not adversely affect them.

Justification

4.46 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to support sustainable rural tourism that benefits businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respects the character of the countryside. This includes supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres. Tourism is important to the Harrogate district, making a significant contribution to the local economy, creating employment opportunities and assisting in attracting investment. Tourism also helps to support rural areas and rural diversification.

4.47 Within the district there are a number of important architectural, historical and natural features that serve to attract visitors, such as the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Studley Royal Park (including the ruins of Fountains Abbey) World Heritage Site and Ripon Cathedral. Other key visitor facilities include, amongst others, the Harrogate Convention Centre and Royal Hall in Harrogate, Lightwater Valley Theme Park near Ripon, the Turkish Baths in Harrogate, Mother Shipton's Cave in Knaresborough, Knaresborough Castle, Ripon Racecourse, Harrogate Theatre, Newby Hall and RHS Harlow Carr Gardens in Harrogate. A number of special events further enhance the district as an important tourist attraction, including the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate, the Ripon International Festival and the Knaresborough Bed Race. The district also contains a wide range of visitor

accommodation in terms of size, quality and type in rural and urban locations that plays a central role in attracting visitors to the district and in supporting the tourist related attractions and activities. Visitors to the district include the holidaymaker, the business visitor and the leisure day tripper.

- 4.48** However, there can be drawbacks arising from tourism, including additional public authority costs, traffic and parking congestion, commercialisation of the historic environment and conflicts of uses in the countryside. The council's approach is, therefore, to encourage the expansion and improvement of the range and type of tourist facilities in a sustainable manner that safeguards the district's environment.
- 4.49** The high quality of the district's countryside and the numerous attractions and activities it has to offer attracts a large number of people each year wanting to spend time and stay in rural areas outside of Harrogate's main urban centres. This policy seeks to control the location, scale and type of tourism development within rural areas to encourage sustainable development that minimises its impact on the environment, local communities and the highway network.
- 4.50** Development proposals should, wherever possible, make best use of any existing local public transport services in the vicinity of the application site, and explore all opportunities to improve accessibility to the district's main urban centres, where this is required by a transport assessment. Consideration should also be given as part of any proposal to providing links to the cycle and footpath networks to encourage non-car travel to rural attractions.
- 4.51** Support will also be given to proposals linked to the long-term conservation and enjoyment of publicly accessible natural and cultural heritage assets. This could involve the development of facilities (e.g. car parking, information centre, public amenities etc.) to support visitors to a particular landscape feature, archaeological site or historical building. In all cases, the scale and nature of facilities proposed must be in keeping with the character of the site and not harm the value of the asset they are catering for.
- 4.52** In line with the NPPF, when determining applications for tourist facilities in rural areas the council will carefully weigh the local economic benefits of a proposal with the need to protect the environment. The council will refuse planning permission for development proposals that would cause irremediable harm to the very reasons that attract people to the district's countryside, principally the high quality of the landscape and the natural and built environment.
- 4.53** Camping and caravan developments can be particularly intrusive in the open countryside and can have adverse impacts when located within existing woodland. As such they deserve special consideration in areas of high quality landscape. Therefore, all caravan, camping and holiday chalet development must demonstrate that it will not cause an adverse harm to, or be prominent in, the landscape. These types of development should also be accessible to local services and utilities (including a local convenience store, public transport and adequate water and sewerage facilities) so that they can be self-sustainable, benefit the local economy and not place unnecessary pressure on the local road network.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS4: Green Belt
- Policy GS5: Supporting the District's Economy
- Policy EC4: Farm Diversification
- Policy TI1: Sustainable Transport
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy HP4: Protecting Amenity
- Policy HP8: New Sports, Open Space and Recreation Development
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Transport assessment.
- Assessment of the availability and suitability of alternative sites within or adjacent to main towns and villages.