

Employment Land Study

Appendix 4: Rural Baseline /
Policy Appraisal

July 2007

CONTENTS

1.	RURAL BASELINE AND ISSUES	1
2.	SETTLEMENT LEVEL BASELINE	13
3.	RURAL ISSUES	19
4.	POLICY APPRAISAL	30

1. RURAL BASELINE AND ISSUES

Background

- 1.1 Within the wider context of the economy of Selby it is important to consider the nature (health) and extent of the rural economy. Through this process of establishing the rural baseline it is possible to gauge the likely future contribution of the rural areas of Selby to the district's wider economic growth.
- 1.2 The importance of rural diversification is identified in both the emerging RSS and the Leeds CRDP as being a key element of economic growth and development in the medium to long term. This is particularly significant for Selby District, given the nature of its market towns and existing settlement hierarchy.
- 1.3 Draft RSS aims to diversify the urban and rural economies, and in turn deliver a better performing and competitive economy. Policy E7 supports rural diversification and strengthening of the rural economy.
- 1.4 The CRDP identifies the particular issues facing the rural economy including poor physical connectivity, the decline in agriculture and farming (mirroring the trend at national and local levels, housing affordability, poor access to services, and poor business survival rates).
- 1.5 The Selby District Core Strategy Issues and Options Report states the priority as being diversification of the rural economy through:
- Broadening agricultural enterprises; and / or
 - Re-using redundant agricultural buildings, in line with recent trends across the District.
- 1.6 Current policy with regards development in the countryside is stated within the Issues and Options Report as discouraging development which would impact upon the openness and character of the countryside, protecting it for its own sake, although there is a recognition that a degree of small scale development, particularly for local jobs and services, and to meet local housing needs may contribute to the vitality of rural communities.
- 1.7 In addition, within current policy there may be instances where larger developments of various types, e.g. tourist developments and renewable energy projects, may, on balance, particularly in non-Green Belt areas, be viewed as beneficial for the local economy or provide valuable local facilities.
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Geography

- 1.8 Data on the rural economy can be difficult to capture. A primary reason for this is the availability and take up of ICT and the 'footloose' nature of much business activity and employment. The restructuring of the agriculture industry and growth of rural businesses related to tourism, leisure, and cultural and creative industries also serves to lessen distinctions between rural and urban economies.
- 1.9 The traditional approach of explaining the rural economy as only agriculture (and more precisely farming) is therefore wholly inadequate. It requires both a spatial and sector configuration which currently does not necessarily exist.
- 1.10 In addition, there are limitations related to the validity and robustness of standard sources of data reflecting agriculture. This makes therefore accurate employment and output estimates are extremely difficult to obtain. Where the data on agriculture can be sourced, due to the changing structure of the rural economy (with specific reference to farming) there is an ongoing debate about the definition of what farming is, and therefore what should or should not be included in the analysis.
- 1.11 Our initial focus within the analysis is defining the 'rural economy' in Selby. This is done at ward level using the Urban and Rural Classification as set out by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), which is a commonly used methodology to distinguish rural and urban wards.
- 1.12 The methodology used here (the Rural Definition) was introduced in 2004 as a joint project between DEFRA, the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC – formerly the Countryside Agency), the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (former, now Department for Communities and Local Government), and the Welsh Assembly.
- 1.13 The 'spectrum' / graded system used replaces the earlier Oxford / CA binary ward classification and adopts a more reliable settlement-based approach.
- 1.14 Wards are classified by two measurement criteria – Morphology / Settlement Form, and Context / Sparsity.

Morphology / Settlement Form

- Urban (over 10,000 population)

- Rural town
- Village
- Dispersed (hamlets and isolated dwellings)

Context / Sparsity – each hectare grid square is given a sparsity score based on the number of households in surrounding hectare squares up to a distance of 30km

- Sparse
- Less sparse

1.15 This gives an eight tier Urban and Rural Classification:

- 1 Urban (Sparse)
- 2 Urban (Less Sparse)
- 3 Town (Less Sparse)
- 4 Town (Sparse)
- 5 Village (Less Sparse)
- 6 Village (Sparse)
- 7 Dispersed (Less Sparse)
- 8 Dispersed (Sparse)

1.16 The table below shows the urban / rural split at ward level across Selby using this definition, with those classified as 1 and 2 as ‘urban’ and 3 to 8 as ‘rural’. This approach takes into account the local context within Selby.

Figure A4.1.1: Rural / Urban Ward Definitions for Selby

Urban	Rural
Brayton	Appleton Roebuck
Selby North	Barlby
Selby South	Camblesforth
Selby West	Cawood with Wistow
	Eggborough
	Fairburn with Brotherton
	Hambleton

	Hemingbrough
	Monk Fryston and South Milford
	North Duffield
	Riccall with Escrick
	Saxton and Ulleskelf
	Sherburn in Elmet
	Tadcaster East
	Tadcaster West
	Whitley

1.17 The rural / urban ward split is shown on Plan 4 in Appendix 4.

Setting the Baseline

1.18 Having established the geography of the rural and urban split within Selby a number of key indicators of economic 'health' have been analysed. From this analysis a series of issues specific to the rural economy have been identified.

Demographics

Population Change / Age Structure

Figure A4.1.2: Population Change / Age Structure 1981 - 2001

	Rural Selby	Selby District	Yorkshire and Humber	England and Wales
Total Population 1981	32,355	58,096	4,810,411	48,521,651
Total Population 1991	39,613	69,898	4,836,524	49,890,277
Total Population 2001	57,942	76,468	4,964,833	52,041,916
% Change 1981 - 2001	79.1%	31.6%	3.2%	7.3%
Working Age Population 1981	24,749	36,856	2,998,856	30,474,078
Working Age Population 1991	31,457	46,002	3,069,909	31,832,791
Working Age Population 2001	37,788	49,228	3,150,634	33,240,406
% Change 1981 - 2001	52.7%	33.6%	5.1%	9.1%

Source: Census, 1981 / 1991 / 2001

1.19 A total 32,355 people were identified as being resident in rural Selby at the time of the Census in 2001, over half the total population of Selby district.

- 1.20 Since 1981 the rural population of Selby has grown by almost 80%, compared to a population increase of 32% across the district over the same period, and much more moderate growth at regional (<5%) and national (<10%) levels.
- 1.21 This growth in working age population over the same period was over 50%, suggesting a significant increase in families, and older retiring residents alongside the growth in working age population.
- 1.22 This growth of over 50% compared to 34% across the district, 5% across Yorkshire and Humber, and 9% across England and Wales.
- 1.23 This growth can be linked to the levels of out community form Selby – with a high proportion of the rural residents working in high-paid, high-grade employment outside of the district, but choosing to live in rural Selby – linked in part to its relative attractiveness as a residential location.

Deprivation

- 1.24 The previous analysis of deprivation, using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004), identified the key issues facing rural Selby within the constraints of the domains included.
- 1.25 The analysis suggested little incidence of deprivation in the rural areas associated with income or employment – reflecting the nature / scale of out-commuting from these locations.
- 1.26 A more significant degree of deprivation associated with housing – likely to be associated with affordability (again linked to out-commuting) – and access to services within rural areas is however evident, both in terms of geographical spread / incidence and areas falling within the 10% most deprived.

Labour Force Analysis

- 1.27 This sub-section details the characteristics of the labour force within rural Selby. Important to note is that this analysis relies on Census data – which measures resident characteristics, rather than explicitly those that are employed within the rural economy.

Economic Activity

Figure A4.1.3: Economic Activity (Proportion of Total Working Age Population)

	Economically active: Employees Part-time	Economically active: Employees Full-time	Economically active: Self-employed	Economically active: Unemployed	Economically active: Full-time student
Rural Selby	13.4	44.1	10.2	2.2	1.9
Selby District	13.8	43.6	9.3	2.5	1.9
Yorkshire and The Humber	12.9	38.8	7.2	3.7	2.5
England and Wales	11.8	40.6	8.3	3.4	2.6

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.28 The proportion of those that are economically active full-time or part-time employed does not stand out compared to wider comparators. However, of real significance is the above average proportion of people resident in rural Selby who are self-employed, 3% above the Yorkshire and Humber average.
- 1.29 This goes hand in hand with agriculture, but also links to previous analysis of the growth in construction (typified by self-employment/small companies) and the professional/business-sector – both growth sectors in the forecast analysis.
- 1.30 Analysis of the data at settlement level shows that levels of self-employment amongst residents of the three towns is lower than in the rural area. Of the three towns, Tadcaster hosts the highest proportion of self-employed residents.

Unemployment

Figure A4.1.4: Unemployment

	Unemployed	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Aged 16 - 24	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Aged 50 and over	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Who have never worked	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Who are long-term unemployed
Rural Selby	2.2	22.7	22.5	3.9	27.1
Selby District	2.5	24.5	20.4	3.8	28.0
Yorkshire and The Humber	3.7	27.4	17.8	9.9	31.5
England and Wales	3.4	25.9	18.6	9.3	30.3

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.31 Unemployment levels within rural Selby, as within the wider district, are below average – with markedly low levels of unemployed aged between 16 and 24 years; who have never worked; or who are long-terms unemployed.
- 1.32 Significantly, however, an above average proportion of people are unemployed and aged 50 and over within rural Selby, over 22% compared to 18 / 19% at the regional and national level. This links in part with the decline of the agriculture sector in general terms. It also highlights the importance of employment provision/access to employment at settlement level.

Qualifications and Skills

Figure A4.1.5: Qualifications

	No qualifications	Highest qualification attained level 1	Highest qualification attained level 2	Highest qualification attained level 3	Highest qualification attained level 4 / 5	Other qualifications / level unknown
Rural Selby	27	18.4	21.1	6.6	18.8	8.1
Selby District	28.2	18.9	20.9	6.4	17.5	8.1
Yorkshire and The Humber	33.1	17.1	18.0	7.7	16.4	7.6
England and Wales	29.1	16.6	19.4	8.3	19.8	6.9

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.33 The labour force within rural Selby appears to be well-educated, with below average proportions of people without qualifications and importantly above average proportions of people educated to level 4 or 5 (degree and above) compared to Yorkshire and Humber.
- 1.34 It is interesting to note that the analysis at settlement level shows that the highest level of skills are in Tadcaster and the rural area. The proportion of residents with Level 4 & 5 qualifications is below the district and regional average in both Selby and Sherburn in Elmet.

Economic Structure

- 1.35 Having established the key characteristics of the labour force within rural Selby it is now pertinent to consider its economic structure compared to the wider district, regional and national comparators.

Industry of Employment

Figure A4.1.6: Industry of Employment

	Agriculture; hunting; forestry	Fishing	Mining & quarrying	Manufacturing	Electricity; gas and water supply	Construction	Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles	Hotels and catering	Transport storage and communication	Financial intermediation	Real estate; renting and business activities	Public administration and defence	Education	Health and social work	Other
Rural Selby	4.6	0.0	1.9	15.8	1.9	7.0	17.2	4.7	5.9	4.0	11.1	4.9	7.3	8.9	4.7
Selby	4.1	0.0	2.1	15.8	2.1	7.1	17.6	4.7	6.1	3.8	10.7	4.9	7.2	9.1	4.7
Yorkshire and The Humber	1.6	0.0	0.4	17.4	0.8	7.0	17.9	5.0	6.3	4.1	9.9	5.5	8.1	11.6	4.5
England and Wales	1.5	0.0	0.3	15.0	0.7	6.8	16.8	4.8	7.0	4.7	13.0	5.7	7.8	10.8	5.2

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.36 Generally the industrial structure of rural Selby does not stand out from that of the district, with the exception of the above average proportion of people employed in the agriculture; hunting; forestry sectors: 4.6% compared to 1.6% across Yorkshire and Humber, and 1.5% across England and Wales.
- 1.37 Analysis at settlement level shows that employees living in the district's three towns are more likely to be involved in the 'local' industrial sectors – manufacturing, mining, wholesale and retail, than those in the rural areas. Both Sherburn -in-Elmet and Tadcaster have a pro-rata proportion of higher value employees (financial intermediation and real estate) resident in the towns.

Rural Enterprises

- 1.38 The table below considers the concentration of enterprises by sector within rural Selby compared to rural Yorkshire and Humber, recoded in 2006.

- 1.39 Rural Selby did however, have an above average proportion of construction and property and business service enterprises than recorded across the region. This evidences an observed trends towards diversification already within rural Selby – an important quality.

Figure A4.1.7: VAT Based Enterprises by Broad Industry Group (Rural)

	Selby		Yorkshire and The Humber	
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
Total	2085		38210	
Agriculture	435	20.9	8860	23.2
Production	145	7.0	2825	7.4
Construction	260	12.5	4455	11.7
Motor Trades	95	4.6	1625	4.3
Wholesale	125	6.0	2230	5.8
Retail	165	7.9	3250	8.5
Hotels & Catering	115	5.5	2435	6.4
Transport	125	6.0	1815	4.8
Post & Telecommunications	25	1.2	275	0.7
Finance	5	0.2	95	0.2
Property & Business Services	455	21.8	7805	20.4
Education	15	0.7	260	0.7
Health	5	0.2	130	0.3
Public Admin & Other Services	115	5.5	2145	5.6

Source: ONS, 2006

Occupation

- 1.40 The table below shows the occupation profile of the working age proportion within rural Selby.

Figure A4.1.8: Occupation of Employment

	Managers and senior officials	Professional occupations	Associate professional and	Administrative and secretarial	Skilled trades occupations	Personal service occupations	Sales and customer service	Process, plant and machine	Elementary occupations
Rural Selby	17	10.1	12.3	12.5	13	6.2	6.8	10.4	11.7
Selby District	15.8	9.3	11.9	12.3	13.0	6.6	7.6	11.1	12.4
Yorkshire and the Humber	13.3	9.7	12.5	12.3	12.7	7.3	8.4	10.4	13.7
England and Wales	15.1	11.2	13.8	13.3	11.6	6.9	7.7	8.5	11.9

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.41 The Census recorded above average proportions of people residing in rural Selby and employed in higher grade occupations compared to England and Wales. Specifically this relates to those employ as Managers and Senior Officials; Professionals and Skilled Trades Occupiers.
- 1.42 All three towns host higher than average proportions of residents in administrative and secretarial, elementary and process, plant and machinery occupational occupations (compared to the district and regional average); Tadcaster has the lowest proportion of the three. All towns host fewer than average residents in managerial and professional occupations than the district and national average; pointing to their preference for the rural area. It is interesting to note however that both Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet are only slightly below the average for professionals and managerial occupations (respectively).
- 1.43 As with the levels of qualification identified this in part is a result of the propensity of a large proportion of the rural Selby labour force to commute out of the district for employment.
- 1.44 Importantly the inclusion of the market towns (excluding Selby town centre) within the defined 'rural Selby' has resulted in an above average (compared to England and Wales) proportion of people employed in Plant; process and machine operative occupations. The significance of this is two-fold. Firstly the vulnerability of the local economies in these locations to wider structural change, and secondly the potential skills issues within the towns and hinterlands across rural Selby.

Distance Travelled to Work

- 1.45 The table below shows the average distance travelled to work.

Figure A4.1.9: Distance Travelled to Work

	Rural Selby	Selby District	Yorkshire and Humber	England and Wales
Works mainly at or from home	19.3	17.4	12.0	13.6
Distance travelled to work: Less than 2km	15.8	20.9	20.8	20.1
Distance travelled to work: 2km to less than 5km	9.9	11.2	22.9	20.1
Distance travelled to work: 5km to less than 10km	15.4	14.6	19.7	18.3
Distance travelled to work: 10km to less than 20km	20.9	19.0	14.4	15.3
Distance travelled to work: 20km to less than 30km	9.6	8.5	4.6	5.4
Distance travelled to work: 30km to less than 40km	4.2	3.8	2.0	2.4
Distance travelled to work: 40km to less than 60km	2.7	2.5	1.6	2.2
Distance travelled to work: 60km and over	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.7

Source: Census, 2001

- 1.46 Two trends are apparent in this analysis. Firstly, an above average proportion of these within rural Selby travel more than 10km to work.
- 1.47 Secondly, a significantly above average proportion of people work mainly at or from home. This in part reflects the legacy of the agricultural industry, but also a potential shift towards BPCS activities operating from home.
- 1.48 Analysis of the data at settlement level shows that the highest number of people working locally live in Tadcaster, but none of the three towns match the rural area for people working at home. Bearing in mind that employment in agriculture accounts for only 4.6% of the economically active population, a significant number of people must be engaged in other, knowledge related activity.
- 1.49 Sherburn in Elmet appears to be hosting a significant number of people who commute out of the district for work.

Income

- 1.50 The final characteristic of the rural economy considered within this analysis is income levels. Detailed information on incomes down to ward level is not readily available. However, in order to obtain an understanding of income levels two indicators have been included – income support; and car ownership (a recognised proxy for levels of disposable income).

Income Support

- 1.51 Rural Selby shows above average proportions of people claiming income support for between 6 months and a year, and between 2 and 5 years. This is likely to be a legacy of the decline in agricultural activity, and the above average proportion of people unemployed and aged over 50 years.

Figure A4.1.10: Income Support Claimants

	Rural Selby	Selby District	Yorkshire and The Humber	England and Wales
Total	725	1260	183540	1916080
Claim Duration Less Than 6 Months	17.9	15.9	13.1	11.7
Claim Duration 6 Months-1 Year	9	9.5	8.5	8.1
Claim Duration 1-2 Years	12.4	11.9	12.0	12.0
Claim Duration 2-5 Years	27.6	26.2	23.7	23.7
Claim Duration 5 Years and Over	33.1	35.7	42.7	44.5

Source: Census, 2001

Car Ownership

- 1.52 Importantly car ownership levels (households with two or more cars) in rural Selby are above average levels. Whilst this implies above average income levels, it also in part reflects access to service provision and employment – and therefore a reliance within the rural economy on cars / vans.

Figure A4.1.11: Car Ownership

	Households with no cars or vans	Households with one car or van	Households with two cars or vans	Households with three cars or vans	Households with four or more cars or vans
Rural Selby	13.7	42.1	35.3	6.9	2.0
Selby District	17.5	43.2	31.6	6.1	1.7
Yorkshire and The Humber	30.3	44.1	21.0	3.5	1.0
England and Wales	26.8	43.8	23.5	4.5	1.4

Source: Census, 2001

2. SETTLEMENT LEVEL BASELINE

Geography

2.1 Data analysis has been undertaken at 'settlement' level concentrating on the main centres of Selby, Sherburn in Elmet, and Tadcaster and their hinterlands. The analysis for these areas is presented in the earlier tables within this section, but drawn out within the following summary sub-sections.

2.2 The following wards are included within the analysis for each market town:

- Selby: Selby North, Selby West, Selby South, Brayton
- Sherburn-in-Elmet: Sherburn in Elmet
- Tadcaster: Tadcaster West, Tadcaster East

Setting the Baseline

Demographics

Population Change / Age Structure

Figure A4.2.1: Population Change / Age Structure 1981 - 2001

	Selby Town	Sherburn in Elmet	Tadcaster	Selby District	Yorkshire and Humber	England and Wales
Total Population 1981	14853	4492	5733	58,096	4,810,411	48,521,651
Total Population 1991	12606	5672	6454	69,898	4,836,524	49,890,277
Total Population 2001	18526	6221	7341	76,468	4,964,833	52,041,916
% Change 1981 - 2001	24.7%	38.5%	28.0%	31.6%	3.2%	7.3%
Working Age Population 1981	11504	3339	4446	36,856	2,998,856	30,474,078
Working Age Population 1991	14536	5251	2191	46,002	3,069,909	31,832,791
Working Age Population 2001	8570	3044	3706	49,228	3,150,634	33,240,406
% Change 1981 - 2001	-25.5%	-8.8%	-16.6%	33.6%	5.1%	9.1%

Source: Census, 1981 / 1991 / 2001

2.3 Interestingly the data suggests a significant reduction in the working age population in all three towns since 1991, against the wider trend observed at District level. This suggests a degree of growth in the rural areas outside the market towns, alongside an ageing population.

Labour Force Analysis

Economic Activity

Figure A4.2.2: Economic Activity (Proportion of Total Working Age Population)

	Economically active: Employees Part-time	Economically active: Employees Full-time	Economically active: Self-employed	Economically active: Unemployed	Economically active: Full-time student
Selby	15.3	41.8	6.3	3.4	2.2
Sherburn in Elmet	14.3	46.4	7.0	2.4	2.4
Tadcaster	15.0	45.9	7.3	1.8	2.0
Selby District	13.8	43.6	9.3	2.5	1.9
Yorkshire and The Humber	12.9	38.8	7.2	3.7	2.5
England and Wales	11.8	40.6	8.3	3.4	2.6

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.4 There are higher proportions of self-employment in rural areas of Selby than there are within the urban, illustrating an interesting trend towards entrepreneurship.
- 2.5 Importantly, Tadcaster is shown to have the highest proportion of self-employment of the three market towns, alongside the lowest unemployment.

Unemployment

Figure A4.2.3: Unemployment

	Unemployed	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Aged 16 - 24	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Aged 50 and over	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Who have never worked	Unemployed people aged 16-74: Who are long-term unemployed
Selby	3.4	28.4	16.0	4.7	30.0
Sherburn in Elmet	2.4	23.8	16.2	2.9	28.6
Tadcaster	1.8	27.8	19.6	3.1	23.7
Selby District	2.5	24.5	20.4	3.8	28.0
Yorkshire and The Humber	3.7	27.4	17.8	9.9	31.5
England and Wales	3.4	25.9	18.6	9.3	30.3

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.6 Whilst unemployment in Tadcaster is lower than in the other market towns it shows relatively high proportions of people unemployed and aged between 16 and 24 years, and aged over 50 years, suggesting limited 'general' employment opportunities in the town catering for the wider population.

Qualifications and Skills

Figure A4.2.4: Qualifications

	No qualifications	Highest qualification attained level 1	Highest qualification attained level 2	Highest qualification attained level 3	Highest qualification attained level 4 / 5	Other qualifications / level unknown
Selby	32.3	20.4	20.5	5.7	13	8.3
Sherburn in Elmet	30.2	20	22	6.7	13.8	7.4
Tadcaster	29.3	18.9	20.7	6.7	17	7.4
Selby District	28.2	18.9	20.9	6.4	17.5	8.1
Yorkshire and The Humber	33.1	17.1	18.0	7.7	16.4	7.6
England and Wales	29.1	16.6	19.4	8.3	19.8	6.9

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.7 The highest qualifications levels amongst the working age population are found to be in Tadcaster and the rural areas. In contrast, at the higher grade, Level 4 / 5 qualifications in Selby and Sherburn-in-Elmet are below the district and regional averages.

Economic Structure

Industry of Employment

Figure A4.2.5: Industry of Employment

	Agriculture; hunting; forestry	Fishing	Mining & quarrying	Manufacturing	Electricity; gas and water supply	Construction	Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles	Hotels and catering	Transport storage and communication	Financial intermediation	Real estate; renting and business activities	Public administration and defence	Education	Health and social work	Other
Selby	2.2	0	2.7	15.9	2.6	7.5	19.2	4.6	6.9	3.2	9.6	4.9	6.8	9.6	4.3
Sherburn in Elmet	2.0	0	1.7	18.2	1.3	6.5	18.6	4.7	7.1	4.3	10.8	4.8	6.5	8.8	4.7
Tadcaster	1.7	0	0.4	22	0.9	5.6	16.5	5.7	4.6	3.7	10.6	5.1	6.5	8.2	8.5
Selby	4.1	0.0	2.1	15.8	2.1	7.1	17.6	4.7	6.1	3.8	10.7	4.9	7.2	9.1	4.7
Yorkshire and The Humber	1.6	0.0	0.4	17.4	0.8	7.0	17.9	5.0	6.3	4.1	9.9	5.5	8.1	11.6	4.5
England and Wales	1.5	0.0	0.3	15.0	0.7	6.8	16.8	4.8	7.0	4.7	13.0	5.7	7.8	10.8	5.2

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.8 From the above table it would appear that employees living in the towns are more likely to be involved in the 'local' industrial sectors – manufacturing, mining, wholesale and retail, than those in the rural areas.
- 2.9 Both Sherburn-in-Elmet and Tadcaster have a pro-rata proportion of higher value employees (financial intermediation and real estate) resident in the towns.

Occupation

Figure A4.2.6: Occupation of Employment

	Managers and senior officials	Professional occupations	Associate professional and	Administrative and secretarial	Skilled trades occupations	Personal service occupations	Sales and customer service	Process; plant and machine	Elementary occupations
Selby	11.8	6.8	10.6	11.3	13.0	7.9	10.2	13.6	14.9
Sherburn in Elmet	14.9	7.7	10.9	13.9	11.4	6.3	7.7	12.2	15.1
Tadcaster	14.3	8.9	11.4	14.8	11.2	7.2	7.2	11.5	13.5
Selby District	15.8	9.3	11.9	12.3	13.0	6.6	7.6	11.1	12.4
Yorkshire and the Humber	13.3	9.7	12.5	12.3	12.7	7.3	8.4	10.4	13.7
England and Wales	15.1	11.2	13.8	13.3	11.6	6.9	7.7	8.5	11.9

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.10 All three towns host higher than average proportions of residents in administrative and secretarial, elementary and process, plant and machinery occupational occupations (compared to the district and regional average); Tadcaster has the lowest proportion of the three.
- 2.11 All towns host fewer than average residents in managerial and professional occupations than the district and national average; pointing to their preference for the rural area. It is interesting to note however that both Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet are only slightly below the average for professionals and managerial occupations (respectively).

Distance Travelled to Work

Figure A4.2.7: Distance Travelled to Work

	Selby Town	Sherburn in Elmet	Tadcaster	Selby District	Yorkshire and Humber	England and Wales
Works mainly at or from home	7	8.6	8.3	17.4	12.0	13.6
Distance travelled to work: Less than 2km	33.1	22	26.6	20.9	20.8	20.1
Distance travelled to work: 2km to less than 5km	11.0	6.4	8.3	11.2	22.9	20.1
Distance travelled to work: 5km to less than 10km	7.9	6.0	15.1	14.6	19.7	18.3
Distance travelled to work: 10km to less than 20km	13.4	30.8	20.4	19.0	14.4	15.3
Distance travelled to work: 20km to less than 30km	10.9	15.4	12.5	8.5	4.6	5.4
Distance travelled to work: 30km to less than 40km	6.9	2.6	1.6	3.8	2.0	2.4
Distance travelled to work: 40km to less than 60km	3.0	1.3	1.6	2.5	1.6	2.2
Distance travelled to work: 60km and over	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.2	1.9	2.7

Source: Census, 2001

- 2.12 The highest number of people working locally live in Tadcaster, but none of the three towns match the rural area for people working at home. Bearing in mind that employment in agriculture accounts for only 4.6% of the economically active population, a significant number of people must be engaged in other, knowledge related activity.
- 2.13 Sherburn in Elmet appears to be hosting a significant number of people who commute out of the district for work.

3. RURAL ISSUES

3.1 The objectives of the Core Strategy and Issues Paper (in relation to the rural area) are to:

- Enhance the role of the three Renaissance market towns as accessible service centres
- Reduce outward commuting from the District (particularly by private car)
- Support diversification of the economy...through the provision of a suitable range and quality of sites and premises for employment uses, and encourage activities to increase skills levels

3.2 The emerging rural issues are considered in relation to each of these objectives.

Enhance the Role of Market Towns

Selby has not been considered from a rural point of view as it considered to be urban in nature.

Tadcaster sits at the very north eastern periphery of the district, essentially within the Leeds City region. As such it provides a service centre role for residents of both Selby and neighbouring districts. The communities to the west include some of the most highly skilled and economically successful residents in the region.

Opportunities for economic growth through scale and high volume activity are restricted, despite its strong road network, by the Green Belt and physical constraints including the road, river and related floodplain.

Tadcaster does however have the core assets (style, services, transport connections, culture) to attract inward investment (both on a daily and permanent basis) and to build an offer to knowledge based businesses based upon its attractiveness, links to the food and drinks sector, proximity and strong connections within the Leeds City Region. Tadcaster must think of its rural hinterland in totality and seek to leverage the strongest possible connections with communities to the west of the A1 as well as within the district.

Sherburn in Elmet appears to be the main focus for economic development via provision of employment land and substantial sites. It hosts a wide range of industrial and logistics business, and supported the vast majority of the districts 75,000 sq m of B2 & B8 development in the year 2005 – 2006.

Sherburn is also well related to the Leeds City Region, situated to the west of the district and will have good road and rail connectivity in all directions. It provides a service centre functionality in terms of employment, housing, transport and retail; its impact is perhaps greatest in terms of employment as the retail and cultural offer is overshadowed by the relative proximity of Leeds and other sub-regional centres such as Harrogate and Knaresborough.

The scale of development potential offered by Sherburn is constrained by the Green Belt (it is inset within the West Yorkshire Greenbelt) and the Sherburn bypass to the east.

- 3.3 Given the scale of economic activity hosted at Sherburn, there must be opportunities to link enterprise hosted in the related rural areas to the service centre.

Reduce Outward Commuting from the District

- 3.4 It is clear from the baseline analysis that the residents of the rural areas of the district are potentially a strong economic resource. There are high levels of economic activity (compared to regional average; 42.7% fte v. 38.8%) and very high levels of self-employment (12.8%) compared to district (9.3%) and regional average (7.2%). Educational levels are also higher amongst rural residents: there are fewer with no qualifications (25.9%) than the district (28.2%) and regional average (33.1%), and more with L4/5 (22%) compared with the district (17.5%) and regional average (16.4%). The occupational classification of residents shows a high incidence of in managers, professional and associate professional (levels are well above regional averages); under an under representation in personal services, sales and elementary (below the regional average).
- 3.5 Local intelligence, supported by data on the distance travelled to work and the gap between workbased and resident based earnings, claims that many of these highly skilled and enterprising residents leave the district to work everyday. The challenge for Selby is therefore to provide opportunities within the district for them to set up their own businesses or match / improve on their current employment.
- 3.6 The main route to this is via the provision of appropriate premises in order to attract owner managed business into the market towns and rural area. Evidence shows that rural areas (the places that these people live) are poorly served with 'fit for purpose' workspace for knowledge based business. Analysis of the council's annual monitoring report bears this out; of the 75,000 sq m of new workspace completed in the district in 2005 / 2006, only 1.061 sq m was in the B1 use class (offices and light industrial), the remainder was in B2 and B8 (warehousing and general industrial).

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- 3.7 It is interesting to note that the sector of employment of the districts residents is relatively consistent across the rural and urban areas. The main employers are manufacturing and retail / wholesale, with financial and business services the next largest. It is interesting to note that agriculture accounts for only 4.1% (6.1% in the rural area) of employment.
- 3.8 Further analysis of available evidence points to the following factors which may be constraining the location of new knowledge based business in the district:
- Lack of new retail and cultural development in the market towns; the AMR reports that there were no applications for new development in Tadcaster or Sherburn Town Centres during the period 2005 / 2006. It also reports 20 empty shop premises in Tadcaster and 4 in Sherburn.
 - High level of demand for housing sites; there has been a high level of housing development in the district (640 completions in 2005/06, 800 forecast for 2006/07). This will inevitably put pressure on available sites and affect their value, so preventing development for employment sites
 - The right sort of employment land allocation; does the allocation provide for and support small developments of B1 space in the market towns and larger villages? The AMR reports that there are still 61 ha's of employment land allocated for development, most of which is at Sherburn and the Burn Airfield. Owner managers like to be able to buy their workspace; due to the size of businesses, highest demand is likely to be for units of < 500 sq m
 - Housing affordability in rural areas; the 2005 Housing Needs Survey showed the need for new affordable housing units in the rural areas. Since that time, only 31 have been completed in the rural areas, none on exception sites
 - The restrictive policy on homeworking in the current Local Plan

Support Diversification of the Economy

- 3.9 The economy of Selby has traditionally been dominated by manufacturing, mining and the food and drink sector. Farming is a very visible activity in terms of land use, but accounts for a relatively small proportion of employment (4%). Agriculture accounts for 21% of businesses in the rural area (below the regional average) which means that four out of five rural businesses are in other sectors. Evidence shows that the allocation of business stock in the rural areas of the district is consistent with the regional profile, with rural Selby over represented in

Transport (6.0% v 4.8%), Property & Business Services (21.8% v 20.4%) and construction (12.5%v 11.7%).

- 3.10 There is clear evidence of continuing decline in the agriculture and mining sectors, (leading to relatively high incidence of unemployment amongst the over 50's and consequent low income households). This points towards limited employment alternatives and the need to broaden the base of economic activity for at all levels of enterprise. It is interesting to note that (based on the proportion of sectoral employment and business stock) the visitor economy in the district is limited. Tourism businesses often offer a viable alternate income to low skilled, older workers and potential for land based diversification – this avenue does not appear to be available, at least at present.
- 3.11 There is evidence of growth in the financial and business service and construction sectors, and real potential to harness the move towards higher skilled and knowledge based enterprise experienced across the country. How can the rural areas contribute to achieving this potential, the shift from lower to higher value employment? This will require both upskilling of the existing local workforce and broadening the range of economic activity hosted in the district.
- 3.12 Emerging Issues around broadening the economic base include the following:

Re-Use of Farm Buildings

- 3.13 There is clearly potential for existing buildings in rural areas to add to the district's workspace portfolio. It appears that some owners of buildings are recognising this and securing planning consent for workspace use. The AMR (2005 – 2006) includes the following sites with outstanding change of use consent for B1.
- Home Farm, Thorganby 300 sq m (completed), 790 sq m (outstanding)
 - Whitemoor Farm Cliffe (320 sq m)
 - Commonside Farm, Barlow (0.36 ha's)
 - Burn Grange Farm, Burn (320 sq m)
 - Brears Farm Nurseries, Beal (251 sq m)
 - Bowers House Farm, Hillam (633 sq m)
 - Former Little Chef & Filling Station, Braham Crossroads, A64 Eastbound (0.35 ha's)
 - Willow Farm, Tadcaster (891 sq m)

It is not clear from initial research how successful development of these buildings is likely to be, but it is interesting to note that existing consents total over 3.500 sq m of B1 workspace. That is three times more than was completed in the whole district in 2005 / 2006.

- 3.14 It will be important to understand the status of these consents, their potential for completion and to attract new knowledge based businesses.

Visitor Economy

In many parts of the country the visitor economy is the most likely sector which land based business turns to when looking for diversification. It would appear that the visitor economy is not very strong in the district. It is interesting to note that the AMR 2005/ 2006 reports only one leisure development (Spring Lodge Lake, Womersley). All of the applications for conversion of farm buildings were for business, rather than tourism use.

- 3.15 It seems likely therefore that efforts to stimulate diversification should concentrate on:

- business use (subject to demand and offering appropriate products)
- the spending power of local residents

- 3.16 Appropriate diversification aimed at local residents (as the market) include equestrian centres, farm parks and activity centres, artisan production (food and countryside products) and related retail and food service.

Planning Framework

- 3.17 Planning and development control is a major influence on economic development in rural areas. Evidence from consultation and wider research is that business owners in rural areas, both within Key Service Centres and in the wider rural area, find planning and development control one of the hardest issues to deal with when seeking to diversify and develop their business.
- 3.18 In simple terms, planning tends to act as a brake on economic development in rural areas rather than as an enabler.
- 3.19 This is not because of a negative approach from local planning authorities, but is the logical consequence of national planning policy which seeks to focus development in cities and towns, and where-ever possible to use previously developed land. Local Planning Authorities are statutorily required to work within the context of national and regional policy.
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3.20 Achieving 'Sustainable development' is a core principle underpinning land use planning and is therefore the key driver for national, regional and local policy making. In applying the principles of sustainable development to planning policy relating to rural areas¹ Government has set out the following instructions.

(i) Decisions on development proposals should be based on sustainable development principles, ensuring an integrated approach to the consideration of:

- social inclusion, recognising the needs of everyone;
- effective protection and enhancement of the environment;
- prudent use of natural resources; and
- maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

(ii) Good quality, carefully-sited accessible development within existing towns and villages should be allowed where it benefits the local economy and/or community (e.g. affordable housing for identified local needs); maintains or enhances the local environment; and does not conflict with other planning policies.

(iii) Accessibility should be a key consideration in all development decisions. Most developments which are likely to generate large numbers of trips should be located in or next to towns or other service centres that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, in line with the policies set out in PPG13, *Transport*. Decisions on the location of other developments in rural areas should, where possible, give people the greatest opportunity to access them by public transport, walking and cycling, consistent with achieving the primary purpose of the development.

(iv) New building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled; the Government's overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.

(v) Priority should be given to the re-use of previously-developed ('brownfield') sites in preference to the development of greenfield sites, except in cases where there are no brownfield sites available, or these brownfield sites perform so poorly in terms of sustainability

¹ Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

considerations (for example, in their remoteness from settlements and services) in comparison with greenfield sites.

(vi) All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.

3.21 Local Planning Authorities must take account of this over-riding context when considering economic development opportunities in rural areas. The Government's national planning policy guidance for rural areas (Planning Policy Statement 7) does however recognise the need for local planning authorities to **facilitate** and **enable** appropriate development in order to promote economic growth, ensure the future management of the countryside, provide access and maintain sustainable communities. It sets out some clear principles for planning authorities to follow:

- Location of Development

Away from larger urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together. These centres (which might be a country town, a single large village or a group of villages) should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development.

- The Countryside Around Urban Areas

While the policies in PPG2 continue to apply in green belts, local planning authorities should ensure that their local policies address the particular land use issues and opportunities to be found in the countryside ..., recognising its importance to those who live or work there, and also in providing the nearest and most accessible countryside to urban residents. Planning authorities should aim to secure environmental improvements and maximise a range of beneficial uses of this land, whilst reducing potential conflicts between neighbouring land uses. This should include improvement of public access (e.g. through support for country parks and community forests) and facilitating the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities.

- Support Sustainable Farming

Planning policies should recognise the role played by agriculture in the maintenance and management of the countryside and support development proposals that will enable farming and farmers to:

-
- become more competitive, sustainable and environmentally friendly;
 - adapt to new and changing markets;
 - comply with changing legislation and associated guidance;
 - diversify into new agricultural opportunities (e.g. renewable energy crops); or
 - broaden their operations to 'add value' to their primary produce.

- Support and Facilitate Land Based Diversification

Recognising that diversification into non-agricultural activities is vital to the continuing viability of many farm enterprises, local planning authorities should:

- set out in their LDDs the criteria to be applied to planning applications for farm diversification projects;
- be supportive of well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that contribute to sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the agricultural enterprise, and are consistent in their scale with their rural location. This applies equally to farm diversification schemes around the fringes of urban areas; and
- where relevant, give favourable consideration to proposals for diversification in Green Belts where the development preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it².

- Support the Re-Use of Existing Buildings

Government's policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses. Local planning authorities should be particularly supportive of

² Where farm diversification proposals in the Green Belt would result in inappropriate development in terms of PPG2, any wider benefits of the diversification may contribute to the 'very special circumstances' required by PPG2 for a development to be granted planning permission.

the re-use of existing buildings that are adjacent or closely related to country towns and villages, for economic or community uses.

- Minimise the Impact of Farm Diversification

A supportive approach to farm diversification should not result in excessive expansion and encroachment of building development into the countryside. Planning authorities should:

- encourage the re-use or replacement of existing buildings where feasible, having
- regard to paragraphs 17-21; and
- have regard to the amenity of any nearby residents or other rural businesses that may
- be adversely affected by new types of on-farm development.

3.22 This instruction provides a clear context and set of drivers for supporting and enabling economic development in rural areas at a local level (i.e. within a Local Development Framework).

3.23 The Local Development Framework (LDF) needs to act as an enabling framework for the sustainable development of the district; in particular it should allow for the local economic development objectives to be achieved. It should also provide a context within which the borough can enable investment and development to contribute to regional and sub-regional strategic objectives, such as those contained within the Regional Economic Strategy and Leeds City Region Development Framework

3.24 It is incumbent upon the Local Development Framework to consider and set out how the rural area of the district can contribute to these objectives. The approach of the local planning authority should be guided by the principles set out in national planning policy statements (in particular PPS2 Green Belts and PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas). It should also take account of the *circumstances, needs and priorities of the rural communities and businesses in their area, and of the interdependence between urban and rural areas*³.

3.25 It is recommended that the LDF should take full account of, and where possible support the following key drivers:

Local Service Centres:

3.26 Identify the settlements (and networks of settlements) which provide community facilities, services and employment. Consider how these local service centres can contribute to sustainable economic development through provision of:

- appropriate sites for employment and enterprise
- a comprehensive *range* of housing provision (from 'affordable' to 'executive')
- community facilities (i.e. shops, pubs, café, halls, libraries, schools, health centres etc)
- leisure and visitor facilities (enterprise) to support improved access and enjoyment of the countryside by the urban population

Related 'Opportunity Sites'

3.27 Consider whether there are groups or sets of farm buildings which are closely related or adjacent to these local service centres which can contribute to their improved functionality.

Re-Use of Existing Buildings

3.28 Set a presumption in favour of the re-use of existing buildings for uses which contribute to sustainable economic and community development. The uses which the LDF should encourage might include:

- workspace for knowledge based or service enterprises (B1 use class)
- workspace for appropriate light industrial (B1 use class) enterprises
- workspace ancillary to residential accommodation (home working)
- facilities to develop the visitor and leisure economy (equestrian facilities, countryside parks, activity trails and trail heads, cafés and parking infrastructure)
- facilities to support sustainable agriculture and related diversification (processing and adding value to primary produce, development processing and distribution of countryside products etc)
- community facilities (meeting rooms, halls, service points)
- mixed workspace and residential uses

³ PPS7, paragraph 2

- 3.29 Any re-use would need to meet the requirements of Green Belt policy (in terms of impact on the openness of the Green Belt) and have due regard to the amenity of those living, working or enjoying access to the local area.

Sustainable Development of Agricultural Businesses

- 3.30 Support the future viability of farm businesses through enabling development which allows farm businesses to:

- become more competitive, sustainable and environmentally friendly;
- adapt to new and changing markets;
- comply with changing legislation and associated guidance;
- diversify into new agricultural opportunities (e.g. renewable energy crops); or
- broaden their operations to 'add value' to their primary produce.

- 3.31 Any such development will need to respect and not materially impact upon the openness of Green Belt, or restrict the ability of the urban population to access and engage in recreation in the local countryside.

Improve Access and Rural / Urban Connectivity

- 3.32 Set a context which will enable and secure improvements to access and informal leisure and recreational opportunities for the urban population (and those living in local service centres) in tandem to the sustainable re-use of existing rural buildings and 'opportunity sites' adjacent to local service centres.

Maintain and Enhance the Natural Environment

- 3.33 Ensure that development of all kinds within and adjacent to the rural area (i.e. highways infrastructure and signage as well as built development) respects and where-ever possible enhances the character of the natural environment and its relationship with the town (of St.Helens), local service centres and key transport corridors.

Green Infrastructure

- 3.34 Set a context which promotes the use of, and investment in 'Green Infrastructure' in the areas within and immediately adjacent to the town and its key access points as an asset for the borough which can contribute to improved social and economic well-being.
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4. POLICY APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Previous analysis has suggested the importance of both homeworking and conversion of agricultural buildings to contributing to the diversification of the rural economy. Current policy relating to these areas are appraised in turn in the remainder of this section.

Current Policy: Homeworking

EMP9A - Homeworking

- 4.2 Business uses operating from a single dwelling house, or within its curtilage, will **only** be permitted where the proposal:
- 1) Would not generate visitors, traffic, noise or fumes over and above what might be expected if the property were in use as a single dwelling without ancillary use;
 - 2) Would not have a significant adverse effect on the visual amenity of the local residential area; and
 - 3) Would not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety.

This gives an impression that homeworking is to be dissuaded and that any use which generates visitors or traffic will not be allowed. This position errs on the need to maintain control rather than promoting acceptable uses. It does not make any reference to scale of impact – in effect it reads as if any change from pure residential user is discouraged.

The fact that many homeworking uses do not require planning consent (unless and until the business use becomes prejudicial (would adversely affect residential amenity) is hidden by the wording of the existing policy.

The Peak District NPA Local Plan introduces the subject of homeworking with a positive comment set out *before* the policy statement; *'the NPA's support for a flexible approach to working from home is set out in Structure Plan Policy EC3. In many cases, where the overall character of the residential use is not changed, home working does not required planning permission.*

- 4.3 This is not so different from Selby's justification copy; but is offered in advance of the policy, and majors on the fact that planning consent is very often not required.

Selby Justification - EMP9A

Homeworking

6.51 Recent developments in computing and tele-communications have led to more and more people working from home – a trend which is likely to increase in future years. Homeworking does not necessarily need planning permission, which is generally only required when the business use is of sufficient intensity as to affect the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling. For example, the use by a householder of a room as an office, or childminding complying with the Department of Health's standard recommended ratios¹ is unlikely to change the character of the house's use. In such cases the Council would not require planning permission to be sought. However, if the business is not, or has ceased to be, ancillary to its use as a single dwelling as a result of the intensity of the business activity, planning permission will be required.

- 4.4 The wording in PPG4 relates to the employment use not 'adversely affecting residential amenity'; PPG4 specifically states that 'the fact that an activity differs from the predominant land use in any locality is not a sufficient reason, in itself, for refusing planning permission'.

6.52 The Council is anxious to protect the amenity of residential areas from unreasonable nuisance caused by homeworking, which, for example, may be caused by increased traffic generation, noise, fumes or unreasonable hours of working. Anyone considering working from home is advised to seek advice from the Council at an early stage.

The Peak District NPA policy justification introduces the need for a policy to control uses which might adversely affect residential use and provides an example to illustrate the sort and scale of use that may need to be restricted. It does this in a positive and enabling manner.

- 4.5 *'Where this character is changed to some degree, and permission is needed, it is reasonable to require clear limits to the type and size of activity, providing reassurance and certainty to neighbours. Businesses such as taxi firms, for example, can cause problems if they expand to the point where more than one or two vehicles operate from a domestic setting, particularly if these cannot be accommodated on the site.'*

6.53 In cases where a planning application is deemed to be necessary because there is a possibility that the use will change, or has already changed, the overall character of the

property's use as a single dwelling house, the Council will judge proposals in accordance with the following policy.

- 4.6 The Peak District NPA policy on homeworking (LE3) introduces the concept of strong control, but offers a presumption in favour of uses which are deemed to be acceptable – those within Use Class B1.

Policy LE3; Home Working

Planning permission for home working will be restricted to a specified activity within use class B1. Planning conditions and/or obligations will be used as necessary and appropriate to control any aspects of the business activity likely to affect the valued characteristics residential character or amenity of the area including:

The exclusion of permitted development rights for further buildings and structures;

The scale, intensity and type of activity, including vehicular movements and hours of operation;

The arrangement of parking and / or storing of vehicles, equipment and materials

- 4.7 The wording of the Peak District NPA policy would appear to be appropriate for Selby District.

Conversions to Employment Use in the Countryside

Current Policy - EMP8 - Conversions to Employment Use in the Countryside

Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings for commercial, industrial or recreational uses, including appropriate farm diversification activities, will be permitted provided:

- 1) The building is structurally sound and capable of re-use without substantial re-building;
- 2) The proposed re-use or adaptation will generally take place within the fabric of the building and will not require extensive alteration, re-building and/or extension;
- 3) Conversion would not damage the fabric and character of a building of architectural or historical interest, or a traditional building which makes a positive contribution to the character of the countryside;
- 4) The form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings;

5) The conversion of the building and ancillary works, such as the creation of incidental outside areas, and the provision of satisfactory access and parking arrangements, would not have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the area, or encroach into open countryside; and

6) The proposal would not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety or which would have a significant adverse effect on local amenity.

4.8 It may be appropriate to set different standards around impact on character and appearance of the area an encroachment into open countryside for sites within and outside the Green Belt.

Justification - EMP8

Conversions to Employment Use in the Countryside

6.39 PPG7 (The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development, 1997) makes it clear that proposals for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings can provide valuable workspace and help reduce the demand for new buildings in rural areas. Such developments can often be carried out without damage to their surroundings, and may give rise to no greater disturbance or traffic generation than the former use. A significant number of jobs have already been created in this manner in connection with a variety of commercial, industrial and recreational uses, in accordance with Structure Plan policies and policies in the adopted Rural Areas Local Plan (1990).

6.40 In particular, the re-use or adaptation of existing farm buildings can often provide accommodation for farm diversification activities. With the changes that are continuing to occur in agriculture, it is increasingly important for farmers to be able to look outside agriculture for sources of income and to generate rural employment.

6.41 In line with national planning policy, the District Council will in future give preference to the conversion of buildings to employment uses rather than residential use because of the greater economic and social benefits involved, and because it is often easier to retain the existing character of the building and minimise the impact on the locality. The conversion of buildings to employment uses will also be acceptable in principle in areas of Green Belt, subject to the normal restrictions and conditions applied to such areas, as outlined in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.25 and POLICY GB2.

6.42 When considering proposals, it is important to ensure that the form, bulk and general design of the building will be in keeping with its surroundings. In any conversion, the District

Council will also ensure that the intrinsic character of the building will not be lost through unsympathetic alteration. Buildings must be structurally sound and proposals for major reconstruction or extensions will not be acceptable, since this is likely to fundamentally alter the character of the building.

6.43 Care will also be taken to ensure that any incidental outside areas required as part of the scheme can be provided without adversely affecting the appearance and character of the surrounding area or encroaching into the open countryside.

It may be possible to take a more pragmatic view about the 'intrinsic character' of the building in areas outside the Green Belt. For example the Ribble Valley Local Plan (very rural area in Lancashire including an AONB) includes the following statement in its justification notes:

*'the conversion of buildings to uses which will allow the maintenance of employment opportunities is generally to be encouraged and only where **clear disturbance** will be caused to neighbours, where the form of the building will be **wholly inappropriate**, where development control criteria cannot be met or where the proposed uses contrary to other policies in this plan, will such proposals be resisted'.*

The Council may wish to take a view that the provision of effective and fit for purpose workspace in rural areas of the borough outside the Green Belt is more important than the retention of intrinsic character of existing rural buildings, restrictions on alteration and extension, or the impact that the use for employment has on the wider countryside.

Ribble Valley's policy wording offers a more pragmatic approach to re-use;

- 4.9 'The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for major alterations which would adversely affect the character of the building; The impact of the proposal or additional elements likely to be required for the proper operation of the building will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated;'

6.44 Some rural buildings may provide nesting and roosting sites for barn owls and bats which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). In such circumstances, proposals will need to comply with the requirements of POLICY ENV14.

6.45 PPG advice indicates that Local Authorities may wish to take steps to ensure that the construction of new farm buildings with the intention of early conversion to another use is strictly controlled. In considering proposals for the re-use of modern buildings, particularly those erected under permitted development rights, applicants will be required to demonstrate

that the building has been used for its originally intended purposes. The Council will investigate carefully the history of a building proposed for conversion in order to guard against abuse of the system.

Ribble Valley Borough Council Local Plan

The Conversion of Barns and other Rural Buildings for Employment Uses

POLICY EMP9

Planning permission will be granted for employment-generating uses in barns and other rural buildings, provided all of the following criteria are met:

- (i) The proposed use will not cause unacceptable disturbance to neighbours in any way;
- (ii) The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or other rural enterprise;
- (iii) The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for major alterations which would adversely affect the character of the building;
- (vi) The impact of the proposal or additional elements likely to be required for the proper operation of the building will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated;
- (v) The access to the site is of a safe standard or is capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area;
- (vi) The design of the conversion should be of a high standard and be in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings.