

SENT BY EMAIL
localplan@yorkshiredales.org.uk
10/08/2022

Dear Planning Policy Team,

**YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY LOCAL PLAN 2023-2040:
CONSULTATION NO.5 – PREFERRED OPTIONS**

1. Thank you for consulting with the Home Builders Federation (HBF) on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Local Plan Preferred Options consultation.
2. The HBF is the principal representative body of the house-building industry in England and Wales. Our representations reflect the views of our membership, which includes multi-national PLC's, regional developers and small, local builders. In any one year, our members account for over 80% of all new "for sale" market housing built in England and Wales as well as a large proportion of newly built affordable housing.
3. This response is provided in order to assist the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) in the preparation of the emerging local plan. The HBF is keen to ensure that the YDNPA produces a sound local plan which provides for the housing needs of the area.

General

4. As a very general point the HBF would recommend that the Council seek to number the paragraphs and sub points within their policies. This would make the policies easier to read and to refer to.

CP3 – Biodiversity

5. This policy sets out the biodiversity requirements of new development, for smaller sites (3-9 dwellings) it states that the Small Sites Metric may be used to demonstrate biodiversity net gain. It goes on to state that any development on a site where a priority habitat is present or on residential sites of 10 or more dwellings the Council expect the development to maximise opportunities on site with a minimum of 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) measured by the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 or later.
6. It is the HBF's opinion that the Council should not deviate from the Government's proposals on biodiversity gain as set out in the Environment Act. This legislation will require development to achieve a 10% net gain for biodiversity. It is the Government's opinion that 10% strikes the right balance between the ambition for development and reversing environmental decline. 10% gain provides certainty in achieving environmental outcomes, deliverability of development and costs for developers. 10% will be a



mandatory national requirement, but it is not a cap on the aspirations of developers who want to voluntarily go further. This mandatory requirement offers developers a level playing field nationally and reduced risks of unexpected costs and delays. The HBF is concerned that the additional requirement to meet the 20% net gain, may add significantly to the cost of the development both financially and in terms of land and space, and may be an issue for the viability of development. The HBF is also concerned that the proposed policy does not include a transitional period, which may be required in line with the Environment Act, and to allow time for the YDNPA to prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, for biodiversity credits to come forward and for secondary legislation to come forward.

CP4 – Design

7. This policy states that development proposals should conform with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide. The HBF does not consider it is appropriate to require development proposals to be in conformity with a design guide that is not being tested to the same standards as the Local Plan policies, as this potentially gives the document the elevated status to that of the Development Plan. The HBF considers that it would be appropriate to refer to the Design Guide as a consideration in the determination of applications in line with the NPPF¹.
8. This policy also refers to the Future Homes Standard, and the need for all new homes to lower carbon emissions by 2025. The HBF notes that Government has now published an update to Building Regulations Part L. The publication of the new Approved Documents for Part L (conservation of fuel and power) and F (ventilation) reflect the interim uplift to Building Regulations on the journey to the 2025 Future Homes Standard. The HBF considers that tackling climate change by promoting greater energy efficiency via a nationally consistent set of standards and timetable, which is universally understood and technically implementable, is the most appropriate way forward. The Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes will produce at least 75% lower CO₂ emissions than one built to previous energy efficiency requirements. By delivering carbon reductions through the fabric and building services in a home rather than relying on wider carbon offsetting, the Future Homes Standard will ensure new homes have a smaller carbon footprint than any previous Government policy. In addition, this footprint will continue to reduce over time as the electricity grid decarbonises.
9. On 27 July 2021, the Future Homes Delivery Plan² was published (click for the link to [The Future Homes Delivery Plan](#) – Summary of the goals, the shared roadmap & the Future Homes Delivery Hub). To drive and oversee the plan, the new delivery Hub will be launched in September, with the support and involvement of Government. The Hub will help facilitate a sector-wide approach to identify the metrics, more detailed targets where necessary, methods and innovations to meet the goals and the collaborations required with supply chains and other sectors. It will incorporate the needs of all parties including the public and private sector and crucially, consumers, such that they can all play their part in delivering environmentally conscious homes that people want to live in.

¹ Paragraphs 129 and 134 of the NPPF 2021

² <https://www.futurehomes.org.uk/delivery-plan>

10. The HBF considers that the Councils should comply with the Government's intention of setting standards for energy efficiency through the Building Regulations. The key to success is standardisation and avoidance of individual Council's specifying their own policy approach to energy efficiency, which undermines economies of scale for product manufacturers, suppliers and developers. The Council should not need to set local standards to minimise the demand for energy because of the higher levels of energy efficiency standards for new homes proposed in the 2021 Part L uplift and the Future Homes Standard 2025. The HBF is also not sure it is necessary for the policy to refer to the Future Homes Standard as this will be introduced through the building regulations system, rather than through planning policy.

11. This policy also states that all development proposals should seek to minimise the demand for energy with new residential parking spaces making provision for electric vehicle (EV) charging or the cabling ready for future vehicle charging. The HBF is supportive of encouragement for the use of electric and hybrid vehicles via a national standardised approach implemented through the Building Regulations to ensure a consistent approach to future proofing the housing stock. Part S of the Building Regulations 'Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles' has now been published and took effect from 15th June 2022. This regulations document provides guidance on the installation and location of electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs). It states that a new residential building with associated parking must have access to EVCPs. It states that the total number of EVCPs must be equal to the number of parking spaces if there are fewer parking spaces than dwellings, or the equal to the number of dwellings where there are more parking spaces. The Regulations also set technical requirements for the charging points these include having a nominal output of 7kW and being fitted with a universal socket. The Government has estimated installation of such charging points add on an additional cost of approximately £976. Therefore, the HBF considers that this element of the policy is unnecessary and repetitious of national building regulations, and should be deleted.

CP5 – Energy

12. This policy states that the authority will encourage developers to plan for resilient heating and other emergency measures, particularly in housing schemes where regular or prolonged disruption to the electricity supply and communications could have a severe impact on householder wellbeing or safety. The HBF would seek clarity as to what exactly the Council would expect a home builder to provide to create this resilience, and how this will be factored into the viability of the development.

CP9 – Spatial Strategy and Housing Land Target

13. The policy states that the housing supply will be expanded by a target of 50 new dwellings per year (850 dwellings between 2023 and 2040). It suggests that the majority of this target will be met through the development of allocated sites on the edge of towns and larger villages. It goes on to state that new build housing will only be permitted in locations outside of settlements subject to evidence of an exceptional need for affordable housing or the needs of a rural based enterprise.

14. In terms to the scale of housing provision the HBF is mindful of the status of the area as a National Park and therefore does not consider unrestricted housing growth should occur. It is, however, important that the National Park retains its vitality and places due weight upon its duty to; *'seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities'*.
15. PPG (ID 2a-014) states that where the data is not available such as in National Parks an alternative approach (to the Standard Method) will have to be used. It goes on to state that such authorities may continue to identify a housing need figure using a method determined locally, but in doing so will need to consider the best available information on anticipated changes in households as well as local affordability levels. The YDNPA Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (November 2019) recommends a 'policy-on dwelling-led annual housing requirement' of 50 dwelling per annum (dpa) across the YDNPA over the plan period 2023 to 2040. It goes on to identify an ongoing need for 30 affordable homes each year. The SHMA has established a baseline for the 10-year period 2023 to 2033 and is based on the 2014-household projections, and has considered the 2016-based projections as an alternate scenario. Given the 2018-based projections are now available, the HBF consider that it may have been appropriate for the National Park Authority (NPA) to have updated the information in relation to the household formation and affordability to ensure that housing requirement is appropriate and robust in line with the guidance set out in the PPG.
16. The HBF notes that a housing requirement of 50dpa would be in line with the SHMA recommendation and that the YDNPA consider that this figure would be sufficient to halt population decline.

C1 – Housing in Towns and large Villages

17. This policy restricts all new housing to principal residence only, it also states that single plots will be targeted at local occupancy and First Homes. The HBF seek assurances from the Council that the need for dwellings to be a principal residence and for single plots to be targeted at local occupancy and First Homes will not be an impediment to the effective delivery of homes. The HBF have concerns in relation to these restrictions and the potential implications they could have on the delivery of homes, including the potential to deliver infrastructure and other policy requirements set out in the plan and the impacts on future financing and rights of occupants.
18. The policy goes on to require housing sites to be built to a density of 35 dwellings per hectare (dph). The HBF considers that 35dph may be a suitable density requirement in some locations to ensure efficient and effective use of land. However, there may be circumstances where the proposed densities are not appropriate and should and the HBF considers that the Council may want to include further flexibility within this policy to ensure that site specific circumstances can be considered when determining an appropriate density for development.
19. The policy also sets the affordable housing requirements for sites of 2 dwellings or more ranging from 20% to 50% dependent on site size and location, and suggests the affordable housing tenure split of 67% rental, 25% for First Homes and 8% for other

affordable home ownership. The policy also includes a section in relation to viability and suggests changes to the tenure of the affordable housing will be considered but a lower rate of affordable housing would not be considered policy compliant and would be refused. The HBF considers that it is appropriate for the Council to include the 25% requirement for First Homes, and to acknowledge the potential need for a viability assessment. The HBF is not aware of any information provided in relation to the viability of the requirements of this policy and can not comment further as to whether the requirements are appropriate. Although, the HBF is concerned that the Council are suggesting that a reduction in the affordable housing requirement would not be possible even with viability evidence.

20. And finally, the policy also looks for sites of more than 3 units to include one or two bedroom dwellings. The HBF considers that any policy in relation to housing mix will need to be flexible and will likely need to reflect the small numbers of dwellings that are likely to be provided on each site. The policy may need to consider not just the SHMA recommended mix but the needs and aspirations of the market at the time of the proposed development, other available evidence, the local character of the area, and the viability of the development. The HBF is concerned about the demand for one or two bedroom homes, and considers that whilst these might be what is needed it may not be what is in demand, in terms of the market's aspirations, and may lead to inappropriate homes being delivered.

C2 – Housing in Small Villages

21. This policy states that subject to site availability up to two new build dwellings will be permitted within the development boundaries of Small Settlements during the Plan period.
22. The HBF considers that clarity needs to be added to this policy, firstly it is not entirely clear if the policy is restricting the number of homes over the plan period in each small settlement to two or whether it means only sites of two dwellings at a time can come forward, the HBF has assumed the latter. The HBF considers the restriction to only two dwellings is unnecessary and appears rather arbitrary. It is considered that the policy lacks the flexibility required to deal with the wide range of sites which may come forward and provide valuable sources of housing supply, whilst maintaining or improving the qualities of the National Park. The HBF considers that the policy could refer to appropriate scale this would provide flexibility and where there is potential it would allow for more than one or two dwellings to be accommodated.

C6 – Accommodation for the Elderly and Vulnerable Adults

23. This policy states that the Council will permit Lifetime Homes and other flexible forms of new accommodation to widen the mix of housing for elderly and vulnerable adults. It also states that the Council will permit dedicated extra or residential care facilities within or on the edge of towns and larger villages as an exception to spatial policy CP9.
24. The Council will be aware that the Lifetime Homes standard is no longer applicable following the Government's Housing Standards review. Lifetime Homes have now been replaced by the optional Building Regulations accessibility standards. The Council may

also have noted that since the publication of their consultation document that the Government has opted to raise the minimum accessibility standards for new homes in England, this is likely to see the M4(2) standard become the normal standard with M4(1) in exceptional circumstances for example where sites are vulnerable to flooding, for flats above garages and other sites where step free access is not possible. It is likely that additional standards above the M4(2) standards will still be introduced via a Plan but only where there is specific evidence to justify their inclusion. The evidence base and method of introduction is set out within the PPG³ section upon 'Housing - Optional Technical Standards' and includes consideration of need and viability. The HBF is unaware that the Council can provide the necessary evidence at this stage and as such it is suggested that reference to the Lifetime Homes is removed.

25. The PPG⁴ states that authorities should set clear policies to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older and disabled people. Therefore, the HBF considers that it is appropriate for the YDNPA to include a policy that allows for adaptations and extensions to existing homes for older and disabled people, and that allows for dedicated extra and residential care facilities.

E8 – New Build Live/Work Units

26. This policy suggests that the Council will permit new build live/work units for rent and the conversion of traditional buildings on former industrial sites where the current use is no longer viable and has been vacant for 3 years, it goes on to state that outside of development boundaries proposals will need to be supported by a viable business plan. The HBF considers that the Council's support for the provision for live/work units is appropriate, and that this can provide alternative housing provision. However, the HBF considers that the Council should consider additional flexibility within the policy which would allow for residential development in some circumstances not just live/work units.

NE3 – Safeguarding the water environment

27. This policy seeks to ensure that any overnight accommodation is nutrient neutral, it suggests that this could be achieved through on sites means or through financial or in-kind contributions to off-setting measures that aim to reduce runoff elsewhere in the Eden Catchment. The HBF is concerned that this policy is placing the emphasis on addressing the issues of nutrient pollution solely on home builders, whilst the Government recognise that there is a need to address the sources of pollution and to tighten up the associated regulatory frameworks. The Government is looking to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment from agriculture and phosphorus from treated wastewater. The HBF considers this may require further consideration in relation to this policy and as this issue goes forward and more information is provided.

Future Engagement

28. I trust that the Council will find these comments useful as it continues to progress its Local Plan. I would be happy to discuss these issues in greater detail or assist in facilitating discussions with the wider house building industry.

³ PPG ID: 56-001-20150327 to ID: 56-012-20150327

⁴ PPG ID: 63-006-20190626

29. The HBF would like to be kept informed of all forthcoming consultations upon the Local Plan and associated documents. Please use the contact details provided below for future correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Harding'.

Joanne Harding
Planning Manager – Local Plan (North)

Email: joanne.harding@hbf.co.uk

Phone: 07972 774 229