

Escrick Parish Council Representations to 'PLAN Selby: Delivering the Vision' The Sites and Policies Local Plan – Initial Consultation

Following adoption by Selby District Council of its Core Strategy, Escrick Parish Council welcomes the consultation now being undertaken on this document as the first stage of dialogue with the local community. The NPPF requires Council's to listen and taken on board responses by Parish Councils (amongst others) and we welcome this document as the initial broad brush dialogue that will later translate the Core Strategy policies into site allocations in order to ensure that the needs of the District are met.

We note the intention to undertake **Sustainability Appraisals** to further inform the process in due course. We believe that it is important that the views of Parish Councils and local community are sought on the draft Appraisals undertaken by officers in due course before they are finalised. Parish Councils have important local knowledge that can positively contribute to the process and we suggest that officers forward drafts at the appropriate time to each Parish Council so that they can assist by providing such information.

Regarding the **Duty to Cooperate**, we feel that this is particularly important in the case of Escrick, due to the anomaly in the District boundary which bisects the village at its northern end. York City Council was previously proposing to remove land from the Green Belt as 'safeguarded land' to provide potentially for its own future housing needs, although their Core Strategy was rejected by its councillors and is now under review. We consider that the two Planning Authorities must cooperate in order to ensure that the village grows only at a size that is appropriate and sustainable. We therefore support the intention to continue to Cooperate to ensure that Strategic issues are determined correctly for the benefit of both Authorities.

Regarding the tables and questions posed within PLAN Selby, we comment as follows:

Table 2 / Question 7: We support the proposed approach and broad principles of the calculation method. We agree that housing completions and outstanding plots with planning permission should be taken into account when the quantum of new allocations is calculated and request that this information be updated before the final housing requirement is calculated.

Question 8: In order to ensure that the Council meets its minimum housing requirement, it makes sense for some over-allocation and a range of sites to be allocated. However, any over allocation and larger sites needed to achieve that must be allocated in the Main Towns - ie the Selby Urban Area and at Sherburn in Elmet and at Tadcaster – where there are sufficient services, facilities, employment opportunities and public transport available to enable those developments to achieve sustainability objectives. Additionally, larger sites have the ability to provide greater services and facilities themselves, thus further assisting meeting sustainability objectives. For this reason, it would not be appropriate for any over development allocations to be directed to the Designated Service Villages.

Tables 3 and 4 / Question 9: Escrick Parish Council supports the proportionate growth option suggested in para 3.28, which proposes, as a starting point, that a growth level of circa 8 – 9% would be needed in each of the DSVs to accommodate the housing needs of the Core Strategy. This reflects the ability of each DSV to grow at a rate commensurate with its size and level of services available, which would enable it to accommodate the additional growth without problems. This is far more logical and appropriate than the alternative that each DSV receive an equal share. We therefore support the proposals in Q9a). Whilst these numbers should not be overly prescriptive, they should be a general guide as to the size of development that a DSV will be expected to accommodate.

We also agree that technical issues such as flood risk, highways capacity and access should be taken into account when assessing the final minimum target for DSVs. However, **Q9b)** should be amended to say that equally important are environmental considerations – in particular Green Belt - which should also carry considerable weight. Land availability is important to ensure that allocations are deliverable but should not override environmental and technical considerations. Further emphasis needs to be placed on the **Approach to Allocations** as set out in **Figure 5**, thereby ensuring that Green Belt boundaries are only rolled back in exceptional circumstances (see **T3 Key Messages**) and in appropriate locations, of an appropriate scale and thus where truly required, and this should be an important consideration when the final distribution is determined. This complies with latest Government statements regarding the NPPF.

Question 22: Whilst we have no preference which strategy is chosen, we would point out that if the option to draw Development Limits loosely around settlements to allow 'sympathetic development' is chosen, this will have implications for the quantum of housing allocations required, and in particular for **Q8**. There will be less need for over allocation if loose boundaries are drawn as this will result in windfall sites coming forward, which will assist in meeting housing needs.

Question 25: As commented in the 2nd paragraph above, it is important that Parish Councils are consulted when Parish Services Surveys are undertaken to ensure that the information used is up to date and correct.

Tables 9 / Questions 30 and 31: Any policies, whether within the Core Strategy or PLAN Selby, should seek to provide some Specialist housing – for example, older persons accommodation – but this may best be met by specific allocations for these purposes in the larger settlements and/or where needs exist. However, for general housing allocations, it would be inappropriate for policies to prescribe Housing Mix as it up to developers and the market to determine what is needed, appropriate to a location and what will sell.

Question 33: It is important that policies for allocated sites specify design and environmental considerations that should be incorporated to ensure that quality developments are built. An example of good design in Escrick is the Carrs Meadows development which incorporated greenspace within the heart of the development, with spacious plots leaving space for planting on the streetscene and in gardens. It also includes a mix of house sizes designed to reflect the character of the village core (the Conservation Area). Any policies should be drafted to ensure that this quality will be replicated in any new development site within the village, with the same principles applied to other developments in the District to reflect the local character of that particular settlement.

Question 49: We request that **para 5.71** should be amended as this is incorrect. The Council's own Flood Risk maps prepared by Scott Wilson and the Environment Agency's website both show that some parts of the village are within Flood Risk Zones. Whilst there may be potential for some mitigation, the statement that Escrick is unconstrained by Flood Risk is incorrect. There are also other environmental designations that must be considered when the optimum site for Escrick is sought.

Para 5.72 also needs updating and correcting to reflect the true position regarding York Council's Core Strategy, which was not approved by Members and the draft has been withdrawn. It therefore has no formal status and so the purported designation of the land north of Escrick as Safeguarded Land is incorrect. The site is still within the York Green Belt until designated otherwise within an adopted Local Plan.

In response to **Q49a)**, we support Selby Council working with York Council, as stated above, to ensure that only the appropriate level of development takes place within Escrick village as a whole –

of the scale proposed within Q9 above (ie circa 30 – 40 dwellings) – irrespective of District boundaries.

Regarding Q49b), we reserve the opportunity to continue discussions with the Council regarding future needs that may require a site. So long as the village's current facilities are protected by appropriate designations and policies (ie the primary school and its playing fields, adjoining public open space incorporating the village playground, allotments, village hall / community hub, doctor's surgery, Parsonage Hotel and Queen Margaret's School, for example) we are currently unaware of any new needs but would be happy to be involved in further consultation in due course.

We trust that these comments are of assistance and look forward to being involved in the consultation process further as the Local Plan progresses.

Escrick Parish Council

18.1.15