
NYMNPA Local Plan Preferred Options (July 2018)

Response on behalf of Mr. A. Robson

Local Plan

Preferred Options Consultation





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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We write to you on behalf of our client, Mr. A. Robson, in response to the North York Moors National Park Authority Local Plan Preferred Options (July 2018) consultation.
- 1.2 Our client's interest is in respect of the settlement 'Castleton'. Our comments therefore focus on this settlement and the associated draft policies.
- 1.3 The comments and suggested changes proposed as part of this consultation are therefore in respect of the following matters / policies:
- North York Moors in 2035 - A Vision
 - Objectives for the North York Moors National Park Local Plan
 - Strategic Policy A - Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development
 - Strategic Policy B - The Spatial Strategy
 - Strategic Policy C - Quality and Design of Development
 - Strategic Policy G - Landscape
 - Strategic Policy I - The Historic Environment
 - Policy ENV9 - Historic Landscape Assets
 - Policy ENV11 - Built Heritage
 - Policy ENV13 - Visually Important Spaces
 - CAS-VIS02 ("Land between 42 and 50 Church Street")
 - CAS-VIS03 ("Land north west of junction of Ashfield Road and Ash Lea")
 - Policy BL1 - Employment and Training Development
 - Policy BL5 - Agricultural Development
 - Policy CO1 - Supporting New Development
 - Strategic Policy M - Housing
 - Policy CO7 - Housing in Larger Villages
 - Policy CO10 - Housing in Open Countryside
 - Policy CO12 - Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings Within Settlements
 - Policy CO13 - Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings in Open Countryside

- 1.4 In addition to making comments to the above strategies and policies, we also have specific comments to make in regard to two sites at Castleton that are within our client's ownership. These two sites are known as:
- "Land between 42 and 50 Church Street" and,
 - "Land north west of junction of Ashfield Road and Ash Lea".
- 1.5 Please see the Appendix for a Location Plan showing our client's landholdings outlined in blue and CAS-VIS02, the garden of 34 Church Street and CAS-VIS03 hatched and cross-hatched in red.
- 1.6 We therefore suggest that several changes should be made to the aforementioned draft strategies and policies and we propose that "Land between 42 and 50 Church Street" and "Land north west of junction of Ashfield Road and Ash Lea" are deleted as Visually Important Spaces as currently proposed in the Local Plan up to 2035. Our suggested changes (and justification) to the Local Plan are set out in Section 2 below.
- 1.7 It is acknowledged that once adopted the new Local Plan will replace all policies in the 2008 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document. There are no extant 'saved' policies from previous plans.

2. Response

Portrait, Vision and Objectives

North York Moors in 2035 – A Vision

- 2.1 Local Plans typically include a vision for how the area will look and function at the end of a Local Plan's life. We note that the Authority has an existing vision set out in its Management Plan and it is proposed, for consistency, that the vision is replicated into the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.2 Whilst we support this in principle it is considered that there are four matters / challenges that need highlighting further in the Local Plan Vision and these include 'population', 'housing', 'employment and economy' and 'local services'.

Population

- 2.3 As set out at paragraph 2.27 of the Preferred Options consultation document, many of the policies in the Plan have been drafted with a view to protecting and enhancing the special qualities of the National Park, however, it is also important to recognise that the North York Moors is also a living, working and recreational landscape.
- 2.4 According to the 2016 mid-year population estimates (Office for National Statistics (ONS)), the National Park is home to 22,976 residents who continue to contribute to the culture, communities, economy and upkeep of the National Park. In addition to the 22,976 residents, the North York Moors also contained 7,959 jobs, 1,673 farm holdings, and attracted 7.93 million visitors in 2016. Policies in this Plan therefore need to be engrained in an understanding that people, jobs and income are also important to the future of the National Park.
- 2.5 There has been a 4.2% fall in population between 2001 and 2016 – a loss of 1,108 people - along with an ageing population. As such, we agree with the assertion that there is a need to seek to reduce population loss and encourage younger people to stay in or move into the area. The Vision should therefore refer to stabilising the population throughout the National Park.

Housing

- 2.6 There is high quality housing stock in the National Park as well as a strong demand for second homes. It was recorded at the last census that 17.3% of the National Park's housing stock were households with no usual residents. National Park status, together with the rural character of the North York Moors also means that there are few opportunities for new housebuilding. This means suitable and affordable housing stock is scarce for those on the lower rungs of the housing ladder.

2.7 Based on the above, it is agreed that there is a need to provide new housing throughout the National Park to widen choice for local communities, and that housing needs to be as affordable and available to local people as much as possible. Where new housing is built every effort needs to be made to make sure it is of a type, size, tenure and price that supports the long term sustainability of local communities. The Vision should also refer to meeting housing needs throughout the National Park.

Employment and economy

2.8 As set out in paragraph 2.31 of the Preferred Options consultation document, there is almost no available labour force to fill new jobs in the National Park, so that people must be brought in, and seasonal tourism means that employment levels in January are almost half of those in August. Wages are low and employment is concentrated in low paid sectors like agriculture and tourism. There are limited opportunities for new employment premises, especially modern business premises, and agriculture faces long term pressures and Brexit uncertainties.

2.9 As such, we agree with the assertion that there is a need to encourage better paid jobs in more varied sectors and employment opportunities throughout the year.

Local Services

2.10 There has been a reduction in local services in many villages recently. However, such services remain vital in villages in such a rural area.

2.11 Based on the above, it is agreed that policies should seek to prevent the further loss of local services as far as possible.

2.12 To ensure the Vision is appropriate it is therefore considered that the following matters should be included within the Vision Statement:

- A place which seeks to reduce population loss and encourage younger people to stay in or move into the area;
- A place that provides appropriate new housing in sustainable settlements to widen choice for local communities;
- A place that encourages better paid jobs in more varied sectors and employment opportunities throughout the year; and
- A place that seeks to prevent the further loss of local services as far as possible to preserve sustainable settlements.

2.13 The inclusion of these four bullet points will help the population stabilise and also achieve other matters such as self-sustaining communities, and economic benefits.

Objectives for the North York Moors National Park Local Plan

- 2.14 It is acknowledged that the Vision will be translated into a series of objectives to help the development of Local Plan policies. Whilst we support the draft objectives in principle, it is considered that there could be some improvements.
- 2.15 The area where it is considered that improvements can be made to the objectives is in the 'Communities' section (points 18-20) as currently drafted in the Plan.
- 2.16 It is therefore proposed that bullet points 18-20 are amended as follows:

"Communities

18. *Foster vibrant local communities ~~where current population levels are maintained~~ to stabilise the population levels across the National Park, where young people have an opportunity to live and work, and where new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure including sustainable transport.*
19. *Support the provision and retention of key community facilities and services.*
20. *Ensure that a range of types and sizes of housing is available and of a viable and appropriate scale to meet local needs, including principal residence housing and affordable housing and limit the number of second homes".*

Strategic Approach

Strategic Policy A - Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development

- 2.17 We support the inclusion of 'Strategic Policy A' as it follows the requirements set out by the Planning Inspectorate and the overall aim of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, it is vital that the Plan is prepared positively and that development needs are met during the plan period. It is therefore considered that the draft Policy could better reflect the model wording as proposed by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 2.18 The Planning Inspectorate's model wording is as follows:

"When considering development proposals, the North York Moors National Park will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions, which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- 1. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- 2. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted”.*

- 2.19 Based upon a ‘Positive Approach’ agenda, policies must not contain too many restrictive and unduly onerous conditions which may result in unviable and, ultimately, undeliverable development sites. It is therefore considered that Strategic Policy A - Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development should be amended to replicate the Inspectorate’s model wording.
- 2.20 We reiterate the importance of policies not containing too many restrictive and unduly onerous conditions in several other policies below.

Strategic Policy B - The Spatial Strategy

- 2.21 We fully support the inclusion of a Settlement Hierarchy within the Local Plan, as it is agreed that this a great way of indicating the best locations for future development (both for local residents, landowners and developers). The settlement hierarchy shows what types and levels of development are appropriate for settlements in each of the four ‘tiers’ set out in the hierarchy; (1. Local Service Centre, 2. Larger Villages, 3. Smaller Villages and 4. Open Countryside). We support the proposed Settlement Hierarchy and the settlements selected for each tier.
- 2.22 It is agreed that Strategic Policy B sets out an appropriate strategy for how the opportunities for new development in the National Park will be distributed to help meet the Vision for the National Park to 2035 (and the accompanying objectives of the Plan), subject to the amendments which we suggest below. Settlements are classed as either Larger or Smaller Villages based on a range of considerations; primarily settlement size and form and the range of services and facilities available.

- 2.23 It is vital that this policy supports both affordable and market housing, employment and training premises and new facilities and services to ensure that Larger Villages remain viable and sustainable. It is noted in the draft policy that “*Development should support the service function of Larger Villages by providing additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing), employment and training premises and new facilities and services for the immediate and wider locality*”. A Principal Residence is a form of market housing controlled by a mechanism which ensures it can be lived in by anyone but only as their main residence. A local connection (as set out at Policy CO14) is not required. The aim of this mechanism is to prevent any new market housing being used as a second or holiday home, and to allow for housing to come forward for sale at close to open market rates, which allows for an element of cross subsidy to be generated to fund affordable housing. We support this approach and propose no changes to this part of the policy as long as Principal Residence dwellings are viable.
- 2.24 It is essential that this policy supports small scale housing developments, small scale employment and training premises and new facilities and services for the immediate locality to maintain the rural character of Smaller Villages. We support this approach in principle, but suggest that the relevant part of the proposed policy should be amended to read as follows, to prevent excessive restrictions from stifling otherwise viable developments, which could contribute significantly to the achievement of the Vision and objectives of the National Park, as amended above: “*Development should maintain the rural character of Smaller Villages by providing small scale housing developments to ~~meet identified local and affordable needs,~~ provide additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing), small scale employment and training premises and new facilities and services for the immediate locality only”.*
- 2.25 It is vital that this policy supports the reuse of traditional buildings in Open Countryside in a way that supports a living countryside and contributes positively to the character of local landscapes. We support this approach in principle, but suggest that the relevant part of the proposed policy should be amended to read as follows, to prevent excessive restrictions from stifling otherwise viable redevelopments of traditional buildings, which could contribute significantly to the achievement of the Vision and objectives of the National Park, as amended above: “*1. Where development reuses a ~~building of architectural or historic importance~~ traditional building in a way that supports an economic use or meets the demand for local needs housing, provides additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing) and small scale employment and training premises, and which contributes positively to the character of the local landscape”.*

Strategic Policy C - Quality and Design of Development

- 2.26 We support, in principle, Strategic Policy C ‘Quality and Design of Development’. However, it is noted that criteria 1 of the Strategic Policy C refers to the North York Moors National Park Authority Design Guide that was adopted 2008. Whilst we have no specific issues here, it is considered that the Design Guide (now 10 years old) should be updated so that the supporting documents are up to date (and in line) with the emerging Local Plan and revised NPPF (2018).
- 2.27 We do however, propose some changes to the policy and this is in respect of criterion 3 as set out below:

3. The siting, orientation, layout and density of the proposal complement existing buildings and the form of the settlement, preserving or enhancing views into and out of the site where appropriate and creating spaces about and between buildings, which contribute to the character and quality of the locality;

- 2.28 The reason for the suggested amendment is to ensure that infill sites can be brought forward without too many onerous conditions. If the Authority is supportive of sites coming forward for development in the Larger Villages then the supporting policies need to allow this to happen.
- 2.29 Notwithstanding this it is fully supported that new development should be of the highest quality with the design and location respecting the character of the existing settlements.
- 2.30 It is also acknowledged and supported that, at paragraph 3.19 of the consultation document, the supporting text to Strategic Policy C will support more contemporary, modern designs where considered appropriate. This is considered forward thinking and is accepted that each site would be considered on its own merits.

The Environment

Strategic Policy G – Landscape

- 2.31 We acknowledge and support the statement that, as well as being important for itself, the high quality landscape of the North York Moors is an important attraction for visitors and makes a valuable contribution to the local economy. Proposed policies seek to ensure that new development will not harm, but complement and enhance, the National Park's distinctive landscape character types.
- 2.32 However, whilst it is important to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the high quality, diverse and distinctive landscapes across the whole of the National Park, landscape considerations should not preclude future development in appropriate villages. For example, historic settlement form and individual trees, groups of trees, woodland, hedgerows and walls of value should not preclude development, but be treated with care in the first case and retained where possible and enhanced where appropriate in the second case.
- 2.33 As long as it is acknowledged that landscape considerations should not preclude future development we have no further comments to make in respect of Strategic Policy G.

Strategic Policy I – The Historic Environment

- 2.34 We acknowledge and support the assertion that protecting and enhancing the historic environment is important to maintaining the distinctiveness and sense of place of the North York Moors. The Authority wants to maintain and strengthen its commitment to protecting and making sustainable use of the historic environment and will therefore place great weight on the need to protect and enhance the historic environment of the North York Moors National Park.

- 2.35 However, whilst it is important to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment across the whole of the National Park, the historic environment should not preclude future development in appropriate villages. For example, conservation areas should not preclude development but ensure that special care is taken when considering any future proposal / design, that the new development is built to a high standard and, where possible, seek to preserve and / or enhance the significance of the associated heritage asset.
- 2.36 As long as it is acknowledged that the historic environment should not preclude future development we have no further comments to make in respect of Strategic Policy I.

Policy ENV9 - Historic Landscape Assets

- 2.37 We support Policy ENV9 in principle as it is important to ensure that development proposals affecting historic landscape assets should preserve and enhance the landscape quality and character of the North York Moors, and public experience of it.
- 2.38 It is vital, however, to ensure that such assets do not preclude development from coming forward. As previously highlighted, there is a need to stabilise the population in the National Park and to meet an identified housing need. As such, the Authority needs to support appropriate infill sites in sustainable settlements, rather than resisting development at all opportunities.
- 2.39 Therefore, and to avoid duplication, as trees, woodlands, traditional orchards and hedgerows are to be protected by Policy ENV1 and open spaces and views by Policy ENV13, it is suggested that point 7. should be amended to refer to, *“Other landscape features such as ~~mature or veteran trees, hedges and historic boundaries and enclosures~~ of value and other important character elements of value, other than trees, woodlands, traditional orchards and hedgerows, which are protected by Policy ENV1, and open spaces and views, which are protected by Policy ENV13”*.
- 2.40 It is acknowledged that small scale changes to buildings, settlements and sites take place continually, responding to changing values, fashions, availability of products and new technology and although change is inevitable it may be to the detriment of those features which give the North York Moors its particular character. We therefore acknowledge that all development proposals need to consider the impact on the many features which contribute to the historic landscape of the National Park as an integrated whole, as well as upon individual assets. We therefore agree with paragraph 4.72 of the policy explanation text.

Policy ENV11 - Built Heritage

- 2.41 We support Policy ENV11 in principle as it is important to ensure that new development, with the potential to affect the built heritage, should reinforce the distinctive historic character of the North York Moors by fostering a positive and sympathetic relationship with traditional local architecture, materials and construction.

- 2.42 It is important for new development affecting the built heritage to be built to high standards, preserving and / or enhancing the significance of such buildings. It is vital however, to ensure that the built heritage does not preclude development from coming forward.
- 2.43 As previously noted, there is a need to stabilise the population in the National Park and to meet an identified housing need. As such, the Authority needs to support appropriate infill sites in sustainable settlements rather than resisting development at all costs.
- 2.44 Therefore, and to avoid duplication, as trees, woodlands, traditional orchards and hedgerows are to be protected by Policy ENV1 and open spaces and views by Policy ENV13, it is suggested that point 4. should be amended to read, *“Preserve and enhance the character of settlements including buildings, ~~all open spaces, trees~~ and other important features that contribute to visual, historical or architectural character.*

Policy ENV13 – Visually Important Spaces

- 2.45 In accordance with Policy ENV13, there are several areas identified on the Policies Map as Visually Important Spaces (VIS). On such sites there will be a presumption against development unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not result in the loss of, or significant harm to, the qualities or functions for which the space has been identified.
- 2.46 We have several concerns to this policy and the proposed identified Visually Important Spaces as set out on the Policies Map.
- 2.47 Paragraph 4.93 of the consultation document states that the distinctive character of the North York Moors villages is derived from a number of inter-related historical and architectural features including; the relationship between buildings and spaces, views along streets and between buildings, traditional street patterns and layouts and the design detailing and materials of traditional buildings. Whilst we do not dispute this, we do consider that the allocation of some sites as Visually Important Spaces are incorrect.
- 2.48 It appears as though the Authority has identified as many potential infill sites as Visually Important Spaces as possible and has not therefore taken a pragmatic view to such allocations. For example, Strategic Policy B states that for Larger Villages, *“Development should support the service function of Larger Villages by providing additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing), employment and training premises and new facilities and services for the immediate and wider locality”.*
- 2.49 Castleton is identified in the Settlement Hierarchy as a Larger Village (listed in Table 1 of the consultation document (page 32)). The fifteen identified Larger Villages have a more ‘self-contained’ character, with a range of facilities serving the wider community. The emerging Local Plan allows for small scale development in or adjacent to these areas to meet local housing, employment and community needs, including ‘principal residence’ housing on infill sites (Policy CO7). No

development boundaries or limits are defined and the suitability of a site for development will be defined on a case by case basis. However, when considering potential development opportunities for the village, it appears as though the Visually Important Spaces are being used to stifle development. Whilst paragraph 4.95 of the consultation document states that this policy is intended to support the development policies for those villages outlined in the Settlement Hierarchy, to help steer any infill development to the most appropriate locations (with the identification of important spaces to aid the Authority's Development Management and Planning Policy teams and provide valuable information for landowners, applicants and developers), it is considered that the Authority have identified incorrect sites.

- 2.50 We note that the justification text states that the policy as written does not necessarily preclude development on these spaces; rather it is intended to provide a presumption against development where the proposal would harm the qualities for which the space has been identified. However, it is considered that some of the identified Visually Important Spaces are infill sites that would suitably accommodate properties without detriment to the existing settlement.
- 2.51 The Visually Important Spaces that have been identified are shown on the Policies Map and the Authority confirm that the assessments of the spaces were made on a purely visual inspection from the highway and consists generally of spaces which form a small gap within a continuously built up frontage within the main built up area of the settlement, (i.e. in that they could meet the definition of infill development as set out in the Preferred Options), or in some cases a space may have been identified in order to protect the setting of a particular attractive range of buildings.
- 2.52 In considering whether a space is worthy of identification, it has been assessed against the following criteria:
1. The space makes a positive contribution to the overall form, character and appearance of the settlement;
 2. The space makes a positive contribution to the setting of a building or groups of buildings either listed or of historical or architectural interest;
 3. The space provides a vista/viewpoint into the surrounding countryside;
 4. The space provides a visual relief in a settlement where there is a change in the pattern or character of development;
 5. The site has archaeological or historic interest;
 6. The space provides an open setting for a visually important tree(s) or is important for biodiversity.
- 2.53 Our client owns several proposed sites identified as Visually Important Spaces within Castleton, which is a village in the civil parish of Danby in the county of North Yorkshire, about 7 miles south east of Guisborough in the North York Moors National Park.
- 2.54 Whilst our client does not object to all proposed VIS allocations, there are serious concerns over the following two references:

- CAS - VIS02
- CAS - VIS03

2.55 It is noted that the intention of identifying these spaces is to protect spaces within the settlement where it is considered that the future development of these spaces could harm the rural character of the village. As such Policy ENV13 - Visually Important Spaces is proposed as a policy of restraint in respect of new development. We strongly object to the identification of the above two sites and the reasons for such are set out below:

CAS - VIS02

2.56 This site is located on the southern side of Church Street (the main road running through Castleton and its Conservation Area), situated between 42 and 50 Church Street, at the head of a very much larger field which slopes downhill to Danby Beck, all of which is in our client's ownership. The site is bounded to the north by stone walling, an access gate and hedgerows and trees.

2.57 The justification for identifying the site as a Visually Important Space is stated to be that, located at the eastern end of the village, it is highly prominent in the street scene, especially when travelling east to west through the village, as it provides panoramic views out to the surrounding moorland. Further, the site is stated to significantly change the character of this part of Castleton from the built up area of the village, where development is generally terraced in form and built on or close to the highway, to the more open countryside where the junction between Ashfield Road and Church Street provides an end-stop to the village. Finally, the site is stated therefore to make a positive contribution to the setting of Castleton, its overall form and character and to provide important views out into the surrounding countryside and Danby Low Moor.

2.58 It is considered that the site is neither located at the eastern end of the village, nor highly prominent in its street scene, when travelling east to west through the village, when it provides a limited view of the countryside. It is considered that the eastern end of the village is located at Ellerstang Bridge, the eastern end of its built up area at Ellerstang and the eastern end of its main built up area at Nos. 50 to 56 Church Street and the village church opposite them. The site is not highly prominent in the street scene, when travelling east to west through the village, as it is well screened by the stone walling, hedge and trees, which limit the view (see Figures 1 and 2 below for reference).

2.59 It is not considered that the site changes the character of this part of Castleton from its built up area to the more open countryside. The authority has chosen not to impose a settlement boundary on the village, but to judge each case on its merits, and that approach should be followed here. The junction of Church Street and Ashfield Road does not provide an end-stop to the village. Development which is generally terraced in form and built on or close to the highway continues along the road, past the site, to Nos. 50 to 56 Church Street and the village church.

2.60 Accordingly, the site is not considered to make a positive contribution to the setting of the village and its overall form and character or to provide important views out into the surrounding countryside and Danby Low Moor.

- 2.61 There is a finite supply of developable infill sites in villages and the supply of infill sites is reducing. Furthermore, there is a requirement to stem the decline in population and to strengthen the communities in the villages throughout the National Park.
- 2.62 There is a need, therefore, for a balance between protecting sites that actually contribute to the special character of a settlement (such as village greens) with meeting the housing need, in order to maintain the vitality of local communities. As set out in the Visually Important Spaces Topic Paper, *“The National Park is not a museum and therefore new developments within existing village boundaries would be acceptable and beneficial to keep village life vibrant”*.
- 2.63 Due to the location of this site, and its place within the main built up area of the village, it is considered that, with careful design and the amendments to the definition of infill suggested below, this site could provide an appropriate infill site in Castleton without having an adverse impact on the area. We therefore request that this site is removed from the list of Visually important Spaces.
- 2.64 Moreover, we suggest that, given the above, and other points made in this response, the Authority should consider the inclusion of an allocations policy of specific allocations in its Local Plan to the ends identified in paragraph 4.95 of the consultation document.



*Figure 1: travelling east to west, past CAS-VIS02
(Google Maps)*



*Figure 2: travelling further east to west, past CAS-VIS02
(Google Maps)*

CAS - VIS03

- 2.65 This site is located north west of the junction of Ash Lea and Ashfield Road within the main built up area of the village. It constitutes the eastern part of the garden of 34 Church Street, which is owned by our client. The site is elevated and bounded to the north by listed and other residential buildings; to the east by an earth bank and stone walling; and to the south by an earth bank and wooden fencing. Those boundaries feature a mixture of mature trees, younger trees and shrubs. The site is used by its tenants as a garden and already has outbuildings on it, in the form of two wooden sheds and a glass greenhouse, and is not, therefore, unspoilt green space (see Figures 5 and 6 below for reference).
- 2.66 The justification for identifying the site as a Visually Important Space is stated to be that it makes a positive contribution to the character of the eastern edge of Castleton as it forms an attractive open space between the historic part of the village and the more modern developments at Ash Lea and Ash Grove. Further, the site is stated to provide a natural attractive setting for the surrounding listed buildings.
- 2.67 We strongly contest this site as a VIS for the following reasons. It is not considered that it makes a positive contribution to the character of the eastern edge of Castleton because it forms an attractive open space between the historic part of the village and the more modern developments at Ash Lea and Ash Grove. The section of Ashfield Road between its junction with Ash Lea and its junction with Church Street forms an attractive transition zone from the more modern developments at Ash Lea and Ash Grove to the historic parts of the village. Its attractive character results from the interaction of the listed buildings; the paths and verges; the views north into the village and south into the countryside; and the open space at proposed Visually important Space CAS - VIS01.
- 2.68 The site itself makes no positive contribution to the character of the transition zone and can hardly be described as an attractive open space. It is private land which can neither be entered nor clearly seen into or out of, except to a limited degree to the east, as it is elevated above ground level; enclosed by earth banks, stone walling or fencing; obscured by trees and shrubs; and contains two sheds and a greenhouse.
- 2.69 It is not considered that the site provides a natural attractive setting for the surrounding listed buildings or that proposed Visually Important Space CAS - VIS02 should be imposed on well-bounded private land.
- 2.70 As previously mentioned, there is a finite supply of developable infill sites in villages and the supply of infill sites is reducing. With Castleton being a Larger Village, considered suitable of addressing the housing need and in need of stabilising the settlement population, it is considered that this site could provide a future small scale infill development opportunity.
- 2.71 This site could accommodate a new dwelling, which would hardly be visible from Ash Lea or Ashfield Road, with appropriate groundwork and landscaping; the retention of as many of the existing mature trees as possible; the planting of new young trees; and the addition of an access point off Ash Lea. If the site was so developed, there would be no adverse impact on the attractive character of the transition zone or the nearby listed buildings.

2.72 Therefore, it is considered that it is neither appropriate nor justifiable to allocate the site as a Visually Important Space. In short, it is not considered that infill development of this site, with careful design and with the amendments to the definition of infill suggested below, would result in the loss of an open space which contributes to the amenity, character and setting of the settlement.

2.73 Moreover, we suggest that, given the above, and other points made in this response, the Authority should consider the inclusion of an allocations policy of specific allocations in its Local Plan to the ends identified in paragraph 4.95 of the consultation document.



Figure 3: Ashfield Road looking south west



Figure 4: the site looking north west



Figure 5: looking east from the site, angled left



Figure 6: Looking east from the site, angled right

2.74 In conclusion, it is proposed that Sites CAS - VIS02 and CAS - VIS03 are deleted as Visually Important Spaces in Castleton.

Business and Land Management

Policy BL1 - Employment and Training Development

2.75 Policy BL1 'Employment and Training Development' is intended to reflect the need to diversify and strengthen the local economy. We support this policy in principle. However, as mentioned above, it is vital that it encourages better paid jobs in more varied sectors and employment opportunities throughout the year, as reflected in the National Park Vision, as amended above. Thus, this policy should seek to diversify and strengthen the local economy beyond agriculture, forestry, tourism, recreation and mining. Moreover, it should not impose overly onerous requirements that could prevent otherwise viable developments, which would have such positive effects, from taking place.

2.76 It is therefore considered that part C1 of Policy BL1 should be amended to read as follows:

The reuse of an existing building for employment and training provision will be permitted where it is small scale and results from the reuse or extension of existing buildings which are of a permanent and substantial construction ~~and which can be reused without significant rebuilding~~. The development of new business premises will not be permitted, unless proposals are compliant with Policy BL3.

2.77 It is also considered that point 1 in the penultimate part of Policy BL1 should be amended to read that: *'The scale and location of the proposal would not individually or cumulatively be seriously detrimental to the character and appearance of the local and wider landscape'.*

Policy BL5 – Agricultural Development

2.78 Policy BL1 'Agricultural Development' is intended to support rural development, whilst conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North York Moors, and is welcomed accordingly.

2.79 For the avoidance of doubt, it is therefore considered that point 3 of Policy BL5 should be amended to read as follows: *'It can be demonstrated that there are no suitable existing buildings available to support the existing business and no disposal of suitable buildings has taken place in the period of twenty-four months immediately preceding the date on which the proposal was submitted'.*

Communities

Policy CO1 – Supporting New Development

2.80 Policy CO1 'Supporting New Development' is intended to ensure that adequate infrastructure is, or can be made, available to support new development and that the development of any new infrastructure is sensitive to its location within a National Park setting. We support this policy in principle, however, it is vital that any contributions sought are not overly onerous that could impact on the viability of a scheme. It is therefore considered that the word 'viable' is included within the actual policy text.

2.81 It is therefore considered appropriate for paragraph 7.8 to be included within the policy / plan to ensure that negotiations can take place in a timely manner. Each development proposal should be assessed on its own merits and therefore we agree that specific requirements for any new or improved infrastructure cannot be included within the policy.

2.82 Similarly, it is considered that points b) and c) in the final paragraph of Policy CO1 should be amended to read as follows:

b) The design minimises impact on visual amenity, including the character and appearance of the locality and the wider landscape, as far as reasonably possible;

c) They will not result in harmful impacts upon features of ecological, archaeological, architectural or historic ~~interest~~ value, which would be contrary to the provisions of this Plan.

Strategic Policy M - Housing

- 2.83 It is noted that to help meet the needs of local communities, Strategic Policy M states that a minimum of 551 new homes (29 per year) will be completed over the period of this plan.
- 2.84 It is important to note that the proposed housing figure is a minimum target only and not a ceiling on development. Development that exceeds this number, where appropriate, should still be supported to ensure that the objective of stabilising the population in the National Park is achieved. We therefore agree with paragraph 7.26 of the Local Plan which states that, *“the rate of 29 new homes per year should be regarded as a minimum and should not be used to put a moratorium on new housing development once it is reached”*.
- 2.85 Within the main built up area of Larger Villages, new development is supported *‘where it comprises conversion of an existing building or a small infill development providing principal residence or affordable housing’*. It is considered that the word *‘small’* should be deleted here that this should be expanded to include *‘rounding off’* to help meet the housing needs in the most sustainable settlements. As set out in the Strategy of the Plan, the aim is to have a flexible approach to new housing that will help stem population decline and support the vitality of the local economy and services in these communities whilst respecting the character and form of the built environment.
- 2.86 In Open Countryside, new development is supported *‘where there is an essential need for a new dwelling to support established farming, forestry or other land management activities, where an existing dwelling needs to be replaced or where it comprises conversion of a building of architectural or historic importance which makes a positive contribution to the landscape and special qualities of the National Park’*. For reasons which are explained above, it is considered that the final part of the above wording should be amended to read as follows: *‘or where it comprises conversion of a traditional building to provide additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing), and which contributes positively to the character of the local landscape’*.
- 2.87 As the National Park is within commuting distance of Teesside, York and Leeds and is an attractive place to live, it is considered that the demand for housing is strong. It is therefore important for the Authority to meet this demand.
- 2.88 Currently, opportunities for new housing development within the National Park are very limited and need to be considered carefully in terms of how they can best support local communities. As such, the Authority should support infill development sites in sustainable villages to help meet this need (rather than trying to stifle such opportunities via Policy ENV13 - Visually Important Spaces, for example).
- 2.89 We support a strategy to provide additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing) across the National Park and consider that the Authority should ensure that such development can come forward to help meet the minimum housing need, if not more, to meet the Communities objectives, as amended above.

- 2.90 The aim should be to have a flexible approach to new housing to ensure that over the Plan period, population decline will cease and development will support the vitality of the local economy and services in appropriate communities whilst respecting the character and form of the built environment.
- 2.91 It is acknowledged that no land is allocated for housing in the Local Plan apart from the housing elements of Environmental Enhancement Sites (Policy ENV14) and that the housing delivery would be through land allocated in the Helmsley Plan, windfall development (including custom and self-build housing), conversions and affordable housing 'exception' sites identified in conjunction with Rural Housing Enablers.
- 2.92 Whilst this could be an appropriate approach, concerns are raised over what appears to be a way of preventing housing delivery by including onerous amounts of Visually Important Spaces. It is considered that the restrictions mentioned in paragraphs 7.29-7.30 of the Local Plan will make it extremely difficult for any infill development to actually happen.
- 2.93 Therefore, it is considered that the Authority should consider the inclusion of an allocations policy of specific allocations in its Local Plan to the ends identified in paragraph 4.95 of the consultation document.
- 2.94 Furthermore, whilst it is noted that the 2016 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) concluded that an annual figure of 29 dwellings, mainly 1 and 2 bedroom units for affordable housing and smaller 2 and 3 bedroom units for general housing needs, it is important for each site to be considered on its own merits and to ensure it is used effectively and efficiently.
- 2.95 New homes are essential to address serious issues such as affordability, declining population and loss of services. However, restricting an infill site (defined as a small gap within a continuously built up frontage within the main built up area), to only be allowed to accommodate no more than two dwellings, does not allow some sites to be utilised in the most effective or efficient manner.
- 2.96 It is therefore proposed that an infill site should be defined as *"a gap within the main built up area"* and that the number of units allowed should be removed to enable sites to be considered on their own merits. This will assist with stabilising the population whilst creating a greater proportion of young and working age people.

Policy C07 – Housing in Larger Villages

- 2.97 There is support for Policy C07 which aims to support services and maintain the economic vitality of Larger Villages within the National Park by permitting the development of principal residence or affordable housing on suitable infill sites or by conversions of existing buildings.
- 2.98 However, in addition to concerns raised about the number of units that can be accommodated as part of an infill site (please see our comments to Strategic Policy M), it is considered that the restrictions associated with new housing in the Large

Villages is also too onerous. Whilst the provision of principal residence or affordable housing on suitable infill sites is fully supported within Larger Villages, individual dwellings should not be restricted to having an internal floor area of no more than 93 square metres. Whilst it is acknowledged that the 2016 SHMA identifies a need for 2 and 3 bed dwellings, flexibility on sizes of such properties should be supported, whilst still ensuring new development is of an appropriate scale. As set out numerous times throughout this response, each site should be assessed on its own merits, utilising the site to its most effective and efficient manner, in line with the NPPF (2018).

2.99 It is therefore considered that the size limitations should be removed from the policy text.

Policy CO10 - Housing in Open Countryside

2.100 There is support for Policy CO10 which aims to enable housing development in open countryside in certain circumstances, provided it can be done without unacceptable harm to the landscape or the special qualities of the National Park.

2.101 However, it is considered that, for reasons referred to above, Policy CO10 should be amended so that its following parts read as follows:

3. *Where a rural building, ~~which is important in the landscape,~~ is to be converted in accordance with Policy CO13, Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings in Open Countryside.*

Dwellings which are not of a high quality or which have a harmful impact on the landscape to a significant degree will not be permitted.

Policy CO12 – Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings Within Settlements

2.102 There is support for Policy CO12 which aims to allow conversion and change of use, including to residential use, of existing buildings which are worthy of retention and make a positive contribution to the character of the settlement.

2.103 However, it is considered that, for reasons referred to above and so that changes required to curtilage, access arrangements and parking provision do not preclude otherwise positive and viable development and redevelopment, Policy CO12 should be amended as follows:

2. *The building is structurally sound ~~and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding,~~ as demonstrated by a qualified structural engineer's report;*
3. *The building is of sufficient size for the proposed use and services and other functional requirements can be provided without significant harm to the fabric of the building or its surroundings;*
5. *~~The proposed use does not lead to changes in the building's curtilage or the creation of any new vehicular access or parking area that would adversely affect the character and appearance of the building or its surroundings;~~*

Policy CO13 – Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings in Open Countryside

2.104 We support Policy CO13 which seeks to ensure the retention of the most desirable and significant buildings which, without conversion to alternative uses, would deteriorate and be lost to the landscape of the National Park.

2.105 However, we consider that the policy should be amended as follows:

1. ~~The building is of architectural or historic importance and makes a positive contribution to the landscape and special qualities of the National Park~~ a traditional nature and contributes positively to the character of the local landscape;
2. ~~The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding,~~ as demonstrated by a qualified structural engineer's report.
3. ~~The building is of sufficient size to accentuate the proposed use without the need for significant alterations, extensions or other new buildings.~~
4. ~~The proposal is of a high quality design, which retains existing external features, which contribute significantly to the character of the building, including original openings and roofing materials. This design should reflect the traditional form and character of the building and provide for essential services and other functional requirements without significant harm to the fabric of the building and its setting.~~
5. ~~The proposed use does not lead to changes in the building's curtilage or the creation of any new vehicular access or parking area that would adversely affect the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding landscape;~~
- c. Principal residence; affordable housing; or local needs housing, provided the building is located within an existing group of buildings that have a close physical and visual relationship to each other and include an existing residential unit within the group.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. Whilst we agree in principle with the majority of the draft Local Plan, we do have concerns regarding some of the policies throughout the consultation document.
- 3.2. The comments and suggested changes proposed as part of this consultation are in respect of the following matters / policies:
- North York Moors in 2035 - A Vision
 - Objectives for the North York Moors National Park Local Plan
 - Strategic Policy A - Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development
 - Strategic Policy B - The Spatial Strategy
 - Strategic Policy C - Quality and Design of Development
 - Strategic Policy G - Landscape
 - Strategic Policy I - The Historic Environment
 - Policy ENV9 - Historic Landscape Assets
 - Policy ENV11 - Built Heritage
 - Policy ENV13 - Visually Important Spaces
 - o CAS-VIS02 (“Land between 42 and 50 Church Street”)
 - o CAS-VIS03 (“Land north west of junction of Ashfield Road and Ash Lea”)
 - Policy BL1 - Employment and Training Development
 - Policy BL5 - Agricultural Development
 - Policy CO1 - Supporting New Development
 - Strategic Policy M - Housing
 - Policy CO7 - Housing in Larger Villages
 - Policy CO10 - Housing in Open Countryside
 - Policy CO12 - Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings Within Settlements
 - Policy CO13 - Conversion and Change of Use of Buildings in Open Countryside
- 3.3 To ensure the Vision and Objectives are appropriate it is considered that population, housing, employment and economy and local services should be included within the Vision Statement and listed objectives to ensure that the population stabilises whilst creating self-sustaining communities, and associated economic benefits.
- 3.4 Strategic Policy A should reflect the Planning Inspectorate model wording on the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.5 We support the inclusion of a Settlement Hierarchy within the Local Plan as set out at Strategic Policy B, subject to suggested amendments to prevent excessive restrictions from stifling otherwise viable developments and redevelopments, which could contribute significantly to the achievement of the Vision and objectives of the National Park.

- 3.6 Some changes should take place to Strategic Policy C and this is in respect of criterion 3. Additionally, the Design Guide should be updated to ensure that all local policy and guidance is up to date and in accordance with the 2018 NPPF.
- 3.7 In relation to Strategic Policy G, whilst it is important to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the high quality, diverse and distinctive landscapes across the whole of the National Park, landscape considerations should not preclude future development in appropriate settlements.
- 3.8 In respect of Strategic Policy I, Policy ENV9, and Policy ENV11, whilst it is important to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment across the whole of the National Park, the historic environment should not preclude future development in appropriately identified villages and the suggested amendments should therefore be made to Policy ENV9 and Policy ENV11.
- 3.9 There are serious concerns regarding Policy ENV13. It appears as though the Authority has identified as many potential infill sites as possible as Visually Important Spaces.
- 3.10 It is proposed that Sites VIS02 and VIS03 are deleted as Visually Important Spaces in Castleton. These two sites are within our client's ownership.
- 3.11 Policy BL1 is intended to reflect the need to diversify and strengthen the local economy. We support this policy in principle. However, it is vital that it encourages better paid jobs in more varied sectors and employment opportunities throughout the year, as reflected in the National Park Vision, as amended. Moreover, it should not impose overly onerous requirements that could prevent otherwise viable developments, which would have such positive effects, from taking place. It is therefore considered that Policy BL1 should be amended to relax such requirements as suggested.
- 3.12 Policy BL5 is intended to support rural development, whilst conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North York Moors, and is welcomed accordingly. For the avoidance of doubt, it is therefore considered that Policy BL5 should be amended to clarify its provisions as suggested.
- 3.13 Policy CO1 is intended to ensure that adequate infrastructure is, or can be made, available to support new development and that the development of any new infrastructure is sensitive to its location within a National Park setting. We support this policy in principle, however, it is vital that any contributions sought are not overly onerous that could impact on the viability of a scheme. It is therefore considered that the word 'viable' is included within the actual policy text and that it is amended as further suggested.
- 3.14 Strategic Policy M states that a minimum of 551 new homes (29 per year) will be completed over the period of this plan. It is important to note that this is a minimum target only and not a ceiling on development. Development that exceeds this number, where appropriate, should still be supported to ensure that the objective of stabilising the population in the National Park is achieved.

- 3.15 It is proposed that the circumstances in which new development will be supported should be amended as suggested within the main built up area of Larger Villages and in Open Countryside.
- 3.16 It is further proposed that an infill site should be defined as a *“gap within the main built up area”* and that the number of units allowed should be removed to enable sites to be considered on their own merits. This will assist with stabilising the population whilst creating a greater proportion of young and working age people.
- 3.17 It is finally proposed that Policies CO7, CO10, CO12 and CO13 should be amended as suggested to remove the excessively onerous size restriction in the first case and for reasons referred to above in the other cases.
- 3.18 Our client would like to work closely and in partnership with the Authority to support and help deliver sustainable development in the National Park, particularly Castleton. We would be pleased if the comments in this document are taken into account during the preparation of the Local Plan and we would ask that we are kept informed of all future consultations during the Plan process.
- 3.19 In the meantime, we would be most grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this submission and, if you have any queries with regard to this correspondence, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Local Plan

Preferred Options Consultation





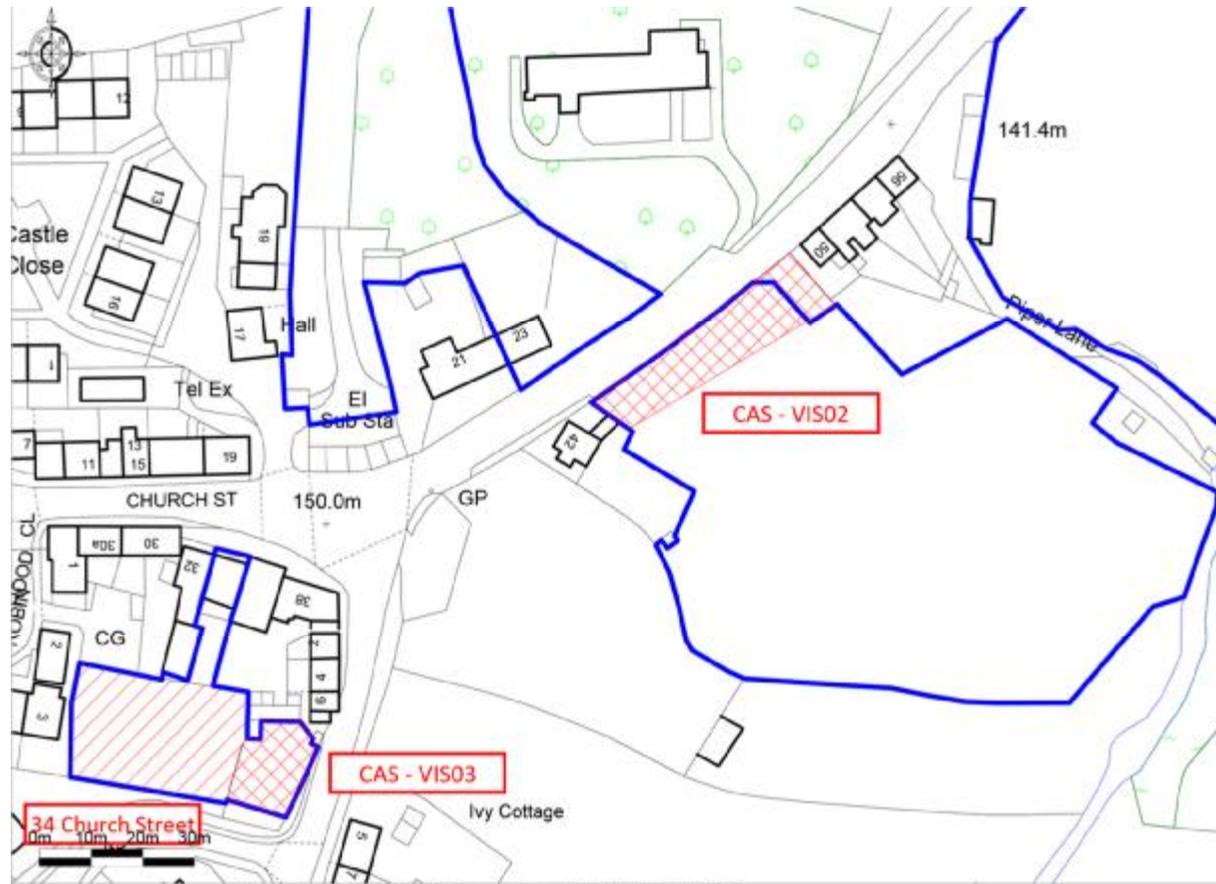
Appendix

Local Plan

Preferred Options Consultation



Castleton



Promap
LANDMARK INFORMATION GROUP

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For Convenience Only

24th May 2019

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Dear Sirs,

North York Moors National Park Authority (“NYMNP”) Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft 2019 (Regulation 19) Consultation – Land at Castleton

These representations have been prepared on behalf of our Client, Mr A. Robson, in response to the NYMNP Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft (“LPPSD”) consultation, in objection to a number of draft policies which could impact upon our Client’s land interests.

Our Client has previously made representations to the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan Consultation which took place in 2018 in respect of their land interests and other relevant matters (please see enclosed). These representations look to supplement those previously made and provide additional comments on new and/or changed relevant policies and whether our Client considers the plan to be legally and procedurally compliant and sound.

Our client’s interest is in respect of the settlement ‘Castleton’ and two sites within the settlement that are within our client’s ownership, which are known as:

- Land between 42 and 50 Church Street (Site A); and
- Land north west of junction of Ashfield Road and Ash Lea (Site B).

The National Planning Context and Basis of These Representations

These representations set out our comments in relation to the LPPSD and the draft policies proposed which we believe should be addressed before it progresses towards the examination in public in order to secure a sound plan that is consistent with national planning policy.

The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) and Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) constitute the national planning policy regime and the NYMNP will need to be found sound in accordance with these policies. The NPPF states, at paragraph 35, that Local Plans will be found sound if they are:

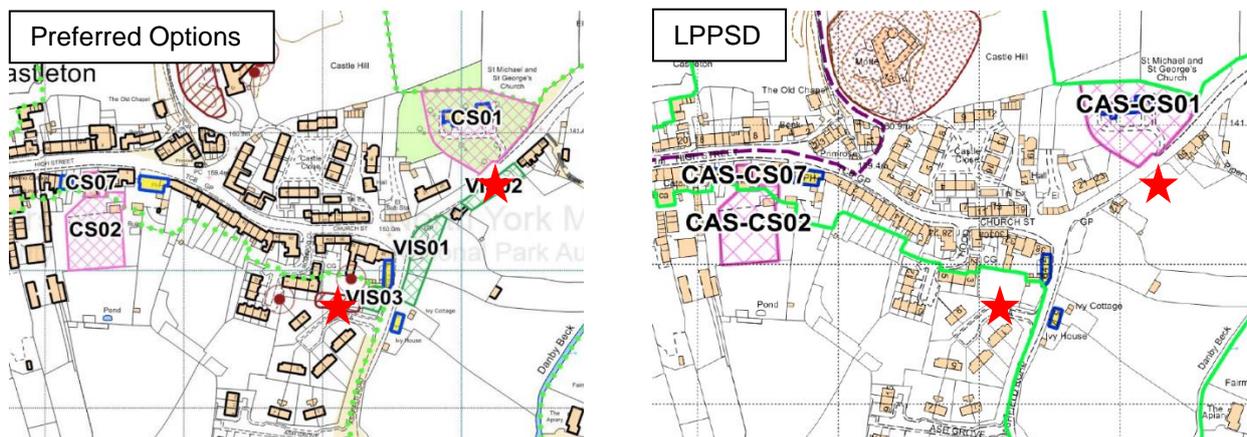
- Positively prepared - *“providing a strategy which, **as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs**; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development”*
- Justified - *“an appropriate strategy, taking into account the **reasonable alternatives**, and based on **proportionate evidence**”*

- Effective - “**deliverable over the plan period**, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground”
- Consistent with national policy – “**enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this framework**”

This letter responds to, and addresses specific elements of the LPPSD consultation in relation to our Client’s land interests, as well as making recommendations and suggested amendments on how the plan should be amended in order to be found sound. We trust that the comments will be of assistance and we look forward to ongoing engagement during the process.

Site Context

Within the Preferred Options Local Plan consultation our Client’s land interests were identified under draft policy ENV13 ‘Visually Important Spaces’ and allocated on the proposals map as indicated below. However, within the LPPSD this policy has been removed and replaced in part by policy ENV14 which does not specifically allocate sites as ‘Important Undeveloped Spaces’ as shown on the map below.



As shown above, our Client’s land interests were previously identified as Visually Important Spaces 02 (Site A) and 03 (Site B) in the Preferred Options Local Plan. Our Client supports this change in policy position and specifically the removal of the site specific allocations under the former policy. However, whilst these sites are no longer allocated under draft policy ENV14, it is possible that they could be considered as Important Undeveloped Spaces and our comments and concerns with this are set out below in further detail.

LPPSD Commentary

Policy ENV14 Important Undeveloped Sites

This policy, which appears to have replaced the former draft policy ENV13 and its allocations, seeks to only permit the development of, unidentified, Important Undeveloped Sites where there is no unacceptable impact on the visual, historical, or cultural value of the space.

We support the aims of this policy, the removal of the former draft policy ENV13 and the removal of the identified Visually Important Spaces from the proposals map. However, the ‘blanket approach’ the policy seeks to implement on all undeveloped sites across the National Park does raise concerns and apparent conflicts with the aims and objectives of the Local Plan and also national planning policy which seeks to ensure that plans are positively prepared.

The supporting text to this policy, particularly paragraph 4.112 states that “*the geology and landform of the North York Moors is such that the wider landscape frequently makes significant contribution to the character of*

its villages. The moorland, hills and dales form an outstanding backdrop to all of the National Park's villages and its topography generates many long distance views both into and out of villages. Views along streets and between buildings, together with traditional street patterns and layouts are important, combining to give each village or settlement its own distinct character". Whilst we do not dispute this, we do consider that it is inappropriate and inaccurate to simply identify every single area of undeveloped space under this policy and to then have to consider the historical form/character, setting, views of the countryside, archaeological interests and ecological implications of developing each area of undeveloped space when not all spaces are of equal importance.

Paragraph 4.113 goes on to seemingly identify some types of spaces that could be considered as an Important Undeveloped Space, which includes:

- Paddocks;
- Orchards;
- Gardens;
- Common land;
- Agricultural land; and
- Lanes and tracks.

Again this typology of spaces is broad in nature and given the rural context of the national park and Castleton, it effectively encompasses much of the land that isn't already developed or allocated for a specific use in the LPPSD. We consider that in order for this policy to be effective and allow for the Local Plan to deliver its identified vision and objectives, it must either be removed and/or not applied consistently across the Authority area without flexibility, as to do so would be procedurally flawed and unsound in our opinion.

Our Client's land interests in the village of Castleton currently comprise the following:

- Site A – open countryside
- Site B – residential garden

It is considered that neither of these sites could be considered as an Important Undeveloped Space. Further reasoning and justification as to why we consider the two sites should not be considered as Important Undeveloped Spaces is set out within our earlier representations to the Preferred Options Local Plan and are enclosed with this letter.

In addition, the policy, as currently worded, would be at odds with Strategic Policy B which states that for Larger Villages, "*Development should support the service function of Larger Villages by providing additional housing (including principal residence and affordable housing), employment and training premises and new facilities and services for the immediate and wider locality*".

Castleton is identified in the Settlement Hierarchy as a Larger Village and draft policy CO7 allows for the development of principal and affordable housing on suitable sites of no more than five dwellings in order to support the wider service function of the Larger Villages. In terms of Castleton, no development boundaries/limits are defined and no sites are designated for a specific use (housing or employment etc.) on the proposals map, with the suitability of a site for development being defined on a case by case basis. However, when considering potential development opportunities for the village, the blanket approach of policy ENV14 appears to deliberately restrict opportunities within or adjacent to the village to provide much needed housing and support the service function of the village as sought by Strategic Objective B and paragraph 78 of the NPPF which states "*planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services*".

We note that the justification text states that the policy seeks to support appropriate development which does not impact the character of the settlements and the wider built environment of the National Park. However, it is considered that some sites within Castleton could suitably accommodate new residential development without detriment to the settlements character.

Based on the above, it is considered that the Authority cannot seek to identify all undeveloped sites within the National Park and Larger Villages, such as Castleton, under policy ENV14. There is a limited supply of developable sites in the Larger Villages and Castleton has been identified as being suitable for development to address housing need, as confirmed by its location within the settlement hierarchy, in order to support local services. It is considered that our Client's land interests are suitable, available and achievable for future development in order to meet these objectives.

There is a need, therefore, for a balance between protecting sites that actually contribute to special character of a settlement and the wider built environment of the National Park, whilst ensuring new homes are delivered in order to meet housing need and help villages grow and thrive to support local services. Policy ENV14, through its broad scope and blanket approach, would not contribute towards achieving these objectives and would therefore not be compliant with strategic policies in the emerging Local Plan or national policy and guidance and should be removed.

Summary

Whilst we agree in principle with the majority of the LPPSD, however we do have particular concerns with some of the draft policies and particularly policy ENV14, despite the changes that have been made since the Preferred Options consultation.

We fully support the inclusion of a Settlement Hierarchy within the Local Plan as set out at Strategic Policy B and also support the need for additional housing within these Larger Villages to support the local and wider services.

We have serious concerns regarding Policy ENV14 and the apparent 'blanket approach' that the Authority has proposed which encompasses all undeveloped sites across the National Park. The policy conflicts with Strategic Policy B which supports the delivery of additional housing in Larger Villages, such as Castleton. This policy should therefore be removed, as opportunities for new housing development within the National Park are very limited. The Authority should support infill development sites in sustainable villages to help meet the identified needs, rather than trying to stifle such opportunities via Policy ENV14 and allow those villages to grow and thrive.

We trust that our comments will be duly considered along with those previously provided and be of assistance to the Authority and help to ensure that a sound and legally compliant Local Plan is taken forward.

If you have any queries with regard to this correspondence then please do not hesitate to contact me.





Associate

Enclosed:

Preferred Options Local Plan Consultation Response