



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
NORTH YORKSHIRE

## Campaign to Protect Rural England North Yorkshire Branch

CPRE North Yorkshire Reg Charity No: 500333

Chairman: David Clarke  
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14th October 2008

C. Walker  
Craven Sistrict Council  
Granville Street  
Skipton

Dear Sir

***Proposals for building extra housing and/or an Eco town in the corridor between Skipton & Keighley.***

CPRE considers that proposals for development on the scale envisaged between Skipton and Keighley are unacceptable on both environmental and amenity grounds and contrary to established regional and National policy.

The following policies are relevant

- 1 Craven's allocation of housing in the RSS is 250 net new houses annually.
  - a) 300 houses are in excess of this.
  - b) There are many empty homes in Leeds and the current financial crisis, which will not be speedily resolved, will make this situation worse. In Keighley there are brown field sites which are suitable for development.
  - c) It is clear that many of the houses proposed would be used, if occupied at all, for commuting to Leeds.
  - d) If houses which are now for sale were to be bought up by CDC or housing associations, it would benefit the environment, the local communities, homeless people, and it would save a great deal of expense: no new roads, water supplies, schools, sewage, etc. would be required.
2. The locational policies in the RSS, to which Craven must conform, give Skipton as the main location with only necessary affordable housing in nearby villages
- 3 Whatever the housing numbers the following principles governing location **must** apply
  - a) LCR 1 C1 – Protect and enhance the biodiversity and landscape character of Landscape Joint Character Areas – in Craven this is JCA 21 The Yorkshire Dales
  - b) C3 Safeguard the rural setting of the communities... to the North of Bradford and Leeds.
  - c) E4 Encourage regeneration and growth in Airedale focussing on Keighley and Skipton. (Given that Skipton has little land except green fields, this is not to be encouraged.)

CPRE considers that

- 1) The proposed development would fundamentally change the character of the Airedale valley between Keighley and Skipton. As will be seen from the attached maps the growth in the Leeds/Bradford conurbation in the last 30 years has been dramatic. Given that cities in England have the lowest population density of any cities in Europe, with consequent difficulties in providing services and profligate use of land. A proposal which would substantially increase this sprawl and effectively help to make a continuous ribbon of development in the valley is unacceptable
- 2) All proposals which increase long distance commuting should be dropped.
- 3) The requirement for 'Affordable' housing must be met by small numbers of houses in towns and villages where people requiring such housing work. Large scale 'Affordable' housing proposals are a contradiction in terms.
- 4) Given the current understanding of the essential demand on farming and forestry land for food, fuel and ecological/environmental requirements no housing should be permitted on farming land.
- 5) The current targets for net new houses are inappropriate and will be changed. The housing shortage is most acute in the South East. There are large numbers of empty properties in the North and the Governments increase of the Y&H RSS proposals without consultation was a grave error.
- 6) Any proposal for an Eco town must meet the 10 tests appended to this letter. The current proposals for the Airedale Valley fail such tests comprehensively.
- 7) There is adequate brown field land in the area to accommodate the required number of new houses.

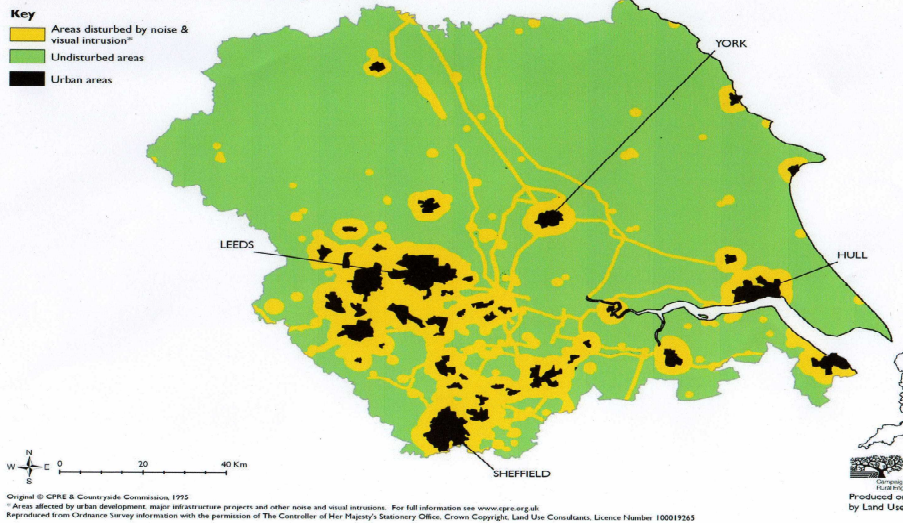
Yours sincerely

Hilary Fenten  
Chair Craven District North Yorks CPRE

#### **10 tests for Eco Town location and construction.**

- 1) The public and affected communities should be fully consulted on schemes, including the principle of whether or not to have an eco-town in their area;
- 2) Schemes should be tested through regional spatial strategies and local development framework reviews. These should ensure that decisions on eco-towns take full account of evidence on environmental effects, housing need and alternatives for meeting this;
- 3) Decisions on eco-towns should be accompanied by evidence that demonstrates a new settlement to be the most sustainable option for accommodating housing growth compared with other options, such as redeveloping an existing urban brown field site or an urban extension;
- 4) Schemes should demonstrate efficient use of land, with densities capable of supporting public transport and a high priority given to recycling brown field land and buildings;
- 5) They should be genuinely carbon neutral, taking into account potential emissions from transport (domestic, public and commercial) and buildings (in construction and use);
- 6) They should foster a strong sense of place and community, achieve CABE gold Building for Life Standards, with high quality public spaces, architecture and street layouts that give priority to pedestrians and non-motorised transport, including substantial car free areas;
- 7) They should be subject to an independent landscape character appraisal, be sympathetic to their setting and clearly enhance the local landscape, built and natural heritage, including through the designation of new Green Belt where appropriate;
- 8) They should include measures designed to conserve water and other natural resources, minimise soil, air, noise and light pollution and achieve zero-waste;
- 9) They should be complete communities with homes (with at least 50% affordable), schools, workplaces, shops, recreation, community and health facilities and open space within walking distance and foster active, sustainable lifestyles and civic participation;
- 10) They should be well connected to surroundings with high quality public transport providing good access to nearby settlements and local supply networks, with sourcing of local produce, such as food, fuel and replenishable building materials.

## Yorkshire and Humber Early 1960s



## Intrusion Map: Yorkshire and Humber 2007

