

## **The Selected Spatial Strategy for Development Growth in the Craven Local Plan**

1. The spatial strategy developed aims to identify the most appropriate spatial distribution for growth in the plan area. The spatial strategy aims to identify the most appropriate locations for providing new homes, employment, retail, community and visitor facilities over the period of the local plan. The elements of the chosen spatial strategy are based on the assessment work set out in Sp001, and in particular based on the sustainability matrices of the five options. The reasons for preferring Option E are based on this document.
2. Accordingly, Craven's future development requirements will be distributed and accommodated in line with the spatial strategy, and on the basis of an established settlement hierarchy for towns and villages in the plan area, which has agreed upon by Members of Craven District Council. An assessment of the role and function of the different settlements is set out in Appendix 1 of the hearing statement for Matter 4.
3. Four scenarios of growth pattern within the Craven plan area emerged from engagement with stakeholders were selected as models to help to eventually determine a most suitable option. These scenarios were designed to provide four possible approaches to spatial growth in Craven. These four scenarios were each subject to Sustainability Appraisal to evaluate the positives and negatives of each spatial approach.
4. The objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal that are used are the same objectives as those used to test the draft policies of the plan and also to test the proposed sites for development put forward under the Call for Sites process. These sustainability objectives are based on a range of social, environmental and economic criteria. From this work, a fifth spatial approach was based on bringing together the respective merits from each of the four scenarios evaluated, to form what appears to be the most sustainable solution for development growth in Craven over the plan period. A sustainability appraisal was then undertaken for this preferred spatial option.
5. In summary, the initial spatial scenarios chosen for growth in Craven are described as follows:
  - Option A – Growth focused on main settlements;
  - Option B – Dispersed Growth;
  - Option C – Growth focused on Skipton;
  - Option D – Growth focused on Skipton and the south-east.
6. The percentages allocated to each settlement under these scenarios, and the spatial scenario chosen as the preferred option (Option E), are shown in the table and diagrams. Option E focuses on what it sees as a balanced hierarchy of growth. This option focuses on concentrating the majority of the growth in the larger urban settlements, and with a smaller distribution of growth allocated to the smaller towns and villages. The scenario predominately incorporates the merits of the preceding four options, predominately Options A, C and D. The following bullet points set out

as to the reasons why it is deemed that Option E represents the most suitable spatial strategy in the local plan area.

- Skipton is currently by far the largest urban settlement in the Craven local plan area. It is identified as a principal settlement (Tier 1 settlement) in the settlement hierarchy, given that it has by far the highest levels of services and facilities in the local plan area, and its role and function in the plan area. It is considered appropriate to allocate 50% of the expected overall growth to Skipton under this chosen spatial strategy;
- The Tier 2 (Key Service Centres) settlements also receive what is believed to be appropriate levels of growth under this strategy. The Tier 2 settlements (Settle and Bentham) also have relatively high levels of services and facilities, and they each receive between 10-11% of developmental growth. Settle, in the centre of the local plan area, and Bentham, in the west of the plan area, also act as appropriate urban areas in distributing the larger portion of the growth evenly throughout the local plan area, considering Skipton's allocation in the east. These settlements also have important functions and roles in their respective local areas;
- The three Tier 3 settlements (Local Service Centres) are also evenly distributed throughout the plan area in geographical terms (Glusburn & Crosshills in the southeast, Gargrave in the central area, and Ingleton in the west). These settlements were afforded between 2% to 5.1% of development growth (this has since been revised to 3.5% for each settlement in this Tier). The three Tier 3 settlements offer an additional but smaller range of services, and they can be seen to complement the Principal Settlement and the two Key Service Centres in geographical terms;
- Villages with basic services (Tier 4a) and settlements with basic services that are bisected by the national park boundary (Tier 4b) are each afforded up to 2% of development growth. Such settlements have a limited range of services and facilities, but it is important to ensure that such growth is allocated to more rural settlements to ensure their continued viability and prosperity;
- There are also important environmental reasons as to why this spatial strategy option was chosen. Slightly over 70% of the development growth is accommodated in the three largest urban areas, with 50% accommodated in the town of Skipton. These settlements, and in particular, Skipton, has the best public transport options in the local plan area. This reduces the requirements for private vehicle travel throughout the district. In addition, the low adherence of this strategy to the elements of Option B (dispersed growth) means that urban sprawl type development in the local plan area will be avoided. Large percentages of proposed development in the southeast of the local plan area are avoided, which is important given this area's proximity to Bradford and its present and future housing allocations adjacent to the South Pennine Moors SAC & Phase 2 SPA.