

DRAFT PLAN

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Wray with Botton Neighbourhood Area



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VISION

The vision for the Wray-with Botton Neighbourhood Plan needs to reflect and supplement the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan vision, the Local Plan vision, national policy and the evidence gathered from consultation with the local community.

Based on engagement with the Community and the key issues identified, Wray-with-Botton Neighbourhood Development Plan's Vision for 2031 is as follows:

Development will be managed in the Neighbourhood Plan area in a way that meets the needs of the local community allowing them to continue to live, work and enjoy a high quality of life in an area that creates a strong sense of place.

Wray-with-Botton will support high-quality sustainable development to meet local needs which enhances the local distinctiveness of its character and respects its setting within the landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Sustainable development will be managed within the Parish for the benefit of its residents, businesses and wild-life, maintaining and enhancing its character and respecting its setting within the landscape. Agriculture and wild places will remain valued features of local life.

Success will mean Wray-with-Botton continues to be a small vibrant, rural community encouraging prosperity for residents and local businesses alike.

Reasoned Justification

The vision has been subject to much discussion both within the neighbourhood planning group and the wider community through consultation. It encompasses the key strands of local distinctiveness and the established high quality of life created by a vibrant community living in harmony with its special surroundings. The community supports sustainable development provided it will enhance and not harm the strong sense of place.

OBJECTIVES

To achieve this Vision, the following Objectives should be met:

(I) Development is compatible with the existing built environment and the landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB in terms of its character, heritage and scale.

(II) Development is designed to a high standard and within the village of Wray compatible with the Conservation Area at its core.

(III) The housing needs of the Parish are met by providing homes of the right type size and tenure in the most suitable places.

(IV) Priority is given to new development on previously developed land

(V) Local suitable business initiatives for live/work, agricultural diversification, small scale facilities for tourism and enterprise are encouraged and strengthened.

(VI) Development is compatible with the natural environment, preserving wildlife habitats, green spaces and respecting the importance of the setting within the AONB.

(VII) Development is compatible with the traditions and activities of the Neighbourhood.

(VIII) Parking and pedestrian, cycle and equestrian routes are improved to promote safety and community well-being for access to local services and leisure.

Reasoned Justification

As is the the case for the vision, the objectives for the Wray-with Botton Neighbourhood Plan needs to reflect and supplement the objectives of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan, the Local Plan, national policy and the evidence gathered from consultation with the local community. The objectives expand on the vision, giving it substance and showing how it will be achieved. In turn, the objectives lead on to the specific policies which will deliver them.

Objectives (I) and (II) establish the overall strategy putting the emphasis on development which is compatible with the aims and objectives of the Forest of Bowland AONB and ensuring that the main settlement of Wray maintains its local distinctiveness.

Objectives (III) and (IV) seek to deliver the housing needs of the area in a sustainable way making best use of previously developed land in the same way that has helped the village grow in the past in a way which maintains the strong sense of place and community cohesion.

Objective (V) seeks to support a strong rural economy seeking innovation and encouraging diversification to meet changing times.

Objective (VI) recognises the adverse impacts that can occur where development fails to take account of its surroundings and sets a high value on the natural assets which support the designation of the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Objective (VII) refers to the traditions and activities of the area. These take place in a wide variety of community assets and places. The objective aims to support their retention and enhancement wherever possible.

Whilst recognising that significant improvement of public transport or highway infrastructure is unlikely, nevertheless there is the potential to encourage small scale improvements particularly to reduce the conflict between non-motorised users and vehicles within the village of Wray and to improve the footpath and cycleway network to promote safety and community well-being. Objective (VIII) seeks to support this.

DRAFT POLICIES

The Neighbourhood Plan Group developed policies by looking at each of the identified objectives in turn and considering the extent to which additional planning policies, allocations and guidance over and above those already in the existing Lancaster City Development Plan, the emerging Local Plan and the Forest of Bowland Management Plan, could help achieve them. It then drafted policies accordingly, consulting with Lancaster City Council's planning officers to ensure that the wording would be as effective as possible.

Policy Number	Policy Name
	OVERALL STRATEGY
OS1	DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
OS2	LANDSCAPE
OS2	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
	BUILT ENVIRONMENT
BE1	DESIGN
BE2	LOCAL DESIGN PANELS
	HOUSING
H1	HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
H2	HOUSING PROVISION
H3	CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS (FALLING OUT OF USE) WITHIN WRAY SETTLEMENT AREA TO RESIDENTIAL USE
	RURAL ECONOMY
RE1	RETENTION OF LAND FOR AGRICULTURE
RE2	DIVERSIFICATION AND RE-USE OF REDUNDANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS
RE3	LIVE/WORK UNITS, SMALL SCALE ENTERPRISES AND FACILITIES FOR TOURISM

	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
NE1	CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
NE2	LOCAL GREENSPACE
NE3	PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF WILDLIFE HABITATS INCLUDING HEDGEROWS
NE4	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
	COMMUNITY
COM1	SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ASSETS AND THE TRADITIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
	TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
TRA1	TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT
TRA2	IMPROVEMENTS TO LOCAL SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE
TRA3	IMPROVEMENTS TO SAFETY ON LOCAL ROADS
TRA4	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

OVERALL STRATEGY

A key reason for preparing the the Neighbourhood Plan is to place development more clearly in the context of the of the primary purpose of the Forest of Bowland AONB - to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area - and to put this purpose at the heart of planning within the plan area. The first two policies aim to establish this purpose at the heart of the overall approach.

Policy OS1: Development Strategy

A landscape capacity-led approach to development will be taken in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Development will be permitted where it furthers the primary purpose of AONB designation¹. Development that prejudices this purpose will not be permitted. Exceptions will only be made where it can be demonstrated that:

(I) there is an overriding public need; and

(II) the development cannot be located elsewhere; and

(III) the harm can be mitigated or, only where mitigation is not possible, compensatory measures can be agreed.

Development within the village of Wray

To promote a vibrant local community and support services, small scale growth and investment will be supported within the village of Wray where it is in keeping with the primary purpose of the AONB.

¹ As set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:

- The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty
- In pursuing the primary purpose of the designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regards should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.
- Recreation is not an objective of the designation but the demand for recreation should be met insofar as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

Development outside the village of Wray

Development proposals on the edge of the settlement will be permitted only where it can be clearly demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on settlement character, the character of the immediate and wider landscape or the Special Qualities of the AONB.

Development proposals outside the village of Wray will be treated as exceptions and will be permitted only where they demonstrate:

(IV) an essential need for a rural location; or

(V) that it will help to sustain an existing business, including farm diversification schemes; or

(VI) that it contributes to the meeting of a proven and essential housing need in that location;

or

(VII) that it represents a sensitive and appropriate reuse, redevelopment or extension of an existing building.

Major Development

In accordance with NPPF Paragraph 116, proposals for major development will not be permitted in the AONB, unless the proposal can be demonstrated to be in the public interest and exceptional circumstances exist.

Whether a proposed development constitutes major development will be a matter for the relevant decision taker, taking into account the individual characteristics and circumstances of the proposal and the local context. In determining whether a proposed development constitutes major development Lancaster City Council will consider whether by reason of its scale, character or nature, the proposal has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty of the AONB.

In determining whether exceptional circumstances exist Lancaster City Council will consider:

(VIII) the need for the development, including any national considerations, and the impact of permitting or refusing it upon the local economy; and

(IX) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

(X) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

The Forest of Bowland AONB benefits from the the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty and great weight will be given to conserving the landscape in considering development proposals. This includes taking into full account all elements and individual features that contribute to the landscape and settlement character of the AONB, such as biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural heritage, guided by the AONB Management

Plan.

Policy OS2 - Landscape

Proposals will not be permitted where they would have a significant adverse effect upon the character of the landscape or would harm the landscape quality, visual amenity, nature conservation interests, geodiversity interests or cultural heritage of the AONB.

Development proposals will be supported where they:

- (I) give great weight to conserving the landscape and its character, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, features and building materials; and
- (II) take account of and respect the relevant landscape character types and features identified in the AONB Landscape Character Assessment, the Wray Conservation Area Appraisal, and the Wray-with-Botton Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal; and
- (III) ensure that the location, layout, scale, design, proportion, massing, materials and colour conserves and enhances what is special and locally distinctive about the landscape, settlement and historic character, including protecting open views; and
- (IV) retain the existing scale and pattern of the landscape; and
- (V) retain, integrate and enhance distinctive natural, semi-natural, cultural and historic features; and
- (VI) conserve and enhance visual amenity, views, tranquillity and the sense of space and place, avoiding the introduction of intrusive elements or compromise to the skyline; and
- (VII) avoid harm to the wider landscape, including cumulative impacts, and prevent urbanisation and increases in noise and light pollution, reducing it where there is scope to do so; and open views; and
- (VIII) include a robust Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment demonstrating the level of impact of the proposed development.

Reasoned Justification

'Natural Beauty' is not just an aesthetic concept, and 'landscape' means more than just scenery. The landscape and natural beauty of AONBs is partly due to nature, and is partly the product of many centuries of human modification. Landscape encompasses everything – 'natural' and human – that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soils, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it.

The character of the landscape in the Neighbourhood Plan area is a highly valued asset. The wooded valleys, field patterns stretching out to open moorland are defining features. It is the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) in this area that makes the landscape so distinctive resulting in a strong sense of place.

The Forest of Bowland AONB is a protected landscape as set out in paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework and explained in the AONB Management Plan. Protected landscapes are part of the cultural and natural heritage of the nation and have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The AONB contains important heritage assets, wildlife species, habitats and geological diversity, many of which are recognised as being of national or international importance, and are protected by law.

National policy gives great weight to the protection of the Special Qualities of the AONB, such as its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage. If the Special Qualities are damaged, for example by insensitive development, then that will compromise the primary purpose of the AONB and the enjoyment of the area by the public. The assumption therefore is that the Special Qualities are connected to the landscape, wildlife, cultural heritage and the enjoyment of being in the AONB.

Where a development proposal would create conflict between the primary purpose of the AONB and other uses of the AONB, such as recreation, the purpose of conservation is given preference under a long-standing presumption known as the 'Sandford Principle'.

In order to best serve the primary purpose of AONB designation, new development must relate to the established character of the area (as described in the Landscape Character Assessment) in which it is to be located. It must integrate with its setting and be in keeping with neighbouring buildings and the landscape by appropriate siting, nature, scale, proportion, massing, design, materials and landscaping. It must respect the prevailing proportion of buildings to gardens and green space.

There are many opportunities to conserve and enhance the special and distinctive character of the AONB landscapes by managing development and supporting the conservation of distinctive landscape features such as in-field trees, hedgerows, drystone walls, and ponds. Proposals will be supported where they remove elements that adversely affect the landscape, such as overhead cables.

The land at the edge of settlements often forms part of the historic setting of the settlement and can include areas which have cultural importance. Public rights of way can often provide access to these areas and connections to the open landscape of the AONB beyond. They provide key opportunities for green infrastructure in addition to shaping and maintaining settlement character.

Development has the potential to introduce intrusive and jarring elements into the landscape resulting in adverse impacts on views and visual amenity. How a site, feature, building or view is seen, fitting in with its surroundings, and enjoyed in that context is very important within the AONB. This is a highly valued aspect of the AONB by local residents and is the reason why many visitors come to the AONB.

A sense of tranquillity is a special quality of the AONB but is gradually being eroded by increases in noise, activity, traffic and disturbance. The scale and type of new development and level of activity along with journeys to and from a site will affect tranquillity and will be a factor in determining whether or not a proposed development can proceed.

All light pollution, however small, contributes to the general erosion of darkness in the AONB. The spilling of light beyond a site boundary and into the surrounding countryside can be disturbing to wildlife and have an intrusive visual impact. Light pollution contributes generally to the urbanisation of the rural landscape and the loss of darkness in our night skies and should be minimised in any new development.

The expectation is that the majority of development proposals in the AONB should be modest in scale. Through negotiation on aspects of design and mitigation, it should usually be possible to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the statutory purposes.

Major Development

National planning policy does not allow major new development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty except in exceptional circumstances because of the likely harm it would cause to the nation's long term interest of conserving these places. Proposals are subject to the most rigorous examination and have to demonstrate that they are genuinely in the nation's interest if they are to proceed.

Whether a proposed development constitutes major development will be a matter for the relevant decision taker. Major development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area is defined as development that has the potential to have a serious adverse impact on the landscape, wildlife, cultural heritage or Special Qualities of the AONB because of its scale, form, character or nature. Examples may include quarrying, medium and large scale housing development, commercial development that is out of keeping with the landscape, caravan sites, new roads, tall vertical structures and high voltage overhead power lines. The intimate nature of the AONB landscape means that even smaller-scale development proposals may be considered to be 'major' depending on the context. Development may have the potential to have a significant impact on the qualities of an AONB whether it is located inside or adjacent to its boundary.

A landscape capacity-led approach

The Forest of Bowland was designated as an AONB in recognition of its landscape attributes characterised by the grandeur of the upland core; the steep escarpment of the Moorland Hills; the undulating lowlands; the visual contrasts between each element of the overall landscape; the serenity and tranquility of the area; the distinctive pattern of settlements; the wildlife and the landscape's historic and cultural associations. Although it forms only a portion of the overall AONB, Wray-with-Botton Parish includes many of these characteristics. The Wray-with Botton Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal includes a detailed analysis of setting of the village and identifies eight local character areas around the village of Wray which help to create a picture of the distinctive places within the existing settlement and how they relate to the adjacent land. This appraisal forms the basis of individual site assessment to determine the sensitivity of each area and its capacity to accommodate housing growth in the context of the village and its setting. With the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing the landscape attributes of the AONB, it is entirely appropriate to take a landscape-led approach to the formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

An important part of Lancaster City Council's District-wide plan preparation is the identification of objectively assessed housing needs (OAN). This includes needs for affordable housing, but also any needs for other housing types, including open market housing. When the Local Plan is submitted for examination, the Government Inspector will consider very closely whether and how it is meeting evidenced needs. Although Lancaster City Council District is refining its identified level of need, the figure represent the position across the whole of the District. It is difficult to apportion a figure specific to either the area of the AONB within Lancaster City or to the Parish of Wray-with-Botton and no precedent exists for such an approach. OAN calculations are district-wide assessments and there are difficulties in calculating an OAN for a smaller areas such as individual parishes.

A Housing Needs Survey² was carried out as part of the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. All households were given the opportunity to take part and a 58.6% return was achieved. The survey found that main affordable need for the 5 year period to 2020 is for 1 or 2 bed houses to buy at discounted prices (4 No) followed by 3+ bed houses to buy at discounted prices (2 No) and Sheltered Housing (1 No for rent and 1 No to buy at a discounted price) and 1 requirement for a 3+ bed house to rent. Other needs identified could be met on the open market. Whilst it will be necessary to review and revise this information over the course of the 15 year plan period, it was concluded that there was no pressing demand within the parish for significant numbers of new dwellings. The implementation of existing planning permissions (10 dwellings) and the opportunities for further infill in the village of Wray over the plan period would be likely to provide sufficient dwellings to meet local need and make a contribution towards growth and needs identified in the Lancaster City District as a whole.

New development can make a positive contribution to the landscape but can also harm it in a number of ways. For example, new features that are uncharacteristic of the landscape may be introduced that detract from the local vernacular building style, intrude into skylines or obstruct or erode important views. Important landscape features such as hedges, drystone walls and mature trees may be damaged or removed. Over time, development can lead to the gradual erosion of local distinctiveness and in a protected landscape of such unique character, this sort of cumulative loss and harm must be avoided in order to serve the primary purpose of AONB designation.

All new development within the area of the Forest of Bowland AONB covered by this Neighbourhood Plan must complement the character and visual amenity of the local landscape and must reflect the capacity of the landscape to accommodate it.

The Parish and City Councils will also expect proposals to have regard to the content of the AONB Management Plan.

Given the difficulties in apportioning the OAN, and the emphasis on the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development within the AONB, it has been concluded that it is not necessary to identify a specific housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan and that the priority should be to meet identified affordable and other local housing needs within the capacity of the landscape.

General Requirements

Policies set out in Lancaster City Council's Local Plan include general requirements that all new development, including development in the Forest of Bowland AONB, is expected to meet. These requirements help to ensure that all new development reaches a certain standard and contributes positively to the area. Also included is the requirement for the setting of the AONB to be protected.

OS3 – General requirements

In addition to General Requirements for all development set out in the Lancaster City Local Plan, all development within the Neighbourhood Plan area must:

(I) have proper and full regard to the AONB designation, in line with current

² See Appendix 2: Housing Needs Survey Report 2015

legislation, policy, guidance and evidence relating to designated landscapes; and

(II) reinforce, complement and be guided by the Special Qualities of the AONB, as set out in the AONB Management Plan; and

(III) clearly support, contribute to and not detract from the primary purpose of AONB designation; and

(IV) protect the setting of and views into and out from the AONB and Wray Conservation Area; and

(V) take full account of the cumulative and incremental impacts of development having regard to the impacts of existing developments (including unintended impacts and impacts of development that has taken place as a result of Permitted Development Rights, licensing or certification) and the likely further impacts of the proposal in hand; and

(VI) ensure that traffic movements and transport arrangements associated with new development do not compromise the area's tranquillity, rural feel or opportunities for quiet enjoyment and recreation.

Where the individual, cumulative or incremental impacts of a development proposal would compromise the primary purpose of the Forest of Bowland AONB designation or the Special Qualities and these impacts cannot be effectively mitigated or offset, permission will not be granted.

Reasoned Justification

The General Requirements set out at District level apply in the AONB, but because the Neighbourhood Plan area falls wholly within the Forest of Bowland AONB and because of the AONB's protected status and Special Qualities, this policy sets out that within the Neighbourhood Plan area, further requirements must be met. All development in the Neighbourhood Plan area is expected to conform to a very high standard of design, to be in keeping with local distinctiveness and should seek to conserve and enhance the Forest of Bowland AONB's natural beauty.

HOUSING

Policy H1: Housing Development

Proposals for meeting housing needs through the conversion or sub-division of existing buildings, or on previously developed land and on allocated sites within the village of Wray listed below that have been identified through the Site Assessment process will be supported where they are of a scale, siting and design that is compatible with the area as outlined in Policy BE1 of this Plan.

New housing development will be supported where the maximum possible affordable homes are delivered and where the number, size, types and tenures of all homes provided demonstrably reflects and meets identified local needs in accordance with current housing needs evidence at the time of application.

Proposals will be expected to demonstrate that densities make best and efficient use of land and reflect the settlement character. The delivery of affordable housing should be phased in line with demand to ensure that the market is not over-supplied at any one time.

Allocated Sites

Site Reference	Name	Area	Estimated Dwellings
WR3	Appletree Barn Paddock	0.34 ha	5 ³
WR5	Hoskins Farm	0.54 ha	15
WR6	Adj 45 Wennington Road	0.03 ha	1 ⁴
WR10	New Inn	n/a	4 ⁵
WR11	New Inn Car Park	0.03 ha	1

Reasoned Justification

³ Planning permission already granted Refs 14/01134/FUL & 15/00087/OUT

⁴ Planning permission already granted Ref 15/01443/FUL

⁵ Planning permission already granted Ref 14/01088/CU (number includes an existing disused cottage)

Background to approach is based on what has worked in the past - incremental growth and no large scale development other than Hoskins Farm. Housing needs survey indicated a current requirement for up to 9 affordable homes to buy or rent. The policy is driven by the need to avoid encroachment on the surrounding countryside; to preserve the setting of the village in the landscape; to minimise harmful visual impact of development on the Forest of Bowland AONB and the Wray Conservation Area; and, to preserve important views into and out of the Wray Conservation area. Wray Parish Council is mindful of overall housing need identified at District level but this must be balanced against the potential harm to the Forest of Bowland AONB and notes that a similar landscape-capacity led approach has been proposed for the Arnside & Silverdale draft Development Plan Document.

The historic rate has averaged about 1 to 2 properties each year since the 1940s. A similar approach would result in 15 to 30 new homes over the plan period of which 4 at the New Inn, 5 at Appletree Barn and 1 adjacent to 45 Wennington Road have planning consent. A new house has been completed recently behind The Gars which continues this historic trend.

The most significant site identified to come forward in the plan period would be Hoskins Farm where the owner has indicated⁶ that the site could come forward for development within 5 to 10 years time. Being in the heart of the village, a well designed scheme would be expected to preserve and enhance the Wray Conservation Area and the listed buildings both on the site and nearby. Development of the site also has the potential to release land to provide a limited amount of off-street parking for community use.

A further 3 sites have been identified which are considered suitable for housing and are listed in the table below. However the landowners do not have a positive intention to bring these sites forward in the present financial climate. They are therefore not available and cannot be allocated. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the availability of land for small developments which would contribute to incremental growth throughout the plan period.

Suitable Sites with the potential to come forward within the Plan period			
Site Reference	Name	Area	Estimated Dwellings
WR4	Wood House Paddock	0.21 ha	6
WR9	Old Chapel Field	0.08 ha	2
WR14	Land adjacent School Lane	0.19 ha	4

The overall increase in the number of homes would therefore range between 26 and 38 over the plan period representing an increase of between about 12% and 17% of the 222 households identified in the 2011 census. Subject to detailed design considerations and all

⁶ Need date of letter to Lancaster City Council from John Staveley

other relevant planning policies, the Parish considers that this potential increase can be satisfactorily accommodated within a landscape capacity approach to development within the Forest of Bowland AONB.

POLICY H2: Housing Provision

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to satisfying other relevant policy requirements and in order to ensure that new development in the AONB meets local needs, proposals for new housing development will be supported where they deliver at least 50% affordable housing. Only where this is demonstrably unachievable through available mechanisms will a lower percentage be acceptable.

New housing development will be supported where the maximum possible affordable homes are delivered and where the number, size, types and tenures of all homes provided demonstrably reflects and meets identified local needs in accordance with current housing needs evidence at the time of the application.

Priority will be given to the delivery of affordable housing and maximising the potential for meeting identified local needs and local affordable needs from appropriate individual development opportunities. Proposals will be expected to demonstrate that densities make best and efficient use of land and reflect local settlement character.

Affordable housing needs are forecast to apply over a period of time and not all the identified need is required straight away. The delivery of affordable housing should be phased in line with demand to ensure that the market is not over-supplied at any time. This can be done by close working with and between housing developers, landowners and appropriate Registered Providers of affordable housing.

Subject to meeting other policy requirements, proposals will be supported that:

(I) meet housing needs through the conversion or sub-division of existing buildings or through the redevelopment of previously developed land; or

(II) meet the needs of specific societal groups or restrict occupancy to sole/main residence or to those with a local connection.

Reasoned Justification

A requirement for 50% of new homes to be affordable is justified because the Neighbourhood Plan Designated area lies wholly within the AONB, a sensitive landscape protected at a national level. It is inappropriate to use those sites that are suitable for development to deliver development that does not meet local affordable or other local needs. Doing so would mean that those needs would remain unmet and more sensitive sites would have to be developed in order to meet the needs, causing harm and compromising the primary purpose of the AONB designation.

Existing policies and legal conditions mean that all affordable housing is already restricted to those with a local connection in perpetuity. There is no evidence to suggest that there is a high proportion of second homes and holiday lets that would justify additional occupancy restrictions where this type of approach may also increase viability concerns. Therefore this plan does not set out any proposal to restrict the occupancy of new properties other than the

existing restrictions placed on affordable housing. However, the policy does identify that where proposals offer occupancy controls that help to support the meeting of local needs, this will be looked upon favourably as part of the overall consideration of the scheme.

This policy supports the approach taken in the Council's draft review of the Development Management DPD Policy DM5: Housing Provision in the Forest of Bowland AONB. Although at an early stage on its path to adoption, nevertheless it provides strong guidance.

The policy will be used to address potential future applications on non-allocated sites.

POLICY H3: Conversion of Agricultural Buildings (falling out of use) within Wray settlement area to residential use.

The principle of conversion of agricultural buildings to residential use within the established settlement area of Wray Village will be supported where:

- (I) Suitable services and access are available without the need for works which would adversely affect the character of the building and / or locality;
- (II) The building is of a permanent and substantial construction, is structurally sound and capable of conversion and that any important architectural and historical features are retained within the proposal;
- (III) The proposal safeguards the roosting or nesting habitat of any protected species present within the building;
- (IV) The proposal does not adversely affect the character, rural setting and appearance of the surrounding landscape or the amenity of nearby residents through the use of good design and use of materials;
- (V) The type of use proposed is of a scale and type that is consistent with the specific location;
- (VI) The proposal does not have an adverse impact on the local highway network, either in terms of highway safety or highway capacity; and
- (VII) The proposal is accompanied by an acceptable Travel Plan where it is recognised that the proposed use will generate a significant level of trips.
- (VIII) The conversion does not have an adverse affect on the ability of the fields around Wray to continue in agricultural use.
- (IX) The proposal meets Local Plan Policy DM44: Residential Conversions.

Where some limited development outside the settlement area would be necessary in order for the proposal to meet criteria (VIII) then this will only be allowed provided that it meets the definition of purpose (I)⁷ of Local Plan Policy DM7: Economic Development in Rural Areas and that the development has regard to policies BE1 and BE2 of this Plan and to the provisions in paragraph 115⁸ of the NPPF:

Reasoned Justification

The conversion of farm buildings within the village of Wray to residential use could help meet the identified housing need in Wray without harming the contribution the townscape and surrounding landscape of the village make to the various functions of the Forest of Bowland AONB. However, it may be necessary to offset the loss of the agricultural buildings in the settlement area to some extent with agricultural related development outside the settlement area in order to maintain the agricultural function of the surrounding fields in which case such development should be of an acceptable design and scale to its scale.

⁷ Essential operations for agriculture, horticulture, equine related activities, allocated mineral extraction or waste management facilities and essential infrastructure where there is a proven and justified need

⁸ Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.

WRAY HOUSING NEED SURVEY 2015

A Housing Needs Survey⁹ was carried out as part of the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. All households were given the opportunity to take part and a 58.6% return was achieved. The survey found that main affordable need for the 5 year period to 2020 is for 1 or 2 bed houses to buy at discounted prices (4 No) followed by 3+ bed houses to buy at discounted prices (2 No) and Sheltered Housing (1 No for rent and 1 No to buy at a discounted price) and 1 requirement for a 3+ bed house to rent. Other needs identified could be met on the open market. Whilst it will be necessary to review and revise this information over the course of the 15 year plan period, it was concluded that there was no pressing demand within the parish for significant numbers of new dwellings. The implementation of existing planning permissions (10 dwellings) and the opportunities for further infill in the village of Wray over the plan period would be likely to provide sufficient dwellings to meet local need and make a contribution towards growth and needs identified in the Lancaster City District as a whole.

⁹ See Appendix 2: Housing Needs Survey Report 2015

SITE ASSESSMENT

Methodology

1.1.1 Sites that have been assessed around the village of Wray for their potential for development in line with the Development Strategy set out in Policy OS1. Each site has been subject to rigorous examination against a number of criteria to determine whether or not it could be allocated under Policy H1 for housing.

1.1.2 Lancaster City Council has previously identified and assessed five sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area for housing as shown in the table below. Each of these sites had been assessed by the Council as part of its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) in 2009, 2012, 2014 and most recently in 2015. Although there were no significant changes to the physical characteristics of these sites during this period, there was no consistent conclusion, other than for Hoskins Farm, as to whether the sites should be allocated for housing.

NP Reference	SHLAA 2015 Reference	Description
WR1	643	Land East of Wray
WR2	637	Land North of Wray
WR3	638	Land Adjacent to Appletree Barn
WR4	639	Wood House Paddock
WR5	642	Hoskins Farm

1.1.3 These sites therefore formed a starting point for the site search. The community was invited to suggest possible sites for development through the engagement process by questionnaire survey and at the open day exhibition held on 4 July 2015. These suggestions were interpreted by the Neighbourhood Plan Group (NPG) into a number of additional sites

including some subdivision of the larger sites WR1 and WR2 and sites that came forward as planning applications.

NP Reference	Description
WR1.1	Home Farm Close North
WR1.2	Home Farm Close Mid Section
WR2.1	Strip Field between Briglands and 45 Wennington Road
WR6	Land adjacent 45 Wennington Road
WR7	School House Paddock
WR8	Gibson's Paddock, School Lane
WR9	Old Chapel Field
WR10	New Inn
WR11	New Inn Car Park
WR12	Back of Beck 1: Enclosure West of Bridge House Farm
WR13	Back of Beck 2: Pasture between allotments and Bank Wood
WR14	Paddock adjacent to Moor Cottages, School Lane
WR15	Land West of Wray: behind New Inn and Methodist Church
WR16	Hornby Road: north side of B6480, west of barn

1.1.4 In seeking a consistent way of assessing the sites, the NPG adopted the broad principles used by the Council in its 2015 SHLAA¹⁰. These principles include assessment of the suitability of the site for housing, its availability and whether and when such development could be delivered. Whilst the SHLAA recognised that sites within Wray lay within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), inevitably given the scale of the SHLAA, it was unable to look at the sites in any detail to assess the impact of development on the AONB.

1.1.5 However, the Council was drafting a Development Plan Document (DPD) jointly with South Lakeland District Council to cover the Arnside & Silverdale AONB and addressed site assessment by developing bespoke assessment criteria with which to each of the site suggestions could be assessed. This enabled a more comprehensive assessment than was possible with the SHLAA and was adopted by the NPG for site assessment in Wray.

¹⁰ A Local Plan for Lancaster District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015: Report

1.1.6 Taking account of the location within the Forest of Bowland AONB, it was clear that professional independent landscape appraisal would be essential to understand the special qualities of the area. Lancaster City Council agreed to fund a Landscape and Visual Survey Report on sites WR1 and WR2 covering land to the east and north of Wray by Arcadis (formerly Hyder Consulting). However, given that sites had been identified in all areas of the village, it was necessary to extend and review this work to ensure a consistent approach. Alison Farmer Associates was commissioned by the Parish Council to undertake this additional assessment¹¹.

1.1.7 An essential element of the site assessment process is to discuss the potential for development with the landowners. Sites which may have been considered suitable could not be allocated unless the site would be available during the Neighbourhood Plan period. If the site was considered both suitable and available then it was necessary to assess whether there was a real prospect of delivering that development within the plan period. This will be achieved by inviting representatives from local developers and land agents to give their opinions on the sites and making a judgement on the outcome.

1.1.8 The final stage in the process will be to submit those sites considered suitable, available and deliverable for Habitats Regulations¹² Assessment (HRA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) as required under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive¹³.

1.1.9 Site assessment for each site will comprise a brief description of the location, an assessment of its suitability, availability and achievability together with a plan, photograph, map and summary assessment sheet.

¹¹ Wray-with-Botton Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal Alison Farmer Associates 2017

¹² Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. The Directive is primarily transposed in England under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations).

¹³ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment