

**FRIENDS OF THE PEAK DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND
SOUTH YORKSHIRE
HOUSING POLICY**

Our Housing Policy aims are:

- **to reduce land-take from housing;**
- **to ensure that housing developments are located in the most sustainable sites ensuring that brownfield and low landscape value sites are developed first;**
- **to promote provision of housing which rural residents can afford;**
- **to promote provision of housing that fits with local landscape character;**
- **to promote good design contributing to a 'sense of place' and making prudent use of natural resources;**
- **to ensure that the use of materials reflects or enhances locally distinctive building styles;**
- **to promote housing which responds to the effects of and reduces its contribution to climate change.**

These aims will be pursued through our responses to planning applications and our representations on development plans.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We support open market housing developments that comply with PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) and PPS3 (Housing) or promote urban renaissance. We support the provision of affordable housing in order to sustain rural communities but the benefits must be assessed in the light of the landscape impacts of each scheme and the level of affordable housing need in each area.

We will encourage Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to prioritise the development of brownfield sites and the conversion of existing buildings. We will also support LPAs who justify and incorporate projected windfalls within their housing calculations.

The branch will encourage, where appropriate, LPAs to maintain a brownfield target of no less than 60% of new housing on previously developed (brownfield) land.

The compliance of housing applications and allocations with other parts of PPS1 and PPS3 should be considered, such as design and density standards, access to public transport, jobs, shops and services etc.

We must also ensure that housing developments comply, where appropriate, with:

- PPS22 and its companion guide;

- PPS1 and its supplement: Planning and Climate Change; and
- the Code for Sustainable Homes.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In the case of affordable housing, we will only consider supporting applications affecting greenfield sites where:

1. A full assessment has been made of the availability of previously developed land and buildings AND
2. There is a proven level of affordable housing need in the area (in that parish/ward or an adjoining parish/ward) which the application would satisfy (based on scrutiny of housing needs surveys) AND
3. It is the best site available on all planning grounds, especially landscape impact, taking into account both the design and materials of the dwellings and their impact upon their setting.

When responding to development plan reviews, we will encourage LPAs to adopt the 'one-for-one' policy advocated in the Rural White Paper (2000) where, in small villages, housing developments should be at least 50% affordable when there is evidence of need. We should aim for a similar proportion to be adopted in the quantity of affordable housing required on other sites and we should campaign for the requirement to apply to the smallest of sites. We should encourage LPAs to allocate some sites for 100% affordable housing. Where housing targets are exceeded we should encourage a moratorium against all housing except 90% affordable housing or sensitive conversions. We should encourage all LPAs to bring forward affordable housing Supplementary Planning Documents defining affordable housing and making provision for it to remain affordable in perpetuity. The Peak District National Park SPG is a good example.

LANDSCAPE IMPACT

In judging housing development proposals, the following factors would weigh in favour:

- no damaging visual impact from public land;
- the site is within an urban area, village or town, preferably using previously developed land or buildings;
- the site is on the edge of, but within, the logical built up area of villages or towns;
- sensitive conversion of existing buildings (even in the open countryside and outside existing settlements), subject to access to public transport and other sustainability factors etc;
- the development enhances the rural landscape.

We would usually object to:

- sites on the edge of (but beyond) existing built up areas.
- new developments in hamlets or open countryside.

CROSS-SUBSIDY IN THE NATIONAL PARK

In the Peak District there is a zero allocation of open market housing, cross-subsidy (where affordable housing is subsidised by on-site open market housing) should generally not be accepted. In extremely rare cases, where there are other significant benefits such as the restoration of a significant building which is at risk, or the redevelopment of an unsightly site, an exception may be made. In such circumstances, the development must achieve the highest number of affordable dwellings that are economically viable. Outside the Peak District, a greater level of cross-subsidy may be acceptable. We would seek designs that integrate affordable housing into the overall development.

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