

13<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Planning Policy  
Ryedale District Council  
Ryedale House  
Old Malton Road  
Malton  
YO17 7HH

RE: Key Decisions Consultation – Ryedale Plan

Dear Sir / Madam

Rather than answering each individual question on the consultation, we as the Parish Council will focus on those areas that are of greater relevance to the Parish as opposed to those questions that are more general and relevant to whole of the district. In responding to this consultation, we have not only taken informal feedback from within the parish but have represented data from our recent full parish survey. A copy of this survey can be found on the Slingsby Village Website.

As a general approach, we feel any target for number of houses, type of house or specific policy restrictions should be evidence based and driven by local demand and relevant to the local environment. We fear that external targets could lead to development taking place at a scale that is inappropriate, or individual developments being disengaged from the needs of a specific community. Whilst the target of 200 houses per year may be appropriate for the district as a whole, the distribution of new homes across the district is key. We fear that a significant development of say 20 to 50 houses in a relatively isolated, rural location could be seen as favourable by planners to meet this arbitrary target of 200, even if the development is not relevant to and opposed by its immediate locale.

Similarly, any targets relating to SP18 or wider environmental and low carbon targets should be supported but with enhanced consideration to location and site specific need. For example, it may not be possible or relevant to include commonly specified decentralised energy generation, energy efficient technologies or environmental enhancements on all sites. More important, would be to ensure that each development maximises those low carbon technologies and environmental enhancements that are relevant and possible on site, rather than just to a 'box-ticking' level.

As a thriving rural community, the Parish would prefer that a Local Needs Occupancy Condition was retained within any future planning policy, in order to maintain the character of the community and provide homes for local families but we understand the limitations such a condition puts on new development and as such would not oppose the removal of this condition. We are however strongly in favour of retaining a Primary Residence Condition. The parish fears the hollowing out of the community and the potential of any future development being little used, often empty second homes. Not only does this have a significant impact on the parish in terms of empty houses, it can also restrict local families and first-time buyers from staying in the parish. There was significant support for this approach in the recent Parish Survey.

The most significant policy change that is suggested in the key decision consultation document, and the one that has led to the greatest feedback from within the parish, is regarding the distribution of

future development. Specifically, the proposed approach to apply the application of Option 2 as a principle: Option 2: A less concentrated, more dispersed approach to distributing growth – with development focussed at the Market Towns and specific villages, including existing ‘Service Villages’ and selected additional villages.

Whilst the definition, classification, and significance of what constitutes a ‘Service Village’ is arbitrary at best, we don’t feel this is particularly relevant. Indeed, by the documents own definition, Slingsby no longer fits into the previous ‘Service Village’ classification, but instead of it being removed from the list, the definition of ‘Service Village’ has been altered to suit the proposed policy. Rather than take issue with the term and classification of a ‘Service Village’ we are more concerned with the overall approach of option 2.

We strongly disagree with option 2 and feel the emphasis of future developing falling on the weakest shoulders is wholly inappropriate and will lead to significant opposition. This is also the view held by individual respondents from the recent Parish Survey. Not only does this proposal encourage development away from the major concentration of amenities and facilities in towns, but it would also further stretch the diminishing vital resources within rural locations and damage the very thing that makes Ryedale so special. By forcing significant development on rural villages, communities will be stretched and irreparably damaged, destroying the character of unique communities.

Slingsby as an example has already had significant development over recent years\*, with little additional support for amenities, services or environmental reparation, increasing its size by nearly a third and has live development plans\*\* to increase the village by another 12%. These figures don’t include the natural growth of the village where a natural evolution of small-scale developments (1 to 5 houses) has also happened and would likely happen, where appropriate in the future. If the whole of Ryedale had or needed to expand by the 30% to 40% that Slingsby has already delivered, then there may be some justification to include Slingsby in future plans. As it stands, Slingsby has shouldered the weight significantly more than average for the district and to continue demanding ever more from a community with limited resources would be unfair, unjust and ultimately damaging.

Additionally, option 2 seems to favour the commercial desires of developers and large landowners over the needs and opinions of the rural communities. This is a very worrying approach and seems at odds with the any ‘localism’ agenda and policy of inclusion and fairness. The broad-brush approach of viewing 15 villages as one block of development resource does not speak to the unique nature of each village and neglects to address the needs, resources, amenities, and support (or lack-there-of) within the individual village.

Overall, the approach of Key Decisions Consultation document is confused and at times contradictory and we have had significant feedback from within the parish that it is difficult to engage with and has very short timescales. It also fails to explain how any Ryedale Plan integrates into the new North Yorkshire Council and if the Ryedale Plan, its discrete targets, and policies will indeed be relevant post 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

We very much hope our strong and evidenced opinions are listened to and included within the design and implementation of the final plan. Slingsby is a coherent, well organised community with a common voice on the main issue covered in the consultation and expects any future planning policies takes into account the opinions and needs of our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Slingsby, South Holme and Fryton Parish Council

\* **Cavendish Court** - 18 houses, completed c.2016 , **Porch House Farm** - 14 houses, completed c.1998, **Aspen Way** - 18 houses, completed c.1990, **Sycamore Close** - 34 houses, completed c.1987

\*\* **Balk** (currently in planning, reserved matters to be address - 18/00068/MOUT) 38 houses