

Consultation point: Foreword

Representation ID: 29805

Comment Type: Comment

Respondent: Ilkley Labour Party [7020]

Agent:

Summary:

The Ilkley Branch of the Labour Party discussed the plan and agreed this response.

Overall, we commend the proposals and had some points to add, with no major criticisms.

The proposal covers well many of the major concerns for residents, including housing, roads and transport, the environment and businesses.

We recognise the particular features that affect decisions on Ilkley. One implication is that building is likely under current and foreseeable planning regulations to result in more expensive housing, which does not satisfy the needs of those who work in Ilkley's services and businesses and which would if anything result in further imbalance as well as potential environmental damage. Identifying boundaries and keeping inside is important (Inspectors Report, 1988).

Support for increased pedestrianization and of environmental measures was strong. We hope that the Plan is successful.

Full Submission:

The Ilkley Branch of the Labour Party has discussed and agreed the following comments on the Neighbourhood Plan.

"Overall, this is a positive and constructive proposal with a strong focus on the needs of residents and the environment. There are proposals relevant to the function of the town as a tourist destination and on business. There is material on housing and proposals for building given the requirements from central government to build new housing.

One further proposal is to designate the Eastern boundary of the town a permanent feature, as recommended by the Inspectors report of 1988, confirming it as a "strong and defensible boundary". The terrace of large Victorian houses (along with the Georgian farmhouse) clearly heralds the fact that it is an entrance to a Spa town of late Georgian and Victorian significance, architecturally and historically. Even more ambitious, but more protective in the future would be a campaign to designate more clear boundaries around the town as a whole, protecting the landscape, green field sites and preventing sprawl that would make it hard to pursue environmentally friendly policies such as pedestrianizing.

The issue of affordable housing is significant for the town and the high level of house prices makes affordable very different from most of the authority. This has several effects, including the difficulty experienced by younger people who have grown up in the town in finding affordable housing locally, either to buy or to rent. Supposedly affordable housing in Ilkley is still likely to be over 50% higher than average house prices across Yorkshire and nationally. People who provide essential services or who are employed in the town on relatively low wages also find it hard to afford to live in Ilkley and must commute. Much of the cheapest housing is in complexes for retired older people, which is of no help to younger people looking to purchase or rent a first home and for working adults, while these lower prices artificially depress the average prices of property locally. We recommend a survey and a review of policy on building and housing. Possible solutions might be to include more social housing in the proposals for building.

The demographics of the town point to issues for the future, which need emphasis in the neighbourhood Plan. Older people use more health and social services, and services for them offer low paid employment, indicating some potential for a vicious circle of increasing need and difficulty in provision. New building of family homes may make more demands on education as well as childcare and health services. The plans for keeping up with the need for these need to be linked into the processes for development before further expansion begins.

The Victorian infrastructure, including sewers, water, gas and electricity are likely to be stretched by new developments, putting areas at risk of loss of service and even flooding. The plans for the maintenance and expansion or renewal of infrastructure needs to be an early part of any planning to develop the town.

Local traffic, parking and road markings are all of concern to many Ilkley residents and a review of these to support environmentally friendly travel is welcome. This might include consideration of an increased off-set for the Brook Street crossing and the way that parking places are protected by inserts along the Grove.

The Clean River campaign has been successful, although early testing of water quality indicates that it is poor. The remedies for this are likely to involve coordination with other areas and action more widely along the Wharfe.

We recognise the interaction between different levels of government and that sometimes policy locally is over-ridden by forces from elsewhere. However, we commend the plan and hope that it serves to promote the quality of life and environment in Ilkley."