

MATTER 2: REVISED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY
(Policy SC4 and associated policies¹)

The Council proposes to amend the Settlement Hierarchy in the submitted plan to include Burley-in-Wharfedale and Menston in the category of Local Growth Centres.

Key issue:

Is the proposed settlement hierarchy in terms of the amended status and role of Burley-in-Wharfedale and Menston appropriate, justified, effective, positively prepared, soundly based and consistent with the latest national policy?

a. What is the basis and justification for the revised settlement hierarchy, and is it based on up-to-date and robust evidence?

1. **We support** the reinstatement of Burley and Menston as Local Growth Centres based on the updated Core Strategy evidence base.
2. The revised Settlement Hierarchy upgrading Burley in Wharfedale and Menston to the status of Local Growth Centres is exclusively a result of the revisions to Policy SC8 and the HRA. However the Further Engagement Draft Core Strategy (FEDCS) had previously proposed that these two settlements should be Local Growth Centres. It is important to note that the positions of Menston and Burley in Wharfedale in the Settlement Hierarchy continues the earlier adopted strategic approach in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Adopted October 2005). While this earlier adopted plan was produced under very different national policy guidance it does specifically identify these two settlements, along with Steeton and Thornton, as “nodes in good quality transport corridors.” Over the last 11 years the large growth in rail usage on the Wharfedale and Airedale lines has further underlined the great importance of these public transport facilities. We have previously given evidence to support the argument that the train sets currently operating on these lines are not over capacity. However further growth in passengers is anticipated and investment to make quantitative capacity improvements as well as qualitative improvements at stations and on trains will be necessary. Further development will make financial contributions towards these improvements.
3. These two large villages are located in an area of high housing need and demand. In relation to this point, at the March 2015 EIP we presented evidence alongside NLP with regard to the nature of the Wharfedale housing sub-market (this evidence was submitted in full as part of our response to the Publication Draft Core Strategy in March 2014 and is titled ‘Wharfedale Local Area – Housing Market Signals Analysis’ - 31 March 2014). Menston and Burley have a good range of shops, services and supporting facilities. However further investment will strengthen their roles and this will, to a significant degree, be influenced by 1) financial contributions from development; and 2) additional expenditure and support from the growth in households proposed.

¹ including Main Modifications 7-13

Bradford Core Strategy – Examination – Proposed Main Modifications

Matter 2 – REVISED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY (Policy SC4)

b. Does the revised settlement hierarchy reflect the existing and future status, role and function of the relevant settlements?

4. The selection of Burley and Menston as Local Growth Centres originates from earlier drafts of the UDP and its associated evidence base. The FEDCS settlement strategy reflected the already enhanced status of these settlements. We consider that these settlements have for some time operated as Local Growth Centres. At Menston planning permissions for circa 300 dwellings have recently been granted on two UDP allocations. These two sites have been delayed slightly through objections via the Menston Action Group but through our own direct involvement we have no doubt these schemes will be commenced and completed within the next 5 years. Housebuilder demand for further sites in this area is high.
5. There is significant scope to enhance the existing functions as Local Growth Centres.

c. What are the implications of including Burley-in-Wharfedale and Menston in the category of Local Growth Centres in terms of their future role and levels of growth, and are there any cross-boundary implications?

6. See responses to a) and b) above and to Matter 3C (Wharfedale sub area).