



# SOWERBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2019 - 2034





## **Vision**

By 2034 Sowerby will be an inclusive community with housing that meets the needs of the local people both young and old. New development will be in line with community aspirations and Sowerby will have secured quality space for play, socialisation and recreation, to be enjoyed by all. Services and infrastructure will be in place to meet increased demand, contributing to a cohesive and sustainable community. The natural environment will continue to contribute to the physical, social and mental wellbeing of residents and visitors alike. The impacts of traffic and congestion will be eased and more sustainable methods of transport will be promoted.



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## Glossary, Abbreviations and Acronyms

CC – Calderdale Council

SHMA - Shaping the Housing Future of Calderdale SHMA November 2015

SDG – draft Calderdale Street Design Guide

SNPP - Sub-National Population Projections

CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy

DLP - (Draft) Calderdale Local Plan, Publication Draft 2018.

HRA - Habitats Regulation Assessment. NDP- Neighbourhood Development Plan.

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework.

NPPG - National Planning Practice Guidance.

RCUDP- Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan, as amended by the Secretary of State, 3rd August 2009. SEA - Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Council - Calderdale Metropolitan District Council.

The Forum - collective term to represent the qualifying body which has prepared this Plan.

The Plan - the Neighbourhood Development Plan subject to the Referendum

## **Section 1 - Introduction**

The biggest question we faced when starting this process was

### **Why are you doing this?**

And throughout the process we asked ourselves that very question several times. The answer kept us going and is very simple.

1.1 In the winter of 2015/6 St Peter's Church held an open day and one of the stalls was all about Sowerby Bridge Town Development Board. When queried whether this included Sowerby the answer came back – well they are the same aren't they? This led to a little more investigation into what was going on around us. It turned out that Ripponden Parish Council had applied to form a Neighbourhood Plan Area and Sowerby Bridge Development Board were working on the Town's development. Everyone assumed that Sowerby Bridge would just swallow the area between their boundary and Ripponden Parish Boundary but that is not what we, the residents, wanted.

1.2 Sowerby is in Ryburn Ward and is mainly rural whereas Sowerby Bridge is a Ward and Town in its own right and is mainly urban with industrial sites. We believed that while Sowerby Bridge would do their best; their interest lies with the town and its economic improvement which may be to the detriment of Sowerby. On discussion with the Ward Councillors and Development Board it turned out that they did not want to take Sowerby under their wing either.

1.3 This left us as, as a small area with no formal governance sandwiched between a large conurbation and a well-established and active parish council. A no man's land for local control. Therefore, we decided, if we want to influence what happens in our Neighbourhood, maintain its appeal, have well-built beautiful houses that our friends and neighbours can afford to buy and live in, we needed to organise ourselves. And so, the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan Forum was formed.

## Section 2 - Sowerby Context.

2.1. Sowerby is one of the original 12 hilltop Townships that were later formed into the Calderdale Metropolitan Area; Sowerby sits almost at the centre of Calderdale, although Calderdale sits at the far western reaches of West Yorkshire with Lancashire only 10km away.

2.2. Sowerby grew from a small settlement of only 9 villagers, 22 smallholders, 11 freeman and 3 priests in 1086 to a town around the early part of the 1600's with number of buildings including farms, cottages, churches, chapels, halls, schools and shops.

2.3. The hill top area that Sowerby is situated on forms a spur between the Rivers Calder, to the north, and Ryburn, to the south-east. The neighbourhood area encompasses a small area on Norland hillside which drops until it crosses the River Ryburn at 104m a.s.l. then it climbs the Sowerby Hill until it reaches its apex around Hubberton at approximately 255m a.s.l. Most of the Township is around the 200- 210m a.s.l. height.



The view down to Sowerby from Steep Lane (above) and from the other side of the valley (below) situating Sowerby on the hill above the valley



2.4. There is little in employment within the area; the majority of the population commute to their employment in Sowerby Bridge, approximately  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles to the east, Halifax,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles to the north-east or Huddersfield  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the south-east. All bus routes go via Halifax and the nearest train stations are at Sowerby Bridge and Halifax respectively which means that the majority of the commuting traffic leaves the area on one of the two roads that join together to link with the A58 in Sowerby Bridge.



2.5. The area is mainly rural with 72% of the land (218 hectares) designated as Green Belt; leaving 28% designated as urban areas. This is a major constraint for any development in the area as both greenfield and brownfield sites are few and far between.

2.6. The Beechwood Estate has several small areas of green communal space and Beechwood Park, located at Kingsley Avenue, which incorporates a large flat grassed area with a children's play park. Sowerby Town has no large community space and while surrounded on 3 sides by fields these belong to working farms so are not available to the public to use. At the moment the residents use Ryburn Valley School fields which are not available during term time.



2.7. This leaves the residents with few options; luckily, as we are an ancient Township whose prominence came from controlling the wool trade in the area, there are plenty of public footpaths that walkers can utilise. Several within the area and just outside it are still the traditional greenlanes, which are grassed areas (occasionally flagged with Yorkshire stones for wagons) between two drystone walls. Although getting to and from these footpaths can be quite hazardous as most of our lanes and roads have no footpaths.



**Examples of Green Lanes within the area**

2.8. We are well supplied by schools with 1 Nursery, 2 Junior Schools and 1 Senior School within the area and a further 2 Nurseries, 4 Junior schools and 1 Senior School just outside of our boundaries. Fortunately for residents all of our schools perform very well in the OFSTED

inspections. This means there is a very high demand for school places from outside of the neighbourhood area which leads to problems with students gaining places and a significant problem with congestion during the school run time period.

2.9. The Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan area was drawn up in consultation with Calderdale MBC (CC), it is formed using the Sowerby and White Windows polling areas. The boundary lines are formed by the ward boundary with Sowerby Bridge in the east, Luddenden Ward in the north, Ripponden Parish Council boundary in the west and the polling stations of White Windows and Sowerby to the south. The area can be seen at Appendix A.

2.10. There are 1,556 dwellings within the area of which 162 are situated in the Green Belt. Assuming average population density this would give a population of approximately 3,500 people. From the 2011 census the population is predominately white, English speaking, locally born with an average age of 40. The SNPP of 2012 calculates that approximately 16% of our population are over 65 and 9% under 25. Part of the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan area is within the 1<sup>st</sup> decile of relatively most deprived areas in England. This has a significant effect on the ability of the local population to rent or buy homes.







## Section 3 - What is a Neighbourhood Plan and how did we produce it?

3.1. Under the Neighbourhood Planning Act of 2017; which sits under the Localism Act of 2012, local communities are empowered to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan is written by the community and sets out planning policies for their Neighbourhood. It is written by the community to ensure that the people who know and love the area can encourage and support appropriate sustainable development when it is submitted in the right place.

3.2. Once completed the plan is subject to a public referendum and if the community vote to accept the plan it becomes part of the Local Authority's planning process and is used when deciding if new development should be authorised or not.

3.3. Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council produces the Local Plan (DLP) which sets out the 15-year plan for Calderdale. The Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan will mirror the DLP dates and will run from 2019 to 2034. Within this emerging DLP there are potential development sites already identified within the Neighbourhood Area (see Appendix A and D). Due to the limits of the area, as discussed in the context, it was decided that the sites within the DLP were the best available sites and when the DLP is fully adopted these proposed sites would be wholly supported by the forum.

3.4. The Neighbourhood Plan must follow and be in line with the policies laid out in the DLP and the National Planning Framework, the government's overall planning policies. It is a critical local document that planning proposals must be assessed against.

3.5. As Sowerby does not have a Parish Council the Forum had to apply for permission to incorporate as a qualifying body. This request was submitted to the CC and then after consultation with the community was authorised on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. As part of this process the extent of the Neighbourhood Area, see Appendix A, was also submitted and authorised.

3.6. The initial consultation was carried out between 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. It consisted of an open day, advert (at Document 1), and a questionnaire, that could be filled in online or in person. Over 150 people attended the open day meeting giving a variety of views with a further 84 questionnaires that were completed giving a total overall return of 7% for the area. These results gave the structure to the plan's themes and objectives. Full details of how the consultation occurred can be found in the Consultation Statement which is held on the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan website and within the supporting document pack.



Initial consultation day

3.7. Specialised investigations into housing needs, heritage and a design code (Appendix C) were carried out with the assistance of Locality and AECOM; these reports then further defined the policies contained within the plan. The full reports can be found in the Appendixes. Combined with the specialist report, a heritage questionnaire was distributed among the community to identify non-designated sites and assets that the community want to protected.

3.8. One of the themes that came out of the initial consultation was the lack of community facilities, leading to an objective of improving the local shopping area. To identify the problems facing our local businesses we asked them to fill in a questionnaire or have a face to face meeting with a member of the forum. The three schools in the area are the biggest employers, followed by Calder Valley Skip Hire, the community shops, Tommy Topsoil and the two public houses. Employment in the area after that is mainly local farms and the self-employed. Of the 10 companies with business premises we received 4 questionnaires back giving us a 40% response rate.

3.9. A final community consultation was carried out from the 15<sup>th</sup> of December for 6 weeks, where all the evidence and the draft policies were provided for the residents, employees and employers within the area to read and comment on. These documents were also held at various locations around the area and on the website for a full 6 weeks with comments able to be sent via email or post to the forum.



3.10. Once the public consultation was completed all responses were reviewed and assessed to see if any changes needed to be made to the documents. The forum authorised all changes to the document.

3.11. From there a final consultation with the statutory bodies was conducted by CC. Feedback from this consultation was also fed back to the Forum and any changes required were implemented into the document.

3.12. The final external consultation check was conducted through AECOM. Feedback from this was sent to the forum and acted upon where it was felt appropriate. A copy of this report can be found on the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan website and in the supporting documents pack.

3.13. Throughout the entire timeline there have been formal and informal meetings with CC Planning Department to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan remains in line with and in accordance with the current and emerging local development plan.



## Section 4 - Key Themes and Objectives

4.1. At the time of writing CC are in the process of changing from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) to the Calderdale DLP. It is necessary to establish general conformity with local strategic policies. The UDP is technically the statutory policy document although it is likely to be replaced with the emerging DLP which is under examination and at a relatively late stage in its process. In this case, the evidence supporting the emerging Plan and impact on consequent policies must be considered. There is also the requirement to take account of national guidance.

4.2. The DLP was under draft form during this process of formulating the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan. As changes and alterations were made to the DLP the Neighbourhood Plan policies were adjusted to remain consistent with the plan.

4.3. From the initial community meeting and subsequent questionnaires, the six themes most concerning the community were; in no particular order:

- Traffic and congestion
- Lack of community facilities
- Lack of community green space, play and recreational space
- Strain on infrastructure
- Local housing needs – in particular housing for individuals and the elderly.
- Sustainable housing, building sustainably as well as enabling sustainable transport.

4.4. From these themes the following objectives were identified which are addressed by the respective policies.

- Reduce traffic and congestion while improving parking provision.
- Secure green space, play and recreational spaces.
- Secure community facilities.
- Preserve and maintain the character of the current village and housing estates.
- Secure high-quality design, reflecting the distinctive local environment.
- Improve the local shopping area.
- Create and enhance services and facilities for the young and elderly.
- Preserve and enhance the natural environment.
- Protect local non-designated heritage assets.

## 5. POLICIES

5.1. The revised National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

5.2. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

5.3. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

5.4. The issues facing the community were identified from public consultation, these issues were brought together into sympathetic groups which formed our themes. From these themes cohesive objectives were written and from these policies formed to implement these objectives.

5.5. The NPPF states in paragraph 11 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF and through both plan-making and decision-taking. All of our policies have been written with sustainability in mind.

5.6. The social goals of the Neighbourhood Plan are to maintain a thriving community within Sowerby, recognising that the community and its needs to grow through improving non-car movement. The economic goals are to retain and improve the existing employment base within Sowerby. It seeks to achieve this by ensuring that access to the current shopping area remains and is improved. Sowerby is a mainly rural area with the majority of economic stimulus through farms. These farms are situated on green belt lands and as such have their own legal protection. The environmental goals are to protect the environment and ensure that development recognises this in its design, landscaping and access. This it seeks to achieve through its policies on design and density within Sowerby.

5.7. Further details of how this has been achieved can be found at Appendix E, the Sustainability Table and within the Basic Conditions Document held with supporting documents and on the Neighbourhood Plan Website.

5.8. This document has drawn upon the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF), Calderdale MBC's Draft Local Plan (DLP), Calderdale's Draft Flood Risk and Drainage Supplementary Planning Guidance (DSPG) and Calderdale's Draft Street Design Guide (SDG), which in turn is derived from Manual for Streets 2007. Each policy is listed under the Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan Policy Number (SNPP) and sits within the purple box, with the supporting information below.

5.9. There are also a number of aspirations set out that whilst not policies are actions that the community would like the relevant organisations to consider for implementation within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. These are set out in the orange boxes in section 6.

**SNPP1: When opportunities arise walking and cycling infrastructure shall be enhanced and extended in proportion to the scale of development. Links to community facilities should be enhanced and new ones established, where possible.**

5.10. This policy draws upon NPPF Paras. 55, 56, 91, 98, 102, 104 and 110, the draft SDG (general) and DLP Policy CC1.

5.11. It seeks to ensure that the community concerns for pedestrian and cyclist safety in future developments and on current roads and paths due to future development remains prominent when views are expressed and decisions made on planning applications relating to them.

5.12. The policy reflects both the Neighbourhood and wider area's aspirations to encourage the use of footpaths and cycle ways for short local journeys to the local larger town and schools. If safe and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists can be identified, provided and linked it is anticipated that local people will choose to use such forms of transport in preference to private cars for short journeys, to the overall benefit of the environment, public health and in the interests of reducing climate change.

5.13. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals. The scope and scale of measures required will be related to opportunities available, the level of development proposed and the pressure it places on existing infrastructure. This is in accordance with guidance in the NPPF.

5.14. The policy is considered necessary in addition to those documents identified in 5.10 in order to relate the policy to the local context, identity and scale of the area.



**SNPP2: We encourage CC to prioritise any CIL resultant from development within the area to create, maintain and improve the network of footpaths and cycles paths; particularly along Sowerby New Road and through to the end of Sowerby. Developer contributions towards these costs should be sought in appropriate cases.**

5.15. This policy draws upon DLP Policy CC1, general provisions of the draft SDG and NPPF Para. 91.

5.16. The policy reflects both the Neighbourhood and wider areas aspirations to encourage the use of cycle ways for short local journeys to the local larger town and schools. If safe and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists can be identified, provided and linked it is anticipated that local people will chose to use such forms of transport in preference to private cars for short journeys, to the overall benefit of the environment, public health and in the interests of reducing climate change.

**SNPP3: Development should be in accordance with the Council's parking guidelines but for dwellings of more than 3 bedrooms, it will be necessary to provide a minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling either within the dwelling curtilage or in communal spaces, where it can be demonstrated that there are existing or potential on street parking problems. Lower levels of parking may be acceptable in accessible locations.**

5.17. This policy draws upon the draft SDG Section 5 and Local Plan HS7 and Annex 1 Table 1.1 C3.

5.18. It seeks to reflect the community aspiration that on road parking is kept to a minimum to improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety, increasing visual amenity and improving the local character of the area.

5.19. Within the area local residents, visitors, and service providers (including the emergency services) have reported difficulties in accessing the residential areas due to the levels of on-street parking.

5.20. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP4: Residential developments shall provide a bike storage locker for every dwelling unit. An electric charging point shall be provided for every dwelling unit where there is a parking space within the curtilage of the dwelling.**

5.21. This policy draws upon the draft SDG 5.18, 5.23, 5.6 and NPPF Para. 105 and Local Plan IM4 and Annex 1.

5.22. It seeks to reflect the community aspirations that alternative transport is fully supported within the area in order to reduce the congestion on the roads. Residents are more likely to employ alternative transport options if that transport can then be charged, stored and maintained safely within the neighbourhood.

5.23. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP5: In order to protect and encourage the remaining wildlife in Sowerby a low light emissions policy is supported within the area. All new development proposals which require external lighting, should demonstrate how they will meet the policy aims with the submission of details of all proposed external lighting which should include time controllable security lights where necessary.**

5.24. This policy draws upon the Calderdale Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), Local Plan CC1, NPPF Para's 174 and 180.

5.25. As described in the Ecological Assessment, in the Supporting Documents Pack, it is believed that the Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats may live within the neighbourhood boundary and Brown Long Eared and Daubenton bats live within 1km of the boundary. There are also significant sightings of Calderdale BAP listed birds within the area as well as several other mammals and invertebrates.

5.26. Bats commonly use suburban areas for commuting and foraging with Noctule and Pipistrelle bats often congregating around street lamps to take advantage of the invertebrates they attract. There are numerous street tree corridors throughout Sowerby which facilitate access for these bat species; however, other bats including Brown Long Eared bat and most myotis

species are generally less tolerant of light. These species may be cut off from potential foraging or roosting sites due to continuous lighting such as that along roads. To allow bats to continue to use wildlife corridors any lighting planned in these areas could follow recommendations prescribed by the Bat Conservation Trust (2018) including;

- The spread of light should be at, or near horizontal level.
- The times that lights are used should be limited to provide some dark periods.
- Light sources to be used should lack ultra-violet light.
- A warm white spectrum (Ideally <2700 Kelvin)
- Lights should peak higher than 550nm
- Streetlights can be located so that the rear shields are adjacent to habitats

5.27. This policy should be used to encourage CC to turn off streetlights at low use times (e.g. midnight to 5am).

5.28. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP6: To alleviate issues with the change of land use from green field to urban usage, when development is considered acceptable in terms of national guidance in relation to flooding but has the potential to create surface water run off which may exacerbate flooding problems, natural flood management /sustainable drainage systems shall be implemented to reduce flooding on the site and elsewhere**

5.29. This policy draws upon comprehensive Policies detailed within the draft SDG, which in turn derive their basis from DLP Policies Nos. CC2, CC3 and CC4. Also see NPPF Para. 165.

5.30. It seeks to ensure that the community concerns about surface water flooding and sustainable drainage are taken into consideration when detailed proposals for new development are prepared and when views are expressed, and decision are made on planning applications relating to them. The NPPF has comprehensive guidance relating to the issues which need to be considered in assessing planning applications. This should be closely followed in addition to this Plan policy.



5.31. Much of Ryburn suffered catastrophic flooding in 2015. Sowerby itself suffered from waterlogged ground in 2015, and still does due to its position on a hillside with regularly saturated land above. Recent experience suggests that these problems would be exacerbated if new development were allowed, without incorporating appropriate flood prevention, resilience and mitigation measures through well-established SuDS techniques. CC has set up a taskforce to assist in the improvement of sustainable drainage within Calderdale. A full range of options for developers can be found at the Slow the Flow: Calderdale website.

5.32. Developers should demonstrate the inclusion of one or more of the following sustainable drainage design features to manage the risk of surface water flooding within their boundary and elsewhere.

- permeable driveways and parking areas;
- water harvesting and storage features;
- green roofs and/or
- soakaways

5.33. Support will be given to any application to retrofit SuDs / NFD to any previously permitted development.

5.34. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

5.35. The policy is necessary to raise awareness of flooding issues and to ensure that all new development within the area does not increase and where possible decreases surface water run-off.

**SNPP7:     Housing development proposals should have regard to the Design Code, appendix C, contain within this document, taking full account of the local vernacular.**

5.36. This policy draws upon DLP Policies SD1, BT1 and HE1. NPPF Paras. 124, 125, 126, 127 and 130.

5.37. It seeks to ensure that the community aspirations embodied in the Design Code document prepared by AECOM, February 2019, are applied to proposals for all (new) housing development in the area to ensure that the design principles therein are taken into consideration when proposals for new development are prepared and when views are expressed and decisions are made on planning applications relating to them.

5.38. The Design Code makes specific recommendations on seven sites which are identified as having potential for development in the DLP, which at the time of the preparation of this Plan is not yet formally adopted. The Design Code is in anticipation that some or all of these sites may be allocated but does not establish any presumption in favour of development which remains to be determined in the emerging Calderdale Local Plan.”

5.39. Applicants for planning permission will be expected to include reference to the Design Code in any Design and Access, Heritage, or Planning Statements submitted with their applications.

5.40. The Design Code is a response to community concerns that new development within the area pays due respect to cultural, historic and architectural influences in the local community.

5.41. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

5.42. The policy is necessary to ensure that the requirements of the Design Code are linked to new development through a formal policy requirement in the development plan.

**SNPP8: Development shall be located, orientated and designed to take account of opportunities on site to achieve energy efficiency.**

5.43. This policy draws upon DLP CC1, NPPF Para.’s 10, 11, 131 and 150.

5.44. This policy reflects resident aspirations that future buildings will be affordable both to purchase and to live in. Energy costs are taking up a bigger proportion of income than ever and it is of no help if homes are built but are unaffordable to heat and run.

5.45. Development proposals should be of a demonstrable sustainable design and construction, optimised for energy efficiency. Proposals that aspire to zero emissions will be supported.

5.46. The design, location and orientation of development can have a significant impact on energy efficiency. The precise siting and design of a building can optimise passive solar gain and combat over-heating. Constructional methods connected with the fabric of the building are covered by the Building Regulations.

5.47. Non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard 'excellent'.

5.48. There are policies in the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan and the DLP which promote the use of renewable technologies.

5.49. The retrofit of heritage properties/assets is encouraged to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate, providing it safeguards historic characteristics and development is done with engagement and permissions of relevant organisations.

5.50. The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables in historic buildings will be encouraged, including the retrofitting of listed buildings, buildings of solid wall or traditional construction and buildings within conservation areas, whilst safeguarding the special characteristics of these heritage assets for the future.

5.51. Alterations to existing buildings must be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with sustainable design and construction standards.

5.52. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP9:** Residential development of 10 or more dwellings shall provide a mix of housing in terms of size, type, tenure and affordability which shall be informed by the latest housing needs assessment.

5.53. This policy draws upon DLP Policies HS2, HS3 and HS4. NPPF Paras. 61, 62, 71 and 122.

5.54. In line with the Housing Needs Assessment – contained within the supporting documentation to the Neighbourhood Plan, this policy reflects community aspirations that all sites allocated for residential development should provide a range of dwellings, thus allowing younger adults to remain within the community when they wish to leave their parental home to buy or rent an entry level home. It will also allow others to downsize while staying within their support network; freeing up mid to large size houses for families in line with the Housing Needs Assessment.



5.55. There is likely to be a significant need for small and medium sized housing of 2-3 bedrooms in the future, with these most appropriately provided by construction of semi-detached and terraced houses. There is also an identified need for additional specialist housing for the elderly within the Plan area totalling 13 units over the Plan period, which should be of sufficient size to make a small, dedicated scheme feasible.

5.56. Among projected changes, single person and couples will make up the majority of household increase (currently 29.8% and 18.6% of households), and the majority of these are likely to be retired or households nearing the age of retirement. To date the LPA and market has significantly under-delivered against HMA targets during the past five years. As such there is a discrepancy between the number of housing typologies sold and the level in the existing stock. The imbalance suggests increasing demand for terraced and semi-detached dwellings. There may be further housing needs assessments carried out by the Neighbourhood Forum or the Council during the Plan period. The policy will be implemented in accordance with the latest assessment.

5.57. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP10: Housing Development of 15 or more dwelling units shall provide a minimum of 25% of the dwelling units as affordable housing. The Council will expect details of the affordable housing mix to be provided in a statement of Affordable Housing Contribution to be informed by the most recent or relevant Housing Needs Assessment, related to the Plan area, together with Council's published guidance on affordable housing provision.**

**In some instances, the proportion may be less than that referred to above, where robust viability evidence demonstrates that there are development costs which would otherwise prejudice the implementation of the proposal. For any deviation from the stated requirements, the Council will take account of the most recent Housing Market Needs Assessment as it relates to the Plan area, such as the SHMA and any subsequent updates or other relevant and recent information.**

**The affordable homes should be incorporated within the development but where justified, a financial contribution of at least equal value may be accepted to provide affordable homes elsewhere or to re-use or improve the existing housing stock.**

**Planning applications which include proposals for affordable housing must ensure that there are secure and practical arrangements to retain the benefits of affordability for initial and subsequent owners and occupiers, such as the involvement of a registered provider and where appropriate by the use of conditions or planning obligations.**

5.58. This policy draws upon DLP Policy HS3 and NPPF Paras. 61, 62 and 64.

5.59. In line with the Housing Needs Assessment – contained within the supporting documentation to the Neighbourhood Plan, this policy reflects community aspirations that all sites allocated for residential development should provide a range of dwellings in line with the Housing Needs Assessment, allowing younger adults to remain within the community when they wish to leave their parental home to move into an entry level home.

5.60. Shared ownership and other affordable forms of homeownership and affordable renting, including social renting, have a significant role to play in meeting locally expressed needs, particularly given the relatively high levels of social renting in the town in comparison with the Borough.

5.61. The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio (LQAR) for Sowerby was 7.64 in 2017 and this compares with a LQAR for Calderdale of around 4.59 in 2016. This data suggests entry level dwellings are relatively unaffordable in Sowerby compared with the levels in the District as a whole.

Around 58% of all households are unable to afford to purchase a dwelling of this type. As regards access to the private rental market, around 58% of all households are unable to access entry-level type dwellings for rent as the current rental market in Sowerby is currently more expensive; given this is supposedly the most affordable open market tenure, we can conclude that 58% of households are unable to access housing suited to their needs, given their household composition, without subsidy.

5.62. The AECOM 2018 Housing Needs Assessment prepared as an evidence base for the Plan. draws the following main conclusions in terms of guiding housing to meet needs; Tenures should be 53.8% (55 to 60%) Social rented 21.6% Intermediate and 24.6% Market Housing (mainly private rented) In terms of size of dwellings, the trends identified point towards a mix of smaller dwellings and family sized homes, of 2-5 habitable rooms. A range of accommodation is identified to meet the needs of an increasing number of elderly people.

5.63. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPP11: In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.**

5.64. This policy draws upon DLP Policy HE1, plus NPPF Paras. 184, 189, 190 and 197.

5.65. In line with the Heritage Assessment – contained within the supporting documentation to the Neighbourhood Plan, this policy reflects the fact that community awareness that much of our built heritage has either been demolished or removed in the 1950s and as such remaining elements of historic and conservation interest should be preserved. While many buildings within the Plan Area are Listed, many considered by the Community to be of historic value are not currently protected by legislation. In addition to individual buildings, the Plan Area contains groupings, structures and natural features that are considered worthy of protection. These assets are listed at Appendix B.

5.66. Where renovations or alterations of the assets on the list are proposed the design proposals should be treated sensitively and with careful regard to the surrounding environment.



5.67. Where development would result potentially in the loss of identified local non-designated heritage assets, it is requested that community consultation takes place prior to submission of any planning application. This will enable the developer and Community to work together, to achieve a solution that minimises and mitigates the effect of development in the interests of both parties.

5.68. This policy will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.





**SOWERBY  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PLAN**

## 6 ASPIRATIONS

**SNPA1: This is an aspiration not a policy. We support any action the CC takes to limit parking along the bus routes in order to preserve an easy flow of bus traffic in to and out of the area. Development proposals should not exacerbate the parking of vehicles along bus routes and should ensure safe and adequate parking arrangements for the area at all times. At the same time, we encourage the CC to promote the principal of getting parked vehicles off the side of the road – in particular Sowerby New Road – to promote the safety of pedestrians and to ease traffic flow.**

6.1. This aspiration draws upon NPPF Para.102 and Local Plan Policy HW6, IM4, IM5, RT7, HS7 and Annex 1.

6.2. This aspiration seeks to reflect the community aspiration that on-road parking is kept to a minimum to improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety, thus enhancing visual amenity and improving the local character of the area.

6.3. Within the area local residents, visitors, and service providers (including the emergency services) have reported difficulties in accessing the residential areas due to the levels of on-street parking.

6.4. It also seeks to ensure that the community concerns for pedestrian and cyclist safety on the roads in future developments is recognised, particularly when views are expressed and decisions made on planning applications relating to them.

**SNPA2: This is an aspiration not a policy. Large scale development proposals (over 20 dwellings) must include and develop usable space for the community to use.**

6.5. This aspiration draws upon DLP Policies GN4, GN6 and HW2. NPPF Para. 99.

6.6. It seeks to alleviate the community concern that future development will result in the further loss of community space. While 72% of the area is Green Belt this does not equate with large areas

that the community can utilise for recreation. The inclusion of community space should be included within all large development submissions.

6.7. Recent development has led to the loss of community space and this policy is necessary to raise awareness of lack of space within the area.

6.8. The limit of 20 dwellings has been allocated as this number of dwellings is felt to have enough space to include space for community use. Developments of less than 20 dwellings that are in future linked to further developments will be combined to have a cumulative impact.

6.9. This aspiration will be encouraged to be used by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPA3: This is an aspiration not a policy. Development proposals that actively safeguards and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and wildlife opportunities within their core proposal will be supported especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.**

6.10. This aspiration draws upon Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the Calderdale Biodiversity Action Plan and DLP Policy EN1.

6.11. This aspiration is designed to alleviate the community concerns about the impact any future development will have on the wildlife and the natural environment.

6.12. As described in the Ecological Assessment, Annex B, it is believed that the Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats may live within the neighbourhood boundary and the Brown Long Eared and Daubenton bats live within 1km of the boundary. There are also significant sightings of Calderdale BAP listed birds within the area. As such development proposals supporting our natural wildlife by incorporating bird and or bat boxes in each dwelling will be strongly encouraged.

6.13. Sowerby Neighbourhood Area is rural in character and a majority of residents strongly support the protection and encouragement of local wildlife. Within the area there have been sightings of hedgehogs, badgers, foxes, newts, other amphibians as well as a varied bird population. The community is keen to continue to support and even increase these populations. Development proposals that support wildlife/ habitat corridors by:

- Planting a variety of indigenous trees and shrubs within each newly created curtilage.
- Creating freedom of movement for mammals to move between dwellings and the remainder of the area by providing safe access routes for mammals between boundaries.
- Creating wetland/ pond areas/ rain gardens where possible will be supported.

6.14. This aspiration will be encouraged to be used by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

6.15. The aspiration is considered necessary in addition to those listed in paragraph 10.1 in order to relate the policy to the local context, identity and scale of the area.

**SNPA4: This is an aspiration not a policy. To ensure the protection of the community, all development must provide safe pedestrian and cycling access within site boundaries and, as far as practical, to the community facilities within Sowerby.**

6.16. This aspiration draws upon the provisions of the draft SDG in general, plus NPPF Paras. 91 and 110.

6.17. This aspiration reflects community aspirations that all sites allocated for residential development should provide safe ingress and egress for pedestrians and cyclists. Several established residential areas have very narrow roads and either narrow or no footpaths at all. Recent experience shows that developments on brown field sites that do not have established roadside footpaths to the main town thoroughfares do not incorporate new footpaths in the development proposal.

6.18. The majority of identified sites are in green field sites and have limited pedestrian access currently, therefore all new development proposals should seek to identify and incorporate safe access to the existing urban areas.

6.19. This aspiration will be encouraged to be used by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPA5: This is an aspiration not a policy. CC will be encouraged to provide improved parking spaces to serve the shopping arcade on Towngate.**

6.20. This aspiration draws upon the provisions of the draft SDG in general and the spirit of NPPF Para. 92 and DLP RT7.

6.21. This aspiration reflects both community and business aspirations, in that the parking in front of the shop arcades should be improved, as cars currently utilise the old bus-stop which is unsuitable for multiple vehicle parking.

6.22. It is anticipated that safe parking in the vicinity of the shops will encourage increased patronage to the benefit of local business and through this the community as a whole.

**SNPA6: This is an aspiration not a policy. Planning proposals should minimise the amount of pollution created, particularly that discharged into the surrounding air, and include alternative means of energy production unless demonstrably impractical.**

6.23. This aspiration draws upon Local Plan HW1, NPPF 181 and 183.

6.24. This aspiration reflects the fact that community has a rising concern over the quality of the air within Ryburn Valley. As a community there is no wish to add to any form of pollution and only proposals that seek to eliminate pollution should be supported.

6.25. Proposals for individual and community scale energy from solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria: the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

6.26. This aspiration should be encouraged to be applied by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.

**SNPA7: This is an aspiration not a policy. Wind turbines proposals of under 18m will be supported in principle within the Neighbourhood Plan Area where no unacceptable impacts are generated, particularly those relating to noise, biodiversity and visual effect.**

6.27. This aspiration draws upon Local Plan CC1, NPPF 151, 152 and 153.

6.28. This aspiration reflects the fact that community are keen to assist in providing alternative and clean power sources while preventing unsightly areas within the area.



6.29. Proposals for small scale wind turbines will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- Residential amenity through noise generation, shadow flicker or overbearing visual impact is not overbearing.
- Safety of highways and public rights of way is not affected.
- Landscape and visual impact is not impaired the cumulative impact from concentrations of wind turbines should be heavily weighted. Proposals for individual wind turbines or wind farms will not be permitted where they, together with existing and approved turbines or wind farms, would lead to a concentration of wind turbines on a scale which would significantly change the character of the wider landscape.
- Once the development reaches the end of its operational life it must be removed and the site remediated to its previous quality for future agricultural activity.

6.30. This aspiration deals with wind turbines under 18m as above this height the policy within the Local Plan will deal with any development.

6.31. This aspiration will be implemented by those seeking to carry out new development: by persons and organisations commenting upon planning applications; and by those responsible for determining planning applications and appeals.



Policy / Aspiration Reference Comparison with Regulation 16 Version of Sowerby Neighbourhood Plan

Referendum Version Policy / Aspiration Reference	Previous Regulation 16 Policy Reference
SNPP1	SNPP2
SNPP2	SNPP3
SNPP3	SNPP4
SNPP4	SNPP5
SNPP5	SNPP6
SNPP6	SNPP7
SNPP7	SNPP9
SNPP8	SNPP13
SNPP9	SNPP14
SNPP10	SNPP15
SNPP11	SNPP16
Aspirations	
SNPA1	SNPP1
SNPA2	SNPP8
SNPA3	SNPP10
SNPA4	SNPP11
SNPA5	SNPP12
SNPA6	SNPP17
SNPA7	SNPP18

