

**WAKEFIELD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

SETTLEMENT TECHNICAL PAPER

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of this Document

- 1.1 This background document explains how the settlement hierarchy and spatial development strategy set out in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document has been arrived at. It is a technical document and does not form part of Wakefield's Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 1.2 The Core Strategy establishes a settlement hierarchy to guide the location and scale of new development within the district to 2026 (Policy CS1). Settlements within Wakefield district have been ranked in order of preference in terms of their size and role within the context of the district and sub region, their suitability to accommodate new development, and their accessibility to jobs and services. The aim of the spatial development strategy is to ensure that new development takes place at the appropriate scale in the most sustainable settlements. Most development will be concentrated within those settlements with the largest range of shops and services with more limited development within local service centres and villages. The overall aim of the plan is to create sustainable communities¹.
- 1.3 Wakefield Metropolitan District Council has devised a methodology to assess the suitability of settlements to deliver plan-led growth across the district. This document summarises the results of this appraisal and explains how it has informed the development of the spatial development strategy set out in the Core Strategy including the various spatial options for delivering growth. This takes forward the initial work carried out through the Wakefield Urban Potential Study (2004) to rank and classify settlements, and identify the extent of their boundaries.
- 1.4 The settlement appraisal provides the basis for determining the settlement hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy. It covers all of Wakefield's settlements, except small villages and hamlets with a population of fewer than 500.
- 1.5 This technical paper also:
 - reviews the national and regional policy context;
 - clarifies the role of each settlement in terms of its function, role and size and identifies constraints, opportunities and issues;
 - considers the suitability of each settlement to accommodate new development and change using the results of the urban potential study and the survey work as a basis for more detailed analysis; and
 - assesses each settlement in terms of their proximity to jobs, services and transport connections.
- 1.6 This forms part of the evidence base of the Core Strategy and is a background report to be submitted at the same time as the Core Strategy. It sets out the Council's justification for the proposed settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy having regard to regional and

¹ The definition and components of a 'sustainable community' are set out in Section 2 (Policy Background) of this report.

national policy advice and a wide range of sustainability factors, including the role and function of each settlement and their proximity to jobs and services.

- 1.7 One of the main requirements of the planning system is that all of the policies and proposals in the LDF are based on a thorough understanding of the needs, opportunities, constraints and issues within the plan area². The evidence base will inform the various components of the LDF and will be used to test the soundness of the Core Strategy at examination.
- 1.8 This paper is split into two parts. **Part one** sets out the policy context and methodology used to assess the suitability of settlements and their potential to accommodate growth. **Part two** provides background information on the settlements including demographic characteristics, the form and character of the built up area, the accessibility to key facilities and services, employment and commuting patterns, and the accessibility to public transport.
- 1.9 This is one of a number of technical papers that have been produced to support the evidence base of the LDF.

2.0 POLICY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This section provides a brief description of national, regional and local guidance within which the settlement hierarchy has been developed. They also provide the context for appraising individual settlements against detailed sustainability criteria.
- 2.2 Initial work on establishing the settlement hierarchy was carried out on the regional and sub regional basis through the Regional Spatial Strategy Settlement Study prepared by North Yorkshire County Council and the Regional Assembly for Yorkshire and the Humber as well as through urban potential study prepared by Wakefield MDC.

National Policy Guidance

- 2.3 At the heart of spatial plan making is the desire to create sustainable and vibrant communities and deliver sustainable development in all places. Achieving these underlying principles requires a systematic and joined up approach.
- 2.4 The Sustainable Communities Plan (Office of Deputy Prime Minister, 2003) defines sustainable communities as *'places in which people want to live, now and in the future. They embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level. This means they improve quality of life for all whilst safeguarding the environment for future generations'*.
- 2.5 For communities to be sustainable³, they must be:
 - well connected to other places, with good transport links and communications linking people to jobs, services and the open countryside, with opportunities for all;
 - clean, safe, friendly and vibrant with a good range of goods and services;
 - thriving (i.e. in terms of a growing and diverse economy) and well run;

² Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (2004)

³ Government's Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)

- environmentally friendly with high quality buildings and spaces;
 - places with local identity and distinctive character;
 - self sustaining, capable of supporting the needs of the local population; and
 - balanced (i.e. in terms of the mix of uses, tenures and social groups) and inclusive.
- 2.6 The creation of sustainable communities embraces the principles of sustainable development and requires a holistic and co-ordinated approach to housing, transport, education and health, jobs, social opportunities, services and the physical environment.
- 2.7 The above principles and priorities have formed the basis for assessing the suitability of settlements to accommodate new growth in Wakefield. This involves focussing on the needs of communities and promoting settlements as engines of growth and regeneration to achieve a more sustainable pattern of development across the district. Equally, it means accepting that there are environmental limits to the growth of settlements to support economic activity and managing land uses and resources in a more efficient and cost effective way within the district.
- 2.8 The settlement hierarchy rests on the four pillars of sustainable development provided in Planning Policy Statement 12 (as set out below) and the guiding principles of the Government's sustainable development strategy 'Securing the Future' (2005).
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment
 - Social progress that meets the needs of everyone
 - Effective protection of the environment
 - Prudent use of natural resources
- 2.9 Other relevant national planning documents which have informed the development of the settlement hierarchy include PPG2 (Greenbelt), PPS3 (Housing), PPS7 (Sustainable Development in the Countryside) and PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk).
- 2.10 PPS3 sets out the Government's policy on housing and states that the focus for additional housing should be within existing towns and villages. When identifying sites for new housing development, priority should be given to previously developed land and buildings in the urban area in preference to greenfield sites taking into account, amongst other factors, the potential of settlements to accommodate housing growth, environmental and physical constraints and their relative accessibility in terms of jobs and services, and their ability to create mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities.
- 2.11 PPS3 suggests a two tier hierarchy split between urban areas and villages. Villages should only accommodate significant new housing development where it can be demonstrated that the housing will support local services which would be unviable without modest growth or additional housing is needed to meet local needs, such as affordable housing.

The Northern Way

- 2.12 Wakefield forms part of one of eight city regions within the north of England that have signed up to the Northern Way initiative⁴. Wakefield lies within the Leeds City Region that encompasses other large cities and towns in Yorkshire (e.g. Barnsley, Bradford, Halifax,

⁴ The Northern Way – 'Making it Happen' (Office of Deputy Prime Minister, 2004)

Harrogate, Huddersfield, Leeds, Sheffield, Wakefield and York). The strategy aims to improve the economic performance of all the city regions within northern England. This will comprise a long-term vision to be developed through Regional Development Agencies and Regional Planning Bodies and set out a plan to exploit existing infrastructure and to develop ways to increase economic change in the region. This would include raising skills, enterprise, investment, innovation and competition, and getting people back into jobs.

- 2.13 The overall strategy of the Northern Way is reflected through the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber ('The Yorkshire and Humber Plan') and other regional spatial strategies.

Regional Policy Guidance

Regional Spatial Strategy (formerly RPG12)

- 2.14 The current Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for Yorkshire and the Humber (adopted in 2004) sets the broad development strategy for development, setting the broad priorities in terms of location and scale of development across the region.
- 2.15 RSS sets out a typology of different forms of settlement within the region:
- **Main urban areas**
 - **Coalfield and market towns**
 - **Smaller towns and villages**
- 2.16 The spatial strategy sets out a sequential approach to development and aims to focus growth and development within the main urban areas of the region with smaller scale development in coalfield and market towns and more limited development within villages where it meets local needs.
- 2.17 A settlement study was undertaken to define a more detailed, wide ranging and functional classification to help inform the emerging RSS and describe the distinct characteristics of different settlements in the region. Each settlement was considered against a range of social, environmental and economic criteria (including health, education, leisure, tenure, population and deprivation data) and classified in terms of its location, service role, prosperity and function. This formed the basis for determining the settlement hierarchy in the emerging RSS.
- 2.18 The revised draft RSS ('the Yorkshire and Humber Plan') establishes a four tier settlement hierarchy of:
- **Regional Cities**
 - **Sub Regional Cities and Towns**
 - **Principal Towns**
 - **Local Service Centres**
- 2.19 This takes into account the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the draft RSS and the findings of the regional settlement study.

2.20 RSS identifies Wakefield as a 'Sub Regional City' and seeks to enhance its role as a focus for growth within the Leeds City Region.

2.21 The key messages for Wakefield are as follows:

- development should be focussed within the main urban areas of the district, principally the Sub Regional City of Wakefield and the Principal Towns⁵ of Castleford and Pontefract;
- links between settlements as well as adjoining authorities such as Barnsley, Selby and Leeds should be reinforced and strengthened and other regionally significant regeneration areas;
- recognise its role in delivering growth within the Leeds City Region and reaping the benefits of the Leeds economy (the pre eminent centre within the sub region) especially in terms of inward investment, connectivity and regeneration;
- prioritise investment and regeneration on the Principal Towns in the former coalfield areas; and
- development in smaller settlements and villages should be limited to meet local needs.

2.22 RSS identifies the south-east of the sub area (including Wakefield and former coalfield areas) as an area of potentially the widest regeneration activity in the city region. For this reason, Wakefield District and the wider area has been designated as a 'Regeneration Priority Area'.

2.23 RSS is attempting to ensure that development across the whole region follows sustainable development patterns and that a consistent approach is adopted by local authorities in the region to make this happen. These flow from the objectives of the Government's sustainable communities plan.

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

2.24 The Local Transport Plan for West Yorkshire 2006/07– 2010/11 contains the detailed strategy, policies, proposals and programme for investment in transport. It is structured around four shared priorities: accessibility, congestion, road safety and air quality; and an additional priority for asset management. It sets out an accessibility strategy that identifies initial priorities and actions based around access to health facilities, access to local shops/centres, access to employment and rural areas. In particular, it seeks to embed accessibility issues in the LDF as a key means of reducing social exclusion.

Local Policy Guidance

Wakefield Community Strategy

2.25 The Community Strategy (Developing Knowledge Communities) sets out the long term vision for the regeneration of Wakefield District based on developing 'knowledge communities', setting the overarching policy framework for all other plans and programmes. It identifies the city of Wakefield, the Five Towns (Castleford, Pontefract,

⁵ Sub Regional Cities will be the prime focus for housing, employment, shopping, education, health and cultural facilities within the district, while 'Principal Towns' will be the main local focus for such services.

Knottingley, Normanton and Featherstone) and the south east of the district as priorities for regeneration, particularly the city and town centres, whilst aiming to meet local needs in other settlements.

Local Development Framework

- 2.26 Wakefield is currently preparing a series of documents to guide development across the district as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will, when adopted, replace the current adopted development plan, the Wakefield Unitary Development Plan First Alteration.
- 2.27 The most important of these is the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, which sets out the overall spatial framework for development and the use of land within the district for the next 15 to 20 years. Together with the emerging RSS, the LDF forms part of Wakefield's statutory development plan.

Core Strategy

- 2.28 The Core Strategy establishes a five tier settlement hierarchy to guide the scale and location of new development within the district over the plan period to 2026 (Policy CS1). The settlement hierarchy ranks settlements in terms of their relative size, role and function and suitability to accommodate plan led growth and development.
- 2.29 Each settlement has been subject to detailed survey and appraisal against a range of sustainability criteria (i.e. social, economic and environmental factors) to ensure rigour and consistency in terms of ranking. They include:
- Accessibility to services and jobs
 - Location in relation to public transport
 - Size and role of settlement; and
 - Environmental constraints and opportunities
- 2.30 Generally, new development will be directed towards those settlements which rank the highest in the hierarchy while those at the lower end of the hierarchy will only see new development to meet local need or where there are overriding regeneration objectives.
- 2.31 The settlement hierarchy is based on the settlement appraisal and guidance (particularly RSS). The Core Strategy uses the settlement appraisal alongside policy priorities (i.e. urban renaissance, urban regeneration and housing renewal) to determine the scale of growth within each settlement. Core Strategy policies CS1 and CS2 and the settlement hierarchy indicate that the majority of the development will be focused in Wakefield, Castleford and Pontefract and supplemented by development in Featherstone, Knottingley, Normanton, South Elmsall / South Kirby.
- 2.32 The spatial objectives are in general conformity with the existing and revised draft RSS and seek to recognise and build on Wakefield's role as a Sub Regional City within the Leeds City Region. There is also recognition of the need to tackle deprivation in the smaller settlements, particularly in the former mining communities and embrace wider sustainability objectives.

Urban Potential Study

- 2.33 The study provides an overall assessment of the potential for residential development within the district. It provides an indication of how much housing could be developed on previously developed sites within urban areas during the plan period. This brings together survey work and information on land and property from a range of sources including council records and phone books. The study involved settlement survey and analysis that assessed the size and function of settlements and their potential to accommodate growth.
- 2.34 As well as defining the extent of the settlement boundaries, the study developed a sustainability checklist as a basis for determining the number of facilities and services within each settlement covering, amongst others, education, health, retail, public transport and community facilities. This information was used to decide which settlements would be included within the settlement appraisal. The settlement appraisal follows up the initial survey which formed part of the urban potential study and compares settlements in terms of their function, socio-economic roles and suitability for further growth.
- 2.35 A raft of policy documents and frameworks⁶ have been prepared through the Yorkshire Forward Renaissance Towns Initiative setting out a twenty-year vision and proposals for the regeneration of the city of Wakefield and the Five Towns. The overall approach of the programme is to:
- promote the Five Towns as a major regeneration area and a location for key services;
 - create more compact and multi use settlements especially within city and town centres that makes a clear distinction between town and countryside (i.e. developing a 'constellation of compact towns') and are well linked to each other by non car modes especially public transport;
 - re-connect the settlements with surrounding towns and the countryside benefiting from improved accessibility to jobs and services; and
 - re-establish Wakefield as a shopping destination of choice and a place to work, live and visit as well as promote the distinctive and historic qualities of the city centre.

⁶ 'Getting Connected: Wakefield Renaissance Charter' (Koetter Kim & Associates, 2002)
'Wakefield: A Strategic Framework for the District' (Koetter Kim & Associates 2004)
'Wakefield: Developing the Vision' (Koetter Kim & Associates, 2005)
'Five Towns: Strategic Development Framework' (Yorkshire Forward, 2005)

3.0 SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

Approach to Methodology

3.1 The settlement appraisal involved the following stages:

Box 1: Stages of Settlement Assessment Process

Stage 1: Literature and policy review

A review of relevant documentation and sources of information including national, regional and local plans and programmes, such as the regional settlement study, city and town centre master plans and neighbourhood renewal strategies. This informed the development of the settlement hierarchy and the identification of sustainable settlements.

Stage 2: Settlement identification

This involved identifying settlements and areas suitable to accommodate growth using the results of the urban capacity work and baseline review as a starting point. The appraisal sought to classify/define settlements in terms of role, function and importance.

Stage 3: Sustainability indicators

A core set of sustainability indicators were developed to assess the sustainability of each settlement and their potential to accommodate plan led growth. This involved analysing 2001 census data, including relative population sizes, workplace to population ratios, economic activity and health related statistics. A summary of how each settlement performed against the sustainability indicators is set out in the settlement profiles in Section 4 of this technical paper.

The factors considered included:

- the ability of plan led growth to contribute towards maintaining or improving sustainability of the settlement and economic regeneration;
- the accessibility of the settlement to shops and services;
- physical and environmental constraints that limit settlement expansion; and
- opportunities for promoting growth within the settlement.

Stage 4: Developing the settlement hierarchy

This explains how the results of the appraisal have informed the development of the spatial development strategy including spatial options.

Stage 5: Conclusions and recommendations

This summarises the results and outlines the way forward.

3.2 The overall approach to ranking and classifying settlements reflects wider Government objectives (as reflected in the Core Strategy) that aim to minimise the loss of the countryside, protect natural resources, reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and promote a high quality built environment.

Settlement Identification

- 3.3 The purpose of this stage was to identify/ classify settlements and determine which settlements should be included within the scope of appraisal.
- 3.4 A simple classification system has been developed to determine the broad level and scale of development and growth for each settlement. It is based on the settlement classification system set out in the RSS and government definitions of sustainable development. The challenge is to deliver sustainable growth and meet local needs regeneration objectives within the city of Wakefield and towns within the wider coalfield area including city and town centres.
- 3.5 Based on the evidence set out in this document, Wakefield's settlements vary in terms of size, composition and function, ranging from sub regional cities and medium to large towns through to small rural market towns and villages. In part, these differences reflect the fact that Wakefield is a large metropolitan area with former coalfield areas and large tracts of open land (over 70% of the district lies within the green belt) and a closely linked network of settlements.
- 3.6 However, due to resource and time constraints, it has not been possible to assess all of Wakefield's settlements as part of the settlement work. The settlement appraisal focuses on:
- settlements with potential to be a focus for growth under the terms of the RSS;
 - other coalfield and market towns; and
 - a limited number of further smaller settlements south and east of the M1 and M62 motorways which are likely to face development pressures during the LDF period.
- 3.8 Wakefield's settlements have been classified into different categories of urban form based on the following order of priority (see Core Strategy key diagram):
- **Urban Areas**
 - **Local Service Centres**
 - **Villages**
 - **Other Settlements**
- 3.9 Definitions of these different types of settlement and centres are contained in the current RSS, revised draft RSS, PPS6 and the regional settlement study - prepared by North Yorkshire County Council for the revised draft RSS in 2004. The settlement appraisal aims to broaden the scope of the regional settlement hierarchy to encompass social, economic and environmental factors that relate to local sustainability criteria. These are set out in Box 2 overleaf.
- 3.10 Broadly, the **Urban Areas** are defined as:
- the largest settlements within the district which offer the highest level of services, facilities and employment opportunities;
 - the most accessible locations within the district in terms of proximity to public transport and the strategic road network; and

- settlements with a population of 10,000 and above and a population density of more than 30 dwellings per hectare. The exception is Hemsworth in the south east of the district, which has a population of 9,100. It should be recognised that Hemsworth performs the role of a district centre and is significantly larger than some other urban settlements. This is based on the Government's definition of urban areas set out in the *Review of Urban and Rural Area Definitions*, report to the ODPM (December 2002).
- 3.11 It should be noted that the urban potential study defines the physical boundary of the settlement as that which forms part of the urban envelope and excludes the green belt. However, it means that settlement boundaries do not equate with the boundaries of the Super Output Areas from the 2001 census on which the demographic and socio economic statistics for each settlement are based. The majority of the published socio-economic information is only available for wards, Super Output Areas and parishes or post codes. Nevertheless, the contextual data provides a useful measure for comparing and assessing settlements in terms of their suitability to accommodate growth, and their relative sustainability.
- 3.12 Using the above definition as a guide, we have classified the following settlements as 'Urban Areas'.
- Sub Regional City of Wakefield
 - Principal Towns (Castleford and Pontefract)
 - Featherstone
 - Hemsworth
 - Horbury
 - Knottingely (including Ferrybridge)
 - Normanton (including Altofts)
 - Ossett
 - South Elmsall/ South Kirkby
 - Stanley/Outwood.
- 3.13 These are the main urban areas of the district and the results of the settlement appraisal described in Section 4 show that the settlements are suitable to accommodate further growth. The villages and other settlements within the hierarchy are mostly rural in character and do not provide a sufficient range of services or population to accommodate significant growth other than associated with local needs, such as affordable housing.
- 3.14 'Principal Towns' are identified in revised draft RSS (proposed changes) and form the second category of settlement in the district under the Sub Regional City of Wakefield. Castleford and Pontefract are relatively similar in terms of connectivity, demographic profile and social mix. They both fulfil regionally significant roles as service, employment and transport hubs for their surrounding areas. They are large former mining towns with strong connections with the Sub Regional City of Wakefield and Regional City of Leeds.
- 3.15 Wakefield, Castleford and Pontefract contain the main shopping and commercial centres within the district (i.e. city and town centres) and employment areas. Reflecting their role and status as key urban areas, these settlements sit above the other settlements in the settlement hierarchy as set out in the Core Strategy (Policy CS1).

- 3.16 The typology of settlements draws a distinction between urban areas and rural areas. Rural areas include the Local Service Centres (see description below), villages and other settlements.
- 3.17 RSS defines **Local Service Centres** as *'towns and villages that provide services and meet the needs of, and are accessible to, people living in surrounding rural areas'* (Paragraph 4.55 of the Core Approach). Although they are not identified in the regional settlement study the RSS requires local planning authorities to identify/ allocate Local Service Centres in their LDFs.
- 3.18 In Wakefield District Local Service Centres have a particular role to play in supporting villages and small settlements within the rural hinterland. They include small towns and large villages, and some have established commercial and employment centres, as the results of the settlement study confirm. They also display similar characteristics in terms of size, profile, and the range of facilities. Settlements classed as Local Service Centres have a population of around between 6,000 and 4,000. Usually they provide a range of local shops and services, such as convenience stores and some public facilities (e.g. library and post office), and have strong links with the main urban areas of the district.
- 3.19 In the tier of settlement beneath the Local Service Centres identified in the settlement hierarchy, the relatively limited range of services and facilities in the **Villages** mean that they do not fit into the category of 'Urban Areas' or 'Local Service Centres'. Villages (which are identified as the fourth category of settlement) generally serve the needs of the local community within the settlement. They are not of sufficient size to support a broader range of services and facilities. As the settlement appraisal confirms, the villages are generally not well served by public transport. None of the villages have railway or bus stations and generally have lower levels of accessibility to the main urban areas.
- 3.20 There are also a number of other settlements that are washed over by green belt (including small villages and hamlets) dispersed across the district with few or minimal facilities or very limited accessibility to local facilities and employment opportunities. They do not fit into the category of a village. These are considered to form part of the countryside and are known as '**Other Settlements**'.
- 3.21 **For the purpose of the settlement appraisal, the Villages and Other Settlements have not been subject to detailed survey or analysis nor included within the scope of this technical paper as they are only suitable for small scale growth.**
- 3.22 Wakefield's settlements have been categorised according to their:
- role and function (in terms of population size, demographic profile, location, availability of services and facilities and service role)
 - accessibility by different modes of transport (i.e. rail, bus, cycle and motor vehicle) especially to other settlements within the district
 - overall suitability to accommodate development having regard to potential constraints and opportunities and the character and form of the settlement)
- 3.23 These typologies have formed the basis of determining which settlements should be included within the settlement appraisal.

Settlement Boundaries

- 3.24 Once the list of settlements to be included in the appraisal had been decided, it was necessary to determine the extent of the settlement boundaries in terms of the urban envelope. The results were initially presented through the urban capacity study and have been updated to reflect changing circumstances.
- 3.25 Maps showing the settlement boundaries are set out in the urban potential study in the appendices. They largely reflect the extent of the built up area except where previously developed land within the green belt adjoins the urban area. A full list of settlements included in this appraisal is set out in Section 5 (Settlement Profiles) of this technical paper.

Sustainability Indicators

- 3.26 As previously mentioned, we carried out an initial assessment of the settlements as part of the urban capacity work during 2004. The study developed a sustainability checklist to determine the capacity of settlements to accommodate growth focussing on the level of facilities available within each settlement.
- 3.27 This checklist has been used as a starting point for developing a more comprehensive set of indicators embracing social, economic as well as environmental considerations to assess the sustainability of settlements in terms of delivering plan led growth and sustainable communities. These indicators are listed in Box 2 below and presented in the left hand column of the settlement appraisal table in Appendix A.

Box 2: Sustainability indicators for Wakefield's settlement hierarchy

Role and function of settlement

- Population size
- Range and number of services and facilities available with the settlement
- UDP designation (i.e. shopping and commercial centre)

Socio-economic factors

- Car ownership and owner occupancy levels
- Health conditions
- Workplace population / workplace population ratios (i.e. people who live and work in the same settlement)
- Deprivation levels (Indices of Deprivation)

Accessibility

- Accessibility zones (as set out in the supplementary planning guidance note on district-wide parking standards - SPG7)
- Number of public transport facilities available with the settlement (i.e. proximity to public transport)
- Accessibility to larger urban settlements

Environmental constraints and opportunities

- Conservation areas

- Flood risk
- Air quality
- Nature conservation sites
- Hazardous sites
- Landscape character area (i.e. sensitivity of the landscape to change)
- Regeneration activity (master plans and renewal programmes)
- New cycle and road proposals

Capacity

- Identified housing potential
- Previous UDP growth (i.e. high, medium or low)

3.28 The above criteria have been used to justify which settlement falls into which category within the settlement hierarchy (i.e. 'Urban Areas', 'Local Service Centres', 'Villages' and 'Other Settlements'). As far as possible, these indicators reflect national and regional priorities as well as local needs and have been drawn from a variety of sources, including:

- national planning guidance (including PPS3, PPS6 and PPG13)
- Regional Spatial Strategy: Settlement Study (2004)
- Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF - 2003-2005)
- local performance indicators (e.g. supplementary planning guidance/ supplementary planning documents, master plans etc)

3.29 For the purposes of the appraisal, we have adopted the accessibility standards in SPG7 as a basis for determining the level of "accessibility" within each settlement by modes other than the car (i.e. public transport, cycling and walking) using a ranking scale of high, medium and low. The accessibility zones are shown diagrammatically in Appendix D (taken as an extract from SPG7: District Wide Parking Standards).

3.30 Socio economic factors are recognised as critical elements in the sustainability of settlements and the habitats and human resources on which they depend. They provide a useful measure of the contribution of the settlement to social and economic well-being, especially in terms of employment status, income, economic activity and education.

3.31 A constraints map showing environmental designations such as international and national nature conservation sites (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest), flood risk zones (low, medium and high risk) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) is included in Appendix B. A separate map showing hazardous sites is also provided in Appendix C. In policy D36 of the Development Policies Development Plan Document an explanation of the different categories of flood risk is provided.

Settlement Appraisal

3.32 Stage 3 of the settlement appraisal entailed collecting and synthesising information on key contextual data on individual settlements in the district across a range of socio-economic and environmental factors. This information was used to categorise and rank settlements in terms of their position within the hierarchy and determine the suitability for growth of each settlement.

3.33 Data sources included:

- 2001 census data (demographic information in terms of population, unemployment and deprivation)
- Health and Safety Executive web site (www.hse.gov.uk)
- National statistics web site (www.statistics.gov.uk)
- Indicative flood plain maps (Environment Agency)
- Information from statutory planning documents including the Wakefield UDP First Alteration and the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan
- Housing and employment land requirements
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (David Cumberland Housing Regeneration Ltd, draft version, 2007)
- Wakefield Urban Potential Study (2004)
- Landscape Character Assessment of Wakefield District (2004)
- Strategic flood risk assessment (2005)
- Wakefield city centre health checks (GVA Grimley)
- Index of multiple deprivation indicators (2004)
- Affordable housing need statements

3.34 The index of multiple deprivation describes the distribution of deprivation across the district on a ward by ward basis. The information used to describe deprivation at ward level includes income, employment levels, skills and training, health, educational attainment and other socio-economic factors.

3.35 This information has been turned into a single score for each settlement relative to one another based on their level of deprivation. The average regional rank always represents 5 on the scale. Generally, the higher a settlement scores the better it is performing in the region and the lower it scores the poorer it is performing.

3.36 A substantial amount of the information originates from local sources such as the flood risk assessment and landscape character study and other non-statutory documents that underpin the LDF. However, the settlement appraisal does not include a comprehensive analysis of accessibility profiling and mapping (via accession software), public transport corridors and travel to work patterns. This is attributed to the lack of available empirical data and time limitations.

3.37 Using these data sources, each settlement has been assessed against each of the sustainability indicators (as identified in Box 2 and Appendix A) to determine their suitability for growth and plan led change via a combination of desk top analysis and survey work/ site inspections.

3.38 This involved undertaking a detailed survey of services and facilities in each settlement. The indicators include, among others, education establishments (e.g. nursery, primary and secondary schools), health centres (e.g. general hospitals, GPs, dentists and health clinics), convenience and comparison shops, public transport nodes (e.g. bus and railway stations) and community and leisure facilities (e.g. libraries, community centres, sports hall/swimming pools). Its main purpose is to establish the role and function of each settlement and their accessibility in terms of proximity to jobs and services.

- 3.39 Overall, the results of the survey (as set out in Appendix A: Settlement Appraisal) indicate that Wakefield and Castleford contain the highest number of facilities and services within the district (33 in total) closely followed by Pontefract (32 in total).
- 3.40 The intent of the settlement appraisal is two fold:
1. To provide an audit of settlement needs and current circumstances in terms of the number of facilities and services within each settlement and existing demographic, employment and housing trends. This reflects the current situation (i.e. what is there now) and acknowledges the individual roles of settlements.
 2. To highlight the potential benefits that future growth will engender in the settlement in terms of supporting local facilities (especially where there are deficiencies in existing provision) and or consolidating their existing role.
- 3.41 In relation to the second bullet point, the settlement appraisal sought to identify where further growth could contribute towards improving the sustainability of the settlement and regeneration objectives.
- 3.42 Settlement profiles are provided in Section 4 overleaf. A brief summary of the results of the settlement appraisal is included in Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy, which provides a comparison of the services and infrastructure available in each settlement. The table includes all of the settlements listed in the settlement hierarchy including small villages and other settlements. A more detailed summary of the results of the settlement appraisal (excluding the villages and small settlements) is included in Appendix A of this paper.

4.0 SETTLEMENT PROFILES

- 4.1 The settlement profiles set out the evidence base used to assess settlements against the sustainability indicators identified in Box 2 of this report. The settlement appraisal uses the settlement classification system identified in Section 3 as a basis for establishing the levels of growth in each settlement. As mentioned previously, the settlement ranking is based on a wide range of sustainability criteria.
- 4.2 Under the settlement classification system, 'Urban Areas' cover those settlements containing the city and town centres, key services and other main foci of community life. They are also relatively accessible by non car modes (public transport, cycling and walking) to nearby larger settlements such as Sheffield, Leeds and Wakefield. In such locations, the landscape generally has a low sensitivity to change and there is capacity to absorb significant development and change within the settlement over the course of the plan period. In terms of the vitality and viability of city and town centres a high ranking would indicate that change would provide positive benefits for the settlement by improving the quality and range of provision and consolidating its role as a retail and commercial centre. However, a low ranking indicates that there is a constraint to plan-led change or that the sustainability of the settlement would not be improved by intervention.
- 4.3 For those settlements identified as 'Local Service Centres' in the hierarchy there is recognition that some form of intervention is required to promote regeneration and neighbourhood renewal at a local level. In other words, they have capacity to absorb growth, albeit at a more limited scale.
- 4.4 There are a number of small rural settlements within the district such as the villages of Netherpton, Sharlston, Middlestown, High and Low Ackworth, West Bretton and Woolley with very limited services and facilities. They have a population of less than 2,000 and offer very limited scope for growth. These have not been included in the list of settlements for detailed appraisal in this technical paper.

Urban Areas

Wakefield (Sub Regional City)

- 4.5 Wakefield is a city on the river Calder and the largest settlement in the district with a population of 76,886. It serves as a sub regional shopping and commercial centre and recognised as a major engine of the local economy within the context of the Leeds City Region.
- 4.6 By virtue of its strategic location astride the M1 motorway and main East Coast mainline and M62 to the north, Wakefield enjoys strong links both to Leeds city centre in the north and the Five Towns in the east. There are two railway stations within Wakefield city centre: Wakefield Westgate (trains mainly to Leeds, Doncaster, Sheffield and stations on the East Coast Mainline, including the terminus at London King's Cross) and Wakefield Kirkgate (trains to Barnsley, Meadowhall, Sheffield, Normanton, Pontefract, Knottingley, Leeds and Castleford). This gives Wakefield a strong competitive edge in attracting businesses to locate in the area.

- 4.7 In terms of socio economic profile, Wakefield has pockets of high deprivation especially within inner city areas (which are among the 25% most deprived in England) and unemployment is above the district average. There is wide variation between inner wards of the city (e.g. Wakefield East) and relatively affluent suburban areas to the north and south (e.g. Wakefield North and South) in terms of household incomes, life expectancy and employment levels. Although Wakefield has a relatively low ethnic minority population, in some parts of the city they represent over 55% of the total neighbourhood population.
- 4.8 Wakefield has a relatively high proportion of public sector housing and is almost 50% council-rented. There is an opportunity to provide a greater range of tenures and house types within the city to meet local needs and housing choice and create more mixed and balanced communities.
- 4.9 Wakefield city centre is by far the largest and most accessible service centre in the district offering a wide range of facilities and services serving district wide and sub regional needs including the regional headquarters of public organisations (e.g. West Yorkshire Police) and a large indoor shopping centre. High frequency bus and coach services are available from Wakefield bus station to major cities and towns within the sub region and region including Barnsley, Leeds, Huddersfield and Selby and other settlements.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.10 The M1 motorway cuts through in a north and south direction and acts as a significant barrier between Ossett/Horbury and Wakefield. Much of the area is urbanised and the remaining urban area has characteristics of the urban fringe.
- 4.11 There are a number of environmental constraints that have the potential to limit the outward expansion of the city and its potential to accommodate growth. The majority of the urban area is designated as an AQMA where nitrogen oxide levels exceed national guidelines. Air quality is a particular problem within the city centre due to high volume of traffic that penetrates the heart of the city via the inner ring road. Parts of the waterfront to the south of city centre are located within Major Hazard Installation Consultation Zones (HSE Consultation Zones) due to the presence of major chemical works. On the other hand, the gas storage tanks at Marsh Way (as shown on Appendix C) are in the process of being demolished to make way for the Trinity Walk retail led development scheme.
- 4.12 The River Calder and the Calder and Hebble Navigation Canal and Ings Beck pose a flood risk to Wakefield city centre and surrounding industrial areas especially where urban development has encroached into the flood plain. The areas most at risk are the waterfront, Calder Vale and Thornes Wharf to the south of the city centre and the Pugneys Country Park. These are designated within a high flood risk zone. Flood risk is also apparent at the becks of Spring Mill, Owler, Flanshaw, Fosterford and Oakenshaw. Flood zones through this section of the Calder Valley are typically broad, reflecting the lowland, meandering nature of the River Calder. In spite of this, Wakefield benefits from a large number of flood defences and further flood defences are planned for construction by the Environment Agency.
- 4.13 There are a number of major strategic schemes in the pipeline which will improve accessibility and support the regeneration of Wakefield city centre. Planned improvements include a new railway station at Westgate - which will include a new station platform - as

part of Merchant Gate regeneration proposals, a new gyratory system to support bus services into the city centre, and a new urban boulevard which will complete the current inner ring road (the Emerald Ring).

Suitability for Growth

- 4.14 The urban potential study indicates that the urban area of Wakefield might be able to accommodate significant levels of new housing (approximately 2900 homes) largely through the development of previously developed and vacant sites. A relatively small proportion of greenfield sites will need to come forward. There are a number of opportunities for high-density residential and office developments within the city centre especially within the Special Policy Areas.
- 4.15 The results confirm that Wakefield has significant potential to provide housing, employment, retail and business growth over the plan period. This will help regenerate the city centre and enhance its role as a sub regional centre, as well as increase the viability of services (e.g. such as public transport) and provide a more diverse mix of housing.

Castleford (Principal Town)

- 4.16 Castleford (including Glasshoughton) is a former mining town situated near junctions 31 and 32 of the M62 motorway, some 12 miles from the city of Wakefield and 15 miles from Leeds. It is the largest settlement in the district after Wakefield with a population of around 37,500.
- 4.17 Castleford suffers from high levels of social and economic deprivation and parts of the settlement are very deprived. The Super Output Area (as defined by 2001 census) surrounding Castleford and Airedale is the most income deprived in the Wakefield District. The data shows that 46% of the population living in this area are experiencing income deprivation, and it is ranked within the 2% most income deprived areas in England. It has very low levels of educational attainment compared with district and regional averages with 48% of the population holding no formal qualifications - which is more than 20% above the national average. In the 2001 census, 15% of residents described their health as 'not good' (compared with 12.3% for the district and 9% for the UK as a whole) while over a quarter of the population had a limiting or long term illness (compared with 22% for the district and 17.9% nationally). Car ownership is 10% lower than the national average.
- 4.18 There is currently a lack of housing choice within Castleford with a limited availability of detached or large houses. There is also very limited amount of housing in the town centre.
- 4.19 Castleford lies within a medium accessibility zone in terms of parking standards in SPG7. The table in the appendix shows that, after Wakefield, Castleford has the widest range of facilities and services in the district. In comparison with other town centres in the district, Castleford provides a relatively large amount of comparison goods although the retail stock has declined in recent years and faces increasing competition from nearby centres. There are also a number of employment areas around the edge of the town. There are regular buses from Wakefield and Leeds to Castleford and a regular bus service from Doncaster to Glasshoughton and Whitwood (and on to Leeds).

4.20 There are also two railway stations at Glasshoughton (which serves Xscape, a major leisure designation of regional importance, and employment and retail uses) and adjacent to the town centre providing regular services to Leeds, Barnsley and Sheffield. The proximity of the motorway means that Castleford has good road links to Wakefield and other large settlements.

Constraints and Opportunities

4.21 The urban potential study indicates that Castleford has the potential for growth due to availability of brownfield sites, although there are environmental constraints on the edge of the settlement that may constrain its future growth potential beyond the current plan period.

4.22 Air quality is generally poor particularly within the town centre and along the southern edge of the settlement. An AQMA has been declared either side of the M62 motorway to the immediate south of Castleford due to high nitrogen oxide levels, while Castleford town centre has recently been designated as an AQMA.

4.23 Although there are relatively few protected areas such as conservation areas, extensive Roman archaeological remains are located beneath the surface of some of Castleford's streets, especially in the town centre.

4.24 Castleford is located adjacent to the confluence of the rivers Aire and Calder on the outskirts of the built up area. Flood risk in Castleford is principally related to both rivers with extreme flood events dependant on coincident flooding in both systems. The flood risk zones are wide reflecting the lowland character of the rivers, and land to the north of Castleford town centre is designated within a high risk flood zone (Zone 3a).

4.25 The settlement has former chemical works which are still designated as HSE Consultation Zones where development must be assessed in terms of their location and proximity to hazardous operations. These zones are shown diagrammatically at Appendix C.

4.26 Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Town Programme identifies that there are significant opportunities to regenerate the town centre and surrounding area, stimulate investment and promote the heritage of the area. Major initiatives include the Castleford Town Centre Strategy and Castleford Regeneration Project. Specific projects include a new river crossing between the town centre and River Aire, a new town centre gallery and bus/rail interchange.

Suitability for Growth

4.27 Given the high level service provision and the extent of brownfield opportunities, through housing renewal and redevelopment in the town, Castleford has potential to accommodate significant growth, including a mix of housing and employment, to meet the needs of the town and wider hinterland. There is a need to diversify and improve the quality of the housing stock (e.g. provide more family and detached housing) and address social and economic imbalances through planned neighbourhood regeneration, as well as improve vitality and viability of the town centre.

- 4.28 In the urban potential study Castleford was identified with a further potential for 1600 dwellings. Due to the availability of former employment land, Castleford can support higher levels of growth than other settlements in the district. However, future growth must go hand in hand with proposed infrastructure improvements, especially in relation to improving air quality and road/rail links to other settlements and the city of Wakefield.

Pontefract (Principal Town)

- 4.29 Pontefract is a historic market town with a Norman castle and several fine churches. It is one of the Five Towns and has a population of nearly 30,000 people.
- 4.30 The town is particularly well located in relation to the strategic highway network being close to junction 32 of M62 motorway and the junction of the A1, and also has good links to Doncaster and Barnsley via the A629 and A689 and settlements within the Green Corridor to the south. It presents an opportunity to enhance the employment role of the settlement and support the role of the town centre as a local service centre.
- 4.31 In the context of the regional settlement hierarchy, Pontefract is classed as a standalone settlement within the urban hinterland with strong links to Normanton, Featherstone and Castleford. To the north, the M62 corridor which runs east to west and the green belt provide a significant barrier to growth, but they serve to prevent the coalescence of settlements.
- 4.32 The results of the 2001 census are quite mixed in terms of levels of poverty and deprivation. Although parts of the settlement are very deprived, other indicators such as owner occupation and car ownership levels are close to district and national averages.
- 4.33 The town centre has been subject to a detailed master planning exercise aimed at revitalising the retail function and creating a stronger civic and cultural hub and a high quality public realm.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.34 There is a need to improve access to the town centre by all forms of transport and the physical environment as well as diversify the housing stock especially within the town centre. Pontefract-Barnsley is identified as a potential quality bus corridor in the Local Transport Plan.
- 4.35 As illustrated on the constraints map, Pontefract is less constrained by environmental designations than Castleford, Knottingley and Normanton where the flood catchment areas and AQMAs are more extensive in size. There are no identified nature conservation sites within proximity of the settlement.
- 4.36 Air quality is still a concern especially in the town centre, although the boundary of the AQMA in the M62 corridor is set back from the edge of the built up area except on the northern edge of the settlement. There is scope to expand the urban area to accommodate new development on former industrial or mining sites.
- 4.37 Pontefract has good bus and rail connections. Unlike many settlements of its size, Pontefract has three railway stations: Pontefract Baghill, on the Dearne Valley Line, which

connects York and Sheffield; and Pontefract Monkhill and Pontefract Tanshelf, which connect with Leeds and Wakefield.

- 4.38 Pontefract town centre boasts a good range of services and facilities, especially within the primary shopping frontages, although it is run down and requires heritage led regeneration. The town centre has a strong and distinct historic character which dates back to the Middle Ages when Pontefract was the main centre of West Yorkshire. The majority of the town centre lies within a conservation area, and a new conservation area has been designated at the Mount on the edge of the town centre.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.39 Overall, the settlement is suitable to support high levels of growth due to its accessibility to the strategic highway/ rail network and the availability of brownfield opportunities arising from housing renewal and clearance programmes and town centre led regeneration. However, its future growth potential is constrained by the need to protect and enhance the historic character of the settlement.
- 4.40 In the urban potential study Pontefract was identified with a potential for 1330 dwellings. The UDP identified seven areas as housing land allocations. There are two employment zone allocations and one employment site allocation. Pontefract has a fairly high workplace/ resident population ratio and has the fourth largest workplace population in the District. Haribo Dunhill and Monkhill Confectionery are major employers in Pontefract.
- 4.41 The redevelopment of the former Prince of Wales colliery site provides the potential for a significant urban extension to serve needs of the local area and provide strong links with the town centre.

South Elmsall/ South Kirkby

- 4.42 South Elmsall / South Kirkby lies in the far south east of the district and has a population of approximately 18,425. According to the RSS settlement hierarchy, it is classed as a stand alone settlement within the urban hinterland. In terms of function, South Elmsall/ South Kirkby is categorised as a settlement with no dominant role and is less prosperous
- 4.43 This area was extensively settled in the Iron Age and is adjacent to the line of a Roman road to Castleford. The A1 is a dominant feature in the landscape.
- 4.44 As with other similar sized towns, South Elmsall / South Kirkby grew up as a result of coal mining activity during the early 20th century. The subsequent demise of the coal industry has led to acute economic and social deprivation and derelict or vacant sites, although reclamation is progressing well. The landscape has been extensively remodelled by mining and restoration to intensive agricultural use.
- 4.45 In terms of public transport, South Elmsall / South Kirkby has its own bus and rail station and is accessible with services to both nearby (and larger) settlements within and beyond the district although most of these services are not classed as frequent. The Local Transport Plan includes measures to improve rail and bus services.

- 4.46 South Kirkby/ South Elmsall is classed as being within a medium accessibility zone in terms of parking standards in SPG7. The proposed A1 Link Road and a potential South East Link Road will increase accessibility and employment opportunities. The opening of the Hemsworth by-pass has already increased accessibility and opportunities. It is more isolated from high order jobs and services than most other urban areas owing to its position on the edge of the district and lack of direct access to motorway junctions.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.47 Flood risk is exposed to the area by the main river (Ea Beck/ Hague Hall Beck) and its tributaries (Handsworth Beck and Langthwaite Beck). Flood zones are narrow and mostly constrained to Ea Beck/ Hague Hall Beck. Most of the high risk zone is designated as washland or is undeveloped. There are no flood defences in this area and no detailed floodplain mapping studies of the watercourses. There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest within relatively close proximity to South Elmsall.
- 4.48 South Kirkby/ South Elmsall is reasonably well provided in terms of shops and services and open space, although in isolated areas, there is a lack of incidental playing areas particularly where older housing is concentrated. The settlement has no publicly available indoor sports facilities apart from a swimming pool at Minsthorpe Community College.
- 4.49 The main opportunities for cycle route development are presented by the disused Hull and Barnsley railway and the SESKU Ringway.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.50 In the urban potential study South Elmsall/ South Kirkby was identified with a potential for 1006 dwellings. The UDP identified eight areas as housing land allocations and one housing area was classed as having priority for environmental improvement.
- 4.51 Owing to the availability of employment opportunities and previously developed land and the regeneration needs of the settlement and its population size and proximity to the A1 corridor, South Elmsall / South Kirkby offers scope for housing and employment growth. This is also partly as a result of the need to diversify the housing stock and address market failure. The settlement forms part of the Green Corridor housing pathfinder area where efforts are being made to improve the quality of housing stock and create more mixed and balanced communities. There are two employment zones and two employment site allocations including the former South Kirkby colliery area.

Normanton / Altofts

- 4.52 Normanton / Altofts is a market and former mining town beside the rivers Calder and the Aire within five miles of the city of Wakefield.
- 4.53 Owing to its strategic location astride the M62 motorway (Manchester to Hull - west to east), Normanton (including Altofts) serves primarily a commuter settlement for the Leeds City Region. However, it has good links to the city of Wakefield and other settlements.
- 4.54 Northampton also serves as a business distribution centre and the expansion of Wakefield Europort at junction 31 of the M62 motorway has increased its attractiveness as a place to

live and work. It is also well connected by rail services with regular trains to Barnsley, Meadowhall, Leeds and Sheffield. There is no bus station within central Normanton.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.55 The northern part of the settlement is heavily constrained in physical terms by environmental designations (i.e. washlands and nature conservation sites). Normanton is at risk of flooding from the main river Wain Dike/ Sewerbridge Beck and the critical ordinary watercourses of Ashfield Beck, Wain Dike Beck and Whin Beck. The high risk flood zone is principally limited to Wain Dike/ Sewerbridge Beck and as most of this area is developed is categorised Zone 3a. This watercourse has been widely culverted and diverted in parts, and consequently, there is uncertainty in the flood zones in some locations.
- 4.56 The landscape is typically urban fringe with some degraded areas as a result of derelict workings, urban sprawl and more recent expansion of housing and industrial developments. There are also pockets of deprivation within existing housing estates.
- 4.57 In addition, though not shown on the constraints map, there is a Site of Scientific Interest within relatively close proximity to Normanton at Foxholes and Altofts Ings which comprises extensive areas of red swamp and important breeding ground for birds. The existence of a large AQMA within the confines of the settlement also places a constraint on the future expansion of the settlement especially around motorway junctions.
- 4.58 Normanton town centre serves a catchment area of around 18,000 people. It has a good range of mainly convenience shops and services with some independent comparison shops although its role and influence as a retail hub has declined following competition from other centres.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.59 Normanton could support a modest level of growth and meet local housing needs to support the regeneration of the town centre and run down housing areas where qualitative improvements are needed to the existing housing stock. There is scope for expanding employment opportunities at key motorway junctions.
- 4.60 In the urban potential study Normanton was identified with a potential for 400 dwellings. The UDP identified four areas as housing land allocations and two housing areas were classed as having priority for environmental improvement. There is one employment zone allocation and one employment site allocation.

Hemsworth

- 4.61 Hemsworth is a market and former mining town lying between Fitzwilliam/ Kingsley and South Kirby within the south eastern corner of the district. In the regional settlement hierarchy (RSS) it is classed as a stand alone settlement within urban hinterland which means it is within 10km of the centre of a settlement with a population of more than 20,000. In terms of function, Hemsworth is categorised as a settlement with no dominant role and as less prosperous.

- 4.62 The subsequent collapse of the coal industry has led to a decline in employment opportunities and acute social deprivation.
- 4.63 In terms of public transport, Hemsworth has its own bus station and is accessible with frequent services to both nearby (and larger) settlements and also services to other centres outside the district, although there is no rail access between Hemsworth and other settlements. Hemsworth is classed as being within a medium accessibility zone in terms of parking standards in SPG7. The town centre has a reasonable range of local facilities and serves as the largest retail centre in the south east of the district.
- 4.64 According to the indices of multiple deprivation, Hemsworth ward is the most deprived in the district and falls within the 1% most deprived in England in terms of disability and health deprivation. The high crime rate is linked to high drug abuse especially in relation to theft and burglaries. It also has the worst health record in the district and proportion of economically active is somewhat below the district average. Hemsworth also has a lower than average workplace population ratio.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.65 Flood risk is exposed to the area by the main river (Eg Beck Beck / Hague Hall Beck) and its tributaries. Most of the high risk zone is designated as washland or is undeveloped. There are no flood defences in this area and the watercourses have not been subject to detailed floodplain mapping studies.
- 4.66 The main opportunities for cycle route development include the Dearne Valley Junction railway and the Trans Pennine Trail national route. There is an existing cycle track constructed adjacent to the Hemsworth Bypass.
- 4.67 New development and investment in the south east of the district should be focused in Hemsworth to enhance its role as a market town. The Green Corridor partnership within this area will deliver concerted action to tackle housing market failure in parts of the area and improve the housing environment. There are areas of open water at Vale Head Park. The A1 Link Road is due to be implemented during the current Local Transport Plan period.
- 4.68 In addition, there are major proposals to regenerate and extend Hemsworth town centre with a new supermarket, school, library, and bus station.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.69 In the urban potential study Hemsworth was identified with a potential 588 dwellings. The UDP identified two housing areas as having priority for environmental improvement.
- 4.70 Given the availability of previously developed sites and improving road links, Hemsworth has the potential for further housing and employment growth to support its role as a market town and re-invigorate local neighbourhoods.

Ossett

- 4.71 Ossett is an old industrial town close to junction 40 of the M1 motorway and has a population of approximately 21,000.
- 4.72 In terms of location, Ossett serves as a linked settlement which means it adjoins or forms part of the main urban core (in this case the city of Wakefield) and is classed as prosperous.
- 4.73 In terms of function, Ossett serves as a commuter settlement and employment centre. It lies in an area of undulating land and defined by the River Calder and the district boundary. Much of the area is urbanised and the remaining countryside has many characteristics of the urban fringe. There are very few areas of woodland and open water but there is adequate provision of public open space.
- 4.74 In terms of public transport, Ossett has a bus station and is relatively accessible by bus with frequent services to both nearby (and larger) settlements, and also frequent services to other centres outside the district. The settlement is well situated for access to the M1 motorway via the A638 to junction 40 and the city of Wakefield to the east, although the motorway acts as a significant barrier between the two settlements. However, there is no rail access between Ossett and other centres. It is one of the largest towns in the region without a train station.
- 4.75 Ossett is categorised as being within a medium accessibility zone in terms of parking standards in SPG7. It is well served in terms of services and facilities with many schools and shops, pubs, local markets and outdoor sport clubs although there is an under provision of indoor sports facilities in the area. The town centre has been pedestrainised and includes a new bus station.
- 4.76 Ossett is a reasonably prosperous area with relatively high levels of educational attainment, car ownership and employment compared with the district average. General health classed as 'good' is somewhat above the district average and similarly general health classed as 'not good' is somewhat below the district average. In the index of multiple deprivation, Ossett has the highest joint ranking of 6 above the regional average ranking of 5.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.77 However, the green belt surrounding Ossett represents a major constraint on future growth. It provides an important role in preventing the coalescence of Ossett and the city of Wakefield and preserving the open gap between the urban area and the countryside.
- 4.78 In addition, there is a small area at high risk of flooding at Ossett Spa to the east of the settlement. There is a large conservation area encircling the town centre.
- 4.79 There are two employment zones and although Ossett does not have many major employers it has the fourth largest workplace population in the district and a fairly high workplace/ resident population ratio.

- 4.80 The main opportunities for cycle network development include the Aire and Calder cycleway (from Dewsbury to Castleford) and the north Wakefield orbital route connecting several major development sites.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.81 Ossett has already experienced fairly high housing growth during recent years. Its growth has partly resulted from it acting as a commuting settlement to nearby cities and towns, such as Wakefield, Barnsley, Huddersfield and Leeds. This is illustrated by the fact that 71.6% of residents travel to work by car - which is higher than the district and national average. Substantial additional growth is likely to lead to unsustainable patterns of growth since it could further increase out commuting and increase air quality problems along the M1 motorway corridor between junctions 40 and 41.
- 4.82 In the urban potential study Ossett was identified with a potential for 361 dwellings. This is substantially less than housing development in recent years. There is more limited capacity to accommodate further growth due to physical limits set by the green belt and the M1 motorway and the previous large take up of land for housing. In order to diversify the local housing market and meet employment needs, some modest or limited growth will be needed within the settlement.

Featherstone

- 4.83 Featherstone is a small former mining town some 10 miles southeast of Leeds close to Pontefract and 6 miles from Wakefield with a population of around 17,000.
- 4.84 The settlement does not play a dominant role within the wider catchment and is relatively self-contained in terms of commuting and household patterns. It boasts good range of parks such as Purston Park and local facilities. There are two secondary schools and further education facilities within the settlement.
- 4.85 Featherstone settlement is served by regular bus services to Wakefield, the Five Towns and other settlements in the district. It has a railway station providing a service between the main cities and towns in the sub region. However, it does not have particularly good access to the strategic road network nor its own bus station. In terms of parking standards, the settlement lies within a medium accessibility zone.
- 4.86 Like other settlements within the Five Towns growth area, Featherstone is slowly recovering from the decline of the mining industry. The town suffers from relatively high levels of economic inactivity and long term unemployment. According to the 2001 census, some 10.5% of residents have a long term sickness or disability (more than twice the national average).
- 4.87 The ward of Featherstone has been designated as an enterprise area where financial incentives are given to encourage business growth. The ward also has a relatively high proportion of council rented housing (31%) compared with the district (25%) and England (13%). Terraced housing is the dominant form of housing. There is a need to diversify the housing stock by providing a greater choice of dwellings and tenures, such as affordable housing.

- 4.88 Featherstone town centre mainly serves the day to day shopping needs of the settlement and the villages of Ackton, North Featherstone and Puston Jaglin, and essentially provides a localised shopping function.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.89 There are no significant nature conservation or flood risk constraints restricting the expansion of the settlement. Although Featherstone town centre has been designated as an AQMA, it covers a relatively small area and should not preclude further housing or employment development subject to environmental safeguards.
- 4.90 The landscape is typically urban fringe with some degraded areas as a result of derelict workings, urban sprawl and more recent expansion of housing and industrial developments. This is an area of undulating land rising eastwards from the River Calder towards Pontefract.
- 4.91 Flood zones in this area are typically narrow and almost entirely undeveloped or designated washland. These flood zones are therefore categorised Zone 3b or 3c. There are no flood defences in this area and the watercourses have not been subject to detailed floodplain mapping studies.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.92 Although Featherstone is a relatively small town, it is considered to be suitable for further housing and employment development given its regeneration potential and proximity to the city of Wakefield and key employment sites. A moderate level of growth will help support local facilities and the local economy especially existing businesses.
- 4.93 In the urban potential study Featherstone was identified with a potential for 329 dwellings. The UDP identified three areas as housing land allocations and two housing areas were classed as having priority for environmental improvement. There is one employment zone allocation and three employment site allocations.

Knottingley (including Ferrybridge)

- 4.94 Knottingley (including Ferrybridge), an industrial town of around 16,000 inhabitants, is situated in the lower Aire Valley on the south bank of the River Aire at the north eastern edge of the district close to Castleford and Pontefract.
- 4.95 The landscape is largely urban in character and is dominated by industrial development and derelict mineral workings which have the potential to accommodate high quality development and landscaping. Its prosperity was based on glass manufacturing, mining and ship building.
- 4.96 Although Knottingley has a railway and bus station, several primary schools and a secondary school, it provides fewer services and facilities than other settlements of similar size, and the town centre has only a relatively small collection of shops. There is no high street market. Knottingley town centre would benefit from qualitative and small scale functional intervention to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre. There is potential to establish an improved retail and leisure hub within the town centre to service

the needs of the local population. It has a similar socio-economic profile to the other Five Towns with high levels of long term sickness and ill health that are significantly above the national average. The Knottingley ward is among the 25% most deprived in England.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.97 Despite benefiting from good road accessibility via the A1(M) and M62 motorways to Barnsley, Doncaster, Selby and other cities and towns, the growth of the settlement has physical limits set by the River Aire to the north, the A1 to the west and M62 motorway to the south, and the designated green belt. The settlement lies within a medium accessibility zone in terms of SPG7.
- 4.98 In terms of future growth, Knottingley is also constrained to the north and east by the presence of an extensive high risk flood zone.
- 4.99 Most of the existing urban area is situated on high ground and is consequently free from main river flood risk. Low lying areas, such as those in the eastern parts of Knottingley, are defended by the right (south) bank defences of the River Aire. These defences consist of earth embankments and flood walls, recorded as being in fair or poor condition.
- 4.100 In addition, there are two major hazardous sites within or on the edge of the settlement whose catchment zones extend into residential areas. These are shown on the hazardous sites map in Appendix C.
- 4.101 This area is covered by an AQMA where levels of nitrogen oxide significantly exceed government guidelines. Air quality is particularly poor along A645 and junctions to the M62 motorway and A1(M) due to high levels of traffic flow. Nearby urban areas such as Castleford and Pontefract have more localised concentrations of nitrogen oxide, whereas in Knottingley the problem is more widespread. Hence the designation covers the entire urban area of the settlement.
- 4.102 Together, these factors provide a constraint to development in the settlement, especially within residential areas.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.103 A moderate level growth would be appropriate within Knottingley, including a mixture of high and low density housing both to meet local demand and support the regeneration of the town centre. There is also potential to exploit existing employment sites at motorway junctions.
- 4.104 In the urban potential study Knottingley was identified with a potential for 546 dwellings. The UDP identified two areas as housing land allocations. There are four employment zone allocations and three employment site allocations.

Stanley/ Outwood

- 4.105 Stanley/ Outwood lies to the north of the city of Wakefield on the north western edge of the district.

- 4.106 Although the settlement has strong links to Wakefield, Stanley/ Outwood displays distinctive characteristics that differ from the main urban area. It primarily serves as a commuter settlement owing to its proximity to Leeds and M1 and M62 motorways as evidenced by the fairly low workplace population and a fairly low workplace/ resident population ratio. It is a stable and relatively prosperous area of the district in comparison with the city of Wakefield and the Five Towns, and levels of economic activity are amongst the highest in the district. In the index of multiple deprivation, Stanley/ Outwood has the highest joint ranking within the district of 6, above the regional average ranking of 5. In addition, general health classed as 'good' is amongst the highest in the district average and similarly general health classed as 'not good' is amongst the lowest in the district. In comparison with other urban areas in the settlement hierarchy, Stanley / Outwood has a relatively large residential population of around 23,000 people.
- 4.107 According to the regional settlement study, Stanley/ Outwood is categorised as an employment centre and is a significant commuter settlement for Leeds. The majority of Stanley/ Outwood's economic activity takes place along the A61 (Leeds Road) which runs through north to south and the business/ industrial estate at junction 41 of the M1. Much of the area is urbanised and the remaining countryside has many characteristics of the urban fringe. There are few areas of woodland and open water but there is adequate provision of public open space and a local nature reserve.
- 4.108 Stanley/ Outwood is accessible via rail from Outwood railway station with frequent services to both nearby (and larger) settlements and also frequent services to other centres outside the district. The settlement also enjoys good access to the M1 and M62 motorways to the west and north.
- 4.109 In terms of parking standards, Stanley/ Outwood is catergorised within a medium/ low accessibility zone. It has a reasonable range of local shops and services although there is no designated town centre within the settlement.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.110 There is a medium to high flood risk at Stanley by the River Calder to the east of the settlement.
- 4.111 The western part of the settlement is separated from the main urban area by open space and green belt. As illustrated on the constraints map, Stanley/ Outwood is largely covered by an AQMA due to exceedances of nitrogen oxide emissions.
- 4.112 The main opportunities for cycle network development include a Wakefield to Leeds route through Stanley, Outwood and Lofthouse Gate, the Aire and Calder Cycleway (from Dewsbury to Castleford), and the Trans Pennine Trail national route.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.113 In the urban potential study Stanley/ Outwood was identified with a potential 303 dwellings. The UDP identified two areas as housing land allocations and three housing areas were classed as having priority for environmental improvement. However, Stanley / Outwood has already experienced fairly high housing growth in recent years, primarily due to its proximity to Leeds. This has led to increased outward commuting and car traffic.

4.114 Given the prosperous nature of the area, and its role as a commuter settlement, Stanley / Outwood offers only limited growth potential. For a settlement of its size, it offers relatively limited service provision such as financial services, retail shops and sport facilities, or employment opportunities, especially in comparison with the city of Wakefield where there are more brownfield opportunities.

Horbury

4.115 Located close to the M1 motorway within the western part of the district, Horbury is set in elevated position overlooking the valley of the River Calder to the east of the city of Wakefield. It has a long history dating back to Domesday survey when it was known as "Orberie", and consists of a number of fine medieval and Georgian buildings interspersed with an interesting mixture of Victorian properties, giving the area a distinctive character. It has a population of around 10,000.

4.116 According to the regional settlement study, Horbury is classed as a linked settlement (as it adjoins the main urban core of Wakefield) and is classed as prosperous. In terms of function Horbury is categorised as a commuter settlement within the urban hinterland. It is adequately served in terms of the range of shops and facilities available although there are no financial services (e.g. banks or building societies) or public institutions. Although the extended community use of Horbury High School has been implemented, there is an under-provision of indoor sports facilities in this area.

4.117 Although there is no railway station or transport interchange, bus accessibility, especially to the larger settlements such as Wakefield, is relatively good.

4.118 Horbury lies in an area of undulating land and defined by the River Calder and the district boundary. Much of the area is urbanised and the remaining countryside has many characteristics of the urban fringe. There are very few areas of woodland and open water but there is adequate provision of public open space.

4.119 By virtue of its proximity to junctions 39 and 40 of the M1 motorway, Horbury enjoys good access to the strategic road network. However, this also acts as a significant barrier between the settlement and the main urban area of Wakefield. Horbury lies within a medium accessibility zone in terms of parking standards in SPG7.

4.120 According to the 2001 census, Horbury is relatively affluent area in terms of economic activity, educational attainment, health and the strength of local housing market (rate of owner occupancy) and has more households with two or more cars than the district and national average. In the index of multiple deprivation, Horbury has the highest joint ranking of 6 above the regional average ranking of 5.

Constraints and Opportunities

4.121 The settlement of Horbury is mostly remote from the flood zones and main river flood risk. However, most of Horbury Bridge is within the high risk zone. There is a conservation area around the centre of the town.

4.122 The main opportunities for cycle network development include the Aire and Calder Cycleway (from Dewsbury to Castleford) and the north Wakefield orbital route connecting several major development sites. There is an existing Horbury to Wakefield route.

Suitability for Growth

4.123 In the urban potential study Horbury was identified with a potential 374 dwellings. The UDP identified three areas as housing land allocations and two housing areas were classed as having priority for environmental improvement.

4.124 There are three employment zones although Horbury does not have many major employers and it has a median average figure of workplace population and an above average workplace/ resident population ratio.

4.125 In recent years, Horbury has experienced a high demand for housing which has, in turn, encouraged outward commuting, primary due to its location alongside the strategic highway network. However, there is a need to limit the rate of growth and development to preserve the historic character of the settlement and surrounding landscape and discourage further outward commuting.

Local Service Centres

Ackworth (Moor Top)

4.126 Ackworth (Moor Top) is a relatively prosperous semi rural village surrounded by green belt and a high quality landscape setting. The settlement provides an important service role for the wider rural hinterland, including the villages of High Ackworth, Low Ackworth, Brakenhill and other small settlements. There are reasonably extensive employment areas within the south eastern corner of the village, including several quarries and a business park.

4.127 The 2001 census data confirms that Ackworth (including High and Low Ackworth and Moor Top) has very high car ownership levels with nearly 40% of households with access to at least two cars, which is significantly higher than the district (24.8%) and national average (29.5%), while 21.5% are educated to degree level or higher as compared with 12.5% in the district. Ackworth also has one of the highest rate of owner occupancy in the district at 76%

4.128 Ackworth lies within a low accessibility zone in terms of parking standards and has a low workplace population ratio, mainly due to the incremental loss of employment uses in the settlement.

Constraints and Opportunities

4.129 This undulating area is characterised by parkland landscapes with areas of woodland and trees planted in meadow and the area is intensively farmed. There are four Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the vicinity of Ackworth of mainly limestone grasslands and shrubs with diverse plant special. However, future growth could also have a negative impact on the surrounding landscape and the amenity of the green belt, as well as the setting of conservation areas within High Ackworth and Low Ackworth. The village has a number of

stone built and high quality materials which contribute to the sense of place and character of settlement.

- 4.130 Flood zones in this area are typically narrow and almost entirely undeveloped or designated washland. These flood zones are therefore categorised Zone 3b or 3c. There are no flood defences in this area and the watercourses have not been subject to detailed floodplain mapping studies.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.131 Given the above factors and its location, the growth potential of the village is relatively modest.. However, there is an acknowledged need to provide smaller scale additional housing and some employment to support its role as a local service centre and employment hub for the rural hinterland. In the urban potential study Ackworth was identified with a potential of 208 dwellings. The UDP identified four areas as housing land allocations and one area as an employment site allocation.
- 4.132 Given the incremental loss of employment land and the lower workplace ratio it is considered that preserving employment land is a key issue to secure the future sustainability of the settlement.

Crofton

- 4.133 Crofton is a large commuter village located on the A638 some three miles to the south of Wakefield. Close to the M1, A1 and M62 motorways, it is 25 minutes drive to Leeds, 30 minutes to Sheffield, 60 minutes to Manchester and 60 minutes to Hull. Self contained and surrounded by open countryside, Crofton has a wide selection of shops and community facilities, including a health centre, library, two post offices, several village supermarkets, two churches and eight pubs. There is a large sports field (cricket, rugby and football) within the village, and a number of country parks/walks within walking distance of the village.
- 4.134 Crofton has a recently rebuilt secondary school (Crofton High School), two primary schools and two infant schools serving pre-school to GCSE level. Despite the decline of the mining industry in the area, the village has not seen stagnation to the same extent as most other areas, and has expanded considerably since the 1960s with numerous housing developments.
- 4.135 Although Crofton is not accessible by rail, it has reasonably good and frequent bus links between Wakefield and Doncaster and neighbouring settlements via the A638. Because the village is on several bus routes, a bus leaves Crofton for Wakefield every 15 minutes at peak times.
- 4.136 This area is characterised by undulating landscapes. The disused Barnsley canal and several former mining lines are important links within the area. Large parts of the area consist of comparatively young landscapes as a result of reclamation of spoil heaps and restoration of opencast mining. The area retains its rural character and has expanded for residential rather than industrial reasons.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.137 The village lies outside the flood plain and therefore has low probability of flooding. There is an opportunity to improve cycle and pedestrian links between Crofton and Wakefield via the Green Corridor network.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.138 The urban potential study confirms that there is very limited capacity within the settlement to accommodate further development with a housing potential identified at 42 dwellings. The physical expansion is heavily constrained by the fact that the green belt surrounds the settlement on four sides and is separated from the main urban areas. In the context of the regional settlement study it is classed as a standalone commuter settlement within the rural hinterland.

Fitzwilliam / Kinsley

- 4.139 Fitzwilliam / Kinsley is a small settlement on the B6273 to the west of Hemsworth.
- 4.140 Like most of the settlements in the south east of the district, Fitzwilliam / Kinsley has suffered from economic and social decline as a result of the collapse of coal mining industry in the area.
- 4.141 The village was originally built to exploit the coal resources in the area around the pit head at "Fitzwilliam Main" (which later became South Kirby Colliery). But outward migration has increased significantly in recent decades and, as a result, the population of the village has declined. Much of the older former mining housing stock has been demolished, including the whole of the "City" estate due to the dominance of derelict properties. In fact, the area is ranked in the index of multiple deprivation among the 10% most deprived areas in the country with among the highest concentrations of worklessness in the district. It suffers from poorer health than many other settlements in the district.
- 4.142 The settlement functions as a local service centre providing a small range of local facilities that serve the day to day shopping needs of local residents. It is also well served by public transport with regular train services to Leeds via Wakefield Westgate, Doncaster and Sheffield from Fitzwilliam railway station and bus services to Hemsworth, Doncaster and Wakefield.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.143 The area consists of shallow vales with settlement on low ridges. There are important archaeological remains at Kinsley. There are areas of open water at Hoyle Mill Dam.
- 4.144 Flood zones in this area are typically narrow and almost entirely undeveloped or designated washland. These flood zones are therefore categorised Zone 3b or 3c. There are no flood defences in this area and the watercourses have not been subject to detailed floodplain mapping studies.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.145 Some limited growth will be appropriate within the settlement boundaries to support neighbourhood renewal and meet local needs. In the urban potential study Fitzwilliam/Kinsley was identified with a potential for 221 dwellings. The UDP identified two areas as housing land allocations and one area as an employment zone allocation

Ryhill / Havercroft

- 4.146 Ryhill / Havercroft is a small rural settlement situated on the B6428 approximately 7 miles south east of the city of Wakefield.
- 4.147 The settlement is relatively inaccessible by public transport, lacking direct access to the strategic highway/ railway network. Although the economy is slowing recovering from the loss of the mining industry, the settlement is still relatively deprived compared with wards within western parts of the district, being within 25% most deprived wards in England. Life expectancy is significantly lower than the national average. The village contains a limited range of services and shops serving day to day needs.
- 4.148 The village now acts as a commuter settlement for nearby towns and is becoming more prosperous.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.149 Although surrounded by green belt, the settlement has no known environmental constraints that would limit the expansion of the settlement. There is a low risk of flooding throughout the area. The area consists of shallow vales with settlement on low ridges.
- 4.150 The restoration of the Barnsley Dearne and Dove canals presents an opportunity to realise the development and tourist potential of the river corridor and increase the attraction of the village as a place to live.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.151 For a settlement of its size, Ryhill / Havercroft has a good range of education facilities. The village performs the role of a Local Service Centre serving day to day convenience needs of local residents. However, there is only a limited range of services and facilities, such public transport nodes. There are no secondary schools or supermarkets in the village. No figure was given in the urban potential study for housing potential although the UDP identifies four areas as housing site allocations.
- 4.152 For these reasons, the settlement is not considered to be suitable for a significant level of growth.

Upton / North Elmsall

- 4.153 Upton (including North Elmsall) is a former mining community with a population of 6,070 within the south east part of the district close to the boundaries of adjoining metropolitan areas of Barnsley and Doncaster.

- 4.154 Upton / North Elmsall is one of many small settlements in the district which developed into small towns as a result of coal mining in the early 20th century. The subsequent collapse of the industry has led to derelict sites and social deprivation although reclamation is progressing well. However, it now serves as an overflow from more expensive residential areas of Pontefract and also parts of the borough of Doncaster.
- 4.155 The settlement has a small range of local facilities (17 in total) including a post office, several convenience shops, a GP surgery, health clinic, library and nursery and primary schools. The settlement does not contain facilities such as a bus station, a secondary school, supermarket and sports centre which are typically found within higher ranked Local Service Centres.
- 4.156 Upton / North Elmsall lies in close proximity to the A1(M) which links to the national motorway network via the M62 motorway. The settlement has no train station or bus station but is served by four main bus routes connecting it to the Five Towns and near by South Elmsall and South Kirkby. The settlement is identified as being within a 'low' accessibility zone (SPG7).
- 4.157 Despite its good transport links, only 59% of the working population in the village are economically active. The economic activity rate is very low compared with the district and national average and the workplace to resident population ratio of 0.11 (work place population of 654) is the lowest in the whole district.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 4.158 The settlement forms a natural bowl shape through which flow various becks. It has a low risk of flooding and there are no other environmental constraints within the settlement. The settlement is enclosed by green belt.

Suitability for Growth

- 4.159 Upton / North Elmsall has already experienced some housing growth in recent years, reflecting its role as a commuter settlement for the Five Towns and neighbouring boroughs of Barnsley and Doncaster. On the other hand, there is relatively limited scope within the settlement for further development and no figure was given in the urban potential study for housing potential. The UDP identifies four areas as housing site allocations and one area as an employment site allocation. The settlement is viewed as suitable for only modest or limited growth.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

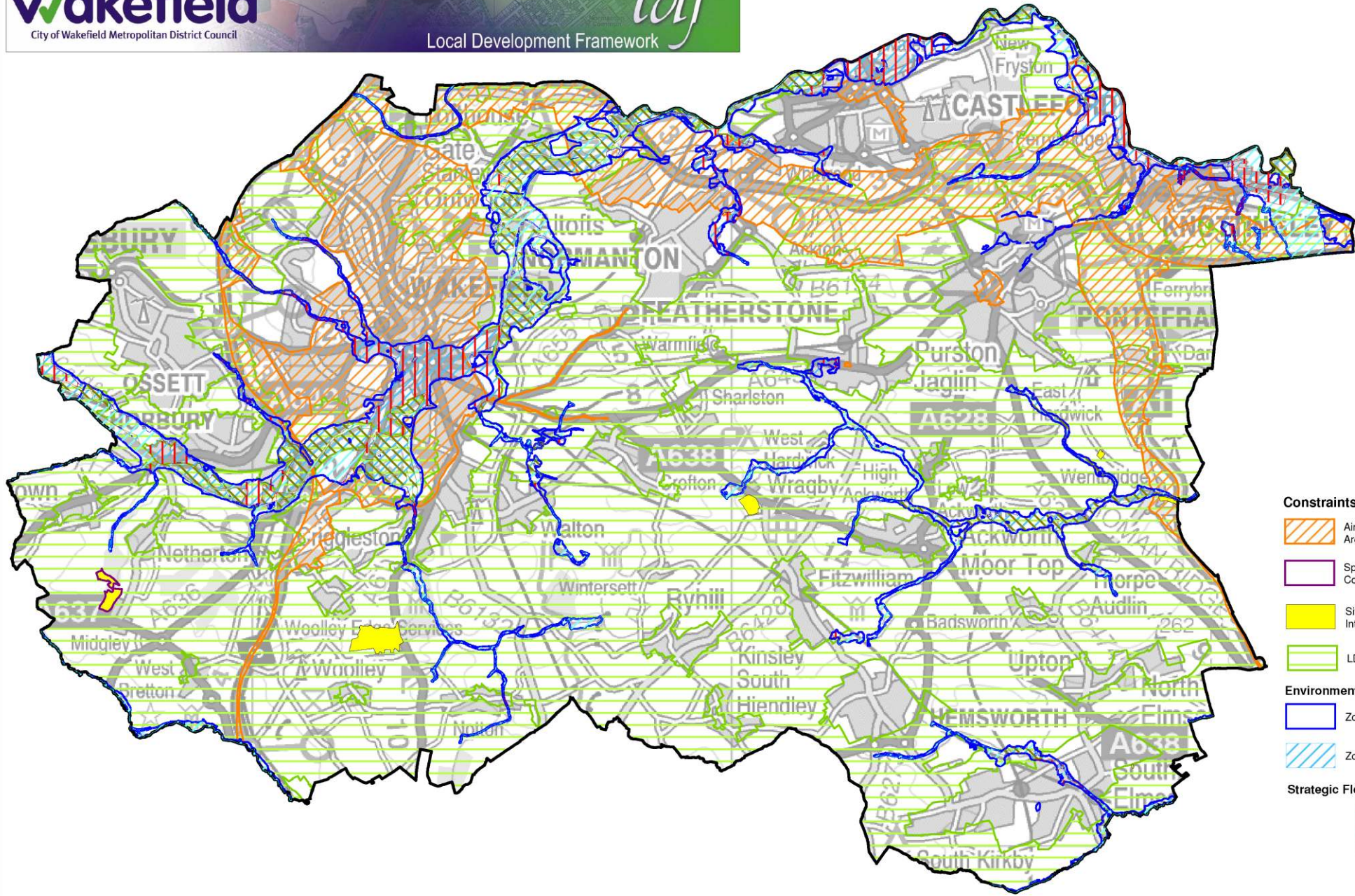
- 5.1 The main conclusions of the settlement appraisal are that the largest settlements in the district provide the highest level of services and infrastructure provision and are therefore suitable for large scale growth, and there is potentially sufficient land within existing settlements to accommodate a high proportion of this growth up until 2026. The results of the urban potential study and early work on the Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document confirm these findings. More information can also be found in the housing and employment technical papers.
- 5.2 A series of spatial options were devised for assessing where and how much development should be distributed across these settlements. The Assessment of Options document sets out how we have considered spatial options and this has been prepared to accompany the Core Strategy.
- 5.3 The results of the evidence base set out in the settlement appraisal have influenced the scale and distribution of growth based on the relative sustainability of settlements in terms of capacity, their role and function, size, infrastructure, social cohesion, economic performance and physical and functional links between settlements. This will support the sub regional role of Wakefield and regeneration objectives for the Five Towns and south east of the district.
- 5.4 In order of priority, Wakefield sits at the top of the settlement hierarchy as the highest ranked settlement, befitting its status as a major sub regional city and the largest settlement in the district. It has the potential to provide a substantial proportion of the new growth through regeneration activity (especially in the city centre) and neighbourhood renewal.
- 5.5 There is also a strong justification for significant growth within the Five Towns in the east of the district. Castleford is a major settlement with abundant capacity to accommodate further growth and town centre led regeneration. Its status as a market town and major growth point is recognised in both the regional settlement study, RSS and Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Towns Initiative. According to the 2001 census, Castleford is the largest of the Five Towns and has the largest retail centre outside Wakefield. The results also confirm that Castleford is also marginally more accessible by different modes of transport to the main urban areas and has wider range of facilities than Pontefract or the other urban areas.
- 5.6 The town of Pontefract also provides some high order services and facilities. It performs a significant service role and has the sufficient brownfield opportunities and population to support high levels of growth.
- 5.7 The findings of the appraisal confirm that some, albeit more limited, growth is needed within the Local Service Centres (notably South Elmsall/ South Kirkby, Normanton and Hemsworth) to support neighbourhood renewal and regeneration activity and their roles as rural market towns. However, significant growth within relatively prosperous commuter settlements, such as Ossett and Horbury, could accentuate travel to work patterns and run counter to the aim of creating compact and sustainable settlements.







Appendix A Settlement Appraisal Matrix

	City of Wakefield	Castleford (incl Glasshoughton)	Pontefract	South Elmsall/ South Kirkby	Normanton /Altofts	Hemsworth	Ossett	Featherstone	Knottingley/ Ferrybridge	Stanley/ Outwood	Horbury	Ackworth (Moor Top)	Crofton	Fitzwilliam / Kinsley	Ryhill/ Havercroft	Upton/ North Elmsall
Hot food take away	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Launderette	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓					
Financial (e.g. bank / building society)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				
Fire station	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Police station	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓									
Professional (e.g. solicitors)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Community Facilities																
Library	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community centre	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Sports hall/ centre/ swimming pool	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓
Sports ground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				
Total number of facilities	33	33	32	30	29	28	28	26	23	22	21	20	17	17	17	17
Environmental Constraints																
Conservation areas	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓				
Air quality (AQMA)	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓						
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)				✓												
Hazardous sites (HSE)	4	4		1				1	2							
Landscape character	Medium - low	Medium - high	Medium - high	Medium - very high	Low - medium	High - medium	Very high medium	Medium - high	Low - medium	High - medium	High - medium	Medium - high	Medium - high	Medium - high	Very high high	Medium - very high
Capacity																
Previous UDP growth	High	High	High	Medium	High	Medium - low	Medium - high	Medium - low	Medium - low	Medium - high	Medium - high	Medium - low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

	City of Wakefield	Castleford (incl Glasshoughton)	Pontefract	South Elmsall/ South Kirkby	Normanton /Altofts	Hemsworth	Ossett	Featherstone	Knottingley/ Ferrybridge	Stanley/ Outwood	Horbury	Ackworth (Moor Top)	Crofton	Fitzwilliam / Kinsley	Ryhill/ Havercroft	Upton/ North Elmsall
Identified housing potential (Urban Potential Study, 2004)	2,908	1,600	1,330	1,006	400	588	361	329	546	303	374	208	42	221	N/A	N/A
Affordable housing need	Very high high	High - medium	Very high	Medium	High	Medium	Very high	Medium	Medium	High	High - medium	High - medium	High	Medium	High	Medium
Major Planned Improvements																
Major regeneration investments	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓
Transport	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓				✓				
Settlement Ranking																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Settlement Classification																
	Urban Area (Sub-Regional City)	Urban Area (Principal Town)	Urban Area (Principal Town)	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Urban Area	Local Service Centre	Local Service Centre	Local Service Centre	Local Service Centre

Appendix B Constraints Map



- Constraints Key:**
-  Air Quality Management Area (A.Q.M.A.)
 -  Special Area of Conservation (S.A.C.)
 -  Site of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.)
 -  LDF Green belt
- Environment Agency Flood Zone**
-  Zone 2 Low-Medium Risk
 -  Zone 3 High Risk
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**
-  Zone 2
 -  Zone 3a
 -  Zone 3b
 -  Zone 3c

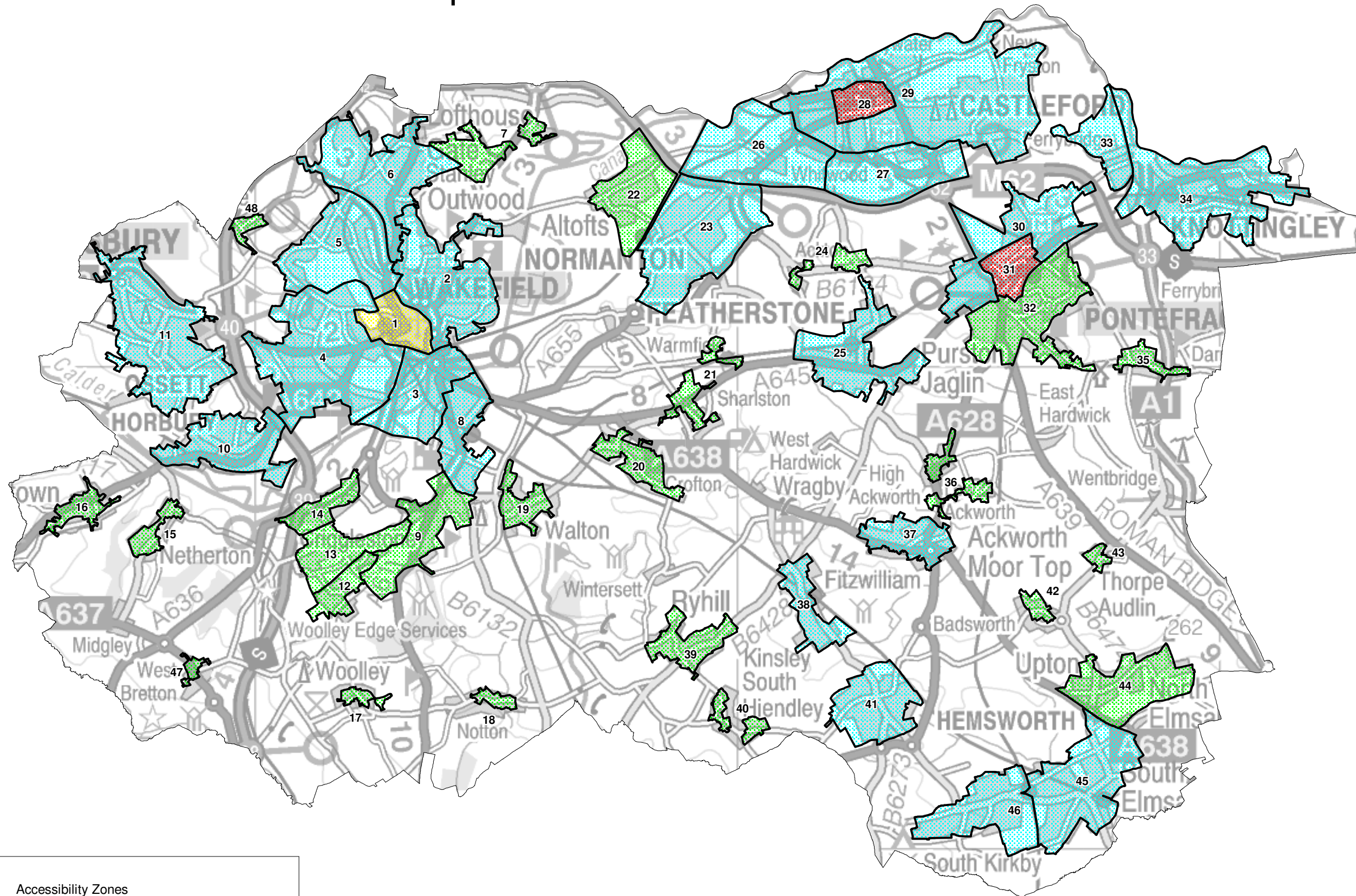
Appendix C Hazardous Sites Map

Appendix D Accessibility Zones

Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

ACCESSIBILITY

ZONES



ID	Zone
1	Wakefield Centre
2	Wakefield North East
3	Wakefield South East
4	Wakefield West
5	Wakefield North
6	Outwood
7	Stanley - Bottom Boat
8	Sandal - Agbrigg
9	Milnthorpe
10	Horbury
11	Ossett
12	Chapelthorpe
13	Crigglestone
14	Durkar
15	Netherton
16	Middlestown
17	Woolley
18	Notton
19	Walton
20	Crofton
21	Sharlston - Streethouse
22	Altofts
23	Normanton
24	North Featherstone
25	Featherstone
26	Europort - Whitwood
27	Freeport
28	Castleford Centre
29	Castleford Conurbation
30	Pontefract North
31	Pontefract Centre
32	Pontefract South
33	Ferrybridge
34	Knottingley
35	Darrington
36	Ackworth - High & Low
37	Ackworth Moor Top
38	Fitzwilliam - Kinsley
39	Havercroft - Ryhill
40	South Hiendley
41	Hemsworth
42	Badsworth
43	Thorpe Audlin
44	Upton - North Elmsall
45	South Elmsall North
46	South Kirkby
47	West Bretton
48	Kirkhamgate

Accessibility Zones By Classification

- Low (24)
- Market Town High (2)
- Medium (21)
- Urban High (1)

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