

CALDERDALE MBC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

In the past, Calderdale has had a document called the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which has set out how the Council considers the area should be developed over a period of years. The Government has now changed the Planning System, and these UDPs are to be replaced by new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), which will be phased in over the next few years by a series of planning documents. The Core Strategy is the key plan within the LDF. It will contain a number of planning documents, which can be individually updated more speedily than the UDPs could. The Government has set down the main requirements of the Core Strategy documents as follows

- An overall vision which sets out how the area and places within it should develop
- Strategic objectives for the area focussing on the key issues to be addressed
- How these objectives will be achieved
- Clear arrangements for monitoring achievement

Calderdale has produced a booklet – Core Strategy, Issues and Options, for consultation by interested parties, and in response to this, the Luddenden Conservation Society has made the following comments.

CALDERDALE MBC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY ISSUES

COMMENTS FROM LUDDENDEN CONSERVATION SOCIETY

**CONTACT: MR R. COLLINGE, WESLEY VILLA, NEW ROAD, LUDDENDEN,
HALIFAX HX2 6QZ.**

Question 6 Environment - flooding

The Society believes that new development should be severely curtailed on sites where there is a possibility of flooding. In the past, this has not always been the case, and large scale developments have been allowed in places where the Environment Agency has declined to give an assurance that flooding may not take place under more severe conditions in the future.

In addition, due to the extensive use of water power during the last two centuries, there are a large number of mill dams on the hillsides throughout Calderdale. The Society believes that the safety of these should be examined throughout the area, as there have been a number of cases recently where dams have come close to overflowing, or the wall being breached – with consequent flooding of existing homes a distinct possibility.

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Question 7 Environment - Renewable Energy

The Society has a number of concerns with regard to this. Obviously, the upland areas of Calderdale are places which may very well be suitable for the siting of windfarms. We believe that great care should be taken before any further windfarms are allowed, or existing windfarms upgraded with the new larger generators. In particular, we are very concerned over the proposed extensions at Ovenden Moor. The Society did not object to the building of the present windfarm, but the replacement of these with generators three times as big will add a completely different dimension.

The Society is also concerned at present that some form of guidelines should be put in place for the addition of small household generators in Conservation Areas. We fear that proliferation of these may occur in the future before the possibility has been discussed, and that this will happen on some kind of *ad hoc* basis, rather than in a planned way.

We also are of the opinion that in areas where this is possible and for uses where it would be feasible, the use of water power should be considered. It may be one area in which Calderdale could encourage job creation. Orders could be given for small scale water power generators in some properties owned by the Council. During the 19th century, a number of firms in Calderdale specialised in making water power turbines, and there is no reason why these should not again be useful.

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Question 9 Environment - The natural environment.

The Society is totally in agreement with the premise that protection and enhancement of the natural environment is a priority for the Core Strategy. We are always concerned that development should not be allowed in any part of the green belt, and that areas of land should not be removed from green belt. We are delighted that a review of green belt is envisaged and that it will “provide certainty for the next thirty years or more”.

We also note the wording of paragraph 2.48 “the landscape and biodiversity of Calderdale is under pressure from a variety of sources, including ... traffic increase, leisure and recreation...” To a certain extent, we fear that these are mere weasel words. When our Society attempted to obtain grants for building a car park at the entrance to the Luddenden valley, in an attempt to improve the car parking situation for villagers, and to give walkers and visitors to the area somewhere to leave vehicles, no-one was prepared to give any form of monetary grant towards this, and we also feel that projects which aim to take traffic off roads should also be recognised in the core strategy.

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Question 10 Environment - Built environment

We have already mentioned in question 7 – renewable energy, that the Society is concerned that guidelines should be formulated about the provision of small scale wind generators on buildings in conservation areas. Over the years, we have stumbled into such issues as to whether dormer windows, plastic doors and window frames, satellite dishes etc should be allowed in Conservation areas. By the time the Authority has come round to making some decision and guidelines, the issue has effectively been settled by large numbers already having been put in. We fear that the same thing will occur over small wind generators, and that Calderdale should be pro-active here.

There are also a number of other types of built assets that may merit protection. In the Luddenden valley, above the Britannia development at Luddendenfoot, are a number of old air raid shelters from the second world war. The Society has on a number of occasions debated whether these (or some/one) worthy of listing as an example of these structures. There are also on the moors in a number of areas of Calderdale, wartime remains, where a similar question could be asked. In the valleys, most of the mills originally had a mill goit, dam or/and mill chimney. Most of these have now vanished, and the question should also be asked whether some remains of our industrial past such as these should also be listed.

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**CONTACT: MR R. COLLINGE, WESLEY VILLA, NEW ROAD, LUDDENDEN,
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Question13 Location of new housing developments

The Society does not believe that under any circumstances, Spacial Option 1 i.e. Business as Usual should be followed for the provision of new homes. We believe that some areas, (and the Luddenden valley is one) have suffered from far more development than can be assimilated. Traffic problems, in terms of parking, traffic speeds, and general acceptability have increased enormously, and far more than in other areas. There is a shortage of school places in the area – for example, people moving into the area have had to send secondary school children to schools at the other side of Halifax because local schools are full. We are much more in favour of options 3 and 4.

We believe that concentrating development in Halifax and Brighouse is the way forward for Calderdale, and that this will not undermine the long term viability of other settlements, particularly if the Brighouse railway line from Halifax is timetabled to link with the Calder Valley trains at Hailfax.

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Question 17 Increased levels of cycling and walking

The levels of cycling and walking by children can be increased by providing better facilities for cycles at schools – the education department could ask schools what facilities they have for the safe storage of cycles, and how they propose to provide these if there are none. With regard to walking, the concept of walking buses can be expanded. Luddenden Dean school started a walking bus, but this did not last a very long time because not enough parents could be enrolled to help with it. If a small amount of funding could be provided directly to schools as part of their capitation for parents supervising this to be paid in the same way that crossing patrols are, expansion would take place.

For more adult participation, more guides to walks in the area in all of the Calderdale newsletters etc would help – as would publicity in the local newspapers. The Calderdale Walkers fortnight in September is a great idea, but should also include short walks for families – often, the shortest is longer than a family not used to walking can manage.

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Question 18

In a number of cases, there is not necessarily need for additional health facilities, but for facilities which already exist, not to be run down because a brand new clinic in some other village has been provided as part of the same group practice. I refer again specifically to Luddenden, where the Hebden Bridge group practice has provided a new clinic in Mytholmroyd. Great pressure continues to have to be put on the practice not to run down the Luddenden clinic by providing fewer surgeries, fewer times when one can see the nurse etc. In areas such as Calderdale, mere distance from facilities, although it may be in agreement with government guidelines, is not always a good guide, when an old person without a car, has to take two bus journeys. The Health Authority does not give sufficient attention to matters such as this.

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Question 20

Luddenden has a number of neighbourhood Watch schemes, but at these and also at the Calderdale Area forums, there is constant complaint that not enough policing on the beat is seen. Vandalism is endemic, and although a police push for a fortnight with increased numbers may alleviate the situation for a while, it soon goes back to what it was.

See also answers to question 22

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Question 22 Children and Young People

More activities throughout the district should be available for young people. The absence of facilities for youth in one area often puts a strain on other areas. The Luddenden club receives many people from the Mytholmroyd area, which contributes to the vandalism problems being seen in the Luddenden area. These would be less likely to occur were there a similar club in Mytholmroyd.

It would seem feasible in an area such as Calderdale that more outdoor pursuits type of leisure activity could be provided by the youth service. For example, surely a scheme could be set up where there are 'peripatatic outdoor youth leaders' who could visit each Calderdale Youth Club in turn, and provide this type of facility.

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Question 27 Spatial Options

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