

Appendix B – Adopted Craven Local Plan Policy EC4: Tourism & EC4A: Tourism Led Development at Bolton Abbey

Extract from the Adopted Craven Local Plan (2019)

TOURISM

7.15 Tourism is the broad term applied to the range of activities, businesses and services that people enjoy whilst visiting Craven. The economy that has built up around tourism is now a substantial and important part of the area's overall economy and quality of life.

7.16 The boost that tourism and visitors provide is seen in the success of Craven's market towns as local places for shopping, culture, leisure and business. Tourism also helps in the understanding and appreciation of Craven's natural environment, heritage and culture, which, in turn, helps to conserve these resources for future generations. Supporting sustainable tourism is therefore an important aim of the local plan and will help to secure a thriving economy, vibrant town-centres, cultural experiences, active recreation, rich biodiversity, beautiful landscapes and well-preserved historic places, which will be both attractive to visitors and beneficial to local communities.

Destinations, visitor accommodation and activities

7.17 The local plan aims to support both established and aspiring tourist destinations that wish to develop and become better and more successful. Those wishing to offer a wider choice of accommodation or activities, which create appeal, interest and enjoyment for visitors, will be supported; and proposals to develop new ideas and opportunities, in a sustainable way, will be encouraged.

Synergies, commitments and key locations

7.18 Tourism businesses may combine well with other businesses in non-tourism sectors. Both can provide a draw, add interest and vitality, and provide facilities and services that may be of wider appeal beyond their respective customer base. Similarly, individual businesses may benefit from integrating tourism and other sectors within their own hybrid operation. The local plan therefore recognises and supports opportunities to secure knock-on benefits from locating tourism and other forms of business together — this is referred to as “synergies of co-location”.

7.19 In addition to giving broad encouragement and support to sustainable tourism across the plan area, the local plan also establishes two specific tourism designations: a Tourism Development Commitment and Key Locations for Tourism Development. Land designated as a Tourism Development Commitment already benefits from planning permission and is described in paragraph 7.20. The eight Key Locations, which are described in paragraphs 7.21 to 7.35, offer particularly good opportunities for sustainable tourism and for harnessing synergies of co-location.

7.20 **Tourism Development Commitment.** Land designated as the Tourism Development Commitment is located to the west of Hellifield and is outlined by a red dashed line in Diagram EC4B. This land benefits from extant planning permission for construction of a rural environmental centre comprising tourism, exhibition, training, equestrian and livestock

buildings, a hotel and nature conservation area¹. However, the extent of operational development (buildings etc.) allowed by the planning permission is limited to three areas within the red dashed line and identified by grey hatching in the diagram, with most of the land remaining as fields, a nature conservation area, open public space and a grass car park. Designation of the Tourism Development Commitment recognises the extent of operational development already approved and related Policy EC4B sets out the Council's approach to proposals for alternative development, which may come forward in the future. Such proposals will be supported, in principle, provided that they promote sustainable tourism and fully address important matters of landscape, heritage, local character and appearance, archaeology, biodiversity, local green space and public rights of way, in accordance with local plan Policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV10 and ENV12.

7.21 Bolton Abbey/Bolton Abbey Station. Bolton Abbey is a place of multiple significances. Bolton Priory has historical value as an Augustinian foundation dating back to 1151, built and altered over time which has the potential to yield evidence about past human activity. It also has high aesthetic value as a piece of architectural design: the ruined east end is of exceptional quality and a rare example in Yorkshire of late C14 architecture at its most refined. However, it is the wider relationship of the Priory with its landscape setting that gives this place its greatest significance. Together they form a famous landscape, an icon of the Picturesque and Romantic Movements of the latterpart of the 18th and into the 19th centuries, which valued the Priory ruins in its landscape setting for its fortuitous aesthetic effect. The association of Bolton Abbey with the Romantic Movement and the area's later accessibility to major populations in the industrial centres of the West Riding led to the development of the site as a tourist destination. The railway arrived at Bolton Abbey Station in 1888. On one August Bank Holiday in the 1890s the railway brought over 40,000 people to Bolton Abbey. The site became and remains a popular destination for tourists, generating a strong communal value expressed in the continuing appreciation by the public for this place, which is one of the most visited sites in Yorkshire and plays a significant role as a gateway to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

7.22 Bolton Abbey is also a Tier 4b settlement (villages with basic services bisected by Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary) within the Local Plan's Spatial Hierarchy. It is similarly recognised as a service village in the adopted Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2016). It comprises land at Bolton Abbey village and Bolton Bridge, and provides a range of services to its community and those of smaller related settlements nearby in the National Park.

7.23 However, several issues at the Bolton Abbey Core Visitor Area² (all of which is owned by the Bolton Abbey Estate) diminish both the visitor offer concerned and the ability of the

¹ On 11th January 2000, conditional outline planning permission was granted for construction of Hellifield Rural Environmental Centre (decision no. 5/42/149/C). The outline permission was renewed on 10th February 2003 (decision no. 42/2002/2763), reserved matters were approved on 20th September 2005 (decision no. 42/2005/5082) and works to implement the permission were subsequently carried out.

² A map showing the boundary of the Bolton Abbey Core Visitor Area (CVA) is provided in the Bolton Abbey Development Options Appraisal Study (BADOAS), which has been prepared by the Bolton Abbey Estate in liaison with local and external stakeholders. The CVA extends from Bolton Bridge to Barden Bridge, includes Bolton Abbey Station and is bisected by the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. That part of the CVA falling within the Craven Local Plan area is shown on the Policies Map (Inset Map No. 24). The BADOAS has been incorporated into the Local Plan evidence base and supports Local Plan Policies EC4 and EC4A.

Bolton Abbey Estate to support its ongoing programme of environmental management and architectural conservation. The Bolton Abbey Estate has identified these issues as follows: no play of visitor operations to bad weather and school holidays; little secondary spend by visitors; major planning constraints; high maintenance costs; increased competition; services at risk; staffing problems due to high house prices; very limited choice of visitor accommodation in the immediate area.

7.24 In seeking to address these issues, the Bolton Abbey Estate has identified eight potential development zones within the Core Visitor Area, two of which are located partly within the Craven Local Plan area at Bolton Abbey and Bolton Bridge. The Bolton Abbey Estate has liaised with local and external stakeholders on their proposals for mixed use tourism led development including the District Council, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, and Historic England (which supports in principle the provision of development of an appropriate scale, intensity and mix of uses in Bolton Abbey village, Bolton Bridge and other parts of the Core Visitor Area in the long term).

7.25 The Bolton Abbey Estate proposals refer mainly to tourism-led development to support and diversify visitor operations at Bolton Abbey, improving cycling and walking infrastructure and providing facilities such as a farm shop and eating / drinking establishments, which will also benefit the local community. In addition, the Bolton Abbey Estate wishes to pursue other forms of development to accord with policies elsewhere in the Local Plan, including for example small scale housing development and rural office development.

7.26 Tourism led mixed use development at Bolton Abbey has the potential to boost the tourism economy of the area and achieve the synergies of colocation with other business and commercial development to provide for significant high value employment opportunities in accordance with Policy EC4 of the Local Plan, but this must be achieved without harm to the important and significant historic, ecological and landscape assets of this special place.

7.27 However, the Council has not allocated specific sites at Bolton Abbey for two reasons. Firstly, the Council considers that a comprehensive strategy and development masterplan must be prepared for the area which: takes into account the heritage, ecology and landscape sensitivity of the area; considers the fact that the National Park boundary runs through Bolton Abbey village and Bolton Bridge; involves Historic England, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Natural England, the District Council and other stakeholders as appropriate. Secondly, it considers that there is a need to establish the potential impact of detailed proposals (for uses such as a play barn, farm shop, play area, pub, housing, visitor accommodation, cycling hub, offices and biomass boiler) before confirming the use of land for a particular purpose.

7.28 The local plan therefore includes a related policy to EC4 (EC4A), to support sensitive and sustainable tourism-led, mixed-use development at Bolton Abbey, in the general locations identified at Bolton Abbey and Bolton Bridge (see Policies Inset Map No.24), subject to a comprehensive strategy and Masterplan for the Core Visitor Area to the satisfaction of itself and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (as local planning authorities) and in consultation with other key stakeholders, including, Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Development proposals will be expected to accord with the principles of the Masterplan and development proposals which would prejudice the delivery of the related strategy for the Core Visitor Area will not be permitted.

7.29 **Broughton Hall Estate.** This is a key location that has successfully integrated tourism, business, heritage and landscape over many years –tapping in to the synergies of colocation and creating a place of unique character and appeal. This achievement and the

location's potential for continued sustainable growth and enhancement are recognised in its designation.

7.30 Ingleton – viaduct area. Ingleton's grade II listed former railway viaduct is a significant heritage asset, which contributes to the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area. At present, the viaduct is inaccessible, but has the potential to become an elevated public walkway and the centrepiece of wider proposals to enhance the local tourist economy and historic environment.

7.31 Gargrave – canal area. The Leeds & Liverpool Canal is a significant heritage asset and its moorings, towpath and grade II listed bridges and locks add to Gargrave's attractiveness to visitors. Proposals that would help to enhance the canal's significance and attractiveness, its role in the local economy and the range of canal-side facilities currently on offer will be supported in principle.

7.32 Skipton – canal and railway station area. Skipton's busy and popular grade II listed railway station is an important gateway to the town, but its facilities, surroundings, accessibility and relationship to the town centre could be improved. The Leeds & Liverpool Canal, which is just a short walk to the north, is a significant heritage asset within the Skipton Conservation Area and is popular for its moorings and events. The canal towpath also provides an attractive pedestrian and cycle route to the town centre, Aireville Park and beyond. This part of the town has been designated as a key location to highlight the area's potential and to encourage proposals that will support the local economy, improve accessibility, enhance the visitor experience, conserve heritage assets and create a better townscape.

7.33 Bentham – railway station area. High Bentham has a significant number of undesignated heritage assets and the potential for conservation area designation. Its attractiveness as a tourist destination and gateway to the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are reinforced by its railway station on the "Little North Western" line, which is supported by a community rail partnership. The station is located in an area of town where space and opportunities for growth are less constrained than in the historic and tightly built centre immediately to the north. This greater potential is recognised in the area's designation as a key location and proposals will be supported, in principle, where they would enhance the town's attractiveness to visitors, support the local economy and conserve heritage assets.

7.34 Hellifield – railway station area. The grade II listed Hellifield Station marks the southernmost extent of the Settle-Carlisle Conservation Area, which follows the route of the popular, scenic and historic railway. The Yorkshire Dales National Park is to the immediate northeast, the Tourism Development Commitment is to the southwest and areas around the station buildings are mainly operational land. In this key location, appropriate proposals to develop facilities and services and to enhance linkages and relationships with the surrounding area will be supported in principle.

7.35 Embsay – railway station area. The Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway intends to extend its operations to Skipton railway station where former platforms 5 and 6 would be brought back into use. This and other appropriate enhancements to services and facilities could make a significant contribution to sustainable growth in tourism at each of the three key locations involved – Embsay, Bolton Abbey and Skipton – and will be supported in principle.

Rural and countryside areas

7.36 Tourism naturally extends beyond Craven's main settlements and the local plan therefore supports sustainable tourism in more remote locations — to do otherwise would be to unfairly restrict economic, environmental and social opportunities, and to hinder growth and diversity within the rural economy. Proposals for tourism development that will result in improved biodiversity and green infrastructure, and better facilities for rural communities, will be particularly welcomed. Wildlife activities or 'Nature Tourism' will be encouraged and supported, in principle, in both rural and urban areas.

Community benefits

7.37 A sustainable approach to growth in tourism will ensure that benefits to the economy, environment and quality of life are felt as broadly as possible, including within local communities. Part of this will be to attach appropriate community use agreements to planning permissions for tourism development, where this will improve the availability of community facilities in the local area. Communities will also be supported in bringing forward their own sustainable tourism projects through neighbourhood planning.

7.38 Local strategies and action plans

Local business organisations, such as Chambers of Trade and Business Improvement Districts (BID), are active in promoting business, services and activities in their areas. Supporting tourism is a vital component of their work and this is reflected in strategies and action plans being pursued across the district³. Local business organisations will therefore be supported in their efforts to promote sustainable tourism.

Public transport, walking and cycling

7.39 The local plan aims to connect tourism development to the public transport network and to promote walking and cycling, in the interests of sustainability, health and well-being. Several key locations and the tourism development commitment have been identified as offering particular opportunities to further these aims. Policy SP2: Economic Activity and Business Growth supports enhanced connections across the public transport network, including the Skipton to Colne railway line, which offers opportunities to promote sustainable travel to Craven destinations and, therefore, sustainable tourism.

Sustainable development

7.40 The local plan's general support for tourism does not mean support for any tourism-related development proposal that may come forward. Individual proposals will need to accord with other relevant local plan policies, promote relevant plan objectives and achieve sustainable development overall.

³ Skipton BID funds projects, events and other activities to ensure that the town remains the ideal place in which to work, visit, shop and live. Settle & District Chamber of Trade is developing a live business plan supported by a vision, objectives and actions including a website, visitor signage and cultural facilities. An Action Plan for Ingleton sets out a number of key improvements for the village and has been prepared by Craven District Council, Ingleton Parish Council, Ingleton & District Tradespeoples' Association and Ingleton Rural Community Association.

POLICY EC4: TOURISM

Tourism will grow in a sustainable way, so that it helps to improve the economy, environment and quality of life. Such growth will be achieved by:

- a) Enabling established destinations to become even better through the development of new and improved facilities;**
- b) Helping up-and-coming destinations to establish themselves and become successful;**
- c) Recognising opportunities to bring tourism into new areas that have untapped potential, including new types of activity and new destinations;**
- d) Acknowledging the range of sporting, recreational, cultural, arts, wildlife and leisurely activities that people may wish to engage in as tourists;**
- e) Ensuring that tourism development provides easy access to the network of public transport services, footpaths and cycle routes (including canal towpaths) in the area and, wherever possible, secures the improvement and expansion of that network;**
- f) Realising opportunities, where they arise, to secure additional knock-on benefits from placing tourism development and other forms of business and commercial development together in the same location, thereby achieving synergies of co-location;**
- g) Supporting, in principle, proposals for tourism development and for achieving synergies of co-location, in the following key locations for tourism development identified on the policies map; Bolton Abbey/Bolton Abbey Railway Station**

Broughton Hall Estate

Ingleton – viaduct area

Gargrave – canal area

Skipton – canal and railway station area

Bentham – railway station area

Hellifield – railway station area

Embsay – railway station area

- h) Ensuring that the benefits of tourism growth – to the economy, environment and quality of life – are felt as broadly as possible within local communities;**
- i) Securing appropriate community use of private facilities provided as part of tourism developments, including sports, leisure, recreational and cultural and arts facilities, shops and open spaces;**
- j) Encouraging and supporting communities and business organisations to promote sustainable tourism through Neighbourhood Plans and other local initiatives;**

Individual proposals that accord with the Council’s general approach set out in parts a) to j) above must also accord with all other relevant local plan policies and any relevant neighbourhood plan policies and must help to achieve sustainable development overall.

POLICY EC4A: TOURISM-LED DEVELOPMENT AT BOLTON ABBEY

The provision of sensitive and sustainable tourism-led, mixed-use development at Bolton Abbey will be supported within the Core Visitor Area indicated on the Policies Map (Inset Map No.24).

In particular, within the Core Visitor Area, the following mix of uses will be supported in principle subject to their scale, design, location, interrelationships and cumulative impact upon the historic environment, ecology, flood risk and landscape character being acceptable:

- Tourism facilities, including but not limited to, farm shop, play barn and eating/drinking establishments;**
- New build visitor accommodation;**
- New infrastructure necessary to promote and improve cycling and walking;**
- Limited residential development to provide staff accommodation and market housing, which conforms to policies elsewhere in the Local Plan;**
- Limited commercial development, which conforms to policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.**

Larger scale development will be restricted to the following general locations indicated on the Policies Map (Inset Map No. 24):

- Land including and surrounding the main village car park at Bolton Abbey village**
- Land to the north-north-west of the B6160 / A59 roundabout at Bolton Bridge**
- Land north of the highway spur (part of former A59) to the west of the B6160 at Bolton Bridge**

A comprehensive strategy and Masterplan for the Core Visitor Area, including detailed development and design principles and a Landscape and 215 Visual Impact Assessment, shall be produced to the satisfaction of the local planning authorities in consultation with key stakeholders, including Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Development proposals will be expected to accord with the principles of the Masterplan and developments which would prejudice the delivery of the related strategy for the Core Visitor Area will not be permitted.