

Kirklees
the place to
grow



This booklet sets out information on:

- a new Local Plan for Kirklees, and the process of how this will be developed;
- our ambition for Kirklees' future and how a Local Plan can help achieve this;
- key statistics, facts and information which government say Local Plans should be based on;
- options for how we decide where new development could go.

Your views are important

Your thoughts at this early stage will be invaluable to us in shaping the Local Plan. At this stage we are keen to share as much information with you as we can, so that you can play a part in developing the options which will go out for formal public consultation in 2015



Over the following pages, we have set out the information and statistics which the government require us to take into account in putting together our plan. At the start of each section, we have posed questions for you to think about as you consider the information. Details of how to send us your comments in response to the questions are at the back of this leaflet.



A new Local Plan for Kirklees

The Kirklees Local Plan (previously known as the Local Development Framework) will set out how much land we will make available for creating the jobs and homes our businesses and residents will need over the next 15 years, so that our district thrives. Our plan will also identify areas of Kirklees that need protection - including valuable open spaces, areas with high environmental quality and historic value; and set out where we must also make improvements to our infrastructure (such as roads, schools and shops) so that any new developments are sustainable.

Why do we need a Local Plan?

The government requires all local councils to develop a long-term plan which sets out how and where land can be developed over the next 15 years, in order to meet the growing needs of local people and businesses. The plan sets out what and where development is acceptable, and once agreed and adopted, will govern how planning applications are assessed. The plan can also reflect local features and circumstances which give places their very distinct identity.

What happens if we don't have a Local Plan?

As Kirklees has not yet adopted a new Local Plan, our open spaces are currently at risk from development of new homes. This is because we can't demonstrate that we have identified enough land for new homes. This means that when developers apply for planning permission in areas we want to protect, the council cannot legally justify turning applications down.

Without a plan, development is happening in Kirklees in an un-coordinated way, making it very difficult for us to plan ahead and ensure that new homes are created alongside infrastructure such as local services and facilities and green space. Having a Local Plan will help us to prevent uncoordinated development.

Help shape our approach

We want to hear your thoughts about how we can make sure Kirklees makes the most of its attractive location and distinctive places, so that our economy grows and our people prosper. And at this stage, we are particularly keen to hear your views on how we approach strategic decisions about where new development should go.



What kind of place do we want Kirklees to be?

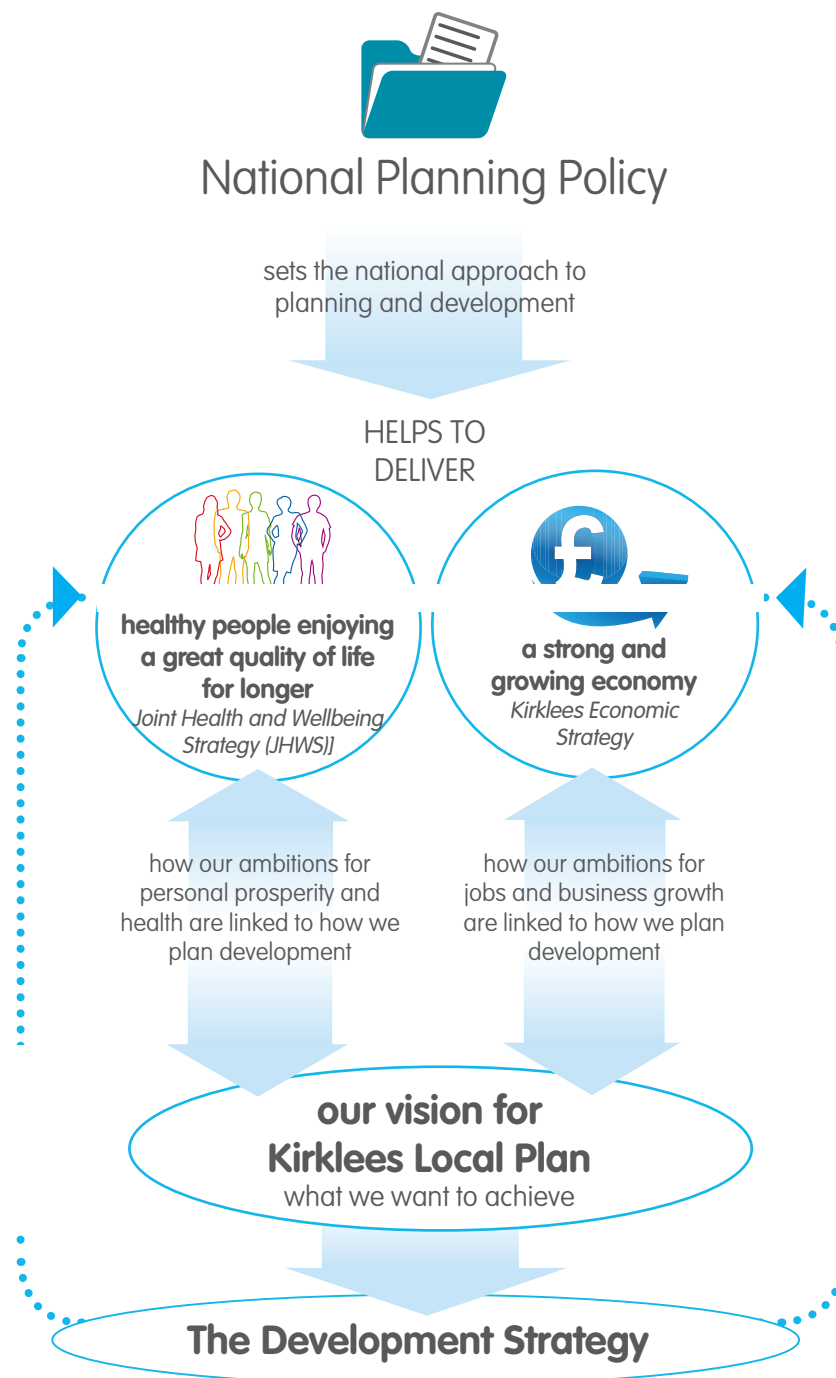
Securing a healthy and prosperous future

We recognise that two major factors are important in making Kirklees a better place in the future:

- healthy people enjoying quality of life, and
- a strong and growing economy.

The Council has adopted two strategies which describe how we will achieve this, and as you can see, both are very much dependent on the development of our Local Plan.

We have produced a vision and objectives for the Local plan which reflect these strategies, government guidance, and the comments made at Local Plan engagement sessions in July.



Vision for Kirklees

The Kirklees Local Plan supports the ambition for Kirklees to be a great place to live, work and invest in; where all residents can enjoy quality of life, have access to job opportunities and a decent and affordable home. People will have access to a range of local facilities, adequate infrastructure, and places will be well-connected encouraging sustainable travel and improving links to other parts of the Leeds City Region and beyond.

The Plan will recognise the diverse character of the district as a whole, and also the opportunities within individual character areas to build thriving communities which respond to local needs.

The district will be ideally placed to encourage inward investment and stimulate economic growth, regenerating our towns whilst preserving their distinct character, and through the creation of jobs will tackle poverty. The natural built and historic environment will be maintained and enhanced to improve quality of life, through high quality, inclusive design and safe environments; and opportunities for play and sport will promote healthy and happy lives for Kirklees residents and visitors.

Questions

1. Do you think our VISION for Kirklees is right?
2. Is there anything you think we have missed which should be included?

Our Local Plan will:

- support the growth and diversification of the economy, including the provision of a high quality communication infrastructure;
- strengthen the role of town centres, particularly Huddersfield, Dewsbury and Batley, to support their vitality and viability;
- improve transport links within and between Kirklees towns and with neighbouring towns and cities, giving priority to public transport, commercial traffic, and to cycling and walking;
- provide new homes which meet the needs of the community offering a range of size, tenure and affordability, with good access to employment, shops and services;
- tackle inequality and give all residents the opportunity of a healthy lifestyle, free from crime and to achieve their potential in work and education;
- protect and improve green infrastructure so that residents have access to good quality open spaces, sport and recreation opportunities, and for wildlife to flourish;
- promote development that helps to mitigate climate change, and development which is adapted so that the potential impact from climate change is reduced;
- protect and enhance the characteristics of the built, natural and historic environment, and local distinctiveness which contribute to the character of Kirklees;
- promote the use of brownfield land to meet development needs and support the regeneration of areas;
- facilitate the sustainable use and management of minerals and waste.



Jobs and homes so that Kirklees grows and thrives

Where do we start, and what must we take into account?

The government says that the starting point for Local Plans is to establish the need for jobs and homes, and that this should be based on evidence. This involves examining official statistics, including population estimates and projections, census data and household projections prepared by the government, together with other local evidence.

We must consult with our neighbouring councils so that we can demonstrate there has been a co-ordinated approach to meeting needs for development. The government also requires that the number of homes in an area is consistent with the provision made for jobs (taking into account commuting between different areas.)

This is our baseline, and called “objectively assessed need.”

(In the past, the government produced its own strategy which informed each council how many homes and jobs it should plan for over the next 15 years. This was called the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and has now been abolished. However, it is still useful to compare new proposals to this figure, as the figure gives an impression of the scale of development government considered to be appropriate.)

Refining our approach

We know that other factors could affect how many jobs and homes we will need. For example, if we have an ambition to grow our economy so that we improve our residents’ quality of life, this will have an effect the number of jobs and homes we will need.

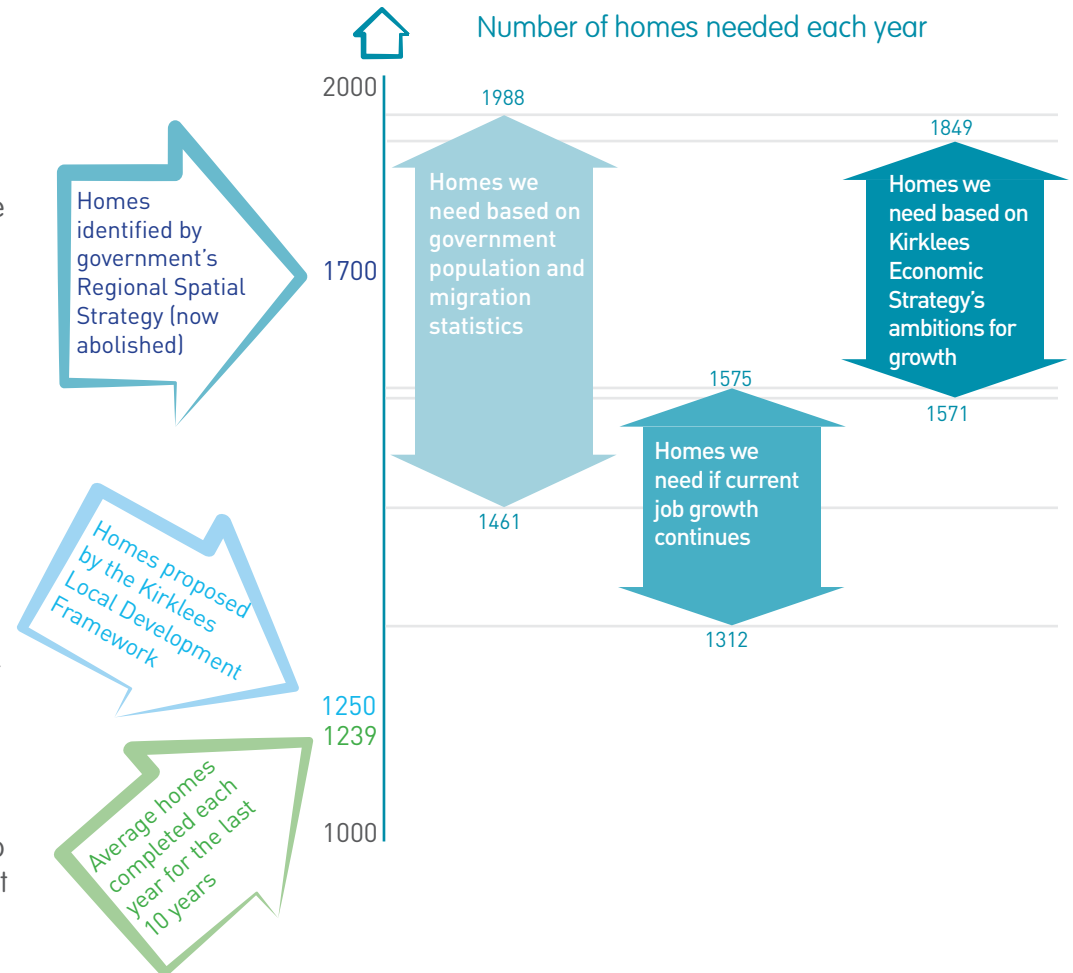
To make sure that all councils are considering these factors consistently across the Leeds City Region, all 10 councils (including Kirklees) have commissioned a study to give us a baseline range for jobs and homes. The study also tests what the impact would be if there were different assumptions about population and household growth, migration and economic growth.

You can view this study at kirklees.gov.uk/localplan

Next Steps

Later in the autumn, we will commission a further housing study which will refine the range of figures we currently have, to give us an actual figure.

We will publish this information when we receive it in 2015.



Where development goes - Place Shaping

The character of our places

Not only does the Local Plan need to identify the scale of development over the next 15 years, but also where this development should be. Our Local Plan needs to be sensitive to the local character of the places which make up Kirklees.

Different places often have different roles and functions – larger places usually are home to more employment, shopping and leisure opportunities; whereas in smaller towns and villages, jobs and services are more limited. Places also differ greatly in their prosperity – where residents' quality of life is affected by the lack of local jobs, services and affordable housing, and being able to travel easily to nearby towns and cities.

By understanding the different roles places play, their strengths and their constraints, we can adopt a strategic approach to where new development can take place.

You can influence the choices which will shape our places

The Council recently established 4 District Committee areas:

- Huddersfield
- Dewsbury & Mirfield
- Batley & Spen
- Kirklees Rural (Colne, Holme and Dearne valleys)

You have told us that you would like the local character of places to play a key role in influencing where development goes. So, we have used the committee areas above as a starting point to assess their different character areas.

Over the following pages we have provided information about the whole of the district, so that you can compare places; and a more detailed view of the 4 character areas, so that you can tell us how places might change and grow.

Questions

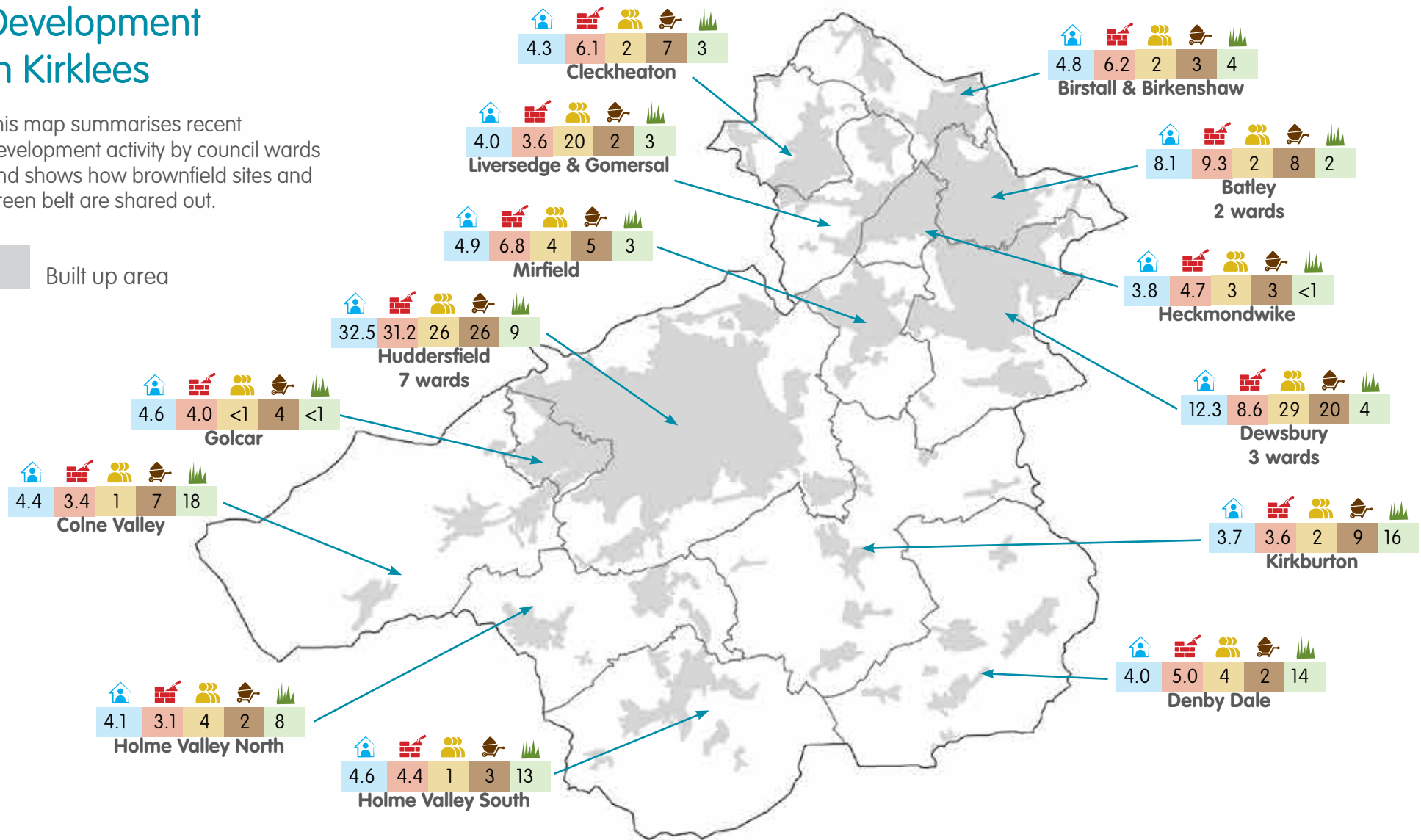
3. What do you think about the concept of relating new development to the characteristics of different places?
4. What are the main characteristics you think we should take into account when we look at places and future development?
5. What services, facilities and infrastructure would the 4 character areas need to accommodate growth?
6. Do you think places or character areas should have their own vision and objectives?
What would you include?








Development in Kirklees

This map summarises recent development activity by council wards and shows how brownfield sites and green belt are shared out.

 Built up area



KEY

				
% share of Kirklees households 2011	% share of Kirklees housing development 2007-13	% share of Kirklees employment development 2007-13	% share of Kirklees brownfield land with development potential	% share of Kirklees green belt

Income, housing, health, education and unemployment

This diagram shows traffic light ratings for each place, ranging from **GREEN** meaning that a place performs better, to **RED** meaning a place performs worse.



	Household income	House prices	Un-employment	Health	School leavers entering further education	Job opportunities	Shopping facilities	
							Food	Non-food
Huddersfield (inc Golcar Ward)	Orange	Light Green	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
Dewsbury	Red	Light Green	Red	Red	Orange	Light Green	Green	Green
Mirfield/Upper Hopton	Light Green	Orange	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Batley	Red	Light Green	Orange	Red	Light Green	Yellow	Green	Green
Heckmondwike	Yellow	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Light Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Cleckheaton/Scholes	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Birstall	Light Green	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Birkenshaw/E Bierley	Light Green	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Orange	Green	Yellow
Gomersal	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Yellow
Marsden	Light Green	Yellow	Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Slaitwaite/Linthwaite	Light Green	Yellow	Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Meltham	Light Green	Orange	Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Honley/Brockholes	Light Green	Orange	Green	Light Green	Light Green	Orange	Yellow	Red
Holmfirth	Green	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Kirkburton/Highburton	Green	Red	Green	Green	Light Green	Orange	Red	Red
Shepley/Shelley	Green	Red	Green	Green	Light Green	Orange	Red	Red
Grange Moor/Flockton	Green	Red	Green	Green	Light Green	Red	Red	Red
Denby Dale/Scissett/Clayton West	Light Green	Red	Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
Skelmanthorpe/Emley	Light Green	Red	Green	Light Green	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red

These indicators are derived from 2011 census data and the council's 2014 retail capacity study. They are presented in this form to illustrate similarities and differences between different parts of Kirklees.

Character and constraints of **Huddersfield**

Huddersfield is an extensive urban area, surrounded by steep slopes which are visible from within the town, and contains numerous areas of historic or architectural interest, including the town centre. There is a good range of shopping and leisure opportunities both in the town centre and retail parks, and further afield in neighbouring local centres. Industrial areas are concentrated along the Colne and

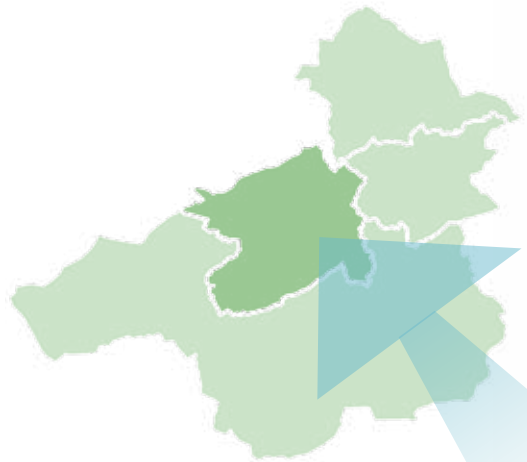
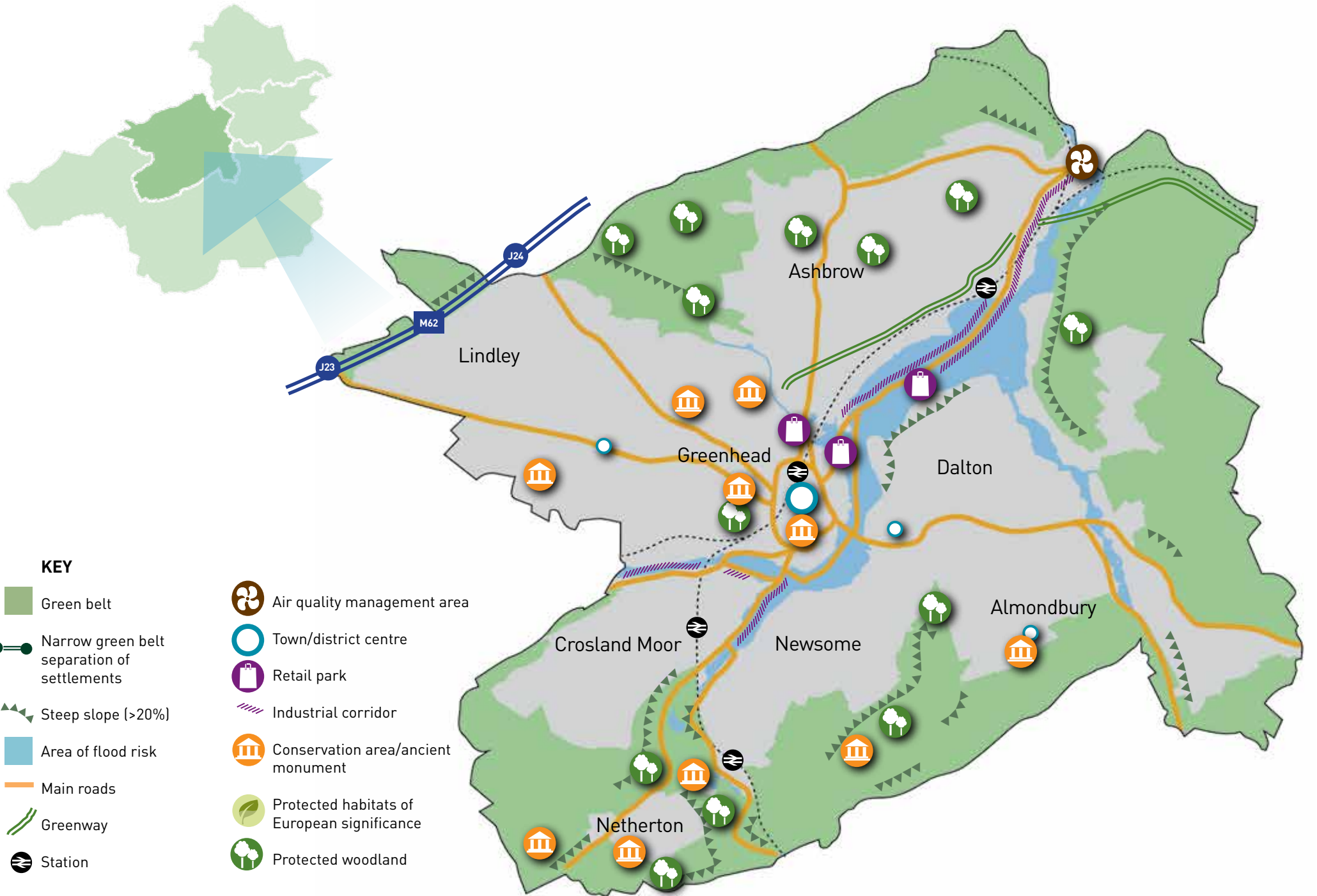
Holme river corridors and the town centre, providing a variety of employment opportunities, but unemployment is above the Kirklees average. Household income and average house prices are below the Kirklees average. All areas of the town are well served by public transport, but several main roads are prone to peak hour delays.

Strengths/opportunities for growth

- Frequent rail services across the north of England from Huddersfield station
- Good access to the M62, particularly from the north
- Priority in Kirklees Economic Strategy to revitalise Huddersfield town centre including enhanced independent retail, cultural and leisure offer; mixed use development of Waterfront Quarter and other key sites; and next generation digital connectivity
- Huddersfield University and Kirklees College potentially attracting investment
- The town centre is a focus for shopping and leisure and there are opportunities to enhance this provision; local centres generally offer good provision to meet local needs
- Attractive buildings and spaces of historic and architectural interest
- Many areas of the town have good access to greenspaces and greenways present opportunities for walking and cycling
- Strong and innovative manufacturing sector linked to educational establishments.
- Economic opportunities in creative sector linked to university, Kirklees College and media centre
- Strong housing market in the north of Huddersfield

Challenges to growth

- Traffic congestion and poor access to M1 from across Huddersfield and poor access to M62 from the south
- Few flat, easily accessible potential development locations
- Flatter areas at low levels tend to be at risk of flooding
- Poor air quality in some areas
- Pockets of high unemployment, deprivation and poor health
- The housing market is weak in some areas, which may be a barrier to development of Brownfield sites
- Shortfall of Grade A office accommodation and private sector service sector employers relative to other large towns



Lindley

Ashbrow

Greenhead

Dalton

Crosland Moor

Newsome

Almondbury

Netherton

J24

M62

J23

Character and constraints of **Dewsbury and Mirfield**

Dewsbury and Mirfield form an extensive urban area within a wide valley, bounded by some steep slopes and containing significant areas of historic or architectural interest. The area benefits from good transport links to the M62 and the M1, and by rail to Leeds and Manchester. There is also a well-established green network making it easy to walk and cycle. Dewsbury town centre is the main location for

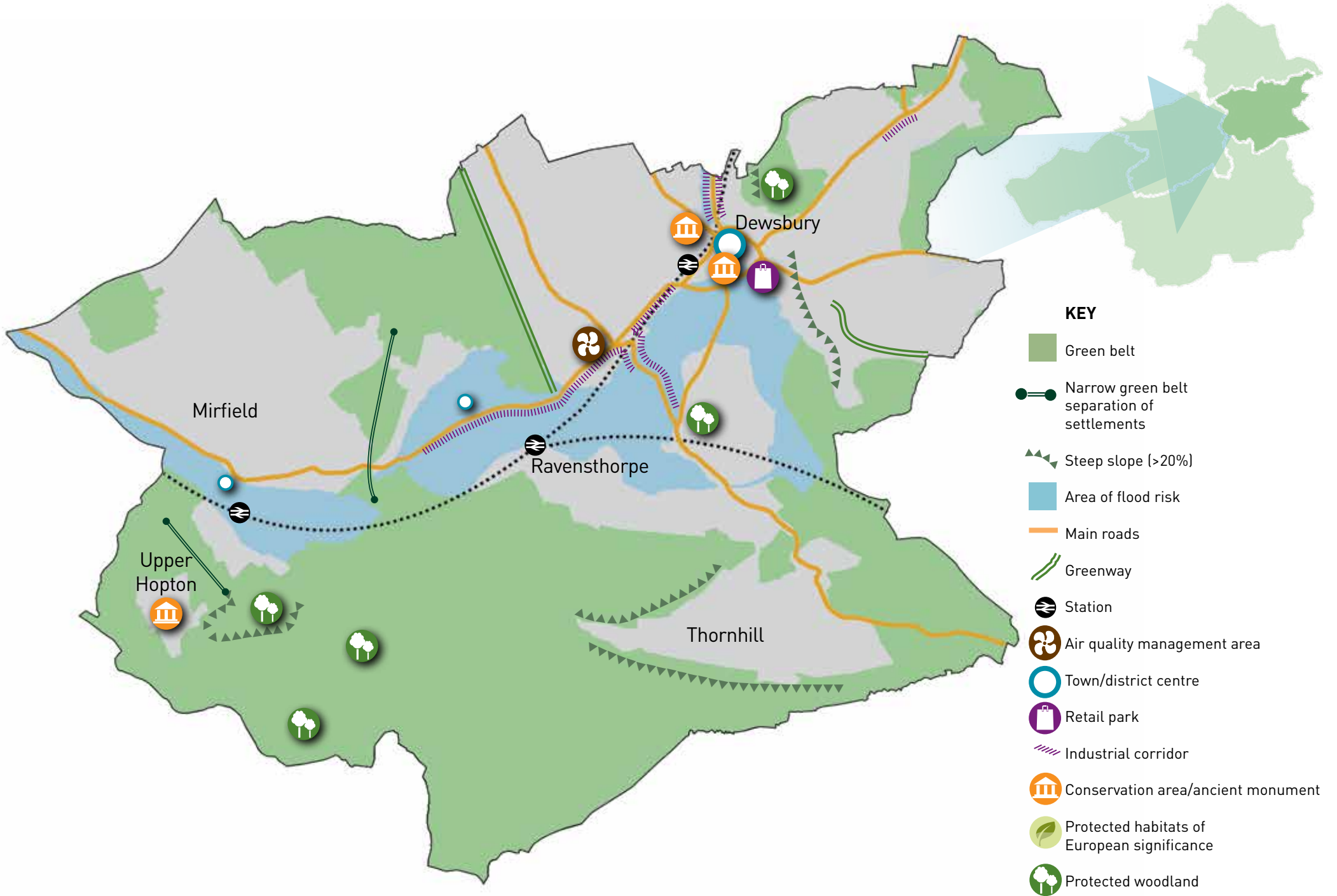
shopping. Local shopping centres exist in Mirfield and Ravensthorpe, where shops and services are either side of the busy main road. Overall, household incomes are above the Kirklees average but there are some higher income areas. Relative to other parts of Kirklees, skills levels in Dewsbury are lower than average. The area experiences both strong and weak housing market areas.

Strengths/opportunities for growth

- Dewsbury has good rail links to Leeds and Manchester
- Relatively good motorway links from Mirfield to M62 and north-east Dewsbury to M62 and M1
- Priority in Kirklees Economic Strategy to transform Dewsbury, building on its strategic location and driven by integrated housing and economic development in town centre
- Strong housing market areas of Mirfield and outskirts of Dewsbury
- Generally good provision of local shopping
- Attractive buildings and townscape in Dewsbury
- Kirklees College potentially attracting investment
- Established greenway network and Dewsbury Country Park
- Brownfield opportunities from former industrial uses
- Potential to enhance river and canal corridor to help attract investment
- A growing young population with a history of enterprise and community networks

Challenges to growth

- Traffic congestion on key routes
- High levels of inequality between strong and weak housing market areas
- Narrow green belt gaps separating some settlements, particularly around A64
- Flatter areas at low levels tend to be at risk of flooding
- Many brownfield opportunities are in weak housing market areas
- Poor environmental quality in some areas reduces potential for investment
- Higher than average floorspace vacancy in Dewsbury Town Centre
- Pockets of high unemployment, deprivation and poor health
- Negative perception of Dewsbury as a place to live and invest (Kirklees Economic Strategy)



Mirfield

Dewsbury

Ravensthorpe

Upper Hopton

Thornhill

Character and constraints of **Batley and Spen**

Settlements here are based around the hills and valleys of the Spen and Calder rivers, although the valleys are wider and generally less steep than in other parts of Kirklees. The historic building legacy of the industrial revolution make for attractive townscapes; although the built-up areas of Heckmondwike, Batley and Dewsbury have merged into one urban area, and many settlements are separated by only

relatively narrow areas of green belt. The area enjoys a well-established greenway network with plenty of opportunities for walking and cycling. There are good local centres offering a range of shopping, and also a major retail park at Birstall. Incomes vary across the area, generally being lower in Batley and higher in Birstall.

Strengths/opportunities for growth

- Good motorway links to M62
- Greenway network encourages walking and cycling
- Attractive buildings reflecting the area's industrial heritage and public spaces, particularly in Batley and Birstall
- Attractive countryside between settlements, primarily in the Spen Valley
- Town, district and local centres offer good range of local shopping facilities
- Strong housing market area around Birstall, Gomersal and Cleckheaton
- Good local employment opportunities in Batley, Birstall and Cleckheaton
- Gentle slopes provide the opportunity to expand settlements
- Oakwell Hall Country Park

Challenges to growth

- Traffic congestion on main routes
- Rail services are restricted to local services at Batley
- Bus journeys to larger towns and cities tend to be indirect and experience congestion
- Narrow green belt gaps between many settlements
- Higher than average empty shops and offices in Batley town centre
- Poor environmental quality in some areas reduces the potential for investment
- Noise and air quality issues associated with motorway
- Pockets of high unemployment, deprivation and poor health



Character and constraints of **Kirklees Rural**

In the towns and villages of the Colne and Dearne valleys, settlements are generally well separated by open countryside, although those within the upper Holme Valley often join together. The upper Holme and Colne valleys border the Peak District National Park, and these areas include habitats and species protected by European legislation. Generally, the Holme and Colne valleys are narrow, with steep sides which can limit development, whereas the Dearne Valley has more gently sloping valleys.

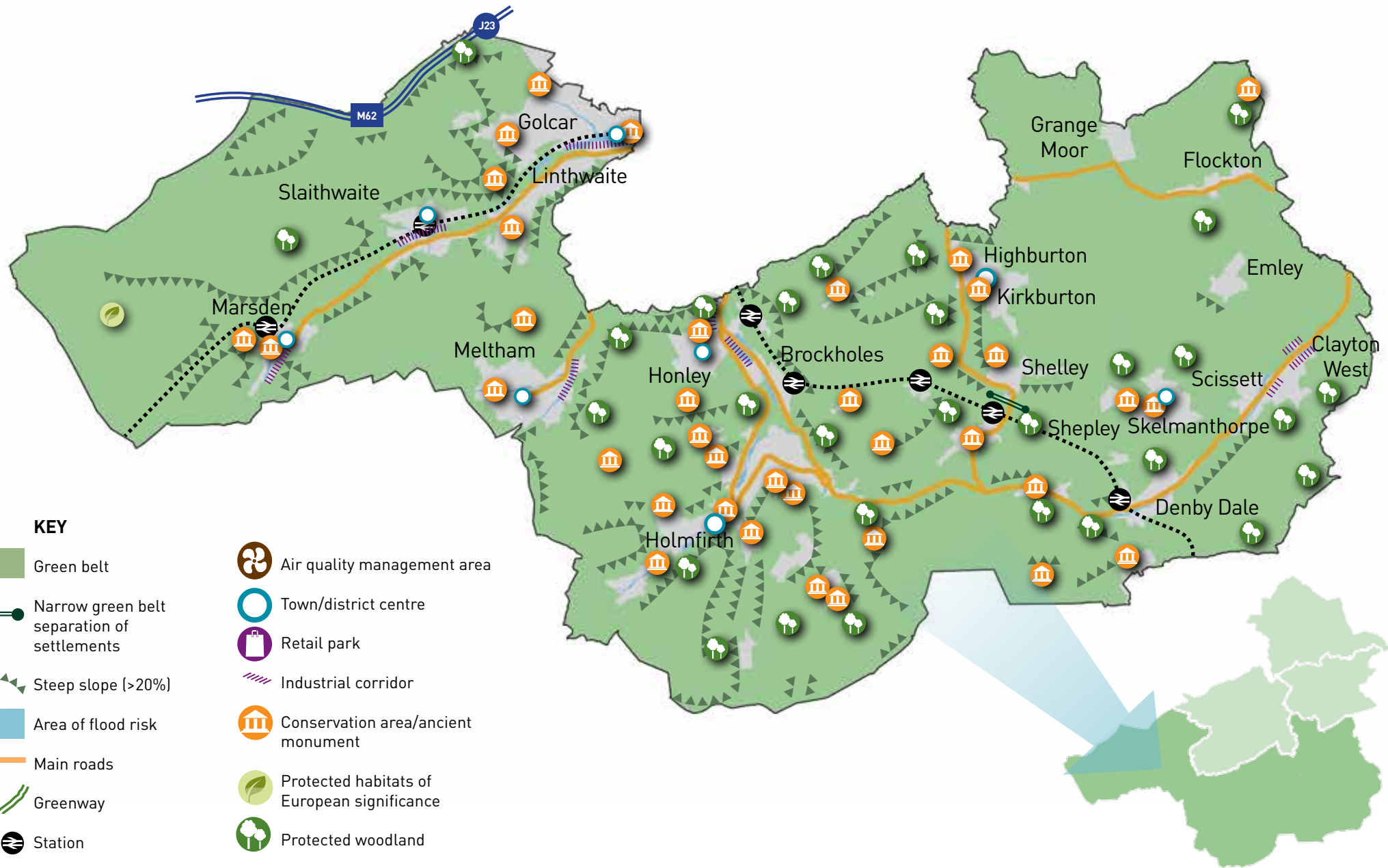
Strengths/opportunities for growth

- Generally high levels of income
- Low unemployment
- Canal and centres such as Holmfirth attract tourism
- Rail links to Leeds, Huddersfield and Manchester from the Colne Valley and potential to improve frequency of services in parts of the Holme Valley and Dearne Valley
- Dearne Valley has relatively good access to M1
- Attractive landscape character
- Market strength suggests brownfield opportunities are more viable
- Gentle slopes in the east provides opportunity to expand settlements

Settlements are well connected to Huddersfield and there are good connections to the M1 from the east. The Colne Valley has good rail links to Manchester, Huddersfield and Leeds, and local rail links exist in part between the Holme Valley, Dearne Valley and Huddersfield. For many of the towns and villages, Huddersfield is the focus for where most people work, shop and undertake leisure activities.

Challenges to growth

- Expansion of settlements in the upper Colne and Holme Valleys may be constrained by European protected habitats and species
- Steep valley sides in the Colne Valley and Holme Valley
- Generally high house prices create problems of affordability for local people
- Limited opportunities for people to work and shop locally
- Relatively poor motorway access from the Colne Valley and Holme Valley
- Limited frequency of rail service
- Few brownfield opportunities from industrial legacy
- Loss of employment land to housing



How to decide where development goes

As well as setting out how many new homes and how much land for jobs we need, the local plan must also contain a 'spatial framework.'

Put simply, the spatial framework describes the approach we will take to deciding how much development will go where. However we decide to do this, our approach must link back to the Local Plan's vision and objectives, take account of our need for homes and jobs, and be sensitive to the different characteristics of places within Kirklees.

Our approach should also help us to:

- deliver the objectives of the council's Economic Strategy and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- ensure sufficient land is found for new homes, jobs, shopping, facilities for sport and leisure, minerals and waste management, and that this land is in locations where we can expect development to be delivered;
- minimise the adverse impact of development on the natural and historic environment, and on local character – we can do this by encouraging the use of brownfield land first, before greenfield land;
- recognise that development in some areas and circumstances is challenging, and that if we pursue this there should be a reasonable prospect of improving critical infrastructure.

Brownfield is land which has been used before and is being re-developed

Greenfield is land which has not been developed before

Green belt is open land which separates one town or settlement from the next

Approach 1

Allocating development based on the size of settlements

This approach would categorise towns and villages according to their existing size, role and function, and rank them from large to small. Any future development would be distributed proportionately according to a place's existing size.

Generally, this means that the larger the place, the more development it would accommodate.

Larger settlements usually have a greater range of existing services and infrastructure than the smaller settlements. Therefore it's likely that development in and around these places is sustainable. Smaller settlements tend to have less capacity to accommodate growth without significant new services and infrastructure, and this is likely to make development more expensive than it would be in larger places.

Approach 2

Allocating development based on an area's character, its constraints and opportunities

This approach would assess the potential of each of the 4 character areas we've talked about in earlier pages to grow. This means that development would be allocated to places based on their ability to help us achieve our overall objectives, rather than simply on their existing size.

It could also mean that quite small places could grow significantly if development opportunities exist.

Approach 3

Allocating development based on an area's character and the size of its settlements

This approach would assess the potential of the 4 character areas to grow but also acknowledge the size and function of each settlement in the character area. Generally, this would mean that the larger the place, the more development it would accommodate, but it would also allow for the different characters of Kirklees' places to be taken into account.

Questions

7. Which approach do you prefer?
8. Are there other approaches to allocating development to areas you think we could consider?



Have your say

To comment on this document, please answer the questions as they appear in this booklet, and:

Give us your comments on-line:
kirklees.gov.uk/localplan

Send your comments to us at:
Planning Policy Group
PO Box B93
Civic Centre 3
Off Market Street
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR

Email your comments to us at:
local.development@kirklees.gov.uk

Call for sites...

If you are aware of a potential development site in your area and think we should consider this, please complete a call for sites form at kirklees.gov.uk/localplan.

Your comments must reach us by 19th December 2014

If you would like this information in a different format, please contact Kirklees Direct

01484 414746 or email **local.development@kirklees.gov.uk**

For further information:

- Visit the website kirklees.gov.uk/localplan
- Email: local.development@kirklees.gov.uk
- Contact Kirklees Direct: 01484 414746



Next Steps

Your views will help us to consider and accurately reflect the towns, villages and settlements which make up the Kirklees district. We will use your comments to plan how we can grow to provide the jobs and homes our businesses and residents need.

In early 2015, we will carry out more detailed work to develop a draft Local Plan proposal and hope to be ready to consult on this by late summer 2015. If you want to be kept informed about the progress of the Local Plan and to be consulted on key stages of its preparation, please contact us with your name, postal address and email address, and ask to be added to our consultation database.



