

# YORKSHIRE LAND

Limited

PO Box 785, HARROGATE, HG1 9RT

E-mail: [office@yorkshireland-ltd.com](mailto:office@yorkshireland-ltd.com)

Telephone: 01423 770335

Our Ref YLL/JJ/2017-11.01

16 November 2017

**Mr J Jenkinson**

Head of Planning & Building Control  
Economic Regeneration Service  
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Westgate Plaza  
PO Box 604  
BARNLEY S70 9FE

Sent by email to  
[joejenkinson@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:joejenkinson@barnsley.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Jenkinson,

## **MEETING - THURSDAY 09 NOVEMBER 2017**

We write following our meeting with yourself and David Shepherd (Place Service Director) last Thursday, 09 November 2017 at Westgate Plaza. This meeting was attended by myself, Samuel Green and Mr Paul Butler of PB Planning, at your request, to discuss the Barnsley Local Plan.

We are advised that PB Planning will be writing to you under separate cover. However, considering Mr Butler is currently on vacation, we felt it prudent to provide our own correspondence following the meeting.

You explained to us at this meeting that it had become apparent to the Council during the Local Plan Examination process, that unlike during the previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP) process, the Local Plan Inspector cannot instruct the Council to allocate specific housing or employment sites within the Local Plan. You did confirm that the Inspector can identify a requirement for further allocations and indicate the locations in which these allocations should be identified (i.e. the villages) but cautioned that it was at the Council's sole discretion which sites were ultimately included in the Development Plan.

You then informed us that the Council would be willing to consider allocating the Millstones site in Oxspring and the northern part of our Hunningley Lane site in Urban Barnsley, for housing development.

With regard to the Millstones site in Oxspring, we reminded you at the meeting that the Local Plan Inspector had undertaken a visit to the site on Friday, 29 September 2017

following the unresolved issue in respect of Minor Changes to the Green Belt Boundary arising at the Stage 2 Hearing Sessions, and that Inspector Housden subsequently confirmed at the commencement of the Stage 3 Hearing Sessions that she has reached a decision in respect of this matter, which will be included in her report to be published in due course. Notwithstanding this, it is pleasing to note that the Council now accept that the Millstones site is suitable for housing.

With regard to the Hunningley Lane site, whilst again it is pleasing to note that the Council recognise the site's suitability to meet housing needs in Urban Barnsley, we are baffled as to why the Council believe that only the northern part of the site can accommodate housing. As you are aware, Arup identify in the Green Belt Review (General Area UB12) that:

- To the west, the Green Belt boundary is weakly defined by built form around White Cross Lane which has sprawled beyond the B6100 Ardsley Road (Hunningley Lane);
- On the whole, the existing Green Belt boundary is considered to be relatively weak;
- **An operational railway line which traverses the General Area from north to south could constitute a strongly durable boundary should the area be considered for sub-division;**
- A small-scale area of natural consolidation exists to the south of the Lockeflash Cemetery, on the land bounded by the operational railway line and to the south by Dob Sike.

Each of Arup's comments relates directly to the Hunningley Lane site, which is bounded by the Railway Line on its Eastern Boundary and the B6100 Ardsley Road (Hunningley Lane) on its Western Boundary. The built form which Arup deem to have sprawled beyond the B6100 is located on the southern half the site, whilst the small scale area of natural consolidation which Arup identify between the Lockeflash Cemetery and by Dob Sike, forms the northern half of the site.

We refer you to Paragraph 28 of the Opinion by Leading Counsel, Sasha White QC, in respect of the failings of the Green Belt Review. Furthermore, the letter by Smeeden Foreman Landscape Architects dated 02 May 2016, elaborates on the relationship between the Hunningley Lane site and the Green Area located to the west of the B6100 'Hunningley Lane' between Kendray and Worsbrough Dale (identified in the Green Belt Review as General Area UB13) demonstrating the capacity of the Hunningley Lane site to accommodate significant numbers of dwellings whilst leaving a generous open corridor east-west through the site. Both of these documents have previously been submitted to the Council, but can now be viewed online at: [www.Hunningley-Lane.co.uk](http://www.Hunningley-Lane.co.uk)

The evidence referred to above demonstrates that our Hunningley Lane site falls completely outside of the specified 1.5km radius between the new Green Belt boundary and between Barnsley and Wombwell, in common with the similarly situated proposed allocation AC14.

You categorically informed us that the Council would not be including either the proposed Blackmoor Business Park site or our Oxspring Fields site as employment and housing site

allocations respectively in the Local Plan, and that we should forget these sites and write off any costs associated with them to date. You also commented further that this position goes to the top of the Council and we do find this statement particularly objectionable.

We have captured the commentary of the meeting in a detailed memo, which we can provide if required. However, we do find many of the comments you made at the meeting deeply perturbing as it appears that the Council have predetermined that our Oxspring Fields and the Blackmoor Business Park sites should not be included as allocations in the Local Plan. Clearly, this should not be the case as the site selection process should always remain fair and objective.

Firstly, it is the opinion of ourselves and our professional advisers that all site allocations should be judged and selected only on their planning merits (which includes sustainability and deliverability) and ability to satisfy planning policy requirements. In respect of this very point, at our earlier meeting with yourself, held at 1300 hrs at Westgate Plaza on 19 July 2016, you informed myself and Samuel Green, that the Oxspring Fields site is a good site with good planning credentials, but that the Council had simply taken a policy decision not to allocate any Green Belt sites for housing in the western villages and the Council therefore had no intention of allocating the site in the Local Plan.

Regarding the matter of Sustainability, Mr Matthew Reynolds (Planning Officer) of South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (the driving force behind the development of Public Transport in South Yorkshire and a public sector partner of the Council) outlines in his letter of 12 June 2014 (previously submitted to the Council and available on the Oxspring Fields website - [www.Oxspring-Fields.co.uk](http://www.Oxspring-Fields.co.uk)) that the proximity to the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) is a very good feature for the Oxspring Fields site and should not be overlooked. Mr Reynolds also sets out in the letter that the high levels of accessibility to the TPT promote the Oxspring Fields site as a very sustainable option given the connections to a high quality walking and cycling network and that as the site is within 2 kilometres from the railway station, SYPTE would deem it acceptable to expect a proportion of cycle based park and riding from Penistone, as well as a higher proportion of cycling trips for commuter purposes. Clearly, Mr Reynold's comments equally apply to the proposed adjoining Blackmoor Business Park site.

The TPT forms the Southern Boundary of the Oxspring Fields site. From here Penistone and its Railway Station are only 10 minutes away by bicycle. The remaining boundaries of the Oxspring Fields site comprise the B6462 'Sheffield Road' to the north, the proposed Blackmoor Business Park site and Yorkshire Water waste water treatment works to the east, and the existing built form of Oxspring to the west.

Arup's assessment of Green Belt Review General Area PEN11, within which the Oxspring Fields site is located, recognises that:

*"The Trans Pennine Trail within a dismantled railway could represent a strong internal boundary, should the General Area be considered for sub division"*

Indeed, the proposed Oxspring Fields site is a much smaller parcel of land stretching to just 12 hectares within the overall 190.8 hectare General Area PEN11. Furthermore, the site is located to the north of the TPT, where land has completely different landscape characteristics to that located to the south of the TPT, which is formed of large open fields stretching to approximately 148 hectares from Roughbirchworth Lane in the West to Cross Lane in the South and Blackmoor in the East.

It is therefore very concerning that the Council has not pursued the opportunity identified by Arup to consider the TPT as an internal boundary within Green Belt General Area PEN11 which would lead to the identification of the Oxspring Fields the site as a resultant parcel.

We note that Leading Counsel, Sasha White QC, comments specifically on this issue within paragraph 28 of his Legal Opinion regarding the Barnsley Local Plan:

*"It would seem to me that there has been a clear failure properly to analyse the merits of releasing land from the Green Belt consisting of smaller areas than the general areas identified in the review. Whilst in other locations the Green Belt review process leads to an analysis of "resultant parcels" where release could be considered, there is no such analysis in respect of the YLL sites. I consider this at least arguably unsound given that in the case of both PEN11 and UB12, the Arup reports recognise (a) the absence of defensible boundaries for the whole of the general areas but (b) the existence of features within the general areas which could form defensible Green Belt boundaries. **It seems to me that a sound Green Belt review** should, when faced with that evidence, go on to consider whether the purposes of the Green Belt in that location could be served by adjusting the boundary to reflect the defensible boundaries identified (i.e. the Trans Pennine Trail in PEN11 and the operational railway line in UB12). I can see no consideration whatsoever of that possibility." (Our Emphasis)*

As noted in Paragraph 19 of the Sasha White QC opinion, the review also failed to identify the sizeable decommissioned Works site (identified as a 'depot' on the map of general area PEN11) as a defensible boundary within the PEN11 general area:

*"If this were taken into account together with the Trans Pennine Trail, B6462 and the existing settlements boundary of Oxspring, YLL's site would be surrounded on each side by defensible boundaries."*

Furthermore, the 2013 Barnsley Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) recognises the Oxspring Fields site as a Category 1 'Deliverable' Site, unlike the proposed Safeguarded Land 'SAF18' which is a Category 2 site considering its close proximity to an active dairy farm, which has expanded further within the last year with the erection of new agricultural buildings.

As you are aware highways consultants, Pell Frischmann, have confirmed that satisfactory access can be achieved from the Oxspring Fields site directly onto the B6462 'Sheffield Road' and the multitude of documentation previously submitted to the Council confirms that there are no technical constraints which could affect the delivery of the site.

There is strong developer interest in the Oxspring Fields site from a number of housebuilding companies, but not least from Barratt and David Wilson Homes (BDWH)

who are a five star housebuilder and the country's number one house builder by volume, all of whom could deliver housing on the site within the first two years of the Local Plan having been adopted.

The Oxspring Fields site will also act as a catalyst to enable the delivery of a number of unmatched community benefits to the village of Oxspring. This includes the construction of the long sought after Sports and Community Pavilion on Oxspring Sports Fields and a Tourism Hub alongside the TPT, which will provide facilities for the local community, visitors to the village and users of the TPT. Both of these facilities are sought in the Draft Oxspring Neighbourhood Plan, the progress of which has been halted pending adoption of the Barnsley Local Plan, but identifies no means of delivery.

As we highlighted at the Stage 3 Local Plan Hearing Sessions, the Tourism Hub element of the Oxspring Fields scheme aligns with and seeks to deliver the aspiration set out within Policy E7 of the Local Plan, the supporting text to which confirms (Paragraph 8.31) the need to maximise the use of Tourism Assets, specifically identifying the Trans Pennine Trail:

*"The future development of tourism is an important issue in both urban and rural areas. Tourism has an important role to play in Barnsley's economy. We want to build on the existing tourism potential of current attractions and others close to our borders and to support and explore all opportunities to improve existing destinations and create new tourism and cultural attractions. We need to build on the legacy of the Tour de France and maximise use of key assets in the borough such as the Trans Pennine Trail."*

To date, the Council has ignored the Housing Needs and Capacity Assessment undertaken by consultants URS, instructed by Planning Aid England on behalf of Oxspring Parish Council. This report - which is in the public domain and has been extensively referred to during the examination hearing sessions - objectively identifies a need for 53-68 dwellings in Oxspring over the plan period to 2026, or 96 new homes when extrapolated to cover the Local plan period to 2033. No such Assessment currently exists for any other western village.

Minute 5a of the Oxspring Parish Council meeting on Monday, 07 July 2014 confirms that:

*"Planning Aid England are doing a housing Needs Analysis Survey. This will be an **independent review of the housing needs in Oxspring** and will take a couple of months to be completed." **Our Emphasis***

Furthermore, paragraph 6.33 of the Council's Sustainability Assessment, prepared in support of the Local Plan, recognises that there is demand within the Borough for Affordable Housing 'particularly in high demand areas such as the rural settlements in the west' where house prices are more expensive than in all other areas of the Borough, rendering it more difficult for first time buyers and those on lower incomes to purchase a home. Our current proposals for 150 dwellings at the Oxspring Fields site would result in the delivery of 45 new affordable homes for the village, in accordance with the planning policy

requirement for 30% of any development in Penistone and the Rural West of the Borough in excess of 15 dwellings to be provided as affordable units.

All of this compelling information has previously been submitted to the Council and is available to view on the Oxspring Fields website.

A comprehensive Landscape Assessment prepared by Smeeden Foreman was submitted to the Council in 2014 and demonstrates on page 17 'Historical Settlement Pattern' how the village has evolved over the centuries, predominantly as a linear settlement between the Sheffield Road (B6462) and the former Railway Line, now the TPT. We attach pages 16 & 17 at Appendix 1, for ease of reference.

You will also recall several other comprehensive reports which have been submitted to the Council throughout the Plan preparation process, including the Oxspring Non-Green Belt Windfall & Safeguarded Land Housing Deliverability and Capacity Assessment (July 2015) prepared by PB Planning and a Sustainability and Accessibility Study prepared jointly between PB Planning and Pell Frischmann, one of the UK's leading firm of Consulting Engineers. The latter document provides clear and demonstrable evidence that the Oxspring Fields site is situated in a highly sustainable location given the accessibility of the site and its connectivity to a wide range of services and facilities.

At the Stage 3 Hearing Session of the Barnsley Local Plan Examination on Tuesday, 10 October 2017 both ourselves and our consultant, Mr Paul Butler, presented compelling evidence pointing to the requirement to identify additional employment land to meet the needs of Penistone and the Western Villages.

As you are aware, currently only one site is proposed for employment allocation to meet the needs of Penistone and the Western Villages (Site Ref P2) which at 3.27 hectares in size, makes up only 1% of the total employment land proposed in the Borough. This is despite the fact that the Penistone East and West Wards are home to 10% of the Borough's population. In contrast, the Council's adopted Core Strategy sets out in paragraph 7.79 the need to provide between 4.5 and 6.5 hectares of Employment Land in Penistone over the Core Strategy period (2008 to 2026). As the Local Plan extends to 2033, we believe that at least a proportionate amount of additional employment land will be required to ensure that the employment needs of Penistone and the Western Villages can be met over the Local Plan period.

As identified in our evidence to the Local Plan Examination, Site P2 is situated between a number of low railway bridges which cause access restrictions to high sided vehicles (see letter reference YLL/BMBC/2017-11.01 at [www.BlackmoorBusinessPark.co.uk](http://www.BlackmoorBusinessPark.co.uk)). We also highlighted a number of onsite constraints and the Council itself notes within its Stage 3 Matter 10 Hearing Statement in respect of site P2 that:

*"The site scores relatively poorly but, given the lack of suitable alternatives it is proposed for allocation to ensure some new employment land provision is made in Penistone"*

*“EB37 Barnsley Employment Land Report Mott Macdonald April 2016 anticipates that the site is unlikely to be developed until over 10 years into the plan period (Timescale: Long term (10+years)).”*

Whilst site P2 is proposed to meet the needs of Penistone, as we have highlighted to the council on a number of occasions, it is located within the Parish Boundary of Oxspring. Furthermore, Site P2 is a greenfield site located within the Green Belt. In comparison, the proposed Blackmoor Business Park site, which is situated on the edge of Oxspring, is also located in the Green Belt but is a previously developed brownfield site. This is evidenced by the plan utilised in the Green Belt Review (General Area PEN11) which identifies the site as a ‘depot’ and from the various photographs and correspondence we submitted to the Council regarding the Blackmoor Business Park site during 2016, which are available to view on the Blackmoor Business Park website ([www.BlackmoorBusinessPark.co.uk](http://www.BlackmoorBusinessPark.co.uk)).

The Arup Green Belt Review (General Area PEN11) confirms in respect of the area of the Blackmoor Business Park site that:

*“Large wooded areas reduce the level of openness and the large sewage works at Cheese Bottom reduces the rural character.”*

On Wednesday, 11 October 2017, Mr Paul Butler of PB Planning wrote to the Local Plan Inspector via the Programme Officer, enclosing his scoring of the Blackmoor Business Park site against the Council’s criteria for the assessment of proposed employment sites. PB Planning identify that the site scores 88 points, highlighting a sustainable and suitable employment land opportunity. The documentation is available to view on the Local Plan Examination Website under ‘Documents Submitted at Stage 3’.

The Blackmoor Business Park site is located off the B6462 ‘Sheffield Road’ only 2.2 miles from Penistone Town Centre and just 1.4 miles of the Penistone Principal Town boundary at Springvale, which adjoins Oxspring. The A628 is also situated 0.7 miles from the site. In respect of Public Transport, there is an existing bus stop positioned at the site entrance on the B6462 ‘Sheffield Road’ and the Trans Pennine Trail also forms the southern boundary of the site, from where Penistone Railway Station is just 10 minutes away by bicycle. This therefore dispels the position of officers, referred to in the Letter from Councillor Roy Miller (Cabinet Spokesperson for Place) dated 23 May 2016 (available on the Blackmoor Business Park website) that the site is remote from the Penistone Principal Town and that the sustainability credentials of the site are poor due to the location of the site.

Paragraph 10.2 of the Council’s Cabinet Report of 15 November 2017 (CAB.15.11.2017/6) recognises the *“adoption of a Local Plan is essential in order to allow the Council to manage physical development of the Borough on behalf of residents and businesses. This includes providing sufficient land in the right places to attract more businesses into the Borough and to allow existing Businesses to grow. The aim of this is to create more and better jobs in order to improve earnings and increase opportunities for local residents.”*

We turn now to the compelling evidence we submitted to the Local Plan Examination

compiled independently by the Barnsley Development Agency (BDA), which is attached at Appendix 2, and identifies amongst other salient points:

- A. that the ability to continue the growth recorded is crucial to helping to ensure that Penistone West ward contributes to the overall Borough wide economic strategy targets (need for up to 32,000 jobs to be created and the growth of the indigenous business base by 1,500 new businesses);
- B. that bank start data (new business bank accounts) continues to record the Penistone West and East wards as being in the top 3 wards within Barnsley for the creation of new business; and
- C. Loss of key employment land to other uses (most notably housing) could potentially hamper the future and continued growth of both the overall business base and future jobs within the Penistone part of the Borough. Thus meaning that the Borough is unable to meet its core economic strategy targets; a reduction in potential business rates for BMBC and the potential out commuting of businesses and loss of additional private sector jobs if a range of future land and premises does not remain.

Against the background outlined above, we find the comment you made at our meeting that the Council will never allocate the Blackmoor Business Park site in the Local Plan deeply concerning, especially considering that the only currently proposed employment site allocation for Penistone (P2) represents only 1% of total employment land proposed to be provided across the Borough.

We trust you will agree that employment land and job opportunities in Penistone are equally as important as employment land and job opportunities in any other part of the Borough.

At the Stage 3 Examination Hearing on Tuesday, 10 October 2017 the Inspector asked you several specific questions concerning the supply of Employment Land for Penistone and our proposals for the Blackmoor Business Park. In response, you informed the Inspector that there are very few locations suitable for employment land to meet the needs of Penistone and also stated:

*"The only reason he (Mr Green) wants us to allocate the Blackmoor Business Park site is because his Oxspring Fields site would become infill."*

Both of these points were noted and we believe your verbal statement to the Inspector in respect of the Oxspring Fields site was an important recognition of the site's suitability to accommodate development. On this basis, we cannot understand why having previously informed myself and Samuel Green at our meeting on 19 July 2016 that the Oxspring Fields site has good planning credentials, you informed us at our meeting last week that the site will never be allocated for development by the Council in the Local Plan.

It could be perceived from your statement that the Council are resisting allocating the Blackmoor Business Park site for employment purposes, simply because it fears that this



would also lead to the identification of the adjoining Oxspring Fields site as a housing allocation.

Following your comments at the Examination Hearings in respect of Employment Land for Penistone, Mr Graham Saunders of the Community Action Penistone group spoke at the invitation of the Inspector, stating that he recognised the need for employment land to meet the needs of the Penistone area over the Plan Period to 2033. Mr Saunders also commented in respect of the Blackmoor Business Park proposals, that it appeared to him to be more logical to allocate a previously developed site ahead of a greenfield site such as site P2.

On Tuesday, 15 August 2017 Inspector Housden issued an Interim Findings report following stages 1 & 2 of the Local Plan Examination. Within this report Inspector Housden identifies amongst other matters that, based on what she has read and heard to date, her view is that if the plan is to be found sound it should have a more positive approach to the future of the Borough's villages.

In the closing stages of the Stage 3 Hearing Sessions, which addressed the supply and deliverability of housing sites, you provided a brief explanation to the Inspector and Representors outlining how the Council intends to address the matters raised by the Inspector in her Interim Findings Report, regarding the most appropriate course of action to be taken to address the issue of soundness in relation to the villages. You did confirm that the council recognise there are a number of longstanding Safeguarded Land allocations in and around the Western Villages which have technical and other issues, rendering them unsuitable for development, and that it would therefore be necessary in some instances to identify new housing land allocations.

The Non-Green Belt Windfall and Safeguarded Land Housing Deliverability and Capacity Assessment prepared by PB Planning, identifies in detail why Safeguarded Land allocation 'SAF18' in Oxspring is not deliverable and we have previously provided the Council with a detailed Drainage Report by Topping Engineers, which identifies that the site has surface water drainage constraints. Both of these documents are available to view on the Oxspring Fields website.

Importantly, the owner of site 'SAF18' has made it quite clear to ourselves and to the Oxspring Parish Council (see section 5a of the Oxspring Parish Council Minutes dated Monday, 03 November 2014) that he will not sell the land and considers that allowing housing development to encroach closer to his property would cause issues which may affect the future of his dairy farm. This was identified in the 2013 SHLAA, which recognises a 'bad neighbour' constraint for the safeguarded land 'SAF18' (SHLAA Ref 341).

Both Oxspring Parish Council and the Oxspring Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have requested the Council to return the Safeguarded Land site 'SAF18' to Green Belt designation.

It is also important to note here that the Arup Green Belt Review (General Area PEN2 and PEN11) identifies that site SAF18 fulfils a strong Green Belt role:

*“Generally, safeguarded land and allocations made by the UDP proposals map do not strengthen this boundary but enforce its irregularity. The existing Green Belt boundary is particularly weak adjoining the south of Oxspring around Roughbirchwood (sic) Lodge. The existing Green Belt boundary is therefore considered to be weak.”*

*“...the area of safeguarded land off Roughbirchworth road will appear to weaken the integrity of the Green Belt.”*

The Green Belt Review (General Area PEN2) also goes on to identify that:

*“Rectilinear field boundaries south of Oxspring portray a strongly rural character.”*

We are therefore gravely concerned that you informed Mr Butler and ourselves at our meeting last week, that the Council will consider allocating site SAF18 for development to meet housing needs in Oxspring.

Considering that the ‘SAF18’ site is a longstanding safeguarded land allocation, the fact that the site has not been brought forward – despite the Council having been unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply in recent years – speaks volumes and reinforces the fact that the landowner is unwilling to see the site developed.

As we pointed out at the Examination Hearing Sessions, neither the landowner nor representatives acting on his behalf were in attendance promoting the site either as a continued safeguarded land designation or as a housing allocation.

It is clear that SAF18 is an unsuitable site with an unwilling landowner, surface water drainage and technical constraints and that it fulfils a strong Green Belt purpose, as highlighted in the Arup Green Belt Review. In comparison the Oxspring Fields site is promoted by a willing landowner/developer and is surrounded on all sides by strong defensible boundaries, indeed it is situated to the north of the TPT which, as Arup identify, could represent a strong internal boundary to the Green Belt, should the General Area be considered for sub division. Furthermore, the site has no technical constraints and significant interest from several national housebuilders, including BDWH, who could deliver homes at the site within the first two years of the Local Plan being adopted. The development will also enable the delivery of a host of long sought after benefits for the local community including a Sports and Community Pavilion, Tourism Hub and country park.

The Oxspring Fields site would not result in the merging of settlements (unlike site reference MU1 in Urban Barnsley) and will maintain the historical linear pattern of development which has developed over several centuries between the B6462 ‘Sheffield Road’ and Former Railway Line (now the TPT).

As you are aware, the Legal Opinion by Leading Counsel, Sasha White QC, identifies a number of serious issues with the Local Plan as currently drafted, and we refer you to paragraphs 26 and 27 particularly, in respect of Safeguarded Land SAF18.

You also subsequently identified at our meeting that the Council could consider allocating

the Resultant Parcel PEN9A in Oxspring (see General Area PEN9) which is located to the north of the B6462 'Sheffield Road' in the north western area of the village. We note the following comments by Arup in respect of Green Belt General Area PEN 9:

- The existing boundary of the Green Belt is well defined by the 'hard infrastructure' of the B6462 to the south west;
- This General Area is connected to the village of Oxspring, which is linked via a linear chain of settlements to the urban area of Penistone;
- Development to the north of the B6462 would be largely independent of current development patterns;
- The eastern portion of this General Area alongside the operational railway line does play a role in protecting the 'largely essential gap and very narrow' between Oxspring and Penistone, although coalescence has already mostly occurred; and
- Development to the south of the River Don corridor would imitate the linear residential built form to the south of Sheffield Road.

At both the Examination Hearings and at our meeting last week you commented that one of the reasons the Council are unwilling to allocate the Oxspring Fields site is because the Council consider that it is located in the River Don Green Corridor. However, we note that the Green Belt Resultant Parcel PEN9A actually lies within the heart of the River Don Green Corridor, directly adjoining the River Don.

In comparison, the proposed Oxspring Fields site is situated away from the River Don, to the south side of the B6462 'Sheffield Road' in keeping with the predominantly linear pattern of development in Oxspring, which has developed over several centuries.

We are also aware that the topography of Green Belt Resultant Parcel PEN9a falls away sharply from South to North towards the River Don. This is an important issue, which presents constraints for road access and drainage and will significantly affect the viability of any potential development.

At our meeting last week you also suggested to us (for the first time) that the Oxspring Fields site would constitute ribbon development. However, this does not withstand scrutiny, considering that you informed the Inspector at the Stage 3 Examination Hearings that if the Blackmoor Business Park was allocated for Employment development, the Oxspring Fields site would become infill. We reiterate that this infill will maintain the linear pattern of development in Oxspring, highlighted on page 17 of the Smeeden Foreman Landscape Statement, attached at Appendix 1.

As Mr Butler reminded you at last week's meeting, the Barnsley UDP recognises within Paragraph 4.12 (Volume 13 - Western Rural Area) that:

*“Oxspring is one of the locations in the Western Community Area for additional development because of its physical relationship to the Penistone Urban area and because it has the infrastructure capacity to accommodate some further development without serious detriment to the quality and character of the Green Belt.”*

Furthermore, the Settlement Assessment scoring submitted to the Council and the Local Plan Inspector by PB Planning on Friday, 03 November 2017 identifies Oxspring as the highest scoring Western Village.

Mr Butler also informed you at the meeting of his professional opinion that Oxspring Fields is an outstanding and sustainable housing site proposal, promoted by a willing landowner/developer, which is capable of immediate delivery upon adoption of the Local Plan, will meet the market and affordable housing needs of the village in full and provide unmatched benefits for the local community, whilst maintaining the established linear pattern of development in Oxspring.

As we have previously identified to the Council, the Community Consultation and Engagement Event which we held between 0930 and 1400 hrs on Saturday, 23 January 2016 at St Aidans Church, Oxspring, demonstrated an overwhelming support for the Oxspring Fields proposals, with a phenomenal 100% in favour of the scheme as an alternative to the Safeguarded Land 'SAF18'. This consultation event was attended by many individuals, business representatives and by the Council's Place Service Director, Mr David Shepherd.

The Oxspring Fields site has been demonstrably proven to be logically situated, developable quickly and benevolent toward the wants and needs of the community in Oxspring. This is a unique opportunity to bring about betterment, and we request that the councils position is reconsidered, having regard to the elements reiterated once again in this letter.

We trust that you and the Councils Cabinet Spokesperson for Place, having been delegated power by Cabinet for the remainder of the Local Plan Examination to agree main modifications (including additional site allocations) will give the content of this letter your utmost professional consideration and respectfully request that our sites are considered objectively on their outstanding planning merits and the contributions they can make towards achieving a sound development plan.

Yours sincerely  
**YORKSHIRE LAND Limited**

  
**Steven Green**  
Managing Director

Cc    *Mr David Shepherd*    -    *Director of Place, Barnsley MBC*  
      *Mr Paul Butler*         -    *Director, PB Planning*

Encs    *Appendix 1*         -    *Pages 16 & 17 of the Smeeden Foreman Landscape Statement 2014*  
      *Appendix 2*         -    *Barnsley Development Agency Economic Data for Penistone*

## **APPENDIX 1**

**PAGES 16 & 17 OF THE SMEDDEN FOREMAN  
OXSPRING FIELDS LANDSCAPE STATEMENT 2014**

# OXSPRING FIELDS



Landscape statement, May 2014 - Yorkshire Land Ltd

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Landscape Architects ■ Urban Designers ■ Ecologists ■ Horticulturists

Somerset House, Low Moor Lane, Scotton, Knaresborough, N.Yorks HG5 9JB  
Tel: 01423 863369 Fax: 01423 313107 Email: office@smeedenforeman.co.uk Web: www.smeedenforeman.co.uk

# Access and connectivity

The proposed development represents an opportunity to create a well connected and natural residential extension to the linear settlement pattern along this area of the River Don valley. Transport links, local services and recreational facilities are all easily accessed from the site due to it's close proximity to key cycling, walking and road routes.

Local services, such as the post office, village store, school, playing fields, playground, church, and village pub are all easily accessed within a 7 minute walk or a 2 minute cycle. The new sports/ community centre would be located within this zone.

Beyond the village, the Trans Pennine cycle and pedestrian trail connects the proposed site to Penistone and it's railway station (less than 30 mins walk or a 7 minute cycle).

From Penistone station, trains connect to:

- Barnsley (15mins)
- Huddersfield (30mins)
- Wakefield (43mins)
- Sheffield (45 mins)
- Leeds (60mins)

Barnsley (43mins) and Sheffield (63mins) are also easily reached by cycle along the two Transpennine cycle routes that lead from the site.

Penistone also has many other facilities including schools, sports clubs, cinema, local shops, supermarket, providing a large number of services within easy cycling or walking distance of the proposed site.

Furthermore, the fact that the site is situated along the B6462 Sheffield Road, enables this site to directly connect to the key road route in the area without drawing additional traffic through existing residential areas.

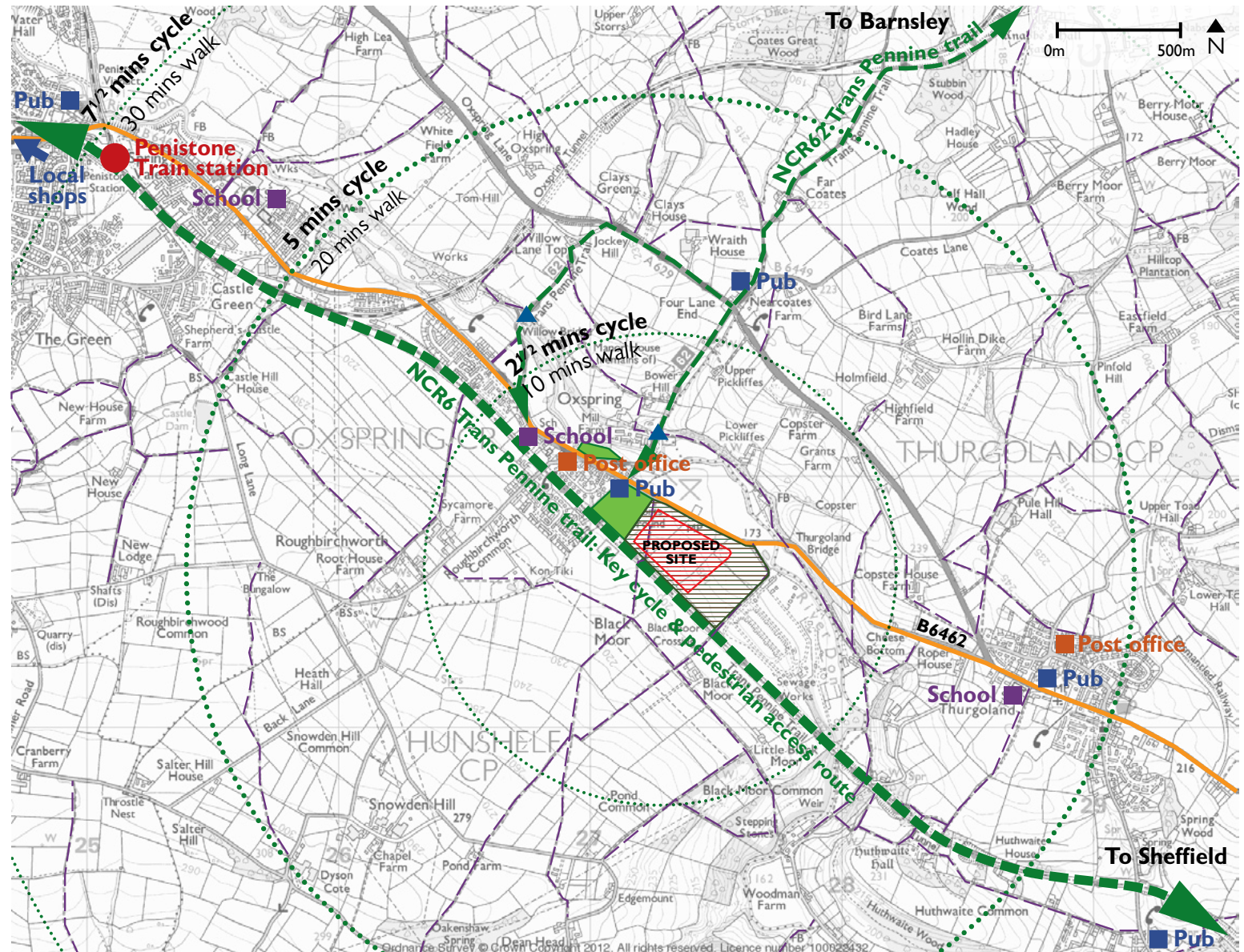


Fig 2: Map showing connectivity to local services and key pedestrian and cycle routes in the area

The proposed site will have a positive impact on the area's connectivity and facilities including:

- New connectivity to and from the site and Trans Pennine trail

- Direct connectivity to the B6462 from the site, drawing traffic along the main road route rather than through residential areas
- The local community will benefit from access to improved recreational facilities,

including a sports/ community centre and improved sports grounds, play area, and new recreational opportunities through the proposed woodland area adjacent to the southeast site boundary.



# Historic settlement pattern

Over the last two centuries, settlement has been mostly linear, focused along the River Don valley, with isolated rural farmsteads and small hamlets scattered over the remaining landscape.

Mills have been part of the local economy since the middle ages and have helped to form the basis of settlement along the sloping valley of the River Don, which provides a natural boundary to development.

When the Railway arrived in the mid 19th century, it provided another strong boundary to the southwest providing another force to influence the linear syntax of the River Don valley's development.

The combination of river and railway has thus provided the syntax and framework for a strong linear pattern of development along this section of the River Don valley over the last two centuries.

More recently, in the late 20th century and early 21st century, development has contravened this historic development pattern, by moving to the southwest towards Roughbirchworth.

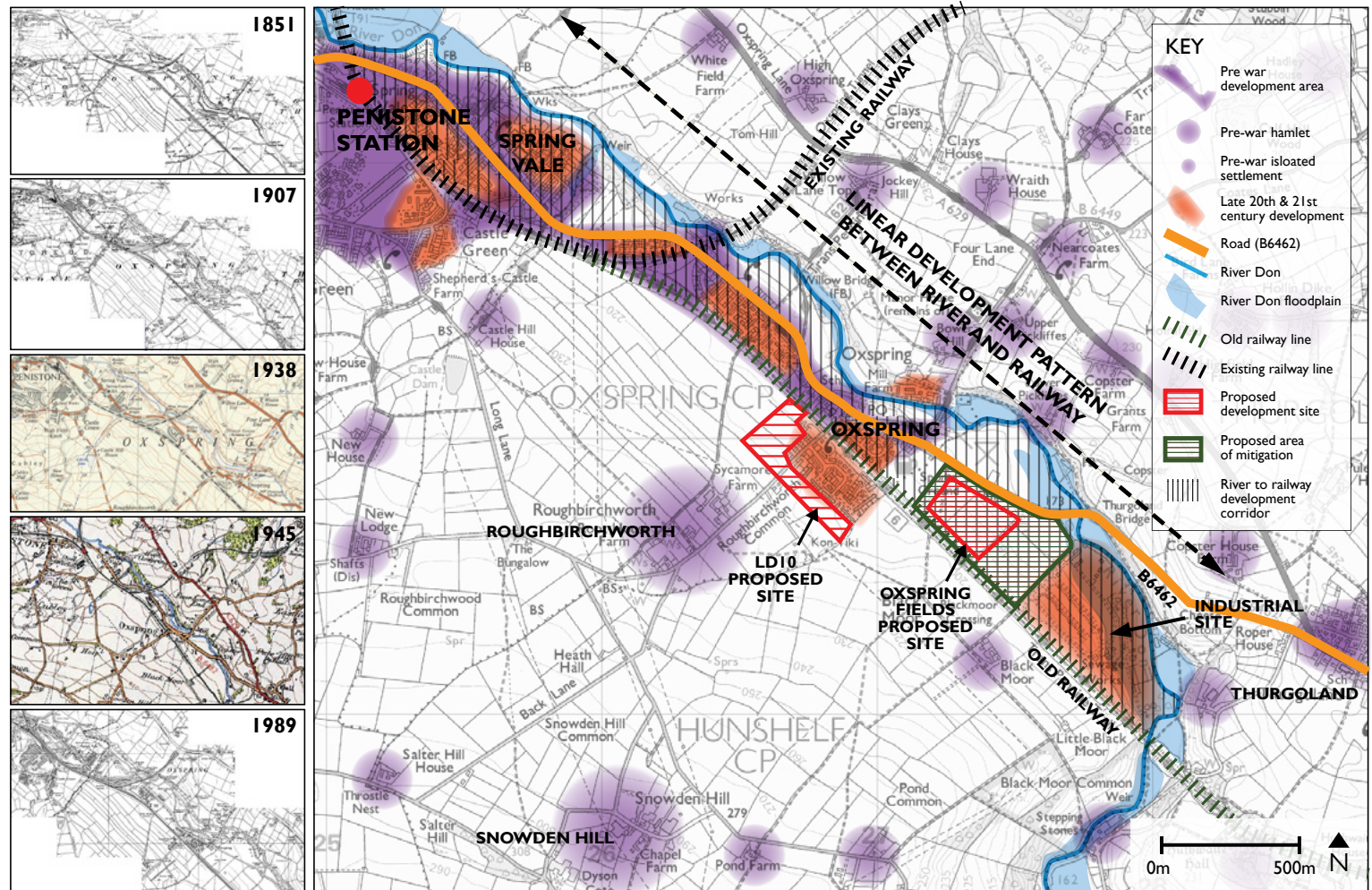


Fig 3: Map showing the historic settlement pattern in the area surrounding Oxspring

## Future proposals (Oxspring fields site)

This development site represents a natural extension of the historic settlement pattern along the River Don valley between two clear, strong and defensible boundaries; the River Don and the old railway line and embankment. Furthermore, the site is also sandwiched between two existing areas of development; Oxspring village to the northwest and the largely disused industrial site to the southeast, creating clear, well defined barriers to prevent further expansion.

## Future proposals (LD10 site)

Further development to the southwest would both ignore and conflict with the historic linear pattern of development in the Don valley area. Development to the southwest of Oxspring, toward Roughbirchworth is already beginning to encroach upon the rural nature of the hamlet. Further development towards Roughbirchworth is likely to have a profound impact on the rural nature of this hamlet and effectively begin a coalescence between these two settlements. In addition, this site clearly has a more arbitrary boundary with no natural or clear edges which could help define a barrier for future development.



## **APPENDIX 2**

**BARNSLEY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**ECONOMIC DATA REGARDING PENISTONE**

**From:** Smith , Matthew [MatthewSmith@barnsley.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 09 August 2013 16:04  
**To:** Dunn , Keiron  
**Subject:** FW: Penistone

Keiron,

More info to help with Lairds Way report.

Matthew

**Matthew Smith**  
**Group Leader (Outer Team)**  
**Development Management**  
**Barnsley MBC**  
**Planning and Transportation**  
**PO Box 604**  
**Barnsley**  
**South Yorks**  
**S70 9FE**  
**Tel: 01226 772583**

**From:** Johnson , Paul  
**Sent:** 15 July 2013 13:16  
**To:** Smith , Matthew  
**Subject:** RE: Penistone

Matthew

Many thanks for your email

In relation to your questions hopefully the following should help

### **Census Labour Supply Data**

According to the 2011 Census the Penistone West ward (incorporates main urban centre of Pensitone, Thurlstone and Hoylandswiane) recorded;

- 11,322 residents of which 65.2% are classed as being of working age (16- Pensionable Age)
- Penistone West's working age population rate (65.2%) is greater than the rates recorded at borough (64.1%), regional (64.6%) and national (62.5%) rates – helping to indicate a potential greater demand for potential employment sites to service the indigenous population base.
- 73% of Penistone West's resident based population (16-74) are classed as being economically active, which is greater than the rates recorded at borough (66.5%), regional (68.4%) and national (69.9%) rates
- Of those who were economically active in Pensitoen West;
  - 67.5% were in employment, which is greater than the rates recorded at borough (59.1%), regional (60.0%) and national (62.1%) rates
  - 10.8% were in self employment, which is greater than the rates recorded at borough (7.7%), regional (8.4%) and national (9.8%) rates
  - 3.0 % were unemployed, which is lower than the rates recorded at borough (5.1%), regional (4.8%) and national (4.4%) rates
- Over the last 10 years (since the last Census the following characteristic's have occurred within the Penistone West ward:
  - Employment levels have increased (65.0% in 2001 to 67.5% in 2011)

- Self employment levels has increased (9.9% in 2001 to 10.8% in 2011)
- Unemployment levels has increased (2.3% in 2001 to 3% in 2011)

Unfortunately, Census 2011 data has not released travel to work statistics for lower levels of geographies, therefore we are unable to provide a response to this question , however Census 2001 indicated that residents who lived in Pensistone West ward:

- 29.4% worked less than 2K form where they lived (lower than the rates recorded at borough (28.1%), regional (29.1%) and national (29.1%) rates
- 50.8% worked less than 10K form where they lived (lower than the rates recorded at borough (66.6%), regional (71.4%) and national (67.5%) rates

### **Labour Demand Data**

According to ONS Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES) data there are;

- 3,073 total employee jobs are held by businesses within the Penistone West Ward, of which:
  - 68.6% are classified as being full time and 31.4% are part time classified
- In terms of the industrial breakdown of jobs in the Penistone West Ward;
  - 25.7% are Manufacturing based
  - 17% are Retail based
  - 8% are Transport and Storage based
- **Over the past year;**
  - the number of jobs in the Penistone West ward has increased by 0.3%, with Full time Employment (FTE's) jobs increasing by 1.3% (lower than the 2.8% increase recorded at Barnsley level)
  - Transport and Storage sector recording the largest increase in jobs that have been created (+142 increase of 135%)
- Despite the increase recorded over the last year, the number of employee jobs in Penistone West ward remains -6.1% lower than before the last recession (2008).

In addition to the above, Bank start data (new business bank accounts) continues to record the Penistone West and East wards as being one of the top 3 wards within Barnsley for the creation of new businesses.

### **Conclusion**

- The above evidence from both a labour supply and also to that of a labour demand perspective help to indicate that the Penistone West Ward is seen as being one of the boroughs most economically active part of the borough, which has seen levels of employment and self employment continue to increase over the last 10 years and remain higher than borough wide, regional and national rates.
- Likewise Penistone West Ward residents have been more resilient and continue to record significantly lower levels of unemployment compared to other parts of the borough and indeed regional and national rates.
- Residents of the borough are more likely to out commute to work (outside Penistone), mostly associated to more constrained workplace pay that both Penistone and Barnsley as a borough commands.
- Job growth has occurred, during the last few challenging years from largely the growth of the indigenous business stock and also the expansion and relocation of companies to new employment sites.

- The ability to continue the growth recorded over the past year is crucial to helping to ensure that Penistone West ward contributes to the overall borough wide economic strategy targets (need for up to 32,000 jobs being to be created and the growth of the indigenous businesses base by 1,500 new businesses)
- Loss of key employment land to other uses (most notably housing) could potentially hamper the future and continued growth of both the overall business base and future jobs within the Penistone part of the borough. Thus meaning that the borough is unable to meet its core economic strategy targets; a reduction in potential business rates for BMBC and the potential out commuting of businesses and loss of additional private sector jobs if a range of future land and premises does not remain.
- For instance many “self-employed” are working from home in the Penistone and surrounding areas due to the lack of facilities in the proximity especially for new start and small businesses. Starter units and test bed area would do well.
- Likewise recent demand for appropriate sized units at Martree Business Park (3,000 – 4,000 sqft) has seen all units on this employment site currently being occupied and let to tenants, issue now will be for additional grow on space to remain these businesses and additional employment space for similar businesses that could be attracted to Penistone.

Hope this helps ,however if you require any additional information please do not hesitate to let me know

Regards

Paul Johnson  
 Connect Barnsley Manager  
 Barnsley Development Agency  
 Tel: 01226 787532  
 Email : [pauljohnson@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:pauljohnson@barnsley.gov.uk)

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**From:** Smith , Matthew  
**Sent:** 11 July 2013 13:44  
**To:** Johnson , Paul  
**Subject:** Penistone

To Paul,

I've been informed you may be able to help me out with some background information on the current and future economic potential of Penistone.

I am currently dealing with a planning application for residential development on a site in Penistone which is designated for employment use. The applicants are arguing that the site is not required for employment purposes but in order to understand whether it is needed or not it would be useful to know how the labour market acts in Penistone. With this in mind, have you got any information which might answer the following:

- What is the percentage of residents who live and work in Penistone?
- Has the trend over the last 10 years been for residents to work outside of Penistone?
- Do you know if there is a great need for employment provision within Penistone>?

Any information you can provide on the above would be appreciated.

Matthew

**Matthew Smith  
Group Leader (Outer Team)  
Development Management  
Barnsley MBC  
Planning and Transportation  
PO Box 604  
Barnsley  
South Yorks  
S70 9FE  
Tel: 01226 772583**