

Sowerby Gateway Approved by Planning Inspectorate

The outline development of the Sowerby Gateway site, earmarked to meet Hambleton District Council's housing and employment needs for Sowerby and Thirsk, has been approved by the government's Planning Inspectorate.

Following a thorough examination into Hambleton's Allocations Development Plan Document, government inspectors have confirmed that the Council's proposed choice of development site successfully meets the criteria as set out in the Planning Policy Statement. The Sowerby Gateway scheme will now form an instrumental part of the Allocations Development Plan for the area.

Originally selected as the Council's preferred option in 2009, outline plans have since been drawn up by the Castlevale Group to meet the requirements detailed in the area's Local Development Framework. In total, the plan requires the Council to deliver 1491 new homes over the next 16 years.

These proposed plans were made public in July and have since been subject to a period of consultation with the local community.

Now that the use of the Sowerby Gateway site has been officially approved for potential development, Castlevale's plans for the first stage of construction, just less than ten per cent of the total housing allocation, will be finalised ready for a formal application to the Council by the end of September.

Terry Davies, director at Castlevale Group said: "The approval by the Planning Inspectorate is a significant milestone for the Sowerby Gateway development, giving us firm grounding from which we can finalise the detail for the first stage of development, and start to deliver this new fully sustainable community in Sowerby."

The site, located to the south west of Thirsk (with Sowerby) comprises 72 hectares of land on either side of Topcliffe Road.

"We are working closely with local residents, Councillors and the community to ensure we provide the right scheme for the needs of Thirsk, and we have been shaping our detailed plans with input from hundreds of residents over the past months," added Mr Davies.

The site will help the Council deliver its requirements for residential and employment land and Castlevale has developed comprehensive plans to create a strategic expansion of Thirsk and Sowerby over a 15 – 20 year period.

The proposed plans include residential and commercial space, shops and a neighbourhood centre, alongside land allocated for community use, including playing fields, allotments and a new primary school.