



## OPEN REPORT LOCAL PAN COMMITTEE

---

**LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE 8<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN – Development Strategy Options**

**Report of Director of Place and Economy**

**Report Author and Contact Details**

Matt Bowers, Planning Consultant  
[matt.bowers@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:matt.bowers@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)  
Tel. 01629 761251

**Wards Affected**

All Outside of the Peak District National Park

**Report Summary**

This report sets out spatial strategy options for testing.

**Recommendations**

1. That the Committee endorse the Strategy options for testing.
2. That the Committee will consider and determine a preferred spatial development strategy at its next meeting.

**List of Appendices**

None

**Background Papers**

[Spatial Strategy Development Options](#), Local Plans Sub Committee, May 2025

[Derbyshire Dales Local Plan - Vision and Strategic Objectives](#), Local Plan Committee, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025

[Derbyshire Dales Local Plan - Planning Inspectorate Advisory Visit and Implications for Local Plan Preparation](#), Local Plan Committee, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025

[Derbyshire Dales Local Plan - Review Progress Final Report by Hyas Consultants](#), Local Plan Committee, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025

**Consideration of report by Council or other committee**

The constitution, as amended at Council on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025, establishes that Council is now deemed to be responsible for the preparation and adoption of the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan, guided by the recommendations of this Committee. The methodology will be applied to shape what sites are included within a draft version of the Local Plan Review, scheduled to be considered by Council in July 2026.

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from Press or Public**

No

## **Derbyshire Dales Local Plan – Development Strategy Options**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 In May 2025 the Local Plan Sub Committee considered a report setting out four development strategy options for the new Local Plan. The report went on to explain the role of Sustainability Appraisal and the need to test reasonable alternatives to a preferred approach.
- 1.2 In September 2025, this Committee endorsed an updated vision and objectives for inclusion in the new Local Plan.
- 1.3 Advice provided by the Planning Inspectorate and reported to this committee in November 2025 in relation to the spatial strategy was:
- The spatial strategy underpinning the Local Plan needs to be positively prepared. It must be informed by an analysis of the reasonable alternative options identified and evidenced through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
  - Careful consideration should be given, based on clear evidence, as to whether a new settlement is an appropriate response to meeting longer term housing needs.
  - Any new settlement option would need to demonstrate a reasonable prospect of beginning delivery within the plan period, and a stepped housing requirement could be considered to address this.
  - Having a contingency policy within the Local Plan to allow development in sustainable edge of settlement locations is advisable in the event of under delivery and if a five-year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated (this would be similar to existing policy S4(i) of the adopted Derbyshire Dales Local Plan).
- 1.4 In December 2025, this Committee considered a report from Hyas consultants on the work done to date on the Local Plan Review and the work outstanding. That report which was noted by the Committee stated “ We do not consider the Council will be in a position by a Regulation 19 stage to have information to support any allocation of a new settlement. Furthermore, given the embryonic stage of the idea, it is unlikely that there would be any delivery within the new plan period”. The Committee also endorsed a recommendation in the covering report to “Consider the merits of identifying a direction of travel for a new settlement, including the potential for a high-level policy on principles”.
- 1.5 This stage is the development of the Spatial Development Strategy that will appear in the revised Local Plan. It identifies options to be tested for sustainability in conjunction with the rest of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal will help to inform which option is recommended to be included. Therefore, this paper sets out a set of options to be tested. It does not attempt to evaluate these options.

### **2. Key Issues**

## National Policy, Guidance and Legislation

2.1 Sustainability Appraisal of a Local Plan is required under Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The NPPF (February 2019) also requires SA of DPDs. The SA must incorporate the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). The SEA Regulations transpose the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) into English law and applies to a range of plans and programmes, including DPDs. The purpose of the SEA Directive is to ensure a high level of environmental protection, and to integrate the consideration of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans, with a view to promoting sustainable development. Within the context of local planning in England, it is accepted practice to integrate the requirements of SA and SEA into a single assessment process as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (updated 2019).

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) at para 11 states:

*all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.*

2.3 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF (2024) states:

*The development plan must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area. (This is a legal requirement of local planning authorities exercising their plan-making functions (section 39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).*

2.4 Paragraph 20 states:

*Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for:*

*a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;*

*b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*

*c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and*

*d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.*

2.5 Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2024) states:

*Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).*

- 2.6 The above Paragraph therefore specifies further requirements that the Spatial Development Strategy must meet. It requires all relevant economic, social and environmental objectives to be addressed. The final Spatial Development Strategy needs to reflect the NPPF guidance for the Strategy itself and for the Sustainability Appraisal, and the SEA Regulations.

### Development of the Spatial Options

- 2.7 The adopted Local Plan Spatial Strategy is set out in Chapter 4 of that document. Para 4.13 states: “to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are achieved across the Plan area the highest priority will be to focus development on the Market Towns where access to services, facilities and employment opportunities are most readily available”. Para 4.15 sets out the strategic approach.

- 2.8 Since the Plan was adopted there have been changes in national policy and local circumstances, for example the increase in housing numbers from the Government and the creation of EMCCA which itself will be producing a strategic plan in due course. This leads to a new set of circumstances to consider the plans development strategy.

- 2.9 The four options considered by the Local Plans Sub Committee in May 2025 were as follows:

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Option 1 Continuation of distribution patterns as adopted Local Plan</b>	<b>Option 2 Distribution more concentrated to Market Towns and Service Centres</b>	<b>Option 3 Distribution more dispersed to lower order settlements</b>	<b>Option 4 Distribution Split between Market Towns &amp; New Settlement</b>
<b>1</b>	78.8%	85%	50%	30%
<b>2</b>	8.5%	12%	10%	
<b>3</b>	11%	3%	25%	
<b>4</b>	0.8%	--	10%	
<b>5</b>	0.5%	--	5%	

<b>Other Rural Areas</b>	0.3%	--	--	70%
--------------------------	------	----	----	-----

2.10 Option one was based on allocations in the adopted plan. Monitoring work shows that commitments as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, are distributed as follows:

Tier 1	66.6%
Tier 2	5.6%
Tier 3	20.7%
Tier 4	3.4%
Tier 5	1.3%
Other Rural Areas	2.3%

2.11 This most closely follows option 1 albeit the split between tier 1 and 3 are different.

2.12 Given the recognition that the Council is unlikely to have sufficient evidence at the time a Reg 19 draft plan is required, then option 4 considered in May last year to test 70% of development occurring in a new settlement is considered not to be a reasonable alternative.

2.13 Furthermore, a review the SHLAA submissions and work done date suggest that there would be too few sites to increase the proportion of development in tiers 4 and 5.

2.14 Given this, officers recommend revising the options for distribution of development to be tested as follows:

	<b>Option 1 Broadly following past trends</b>	<b>Option 2 Greater focus of development in the market towns and Darley Dale</b>	<b>Option 3 Greater focus on tier 3 settlements</b>	<b>Option 4 The majority of growth in a new settlement with limited growth to reflect the settlement hierarchy and support the vitality and sustainability of settlements</b>
<b>1</b>	75%	85%	60%	65%
<b>2</b>	5.75%	10%	5%	5%
<b>3</b>	16.75%	3%	30%	13%
<b>4</b>	1%	1%	2%	1%
<b>5</b>	1%	0.5%	2%	1%
<b>Other Rural Areas inc New Settlement</b>	0.5%	0.5%	1%	15%

- 2.15 These options would cover the strategy for the whole plan period, which includes existing permissions and existing allocations if taken forward.
- 2.16 Option 1 above reflects the pattern of development in recent times which has a **lower proportion of development in the Market Towns** compared to the adopted plan. Development in Tier 1 and 2 settlements will continue to be the focus for new development, where it is of an appropriate scale and will support their sustainability and maintain their character, consistent with the policy objectives in the Plan; development in Tier 3 settlements will be supported where it will help maintain their vitality and sustainability, provided that it is of a scale that respects and enhances the character of the settlement, again consistent with the policy objectives in the Plan.
- 2.17 Option 2 would direct more development towards the higher tier settlements and option 3 would increase the proportion of development in tiers 3, 4 and 5.
- 2.18 Option 4 reflects the assumption that a strategy aligned with option 1 is followed for the start of the plan period and then a new settlement would start delivering from 2035 with an average build out of 150dpa. This reflects research on the delivery of new settlements. It assumes that a new settlement would be located outside the settlement hierarchy.

- 2.19 In addition, these options should be tested at different quantum of development. Officers have identified the following levels of development to test against each distribution option:

Growth scenario A – 415 dpa (Standard Method minus 158 in National Park)

Growth Scenario B – 523 dpa (Standard Method minus 50 in National Park)

Growth Scenario C – 284 dpa (Adopted Local Plan)

- 2.20 The Government Standard Methodology for calculating Local Housing Needs results in a figure for the District of 573dpa. Work undertaken on housing needs by our consultants has shown that this can be split between the Peak Park Planning Authority Area at 158dpa and the Derbyshire Dales Planning Authority Area at 415dpa. This is reflected in growth scenario A. Whilst it is understood the Peak Park Planning Authority accept this methodology we understand that the Peak Park Planning Authority considers it can only meet 50dpa in its area and therefore scenario B will test this. It is also appropriate to test a lower figure and growth scenario C does this using the adopted plan housing requirement.
- 2.21 Given work done to date, it is unlikely that the Council will be able to demonstrate at this point in time that it can allocate enough sites to meet the scenarios A and B over the course of the plan, whichever spatial option is tested. This is likely to result in the need for a review policy to trigger a review of the Plan upon adoption. Therefore, the spatial strategies 1 to 3 above would only be followed for the early years of the plan. Further work would be undertaken on the development of a new settlement to accommodate any unmet needs. Option 4 reflects this approach to focus efforts on bringing forward a new settlement towards the end of plan period. The Council will need to do further work in identifying and bringing forward one or more new settlements between now and the next plan, given the complexities associated with new settlements.
- 2.22 The results of the Sustainability Appraisal will inform consideration of a preferred spatial development strategy.
- 2.23 Once the preferred strategy is determined then sites that have been assessed as suitable, available and achievable through the SHLAA will be considered in the context of this overall distribution framework for inclusion in the revised plan as part of the site selection work.

### **3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal**

- 3.1 Sustainability Appraisal is a legal requirement and must be undertaken. The SA process will consider alternative options for spatial distribution and levels of growth.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 None required.

- 4.2 The Local Plan has already been subject to public consultation in accordance with the Plan making regulations, namely Regulation 18, (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) and details outlined within the District Council's Statement of Community Involvement. A further consultation will be undertaken under Regulation 19 on the Local Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

## **5. Timetable for Implementation**

- 5.1 The final Sustainability Appraisal will be presented alongside the draft Local Plan to Full Council in July.

## **6. Policy Implications**

- 6.1 No direct policy implications for the District Council as a consequence of this report. The Local Plan itself will have policy implications, and these will be covered in future reports where relevant.

## **7. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications as a consequence of this report. Any that do arise following the implementation of the above recommendations will be contained within existing budgets. The financial risk is, therefore, assessed as low.

## **8. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.
- 8.2 The proposed methodology for identifying and testing reasonable alternatives accords with the statutory requirements for Sustainability Appraisal under section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and the National Planning Policy Framework. The approach therefore meets the legal duties placed on the Council in preparing a Local Plan.
- 8.3 However, it is important to note that failure to progress the Local Plan Review in accordance with the legislative framework and the supporting evidence base may expose the Council to an increased risk of legal challenge, including potential claims of procedural unfairness or non-compliance with statutory requirements. Delays to the plan-making process may also heighten the risk that planning applications are determined on appeal rather than through a plan-led system, particularly if the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply or an up-to-date development plan.

- 8.4 The recommended approach will support the Council in mitigating these risks and ensuring that the Local Plan progresses in a legally robust manner.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities implications. The review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan, its strategy and policies, will be subject to a comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **10. Climate Change Implications**

- 10.1 There are no direct climate change implications. The review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will include revised policies which will seek to mitigate the effects of Climate Change and be subject to a Climate Change Impact Assessment. The Local Plan as a whole will also be subject to Sustainability Appraisal which will assess the impacts of the Plan on matters such as climate change. Should any impacts be identified, this process will also help identify any necessary mitigation to address them.

## **11. Risk Management**

- 11.1 The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan is one of the Council's pivotal plans and strategies ensuring the spatial delivery of the District Council's aims and objectives as set out in its Corporate Plan. Any significant delays in undertaking the review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will increase the risk to the District Council of delivering its key aims and objectives and also the time by which the District Council can get a revised Local Plan adopted.
- 11.2 The longer that the Local Plan review takes to complete the greater the risk to the District Council that the future shape and direction of new development will not be plan-led, rather it will be determined by decisions made on un-coordinated planning applications, often on appeal. A detailed risk assessment relating the preparation of the Local Plan is set out in the adopted LDS.

### **Report Authorisation**

Approvals obtained from: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	26/03/2026
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer	Karen Henriksen	26/03/2026
Monitoring Officer	Kerry France	26-03-2026