

Response from Darley Dale Town Council to DDDC Local Plan Review 2023

The Local Plan 2013 is currently under review. We draw your attention to the following commitments in the existing Local Plan:

- Proactive measures will be taken to maximise the use of previously developed land (SO13)
- The distinct character of Dale Dale will be preserved by the maintenance of the strategic open spaces along the A6 in order to avoid coalescence with Matlock (Policy PD10).

DDTC feels that the developments built in recent years opposite the Whitworth Hospital and on land adjoining DFS and to the rear of the Co-op store, and the current development on Normanhurst Park seems to contradict the Council's commitment to, and policy PD10 to preserve the open spaces along the A6 between Matlock and Darley Dale, and prevent coalescence of Darley Dale with Matlock.

Likewise, the first development of the greenfield site at the lower end of Old Hackney Lane could be viewed as the first step towards further coalescence of Darley Dale into Matlock and a breach of policy PD10. Developers could see a precedent having been set and seek to expand up the hill.

Whilst we applaud the brownfield site developed into the Darcey House Care Home, it added to what has seemed to be a continual misery of roadworks on the A6 between Matlock and Darley Dale during these developments for the past few years.

The Local Plan Review identifies:

Appendix 1 of the Review identifies that Darley Dale requires between 25 and 100 homes between adoption of the revised plan and 2040, with 25 based on the maximum number of homes being built in the National Park over the period and 100 based on the minimum.

DDDC has a preference to approve a quantity of in-process applications in the original plan of around 57 homes on a greenfield site in Old Hackney Lane, Darley Dale, and 100 homes in Stancliffe Quarry on a brownfield site.

The Local Plan Review makes no reference to:

- Adding weight to greenfield sites in the Sequential Approach ethos.
- Energy sustainability in terms of solar and non-gas heating of homes.

DDTC wishes to express concern about over-development by DDDC.

Looking at the overall picture, DDDC concedes that a reduction in quantities is needed in its overall in-process preferred applications of 3049 homes against a 16 year requirement of 1888 homes (worst case scenario). It asks residents for a guide on how many and where the reduced number of homes should be built, but it offers no guidance towards its sequential approach even though scrapping all the greenfield sites would still leave a significant overbuild quantity against the 1888 requirement.

The overall 1888 quantity is a 16 year requirement and even halving the in-process preferred 3049 homes would bring the figure close to the 16 year total. If it was halved to 1525 for example, this would only leave 363 homes to build across the whole district in the next 16 years, or 23 homes per year. It would be reasonable to say approval of these preferred sites now would be dramatic over-building in the early phase of the next 16 years.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2017, DDDC have built around 10 years worth of the average of the 23 year allocation in 6 years. It would be reasonable to also say this could also be seen as be dramatic over-building in the early phase of the first 6 years.

Referring this to Darley Dale, to approve and build the 57 greenfield homes on Old Hackney Lane now, as per DDDC's stated preference in the review, would swallow up either more than the total allocation of 100 homes for Darley Dale over the next 16 years if the minimum number of houses are built in the National Park, or over-develop dramatically if only 25 homes are required in the National Park.

No future proofing:

DDTC would argue that to use the total allocation for the next 16 years now, prevents DDDC from achieving the potential benefits against climate change and from sustainable energy that, for example, applying the requirements that the Future Homes Building Standard may bring, or from potential future community energy projects.

DDTC also believes that it is partly relevant now, as to say that DDTC is disappointed over the absence of solar or non-gas heating seen in the newly built homes along the A6 corridor, or under construction now in Normanhurst Park is an under-statement. Surely DDDC don't need to wait for the findings of the Future Homes Building Standard to require a drive towards gas-free and energy part self-sufficiency now.

DDTC therefore responds to the review and asks DDDC to:

- 1 Implement its own sequential approach and place an immediate hold on the approval of development of any greenfield site in Darley Dale.
- 2 Resist any approach from development that would coalesce Darley Dale into Matlock as per the existing Local Plan policy PD10.

- 3 For the foreseeable future, only approve development of brownfield sites in Darley Dale.
- 4 Re-consider the quantity of houses per future development in Darley Dale bearing in mind the average of between the 25 and 100 total identified requirement over the 16 years as per DDDC's own figures.
- 5 Take a lead nationally and become an exemplar on the compulsory requirement for newly built homes to have higher levels of insulation than is now the norm which would enable effective (both in performance and cost) non-gas heating systems, and for partial self-sufficiency in energy with solar.

A final point would be that DDTC considers several, if not most of the questionnaire questions to be unanswerable by the majority of residents. DDDC state in their Appendix 1 that housing quantities at this stage do not take into account any issues such as school capacity or evidence on deliverability, viability or infrastructure capacity, yet ask for residents' opinion as to whether the quantities are too few, just right or too many, for example. How could they possibly answer other than a complete guess? It raises a question as to what conclusions DDDC would hope to draw from its public consultation via this questionnaire?