

Community VOICE

AUGUST 2026

REVISED LOCAL PLAN SPECIAL EDITION

Your home.
Your community.
Your chance to have a say.





Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC) is writing a new Local Plan - a document that will decide where new homes, roads and other development can be built across Derbyshire Dales for the next 15 years. It directly affects Darley Dale.

The draft plan proposes up to 184 new homes across five sites in and around Darley Dale. Before the plan is finalised, there is a short public consultation (called Regulation 19 Consultation) - and this may be your only remaining opportunity to tell the planning inspector what you think.



This newsletter reflects DDTC's formal representations and concerns about the draft Local Plan. It is published to ensure all residents have the information they need to participate in the consultation.



184 HOMES PROPOSED

Across 5 sites in Darley Dale - all with drainage or access issues, with some on protected land.



SERIOUS CONCERNS

Darley Dale's sewage network is already overloaded. No cumulative drainage study has been done.



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Once the plan goes to the planning inspector, this consultation closes. See page 5.

What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan is a legal document produced by DDDC. Once approved by a planning inspector, it sets the rules for all development in the district for 15 years.

It is at the draft stage and ready to be presented to the planning inspector. Once adopted (approved), it is very difficult to challenge individual decisions that follow it.

WHAT HAS DDTC DONE?

As your town council, Darley Dale Town Council (DDTC) has worked hard to scrutinise the draft plan. We have submitted formal objections, attended important committee meetings, sent detailed reports to all district councillors, and raised serious concerns about drainage, road access, green space protection and even on how the process has been managed.

WHY CAN'T DDDC JUST SAY NO?

There is a legal reason DDDC finds it hard to resist these sites, even with their flaws - it's connected to a rule called the five-year housing land supply. We explain this in this newsletter, and why it matters for the sites near you.

WHAT HAS DDTC DONE?

DDTC is a statutory consultee on the Local Plan - which means we have a legal right to be involved and to make formal submissions. Here is what we have done, and what we found.

OUR FORMAL SUBMISSIONS

- Sent several formal objection letters to District Council committee members and the legal team setting out our concerns.
- Attended important Local Plan committee meetings. Submitted written questions and spoke publicly to committee members.
- Sent detailed written analysis reports directly to all 11 district councillors on the committee two days before the May vote on the site allocations.
- Commissioned a full review of all 129 site assessments across Derbyshire Dales and found the same assessment rules were NOT applied consistently.
- Produced individual reports on each of the five Darley Dale sites - see darleydale.gov.uk/localplan2026
- Submitted a formal request for a cumulative sewage & drainage study - which the district council confirmed was lost internally.

6 KEY CONCERNS

1. THE SEWAGE NETWORK IS ALREADY FULL

All five proposed Darley Dale sites drain into the same combined sewage network which overflows into the River Derwent opposite the ARC Leisure Centre. Severn Trent Water has publicly confirmed the network is already overloaded. Despite DDTC asking three times, no cumulative drainage or sewer capacity study has been carried out

2. ROAD ACCESS PROBLEMS ARE UNRESOLVED

Several proposed sites have no proper road access. The development near Boden Close has a road and sewer that are still private, not adopted by the council or Severn Trent. A resident there is currently suffering sewage flooding from the private drain – yet the District Council's assessment says access via Boden Close is 'acceptable in principle'.

3. SITES ARE ON PROTECTED OPEN LAND

Policy PD10 is designed to keep a gap of open countryside between Darley Dale and Matlock. Some of the five proposed sites are on land covered by this protection. Inexplicably the District Council has never used this rule to object to a single application in nine years. The revised PD10 policy map is missing from the draft plan. It is a map based policy.

4. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS WAS INCONSISTENT

DDTC reviewed all 129 site assessments across the district and found 36 sites (28%) were given different conclusions despite having the same level of risk in the same category. The same rules should produce the same results.

5. COMMUNITIES WERE NOT PROPERLY CONSULTED

The column for town and parish council comments was blank for every Darley Dale site. No community in the district was asked about the assessed proposed sites before the vote in May 2026.

6. COUNCILLORS VOTED BEFORE THEY HAD ALL THE EVIDENCE

Sites covered by Local Plan Policy PD10 were voted on before the revised draft plan wording, and the revised policy map it relates to, was released. How can councillors vote without knowing all the facts?

What we asked for but **DID NOT** receive

We asked for.....

A cumulative drainage study before sites are allocated.

The revised PD10 boundary map.

Clear allocated site maps before the April meeting.

What happened.....

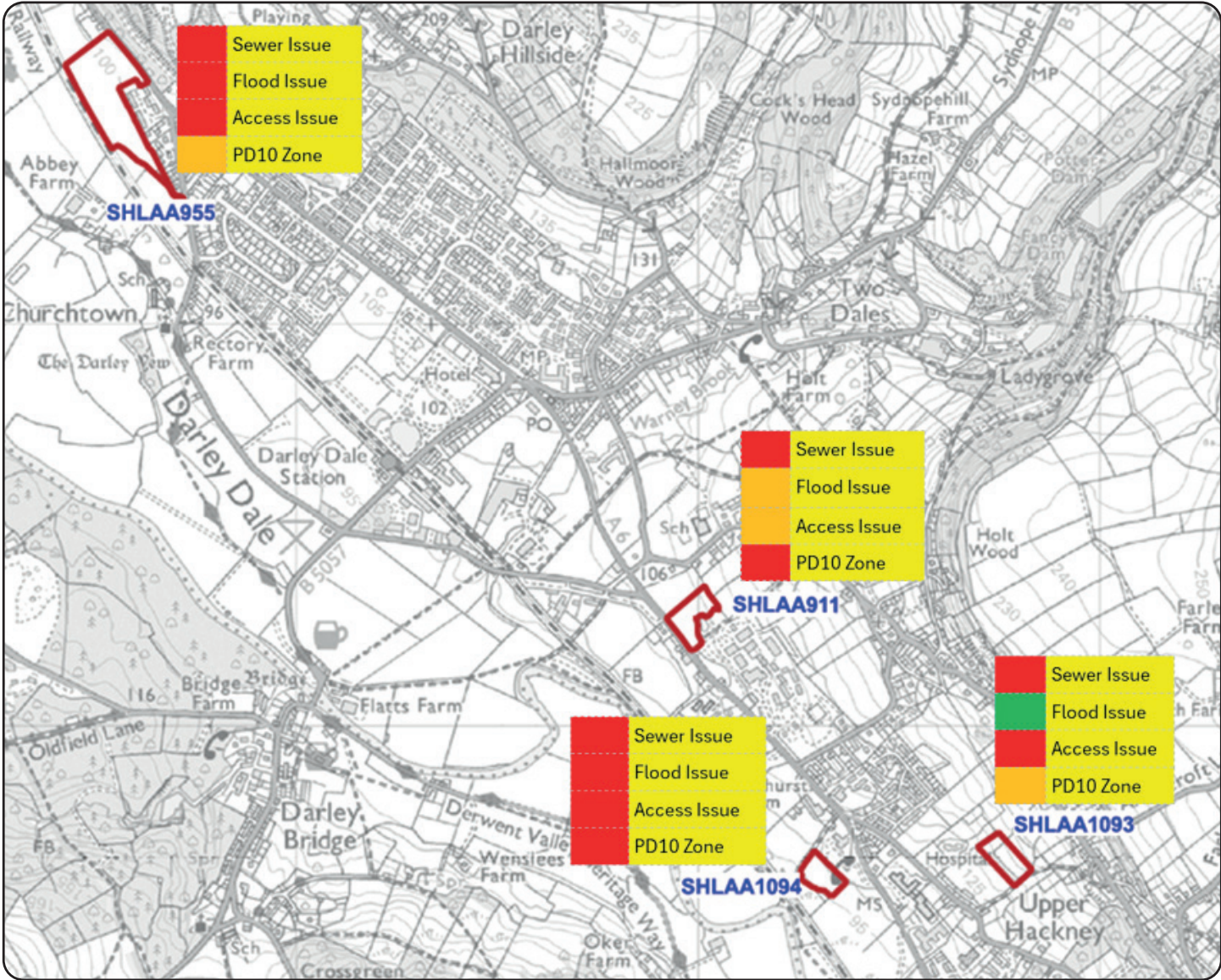
Request sent three times. Initially lost internally by DDDC. Still not done.

Not released. Participation deadline passed without it being provided.

Released AFTER the submission deadline despite three reminders.

THE 5 PROPOSED SITES IN DARLEY DALE

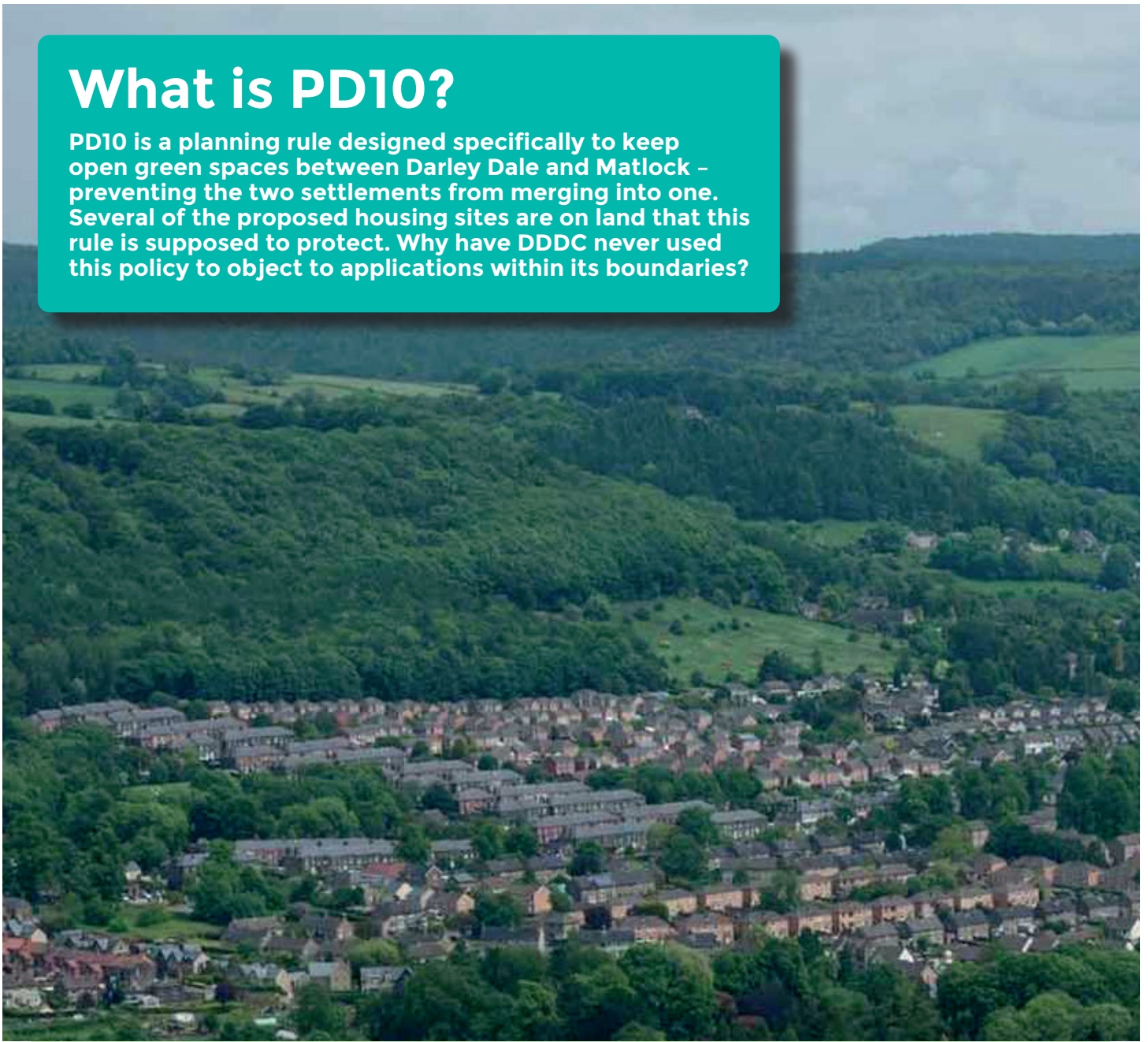
The map below shows the location of four of the five sites proposed for housing development in Darley Dale, with their RAG-rated (Red/Amber/Green) issues. Stancliffe Quarry is not shown on the map (see table below).



SITE REF	SITE NAME	HOMES	SEWER RISK	FLOOD	ACCESS	PD10	NOTES
SHLAA281	Stancliffe Quarry, Dale Road North	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Not shown on map. Also: wildlife, heritage, old minerals site, court injunction on access
SHLAA911	St Elphin's Park, Dale Road South	25	High	Med	Med	High	
SHLAA955	Land west of Darley Road North	40	High	High	High	Med	
SHLAA1093	Old Hackney Lane Hackney Road	14	High	Low	High	Med	
SHLAA1094	SW of Darley Lodge, Bakewell Road	25	High	High	High	High	
TOTAL	All five sites	184	All sites drain into the same sewage network. No cumulative drainage study has been done.				

What is PD10?

PD10 is a planning rule designed specifically to keep open green spaces between Darley Dale and Matlock – preventing the two settlements from merging into one. Several of the proposed housing sites are on land that this rule is supposed to protect. Why have DDDC never used this policy to object to applications within its boundaries?



How to have your say...

Once the public consultation closes and the plan goes to the planning inspector, the opportunity to influence the plan directly through DDDC closes. After that, you can only write to the inspector – and only on the specific issues raised during the consultation.

THIS IS YOUR LAST OPPORTUNITY!!!

THE LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE

NOW	Draft plan being finalised by DDDC after June/July committee meetings.
Aug - Sep 2026	PUBLIC CONSULTATION (Regulation 19) - Your opportunity to send your views directly to DDDC. Submissions go on the public record.
Late 2026	Plan submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Public consultation closes.
2027	Independent planning inspector examines the plan at public hearing sessions.
2027 - 2028	Inspector's report. If found sound, the plan is adopted and becomes law.

WHY CAN'T DDDC JUST SAY NO?

Understanding the Five-Year Housing Land Supply

You might reasonably ask: if these sites have so many problems, why has DDDC proposed them? Part of the answer lies in a technical planning rule most residents have never heard of – but it has a real effect on decisions near you.

THE FIVE-YEAR RULE

National planning rules require every council to show it has enough land ready for housing for the next five years – this is called the Five-Year Housing Land Supply. District councils calculate this figure from their allocated sites, including the ones in the Local Plan.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A COUNCIL CAN'T SHOW ONE?

If a District Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply, national policy says its housing policies are treated as 'out of date'. A rule known as the 'tilted balance' then applies: for most planning applications, permission should be granted unless the harm from the development clearly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits – even where the proposal conflicts with the Local Plan.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

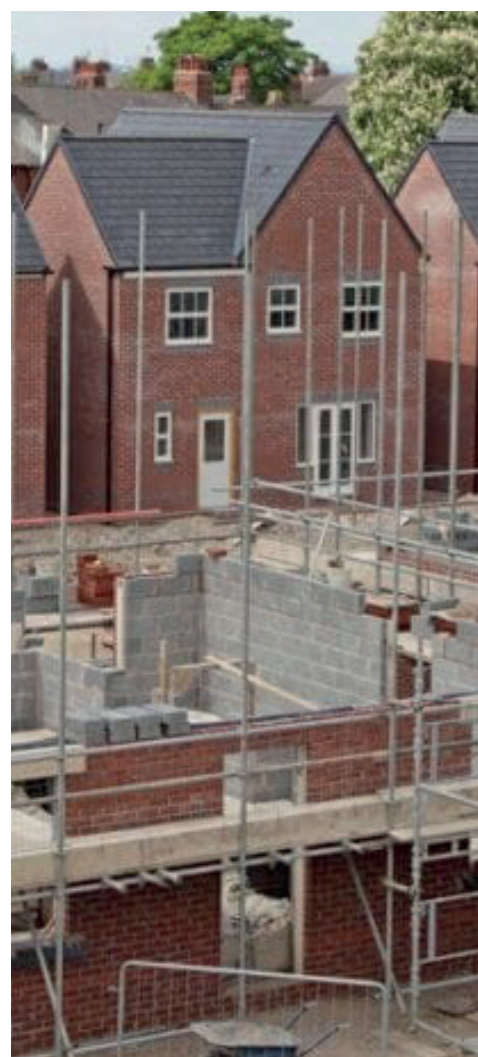
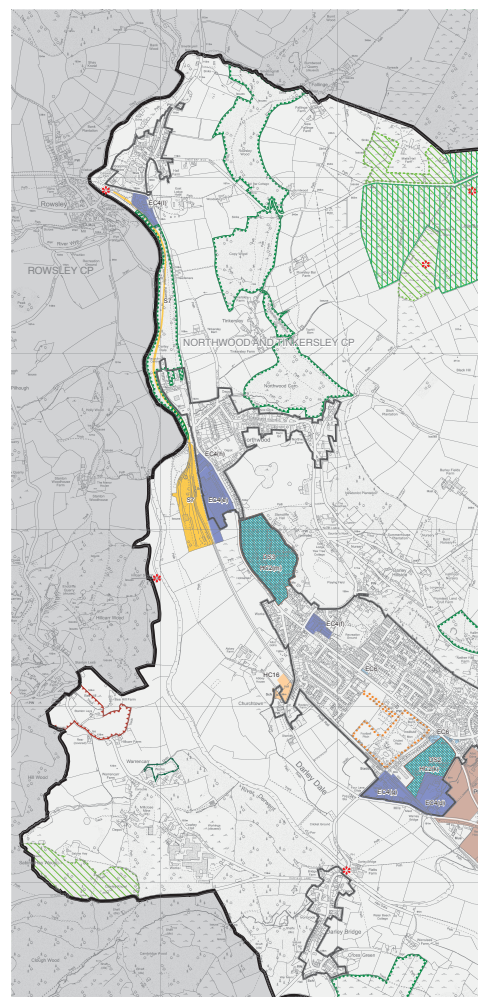
Without a five-year supply, it becomes much harder for a district council to refuse speculative planning applications anywhere in the district – even on sites the Local Plan never intended for housing – because appeal inspectors will usually presume in favour of development and side with the developer unless the harm can be shown to be severe.

WHY THIS AFFECTS DDDC

DDDC has repeatedly been unable to demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land Supply, and has lost a series of recent planning appeals largely for this reason. Tax-payers money has been awarded to developers for costs when DDDC lose appeals. Every time an appeal is lost this way, it reinforces the pressure on the District Council to keep its housing numbers up – because a weaker supply figure means more risk of losing control over where development happens next.

TELL THE DISTRICT COUNCIL YOU AREN'T HAPPY ABOUT THIS

Despite losing recent appeals on the Five-Year Housing Land Supply rule DDDC even now, isn't able to show a Five-Year Land Supply and this potentially exposes any land in Darley Dale to speculative development. Write or email the District Council to tell them you are aware of the problems and that they must do more to protect Darley Dale against unwanted development.



Why this matters for sites near you...

This is very likely why sites with real, documented problems – drainage, access, or land that Policy PD10 is meant to protect – remain marked as suitable for development, despite the red flags shown on the map on page 4.

THE PRESSURE, NOT A PLOT

We are not suggesting anyone has acted improperly. The pressure here is structural: every allocated site counts towards the five-year supply figure. Removing or downgrading a site – even one with serious constraints – makes the supply figure worse and increases the risk of losing further appeals across the whole district. That is a powerful incentive to keep sites on the list, whatever their individual concerns may show.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR REPRESENTATION

When you submit your views to DDDC (see page 8), it is worth making the connection explicitly. You do not need to use technical language – simply saying you are concerned that a site's allocation may be due more to housing numbers than to its actual suitability, is a legitimate and important point for the record.

A SUGGESTED LINE FOR YOUR SUBMISSION

"I am concerned that this site's allocation may be driven by housing land supply pressure rather than by a genuine assessment of its suitability, given the drainage, sewage, access and PD10 issues identified."

Turn to page 5 for the full timetable and how to submit your representation (page 8) to DDDC before the consultation closes.





HOW TO SEND YOUR VIEWS

During the August - September 2026 consultation, DDDC will publish all the draft plan documents on their website and invite responses. Here is how to respond:

ONLINE (easiest)

Go to the DDDC website and use the online consultation form. Search for:

www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plan/local-plan

Look for 'Have Your Say', 'Regulation 19' or 'Consultation'.

(Consultation page not open when this document was printed)

You can respond on specific issues - you do not need to comment on everything.

BY EMAIL OR POST

If you prefer not to use the website, you can email or write to:

localplan@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Planning Policy Team
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall, Bank Road
Matlock, DE4 3NN

Include your name and address and state which policy or site, or procedure/process your comments relate to.

WHAT MIGHT YOU WANT TO SAY?

You do not need to be a planning expert. Here are some issues that affect Darley Dale residents which you might want to raise but in your own words....

- The sewage network serving Darley Dale is already at capacity on wet days - building 184 more homes without upgrading the pipes first risks making the flooding problem worse for existing residents.
- Some proposed sites have no confirmed public road access - I am concerned that development could go ahead without proper access being secured.
- The open land between Darley Dale and Matlock is important to me. I do not want to see those two communities merge into one.
- I am concerned that no cumulative drainage impact assessment has been done before these sites were selected.
- The assessment process for site selection appeared inconsistent - the same problems produced different outcomes at different sites.
- I am concerned that housing land supply pressure, not genuine site suitability, may be why sites with drainage, sewage, access and other problems have been allocated.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FOR DDTC?

We are happy to help. Contact us at: townclerk@darleydale.gov.uk T: 01629 735248

The Whitworth, Station Road, Darley Dale, DE4 2EQ

More information: darleydale.gov.uk/local-plan-2026