

DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION STAGE 1

SESSION 7, MATTER 7 - EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Hearing statement on behalf of A. R. Yarwood, Slinger Plant Services and Ms S. Millward

1. I am Roger Yarwood. I have set out my background and qualifications in a separate appendix. In regard to the matter to be considered in this session, I represent Slinger Plant Services and Ms S Millward, both owners of property in the District, and I also represent myself as a resident of the District.
2. I submit that a greater number and range of employment sites should be allocated in the Local Plan. I submit there is a mismatch between the anticipated increase in population and the amount of land allocated for employment.
3. The Council should commit to allocating sufficient land to meet the need for new employment land. The proposed allocations are grossly inadequate and there must be serious doubts over their delivery.
4. The reliance on Cawdor Quarry to deliver any employment land demonstrates that the Council is unduly optimistic in its expectations. The Council has indicated that it believes that Cawdor will be developed. However, Cawdor Quarry failed to deliver the employment land allocated in the previous Local Plan. Despite being granted permission for a mixed housing and employment development over 16 years ago it remains undeveloped. The developers have effectively conceded that the development of the site is not viable. There can be no realistic expectation that this site will deliver any development providing employment land.
5. Despite this history, the Council is now to be reliant on the development of even more quarry sites. If housing is difficult to deliver at quarry sites, due to viability issues, how much more is that true of employment development, where the returns are less..
6. Outline planning permission has been granted at Halldale Quarry but, as experience at Cawdor demonstrates, this is not a good indicator of delivery. There is no evidence of the quarry allocations being viable and reasonably deliverable within the lifetime of the Plan. The experience of Cawdor only serves to demonstrate that Quarry sites are very difficult to bring forward.

7. The site allocated at Middleton Road/Cromford Road is beset by similar problems to those which arise in the allocated quarry sites. This is another difficult site beset by remediation issues.
8. Whilst some of the land at Ashbourne Airfield may come forward for employment land during the life of the Local Plan, it is improbable that the full allocation will be available.
9. Only the site at Porter Lane has a reasonable prospect of becoming available in its entirety.
10. Several employers have indicated a wish to relocate to better sites and, indeed, the Council's reliance on windfall sites on previously developed land depends to some extent on such relocations. These relocation needs can be expected to take up much of the deliverable allocated land, leaving very little to meet the aspirations of new businesses.
11. The anticipated increase in the District's population, the trend for working into later life, the effects of Brexit and a buoyant demand for employment sites should be reflected in employment land allocations.
12. My clients sites at Derby Road, Cromford (former Pisani Works land) and Porter Lane, Wirksworth (close to the allocated site) offer excellent achievable and well located sites to provide additional employment land to meet this need.