

DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

SESSION 14, MATTER 10 & 11 ALLOCATIONS AND SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES - RURAL PARISHES

Hearing statement on behalf of Slinger Plant Services (1091)

1. I am Roger Yarwood. I have set out my background and qualifications in a separate appendix to an earlier hearing statement.
2. I represent a client with land suitable for housing development in Cromford.
3. I submit that:
 - That constraints render it unlikely that the "strategic" sites in Matlock and Darley Dale and Wirksworth will be deliverable within a reasonable timescale and the reliance on those sites to deliver the housing need in Matlock, Wirksworth and Darley Dale is not a realistic approach. As a consequence, other sites should be allocated to help meet any resulting shortfall.
 - Several smaller sites, including sites which I and others have put forward for allocation, would give more certainty of delivery and provide better choice.
 - Settlement boundaries are in general too tightly drawn to the extent that good development opportunities will be stifled.
4. The expectation that Local Plan will deliver over 2000 dwellings on the 7 strategic sites in Matlock, Wirksworth and Darley Dale is unrealistic. The reliance on former quarry sites to deliver a substantial element of this provision demonstrates that the Council is unduly optimistic in its expectations of meeting its OAN target (even at the reduced level as proposed in Main Modification MM23).
5. Despite being granted permission for housing development over 16 years ago Cawdor Quarry remains undeveloped and this experience demonstrates the difficulty in developing former quarries. Yet, despite this history, the Council is now to be largely reliant on the development of additional quarry sites.
6. The site put forward for development at Cromford on behalf of my client, Slinger Plant Services, (SHLAA 160) has good access to employment sites, community facilities and public transport. Less sustainable sites have been allocated in relatively remote locations with a far more dramatic and adverse impact on the landscape.

7. Appendix 2 of the Council's Local Plan Advisory Committee's agenda for 20/01/16 asserts that constraints attributable to the "historic environment" (due to its location in the World Heritage Buffer Zone and Cromford Conservation Area) affect this site. I submit that the development would have no impact whatsoever on the World Heritage Site and the only part of the site within the Conservation Area is already largely occupied by a visually discordant manufacturing site. Far from detracting from the historic environment, redevelopment of this site would bring significant benefit.
8. The only other reason why the site receives a "red" classification is due to the absence of health facilities in Cromford but health facilities a short distance away in Wirksworth are available and have apparently been overlooked.
9. I submit that the Council's assessment of this site is fundamentally flawed.
10. Together with sites put forward by my other clients, and some sites put forward by other agents, allocation of my client's site at Cromford would bring flexibility in housing provision, provide choice and give greater certainty over delivery.
11. I submit that further flexibility and choice would be secured by a less tightly drawn settlement boundary. The Council, regrettably, appears to have approached the drafting of settlement boundaries from the standpoint of excluding as much land as possible. If the settlement Boundary for Cromford had been logically defined, a larger proportion of this site would have been within the Boundary.

.