

# DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION STAGE 1

## SESSION 13, MATTERS 10 AND 11 - DARLEY DALE Strategic and other allocations Settlement Boundaries and Strategic Gap

**Mr. A R. Yarwood**

1. I am Roger Yarwood. I set out my background and qualifications in a separate appendix.
2. I submit that:
  - That the allocations for housing in Darley Dale are inadequate.
  - That the Strategic Gap between Matlock and Darley Dale is unnecessary and ill considered
  - That the settlement Boundary for Darley Dale is unduly restrictive and excludes sustainable satellite settlements.

### **Housing Allocations**

3. The A6 Matlock - Darley Dale - Northwood corridor is the most sustainable location for housing development. It has the best public transport links to both local and regional centres offering unrivalled opportunities for car-free access to community facilities. The proposed allocations in Matlock and Wirksworth compare unfavourably in terms of sustainability with potential housing sites in Darley Dale.

### **Strategic Gap**

4. The previous Local Plan Policy NBE9, which seeks to protect the separate identity of Matlock and Darley Dale has been retained as part of Policy S8 and as Policy DB10, despite the fact that it has been significantly eroded by subsequent development to the point where it serves no real purpose.
5. The A6 corridor now has a urban character and the retention of such spaces as remain undeveloped cannot now be justified, particularly when it has resulted in the allocation of less sustainable and less deliverable sites elsewhere in the Matlock sub-area. Development of much of the land protected by Policy PD10 would have very little impact on the character of this urban corridor.
6. The Landscape Assessment which supports this policy is, in my view, unfit for purpose, a view shared by several other experienced planning consultants. It is not an objective assessment of landscape character. It gives undue weight to the value of landscape along

the comparatively well contained A6 corridor whilst giving less value to remote exposed countryside areas.

7. If this policy is to carry weight the area identified must be defined with the necessary care and be based on a robust assessment. That is not the case with the proposals map supporting this policy. An obvious example is the inclusion of the Whitworth Park, and land at Northwood which have no role in preventing the coalescence of Matlock and Darley Dale and are not unduly sensitive in terms of landscape quality.
8. This is an unnecessary policy. Sufficient protection exists by virtue of other policies. The policy should be deleted. and sites in the Darley Dale corridor allocated for housing.

### **Settlement Boundary**

9. 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 throughout the Local Plan area from the standpoint of excluding as much land as possible. Main modification MM21 is helpful but is merely supporting text and is not fully reflected in relevant policies. In any event this does nothing to overcome the fundamental shortcoming in the drafting of the Darley Dale Settlement Boundary.
10. The settlement boundary is particularly poorly delineated in Darley Dale. There are really several separate settlements within Darley Dale. As well as Darley Dale itself there are the satellite settlements of Churchtown, Darley Hillside, Farley, Hackney, Ladygrove and Two Dales. Whilst proposed modification MM3 now helpfully, but belatedly, recognises this, it does nothing to address the problem caused by excluding some of these settlements from the Settlement Boundary.
11. With the exception of part of Two Dales, all these settlements have been excluded from the settlement boundary. Yet many of these settlements have excellent access to employment and public transport, have a good range of community facilities and/or have good access to facilities in neighbouring settlements.
12. This is shown to be an inconsistent approach when one compares this with the approach adopted in Wirksworth, where the satellite settlements of Bolehill, Gorse Bank and Wash Green have been included in the settlement boundary even though they have no community facilities. Compare this with Hackney which has a school, church, pub, and

regular bus service; has seen substantial recent housing development yet has no settlement boundary and thus will be excluded from even the permissive approach to development provided by Policy S3 in fifth tier settlements.

13. I would commend to the adoption of the settlement framework boundary for Hackney put forward in an earlier Local Plan, the relevant extract from which I attach.