

Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan
Regeneration and Policy
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall
Bank Road
Matlock
Derbyshire DE4 3NN

By email only to: localplan@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

RE: Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter provides Gladman Developments Ltd (Gladman) representations in response to the submission version of the Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan (DNP) under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This letter seeks to highlight the issues with the plan as currently presented and its relationship with national and local planning policy.

Legal Requirements

Before a neighbourhood plan can proceed to referendum it must be tested against a set of basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4b of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The basic conditions that the DNP must meet are as follows:

- (a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order.*
- (d) The making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.*
- (e) The making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).*
- (f) The making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.*

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In doing so it sets out the requirements for the preparation of neighbourhood plans to be in conformity with the strategic priorities for the wider area and the role in which they play in delivering sustainable development to meet development needs.

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread through both plan-making and decision-taking. For plan-making this means that plan makers should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. This requirement is applicable to neighbourhood plans.

The recent Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) updates make clear that neighbourhood plans should conform to national policy requirements and take account the latest and most up-to-date evidence of housing needs in order to assist the Council in delivering sustainable development, a neighbourhood plan basic condition.

The application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development will have implications for how communities engage with neighbourhood planning. Paragraph 16 of the Framework makes clear that Qualifying Bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should develop plans that support strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing development and plan positively to support local development.

Paragraph 17 further makes clear that neighbourhood plans should set out a clear and positive vision for the future of the area and policies contained in those plans should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency. Neighbourhood plans should seek to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, jobs and thriving local places that the country needs, whilst responding positively to the wider opportunities for growth.

Paragraph 184 of the Framework makes clear that local planning authorities will need to clearly set out their strategic policies to ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. The Neighbourhood Plan should ensure that it is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider area and plan positively to support the delivery of sustainable growth opportunities.

Planning Practice Guidance

It is clear from the requirements of the Framework that neighbourhood plans should be prepared in conformity with the strategic requirements for the wider area as confirmed in an adopted development plan. The requirements of the Framework have now been supplemented by the publication of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

On 11th February 2016, the Secretary of State (SoS) published a series of updates to the neighbourhood planning chapter of the PPG. In summary, these update a number of component parts of the evidence base that are required to support an emerging neighbourhood plan.

On 19th May 2016, the Secretary of State published a further set of updates to the neighbourhood planning PPG. These updates provide further clarity on what measures a qualifying body should take to review the contents of a neighbourhood plan where the evidence base for the plan policy becomes less robust. As such it is considered that where a qualifying body intends to undertake a review of the neighbourhood plan, it should include a policy relating to this intention which includes a detailed explanation outlining the qualifying bodies anticipated timescales in this regard.

Further, the PPG makes clear that neighbourhood plans should not contain policies restricting housing development in settlements or preventing other settlements from being expanded. It is with that in mind that Gladman has reservations regarding the DNP's ability to meet basic condition (a) and this will be discussed in greater detail throughout this response.

Relationship to Local Plan

The development plan that covers the Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan area and the development plan which the DNP will be tested against is the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (DDLDP) which was formally adopted by Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC) on 7th December 2017. The Local Plan sets out the Council's overall vision, objectives and policies for future development of those parts of the Derbyshire Dales that lie outside the Peak District National Park for the period

2013-2033. The adoption of the Local Plan completed the replacement of the 'saved policies' in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (2005), which have now been replaced in their entirety.

Noting that this document has been adopted during the course of the DNP Regulation 16 consultation Gladman submit that careful consideration should be taken by both the Parish Council and DDDC to ensure that the DNP is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the new DDLP.

Within the DDLP, Doveridge is classified as a third-tier settlement, which are accessible settlements with some facilities. New development will be supported within the defined settlement boundaries of these settlements as well as on the edge of these settlements in circumstances where DDDC cannot demonstrate a deliverable five-year supply of housing sites.

Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan

This section highlights the key issues that Gladman would like to raise with regards to the content of the DNP as currently presented. It is considered that some policies do not reflect the requirements of national policy and guidance, Gladman has therefore sought to recommend a series of alternative options that should be explored prior to the Plan being submitted for Independent Examination.

As a general comment Gladman note that several references are made to the 'saved policies' of the old Local Plan and prior to submission for examination these should be deleted as these are no longer the basis upon which planning decisions will be made in the district.

Policy R1: Infill Development within the Settlement Development Boundary of Doveridge

This policy seeks to limit development within the settlement boundary to sites of two residential units or less. Gladman have seen no evidence to suggest why this should be the limit to development proposals and this may have the affect of restricting otherwise sustainable development opportunities.

Further, Gladman note there is no reference to how development proposals will be dealt with beyond the settlement boundary. Gladman suggest that wording is added to this policy to set out that development proposals beyond the settlement boundary will be subject to DDLP Policy S4: Development in the Countryside. This would help to provide clarity for a user of the plan.

Policy H1: Housing Mix to meet the specific demographic needs of Doveridge

Gladman note the intentions of this policy to set out an appropriate housing mix for new developments however do not consider this policy to provide any additional value to that already contained in the recently adopted DDLP policy HC11. Further, the Local Plan policy seeks to incorporate the housing mix to all residential developments from the higher threshold of 11 dwellings or more whereas the DNP is seeking to implement this on developments of 10 or more dwellings.

The mix set out in Policy H1 is a direct copy of part of the table set out in policy HC11 however it is set out in a less clear way than the adopted Local Plan policy. Gladman suggest that as this policy offers no further detail to that of Local Plan policy HC11 that it should be deleted from the DNP.

Conclusions

Gladman recognises the role of neighbourhood plans as a tool for local people to shape the development of their local community. However, it is clear from national guidance that these must be consistent with national planning policy and the strategic requirements for the wider authority area. Through this consultation response, Gladman has sought to clarify the relation of the DNP as currently proposed with the requirements of national planning policy and the wider strategic policies for the wider area.

Gladman is concerned that the plan in its current form does not comply with basic condition (a) and as the Plan does not conform with national policy and guidance. Gladman hopes you have found these representations helpful and constructive. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me or one of the Gladman team.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Agnew
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Gladman Developments Ltd.