

DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION STAGE 1

SESSION 2, MATTER 2 THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Hearing statement on behalf of A. R. Yarwood, A. Clements and M. Nutting

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 Mr. Clements and Mr. Nutting, both residents of and owners of property in Bonsall and I also represent myself as a resident of the District.
2. I submit that the hierarchy of settlements is ill-considered, over complex and inconsistent. To propose 5 tiers of settlements is unnecessary and confusing. The Council is adopting the same discredited approach which was criticised by the Local Plan Inspector at the Local Plan inquiry which preceded the adoption of the 2005 Local Plan and resulted in the Council having to abandon its approach to settlement classification with serious adverse consequences for the many villages in the District which have consequently been starved of development over the last 12 years. I sincerely hope that does not happen again but it is disappointing that the Council has not learned the lesson of previous mistakes.
3. In the Local Plan background paper entitled "Settlement Hierarchy" the table at paragraph 3.3 shows that, apart from the 4 main towns, Bonsall has the 4th highest population of any settlement in the Derbyshire Dales. with 750 residents. The report goes on to say that *" it has been decided that only those settlements with a population of over 400 residents or at least a primary school, should be included in the Assessment."*
4. Thus Bonsall was one of the 13 villages with populations greater than 400 to be considered as settlements "which could best accommodate major development." The subsequent findings of the assessment give Bonsall a score of only 12 but it is not difficult to find the reasons why this low score is the result of a flawed assessment. In regard to the economy it is given a score of only 2, which clearly fails to reflect its proximity to the major employment centres of Matlock and Wirksworth. In regard to the social score it achieves a relatively high score of 10. It is surely the case that the weighting for social facilities should be greater than the weighting for economy.
5. The floors in the methodology become even more apparent when one notes that Hulland Ward also has a score of 2, and yet has, rightly, been identified as one of only 4 villages where very significant levels of growth are proposed.

6. The exclusion of Bonsall from settlements with a settlement boundary is illogical. Quite clearly a hierarchy which places Bonsall in a lower category than Sudbury cannot be sound. No other settlement of this size with the level community facilities available in Bonsall has been excluded from the list of "accessible settlements".

7. I submit that Bonsall should be included as an "accessible settlement" and should have a settlement boundary which includes the properties known as Chestnut Farm, at Uppertown, and The Cascades at Clatterway.

Appendix

Qualifications and Experience of A. R. Yarwood

I hold a Diploma in Town Planning and I am a Chartered Town Planner being elected to membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1970.

I have held senior planning positions with City Council, National Park, and County Council Planning Departments before becoming the Head of the Planning Department at Derbyshire Dales District Council, a post I held for 28 years until my retirement in June 2001.

Prior to my employment with Derbyshire Dales District Council I worked on the preparation of the Matlock Local Plan (which did not proceed to adoption).

In my role as Head of Planning at Derbyshire Dales District Council, I was responsible for the preparation and adoption of the first Local Plan for the District. I was also particularly involved in protection of the District's historic environment and buildings. I played a leading role in working with the Civic Trust on "The Wirksworth Project", which was a co-ordinated project to protect and enhance the economic wellbeing and historic character of the town and which secured both the Europa Nostra award and RTPI Silver Jubilee Cup. I was also actively involved in securing World Heritage status for the Derwent Valley Mills.

Following my retirement from public service, I established a planning consultancy, which I continue to run and I have also been engaged as a fee-per-case Planning Inspector with the Planning Inspectorate in the Irish Republic and I was employed by the Royal Town Planning Institutes as the Caseworker at East Midlands Planning Aid service. I also continue to act as the Planning Officer to the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups.

I am a resident of Derbyshire Dales and have lived and worked in what is now the Derbyshire Dales District all my life apart from brief spells of residence/work in Sheffield and High Peak.