

Stage 2 Local Plan Examination

Session 10 – 09:30 Tuesday 16th May 2017

Matters 10 & 11 – Strategic Allocations and Settlement Boundaries – Matlock.

A Submission by Jonathan Jenkin BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI from Planning Design Practice on behalf of Wildgoose Homes in response to the Matters and Questions raised by the Inspector Mr Mark Dakeyne BA(Hons)MRTPI

1. The Matlock Development Strategy

Are the allocations in Matlock consistent with the development strategy Policy S8)?

The development strategy has a set of competing aims and objectives. This leads to an inconsistency within the strategy.

An overview of Matlock taking into account access, topography and public transport provision indicates that the relatively flat areas adjacent to the River Derwent and along the A6 corridor should be the focus for development to ensure access by a range of transport options and to take up the opportunities of a modal shift to walking and cycling.

Policy S8 seeks to promote the sustainable growth of Matlock, by providing for the housing needs of the community by allocating a range of suitable deliverable housing sites sufficient to meet the requirements of the plan area.

To do that the Council has included two industrial legacy sites as strategic sites to deliver 220 dwellings at Halldale Quarry (DS5) and 470 dwellings at Cawdor (DS9). Together these two sites comprise the largest housing allocations in the town.

2. Gritstone Road

No comment

3. Halldale Quarry

Is the allocation justified having regard to the highway network constraints?

Is the site deliverable in the time scale envisaged in the SHELLA having regard to constraints, infrastructure and viability? In particular what are the implications for deliverability of contamination, quarry faces, stability and the mineral resource?

At Halldale Quarry the Council resolved to grant planning permission on 1st June 2016 for 220 dwellings, 400sqm of A3 and 6400sqm of B1 floor space (14/00541/OUT). This was subject to the revocation of old permissions and discussions were underway with the County Council. In the officer's report it was acknowledged that the topographical constraints and the lack of public transport indicate that the site is unlikely to facilitate good levels of accessibility by means other than the private car.

The Council has assessed the viability and deliverability of this site and the District Valuer's Office (DVO) confirmed that the site cannot support any affordable housing, nor can it support any other Section 106 contributions. The Council also accepts that use of the site for housing will lead to the loss of a key employment site.

The DVO report clearly indicates that deliverability on this site is highly suspect. The site itself is north facing. The application has been supported by an initial Rock Face Assessment but no intrusive ground investigation and housing if built would be within the quarry with little openness or outlook. Development of this site would be highly risky for a developer – not only is the ground stability and ground contamination unknown, the site is not an attractive place to live.

Policy S8 seeks to provide for the housing needs of the community by allocating a range of suitable deliverable sites. This site is neither suitable nor deliverable. The SHELLA indicates that 90 dwellings will come forward in the first 5 years, 120 dwellings in 6 -10 years and 10 post 10 years. This is very slow take up of development on what is a very difficult site. There is no indication at this time that development can come forward within the timescales set out in the housing trajectory. It would also mean that new homeowners would be living in a partly built development for more than 10 years.

If the Council is serious about developing this site they should:-

- Fund a feasibility study including ground investigation, rock face stability & contamination report; identify the costs associated with remediation suitable for residential development.
- Seek to secure public funds to make up any shortfall to enable market led development to take place while securing affordable housing and appropriate S106 costs including new public transport.

The site should be removed as a site in the Plan and other sites should be identified. The site could then come forward once viability and deliverable issues have been resolved.

4. Cawdor Quarry

Is the site deliverable in the timescales envisaged by the SHELAA having regard to constraints, infrastructure and viability?

In particular what are the implications for deliverability of contamination, quarry faces, stability and the mineral resource?

Should the size and scope of the allocation be increased to ensure that the site comes forward?

An application (16/00923/OUT) is pending for 586 dwellings incorporating 78 affordable units, 2800sqm of commercial floor space (Class B1), shop & café. This application includes Cawdor Quarry itself and agricultural land adjacent to it known as Snitterton Fields. This application has proved to be controversial with the inclusion of the fields. The Peak Park Planning Board has objected to the inclusion of Snitterton fields.

At the time of writing there has been no intrusive site investigation and there has been no assessment of the costs of decontamination or land stability as part of the planning application. The submitted Phase I report recommends intrusive investigations and the attached reports indicate landslip hazards. There is no formal viability assessment and the Planning Statement submitted by land agents Savills skates over the issue. The Savills report identifies costs of remediation of between £5m - £8m but with no indication of how these costs will be met.

Without a costed programme, the provision of affordable housing and the ability of the site to meet required S106 requirements cannot be quantified. Whilst the current application will be determined on its own merits the application's shortcomings indicate real difficulty in delivering housing on the Cawdor Quarry Site.

In putting this site forward in the Local Plan as a site allocation the Council has been premature. To move forward and deliver this site the Council needs to commission an intrusive site investigation, ground and rock face stability assessment and a full ecological assessment.

The results need to be assessed by an independent Valuer so that the Council can see whether this land can be developed and if so how much housing can it accommodate and how big does the development need to be? Without this necessary preliminary work the site should not be included as a strategic site in the Local Plan and other more deliverable sites should be considered. Whilst it is accepted that this site has an extant consent the history of non-delivery stretches back over 15 years and the failure to develop this land over such an extended period has harmed the provision of housing in the sub-area.

5. Settlement Boundaries

Is the Settlement Boundary for Matlock justified?

In my professional capacity as a chartered town planner and in support of our clients, who have an interest in land within the A6 corridor, the Settlement Boundary for Matlock along its north western side is wholly inappropriate. The Council sets out in Paragraph 4.23 the criteria it uses to define the extent of the Settlement Framework Boundaries. This includes areas of contiguous built development which has been excluded at this end of the town but has been included at the southern end of the town at Starkholmes & Riber. In detail the settlement framework boundary should include:-

1. Land south west of the A6 (Bakewell Road) opposite Alton Rise & Stanton Moor View including Valley Lodge Care Home and along the Road as far as Long Meadow. There is an existing commitment by virtue of an extant planning permission (15/00814/OUT) which extends built development to Darley Lodge.
2. Land north east of the A6 beyond Poppy Fields Close (the current settlement Framework Limit) to include the Meadow View Care Centre & the Whitworth Hospital; neither of which are in extensive grounds. To include land west of Old Hackney have and then north east of Old Hackney Lane to include proposed Housing Allocation (H2C (h) and the land & housing around Darley House Oakwood Drive. Proposed allocation H2C (h) indicates that this forms part of the built framework of Matlock and should be included within the settlement beyond.
3. Grove Lane is continuous development that extends into Hackney Village & Upper Hackney. Continuous development then links this area back into Matlock.
4. St Elphins & Normanhurst Park St Elphins is a large retirement community which has been extended and altered in the last 15 years to include over 95 dwellings. Normanhurst Park is an area of housing on the southwest side of the A6 (Dale Road South) which is also the location for housing allocation HCC (k). The settlement framework boundary should be extended to include these housing areas.
5. Old Road and Greenaway Lane. This area includes the Local Primary School and housing & links directly to Hackney. The Settlement Framework Boundary should include the south side of Old Road as far as the rail bridge.

A plan showing existing and proposed town boundaries are attached to this statement.

At this point, given the continuous nature of existing development and the lack of any clearly defined break between Matlock & Darley Dale; Darley Dale could form part of a single Greater Matlock Settlement Framework. It should be noted that the Matlock Settlement Framework Boundary already extends beyond the existing administrate Matlock Town Area into Darley Dale Parish. The existing Parish boundary runs through the Arc Leisure centre. Areas of open land could be allocated for housing or depending upon their role in landscape and amenity terms could be

protected as greenspace. Details of a proposal for an Action Area Plan are presented in Session 13.

6. Infrastructure

No comment.

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