

DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

INSPECTOR'S PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS, CLARIFICATION AND COMMENTS RELATING TO SOUNDNESS (Strengthening the Economy – Chapter 7)

Introduction

1. The purpose of this note is to seek clarification from the Council on a number of matters relating to Chapter 7 of the Local Plan. These matters have emerged from my preparation so far, including assessing representations. I will have further questions during the preparation period.

Preamble to Chapter

2. Paragraph 7.3 refers to investment in infrastructure being crucial to unlocking new housing and employment development in Ashbourne and around Matlock. The implication is that such investment will be supported by 'public sector' funding. Is this the case and have Local Growth Funds been committed to such projects?
3. I asked questions dated 7 February on Employment Provision and Policies EC1 and EC2.

Policy EC2

4. Phase 1 at Ashbourne Airfield (EC2(a)) was granted planning permission in 2014 and therefore is a commitment (paragraph 8.31 refers). Similarly land at Cawdor Quarry has an extant planning permission (paragraph 8.37 refers). In terms of plan consistency should the sites be included as allocations?

Policy EC3

5. In response to representations it was indicated that further supporting text would be added to the policy to emphasise the content of paragraph 22 of the Framework. Is this still the intention? The modification has not been picked up in document SD03.

Policy EC4

6. The policy should be cross-referenced with Policy EC3 not EC2. Is Policy EC4 necessary having regard to the terms of Policy EC3?

Policy EC6

7. Paragraph 7.20 refers to the creation of biodiversity habitats in town centres. The scope for this would appear to be limited so it is not clear why this has been emphasised. Moreover it has not been reflected in the policy itself so presumably is not considered essential.
8. The second sentence of paragraph 7.25 does not make sense. Should it read: 'The assessment of capacity for additional convenience floorspace across the plan area does not show any potential scope for additional floorspace'?

Policy EC7

9. The policy refers to changes of use from retail to other town centre uses only being permitted where it will not create a concentration of non-shopping uses. However, there is no definition of what would constitute a concentration e.g. by reference to thresholds for the number of non-retail uses in a given frontage or within a row. Have such thresholds been considered?

Policy EC8

10. Paragraph 7.31 appears to have a couple of typos. On line 1 the reference to 'higher proportion' does not square with the first part of the sentence. The number on the last line should presumably be 5,007 people?
11. The cross reference to policy about farm diversification should be Policy EC10 not EC9.
12. The last section of the policy would be more positive if 'only' was deleted. Is it realistic to expect all forms of tourist and culture development to be in a sustainable location and accessed by a variety of means of transport? For example small scale farm diversification such as holiday accommodation would not easily meet such a requirement but could comply with Policy EC10.

Policy EC10

13. The explanation to the policy (paragraph 7.43) indicates a preference for conversion of existing buildings but this is not reflected in the policy. Would the inclusion of an additional criterion to address this issue be appropriate?

Response

14. It would be helpful to have a response from the Council on matters raised above by 24 February if possible. If the Council consider that any of the above comments and questions need to be addressed by Main Modifications (MMs) then please let me know. In this respect as advised in the Initial Questions a Schedule of MMs should be produced at an appropriate stage in advance of the hearings.
15. I am not inviting comments from other parties at this stage. I want to clarify the Council's position first. This will help me set out pre-hearing questions in due course on which all parties with relevant representations will have the opportunity to respond.

Thank you.

Mark Dakeyne

INSPECTOR

14 February 2017