



## OPEN REPORT LOCAL PLAN SUB COMMITTEE

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### LOCAL PLAN SUB COMMITTEE – 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024

#### **Derbyshire Dales Local Plan – Proposed Assessment Methodology for Site Selection and Prioritisation - Housing Land Allocations**

#### **Report of Planning Policy Manager**

#### **Report Author and Contact Details**

Esther Lindley

Principal Planning Policy Officer

Tel 01629 761241

Email [esther.lindley@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:esther.lindley@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

#### **Wards Affected**

All outside of the Peak District National Park

#### **Report Summary**

This report provides for Members consideration and approval a proposed methodology for the evaluation and prioritisation of potential housing sites as the basis for allocation within the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan for the period 2017-2040.

#### **Recommendations**

1. That Members endorse the methodology for the evaluation and prioritisation of sites as set out in Section 2 and Appendix 1 and that this is employed to determine which housing sites should be identified to meet the strategic housing requirements of the Derbyshire Dales for the period 2017-2040.
2. That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Local Plan Sub Committee, that provides an assessment of potential sites utilising the methodology set out in this report.

#### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Site Assessment Matrix Defined Planning Criteria

#### **Background Papers**

Report to Local Plan Sub Committee 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024:

<https://democracy.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/documents/s10227/Local%20Plan%20Public%20Consultation%20-%20Housing%20Options.pdf>

**Consideration of report by Council or other committee**

This report is presented to the Local Plan Sub Committee for consideration in discharging their terms of reference on behalf of the Community and Environment Committee. When all policies and proposals have been reviewed by this Sub Committee a report will be presented to Community and Environment Committee.

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from Press or Public**

No

## **Proposed Assessment Methodology for Site Selection and Prioritisation - Housing Land Allocations**

### **1. Background**

1.1 Members will recall, at a meeting of this Sub Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 considering a report which set out proposals for the first round of public consultation on the review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. It was resolved as follows :(Minute 430/23)

*1. That preparations for the public consultation proceed, on the basis that estimated housing need and the availability of major development sites be taken into account, with support through policies for appropriate levels of development in smaller communities.*

*That, the following topics therefore be included in the public consultation process:*

- *An appropriate level of development in smaller communities.*
- *The viability of identified major sites.*

*2. That the details of the public consultation set out in Appendix 1 be developed into formal public consultation documentation to be agreed in conjunction with the membership of this Sub-Committee.*

*3. That public consultation commence on 9th May 2024 for a period of six weeks ending on 20th June 2024.*

*4. That a further report on the results of the public consultation be considered by a future meeting of this Sub-Committee.*

*5. That decisions on the future site allocations in the Local Plan be undertaken as part of the detailed development of the policy and proposals, and be subject to consultation as part of the Regulation 18/19 consultations during the latter part of 2024 and during Spring 2025*

1.2 At the last meeting of this Sub Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 it was resolved that the first round of public consultation on the Local Plan should be undertaken at a relatively high level and that the results of the consultation be used as a basis for future decisions relating to the location and distribution of new housing development. Public consultation on the Local Plan was undertaken 9<sup>th</sup> May to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the outcomes of this consultation exercise and summary of representations received is set out elsewhere on the agenda of this Sub Committee.

1.3 The public consultation sought views on the overall level of housing needs for the Derbyshire Dales, and the potential distribution of the housing across the Plan area, including the implications of meeting or otherwise the housing needs arising from within the Peak District National Park.

1.4 As set out elsewhere on the agenda to this meeting it is recommended, that a housing target of 217 dwellings per annum for the whole of Derbyshire Dales form the basis of the future housing needs over the period 2017-2040. for the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.

- 1.5 On the basis of completions and commitments it is considered that the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will need to allocate land for between 1,888 and 1,378 new homes over the period from 2023 to 2040.
- 1.6 Now that the initial public consultation on the Local Plan has been completed decisions need to be made about how much and where new housing development should take place. In order to meet the recommended overall housing requirement it is necessary to determine which sites are most suitable for allocation in the Local Plan.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 As Members will be aware the revised Local Plan will determine the overall strategy for future development across the District to 2040, including the location of residential development to address housing needs.
- 2.2 The starting point for the preparation of local plans is set out within para 11a of the NPPF, which states that *“all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.”* In addition, in terms of sustainable transport, the NPPF at para 109 confirms that the planning system *“should actively manage patterns of growth”* and that *“significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.”*
- 2.3 As set out elsewhere on this agenda it is recommended that the ‘spatial strategy’ for the Local Plan should concentrate development in the most sustainable locations, which in the context of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan review would entail development focused to those settlements identified within the ‘settlement hierarchy’.
- 2.4 As well as identifying how many new homes the District needs and sustainable locations the Local Plan must endeavour to ‘allocate’ sufficient land in appropriate locations to meet housing needs over the Plan period. The sites allocated in the Local Plan will need to be sustainable, deliverable and justified through an extensive evidence base.
- 2.5 To achieve this it is suggested that a site selection process, that provides an indication of the relative merits of each site, and how they fit with the overall strategy Members wish to achieve through the Local Plan is appropriate. This report therefore sets out a proposed approach to site selection which seeks to evaluate the suitability of potential sites for allocation in the Local Plan.
- 2.6 The purpose of the site selection methodology will be to identify sites suitable for allocation in the Local Plan, this would normally be sites capable of delivering 10 or more residential units. The review of the Local Plan will look to incorporate a policy approach to the delivery of other sites below the 10 dwelling allocation threshold.

## Site Selection Methodology

### Stage 1 – Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

- 2.7 The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) provides essential evidence on the potential supply of land suitable for housing in the Derbyshire Dales over the next 15 years. The SHELAA is a technical assessment which considers the availability, suitability and achievability of land in the District for possible development. However, as Members are aware, it is not the role of the SHELAA to allocate land for development, but to provide evidence alongside other studies to inform the site allocation and/or decision making process. The SHELAA provides the starting point for assessment, helping to identify sites and guide the site selection process.
- 2.8 The most recent version of the Derbyshire Dales SHELAA published in April 2022<sup>1</sup> identifies a number of sites in the towns and villages of the Plan area that are considered to have some potential for development. The existing housing allocations in the Adopted Derbyshire Dales Local Plan have been subject to a SHLEAA assessment. A number of other alternative sites for new residential development were identified during the recent public consultation period. These sites will be subject to review through the SHELAA process, using the same comprehensive assessment criteria as used previously.

### Stage 2 – Assessment Against Defined Planning Criteria

- 2.9 Following the first stage of assessment undertaken through the SHELAA all potential sites that are considered available, suitable and achievable (including existing housing allocations in the adopted Derbyshire Dales Local Plan and new alternative sites) would be evaluated against a series of defined planning criteria (set out in Appendix 1). These criteria will seek to provide an indication of the relative merits of each site and attribute a degree of prioritisation to their suitability for allocation. The proposed 'defined planning criteria' cover aspects such as:

- Brownfield/greenfield
- Ecological and environmental constraints
- Historic constraints
- Site accessibility and impacts on highway network
- Access to public transport
- Proximity to services and facilities
- Flood risk and surface water run off
- Impact on landscape setting
- Infrastructure constraints, improvements and enhancements
- Ability to meet affordable housing needs

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/documents/shelaa-final-report-april-2022/download>  
<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/documents/shelaa-2021-appendices-full-april-2022/download>

- Bad neighbour constraints
- Ownership constraints
- Site timeframe for delivery

2.10 In order to significantly boost the supply of land for housing, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites for housing. In determining which sites are appropriate for potential allocation for housing development, consideration therefore needs to be given as to whether sites are genuinely deliverable and developable. These terms are defined within the NPPF as follows:

*“To be considered **deliverable**, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on site within five years.”*

*“To be considered **developable**, site should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.”*

2.11 To inform the assessment of sites against the defined planning criteria and address issues of site deliverability and suitability additional supporting information and justification material will be sought from landowners, developers and agents to ensure that the District Council can be satisfied that sites are genuinely developable and deliverable during the Plan period.

### **Stage 3 Site Prioritisation**

2.12 The appraisal of the sites against the defined planning criteria will enable sites to be prioritised and therefore help determine which should be considered as being the most suitable for development and allocation within the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. Equally the process will enable the District Council to determine which sites are least appropriate for allocation in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.

2.13 Appendix 1 sets out the defined planning criteria which will be used to evaluate sites. It is recommended that the sites be prioritised on the basis of the following criteria:

## Priority 1

Sites which are located within close proximity to the Market Towns of Matlock, Ashbourne and Wirksworth and perform highly (score 3 or above) in respect of **all** of the following key development criteria: ecological impacts, site access and highway impact, flood risk and surface water run off, infrastructure considerations, bad neighbour considerations and ownership constraints, **and** are developable and deliverable within 5 years.

Priority 1 sites will in due course, be those sites which should be considered first for allocation in the Local Plan in order to meet the future housing requirement.

## Priority 2

Sites which are located within close proximity to the Market Towns of Matlock, Ashbourne or Wirksworth, or the Tier 2 settlement of Darley Dale; and Tier 3 settlements of Brailsford, Clifton, Cromford, Darley Bridge, Doveridge, Hlland Ward, Matlock Bath, Middleton, Northwood, Rowsley, Sudbury and Tansley; and perform well (score at least 3) in respect of **all** of the following key development criteria: ecological impacts, site access and highway impact, flood risk and surface water run off, infrastructure considerations, bad neighbour consideration and ownership constraints.

Sites located within close proximity of the Market Towns which are considered developable but **not** deliverable within 5 years would be considered to be Priority 2

## Priority 3

Sites in all other locations which are capable of being considered developable, and where the site assessment indicates, against a range of key development criteria including site access, flood risk and surface water run off, that development is likely to have a more significant detrimental impact with the prospect of only partial mitigation of any impact.

## Priority 4

Sites which perform poorly (Score 1) in respect of **any** of the following key development criteria: site access and highway impact, flood risk and surface water run off, infrastructure constraints, bad neighbour consideration and ownership considerations.

Priority 4 sites are inappropriate for development due to the fact that there are significant constraints which do not appear to be capable of mitigation.. As such, Priority 4 sites should not be considered suitable for allocation.

- 2.14 Having completed the evaluation of sites using the 3-stage process outlined above Members may wish to give due weight to other factors including the level of representations and the results of the Sustainability Appraisal in deciding which sites to allocate in the Local Plan. In the event that Members do not agree with the Officers assessment and recommendations it is considered that these

should be subject to an appropriate resolution of the LPSC and where appropriate future meetings of Community and Environment Committee.

- 2.15 It is recommended that a future report on the outcome of this site selection and prioritisation assessment process be presented to a future meeting of this Sub Committee, and at that meeting a resolution be sought which identifies the sites to be taken forward into the revised Local Plans.

### **3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal**

- 3.1 The purpose of the proposed site selection and prioritisation methodology is to provide a robust assessment to inform the allocation of land for housing in the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. The proposed methodology will, alongside other elements of the evidence base inform the preparation of the revised Local Plan. The alternative option would be to not have a comprehensive selection process, which would make it difficult to objectively and accurately distinguish which sites may or may not be suitable for allocation in the Local Plan.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 The results of site selection and prioritisation, alongside input from Sustainability Appraisal and the supporting Local Plan evidence base will be used to shape the Local Plan and preparation of a Draft Plan for consultation under Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is anticipated that this will be undertaken in late Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025. These are statutory periods of public consultation, the responses from which the District Council will need to formally take into account prior to the submission of the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan to the Secretary of State.

### **5. Timetable for Implementation**

- 5.1 The Local Development Scheme approved by this Committee at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 sets out the current timetable for the completion of the revisions to the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. At this time it envisages that during 2024 there will be public consultation, on the principles of the location of new development, future housing needs and policy developments. This will allow submission of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan to the Secretary of State by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, with adoption to follow 2026.

### **6. Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The results of this site selection and prioritisation process are intended to inform development of the policies and proposals in the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.



## **7. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 The choice of a proposed methodology will have no direct financial or resource implications for the District Council.
- 7.2 Producing a report that provides an assessment of potential sites utilising the methodology set out in this report will have no direct financial implications. However, there will be an opportunity cost for a member of staff to produce this report.

## **8. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 This report provides for Members consideration and approval to a proposed methodology for the evaluation and prioritisation of potential housing sites as the basis for allocation within the revised Derbyshire Dales Local Plan for the period 2017-2040.
- 8.2 There are 2 recommendations to be considered and decided upon. The risk of Legal challenge should the decisions be taken as recommended has been assessed as low, provided the proposed methodology complies with all applicable legislation and guidance.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities implications as a consequence of this report. The review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will be subject to a comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **10. Climate Change Implications**

- 10.1 There are no direct climate change implications as a consequence of this report. The review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will include revised policies which will seek to mitigate the effects Climate Change and be subject to a Climate Change Impact Assessment.

## **11. Risk Management**

- 11.1 At this time the risk associated with the preparation of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan is low. The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan is one of the pivotal plans and strategies ensuring the delivery of the District Council's aims and objectives as out in its Corporate Plan. Any significant delays in undertaking the review of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan will increase the risk to the District Council of delivering its key aims and objectives.

### **Report Authorisation**

Approvals obtained from:-

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	11/07/2024
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer	Karen Henriksen	09/07/2024
Monitoring Officer (or Legal Services Manager)	Helen Mitchell	11/07/2024