

**Comment Form**

	Joint response: please correspondence with both parties	
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Please keep us informed about the next consultation on the Local Plan.

Signature:	<div style="border: 1px solid red; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>	Date	6 <sup>th</sup> April 2017
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1.	<p><b><u>Introduction</u></b></p>
1.1	<p>North-East Derbyshire straddles two CPRE branches: the northern parishes of Dronfield Woodhouse, Dronfield North and South, Gosforth Valley, Coal Aston, Unstone, Ridgeway and Marsh Lane, Eckington North and South, Killamarsh East and West, and Renishaw, fall within the branch area of CPRE South Yorkshire and Friends of the Peak District; and the remainder of the District falls within CPRE Derbyshire Branch. This response is prepared jointly on behalf of both branches.</p>
1.2	<p>CPRE welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Local Plan process and looks forward to continued involvement at future stages. Our responses are informed by our commitment to sustainable development, and our principal aims in influencing Local Plans are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve the right development in the right places;</li> <li>• Avoid unnecessary loss of greenfield land;</li> <li>• Ensure communities have a fair say in the planning decisions that affect them.</li> </ul> <p>Our key concerns are set out below.</p>
2.	<p><b><u>The Plan needs a clearer placemaking agenda</u></b>  <b><u>Policies SS1; SS4-SS8; SP1-SP4; SDC13; ID1-ID8</u></b></p>
2.1	<p>In CPRE's view the structure of the Local Plan needs to be improved in order to articulate the way in which this suite of policies should work together to achieve genuine placemaking. Whilst we would generally support each of policies, we are not satisfied that they will be effective when set against the unseemly haste with which all local planning authorities are seeking to increase the rate of development. It is therefore essential that the totality of what NED is aiming to achieve, in terms of sustainable places, through the proper, integrated implementation of these policies, is clearly articulated.</p>
2.2	<p><b>We recommend that the opening policy of the Plan, SS1, should be much more than the generalized wish-list it currently is. It should offer a sequential guide to the way the rest of the plan works in the pursuit of sustainable placemaking, along these lines.</b></p> <p><b><i>The Local Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Sets out how the places in North-East Derbyshire should evolve and become more sustainable, in terms of their infrastructure, social fabric and environmental wellbeing (policies.....);</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>identifies a hierarchy of places and sets out policies that focus development in the right places to enhance those places (policies.....)</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>provides sites and policies for the types and locations of built development that should be encouraged in order to implement the plan (policies.....)</i></b></li> </ul>
2.3	<p>To highlight this point we draw your attention to three specific examples.</p>

2.4	<p>The supporting texts for SP1 and SP4 all refer to shortfalls in green and open space in the main settlements, and the need to ensure they are well-protected; but the justification for why they should be protected, and the benefits that will accrue to places from that protection, is spread thinly across ID1 to ID6. In turn, this means that the weight afforded to green and open space in decision-making, and the role of developer contributions to implementation via ID8, are difficult to distill and will be vulnerable to challenge.</p>
2.5	<p>The proposed housing allocation south of Clay Cross is large and has good potential to provide a sustainable extension to the town. However there is a high risk that it will simply be a large housing estate, with minimal supporting uses (eg corner shops, community facilities), tokenistic green spaces and a lack of social infrastructure. This risk could be avoided if the plan were clearer that new development should enhance the place it becomes part of: for example, policy SDC13 should test whether development will contribute to the provision and viability of community facilities, sustainable travel options etc for the locality as a whole (eg mix of uses, safe walking and cycling).</p>
2.6	<p>There is ever-increasing nationwide evidence that link-road and motorway-based development corridor models do not deliver significant economic benefits, but have many shortcomings in terms of poor place-making, wide-scale landscape impact, traffic generation and associated air and noise pollution and carbon emissions. We would therefore expect Local Plans to move away from allocating land for development based on link roads and motorway junctions. It is possible that Markham Vale could be seen as an exceptional case, due to the large regeneration opportunity there; but on the other hand the development that has already taken place is very typical of low-density, high-land-take, motorway-based developments elsewhere in the region; and little evidence of any attempt to plan for connecting development to the adjacent railway line. When the sustainability and placemaking credentials of such a major element of the Plan are difficult to determine, this leaves the overall merits of the plan open to question, especially in relation to ID6 and ID7, and the intention to reduce the need to travel as stated in SS1(c).</p>
3.	<p><b><u>The Plan needs a more restorative approach to the environment: Policies SDC1 to SDC14</u></b></p>
3.1	<p>We broadly support these policies, but we are concerned that they do not adequately articulate the range and rate of enhancements that are needed in order to make progress on sustainable development. A much more pro-active approach is needed. In particular:</p>
3.2	<p><b>We note that there is no specific policy for reducing and adapting to climate change, other than one clause in SS1; although aspects of it are found within other policies. Given the scale of the challenges posed by climate change, and local authorities' obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008, we believe a high-level climate change policy should be included in the Plan. The RTPI publication <i>Planning for climate change – guidance for local authorities</i> (April 2012) provides a good starting point for this.</b></p>

3.3	SDC3 should go much further than simply guarding against ‘significant harm’ to landscape character. Places where landscape has already been degraded, or landscapes subjected to smaller but accumulating impacts, will not benefit from this policy, and a restorative approach, is therefore essential. A landscape action plan is needed and should be implemented via this policy.
3.4	SDC11 should <i>require</i> all new developments to be zero-carbon, with only the rarest exceptions, and should extend this requirement as far as possible to change-of-use applications. Otherwise, significant progress towards a low-carbon built environment will not be achieved, which will in turn hinder NEDDC in meeting its obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008.
3.5	As mentioned earlier, SDC13 should test whether the design of development will facilitate the provision and viability of community facilities, sustainable travel options etc for the locality as a whole (eg mix of uses, safe walking and cycling).
3.6	SDC14 should require development proposals to result in a <i>net enhancement</i> to the environmental quality of the locality.
4.	<b><u>The place-shaping should be more robust: Policies SS9-SS14</u></b>
4.1	Our comments on these policies are set in the context that we do not accept the strategic case for Green Belt change is soundly based, as we have explained in response to policies SS2 and SS3.
4.2	This is a suite of place-shaping policies. Settlement Development Limits, Local Settlement Gaps, Safeguarded Land and Green Belt, all seek to delineate areas where built development will be appropriate from areas where it will not. In terms of the rationale for that delineation, CPRE is broadly supportive of the policies. However, there is a very high risk that they will be ineffective, and must therefore be considered unsound, as we explain here.
4.3	Recent planning application and appeal decisions across the country have shown these place-shaping policies to be very vulnerable to fluctuations in the five-year land supply. Green Belt land has tended to remain relatively safe, but non-Green Belt land outside settlement limits, and also urban greenspaces, are extremely vulnerable. This arises because these policies have been deemed to constrain the supply of land for housing, and therefore carry reduced weight in the absence of a five-year land supply. The results of this problem have been very damaging, and it is essential that the NED Local Plan takes a robust approach that reduces this vulnerability.
4.4	<b>In our view, the Plan should state explicitly the following points.</b>
4.5	<b>The purpose of place-shaping policies is not to constrain development, but to guide it to the right places and – in so doing – maintain the planned relationship between built development and other uses of land, including (for example) open space, green infrastructure, agriculture and climate resilience. The policies are therefore working positively for both built and non-built land uses. The Local Plan should therefore identify the range of sustainable development functions that are</b>

	<b>embedded in the suite of place-shaping policies, and the importance of those functions carrying weight in decision-making.</b>
4.6	<b>Lack of a five-year supply may trigger a presumption in favour of sustainable development; but the suite of place-shaping policies create a spatial expression of where development should be located in order for it to be considered sustainable. Therefore any reduction in the weight given to place-shaping policies is effectively a reduction in the sustainability of the resulting development.</b>
4.7	Safeguarded land is being habitually undermined by planning applications and appeals coming forward for those sites during the plan period in instances where the local authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year land supply. This makes Local Plan policies for safeguarding land ineffective. In NED this is a particular concern, because of the concentration of safeguarded land on the south side of Eckington. There is an extremely high risk of an aggressive planning application to develop this site during the period – an outcome that would be unsustainable, inappropriate and, by eliminating the provision of safeguarded land, create pressure for a further Green Belt review.
4.8	<b>To remedy this, SS10 should clearly state the function that safeguarded land is intended to provide and the consequences of developing it during the plan period. In particular, this will include a statement of how the settlement hierarchy, infrastructure provision and distribution of development are pertinent to the plan period and cannot in themselves be rendered out-of-date by lack of a 5-year land supply.</b>
4.9	NPPF Para 81 requires local authorities to plan positively for the enhancement of land within Green Belt. This can only be achieved if the permanence of the Green Belt is enshrined in the Local Plan, and if the Local Plan includes an enhancement action plans for the land within Green Belt, which would then be a material considerations in determining planning applications, and would also inform any review of the Green Belt boundary. Any site proposed allocations for development that require the removal of land from Green Belt, strategic gaps, urban greenspaces or countryside policy areas must then take account of their potential to harm, or benefit, this enhancement action plan.
4.10	<b>We recommend that Policy SS9 be amended to provide for a Green Belt enhancement plan for the implementation of NPPF Para 81 in this way.</b>
4.11	<b>In our view, this commitment to enhancement should be extended to land designated as non-Green Belt countryside, settlement gaps and urban greenspaces, in order to assist in implementing policies SDC1 to SDC14 and ID1 to ID5; and to enable their sustainability functions to carry greater weight in decision-making.</b>
5.	<b><u>The scale of development is over-stated: Policy SS2</u></b>
5.1	The Derbyshire Employment Forecasts (para 4.3) predict employment growth in NED as follows: 2013-18 0.5% per year 2019-30 0.1% per year

5.2	<p>By the time the Plan is adopted, that earlier phase of relatively quicker job growth will have expired and, if the forecast is correct, the economy of the area will have largely flattened out. Clearly there will be an appetite for NED to take a more ambitious position than this, and to make policy interventions on that basis; but from such a low baseline there is clearly a limit to what could be achieved during the 2019-30 period. Para 3.1 of the Derbyshire Employment Forecasts also expects the working age population of Derbyshire to fall on average by 0.2% per year across the same period. So it is reasonable to assume that any job-related housing growth in NED over the remaining plan period will be negligible.</p>
5.3	<p>This assessment is borne out by the North Derbyshire &amp; Bassetlaw SHMA (para 1.7) which states: <i>“...in theory 1,500 homes [in the HMA] might be needed to support growth in line with Experian projections for employment growth to 2031. However the wider evidence does not point towards the economy being a particularly strong driver of the housing market across the HMA as a whole; and there is strong potential to support economic growth through reducing out-commuting.”</i></p>
5.4	<p>CPRE would strongly support the emphasis on reducing out-commuting.</p>
5.5	<p>According to NED’s Housing Statistics report, housing completions 2011-16 averaged 203 per year, compared to the proposed housing requirement of 300. However, the <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> Live Table 253 indicates that completions over that period averaged only 142 per year, of which only 3% (20 homes) were affordable. The reason for this statistical discrepancy is unclear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To bring housing completions up to the target annual rate would require an almost 50% increase in completion rates.</li> <li>• To build the remaining homes during the remaining plan period would require an average 328 completions per year, ie a 61% increase compared to the recent trend.</li> <li>• To achieve the planned 515 completions in 2019-20 would require an instantaneous 153% increase in completion rates.</li> </ul>
5.6	<p>It must be remembered that, unless a major programme of building by alternative housing providers can be instigated very rapidly, any growth in housebuilding rates will only happen on the basis of overall economic growth. A 50%-150% increase in housebuilding set against a virtually flat economic and job growth projection is therefore wholly unrealistic; and it would wrong and damaging to plan site allocations and land supply on the basis of such a fantastical scenario.</p>
5.7	<p>It is unclear why there is disagreement between the North Derbyshire &amp; Bassetlaw SHMA (2013), which proposed an OAN of 270-310 homes per year, and the North East Derbyshire HNMAS (2011), which states (para 10):</p> <p><i>“The projections indicate that 346 dwellings would be required per annum to meet the [2010] national projections, but that if longer-term migration trends are considered, the requirement would be lower – for 200 dwellings per annum. In both cases, the demographic structure would continue to age over the plan period with a reduction in the size of the resident workforce in the District.”</i></p>

5.8	It is also pertinent that whilst the 2011-based projections suggest NED would grow by 300 households per year, the 2014-based projections show a lower rate of 210 per year. We would therefore have expected the OAN to have fallen since 2013, and the reasons why this has not happened are entirely opaque.
5.9	<p>Furthermore, we would point out that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A substantial proportion of this should be in affordable tenures (see our comments on Policy LC2)</li> <li>• The market can only absorb new housing at a certain rate, so planning to supply housing significantly faster than this to 'catch up' is wholly untenable;</li> <li>• Therefore translating the annual OAN rate into a total figure of 6,600 for the plan period with only 17 years remaining is not a realistic option, unless significant non-market and/or diversified housing provision is expected to come on-stream in the very near future.</li> </ul>
5.10	Our position here is supported by the NEDDC Growth Strategy 2014 (p.12) which states: "Evidence suggests that housing delivery is restricted by low effective demand for housing, rather than a shortage of housing land." In other words, the philosophy of 'build it and they will come' is very unlikely to succeed. Therefore the translation of OAN into the proposed housing requirement is deeply ineffective, and therefore unsound.
5.11	<p><b>In the light of this position, we would recommend that the housing target is based on the lower-end OAN rate of 270 homes per year, and is segmented along the following lines:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open-market provision by conventional providers: 200 per year, ie the rate that the conventional delivery model can reasonably be expected to supply;</b></li> <li>• <b>Alternative provision (affordables, community build/custom build) 70 per year, representing the scale of provision for which innovative delivery models are required, and enabling a significant boost in affordable supply.</b></li> </ul>
5.12	<b>This would produce an overall housing target of 5,400 homes in the plan period, of which 1,400 (26%) would be expected to be in a mix of affordable, community and custom-build tenures.</b>
6.	<b><u>The spatial strategy: Policy SS3</u></b>
6.1	The planned spatial distribution of development is broadly similar to past trends. The exception to this is the increased focus on strategic development sites; and to the extent that these are predominantly brownfield sites in areas requiring regeneration, we support that emphasis.
6.2	We also acknowledge that if the proposed housing requirement is to be pursued in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, and unsustainable development in level 3 and 4 settlements is to be avoided, then that would point towards a scale of growth in Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh that would be likely to impact on the Green Belt. At the previous consultation stage we raised concerns that, in

	<p>seeking to avoid Green Belt impacts, the Council was proposing an inappropriate redistribution towards level 3 and 4 settlements that was at odds with the settlement hierarchy, and would adversely impact smaller settlements and their settings. We welcome that the Council has responded to these concerns in relation to smaller settlements. However, within that context we do not accept that the strategic case for changing Green Belt boundaries at Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh is soundly based, for the reasons we will now explore.</p>
6.3	<p>The North-East Derbyshire HNMMAS (2011) para 11 states:  <i>"..the National Planning Policy Framework accepts that there are circumstances in which there are strategic development constraints which mean that the full requirements for market and affordable housing cannot be met. This may well be the case recognizing in particular the Green Belt constraints affecting the north of the District, and the inclusion of parts of the west of the District in the Peak District National Park."</i></p>
6.4	<p>The housing requirement has not been reduced compared to the selected OAN, which indicates that these strategic constraints have not been taken into account. In any case, in our view the OAN itself and the resulting housing target have been overstated even before any strategic constraints might apply.</p>
6.5	<p>The HNMMAS continues, at para 16:  <i>"There is significant out-commuting from the District to work. Currently just a third of residents work within the District, with significant out-commuting to Chesterfield and Sheffield. Given the demographic dynamics of the District the long-term potential for employment growth is likely to be dependent on reducing out-commuting."</i></p>
6.6	<p>Taking land out of Green Belt for housing in the northern settlements of Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh can only serve to increase out-commuting to Sheffield, and therefore runs directly contrary to the evidence of what NED needs to do in economic terms. The draft Plan provides its own evidence that increased out-commuting would take place: paras 7.4, 7.20 and 7.32 state that Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh are areas of high demand for growth, and 7.32 notes that this is <i>"due to its close proximity to Sheffield"</i>.</p>
6.7	<p>Enabling an increase in out-commuting is not only economically counter-productive but will also increase road traffic and associated pollution and carbon emissions, so it is environmentally damaging.</p>
6.8	<p><b>Therefore we conclude that housing development on sites currently in the Green Belt is not needed <i>and</i> would be both economically and environmentally damaging. Clearly, this does not amount to any exceptional circumstances for changes to the Green Belt – in fact quite the opposite.</b></p>
6.9	<p><b>We recommend that the housing requirement be adjusted downwards, as we have already outlined, by 1,200 homes to 5,400. This would result in a much more sound plan in terms of meeting development needs sustainably. Based on the existing capacity figures, removing all the proposed Green Belt deletion sites from the Plan would create a shortfall of 655 dwellings against our</b></p>



	<p><b>proposed 5,400 target, which in our view could easily be made up over the plan period by increasing the density requirements on remaining sites – by about 5%.</b></p>
7.	<p><b><u>Housing Allocations: Policy LC1</u></b></p>
7.1	<p>CPRE objects to the proposed allocations on land taken from the Green Belt because, as we set out in response to SS2 and SS3, we do not accept that the strategic case for Green Belt change is soundly based. The resulting proposed site allocations (g to s, excluding m and o) have varying impacts on the function of the Green Belt itself, but our principal objection is that these will tend to release sites for development that is unsustainable. They will generate significant amounts of out-commuting that is contrary to other policies in the Plan, runs counter to the economic evidence base, and will cause environmental damage in terms of air and noise pollution and carbon emissions. They will fuel housing demand in Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh; and they will broadly fail to meet genuine housing needs. In some cases, most notably south of Eckington, they will cause significant encroachment into open countryside by breaching a natural edge in the landscape.</p>
7.2	<p>Removal from the plan of the allocations most damaging to the Green Belt and the landscape - sites g, h, l and p – would remove 1,195 dwellings based on the proposed capacities. Our recommended housing target of 5,400 could be met without those four sites.</p>
7.3	<p>The remaining proposed Green Belt sites – l, j, k, n, q, r and s account for a further 660 dwellings. In our view, small increases in development densities on other sites – principally the regeneration sites at The Avenue and Biwaters (SS4 and SS5) – would eliminate the need for those Green Belt deletions.</p>
7.4	<p>We acknowledge that these changes would amount to a change to the spatial distribution of development, which would no longer be in proportion to the existing settlement hierarchy. Insofar as the proposed Green Belt changes would produce unsustainable patterns of settlement and travel, and concentrating development in regeneration zones can be considered to be more sustainable, we would support such a change.</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Affordable Housing: Policy LC2</u></b></p>
8.1	<p>The HNMA (para 29) finds that an estimated 24% of all households in NED cannot afford market housing without subsidy, and finds a net annual need (Figure H) for 494 affordable homes. Compared to the recent trend of 4 new affordable homes across the district per year, it is abundantly clear that if genuine housing need were to be addressed then the majority of new homes should be in affordable tenures.</p>
8.2	<p>In common with many other Local Plans, the NED Plan only seeks to address affordable housing provision as a proportion or contribution delivered by S106 agreements on market housing schemes. Within this segment, the 30%-40% target identified in LC2 is to be welcomed, but the recent delivery of affordable homes is so tiny by comparison with this target, and private housebuilders have become</p>

	<p>adept at reducing their affordable housing contributions through the planning application process, that there is virtually no prospect of this being achieved; and the policy must therefore be considered ineffective. The fact that LC2 provides a series of criteria by which the affordable requirement might be reduced only emphasizes this problem.</p>
<p>8.3</p>	<p>In response to policy SS2, we recommended an overall housing target of 5,400, of which 26%, or 70 homes per year, should be in alternative tenures other than conventional open market dwellings. Our key point here is that, whilst open market schemes may or may not deliver the proportional target (for example, 30% of 200 homes is 60 affordables, but if only 10% were achieved in practice then only 20 affordables would delivered by this mechanism), our proposed target of 70 homes per year operates independently of the proportional delivery by S106.</p>
<p>8.4</p>	<p><b>We therefore recommend that LC2 be re-written as follows.</b></p>
<p>8.5</p>	<p><b>NE Derbyshire aims to provide at least 70 [or other number] homes per year in affordable tenures, including social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership. The objectively assessed need for affordable housing is much higher than this, in the order of 400-500 dwellings per year, but it is unrealistic to plan for this due to lack of delivery mechanisms.</b></p> <p><b>Private developments of more than 10 dwellings will be expected to provide a percentage of affordable housing in accordance with the table below [as per existing LC2]. This percentage may vary for the reasons set out below [as per existing LC2].</b></p> <p><b>The mix of types and tenures of housing envisaged for each site allocation will be identified. Planning permission will not normally be granted on allocated site if it proposes fewer homes in affordable tenures than are outlined in the site allocation.</b></p> <p><b>Delivery will be monitored through quarterly housing starts, and if the target rate for affordable homes is not being met then this will carry additional weight in planning decisions.</b></p> <p><b>Alternative providers of affordable tenures, such as Community Land Trusts, will be actively supported by ensuring that an appropriate proportion of the housing land supply is on sites that are suitable, and suitably located, for those providers.</b></p>