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Our ref PM/DMD/Quarndon Neighbourhood Plan  
Your ref  
Date 13 August 2018

Dear Mr Reed

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## Localism Act 2011 – Strategic Planning Comments

### Quarndon Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2033: Pre-Submission Version

Thank you for consulting Derbyshire County Council (DCC) on the Quarndon Neighbourhood Development Plan (QNDP) 2018 – 2033: Pre-Submission Version. The comments below are DCC's Member and Officers' technical comments with regard to the green belt, housing, heritage, transport, renewable energy, and public health aspects of the Plan.

#### Local Member Comments

Councillor Chris Short, the Local County Council Member for Duffield and Belper South, has been consulted. To date, no comments have been received. If I receive any comments I will forward them to you.

#### Officer Comments

##### General

Overall, DCC would consider that the Plan is well written and structured. In particular, it is supported by a range of evidence such as the AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, Derby Principal Area Green Belt Review, Census data, and the Kedleston Hall Setting Study, which have helped inform and frame the policy approach in the QNDP.

##### Green Belt

The key / overriding planning policy context for consideration of the QNDP and its policy approach is that the vast majority of the Parish is covered by the Nottingham – Derby Green Belt, with the main settlement of Quarndon inset from the Green Belt but tightly constrained by it, as set out in the Adopted Amber Valley Local Plan and Amber Valley Local Plan Submission.

It is fully supported, therefore, that Green Belt is given high prominence in the QNDP in framing the overall future approach to growth in the Parish, particularly housing development. DCC is

pleased to see that the Spatial Portrait Section makes extensive reference to the Technical Assessment of the Derby Principal Area Green Belt Purposes Study, which was coordinated by DCC working jointly with officers of Amber Valley Borough, Derby City, Erewash Borough and South Derbyshire District Councils and published in 2012. The study defined five broad areas of the Derby PUA Green Belt for assessment purposes for which Quarndon Parish fell within Area A, Derby North West. As appropriately identified in paragraph 6.1.4 of the QNDP, the study concluded that:

*'The Green Belt in this location performs a very important role in constraining the northward sprawl of the City and the merging of the urban areas of Derby with Quarndon, Duffield, and Belper'; and*

*'The physical open gaps between Derby and Quarndon and Quarndon and Duffield are very narrow in this location and the Green Belt performs an important role therefore in preventing the merging of these settlements with each other and the urban area of the City. On the western edge of the broad location, the Green Belt performs an important role in preventing urban sprawl between the City and the National Trust's Kedleston Hall Registered Park and Garden.*

*In helping to separate the urban area of Derby from Quarndon, Duffield and Belper, this area of Green Belt performs an important wider role in preventing the merging of Derby and Belper along the Derwent Valley. Historically, there has been some linear development along the A6 to the north of the City towards Belper. The openness and restriction on development that is provided by the Green Belt is essential therefore in defining the extent of settlements in this area and preventing them from merging'.*

In the context of the above, the Policy approach to Green Belt set out in paragraphs 8.2.1.3, and Policies QSS1 and QSS3 is fully supported, which seeks to ensure that any new housing development will be limited to infill of the village inset from the Green Belt, through new build, the re-use or redevelopment of redundant buildings or conversion or re-use of agricultural or residential buildings. This approach is fully compliant with the newly revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), adopted Amber Valley Local Plan, and Amber Valley Local Plan Submission. Similarly, Policy QSS4 is also supported, which seeks to ensure that the village of Quarndon will remain separated from the City of Derby and Duffield, as this is compliant with the recommendations and conclusions of the Derby PUA Green Belt study which recognised such separation as one of the main purposes of the Green Belt in this location.

### Housing

The approach to housing and housing policy has become more complex as a result of the decision of the Court of Appeal on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018, effectively upholding a Planning Inspector's decision to grant planning permission for up to 400 new homes on land to the west of Kedleston Road, Quarndon in the south of the Parish. Paragraph 6.2.7 sets out clearly that there has been great concern amongst Parish residents about the housing proposals which would compromise the setting of Kedleston Hall, Park and Conservation Area and destroy the rural outlook towards Quarndon. The NP will need to be updated to reflect this decision, identify the site in question and consider how the housing development will impact on the future growth of the Parish and its residents, particularly the likely impact on local facilities and services, including primary and secondary schools in the area, which the Plan highlights as being currently relatively limited.

There is an important opportunity for the Plan to seek to influence how the Kedleston Road housing development (outline application) is designed and brought forward, particularly to influence the type and mix of housing incorporated within the scheme, as evidence

commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan Group in the AECOM Housing Needs Assessment clearly identifies an important need in the Parish for two and three bedroomed family homes, more affordable homes and homes for the elderly. Policies to facilitate these types of new homes are already set out in Policies QH4 and QH5; however, these policies were framed in a context that only between 15 and 30 new homes would be needed in the Parish up to 2033. An additional 400 new homes will now need to be accommodated in the Parish and so the policies will need to be revisited in this changed context to see if they are still largely appropriate and fit for purpose. In addition, the AECOM study may also need to be updated to reflect the changed context caused by the Kedleston Road decision.

That said, the overall approach to new housing development within the larger part of the Parish that is located within the Green Belt is considered to remain wholly appropriate. Infill development within the settlement of Quarndon which is inset from the Green Belt will be limited, and compliant with national and local planning policies for the Green Belt set out above. The Amber Valley Local Plan Submission sets out a hierarchy of the Borough's settlements (Policy SS3) and other policies setting out the appropriate scale of development within those settlements based on their range of services and facilities. Quarndon is defined in the hierarchy in SS3 as 'Other Villages and Settlements' that have a limited range of services and facilities. Policy H2 indicates that in such settlements, new housing development should be restricted to the built framework of such settlements and in the form of limited infilling of small gaps. Policies QSS1 and QH1 are both compliant with the Local Plan policy approach.

DCC's other main concern is that the Plan does not contain any policies for affordable housing, even though the AECOM Housing Needs Assessment identifies a need for affordable housing in the Parish as set out at paragraph 8.3.5.2. This paragraph justifies the omission of a policy and a specific proportion of affordable housing on the basis that policy QH4 seeks to encourage the development of smaller 2 and 3 bedroom houses which are likely to be more affordable compared to larger four and five bedroom houses. However, this does not appear to be a robust approach because a 2 or 3 bedroom house in Quarndon could cost in excess £200,000 compared to a similar house costing considerably less in another part of Amber Valley i.e. affordability is relative and not just based on size of unit. Setting a maximum unit size will not therefore guarantee that those units will be affordable (affordable rent, social rent, or shared ownership). DCC would suggest, therefore, that there needs to be a specific policy in the QNDP on affordable housing if it is to be effective in tackling the acute affordability problem in the Parish. The Amber Valley Local Plan Submission includes Policy H5, which requires housing schemes of 0.5 ha or more (or 15 dwellings or more) to include up to 30% affordable housing subject to considerations of viability. Quarndon is likely to be a very viable location to build houses and so there is no reason why an affordable housing policy in the Plan for housing schemes to provide for up to 30% affordable housing would not be workable.

### **8.2.3 Setting of Kedleston Hall, Park and Conservation Area**

#### Heritage

The other fundamental planning policy constraint affecting a large part of the Parish is the setting of Kedleston Hall and its historic park and gardens. Impact on this setting was the key consideration at the heart of the Court of Appeal's deliberations on the acceptability of the planning application for 400 homes on the Kedleston Road site. Although the Inspector and Court of Appeal determined that the impact of the Kedleston Road housing scheme would have less than substantial harm on the setting of the Hall and its park and gardens and would be acceptable with appropriate mitigation, the importance of the setting and the Local Plan policies which sought to protect it were acknowledged and not brought into question in the decisions.

In this context, the inclusion of Policy QSS2 is supported, which sets out the Plan's aim to ensure that the any new development does not cause 'significant harm' to the setting of Kedleston Hall, Park and Conservation Area. However, the supporting text to Policy QSS2 should make reference to the key test of 'harm' that should be applied to planning applications affecting designated heritage assets and their settings as set out in paragraphs 193 to 196 of the Revised NPPF (i.e. substantial harm or total loss and less than substantial harm versus the public benefits of granting permission).

### 8.3.7 Transport and Parking

#### Policy QH6

Whilst DCC has no comments to make on highway issues generally, the policy reference 'ensuring dwellings are designed with the provision for the charging of electric cars' is welcomed. However, DCC would suggest that a similar wording should be added to: **Policy QCLE2: Community facilities** e.g. *"New community facility proposals should include provision of Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle and e-bike charging points available for both the public and staff."*

### 8.4.5 Reuse of Buildings for Employment Purposes

#### Policy QCLE4

DCC would suggest that in the final line of the policy the words 'sustainable drainage management systems' should be replaced by the more recognisable term 'Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)'.

## 8.5 Policies for Renewable Energy

### 8.5.2 Renewable Energy

#### Policy QRE1

The policy seeks to limit photovoltaic panels to less than 4kW roof-mounted. Whilst DCC accepts the argument against development in the Green Belt, Kedleston Hall Park and its setting, and in the Conservation Area, nevertheless DCC feels that limiting panels to 4kW is unnecessary, particularly as 'conservation area friendly' panels are now available. DCC would suggest, therefore, that it would be more appropriate to say that ground mounted solar arrays and visually intrusive roof mounted systems will be resisted.

## 8.6 Policies for Rural Character, Heritage Assets and Environment

### 8.6.2 Natural Features

#### Policy QEN1

In general, DCC has no comments to make on the landscape elements of the Plan. Nevertheless, the reference to the 'preservation of existing mature trees, ancient woodland and hedgerows' is welcomed, and reflects the publication of the new NPPF (July 2018) in its approach to the protection of veteran trees.

### 8.6.3 Historical/Heritage Assets

The Quarndon parish abuts the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Buffer Zone, but the Buffer Zone, and the World Heritage Site itself, do not fall within the parish boundary. As such, DCC has no comments to make on this aspect of the QNDP.

## 8.6.5 Dark Skies

### Policy QEN4

The policy approach is welcomed.

### **Public Health**

DCC's Public Health Department has considered how the plan aligns with the agreed Strategic Statement – Planning and Health, across Derbyshire and Derby City (see attachment). Comments below indicate where the Department feels the QNDP supports the Statement's priorities, where it could be strengthened, or where it could be more explicit.

The QNDP does not make any reference to Health Impact Assessments (HIA). DCC would suggest that the following statement should be added to the Plan:

*“Planning applications for major residential developments of 100 Dwellings or more should ideally be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) where there is likely to be a negative impact on population health as a consequence of development.”*

The QNDP also makes no reference to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and population human health as one of the EIA considerations. The Neighbourhood Planning Group should consider adding this to the Plan.

The Department feels that this plan demonstrates a commitment to support and enhance the health and wellbeing of local residents, through local planning policy.

There are many references to health and wellbeing throughout the QNDP, demonstrating the potential for a joined up partnership approach to supporting healthy communities within Quarndon. The QNDP makes reference to healthy footpaths, and links to leisure opportunities essential for physical and mental health including community facilities to enable the development of healthy children. The QNDP supports biodiversity for the health and wellbeing of local people, and the provision to walk and cycle in the context of managing traffic volume and improving people's health.

### **6.1 Prioritising positive prevention (promote the development of healthy environments that actively support people to maintain a healthy weight)**

The QNDP makes specific reference to walking and cycling, and the consultation showed strong support for improving walking and cycling in the parish. The network of footpaths throughout the parish is widely used, and there are many attractive cycle routes. The Plan reflects the need to protect the rural environment including the Green Belt. It also recognises the importance of promoting these activities through the provision of appropriate facilities. Objective 10 of Amber Valley Borough Council's Local Plan Submission 2018 includes "...provision of infrastructure that creates opportunities for non-motorised transport..."

The QNDP also makes reference to supporting "Towards a Healthy Amber Valley, 2017/2018" thus highlighting a commitment by the parish to improve levels of physical activity through appropriate planning.

### **6.2 Supporting positive mental wellbeing**

Mental Health is briefly mentioned in relation to leisure opportunities that are essential to both physical and mental health. It could also be surmised that the "wellbeing" agenda is supported

in the plan by the inclusion of references to the natural environment, open green spaces, connectedness, community facilities, and community consultation.

### **6.3 Supporting healthy ageing**

It is clear from consultation with residents that provision for the elderly should be a key priority in the Plan. The QNDP outlines an understanding of the ageing population, and the desire of the older population to remain in the village.

The QNDP outlines an understanding that the neighbourhood will change in response to the growing and ageing population of the borough. The Plan also recognises that provision of accommodation within the Parish for those no longer able to live independently would be beneficial.

Whilst design of neighbourhoods specifically for older people is not explicit, this may be covered in the use of development design standards such as Building for Life (BfL 12) which encourages connectedness and meeting local housing requirements. Thus DCC would encourage the Neighbourhood Planning Group to include a reference to BfL 12 in Section 8.3.4: Design and Built Character.

The QNDP could also be strengthened by making reference to encouraging dementia- friendly communities.

### **6.4 Enabling people to connect with each other**

The QNDP makes reference to the need to ensure that the community facilities and services are provided to meet the growing local need. Community engagement is a key principle mentioned in the Plan, and reference is made to consultation with residents identifying the high value placed on the sense of community in the Parish. The Plan also makes reference to supporting development proposals for new community facilities, provided there are no significant adverse impacts.

### **6.5 Healthy Homes**

The QNDP seeks to ensure promotion of the use of high quality design and materials for development of buildings that reflect the predominantly rural and residential character of the area, with innovative design of new dwellings to minimise environmental impact. The Plan refers to improved facilities and access to public transport, and meeting the local housing requirement in particular for older residents, young families and nest flyers.

The quality of existing housing stock is not specifically mentioned. Living in poor quality homes that require improvement has a fundamental negative impact on health and particularly the most vulnerable people e.g. children and older people. Therefore the QNDP would be strengthened if it included some reference to ensuring existing housing stock maintains good quality, or is renovated or replaced if it requires improvement.

Other areas from the Planning and Health Strategic Statement that the Neighbourhood Planning Group should consider for inclusion to strengthen the Plan are:-

- Supporting Dementia-Friendly communities, and enabling connectedness. This should include encouraging developers to design homes to a lifetime standard that includes facilities and features that enable people to live independently for longer.
- The inclusion of a reference to mixed use housing development that would create opportunities for connectedness between members of the community who might not

otherwise come into contact with each other, for example, via a shared recreational space to encourage inter-generational contact and neighbourhood community centres.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss the comments further.

Yours sincerely

*David M Dale*

David M Dale

Policy and Monitoring and LA lead: CLIP: Planning Sub-group

