

PLANNING POLICY COMMENTS

Date: 6 March 2025

Application Number: HPK/2024/0481

Location: Glossopdale Community College Lower Site, Talbot Road, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 7DR

Proposal: Outline planning application for the construction of up to 110 dwellings, with all matters reserved (except principal points of access)

Issues for Consideration

High Peak Local Plan 2016

The 2016 High Peak Local Plan is the relevant plan to assess this application against. On the 23rd June 2022, the Council concluded that Policy S3 (Strategic Housing Development), Policy S4 (Maintaining and Enhancing an Economic Base) and Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) are deemed out of date for development management purposes and agreed to commencement of an update to the Local Plan to update Policy S3, S4 and H4 and to consider any consequential updates for policies and to reflect corporate priorities including in particular issues around climate change, biodiversity and nutrient neutrality.

All the other Local Plan policies remain valid in the assessment of this application.

The Local Plan Review is underway but is at a very early stage so does not have any influence on the assessment of this application.

5 Year Housing Land Supply

New Government policy set out in the latest NPPF (December 2024), namely the new standard method for calculating local housing needs, has impacted on the Council's 5-year housing land supply status.

The Council must now calculate local housing need using the standard method in place of the housing targets in the Local Plan as the plan is more than 5 years old. The new standard method for calculating local housing need results in a local housing need of 553 dwellings per annum for High Peak. The Housing Delivery Test 2023 results published in December 2024 indicate that the Council passed with 153%. Therefore a 5% buffer should be used.

Consequently, the Council's housing land supply equates to **2.85 years**. (It should be noted that this is not a full update but provides an interim position prior to the next published statement which will reflect the position at 1st April 2025).

This was reported to Development Control Committee on the 24th February 2025:

<https://democracy.highpeak.gov.uk/documents/s44773/ITEM%205%205YHLS%20update%2024%20Feb%202025%20Development%20Control%20Committee.pdf>

If an authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, including any appropriate buffer, the presumption in favour of sustainable development also known as the 'tilted balance' will apply, as set out in 11(d) of the NPPF which states:

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework** that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

**The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

The new NPPF changes increased the requirement for refusing applications in paragraph i. from policies that protect areas of assets of particular importance proving a 'strong reason' instead of the previous iteration which required a 'clear reason'.

Loss of Community Facility

A school is classed as a community facility in Local Plan Policy CF5, so the applicant is required to meet the terms of this policy i.e. in this case demonstrate that an alternative facility of the same type is available or can be provided in an accessible location. The policy also states 'if permission is granted for a change of use or redevelopment, preference will be given to premises remaining in some form of community or employment use so long as this does not result in traffic, amenity, environmental or conservation problems.'

Page 30 of the Planning Statement states that there is suitable alternative school provision locally as the school has been replaced on another site in the locality. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that the policy test of having an alternative facility

of the same type available in an accessible location has been passed. This does assume that the replacement Glossopdale School is able to accommodate the educational needs of potential new residents on the proposed site? The Local Education Authority will advise.

The second part of the test regarding preference for premises remaining in some form of community or employment use is covered below.

Leisure Centre

As listed in the Planning Statement (p.24), the Borough Council has undertaken work with the County Council on a Development Brief for this site following the school closure. A draft brief was produced, though it has not been published or adopted by either Council. A key element of the brief was assessing suitable uses for the site. Both residential and leisure uses are considered to be suitable.

At the time the brief was being developed (2021/22), the Council's sport and leisure consultant identified a need for a new, co-located 'wet and dry' leisure centre to serve Glossop. The Glossopdale Community College site was identified as the only suitable and available site which is within a reasonable distance of the town centre and customer base which could also accommodate the size of facility required. Therefore, the brief suggested that the school site could be used as a mixed residential/leisure site.

It would be appropriate for the case officer to investigate this issue with the service commissioning department to ascertain whether it is still applicable and if so whether it influences the outcome of this application.

Loss of Playing Fields

There is a question mark over whether the replacement of Glossopdale School on the new site has resulted in a net loss of playing fields or not. The applicant presents an argument to say that this is not the case and that Sport England are not a statutory consultee for this proposal as the criteria for consulting them set out in the PPG is not applicable (Planning Statement p. 31). It is also stated that the playing fields have been unavailable and unused since September 2018 and they therefore consider that the proposals would not prejudice the use or lead to the loss of use of playing fields. Sport England had a different view at pre-application stage. This is a matter for the case officer to investigate and reach a view on.

Conclusion on Principle of Development

As the proposed site is within the Glossop development boundary and the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the tilted balance applies so the general principle of housing development on this site is acceptable from a policy point of view. However, in reaching a decision, the leisure centre and playing fields issues detailed above should be investigated and assessed by the case officer.

Other Issues

As an indicative scheme has been included as part of this application, other matters related to this are covered below to assist the developer when preparing any future reserved matters application:

Housing Mix

Local Plan Policy H3 requires consideration to be given to the housing mix and compliance with the Nationally Described Space Standards and accessibility standards. These should be secured through a condition and/or legal agreement as per the legal opinion sought by the Council during the determination of the Foxlow Farm Reserved Matters application which concluded that provision should be made at the Outline application stage.

In September 2022, the Council published the Housing and Economic Land Needs Assessment (HELNA) that was commissioned to inform the review of the Local Plan. The study provides an updated analysis of the housing mix required across the Borough as well as providing a more fine-grained assessment of the recommended housing mix across each of the Local Plan Sub-Areas. This includes Glossopdale within which the site in question is located.

Accordingly, the HELNA is deemed to be a “successor document” to the SHMA as referenced in Policy H3 and it should therefore be taken into account when considering any planning application on the site. The recommendations from the 2022 HELNA in relation to the mix of market housing for both High Peak as a whole as well as Glossopdale are outlined below alongside the existing housing stock in Dinting Ward (the ward in which the site sits).

Recommendations with a market adjustment are also provided. This results in a 15% reduction in the number of smaller (1-2 bed) dwellings and a commensurate increase in the number of 3 and 4 bedroom properties to reflect “the very pronounced socio-economic shock precipitated by the pandemic and the strong (and what appears to be a permanent) shift towards homeworking and the need for larger properties to accommodate this.” (HELNA, para 12.34)

The development should bring the housing stock closer to the HELNA recommendations.

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed or more
2014 SHMA	10%	45%	35%	10%
2022 HELNA High Peak	10%	37%	41%	12%
2022 HELNA High Peak (with market adjustment)	8%	32%	44%	16%
2022 HELNA Glossop	7%	37%	46%	10%

2022 HELNA Glossop (with market adjustment)	6%	31%	49%	13%
% of existing housing stock in Dinting Ward (2021 Census)	5%	21%	40%	34%

Table Showing Housing Mix Data

Consequently, looking at recent data from the 2021 Census showing actual percentage of housing stock in the Dinting Ward, to bring the housing stock closer to the HELNA recommendations more 1, 2 and 3 bed houses are needed.

It is noted that in the planning statement (p.35) the indicative housing mix mostly falls in line with HELNA recommendations. The only conflict is the 4+ bed housing stock which is already well above HELNA recommendations in the Dinting Ward and this would be further increased by the agent's indicative proposal. It would be preferable to have a slightly higher proportion of 3 bed houses and lower proportion of 4 bed houses for more consistency with HELNA recommendations.

In relation to Part M4 (2) of the Buildings Regulations, the HELNA recommends that c.50% of new market housing should meet this standard.

Self-Build Housing Demand

The Council has a legal duty to meet the demand for the number of entries (plots) demanded on its self-build register overall; and should also consider the geographic areas of the Borough specified by applicants.

In the case of Glossop (including Charlesworth, Hadfield, Tintwistle and Padfield) at the time of writing, 45 self-build requests are on the register.

As demand exists, it is suggested that this is addressed by the applicant in any future reserved matters application.

Density

An indicative capacity of 110 dwellings (105 on concept plan) is proposed by the applicant on this 4.75ha site, which appears to be a very low density. On page 35 of the planning statement the applicant argues that the net developable area of the site is only 3ha which would equate to 33dph. They argue that site constraints and the provision of BNG and sustainable drainage limit the site capacity.

This site is in a sustainable location, has a brownfield element and is well served by public transport. It is important for the Council to ensure that sites like this are developed to make optimal use of the available land as there is only a 2.85 year housing land supply available (at the time of writing).

Whilst density is not a matter for consideration at this outline stage, this will be carefully considered as part of any future reserved matters application.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The potential for a large onsite BNG uplift of 140% (p.36 of planning statement) is noted.

High Peak Developer Contributions SPD (October 2023)

This document sets out the Council's and other partner's requirements. Those which could be applicable to this proposal are listed below:

- Affordable housing - 30% on site with the 80 (social rented) / 20 (intermediate) split meeting NDSS requirements.
- Open space – consultation with Council's 'Service Commissioning' section at an early stage (preferably pre-app).
- Outdoor sports and playing pitches (note that an updated playing pitch strategy is currently being prepared)
- Contribution towards built leisure facilities (in consultation with the Service Commissioning team)
- BNG requirements set out in the Environment Act
- Air quality (if the Council's Environmental Health section deem it to be applicable in this case)
- Contribution towards improving healthcare as this proposal will exceed the 50 dwelling threshold (if deemed appropriate by the Derbyshire Integrated Health System)
- Contribution towards highways and transport improvements (as per requirements of the Highway Authority)
- Contribution towards education (as per requirements of Local Education Authority)
- All new developments to include secure and accessible cycle storage, electric vehicle charging points, carbon offsetting, achieve the highest standards of sustainable design and construction
- Libraries (as per requirements of Derbyshire County Council)
- Waste (as per requirements of Derbyshire County Council)

Design

It is acknowledged that the scheme shown at this stage is indicative and not part of this outline application (apart from principal points of access).

However, there has been a significant amount of urban design work undertaken on this site as part of the unadopted design brief and there is one particular issue not addressed in the indicative plan which would improve the connectivity of the site:

Are there any opportunities to include a pedestrian access to the south of the site?

The site is 0.5 miles from the town centre. However, to walk from the Talbot Road site entrance to the town centre will be between 15 and 20 minutes. It is therefore desirable that any developer explore creating new links especially to the Howard Town centre

and new footpaths along Glossopdale Brook area which would greatly enhance the liveability of any housing development in this area.

Ideal walkway links would be to Fauvel Road and the junction with Spire Hollin. Developers should look at the possibility of obtaining access along one of the boundaries of the side gardens of houses along the stretch of houses along Fauvel Road, at a point between houses 18 to 22, where there is potential to create a narrow 2 to 2.5m footpath. This would also provide an essential direct link to recreation facilities at Fauvel Road. Also, there is an opportunity to look at the potential of creating links from Spire Hollin in the street frontage around 18a and 20 Spire Hollin.

Prospective developers should attempt to negotiate options for achieving new pedestrian access with landowners prior to a reserved matters planning application being made.