

Comment

Consultee	Alex Swainston (1171373)
Email Address	
Address	
Event Name	Local Plan 2016-2036 Proposed Modifications
Comment by	Alex Swainston (1171373)
Comment ID	DBLPMod379
Response Date	17/11/21 12:00
Status	Processed
Submission Type	Letter
Version	0.5
Question 1	
Which document/modification does this representation relate to?	Main Modification Schedule *
* Please provide the reference number (where applicable), for example MM1, PM1, MIN1	MM30
Question 2	
What best describes the nature of your representation?	Object
Question 3 Legally Compliant and Sound	
Do you consider the Plan, incorporating the proposed Modification is Legally Compliant?	No
Do you consider the Plan, incorporating the proposed Modification is Sound?	No
Question 4	

Please give details of why you consider the Darlington Local Plan, incorporating the proposed Modifications to which your representation relates, is not legally compliant or is unsound. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the Plan or comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum/Habitats Regulations Screening please also use this box to set out your comments.

As a local resident of Darlington I can honestly say, I have found this whole process to be nothing but confusing, unapproachable and downright misleading! The goal posts keeps changing in terms of housing numbers and from “allocation” to “commitment” and from “commitment” to “delivered”. This in itself to me, demonstrates how unsound and inappropriate the housing allocation is and totally unnecessary for yet more. I CANNOT fathom why a town the size of Darlington requires more than one ‘Garden Village’ large scale build since the Plan period has already started, and since houses have already been built, it doesn't make sense to re-set the balance. The figure given for housing delivery within the Plan period, really should include dwellings already constructed since 2016 as there are many! As we are in this process currently, I see many more new builds already commencing including, Coatham Vale, houses going in opposite the big stadium on the bypass, houses in Heighington, MSG all popping up on large estates. All happening right now before this LP already agreed how can this be legal or sound?

I'd like to see evidence of the methodology used for calculating such a huge housing need, which in my opinion, is far in excess of what is actually needed. Has anyone actually got the true figure of built houses since 2016 and in process? Are these houses the necessary type e.g. affordable, bungalows etc etc as to me most are not. Where are the opportunities for developing within the town itself? How is it calculated or decided why greenbelt should be used verses brownfield or town centre builds?

Question 5

Please set out what changes you consider necessary to make the Plan legally compliant or sound and why, thinking about what you identified in Question 4. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording or any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

- . Skerningham removed
- . Housing need to be reassessed taking into account what has been built since 2016 and in process of being built
- . Greenbelt protected more town-based sites looked at if housing still needed
- . Schools are needed even with this current finished and committed builds yet nothing has been done.

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With regard to proposals with reference to the relocation of the golf club, again I cant see any need to do this and the Skerningham area should be left out of the plan. Its a well used beautiful piece of countryside and the existing golf club serves the community well this is a wasteful 'reinvention of the wheel' with no regard to the environmental impact such a large scale development would have. In addition should the golf club remain where it is and housing still built in the area the plan doesn't show any kind of cohesive development which could adequately be served by one neighbourhood centre or by any additional schools. Therefore MM74 and MM75 should not be retained in the Plan, because if the golf club does not move, the Skerningham development as described in the Plan cannot reasonably be delivered.

In addition, as I have previously said, the housing requirement for Darlington Borough over the Plan period has already been largely met taking into account completions since 2016, current commitments and windfalls in between 2020 and 2021; thus surely the Skerningham site would still be surplus to requirements?

There is much more I'd like to say but I have found the whole process extremely difficult to comment on! I think its vitally important to note that as a public consultation, this has been –

- . Not well advertised
- . Not user friendly, how do those unable to use I.T or have access to it even comment?
- . No attempt to make the information available in layman's terms.

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