Matter 3 – Strategic Approach

Q3.2 Is the broad spatial distribution of development proposed in policies 2 and 3 justified? In Particular, the aims to accommodate:

a) At least 50% of new homes in and around the Main Urban Area; approximately 40% at seven Main Towns; and about 10% at ten services Towns and Villages.

1.1 As set out in Section 2.2 of our representation we do not consider the Plan in its current form to be sound. The plan’s vision seeks to ensure the sustainability of villages through appropriate development and the hierarchy includes a number of ‘defined villages’. However, there is no recognition in the vision or the spatial distribution that many of the smaller settlements are not in isolated locations and development in one village is likely to support services in a nearby village.

1.2 The vision and lack of strategic distribution to the defined villages is not consistent with national policy in the context of much of the rural nature of Doncaster.

Matter 6 - Housing Development Requirements

Q6.1 Are the development requirements for the housing allocations without planning permission set out in Appendix 2 to the plan justified? Is there sufficient detail to provide clarity to developers, local communities and other interested parties about the nature and scale of development proposed? Are the Council’s suggested changes to Appendix 2 relating to sites ref 133 and 247 necessary to make the plan sound?

1.3 As referred to in paragraphs 2.24 onwards of our statement, Policy 6 and Table H1 and H2 do not include any sites in Clayton

1.4 We do not consider that the proposed allocations support sustainable rural communities as set out in the plan’s vision. It is considered that small scale development should be supported in the defined villages that are located in close proximity to larger villages/ settlements such that they have a functional relationship.

1.5 Policy two permits some development within the defined villages Development Limits but there are no opportunities for infill in Clayton or many of the other defined villages, effectively making the policy statement and further development in these locations undeliverable and unsound.
1.6 The current policy removes choice for the younger generation who wish to remain in the village and support the local or wider functional community.

1.7 Paragraph 2.27 of our statement identifies opportunities for small scale development extensions for allocation and removal from the green belt around Clayton to support the village and wider community over the plan period in accordance with NPPF.

Matter 7 Specific Types of Housing

Q7.1 - Is the approach to housing development in the Countryside set out in policies 2, 3 and 26 justified and consistent with national policy? In particular:

- Are the size limits for an individual scheme/site and cumulative growth limits over the plan period for residential development adjacent to the 14 defined villages set out in policy 3 justified?

- Are the councils suggested changes to the title of the first column of the table in policy 3 and footnote 5 relating to the site/scheme and cumulative growth limits for the 14 defined villages necessary and would they make the policy effective?

- Is the requirement to demonstrate exceptional circumstances and clear community support for development in the countryside adjacent to the development limit of a defined village justified and consistent with national policy?

1.8 The Councils response to PQ17 explains that the 14 defined villages in policy 3 relate to those villages on the eastern side of the Borough surrounded by Countryside policy area and excludes those villages in the West, surrounded by Green Belt.

1.9 The clarification is welcomed as it was not clear previously. However, it remains our case that there is no justification for why the exceptional circumstances do not apply to all 40 defined villages.

1.10 Paragraph 7.4.7 of the Green Belt Topic paper states that following a review of all the villages, it was concluded that there was not sufficient justification or exceptional circumstances to cover the settlements (in the west of the borough) with Green Belt designation.
The proposed approach means that the land outside the settlement limits is subject to Green Belt policy. However, the settlement limits of the majority of the defined villages, particularly Clayton are so tightly drawn that essentially there is no opportunity for sustainable growth of the villages in the west of the borough under the current policy wording.

The proposed policy approach and limitation of the exception under part 5 of policy 2 is not effective and will lead to a skewed and unstainable pattern of development which the Green Belt Topic Paper seeks to avoid, stating that the settlement strategy for growth across the borough must be maintained.

The exception under Part 5 of Policy 2 should apply to all defined villages referred to in part 4. However, as discussed there is no opportunity for development within the development limits at the majority of the defined villages. For the exceptional circumstances of the policy to be effective across the Borough, extensions to the development limits will be needed to the defined villages in the west of the borough that are surrounded by Green Belt.

As we suggest in paragraph 2.24 to 2.77 sustainable extensions to the development limits of the defined villages, in particular Clayton should be made to provide sustainable and equitable housing growth, providing a better mix and choice of sites which will improve the delivery of new homes.

The removal of some parcels of land adjoining the development limits surrounding the defined villages in the west of the borough will ensure Green Belt boundaries do not need to be altered again at the end of the plan period and ensure sustainable growth across the Borough and over the plan period.