

DD3: Presentation to Local Plan Advisory Committee 12/12/12

Richard Bunting

My name is Richard Bunting; my wife and I are landowners for DD3. Firstly, I care deeply about the area around the site. I was born a stone's throw away; as a child, I lived and went to school nearby; my home overlooks it.

And I care deeply about environmental and social issues (including housing) – which I work on for a living and on which I do a lot of voluntary work in the community.

All this goes to the heart of our vision for the site.

We want our area to have adequate future housing (not least because we're parents) and for it to be fresh and vibrant. As shown in the promotional report we submitted during consultation, DD3 could provide 25 new homes including affordable housing.

We want to fuse that social need with the highest possible environmental standards. For this development to be modest; sensitive; to work well with the local landscape. But more: for it to be an exciting, forward-looking eco development of high environmental quality, and low-carbon sustainability.

Regarding biodiversity, our professional ecological survey concluded the current vegetation is not species rich – a view supported by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. So ecological impact would be low – but we want to enhance the site's biodiversity and wildlife benefits, retaining hedgerows and trees, while adding beneficial features and native planting, so that this is a really healthy, rich and green place to live.

Additionally, we own five adjacent acres, and have resisted approaches from builders interested in development of this section of the hillside. As well as being a potentially pioneering opportunity, development of DD3 would allow us to conserve this neighbouring space for the future. And we want to work with officers to investigate other community benefits: possibly new informal open space, allotments and a small orchard.

As the officers note, DD3 relates well to an adjacent existing residential development. As shown by our submitted indicative plan, moderate visual impact for some current residents can be softened by a planting buffer zone, sensitive landscaping, and through appropriate distances between new and existing properties.

The technical work we commissioned, and the conclusions of key bodies, address the main issues raised in the seven separate public comments made during consultation.

A detailed traffic and transport assessment we commissioned concluded development would generate only minimal traffic increases with no significant off-site impact. The Highways Authority advises development is feasible in highway terms.

The site has no known springs and is always dry. The Environment Agency has no records of unmapped watercourses.

A good range of services (chemist, post office, supermarket, doctors surgery, bank) are some 15 minutes level walk towards Darley Dale. Matlock town centre is just over 20 minutes away. Two schools are 10 minutes away. There's excellent public transport to Matlock, with a bus stop nearby on the A6.

Technical studies confirm no overriding constraints to development. The site is deliverable and, as officers note, suitable for development. It relates well to an existing residential development. It would bring significant economic, social and environmental benefits. We welcome the Officers' Recommendation of priority 2 and ask the committee to endorse that. Thank you.