



Dartmoor Local Plan (2018 - 2036) Examination

ED22 DNPA Hearing Statement 8 Settlement Boundaries

Issue 1 Methodology and application

Q1. Are the proposed settlement boundaries appropriate and justified?

- 1.1 The rationale for settlement boundaries, and their merits is discussed in Topic Paper 4 – Vision and Spatial Strategy [SD104] (section 4). This includes a review of the experience of their use over the current plan period, and consideration of how Settlement Boundaries could be applied under the revised settlement hierarchy. It was concluded that on balance Settlement Boundaries should be drafted for Rural Settlements, in order to enable a consistent and clear application of policy, relating in particular to development 'within the settlement'. Draft settlement boundaries for these settlements were included from the Regulation 18 consultation stage, enabling opportunities for scrutiny and comment.
- 1.2 The methodology for their drafting has been consistently applied across the relevant settlements. It is unchanged from the approach used to identify settlement boundaries in the extant Local Plan and was part of the public consultation at both formal consultation stages.

Q2. What methodology was employed to identify them?

- 2.1 The methodology for the Settlement Boundaries is set out in Topic Paper 4 – Vision and Spatial Strategy [SD104] (section 4). Both the methodology and the Draft settlement boundaries themselves were included from the Regulation 18 consultation stage, enabling opportunities for scrutiny and comment.

Q3. As the proposed site allocation at Mary Tavy sits adjacent to the settlement boundary, should the settlement boundary be adjusted to include it?

3.1 DNPA has taken a precautionary approach to the settlement boundary at Mary Tavy in relation to Proposal 7.22(2). It is recognised by DNPA and Devon County Council (DCC) (as Education Authority) that the prospect of a new primary school is potentially a more distant prospect, given the funding does not currently exist. DCC requested DNPA retain the proposal as there is a recognised need for the school, and it remains a strong local aspiration. Given the lack of certainty around delivery, it was therefore considered a cautious approach should be taken, and the settlement boundary not redrawn in this instance. This ensures that, should the school development not come forward, a precedent has not been established that would mean this parcel of land is treated as being within the settlement, and therefore having policies applied to it which may not be appropriate for an undeveloped edge of village site.

Q4. What is the justification for the inclusion of a part of the South Hams SAC within the Buckfast settlement boundary?

4.1 The purpose of the Settlement Boundary is to identify which policies apply where. It is stated in [SD104] that the inclusion of an area within a settlement boundary does not automatically mean development would be acceptable. Any proposal within a settlement boundary would still be subject to all of the relevant Development Plan policies and other material considerations. Any proposal must therefore be considered in the context of the Plan as a whole, and any other relevant policies taken into account, such as for example habitat, flood risk or a conservation area. To then exclude an area of constraint would significantly alter the long established rationale behind a boundaries (which exists in the adopted Plan) and make them very complicated to draft.

4.2 As a parallel; the EA has not requested that we remove areas of flood zone 3 from the Settlement Boundaries. It recognises that the Settlement Boundary identifies which development policy applies, and that a flood risk policy may then determine that development would not be appropriate in that instance. The same approach would apply for habitat constraint, and it would be perverse for the Plan to say that because a habitat constraint applies, that area no longer forms part of the settlement. The area in question is an industrial area, any development in this area would be required to demonstrate it would not impact upon the integrity of the SAC, as would be the case if it was outside the Settlement Boundary.

