

Report on Community Consultation for the Peak District National Park “Local Plan Review” – 4th November 2024

Background

A new Local Plan for the Peak District National Park is currently being prepared by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA). It will shape future development in the National Park to 2045. It will set out the vision, spatial strategy and planning policies that will be used to guide decisions on development proposals and planning applications.

PDNPA is currently consulting on options within their emerging Local Plan and Great Longstone Parish Council (GLPC) organised a community event to explore parts of the document.

Whilst the primary purpose of the meeting was to see if consensus could be found for a response from GLPC, another important objective was to generate interest in moving forward with a Neighbourhood or Village plan either just for the parish of Great Longstone, or for the wider Longstone Area.

Parish Council Objectives for the Event

- Understand where consensus exists on key issues to allow our feedback against the plan
- Help GLPC to formulate plans for a Longstone Area Neighbourhood or Village Plan
- Help GLPC to define topics for the plan, and NOT the strategy!
- Engage with individuals interested in helping this process and/or forming an interim steering committee

About the Peak District (taken from a Local Plan Review document)

The Peak District National Park is an asset of national, regional, and local importance spanning an area of over 1.4 thousand km². The National Park lies mostly within the county of Derbyshire, but crosses into Staffordshire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, and South/West Yorkshire. The resident population of the area is around 35,900, with 16,200 households. The National Park is considered the most accessible of the UK's National Parks and sees approximately 13.25 million visitors every year, with 20 million people living within one hour's journey.

The Peak District National Park is a vibrant landscape with over 200 square miles of open access land and 1,600 miles of public rights of way. In 1951, it was the first of the UK's 15 National Parks to be designated and it is rich in heritage, with approximately 2,143 listed buildings and 450 scheduled monuments.

The National Park is defined by its contrasting landscape consisting of gritstone edges (the Dark Peak); limestone dales (White Peak); near 200 square miles of moorland; rolling hills and farmland (southwest Peak); 5,440 miles of dry-stone wall caverns; and 55 reservoirs. Amongst this, there are several notable villages of interest including Castleton, Eyam, Hathersage, Tideswell, and Ilam, as well as the famous town of Bakewell.

The area's main industries are tourism, quarrying (with 70 active and disused quarry sites this is more than all other UK National Parks put together), farming (with almost 90% of the National Park being farmland) and manufacturing. Over 35% of the National Park is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

All National Parks have a distinct set of 'Special Qualities' derived from National Park legislation. The Peak District's special qualities are:

- Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology.
- Internationally important and locally distinctive wildlife and habitats.
- Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies with reach of millions.
- Landscapes that tell a story of thousands of years of people, farming and industry.
- Characteristic settlements with strong communities and traditions.
- An inspiring space for escape, adventure, exploring and quiet reflection.
- Vital benefits for millions of people that flow beyond the landscape boundary.

Demographic Changes within the Peak Park Area

Change are also happening, and these are demographic figures (for the wide National Park area), for the past decade:

- The population of the National Park fell from 37,905 in 2011 to 35,897 in 2021 – a fall of 2,008 or 5.3% over the period. (East Midlands +7.7%, England and Wales +6.3%). **Change against national average almost 12% lower.**
- The number of young people living in the Peak District declined by 1,069, or 17.9%, from 5,960 in 2011 to 4,891 in 2021 (East Midlands +5.2%, England and Wales +4.3). **Change against national average over 22% lower.**
- The number of working age residents living in the Peak District fell from 23,007 in 2011 to 20,259 in 2021, a fall of 2,748 or 12% (England and Wales +3.4%). **Change against national average over 15% lower.**
- The number of older residents increased by 1,809 or 20% over the past ten years, from 8,938 to 10,747. **Similar to national picture.**

Great Longstone's Consultation Event

This took place in Longstone Village Hall between 5pm and 9pm on Monday 4th November.

The event had been publicised through

- the community newsletter "Under the Edge",
- emails
- posters displayed around Great Longstone and the surrounding hamlets
- The Great Longstone "Facebook" page

The event consisted of 2 distinct sections.

Section 1 - 5pm to 7pm: View displays and an opportunity to provide personal written feedback

Section 2 - 7pm to 9pm: Presentation lead by Cllr Andy Douglass

Section 1

Displays, provided by PDNPA, were put up and between 15 and 20 people came to look at them.

Most of the displays, explaining the 14 sections within the consultation, were explaining what was, and was not, within the scope of the exercise. A small number asked for specific feedback.

Section 2

A total of around 50 people (+/- 1). Around half the people who attended Section 1 either stayed or returned for Section 2.

Councillor Douglas when though a series of slides that explained the main sections of the consultation, and looked at a sub-set of issues that potentially had a direct bearing on the Longstone Area. The order that these are presented in differed slightly from the consultation document, to make the presentation flow more easily.

1. Spatial Strategy.

- a. Do we need more affordable housing within the Longstone Area?
 - i. Yes 54%
 - ii. No 0 %
 - iii. Abstained 46%

It was felt that this was too inclusive for the Parish Council to take a formal position

- b. Do we need to establish development boundaries within the Longstone Area?
 - i. No conclusive conclusion
- c. Do we need to designate local green space on the edge of our settlements
 - i. As the settlements are surrounded by farmland it was not felt that this was necessary

2. Housing

- a. Do we want a permanent residence clause on new open market homes to prevent them being used as holiday homes?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council

3. Landscape, biodiversity and nature recovery

- a. Should we adopt a more proactive biodiversity and nature recovery policy within our area?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council

4. Cultural heritage and the built environment

- a. Should we establish a Longstone Area register of non-designated heritage assets?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council
- b. Do we need to identify and protect key community assets?

- i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council

5. Climate change and sustainable building

- a. Should we support sensitively sited, small scale renewable energy infrastructure?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council however questions raised about:
 1. What is definition of "small scale"
 2. Applications for siting of on-roof solar panels on Listed Buildings and within Conservation Areas should be looked upon favourably.

6. Recreation and tourism

- a. Do we support temporary overnight tourist accommodation that is well suited to its location?
 - i. No conclusive conclusion as question too vague
- b. Should the new plan define "Recreation Attractions" and "Recreation Hubs" and develop specific planning policies for those areas? (example – Monsal Head / Monsal Trail)
 - i. Agreed, though this does depend on the detail.

7. Shops, services and community facilities

- a. Do we support the retention of the current local services within the Longstone Area?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council
- b. Do we need to enhance the local services within the Longstone Area?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council

8. Business

- a. Do we support both small Business Parks within the Longstone Area ("Church Lane" and "Top Yard")?
 - i. Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council

9. Farming

- a. The community is supportive of the local farming community, though as none were available for the meeting no specific proposals were discussed.

10. Transport

- a. Do we support additional off-road car parking (for residents & visitors) in the Longstone Area?
 - i. It was agreed that it should be investigated as agreement would need far more specific details.

- b. Protect the Monsal and Longendale Trails from development that conflicts with their current purpose as recreational trails
 - i. There are strong and conflicting opinions on this issue, and it is recommended that the Council does not take a formal position, at this time.
- c. Should existing car parks be considered for overnight stays in campervans or mobile homes?
 - i. In principle there were no issues with this, other than it taking business from farmers and others with small sites whilst not doing anything about the growing issue of campervans and mobile homes parking on the roadside. This is a pertinent issue in Longstone as 10+ vehicles are parked most night in a highly visible position on “Longstone Edge”. Vehicles now appear to use the unofficial, but widely publicized overnight parking on almost every night of the year.

11. Utilities

- a. The only issue raised was the expansion of, or new, reservoirs which was not voted on.

12. Mineral Extraction

- a. There was much discussion on the PDNPA to limit mineral extraction to the period up to 2045 but not enough consensus to answer these specific questions.
- b. There was a unanimous view supporting a new policy on restoration and aftercare of old mineral sites, and specifically the ones in our area.

Annex A – Proposed Response to the PDNPA Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation

Questions 1 to 7

The general direction was that the Longstone area needed more affordable housing and the ability to determine its own direction rather than allocation from PDNPA. We preferred the multi-tier settlement tier approach rather than the current two-tier approach. In all cases there was not an adequate majority to determine a response.

Question 8

General opinion was that the current transport policy particularly around bus service was inadequate, again this was a view from the floor and not voted on as a majority.

Question 9

Agreed with the objectives for Landscape, biodiversity and nature recovery. These issues are fully supported, and we need to be more proactive in policy to force through improvements.

Question 10

As above – the policy will help nature recovery

Question 11

As above – the BNG policy will provide a target for developments

Question 12

As the Natural Zone is outside of the Great Longstone area then this was not specifically debated.

Question 13

Not debated

Question 14

Spatial Objectives for cultural heritage and built environment were topic that transcended other discussions. The management of cultural assets to allow solar panels on grade 2 listed buildings was something that was requested from the floor, however, there was no vote.

Question 15

No vote

Question 16

Full support for the local list to cover non-designated heritage assets, owners and prospective purchasers need to be aware of the issues around any restrictions applicable to their homes.

Question 17

The conversion of isolated traditional buildings was discussed from the floor during another topic and a view was, that in the case of farmers income, then this should be allowed. However, this was not voted on.

Question 18

Climate Change and Sustainable buildings – question not debated in the form it appears in the survey

Question 19

Question not debated in the form it appears in the survey

Question 20

Covers new build developments and not question not debated in the form it appears in the survey.

Question 21

The meeting was fully supportive of small-scale low carbon and renewable energy development, and agree that this needs greater clarity. The area supports being more proactive in relation to small scale developments in the area that have local benefits, and specifically, PDNPA being more flexible to the installation of solar on listed buildings and conservation areas.

Question 22

Carbon capture and storage was not discussed.

Question 23

Recreation and Tourism, the meeting was supportive of this high level proposal to direct recreation development to existing recreation attractions and address specific issues around improved facilities, such as parking and amenities. However, some specifics within this question that were not universally supported.

Question 24

This question deals specifically with defining attractions and hubs to which the meeting fully supported, the local areas/sites we would consider are Monsal Head and the Monsal Trail.

Question 25

Temporary Camp Sites – opinion from the floor generally supportive of the right for farmers to establish camp sites, however, not debated or voted on

Question 26

Touring camping and caravan sites – as above

Question 27

Static caravans, lodges – not debated

Question 28

More affordable Housing - Do we need more affordable housing within the Longstone Area?

- i. Yes 54%
- ii. No 0 %
- iii. Abstained 46%

It was felt that this was too inclusive for the Parish Council to take a formal position

Question 29

Agreed that there should be a permanent residence clause on new to market housing – the meeting fully supportive of this clause – Option 2 or 3, provided that the Longstone Area was within the area that the clause applied to (if option 3 was selected)!

Question 30

Long debate on definitions of affordable housing eligibility. There was not a majority out of the meeting to support a widening of the eligibility criteria, however, there was strong support of

- i. Conditions in perpetuity
- ii. Balance of social rent and outright purchase
- iii. Suppression of market value to allow ongoing affordability

Question 31

Local Connections for affordable housing was covered by the debate above and although was not voted on, there was general support from the floor.

Question 32

Affordable House size, as above, general support and specifically to prevent extensions that may impact on affordability in perpetuity.

Question 33

Shops, Services and community facilities - Overwhelming in favour. Position recommended to be adopted by Parish Council. We need to support and develop our existing facilities, general feeling that they were not adequate for a community our size and force travel out of the village.

Question 34

As above the range of community facilities supported within the planning policy needs to be extended.

Question 35

Bakewell – not discussed

Question 36

Business – the meeting was supportive of the spatial objectives on business for the rural economy

Question 37

The extensions to business was not discussed specifically, however, the meeting was fully supportive of retaining and enhancing the business facilities within the Longstone area.

Question 38 to 39

Questions relate to Farming which were not discussed

Question 40

This question covers the high-level strategy for transport that was not discussed and contains some specifics that were not unanimous.

Question 41

Visitor Parking – it was agreed that more parking should be provided and needed further investigation. Current parking provision in the Longstone Area is inadequate and leads to problems.

Question 42

Protect the Monsal and Longendale Trails from development that conflicts with their current purpose as recreational trails. There are strong and conflicting opinions on this issue, and it is recommended that the Council does not take a formal position, at this time.

Question 43

Road building schemes – not discussed

Question 44

Should existing car parks be considered for overnight stays in campervans or mobile homes?

In principle there were no issues with this, other than it taking business from farmers and others with small sites whilst not doing anything about the growing issue of campervans and mobile homes parking on the roadside. This is a pertinent issue in Longstone as 10+ vehicles are parked most night in a highly visible position on “Longstone Edge”. Vehicles now appear to use the unofficial, but widely publicized overnight parking on almost every night of the year.

Question 45

Air Transport – drone landing areas. Not discussed

Question 46

Utilities challenges and Spatial objectives. Not discussed specifically, however, the management plan objectives (1, 6 and 10) were supported in other debates

Question 47

New or expanded reservoirs – not discussed or debated

Question 48 to 53

There was much discussion on the PDNPA to limit mineral extraction to the period up to 2045 but not enough consensus to answer these specific questions. The closure of the Hope Cement Works was not debated.

Question 54

There was a unanimous view supporting a new policy on restoration and aftercare of old mineral sites, and specifically the ones in our area.