

## Controlling Development in the Open Countryside

6.9 The guiding principle is that development should benefit economic activity, promote social inclusion and maintain or enhance the environment. The open countryside can accommodate some forms of development without detriment, if the type, form and design are sensitive to the location. New development should be carefully located having regard to existing settlement patterns and to historic, wildlife and landscape resources. Development in the open countryside, away from existing defined settlements or areas located for development will be strictly controlled.

## RD2 - Development in the Open Countryside

**Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:**

- i) essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;**
- ii) employment related development appropriate to the open countryside;**
- iii) affordable housing to meet a proven local need;**
- iv) essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation, or local community facilities;**
- v) for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings;**

- vi) for diversification of an established agricultural business;**
- vii) for the replacement, alteration or extension of an existing dwelling;**
- viii) essential for the provision of an appropriate level of roadside services or the provision of utility services.**

**Provided that:**

- a) the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries;**
- b) the proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this Local Plan;**
- c) the development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; and**
- d) the development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety; and**
- e) account is taken of whether the site is**

**capable of being served by public transport; and**

- f) the development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping.**

- 6.10 Policy RD2 sets out the Council's overall development control policy for development within the open countryside. It aims to balance the needs and benefits of economic activity with maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of the countryside. It promotes the positive benefits of rural diversification by ensuring that the long-term social and economic vitality of rural areas, and an efficient and flexible agriculture industry is maintained.
- 6.11 PPG7 states "Development should help promote healthy rural communities where people both live and work. The main focus of new development should be on existing towns and villages (including networks of small villages) ... where employment, housing (including affordable housing) and other services can be provided close together". The Local Plan strategy has taken account of this advice by directing the majority of rural development proposals to the medium and minimum growth settlements. This is where the majority of services within rural areas are located and where development can be best sustained and benefit the rural community. However, there are circumstances when development outside the defined settlements may be appropriate.
- 6.12 Where development is permitted it should be of the highest quality and make a positive contribution to the environment as well as the social and economic prospects of the area. PPG7 states "New building in rural areas should... be of an appropriate design and scale for its location. Modern designs should have proper regard to

*the context for development in relation to both the immediate setting and the defining characteristics of the wider local area, including local or regional building traditions or materials".*

### **Industrial and Commercial Development in Rural Areas**

- 6.13 Future industrial and commercial development in rural areas should be consistent with the overall plan strategy, which aims to guide development towards the large urban centres to minimise travel, while at the same time securing sustainable development in the rural settlements. Development should be of a scale and character appropriate to each settlement where a social or economic need is demonstrated. New building in rural areas should contribute to a sense of local identity and regional diversity and be of an appropriate design and scale for its location in order to achieve good quality development.

### **RD3 – Industrial and Commercial Development in Minimum and Medium Growth Settlements**

**Proposals for industrial and commercial development, including extensions to buildings, limited infilling between buildings, redevelopment of existing sites and conversion of rural buildings in minimum and medium growth settlements, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) the proposal does not lead to an over intensification of an activity on the site to the detriment of residential**