

Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies
Settlement Boundary Review
December 2013

1. Settlement Boundaries

- 1.1 Settlement boundaries are recognised and generally accepted as an essential tool for the management of development, principally to prevent the encroachment of development into the countryside. It is important that the methodology is; clear, consistently applied, and capable of being easily understood by users.
- 1.2 The settlement boundaries have been carried forward from the settlement policy areas in the adopted Local Plan April 1999. The Local Plan: Key Policies Pre-submission document sets out a hierarchy as follows:
- Chichester City Sub-Regional Centre: providing a wide range of higher order services and facilities - employment, shopping, education, health, entertainment, arts and culture - serving a wide catchment area extending outside the District.
 - Settlement Hubs: providing a reasonable range of employment, retail, social and community facilities serving the settlement and local catchment areas.
 - Service Villages: providing a reasonable range of basic facilities (e.g. primary school, convenience store and post office) to meet the everyday needs of local residents, or villages that provide fewer of these facilities but that have reasonable access to them in nearby settlements.
 - Rest of Plan Area: this includes the countryside and other small villages and hamlets which have poor access to facilities.
- 1.3 The classification of settlements within the hierarchy is based on their existing characteristics and takes account of a number of factors including the availability of services and facilities, levels of accessibility and public transport, settlement size and character, identified infrastructure, environmental constraints and potential land availability.
- 1.4 The golden thread of the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with the eleventh core planning principle stating that plan-making should "actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable".
- 1.5 It is for Local Planning Authorities to consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area (NPPF para 53).

2. Methodology

- 2.1 Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies Pre-submission Policy 2 Settlement Boundaries states that settlement boundaries will be reviewed through the preparation of Development Plan Documents and/or Neighbourhood Plans, and should reflect the following general approach:
1. Respecting the setting, form and character of the settlement;
 2. Avoiding actual or perceived coalescence of settlements; and
 3. Ensuring good accessibility to local services and facilities.
- 2.2 It is important that the services within the settlement boundary are maintained as far as possible. The strategic policies in the Chichester Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan will be used to reinforce and complement the selection of settlement boundaries in an effort to support the continuation of a network of services.
- 2.3 Development in the rest of the Plan area will be restricted to that which requires a countryside location or meets an essential local rural need or supports rural diversification.
- ## **3. Assessment**
- 3.1 The concept of settlement boundaries is to draw a policy line which separates built-up areas (within which development is, in principle, acceptable), from the countryside (within which, with limited exceptions, it is not).
- 3.2 Settlement boundaries have previously been drawn close to buildings but may be redrawn to include the whole curtilage of homes and other buildings where they relate well to the existing built-up area. There is a presumption in favour of development if land is within a settlement boundary and therefore land should only be included within the boundary if that is where development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with other policies. There is a judgement to be made as to whether other development or areas adjacent to but outside the current settlement policy area relates more to the built environment than to the surrounding countryside.
- 3.3 A desktop study of the mapped area should be undertaken to collect data on current land and built form, land-use, landscape character, woodland cover, field pattern and settlement pattern using GIS and aerial photographs. This will allow the landscape to be easily surveyed in the field and gain a clearer understanding of the potential settlement boundary.
- 3.4 Fieldwork will also need to be undertaken to collect visual data relating to land and built form, land-use, vegetation, field boundaries and more perceptual aspects like scale, enclosure and visual unity. A decision can be made on whether the boundary is urban or rural in form as well as understanding the condition of landscape features and elements that detract from the overall character of that area.

- 3.5 The above information can then be collated to identify a new settlement boundary or amendments to the existing boundary. A written record should be produced for the proposed settlement boundary and changes made to maps where necessary. The transition between types of openness such as moving from garden to countryside may be hard to define, however, the processes identified in 3.3 and 3.4 above should help in judging the point where the characteristics of one are more dominant than another. The maps and written analysis, supported by photographs if necessary, will provide the evidence for the decision made.

Key Requirements:

- Settlement boundaries should include new development adjacent to the settlement boundary. This includes sites that have been developed following allocation in the Adopted Local Plan 1999, sites that have planning permission, built exception site housing, minor extensions and other areas adjacent to but outside the current settlement policy area that relate more to the built environment than to the surrounding countryside.
- Settlement boundaries need not be continuous, it may be appropriate given the form of a settlement to define two or more separate areas.
- Isolated or sporadic development which is clearly detached from the main settlement should be excluded and where possible, settlement boundaries should follow a defined feature e.g. field boundary, road, stream, wall or fence.
- New schools, existing and proposed peripheral playing fields, environmental space, allotments, local green space and community gardens should not be included within the settlement boundary.
- Agricultural buildings may be included in settlement boundaries if they are well related in terms of scale and positioning to the rest of the settlement. Account will also be taken of the availability of defensible boundaries and the age of the building (i.e. how established the building is in the settlement).

Settlement Boundary Assessment Sheet

Date:	Location
Key Characteristics	
Elevation/ Height/ Prominence	Low/ Medium/ High
Landform/ Features	Dominant/ Apparent/ Insignificant
Land Use	urban/rural/other arable/grassland/orchards/paddocks/woodland
Vegetation	dominant/ apparent/insignificant native/exotic/mixed
Woodland	extensive/fragmented/linear
Hedges	tall/medium/low
Hedgerow trees	present/absent
Extent of Views	extensive/interrupted/enclosed
Enclosure	dominant/apparent/insignificant
Transport and Highways	dominant/apparent/insignificant main road/urban road/rural lane/trainline/footpath/cyclepath
Settlements	dominant/apparent/insignificant town/village/hamlet
Density	Low/ Medium/ High
Buildings	dominant/apparent/insignificant type: domestic/farm/ commercial/industrial/other age: pre-17 th C/18 th C /19 th C/20 th C/ 21 st style:
Brief Description	