

Summer/autumn 2013

Purbeck District Council Settlement Boundary Review

Draft criteria, which will be subject to public consultation



NB. Each site must be judged on its merits – no two scenarios will be exactly the same and so a judgment will depend on local circumstances.

What should be in a settlement boundary?

1. Settlement boundaries will normally include uses and buildings (including those with planning permission that are not yet built) that have a clear social or economic function and relate better to the built form of the settlement than the countryside. This will usually include residential properties, services, facilities (shops, schools, community buildings, health services), and employment.
2. The purpose of the settlement boundary review is not to regularise unauthorised development and nor is it to free up land for development. However, the Council acknowledges that both could result from some proposed adjustments, for example through a justifiable and necessary minor realignment.

What should not be in a settlement boundary?

3. Settlement boundaries should never include development that is clearly detached from the settlement and nor should they include rural exception sites for affordable housing. This is because rural exception sites must be outside of settlement boundaries by definition. Plus, if the site was within the settlement boundary and intensified, new housing would not need to be affordable.
4. The following should **not** normally be in a settlement boundary:
 - Open spaces at the edge of settlements, e.g. playing/sports fields, allotments and cemeteries. Where such open spaces are clearly part of the built form of the settlement, e.g. by virtue of being closely surrounded by the settlement, they should be included in the settlement boundary and designated as open space to protect them from development.
 - Large, open residential gardens whose inclusion in the settlement and possible development would harm the structure, form and character of the settlement through sprawl.
 - Important gaps. For example, where a settlement is fragmented, the open gaps in between may be important landscape/townscape features that should be retained. These gaps may include areas of hardstanding/car parks, which would normally be included in a settlement boundary. Deciding whether or not to include features such

as hardstandings/car parks in existing gaps should take into account the function of the hardstanding/car park and its social/economic relationship with the settlement. For example, where a hardstanding/car park relates to a building/use that is an integral part of the settlement, there is a stronger case for including it in the settlement boundary than if it relates to a building/use that has a closer relationship with the countryside. In any case, judging whether or not to include such features should be balanced against whether or not their built presence and potential development outweighs the importance of retaining the gap.

- The following uses: agriculture, forestry, equestrian, minerals extraction/landfill, water or other open space and public utilities, e.g. reservoirs, sewage treatment works and substations, unless they clearly relate to the built form of the settlement, e.g. by virtue of being closely surrounded by development.
- Camping and caravanning sites. However, any parts of such sites that have a year round permanent residential use and are well related to the built form of the settlement should be included in the settlement boundary.

For further information, contact:

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