

Housing in the Countryside 4

Housing in the Countryside Policies

Policy C 1

Location of New Housing in the Countryside

There is a presumption in favour of development and redevelopment within the settlement boundaries of the following settlements:

Aldermaston	Donnington	Newbury
Aldermaston Wharf	East Garston	Pangbourne
Ashmore Green	East Ilsley	Peasmore
Beenham	Eastbury	Stockcross
Boxford	Eddington	Streatley
Bradfield	Enborne Row	Tadley/Pamber Heath
Bradfield Southend	Great Shefford	Thatcham
Brightwalton	Greenham	Theale
Brightwalton Green	Hampstead Norreys	Tidmarsh
Brimpton	Hermitage	Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot, Purley)
Burghfield	Hungerford	Upper Basildon
Burghfield Bridge	Kintbury	Upper Bucklebury
Burghfield Common	Lambourn	West Ilsley
Chieveley	Leckhampstead	Woolhampton
Cold Ash	Lower Basildon	Wickham
Compton	Mortimer	Yattendon
Curridge		

There will be a presumption against new residential development outside of the settlement boundaries. Exceptions to this are limited to rural exception housing schemes, conversion of redundant buildings, housing to accommodate rural workers, extension to or replacement of existing residential units and limited infill in settlements in the countryside with no defined settlement boundary. All proposals will need to satisfy the other policies in this section of the Plan.

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In settlements in the countryside with no defined settlement boundary, limited infill development may be considered where:

- i. It is within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more existing dwellings adjacent to, or fronting an existing highway; and
- ii. The scale of development consists of infilling a small undeveloped plot commensurate with the scale and character of existing dwellings within an otherwise built up frontage; and
- iii. It does not extend the existing frontage; and
- iv. The plot size and spacing between dwellings is similar to adjacent properties and respects the rural character and street scene of the locality.

Planning permission will not be granted where a proposal harms or undermines the existing relationship of the settlement within the open countryside, where it does not contribute to the character and distinctiveness of a rural area, including the natural beauty of the AONB or where development would have an adverse cumulative impact on the environment or highway safety.

Supporting Text

4.12 New development is easiest to assimilate when located within existing settlements. The overall spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy for West Berkshire is set out in Policy ADPP1 in the Core Strategy. The policy seeks to accommodate development in the most sustainable way, focusing the majority of development in settlements with existing facilities and services.

4.13 Policy ADPP1 makes reference to smaller villages with settlement boundaries which are suitable for limited infill development. These settlements are currently set out in saved policy HSG1 which will be replaced by Policy C1 upon adoption of this Housing Site Allocations DPD. The settlements within the settlement hierarchy will have revised settlement boundaries as a result of housing allocations stemming from the Local Plan.

4.14 Planning guidance advises that blanket policies restricting housing development should be avoided unless there is robust evidence on why this is necessary. The conservation and enhancement of the AONB and its setting and a recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside whilst supporting rural communities within it are key considerations. However, there may be circumstances where limited infill development (one or two units) may be possible in settlements without a defined settlement boundary where it is appropriately located within a group of existing dwellings.

4.15 For all housing proposals in the countryside, the applicant should illustrate the appropriateness of the development within the rural context by providing the following supporting evidence:

- i. an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposals
- ii. impact on the highway network both in terms of alterations to the existing highway and increase in all forms of traffic on the wider network
- iii. measures proposed to provide for, or encourage, sustainable transport, pedestrian access to existing footpaths, and sources of sustainable energy
- iv. plot size, curtilage and boundary treatments
- v. the use of materials acceptable within the local architectural context
- vi. impact on quality of dark skies with mitigation measures where required
- vii. foul and surface water disposal

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- viii. landscaping including native species
- ix. ground moulding, if any, with priority to retaining the natural slope.

4.16 In the countryside, development is restricted. The exceptions are covered by the remainder of the policies in this section of the DPD.

4.17 There may be a special circumstance, where a new home of truly outstanding design standards, reflecting the highest standards of architecture is proposed. These will be considered on their individual merits.