

Location

Introduction

68. Where new development is located has an impact on how well it: meets the needs of the communities of West Sussex; protects the distinctive character of our towns and villages, countryside and coast; protects the environment in general; and uses the County's resources and assets wisely. Therefore, it is a key factor in delivering the Strategy of this Plan.
69. This chapter sets out the Locational Strategy, which flows from the environmental, social and economic objectives of the Plan and the Development Strategy in the first chapter, "Shaping our future".
70. The Locational Strategy seeks to concentrate most new development within existing towns and villages and where necessary in a limited number of large-scale extensions to the main towns together with some smaller-scale development on the edge of villages and small towns. Although new development is inevitable, it will be a priority to ensure that it is of high quality, whatever it is for and wherever it is located, and that the least harm is caused and that the most benefits are secured, particularly to the environment.
71. Whatever the type and scale of the development, there are over-arching principles. These are reflected in the policies in this Chapter and in many of the other policies of this Plan. In general, the following should be taken into account when locating new development:
- the need to make the best use of land, especially previously-developed land (including the use of existing buildings) within existing built-up areas, and to minimise the use of greenfield sites;
 - the availability of spare capacity in existing and proposed infrastructure and the need to avoid imposing an unacceptable load on existing and potential water supplies and other infrastructure;
 - the need to avoid increases in and, if possible, reduce both the need to travel (particularly by car) and the length of journeys;
 - accessibility by a genuine choice of travel especially walking, cycling and passenger transport;
 - the distinctive character of different parts of the County and the need to maintain the strategic settlement pattern;
 - the impact on community, historic or cultural resources;
 - the impact on habitats, species and geology including areas, sites or species of importance for nature conservation;
 - the need to avoid areas at risk of land instability, erosion, and flooding (both fluvial and marine) and to avoid increasing the risk of flooding;
 - the impact on the quality of natural resources including air, soil, water and minerals and the need to avoid areas subject to existing or potential poor air quality or noise or smell pollution; and
 - the need to maximise any benefits to the environment as a whole.
72. These principles are enshrined in Policy LOC1 which sets out the Locational Strategy. It requires local plans to define the areas within which development is accepted in principle – the 'built-up areas'. These should include most existing towns and villages together with any land allocated to meet the requirements of this Plan and local plans. Outside these areas, that is, within the 'countryside', Policy LOC2 limits development, in general, to those uses which need to be located there. As such Policies LOC1 and LOC2 form the general framework within which all the other policies of this Plan operate.

Locational strategy

Policy LOC1

- (a) The priority in West Sussex is to locate new development within towns and villages particularly through the reuse of previously-developed land (including the reuse or conversion of existing buildings). Accordingly, development**

within built-up area boundaries, including infilling, redevelopment and conversion, should be permitted provided that the impact on the character of the area and the environment, resources and assets of the County is acceptable.

- (b) Development requirements which cannot be met within towns and villages or at sites with existing planning permission (subject to review at renewal), should be provided for mainly in the form of large-scale mixed-use development:**
- (1) at the following sites ^(a):**
 - (i) east of Angmering;**
 - (ii) Crawley (North East Sector) ^(b);**
 - (iii) south-east and south-west of Haywards Heath;**
 - (iv) Worthing (Durrington); and**
 - (v) north of Bognor Regis (Bersted/Felpham).**
 - (2) at the following locations ^(c) in the north east of West Sussex associated primarily with growth in the Crawley/Gatwick area, part of the Western Policy Area identified in RPG9:**
 - (i) west of Crawley ^(d);**
 - (ii) west and south-west of East Grinstead; and**
 - (iii) west and/or south-west of Horsham.**
 - (3) after 2011, at the following locations ^(c) in the coastal area associated primarily with the regeneration of that area:**
 - (i) at Chichester City; and**
 - (ii) in Arun District, west of the River Arun.**
 - (iii) Prior to the allocation of sites at (i) and (ii) above, the district planning authorities, with the County Council, should ensure that satisfactory progress has been made to improve and upgrade the A27 to meet present need and the needs of new development. Development at these locations should not be permitted unless the necessary road infrastructure is in place or will be provided parallel with such development.**
- (c) In addition to the locations identified under (b), limited provision should be made in local plans for:**
- (1) the small-scale, gradual growth of villages and small towns spread over the plan period which will assist the evolution of rural communities by meeting identified needs for housing and economic activity and supporting local facilities and services; and**
 - (2) small-scale extensions to main towns in the passenger transport corridors to meet identified local needs not otherwise met by development under (a) and (b).**
- (d) Local planning authorities will:**
- (1) define built-up area boundaries in local plans for towns and villages which will include any land allocated to meet the development requirements of this Plan and local plans; and**
 - (2) allocate sites in local plans which contribute to meeting the development requirements of this Plan and local plans taking into account the locational strategy in (a)-(c), the need to protect and enhance the qualities and characteristics of settlements which local communities value, and the other policies of this Plan.**

- (a) **These locations are already identified in adopted or deposit draft local plans - Their development potential should be optimised to an extent compatible with the local character, environment, resources and assets of each location. Although the Bersted part of the north of Bognor Regis Strategic Location was deleted from the adopted Arun District Local Plan following a High Court challenge, strategic-scale development at the location continues to be acceptable in principle provided that the appropriate infrastructure is in place (see paragraph 81).**
- (b) **Development at this location may be delayed or prevented, in whole or in part, due to the need to safeguard land for a possible second runway at Gatwick Airport (see paragraph 84).**
- (c) **Development at these locations must be in accordance with the Strategic Development Principles (Appendix B).**
- (d) **Development at this location may be delayed due to the need to safeguard land for a possible second runway at Gatwick Airport (see paragraph 84).**
73. Over 525,000 people, almost 70% of the population of the County, live in the eleven main towns and adjoining areas. Crawley and Worthing have populations of around 100,000 each. Bognor Regis has a population of almost 65,000 people while Horsham is home to 50,000 people. The remainder (Burgess Hill, Chichester, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Lancing/Sompting, Littlehampton, Shoreham/Southwick) have populations of between 25,000 and 45,000 people. These towns are concentrated along the South Coast and in the eastern and north-eastern part of the County. Almost 235,000 people live in the small towns, villages, hamlets and other rural areas.
74. The Plan gives priority to locating new homes, jobs, facilities and services within towns and villages, particularly through the reuse of previously-developed land (including the reuse of existing buildings). The capacity of the built-up areas to accommodate additional development needs to be assessed and kept under review. This should include the likely contribution to the supply of land from large sites within built-up areas as well as from unidentified or 'windfall' sites. These studies should consider the potential of underused, vacant and derelict sites and the scope for reusing existing buildings for housing and other uses.
75. Underused, vacant and derelict sites could include contaminated land. Development on or near contaminated land could activate the release of contaminants with resultant harm or pollution to the environment unless appropriate sustainable remediation measures are implemented. Redevelopment should therefore ensure historic contamination is identified and remediated in a manner which enables the land to be made suitable for the proposed use and prevents further pollution of the environment.
76. District planning authorities should determine the best use of sites and buildings taking into account the policies of this Plan and ensure that they are likely to come forward during the plan period for that use or uses. Where appropriate, sites should be allocated in local plans for a single use or a mix of uses (see Policy DEV2). In some instances, local authorities may need to purchase land in order to facilitate redevelopment. Wherever possible, this should be done by negotiation but in some cases may involve the use of compulsory purchase.
77. A broad assessment of the capacity of built-up areas has been made. It shows that no matter how efficiently previously-developed land is used, greenfield land will be required to meet the needs identified in this Plan. A number of greenfield sites already have planning permission or are allocated in local plans. Where permissions have lapsed or are being renewed, district planning authorities should ensure that the sites are used in the most appropriate way and that no new information has come to light which suggests that planning permission should not be granted; this includes the possible reallocation of unneeded employment land or buildings for housing (see Policy NE5). Similarly, they should use a review of the local plan to determine whether it is appropriate to roll-forward the allocation of any site not yet with planning permission: that is, should the site be used for the original purpose (possibly at a higher density to make the best use of the land – see Policy ERA1), should it be allocated for an alternative use or is the allocation of the greenfield site no longer appropriate. However, Policy LOC1 reaffirms the principle of developing at a number of major locations which have already been identified in adopted or deposited local plans. Their development potential should be optimised by the District and Borough Councils working in partnership with the development industry and

local communities to an extent that is compatible with the local character, environment, resources and assets of each location.

78. There will be the need within the plan period for additional development on greenfield sites over and above those with planning permission and allocations in local plans. Most of the new development should be concentrated in a relatively small number of large-scale, mixed-use, mixed-density developments. These major development areas, known as 'Strategic Locations', provide the greatest opportunities to achieve mixed uses, to deliver social and physical infrastructure, and to secure environmental improvements. They will also provide the opportunity to secure a range of facilities and services, to increase the choice of means of transport, to minimise the need to travel, to sustain passenger transport, and to reduce energy costs.
79. The potential of broad areas across the County to deliver large-scale, mixed-use development was assessed. The assessment considered the potential impact on the environment, deliverability (in terms of timescale and capacity), infrastructure requirements and opportunities, and implications for local communities (see Appendix A). It used information from responses to structure and local plan consultations, and discussions with District Councils, stakeholders and service providers. The study concluded that, where possible, priority should be given to extending the main towns. National and regional planning policy guidance supports this approach.
80. Consideration was given to how combinations of the new locations, together with the other new development (including sites with permission and existing allocations), would provide additional opportunities to achieve widespread benefits, for example by delivering major improvements to passenger transport, or new or improved social infrastructure.
81. It was concluded that the best strategy would be to concentrate greenfield development in the coast at the following locations (Strategic Development Principles for the new locations are set out in Appendix B):
 - Angmering – This is the area to the east of the village which could accommodate 600 homes and other employment development. Identified in the Arun District Local Plan 1993. Development has started and has included the provision of the Angmering Bypass.
 - Bognor Regis (Bersted/Felpham) – This is the area to the north of the existing built-up area which could accommodate 1,350 homes and employment development by 2011. The Felpham part of the site is identified in the Arun District Local Plan (adopted 2003); the Bersted part was subject to a High Court Challenge and has been deleted from the Plan due to failings in the plan preparation process. The Local Plan Inquiry Inspector accepted that the development proposed in the Deposit Draft Plan was acceptable in principle and that further housing development at Bersted could take place provided the necessary infrastructure was provided. Although further work by Arun District Council is required, the High Court decision does not affect the Inspector's recommendation that strategic development at this location is acceptable in principle provided the appropriate infrastructure is in place. Development should come forward as necessary in order to maintain an adequate supply of housing land. It should include construction of the Bognor Regis relief road (Policy NE17) and passenger transport improvements possibly including a new railway station (Policy NE21).
 - Chichester City – Chichester is potentially one of the most sustainable locations for strategic development due to the provision of employment opportunities, and the quality and quantity of facilities and services, including passenger transport infrastructure, particularly within the town centre. The capacity of the City and the wider area to accommodate strategic-scale development is inhibited by existing capacity problems on the A27 Chichester Bypass. Work has been undertaken by the County Council and the Highways Agency to identify an integrated package of measures including improvements to the junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass, a Stockbridge link road (Policy NE17), bus priority measures, parking restrictions and possibly park and ride. Further detailed work will be undertaken before the Government decides whether to include the schemes for the A27 in the future programme of road improvements. In addition to addressing existing and future congestion and capacity problems, the package will enable about 1,250 homes to be accommodated in one or more locations adjoining or very near to Chichester City by 2016, including subsidised housing, together with other uses. A joint

study should be undertaken by the County and District Councils to identify such locations whilst taking account of the capacity of the City to accommodate additional dwellings on previously-developed land. The study should take account of transport and infrastructure requirements and set out future options for the identification of a site or sites in the review of the Chichester District Local Plan. Depending upon the final location or locations to be determined through the joint study, passenger and other transport improvements may be needed to serve the development, some of which may be identified as part of the integrated package referred to above. Development is unlikely to start before 2011 due to the problems on the A27. Subject to the implementation of appropriate improvements to the A27 Chichester Bypass, development should come forward as necessary in order to maintain an adequate supply of housing land.

- Arun District, west of the River Arun – The selection of this area for major development recognises that beyond the other locations identified in this Plan, there are unlikely to be opportunities for significant expansion of the coastal towns. The capacity of this search area to accommodate strategic-scale development is inhibited by existing capacity problems on the A27 particularly at Arundel. Work is being undertaken by the County Council and the Highways Agency to identify appropriate improvements to the A27 at Arundel. The Highways Agency will report back to the Government later in 2004 who will decide the way forward. In addition to addressing existing and future congestion and capacity problems, the improvements will enable the area of search to provide 1,000 homes by 2016, including subsidised housing, together with other uses and high quality employment land. The location is outside the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is not within a strategic gap. It also moves the focus for development inland, away from areas at risk of flooding. The adopted Arun District Local Plan covers the period to 2011 and development at this location will not be required before 2011. The development should include passenger and other transport improvements. The proposal will increase job opportunities and, together with transport improvements, will assist coastal regeneration.
 - Worthing (Durrington) – This is the area to the north-west of Worthing which could accommodate 1,000 homes, and a local centre. Identified in the Worthing Borough Local Plan 2003. Development should start before 2006 and include improvements to Titnore Lane (Policy NE17) and to passenger transport.
82. Greenfield development in the rest of the County should be concentrated at the following locations (Strategic Development Principles for the new locations are set out in Appendix B):
- Crawley (North East Sector) – This is a new neighbourhood north of the A264 which could accommodate 2,700 homes together with other uses. The location is allocated in the adopted Crawley Borough Local Plan. Any application would be subject to the direction by the Government which prevents development coming forward until the future of the Gatwick Airport is clear. The need to safeguard land for a second runway at Gatwick may affect whether housing and other development in this location can go ahead in whole or in part (see paragraph 84).
 - Crawley (West) – This is the area to the west of the town, to the north of the A264 (mainly within Horsham District) and the broad area of search includes land both to the north and south of the railway line. This location could accommodate 2,500 homes by 2016, including subsidised housing, together with other uses and high quality employment land (see Policy NE7). It is close to Gatwick and the major employment areas in Crawley. Development would support economic growth in the north east of the County. The area of search is outside the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (which is to the south of the A264) and the land is of relatively low landscape and agricultural value. Development should be brought forward as necessary to maintain an adequate supply of housing land (taking account of the need to safeguard land for a second runway at Gatwick Airport, see paragraph 84). It should include passenger and other transport improvements including provision of a relief road around the north-western side of Crawley (Policy NE17) and possibly an extension to Fastway (Policy NE14) and a new or improved railway station (Policy NE21).
 - East Grinstead – This is the area to the west and south-west of East Grinstead which could accommodate 2,500 homes by 2016, including subsidised housing, together with other uses providing that a package of transport improvements, including a relief road,

can be delivered (see paragraph 85). It is close to Crawley/Gatwick and would support economic growth in the north east of the County. There has been little new development in the town in the last ten years, and development would also assist with regeneration of the town centre. The area of search is outside the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the land is of relatively low landscape and agricultural value. Development should be brought forward as necessary to maintain an adequate supply of housing land. It must include a comprehensive package of passenger and other transport improvements including provision of a relief road on the western side of the town (Policy NE17) and passenger transport improvements (Policy NE15/NE21), possibly including an extension to Fastway.

- Haywards Heath – This is the area to the south-east and south-west of Haywards Heath which could accommodate 1,400 homes and associated community uses; identified in the Haywards Heath Local Plan. Development should be completed during the early part of the plan period and should include a relief road (Policy NE17) and other transport infrastructure.
- Horsham – This is the area to the west and/or south-west of Horsham which could accommodate 1,000 homes by 2016, including subsidised housing, together with other uses. It is close to Crawley/Gatwick and would support economic growth in the north east of the County. Within Horsham District, the priority is to implement the West of Crawley Strategic Location (taking account of the implications of safeguarding a second runway at Gatwick Airport, see paragraph 84) but this location should be brought forward as soon as necessary to maintain an adequate supply of housing land. It is outside the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the land is of relatively low landscape and agricultural value. Development should include passenger and other transport improvements, including junction improvements on the A24 (Policy NE17) and a new or improved railway station (Policy NE21).

83. Paragraphs 81-82 above indicate how much housing may be required by 2016 to deliver the Strategy of this Plan. However, this depends upon the amount of housing which comes forward on previously-developed land and the need to maintain an adequate supply of housing land in each district or borough. It is important that each district planning authority plans to deliver through their local plans the levels of housing development which are identified in Policy NE1(a) over the plan period. The need to phase development and the timing of the release of the phases will be determined and managed in accordance with Policies NE1 and NE4. They will need to demonstrate how they intend to deal with the situation where a large site does not come forward as anticipated, for example, due to problems with securing infrastructure improvements - see Policy NE4.
84. The Future of Air Transport White Paper, which was published by the Government in December 2003, indicates that the uncertainty about a third runway at Heathrow and longer-term demand forecasts for air traffic means that a suitable alternative option, that is, a wide-spaced second runway at Gatwick, should be kept open (see paragraph 269). The need to safeguard land for a possible second runway has implications for development at the North East Sector of Crawley and for the West of Crawley Strategic Location. The safeguarding will relate directly to the land needed for the runway and the enlarged airport but also indirectly to land affected by height restrictions and aircraft noise. Development at the North East Sector of Crawley may be delayed. Crawley Borough Council will need to consider the future of any part of the site not directly affected by safeguarding. At the West of Crawley Strategic Location, the precise amount and location will need to be finalised following further detailed assessment work once the position regarding the possible second runway becomes clearer. One key issue to be resolved for the implementation of the Strategic Location is the delivery of the relief road (Policy NE17) which would probably need to run through the safeguarded area. A relief road will still be a requirement of the development of the Strategic Location whether or not new road access to Gatwick from the west is needed to serve a two-runway, two-terminal airport. The matter of the relief road will need to be satisfactorily resolved with BAA Gatwick in order that the implementation of the Strategic Location can progress. The joint study of the Crawley area (see paragraph 86) will provide the opportunity to address how any shortfall in housing supply as a result of this uncertainty will be made up, taking account of Crawley's housing needs and the need to support economic growth in the area.

85. Development at the East Grinstead Strategic Location on the scale suggested is dependent upon the provision of a relief road as part of a package of measures to accommodate the demands generated by the development and to provide relief to traffic congestion in the town centre (see paragraph 257). If fewer than 2,500 homes can be accommodated at East Grinstead during the plan period due to delays in the delivery of necessary infrastructure, including the relief road, any minor shortfall should be accommodated within Mid Sussex District. Any major shortfall would lead to a review of the Development Strategy. It should be noted that this principle applies to all the Strategic Locations (see Policy NE4).
86. In association with work being undertaken by Crawley Borough Council as it reviews the Crawley Borough Local Plan, a joint study of the Crawley area by the County Council the Borough Council and Horsham and Mid Sussex District Councils will be brought forward as a priority to identify an additional strategic location on the edge of Crawley for longer-term needs and as a possible contingency if there is a shortfall in provision in the wider Crawley area that cannot otherwise be met locally. This particularly applies to the need to safeguard land for a possible second runway at Gatwick Airport and the implications of this for the North East Sector and the West of Crawley Strategic Locations (see paragraph 84). The study will also provide an opportunity to reassess the capacity of the urban area of Crawley to deliver additional housing which could help to address any shortfall.
87. A joint assessment with Mid Sussex District Council, together with East Sussex County Council and Lewes District Council and in liaison with key stakeholders, will also be undertaken to identify how development for both strategic and local needs might be accommodated in the wider Burgess Hill area. Both the Crawley and Burgess Hill studies will be progressed in the context of the broader Crawley/Gatwick sub-regional study which is underway, involving the relevant authorities from West Sussex, Surrey and East Sussex, and which will inform the review of the RPG9 for the period to 2026.
88. The precise areas of land to be allocated within each Strategic Location to meet needs to 2016, together with detailed layouts and infrastructure requirements, are matters to be determined by the County and district planning authorities in more detailed joint studies (see Policy DEV6) taking into account the Strategic Development Principles (Appendix B). It should be noted that housing delivery in all the Strategic Locations will continue to be dependent upon the adequacy of existing infrastructure provision in accordance with Policy DEV3. In most cases, the provision of new or the improvement of existing infrastructure (whether on or off-site) will be required where it is necessary to meet the needs of the occupiers or users of the new development and to avoid worsening conditions for users of existing infrastructure. Some elements of the infrastructure required at the Strategic Locations are identified in paragraphs 81-82 and in the Strategic Development Principles.
89. In order to identify and resolve issues in the most acceptable way, the County and District Councils will seek to involve local people and other key stakeholders, including adjoining authorities and their communities, in the planning of the Strategic Locations, for example, through the use of 'hands-on' planning exercises.
90. The indicative capacity of each Strategic Location in the long-term will be established in the detailed studies but account will need to be taken of their long-term capacity in the planning of the areas to ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided. Development at some of the Strategic Locations may continue beyond 2016 but the rate at which they are developed will depend upon the future needs for housing both county-wide and in the district or borough. In addition to assessing the capacity of the Strategic Locations to contribute to meeting needs beyond 2016, there will be a need to assess where capacity exists for future growth including the possible role of new settlements although this is a matter for a review of the strategy.
91. The Strategic Locations, individually and in combination, have the best potential to deliver the objectives of this Plan. They will help to deliver the housing, employment, facilities and services which will meet the needs of the communities of West Sussex whilst protecting the character of the County and its environment, resources and assets. They will help to meet the Vision of the Plan in which social and economic needs are met but where West Sussex remains a County of small to medium-sized towns and villages with the countryside never feeling far away.
92. Most greenfield development should take place in the Strategic Locations. However, small-scale greenfield development may be required to meet identified local needs which would not

otherwise be met through development on previously-developed land, on committed sites and at the Strategic Locations. For example, a new employment allocation to meet the needs of the local economy under Policy NE5 may be required - the supporting text to Policy NE5 identifies employment sites already allocated in local plans or which have planning permission. Priority should be given to the location of new development as extensions to the main towns in passenger transport corridors – such small-scale sites should be identified in local plans by the District Councils and their extent should relate to the size of the adjoining settlement and meet local needs identified through joint working with local communities. Small-scale extensions may also be required within a district as a contingency if there is a shortfall in the supply of housing land due to a delay in the delivery of the one of the Strategic Locations (see Policy NE4).

93. An element of the Strategy is the continued evolution of rural communities. In essence, this means the small-scale, gradual growth of some villages and small towns over the plan period to meet the local social and economic needs and to support existing facilities and services. It will encompass the redevelopment of sites within settlements and may also involve the limited allocation of greenfield sites for development.
94. Such growth should not undermine the essential form, setting and character of the settlements. It should include the provision of homes (including housing for local people who cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market), jobs, community facilities and services and other infrastructure, environmental enhancement, and it should support transport services. Although the amount of housing and other development provided in this way is likely to be small, it could be significant in meeting local needs and supporting facilities and services. The aim is to support rural communities by enabling development which meets their needs but does not undermine the qualities which make the countryside unique and special. In keeping with small-scale extensions to the main settlements, the size of a small-scale extension to a village or small town should relate to the size of the existing settlement and meet local needs identified through joint working with the local community.
95. District planning authorities should define built-up area boundaries in local plans; built-up areas are defined as 'settlement policy areas' in Chichester District. They are a policy tool which is used to identify the areas within which development is accepted in principle, including infilling, redevelopment and conversion: they do not necessarily include all existing developed areas. The built-up area boundaries should include any land allocated to meet the requirements of this Plan and local plans in accordance with Policy LOC1. Development in the countryside (that is, outside the defined built-up area boundaries) will be limited to those uses which are compatible with countryside locations and which have a demonstrable need for a location outside the built-up area or are necessary to sustain the countryside as a place of varied and productive social and economic activity (see Policy LOC2).

District planning authorities should:

- *undertake urban capacity studies to assess how much development could be accommodated within towns and villages, particularly on previously-developed land (including the reuse or conversion of existing buildings);*
- *keep existing housing, employment and other allocations under review to ensure that the best use is made of each site and to ensure that there is a realistic expectation that each site can be developed within the plan period;*
- *optimise the development potential of committed Strategic Locations, working in partnership with the development industry and local communities, to an extent that is compatible with the local character, environment, resources and assets of each location;*
- *together with local communities, assess how the local needs of rural communities can be met and support provided to facilities and services; and*
- *together with local communities, assess the qualities and characteristics of settlements which local communities value (for example, through parish plans, village appraisals and village design statements).*

The countryside

Policy LOC2

- (a) **Development in the countryside, including undeveloped coastal locations, should not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated to require a countryside location. Such development includes that required to meet identified local social or economic needs in order to sustain the countryside as a place of varied and productive social and economic activity. Development should be compatible with its location in the countryside and, where appropriate, it should result in substantial environmental enhancement. Where these criteria are met, the priority is to accommodate such development through the reuse of existing buildings and through the redevelopment of previously-developed rural land in sustainable locations.**
- (b) **Local plans will include policies to ensure that outside built-up area boundaries:**
- (1) **development is limited to those uses which have a demonstrable need for countryside locations (including those uses which are necessary to sustain the countryside as a place of varied and productive social and economic activity in accordance with Policy NE8) and:**
 - (i) **it is compatible with countryside locations; and**
 - (ii) **where appropriate, it results in substantial environmental enhancement;**
 - (2) **priority is given to the reuse, adaptation and extension of existing buildings, where this is possible without extensive alteration or reconstruction, before the construction of replacement or new buildings;**
 - (3) **any new buildings are located, where possible, on previously-developed land, first within or adjacent to a town or village and then close to existing buildings; and**
 - (4) **development is conveniently located in relation to access and services required for the proposed use.**
- (c) **In exceptional circumstances, development which would not normally be acceptable outside built-up area boundaries, should be permitted where it is necessary to maintain the social and economic well-being of the County.**
96. The appearance and peacefulness of the countryside are valued by many people. The countryside is valuable for its own sake, whether or not a particular area has special resources, since once built on, it cannot be replaced. Building in the countryside, outside the defined built-up area boundaries of existing settlements and areas allocated for development in local plans, will be controlled carefully. Development proposals in villages or settlements where no built-up area is defined in local plans will be treated as development in the countryside. There will be a stronger level of protection in areas statutorily or otherwise designated for their landscape, wildlife, historic, or other qualities.
97. The economic and social needs of people who live and work in the countryside are also recognised and change must be accommodated. This must be weighed against the need to protect and, where possible, enhance the countryside's essential character (see Policy NE8).
98. In the countryside, there are buildings and areas where the environment is degraded such as former minerals workings without schemes for restoration and redundant farm buildings which cannot be reused for agricultural or forestry uses at economic cost. In such cases, a form of development, including those to meet local social and economic needs, may be appropriate where it leads to substantial environmental enhancement. This may include the removal of dangerous or unsightly buildings and the restoration of a degraded landscape to an appropriate rural use.
99. In very exceptional circumstances, development to maintain the social and economic well-being of the County may also be necessary in the countryside.

100. The reuse, adaptation and extension of existing buildings will be encouraged in preference to the introduction of new or replacement buildings into the countryside. The reuse and adaptation of existing rural buildings reduces the need for new building and helps to retain buildings of value to the character of rural areas. Such buildings should be of permanent construction without the need for extensive alteration or reconstruction.
101. Any new buildings which are justified should be located, where appropriate and where possible, on previously-developed land before using greenfield sites. Priority should be given to reusing previously-developed land within or adjacent to a town or village and then to such land close to other buildings in the countryside. Previously-developed rural land is that outside built-up areas which contains permanent buildings or structures (excluding buildings used for agricultural or forestry purposes) or associated fixed surface infrastructure which is no longer in use but which has not so far blended into the landscape in the process of time to such an extent that it can reasonably be regarded as part of the natural surroundings.
102. The nature of rural areas will often mean that they are not the most suitable locations for activities which should normally be located in or close to the towns and villages or close to public transport nodes. Accordingly close attention will be paid to the location of development in relation to the access and services required for the proposed use although this will need to be weighed against the social, economic or environmental benefits which can be achieved. However, some locations are so remote that they may not be acceptable for development in any circumstances.