

Chichester District Council

Local Plan Review

Background Paper

Settlement Boundaries



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide justification for the Council's approach to reviewing settlement boundaries for those settlements in the Chichester Local Plan Review Plan area.
- 1.2 Settlement boundaries are a recognised, and generally accepted, essential tool for the management of development, principally to prevent the encroachment of development into the countryside.

2. Background

- 2.1 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).

All of the settlements in the plan area which are classified in the settlement hierarchy as Service Villages or above are defined by settlement boundaries¹. The justification for a settlement's classification in the settlement hierarchy is set out in the Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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. It is important that the methodology is clear, consistently applied, and capable of being easily understood by users.
- 3.3 A desktop study of the 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.
- 3.4 Fieldwork will need to be undertaken to visually consider the 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. Changes will be made to the Policies Map where necessary.

¹ A settlement boundary is not identified at Plaistow.

The methodology and following key requirements will be used for reviewing settlement boundaries through a subsequent Site Allocation DPD. It will also be available to those parishes who are preparing or reviewing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Key requirements:

- Settlement boundaries should be expanded to include new development adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. This includes sites that have been developed following allocation in the adopted Local Plan, and the allocations in the related Site Allocation DPD, sites that have planning permission, built exception site housing, minor extensions and other areas adjacent to but outside the current settlement boundary 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, car parks, local green space and community gardens should not be included within the settlement boundary. The exception to this will be if they occur within settlements and are not adjacent to the settlement boundary. In these circumstances, these spaces are often protected from development by existing national and local policies.
- 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).

4. Settlement Boundary Review

- 4.1 This settlement boundary review is based on the need to update those settlement boundaries where development has taken place adjacent to the boundary, and which has necessitated an amendment.
- 4.2 The starting point for reviewing the settlement boundaries is with the adopted Local Plan, the Site Allocation Development Plan Document and 'made' Neighbourhood Plans. Many parishes in the plan area are preparing, or have 'made' Neighbourhood Plans. Where an area has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, this will identify, in all likelihood, the most up to date settlement boundary. Where parishes review their Neighbourhood Plans, they will consider the need for any amendments and proposed alterations to the settlement boundary as part of the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Site Allocation Development Plan Document also reviewed a number of settlement boundaries within the plan area. Where these documents have already reviewed relevant settlement boundaries, the Council has chosen not to review them again, unless additional subsequent development adjacent outside the settlement boundary has taken place. There may be a need for a further review of settlement boundaries through Neighbourhood Plans or a subsequent Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

4.3 The settlements where the Council proposes to amend the settlement boundary are:

- Chichester city;
- East Wittering & Bracklesham;
- North Mundham/Runcton;
- Stockbridge; and
- Westhampnett.

4.4 The amended settlement boundaries are illustrated on the maps set out in Appendix 1.