

STEERING GROUP STATEMENT ON ITS APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT SITES

Agreed 28 October 2019

The neighbourhood planning process can choose from three alternative approaches in relation to the allocation of specific development sites:

- using a criteria policy-based approach (ie drafting specific policies to cover any development)
- delineating development boundaries outside/alongside the current settlement boundaries (supported by a robust evidence base, such as settlement edge assessment, Local Landscape Character Assessment)
- allocating specific sites for development (supported by a robust evidence base. This would need to include a Strategic Environmental Assessment which would assess any possible environmental and historic impact resulting from the allocated sites, which could result in proposed sites being removed).

Following consideration of the different approaches the NP Steering Group has decided on a criteria policy- based approach. Steering Group determined that this would be most suited to the local context for the following reasons:

- Existing opportunities for infill and rounding off of settlements give some scope for development to meet identified needs, although it is acknowledged that small developments would not be affordable-led.
- Larger scale development outside existing boundaries will still be possible under existing planning policy as rural exception sites.
- The options of site allocation and using development boundaries would likely limit affordable delivery obligations within designated areas (as compared to rural exception sites). This goes against the response in our household survey in favour of the delivery of affordable housing through the neighbourhood planning process. These options would not of course prevent the emergence of further rural exception sites.
- Both the allocation of sites or and the use of development boundaries risk artificially inflating land values of the areas affected and detrimentally affecting adjoining property prices - having a widespread significant detrimental impact to existing residents. This could be very divisive for the community.
- There are a number of existing settlements within the parish which would require a development boundary if this approach was taken forward. This would require a significant amount of work to identify and agree each boundary for each settlement and if it was decided to draw the boundary tightly around the existing settlement there would be no real benefit to this approach.
- Although this is not a determining factor, Steering Group notes that the dispersed nature of settlements means it would be difficult to draw enlarged boundaries around settlements without significant cost and delay to the neighbourhood planning process through protracted consultation and negotiation, putting in jeopardy the whole neighbourhood planning process.

Steering Group is confident that a robust criteria policy-driven approach provides the ability to protect the most sensitive and cherished areas and characteristics of the Parish whilst also enabling the plan to reflect the views and priorities expressed through consultation. These include:

- Respect for the historic and natural environment: reinforcement of existing protections afforded by AONB, WHS and conservation areas
- Affordability and homes for local people
- Scope for industrial sites to be developed
- Protection of green spaces, green gaps and corridors between settlements.

Note

The household survey had 994 responses. The mapping section of the survey had 334 responses. Within the 334 responses there was significant support for a few possible sites. Steering Group does not think that the level of support in the survey for some sites, or the support for the principle of allocating sites, outweigh the disadvantages.

ANNEX

SG Discussion of site allocation / development boundaries / reliance on policies regarding development (flipcharts)

Pros	Cons
<i>Allocation of development sites</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can initially limit development site • few sites had significant support • Can allocate specific sites for specific purpose eg industrial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases land price, thus house prices • Not affordable-led • Any other site can be a rural exception site • How to agree • Need for SEA
<i>Use of development boundaries</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can initially limit development sites • Could steer towards areas and protect others (eg towards the coast) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases land prices, thus house prices • Not affordable led • Any other site can be a rural exception site • How to agree? • Need for SEA
<i>Policy driven -no defined sites/development boundaries</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher proportion of homes for local people • Affordable led • Protection of areas easier eg green spaces • Policies can be evidenced directly from our survey • Flexible possibilities into the future • Policy to allow for specific areas eg industrial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any site can be a rural exception site • Policies must be written 'perfectly', with regard to challenges • Beware 'strangulation' in terms of business • Infill within settlement areas may have detrimental effect on historic settlements • Could we be challenged re 'strongly identified' sites?