

THE CORE STRATEGY & OPTIONS

THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Theme 1 – Achieving a Better Quality of Life

To ensure that development supports the principles of sustainable development and secures sustainable communities

2.2 THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

HEADLINE FACTS – SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

- Spatial policies whilst being geographically based take into consideration the way in which an area is used and functions i.e. wider than a strictly land-use based policy
- The period of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy is 2001 to 2021.
- The period of this Local Development Framework is also to 2021.

The **Community Strategy** identifies as **ITS VISION**:

Building upon the best of the present, Suffolk Coastal should be a district where people want to live and to invest, and care for others and the environment

You have told us the issues are:

- Accommodating growth in a sustainable manner
- Having regard to the aspirations of the communities themselves

2.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Draft Objective 1 – Sustainable Development and Sustainable Communities

To deliver more integrated and sustainable patterns of land use, movement, activity and development and to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities.

- 2.3.1 The twin principles of sustainable development and the creation of sustainable communities are central to the new planning system. Simply expressed, the concept of sustainable development means ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both present and future generations. In relation to sustainable communities it means working toward communities which are active, inclusive and safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed and built, well connected, thriving, well served, fair for everyone, and diverse, reflecting their local circumstances. These twin principles are required to underlie and support all new development plan documents (DPD's).
- 2.3.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) translates these national principles to the regional level. It seeks to achieve a sustainable relationship between jobs, homes and services at both the strategic and local level. Conserving the environment, quality of life, local character and natural resources are also important. Tackling the problems of social inclusion and deprivation are key strands in achieving sustainable development. It is the role of Suffolk Coastal's Core Strategy to cascade these principles further to the local level, tailoring them to address local circumstances.
- 2.3.3 Given that sustainable development and sustainable communities are central to government policy there are no alternative options as to whether or not to include it as an overriding aspiration of the Plan. The issue is how best to address it in the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents.

Alternative Options

- 2.3.4 Option One. Under this option the Core Strategy would simply repeat policy SS1 of the RSS. However, this is considered unnecessary given the fact that the RSS will form part of the Development Plan.

2.3.5 Option Two A second option is to include instead, a set of Core Principles relating to sustainable development and sustainable communities based around government advice and the RSS, but that highlights the aspects of sustainable development and sustainable communities considered critical to the Suffolk Coastal district. This approach avoids unnecessary repetition and has the added benefit of making it more relevant to the Suffolk Coastal District Area.

2.3.6 Issues of particular relevance to the district of Suffolk Coastal might be:

- (a) Provision of sufficient housing to meet the needs of current and future populations, in a way which is both sustainable, appropriate to the widely varying communities which make up the District, and avoids or minimises the negative impacts which can arise from development
- (b) The application of a defined settlement hierarchy itself based on sustainability principles;
- (c) The achievement of quality local services accessible to all sections of the community;
- (d) The conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment;
- (e) Enabling a healthy economy, notably in the rural areas;
- (f) Maintaining and enhancing a sense of place; and
- (g) Transport accessibility to services and an integrated and sustainable transport system.

2.4 A SPATIAL STRATEGY - SETTLEMENTS

HEADLINE FACTS – SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

- The district contains over 100 settlements of varying size and function, from the urban areas of Felixstowe and the Ipswich Policy Area, to small rural settlements containing less than 50 dwellings.
- The number, range and size of settlement type contribute to the quality and character of the district, making it an attractive area to live, work, visit and invest.
- About 60% of the resident population live within the urban areas of Felixstowe and the Ipswich fringe as well as the five market towns of Aldeburgh, Framlingham, Leiston, Saxmundham and Woodbridge.
- Felixstowe and the market towns are the highest order retail and service centres within the district, catering for both the resident population and tourist trade.
- Abutting the district in the south is the regional centre of Ipswich.
- Strategic employment sites including the port of Felixstowe and the BT site at Martlesham Heath are located to the south of the district closest to the existing centres of population and primary transport network (road, rail and bus).
- The vast majority of settlements within the district are rural in character with limited access to services and facilities. Transport in these areas is predominantly by means of private motor vehicles due to limited availability of public transport provision.

The **Community Strategy** identifies as one of its priorities:

Access to Services: Investigating new ways to address the decline in local services and the limitations of public transport, especially in the rural areas

You have told us the issues are:

- Future development should be located in areas where access to day-to day facilities and services are available by public transport, cycling and walking.
- Development sites should be available in a range of sizes. Smaller developments should be encouraged in local communities to meet local needs
- The role of the market towns as retail, service and employment centres should be supported
- Land should be made available for affordable housing to meet local needs
- Further clarification should be provided as to what is meant by a sustainable viable rural community

SETTLEMENT CLASSIFICATION

Draft Objective 2 – Settlement Policy

To ensure that the number and distribution of new houses and jobs are balanced and reflect sustainable principles, including making greater use of previously developed land, whilst respecting the character of settlements and local surroundings. In doing so to sustain viable rural communities and deliver more integrated patterns of land-use, movement, activity and development.

- 2.4.1 Establishing a settlement hierarchy is a fundamental pre-requisite to identifying a range of possible spatial development options. It is this that will determine the level and density of new development considered acceptable for each level within the hierarchy, and from this, the possible development combinations, that could realistically meet the housing and employment requirements for the district, as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. It also involves identifying and assessing what are considered appropriate levels of services and facilities including retail, for each settlement type, with the aim of maintaining and where appropriate extending existing levels of provision.
- 2.4.2 In accordance with the principles of sustainable development and sustainable communities, the RSS requires that the major centres be the focus of the largest scale of development. Thereafter it states that development will be focused in market towns and then at key service centres. In all other rural settlements and related communities it states that local authorities should consider the potential to accommodate new development, sympathetic to local character and of an appropriate scale and nature, including local employment and housing need. The Core Strategy needs to consider a settlement hierarchy based on that set out at the national and regional levels.

Alternative Options

- 2.4.3 **Option One.** This option would continue the settlement hierarchy as currently set out in the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (incorporating the 1st and 2nd Alterations). Under this option settlements are identified primarily on their physical size. To continue with it is essentially a “do nothing” approach. Such a hierarchy would contain levels as follows:

Option 1 - Settlement Policy “Do Nothing”

The following settlement hierarchy would continue to be used in determining the scale of development appropriate in a particular location.

Major Centres - defined as settlements capable of development for strategic purposes.

Market Towns - settlements capable of expansion, including estate scale development, where such development would support the role of the settlement, contribute to regeneration and not be detrimental to their character and setting

Large Villages – settlements suitable for new development consisting of groups of houses and infilling

Small Villages – settlements where development would be confined to infilling only.

Countryside - settlements where the presumption is against new development unless it can be justified as a rural exception. These comprise the hamlets and small groups of dwellings that are dispersed across the district. These are considered to form part of the countryside.

Other than in respect of 'Countryside', physical limits boundaries will be drawn for each of the settlements. The physical limits will be drawn to reflect the main built area of the settlement. Outside these physical limits the land will be deemed to be "Countryside" except where specific policies or allocations apply. Once allocated land is developed it will be incorporated into the physical limits of the settlement to which it relates.

- 2.4.4 Option 1 has the benefit of being simple in its approach. However, it provides little guidance to distinguish between settlements of 25 or 1000+ dwellings. It also fails to reflect the current emphasis on sustainable settlements and the need to look at the function of settlements as well as their size. The approach therefore fails to accord with latest advice in the RSS to which the Local Development Framework (LDF) is required to conform as it cannot distinguish, or provide the basis for distinguishing, even those settlements which are key service centres from others. To progress with this option might therefore risk the LDF failing the key test of soundness thereby undermining the Development Plan Document (DPD) as a whole.
- 2.4.5 Option 2. Under this option the settlement hierarchy is re-defined based on a combination of function and physical form. It reflects much more closely what actually happens on the ground, i.e. looking at individual communities and how and at what level they operate. It provides a finer-grained approach to the range of settlement types that exist across the district. Settlements are categorised according to sustainability factors including size, level of facilities, their role in relation to their locality, as well as their physical form. This will ensure that the number and distribution of new houses and jobs are balanced and reflect sustainable principles whilst respecting the character of settlements and local surroundings. On the one level the hierarchy reflects the situation as it currently exists "on the ground". It recognises and acknowledges individual roles. At a second level, it provides the framework within which settlements considered to be sustainable are able to continue to grow and develop or to consolidate their existing role. Development is therefore expressed in terms of three key uses, access (or lack of access) to which, is considered to underpin quality of life. This includes housing, employment and retail (including access to services and facilities) uses.
- 2.4.6 Under this Option the levels would be as follows:

Option 2 - Settlement Policy Based on Principles of Sustainability

The following settlement hierarchy would be used in determining the scale of development appropriate in a particular location.

Major Centres - defined as settlements capable of development for strategic purposes.

Market Towns - settlements capable of expansion, including estate scale development, where such development would support the role of the settlement, contribute to regeneration and not be detrimental to their character and setting

Key Service Centres – settlements which provide the full range of specified facilities and are capable of sustaining some minor expansion, groups of houses and infilling

Local Service Centres – settlements providing a smaller range of facilities than the key service centres. Development within these settlements would be confined to, dependent

on their individual character, infilling or small groups which address specific local economic, social or community objectives. Also includes settlements that contain a smaller range of facilities but link with neighbouring settlements (as a “cluster”), so as to between them provide for a greater range of facilities and services that go a long way to meeting all day to day needs of the wider locality.

Other Villages - settlements with few or minimal facilities where the presumption is against new development unless it can be justified as a rural exception. These comprise the hamlets and small groups of dwellings that are dispersed across the district. These are considered to form part of the countryside.

Other than in respect of Other Villages, physical limits boundaries will be drawn for each of the settlements. The physical limits will be drawn to reflect the main built area of the settlement. Outside these physical limits the land will be deemed to be “Countryside” except where specific policies or allocations apply. Once allocated land is developed it will be incorporated into the physical limits of the settlement to which it relates.

2.4.7 In order to assist local communities in assessing where they think their settlement should be placed in the hierarchy; and what the implications of their positioning within the hierarchy might be, the following schedule has been drawn up based on Option 2 above, were this to be the Council’s ultimate preference.

THIS SCHEDULE IS AN EXAMPLE AND PUBLISHED FOR DISCUSSION ONLY.

TABLE 1 - SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Settlement Classification	Attributes	Settlements	Scale of Development		
			Housing	Employment	Retail
Major Centre	Urban area Regional or sub-regional catchment area Wide range of employment and commercial activity Social facilities such as health and education	Felixstowe and the Trimleys’ Ipswich Fringe i.e. Kesgrave Martlesham Heath Purdis Farm Rushmere St Andrew (excluding the village)	Allocations of large scale development to meet strategic needs Within the defined limits development in the form of: Estates Groups Infill Affordable housing: One third of new allocations One in three units in all developments of 6 units or more in size	Felixstowe - Strategic employment site linked to port. Ipswich fringe - Strategic employment sites at Adastral Park. Limited local employment provision elsewhere. Some new small scale business./service use (B1/A2 provision appropriate within the new housing areas linked to local/district service centres	Felixstowe - Should incorporate a range of provision including convenience store, supermarket, and comparison goods. Walton – district centre Martlesham Heath – existing out of town centre comprising retail park and superstore. District centres at Kesgrave, Martlesham Heath and Bixley Farm

Settlement Classification	Attributes	Settlements	Scale of Development		
			Housing	Employment	Retail
Market Town	<p>Focal point for employment, shopping and community facilities</p> <p>Transport hub</p>	<p>Aldeburgh Framlingham Leiston Saxmundham Woodbridge (with part of Melton & Martlesham)</p>	<p>Allocations in the form of: estate scale development if/where appropriate</p> <p>Within the defined limits development in the form of: Estates Groups Infill</p> <p>Affordable Housing: One third of each new allocation One in three units in all developments of 6 units or more in size Exception sites on the edges of the physical limits of the town</p>	<p>Range of general and local employment opportunities. Emphasis on retention of existing businesses and areas in employment use to provide opportunities both for expansion and start-up.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve and expand on the existing tourism offer will generally be encouraged where they would be in sympathy with the character and scale of the town</p>	<p>Convenience, supermarket, and comparison shopping provision.</p> <p>Emphasis will be on retaining range of provision to meet the needs of the town and its hinterland whilst supporting their role as local tourist centres.</p>
Key Service Centre	<p>At least</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public transport access to a town • Shop(s) meeting day to day needs • Local employment opportunities • Meeting place • Post office • Pub or licensed premises • Primary school • Doctors Surgery 	<p>Alderton Aldringham; Blythburgh, Bramfield, Dennington, Earl Soham, Eyke, Grundisburgh, Hollesley, Kirton, Knodishall, Martlesham Village, Melton Village, Orford, Otley, Peasehall, Rendlesham, Snape, Ufford, Westleton, Wickham Market, Witnesham, Yoxford</p>	<p>Allocations in the form of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor extensions to some villages to meet local needs <p>Within the defined physical limits development in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups • Infill <p>Affordable Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two thirds of each new allocation • One in three units in all developments of 3 units or more in size • Exception sites on the edges of the physical limit boundaries 	<p>Limited range of employment opportunities but mainly local.</p> <p>Emphasis on retention of existing businesses and areas in employment use to provide opportunities for expansion and start-up.</p>	<p>Small range of comparison and convenience shopping.</p> <p>Emphasis will be on retention of existing provision</p> <p>District centre - Wickham Market</p>

Settlement Classification	Attributes	Settlements	Scale of Development		
			Housing	Employment	Retail
Local Service Centres	<p>A range of facilities, at least 3 from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport access to a town Shop(s) meeting day to day needs Local employment opportunities Meeting place Post office Pub or licensed premises 	<p>Badingham, Bawdsey, Bucklesham, Benhall Blaxhall, Brandeston Bredfield Bromeswell Butley, Campsea Ashe, Charsfield, Chillesford, Clopton, Cretingham Dallinghoo, Darsham Dunwich, Easton, Friston;Great Bealings, Hacheston Hasketon Kelsale, Kettleburgh, Levington, Little Bealings, Little Glemham Marlesford, Middleton, Nacton, Parham Pettistree Rendham Rushmere St Andrew (village) Shottisham, Stratford St Andrew, Sutton, Sutton Heath, Swilland; Theberton, Tuddenham, Tunstall, Walberswick, Waldringfield, Wenhaston, Westerfield</p>	<p>Within the defined physical limits development as appropriate in the form of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups and/or Infill <p>Affordable Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One in three units in all developments of 3 units or more in size; Exception sites on the edges of the physical limits boundaries 	<p>Where provision exists emphasis will be on retention. Potential for expansion likely to be limited due to environmental and infrastructure limitations.</p> <p>New provision most likely to be provided through conversion/re-use of existing buildings and have tangible links to the local area.</p>	<p>Convenience shopping. This could include provision in the form of a farm shop, or similar linked /ancillary to another use.</p> <p>Emphasis will be on retention of existing provision.</p>
Other Villages	Minimal facilities	<p>Boyton, Bruisyard, Chediston, Cransford, Cratfield, Falkenham, Farnham, Foxhall; Great Glemham Heveningham, Huntingfield, Newbourne Playford, Saxtead, Sudbourne, Sweffling; Walpole</p>	<p>No development (other than to meet local needs) and no defined physical limit boundary.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Development in the form of infill for local needs only</p>	<p>Existing employment where it exists is linked predominantly to agricultural industry or other rural businesses. Emphasis will be on retaining existing uses. Farm diversification and tourism uses may be appropriate.</p>	<p>Where no provision currently exists this situation is unlikely to change. This includes the provision of a farm shop or similar.</p>

Settlement Classification	Attributes	Settlements	Scale of Development		
			Housing	Employment	Retail
Countryside	No facilities	Boulge, Brightwell, Burgh, Capel St Andrew, Cookley, Culpho, Debach, Gedgrave, Hemley, Hoo, Iken, Letheringham, Linstead Magna, Linstead Parva, Monewden, Ramsholt, Sibton, Sternfield, Stratton Hall, Thorington, Ubbeston, Wantisden	No development and no defined physical limit boundary. Affordable Housing None	Employment where it does exist is predominantly linked to agriculture or forestry. Farm diversification schemes and tourism uses may be appropriate.	Where no provision currently exists this situation is unlikely to change. This includes the provision of a farm shop or similar.

QUESTIONS - Settlement Hierarchy

- Q5 As an approach to identifying different settlement types, which of the options identified do you prefer?
Option 1
Option 2
- Q6. Using the example set out in Table 1, are the broad scales and types of development identified for each settlement type appropriate? Y/N

If NO, why not?
- Q7 Using the example set out in Table 1, do you think any settlement is wrongly identified as a particular settlement type? Y/N

If YES which settlement and why?

Wickham Market

- 2.4.8 A further Option exists in respect of Wickham Market. Although currently a large village, and potentially a key service centre if that particular Option is pursued, the settlement has a wide range of services and is close to being considered a market town. If so, there is the possibility that it could be a potential location for new housing development.

QUESTION - Wickham Market

- Q8 Do you think Wickham Market should be identified as a market town under the settlement hierarchy? YES/NO Please give reasons

Physical Limits Boundaries

Function and Purpose

- 2.4.9 An important element of the Settlement Strategy will be the defining of physical limits. The main function of physical limits is to define the area within which most forms of development would be allowed. They are drawn in order to achieve the Settlement Strategy. The following guidelines have been devised in order to ensure consistency in the drawing up of those boundaries and reflect in large measure, the basis on which the physical limits boundaries are currently defined in the adopted Local Plan. They will also assist the Council in assessing proposals for development. Outside the physical limits the District will be defined as countryside where development will be strictly controlled and not permitted unless in conformity with other policies or the subject of specific allocations.
- 2.4.10 The Council will refer to individual community plans and seek to respect those plans wherever possible and practical when defining physical limits. Principles of sustainability will also be paramount (see section 2.3).
- 2.4.11 Physical limits will:
- Make it clear to the local community and potential developers where development will be acceptable.
 - Prevent development being spread throughout the countryside.
 - Protect the setting of towns and villages
- 2.4.12 Physical limits will not:
- Mean that all development proposals within them will be acceptable. A proposal must be consistent with other relevant policies.
 - Reflect or follow Parish boundaries.
- 2.4.13 The process of defining the physical limits boundary is:
- Firstly, to identify the main built form.
 - Secondly, to draw an 'envelope' around the built form.

The Built Form

- 2.4.14 More often than not the built form will constitute the traditional heart of a settlement together with any expansion over the years, often in the form of groups of houses and estates.
- 2.4.15 The built form may contain open areas. These can be historic areas such as village greens and churchyards, but also areas of open space, small paddocks, allotments' and even large gardens. Such areas may be protected from development where they are the subject of local or national designations, or make an important contribution to:
- The street-scene or
 - The physical form and layout of the settlement.
- 2.4.16 Linear or 'ribbon' development will not be considered a built form or part of the built form if:
- It is separated from the main built form by a site, or area, so that it visually does not appear to constitute part of it.
 - The ribbon is fragmented, with large gaps created by gardens or tranches of countryside.
- 2.4.17 There may be occasions where a settlement has developed in a location away from its traditional heart, perhaps around a school or other feature or facility. Such areas may be considered to constitute a built form if:

- a) They are substantial in size and not merely a small group of houses or a hamlet.
- b) They contain community facilities such as a school, convenience store or village hall, or have safe and convenient access on foot to such facilities i.e. are considered to be 'sustainable'

The Drawing of the 'Envelope'

2.4.18 A physical limits boundary or 'envelope' will be drawn around an appropriate built form. Wherever practical it will follow physical features such as field boundaries, roads and footpaths.

2.4.19 The line will not include the following:

- a) Large residential gardens and curtilages that are on the periphery and abut both the built form and the adjoining countryside.
- b) Open areas such as playing fields, cemeteries, allotments, orchards and natural habitats, which abut both the built form and the adjoining countryside.
- c) Farmyards and associated agricultural buildings that abut both the built form and the adjoining countryside.
- d) 'Fingers' of agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form.

QUESTION - Physical Limits Boundaries

Q9 Do you agree with the suggested method for identifying physical limits boundaries? Y/N
If NO, what changes would you suggest?

2.5 A SPATIAL STRATEGY - THE COUNTRYSIDE

HEADLINE FACTS – COUNTRYSIDE

- Suffolk Coastal is a diverse district of nearly 90,000 hectares, incorporating coast, countryside, towns, suburbs and villages but is predominantly rural in character.
- Population density in the northern part of the district is as low as 10 per ha in places.
- 36% of the District is nationally designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- 12% is designated as being of national or international importance for its nature conservation interest
- The District contains 55 km of coastline of which 50km is designated as Heritage Coast
- Around 5% of the working population are employed in agriculture, well above the average figure for either the East of England or Great Britain.
- Much of the district outside of the coast and towns is classified as grade 2 and 3 "best and most versatile" agricultural land, characterised by crops (vegetables, maize, rapeseed) and intensive pig breeding units.
- Large agricultural holdings dominate both in terms of field size and scale of production, supplying direct to the main supermarket chains.
- Significant numbers of people are employed in the horticulture business
- 10% of the district is given over to forestry/woodland, important both for its timber production and its recreation/tourism use
- The quality of the countryside is an important resource for the District's tourism industry, both day visitors, overnight stays and traditional holiday makers
- Levels of public transport, services and facilities in the rural area are limited.
- Access to many parts of the rural area within the district whilst not far in distance terms from the classified road network, is difficult, as they are serviced by single track roads with passing places.

The **Community Strategy** identifies two of its **key issues** as safeguarding, enhancing and managing the distinctive high quality of the environment of the district; and improving the process of estuary and coastal management; and

Under its **ambitions** – to maintain and enhance the prosperity of the rural areas and to promote opportunities for people to develop the skills they need; and to develop tourism

You have told us the issues are:

- There was no core objective relating to the protection of the countryside and coast
- In relation to the rural economy specific support should be provided for the farming industry
- Care needs to be taken to ensure that new businesses in the countryside are of an appropriate scale and have regard to the availability of infrastructure and services, particularly water.
- There is a balance between promoting tourism and the quality of the countryside and biodiversity.
- Promoting local distinctiveness is important

2.5.1 National policies and guidance require that the quality and character of the countryside is protected for its own sake and, where possible, enhanced. Particular regard is required to be had to any areas that have been statutorily designated for their landscape, wildlife or historic qualities.

2.5.2 National policy also increasingly recognises the need for more regard to be had to rural issues and to the problems and opportunities these areas experience. Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) sets out the governments objectives for the rural areas as follows:

- a) To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas
- b) To promote more sustainable patterns of development
- c) To promote the development of the English regions by improving their economic performance so that they are able to reach their full potential; and
- d) To promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agricultural sectors

Draft Objective 3 – Countryside

To provide a framework which will maintain and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment, whilst securing the long-term prosperity of those living and working within the rural area, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Alternative Options

2.5.3 Option One – to continue with the existing policy of restraint as set out in the adopted Local Plan. Under this option the policy emphasis is to restrict development within the countryside excepting for a few specified exceptions. Development is expected to encompass the following categories:

1. agriculture, including horticulture
2. forestry
3. employment
4. housing to meet local needs (including extensions and replacements)
5. sites for gypsies and travellers (subject to the results of a Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment survey)
6. community facilities
7. leisure and tourism
8. transportation projects
9. public utility projects

10. renewable energy projects
11. coastal defence
12. mineral extraction (subject to conformity with the Minerals LDF produced by the County Council) and
13. waste disposal (also subject to conformity with the Waste LDF produced by the County Council)

2.5.4 The policy has worked well in restricting unnecessary development within the rural areas. However this blanket type restriction on development lacks the subtlety to distinguish between the wide variety of uses and activities which currently take place within the rural areas, or to distinguish between those areas which are more sensitive to particular uses from those which are not.

2.5.5 Option Two – This option continues to reflect the government's overall aim of protecting the countryside for its own sake, for its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage, wildlife and natural resources. Within this however, government proposes a more proactive approach to guiding new development. It introduces a spatial element based primarily around those parts that are designated for their nature conservation or landscape value and those parts that are not. The new policy approach would provide more specific guidance as to the types and scale of uses likely to be acceptable (or not acceptable) within these broad areas, in similar fashion to the settlement hierarchy set out in Option Two above. This approach is considered to better reflect government guidance whilst tailoring it to reflect local circumstances and priorities. It would provide an appropriate framework of support for the myriad of businesses and uses that currently exist, particularly those related to the agricultural economy, whilst preserving the assets that make the district an attractive destination for tourists.

2.5.6 Under such an Option Proposals will be assessed against the following general issues:

In respect of the development itself:

- a) The need to be located in the countryside
- b) Whether the proposal could be accommodated within a settlement
- c) Social and economic benefits
- d) The cumulative impact

In respect of the location:

- a) The nature of the countryside in question – landform, skyline, vegetation, character, biodiversity etc
- b) Designations and the status of those designations, i.e. international, national, regional, county-wide or local
- c) Historic and cultural value
- d) Levels of remoteness
- e) Scale and impact, including visual, noise and general disturbance
- f) Sustainability
- h) Accessibility - including the generation of traffic and ability of the local road system to absorb traffic.

QUESTIONS - Countryside

Q10 When considering the long term future of the countryside which of the stated options do you generally prefer and why?
Option 1
Option 2

Q11 If you prefer Option 1, are there uses you would wish to see removed, or new uses added to the list?