

Settlement Confines Review – Consultation 2021

As part of the development of the new Dover District Local Plan and to support Strategic Policy 3: Residential Windfall Development the Council are undertaking a review of the built confines of all the settlements in the District.

This note sets out the context behind the review, the methodology used, the main changes to the settlement confines made as part of the review and the purpose of this consultation.

What is a Settlement Confine

Settlement confines are long established planning tools, consistent with the NPPF's objectives of achieving sustainable development by, among other things, supporting patterns of development that facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport; taking account of the different roles and character of different areas; and avoiding new isolated homes in the countryside.

In simple terms, a 'settlement confine' is a dividing line, or boundary between areas of built/urban development (the settlement) and non-urban or rural development (the open countryside). Although a settlement confine does not preclude all development beyond the confine, it does give clarity as to where new development within the confine or directly adjacent is likely to be acceptable in planning terms.

Purpose of the Review

Settlement confines in the District were last updated as part of the production of the Core Strategy (2010) and Land Allocations Local Plan (2015). Given this, it was considered necessary as part of the development of the new Dover District Local Plan to update the settlement confines in the District to take account of changes to the settlement confines resulting from new development and proposed changes in the Council's policy approach to delivering residential windfall development.

The review has been undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out below.

Policy Context

It is well defined within the existing core strategy and draft Local Plan how settlement confines help define planning land use.

There is neither a definition or procedure within national or local policy on how a settlement confine should be defined.

The NPPF does however set out consideration to levels and type of development that maybe acceptable within and outside of a settlement. For example:

NPPF 2019

Paragraph 68 c) *'support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes'*

Paragraph 71 b) *'be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them³³*

33 Entry-level exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement.'

Paragraph 84 '...The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.'

Paragraph 118 c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;'

Draft Strategic Policy 3: Residential Windfall Development

Strategic Policy 3 of the local plan sets out the Council's proposed approach to residential windfall development in the District. The Council are still considering responses made on this policy as part of the Regulation 18 consultation on the draft Local Plan and determining whether changes should be made to the Policy. However, this does not affect where the settlement confines are drawn, as the location of the confines is a factual assessment of the existing built confines of the settlement.

Methodology

Officers have carried out an initial desk-based review of all the settlement confines in the District, using GIS, aerial imagery, base mapping and street view.

The starting point for the review of each settlement confines has been that a settlement is a continuous built environment, based around a core community hub or structure(s) for example public house, place of worship, school, village hall retail and employment.

In circumstances where there is a partial break in the built environment, such as amenity space, the partial break has been considered in terms of the setting of the wider built environment.

The following criteria have then been used to judge what should be included within the built confines of a settlement:

- All properties physically linked to the main (built) part of the settlement should be included within settlement confines, except those such as operating farms as they principally relate to activities within the countryside.
- Settlement confines should not include properties separated from the main body of the settlement by areas of open land not forming a residential curtilage.
- Settlement confines should include traditional rural buildings converted to residential use that are connected to the main body of the settlement, together with their residential curtilages.
- Settlement confines should exclude sites with planning permission for development and allocated sites, where the development has not started. Only sites with planning consent that are under construction or completed should be included within confines. This is to reflect the proposed change to the approach to windfall development set out in draft Strategic Policy 3, whereby development may be considered acceptable immediately adjoining the settlement confines of some settlements. This is to avoid the situation where development is permitted on sites which at the current time are not actually adjoining the

built form of the settlement and would remain detached from the settlement should the planning permission or allocation not be brought forward in the future.

- Settlement confines should normally include all residential curtilages. However, where extensive land and gardens exist around dwellings, settlement confines should be drawn tightly to the dwelling.
- Settlement confines should include sites that are so damaged by visual intrusion as to be unworthy of designation in the open countryside. An example could be a site on the boundary almost surrounded by built development.
- Settlement confines should follow clearly defined physical features, such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads and streams.

Main Changes to Settlement Confines

The main changes made to the settlement confines in the District as a result of the review are as follows:

- Built settlement confines have been tidied up where necessary to clearly follow defined physical features.
- Allocated sites and sites with planning permission that are not started have been removed from confines. This is to ensure the confines follow that of the existing built settlement, not what is proposed, in case an allocation isn't delivered. When allocated sites or sites with planning permission are developed, they will then be incorporated within settlement confines in future reviews. This means in some cases the boundaries are more tightly drawn than currently.
- Development that has planning consent and is under construction or complete has been included within built confines.
- Whitfield, Connaught Barracks/ Burgoyne Heights and Dover now have separate built confines.
- The beach and sea have been removed from built confines.
- Large areas of designated open space are generally not within built confines.
- Stations are now included within confines.
- Schools are now included within built confines.
- Churches surrounded by large areas of open space are generally outside built confines.
- Employment areas that are connected to and part of settlements are now within the built confines.

Furthermore, in accordance with draft Local Plan Strategy Policy 3 Residential Windfall Development confines have been given to some settlements that previously did not have settlement confines.

These are:

- Ashley
- Barnsole
- Betteshanger
- Chillenden
- Coldred
- Denton

- East Studdal
- Finglesham
- Guston
- Martin
- Martin Mill
- Northbourne
- Sutton
- Tilmanstone
- Wingham Green

However, it should be noted that in drawing new built settlement confines it was decided that the following settlements should remain without confines, due to the particular characteristics of the built form of the settlement:

- Elmstone
- West Langdon
- West Stourmouth
- Wotton

Consultation with Town and Parish Council's

Consultation is taking place with Town and Parish Council's on the review of the settlement confines from the 23rd July to the 10th September 2021 for a period of 7 weeks.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek the views and local knowledge of the Town and Parish Council's on the proposed changes to the confines of the settlements in their town or parish.

It is up to each individual Town and Parish Council whether they wish to consult more widely with their communities.

Town and Parish Council's are asked to state whether they support or object to the proposed settlement confines.

Where Town and Parish Council's object to any changes to the settlement confines proposed, the Council requests that Town and Parish Council's mark up on the Plan provided how they propose the settlement confines should be drawn and set any proposed changes out in an accompanying email or letter.

Once the consultation has closed officers will consider the responses and update the settlement confines as required.

The final settlement confines will then be published as part of the consultation on the Regulation 19 Local Plan.