

Isle of Wight Council

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside



August 2004

This is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents. The Isle of Wight Council adopted this Guide August 2004, following public consultation. It is published by Isle of Wight Council, Directorate of Environment Services.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 National and local planning policies state that development in the open countryside, away from established settlements should generally be strictly controlled. These include countryside with no formal protection as well as specially designated areas such as Area of Outstanding natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 In all parts of the countryside, as elsewhere, there are competing demands for land. We have to protect open countryside, for its importance as part of the landscape heritage, as a natural habitat and to ensure we retain the best agricultural land as a national resource for the future.
- 1.3 Nevertheless, the Council recognizes that the countryside can accommodate certain forms of development without harming these assets. Appropriate development in rural areas can help support local shops, schools and other services. It can help to sustain the local economy and promote self-contained rural communities.
- 1.4 There is a clear demand for large houses in the countryside, but the replacement and extension of small existing dwellings can have a major impact on the character of the rural environment. The Council's Housing needs Survey 1996 provides evidence of a continuing need for 1 or 2 bedroom small dwellings to meet local need.

2 Appropriate Development in the Countryside

- 2.1 Planning policies within the Unitary Development Plan set out to ensure that development is normally restricted to agriculture, forestry, countryside, recreation/tourism, leisure and sport and other uses normally located in the countryside. These policies are set out in full in the relevant sections of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
- 2.2 As well as those uses already mentioned, replacement dwellings in the countryside might be appropriate. Policy H9 provides the general policy that deals with residential development outside of development boundaries, and this guidance note provides more detail, specifically with regard to replacement dwellings.

UDP Policies:
H9

- 2.3 The Council has a statutory responsibility to have regard for the purpose of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB designation to support the conservation and enhancement of landscape character. There are stricter permitted development rights within the AONB and special attention should be

given to any replacement dwelling in the AONB to ensure they contribute to local distinctiveness and enhance the character of the surrounding landscape.

3 What is a Replacement Dwelling?

- 3.1 This is a dwelling that is built on the site of an existing dwelling. The Council believes that the existing dwelling should be either habitable in its present state or capable of being made re-habitable without extensive re-building, in order to warrant a replacement dwelling, e.g. the existence of a derelict/ruin building does not establish the right to a replacement dwelling.
- 3.2 Replacement is generally unacceptable where the existing residential use rights have been abandoned, the existing dwelling is of architectural or historic merit or the building is a temporary structure.

4 Building Proposals:

- 4.1 If a scheme is acceptable in principle, its siting and design should protect the visual quality of the landscape of the rural area.
- 4.2 The design of new buildings and the extension/alteration of existing buildings must be of a scale and character appropriate to the locality. From experience, the Council believes that designs that reflect the character of traditional dwellings can be fitted most easily into the landscape.
- 4.3 Innovative designs that demonstrate a sympathetic understanding of the existing landscape will be considered.
- 4.4 In particular the proposal should:
- Be visually unobtrusive;
 - Be appropriate for the plot size and not result in a cramped appearance;
 - Retain original site features such as walls, roadside hedges and mature trees;
 - Not result in access problems or provision of services at public cost;
 - Use existing or similar materials which are traditionally prominent in the area;
 - Not require an extension to the residential curtilage; and
 - Not damage local features of archaeological, historic, scientific or conservation value.
 - Include proposals for the mitigation of development impact on any buried or structural archaeological, historic, and scientific or conservation value.

5 Detailed Criteria for Determining Applications

- 5.1 The UDP allows for existing dwellings in the countryside to be replaced in certain circumstances. The issues that need special attention and consideration are:
- 5.2 Planning permission will not be granted for a replacement dwelling where a dwelling has already been demolished or is not habitable without substantial re-building works, as this would be regarded as tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling and hence contrary to policy.
- 5.3 Any replacement must not result in the creation of additional dwellings.
- 5.4 The size of the new dwelling should reflect the original dwelling and not result in a dwelling that is disproportionately larger than the one it is replacing. As a guide any increase should not normally exceed 35% of the volume of the original dwelling.
- 5.5 The impact of the replacement dwelling and any ancillary buildings should not make the new dwelling substantially more visually prominent or intrusive in the landscape.
- 5.6 The proposed replacement dwelling should be on the site of the original dwelling, unless in exceptional circumstances, when its location within the curtilage of the dwelling will bring environmental improvements (e.g. highway safety benefits). In such cases its revised setting should have less impact on the surrounding landscape than the existing property.
- 5.7 The design and detailing of the existing dwelling/surrounding buildings should be reflected in its replacement, particularly in terms of the roof height/profile, proportions, openings and types of materials used. If the existing dwelling is constructed of materials that are unsympathetic to the immediate locality, consideration will be given to the use of alternative materials.
- 5.8 In limited circumstances, where the existing dwelling is inappropriate scale and unsympathetic to the character of the surrounding area innovative designs may be put forward for consideration. In such cases a contextual character assessment of the area must support the proposed design.
- 5.9 In considering applications to extend or replace existing agricultural workers' dwellings, or to develop additional ancillary buildings within their curtilages, the Council may require a Whole Farm Plan in support of the application with regard to the nature and ability of the holding to support the development. Additional guidance on the Conversion of Rural Buildings is given in a separate Supplementary Planning Guidance Document.
- 5.10 If barn owls, bats or other protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are present within the building, no work can be undertaken without prior consultation with English Nature. A development license from DEFRA may also be required for European protected species before any work can be undertaken. Work will be delayed until breeding and nesting season is over and alternative accommodation is provided.

6 Information Required

6.1 Outline applications for replacement dwellings are unacceptable as they contain insufficient information for the Council to assess the impact of proposals. The submission of a full detailed application is necessary, and should include:

- A survey report on existing dwelling
- Plans and elevations of the existing dwelling.
- Where relevant, plans and schedules indicating areas of repair/demolition and rebuilding.
- Plans of the new dwelling and other structures/works.
- Details of existing and proposed site levels.
- Landscape plans.
- Where dwelling lies within a flood risk area, a full flood risk assessment as detailed in Appendix F of PPG25.

7 Summary of Contacts

The Development Control Section is part of the Council's Planning Services Department, which is located at:

Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2QS Tel: (01983) 823552

The Councils Building Control Section is also located at the address above.

County Sites and Monuments Officer
County Archaeological Centre, 61 Clatterford Road, Newport, Isle of Wight,
Tel: (01983) 823810

English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA Tel 01733 455000 Fax 01733 568834.

The assistance of the following Local Authorities and organisations in supplying information used in the publication of this Supplementary Planning Guidance Note is gratefully acknowledged:

- Hambleton District Council
- North Cornwall District Council
- London Borough of Kingston Upon Thames

- Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council