



Pembrokeshire County Council  
Local Development Plan 2

**Settlement Boundary Methodology  
Background Paper**

**November 2019**

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. National Planning Policy and Guidance .....	3
3. Settlement Boundaries.....	3
4. Defining Settlement Boundaries .....	4
Spatial Delineation .....	7

This paper sets out

- Welsh Government guidance on Settlement Boundaries
- The settlement hierarchy – where Settlement Boundaries have been drawn
- The types of land use, development or allocations which are inside or outside settlement boundaries
- Different approaches at different levels of the settlement hierarchy
- How we have shown the settlement boundaries on the Proposals Map.

## 1. Introduction

### *Local Development Plan Review*

- i. Pembrokeshire County Council is preparing a replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) – **Local Development Plan 2**. When adopted, it will provide a revised and updated policy framework to guide development outside of the National Park and inform planning decisions taken by the County Council. During the **Review**, the existing Local Development Plan (up to 2021) will remain in place until Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) is adopted.
- ii. This Background Paper Settlement Boundary Methodology has been produced to explain how the Authority has identified its settlement boundaries within the Deposit Plan.

## 2. National Planning Policy and Guidance

2.1 [Local Development Plan Manual 2](#) requires that policies and proposals with a spatial component should be delineated on the Proposals Map. The Welsh Government has published a consultation draft [Development Plans Manual 3](#). The draft manual advises that

- LDPs should contain settlement boundaries.
- They should be delineated on the Proposals Map.
- They make a clear distinction for plan users of where development is acceptable or not.
- The settlement boundary must be appropriately drawn; taking into account the aims of the overall strategy and the amount and type of development that is attributed to each tier of the settlement hierarchy.
- A strategic policy must clearly articulate where and why settlement boundaries have been drawn and which types of development are acceptable or not within each settlement tier.

## 3. Settlement Boundaries

3.1 Settlement Boundaries generally define the extent of built development at a settlement and provide a clear indication of where development is acceptable in principle or not.

3.2 Development may be acceptable within a settlement boundary, adjacent to it, well related to it or outside it. The type of development proposed is key to its acceptability at these locations.

3.3 Settlement boundaries are defined by the Authority within the Local Development Plan. Once the Local Development Plan is adopted, the boundaries are final. They

will only be changed when the next plan is adopted (and replaces the previous plan)<sup>1</sup>. They are drawn at settlements within the settlement hierarchy in the Plan. These are

### 1. Urban Settlements

Regional Growth Centres  
Other urban settlements

### 2. Rural Settlements

2a. Rural Town

2b. Service Centres

2c. Service Villages

2d. Local Villages (including Cluster Local Villages)

## 4. Defining Settlement Boundaries

4.1 These are drawn using the physical built extent of residential development at the settlement, and include areas allocated for development, which, once developed, would form a cohesive and integrated part of the settlement.

4.2 Defining settlement boundaries considers

- Areas with planning permission, and which accord with the plan strategy should lie within the settlement boundary, unless there are specific reasons to exclude them. e.g. they form an exception site which has not been fully developed, or the site is not required for development within the lifespan of Local Development Plan2.
- Areas allocated for development are included where they form part of the settlement
- Areas of existing built residential development using best available aerial and satellite imagery, planning application data sources, and site visits.

4.3 Settlement boundaries exclude areas outside settlements which are classified as countryside for Local Development Plan policy purposes. They can also exclude elements of the settlement when development or redevelopment proposals would be

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<sup>1</sup> The Local Development Plan is the adopted plan for Pembrokeshire. It is anticipated that this will be replaced in 2021 by Local Development Plan2.

inappropriate for example where they would have an adverse effect on landscape, settlement pattern or coalescence of settlements or environmental interests.

4.4 An example of this would be large gardens (residential curtilages) which extend into the countryside and if development took place, would contribute to the coalescence of settlements. Gardens can be excluded from settlement limits on this basis and for other reasons.

4.5 Built areas of the settlement can also be excluded if they are considered vulnerable to pressure for development or redevelopment for other uses which would not benefit local communities to the extent of the existing development or proposal. An example of this would be employment uses where the loss of employment land at local communities would impact on sustainability and employment opportunity.

4.6 Settlement Boundaries are also drawn to protect the countryside from development and to encourage the reuse of previously developed or brownfield land within settlement boundaries.

4.7 When defining all Settlement Boundaries, the methodology used to define boundaries across the hierarchy was - :

- The curtilages of dwellings within settlements were included within a Settlement Boundary unless they were considered visually or functionally separate to the dwelling, or extend into the countryside to the extent that they could contribute to the coalescence of settlements, or where development would have a detrimental landscape impact.
- Areas with an extant planning permission for housing that were physically well connected and related strongly to the settlement were included within a Settlement Boundary unless i) the site was no longer needed for development or; ii) the site forms an exception site which has not been fully developed
- Recreational or amenity open space which was physically surrounded by the settlement or adjoined on three sides by the settlement has normally been included within a Settlement Boundary. Recreational or amenity space which extends into the countryside or primarily relates in form and nature to the countryside has normally been excluded from the Settlement Boundary.
- Individual plots or small-scale development opportunities which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities in areas physically and visually well related to the existing built environment were included within a Settlement Boundary, unless cumulatively, such opportunities were considered to have a harmful effect on character.

- Existing scattered peripheral residential dwellings not strongly relating to the settlement were excluded from the Settlement Boundary(s) where they were physically separate from it.
- Traditional agricultural buildings with potential to be converted to residential use and which physically relate to a settlement were included within Settlement Boundaries.
- Employment allocations and existing employment sites on the periphery of a settlement which are significant in size in comparison with the settlement's scale, or are clearly beyond a settlement, are excluded from the Settlement Boundaries.

4.8 Different policy approaches are appropriate depending on a settlement's position in the settlement hierarchy. Generally, larger settlements which have a greater range of services are more sustainable locations, and can expect greater levels of housing growth. Other factors are also taken into account and whilst development should be proportional to the size of the settlement, it should also take into account its function and character, and current service provision.<sup>2</sup> The approach also takes into account the ability of the landscape to accommodate the development and the need for additional housing during the plan period.

4.9 For different levels of the settlement hierarchy, the following approach was taken to settlement boundaries -

**A. Settlement Boundaries for Urban Settlements (Regional Growth centres and other urban settlements), Rural Town, Service Centres and Service Villages.**

- Existing or newly allocated employment land which is surrounded by the built environment of the settlement is included within a settlement boundary. Sites which are on the edge of the settlement are excluded from the Settlement Boundary.
- Caravan sites (residential and touring, including gypsy and traveller sites) which are surrounded by the built form of the settlement are included within a Settlement Boundary. Caravan sites which are not surrounded by the built development of the settlement are excluded from the Settlement Boundary on the basis that their more open physical nature is an important transition element between the settlement and the countryside. Redevelopment of a large site in such an area could potentially consolidate and extend urban sprawl and negatively impact on the environment and landscape, both urban and rural.

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<sup>2</sup> See the [Rural Facilities Survey Report Background Paper](#), April 2019

- Working farms which are surrounded by the built form of the settlement or relate visually and physically to the settlement are included within the Settlement Boundary.
- Retail allocations, existing community facilities and mixed use developments which are physically related in nature to the settlement are included within a Settlement Boundary.

### **B. Settlement Boundaries for Local Villages**

The methodology applying to all Settlement Boundaries was applied in Local Villages. Differences in defining the boundaries were:

- Large existing employment sites, modern agricultural buildings or working farms and caravan sites are excluded from Local Village Settlement Boundaries as in many cases their redevelopment for residential purposes would adversely affect the character of the settlement and be disproportional in scale to the settlement. Policies in the LDP will enable their continued operation and expansion of the existing use where appropriate.
- Existing community facilities such as religious buildings, schools and community halls are included within Settlement Boundaries if they physically relate to the village.

### **C. Settlement Boundaries for Satellite Settlements**

- Satellite settlements are often associated with a larger settlement, but not physically connected. They have sufficient number and cohesion of dwellings to be considered suitable for a Settlement Boundary, but are often not locally recognised as an individual settlement, and may lack a good range of facilities.
- Settlement Boundaries for satellite settlements are drawn tightly to reflect the extent of existing or current permitted residential development, allowing for small infill opportunities and existing consents for residential development to come forward.

#### **Spatial Delineation**

Settlement boundaries will be shown on the proposals map.

Main Towns, Rural Town, Service Centres and Service Villages, and Satellite Settlements will be shown as **red settlement boundaries**.

Local Village settlement (including Cluster Local Villages) will be shown as **blue settlement boundaries**.