



The countryside charity
Hampshire

VERSION 1 as at Sept 2021

Position Statement

Tourism

CPRE Issue

CPRE encourages people to visit the countryside for recreation and well-being, as knowledge and appreciation of the countryside is essential to public support for its conservation and enhancement. This means providing visitor accommodation, attractions and recreation facilities to allow people to enjoy the countryside, but poorly sited or designed buildings and facilities can adversely impact on the character of the countryside and views, especially when located outside settlement policy boundaries on exposed or elevated sites. Planning "creep" over the course of time can undermine initial good design.

Guidance

CPRE supports responsible and sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is tourism which is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment or the social fabric of the host community. So, proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions, recreational activities, environmental education and interpretation should provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the countryside in terms of its natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage, and the ecosystem services it provides, but without detracting from the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area. They should also provide opportunity and encouragement for visitors to explore the countryside using public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding. Appropriate existing buildings should be preferred to new buildings.

Sample Policy

1. Development proposals for visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

- a) The proposals will provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the countryside;
- b) The design and location of the development minimises the need for travel by private car and encourages access and/or subsequent travel by sustainable means, including public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding;



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- c) Development proposals will not detract from the experience of visitors or adversely affect the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area;
 - d) Development proposals make use of existing buildings, and, if no suitable existing buildings are available, the design of any new buildings are sensitive to the character and setting;
 - e) Ancillary facilities are not disproportionately large in relation to the rest of the visitor facilities; and
 - f) Any proposal does not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town or village centres or assets of community value;
2. Development proposals that would result in the loss of visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless :
- a) Evidence is provided that the current use is financially unviable and a robust marketing campaign of at least 12 months has been carried out that clearly demonstrates there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent tourism use; or
 - b) The current use or related development harms the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area

Note

In considering the wording of individual policies in Local Plans, it is important to bear in mind that Local Plans must be looked at as a whole. This means, for example, that policies for the protection of landscape must be applied when considering each and every planning application; and accordingly, there is no need for other policies to refer specifically to landscape protection .