

SWDP 18: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside

- A. The replacement of an existing dwelling in the open countryside with another single dwelling will be permitted where:**
- i. The existing dwelling is not a caravan, mobile home or subject to a temporary planning permission.**
 - ii. It can be demonstrated that accommodation needs cannot be met through the alteration, extension and / or refurbishment of the existing dwelling.**
 - iii. The replacement is not disproportionately larger than the existing dwelling and will not exceed the size of the original footprint by more than 30%.**
 - iv. The proposed dwelling is positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless there are visual, landscape or highway safety or other environmental grounds to justify an alternative location within the existing curtilage.**
 - v. The curtilage of the replacement building is no greater than that of the existing dwelling.**
 - vi. The proposal includes the demolition of the dwelling to be replaced.**
 - vii. Where the existing dwelling has been provided for agricultural purposes, a condition will be attached to ensure that the replacement dwelling can only be occupied by an agricultural worker once it has been built.**

Reasoned Justification

1. New development in the open countryside will be very limited and will relate mainly to exceptions, e.g. for new affordable housing where there is a proven need (SWDP 16). This approach is in conformity with national planning policy, which seeks to direct new housing development to sustainable locations, in areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. However, there is also a need to consider the specific housing requirements of those who work in rural employment, such as agricultural, horticultural and forestry (referred to in SWDP 19) and the replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside.
2. Replacement dwellings can help maintain the level of the existing housing stock, where properties are in poor repair, or not appropriate for current needs in terms of their design or size. However, the replacement of existing dwellings with much larger properties can affect the character of a rural area, especially in locations where traditional dwellings are smaller.

3. Under the General Permitted Development Order, extensions and external alterations to existing dwellings represent permitted development⁽⁴⁵⁾ under certain circumstances (up to the physical and locational limits set out in the Order). Thus, in order to make best use of the existing housing stock, applicants will need to demonstrate why an extension, alteration or refurbishment is not considered suitable and why a replacement dwelling is required.
4. For the purposes of policy SWDP18 the dwelling to be replaced must have established use rights as a dwelling.
5. Proposals for replacement dwellings will not be permitted if they would conflict with policy SWDP 28.
6. It is considered preferable wherever possible to retain existing dwellings, in particular where their design and location make an important contribution to the character of an area. Refurbishment is also encouraged as a sustainable use of existing resources. Although there is a desire to retain small homes to allow choice in rural areas, in reality, however small the dwellings are, they often do not provide choice because of their cost to buy. The main justification for retaining small dwellings is on design grounds. Larger new properties can adversely affect the character of an area as a result of their impact on landscape setting, design and amenity. A percentage approach to any increase in size of the dwelling is considered appropriate in order to reflect the dimensions and plot size of the dwelling that is being replaced, so any increase will be proportionate.

45 Not requiring planning permission.