

## **APPENDIX 12:**

### **Settlement boundary criteria**

The approach to defining settlement boundaries has been used in this Local Plan and its predecessor. The principles used were examined at local plan inquiries and are as follows:

- The settlement boundary should only enclose the main settlement area; i.e. the area of close knit physical character.
- Areas of sporadic, dispersed or ribbon development should normally be excluded from the settlement boundary area.
- Tree belts, woodland areas, hedges and other natural features which help to soften, screen existing development and form a boundary to the settlement are important. These features should be excluded from the settlement or protected in some other way.
- Highly visible areas such as exposed ridges, land forms or open slopes on the edge of settlements should normally be excluded from settlement boundary areas.
- Open undeveloped parcels of land on the edges of settlements should normally be excluded from defined settlement areas.
- Important open spaces within settlements should be safeguarded.
- Clearly identifiable features should be used in drawing the boundary, wherever possible.
- The wider setting and important views both into and out of the settlement should where appropriate also be taken into account.

This approach excludes from the boundaries areas of scattered development and areas of loose-knit development on the edge of settlements that provide the transition from the main settlement area to the open countryside. These areas are an essential part of the character of the District's rural areas; the consolidation of these areas with infill development would be detrimental to the character of these rural areas.