

Plan to ensure appropriate sites come forward in the right locations and at the right time. Ensuring sites are economically viable is also a key consideration in the Local Plan to ensure development can be delivered having regard to the need for affordable housing and supporting infrastructure.

**4.35** The Strategy requires that all new housing developments address the range of housing needs of local people by meeting the requirements for affordable housing, provide a mix of housing to contribute to sustainable communities and promotes the inclusion of a proportion of suitable housing to meet the needs of newly forming households. These policy elements reflect the evidence obtained from the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

**4.36** A major factor in achieving the Spatial Strategy is the delivery of the necessary social and physical infrastructure to support future development requirements. The Strategy seeks policy measures to protect services and facilities as well as development proposals to support them. With limited resources available to the Council, the implementation of infrastructure improvements is dependent on the successful delivery of physical development and regeneration schemes through developer funding and the plans and programmes of other service providers. Developers promoting development and regeneration schemes will be expected to contribute towards strategic and local infrastructure requirements, through both on-site facilities and financial contributions for off-site works and facilities, whether through section 106 agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

**4.37** The Spatial Strategy also recognises that the needs of residents will continue to be met from opportunities, experiences and services provided outside the Borough. It does not seek to compete with the larger health, educational, retail, leisure and recreational opportunities available elsewhere but to complement them and facilitate better access to them. Whilst the focus is therefore on meeting local needs, it will also seek to improve the infrastructure links to the sub-region and invest in improved public transport.

## Settlement Hierarchy

**4.38** A settlement hierarchy forms a useful basis for taking forward the principles of the plan's spatial strategy set out above. It provides a framework to manage the scale of development within the Plan Area and allows for new development to be brought forward in a sustainable way, where local services are available and the need to travel is minimised. The towns and villages in the plan area have been classified into a settlement hierarchy on the basis of the availability of local infrastructure as identified in the Sub-Area Infrastructure Appraisals (2012).

**4.39** The following policy defines the settlement hierarchy and the associated broad approach to development in each instance.

### Policy S 2

#### Settlement Hierarchy

Development will be directed towards the most sustainable locations in accordance with the following settlement hierarchy:

#### Market Towns

Buxton, Glossop, Chapel-en-le-Frith, New Mills and Whaley Bridge are defined as 'Market Towns' and will be the main focus for housing, employment and service growth, consistent with maintaining and where possible enhancing their role, distinctive character vitality and appearance.

### **Larger Villages**

Charlesworth, Chinley, Dove Holes, Furness Vale, Hadfield, Hayfield, Peak Dale and Tintwistle are defined as 'Larger Villages' where a moderate scale of development may be acceptable, consistent with meeting local rural needs and maintaining or enhancing their role, distinctive character or appearance whilst also maintaining existing facilities and services.

### **Smaller Villages**

Buxworth, Chapel Milton, Combs, Birch Vale, Padfield, Smalldale, Sterndale Moor, Thornsett and Tunstead Milton are defined as 'Smaller Villages' where only limited development to meet local rural needs may be acceptable consistent with maintaining and enhancing their distinctive character or appearance.

Settlement boundaries for the above settlements are defined in the Policies Maps. New development should be focused within the settlement boundaries of the Market Towns, Larger Villages and Smaller Villages in accordance with their scale, role and function unless otherwise indicated in the Local Plan.

### **Other Rural Areas**

In all other areas outside of the settlement boundary of settlements, including those villages, hamlets and isolated groups of buildings in the Green Belt and the Countryside which do not have a settlement boundary as defined on the Policies Maps, development will be strictly limited to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside or comprises affordable housing in accordance with policies EQ3 and H5.

The Green Belt as defined on the Policies Maps, will be protected from inappropriate development and proposals will be considered in accordance with the provisions of national planning policy and in the light of other policies in this Local Plan.

The extent of the Green Belt and the area defined as Countryside as defined in the Policies Map will be protected and maintained for the plan period.

### **Town and Local Centres**

The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and local centres as defined on the Maps in accordance with their function, role and scale based on the following hierarchy:

- Main Town Centres: Buxton and Glossop
- Small Town Centres: Chapel-en-le-Frith, New Mills and Whaley Bridge
- Larger Villages and Harpur Hill Local Centre
- Other Settlements

New retail, leisure or office development should be focused within the town centres or local centres in accordance with Policies CF1 and CF2.

### Settlement Scale, Role and Function

**4.40** The **Market Towns** are the largest settlements in High Peak comprising of Buxton including Harpur Hill, Glossop including Gamesley, Chapel-en-le-Frith, New Mills and Whaley Bridge. These accommodate the majority of the Borough's population, services and facilities. The spatial strategy seeks to focus future growth in these settlements and to strengthen their role as service centres. These settlements will be defined by a Settlement Boundary within which development of an appropriate scale and nature will be allowed.

**4.41** The **Larger Villages** are the most sustainable villages in the rural areas which generally have a good local social infrastructure, some local employment opportunities and good accessibility to the towns and larger centres. These villages also have an important role in terms of serving and supporting their immediate surrounding rural areas and smaller villages. The spatial strategy focuses the bulk of the rural development in these settlements and seeks to ensure that they are sustained and promoted as service centres. These settlements will be defined by a Settlement Boundary within which development of an appropriate scale and nature will be allowed. It is recognised that there is a significant range amongst these villages in terms of their size and facilities and it is proposed therefore that the scale of development in each area should be relative to their current size and infrastructure.

**4.42** The **Smaller Villages** generally have a poor range of services and facilities and it is often necessary for local residents to travel outside the village for most of their daily needs. Development on a large scale would be unsustainable in these villages, as it will generate a disproportionate number of additional journeys outside the village and may undermine the spatial strategy. However, it is recognised that there is a need to meet local needs in these settlements for housing and other economic or community purposes. These settlements will also be defined by a Settlement Boundary within which limited development of an appropriate nature will be allowed.

**4.43** The **Other Rural Areas** comprises of the open countryside and green belt outside of the market towns, larger villages and smaller villages where further development is generally inappropriate other than to meet essential local needs and for rural activities. Within these areas there are some groups of houses and hamlets which are not identified as 'smaller villages' because their predominantly open character and loose-knit nature makes infilling and the definition of a Settlement Boundary inappropriate. The strategy of meeting only essential local needs and rural activities will also apply to these areas. The rural areas also contain major developed areas which may be suitable for appropriate development or redevelopment.

**4.44** The hierarchy of **Town and Local Centres** is derived from their current role and function and evidence from the Retail and Town Centre Study which highlights the importance of maintaining Buxton and Glossop as the principal centres for retail, services and leisure facilities. Other smaller town centres and local centres also have an important role in terms of supporting and meeting the needs of local communities and surrounding rural areas.