

Background

The parts of the NPPF that have a general relevance to setting boundaries around different land uses within plans are as follows:

Para 157. Plans should:

- “indicate broad locations for strategic development on a key diagram and land use designations on a proposals map.”
- “allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary, and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate.”
- Identify areas where it may be necessary to limit freedom to change the use of buildings, and support such restrictions with a clear explanation.”
- “identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance...”

Para 17 on core planning principles:

- “take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas...” which is generally taken as requiring the differentiation of areas for different uses such as settlements and the Open Countryside.”
- “actively manage patterns of growth to make fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable...” which can be interpreted as encouraging the focusing of development into settlements as they are the most sustainable places.

Para 21 on building a strong competitive economy:

- ‘Set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to meet anticipated needs over the plan period’ which emphasises the need to consider the inclusion of employment land allocations within settlements, which potentially may influence the setting of settlement boundaries.

Para 28 on supporting a prosperous rural economy:

- ‘support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres’, which can be interpreted as potentially including some of the area’s defined settlements and could therefore affect their settlement boundaries.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Para 002 - Local Plans Chapter

- Planning authorities should set out ‘broad locations and specific allocations of land for different purposes; through designations showing areas where particular opportunities and considerations apply.... A policies map must illustrate geographically the application of policies in a development plan.’

Para 010:

- ‘Where sites are proposed for allocation, sufficient detail should be to provide clarity to developers, local communities and other interests about the nature and scale of developing (addressing the ‘what, where, when and how’ questions.’ This emphasises the need for allocations to be explicitly shown and that may involve the definition of new settlement boundaries.

In summary, national policy and guidance seeks to direct most development to settlements where it can achieve the best levels of sustainability, requires the differentiation of areas for different uses such as settlements and the open countryside, and requires that development allocations should be shown on a policies map. Logically therefore settlement boundaries should be drawn to accommodate new development where it is proposed.

Cornwall Local Plan

Relevant parts of the CLP include:

‘The role and function of places’ Chapter:

Policy 3 says that the Cornwall Site Allocations DPD or Neighbourhood Plans will manage the delivery of housing, community, cultural, leisure, retail, utility and employment provision. The Camelford Community Network Area is one of the locations listed.

In summary, the Cornwall Local Plan sets out the following objectives:

- “Enable the provision of affordable housing, without major development being directed to the area.”
- “Address congestion within Camelford town centre.”
- “Reduce private car use and improve and encourage the use of public and community transport within the area and with adjoining areas.”
- “Strengthen Camelford’s role as a local centre by supporting and enhancing the town’s community facilities and services, and sustain the community infrastructure of surrounding villages, including co-location of facilities.”
- “Enable new employment opportunities and ICT improvements in the area to align housing and employment provision.”
- “Promote renewable energy generation that is sensitive to the landscape character of the area.”
- “Protect the unspoilt character of the undeveloped coast and the area’s special historic significance.”

Pros/Cons of Development Boundaries

Pros

- Gives positive direction, seen as a clear act of planning by community
- Provides clarity to all – is easily understood
- Defines area that to which divergent policies may apply
- Can explicitly include new growth
- Facilitates sequential approach to identification of most sustainable development sites
- Can also help protects most sensitive landscape areas and prevent coalescence of settlements

Cons

- Reduced flexibility to respond to change
- Can create a divisive 'rallying point' for different interests
- Restricts 'organic' change

In summary, on balance, the use of DBs is a useful planning tool that gives clarity and supports other planning policies.

Community Engagement

There were strong views about further housing development, with the majority of people not wanting to see any more building, but in particular large developments (i.e. Treclago View and Victoria Gardens). The use of a DB may provide some reassurance to those concerned and help rebuild the credibility of Planning locally.

Criteria for definition of the Development Boundary

Taking into account the forgoing analysis, the following criteria are recommended to determine the boundaries of the settlements.

General Rules

- The over-ruling consideration must be to reflect and respect the character and built form of the settlement.
- Follow clearly defined features such as field boundaries, roads, streams, rivers, walls, well established fences, curtilage of properties (dwellings and other uses) physically linked to the built part of the settlement except for large gardens, separate curtilages to dwellings (e.g. allotments), Conservation Area status.
- Ensure that views to the countryside and Areas of Outstanding Beauty are protected.
- Ensure that all identified sites are easily accessible and well connected to the town, in particular to encourage travel by cycle or walking.
- Ensure that any development will not have a negative impact on heritage assets within the Parish.

Reference should be made to the Camelford Conservation Area Management Plan, The Design Statement, North Cornwall Boundary 2011-2016, and the Camelford Development Plan 1999 (2003) which can be found within the Evidence Base.

Conclusions

The creation of a Development Boundary is a legitimate, justified and easily understood way of bringing clarity to the planning strategy for Camelford for all its users, and will facilitate the implementation.