

SP4 Countryside Areas

1. The open and rural character of the countryside will be recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty. Development which adversely impacts on the open and rural character of the countryside will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that the harm to the open and rural character is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm.
 2. Within Countryside Areas as defined on the adopted Policies Map planning permission will only be granted for new development that meets the requirements of the Core Development Management Policies and it is for the purposes of:
 - a) Agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction or equine related activities, and the diversification of agricultural businesses in line with Policies EP8 (Rural Economy) and EP10 (Equestrian Development);
 - b) Outdoor sport and leisure facilities where a countryside location is needed and justified and is in accordance with other Local Plan policies;
 - c) Holiday accommodation in line with Policy EP9;
 - d) Renewable Energy in line with Policy EP12;
 - e) The provision of affordable housing in accordance with Policy HP4 (Rural Exceptions);
 - f) The reuse or refurbishment of listed buildings or institutional buildings and associated buildings set within their own grounds;
 - g) Agricultural, forestry or other rural based enterprise workers' dwellings in accordance with policy HP7 (Rural Workers Accommodation);
 - h) The expansion of business in rural areas in accordance with policy EP8 (Rural Economy).
 3. Unless material considerations indicate otherwise planning permission will be granted for operational development that is demonstrated as necessary for the continued operation of an educational establishment within countryside areas subject to the requirements of the Core Development Management Policies.
 4. The conversion of existing buildings will be permitted where it meets the requirements of the Core Development Management Policies and it is demonstrated that the following order of priority has been considered:
 - 1) Employment (use class B1 (now part of class E(g), B2 and B8) uses appropriate to the rural area;
 - 2) Tourism destination uses or other non-retail commercial use or retail to serve local needs in accordance with Policy EP7 (Local Convenience Stores);
 - 3) Live/work units;
 - 4) Tourism accommodation subject to Policy EP9 (Holiday Accommodation);
 - 5) Residential provided the development results in an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- and
- a) Where the proposal involves a use other than in 1) above, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have made every reasonable effort to secure a use higher in the order of priority including appropriate marketing in accordance with policy SP6 (Viability); and
 - b) The buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and

- c) The buildings are large enough for the proposed use without the need for an extension which would be out of scale with the host building or incompatible with the character of the area; and
 - d) In the case of a building erected under the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order the Council must be satisfied that it was originally erected for genuine purposes.
5. The conversion of an existing building which does not comply with the sustainability requirements of Policy SP2 will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it will secure the long term future of a building significant for its heritage value, or would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building for residential use.
6. In order to maintain control over the future development of the site, in appropriate cases the Council will remove permitted development rights, and/or restrict conversions to the particular use applied for in the case of commercial conversions.
7. Within the designated Coastal Change Management Area as shown on the adopted Policies Map planning permission will only be granted for development in association with the purposes listed below and provided the development meets the requirements of the Core Development Management Policies:
- a) Agriculture and fisheries;
 - b) Coastal flood defences;
 - c) Navigation;
 - d) Informal recreation;
 - e) Nature conservation;
 - f) Off-shore energy developments;
 - g) Small scale extensions to existing buildings.

5.6 Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)²⁴

5.6.1 The Forest of Bowland was designated as an AONB in February 1964. It covers an area of 803 square kilometres straddling six local authority boundaries. A designated AONB signifies the landscape therein is of national importance. The Rivers Wyre, Brock and Calder originate in the upland core of the Bowland Fells.

5.6.2 The Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (April 2014 - March 2019) provides a detailed policy framework and identifies a 5-year programme of actions to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural beauty of the Forest of Bowland landscape. Delivery of the AONB Management Plan is the responsibility of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) which is also responsible for liaison between the wide range of organisations and interests within the AONB. Wyre Council is a member of the JAC.

5.6.3 Policy SP5 is consistent with the AONB Management Plan and provides the basis for determining planning applications within the AONB. The principal purpose of Policy SP5 is to protect the character, appearance and setting of the AONB irrespective of whether the proposed development lies within or outside the AONB.

²⁴ An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a special landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.