

## SWDP 35: Visitor Accommodation

(79)

- A. Planning permission for new<sup>(80)</sup> visitor accommodation within development boundaries will be permitted where:**
  - i. It is of an appropriate type and scale for the location or building; and**
  - ii. There is no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.**
  
- B. Planning permission for new<sup>(81)</sup> visitor accommodation outside a development boundary will be permitted where:**
  - i. Ai and Aii of this policy are satisfied; and**
  - ii. It forms part of a farm diversification scheme; or**
  - iii. It would provide ancillary accommodation to an existing public house, restaurant, or similar establishment; or**
  - iv. It forms an extension or alteration to an established hotel or venue; or**
  - v. It re-uses a redundant rural building of permanent and substantial construction; or**
  - vi. It adjoins a development boundary and is physically related to visitor accommodation within the boundary.**

### Reasoned Justification

1. Visitor accommodation can take a wide variety of forms, including hotels, bed and breakfast, guest houses, self catering (i.e. holiday let) and group accommodation such as youth hostels.
2. A significant proportion of visitor spend is on accommodation and therefore the retention of existing and the provision of new visitor accommodation is an essential element of supporting tourism in the south Worcestershire area. By encouraging the development of visitor accommodation in built-up areas, the environmental impact of building in the open countryside can be minimised. Sites within settlements are more appropriate as they already have access to the infrastructure, amenities and public transport links and cycling and walking infrastructure needed to support them.

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3. The size and scale of new hotels should be relative to the size of the host settlement. It is recognised that the Framework requires local authorities to support tourism in rural areas and the countryside. South Worcestershire offers numerous “destination” hotels and visitor accommodation in villages and locations in the open countryside and the policy looks to support these businesses.
4. To enable tourism to enhance the local community, it is important that it does not compromise the amenity of local residents. The conversion of buildings to guesthouses and hotels, especially within residential areas, can generate patterns of activity that are disruptive to neighbours. Suitable buildings may include detached or a semi-detached / terrace residential property, or a commercial building, e.g. ground floor office. Prefabricated industrial buildings would be unsuitable.
5. Proposals will require careful consideration of the siting, scale and design, materials and landscaping of the proposed development and must ensure that they harmonise with the local environment. Proposals within the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be subject to additional screening to ensure that any development, either by itself or cumulatively, will not have an adverse effect on the character of the area.
6. Within the open countryside, making the best use of existing accommodation through reuse, extension or alteration, will help to minimise environmental impacts. Converting redundant or underused buildings which are not of a permanent and substantial construction, nor capable of conversion without major restructuring, additional building, or extension, will clearly have a greater landscape impact.