

## **2.54 DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SITES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (ENV. 27)**

**2.54.1** In the rural area of West Berkshire there are a number of existing educational and institutional establishments including boarding schools. These establishments are found in a number of locations, i.e. wholly within the rural area or partly within and partly outside a defined settlement. An example of the first case is Pangbourne College and of the second case Bradfield College.

**2.54.2** Policy ENV.27 makes provision, within appropriate limits and having regard to the nature and character of such sites and their wider setting, for development required by such uses to continue at a reasonable level and scale of operation. Policy C2(iii) of the Structure Plan refers to "other development for which a rural location is essential". Where a school or similar establishment exists within the rural area it is considered appropriate to treat further development on this basis.

**POLICY ENV.27** Proposals for educational and related development on existing school or institutional sites located in the countryside will be permitted only where:

- (a) it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that such development is necessary to meet the reasonable needs and operational requirements of existing educational and institutional establishments; and
- (b) there are no existing buildings or accommodation within the site or in proximity that might reasonably be used; and
- (c) it is reasonable in proportion to the size and nature of the existing establishment; and
- (d) it is well designed and constructed of appropriate materials, is located close to or within an existing group of buildings and is not inappropriate or intrusive in its setting; and
- (e) it is not harmful to or would result in any significant loss of open space areas, landscape or habitat features found within the site or impact unduly on the amenities of adjoining residential or other properties; and
- (f) it makes provision for landscape enhancement within or adjoining the site where this would help to screen and integrate the new development into its rural surroundings; and
- (g) it would not generate traffic of a type or amount prejudicial to highway safety or the amenity of the area.

In general terms the scale and balance of development (existing and proposed) should be in keeping with the existing nature and character of the site and not harm its rural location and setting.

**2.54.3** In a situation where there is normally a restriction on development outside of defined settlements except for certain limited cases, it is appropriate for the school or similar establishment to justify its need for extra facilities or accommodation as part of a planning application submission.

**2.54.4** The Council will normally require applicants for such development to enter into a legal agreement to ensure that it remains ancillary to the main use of the site and to ensure that staff or student accommodation is not sold off separately to be followed by applications for further housing or residential accommodation.