

Fifteen Criteria for developments associated with sustainable land-based rural activities

[1] The project has a management plan which demonstrates:

[a] how the site will contribute significantly towards the occupiers' livelihoods;

[b] how the objectives cited in items 2 to 14 below will be achieved and maintained.

[2] The project provides affordable access to land and/or housing to people in need.

[3] The project provides public access to the countryside, including temporary access such as open-days and educational visits.

[4] The project can demonstrate how it will be integrated into the local economy and community.

[5] The project can demonstrate that no activities pursued on the site shall cause undue nuisance to neighbours or the public.

[6] The project has prepared a strategy for the minimization of motor vehicle use.

[7] The development and any buildings associated with it are appropriately sited in relation to local landscape, natural resources and settlement patterns.

[8] New buildings and dwellings are not visually intrusive nor of a scale disproportionate to the site and the scale of the operation; and are constructed from materials with low embodied energy and environmental impact, and preferably from locally sourced materials, unless environmental considerations or the use of reclaimed materials determine otherwise. Reuse and conversion of existing buildings on the site is carried out as far as practicable in conformity with these criteria.

[9] The project is reversible, insofar as new buildings can be easily dismantled and the land easily restored to its former condition.

[10] The project plans to minimize the creation of waste and to reuse and recycle as much as possible on site.

[11] The project has a strategy for energy conservation and the reduction, over time, of dependence on non-renewable energy sources to a practical minimum.

[12] The project aims over time for the autonomous provision of water, energy and sewage disposal and where it is not already connected to the utilities, shall make no demands upon the existing infrastructure.

[13] Agricultural, forestry and similar land-based activities are carried out according to sustainable principles. Preference will be given to projects which conform to registered organic standards, sustainable forestry standards or recognized permaculture principles.

[14] The project has strategies and programmes for the ecological management of the site, including:

[a] the sustainable management and improvement of soil structure;

[b] the conservation and, where appropriate, the enhancement of semi-natural habitat, taking into account biodiversity, indigenous species, and wildlife corridors;

[c] the efficient use and reuse of water, as well as increasing the water holding capacity of the site;

[d] the planting of trees and hedges, particularly in areas where the tree coverage is less than 20 per cent.

[15] The project can show that affordability and sustainability are secured, for example, by the involvement of a housing association, co-operative, trust or other social body whose continuing interest in the property will ensure control over subsequent changes of ownership and occupation.