



**Planning Committee**

**10.00 a.m. Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013**  
**The Chilterns Conservation Board office,**  
**90 Station Road, Chinnor**

**Agenda**

1. Election of Chairman	10.00 – 10.01
2. Apologies	10.01 – 10.02
3. Declarations of Interest	10.02 – 10.03
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting	10.03 – 10.05
5. Matters Arising	10.05 – 10.10
6. Public Question Time	10.10 – 10.12
7. High Speed 2 – update	10.12 – 10.40
8. AONB Management Plan Review	10.40 – 11.00
9. Events	11.00 – 11.15
10. Planning Policy Guidance	11.15 – 11.40
11. Solar farms – pre-application proposals	11.40 – 12.00
12. Development Plans responses	12.00 – 12.10
13. Planning Applications – update	12.10 – 12.20
14. Any urgent business	12.20 – 12.25
15. Date of Next and Future Meetings	12.25 – 12.30

Next meeting: **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013** at The Chilterns Conservation Board office, 90 Station Road, Chinnor, OX39 4HA

Proposed future meetings: 2014 – Wednesdays 12<sup>th</sup> February, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> November

**Item 1**                    **Election of Chairman**

**Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:**     Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:**                Special allowance of £816 per year.

**Summary:**                  The Planning Committee is required to elect a chairman. The re-appointment for this position will take place annually following the Board's Annual General Meeting.

**Purpose or report:** To elect a Chairman.

**Background**

1. The Planning Committee should elect a chairman at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting (which took place on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2013). Until the chairman is elected the Planning Officer will chair the meeting.
2. Nominations can be made either before the meeting, by notifying the Planning Officer, or at the meeting itself. If there is more than one nomination there will be a ballot of the Board members present. The Standing Order on regulating meetings states that votes should be determined by a show of hands.
3. In the event of a tie names will be drawn from a hat by the Planning Officer.
4. The Standing Orders do not require the appointment of a Vice Chairman. Should it be necessary for a temporary (deputy) Chairman to be appointed for any particular meeting, the election can place at that meeting.

**Recommendation**

1.        **That the Planning Committee nominates and elects a chairman to serve until the Board's next Annual General Meeting.**

**Item 4**                    **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:**     Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:**              Budget of £520 per year for minute-taker plus staff time

**Summary:**                Minutes of the previous meeting are attached (at Appendix 1) and require approval.

**Purpose of report:** To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting.

**Background**

1. The draft minutes from the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013 have been previously circulated and are attached (at Appendix 1) for approval.

**Recommendation**

1.     **That the Committee approves the minutes of its meeting which took place on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013.**



No declarations of interest in items on the agenda were made.

**84. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record after the following amendment was made: Item 81 (the date of the future meetings) should read 5<sup>th</sup> not 11<sup>th</sup> of September.

**85. Matters Arising from the minutes**

Item 77: the Planning Officer had been instructed to undertake to investigate and engage with LEP's in order to influence the production of plans and respond as they are published. The Planning Officer had signed up to the LEP's newsletter and made a number of contacts on the LEP front and will keep Members updated.

**86. Public question time**

There were no members of the public present.

**87. High Speed 2 – update**

10.15 Chris Richards arrived.

The Planning Officer updated the Committee about the latest developments in connection with a possible high speed rail route through the Chilterns.

The Committee was informed about the following: the suspension by HS2 Ltd of Community Forum meetings; the likely publication of the Draft Environmental Statement on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013; the lack of engagement by HS2 Ltd and the lack of positive results emanating from discussions; the holding of a local authority summit in March to discuss legal proceedings leading up to the Hybrid Bill; the publication of "Buckinghamshire's Blueprint for Mitigating HS2"; the holding of a second noise forum; the fact that the Wider Chilterns HS2 group continues to meet and that a smaller group is also working on producing a document that will try and deal with the non-market effects of the construction of HS2, and the results of the various Judicial Reviews that were announced on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

**1. The Committee NOTED the report.**

**88. AONB Management Plan Review**

The Planning Officer informed Members about the latest developments in connection with the emerging 2014-2019 Management Plan.

The Management Plan's draft SEA Scoping report has been published for

comment (from 8<sup>th</sup> May to 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013) alongside the draft Project Plan. A timetable for production of the draft Plan was also provided. The consultation documents are available on the Board's web site, Members were encouraged to feedback any comments and were invited to complete the recently launched Survey Monkey survey.

Preparation of the draft Management Plan and draft Environmental Statement is ongoing and will continue with involvement of the sub group of the Board with the drafting of the documents being complete by August 2013.

- 1. The Committee AGREED to provide the Planning Officer with any feedback on the Draft Scoping Report and the Draft Project Plan.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED the programme of production of the Management Plan 2014-19.**
- 3. The Committee AGREED to provide responses to the recently launched Survey Monkey survey.**

#### **89. Forthcoming events**

The Planning Officer provided proposed details for consideration and approval for the next AONB Planning Forum and the Planning Committee Tour.

The next AONB Planning Forum will take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 in the afternoon and it was proposed that the key issue for discussion should be the findings from the first year of the NPPF.

It was proposed that, in connection with any possible future AONB boundary review, the Planning Committee Tour should visit the area south of the A505 (east of Luton) in order to gain some familiarity with the landscape. Once a date has been agreed other arrangements will be made. Members agreed to inform the Planning Officer of their availability.

The next AONB Planning Conference will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013. It was proposed that the format of the conference would be in line with the 2012 conference. It was suggested that the NPPF should be discussed and to look more deeply into some of the misunderstandings and confusions. Members were asked to suggest topics for discussion.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the arrangements for the next AONB Planning Forum.**
- 2. The Committee AGREED to inform the Planning Officer if they wished to attend the Planning Forum.**
- 3. The Committee AGREED to notify the Planning Officer of suitable dates for the Planning Tour.**
- 4. The Committee APPROVED the date and the initial arrangements and ideas for subject matter for the AONB Planning Conference 2013.**

**90. Planning Policy Guidance**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about the latest position in connection with the production of a series of planning policies. The Committee was aware that a document detailing a series of planning policies had been discussed, but has been held in abeyance due to other commitments.

12.35 Mike Stubbs left the meeting

It was proposed that previously completed work should be divided into topic based statements similar to the position statement produced in connection with developments affecting the setting of the AONB. Information received from other organisations was proposed to be incorporated where appropriate.

It was agreed that the topic based statements should be prepared in accordance with an order of priority as follows: renewable energy; leisure, tourism and recreation; telecommunications including broadband; housing including affordable and exceptions sites; employment, commercial and retail developments; agricultural development; infrastructure; equestrian uses; minerals and waste; institutional development; permitted development; advertising and any other issues not otherwise addressed (impacts on tranquillity and effects of lighting for example).

12.40 Chris Richards left the meeting.

It was proposed that a first statement should be produced in draft for the next Planning Committee in September and that each subsequent Committee meeting should receive a single statement in draft. The subsequent Committees would receive reports on the previous draft statement that will have been subject to consultation. It was noted that the statements should avoid duplicating text from the Management Plan.

- 1. The Committee APPROVED the preparation of a series of topic based statements as discussed.**
- 2. The Committee ADVISED the Planning Officer to revise the priority list of topic based statements and AGREED to provide information about additional topics.**
- 3. The Committee AGREED that the first statement should be produced for the Planning Committee in September and AGREED that the programme be reviewed at later Committee meetings should this be necessary.**

**Agenda Item 12 was taken early to allow Cllr Roger Emmett to take part in the discussion before he left the meeting.**

## **91. Planning Applications Update**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about, and sought approval for, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with planning applications, appeals and a number of previous cases that have been determined.

The Committee was provided with details about the outstanding formal representations and where decisions had been made by the local planning authority.

The Committee noted previously that in the year 2012/13 the number of applications decided in accordance with the Board's comments was less than 40%. Since the last Committee meeting this figure has changed to 47%. The situation will continue to be monitored and will be discussed at the next AONB Planning Forum. It was proposed, following discussion that a student could be asked to collate information in connection with those applications that have not been determined in line with the Board's comments in order to assess whether there are any patterns with the decisions. This will be reported to a later Committee meeting.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses made in connection with the listed applications.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED the situation in connection with those cases that have not been decided in line with the Board's comments.**
- 3. The Committee AGREED that the Planning Officer should contact local universities to seek a student to undertake research on applications not determined in line with the Board's comments.**

12.00 Cllr Roger Emmett left the meeting.

## **92. Natural England Protocol**

The Planning Officer reported that the current protocol with Natural England for planning matters in the AONB is out of date and needs to be refreshed following discussion with Natural England. Concerns have been expressed nationally about the wording of Natural England's standard letter for responses on planning applications as this could potentially undermine the local AONB response. Changes should be sought (at both local and national levels) and concerns should be addressed with Natural England.

Natural England also now has a charging regime principally for pre planning advice. The Board would not wish Natural England to comment on major development proposals in the Chilterns AONB without seeking the Board's advice first.

- 1. The Committee AGREED that the Planning Officer should liaise**

**with Natural England over updating the current planning protocol with Natural England.**

- 2. The Committee AGREED that the reviewed protocol should be reported to the next planning Committee.**
- 3. The Committee AGREED that the Planning Officer should continue to press for changes in the wording of the current Natural England standard letter in connection with responses on planning applications.**

### **93. Development Plans Responses**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about, and sought approval for, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with the public consultation exercises on the following development plan documents: Central Bedfordshire Council's Renewable Energy Guidance Note 1 Wind Energy; DCLG's Review of Planning Practice Guidance; Central Bedfordshire Council's Gypsy and Traveller Plan long list of sites; Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Strategy pre-submission document; Wycombe Air Park's draft Noise Action Plan; North Hertfordshire District Council's Housing Options – growth levels and directions; Scottish and Southern Energy's 'Innovating for a greener, more efficient future' (RIIO-ED1 second report); Department for Transport's Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, Stage 1 Consultation, and Chiltern District Council's Draft Residential Extensions and Householder Development SPD.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses already made on behalf of the Board in connection with the consultation exercises on the developments plan documents as detailed above.**

### **94. Any Urgent Business**

1. The Planning Officer reported that various changes to Planning Measures have gained Royal Assent (increases in extensions under permitted development rights for example, though not applicable to the AONB).
2. The next Planning Committee will be held after the Board's AGM in June and the Committee was asked to note that this may result in changes in the membership of the Planning Committee.
3. The Planning Officer had attended meetings with National Grid, on behalf of the National Association for AONBs, regarding mitigating the impact of National Grid overhead power transmission lines and pylons. The approach to mitigation needs to be considered. Once National Grid has produced its policy the Committee will need to consider its approach.

### **95. Date of the next meeting**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013** at the office of the Chilterns Conservation

Board, 90 Station Road, Chinnor commencing at 10.00 am.

**Future meetings: Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013.**

The meeting closed at 12.50pm.

**The Chairman .....**

**Date .....**

**Item 7      High Speed 2 update**

**Author:** Colin White Planning Officer

**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time.

**Summary:** Various meetings have taken place, a response has been submitted on the draft environmental statement, a decision has been issued on the Appeal Court case, work is ongoing on the production of a document detailing the non-market effects of HS2 and Community Forum meetings are to recommence.

**Purpose of report:** To update the Committee about the latest developments in connection with a possible high speed rail route through the Chilterns.

**Background**

1. A number of meetings have been held recently that have mostly involved an input from the Board. These have included: a meeting about landscape issues in June which involved representatives from local authorities, Natural England (who subsequently visited the AONB), HS2 and consultants; ongoing meetings of the local Planning Forum and the Ecological Technical Group; briefings for local MPs (David Lidington and Cheryl Gillan); events organised by Buckinghamshire County Council to help those responding to the draft Environmental Statement, and the HS2 roadshows in connection with the draft Environmental Statement.
2. A number of people contributed to the Board's response on the draft Environmental Statement. This ran to over 100 pages and was submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> July. The Board has received copies of numerous other responses and helped to circulate post card responses that had been prepared by others.
3. The Committee was previously informed about the results of the various Judicial Reviews. Having had a split decision in connection with the case on environmental grounds at the Court of Appeal permission was given to appeal the decision. HS2 Action Alliance has now submitted its case to the Supreme Court. The case turns on the narrow and single point of whether the January 2012 decision by Government represents a 'plan or programme' that sets the framework for planning consent. It is understood that this case will be heard shortly.
4. There continues to be a significant amount of press coverage of HS2. In the last few weeks a number of key reports have been published which cast further doubt on the flawed cases for HS2. The Institute of Directors has very recently stated that it is not convinced of the economic benefits of HS2 and considers the project to be a grand folly. The Institute for Economic Affairs also recently claimed that the cost of HS2 was likely to be more than £80bn, whilst it is understood that the Treasury is working on a figure of about £70bn. In addition, a number of leading opposition MPs have spoken out against HS2.

5. The previously published 'Buckinghamshire's Blueprint for Mitigating HS2' is going to be reviewed shortly. This is likely to be coupled with work on what needs to be done in connection with the petitioning of Parliament when the Hybrid Bill is finally deposited. This is programmed for later this year.
6. The previously suspended Community Forums are to start meeting again later in September.
7. Representatives of the Board have been involved in producing a document that will try and deal with the non-market effects of the construction of HS2. This is closely linked to ongoing work on a fully bored tunnel and will be published shortly.
8. The Wider Chilterns HS2 Group continues to meet, is still very well attended and provides an opportunity to discuss relevant issues.
9. Any change in the situation will be reported to the Committee in the future.

### **Recommendation**

1. **That the Committee notes the report.**

**Item 8      AONB Management Plan Review**

**Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer

**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:**                Staff time.

**Summary:**                The draft SEA Scoping Report was the subject of a consultation period in May and June, the draft Management Plan policies have been prepared, the draft Management Plan will be published for comment later in September, and a timetable for the Management Plan review is included for information.

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about the latest developments in connection with the emerging 2014-2019 Management Plan and to encourage engagement and continuing feedback.

**Background**

1.     As previously reported, the review of the current AONB Management Plan has commenced. This Committee has contributed to the preparation of the draft aims, policies and actions. To this end a workshop was held in late July and all Board Members were invited. This provided a good level of feedback and a number of suggested changes were taken on board.
2.     A meeting of the Environment Forum took place in August and this also led to a number of suggested changes. These will all be incorporated into the draft aims, policies and actions which will be published as part of the draft Management Plan on 20<sup>th</sup> September.
3.     Work is also ongoing on the draft Environmental Statement and this will also be published for comment at the same time as the draft Management Plan. The documents will be available on the Board's website and sent out in both electronic and paper form, though the print run will be limited. If Members have any comments at this stage these should be forwarded to the Planning Officer.
4.     The Draft SEA Scoping Report and Draft Project Plan were issued on 7<sup>th</sup> May for a six week period of consultation. This resulted in 105 comments from 35 different organisations or individuals. The three statutory consultees (English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Natural England) and 9 of the Chilterns local authorities responded. There were also responses from the NFU, National Trust, RSPB, a small number of individuals and 16 of the Chilterns' Parish and Town Councils. The comments will be reported to the next Board meeting with suggested responses. From a close examination it appears that there have been no fundamental objections and a series of changes will be proposed to address some more detailed issues.
5.     The Committee is asked to note the current timetable for the production of the Management Plan as detailed below. This will involve the following key tasks:
  - Liaison with partners and updating of evidence base (ongoing).

- Consultation on draft Management Plan and draft Environmental Statement (from 20<sup>th</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2013 for 12 weeks).
  - A review of the consultation feedback will be considered in a report to the Board by the end of February 2014.
  - Final approval of the Plan will be considered by the Board in March 2014.
  - The reviewed Management Plan will be published in April 2014.
6. Progress with the review will be reported to subsequent meetings of the Planning Committee and Members are asked to input as and when required.

### **Recommendations**

1. **That the Committee notes the feedback from the consultation on the Draft SEA Scoping Report and Draft Project Plan.**
2. **That the Committee provides any comments on the draft Management Plan and draft Environmental Statement to the Planning Officer.**
3. **That the Committee notes the programme for the production of the Management Plan 2014-19.**

**Item 9      Events****Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board**Resources:**                Staff time and budget of £900 for Planning Conference.**Summary:**                The AONB Planning Forum, Design Awards and Planning Committee Tour took place recently and the Planning Conference and a further Planning Forum will all take place in the coming months. Feedback is provided from those events held and details require approval for forthcoming events.**Purpose of report:** To consider feedback from recent events and approve the details for the forthcoming events.**Background**Feedback from eventsAONB Planning Forum

1.      The last AONB Planning Forum took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 at the Three Rivers District Council offices in Rickmansworth. There were 14 attendees from 6 of the Chilterns local planning authorities as well as the Wildlife Trusts, Chiltern Society, Environment Agency and the Board. The discussions focussed on the first year of the NPPF and some of the issues that are causing confusion. There was discussion about the lack of detail in connection with some issues (the presumption in favour of sustainable development was a key one). Government has recently published documents in connection with waste and changes to permitted development rights which are to be added to the NPPF. The forum also discussed housing development pressures in AONBs (arising from some questions asked initially by the Cotswolds Conservation Board). The pressures do not appear to be arising in the same way as the Cotswolds (a number of large housing sites in the AONB being approved due to lack of housing land). It was noted that there are a number of possible housing sites emerging in development plans (core strategies and neighbourhood plans). The AONB Management Plan review was also discussed.

Design Awards

2.      The annual Design Awards ceremony took place in June. The overall winner was a new dance studio at the Tring Park School for the Performing Arts and awards were also given for a new office near Henley, a development on the canal at Berkhamsted and a new house at Kings Langley. The awards have been given out annually for the past 15 years and it is felt appropriate to consider the way to take this event forward. A meeting will take place shortly with the Chiltern Society (who co-sponsor the event) with a view to looking at how the awards and the ceremony itself are organised and what changes may need to be brought about. If Members of the Committee have any specific ideas stemming from previous events or have ideas about the way things might change can they inform the Planning Officer?

Planning Committee Tour

3. The Committee is aware of initial work that has been done in connection with a possible AONB boundary review. With this in mind this year's Planning Committee Tour visited the area to the south of the A505 (east of Luton) in late July in order to gain some familiarity with the wider area. A previous Planning Committee Tour visited a small part of the area in 2009. The Tour travelled through Lilley Bottom, Cockernhoe, Breachwood Green, the outer limits of Luton Airport, Chiltern Green, New Mill End, Kimpton, Ayot St Lawrence, Codicote, Knebworth, Langley, Rush Green, Gosmore, Preston, Whitwell, Kings Walden and Great Offley. Those that attended felt that the majority of the area that was visited comprised very good quality landscape, much of which may be worthy of consideration for designation if the AONB boundary were to be extended. A powerpoint presentation will be done to show some of the pictures that were taken on the day.

Forthcoming eventsAONB Planning Conference 2013

4. The Committee is aware that the AONB Planning Conference will take place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October. Since the last Committee arrangements have been made and a programme and invite have been circulated. The programme is attached at Appendix 2. Members are asked to circulate the programme and invite as widely as possible to encourage attendance. Once again, delegate fees will be £30 for Parish and Town Councillors, charities and similar organisations and £45 for all other delegates.

Planning Forum

5. The next AONB Planning Forum is due to take place in November. It is proposed that a doodle poll is organised as previously with dates suggested for the week beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> November. It is proposed that the focus of the Forum should be the draft AONB Management Plan and draft Environmental Statement which will still be out for consultation at that time. Any emerging issues can be addressed. If there are other issues outside the Management Plan these could also be considered.

Recommendations

1. **That the Committee notes the feedback from the various events that have recently taken place.**
2. **That the Committee provides any further feedback at the meeting.**
3. **That the Committee notes arrangements for the AONB Planning Conference and promotes the event widely.**
4. **That the Committee notes and approves the arrangements made for the next Planning Forum.**
5. **That Members of the Committee inform the Planning Officer if they wish to attend the Planning Forum by replying to the doodle poll when issued.**

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual Chilterns AONB  
Planning Conference**

**‘A focus on recent changes in Planning – what are the implications for the Chilterns?’**

**PROGRAMME**

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

**Princes Risborough Golf Club, Lee Road, Saunderton Lee, Princes Risborough, Bucks, HP27 9NX**

**9.30**    *Arrival, Registration and Coffee*

**10.00**   **Welcome and Introduction**

*Bettina Kirkham, Chairman for the day, Chairman Chilterns Conservation Board Planning Committee*

**10.05**   **Don't blink: more planning law reform and what it may mean for the Chilterns**

*Simon Ricketts, Partner, SJ Berwin LLP*

**10.30**   **Planning changes, LEPS and the implications for protected landscapes**

*Professor Janice Morphet, Bartlett School of Planning, University College London*

**10.55**   **Government plans for growth and expectations of the role of LEPS**

*Catriona Riddell, Strategic Planning Convenor, The Planning Officers' Society*

**11.20**   **Questions**

**11.40**   **Refreshments**

- 12.00 Neighbourhood Plans experience at the local level**  
*Geoff Botting, Chair, Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group*
  
- 12.25 Planning reforms and the pressure on the ground**  
*Jerry Unsworth (or Chris Schmidt-Reid), Head of Planning and Sustainability, Wycombe District Council*
  
- 12.50 Questions and Panel Discussion**
  
- 13.10 Closing Remarks**  
*Bettina Kirkham, Chairman*
  
- 13.15 Close, Lunch and opportunities for further discussion and networking**

## **Organised by the Chilterns Conservation Board**

To reduce your own carbon footprint please try and travel to today's event by public transport or car share.

Bus services (21A and 300) run along the A4010 between Princes Risborough and High Wycombe with stops on the main road at Woodway. The venue is a 25 minute walk from here. There are also regular train services which stop at Princes Risborough station which is about 2 miles from the venue. Taxis are available at the railway station.

See <http://traveline.info/> for more information about public transport options.

To save energy and paper, copies of the presentations given at today's conference will be available to view and download from the Chilterns AONB website shortly.

**Item 10**                    **Planning Policy Guidance**

**Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:**                Staff time.

**Summary:**                The Committee has previously approved the production of a series of documents detailing planning policy guidance on various issues. A prioritised list of topics was approved at the last Committee and the first draft statement, dealing with renewable energy, is attached for consideration.

**Purpose of report:** To seek the Committee’s approval of the draft of the first in a series of planning policy guidance documents.

**Background**

1. At its last meeting the Committee approved the production of a series of documents intended to detail the Board’s planning policy guidance on various issues. The Committee also agreed that the guidance should be prepared in accordance with a prioritised list of topics.
2. The first draft statement, dealing with renewable energy, is attached for consideration. Similar documents produced by AONBs and other similar bodies have been examined to provide guidance on the topic.
3. The guidance provides advice on those elements of renewable energy that are considered likely to either be proposed or to be developed within the Chilterns or its setting, including:
  - wind turbines and wind farms;
  - biofuel, biomass and anaerobic digestion;
  - solar photovoltaic (solar farms and domestic scale);
  - solar hot water;
  - hydro-electric and
  - ground and air source heat pumps.
4. The Committee is asked to consider the draft of the document and to suggest any alterations or additions. It is proposed that the document, subject to any agreed changes and the incorporation of appropriate images, should be subject to public consultation, particularly with the local planning authorities in the Chilterns, prior to a further report to the Planning Committee in the future.
5. It is proposed that the next topic to be addressed should be telecommunications.

**Recommendations**

- 1. That, subject to any suggested changes, the Committee approves the draft of the renewable energy planning policy guidance document for consultation purposes.**



## **Chilterns Conservation Board – Planning Policy Guidance**

### **Renewable Energy**

## Introduction

1. Global warming and climate change are generally acknowledged as major threats to environmental well-being arising from the production of greenhouse gases, the main one of which is carbon dioxide, produced principally from the burning of fossil fuels. Renewable sources of energy, however, produce no or limited levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and their use can therefore be a major contributor to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Under the Climate Change Act 2008 the Government is committed to delivering an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This includes a 34% reduction by 2020. In order to achieve these reductions a number of actions will need to take place, notably improving energy efficiency and reducing the demand for power.
3. The UK is also committed to increasing the percentage of power that it produces from renewable sources to 20% by 2020, and reducing its dependence on fossil fuels. Support for the development of small-scale and local power generation facilities, is therefore an important part of this equation.
4. It is equally important that the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) plays its part in reducing emissions and this may be helped by the small-scale, local generation of energy from renewable sources.
5. The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. This is confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act 2000). Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 places a duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to this purpose in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in AONBs. This includes potential developments outside the AONBs that might affect the natural beauty (including visual amenity and tranquillity) of the AONB or its setting. In policy terms AONBs have the same planning status as National Parks.
6. The Chilterns Conservation Board is the body set up by Parliament to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB. The Board also has a duty to have regard to the social and economic wellbeing of those who live and work in the Chilterns AONB.
7. The Chilterns Conservation Board recognises that major benefits can arise from seeking greater energy efficiency. This may take the form of reduced need to travel, better insulation of existing buildings and the use of energy efficient appliances and lights. Therefore, seeking to increase energy generation (even if it is renewable) is not sufficient and much work needs to be undertaken to conserve energy and to use what is generated as efficiently as possible. Ways of achieving this may include reducing external and highway lighting for example, which may also benefit the AONB through protection of dark skies.
8. The Board also recognises the need for renewable energy projects in order to reduce our collective reliance on fossil fuels for generation. However, not all forms of renewable energy project may be suitable within the AONB or its setting.

9. The Board encourages the use of renewable energy in appropriate locations within the AONB or its setting, provided it is consistent with conserving and enhancing the landscape and natural beauty of the area. This policy is contained in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan and is in line with Government and emerging local policies. However, the purpose of designating an AONB should take priority over other considerations because the contribution that can be made from the AONB to national and regional renewable energy generation targets is small while the harm to what is landscape of national importance enjoyed by many people could be great.

### **Purpose of this Guidance**

10. This Planning Policy Guidance is intended to provide advice and guidance to local planning authorities, landowners, developers and other interested parties in connection with the need to consider the impacts of renewable energy development on the Chilterns AONB and its setting. In connection with all appropriate developments, account should also be taken of advice in the Board's Position Statement on 'Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB' published in June 2011.

11. This Statement expands upon a number of policies and issues raised in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-19: A Framework for Action<sup>1</sup>, particularly the following:

**Policy L4: Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of buildings, rural settlements and their landscape setting.**

**Policy L5: Resist developments which detract from the Chilterns' special character.**

**Policy L7: Encourage the removal or mitigation of intrusive developments and features.**

**Policy L8: Conserve the quality of the setting of the AONB by ensuring the impact of adjacent development is sympathetic to the character of the Chilterns and maintains the quality of views to and from it.**

**Policy L11: Ensure the cumulative impact of developments and land use changes do not adversely affect landscape quality and character.**

**Policy L13: Ensure conservation and enhancement of tranquility is a major consideration when planning all development and major landscape management.**

**Policy HE3: Resist changes and management practices which would harm the historic environment and its setting.**

**Policy HE5: Ensure the design and location of development is sympathetic to the character of the historic environment including the setting of heritage assets.**

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<sup>1</sup> Draft Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-19: A Framework for Action, Chilterns Conservation Board (2014) see:

**Policy D10: Ensure, in connection with relevant developments, that full account is taken of the likely impacts on the setting of the AONB.**

**Policy D11: Seek a reduction in the damaging impacts of utilities and other infrastructure.**

**Policy D12: Seek enhancement of the landscape of the AONB by the removal or mitigation of intrusive developments.**

**Policy D14: Encourage the use of renewable energy (particularly wood fuel, solar, hydro-power and ground source heat pumps) in appropriate locations.**

### **Renewable Energy – Planning Policy Guidance**

12. The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. The NPPF details the Government's planning policies in connection with various issues and states that local planning authorities should actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings (paragraph 95) and should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources (paragraph 97). Local planning authorities should also have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources and design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts (paragraph 97).

13. The NPPF states that 'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty' (paragraph 115). The NPPF also states that 'planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest' (paragraph 116).

14. The NPPF also includes a cross reference to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3). This states that in sites with nationally recognised designations, such as AONBs, consent for renewable energy projects should 'only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of designation of the area will not be compromised by the development, and any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by the environmental, social and economic benefits' (paragraph 2.5.33).

15. The policies from the NPPF should influence the production of local plans by the local planning authorities of the Chilterns and the Board will comment on these where necessary.

16. The Board considers, based on past planning applications and enquiries, that the following forms of renewable energy may be proposed within the AONB or its setting and are therefore likely to have impacts on the AONB and its enjoyment:

- Wind turbines and wind farms;
- Biofuel, biomass and anaerobic digestion;

- Solar photovoltaic (domestic scale and solar farms);
- Solar hot water;
- Hydro-electric and
- Ground- and air-source heat pumps.

17. The Board considers that the following definitions of scale should be used throughout this Guidance for the relevant technologies:

<b>Technology</b>	<b>Micro</b>	<b>Small-scale</b>	<b>Medium-scale</b>	<b>Large-scale</b>
<b>Wind turbines</b>	25m tall or less to blade tip	25-60m to blade tip	60-90m to blade tip	90m+ tall
<b>Wind farm</b>	single	1 -5 turbines	6-10 turbines	11+ turbines
<b>Wood fuel, biofuel and biomass</b>	Household	Household, business or farm based	Over 10MW, electricity not consumed on site	Electricity not consumed on site
<b>Anaerobic digestion</b>	Household or farm based	Cluster of farms, site less than 0.5ha	Site over 0.5ha, serving many farms	
<b>Photovoltaics</b>	Household, up to 5kW	Household, business or farm based, less than 10kW	10 - 50kW arrays, electricity not all consumed on site	Over 50kW, electricity not consumed on site
<b>Hydro-electric power</b>	Less than 100kW	Less than 10MW	Over 10MW	Over 10MW
<b>Heat pumps</b>	Household	Business or farm based		

18. The Board considers that medium- to large-scale renewable energy developments will not generally be appropriate within the Chilterns AONB or in locations beyond the AONB boundary where such development would affect its setting and character, as they would have significant potential to adversely affect the natural beauty of the AONB and to compromise the purpose of the AONB contrary to national planning policy.

19. The Board recognises the positive contribution and general acceptability of carefully located micro- and small-scale schemes. However, the Board considers that, though such renewable energy developments may be appropriate within the AONB and its setting, this must be based on a full account being taken of the likely impacts of such developments through the production of thorough landscape and visual impact assessments and environmental impact assessments as necessary.

20. The different forms of renewable energy development require different infrastructure, which in turn has different landscape and other implications. Whilst the generation of power by renewable means in appropriate circumstances is generally to be supported as a contributor to sustainable development, the conservation and enhancement of nationally important landscapes such as the Chilterns AONB is also important and should not be set aside.

#### Wind turbines and wind farms

21. Much of the AONB is unlikely to be able to accommodate wind turbine developments above 25m due to the topography and land cover of the area and impacts on the wind resource (of woodland for example) and the likelihood of causing real harm to the character and qualities of the AONB. Even with turbines below 25m there is still a risk that in many exposed locations the turbines would not be compatible with the purposes of designation (the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB).

22. Wind turbines, within or outside the AONB, of a scale intended to supply electricity only to the national grid or to urban areas outside the AONB will generally be objected to unless it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board that the proposed installation would not, individually or in conjunction with other existing installations, be to the detriment of the natural beauty, character, amenity and/or nature conservation interest of the AONB through visual intrusion, noise, activity or associated infrastructure such as overhead lines. The Board recommends that alternative forms of energy generation should be considered before medium- and large-scale wind turbines and wind farms.

23. In addition, micro- and small-scale turbines may also be considered to be unacceptable, unless they are well located in less exposed locations or naturally screened in some way for example. There may also be issues over cumulative harm if more than one turbine is proposed, even if below 25m in height, as this may change the character of an area, particularly if it is open, undeveloped or tranquil in character.

24. In all cases: exposed scarp top, hillside and hilltop; open vale; open valley and open downland areas are the least likely landscapes where development of this kind could be accommodated without causing significant harm to the AONB.

25. To be acceptable within the AONB the Board considers that micro- and small-scale wind energy development should: be of a form and design that is appropriate for the landscape and visual characteristics of the location; be an appropriate scale for the chosen location; not be sited on a skyline; not be sited close to a prominent feature or within the setting of important heritage assets or historic landscapes, and not have significant cumulative impacts alongside other operational or consented wind energy proposals.

#### Wood fuel, biofuel and biomass

26. The use of wood to fuel boilers is not only a renewable source of energy, but may have the additional benefits of providing an economic incentive to bring neglected woodlands back into active management or recovering waste wood from the waste stream that would otherwise go to landfill. The Board therefore generally supports the principle of thermal energy production using wood fuel, particularly at a domestic or micro-scale and

utilising locally-sourced sustainable timber rather than imports (especially wood pellets). Care would be needed in the location of any replacement planting.

27. There may be potential from other grown crops for biofuel production. Such developments are likely to have limited impacts if undertaken on a generally small-scale. However, careful consideration will need to be given for larger-scale use of land for growing such crops. Sensitive sites (for example permanent grassland, common land, SSSIs and other sites of nature conservation importance and historic landscapes) should be avoided. Where new crops are being introduced the potential for detrimental impacts on landscape character should be fully assessed.

28. The transport of wood or crops to any energy production plant will necessitate increased vehicle movements in the area, unless the plant is located adjacent to the source of fuel, although the plants themselves have to be close to the settlements or facilities they serve to avoid unnecessary infrastructure, so an appropriate locational balance must therefore be achieved. For this reason, and to avoid the greater visual and other effects likely to be caused by large-scale plants, the Board would favour small-scale plants rather than medium- or large-scale, centralised installations.

29. New buildings may be needed to process or dry harvested wood and other biomass. The siting, scale, design, colours and materials of any new buildings should always be carefully considered and should adhere to the advice contained in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and supplementary technical notes on materials (flint, brick and roofing materials) if appropriate.

#### Anaerobic digestion

30. Anaerobic digestion plants serving a single or small number of local farms may be appropriate within the AONB, provided that the development: can be incorporated within an existing farmstead; uses locally sourced material; is of an appropriate scale; is not visually intrusive; is constructed using appropriate materials and is suitably landscaped to ensure the natural beauty of the area is conserved or enhanced.

31. Care will be needed to ensure that land use in the vicinity of the plant is not altered in order to grow crops such as maize which may not normally be expected to be cultivated in the area. Care will also be needed in connection with the consideration of the effects and potential harm that may arise from visual intrusion, noise, increased activity, odour, associated traffic movements and associated infrastructure such as overhead powerlines and pylons or poles to support them. Large new buildings and structures on greenfield sites within the AONB or its setting, importing large quantities of material from outside the immediate area on a significant scale will not be supported.

#### Solar photovoltaic (domestic scale and solar farms)

32. Solar power can take the form of passive solar gain (orientating buildings and using glazing to maximise heat from the sun), photovoltaic cells (generating electricity) or solar panels (heating water).

33. Generally, solar power installations will be micro- or small-scale, usually serving individual properties, and are likely to have minimal landscape or other impacts if

appropriately sited on buildings or land. The Board will therefore generally not object to such installations, many of which now benefit from permitted development rights. The only concerns that may arise in connection with such small-scale schemes are in respect of listed buildings and in Conservation Areas, where a solar array may be considered to detract from the character and appearance of the building or area. With careful design and siting even these locations may be appropriate for such installations.

34. Subject to the location of panels on the top (and in exceptional circumstances) the side of existing buildings, large well-designed solar arrays are likely to be acceptable. There are many large farm buildings where panels could be placed with little or no negative impact on the landscape of the AONB. The Board recommends the use of frameless panels in order to create a continuous dark surface across existing roof surfaces. Some panels are provided with a silver frame the use of which can create a chequered effect across the surface of a roof, which will be visually more prominent, particularly where they are not aligned correctly.

35. If a more substantial free-standing solar array proposal (a solar farm) were to be submitted (above 1 hectare for example) the Board considers that paragraph 116 of the NPPF would apply as this would be considered to be a major development. If such schemes are submitted on the basis of exceptional circumstances then the Board would adopt a criteria based approach following the principles outlined in the NPPF paragraph 116. It is extremely unlikely that any location could be found within the AONB or its setting where such large solar farms would not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, sense of remoteness, tranquility, natural beauty and landscape character for which the AONB is valued. The Board considers that such installations would directly conflict with the purpose of designation.

#### Solar hot water

36. The same principles that apply to solar photovoltaic installations at the micro- or small-scale apply to solar hot water installations. These will generally only be provided at a domestic scale and provided that the siting and design are carefully considered they will usually be acceptable, and may also benefit from permitted development rights. Care will also be needed in respect of listed buildings and in Conservation Areas as detailed above.

#### Hydro-electric

37. The Board considers that medium- or large-scale hydro-electric proposals are likely to be limited within the AONB and its setting due to geographical and environmental restrictions. However, micro- or small-scale projects would generally be acceptable. The AONB is bordered in part by the River Thames and it is known that there is interest in promoting hydro-electric schemes. The Board has supported feasibility work on a project at Goring and Streatley through its previous Sustainable Development Fund.

38. To be acceptable, proposals should: ensure that equipment is placed either in existing buildings or new ones of an appropriate scale and design; use the existing head of water from existing impoundments without affecting the river's flow; ensure that fish populations and other river life are not detrimentally affected, and in the view of the relevant agencies operate without prejudicing progress towards achieving ecological objectives under the Water Framework Directive.

### Ground- and air-source heat pumps

39. Heat pumps, using ground, water or air are generally classed as permitted development for residential dwellings. In most cases proposals are likely to be domestic in scale and due to their relatively limited landscape impact will normally be acceptable. Any reinstatement of land should be carefully and sensitively undertaken and historic landscapes should, wherever possible, be avoided.

40. If buildings are required to house pumps or other equipment then these may require planning permission and should be carefully sited and designed, using appropriate materials.

### General advice

41. The Board advises that renewable energy developments should be located where:

- They are appropriate to the landscape character;
- They would not be a dominant feature in the landscape;
- They are sited well back from scarp tops, hilltop edges, skylines, summits, prominent landforms and other distinctive landscape features;
- They make sympathetic use of existing buildings, tracks and other infrastructure;
- There would be no significant cumulative impacts due to other similar developments;
- There are opportunities to mitigate landscape and visual impacts and compensate for any unavoidable loss;
- They are away from key amenity and heritage assets;
- They respect and are sensitive to important cultural associations;
- They are away from public views (roads, footpaths and public open spaces) it at all possible, and
- They are within existing built-up areas (a farmstead or settlement for example) where a strong functional relationship would be established, rather than in isolated locations away from other built structures.

42. Each of the renewable energy technologies detailed above may have drawbacks in their implementation. The Board wishes to work with those promoting such schemes as well as those that decide applications in order to try and overcome any problems in a way which is consistent with the purposes of the AONB.

43. The Board will expect local authorities, in accordance with their duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to be mindful of both the possible positive and negative impacts of a development, within the AONB and its setting, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB when determining planning applications. When significant impacts are likely the Board would like its views to be sought.

44. Due to the temporary nature of many of the renewable energy technologies listed above, the Board would expect local planning authorities to apply appropriate conditions to planning permissions that seek the removal of any buildings and any other structures at the end of the life of the proposal.

**NOTES**

The Chilterns Conservation Board has the statutory duty<sup>2</sup> to pursue the following two purposes:

- a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB; and
- b) to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.

In fulfilling these roles, the Board shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of people living in the AONB.

This is one of a series of planning policy guidance documents to be published by the Board which help to expand on the Board's policies within the Chilterns AONB Management Plan or explain the Board's approach to new and emerging issues.

Further information and advice is contained in the following: The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the associated supplementary technical notes on local building materials, the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns and The Making of the Chilterns Landscape. All of these can be found on the Board's website.

The Board is comprised of members nominated by the local authorities, elected parish council appointees and individuals appointed by the Secretary of State. The Board, formed in December 2004, is the only organisation that looks after the AONB as a whole.

The Chilterns AONB was designated in 1965 and extended in area in 1990. It occupies 833 square kilometres and is a landscape of equal importance to National Parks such as Snowdonia and the Lake District.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 87, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

**Item 11     Solar farms – pre-application proposals**

**Author:** Colin White Planning Officer

**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time.

**Summary:** The Board has become aware of two recent proposals for solar farms at Bledlow and west of Hemel Hempstead. Both are outside the AONB but likely to have significant impacts on the AONB. It is proposed that a sub-group of the Planning Committee is formed to assess both sites and to undertake site visits. The Committee's feedback on the proposals is sought.

**Purpose of report:** To seek: the Committee's approval for the creation of a sub-group to examine recent proposals for solar farms and to undertake site visits and feedback on the proposals presented.

**Background**

1. The Board has recently become aware of two separate proposals for solar farms at Bledlow and west of Hemel Hempstead. Both of the sites are outside the AONB but the scale of the proposals (up to 30,000 panels at Bledlow and up to about 60,000 panels at west of Hemel Hempstead) means that they are likely to have significant impacts on the AONB. This would be exacerbated by the orientation of the panels and the resulting glint and glare.
2. A powerpoint presentation will be done to show the location of the proposed solar farms and to illustrate the likely impacts by using examples from other locations.
3. In order to fully assess the implications of such proposals it is proposed that a sub-group of the Planning Committee is formed. Those Members of the Committee wishing to take part in the sub-group will be asked to commit to a small number of meetings in order to assess both of the currently proposed sites and also to undertake a site visit to both sites (probably a half day commitment).
4. The Committee is asked to provide the Planning Officer with initial feedback on the proposals presented in order that responses can be prepared in reply to a letter from a local group at Bledlow and the request for a scoping opinion from the local planning authority for west of Hemel Hempstead.

**Recommendations**

1. **That the Committee approves the establishment of a sub-group to assess the proposals for solar farms (including site visits).**
2. **That the Committee provides initial feedback on the proposals presented.**

**Item 12     Development Plans Responses****Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer**Lead Organisations:**     Chilterns Conservation Board**Resources:**                Staff time.

**Summary:**                Responses have been sent in connection with the public consultation exercises on the following development plan documents: **South Oxfordshire DC** Proposed SA of Scoping Report for Local Plan Sites and General Policies; **Chiltern DC** Delivery Development Plan Document public participation; **Woodcote Parish Council** Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2027; **Aylesbury Vale DC** Vale of Aylesbury Plan Strategy Proposed Submission; **Central Beds Council** Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan; **North Herts DC** Housing additional location options; **South Oxfordshire DC** consultation on Sites and General Policies, and **Wycombe DC** Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Draft Scoping Report.

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about, and seek approval of, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with the development plan documents as listed.

**Background**

The following paragraphs detail the responses that have already been drafted and sent in connection with the public consultation exercises on the development plan documents as listed.

**South Oxfordshire DC Proposed SA of Scoping Report for Local Plan Sites and General Policies**

1.        The Board considers that the Scoping Report should include reference to both the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 as both are relevant pieces of national legislation that are particularly applicable in connection with the AONBs within the District.
2.        The Chilterns AONB Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and not 2005. The most up to date Management Plan should be scoped in.
3.        The objectives listed on pages 80 and 81 (Objectives 8 and 9) use inconsistent terminology when compared to the objectives listed in the column detailing comparators and targets. For AONBs the objective should be to 'conserve and enhance' areas designated for their landscape importance in order to reflect both the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which do not use the term 'protect and enhance'.

**Chiltern DC Delivery Development Plan Document public participation**

4. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this consultation on the Delivery Development Plan Document (DDPD).
5. The Board objects to the proposed removal from the Green Belt of those settlements that are currently identified by Policy GB5 in the Chiltern District Local Plan and particularly those settlements that are within the Chilterns AONB (Hyde Heath, Little Kingshill [2 areas], South Heath and Winchmore Hill) because removal from the Green Belt is likely to lead to greater pressure for more intense forms of development that may ultimately have detrimental impacts on the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. Should the Council consider, following this consultation exercise, that removal from the Green Belt is still appropriate then it should undertake a thorough assessment of those potential areas within the current GB5 settlements that would allow for development that would be greater than 'limited infilling' and then give full consideration to identifying such area as 'Areas of Little Change'.
6. The Board considers that the Council's definition of 'small-scale' in connection with affordable housing rural exceptions schemes (taking account of the character and size of a settlement and not normally larger than 10 units) is appropriate.
7. Though the Board does not object to the identification of potential sites for housing through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), it is noted that a number of the site descriptions within the SHLAA fail to take account of the fact that sites are either within the Chilterns AONB or immediately adjacent to it. The Council needs to give proper consideration to the likely impacts of any possible development on the AONB and its setting. Therefore, the Board considers that for all sites within the AONB or its setting (particularly SHLAA sites 258, 8, 308, 325, 408, 410, 411, 412, 416 and 446) full account needs to be taken of the site's location within the AONB or its setting and the likely implications for the protected landscape should development take place, and this should be reflected in the 'deliverability matters' section for each site description.
8. The Board notes that (at paragraphs 6.3 and 7.5) that though no traveller sites options are identified, the potential for a site off Springfield Road, Chesham is included. The text of paragraph 7.5 (final section before the plan on page 13) states that there is the potential for a gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople's site as 'part of the overall development' of the Springfield Road Industrial Estate which is denoted on the plan by an area enclosed by a solid line. The Board believes that this area is located outside both the Green Belt and AONB. However, the text in paragraph 7.5 then goes on to state that, if appropriate, the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople's site could possibly be 'located within the Green Belt part of the site'. This does not appear to be possible from the plan that is shown and would involve any such site being located both within the Green Belt as well as the AONB. The Board does not consider that this is a suitable site for such a use and that it fails to comply with the site selection criteria detailed in Appendix 2 of the DDPD as it would be visually prominent and more than likely to have a detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the AONB.
9. The Board welcomes the proposed preparation of a Heritage Strategy for Chiltern District. As part of the preparatory work the Board considers that full reference should be made to the Chilterns AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and Report.

10. The Board considers that the DDPD should take a more proactive approach to the active enhancement of the wider natural environment. This could be via the introduction of a specific policy and augmentation of the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (as detailed in Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy), with specific references being made to the provision, protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure (in line with Core Strategy Policy CS32) and in particular via the use of Community Infrastructure Levy funds which could be directed to, for example, the management and enhancement of the AONB where subject to development pressures.
11. Reference could usefully be made to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials as part of the text associated with proposed Policy DDP9 Design and Amenity.
12. Reference could usefully be made to the Chilterns AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and Report as part of the text associated with proposed Policy DDP10 Conservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment.
13. The Board welcomes Policies: DDP11 Private Residential Gardens and the recognition that a certain level of private space will be required within residential developments; DDP15 Horse Riding and Equestrian Development and the need to have due regard to the AONB Management Plan where proposals are located within the AONB, and DDP16 Floodlighting and the need to give special consideration to proposals within the Chilterns AONB.
14. The Board considers that because the Chilterns AONB is designated as a nationally important landscape, the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site selection criteria (detailed in Appendix 2 of the DDPD) should include the need to seek sites outside the AONB at Stage One (broad criteria) rather than Stage Two (detailed criteria), because there are unlikely to be many instances where such developments would either conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB as required by the NPPF and under the purposes of the AONB's designation.

### **Woodcote Parish Council Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2027**

15. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this consultation on the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2027.
16. The Board generally welcomes the prominence given in the document to the importance of the Chilterns AONB (and the various publications that are produced in connection with design and other issues) and design in connection with the need to reinforce local distinctiveness (aims and objectives on pages 7 and 8 for example).
17. The Board considers that it would be appropriate to mention the importance of the AONB as part of the Natural Environment section on page 10 of Section 4.
18. The Board particularly welcomes various policies, including C1 (green space and landscaping), C5 (broadband – fibre to the premises) and T8 (pedestrian footways), due to the prominence given to the need to conserve and enhance the AONB or reduce impacts on the environment or inhabitants and others.
19. The Board wonders if, under section 4.3.8 Local Travel, contributions could be sought from future developers for funding that could be directed at the provision or retention/improvement of local bus services.

20. The Board considers that 'into the AONB' is not required within sub-paragraph b of policy HS2 (infill housing in the AONB) as the whole settlement is already within the AONB.
21. The Board considers that it would be useful to refer to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials (flint, brick and roofing materials) with weblinks as appropriate, as part of Section 5.9 Design.
22. The Board considers that, as well as addressing the need to improve existing community facilities, developers should (via contributions in accordance with Policy HS3 Developer Contribution) also contribute to meeting the needs of future occupiers by providing any additional facilities that may be identified in the future.
23. The Board will comment, as appropriate, on applications for development on any of the proposed sites for housing to ensure that all developments meet the purpose of the AONB (the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB). All sites should seek to meet this purpose.
24. The policies for all housing sites should allow for the proper future maintenance of any trees and hedgerows on the sites at present as well as those provided as part of any development that may take place in the future.

#### **Vale of Aylesbury Plan Strategy – Proposed Submission**

25. Though the Chilterns AONB is recognised as an important part of the profile of the District (page 4), the Board considers that to make the Plan more sound it should also be recognised as part of the Natural and Built Environment section on page 6.
26. The Board welcomes the fact that the Council considers that protecting the AONB is a key issue at a 'larger than local' scale.
27. As part of the first section of part i) of the Vision the Board considers that ' , conserved' should be added after 'protected' in order to make the Plan more sound and to fully reflect the wording of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the National Planning Policy Framework as they apply to AONBs.
28. As part of the Strategic Objective 6 the Board considers that ' , conservation' should be added after 'protection' in line 1, in order to make the Plan more sound and to fully reflect the wording of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the National Planning Policy Framework as they apply to AONBs.
29. Policy VS2 and Table 2 detail the spatial strategy for growth and the housing requirements in the various areas. Whilst the Board does not have any specific comments about the level of growth it is concerned about the likely impacts on the Chilterns AONB that may arise from the delivery of the growth, as various identified settlements are either within or are in close proximity to the AONB, and the Plan as drafted does not contain a level of detail about where housing development may take place in order to allow for a full assessment of the likely implications. The Board considers that the Plan would be made more sound if such detail were provided in both tabular and map form, or if the text were made more explicit about the likely locations for development.

30. Policy VS4 is concerned with employment growth and identifies College Road North as a strategic employment site. The Board considers that insufficient information is included in the Plan to enable a full assessment of the likely implications of this part of the policy and considers that the Plan would be made more sound if the boundary of this site was clearly identified on a map.
31. Policy VS6 deals with vitality in town and local centres. The Board welcomes and supports the final criterion which seeks to resist the loss of existing services and facilities in rural settlements.
32. The Board supports Policy VS10 (affordable housing on rural exception sites) as drafted.
33. Policy VS11 is concerned with environmental and heritage assets and is generally welcomed by the Board. However, as part of the introductory paragraph the Board considers that ‘, conserved’ should be added after ‘protected’ and ‘seek’ should be replaced by ‘ensure’. In addition, the Board considers that the word ‘The’ should be added at the start of criterion ii) and that in the same criterion ‘appropriate’ should be changed to ‘great’. The Board considers that this would make the Plan more sound and the changes should be made to fully reflect the wording of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the National Planning Policy Framework as they apply to AONBs.
34. Whilst the section on delivering growth through localism and local distinctiveness is generally welcomed the Board considers that the local distinctiveness element is distinctly lacking from both the text and policy VS13 and that this should be addressed by additional text both here and in the monitoring and implementation section. It would also be useful to refer to any design guides and other advice that have been produced, including the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the supplementary technical notes on Chilterns building materials (flint, brick and roofing materials). This is considered to be particularly important as there will be many parts of the District not covered by Neighbourhood Plans or other such documents, which would require decisions to be taken in accordance with the Vale Plan instead. The Board considers that such changes would make the Plan more sound.
35. The Board’s design advice could usefully be referred to as part of the monitoring and implementation section (e.g. in paragraph 4.1 which refers to the preparation of design guidance).
36. As part of the monitoring and implementation section, the monitoring Indicator for Policy VS11 is ‘development in areas of ... landscape importance’ and the target is ‘preservation or enhancement of ... the landscape interest’. The Board considers that the target could usefully be reworded by deleting ‘preservation’ and replacing this with ‘conservation’ in order to fully reflect the wording of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the National Planning Policy Framework as they apply to AONBs.

### **Central Beds Council Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan**

37. The following comments were submitted using the Council’s standard response form, these have been copied and pasted into this report.

38. Paragraph 5.2 – The Chilterns Conservation Board objects to this paragraph because the criteria applied to the selection of new sites contains no mention of the need to take account of the landscape impacts of any new site. The paragraph would not be effective as it would not require the proper consideration of landscape impacts and it fails to be consistent with national policy as there is a requirement to ensure that all development within an AONB conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the area and one of the ways of testing this is by fully assessing the landscape impacts. The paragraph should be amended by the addition of a criterion that requires an assessment of the landscape impacts of new developments.
39. Policy GT5 – The Chilterns Conservation Board objects to this policy (assessing planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites) because it fails to include a criterion by which to assess the landscape impacts of any proposals that occur within the Chilterns AONB. The policy would not be effective because as drafted it would not require the proper consideration of landscape impacts of proposals and it fails to be consistent with national policy as there is a requirement to ensure that all development within an AONB conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the area and one of the ways of testing this is by fully assessing the landscape impacts. The policy should be amended by the addition of a criterion that requires an assessment of the landscape impacts of new developments, particularly within the Chilterns AONB and its setting.
40. Paragraph 7.4 – The Chilterns Conservation Board objects to this paragraph (related to the proposed allocation to the west of Barton le Clay). Though the proximity of the site to the Chilterns AONB is recognised the paragraph fails to include a criterion by which to fully assess the landscape impacts of the proposal. The paragraph would not be effective because as drafted it would not require the proper consideration of landscape impacts of the proposal and it fails to be consistent with national policy as there is a requirement to ensure that all development affecting an AONB conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the area. One of the ways of testing this is by fully assessing the landscape impacts through the use of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). Therefore, a full LVIA should be undertaken for this site prior to the development of any firm proposals, so that such proposals can be informed by what the likely impacts are. The paragraph should be changed by the addition of text which requires the preparation of a full LVIA prior to any development taking place in order to ensure that all aspects of the proposal are fully assessed.
41. Policy GT10 – The Chilterns Conservation Board objects to this policy (proposed allocation of a site to the west of Barton le Clay) because it fails to include a criterion by which to fully assess the landscape impacts of the proposal. The policy would not be effective because as drafted it would not require the proper consideration of landscape impacts of the proposal and it fails to be consistent with national policy as there is a requirement to ensure that all development affecting an AONB conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the area. One of the ways of testing this is by fully assessing the landscape impacts through the use of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). Therefore, a full LVIA should be undertaken for this site prior to the development of any firm proposals, so that such proposals can be informed by what the likely impacts are. The policy should be changed by the addition of text which requires the preparation of a full LVIA prior to any development taking place in order to ensure that all aspects of the proposal are fully assessed.

42. Paragraph 7.14 and Policy GT13 – The Chilterns Conservation Board objects to this paragraph and policy (proposed allocation of a site to the east of the A5 south of Dunstable) because they fail to fully recognise that the site is located wholly within the Chilterns AONB. As such, this site failed the first test for site assessment and should, according to paragraph 1.17 have been ‘instantly dismissed’ from the sieving process. The Board considers that the development of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location would be most unlikely to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. No exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated in the plan and its accompanying documents that this site should be allocated. In fact, the landscape strategy for the area is to enhance the landscape and this proposal singularly fails to achieve that aim. The site assessment and sustainability appraisal (SA) for the site claim that there is limited impact on the landscape – the Board fundamentally disagrees with this conclusion and considers that the SA fails to take account of the impact on the landscape as part of the scoring process. The SA suggests that the area around the proposed site is within the AONB implying that the proposed site is not – this is clearly not correct. The proposal would have to be mitigated by landscaping and a landscape buffer, which suggests that without such significant works the site could not be accommodated without significant harm to the landscape. The landscape works themselves (fencing and leylandii trees most probably) would also be likely to have detrimental impacts on the landscape. This also is not reflected in the SA. The Board considers that this site should be removed from the plan. Failing this paragraph 7.14 and Policy GT13 should both be amended to include criteria by which to fully assess the landscape impacts of the proposal. The paragraph and policy would not be effective because as drafted they would not require the proper consideration of landscape impacts of the proposal and they fail to be consistent with national policy as there is a requirement to ensure that all development affecting an AONB conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the area. One of the ways of testing this is by fully assessing the landscape impacts through the use of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). Therefore, a full LVIA should be undertaken for this site prior to the development of any firm proposals, so that such proposals can be informed by what the likely impacts are. The Board considers that this site should be removed from the plan. Failing this paragraph 7.14 and Policy GT13 should both be amended to include criteria by which to fully assess the landscape impacts of the proposal (LVIA). This proposal is within the nationally protected Chilterns AONB and the plan has failed to take full account of the likely implications arising from such a development. The Board considers that it should be represented to enable a thorough discussion of the principles of allocating such sites and the likely impacts arising for the AONB.

### **North Herts DC Housing additional location options**

43. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the additional housing sites which have been submitted to the Council for consideration. The Board would like to comment on some of the detail that has been included about specific sites. The Board’s original comments (see response dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013) in connection with the previously proposed sites remain. The Board has comments on the following additional sites – 205, 209, 212, 213, 214, 215 and 216.

44. None of the sites listed above are within the AONB. However, several of them are within the setting of the AONB and should the Council take them forward then full consideration should be given to the likely impacts on the AONB and its enjoyment.
45. All of the sites listed above are considered to be within sensitive landscapes. The Board would therefore suggest that full landscape character and visual impact assessments should be undertaken to feed into the preparation of any future allocations should this be considered by the Council. The area to the south of the A505 is high quality, sensitive landscape that may well be worthy of designation as part of the Chilterns AONB should a review of the AONB boundary ever take place in the future and this should be taken account of if allocations are being considered.

### **South Oxfordshire DC consultation on Sites and General Policies**

46. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the current consultation, although we were very surprised by how sparse the consultation material actually is. It is difficult to respond to a question about whether the right issues are being covered without any information being provided to back this up.
47. No indication is given about where the 1,154 dwellings and 4.2ha of employment land are likely to be located other than villages being assigned a specific number of dwellings. When allocating sites, the local plan should clearly include as part of its evidence base full landscape sensitivity, landscape capacity and landscape and visual impact assessments for each site (both allocated and dismissed sites) in order to ensure that the sites that are ultimately allocated are the best in landscape terms in particular.
48. The Board is not convinced that any of the settlements in the Chilterns AONB will be capable of taking the levels of development identified without there being significant detrimental impacts on the AONB, and the Board equally doubts that such allocations could be achieved without the purpose of the AONB being brought into question (the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB). This particularly applies to the settlements of Nettlebed (which is now even less sustainable than previously with the loss of the local shop), Goring (wholly washed over by the AONB and particularly constrained), Woodcote (wholly washed over by the AONB) and Sonning Common (mostly surrounded by the AONB with many of the previously suggested sites within the AONB boundary).
49. Though the Council has worked with the local Parish Councils in connection with the proportional split it has failed to work with the Chilterns Conservation Board on this issue, despite the Board's best efforts. The Board will most likely have to object to the sites and general policies local plan when it is formally issued because as currently suggested the proposals are unlikely to accord with: the policies within the Council's own Core Strategy; the Chilterns AONB Management Plan, and the policies in the NPPF applicable to the AONB.
50. The Council also appears to have based the proportional split only on each settlement's current size. No account appears to have been taken of the levels of retail provision, employment, public transport, health care, leisure or infrastructure for example. In many cases the lack, or reduced provision, of such facilities will lead to some settlements becoming less sustainable and therefore less able to take the

levels of growth proposed. This is likely to apply to all settlements within the Chilterns AONB, as well as those immediately adjacent to the AONB and clearly within its setting (Chinnor, Watlington, Benson and Crowmarsh Gifford for example). Great care will also need to be taken to ensure that any allocations made take full and proper account of the implications for the nationally protected landscape.

51. No real detail is provided about what general policies are likely to be included, though mention is made of safeguarding the natural and historic environment. The Board presumes that if such policies are being considered then the AONBs within the district will be subject to a specific policy that ensures the purpose of the AONBs is met (the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB).

### **Wycombe DC Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Draft Scoping Report**

52. The Board welcomes the prominence given to the Chilterns AONB Management Plan as part of paragraph 3.3. However, it would also be useful to add the Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation to the list of documents to consider and as part of Appendices A (page 38) and B (page 47).
53. The table below paragraph 5.1 refers to a series of environmental issues. The first of these is the fact that a large proportion of the district is protected by the AONB designation. The Board considers that it is important that measures should be put in place to 'conserve and enhance' this particular asset (rather than 'preserve and enhance' as currently stated). This minor change would ensure that the wording complies with the statutory purpose of the AONB, which is the 'conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area'. This is reflected in the SA objective (2) as detailed in the table following paragraph 6.1.
54. The Board considers that 'and quantity' should be added after 'maintain and enhance the quality' with regard to water sources, as part of SA objective 4 in the table following paragraph 6.1. Water resources are under great pressure and it is vitally important that the quantity of water is protected wherever possible.
55. The Chilterns AONB Management Plan is referred to on page 35. 'Management Plan' should be added after 'Chilterns AONB' in the first line. The Board would question the inclusion of a selected list of policies as an extract from the Management Plan as all policies are relevant because they relate to the AONB as a whole. Perhaps if a selected list is retained then the introductory sentence could be changed by replacing it with the following: 'All policies in the plan are of relevance, however, those of particular importance to the WDLP include'.
56. The Board considers that the Chilterns AONB Management Plan should be listed, alongside all other documents, in Appendix B (page 46).
57. Though much of the district is rural in nature, there are limited references to rural characteristics and issues. The declining services and poor public transport in the rural areas of the district is recognised as a social issue (item 17 on page 20). Air pollution is mentioned as an environmental issue (item 5 on page 19) though there is no mention of the need to address impacts on tranquillity (road and aircraft noise in particular).

**Recommendation**

- 1. That the Committee notes and approves the responses already made on behalf of the Board in connection with the consultation exercises on the development plan documents detailed above.**

**Item 13     Planning Applications Update****Author:**                    Colin White   Planning Officer**Lead Organisations:**     Chilterns Conservation Board**Resources:**                Staff time.**Summary:**                    Representations have been made regarding a number of planning applications and a number of previous cases have been determined.**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about, and seek approval of, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with the planning applications as listed and to update the Committee on any outcomes.**Background**

1.     Since 1<sup>st</sup> April this year the Board has been consulted on 57 applications and has responded to most of these. There have been 10 formal representations so far this year.
2.     The applications that have resulted in formal representations in 2013/14 include:

**Objections**

- 8 pitch travellers' site, Caddington with later revised plans (approved)
  - Anaerobic digestion plan, Mapledurham (withdrawn)
  - Stables, hardstanding and access track, Ibstone (withdrawn)
  - Access track and hardstanding, Stokenchurch (approved)
  - Replacement of existing temporary mobile home with permanent dwelling, Sarratt (two applications – one withdrawn, one not yet decided)
  - Amendments to change of use of buildings to industrial and storage, Watlington (not yet decided)
  - Crematorium and associated development, Little Kimble (not yet decided)
  - 23 dwellings following demolition of buildings on site, Studham (not yet decided)
3.     The outstanding formal representations are detailed in Appendix 4, and where decisions have been made by the local planning authorities these are detailed.
  4.     The Committee noted previously that in 2012/13 the number of applications being decided in line with the Board's comments had been less than 40%. Since the last Committee this figure has changed to 55% with 5 applications still to be determined. This situation will continue to be monitored.

**Recommendation**

1.     **That the Committee notes and approves the responses made in connection with the applications listed in Appendix 4.**

**APPENDIX 4**

Location	LPA	Development	Ref. No.	Status	AONB Planning Officer's Response	Date
Caversham Quarry, Sonning Eye	Oxon CC	Quarry extension	MW.0158 /11	Pending	Object – although outside the AONB the site is within its setting and is clearly visible from the Thames valley sides. The development would involve mineral extraction and site restoration with inert waste over a considerable period of time. There would be lorry movements on roads that lead into the AONB. The LVIA has not taken proper account of the need to consider the setting of the AONB.	26.01.12
Hampden Fields, between Wendover Road and Aston Clinton Road, Weston Turville	AVDC	Mixed use development including 3,200 dwellings, 120 bed care home, park and ride site, 10ha of employment land, local centre, Green Infrastructure and open space (amongst other things)	12/00605 /AOP	<b>Officer recommend refusal 10.04.13 non determination appeal is outstanding</b>	Object – lack of building designs means a full assessment of the proposal is difficult, particularly as some elements may be up to 15m high (or higher), the development would lead to the loss of a strategic green gap between Aylesbury and Weston Turville, the proposal is likely to lead to detrimental impacts on the setting of the AONB due to the effects on views of the Vale of Aylesbury from within the AONB and effects on views of the AONB from within and beyond the application site, the proposed development is on previously undeveloped land and is unallocated for development, whilst recognising that the proposal would have significant effects on views from the AONB these are dismissed, views of the AONB are not considered in any detail, no illustrative material is provided to show how the proposed development would appear, the proposal is not in accordance with the Development Plan and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan, the applicant should be requested to provide sufficient detail to show the visual impact of the development once	30.04.12



Bell Farm, Studham	CBC	23 dwellings following demolition of buildings on site	CB/13/02 733/FUL L	Pending	<p>Board's letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013.</p> <p>Object - The Board considers that the proposal does not accord with the development plan, which in this case includes the saved policies of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004 (SBLP). In addition the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are important material considerations. The policies of the emerging Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy (CBDS) are also material considerations. This document has not yet reached submission stage and, therefore, the weight which can be accorded to it will depend on the relevance of its policies and the extent to which they accord with the NPPF. The form of development proposed is considered to be inappropriate in the Green Belt and would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. The proposal would result in the construction of substantial two storey houses (when compared to the current predominantly single storey buildings on the site) on land which is currently undeveloped and part of the local countryside. It is claimed that the proposed development would have a significant visual benefit to the Conservation Area and Green Belt. This has not been demonstrated by the applicant and is not borne out by examination of the material submitted with the application. The existing buildings are small, low key and mostly single storey with flat or low-pitched roofs. They are not visually inappropriate in this location and do no visual or physical harm to the Conservation Area. Little of the site can be seen from the Conservation Area as a result of the limited height of the existing buildings. An estate of</p>	23.08.13
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					<p>23 substantial, two storey, pitched roofed houses would be likely to have a significantly greater visual impact on the Conservation Area and the Green Belt. The new buildings would be out of scale with and visually dominate the row of terraced cottages north of the site and the Bell Inn to the east, both of which are within the Conservation Area. They would, as a result of their greater number, height and bulk also be visible and visually intrusive when seen from publicly accessible points in the surrounding countryside. This would represent a significant adverse impact on the visual amenities of the Chilterns AONB and the Green Belt. Visual improvement cannot therefore be claimed as a benefit of this proposal and does not represent a very special circumstance in favour of the application. The application site is in the AONB, a nationally designated landscape where the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area is to be given priority. The proposed development would have an adverse impact on this part of the Chilterns landscape by extending development onto currently open, undeveloped land, and through the adverse visual and landscape impact resulting from the construction of 23 substantial two storey dwellings on the site. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted with the application. This concludes that the proposed development 'will result in a low adverse impact on local views and the overall impact for long distance views will be negligible. The overall significance resulting from the completion of this development would likely be negligible/low adverse'. Given the individual viewpoint assessments, over one third of</p>	
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					<p>which are rated adverse, this is a surprising conclusion. At present the buildings on site can be seen from a number of points close to its boundaries and publicly accessible locations in the surrounding countryside. This visibility, and the resulting landscape and visual impact, will increase if the existing low level buildings are replaced by 23 substantial 2 storey, pitched roofed houses which will extend onto parts of the site currently unoccupied by buildings and which will be seen above much of the surrounding vegetation. They would have an urbanising effect on the local landscape and views of the wider landscape and the Conservation Area from the common. In this respect it is important to note that the viewpoints chosen by the consultants for the LVIA south of the village are not representative of general views from this area. It is clear that there would be significant adverse visual and landscape impact as a result of the proposed development, as confirmed by the findings of the LVIA. It seems likely that the conclusion of the LVIA in respect of long distance views (that the impact would be negligible) is an understatement of the degree of adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The proposals are therefore considered to be contrary to national planning policy set out in the NPPF. The Board also considers that the design of many of the proposed buildings is bland and that the proposed hipped and half-hipped roofs would not conform to the advice in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and would, consequently, look out of place (particularly when incorporated into designs that are trying to be more agricultural in appearance and form). It is</p>	
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Wigginton Bottom, Wigginton		dwelling and annex	FUL		is located on a site of about 0.9 hectare, it is considered that the proposal fails to meet the tests of the NPPF for isolated dwellings in the English country house tradition. The apparent size of the site is further reduced when account is taken of the two rights of way that are within the site (one if The Chiltern Way). No detail is show about any proposed changes to the access – this is likely to be affected by new surfacing and widening to allow for spoil to be taken away and deliveries made. The proposal will neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the AONB, it is considered to be contrary to the development plan and AONB Management Plan and the proposal will not increase the understanding or enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.	
Luton Airport, Airport Way, Luton	LBC	Proposed alterations and extensions to terminal buildings, car parks and new taxiway	12/01400 /FUL	Pending	Object - the proposal is for development that would allow an expansion of passenger numbers from about 9 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 18 mppa by about 2028 (with, strangely, no increase in numbers from then until 2031). The upper limit appears to be contrived in order to limit the likely expansion to less than 10mppa and thus negate the need for the application to be considered as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). The Board is concerned about this and believes that the application should be considered as an NSIP or, at the very least, called in for determination. The Board is concerned about the future use of London Luton Airport (LLA), particularly arising from the overflying of aircraft over the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and its setting, both during the day and at night. The Board considers that the application is premature	05.02.13

					<p>because the proposed form of development and the likely implications have not been incorporated into an adopted national aviation strategy (this has yet to be published). If the aircraft type were to remain as at present, the number of aircraft movements would roughly double with a rough doubling in the numbers of passengers. We understand that the size of aircraft is generally increasing, and even so this would still mean that such an increase in passenger numbers would be likely to lead to a significant increase (about 60%) in the number of flights, with consequent detrimental impacts on the Chilterns AONB and its enjoyment. Larger aircraft are noisier so the detrimental impacts that are likely to arise are more than likely to be at least the same if not worse. A significant increase in the number of flights by larger aircraft would mean that there would be a significant increase in the frequency of flights leading to a significant decrease in the intervening quiet periods. As a result average noise levels are likely to rise. The Board is not convinced that the expansion would be taken forward in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable way. The Board previously made comments on the EIA Scoping Report and requested that the statutory Chilterns AONB Management Plan should clearly be referred to alongside the Board's Position Statement on Development Affecting the Setting of the AONB. There is no EIA, neither of these documents appears to have been referred to in the Environmental Statement and no account is taken of the impacts of the operational phase on the Chilterns AONB and its setting – the impacts on</p>	
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					<p>the AONB are summarily dismissed because the changes to the buildings and new development would not be clearly visible from the AONB. The Board is extremely concerned about the likely impacts of overflying aircraft, especially at night, on the tranquillity and enjoyment of the Chilterns AONB, and this should clearly have been fully assessed as part of the Scoping and EIA process prior to the planning application being made. In addition, the EIA should also have addressed landscape and visual effects arising from the use of the airport and the proposed extended taxiways especially because there will be a huge number of aircraft that, when they are not on the ground, would be clearly visible from many miles around. Even when on the ground aircraft are visible from many areas including the Chilterns AONB. The likely effects on the Chilterns AONB should have been fully considered because the AONB is clearly a sensitive receptor. For potential noise impacts the Chilterns AONB should have been subject to specific detailed consideration outside the normal confines of <math>L_{Aeq}</math> assessments. In addition, the impacts of night noise should also have been fully considered and should have included assessments from within the AONB and its setting. This does not appear to have taken place. The Board is also concerned about the likely noise impacts arising from the increase in the number of taxiing aircraft. The Board is concerned about the likely impacts on traffic flows on roads within the AONB arising from the traffic associated with additional passengers.</p> <p>The Board is concerned about the likely development pressures for new housing for</p>	
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					<p>example to cater for the projected large increase in the number of employees. Despite the recent adoption of the Airport Noise Action Plan (2010 to 2015) the Board considers that there is no clear commitment from London Luton Airport Operations Limited (LLAOL) towards effective noise and environmental controls and the Board considers that restrictions should be put in place to significantly reduce the number and frequency of night time flights. In connection with this issue the Board understands that Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted all have strict night noise controls with Government setting limits on noise emissions and aircraft movement numbers. We understand that London City has a night and weekend curfew. The Board is aware that there are no such limits placed upon LLA and we therefore consider that stringent limits on the number of night flights should be introduced to protect the local environment and to provide people with certainty. In addition, we consider that these should reflect the limits imposed by Government at the other three major south east airports. The current planning application should have been treated by the applicant as an opportunity to seek significant improvements and mitigation to the noise impacts on the environment which are created by the airport. This does not appear to have happened. The Board had hoped that the planning application would contain a comprehensive analysis of the future noise implications of the growth proposals and for it to be proactive in coming forward with positive proposals for improvements and mitigation. The proposals should have included the imposition of night flight limitations consistent with</p>	
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					<p>those at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. The Board would expect such limitations to be imposed through a Government body, which would be independent of the airport owner or operator, in order to ensure that environmental concerns are not biased by, and/or offset, commercial gains. The Board would be grateful if it could be involved in the discussions or consultation about any revisions to the existing Night Noise Policy. The Board considers that any expansion plans must be developed in the light of existing operational constraints. These include the proximity of Heathrow airspace and the Bovingdon stack, as well as possible route changes affecting Luton Airport. In addition, the future mix of aircraft and type of flight (for example passenger, corporate or cargo) also need to be taken account of.</p> <p>In addition, the Board understand that NATS has plans to substantially review the structure of the airspace in the south east of England. This may involve changes to the Bovingdon stack which, with other things, may result in changes to departure and arrival routes at Luton Airport. It is not clear to what extent the proposed growth has taken such factors into account. The Board considers that LLAOL is failing in its statutory duty of regard to the purpose of the AONB (to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty, in accordance with Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). The Board would welcome the opportunity to discuss its representation and would like to ensure that it is closely involved in the implementation of the Noise Action Plan's key action to 'assess the impact of London Luton</p>	
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					Airport traffic on the Chilterns AONB and explore potential for operational improvements’.	
Betts Farm, Old Reading Road, Crowmarsh Gifford	SODC	Variation of condition 2 (soft and hard landscaping of P11/W0190)	P11/W19 65	Pending	Object – the proposal would lead to a huge decrease in both the number of trees and the number of shrubs provided as part of the approved development which in turn would mean that the development would be much more prominent in the landscape to the detriment of the natural beauty of the AONB. The original condition was imposed presumably following discussion and was not appealed against. It should therefore be implemented.	20.01.12
Carmel College, Mongewell Park, Mongewell	SODC	Redevelopment to provide 166 dwellings, refurbishment of listed buildings and provision of restaurant, café and swimming pool	P11/W23 57	Pending	Object – proper account is not taken of the NPPF, there is confusion between the many documents that accompany the application (particularly in connection with lost and gained footprint), the application does not include a full design and access statement (what is submitted fails to meet expectations), the design of many of the buildings is inappropriate in the AONB and fails to enhance the natural beauty of the area, the scale and mass of many of the buildings would be greater than the buildings they replace, only previously developed parts of the site should be considered for new buildings (which should only be on the footprint of existing buildings), the transport assessment does not take account of the NPPF and fails to deliver a modal shift away from the private car, public transport provision is inadequate, ‘upgrading’ of rights of way are likely to lead to detrimental impacts on users and their enjoyment, closure of the Ridgeway National Trail (even temporarily) is objected to, the lighting plan is confusing and likely to lead to an increase in light emissions from the site, there will be significant numbers of HGV	02.08.12



					<p>area is likely to lead to the generation of a significant amount of traffic, and much of it is likely to be HGVs. Should the Council decide that this application can be approved then the Board would ask that a specific condition be placed on it restricting the use of any external storage area to agreed occupiers of B1 and B2 units. The revised application would lead to the area used for B1 and B2 uses increasing substantially, which would in turn also increase the number of small vehicle movements. However, the Board welcomes the reduction in HGV movements which would arise from this particular change. The Board is still concerned about the absence of a full and rigorous Traffic Impact Assessment, even though this is understood to have been requested by the District Council following the submission of the Watlington Parish Council Traffic Survey. The applicant argues in correspondence with the Council that this is not now required having reduced the area of internal B8 use within the application. The Board considers that the application cannot be properly considered without a full and rigorous Traffic Impact Assessment, given the number of small vehicles that currently use the site and the expected increase in these through the proposed increased in B1 and B2 uses at the site. Any assessment should include assessment of all of the uses at the site in order to produce a complete picture of traffic movement associated with the site. The Board also considers, based on the form of development and the fact that the site is within the AONB that the application should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. Though the creation of a new path is generally to be</p>	
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					<p>welcomed, what has been proposed by way of amendment to the application appears to downgrade the importance of an ancient path which has remained largely unaltered for many thousands of years. It would appear that users are to be encouraged to use an alternative route rather than the definitive right of way. The Board does not consider that users of the ancient right of way should be displaced into a field for 500m for the sake of the commercial benefit of Lys Mill. The existing right of way along the Icknield Way should therefore remain and its condition and character should not deteriorate any further. Any additional path should be available without hindrance for all users (walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, horse-drawn vehicles etc.), many of which are currently excluded from using the additional path installed in the adjacent field. As a result of the use of the site and the traffic generated by it, the Board considers that the proposal, as amended, neither conserves nor enhances the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. As such the development is considered to be contrary to the development plan and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan. Furthermore, the use of the site and the traffic generated by it would also be detrimental to the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.</p>	
Pond Lane, Mapledurham	SODC	Anaerobic digestion plant, access, associated development and connection to grid	P13/S12 90/FUL	<b>Withdrawn – 20.07.13</b>	<p>Object – The proposal would entail a substantial and alien form of development that would not be in keeping with the landscape of the nationally protected Chilterns AONB. The development would comprise, amongst a number of other things: 2 anaerobic digesters (12m high and 26.5m wide); 3 conjoined silage clamps (measuring a</p>	06.06.13

					<p>total of 76.6m by 65.4m by 4m high); a desulfurization tower (about 10m high); 2 generation units (about 5m high); a flare (about 7m high); a large digestate storage lagoon; an attenuation swale; a planted bund up to 3m high and a 2m high security fence around the site's perimeter. None of these elements would conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. The application describes using cattle manure and maize silage produced on the Mapledurham estate. However, the application also suggests that additional material could be imported if there is insufficient produced on site. The Board is concerned that what is being applied for is greater than that which would be needed to deal with the slurry and silage that is likely to be produced on the estate, and that the proposal, should it be acceptable in all other ways, should be significantly scaled back. The proposal would have a significant adverse detrimental impact on the landscape of the Chilterns AONB and would have a significant adverse detrimental impact on users of the local rights of way, both during construction and operation. The proposal would not bring about conservation of the natural beauty and landscape character in this part of the AONB. The Board considers that the construction and operation of the facility would have an adverse detrimental impact on the local road network and would have a significant adverse detrimental impact on the bridleway that leads to and beyond the site (this route is considered to be unsuitable for HGVs). The Board would be particularly concerned about any 'improvements' that might be made to the bridleway as these would be likely to affect the</p>	
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					<p>character of the route and the enjoyment of the AONB. The proposal is likely to lead to a significant number of HGV movements away from the site in order to deal with spoil that would not otherwise be used in the creation of the bund that is proposed. The construction and operation of the facility would have a significant adverse detrimental impact on the tranquillity in this part of the AONB. The large numbers of HGV and other vehicular movements, operation of pumps and generators and use of the flare would cumulatively produce a significant amount of noise which would be out of keeping with the AONB. In addition, the tranquillity would also be affected by light from both security and other lighting on the site as well as light from the firing of the flare. It appears that no real consideration has been given to the electrical connection from the site to the grid (about a mile in length), which would result in a significant number of poles and wires also being introduced into the landscape with consequent detrimental impacts. The Board considers that should the development be approved then any connection from the site to the grid should be installed underground. As a result of the proposed development and use of the site and adjacent landscape and the likely traffic generated by its construction and operation, the Board considers that the proposal would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. As such the development is considered to be contrary to the development plan and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan. Furthermore, the proposed development and use of the site and the likely traffic generated by its construction and</p>	
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					application documents as the use of flint is referred to in a letter but not detailed in plans or in the design statement (any flintwork should dominate the façade that it is part of and the flintwork should adhere to the Board's technical note on flint); excavation and land raising are proposed but insufficient detail is provided to enable the implications to be assessed.	
Valentine Farm, Shogmoor Lane, Skirmett	WDC	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3 bed dwelling with basement and loft and change of agricultural occupancy condition to incorporate equestrian use	12/07129 /FUL	<b>Finally disposed of – withdrawn – 26.06.13</b>	Object - The design of the replacement dwelling generally appears to accord with the principles outlined in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the supplementary technical notes on Brick and Roofing Materials. However, there are three key elements where the design fails to take account of those principles. The first relates to the use of a balcony at first floor level. This would appear totally out of keeping with the rest of the design and the Board considers that this element should be removed to make the design more acceptable. The second element is the proposal to include a basement. Though the basement would clearly not have a landscape impact, the excavation required to bring it about would, because it would lead to a significant amount of spoil that would have to be dealt with. This is likely to lead to a significant number of extra HGV movements on the local road network to the detriment of users of the AONB and their appreciation of the special qualities of the protected landscape. The third element where the design fails to take account of the principles in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and associated supplementary technical notes is the proposal to include a second floor, which, when combined with the other floors, would make the building a four	24.10.12

						storey one which would be much more bulky than the current dwelling on the site. The Board considers that the second floor, which has all the appearances of two more bedrooms, should be removed from the design. This would enable the roofline to be lowered and the resultant building to take on a bulk and form that is more in keeping with the existing dwelling. The Board also objects to the changes proposed to the agricultural occupancy condition. This was presumably placed on the original dwelling for a good reason and unless this has changed in the intervening period it should remain in place.	
Hunts Hill Farm, Hill Lane, Naphill	WDC	Use of redundant barn for B2 use and external storage	13/05088 /FUL	<b>Refused 10.05.13</b>	–	Object – the use neither conserves nor enhances the natural beauty of the AONB and has detrimental impacts on the enjoyment of the special qualities of the area, the use is inappropriate for the redundant barn due to the noise emissions and the introduction of noise attenuation features is likely to have an additional negative impact whilst the noise would be pushed somewhere else, the use may well have impacts on a neighbouring equestrian facility and could lead to loss of jobs when horses are removed from livery, more appropriate premises are almost certainly available in more easily accessible locations like High Wycombe and should be thoroughly assessed and reported on, traffic generation is likely to have significant detrimental impacts on the lane which is a pleasant, narrow and winding country lane at present and there may be calls for HGV access in the future which would be wholly inappropriate, the proposed outside storage will have landscape impacts and detrimental impacts on the residents of a	15.02.13

					neighbouring property and the Board has significant concerns about likely pollution emissions.	
OS Parcel 2837, Gray's Road, Ibstone	WDC	Stables, barn, access	13/06059 /FUL	<b>Withdrawn</b> – <b>08.07.13</b>	Object - Though the design and overall appearance of the building would be generally acceptable in the Chilterns AONB, the bulk, mass and volume that have been applied for in this instance are not. This is despite changes that have been made to reduce the scale of the recently refused scheme (12/05731/FUL). The application form appears to contain a number of anomalies. No parking spaces are apparently being applied for, despite the fact that the site plan shows a large concrete surfaced area all the way round the proposed building. The application form also details that the use of the building would be for B8 (storage and distribution). The Board doubts that this is what the applicant's agent actually meant, however, if that is what is being applied for then the description of the development would clearly need to be amended and significantly more detail provided in order to assess the implications of such a use. The proposed building is to apparently cater for two horses and what has been proposed is considered to be far in excess of what would be expected to be provided in such situations. The building has the mass, bulk and general outward appearance of a dwelling and with very few alterations could readily be converted to such a use. It is unlikely that any objection would have been raised if the application had been for a small scale building with two stables, small hay store and tack room. The creation of an access track across registered common land is not adequately addressed in the	06.06.13

					<p>details that accompany the application. The site may have a permissive access at present, but what is being applied for would require additional consents and would undoubtedly lead to significant changes in the appearance of the area and a suburbanisation of the common. It does not appear that the applicant owns the part of the common across which the existing access runs as the blue line boundary does not extend this far. The proposal does not appear to accord with Local Plan Policy RT17 in that there is limited access from the site to off-site bridleways.</p> <p>The Board considers that the development does not accord with Wycombe's Core Strategy Policy CS17 and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan because the development fails to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the area. If, despite the objections that have been made, the development is allowed to proceed the Board suggests that the following conditions should be put in place: should the use that is being applied for cease (assuming this is equestrian and not storage and distribution) then the building should be removed and the site made good; the number of horses kept on the land should be no more than two; the building and any change in the use of land should be for private use only; adequate and acceptable measures should be put in place to deal with any wastes that arise, and no lighting shall be installed without the prior approval of the Council (to prevent detrimental impacts on the tranquillity of the AONB).</p>	
Land Between Pophleys	WDC	Resurfacing of existing	13/06280 /FUL	<b>Approved</b> – <b>20.08.13</b>	Object - The Board considers that the works proposed would neither conserve nor enhance the	09.07.13

<p>Wood And Footpath 75 City Road Stokenchurch</p>		<p>trackway and creation of hardstanding</p>			<p>natural beauty of the AONB and would set a dangerous precedent for similar applications at the numerous other plots at this site. The change in surface and introduction of a parking area and the associated parked vehicles would have detrimental impacts on the enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB by both residents and visitors alike. The Board considers that the works that are proposed would be far greater than what might reasonably be required or justified in terms of need and they fail to adequately protect the character of the area. Although the right of way may currently be rutted this is almost certainly due to the weather last year and early this year. If the land is being used for agriculture then access would only be required when the land could physically be worked. Access would not normally be required when the land, and therefore the right of way, is so wet that further damage could be caused. The Board is of the opinion that if the land is to be used for any other use this would require planning permission, and this is not being sought at present. Should any works be needed to the right of way, then the Board considers that it would be sufficient just to fill in the ruts with earth, rather than creating a 2.4m wide hard surface. The Board considers that the proposed hardstanding, along with any parked vehicles, would introduce an urbanising feature into this rural area. If, despite this comment, the Council should decide that this use is appropriate then the Board considers that it should be significantly scaled back because it is too large for its proposed use. In addition, no special circumstances have been demonstrated which justify it in this case. Furthermore, the introduction</p>	
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					of such a feature could increase the possibility of all the other lots on this site requesting one and to give permission for this one would create a very dangerous precedent. Should the Council decide that permission can be granted then it should be conditioned that the surface: is carefully constructed; does not lead to uneven surfaces; is fully rolled; is seeded to ensure that grasses and other species can grow and that future long term maintenance is put in place.	
Doe Hill Farm, Little Kimble	WDC	Crematorium, access road, parking and garden areas	13/06615 /FUL	Pending	Object - The proposal, which would involved a substantial building (511m <sup>2</sup> and up to 9.8m high) plus a number of other built elements, access road, car park and garden areas would lead to the urbanisation of an area of currently undeveloped open countryside well beyond the confines of any settlement, to the detriment of the landscape and the users of the many public rights of way in the vicinity of the site as well as those using more distant routes within the Chilterns AONB. This is considered to be the wrong development on the wrong site. The landscape assessment demonstrates that there will be many adverse impacts on very sensitive receptors, which cannot be adequately mitigated without having additional impacts on the landscape. The urbanisation of the site, and detrimental impacts on the tranquillity of the area, would be compounded by the use of lights (particularly uplighters which are detailed for at least the entrance), though no details about the number and location of other lights appear to have been submitted by which the impacts of the lighting could be assessed. In addition, the introduction of the access road, car park and large amount of formal garden area would also compound the	08.08.13

					<p>detrimental impacts. The proposal would lead to the destruction of a significant number of very important and mature trees as well as a significant length of hedgerow. These represent the most important part of the site and the Board considers that they could not be adequately replaced as they are mature and therefore form a very important part of the landscape in this area. The use of the site would lead to significant detrimental impacts on other users of the local highway network due to the large numbers of slow moving vehicles wishing to access and leave the site throughout the day. Should the council determine that the application should be approved then the Board considers that various conditions ought to be applied which should seek to lessen some of the potential impacts. These conditions should include the following: the requirement for any flint work to be undertaken in accordance with the Board's technical advice (as detailed in the Design Guide's Flint Supplementary Technical Note) with the express requirement that pre-cast concrete flintblocks are not used; the requirement for any lighting to be the absolute minimum required for the safe use of the site and which should be fully assessed and adequately controlled to minimise detrimental impacts on the tranquillity of the area, and any trees and hedgerow lost should be replaced with a significant number of appropriate alternatives which should be subject to long term, adequately funded, maintenance. An archaeological site is identified as part of the site area. Although this may be avoided by built development there would clearly be a need to undertake a full assessment of the whole site to</p>	
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					work out what the implications might be, prior to any development taking place. This should also be adequately conditioned should the council determine that the application should be approved.	