



## Planning Committee

10.00 a.m. Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
The Chilterns Conservation Board office,  
90 Station Road, Chinnor

## Agenda

1. Election of Chairman
2. Apologies
3. Public Question Time
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Minutes of Previous Meeting
6. Matters Arising
7. High Speed 2 – update
8. AONB Management Plan Review
9. Feedback from events and Planning Forum
10. Development Plans Responses
11. Planning Applications – update
12. Any Urgent Business
13. Date of Next Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at The Chilterns Conservation Board office, 90 Station Road,  
Chinnor, OX39 4HA

Future meetings – 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> September and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013

## **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 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012). 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 5      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 need approving.

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

### **Background**

1. The draft minutes from the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012 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 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD  
PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012 AT THE  
CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICE, STATION ROAD, CHINNOR,  
COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 13.10 PM**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Member**

**Appointing Body**

**Appointed by Local Authorities**

Cllr Dave Barnard	North Herts District Council
Cllr Brian Norman	Three Rivers District Council
Cllr Chris Richards	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Bill Storey	Hertfordshire County Council

**Appointed by the Secretary of State**

Mike Fox	(Chairman of the Board, observing)
Bettina Kirkham ( Chairman)	
John Willson	

**Elected by Parish Councils**

Cllr Margaret Jarrett	Hertfordshire Parish Councils
Cllr Barbara Wallis	Buckinghamshire Parish Councils

**OTHERS PRESENT**

**Co-opted Members**

Gill Gowing	Strategic Planning Adviser to The Chiltern Society
-------------	--

**Officers**

Colin White	Chilterns Conservation Board
-------------	------------------------------

**Others**

Deirdre Hansen	Minute taker
----------------	--------------

**45. Apologies**

Cllr Roger Emmett (Wycombe District Council) and Mike Stubbs (National Trust)

**46. Public Question Time**

No members of the public were present.

**47. Declarations of Interest**

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

**48. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**49. Matters Arising from the minutes**

1. Item 35.2 the visit to Luton Bypass (M1 to A6) has taken place.
2. Item 35.3 the representation by members appointed by the Secretary of State has been sent

**50. High Speed 2 – update**

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 particularly informed about:

- the five ongoing judicial reviews (limits have been placed on costs)
- feedback from the second round of Community Forum meetings (no news had been received about the national Environment Forum or the local planning forums)
- the Board's response to the EIA scope and methodology report and the publication of the final scope and methodology report and response to the public consultation (which are being closely examined though thus far it appears that most comments have been summarily dismissed)
- the engagement that had been undertaken between HS2 and the Board in connection with proposed viewpoints for the landscape and visual assessment (information provided by HS2 was poor)
- the recent changes in membership of the Government's Cabinet, possible changes in airports policy, the change in the way that the AONB is being valued and possible mitigation measures were also discussed

It was noted that the Buckinghamshire Mitigation and Compensation Panel and the wider HS2 group continue to meet. A member commented that the

new Secretary of State should visit the Chilterns. Future airport development was also touched on.

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

**51. AONB Management Plan Review**

The Planning Officer reported to the members that the current AONB Management plan runs from 2008-2013. A review of the plan has commenced, some key contextual issues have been identified and staff have discussed a likely timetable. The Committee was informed about the programme for the review and was asked for its views on the contextual issues identified for the AONB Management Plan Review.

Some key issues were highlighted including: the impacts of large developments taking place in the setting of the AONB; the implications of the Big Society, Localism and neighbourhood planning; water use, cost and availability; noise and tranquillity and climate change.

A detailed discussion took place about the possibility of boundary changes. It was noted that any suggestions that may form part of any review should be forwarded to the Board to be logged.

The extracts that had been forwarded were discussed and a number of suggestions, updates and comments were noted, in particular in connection with issues such as waste, the setting of the AONB, the current development plans situation and tranquillity (both noise and light). The suggestions would be fed into the officer meetings that are taking place.

The Committee was encouraged to review the other parts of the plan outside the meeting and to send any comments to officers of the Board.

Progress with the review will be reported to subsequent meetings of the Planning Committee and Members were asked for input as and when required.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and COMMENTED on the context for the Management Plan Review.**
- 2. The Committee REVIEWED and COMMENTED on extracts from the 2008-13 Management Plan as provided.**
- 3. The Committee NOTED the programme for the production of the management plan 2014-19.**

**52. Feedback from events**

The Committee received feedback from a number of recent events including: the Planning Forum in May; the Chilterns Buildings Design Awards in June, and Planning Training for Parish and Town Councils in June and July.

The events had been well attended and feedback from each was good.

The Committee discussed the notes of the meetings that had taken place in connection with re-invigorating the Planning Forum and, subject to some minor changes, agreed that they should be forwarded to the local planning authorities. A note about which planning applications the Board wishes to be consulted on was also presented and it was agreed that this should also be sent to the local planning authorities. The next Planning Forum will take place in November and will focus on the AONB Management Plan review.

The changes made to the format for the Design Awards ceremony were well received. As not all winners were fully represented it was proposed that the invitations for next year's ceremony should stress the need to attend.

The Planning Training had been attended by 95 people representing 42 different Parish and Town Councils and most felt that the format and timings should remain as at present though with a longer session (3 as opposed to 2 hours) this would enable more discussion. The financial situation had been noted.

The Planning Officer was asked if the Board had seen the DCLG consultation "New opportunities for sustainable development and growth through the reuse of existing buildings". The Committee was informed that it the Board had received the consultation and a response would be sent shortly.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the feedback from the various recent events.**
- 2. The Committee APPROVED the notes of the Planning Forum reinvigoration visits.**
- 3. The Committee APPROVED the note on planning applications that the Board wishes to be consulted on.**
- 4. The Committee APPROVED the continuation of the Town and Parish Council Training and that the next sessions should take place in summer 2014.**

12.20 Gill Gowing left the meeting

### **53. Planning Conference 2012**

The Planning Officer reported that the next Chilterns AONB Planning Conference will take place on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October at Benson Parish Hall in South Oxfordshire. Four speakers have been confirmed and would talk about NPPF related issues. A number of other speakers have been approached, but so far none have agreed to attend.

Due to the cost of coach hire and the difficulty of tying the conference theme to any specific sites it was proposed not to make site visits as part of the conference programme this year. The finalised programme is about to be issued and bookings encouraged.

1. **The Committee NOTED the arrangements for the next Chilterns AONB Planning Conference and RESOLVED to promote the event as widely as possible.**
2. **The Committee AGREED to inform the Planning Officer as soon as possible if they wished to attend the conference.**

#### **54. Proposed student research project – implications of internet land sales**

The Committee was informed about the conclusions and recommendations detailed in a report prepared by a student from Oxford Brookes University Planning School in connection with the implications of internet land sales on the AONB.

The report concluded that: there appeared to be little agricultural use taking place; scrub encroachment was taking place; some of the plots are becoming unmanaged and some are looking purposefully unkempt in appearance resulting in adverse impacts on the landscape.

The report recommended the continued use of Article 4 Directions and greater use of Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (untidy site notices) when the landscape had become harmed. It was also recommended that the Board should contact local planning authorities to ask them to consider such actions when sites become untidy or the landscape harmed.

Local authorities should continue to offer advice to prospective purchasers through their websites (this is already the case with the Board's website). It was also concluded that further research into this issue would be required.

The Committee also resolved to and thank the author of the report.

12.25 Chris Richards left the meeting

1. **The Committee NOTED the key conclusions and recommendations in connection with this student research project.**
2. **The Committee RESOLVED that local planning authorities would be contacted in connection with untidy sites or those which are perceived to have damaged the landscape.**
3. **The Committee RESOLVED to thank the author of the report and to inform him that the Board would take note of the recommendations.**

#### **55. Luton development issues**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee that there are various proposals for development in the area around Luton.

Development proposals include: an urban extension to the north of Luton and a northern by-pass (partly within the AONB); a rail freight interchange (Sundon Quarry) and Luton Airport expansion.

A site visit had been made to assess the implications of the urban extension and road and the rail freight interchange and responses have been made to various planning consultations.

A small working group was previously set up and will meet when required. The group would be kept informed of any other proposals.

A further document presently being consulted on is the Southern Bedfordshire Chiltern Arc - Green Infrastructure and Access Vision Statement. This will be responded to shortly.

As part of the AONB Management Plan Review and the considerations of any AONB Boundary review it is suggested that the working group should be involved in the required field work.

12.40 David Barnard left

- 1. The Committee NOTED the report**
- 2. The Committee APPROVED the maintenance of the working group.**

## **56. Development Plans Responses**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee that responses had been sent in connection with the following development plan documents: **English Heritage** Great Western Railway mainline designation consultation; **Bucks CC** Proposed Changes to Minerals and Waste Core Strategy; **Oxfordshire CC** Minerals and Waste Core Strategy proposed submission; **Bedford Borough, Central Beds and Luton Borough Councils** Consultation on main and additional modifications to the Minerals and Waste Core strategy; **Wycombe DC** Delivery and Site allocations DPD; **Luton BC** Local Plan 2011-2013 issues, and **Central Beds Council** Draft Development Strategy.

All responses had been made under delegated powers and the Planning Officer had circulated the reports to the Committee.

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

## **57. Planning Applications Update**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about the various representations that had been made in connection with planning applications as listed in the attached appendix, and updated the Committee on any outcomes.

Since April this year the Board had been consulted on 63 planning applications and had responded to all of these. There were 11 formal representations (all objections). The details of the formal representations have

all been circulated to the Committee.

12.55 Brian Norman and Margaret Jarrett left the meeting.

The Committee was informed about a planning application that had been submitted for a wind turbine at Lower Waldrige Farm, Ford (AVDC application reference number 12/01806/APP). The details of the application were examined and it was resolved that an objection should be submitted based on: impact on the setting and enjoyment of the AONB; lack of rigour in the landscape and visual impact assessment, and queries over the published photomontages.

Whilst looking at information online, the Planning Officer also informed the Committee that the Land Registry web-site now provides the public with details about land scams.

1. **The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses made in connection with the applications listed.**
2. **The Committee RESOLVED that an objection should be drafted and submitted in connection with the wind turbine proposal at Lower Waldrige Farm, Ford.**

**58. Any Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

**59. Date of the next meeting**

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012** at the office of the Chilterns Conservation Board, 90 Station Rd, Chinnor commencing at 10.00 am.

**Future meetings: 6<sup>th</sup> March, 22<sup>nd</sup> May and 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013.**

The meeting closed 13.10

**The Chairman .....**

**Date .....**

## **Item 7      High Speed 2 update**

**Author:** Colin White Planning Officer

**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time.

**Summary:** Community Forums have been held, a response was submitted on the draft Code of Construction Practice, the Board was represented at a 51M Noise Forum, the Buckinghamshire Mitigation and Compensation Panel and the wider HS2 group continue to meet.

**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. The third round of Community Forums is now being held in the Chilterns. The forums are once again being attended by a large number of people from a variety of different organisations. About half of the meeting held recently in Wendover was taken up with two presentations by HS2 Ltd on the Property Compensation Consultation and an engineering and environmental update. Once again HS2 Ltd presented plans at the forum which had not been circulated prior to the meeting. These have subsequently been sent out and it has been discovered that they contain a significant amount of detail that requires comment. Comments were sought by HS2 Ltd at the forum, but this was not possible as the plans could not be read at the scale provided. Comments were also sought on possible receptors that should be subject to noise monitoring or investigation. The eight standard items that had previously been suggested were also briefly discussed and will remain as part of each future agenda.
2. HS2 has also been organising Planning Forums. The first Buckinghamshire meeting took place recently and the Board was represented. Various issues were discussed including: Hybrid Bill procedures; engineering update; a catch up on engagement; mitigation, and the safeguarding and compensation consultations. It is understood that the Environment Forum (a national forum) has not yet met.
3. The draft Code of Construction Practice was the subject of a six week period of consultation (with a limited audience) which ended in October. The Board prepared and submitted a response.
4. The Board was represented at a 51M noise forum. The aims of the forum were to: review the current position on noise; plan for the EIA; compare experiences; agree some questions that should be put to HS2 Ltd and to clarify some key issues. The Planning Officer did a presentation on mitigating the mitigation and considered the impacts of trackside noise barriers, viaducts and tunnel portal arrangements.
5. Tunnel issues remain on the agenda though it is understood that HS2 have still failed to respond to the suggestions that have been put to them.

6. The Board has organised a meeting to discuss mitigation with HS2 Ltd. This takes place prior to the Planning Committee meeting and an update will be provided.
7. The Buckinghamshire Mitigation and Compensation Panel and the wider Chilterns group continue to meet and provide an opportunity to discuss relevant issues. The most recent meetings of the wider Chilterns Group have been well attended.
8. 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 current AONB Management Plan runs from 2008 to 2013. A review of the Plan has commenced and some key contextual issues have been identified. The Committee is asked to confirm the likely issues, policies and actions.

**Purpose of report:** To seek the Committee's views on suggestions in connection with revisions to the issues, policies and actions for the emerging Management Plan.

### **Background**

1. As previously reported, the review of the current AONB Management Plan has commenced. The Board is required to prepare the Plan, but it should be noted that this is a plan for the AONB and not the Board. As part of the preparation of the Plan the Board must take full account of the following: the need to consult and engage widely; the fact that it must reflect the national importance of the AONB; the need to be far seeing (beyond the next 5 years); the avoidance of too much detail; actions should be strategic in nature and cover most of the period of the Plan; the Plan must be meaningful to a wide audience and should be fresh and up to date; the Plan needs to influence many other plans, policies and actions and it should provide the justification and context for the Board's activities from 2014 to 2019.
2. Members of the Board were involved in a workshop recently which dealt with many of the key emerging and existing issues, including: the drive for economic growth; changes to the national planning regime; pests and diseases; transport infrastructure (including aviation, especially Luton and Heathrow as well as HS2); changing visitor patterns; Big Society/Localism/volunteers; agricultural changes (including food security); energy prices and policies; wind turbines and wood fuel, and water use and shortages.
3. It has been proposed that the four previous cross-cutting themes of: Climate Change; Social Inclusion; Health and Well-being and Life long-learning will remain and that they should be supplemented by an additional one – Ecosystems Services.
4. The key issues from the Development chapter of the current Plan (copied into Appendix 2 for information) are as follows: development pressures; the need for open space and Green Infrastructure, design and materials; local distinctiveness; renewable energy; sustainability; climate change adaptation; removal of eyesores; guidance for Permitted Development; the impacts of transport (both the infrastructure and noise) and quarrying and extraction of brickearth.
5. The previous Planning Committee meeting and recent Member workshop highlighted some additional issues that will need to be addressed in the review, including:

- changes in the planning regime;
  - the need to give greater consideration to developments that might affect the setting of the AONB;
  - the need to give greater consideration to water supply and use issues;
  - the need to give some consideration to Green Belt issues where the AONB is coincident;
  - the need to give greater consideration to infrastructure in general (including processing and distribution);
  - greater consideration of HS2, and
  - greater consideration of turbines, pylons and broadband (as part of thriving communities).
6. The Committee is asked to consider the existing and additional issues detailed above and to identify any other issues that should be addressed as part of the review.
7. The current policies for the development chapter are also included in Appendix 2. A number of specific comments were made at the previous Committee meeting and the Member workshop as follows:
- the policies should be ordered so that those with a broader basis would come first in the chapter;
  - an additional policy would be required dealing with development affecting the setting of the AONB;
  - an additional policy will be required to deal with HS2;
  - consideration should be given to the inclusion of a policy dealing with Green Belt and AONB;
  - a definition of 'development' would be provided and included in a Glossary;
  - Policy D2 could be split into two with design as one policy (incorporating Policies D3 and D14) and sustainability as another policy (incorporating text about water efficiency);
  - Policy D5 could be amended by adding in references to overhead wires and wind turbines;
  - Policy D6 could usefully be amended to incorporate general tranquillity issues;
  - Policy D7 could be split with the first part being incorporated into Policy D6 and with reference being made in the supporting text to offsetting;
  - Policy D9 should also consider scale and massing;
  - Policy D10 (renewable energy) could usefully include text about seeking better design and could be combined (with suitable rewording) with Policy D11, and
  - Policy D12 should consider airport expansion and related issues and should also have an action assigned to it.

8. The Committee is asked to consider the existing and additional policies detailed above and to identify any other issues that should be addressed by new policies as part of the review.
9. The current actions for the development chapter are included in Appendix 2. A number of specific comments were made at the previous Committee meeting as follows:
  - actions should not be drafted as policies;
  - actions should be ordered to reflect the order of the issues and policies;
  - new actions are required dealing with the water environment and the need for water efficiency;
  - Action 3 could be deleted (revisions to the Design Guide) with Action 4 being amended to include reference to the Design Guide;
  - Actions 4 and 5 should be considered for deletion with appropriate amendments being made to Action 9;
  - Action 7 should be expanded to cover other vertical structures (pylons and turbines for example);
  - Action 8 (Green Infrastructure) could be expanded with the additional of locational information;
  - the need to reduce light pollution could be added to Action 14, and
  - the noise impacts of trains should also be considered in Action 15.
10. The Committee is asked to consider the existing and additional actions detailed above and to identify any other actions that should be addressed by new policies as part of the review.
11. The programme for production of the Management Plan will involve the following key tasks:
  - In-house review (August to December 2012).
  - Liaison with partners (ongoing).
  - Preparation of a draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report (January to March 2013).
  - Formal draft SEA Scoping Report will be issued for consultation (May to June 2013 for 6 weeks).
  - Preparation of draft Management Plan and draft Environmental Statement (by August 2013).
  - 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).
  - Review of consultation feedback (January 2014).
  - Final approval by the Board (March 2014).
  - Publish the reviewed Management Plan (April 2014).

12. Progress with the review will be reported to subsequent meetings of the Planning Committee and Members are asked to input as and when required. The next few months will involve some intensive work in order that feedback can be given to influence the content of the SEA, Environmental Statement and the Management Plan itself. Officers will collate feedback in December.

### **Recommendations**

1. **That the Committee approves the retention of the existing issues, policies and actions as detailed.**
2. **That the Committee approves the proposed additional issues, policies and actions as detailed.**
3. **That the Committee approves the proposed changes to the issues, policies and actions as detailed.**
4. **That the Committee notes the programme for the production of the Management Plan 2014-19.**

**Development**

**Key Issues**

1. The Chilterns and surrounding areas, particularly within the Milton Keynes and South Midlands and Cambridge-Stansted-Peterborough Growth areas, are under considerable pressure to accommodate significant numbers of new houses.
2. There is continuing pressure to locate large scale developments in or adjacent to the AONB. Assessment of the impact of these proposals needs to accord with national policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 7 (paragraph 22).
3. The retention of open space and the need to try and restrict the scale of new development are key to conserving the natural beauty of the AONB.
4. New development of all types needs to respect vernacular architecture, settlement character and the local landscape. This will require developers to do more than try to use standard designs. The Board has published guidance on design and the use of building materials.
5. All new development needs to accord with the highest environmental standards to minimise impact on the environment and help mitigate the causes of climate change. This means maximising energy efficiency and minimising water use (by the inclusion of grey water recycling for example). In order to help avoid flooding and to encourage aquifer recharge sustainable urban drainage systems should be encouraged.
6. There is a need for the design of new buildings to show adaptation to climate change, for example to ensure buildings remain cool in the summer without using air conditioning.
7. Society must seek ways of reducing its demand for energy (switching off streetlights is one of many) and reduce its dependency upon fossil fuels by switching to renewable energy sources. The options include solar, wood fuel, ground source, hydro and wind, all of which have some potential in the Chilterns. It is the prospect of wind turbines which would be most controversial. It is highly unlikely that large scale wind turbines would be appropriate because of the relative lack of wind and the visual intrusion, especially along the ridge of the escarpment but also when located outside the AONB within its setting. However there is scope for installation of smaller-scale turbines in less intrusive locations where there are suitable wind speeds. The use of wood fuel would be the preferred option because of the extent of the woodland resource which is currently under-utilised.
8. There is a need for a better understanding and awareness of what contributes to local distinctiveness, especially amongst those groups who propose, design and approve new development.

9. In some places the attractiveness of the landscape is diminished by degraded sites, unattractive buildings and other structures and their use. The challenge is to remove, screen or mitigate the visual intrusion.
10. There is a need for active promotion of environmentally sensitive construction methods and the necessary skills, particularly in the use of locally produced building materials.
11. There is an increasing need to guide developments and activities which are exempt from normal planning controls.
12. The physical impact of transport infrastructure and its use have major environmental impacts. The environmental damage or benefits need to be given greater weight. This includes ensuring that the design and management of highways, including maintenance and small works, does not damage environmental quality. They should be constructed and surfaced to minimise noise pollution, a particular problem along the motorways (M40, M25 and M1) and trunk roads. The Board and highway authorities have published the *Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns* which, amongst many issues, seeks reductions in road side clutter and light pollution.
13. There is a small number of active and redundant quarries for which there are no long term plans once quarrying has ceased. There is a need to decide their future, not least to maintain the environmental qualities they have (Chinnor Quarry is a geological SSSI). It is unlikely that landfill would be an acceptable use.
14. The Chilterns is a wealthy area and produces an above average amount of waste per capita. It is increasingly unacceptable to send waste out of the area in which it was generated. In future efforts must concentrate on minimising waste and the option of waste incineration (possibly to generate energy). The choice of suitable sites will be contentious. It is unlikely that large scale incineration plants could be accommodated within the Chilterns AONB without unacceptable environmental impacts.

## **Policies**

- D1 Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB, by reinforcing the local distinctiveness of the built environment.**
- D2 Promote the highest standards of development which respect vernacular architectural styles and represent high environmental standards in terms of energy and water efficiency.**
- D3 Promote best practice in the use of traditional materials, namely flint, brick and roofing materials.**
- D4 Support the sustainable use of local natural resources, notably timber, clay (bricks and tiles) and flint, for local building purposes.**
- D5 Seek a reduction in the damaging impacts of telecommunications infrastructure.**

- D6** Seek enhancement of the quality of the landscape of the AONB by the removal or mitigation of existing visually intrusive developments.
- D7** Pursue opportunities for landscape improvement and creation of green space (green infrastructure) when development is proposed in, or adjacent to, the boundaries of the AONB.
- D8** Encourage appropriate development, especially on previously developed land, that will improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area, whilst having regard to the special qualities of the AONB.
- D9** Encourage appropriate densities on new housing developments which reflect the local context, whilst having regard to the special qualities of the AONB and to policies in Development Plans.
- D10** Encourage the use of renewable energy, in appropriate circumstances, and particularly of wood fuel, solar, hydro-power and ground source heat pumps.
- D11** Promote measures which assist adaptation to climate change which are compatible with the character of the built environment of the AONB.
- D12** Seek a reduction in the level of noise and other forms of pollution caused by all types of aircraft flying over the Chilterns and associated vehicle traffic using the airports.
- D13** Promote the restoration and management of redundant quarries into the landscape whilst conserving and enhancing their biodiversity, geological and archaeological features.
- D14** Encourage the continuation of the local brick-making industry, to ensure a continued supply of high quality, traditional building materials, consistent with the principles of environmental sustainability.
- D15** Support the demand for local building materials by seeking their use in new developments, in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and related Supplementary Technical Notes.
- D16** Promote the reduction of waste by supporting policies which result in re-use, reduction and recycling of waste materials.
- D17** Seek to minimise the environmental impacts on the Chilterns of quarrying and management of landfill sites adjacent to the AONB, including the impacts of through traffic.

### **Actions**

1. Comment on significant planning applications which would affect natural beauty or its enjoyment.

2. Review and comment on all relevant planning strategies and policies which would affect the Chilterns.
3. Produce and promote revisions to The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, particularly to take account of climate change, renewable energy and farm and other rural employment buildings.
4. Continue to promote the Supplementary Technical Notes on Chilterns Building Materials (flint, brick and roofing materials) and review, as appropriate.
5. Develop a monitoring system for the built environment to enable an assessment of changes.
6. Produce guidance that seeks to lessen the impact of telecommunications developments.
7. Continue to press for the undergrounding of overhead powerlines.
8. Support the local planning authorities in their efforts to bring about the provision of green infrastructure.
9. In conjunction with others (Building Research Establishment and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, for example) publish guidance on how building design should reflect the need to adapt to climate change.
10. Promote the use of the *Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns*.
11. Contribute to studies undertaken to assess tranquillity in the AONB.
12. Seek a reduction in noise pollution from road traffic, in particular the M40 and all trunk roads.
13. Encourage the use of low noise surfacing in connection with all new roads and any re-surfacing work.
14. Encourage highway authorities to switch off street lights in appropriate circumstances.
15. Seek a reduction in the noise pollution created by over-flying aircraft and a reduction in the number of over-flying aircraft of all types.

## **Item 9      Feedback from events and Planning Forum**

**Author:** Colin White Planning Officer

**Lead Organisation:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time.

**Summary:** The Board has recently held its annual Planning Conference and has organised the next Planning Forum.

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about the feedback from recent events and to approve the details of the forthcoming Planning Forum.

### **Background**

1. The annual Chilterns AONB Planning Conference took place on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 at the Benson Village Hall in South Oxfordshire. The Conference considered various issues related to the National Planning Policy Framework. Five talks were given addressing various issues in connection with decision-making, achieving sustainable development, finding out what is missing, renewable energy and the likely impact of more recent Government pronouncements. This year there were no site visits and the Conference finished with a late lunch.
2. About 75 people attended from 40 different organisations, with a large number (about 45) from Parish and Town Councils. This might have arisen from the different fees that were applied (£30 for Parish and Town Councils, charities and similar organisations and £45 for all other attendees). The Conference generated about £1,800 in income and costs were about £750.
3. Feedback forms were given to all delegates and about 30 were returned. Overall the feedback is very good with most people being 'very satisfied' with the Conference. Most people favoured retention of the format and timings for next year and suggestions were made for some issues that could be covered at a future Conference including the following:
  - Role of Local Nature Partnerships in planning and the need for local authorities to have regard to their views;
  - Update on Government pronouncements;
  - Water issues;
  - Provision of space for play and community in development;
  - Something for smaller rural villages;
  - Rural markets and market towns;
  - Planning for the needs of the elderly;
  - Public health planning, and
  - More information about neighbourhood plans

4. The only negative comments that were made related to the delivery of the various talks with suggestions being made about the use of powerpoint presentations (or not) and the audibility of some of the speakers. There is not much that can be done about presentation style (other than taking account of the comments made) though the comments are valid, and encouragement is always given for people to use the microphone provided.
5. It is proposed that the next Conference should take place in early October 2013 and that this will be the subject of a report at a future meeting.
6. The second Planning Forum for 2012 will take place on the afternoon (1.30 to 4.30) of Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December. A venue has yet to be organised, though with more limited numbers likely it may be possible to hold the Forum at the Board's office. Final details will be circulated shortly. The main item for discussion will be the Management Plan review and those attending will be taken through the main issues, policies and actions. The AONB boundary will also be subject to some discussion.

### **Recommendations**

1. **That the Committee notes the feedback from the annual AONB Planning Conference.**
2. **That the Committee notes the arrangements for the next Planning Forum meeting.**

## **Item 10     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: **Three Rivers DC** Proposed Submission Development Management Policies; **Aylesbury Vale DC** Vale of Aylesbury Plan Affordable Housing Consultation; **DCLG** New opportunities for sustainable development and growth through the re-use of existing buildings; **OFGEM** RIIO-T1: Initial Proposals for National Grid Electricity Transmission and National Grid Gas – Overview consultation; **Dacorum BC** Draft Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan; **Central Bedfordshire Council** ‘Southern Bedfordshire Chiltern Arc Green Infrastructure and Access Vision Plan, August 2012’; **London Luton Airport Operations Limited** pre-application public consultation on revised master plan document; **Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England** Building a Better Environment; **Central Bedfordshire Council** proposed content of Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, and **Scottish and Southern Energy** consultation on future electricity distribution networks.

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about, and approve, 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.

### **Three Rivers DC Proposed Submission Development Management Policies**

1.        The Board supports the following policies as drafted – DM1 (residential design and layout), DM3 (the historic built environment), DM5 (renewable energy developments), DM6 (biodiversity, trees, woodlands, watercourses and landscaping), DM7 (landscape character, and the Board particularly welcomes the references to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials), DM9 (contamination and pollution control), DM11 (open space, sport and recreation facilities and children’s play space and particularly welcomes the reference to resisting development on commons), DM12 (community, leisure and cultural facilities), DM14 (telecommunications) and DM15 (moorings).

2. Policy DM8 (flood risk and water resources) though the Board supports the policy it is considered that reference could usefully be made to the use of water meters within the measures to be incorporated to ensure efficient use of water resources.

### **Aylesbury Vale DC Vale of Aylesbury Plan Affordable Housing Consultation**

3. The Board supports the Council's proposed policy approach for delivering affordable housing in the Vale of Aylesbury Plan, which will include the following principles: a target to secure 35% affordable housing provision on developments of more than 15 dwellings; developments of between 5 and 14 dwellings should include at least 20% dwellings as affordable; developments of fewer than 5 dwellings should provide a financial contribution equivalent to 20% on-site provision to facilitate off-site provision; support for affordable housing on rural exception sites, and a requirement that, provided it is consistent with the latest AVDC and government housing allocation policies, a proportion of new affordable homes will be sought to meet local needs arising from the area of the district where the homes are built.

### **DCLG New opportunities for sustainable development and growth through the re-use of existing buildings**

4. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this consultation.
5. The Chilterns Conservation Board supports government policy to promote sustainable development in rural areas. The Board recognises that making best use of existing buildings and bringing empty and redundant buildings back into productive use brings benefits to the rural economy as well as to the management of designated landscapes. Under current planning arrangements the Board works closely with its constituent Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to support agricultural diversification within the context of conserving and enhancing landscape character, and we are seizing opportunities to build more sustainable rural economies.
6. Notwithstanding the comments detailed below, the Board is keen to maintain the requirement in protected landscapes, and other Article 1(5) areas (World Heritage Sites, Conservation Areas, National Parks and AONBs), for proposals for the reuse of redundant rural buildings to come through the planning system. In this way the LPAs, often in consultation with the Board, will be able to manage the details involved in such conversions and changes of use to ensure that the special qualities of the protected landscape are appropriately conserved and enhanced. Examples of how this works effectively include:
  - Appropriate management of associated hard and soft landscaping to conserve local character
  - Mitigation measures to safeguard species such as bats and barn owls
  - Appropriate management of rebuilding works ensuring the retention or replacement of particular features important to local character
  - Ensuring control of any external lighting
  - Achieving renewable energy and sustainable construction targets

7. Exemption for AONBs from the proposed changes would be in keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which acknowledges the need for more restrictions on development in AONBs and other protected landscape areas than there is elsewhere.
8. The Board is concerned that implementing the proposals that are detailed in the consultation will not be practical, and introducing the proposed changes will remove the ability of LPAs to manage the impacts of development on key elements of landscape character. The Board is also concerned that the encouragement for the re-use of existing as well as redundant buildings may well lead to the proliferation of more agricultural buildings in rural areas to replace those that are lost to agriculture through re-use. It is suggested that, should the changes be brought about, any re-use should only be of demonstrably redundant agricultural buildings which are capable of re-use without substantial renovation and alteration, and subject to the caveats detailed below.
9. The Board considers that the recommendation that the proposal will only apply to buildings in existence on the date the consultation was published (paragraph 29) will cause considerable difficulty for the LPAs in determining whether or not a building was in place at the date of the consultation, and this will become increasingly difficult over time. In addition, there is no definition of what constitutes a building for the purposes of conversion. There is no mention of whether it is of permanent and substantial construction. Is a Dutch barn, a building open on all four sides, a potential candidate for re-use? Is it a building at the time of the consultation? Can the sides be filled in under agricultural permitted development (PD) rights and then 'the building' re-used? Paragraph 29 also suggests that after 10 years in 'agricultural use' the same PD rights could apply. Again, it will be very difficult for the LPA to determine whether or not it has been in agricultural use for the whole of that period. There is also concern about what level of use constitutes agricultural use. For example, such use could be the nominal garaging of a tractor or other farm vehicles overnight, or the storage of redundant farm equipment.
10. Such proposals are likely to lead to a proliferation of new agricultural buildings. Further restrictions would therefore be necessary if this proliferation is to be avoided. A limiting mechanism would need to be devised to stop farmers from using existing agricultural permitted development rights to secure new buildings, only to then move their agricultural operations from the old buildings to the new ones and using their new permitted development rights to change the use of the old buildings. Relying on local planning authorities or third parties to retrospectively challenge the legality of initial use of agricultural permitted development rights would not be an adequate or fair safeguard.
11. Paragraph 30 proposes that only low impact changes would be permitted. However, there is no definition of low impact, although in paragraph 32 there is a recognition that high impact development needs to have local consideration. The Board wonders when low impact becomes high impact and considers that this would have to be very clearly defined to avoid ambiguity. It is doubtful that such a clear definition could be achieved although the consultation suggests thresholds and limitations. The range of use classes being considered in paragraph 32 as potentially low impact causes the Board concern. What may be low impact in the LPA's view may differ from what the land owner considers as low impact.

12. The Board is concerned that nowhere in the consultation is any mention made of associated operational development connected with the change of use. Would this require planning permission? Most agricultural buildings would not be capable of conversion to the uses listed in paragraph 32 without significant building works and also, in many instances, engineering works to create parking areas and accesses for example. Presumably such works would remain within planning control and thus only the principle of the change of use would not be a planning consideration, provided that it was 'low impact'. However, it seems that this would increase rather than reduce uncertainty and would be likely to make enforcement even more complicated and cumbersome than it is at present.

### **Historic Buildings and Farmsteads**

13. For many designated landscapes traditional farming practices and historic farmsteads are very important components of landscape character and provide the historic dimension to the special qualities of the landscape designation. It is important to find new uses for redundant agricultural buildings and to investigate ways that they could be put to better use in order to help enhance, diversify and strengthen individual farm businesses and the wider rural economy.
14. Although Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments are specifically excluded from the changes proposed in this consultation (paragraph 51) there is no recognition of buildings within Article 1(5) areas including World Heritage Sites, Conservation Areas, National Parks and AONBs. The Board considers that the exemption from the proposed changes should be extended to cover Article 1(5) areas (and therefore including AONBs). This is particularly important in connection with proposals for the conversion of agricultural buildings to other uses, including A1-3, B1, B8, C1 and D2. In some individual cases business, retail and leisure uses (A, B and D) might be acceptable. However, the Board generally opposes C1 use because most farm buildings will be unsuited to this future use and we fear that, with possible permitted rights for change of use in the future, this may create a way of getting residential uses in the countryside without the controls of the NPPF.
15. This raises an additional concern. The consultation does not consider potential subsequent changes of use. As described above, if it is permitted to change to C1 hotels, then proposals elsewhere in the consultation document (paragraphs 40 to 43) would allow for a further change of use to C3 dwelling houses. The Board considers that this is likely to lead to not only a free for all in terms of rural business reusing existing buildings, but also a way for new dwellings to be provided in the countryside without any form of planning control

### **Article 4 Directions**

16. The Board is concerned that the use of Article 4 Directions by local planning authorities is not going to be a practical method to withdraw any new permitted development rights which are not appropriate in particular locations, because LPAs generally lack the capacity to make numerous such directions.

### **Requirement for Prior Approval**

17. If the Government were to introduce some or all of the proposals in this consultation, there would be a strong case for some sort of mechanism that enabled local planning authorities to consider potential impacts.

18. In practice, though, the matters that would need to be made available for local planning authority approval are likely be so complex as to render obsolete the benefits of removing the need for a planning application.
19. Without a change in primary legislation, the matters which could be 'reserved' for prior approval by the local planning authority are limited. Allowing local planning authorities approval rights over siting and appearance would be insufficient as it would not enable all of the types of matters listed above to be managed. It would not, for example, enable parking and highways impacts to be managed.
20. If the Government does choose to allow some or all of these changes of use to be taken out of the planning application system and made subject to the prior approval process instead, there should be further consultation on a firm set of proposals and a draft statutory instrument.
21. The Board considers that the proposals constitute a significant threat to the countryside since it will result in a proliferation of new agricultural buildings in the countryside in order to free up existing buildings for re-use. Many of these will be in unsustainable locations. Furthermore, taken as a whole, the proposals provide a way of securing new homes in locations which planning policies both at national and local level would expressly prohibit.

### **OFGEM RIIO-T1: Initial Proposals for National Grid Electricity Transmission and National Grid Gas – Overview consultation**

22. The Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the RIIO-T1: Initial Proposals for National Grid Electricity Transmission and National Grid Gas – Overview. The Board understands that RIIO stands for 'Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs' and that the consultation is concerned with the transmission price controls for National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) and National Grid Gas (NGGT) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The Board is interested in the NGET aspect and Question 2 that is detailed in the 'outputs, incentives and innovation' supporting document. We are asked: 'Do you have any views on our Initial Proposal on setting an expenditure cap for the start of RIIO-T1 in relation to addressing the visual amenity impacts of existing infrastructure in designated areas?'
23. The Board welcomes the new initiative to provide an allowance to transmission operators to underground existing transmission lines which impact on designated landscapes. The Board considers that this will complement the existing initiative that is currently being delivered by the distribution networks. The Board also understands that there will be a similar scheme for proposed lines. This is also welcomed and supported. However, the Board is concerned that there appears to be a lack of collaborative working between those delivering projects relating to undergrounding existing cables and those dealing with proposed new lines.
24. We consider that it will be important to ensure that the wording in the final document relates to addressing the visual amenity impacts of existing infrastructure 'on', as opposed to 'in', designated areas as the impacts generated by pylons do not just stop at the boundaries of the designated areas.
25. It appears that there is a significant willingness to pay (WTP) by the public, but there is lack of clarity about how the ultimate allowance has been determined which is

confusing to the stakeholders involved. The WTP research that is mentioned demonstrates that there would be an expenditure cap of £1.1bn based on 2009/10 figures. However, the consultation places a cap at the start of the RIIO period of £110m. The Board trusts that the allowance will have the flexibility to be increased (as detailed in paragraph 2.50 of the supporting document) significantly towards the threshold suggested by the NGET analysis, as the proposed levels are only likely to achieve the undergrounding of about 4 miles of existing powerlines (based on a cost of about £25m per mile as detailed in footnote 12 on page 15 of the supporting document). The Board would like to know how this ceiling will be reviewed and the resultant expenditure monitored.

26. The Board has significant concerns about fact that the allowance is being considered on a 'use it or loose it basis'. The Board understands the need for setting timescales for delivery, however, given our experience in helping to deliver projects to underground distribution lines, we have found that they sometimes require protracted negotiations with landowners and others. We think it would be safe to assume that similar negotiations would have to be undertaken for transmission lines and that they would be a lot more complicated and therefore time consuming. We are concerned that if projects failed to be delivered within a price review period then the allowance is likely to be lost.
27. The Board is aware that a draft list of proposed schemes has already been published by National Grid. It would be beneficial if there is a much greater degree of transparency in the selection of such schemes. Any proposals should have a greater level of consultation with the relevant designated landscapes bodies built-in to the process, as local knowledge may help the prioritisation of schemes. It would also ensure that those lines targeted would deliver the greatest landscape benefits as opposed to being the most expedient to do.

### **Dacorum BC Draft Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan**

28. The Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan. Many of the visions and objectives are welcomed. However, one of the key features of the town centre is the River Gade. This is an important chalk stream and is therefore a globally rare resource. Much of the previous work that was undertaken along the river as it runs through the town centre has had detrimental impacts on it and its quality and the current over-abstraction has resulted in significantly reduced flows.
29. The Masterplan represents an ideal opportunity to address some of the damage yet it does not appear to place any value on the River Gade as a significant environmental resource, other than to provide an opportunity to reflect buildings (presumably on the assumption that water is retained within the river) and as a route along which to place paths.
30. In order to improve the quality of the public realm and to enhance the natural environment along the River Gade, and thus to conserve and enhance the quality of this important Chilterns' chalk stream, the Board considers that any restoration work within the corridor of the River Gade should seek to respect the natural environment and re-naturalise the river (by removing artificial concrete banks and obstacles to the movement of aquatic life for example) and thus re-create a more natural river channel and corridor. The Board considers that this should be reflected in the

objectives, opportunities, visions and design principles that apply to the River Gade and its corridor including the lower end of Gadebridge Park, Jellicoe Water Gardens and the Marlowes Shopping and Plough Zones. The Board considers that such changes would demonstrate that the Council is committed to ensuring that the River Gade is a valuable asset to the town.

**Central Bedfordshire Council 'Southern Bedfordshire Chiltern Arc Green Infrastructure and Access Vision Plan, August 2012'**

31. General comment – The Plan still includes a great many photographs. Though they now have captions many do not seem to serve any useful purpose – it would be better to remove many of them. In some cases the pages could be used for maps or figures which should all appear in the document from the start.
32. General comment – Although the Board has been involved it is not clear what other organisations apart from the Council, Groundwork and the National Trust have had an input into the production of the plan. The Board would advise that at the very least Natural England and the Wildlife Trusts (they were very involved in development of biodiversity layer for GI plans in this area) should be contacted and involved in any future work or iterations of the plan.
33. Front page – Green Infrastructure (GI) includes access so the title is a little misleading. The Board is unsure what is meant by a 'vision plan'. Is it a plan or is it a vision, or is it a plan for how to deliver a vision? This is not made clear in either the summary or introduction.
34. Executive Summary – Though the Board has contributed to the production of the Vision Plan it has not been as involved as is suggested by the first paragraph. The Board welcomes the aim of plan which is to produce a holistic vision which seeks to improve connectivity of landscape and GI and networks to ensure access routes and spaces are fit for purpose.
35. Executive Summary – A map should have been included at this point to show the area covered, with clear links to other areas outside the direct scope of the vision plan but within the sphere of influence of the Council's development strategy (many other locations and areas are mentioned later in the document). A map would show the geographic scope of the plan and some of the rationale for that scope would become obvious when a map is examined. It would have been good to see a wider area covered, taking in some of the sites to the east of the A6 (Barton Hills and Warden and Galley Hills for example). This is particularly relevant given the emerging initiative to encourage collaborative management between sites across this area including sites such as Barton Hills (badged as North Chilterns Chalk initiative).
36. Executive Summary – Paragraph 4 talks about 'conserving the diversity'. This also needs to encompass **enhancement** as well as conservation of the area's characteristic features, (both natural and historic). The Vision should be used as a framework not just to protect important sites but to expand and link them along the lines of the principles set out in the Natural Environment White Paper 2011 (more, bigger, better and joined spaces for nature).
37. Executive Summary – this section needs to explain where this plan 'sits' in relation to other GI plans and development strategies for the area. Similarly, it is not clear

where the plan sits within the development plan hierarchy and what status it will ultimately have. There is little point in producing such a plan unless it has real purpose.

38. Introduction – Paragraph 1.2 mentions figure 1 but this is not included in the document. Inclusion of the figure would remove the need for much of the text.
39. The Project Area – Paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 repeat much of the locational information already referred to.
40. In Paragraph 2.2.3 it is not clear what time period the comments on Agri-environment schemes and CAP reform refer to.
41. Paragraph 2.2.4 should include the Board’s statutory purpose. It is the duty of the Conservation Board, in the exercise of its functions, to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty, and the purpose of increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty (see Section 87 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).
42. Paragraph 2.2.5 includes a lot of text that is somewhat superfluous as well as an appendix that would presumably appear in any printed version. It would be better to edit the text and then refer readers to relevant websites for further information.
43. Paragraph 2.5.1 should mention arable flora and bird interest as well as hedgerows, and not just chalk grassland. This paragraph refers to perceived benefits in connection with public ownership - ‘There are a number of Sites.....which, when in public ownerships, are managed to maintain and enhance this biodiversity...’ Private ownership doesn’t necessarily preclude management for biodiversity. The Board wonders if this statement should be so specific about the link with public ownership.
44. Paragraph 2.5.10 should refer to arable flora rather than weeds, and the Board suggests that any reference to farmland habitats should not just be about hedgerows supporting arable flora / farmland birds.
45. Paragraph 2.6.7 mentions an important hedgerow protected under the Hedgerow Regulations, though it is difficult to know where this is – a plan would have been useful.
46. In the Policy Context section text should be added to refer to the Natural Environment White Paper 2011, the National Ecosystem Assessment and the Bedfordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan. This area is also part of the Wildlife Trust’s North Chilterns Chalk Living Landscape.
47. Paragraph 4.4 (1) refers to the lack of visitor facilities - the Board suggests that it would be more productive to consider this issue over a wider area, taking in more of the sites in the area and considering how the public currently use them or might want to use them in the future, and what the opportunities are to enhance facilities. This comment also applies to recommendations 6.2.1 and 6.4.1 – i.e. more work is needed across a wider area to assess need and the feasibility of providing a visitor centre.
48. Paragraph 4.5 (1) refers to the AONB. The statutory purpose for the AONB should be correctly reflected in the wording and therefore ‘and enhanced’ should be added after ‘conserved’ in line 3 and ‘of the area’ should be added after ‘characteristics’ in

line 2. Similarly, the second sentence would benefit from being redrafted as it does not meet the purposes. To comply with national policy (see policies 113 to 118 in the NPPF) the second sentence should be amended to read along the following lines: 'Full account should be taken of the likely effects of any development within the setting of the AONB in order to ensure that the nationally designated landscape is afforded the greatest degree of protection'.

49. Paragraph 4.5 (8) refers to the existence of the overhead power lines. In order to improve the quality of the landscape and its attractiveness to potential users it would be beneficial to seek undergrounding of the power lines as part of any comprehensive development in the area.
50. Paragraph 5.3.4 talks about landscape and heritage objectives and still fails to mention the AONB and its statutory purposes.
51. Section 6.2 deal with biodiversity recommendations. The Board considers that this section should be strengthened with regard to ensuring appropriate management of existing habitat, and should include chalk grassland, woodland and farmland habitats. Reference should also be made to the provision of management advice.
52. Despite numerous references to the lack of public access and rights of way in the heart of the project area nothing is really done about this as part of the vision plan aside from a brief mention in paragraph 6.3.5. Greater access should be provided with both north/south and east/west links within the centre of the area. Views from all routes need to receive consideration as part of any visitor experience assessment.
53. Paragraph 6.4.6 – The Board considers that the area would be better promoted as part of North Chilterns Chalk – we are not persuaded that 'Southern Bedfordshire Chiltern Arc' has much local resonance. It is considered to be too small an area to try to give an identity to.
54. Paragraph 6.4.8 refers to provision of interpretation. The Board would not support separate interpretation for this area, and would want to see it as part of the North Chilterns Chalk promotion.
55. Paragraph 6.4.15 should refer to the North Chilterns Chalk initiative which is looking at collaboration between organisations involving volunteers across a wider area.
56. Section 7 details an Action Plan. The Action Plan contains no detail about lead organisations, priorities, timescales or costs. At least some of this detail should be included from the start as it suggests that the plan will not be implemented at any stage. The Board wonders whether specific proposals for changes to land management (for example locations for creation of new woodlands) been checked against existing local BAP plans and biodiversity / GI layers to check that there is not a conflict of objectives. Has the information been checked to ensure that locations for woodland creation are appropriate?
57. Section 8 is entitled 'progressing the plan'. Page 53 details information about the English Woodland Grant Scheme and the Board's Sustainable Development Fund. English Woodland Grant Scheme also provides grants which can be used to help enhance management of existing woodlands. The Board suggests that in connection with the reference to its Sustainable Development Fund the statement that the Board meets quarterly should be removed. The grants panel meets more frequently than that. In addition, the last sentence should be amended to read: 'Funding applications

are welcome from a wide range of applicants including voluntary / community organisations, local businesses, and individuals’.

58. Figure 7 details the vision arising from the text. The Board considers that further thought should be given to the identification of further rights of way within the central part of the area, the map clearly shows a very large gap in the rights of way network that will not encourage people to use the wider area.
59. Similarly, crossing points on the A6, M1 and railway are already shown. However, the Board considers that a further crossing of the A6 will be needed to the north, particularly as a direct link could then be made to Barton Hills. Those that are proposed should provide enhanced crossing facilities (proper green bridges for example) that encourage people into the wider countryside beyond.
60. Figure 7 also shows 3 locations for possible visitor centres – notwithstanding any direct impacts on the AONB, its setting and enjoyment that might arise from the possible development of visitor centres, the Board considers that to lessen the impact on sensitive sites any centre proposed for the Sundon Hills Country Park should be to the west of the main road and much closer to the former landfill site. The centre proposed on the A6 should also provide for direct links to the east towards Barton Hills and the possible centre within the proposed development area to the north of Luton would be better sited further to the north of the development area in order to allow easier access to the wider countryside beyond. The Board may well have comments to make about specific proposals if they are submitted at some point in the future.

### **London Luton Airport Operations Limited pre-application public consultation on revised master plan document**

61. The Chilterns Conservation Board is concerned about the future use of London Luton Airport (LLA), particularly arising from the overflying of aircraft over the AONB, and its setting, both during the day and at night. The Board has had no direct contact from either the Airport owners or operators and as a statutory body with responsibility for the management of the AONB which is immediately adjacent to the airport we would have expected to be involved in discussions on the expansion of the airport and its likely impacts.
62. Despite not being directly consulted the Board would still like to take the opportunity to comment at this stage in the development of the plans that are being prepared on behalf of the London Luton Airport Operations Limited (LLAOL) and London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL). As we understand it the proposal is for an expansion of passenger numbers from about 9 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 18 mppa by about 2031.
63. As detailed in the information that we have seen, this would appear to principally involve provision of a new taxiway parallel to a current taxiway, extending the taxiways within the existing curtilage of the airport and extending terminal buildings and car parking.
64. If the aircraft type were to remain as at present, the number of aircraft movements would roughly double. We understand that the size of aircraft is generally increasing. This would mean that such an increase in passenger numbers could be catered for by an increase in aircraft movements which would not double the present number.

However, such an increase would nonetheless be very significant. Furthermore, 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.

65. The Chilterns Conservation Board has statutory duties to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and to increase the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the AONB.
66. The revised master plan has been examined and the Board notes the changes that have been made. Whilst consideration of the landscape and visual impacts has moved within the document, and it is now considered as a key environmental issue, the notes that no consideration is given to the likely impacts of the operation of the airport on the Chilterns AONB and its setting.
67. 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, Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).
68. The Board therefore opposes the expansion plans for the following reasons:
69. The Board considers that the proposals are premature because they have not been incorporated into a national aviation strategy which has yet to be published.
70. The Board is concerned that with such short timescales between this consultation and the submission of a planning application (by November 2012 which gives no more than 6 weeks) no account will be taken of any feedback given.
71. The public consultation material is hard to access, poorly produced, very difficult to read and will lead to lack of engagement.
72. The Board is not convinced that the expansion would be taken forward in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable way and, despite being a statutory body, has yet to have sight of the Scoping Report that is required in connection with the production of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). As part of the scoping for the EIA 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 (attached).
73. 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 be fully assessed as part of the Scoping and EIA process prior to any planning application being made. In addition, the EIA should also address 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.
74. The likely effects on the Chilterns AONB should also be considered as part of the EIA. The Board considers that the impacts on the AONB and its enjoyment should be subject to specific detailed consideration as part of the EIA because it is clearly a sensitive receptor. For potential noise impacts the Chilterns AONB should again be subject to specific detailed consideration outside the normal confines of  $L_{Aeq}$  assessments. In addition, the impacts of night noise should also be fully considered and should include assessments from within the AONB and its setting.

75. The Board is also concerned about the likely noise impacts arising from the increase in the number of taxiing aircraft.
76. The Board is concerned about the likely impact of new buildings on the surrounding landscape which includes the Chilterns AONB and its setting.
77. The Board is concerned about the likely impacts on traffic flows on roads within the AONB arising from the traffic associated with additional passengers.
78. The Board is concerned about the likely development pressures for new housing for example to cater for increases in the number of employees.
79. Despite the recent adoption of the Airport Noise Action Plan (2010 to 2015) the Board considers that there is no clear commitment from 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.
80. 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.
81. Any future planning application should be treated by the applicant as an opportunity to seek significant improvements and mitigation to the noise impact environment created by the airport. The Board will expect any such planning application to contain a comprehensive analysis of the future noise implications of the growth proposals and to be proactive in coming forward with positive proposals for improvements and mitigation. These proposals should include the imposition of night flight limitations consistent with 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.
82. The Board would be grateful if it could be involved in the discussions or consultation about any revisions to the existing Night Noise Policy
83. The Board does not accept that noise levels will decrease because 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.
84. 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.
85. 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.

86. The Board would welcome the opportunity to discuss its representation with LLAOL and LLAL and would also 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 Airport traffic on the Chilterns AONB and explore potential for operational improvements'
87. We would be grateful if we could be consulted formally at later stages. We will no doubt comment more fully as the development plans are progressed to the planning application stage.

### **Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England Building a Better Environment**

88. The Chilterns Conservation Board welcomes the production of the 'Building a Better Environment' document.
89. It would be useful to also refer to AONBs in Table 1, second column under 'areas of development expertise'.
90. The key sections from 5 onwards are useful and detailed, however, it would be helpful if they were all linked up with a summary at the end of the document.
91. Section 5, page 9, under 'our role' mention is made of the provision of specialist advice on landscapes. Though this is welcome it does not actually happen in practice. In most cases NE refers an applicant to others for advice, often the local AONB unit for example. This issue is also not really addressed later in Section 18. It would be useful to explain NE's role in advising on the landscape impacts of development (either planning applications or proposals in development plans). The use of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments should be encouraged.
92. Page 10 includes an image of a solar PV farm – the relevance of this to the document is not clear, it would perhaps be better (and more encouraging) to use an image of solar PV or hot water in a domestic-scale setting.
93. Sections 8 and 9 ought to include a full explanation of sustainable drainage systems with all of the likely elements from green roofs through to rainwater harvesting, as well as measures to more closely manage water demand (for example water efficient white goods, grey water recycling and water meters).
94. Section 13 could usefully include references to the NPPF (particularly paragraph 118) and the need to protect aged and veteran trees outside ancient woodland.
95. Page 17 – the fifth bullet point mentions increasing genetic diversity or varying species that will improve resilience in connection with climate change. Care will be needed in the choice of species, particularly in those places where increasing genetic diversity is not necessarily an appropriate action.
96. Reference should be made in Section 14 (statutory wildlife sites and biodiversity) to Local Nature Partnerships and the Natural Environment White Paper, possible under 'further opportunities'.

97. There are references to further information on pages 18 and 19 which refer the reader to the page on which the cross reference is made (see the bottom of page 18 and towards the top of page 19).

### **Central Bedfordshire Council proposed content of Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan**

98. Thank you for informing the Chilterns Conservation Board about the consultation in connection with the proposed content of the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire Council.
99. The Board has examined the questionnaire that is available and has the following brief comment to make by way of response.
100. In accordance with Policies 114 to 116 and 113 in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Conservation Board considers that full consideration should be given to the statutory requirement to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB as well as the need to take full account of any development that may be outside but likely to affect the AONB as part of Policy 3 (assessing planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites) or Policy 4 (assessing planning applications for the expansion of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites).

### **Scottish and Southern Energy consultation on future electricity distribution networks**

101. The Board was consulted in connection with the Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) proposals for their electricity distribution networks. This will represent the SSE business plan for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and would be consistent with the same period as the OFGEM RII0-ED1 (which stands for Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs in Electricity Distribution in the period 2015 to 2023). The southern half of the Chilterns AONB is within the SSE area and just recently SSE has agreed to partake in the OFGEM undergrounding of overhead wires in protected landscapes scheme. This is encouraging and it would clearly be beneficial for the AONB if this engagement was continued until at least 2025. This would be part of SSE's environmental commitment and would be addressed through its business plan. The following text was submitted to SSE in answer to Question 10 - Are there any particular environmental projects that you think we should undertake? If yes, please explain.
102. The Chilterns Conservation Board considers that SSE should fully take part in the OFGEM undergrounding of overhead wires in protected landscapes scheme and should fully utilise the available funding in the period from 2015 to 2023. Such an involvement would be a clear demonstration of SSE's statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONBs within its area (under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). Previous willingness to pay surveys have clearly demonstrated that customers are happy for such funding to be utilised and the Board encourages SSE to continue the work it has recently done in connection with the OFGEM scheme in the period to 2015.

### **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 11     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 appeals and a number of previous cases have been determined.

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about the various representations that have been made in connection with planning applications and appeals and to update the Committee on any outcomes.

### **Background**

1.     Since the 1<sup>st</sup> April this year the Board has been consulted on 95 applications and has responded to all of these. There have been 18 formal representations (all objections).
2.     The applications that have resulted in formal representations in 2012/13 include:

#### **Objections**

- Major development east of Aylesbury (not yet decided)
  - Redevelopment of sheltered housing site at Goring (not yet decided)
  - Stables, barn and hardstanding at Ibstone (refused)
  - Redevelopment of CABI site at Wallingford (approved subject to call in)
  - 8 floodlights on 6 columns at a school at Great Kingshill (approved)
  - Gates, piers and walls, Heath End near Berkhamsted, (approved)
  - Coachway, new sports and leisure centre, offices, hotel, food store, amenities building, landscaping and open space at Handy Cross, High Wycombe (not yet decided)
  - Redevelopment of Carmel College, Wallingford (not yet decided)
  - Change of use from agriculture to campsite, near Princes Risborough (approved)
  - Creation of new access and stationing of mobile home, Spurlands End Road, Great Kingshill (two applications, neither yet decided)
  - Winery building, Little Marlow (approved)
  - Wind turbine, Ford (not yet decided)
  - Importation of inert waste, Loudwater (not yet decided)
  - Athletics track and associated development, Little Marlow (not yet decided)
  - Wind turbine, Henton (not yet decided)
  - Replacement dwelling and new equestrian centre (two applications, neither yet decided)
3.     The outstanding formal representations are detailed in Appendix 3, and where decisions have been made by the local planning authorities these are detailed.

## **Recommendation**

1. That the Committee notes and approves the responses made in connection with the applications listed in Appendix 3.

**APPENDIX 3**

<b>Location</b>	<b>LPA</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>AONB Planning Officer's Response</b>	<b>Date</b>
Meadhams Farm Brickworks	BCC	Variation of conditions	CH/2011/60006/BCC	<b>Approved – 28.09.12</b>	Support - Based on the need to continue to provide good quality local building materials into the future. Development conforms to AONB Management Plan (policies D3 and D4). The Board would be concerned if inappropriate waste was to be deposited in the voids that will be left and trusts that, should permission be granted, this will be adequately conditioned to ensure that it is carefully screened, closely monitored and involves totally inert waste due to the fact that the site is in close proximity to the River Chess and sits on the chalk aquifer.	28.09.11
High Heavens Waste Site, Clay Lane Booker	BCC	New access road	CC12/9002/CM	<b>Refused – 08.08.12</b>	Object – development neither conserves nor enhances the natural beauty of the AONB and is contrary to the AONB Management Plan and development plan for the area, the road would be additional to highway improvements already considered as part of an application that is likely to be approved shortly and there is no overriding need and no special circumstances that would require an additional road (applicant refers to the road as an alternative despite the fact that it would be used by HGVs whilst the existing road would be used by cars and other light vehicles).	27.04.12
Wycombe Heights Golf Centre, Rayners Avenue, Loudwater	BCC	Importation of inert soils and remodelling of golf course and formation of irrigation reservoir	CC12/9005/CM	Pending	Object - The assessment of the plans is very difficult and hampered by the use of 0.5m contours. The Board considers that the proposal that has been submitted would have detrimental impacts on the natural beauty of the AONB and on the users of the public rights of way within the site. Though the driving range is set down in the	23.10.12

				<p>landscape at present the alterations that are proposed would raise some of the activity up by up to 10 metres (greater than the average height of a normal house). This would mean that the driving range and the associated activity would become more visible in the landscape. The raising of the land would be brought about by the importation of a massive amount of waste material and the Board considers that there must be more appropriate ways of improving the driving range (such as cut and fill of an appropriate scale) that meet the requirement to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. Re-siting of the driving range (to a position that would have less impact on the AONB) may also be an option that needs investigation if the form and drainage are such a problem. The construction of the irrigation lake would also raise that part of the site by up to 8 metres with more waste material being imported. The Board considers that other methods of water capture and storage ought to be investigated and implemented before such a change is made to the landscape. The importation of the waste would lead to huge numbers of vehicles accessing and leaving the site to the detriment of users of the public rights of way and this would impact on users' enjoyment of the AONB. The Board is concerned about lighting in the countryside and though the lights that exist on site will no doubt benefit from planning permission their increased use (or replacement with something bigger) may impact on the tranquillity of the area. The Board considers that the application fails to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and also fails to increase the understanding or</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

					enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB and as such considers that the application should be refused.	
Caversham Quarry, Sonning Eye	Oxon CC	Quarry extension	MW.0158/1	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/A OP	Pending	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

					completed and should permission be granted then conditions should be imposed requiring landscaping to mitigate the adverse impacts and details of building materials to be provided.	
Lower Waldrige Farm, Ford	AVDC	101.5m turbine and associated development	12/01806/A PP	Pending	Object – although various viewpoints are considered within the AONB the impact is considered to be greater than that claimed in the LVIA. The turbine would be the most significant vertical structure in many of the views from the scarp-top, and would be much more prominent as it would not be seen in the context of other human influences (apart from very limited numbers of pylons). The consideration that has been given to the impacts on the setting and enjoyment of the Chilterns AONB does not reflect the importance of the designated landscape or its sensitivity to change. The consideration of receptors is inadequate as many people will be in the landscape to take the view and will linger at sites, and contrary to submitted information the AONB receives a great many visitors. The development is likely to have an impact on the AONB and its enjoyment as well as its setting (position statement forwarded with representation). The Board is concerned about the method of illustration through the use of photomontages that would not represent what the eye would see, though they may be compliant with GLVIA the movement of the blades cannot be taken account of.	21.09.12
Valley View, Hemel Hempstead Road, Dagnall	CBC	Proposed gypsy site (5 caravans)	CB/11/0380 7/FULL	Pending	Object – very limited amounts of detail in the application, no information about scale and appearance of buildings on the site, development would have materially greater impact on the AONB than any currently approved development, current and proposed hedge includes species not	29.11.11



Lane, Heath End					<p>to 40m of brick wall and the introduction of either large wrought iron 'feature' gates or 'fully boarded timber gates' (which are both included on the same drawing) which both appear to be of a solid construction of either metal or wood and which would replace a perfectly acceptable 5 bar gate. These elements would introduce, along with a formal entrance arrangement, a series of alien and wholly suburban features into an otherwise rural area. These features neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and the Board considers that they should not be permitted. The plans that have been submitted are confusing and very difficult to read, and therefore very difficult to interpret. It appears that the piers and walls would be sited too close to the stems/trunks of both the hedgerow plants and the trees within it and therefore almost certainly within any root area that would need to be protected from such a construction. Construction of the walls and piers would be likely to lead to the loss of both the hedgerow and the trees within it which is objectionable and which would clearly be to the detriment of the area. Another area of confusion arises in connection with the length of wall that is proposed. The application talks about a section of brick wall to 'run a maximum of 20m either side' of the entrance piers. It appears from the plan that accompanies the application that from the proposed pier to the boundary of the property to the north is no more than about 11m (clearly it would not be possible to construct 20m of wall without consent from a third party). If the proposed wall was constructed up to 20m to the south of the proposed pier then it would stop about a third of</p>	
--------------------	--	--	--	--	---	--

				<p>the way along the current hedgerow. This would look very odd indeed and therefore be completely out of keeping with the area. The Board would not support a wall running the full length of the property as this would lead to an even greater detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. These objections would be addressed by the removal of the walls, piers, gates and formal entrance arrangement from the proposal. However, if, despite this objection, the Council decides that the application should be approved then the Board considers that full account should be taken of the hedgerow regulations. In addition, any approved brick wall should be far enough away from the hedge to ensure that the hedge is not damaged during construction and that its integrity is maintained in perpetuity. A clear gap of at least 1.75m from the back edge of the hedge to the front side of the wall should be required. This is not shown on the plans as currently drafted. These appear to show that the wall would be too close to the hedge. The Board considers that the hedge appears to be affected in part by the amount of tree cover in the vicinity. It would therefore be sensible to introduce shade tolerant hedging species (such as holly) which would help to improve the integrity of the hedge. If the application is approved the Board considers that conditions should be attached which require planting to fill any current gaps and the replacement of any plants within the hedge should they die in the future. The applicant should clearly be happy with such a condition as the application implies protection of the hedge. The Chilterns Conservation Board considers that, as proposed,</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--



					imposed presumably following discussion and was not appealed against. It should therefore be implemented.	
Icknield Place, Goring	SODC	Redevelopment of Sheltered Accommodation with Extra Care Apartments	P11/S0098	Pending	Object - The Board considers that the proposal represents a significant over development of the site, the form, scale and massing of the building all fail to take account of the context of the site which sits within the nationally protected Chilterns AONB where development should conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, most of the development is significantly taller than that which is on the site at present and appears to be taller than the previous proposed building, though with the lack of a scale this is difficult to measure, there is a large extent of flat roof which appears to have been designed in order to lessen the bulk of the building yet results in a contrived appearance with many half hipped roofs, contrary to the advice in the Board's Roofing Materials supplementary technical note, it would be better to remove one of the three storeys and break up the building form more than at present which would enable the introduction of fully gabled roofs with chimneys in order to lessen the impact of large expanses of roof, the Board considers that the design of the building neither takes account of the context of the site within the AONB nor does it accord with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide or the Board's supplementary technical notes on Chilterns building materials (particularly the Brick and Roofing Materials notes), some of the proposed materials (concrete roof tiles and render in particular) also fail to take account of this advice, the proposal neither conserves nor enhances the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and as such	01.05.12

					the application should be refused.	
CABI site, Nosworthy Way, Wallingford	SODC	Redevelopment of site to provide office, care village, key worker housing and leisure facilities	P12/S0436	Pending	Object – the proposal would represent a greater than doubling of the floor area on the site, much of it on undeveloped land including woodland with ecological interest, this impact could be lessened by removing this part of the development or moving it to the east, it is not possible to undertake a thorough LVIA as the proposals lack detail, much of the development could be 4 storeys high and much in close proximity to the bridleway to the west, there is a lack of detail as the application is in outline and the design and access statement does not achieve its purpose for this reason, the site is remote from services and facilities and will lead to a significant increase in traffic, the historic environment will need very careful consideration (Grim's Ditch is within site) and the proposal fails to meet the purposes for which the AONB is designated.	24.05.12
Carmel College, Mongewell Park, Mongewell	SODC	Redevelopment to provide 166 dwellings, refurbishment of listed buildings and provision of restaurant, café and swimming pool	P11/W2357	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	02.08.12

					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 movements to the detriment of the character of the narrow local roads (spoil generation being one cause), renewable energy generation is not adequately addressed, the proposal does not conform to the Local Plan or emerging Core Strategy and as such should be refused.		
Rowan Farm, Henton	SODC	15kW turbine	wind	P12/S2041/ FUL	Pending	Object – Contrary to the assertions made in the application the Board considers that the proposal would represent a significant vertical visual intrusion into the landscape of the Vale which would be about half the height of the Buckinghamshire County Hall building and would be much more obvious within the landscape due to the movement associated with the turbine blades. The Board is of the view that the consideration that has been given to the impacts on the setting and enjoyment of the Chilterns AONB does not reflect the importance of the designated landscape or its sensitivity to change resulting in the suggestion that any impacts are generally not significant. The Board does not agree with this general assessment. The Board considers that the landscape is highly sensitive to change, the magnitude of change is medium to high and the effects are medium or high with the result that there will be significant or potentially significant visual effects overall. Although the proposal does not affect the whole of the AONB, it does have a	23.10.12

				<p>significant effect on a number of locations within the AONB. The turbine would be the only major vertical intrusion in most of the panorama that is experienced from the sites within the AONB that have been assessed. The Board considers that the likely impacts of this proposal should also be considered alongside current proposals/approvals for other wind turbines at Ford and Quarrendon in Aylesbury. The Board notes that the application is accompanied by a report that is entitled 'landscape and visual assessment'. However, the Board would have expected a more thorough document which also went into detail about the likely impacts. Landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIA) would generally accompany such applications and would detail the likely receptors and their sensitivity. For the AONB, users of the rights of way, including the Ridgeway National Trail, will be sensitive receptors that should receive an appropriate level of consideration and assessment. The Council will no doubt be aware that the AONB receives about 55 million visitors a year (2007 Visitor Survey). This is a significant number and many will be visiting the sites chosen as viewpoints on a regular basis. The Guidelines for LVIA (GLVIA) states that walkers, especially those walking in places where enjoyment of the landscape is a key factor, are of the highest sensitivity. The Board considers that many of the views are open with the wind turbine being prominent and out of keeping with the rest of the view. The magnitude of change is probably medium to high and the resulting impact would be substantial or moderate/substantial. From an assessment of the landscape and visual</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--

					assessment it appears that what has been produced does not accord with the GLVIA. The Board considers that the development would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the AONB, would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the AONB and that it would be dominant in views both from and to the AONB. The Board has become increasingly concerned about developments such as this and the likely impacts on the AONB and as a result has adopted a position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB. A copy is attached. The Board considers that the photomontages produced do not represent what the eye would see, do not conform to the GLVIA and they are therefore not an accurate representation of the likely visibility and likely landscape impacts of the proposed turbine. In addition, the fact that the blades of the turbine are supposed to move cannot be taken account of in the montages. Any movement will immediately make the turbine more visible in the landscape.	
Grange Farm, Widmer End	WDC	Agricultural building to be used as potting shed	07/06948/F UL	<b><i>Finally disposed of (no decision will be taken by LPA)</i></b>	Object - The proposal seeks to construct a very large (30m by 15m and 5.6m high) utilitarian, agricultural, building that will be clearly visible to users of the local rights of way. The principles of the AONB appear not to have been taken on board by the applicants. The development could not be assimilated into the Chilterns AONB. The proposal could create a dangerous precedent. The Board is mindful of the need to facilitate growth in the local economy and the evident importance of the applicant's business, however, it considers that the proposal would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB.	07.09.07

Sanfoin Farm, Riding Lane, Wooburn Moor	WDC	2 static caravans, 2 touring caravans, hardstanding, parking and portable utility vehicle	12/05443/F UL	<b>Approved – 20.09.12</b>	Object – the development would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the AONB, much of the development has already taken place and with other developments in the vicinity has led to the exacerbation of the detrimental impact and an increase in the urbanisation of the area, the development is contrary to various planning policies and does not accord with Circular 01/06. Enforcement action should be taken.	04.04.12
Wycombe Sports Centre, Marlow Hill, High Wycombe	WDC	Coachway, park and ride, sports and leisure centre, offices, hotel, food store and amenities building	12/06261/R 4OUT	Pending	Object – the application lacks detail about the bulk, mass, design and materials of key elements and the landscape and visual assessment fails to take proper account of the impacts of the development on users of a right of way within the AONB. There is confusion between the landscape and visual assessment and the parameter plan which do not deal with the same proposal (the buildings are taller on the parameter plan and not therefore subject to a proper assessment). The right of way in the AONB is a highly sensitive receptor and any proposals must be considered accordingly. The Board cannot agree with the conclusion that the proposed development will be ‘a significant visual benefit’ in the long term. No detail is provided in connection with the 11 wind turbines that are proposed and which the application claims should be visible from the M40 to allow the provision of advertising. The design and materials are not really detailed and what detail is provided shows that the proposal fails to take account of the context of the site and its proximity to the AONB.	10.07.12
Brimmers Farm, Brimmers	WDC	Change of use of farmland to campsite and	12/06341/F UL	<b>Approved – 14.11.12</b>	Object – the application lacks detail - visual assessment in particular, as well as plans to show all elements of the development (‘ready pitched	09.08.12

Road, Princes Risborough		change of use of building to toilet block			luxury tents'), concern about what might ultimately get implemented as this may be different in form with greater potential impacts, semi permanent installations take on a degree of permanence and may remain all year (requires conditions and enforcement), there is no landscaping plan, the site is prominent in various views from local rights of way as it is in a natural bowl, access from one field to the proposed washing facilities would require users to cross the main road leading to danger for pedestrians and a desire or need to site toilet and other facilities north of the road leading to further detrimental impacts, the proposal fails to meet the purpose of the AONB designation, economic benefits are likely to be limited and are outweighed by the detrimental impact on the AONB, the proposal is contrary to the AONB Management Plan, NPPF, Local Plan and Core Strategy and should be refused.	
Field Farm, Spurlands End Road, Great Kingshill	WDC	Two applications – creation of access and stationing of mobile home	12/06651/F UL (track) and 12/06652/F UL (mobile home)	Pending	Object – despite assertions in the application the site is within not outside the AONB, the track would be an inappropriate and urbanising feature out of keeping with the area, it would undermine the separation between Great Kingshill and Widmer End, a large gap in the hedgerow increases the visibility of any buildings on the site, the existing access appears to be adequate, the proposal for the mobile home suggests the site is occupied by a number of mobile homes already – this does not appear to be the case as the buildings are agriculture in nature, the development may lead to further similar developments in the future to the detriment of the landscape.	17.08.12
Adjacent to	WDC	Winery, tractor	12/06767/F	<b>Approved –</b>	Object – the proposal is for a very large building	10.09.12

Capel Pump North, Marlow	Cillia, Lane Little		store, access and gates	UL	<b>14.11.12</b>	with an accompanying tractor store, new access and gates and enclosure using close board fencing which would have a detrimental impact on the AONB. The application lacks detail in connection with the impacts of light and noise. Alternative locations should have been considered. The lighting and noise generated would have a detrimental impact on tranquillity. No detail is given for what the implications of temporary and seasonal workers would be.	
Westhorpe Park, Marlow	Little	WDC	Running track with associated development including floodlights	12/06884/R 9FUL	Pending	Object – the proximity of the site to the Chilterns AONB has not been addressed in any of the supporting documents (design and access statement, planning statement, landscape and visual assessment). There are no viewpoints within the AONB for the LVA, and though there are viewpoints for the lighting assessment these are all at low heights when there are footpaths that are much higher that could have been assessed. The AONB is a very sensitive receptor and the use of the proposed floodlights would have a detrimental impact on the tranquillity of the AONB and appreciation of its special qualities. The proposal is considered to be contrary to planning policy and the AONB Management Plan.	25.09.12
Valentine Farm, Shogmoor Lane, Skirmett		WDC	Demolition of agricultural and equestrian buildings and erect private equestrian development with riding area, stables, tack rooms, other	12/07127/F UL	Pending	Object - The Board notes that the current application has arisen after a number of minor changes were made to a previous application that was withdrawn (11/06837/FUL). The Board had objected to the previous planning application. The current application is very similar in scale and design to the previous proposal, and, though changes have been made, the Board does not consider that these have addressed the concerns previously expressed. As the proposal is very	24.10.12

		rooms, and walker	office horse		<p>similar in design, scale and bulk to the previous application the Board therefore objects to the current planning application for the following reasons: The Board would have preferred to see the re-use of the existing buildings if at all possible. This does not appear to have been considered in any depth as part of the application. The Board considers that the design does not accord with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide. The Board has concerns about the scale and mass of the buildings and their impacts on the landscape. This would be a very large development apparently for the personal use of one family. The riding arena and stables would appear as a single, very large building when viewed from both the north and east. These elevations and roofscapes would be particularly dominant in the landscape, especially when this is the most visually accessible part of the site, because it is immediately adjacent to the footpath. The height and unrelieved rooflines are out of keeping with the village. Any hedge and tree planting that has been proposed may possibly help but could not soften the impact of the height of the roof or its dull uniform profile. It is noted that the planting proposal would appear to seek to hide the development from as many views as possible. This could not be achieved, even if it were desirable, for a significant number of years. It is considered that the bulk of the arena and stable building could be lessened by reducing their height, sub-dividing the walls and roofs in order to produce three buildings rather than one (but on a footprint that is not greater than that proposed), and with the facades having more door and window openings (not just blind openings). Other ways of reducing the</p>	
--	--	-------------------------	-----------------	--	--	--

				<p>apparent mass include expressing structural elements on the exterior, overhanging eaves (much greater than at present) and the use of dark-coloured and non-reflective roofs (which is quite feasible in this case). Materials should be traditional, however, the application form states that these are 'to be agreed'. The Board considers that it is vitally important that these are detailed from the outset as the use of certain materials may help to lessen the impact. With no real detail it is not possible to be sure what the impact would be. Bricks are specifically mentioned, these should be locally produced and their use should accord with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Brick supplementary technical note. Roofs should be clad in a non-reflective and textured material in order to allow weathering to take place, and any wooden cladding should be dark in colour. The application mentions cutting in of the arena. The excavation required to bring this about 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. If the Council is considering approval of the planning application, it is considered particularly important to try and reduce the potential impact of the proposal on the landscape. In addition to changes in the roofs and facades, sensitive planting of small clumps of standard trees at the corners and along the longer facades may, in the longer term, provide some means of mitigating any remaining ugly roof lines and dominant walls, but that would be many years</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p>away and may not be satisfactorily achieved. Enforceable conditions must be placed on any permission to avoid the proposed facility becoming a large scale commercial operation. As it is, it is a very large development for the personal use of one family. Therefore, if given, any planning permission should be personal to the owners and a planning obligation entered into in order to ensure that it remains a private facility. The applicant has said that the proposal is for one family's private use in the documents that accompany the application so this should not be a problem. The Board is also concerned about urbanisation arising from this proposal, especially that caused by light pollution. The best way to ensure that this does not happen would be by having no lighting. This is probably impractical, therefore strict conditions would be required if permission is granted in order to ensure that light pollution, particularly that caused by floodlighting, would not be an issue and that any lighting proposed should be switched off when not in use (the use of controllers would help in this instance). Finally, the Board is concerned about hedge and tree planting immediately adjacent to The Chiltern Way. The buildings that are part of the proposal will themselves reduce the quality of experience and views for walkers. However, any additional planting along the edge of the site and next to the footpath may further affect the experience and thus deter people from using the route. The impacts on this promoted route need to be very carefully considered.</p>	
Valentine Farm, Shogmoor	WDC	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of	12/07129/F UL	Pending	Object - The design of the replacement dwelling generally appears to accord with the principles outlined in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide	24.10.12

Lane, Skirmett		3 bed dwelling with basement and loft and change of agricultural occupancy condition to incorporate equestrian use			<p>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 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</p>	
----------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

					unless this has changed in the intervening period it should remain in place.	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--