



Planning Committee

10.00 a.m. Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015  
The Chilterns Conservation Board office,  
90 Station Road, Chinnor, OX39 4HA

Agenda

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Election of Chairman                                      | 10:00 – 10:05 |
| 2. Apologies   | 10.05 – 10.07 |
| 3. Declarations of Interest                                  | 10.07 – 10.09 |
| 4. Minutes of Previous Meeting                               | 10.09 – 10.15 |
| 5. Matters Arising   | 10.15 – 10.20 |
| 6. Public Question Time                                      | 10.20 – 10.25 |
| 7. HS2 update  | 10:25 – 10:30 |
| 8. Development Plans responses – update                      | 10.30 – 10.40 |
| 9. Planning Applications – update                            | 10.40 – 10.50 |
| 10. CCB's planning function & Committee working arrangements | 10.50 – 11.10 |
| 11. Exercise on Molins site at Saunderton                    | 11:10 – 11:45 |
| 12. Pre-application presentation on Newnham Manor site       | 11:45 – 12:20 |
| 13. Any urgent business                                      | 12.20 – 12.25 |
| 14. Date of Next and Future Meetings                         | 12.25 – 12.30 |

Next meeting: **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015** at **The Chilterns Conservation Board Office, 90 Station Road, Chinnor, OX39 4HA**

**Future meetings: Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015.**

**Item 1        Election of Chairman**

**Author:**                                Lucy Murfett Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:**        Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:**                        Special allowance of £790 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 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015). 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 take 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 3        Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**Author:**                                Lucy Murfett Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:**        Chilterns Conservation Board

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

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

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

**Background**

1. The draft minutes from the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 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 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015.**

Appendix 1

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICE, STATION ROAD, CHINNOR, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.45 PM**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Appointing Body</b>
<b>Appointed by Local Authorities</b>	
Cllr David Collins	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Chris Richards	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Jeremy Ryman	Chiltern District Council
<b>Appointed by the Secretary of State</b>	
Helen Tuffs	Secretary of State, Chair
Elizabeth Wilson	Secretary of State
<b>Elected by Parish Councils</b>	
Cllr Tony Penn	Buckinghamshire
Cllr Barbara Wallis	Buckinghamshire
<b>Others present-</b>	
Colin White	CCB Planning Officer
<b>Others</b>	
Deirdre Hansen	Minute taker

It was noted that the Committee had received the notification of the Planning Officer's intention to leave the Board at Easter.

**182. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr David Barnard (North Herts District Council) and Gill Gowing (Secretary of State).

**183. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **184. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **185. Matters Arising from the minutes**

Re 179. The Planning Officer was asked for updates on mobile phone “not spots” in the Chilterns AONB. There were none to report.

#### **186. Public Question time**

No members of the public were present.

#### **187. Arrangements for minute taking of the Committee**

The Planning Officer reported that the contract for the minute-taker for the Planning Committee had not been reviewed since 2012. A new hourly rate was proposed to reflect the increases in allowances and pay for Board Members and staff and this was agreed.

- 1. The Committee APPROVED the revisions to the hourly rate and contract for the minute-taker for the Planning Committee and RECOMMENDED that the matter should also be considered as part of the current review of the Board.**

#### **188. 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.

1. The House of Commons Select Committee is continuing to hear petitions. It is expected to adjourn on the 12<sup>th</sup> March and will hear no further petitions until after the General Election.
2. Following the election, Select Committee members will have to be appointed and this will put further delays on the Board’s likely appearance. The earliest date for petitions from Buckinghamshire to be heard is the end of May 2015.
3. The Board continues to work on preparing evidence for an appearance before the Select Committee and awaits being notified of when that appearance may take place.
4. The Board has reconvened the HS2 Working Group which will meet monthly.
5. The HS2 Working Group was advised of work underway in collaboration with or led by others which are related to the Board’s petitioning points. These included

the provision of Green Bridges, a Buckinghamshire Landscape Principles Study and a Community and Environment Fund.

6. Meetings between Board staff members and HS2 are ongoing, but no issues have been satisfactorily resolved. A further meeting will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> February.
7. The Board's key petitioning point is the request for a fully bored tunnel under the whole of the AONB. Chiltern District Council and others have previously commissioned a report. The Board contributes to this work, both financially and with staff time. Further work is being done on tunnel options and a further report has been prepared.
8. The Board will be represented by Ray Payne in connection with the fully bored tunnel. Other witnesses will be required for other petitioning points and each issue will require a proof of evidence.
9. The Board's previous position statement on mitigation was discussed and approved at the recent Board meeting.
10. The Board continues to attend local area meetings which are being organised by Buckinghamshire County Council.

The Committee discussed the above points and some of the wider HS2 issues, including the public's engagement with the issues.

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

**189. AONB Management Plan Review.**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee of the latest developments in connection with the 2014-2019 Management Plan.

1. Local planning authorities have been requested to endorse the Management Plan as a material consideration.
2. Thus far only Chiltern District Council has endorsed the Management Plan. All local authority Board Members were asked to ensure their own Councils endorse the Management Plan.
3. The Committee was asked to continue to promote the Management Plan and to direct those interested to the relevant pages on the AONB web site.
4. The Committee discussed the matter of local authority endorsement of the Management Plan and requested that the Planning Officer provide a summary document for local authority Members to use in their discussions with their local authorities. The Planning Officer was also asked to provide a list of those local authorities that had as yet not responded and to chase up those local authorities that have not endorsed the Management Plan yet.

**1. The Committee AGREED that the Planning Officer and Members should ensure that all local authorities within the Chilterns endorse the 2014-19 AONB Management Plan.**

## **2. The Committee AGREED to continue to promote the Management Plan.**

### **190. Events**

The Planning Officer informed the Committee of the forthcoming events and sought approval of the details of those:

#### Forthcoming events:

1. The next Planning Forum will take place in June 2015. The preferred date and time is 2.00-4.30pm on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015. Dacorum Borough Council has offered to host. Topics can be chosen closer to the time.
2. Arrangements for the annual Chilterns Building Design Awards 2015 are in place. Promotion has taken place and entries should be received by 1<sup>st</sup> March. The judging panel will be involved in a sieving exercise on the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Shortlisted entries will be visited on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May and the awards ceremony will take place on the evening of the 17<sup>th</sup> June.
3. The judging panel includes Gill Gowing as the Board's representative along with Richard Wheeler (National Trust), Brian Jones (architect of the 2014 overall winner) and two members of the Chiltern Society (Jenny Habib and Charles Firth).
4. After the Planning Officer's departure staff at the Board will need to organise the Ceremony. Help could be sought from the Chiltern Society.
5. AONB Planning Conference 2015: the Planning Conference normally takes place in early October, if as part of the ongoing management review; the Board decided that the Conference should continue, arrangements will need to be put in place later in the year. The management review gives scope for a review of the conference. The feedback from last year's conference was that the format was acceptable. A date for the conference is normally set in May and organisation follows from there, with any final issues addressed in September.

- 1. The Committee NOTED that the next Planning Forum will take place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 though this may be subject to review dependent on the Planning Officer's replacement being in post.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED the arrangements for the Buildings Design Awards 2015.**

- 3. The Committee NOTED the timelines given, should the Board decide to continue with a Planning Conference in October 2015, though this may be subject to postponement to 2016 dependent on the ongoing Management Review.**

### **191. Development Plan Responses**

The Planning Officer informed and sought approval from the Committee of the response that has been sent in and made under delegated powers in connection with the public consultation exercise on the following development plan document: Central Bedfordshire Council North Luton Framework Plan.

It was brought to the Committee's attention that the Framework Plan is a significant piece of work, but that the Board considers it premature pending the outcome of any examination of the Development Strategy. The Committee discussed the response already made and expressed the wish that conversations with the Council should be continued to ensure representations are made on the likely impact on the AONB.

The Planning Officer was commended and thanked for his excellent work on this Framework Plan.

- 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 document as detailed above.**

### **192. Planning Applications Update**

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

1. Since April this year the Board has been consulted on 93 applications and has responded to all of these. This has resulted in 14 formal representations. For 2014/15 the number of applications decided in line with the Board's comments stands at 57%.
2. It was noted that the recent visit to Highlands Farm near Henley-on-Thames and two other Crest Nicholson developments was considered by Members to have been most useful. The Planning Officer thanked Members for their input to the visits.
3. The Committee briefly discussed whether a job description for new Members joining the Planning Committee should be prepared and the possible role of the Planning Committee. It was considered that Members should feed their

views on the matter through the current Management Review being undertaken.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses made in connection with the applications as listed in Appendix 2.**
  
- 2. The Committee AGREED to provide the Acting Chief Officer with thoughts about the role of the Committee and its Members.**

**193. Urgent Business:**

1. The Planning Officer was asked about the Board's involvement with the Luton and Heathrow airport expansions. He explained the Board's continued engagement with NATS and the airports. Once a formal proposal has been made, the Board will comment.
2. The Chair noted that this would be Colin White's last meeting as Planning Officer at the Planning Committee meeting. He is leaving the Board at Easter. The Chair wished Colin all the best in his future enterprise and thanked him for his contributions to the Board's work and all that he has done for the Committee in his role as Planning Officer.
3. The Chair also commented that this would be Barbara Wallis's last meeting and thanked her for all her excellent work for the Planning Committee.

**194. Date of the next meeting Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at the Lodge, 90 Station Road, Chinnor OX39 4HA.**

**195. Future meetings:**

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

**The Chairman.....**

**Date.....**



**Item 8      Development Plans Responses****Author:** Colin White/ Lucy Murfett 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: **Chiltern District Council** Local Plan 2014-2036 Initial Consultation (Regulation 18); Pitstone Parish Council; **Pitstone Parish Council** Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping letter; **Buckinghamshire County Council** replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan; **South Oxfordshire District Council** Local Plan 2031 Refined Options; **South Buckinghamshire District Council** Local Plan 2014-2036 Initial Consultation (Regulation 18); **Chinnor Neighbourhood Plan** area designation; **Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan** pre-submission draft plan; and **Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan** pre-submission draft plan and SEA

**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee about, and seek approval of, the response that has been made under delegated powers in connection with the development plan document 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.

**Chiltern District Council Local Plan 2014-2036 Initial Consultation (Regulation 18)**

1. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this initial consultation on the Council's Local Plan to 2036.
2. The Board recognises that the current consultation is seeking views about what the scope of the Local Plan should be, and what issues it should address in the period to 2036.
3. In accordance with their statutory duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act 2000), the Board considers that the Council should include in the new Local Plan, relevant sections of the vision, objectives and policies which seek to fulfil the Council's duty to have regard to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB. The purpose of the Chilterns AONB is the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area. The Board requests that a specific policy should be included which seeks the conservation

- and enhancement of the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB.
4. The Board considers that wherever possible the Council should seek to identify proposals for development that are located outside, and do not affect the setting or appreciation of, the Chilterns AONB. If development proposals do come forward within, or affecting the setting of the AONB, the Board considers that these should in themselves meet the purpose of the AONB as stated above. If such proposals do emerge, the Board also considers that these should invariably be small in scale and to meet identified needs. There is a requirement to also comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 115 and 116 in particular).
  5. The Board would welcome within the Local Plan inclusion of references to the need to comply with the Board's advice as contained in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and supplementary technical notes on local building materials (flint, brick and roofing materials) and the 'Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns' publication. The statutory Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 should also be suitably referenced. The Board would also welcome references to the Position Statements that it has prepared. Thus far Position Statements have been prepared in connection with development affecting the setting of the AONB and renewable energy. Further Position Statements will be prepared in the future.
  6. The Board is particularly concerned about developments that may affect the setting of the AONB and would welcome greater protection being given to such areas through Local Plan policies. This may be achieved by restricting development or by identifying areas that, though not of AONB landscape quality, may serve a purpose in protecting the setting of the AONB.

#### **Pitstone Parish Council Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping letter**

7. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping letter.
8. Pitstone Parish falls partly within the nationally designated Chilterns AONB and the Board considers that the importance of the AONB should be stressed as part of the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. As detailed above, the Parish Council has a statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of the AONB and this ought to be reflected in the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan.
9. When making reference to the Chilterns AONB the correct nomenclature should be used. AONB stands for 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and the terms should be used consistently.
10. The Board considers that it would be appropriate to include policies dealing with: the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB; the need to ensure that any development in the setting of the Chilterns AONB takes account of the likely impacts on the AONB; the requirement for the best design and use of appropriate building materials throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area (but particularly in connection with any development within the AONB and

its setting); the need to undertake landscape and visual impact assessments for relevant proposals (particularly those in the Chilterns AONB and its setting); the inclusion of a significant proportion of any housing for identified local needs; the requirement that infrastructure that results from any proposed development is provided in a timely manner, and the provision of networks of accessible green space, whether arising from new developments or not.

11. The Board considers that it is necessary to scope in the following documents: the National Planning Policy Framework (particularly paragraphs 115 and 116 which are applicable to AONBs); the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019; the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials (flint, brick and roofing materials); the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns; the Board's Position Statements on development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB and renewable energy; the Chilterns Historic Landscape Character Assessment and any other landscape character assessments (in particular the Countryside Commission work from 1992 for the Chilterns).
12. As stated the Board considers that various documents should be fully scoped. These include the following, most of which are available from the Board (free where available online):
  - the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 'A Framework for Action' (£20.00 inclusive of postage and packing);
  - the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide (£20.00 inclusive of postage and packing);
  - the Buildings Design Guide Supplementary Technical Notes dealing with Flint, Brick and Roofing Materials (£14.00 each inclusive of postage and packing), and
  - the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns (£14.00 inclusive of postage and packing)
  - the Board's Position Statements on development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB and renewable energy (available free of charge from the Chilterns AONB website – see <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation-board/planning-development/position-statements.html>)
  - The Making of the Chilterns Landscape (Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project Summary, £10.00 inclusive of postage and packing)
  - The Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project report is available as a download from the Chilterns AONB website – see [http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/AboutTheChilterns/HistoricEnvironment/The\\_Changing\\_Landscape\\_of\\_the\\_Chilterns.pdf](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/AboutTheChilterns/HistoricEnvironment/The_Changing_Landscape_of_the_Chilterns.pdf)
  - In addition, the 1992 Countryside Commission landscape assessment of the Chilterns ('The Chilterns Landscape', ISBN 0 86170 351 0, CCP 392 available from Natural England) and any other landscape character assessment work that has been undertaken are also considered to be relevant. The Board does not hold stocks of these.

13. The Board is willing to make those documents that it holds copies of available at the costs stipulated.

### **Buckinghamshire County Council replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan**

14. The Board considers that any emerging Local Plan should include a policy which both seeks the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and ensures that any proposals take full account of the likely implications for the setting of this nationally protected landscape. This would ensure that the Local Plan complied with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) and would demonstrate that the Council is seeking to comply with its duties in relation to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB (Section 85 of the CRoW Act).

### **South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2031 Refined Options**

15. The Board considers that the vision for the Local Plan should 'conserved and enhanced the natural beauty and character of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs' rather than 'preserved the natural beauty and character of areas such as the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs'. This would ensure that the Plan complied with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) and would demonstrate that the Council is seeking to comply with its duties in relation to the purpose of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs (Section 85 of the CRoW Act).
16. The Board requests that, when referring to the AONBs, the text of the Local Plan states 'conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONBs', in order to comply with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act).
17. The Board supports neither of the shortlisted sites for Crowmarsh Gifford (CRO6 and CRO7) and considers that other sites outside and not affecting the Chilterns AONB should be identified and developed before sites within the Chilterns AONB are proposed. The Board considers that the development of these sites would have a detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and would be contrary to the NPPF and the statutory AONB Management Plan.
18. The Board objects to the possible allocations at Goring, particularly GOR1 and GOR11, as their development would be most unlikely to lead to the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns AONB. In this instance, due to the significant constraints in place, the Board considers that it would be appropriate for the Council to look for a much-reduced level of housing growth which would be more likely to be met without being in conflict with the purpose of the Chilterns AONB.
19. The Board objects to the possible allocations at Nettlebed as their development would be most unlikely to lead to the conservation and enhancement of the

- Chilterns AONB. In this instance, due to the significant constraints in place and the fact that Nettlebed is a fundamentally unsustainable location for such growth, the Board considers that it would be appropriate for the Council to look for a much-reduced level of housing growth which would be more likely to be met without being in conflict with the purpose of the Chilterns AONB.
20. The Board does not support the possibility of allowing greater flexibility for housing provision in smaller and other villages as this would be likely to lead to increased pressure on the landscape and character of the AONBs within the District.
  21. The Board does not support the regularisation or permanent permission for the Gypsy and Traveller pitches at Newlands, Platt Lane, Northend as it considers that this would be contrary to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB.
  22. The Board considers that the Local Plan should include a policy which both seeks the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONBs and ensures that any proposals take full account of the likely implications for the setting of these nationally protected landscapes. This would ensure that the Local Plan complied with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) and would demonstrate that the Council is seeking to comply with its duties in relation to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB (Section 85 of the CRoW Act).

### **South Buckinghamshire District Council Local Plan 2014-2036 Initial Consultation (Regulation 18)**

23. The Board considers that the Local Plan should include a vision that means the Council will have 'conserved and enhanced the natural beauty and character of the Chilterns AONB'. This would ensure that the Local Plan complied with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) and would demonstrate that the Council is seeking to comply with its duties in relation to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB (Section 85 of the CRoW Act).
24. The Board requests that, when referring to the AONB, the text of the Local Plan states 'conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB', in order to comply with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the CRoW Act.
25. The Board considers that the Local Plan should include a policy which both seeks the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB and ensures that any proposals take full account of the likely implications for the setting of this nationally protected landscape. This would ensure that the Local Plan complied with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the CRoW Act and would demonstrate that the Council is seeking to comply with its duties in relation to the purpose of the Chilterns AONB (Section 85 of the CRoW Act).

26. In addition, should the Council be considering looking to the AONB for a proportion of its housing growth, any new development should meet the purpose of the AONB. The purpose of the AONB is established in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and is 'the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area'. In addition, the NPPF and the statutory Chilterns AONB Management Plan should also be complied with.

### **Chinnor Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation**

27. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Chinnor neighbourhood area. The Chilterns Conservation Board has no comments to make on the appropriateness of this boundary for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. We note that part of the proposed neighbourhood area (south of the Ridgeway) falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the area that is not designated AONB forms part of the setting of the Chilterns AONB.
28. At this initial stage, we would like to offer advice to the neighbourhood plan group about the purposes of AONB designation and the government policies that apply here. As a protected landscape, of equivalent planning status to National Parks, great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Government policy set out in paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework is that:

*"Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

- *the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
  - *the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
  - *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated."*
29. The Chinnor Neighbourhood Plan needs to have regard to national policy and be in general conformity with the strategic policies in South Oxfordshire District Council's local plans, as these form basic conditions against which neighbourhood plans are tested at examination.

30. The Chilterns Conservation Board will wish to stay involved and assist in the future with plan proposals as they develop, and comment on planning applications as they are submitted on proposed allocated sites, to ensure that full and proper account is taken of the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. For more information and advice please contact the Chilterns Conservation Board at [planning@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:planning@chilternsaonb.org). We wish Chinnor Parish Council all the best for the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Draft Plan**

31. The Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan pre-submission draft.
32. Sonning Common is a larger village which sits within the Chilterns AONB on three sides (north, west and east). As a protected landscape, of equivalent planning status to National Parks, great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Government policy set out in paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework is that:
- “Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*
- *the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
  - *the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
  - *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.”*
33. The tests in these three bullet points are set out and a justification is provided at page 35 of the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan, but the important precursor text *“Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of...”* has been omitted and should be added.
34. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to have regard to national policy and be in general conformity with the strategic policies in South Oxfordshire District Council's local plan, as these form basic conditions against which neighbourhood plans are tested at examination.
35. The starting principle for housing distribution is that there should be no major development within the AONB, especially given the availability of alternative sites

- not in the AONB to the south of the village. Currently, at a proposed 52 homes, SON2 is allocated for major development in the AONB.
36. The densities of some of the other proposed allocations appear low, raising the questions of whether land is being used efficiently and whether land in the AONB is being allocated needlessly.
  37. The draft Landscape Study of the Sonning SHLAA sites commissioned by SODC differs from the Potterton Associates Ltd report in some of its conclusions. It recommends, on landscape and visual grounds, that a reduced area for development is allocated for SON2, utilising only the south-eastern portion of the site. The Board recommends that if SON2 is taken forward for allocation, the reduced area should be followed in the submission plan and demarcated on a plan. The policy should require a substantial green infrastructure link and landscape buffer to be created between open landscape of the AONB and the village edge.
  38. Other sites, while not in the AONB, form part of the setting of the Chilterns AONB and have a reduced capacity for development eg SON6 and SON9, which does appear to have been taken on board in the proposed allocated numbers. The Board has produced advice in a position statement 'Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB' to which reference could usefully be added in the Neighbourhood Plan:  
[http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/Chilterns%20AONB%20setting%20position%20statement%20adopted%20June%202011%20\(Rov%201\).pdf](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/Chilterns%20AONB%20setting%20position%20statement%20adopted%20June%202011%20(Rov%201).pdf)
  39. To ensure appropriate design and implementation at later stages, reference could also be made to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019, both available at [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org).
  40. Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan policy ENV1a: Protecting the AONB states "*To conserve and enhance the land designated as AONB.*" This is not a sentence and is not worded as a development plan policy, which should indicate what is required for development to be acceptable. The policy wording on AONBs must have regard to the NPPF and be in general conformity with South Oxfordshire's local plan policies, and ensure compliance with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
  41. Regarding the proposed allocations of SON2/3, the Board recognises that providing improved recreational facilities is an ambition of the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan working group, and that the village community is set to grow with the housing allocations. Fostering the economic and social wellbeing of local AONB communities is a part of the remit of Conservation Boards. However it does not have the same weight as main purposes of a) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty, and b) increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty, and where there is a conflict between a) and b), greater weight should be attached to a).

42. The Board wishes you well in the finalisation of your plan for submission and examination by an independent Examiner.

### **Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Draft Plan and SEA**

43. The Board is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Pre-Submission Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment Report.

#### Comments on the Pre-Submission Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan

44. The Board welcomes your community's decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan to shape how your village will change over the coming years, and the opportunity this provides to ensure this is done in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the national protected landscape that is the Chilterns AONB.
45. Some nomenclature needs tidying up, for instance referring to the correct name of Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (para 1.15)
46. Under the 'Landscape' heading there is no mention of the Chilterns AONB. We suggest adding a paragraph at 1.26 about the Chilterns AONB, which is a higher level designation than the Area of Attractive Landscape currently discussed in this section. Plan F 'Pitstone Landscape' should be accompanied by explanation of the Landscape Character Areas (information source etc.)
47. In focussing its policies and interest on Pitstone village, the plan makes very little reference to the AONB, and no reference to it at all in the policies. This is remiss because the AONB covers a significant portion of the designated neighbourhood area covered by the plan. The Board considers that policies could be added dealing with:
  - the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB;
  - the need to ensure that any development in the setting of the Chilterns AONB takes account of the likely impacts on the AONB;
  - the requirement for the best design and use of appropriate building materials throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area (but particularly in connection with any development within the AONB and its setting);
  - the need to undertake landscape and visual impact assessments for relevant proposals (particularly those in the Chilterns AONB and its setting);
  - the inclusion of a significant proportion of any housing for identified local needs;
  - the requirement that infrastructure that results from any proposed development is provided in a timely manner, and the provision of networks

of accessible green space, whether arising from new developments or not.

48. The Design principles section policy 6 and para 4.27 should refer specifically to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, and the Buildings Design Guide Supplementary Technical Notes dealing with Flint, Brick and Roofing Materials.
49. Policy 5 on Areas of Special Landscape Value could refer to the importance of the setting of the AONB (see Policy D9 of the Chilterns Management Plan and the Chilterns Conservation Board's Position Statements on Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB).
50. The following documents could usefully be added to the list in Appendix A 'evidence base documents':
  - the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 'A Framework for Action'
  - the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide
  - the Buildings Design Guide Supplementary Technical Notes dealing with Flint, Brick and Roofing Materials,
  - the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns
  - the Chilterns Conservation Board's Position Statements on Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB
  - the Chilterns Conservation Board's Position Statements on Renewable Energy
  - the Making of the Chilterns Landscape (Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project Summary)
  - the Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project report

These documents are available as free downloads from the Chilterns AONB website <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation-board/board-publications.html> or <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation-board/planning-development.html>

#### Comments on the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan SEA

51. In paragraphs 4 and 4.2 of the SEA the terminology needs correcting and disentangling. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation are two different designations, both of which need referring to.
52. Since there is a Special Area of Conservation within the area (The Chilterns Beechwoods SAC - a site protected at a European level), reference should be made to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required by Article 6(3) of the European Habitats Directive.
53. SEA Objective 2: 'Landscape' could usefully refer to the setting of the Chilterns AONB (see Policy D9 of the Chilterns Management Plan and the Chilterns

Conservation Board's Position Statements on Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB).

54. In Section 8 which assesses the impacts of the neighbourhood plan policies, the approach seems simplistic and with just three categories (red-amber-green) and no columns for commentary or proposed mitigation.
55. Para 8.14 "*The only reasonable alternative to the remaining policies would be the choice of having no policy on the matter and relying upon the policies of the development plan*" would be better expressed as "*The only reasonable alternative to the remaining policies would be the choice of having no policy on the matter and relying upon the policies of the Local Plan*", since if successful the neighbourhood plan will become part of the development plan.
56. Appendix A needs correcting to refer to the correct name of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (para 1.15)
57. The mapping in Appendix A is of poor quality, hard to read (eg the pink for Special Area of Conservation is covered up by other shading) and lacks a source.

### **Recommendation**

1. **That the Committee notes and approves the response already made on behalf of the Board in connection with the consultation exercise on the development plan document detailed above.**



**APPENDIX 2**

Location	LPA	Development	Ref. No.	Status	Summary of the Board's Response (please contact the Board for more detailed information if this is required)	Date
Former Molins Site, Haw Lane, Saunderton	WDC	Demolition of all buildings, erection of 212 dwellings with access	15/05250/OUTEA	Pending	<p>The Board writes to object to the application for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal would result in the demolition of all buildings on the site. The Board considers that the north eastern façade of the ballroom building is very important in landscape and built environment terms and every effort should be made to retain this. It was clearly designed to be seen from further afield and is neither the main nor front elevation of the building.</li> <li>• The Board considers that the proposal to include a footway along Haw Lane and the consequent narrowing of the carriageway under the railway bridge would be likely to lead to a significant amount of congestion on Haw Lane at peak times, to the detriment of the environment and users of the Chilterns AONB.</li> <li>• The proposal would result in a very suburban form of development out of keeping with both the local area and the wider Chilterns AONB. It does not appear that the advice contained in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide has been taken into account. The Board would welcome being involved in any future iterations of plans for this site should it remain as part of the Council's thinking in connection with its emerging Local Plan.</li> <li>• The proposal would lead to a wholly unsustainable form of development and a significant amount of car borne commuting. The car will clearly be the principal form of transport and this is exemplified by the proposed provision of about 530 car parking spaces (2.5 spaces per dwelling on average). The unsustainable nature of the proposal is also exemplified by the lack of any kind of community facility, retail or employment opportunities. The vast majority of residents associated with the site</li> </ul>	01.04.15

					<p>would have to travel some distance for all their basic needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board considers that the application is premature and that this site, along with others in Saunderton, should be considered as part of the production of an Area Action Plan.</li> <li>• The Board considers that the proposal is contrary to Core Strategy, Local Plan and AONB Management Plan policies and that, as currently presented, the scheme fails to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB.</li> </ul>	
Whitchurch Primary School	OCC	Erection of a single storey modular style classroom	R3.0028/15		<p>The Chilterns Conservation Board would not raise any detailed comments on this application. The key principle of a primary school extension falls within the scope of our (secondary) purpose within section 87 (2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, namely to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities. With regard to our primary duty under section 85, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape, we are aware that the extension is linked within the existing school building and its complex of structures. We would recommend a finish that helps to soften the appearance within the wider landscape, such as a cladding or green painted finish. This could be acceptably controlled by planning condition. Thank you for consulting the Conservation Board.</p>	10.4.15
Frithsden Copse	DBC	Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Development of Application for 2 number single storey side extensions, 2 number two storey rear extensions, leisure building and animal enclosure within Garden	4/01284/15 /LDP		<p>The Chilterns Conservation Board is aware of this current application and would wish to make representations within the scope of our statutory remit. The Board wishes to raise OBJECTION to this application on the basis that, in summary, the application for a Certificate of Lawfulness must fail when regard is given to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) and that a planning application would be required. Further, that we understand works have started, which is concerning in light of the fact that the Certificate cannot be granted and indeed any subsequent planning application would be contrary to saved Local Plan policies 97 (AONB) and 22 (extensions to dwellings in the rural area) and the principal duty in policy and law to conserve the beauty of the AONB.</p>	

					<p>Chilterns Conservation Board Representations:</p> <p>The Certificate of Lawfulness application, we submit, is outside the GPDO and we understand some works have already commenced on site. The application form (at 8) assumes, compliance with permitted development rights and the volume and location tolerances at Schedule 2 of the 1995 GPDO. The consolidated 2015 Order, which comes into force on 15th April 2015, does not affect the tolerances as set out in Schedule 2. As you will be aware, the AONB status of this location and its surroundings, establishes 'designated area' status under Article 1(5) of the 1995 Order (to become Article 2(3) and this affects the criteria that apply to domestic permitted development.</p> <p>In this application, the totality of what is proposed falls within a designated area (the Chilterns AONB) and we would be grateful if the Local Planning Authority could examine and apply the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule 2 Part 1 Class A, Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, at Article 2 (b) of the Order establishes that in an AONB development is not permitted if (b) the enlarged part of the dwellinghouse would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwellinghouse; or (c) the enlarged part of the dwellinghouse would have more than a single storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwellinghouse.</li> <li>• Schedule 2 Part 1 Class E, Buildings Incidental establishes that land within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse which is within (a) an area of outstanding natural beauty; (b) the Broads; (c) a National Park; or d) a World Heritage Site, development is not permitted by Class E if the total area of ground covered by buildings, enclosures, pools and containers situated more than 20 metres from any wall of the dwellinghouse would exceed 10 square metres. E.3 also establishes that In the case of any land within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse which is article 2(3) land, development is not permitted by Class E if any part of the building, enclosure, pool or container would be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation of the dwellinghouse and the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.</li> </ul>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

				<p>It is difficult to ascertain the exact volume figures here as, ordinarily, these would be contained within a Design and Access Statement as would support a planning application. We accepted the Local Planning Authority will seek to reassure themselves on this point before a decision is issued.</p> <p>With some works already commenced we would make the point here that the application of Local Plan saved policies 97 and 22 from the Dacorum Local Plan 1991 – 2011, would on planning merits find these proposals to be unacceptable. Criterion (e) of Policy 22 sets out a well adopted and consistently applied of 150% tolerances of the floor area of the original dwelling. Paragraph 22.1 of supporting text is clear that ‘very large extensions or poorly designed and located ones, individually collectively or cumulatively, would damage the character of the countryside and contradict policies of restraint on general buildings’. The Chilterns Conservation Board would urge a dialogue with the applicant, to avoid a long running potential enforcement action. We have come to the view that the Certificate as applied for should not be granted unless we have misunderstood the General Permitted Development Order. Further, that any subsequent planning application based upon what is within this Certificate of Lawfulness application is contrary to the Development Plan and the duty to conserve an AONB as set out in saved Local Plan policy 97, National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 115 – great weight to AONB) and the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act at its section 85 Duty.</p>	
Valentine Farm Shogmoor Lane Skirmett Buckinghamshire RG9 6TD		Demolition of existing house, attached garage, ancillary residential buildings and former equestrian/agricultural buildings and erection of a detached 2 storey 5 bed dwellinghouse with detached		<p>The Board wishes to raise an objection to this application on the basis that, in summary, the proposal does not appropriately fit within the context of the site and is harmful to the duty to conserve the AONB landscape.</p> <p>Chilterns Conservation Board Representations:</p> <p><b>History and Background.</b> The application site has a lengthy history and this is helpfully set out in the submitted planning statement. From a review of this history the Local Planning Authority have consistently upheld the relevant Development</p>	17.04.15

		<p>garage/store and detached leisure building with associated amenity space and restoration and landscaping of former farmyard area</p>			<p>Plan policies that conserve the character and appearance of the Chilterns countryside and the existing context of the village pattern or grain and building styles. The <b>2006</b> planning approvals for a detached 4-bed dwelling (06/05736/FUL) and stables, indoor school, manege (06/05735/FUL), reapplied the agricultural occupancy condition to the dwelling (originally dating to 1968). In the <b>2008</b> refusal of consent for demolition of existing dwelling (08/05904/FUL) and former farm buildings, erection of replacement 5 bed dwelling with associated outbuildings , the LPAs internal landscaping advice was that the <i>'proposal fails to take regard of existing context in respect of village pattern – grain – building styles'</i>. Also that <i>'The argument of a reduced external floor area compared to the last permission is flawed as the previous application aimed to maintain the agricultural / equestrian uses on site'</i>. The dwelling was outside the original residential curtilage and detrimental to the character and appearance of the countryside. Harm was identified here (para 4.10 of officer's report) on what is a prominent site and the development was also considered to encroach closer to the village (para 4.11). The Chilterns Conservation Board made representations to the effect that the application was overdevelopment. The <b>2012</b> (12/07129/FUL) application for demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 1 x 3 bed detached dwelling with basement and loft storage space and detached garage building along with revisions to the agricultural occupancy condition to incorporate equestrian use, was disposed without a decision. The Chilterns Conservation Board made comments with regard to the scale and mass of the equestrian development ((12/07127/FUL) and the 4 storey nature of the residential development and impact of the resulting roof on the wider landscape. The Chilterns Conservation Board supported the agricultural occupancy condition.</p> <p>We understand a Certificate of Lawfulness was granted in 2013 and for a single storey rear extension and two storey</p>
--	--	---	--	--	---

					<p>front extension (13/06585/CLP). The volumes as within permitted development tolerances are shown as appendices to the planning statement.</p> <p>The current application now proposes a 5 bedroom family dwelling of a <i>linear form</i> and <i>well-mannered dwelling</i>, in effect a distinctive house in the landscape. (Design and Access Statement at 3.2 – 3.5). The Planning Statement reports that the 2008 new dwelling application was a substantially larger dwelling and refused as the design scale and form of the proposed dwelling was considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The planning merits of the current scheme are promoted on the basis that there is a considerable reduction in the footprint of development by 70% coverage, with removal of the equine and ancillary buildings and the return of this land to orchard. This is summarised as a <i>'gilt edged opportunity to enhance design quality'</i> and to result in tangible improvements <i>'to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding AONB'</i> and in accordance with the guidance in the NPPF and relevant Development Plan policies. The Planning Statement also postulates that special circumstances may exist here to justify the siting of development outside the original curtilage of the planning unit. Further, that the agricultural restriction is unviable against market conditions.</p> <p>A submitted landscape and visual impact assessment concludes no adverse landscape impacts and negligible effect from 11 viewpoints. The LVIA study reports the nature of the Hambleden Chalk River Valley LCA 13.2 and this includes <i>'an intact, secluded and tranquil landscape with a strong rural character and time depth.....(continues)</i>.</p> <p><b>Representations.</b> The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful to make the following points:</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p><b>Planning Policy.</b> The policy environment here is very clear, with key attention given to L1 (AONB at criterion 1 to conserve scenic beauty and criterion 2 to design in sympathy with the local landscape and locally traditional building styles) and CS 15 (Development within Residential curtilage to avoid intrusion into open character and rural amenities). Saved Local Plan policies seek to prevent a built-up character resulting from development proposals, whilst the AONB policy raises that duty, combined with the NPPF at paragraph 115 and CROW Act section 85, to apply a duty conserve landscape quality.</p> <p><b>Merits.</b> In this application the proposed dwelling is considerably larger than the existing one, notwithstanding the issue surrounding agricultural occupancy control and its rationale. Whilst permitted development rights are clearly material, the planning authority is able to assess a new application as a fresh development management decision and on its merits. The removal of structures (as shown on submitted drawing 13034 – SU 05) provides justification for a ‘<i>tangible</i>’ benefit as put by the applicant’s but this is a numeric calculation and avoids the merits of a new location and scale / form for the proposal, which does not fit with the surrounding context of this site. Photomontages 6 and 10 (as proposed) do illustrate this point in that the form of the building is out of scale and discordant with the wider setting of the landscape and form of the settlement. For this reason the Board cannot conclude that the proposal satisfies Development Plan policy, indeed the reverse and especially so with regard to L1 (1) and (2) and CS15. The point made by the landscape Officer when dealing with the 2008 refusal, as to village pattern – grain and building styles (4.3 to 4.10 of 2008 application Officer’s Report) remains true to this application. Any justification that an exceptional case exists here would require very special circumstances to indicate otherwise and to set aside AONB / curtilage policies under provision of s 38(6) of the Act. Even applying paragraph 14</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of development, specific policies exist here to '<i>indicate development should be restricted</i>' in an AONB location, under provision of footnote 9 of the Framework. The Board would seek that the local planning authority applies these protective policies within this context.</p> <p>Turning to the Chilterns Building Design Guide, this provides much guidance on context and the relationship between settlement patterns and development proposals. Paragraph 3.26 of supporting text, states that '<i>It is important to consider how the scale and form of a proposed new building will affect its visibility in the landscape, and its relationship to nearby buildings. It is essential that the building is designed to fit the site</i>'. Whilst there is a place for the '<i>one-off</i>' design (as is set out on page 29 of the Design Guide) and a role for contemporary and innovative architecture, the Board would not promote that here due to the very sensitive relationship to the wider landscape and the original nature of the farm buildings and their relationship to this site. This is an approach consistent with design guidance in the NPPF and at paragraph 60 (to reinforce local distinctiveness).</p> <p>We cannot find, in the supporting papers, any evidence of marketing or similar testing, to demonstrate that the agricultural occupancy should be lifted or that the unit of occupation is unviable. The original 1968 imposition of the AOC and its 2006 application serves a planning purpose and would require justification to remove.</p> <p>The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to make these points.</p>	
Land to the rear of Chilterns Road Ballinger	CDC	Application for planning permission for Change of Use from agricultural to			<p>The Chilterns Conservation Board have been consulted on the above application. We are aware that the current application has been amended (in respect of both size and location) when compared to an earlier application made in November 2014 and subsequently withdrawn. The Board</p>	1.05.15

		<p>equestrian purposes, erection of building incorporating stables and tack/feed/hay store and laying of hardstanding and Access track</p>			<p>understands the current application to now be a footprint /floor area of some 77 square metres and sited to the north west of the application site. The application is within the AONB and the access is shared with a bridleway and footpath. We see that access has been partially covered by an aggregate / rubble surfacing and, in internal consultation, the County Council's comments here have recommended a widening of the bridleway to 3 metres in places, to allow vehicles to pass pedestrians. BCC notes the point that there is no information in the application that details traffic movement s from the use.</p> <p>The Chilterns Conservation Board would ask that the Local Planning Authority applies the Core Strategy at Policy CS 22 (a) to conserve and enhance special landscape character and the duty in s85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (to similar effect) as well as the policy guidance as applies in 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The State of the Chilterns Report (2012) at its page 9, deals with the area of land managed for equestrian purposes, stating that, 'changes of land from agriculture to equestrian may require planning permission even in cases where there is no additional infrastructure involved. In view of the increased area of land being used for more intensive equestrian use, it remains important that planning authorities ensure that due process is followed for all such proposals'. As a general measure / indicator of impact here, Policy CS 22 measures success (based upon the Chilterns land use survey evidence) as a decrease in the area of land managed for equestrian purposes.</p> <p>This application involves material changes manifest in a new use and building and surfacing to the access track. The Chilterns Design Guide does provide guidance on the assimilation of agricultural / rural buildings into the landscape (at its 4.7) and the need to avoid isolated rural buildings – reduced in scale or bulk and preferably sited in a dip or depression in the landscape (at 4.8).</p> <p>In this application the Board would seek to make the point that any intensification of the use here and any likelihood of greater surface treatment (as would be required in a manege) would not deliver the duty to conserve or enhance</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

				<p>the landscape. Seeking effective control over the use of the access track by seeking to limit the vehicular comings and goings, would be difficult to control and unenforceable as a planning condition. We could not find any detailed information on this matter in the application. The widening of the bridleway, as requested by the County Council, together with surface dressing has the potential to alter the landscape quality and to its detriment.</p> <p>The Board would like to submit these representations as 'comments' to the application. We would ask that the Local Planning Authority applies the legal and policy tests, as set out above and examines the level of use and the nature of future controls over this and their effectiveness. We would conclude that weight must be given to the landscape quality that prevails here. The change of use to equestrian activity, as opposed to grazing, have the potential to effect a longer term change to the landscape. An assessment of these matters will require the Local Planning Authority to come to a view on the way that such external impacts can be effectively controlled and enforced by the planning system.</p>	
Land Adjacent Holly Tree Poultry Far, Askett	WDC	Outline application with all matters reserved for demolition of all buildings and structures and redevelopment to provide up to 152 dwellings and public open space	15/06332/OUT	<p>The details submitted with the planning application have been examined and I write to let you know that the Chilterns Conservation Board OBJECTS to this application, on grounds of (1) visual impact and (2) being an inappropriate speculative application, outside the Development Plan nor scope for its revision.</p> <p>CCB have previously raised objection to the application to the immediate south of this site (objection of 25th June 2014 against reference 14/06162/OUT for 192 dwellings) on grounds of density and visual impact on the views out from Whiteleaf and the point that the applicant's Landscape &amp; Visual Impact Assessment underplayed the impacts on the AONB. We understand this application is now the subject of an appeal against non-determination.</p> <p>We would like to make the following representations:</p> <p><b>(1) Visual Impact</b></p>	19.05.15

					<p>The application site immediately adjoins the boundary of the Chilterns AONB and undoubtedly forms part of the setting of the AONB. The CCB has produced a Position Statement (2011) on Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB<sup>1</sup> to provide guidance to local planning authorities, landowners, developers and other interested parties on planning applications that are outside the AONB boundary but exact an impact upon it. It explains the statutory duty on local authorities under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the statutory purpose of AONBs when coming to decisions or carrying out their activities relating to, or affecting land within these areas. It cites policy CS17 (Environmental Assets) in the Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy as an example of good practice.</p> <p>Both the current application and 14/06162 raise similar issues for the AONB in that they are adjacent to the AONB boundary and are visible from the escarpment. Both schemes are contrary to Wycombe District Council adopted Core Strategy policy CS17 on Environmental Assets:</p> <p><i>“The Council will conserve and improve the environmental assets of the District by requiring: 1. The conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty <b>and its setting</b>”.</i></p> <p>and to Wycombe District Council adopted Core Strategy policy CS6 on Princes Risborough that seeks to:</p> <p><i>‘safeguard the historic core of the town <b>and its Chilterns escarpment setting</b>, reinforcing the town’s distinctive sense of place’.</i></p> <p>and to Wycombe District Council’s Local Plan policy L1:</p> <p><i>‘Development will not be permitted which, although not itself located within the AONB, would have a demonstrably detrimental effect on its special character or appearance.’</i></p> <p>The application site sits at the junction of two National Landscape Character Areas / Bucks Landscape Character</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation-board/planning-development/position-statements.html>

					<p>areas, where the lower lying southern clay vale abuts the escarpment. This geological and topographic change would have been very much in the minds of those who agreed the AONB boundary in 1965. Today, views out from Whiteleaf enjoy a wide vista with development in the foreground and an impressive sweep of rural hinterland. An appreciation of the nationally protected landscape is itself enhanced by this rural context both within and beyond the AONB. The applicant's own assessment of landscape character and visual assessment comes to the conclusion that these impacts are 'moderate – minor' or 'negligible'. The Design and Access Statement (page 18) states that partial views of the site will be obtained from within the AONB but that, 'at a distance of more than 1km the site appears as a small part of an expansive vista and is seen in the context of the existing Monks Risborough / Princes Risborough railway line'. The LVIA at 7.15 considers the impact on the AONB as 'negligible' due to the small scale in relation to the protected landscape and from elevated partial views of the application site the impact would be 'negligible' and 'minor adverse' (10.16 of LVIA). Viewpoint F of the LVIA shows the view from Whiteleaf and paragraph 5.21 – 5.23 of the text deals with this impact. Views from the escarpment and higher vantage points may be glimpsed but they are still harmful because in this location the proposed development is disconnected from the developed area and sits behind a very low density and rural – village location.</p> <p>In this location the addition of 9.13 hectares with 5.27 ha developed, would appear at odds with the low density rural hinterland that predominates here. Setting of the AONB is material and in a recent appeal decision appeal decision under reference APP/G1630/A/14/2222147 at land east of St Margaret's Drive, Alderton, Tewkesbury, an Inspector applied this in protection of the setting of the Cotswolds AONB boundary. Accepting that every site must be considered on its merits but a matter of general application, the Inspector concluded that 'Paragraph 24. The appeal site makes an important contribution to the foreground setting of the AONB and, for the reasons set out above; I consider that the proposed development would be detrimental to its setting. It would result in the loss of what is currently an open, arable field and its replacement with built development and</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>associated human activity. This would have an adverse effect on the rural quality of the landscape adjoining the southern edge of Alderton, increasing the extent of the built-up part of the settlement at the expense of the surrounding open countryside'. A copy of this decision is appended.</p> <p><b>(2). Speculative application outside the plan-making process</b></p> <p>CCB also raises concern as to matters of process. The application made to the immediate south of this site is now the subject of an undecided appeal. The Local Planning Authority is progressing the work done in the Strategic Sites Assessment Studies of February 2014 through the preparation of the new Wycombe Local Plan and a Princes Risborough Town Plan. A statutory body such as the Chilterns Conservation Board would be a consultee to these and would want to consider matters of housing allocation against its primary duty to conserve and enhance the landscape qualities of the AONB. This current speculative application on an unallocated site is contrary to both the existing protective policy framework in Core Strategy policies CS6 and CS17 and saved Local Plan policies L1, C9 and C10 and is outside the scoping of the Strategic Sites Study, falling beyond even the PR3 study area that extends to Longwick Road and Mill Lane. The CCB would be very concerned if a linear / ribbon form of development were to extend here, which would have impacts upon setting.</p> <p>The applicant's planning statement deals with 5 year housing supply and the policy tests set out in paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is clear that the impact of development on the rural landscape is a matter that can fall within the 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' test and we refer to the recent recovered jurisdiction decision by the Secretary of State at Highworth Road, Faringdon (reference APP/V3120/A/13/2210891, dated 19th February 2015) where rural landscape impacts (themselves not AONB landscapes) were given sufficient weight to dismiss the appeal in a case where the Local Planning Authority accepted they did not have</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>a 5 year supply and that the presumption in paragraph 14 was engaged.</p> <p>The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to submit these representations</p>	
London Road East, Amersham	BCC	Waste Transfer Station	CM59/14	Permission granted 27.5.2015	<p>Note: [Colin White objected to revised (second) application on wider implications for AONB. This is all noted in the officer's report for Planning Committee on 27th May at Bucks CC (officer recommended approval). We did not send a fresh objection but said our previous stood and no new comments on amended plans (which did not affect CCB - were some design changes).]</p>	19.05.2015
Arla Dairy, Aston Clinton	BCC	Anaerobic Digestion Plant	CM 78/14		<p>The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) would like to make some representations on the current proposal for an anaerobic digester within and next to the Arla development at Aston Clinton. These representations are set against the key duty established by section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 and also as policy in paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), (that great weight is given), to 'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'.</p> <p>The application is set well away from and outside the boundary of the AONB. CCB have prepared its own supplementary planning guidance dealing with the setting of the boundary and that is a matter we would ask the County Council to consider when this application comes before planning committee, as we sponsor and seek design reassurances that the light spill from external lighting here does not diminish the wider rural dark skies and general setting of this rural hinterland around the boundary. This point is dealt with in the applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (at volume one). We feel this is reasonable to ask due to the nature of the escarpment here, rising dramatically from Wendover Woods and visible in the wider landscape from Coombe Hill. Whilst we have to accept that the backdrop view here would be set within the wider Arla development, it would be unsatisfactory for the further</p>	19.5.2015

					<p>introduction of lighting to be cumulatively harmful, especially noting the siting of the proposal along the northernmost boundary of the wider Arla development. Therefore the CCB would seek that the Planning Authority is reassured that lighting levels and design achieve the very best design outcome and the lowest impact.</p> <p>In response, therefore, the Chilterns Conservation Board would seek that (a) the Planning Committee is assured that any back spill of lighting is of the minimum necessary and that, linked to this, the County Council are assured that the lowest location and luminance is achieved and an expert opinion is sought on the alternatives here. This could be controlled by condition but the County Council must be reassured that the design impact is realistic and achievable. Further, (b) that detailed scrutiny is given to professional standards in the Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (The Institution of Lighting Engineers 2005). This guidance includes the point that It is recommended that Local Planning Authorities specify the following environmental zones for exterior lighting control within their Development Plans (and continues with categories that include) E1: Intrinsically dark landscapes National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, etc and E2: Low district brightness areas Rural, small village, or relatively dark urban locations. The Chilterns Conservation Board would seek that considerable attention is given to this matter as the longer term impacts of cumulative light gain, is potentially of considerable impact. (c) That in the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) we note that viewpoint 18 considers impacts from Wendover Woods. We would propose an additional viewpoint at Coombe Hill (looking outside – beyond the AONB) is also considered and officer’s visit this location. The existing Arla development is apparent from Coombe Hill and within the Chilterns AONB and looking beyond its boundary. This illustrates the point that the development as promoted has potential to result in a cumulative impact which has considerable potential to erode the E1 and E2 classifications, as above. Therefore, the CCB urges very careful consideration of lighting impacts. We seek that full regard is given and careful attention afforded to design impacts. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful for the opportunity to submit these representations.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					We submit these as 'comments' within the protocol of public representations.	
Chiltern Cottage, Woodcote	Rise	SODC	24 Dwellings	P15/S1009 /FUL	<p>The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) has been consulted on the current application and would like to make representations against a background of previously expressed support for and engagement with the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The principle of development is established here for the development of land at the Chiltern Rise Cottage site under WNP01 (southern section) and policy HS3 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The Board notes some material differences between the application site area and the Neighbourhood Plan provisions, notably numbers (24 units in NP and 27 in application), site configuration (NP site being different to application red line) and access (NP states no new access from Reading Road and the application site a roundabout directly onto Reading Road). These are not matters of direct application to our statutory and policy purpose as affects this application but we are aware that the Local Planning Authority will want to reassure itself on these matters. In light of this we would imagine that amendments and further consultations will be forthcoming and we would promote some consideration of design matters (as below) in these further discussions and negotiations.</p> <p>The location of this site is on something of a gateway between the village and the wider rural area and its location within the AONB affords an opportunity, consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), to create locally distinctive design. These aspirations are found in the NP at D1 which seeks local distinctiveness and 'demonstrating they have sought to conserve local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements'. At page 3 the NP takes a holistic view of policy, establishing that the design of development and housing was determined by both views expressed and design in the Core Strategy and consideration of the Chilterns Conservation Board Design Guide and consideration of Building for Life partnership. Table 3.ii Housing Goals includes that new housing reinforces local distinctiveness. SODC Core Strategy CSQ3 on Design promotes high quality design that 'responds positively to and respects the character of the site and its surroundings,</p>	29.5.15

					<p>particularly the historic significance and heritage values of the historic environment, enhancing local distinctiveness and ensuring that new development is of a scale, type and density appropriate to the site and its setting’</p> <p>In the applicant’s Design and Access statement the Board supports the goals (at its 3.1) of seeking high quality, attractive and inspiring buildings which will enhance the quality of the housing stock and with a strong attractive frontage. What we could not find in the Design and Access Statement or in the supporting Planning Statement was an acknowledgement of the Chilterns Buildings Design Guides or Supplementary Technical Notes and perhaps an understanding of how the proposed designs and layouts interpret or have regard here. The design treatment here, consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework at paragraph 58 states that Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area and (continues at bullet 4), ‘decisions should aim to ensure that developments – respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation’. At paragraph 60 the Framework establishes that, ‘planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative (continues)....’it is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness’. In the context of the Chilterns AONB we do not know the extent to which local distinctiveness has been considered because we cannot find any references to necessary CCB Design Guidance. In light of this we would propose that the designer is offered the opportunity to consider such guidance. At this representation the Board would offer more detailed points as follows:</p> <p>(1) The proposed access – roundabout itself presents an urbanising feature at the edge of the village. Looking to the increased flow of traffic movements as a consequence of 24 new dwellings or 40 in total (should the contingency site be required), then the capacity issue could be accommodated with less intrusive design. This overly engineered access opens up immediate views of building A and D and partially</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p>obscured views of building B. The Draffin Associates plan for indicative landscaping (plan 618/2/02) shows supplementary planting and retention of hedgerows. That approach can be combined with an amended access configuration, subject to highways guidance. An access to the Reading Road appears at odds with the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>(2) The site frontage and its apparent impact on the wider context of the village is best understood with regard to the SODC Landscape Character Assessment by Atlantic Consultants, deals with the low density rural settlement that exists here. The applicant's landscape and Visual Impact Assessment shares these objectives, (at its paragraph 5.2) where it establishes that new development should enhance character and distinctiveness and (at its 9.5) where it identifies the key elements here of layout, massing, external finishes and boundary treatments that will integrate the scheme with the local environment. The Board would support an interpretation of that guidance here, so that issues pertinent to local distinctiveness, massing and external finishes are all considered and given due weight.</p> <p>(3) With regard to the above points the Board would ask that amendments are considered to maintain the boundary treatment and rural aspect, to take account of the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, as would apply in the context of a new housing development. We promote consideration of how to better integrate the layout so that it ultimately delivers the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan at D1, to demonstrate both local distinctiveness and rural settlement. The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, for example (at page 24) promotes maximum use of existing trees and landscape features and (at page 25) Identify local landscape and design features which help the building blend in with the surrounding countryside. Paragraph 3.16 reports that 'Historically there was often no clear edge between town and country. The scatter of cottages and the soft interface between the village and surrounding woods and fields would have retained the sense that the village was part of the countryside. This characteristic is being lost as villages have developed in ways which create a hard edge, where they 'turn their backs' on the countryside. Designers and planners should try to</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>avoid the creation of this hard 'edge'. This can be achieved by emphasising the features which create visual links with the surrounding countryside, such as trees, hedges and earthworks. Tall solid fences and walls appear as a considerable barrier and tend to create a hard edge, and in the process restrict views from the property'. Turning to roofs (page 30+ of the Guide) we note a number of features do apply, such as avoiding bargeboards and flat roofed areas. We would promote reference to the guidance on surface dressing and also the supplementary technical note on roofing materials. We support the promotion of shared space within the scheme but would refer to our guidance on how best to dress this surface. It may well be that, compliant with the Neighbourhood Plan, units are reduced from 27 to 24 and this permits further design thinking to promote a low density rural aspect here. The use of materials with inspiration drawn from the Supplementary Technical Notes does not inhibit innovation here but requires the design team to reflect on the scheme in the production of refinement. The frontage treatment is of particular interest and the configuration of the access will have a strong influence on the wider visual impacts of this development.</p> <p>The Board seeks to submit these representations as 'comments' and would promote design amendments, as we have detailed. Whilst this may be construed as an objection, the Board would promote a dialogue to address and overcome these points so that the Neighbourhood Plan is delivered.</p> <p>The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful to make these representations.</p>	
OS parcel 8784 Mill Lane, Monks Risborough	WDC	Outline application for 192 dwellings and open space	14/06162/OUT and Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/K0425/W/15/3011900	Pending	<p>Planning appeal statement:</p> <p>1.1. The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) was established as a Statutory Board in 2004 under provision of the CROW Act 2000 to promote the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the AONB. The application, the subject of this appeal, at Mill Lane, lies outside the AONB boundary, directly abutting the boundary at the north-eastern side of the</p>	8.7.15

					<p>site. CCB considers that this application affects the setting of the AONB, something on which the CCB has an AONB Management Plan policy and on which we have published a Position Statement (appended).</p> <p>1.2. The Board in its previously expressed objection to the planning application raised representations based upon the setting of the AONB on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The application was made in outline with illustrative plans which did not provide sufficient information by which to judge the likely impacts of the proposed development, and</li> <li>(2) Most of the site is visible from Whiteleaf Hill, a key viewpoint within the AONB and the lack of detail results in the LVIA underplaying the visual impact. This together with the 2 and 2 ½ storey development is likely to result in a form of development at odds with the surrounding grain and scale of development, especially so when viewed from higher ground.</li> <li>(3) The density at 35 dwellings per hectare would lead to a wider impact on the surrounding area. This is exacerbated by potential orientation and roofscape design in the northern section of the site.</li> <li>(4) A general lack of detail on design and materials.</li> <li>(5) Insufficient detail on trees and lighting.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.0. Representations on Appeal</b></p> <p><b>2.1. Legislation and Policy Foundations.</b></p> <p>The application site immediately adjoins the boundary of the Chilterns AONB and undoubtedly forms part of the setting of the AONB. The CCB has an AONB Management Plan policy D9 “<i>Full account should be taken of the likely impacts of developments on the setting of the AONB</i>”. To assist with this CCB has produced a Position Statement (2011) on</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p>Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB providing guidance to local planning authorities, landowners, developers and other interested parties on planning applications that are outside the AONB boundary but exact an impact upon it. This explains the statutory duty on local authorities under <b>Section 85</b> of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the statutory purpose of AONBs when coming to decisions or carrying out their activities relating to, or affecting land within these areas. <b>Paragraph 115 of the NPPF</b> accords the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty to AONBs equivalent to National Parks.</p> <p>2.2. The CCB Position Statement on Setting cites policy <b>CS17</b> (Environmental Assets) in the Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy as an example of good practice.</p> <p>2.3. This scheme must be tested against Wycombe District Council’s adopted Core Strategy policy CS17 on Environmental Assets: <i>“The Council will conserve and improve the environmental assets of the District by requiring: (1) The conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting”</i>.</p> <p>and against Wycombe District Council adopted Core Strategy policy <b>CS6</b> on Princes Risborough that seeks to ‘safeguard the historic core of the town and its Chilterns escarpment setting, reinforcing the town’s distinctive sense of place’.</p> <p>and against Wycombe District Council’s Local Plan policy <b>L1</b> ‘Development will not be permitted which, although not itself located within the AONB, would have a demonstrably detrimental effect on its special character or appearance.’</p> <p>2.4. The application site sits at the junction of two National Landscape Character Areas / Bucks Landscape Character areas, where the lower lying southern clay vale abuts the escarpment. This geological and topographic change would have been very much in the minds of those who agreed the AONB boundary in 1965. Today, views out from Whiteleaf enjoy a wide vista with development in the foreground and an impressive sweep of rural hinterland.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p><b>3.0. Urban Fringe Status.</b></p> <p>The design rationale for the submitted application was set out in the applicant’s Design and Access Statement and followed the CABI Building for Life criteria. Criterion 6 asks, <b>(6) Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?</b> Figure 3 of the D&amp;A is taken from the Buckinghamshire (2011) Landscape Character Assessment. Consideration is given to landscape character and topography (page 16) but (at page 18), the sites surroundings are described as ‘urban fringe’ stating that, ‘The urban fringe location of the site offers a very mixed character, and is considered within the assessment to limit the magnitude of effects the development would have. The loss of a relatively small area of farmland characterising the Southern Clay Vale is considered to represent a Minor Adverse effect, while the continuance of the existing urban fringe within this area of the Escarpment and Foothills is considered to have a negligible effect to the landscape character’. The use of the term ‘urban fringe’ is not derived from the Bucks or National Landscape Character Assessment and must therefore, be derived from a judgement that the scattered village settlement at Askett and housing at Monks Risborough constitute urban fringe. CCB do not consider this site constitutes an urban fringe location. Further, we consider that the CABI criterion 6 cannot be fully demonstrated due to the outline nature of the application.</p> <p><b>4.0. Design.</b></p> <p>The D&amp;A statement addresses the context of the site, with reference to local services / facilities but gives little indication of how the design coding/ siting and response to the context (i.e. surroundings) is proposed or promoted. At Section 3 on ‘Evaluation and Evolution’ (Page 28) the site is largely approached from the standpoint that there are few restrictions / constraints upon it, albeit accepting that views of the Chilterns AONB can be retained across the site to provide visual links and that a ‘protected view’ exists along</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>the northern portion due to the direct relationship to Whiteleaf Hill. Public open space is proposed in the North West corner of the site to protect this. Page 30 of the D&amp;A sets out ‘<i>To create an enduring high quality built form, public realm and landscape that sensitively responds to its setting by using best practice contemporary design that is linked to local character. Using local townscape characteristics of block form and street layout; plot arrangement and materials will assist in creating a development that will positively respond to its immediate context, however the style of architecture and methods of construction should be current and in keeping with sustainable design objectives</i>’. As above, we reiterate the point that it is difficult to assess, due to lack of necessary detail, how this proposal responds to local context or has the capacity to respond to local context.</p> <p><b>5.0. Master-plan.</b></p> <p>The illustrative masterplan is seen as a ‘<i>template</i>’ for the future evolution of design thinking and therefore can in no way bind a future submission of a detailed/reserved matters planning application in the event that the principle of development were to be accepted. Page 42 in dealing with scale of development can, therefore, only offer indicative detail. It is stated that the vast majority of buildings will be no more than 2 storey in height (between 7.5 to 8.5m), but with some 2.5 storeys (up to 10.5m) as landmark buildings in key areas. Density (page 51) is reported to be at an average net density of around 35 dwellings per hectare and in the Master-Plan this is considered to be an appropriate density level given the adjacent urban edge of Monks Risborough. Figure 14 Green Infrastructure Plan shows planting at the periphery as well as open space within the development. The applicant’s submitted Planning Statement (at 6.3) calls this ‘<i>robust</i>’ green infrastructure. It is difficult to assess fully the design details of the scheme, as may be anticipated in an outline application of this nature. The ultimate evaluation of the design merits in the D&amp;A under the Building for Life criteria states, ‘<b>Evaluation:</b> <i>The scheme exploits the existing landscape and topography by retaining the existing boundary planting where possible and enhancing it where practicable. Mature trees at the boundary will also be retained</i>’. This is</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>difficult to understand in light of the paucity of information put here. The Chilterns Conservation Board cannot fully assess the design and layout implications but on the basis of what will be before the Planning Inspector, we have concluded that the density and form (with 2 ½ storey elements) will appear incongruous in the landscape as viewed from within the AONB and, therefore, is detrimental. From Whiteleaf Hill we submit that the development within Monks Risborough and Askett is not viewed as urban fringe.</p> <p><b>6.0. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and relationship to AONB.</b></p> <p>The applicant’s Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment underplays the relationship when viewed from Whiteleaf Hill and elevated position within the AONB escarpment. It is accepted and rightly so that the GLVIA 3<sup>rd</sup> edition methodology allows for ‘<i>professional judgement</i>’ even if much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements (paragraph 2.23 of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition). Assessment of impacts will include matters of perception and these, in our submissions, include visitors to the landscape within the Chilterns. We do not contest the reporting of LCAs and the attribution of landscape sensitivity to the Chilterns, nor the point that the site is outside the AONB and falls within LCA 8.13 – Longwick Vale. What we do submit is that the views within the AONB are affected to a higher level of impact that that given in the LVIA. At Whiteleaf (4.24 + 4.25 of the LVIA) and at viewpoint M, the views to the north-west are seen as for ‘<i>PROW users and visitors to the AONB are of <b>High sensitivity</b></i>’. This chimes with the fact that AONBs were established for public benefit and where the landscape is crisscrossed by public rights of way, the sensitivity of those views will carry authority in any assessment. At paragraph 2.29 of the applicant’s Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it is reported that the GLVIA third edition at its para 5.46 notes that there can be a complex relationship between the value attached to landscape receptors and their susceptibility to change and comments that, ‘<i>As an example a nationally valued landscape does not automatically have a high susceptibility to all types of change</i>’. We would submit</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p>that views out from within the AONB and the setting of the boundary are matters of acknowledged sensitivity and the AONB is a sensitive receptor in the consideration of planning merits. As to magnitude we argue below that the impacts are moderate adverse.</p> <p>6.1. Viewpoint N (Kop Hill and paragraph 4.27) has the same high sensitivity in the LVIA. Yet, paragraph 6.15 of the LVIA concludes that ‘.....<i>The Site is therefore wholly outside the AONB, and is generally separated by the urban area of Monks Risborough. The physical separation and existing urban presence results in the effect the development may have on the Chilterns landscape being considered <b>Negligible</b>.</i> Paragraph 6.32 of the LVIA states that ‘....<i>Where views are achieved, the site is relatively distant, is viewed in the context of the existing Monks Risborough/Princes Risborough urban area and is part of an expansive vista. Effects to these receptors will be no greater than <b>Minor Adverse/Negligible</b>.</i> Paragraph 6.23 of the Planning Statement makes the point that ‘<i>where elevated views are possible within the Chilterns AONB, the development would be a very small element within an expansive view</i>’.</p> <p><b>6.2. Magnitude as affects Setting.</b></p> <p>The conclusions reached in the LVIA and Planning Statement accepts the high sensitivity of the AONB but deem impacts as minor / negligible. Yet the ‘<i>expansive view</i>’ as mentioned in the Planning Statement is a rural area with some scattered settlements around Askett and some low density and more recent housing around Monks Risborough. The current application, notwithstanding the difficulty in assessing impacts, cannot be deemed negligible when a series of higher density blocks of development will be apparent from the PROW at Whiteleaf. At <b>Moderate/Adverse</b>, which is a more appropriate conclusion, we would conclude that the nature of development as proposed offers insufficient assurances to protect the setting of the AONB, principally views out from Whiteleaf Hill. Taken from the GLVIA definitions this is ‘<i>Where the scheme would cause a noticeable adverse/ beneficial change in the existing</i></p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p><i>character or view and the new development would not be the dominant element but one of a number of elements in the overall setting’.</i></p> <p>6.3. Setting of the AONB is material and in a recent appeal decision appeal decision under reference APP/G1630/A/14/2222147 at land east of St Margaret’s Drive, Alderton, Tewkesbury, an Inspector applied this in protection of the setting of the Cotswolds AONB boundary. Accepting that every site must be considered on its merits but a matter of general application, the Inspector concluded that <i>‘Paragraph 24. The appeal site makes an important contribution to the foreground setting of the AONB and, for the reasons set out above; I consider that the proposed development would be detrimental to its setting. It would result in the loss of what is currently an open, arable field and its replacement with built development and associated human activity. This would have an adverse effect on the rural quality of the landscape adjoining the southern edge of Alderton, increasing the extent of the built-up part of the settlement at the expense of the surrounding open countryside’.</i> A copy of this decision is appended.</p> <p><b>7.0 Conclusion</b></p> <p>7.1. The CCB would be grateful if the Inspector on his/her site visit, views the appeal site from within the AONB at Whiteleaf Hill. We have concluded that the setting in proximity of Whiteleaf Hill is formed by a largely rural backcloth and with scattered development within it. This is most certainly not urban fringe and the development of the northern section of the site in proximity of the view will directly impact upon views from Whiteleaf Hill. The green infrastructure / open space within this section would not obviate the fact that a considerable change in the public appreciation of this viewpoint would be a consequence. This site is not allocated in any Local Plan DPD and the scoping of future sites within the Strategic Sites Study (PR3 study area) is at a very early stage. In any event, to pursue the matter by both outline application and subsequent appeal against non-determination is not in the best interests of decision-making and the best interests of protecting the</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

					<p>setting of the AONB by virtue of public appreciation of views from within it. These matters are best resolved through the Plan-Led process.</p> <p>7.2. The Chilterns Conservation Board is grateful of the opportunity to make these representations and would be willing to further assist the Inquiry, at the Inspector's discretion.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

**Item 11      CCB's Planning Function and Planning Committee Working Arrangements**

**Author:** Lucy Murfett, Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time

**Summary:** The change-over of both the majority of the Planning Committee and the staff member (the new Planning Officer) provides an opportunity to consider how best to fulfil CCB's planning function, what to prioritise, how the Planning Committee want to be involved, and the timing and style of the Planning Committee meetings (for instance the balance of meetings and site visits).

**Purpose of report:** To ask the Planning Committee what they want the Planning Officer to prioritise, to recap on the scheme of delegation, and to explore the best ways for the Planning Committee to be involved.

**Background**

1. The Chilterns Conservation Board Annual General Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 saw a number of new members welcomed to the Board and changes in the membership of the Planning Committee.
2. Colin White, who was the Board's Planning Officer since its inception, left at Easter after many years of outstanding service. The new Planning Officer Lucy Murfett joined CCB from the planning policy team at South Oxfordshire District Council and is working part-time 3 days a week. The remaining 2 days a week are still to be filled, with the decision being deferred until the new Chief Officer is in post in the autumn. In the interim a slightly reduced planning function is operating, with assistance being provided one day a week from Mike Stubbs as a Planning Advisor.
3. With the Chilterns covering 13 planning authorities and with over 3000 planning applications a year in AONB, together with around 60 development plan consultations a year (and rising with neighbourhood plans), and threats such as HS2, electrification of the Great Western Mainline, opportunities such as project work to bid for undergrounding of overhead power lines, and the calendar of planning events promoting the Board's planning messages, where to best focus the Board's limited planning resources is an issue that merits some discussion.

### **For discussion**

4. CCB planning committee members are requested to reflect on what works/ doesn't work and any changes that might improve the operation of the planning function and Planning Committee. Matters for discussion might include:
  - i. What should be the threshold (if any) or guiding principles for deciding which planning applications CCB comments on?
  - ii. Do standard responses need agreeing/ reviewing for various types of enquiries or applications.
  - iii. How much do Planning Committee members want to be involved in day to day casework, and by what means (emails/ phone conferences/ site visits), or is reporting comments to Planning Committee retrospectively still the best way?
  - iv. What input should the Planning Officer have in neighbourhood plans, and providing advice to Parish Councils, campaign group and individuals who are either applying for planning permission or opposing it?

### **Recommendation**

1. **That the Committee brings ideas and reflections to the meeting and provides feedback through the exercise.**
2. **That the Planning Officer uses the outputs to bring a future paper and proposals to the next Planning Committee.**

**Item 11      Exercise on the Molins site at Saunderton****Author:** Mike Stubbs Planning Advisor to CCB**Lead Organisations:** Chilterns Conservation Board**Resources:** Staff time.**Summary:** This is an active planning case, a large brownfield site within the AONB and Green Belt raising issues of what would be an appropriate re-use for the site, how sustainable development here would be, what design consideration should be applied and what is the best planning process for achieving a solution.**Purpose of report:** To use a current case as training for new Committee members and to explore with the Committee what the key issues are and what approach the Board should take on this and similar sites. Mike Stubbs to provide a powerpoint presentation introducing the site and the issues it raises. Members of CCB Planning Committee are presented with a series of discussion points on the Molins site at Saunderton. The current outline planning application for up to 212 dwellings raises a number of issues for debate and action:

- (i) To discuss CCB's objection and the potential to set out what we would support.
- (ii) To discuss the early stage policy position as put forward by Wycombe DC and to consider if an Area Action Plan approach is broadly agreed and/or what issues should CCB prepare in anticipation of a site allocation at Molins.
- (iii) To discuss the application by the Parish Council to prepare a neighbourhood plan

**Background/ Chronology****Molins site, Haw Lane, Saunderton (Planning ref 15/05250/OUTEA).**

5. Molins is wholly within the Chilterns AONB and the Metropolitan Green Belt. In 2009 planning consent was granted for the redevelopment of the former factory buildings into 51,677m<sup>2</sup> of Data storage facility, set within 4 campus style buildings. The original Molins factory covered 35,458 m<sup>2</sup> and was some 12m at the highest point. The Conservation Board did not raise an 'in principle objection' but did object on the grounds that although the site is identified as a major development site it would constitute inappropriate development for which very special circumstances do not exist to justify permission. It was considered that the scale, bulk, colour and extent of the proposed development will be more intrusive in visual and landscape terms on this part of the AONB than the existing development. No evidence was put forward on locational need and analysis of alternative sites outside of the AONB.

6. In granting permission Wycombe DC took the view that very special circumstances did exist and cast them as visual improvements and low traffic levels resulting from the data centre use, in a rural area. On AONB impacts they concluded that positive improvements would follow to wider views from public rights of way, due to the design of the buildings. This accepted that the proposed buildings were larger and bulkier than the existing ones and that they would remain recognisable as large structures in the countryside. Combined with low traffic movements in a rural area and low light pollution and delivery of a major development site in the green belt, the overall impact on the AONB was deemed positive. The developer also proposed ecological and landscaping improvements and a footpath link to Saunderton station together with public access to two fields to the south of the application site. This was granted, subject to a section 106 agreement on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008.
7. The new structures were large at up to 16.85 m to the ridge. All buildings were subsequently cleared except for the former canteen/ballroom, an office building and some small security buildings. In plan form the permitted development area covered 255 metres x 253 metres with a maximum height no higher than the previous Molins factories and set at 17.95 AOD by the planning permission. The site is clearly previously developed land and the Planning Authority were persuaded by visual improvements, accepting the proposed campus style 'e' shelters were significant structures.

### **Current Application**

8. Outline planning permission is currently sought for the demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide up to 212 dwellings (at a density of 28.7 dwellings per hectare), open space and access to Haw lane. Approval is sought in outline for this scale and layout of development. The total footprint would be 16,208 square metres. The e shelter application was deemed to be implemented upon demolition of the factory but was not progressed to construction due to an inability to find a developer willing to take on the site following an extensive marketing campaign.
9. An illustrative master-plan (plan 3140792) is now submitted with this application. The applicant's place great weight on the redevelopment of brown-field land and conclude in their Design and Access Statement, on AONB matters, that, *It is concluded that a well-designed residential development replacing the dilapidated, brown-field site, will result in beneficial enhancements to both landscape character and visual amenity and therefore the development will also be a positive enhancement to the Chilterns AONB*'. In their submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) the applicant's state that, cumulatively on Landscape Character and the Chilterns AONB the impact is 'positive' and 'beneficial' and at paragraph 8.8.6 of the LVIA that, *'therefore in considering the potential cumulative effects on the landscape character appropriately designed buildings, applying guidance set out in the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, can positively enhance the landscape character'*. The redevelopment of a brownfield site is seen as beneficial and enhancement. Extracts from the LVIA illustrate how expansive the development site is within the frame of several views from surrounding footpaths.

10. Consideration of the application has been deferred to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015. In a pre-application opinion WDC recommended to the current applicant that *“the appropriate means of pursuing an alternative no-employment use of the site would be via the plan making process rather than the submission of a planning application. We briefly touched on a twin track approach of pursuing a planning application once work on the new Local Plan is substantially progressed whilst promoting an alternative use / allocation for the site via the plan making process”*. A policy stance was then announced by WDC (as below).

### **Planning Policy / Area Action Plan/ Neighbourhood Plan**

11. In March 2015 the WDC Cabinet amended their Local Development Scheme to agree to prepare an Area Action Plan for Saunderton. This is designed to focus on the *‘on the issues for Saunderton, to a level of detail that would not be undertaken for a District-wide Local Plan’* (extract WDC planning pages). Any growth proposals for Saunderton would be managed via this process and any early stage discussion of options would not commence until Autumn 2015. A village plan information sheet, produced by WDC confirms that housing within the AONB and Green Belt is unusual and controversial and that, *‘Any development (including on the Molins site) would have to be of very high quality to meet the standards required of development in the AONB. The approach to the landscape will be critical in the success of any design’*. The Planning Authority have not suggested other sites, although it is speculated that housing could also go on the West Dean Yard site, adjacent Saunderton Station (currently a series of repair and scrap uses).
12. Subsequently Bledlow cum Saunderton Parish Council has submitted an application to prepare a neighbourhood plan. WDC has yet to consult on the neighbourhood area but has put the plan to prepare an Area Action Plan on hold, announcing on 2<sup>nd</sup> July in a weekly planning bulletin that *“The Saunderton Village Plan (also known as an Area Action Plan) has been put on hold whilst the Council reconsiders the idea. This will be through the Local Plan Task and Finish Group – a group that reports to the Council’s Improvement and Review Commission (IRC). The role of the IRC is to hold cabinet members to account, and scrutinise their work. The Local Plan Task and Finish Group recommendations will be reported to the Council’s Cabinet for their consideration and final decision on whether to proceed with the plan or not. Further details of the scrutiny process – which will involve local residents and other stakeholders – will be added to the website and bulletin when available”*.

### **For action / discussion**

13. CCB Planning Committee is requested to consider the current application, its proposal as put in the illustrative master-plan and the policy stance of progressing an Area Action Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. Matters for discussion might consider:
- i. The current outline application for 212 houses and the impacts upon the wider landscape. How these impacts can be mitigated, assuming that is possible.
  - ii. The nature of CCB’s further comments, for example to maintain an objection to any housing development on grounds of the nature of development proposed or to argue that the 212 scheme requires

amendment to protect the AONB. An example at Accordia (Cambridge) will be tabled.

- iii. How best to engage with the forthcoming Area Action Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, what role would CCB take, how to lay down policy markers to protect the wider impacts here such as visual impacts, vehicular movements, nature and scale of development, loss of former canteen / ballroom and 'knock-on' consequences for West Dean Yard. There is an argument here to accept some residential development within the AONB to reinforce the point that such development is rare on this scale and unacceptable elsewhere within the Wycombe District AONB.

### **Recommendation**

3. **That the Committee notes the report and provides feedback through the exercise.**

**Item 12      Pre-application Discussion on the Newnham Manor site at Crowmarsh Gifford**

**Author:** Lucy Murfett Planning Officer

**Lead Organisations:** Chilterns Conservation Board

**Resources:** Staff time

**Summary:** This is an active planning case, the Board has been approached by the developers for pre-application advice. The Planning Officer will provide an introduction, then the planning agent will provide a presentation on the site, followed by questions to the developer and then a discussion among the Committee.

**Purpose of report:** To use a current case as training for new Committee members and to explore with the Committee what the key issues are and steer to give the Planning Officer on the approach to this site going forward, in order to provide a response to the developer.

**Background**

**Land at Newnham Manor, CRO6 and CRO7, Crowmarsh Gifford, South Oxfordshire.**

1. The land at Newnham Manor is on the southern edge of the village of Crowmarsh Gifford. This is categorised as a larger village in the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, and a place for allocation of additional housing, likely to be in the order of at least 48 homes. The village is partly in and partly out of the Chilterns AONB, with land to the east and south of the village falling within the AONB.
2. The District Council has prepared a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identifying and in it assesses ten sites around Crowmarsh Gifford for their suitability for development. In the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Refined Options consultation earlier this year, the District Council shortlisted two sites as being the most appropriate for allocation for housing in the plan period. These were the two sites CRO6 and CRO7 which the developers have approached CCB for pre-application advice on. A two page extract from the SODC consultation document concerning Crowmarsh Gifford is overleaf. SODC also commissioned landscape advice from Bettina Kirkham on the landscape capacity of the SHLAA site, which concluded that CRO6 and CRO7 were capable of development on a reduced development area, excluding much of the agricultural field in the southern part of CRO7.

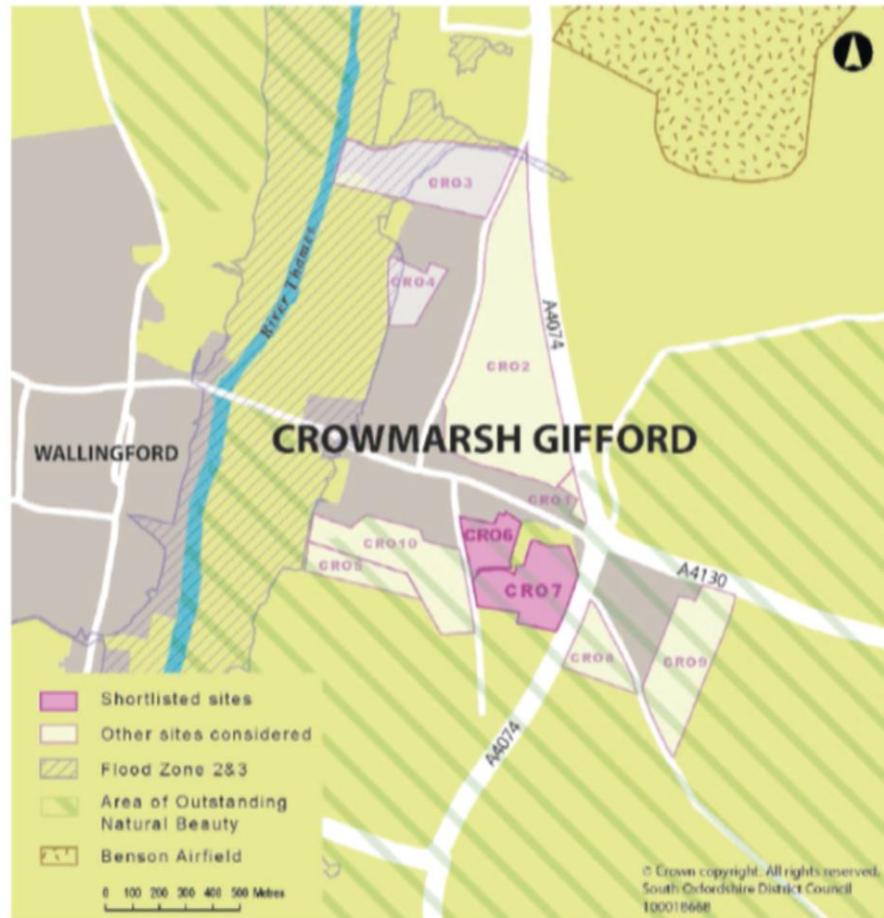
## Crowmarsh Gifford

Crowmarsh Gifford is one of our smallest 'larger villages'. It is located on the opposite bank of the River Thames from Wallingford, and it has its own separate village identity. It has a limited range of services and facilities (a shop, two pubs and a primary school) but benefits from being in easy reach of those in Wallingford. A notable feature is the collection of large employment sites along Benson Lane, consisting of the environmental science cluster in the grounds of the historic Howbery Park and along Benson Lane, and the council offices (recently damaged in a serious fire). The high frequency bus service between Oxford and Reading runs through Crowmarsh Gifford, providing opportunities for sustainable travel.

We need to find sites for at least 48 new homes in Crowmarsh Gifford. In looking for suitable land we have considered whether there are existing brownfield sites which may be available for re-use and all the land around the edge of the village. Our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment<sup>10</sup> shows sites we have identified and provides a summary of their potential, the map shows these sites.

In community consultation events, brownfield site opportunities such as the Jewson's site, the Colliers yard and the Council Offices were suggested, but there is no indication that these are available for redevelopment. CRO6 is currently a caravan site and contains a selection of mostly rundown buildings in the Pheasantry area, which has potential for redevelopment to improve the area. Some of the sites around Crowmarsh are in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would have a high landscape impact (CRO5, 8, 9 and 10). The large site option (CRO2) is not generally popular with the village community, and would be beyond the scale needed for 48 homes. Although in the AONB, CRO6 has limited landscape impacts because it is relatively contained and screened from wider views. Local feeling is that the Lister Wilder building has downgraded the quality of the landscape in this area. The site offers the opportunity to reuse a site close to the centre of the village, and assist the school by providing part of the site as new parking. Although some of CRO7 would be sensitive in AONB terms, using part of CRO7 which is in the same ownership, could provide vehicular access options to the A4074, avoiding adding to road safety concerns outside the primary school on the Old Reading Road. There has in the past been concern about the sewage capacity for Benson and Crowmarsh Gifford, and we are continuing to explore this with Thames Water.

<sup>10</sup> [www.southoxon.gov.uk/shlaa](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/shlaa)



The Crowmarsh Gifford site assessment table is available online at [www.southoxon.gov.uk/lvallocations](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/lvallocations). Using this information we believe that the choice of suitable sites should be made from a refined shortlist of CRO6 and CRO7.

**YOUR VIEW** **Q10:** Which of the Crowmarsh Gifford sites - particularly the sites we have shortlisted sites CRO6 and CRO7 - should be used for new homes, and what positives would you like to see the development bring?

3. The response CCB gave to the SODC Local Plan 2031 Refined Options consultation included the following:

*“The Board supports neither of the shortlisted sites for Crowmarsh Gifford (CRO6 and CRO7) and considers that other sites outside and not affecting the Chilterns AONB should be identified and developed before sites within the Chilterns AONB are proposed. The Board considers that the development of these sites would have a detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and would be contrary to the NPPF and the statutory AONB Management Plan.”*

4. The new CCB planning officer worked on this for SODC previously and so seeks the steer of the Planning Committee in order to inform the response to the developer (and later to SODC should a planning application be submitted).

### **For action / discussion**

5. CCB Planning Committee is requested to consider the site and how best to respond. Matters for discussion might consider:
  - i. Recap on the primary purposes of CCB and to what extent this differs from the role of the Local Planning Authority in weighing up considerations.
  - ii. The NPPF advice in paragraphs 115 and 116 on giving ‘great weight’ to the AONB and refusing major development unless tests are passed, one of which is whether there are alternative sites outside the AONB.
  - iii. To what extent if any the preferences of the local community should influence CCB’s position.

### **Recommendation**

1. **That the Committee notes the report and presentation from the developer, and provides a steer at the meeting for the Planning Officer.**