



Planning Committee

10.00 a.m. Wednesday 25th May 2011
The Chilterns Conservation Board office,
90 Station Road, Chinnor

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Public Question Time
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting
5. Matters Arising
6. High Speed 2 – update
7. Draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB
8. AONB Planning Forum – feedback
9. AONB Planning Conference 2011
10. Chilterns Buildings Design Awards
11. Development Plans Responses
12. Planning Applications – Update
13. Any Urgent Business
14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 7th September 2011 at The Chilterns Conservation Board office, 90 Station Road, Chinnor, OX39 4HA

Future meetings – 30th November 2011, 7th March and 30th May 2012

Item 5 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisations: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Approximately £600 a year for minute-taker plus staff time

Summary: Minutes of the previous meeting are attached (at Appendix 1) and need approving.

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

Background

1. The draft minutes from the meeting on 9th March 2011 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 9th March 2011.**



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERNES CONSERVATION BOARD
PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9TH MARCH 2011 AT THE
CHILTERNES CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICE, STATION ROAD, CHINNOR,
COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.05 PM**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Member

Appointing Body

Appointed by Local Authorities

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

Appointed by the Secretary of State

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

Elected by Parish Councils

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Co-opted Members

Mike Stubbs	The National Trust
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Officers

Colin White	Chilterns Conservation Board
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Others

Deirdre Hansen	Minute taker
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1. Apologies

Cllr Roger Emmett, Wycombe District Council (Board Member).

2. Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

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

5. Matters Arising from the minutes

- Item 6 (Design Awards): 9 entries received to date for this year.
- Item 8 (financial matters): the Planning Officer had not thus far been able to liaise with other AONBs or contact local planning officers to discuss the issue of charging developers and others for pre-application planning advice.
- Item 10 (AONB Planning Conference): the suggested topic for this year is Renewable Energy and its implications for the AONB and its setting.
- Item 12 (development plans responses): Wycombe Community Stadium – Wycombe District Council have decided to invite a planning application. The stadium and the development will have an impact on the surrounding AONB. A visit to a new stadium in Brighton is planned.

6. High Speed 2 - update

The Planning Officer updated the Committee on the latest developments in connection with HS2. There has been much activity in connection with the proposal with meetings taking place, press coverage and the launch of the public consultation on 28th February.

The Stop HS2 convention took place at Stoneleigh on 19th February. Attendance was over 500 people and the event was a great success.

The wider HS2 group meets regularly. The Board has written to HS2 requesting that the consultation documents be widely distributed. This has not happened yet. The consultation will last until the end of July. Road shows are being held along the route (the Great Missenden event has been moved to the Link Road car park).

Advice from the recent wider group meeting was that responses should not be sent in straight away. The federation of action groups had re-affirmed its commitment to stopping HS2. There is a need to get as many people as possible who are 'off the route' to get involved.

1. The Committee NOTED the report.

7. Draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB

A draft position statement had been circulated to the Committee. This was discussed in detail and minor amendments and additions were proposed (reference to lack of a defined boundary in paragraph 4, addition of text relating to changes to the landscape in paragraph 19, moving paragraphs 22 and 23 to an appendix, including references to native species and Green Infrastructure in paragraph 24 and addition of Little Marlow football stadium appeal decision to appendix B).

The Planning Officer would make the suggested alterations and circulate the amended draft to the Committee as part of a consultation with local groups and other organisations. Comments received would be reported to the next Committee meeting.

- 1. The Committee APPROVED the amended draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB.**
- 2. The Committee AGREED that the draft statement should be subject to a period of public consultation with appropriate bodies following which it could be adopted by the Board.**

8. Chilterns AONB Planning Policy Guidelines

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about the progress made in connection with the drafting of the Planning Policy Guidelines. The Committee discussed the format of the proposed policies and considered that each matter should be subject to a single policy only.

The matter of waste was discussed in some detail and it was agreed that this would be the subject of a separate agenda item at the next meeting, with a possible site visit to an energy from waste establishment in the future.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the progress made in the drafting of the AONB Planning Policy Guidelines.**

9. Chilterns AONB Planning Forum

The Planning Officer reported that the next Planning Forum would take place on Tuesday 10th May 2011 in High Wycombe. The likely implications arising out of the proposals in the Localism Bill to allow for the production of neighbourhood plans would be discussed.

The forum will also discuss the impacts of the financial cuts at the local authorities that have come about as a result of the comprehensive spending review. The AONB planning policy guidelines and the position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB will be discussed. The forum

will also discuss a further position statement on renewable energy and guidance on building design and adaptation for climate change.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the arrangements for the next AONB Planning Forum.**

10. Development Plans Responses

The Planning Officer informed the Committee that responses had been sent in connection with public consultations on a number of development plan documents as detailed in the agenda.

No additional points were raised.

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

11. Planning Applications Update

The Planning Officer informed the Committee about the various representations that had been made in connection with planning applications and updated the Committee on any decisions that had been made.

The Committee was also informed about the recent site visits that had taken place to examine views out from the AONB in connection with possible applications for a major milk processing plant at Aston Clinton, wind farms near Wingrave and Wing, the growth to the east of Aylesbury and quarrying/waste recycling at Pitstone Quarry 2.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses made in connection with the applications listed in Appendix 3.**

12. Any Urgent Business

The Chairman and the Planning Officer reported that they had recently visited the Cotswolds AONB annual forum, which was very similar in content and format to the Board's own planning conference.

13. Date of the next meeting

Wednesday 25th May 2011 at the office of the Chilterns Conservation Board, 90 Station Rd, Chinnor commencing at 10.00 am.

Future meetings: 7th September and 30th November 2011 and 7th March 2012

The meeting closed 12.05

The Chairman

Date

Item 6 High Speed 2 update

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisation: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time at present and a budget of £1,000.

Summary: There continues to be a great deal of activity in connection with the High Speed 2 proposal with various roadshows being attended as part of the public consultation exercise, responses being prepared and press releases being issued.

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

Background

1. A summit was held in Aylesbury in mid April to discuss the consultation process that is currently ongoing. The advice given was that, as a lot of work is being done on statements and the gathering of evidence, it would be best to wait to submit a response and that this should be done close to the closing date of 29th July.
2. HS2 has been holding a series of roadshows along the route. These have visited various locations in or near the Chilterns. Members and officers have particularly visited those at Stoke Mandeville, Great Missenden, Wendover and Amersham. In preparation for these work has been done on leaflets and other information. One focus has been on the issue of spoil because HS2 claims that 680,000 cubic metres of spoil would be generated in the West Ruislip to Aylesbury section of the route. The Board has worked with others to calculate a more accurate figure and this is about 12 million cubic metres of spoil. Much has been made of this in the press. Many comments have been made about the noise demonstration and most people consider that this has been poorly put across.
3. The Board has prepared and submitted a statement as evidence to a Transport Select Committee inquiry into HS2. Many others have also submitted statements and the terms of reference for the Committee include many issues that the Board feels strongly about.
4. The Board has also been included as a signatory on a letter from SJ Berwin (legal practice) to DfT that questions the consultation materials. The concern arises because the evidence provided is considered to be insufficient to allow consultees to have an informed position on the consultation questions, primarily because the information provided is misleading. Other signatories on the letter include HS2 Action Alliance, AGHAST, Conserve the Chilterns and Countryside, Chiltern Ridges HS2 Action Group and Bucks Business First. The Chiltern Society may well also agree to be included.
5. At the moment officers are working on the Board's response to the consultation. When available in draft this will be circulated and added to the AONB website to enable its use by others interested in HS2. The response will be refined prior to being submitted before the end of July.

6. There continues to be a great deal of press coverage with contributions from the Board often being featured.
7. Any change in the situation will be reported to the Committee in the future.

Recommendation

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

Item 7 Draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisation: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time at present.

Summary: At the last Committee meeting a discussion took place on a draft position statement about development affecting the setting of the AONB. This statement was circulated to a number of different organisations and the results of the consultation are detailed. Various changes are proposed and it is recommended that the statement be adopted by the Board.

Purpose of report: To report the response to the consultation on the draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB to the Committee, to approve amendments where appropriate and to recommend that the Board adopts the revised statement at its next meeting.

Background

1. The Draft Position Statement on Development Affecting the Setting of the AONB which was approved at the last Planning Committee meeting was subsequently sent to the Conservation Board (both Members and staff), the Board's Planning Committee, planning officers within the AONB, Members and officers on the AONB Historic Environment Group and AONB Environment Forum electronic address lists, the National Association for AONBs, south east and eastern region protected landscapes contacts (AONBs, National Parks, Natural England), Parish and Town Councils in the AONB, contacts for the AONB Planning Forum, the Wildlife Trusts, the National Trust, CPRE, the Environment Agency, English Heritage, the Forestry Commission and The Chiltern Society.
2. The consultation lasted from 11th April until 13th May. A few comments were received after the close of the consultation but in the days prior to the preparation of this report and all have therefore been included.
3. Responses were received from the following: Shaun Pope (Bucks CC), Cliff Percival and Mike Stubbs (the National Trust), George Crutcher, Steve Trow (English Heritage), Charlotte Frizzell (Natural England), David Waker (Chiltern DC), Jackie Patterson (Luton BC), Richard Burden (Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB), Sue Frost (Central Bedfordshire Council), Chris Schmidt-Reid (Wycombe DC) and Mike Chadwick (The Chiltern Society).
4. All the comments made have been summarised and are detailed in the attached table (Appendix 2). The comments have been analysed and recommended responses are included in the final column of the table. Although some of the comments raise some

key issues it is considered that none of them go to the heart of what is in fact a statement of the Board's position on a key current topic.

5. A number of comments have been made that included useful suggestions or proposed additions and these have resulted in some changes. These are detailed as part of the relevant response and are shown in a revised version of the statement which is included as Appendix 3, with the changes marked by ~~strike through~~ for deletions and **bold underlined** for additions. It is recommended that these changes be approved as they improve the position statement.
6. As this is a position statement for the Board it is appropriate that it be discussed at the full Board meeting in June. Subject to the changes that have been detailed being approved by this Committee it is intended that the position statement be the subject of a separate report to the Board with a recommendation that it be adopted.

Recommendations

1. **That the Committee notes the comments received during the consultation on the draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB.**
2. **That the Committee approves the responses made to the comments.**
3. **That the Committee approves the amendments detailed.**
4. **That the Committee recommends the amended statement be adopted by the Board at its next meeting.**

Table detailing comments made (and recommended responses) on the Board's Position Statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB (May 2011)

Name	Para.	Comments	Recommended response
Shaun Pope, Bucks CC	Gen	Wonders if there should be a link to the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns, because things like the Wendover bypass and A41 Aston Clinton bypass have had visual impacts.	Agree with comment – add the following before the final sentence at the end of the paragraph about position statements in the Notes section (page 6) – to read ‘Further information and advice is contained in the following: The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the associated supplementary technical notes on local building materials, the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns and The Making of the Chilterns Landscape’ and amend the final sentence to read ‘All of these can be found on the Board’s website’.
The National Trust	Gen	The document is well drafted with the use of policy and legislation and appeal decisions.	Comments welcomed and noted.
George Crutcher	Gen	It would be useful to have a separate section at the start which says what the setting is and why.	Comments noted, Paragraph 4 is considered to address this issue and states that the setting does not have a defined boundary with an explanation for this statement.
Steve Trow, English Heritage	App. A para 11	English Heritage (EH) commends the Board’s decision to consult on and publish additional guidance to underpin Management Plan policies. EH is generally quite comfortable with the way the Board has approached setting issues; not least by the acknowledgement that the setting of	Comment noted and welcomed. Comment noted and welcomed.

	<p>the Chilterns AONB does not have a geographical border; that setting can be affected by development and by other types of land use change; and by the wide range of impacts and approaches to mitigation and management set out.</p> <p>EH notes that, because of the statutory responsibilities of the Board, references to setting include not only the setting of heritage assets, but also issues relating to conservation of the wider landscape and matters relating to natural beauty. In doing this, the draft brings together matters arising from two quite distinct areas of policy - one pertaining to cultural heritage and one to protected landscapes. Each of these areas has its own legislative basis and its own body of policy guidance.</p> <p>While EH is supportive of what the Board wishes to achieve with its guidance, we must nevertheless take issue with one specific point, namely the status of the AONB designation in relation to the definition of “heritage asset”. In Appendix A paragraph 11 you state that:</p> <p><i>A ‘Heritage asset’ is defined in PPS5 as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions”. In view of the number, scale, quality and distribution of designated and undesignated historic features in the Chilterns AONB, the Board considers that the AONB is a landscape which can be considered a heritage asset under this definition.</i></p> <p>In our view this is not a valid interpretation of the PPS. In its glossary (Annex 2: Terminology) the PPS makes it clear that the term “significance” is defined as referring to “heritage interest” which, in turn, may be “archaeological, architectural,</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>See below for response.</p> <p>Comments noted, however, the Board maintains its view, as stated in paragraph 11 of Appendix A, that the many</p>
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	<p>artistic or historic interest”. While your guidance correctly states that the AONB includes many historic features (and it is certainly the case that these may have heritage interest), the AONB itself is a designation made not on the basis of heritage interest, but on the basis of natural beauty: a concept that does not derive from heritage legislation. In our view it is not helpful to conflate the two legislative strands as your draft attempts to do.</p> <p>While it could certainly be suggested that the PPS is not explicit on whether the entirety of a designated landscape (National Parks, the Broads and AONBs) can be deemed to be a heritage asset, we would suggest that this is implicitly ruled out in paragraph 5 of the PPS which states:</p> <p><i>“Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets. Some heritage assets possess a level of interest that justifies designation (see Annex 2) and particular procedures apply to decisions that involve them. This statement also covers heritage assets that are not designated but which are of heritage interest and are thus a material planning consideration. The historic environment within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty is also the subject of general policies within PPS7”.</i></p> <p>We would also contend that this interpretation is also reasonably clear from paragraph 13 of the <i>“Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide”</i>, which omits AONBs, the Broads and National Parks from the list of designations that are considered to be heritage assets. Additionally, paragraph 16 of the practice guide states that <i>“The policies in the PPS</i></p>	<p>designated and undesignated heritage assets and their associated settings within the AONB lead us to consider that this is a landscape that can be considered under the definition. This stance is considered to be strongly supported by the statement in paragraph 115 of the practice guide referred to, which states ‘Setting will, therefore, <u>generally be more extensive than curtilage and its perceived extent may change</u> as an asset and its surroundings evolve or as understanding of the asset improves’ (our emphasis). The Board considers that its stance is appropriate and does not conflict with PPS5 or its associated practice guide. No change is therefore recommended.</p> <p>In drafting this response it has been noticed that the quotes in paragraph 10 of Appendix A would benefit from being properly referenced. Therefore, add the following paragraph numbers (from the practice guide) after the three quotes to read: ‘paragraph 113’, ‘paragraph 118’ and ‘paragraph 124’ in lines 5, 8 and 9.</p>
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		<p><i>apply to the historic environment of these landscapes” which, in our view, makes it clear that the policies do not apply to the landscape designations as a whole.</i></p> <p>Please note that, in making this point, we are fully aware of the importance of the AONB designation in terms of conservation of the historic environment and we are in no way critical of the aims of the Board’s draft guidance. We do, however, believe that it is important to be very clear on a point that otherwise may be subject to detailed scrutiny at future public inquiries.</p>	
Charlotte Frizzell, Natural England	Gen	I have had a read through the position statement, and I am happy with the document – I have no suggested amendments for you.	Comments welcomed and noted.
David Waker, Chiltern DC	Gen	Thank you for giving Chiltern District Council a chance to comment on the position statement. As you will be aware Chiltern District Council endorsed the AONB Management Plan in April 2009 when the Council’s cabinet resolved that ‘the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2008 – 2013 be endorsed as a material consideration in the exercise of the Council’s planning powers’. The council is aware of the relevant national guidance and of the current status of the South East Plan Policy C3. We are particularly pleased to note that our emerging policy in the Submission Core Strategy CS22 is quoted as an example of good practice, obviously once found sound this will be the Council’s main policy in relation to AONB developments. Having looked through the document we have no other comments to make.	Comments welcomed and noted.
Jackie Patterson, Luton BC	Gen	The Position Statement has been considered by senior officers and by the current Board member and green space portfolio holder, Cllr Roden. They have the following comment to	Comments welcomed and noted.

		make: "Luton Borough Council has made provision for the consideration of the setting of the Chilterns AONB in saved Policy ENV1 - National landscape areas - of Luton Local Plan 2001-2011 and has no further comment to make."	
Richard Burden, Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB	Para 15 page 4	<p>Your document looks good and it is very helpful to have the appendices with the supporting information; our Planning and Transportation Topic Group commented that perhaps the final product could have the actual position statement in a separate [and hence shorter] format for everyday use.</p> <p>The potential adverse impacts list is helpful; perhaps greater overt emphasis on breaking skylines and movement [plumes, rotors, etc] in the scene?</p> <p>Glad to see you have emphasised tranquillity as an aspect of setting; our recent tranquillity work is now on our web site.</p> <p>A point that seems worth emphasising relates to <u>views to</u> and <u>from</u> the AONB. The work the Malverns did was particularly informative and seems to be a key element of setting; interruption of <u>views to</u> the AONB and intrusions / interruptions of wider, or focussed, <u>views out from</u> the AONB.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The final version will be made available as a pdf. Though it is easy to exclude the appendices there is little point in doing so as the main text cross refers to them. No change is considered to be necessary for this issue.</p> <p>Impacts list (paragraph 15 page 4) - agree with comment, therefore add new impact to the list (to be a new third bullet) to read: 'Breaking the skyline, particularly when this is associated with developments that have a vertical emphasis and/or movement (chimneys, plumes or rotors for example)'</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted, this point is considered to be addressed by the first two bullet points in the impacts list in paragraph 15, as well as paragraph 6</p>
Sue Frost, Central Beds Council	Gen and Paras 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19	The Joint Technical Unit for Luton and South Central Bedfordshire has concerns about the content and timing of the statement which puts CBC in a very difficult position with regard to the proposals north of Luton in the Joint	Noted.

	and 20	<p>Core Strategy. As things stand we have no choice but to raise these concerns.</p> <p>Our main concern is that the statement although helpful in some respects could be given a more positive tone as development will be key to delivering green infrastructure in the growth area in Central Bedfordshire.</p> <p>It should also more explicitly recognise that the setting of the AONB varies dramatically in terms of visual quality and it's value in terms of natural resources. In many instances, the urban edge of Luton and Dunstable extends along the AONB boundary.</p> <p>We consider as it stands the statement is too heavy handed in places and could undermine the case for growth where there are special circumstances to be taken into account when determining planning applications. Clearly the Joint Technical Unit is proposing development to the north of Luton which impinges on the AONB and the setting but which given the significant need for housing in the area is considered to be exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>We are particularly mindful of the need to ensure that growth takes place in a way that is sensitive to the landscape in this area however, we cannot</p>	<p>The Board accepts that development will help to deliver green infrastructure. However, if the enabling development takes place in the AONB or its setting this may have significant detrimental impacts on the AONB and its setting. The Board considers that its statutory duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB would generally outweigh the need for being positive about the development.</p> <p>Comments noted, the Board does not consider it necessary to comment on the quality or value of areas within the setting of the AONB. No change is proposed.</p> <p>The Board does not accept that the statement is heavy handed. it has been prepared to highlight the Board's concerns in connection with many forms of development that are resulting in pressures on the nationally designated AONB. Thus far the Board considers that no exceptional circumstances have been outlined that lead it to a different conclusion. No change is proposed.</p> <p>The Board is also mindful of the need to ensure that growth takes place in a sensitive manner. The</p>
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	<p>support blanket opposition to development which impacts on setting or the AONB because there will be exceptional circumstances from time to time which justify development as outlined above. Indeed we believe that the proposals for further development to the north of Luton could soften the very sharp current urban edge by mitigation through tree planting and green buffering and actually enhance the setting. In this respect we are looking to prepare guidance for Development management on land which would form the setting to the AONB as part of a “green framework for growth” document and would welcome your input to that.</p> <p>I have set out a number of more detailed comments and proposed changes below which we believe would address some of our concerns.</p> <p>As a general comment it would be helpful if the Statement gave greater emphasis to the potential for landscape enhancement. In the future this is likely to be funded more by developer contributions to green infrastructure rather than national stewardship initiatives. It would also help if examples of the scale and range of mitigation required to help protect the setting of the AONB were given, as this will assist negotiation at both the masterplanning and planning application stages. Some examples of good practice could also be included as an Appendix, as well as reference to the technical guidance already prepared by the Board eg the Building Design Guide, Guidelines for the Management of Roads and for land management.</p>	<p>statement provides guidance on what the Board’s position is in connection with proposed developments which it considers could have detrimental impacts on the AONB as a result of their form, scale, design or location for example. Any attempts to enhance the setting of the AONB would be welcomed, but these must not be at the expense of the AONB itself. No change is proposed in this instance.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The Board considers that the statements already made about mitigation and enhancement are adequate and appropriate and that no change is necessary. It would not be possible to set out the scale and range of mitigation required as this needs to be determined on a case by case basis by the local planning authorities.</p> <p>Agree with comment, add the following before the final sentence at the end of the paragraph about position statements in the Notes section (page 6) – to read ‘Further information and advice is contained in the following: The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the associated supplementary technical</p>
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		<p>Paragraph 11 could be extended to refer to strategies for enhancement eg the GI Plans, detailed Biodiversity Opportunity mapping eg for calcareous grassland as well as the BAP targets, and the guidance given within Landscape Character Assessments, which usually detail guidelines for development as well as the priorities for landscape management and enhancement.</p> <p>Paragraph 12 should be is extended to include a reference to the need to secure sympathetic mitigation.</p> <p>Paragraph 13 - We suggest a wording change to strengthen the partnership approach eg the Board will “<i>support</i>” rather than “<i>expect</i>” Local Authorities <i>to assess the possible positive and negative impacts of a development, in order to minimise intrusion and achieve the appropriate scale and character of mitigation.</i></p> <p>Paragraph 14 - Suggest deletion of the first sentence as repetition</p>	<p>notes on local building materials, the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns and The Making of the Chilterns Landscape’ and amend the final sentence to read ‘All of these can be found on the Board’s website’.</p> <p>Agree with comment, therefore add the following at the end of paragraph 11 to read: ‘In addition, other strategies such as Green Infrastructure plans, Biodiversity Opportunity mapping and landscape character assessments, may also provide advice about enhancement.’</p> <p>The Board considers that the statements already made about mitigation are adequate and appropriate and that no change is necessary.</p> <p>Comments noted, however, the Board can rightly expect local authorities to be mindful of the impacts of a development on the AONB because they have a statutory duty to do so. The Board is happy to be involved in negotiations on relevant applications and this is expressed in the statement. No change is proposed.</p> <p>Comment noted, the repetition is included to reinforce a point and no change is considered to be necessary.</p>
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		<p><u>Avoiding harm to the AONB</u></p> <p>This section is particularly important and we suggest that it is headed with a combination of para 19 and para 18, emphasising that sympathetic design is key. This will include appropriate mitigation and integration into the wider landscape setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the impact on the setting - to include Landscape and Visual Impact studies and Ecological surveys and Archaeological assessment. • Preparation of a Design and Access statement to inform the design, orientation etc....but also include material and finishes. • Careful use of colours etc - suggest this also includes green and brown roofs. • Detailed mitigation measures - we would prefer <i>Comprehensive mitigation</i> , in scale with the development. We do not think it necessary to restrict planting to native species as for eg , Parkland is a characteristic landscape and would include non-native species. However, we would agree that schemes should be mostly comprised of locally native stock. • Noise - great care needs to be taken with advice here, as features to attenuate noise can be incongruous with the setting. <p>Para 20 could include promotion of the Chiltern Design Guide, Landscape Character Assessment etc.</p>	<p>The comments are noted, most of the information requested is justified or already incorporated into paragraphs 18 to 20 and the bullet points or other suggested revisions (addition of reference to Design Guide etc. within the Notes section on page 6 rather than para 20 as suggested) so no major changes are required.</p> <p>However, it would be useful to add some of the suggestions, therefore add the following: ‘ , ecological surveys or archaeological assessments’ at the end of the first bullet point in para 18, add ‘through the preparation of a design and access statement’ at the end of the second bullet point in para 18, and delete ‘Detailed’ and replace with ‘Comprehensive’ in line 1 of the final bullet point of para 18.</p>
Chris Schmidt-Reid Wycombe DC	Gen and paras 15 and 18	As an authority that has a significant amount of land that is adjacent to the AONB (as well as being in it) we are very much aware of the importance of ensuring that new development does not have a damaging impact. As I am sure you are aware in determining	Comments noted. The Board considers that para 15 does not rule out development. Para 15 lists a series of impacts that the Board considers could be adverse and which may

		<p>planning applications Wycombe District Council seeks to balance the impacts of a development against wider social, economic and environmental impacts and the requirements of planning policy. To this end we would not support a position that appears to rule out development absolutely as appears to be implied by paragraph 15 of the document.</p> <p>We think that this statement needs the statements in paragraph 15 qualifying in terms of how impacts are assessed and that what you are suggesting is not an absolute position. This also applies to paragraph 18, in which we feel it is unrealistic to suggest that development should be avoided and we would not support the inclusion of this statement in this document.</p> <p>We would also question the need for this document, I accept the wish to guide and inform new policy writing, but would point out that policy L1 of the Local Plan (2004) already provides significant amount of protection much stronger than that afforded by the policy CS17 of the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>not result in the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB, or may not increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB and its setting. They are all issues on which the Board would comment if applications were to be made and the impacts would be assessed by addressing the points as proposed to be amended and detailed in para 18. Similarly, para 18 also details the sort of assessments that ought to be made and which the Board would include in its responses. With increasing pressures on the AONB the Board has considered it necessary to prepare the statement of its position and this is all the more pressing when new policies are being prepared that may be weaker than their predecessors.</p>
Mike Chadwick, Chiltern Society	Para 13	<p>I think the main issue is with para 13 on p3. It may not have been the intention, but my reading of this is that, even in the absence of a Local Plan Policy, you are expecting LAs to be mindful ... and seek views of CCB. Is that a reasonable or indeed achievable demand? I think the stress should be on getting the policy in place, as described in para 12 - then the steps in 13 should and can be expected to follow. Maybe it is just a case of combining 12 and 13 in some way, viz ensure policies in place, pointing out that the CROW Act adds an extra obligation to do so; then explain what such a robust policy will require.</p>	<p>The suggestion has been noted, though it is considered that this is mostly addressed by the text as drafted. The Board is right to expect that local authorities will be mindful of the potential impacts of a development on the special qualities of the AONB. This expectation arises from S85 of the CROW Act and PPS7. However, as the Board is not a statutory consultee, and despite its desire to be consulted, it cannot expect</p>

			<p>local authorities to always seek its views on applications outside the AONB. Therefore, delete the following in the last two lines of para 13 ‘, and to seek the views of the Board when significant impacts are anticipated’ and replace with ‘. When significant impacts are likely the Board would like its views to be sought’. In some instances this may not happen, but the Board is generally kept informed of recent applications via weekly lists and can make representations as a result.</p>
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Chilterns Conservation Board – Position Statement (as amended)

Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB

Introduction

1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the special qualities of the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. In policy terms they have the same planning status as National Parks.
2. The Chilterns Conservation Board is the body set up by Parliament to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB. The Board also has a duty to have regard to the social and economic wellbeing of those who live and work in the Chilterns AONB.

Purpose of this Position Statement

3. This Position Statement is intended to provide guidance to local planning authorities, landowners, developers and other interested parties in connection with the need to consider the impacts on the AONB of development and land management¹ proposals which lie outside it but within its 'setting'.
4. The Board considers that, although it does not have a defined geographical boundary, the setting of the Chilterns AONB is the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials or design could be considered to have an impact, either positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the Chilterns AONB.
5. This Statement expands upon issues raised in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13: A Framework for Action², in particular Policy L6 in the landscape chapter,

¹ "Development" includes transport and other infrastructure as well as proposals requiring planning applications. "Land management" includes tree planting, energy crops, and drainage schemes.

² Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13: A Framework for Action, Chilterns Conservation Board (2008) see: http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation/management_plan.html

key issues 8 and 9 and Policies HE2 and HE5 in the historic environment chapter and key issue 7 and supporting text for Policy D10 (renewable energy) in the development chapter.

Policy L6: Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of buildings, rural settlements and their landscape setting.

Policy HE2: Resist land use changes and management practices which would harm nationally designated and locally important historic assets and their settings.

Policy HE5: Ensure the design and location of new development is sympathetic to the character of the historic environment.

Policy D10 supporting text: There may be pressure for the development of wind power in the Chilterns in the future, and full account should be taken of the potential impacts on the landscape, including the setting of the AONB.

6. Views out of the AONB and into its surrounding areas can be very significant. Development proposals that affect views into and out of the AONB need to be carefully assessed, particularly in line with Planning Policy Statement 7, to ensure that they conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the AONB.

7. The need to consider the impact of proposals within the setting of the AONB is set out in Planning Policy Statements, relevant legislation and planning policies and in guidance from Natural England and English Heritage. Those pieces of policy and guidance that are considered to be relevant are detailed in Appendix A.

8. The setting of AONBs has been considered by Inspectors in various planning appeals. Extracts from relevant appeals are detailed in Appendix B.

9. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB are identified in the AONB Management Plan and are briefly set out in Appendix C.

10. This Statement is intended to be used to secure appropriate policies on this issue in Local Development Frameworks and other policy documents which relate to the Chilterns AONB and assist in the decision making process with respect to proposals for development or land management outside the AONB.

11. The need to consider the potential impact of developments within the setting of the AONB on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB itself are explicitly referred to in a number of adopted development plans in relation to the Chilterns AONB. Whilst some developments may have adverse impacts, circumstances can be envisaged where other developments or changes in land use (for example tree planting outside the AONB) could enhance the AONB by mitigating or removing unsightly existing structures which may adversely impact upon the AONB. **In addition, other strategies such as Green Infrastructure plans, Biodiversity Opportunity mapping and landscape character assessments, may also provide advice about enhancement.**

12. **The Board will seek to ensure that the importance of considering the impact of development and land management proposals outside the Chilterns AONB on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB is made clear in all Local Development Framework documents and in policies in other relevant documents.**

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

14. The setting of the Chilterns AONB does not have a geographical border. The location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. A very large development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the AONB boundary. However, the distance away from the AONB will be a material factor in forming a decision on any proposals, in that the further away a development is from the AONB boundary the more the impact is likely to be reduced.

15. Examples of adverse impacts will include:

- Blocking or interference of views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints or rights of way
- Blocking or interference of views of the AONB from public viewpoints or rights of way outside the AONB
- **Breaking the skyline, particularly when this is associated with developments that have a vertical emphasis and/or movement (chimneys, plumes or rotors for example)**
- Loss of tranquillity through the introduction of lighting, noise, or traffic movement
- Introduction of significant or abrupt changes to landscape character particularly where they are originally of a similar character to the AONB
- Change of use of land that is of sufficient scale to cause harm to landscape character
- Loss of biodiversity, particularly in connection with those habitats or species of importance in the AONB
- Loss of features of historic interest, particularly if these are contiguous with the AONB
- Reduction in public access and detrimental impacts on the character and appearance of rural roads and lanes
- Increase in air or water pollution

16. Adverse impacts might not be visual. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB include tranquillity. A development which is noisy may well impact adversely on tranquillity even if not visible from the AONB.

17. **The Board will monitor, comment on and report relevant planning applications and decisions relating to development within the setting of the Chilterns AONB**

which may impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB.

Avoiding Harm to the Setting of the Chilterns AONB

18. The best way of minimizing adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB is through avoidance in the first place, so that schemes bring about the conservation or enhancement of the setting of the AONB. In relation to development within or affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB, the Chilterns Conservation Board supports the following:

- Measures to consider the impact on the setting of the AONB, including where required through Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, **ecological surveys or archaeological assessments**;
- Care being taken over the design, orientation, site layout, height, bulk and scale of structures and buildings **through the preparation of a design and access statement**;
- Consideration not just of the site but also the landscape and land uses around and beyond it;
- Careful use of colours, materials and non-reflective surfaces;
- Restraint and care over the installation and use of street lighting, floodlighting and other external lighting to prevent harm to the dark night skies of the AONB and its setting;
- The grouping of new structures and buildings close to existing structures and buildings to avoid new expanses of development that are visible and out of context (though any likely detrimental impact on historic buildings or groupings will need special consideration to avoid insensitive development); and
- ~~Detailed~~ **Comprehensive** mitigation measures, for example including landscaping and open space that incorporates only native species (where possible contributing to BAP targets and the provision of Green Infrastructure), and noise reduction (though landscaping in certain contexts can be damaging to historic features, deposits, landscape or character so will require careful consideration).

19. It is considered that many issues in relation to new development within the setting of the Chilterns AONB can be resolved through careful design, appropriate materials, location and layout and mitigation measures from landscaping to the use of minimal, well-directed and full cut-off street (and other external) lighting.

20. The Board is willing to enter into pre-application consultations to ensure full attention is given to these factors and to assist in the process at the earliest opportunity.

NOTES

The Chilterns Conservation Board has the statutory duty³ to pursue the following two purposes:

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

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

This is one of a series of position statements published by the Board which help to expand on the Board's policies within the Chilterns AONB Management Plan or explain the Board's approach to new and emerging issues (renewable energy for example). **Further information and advice is contained in the following: The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the associated supplementary technical notes on local building materials, the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns and The Making of the Chilterns Landscape.** All ~~position statements~~ **of these** can be found on the Board's website.

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

The Chilterns AONB was designated in 1965 and extended in area in 1990. It is one of 38 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty across England and Wales. It occupies 833 square kilometres and is a landscape of equal importance to National Parks such as Snowdonia and the Lake District.

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³ Section 87, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Policy guidance on the consideration of development proposals within the setting of protected landscapes

National legislation and guidance

1. Section 85 of the **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000** places a statutory duty on all relevant authorities requiring them 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.
2. Guidance on how the implication of this duty and how it may be discharged was issued by Defra in 2005⁴. This includes the statement *“Additionally, it may sometimes be the case that the activities of certain authorities operating outside the boundaries of these areas may have an impact within them. In such cases, relevant authorities will also be expected to have regard to the purposes of these areas”*. The Guidance includes a list of relevant authorities, although this is not definitive.
3. **Natural England** has published more detailed guidance in 2010⁵, including case studies. It includes a case study from the Northumberland National Park regarding *“Working to ensure policies include the impact on National Parks from development beyond their boundaries”*.
4. Paragraph 14 of **Planning Policy Statement 22**, Renewable Energy, states that with respect to renewable energy developments *“Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should not create ‘buffer zones’ around international or nationally designated areas and apply policies to these zones that prevent the development of renewable energy projects. However, the potential impact on designated areas of renewable energy projects close to their boundaries will be a material consideration to be taken into account in determining planning applications”*.
5. This concept of the significance of setting has to be recognised with respect to protected landscapes (AONBs and National Parks). **Natural England’s published spatial planning position**⁶ considers, in Position 5, the protection and enhancement of protected landscapes: *“Spatial planning policies and decisions should ensure the highest levels of protection and enhancement for England’s protected landscapes, habitats, sites and species”*. The explanatory text states *“Natural England interprets the protection and enhancement of all sites, habitats and landscapes widely. This includes safeguarding their character, qualities and features, including where appropriate, their settings”*.
6. Natural England has published **‘Making Space for Renewable Energy – Natural England’s approach to assessing on-shore wind energy development’**.⁷ This includes

⁴ Duties on relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. Defra (2005)

⁵ “England’s statutory designations: A practical guide to your duty of regard” Natural England NE243 (2010)

⁶ Natural England’s Spatial Planning Position (2009), see:

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/PlanningPosition_tcm6-16604.pdf

⁷ http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/NEBPU1805Annex2_tcm6-15152.pdf

the statement “Natural England regards the setting of protected landscapes as being potentially influential on the conservation of the special qualities of the National Park or AONB concerned”.

7. This guidance continues “Spatial plans should include policies that take into account the sensitivity of the setting of protected landscapes”, and “The potential for developments to dominate the setting of protected landscapes requires careful consideration”.

8. The consultation draft **Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1** includes in the background section⁸ the statement:

“Landscape and visual impacts – The Government proposes to retain and clarify the important protection that PPS 7 provides for nationally designated areas. The PPS does not refer to developments outside such areas but visible from them. In these cases outside the remit of PPS 7, the IPC [Infrastructure Planning Commission] will, as now, have to take account of the impact on the landscape but we propose that specifically, the IPC will need to be satisfied that the application will not compromise the objectives which were the basis for designation of the designated site”.

9. The concept of ‘setting’ is set out in the legislation⁹ and guidance¹⁰ relating to Designated historic assets. Setting is defined in Annex 2 of **Planning Policy Statement 5 ‘Planning for the Historic Environment’** as “The surroundings in which a historic asset is appreciated”.

10. Helpful guidance on the consideration of the setting of heritage assets is given in the **‘Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide’** published by English Heritage in March 2010¹¹. Setting is said to be “the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not” (**paragraph 113**). The guidance goes on to say that “For the purposes of spatial planning, any development of change capable of affecting the significance of a heritage asset or peoples experience of it can be considered as falling within its setting” (**paragraph 118**), and “Transport proposals can affect the setting of heritage assets” (**paragraph 124**).

11. A ‘Heritage asset’ is defined in **PPS5** as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions”. In view of the number, scale, quality and distribution of designated and undesignated historic features in the Chilterns AONB, the Board considers that the AONB is a landscape which can be considered a heritage asset under this definition.

Regional Planning¹²

12. The concept of the setting of an AONB has been incorporated into the Regional

⁸ <http://data.energynpsconsultation.decc.gov.uk/documents/condoc.pdf>

⁹ Sections 16 and 66, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

¹⁰ Planning Policy Statement 5 “Planning for the historic Environment” (PPS5) Policy HE.10.

¹¹ [http://www.english-](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Historic_Environment_Planning_Practice_Guide.pdf?1269365073)

[heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Historic_Environment_Planning_Practice_Guide.pdf?1269365073](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Historic_Environment_Planning_Practice_Guide.pdf?1269365073)

¹² On 31st May 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the Government’s intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies. This was confirmed in the Localism Bill.

Spatial Strategy for the South East which affects the Chilterns AONB. **The South East Plan** has a policy which includes reference to the importance of the setting of protected landscapes.

13. Policy C3 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) of the South East Plan states:

“High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in the region’s Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and planning decisions should have regard to their setting. Proposals for development should be considered in that context. Positive land management policies should be developed to sustain the areas’ landscape quality. In drafting local development documents, local planning authorities should have regard to statutory AONB Management Plans”.

Local Planning

The Board considers policy CS17 (Environmental Assets) in the **Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy**¹³ is an example of good practice. The policy includes the text:

“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”.

The Board also considers that the first part of policy CS22 (Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in the **Core Strategy for Chiltern District**¹⁴ is another example of good practice. The policy includes the text:

“The principles to be followed in the Chilterns AONB are that:

- a) all proposals must conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage, distinctiveness of the Chilterns AONB*
- b) all proposals must protect the setting of the AONB and safeguard views into and out of the area”.*

¹³ <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/corestrategy/site/index.php>

Appeal decisions

1. Consideration was given to the impacts on the setting and enjoyment of the **Chilterns AONB** in a joint appeal against the refusal of applications for the redevelopment of a football ground in Marlow for housing development and the creation of a **new football ground** at an alternative site near Little Marlow (see APP/K0425/A/09/2111436, 2010). In dismissing the appeal the Inspector wrote:

“The Chilterns AONB lies to the north on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site and the proposal would not have a direct impact on any of the key characteristics of the AONB landscape. However, the valley floor landscape plays a role in the setting of the AONB. It forms the middle ground of the public view point from Winter Hill on the south side of the river. Whilst it was suggested that the proposal was not on the ‘principal viewline’ across the valley, the Winter Hill view point provides a very wide panorama that is experienced by turning the head to appreciate its breadth. I do not, therefore, consider that there is a ‘principal viewline’. Although the facilities would be sited on lower land to the east of the site close to an existing hedgerow and tree belt they would, in my view, add to the built form in the valley and reinforce the urban fringe character further reducing the integrity of the landscape to the detriment of the open rural character of fields and lakes”.

“The pitches would be mostly used in the winter when floodlights would be needed in the evenings. At night from Winter Hill the sharp line of the lights on the A404 and Marlow beyond contrast with the almost complete darkness of the AONB on the far side of the valley. Whilst there are some lights towards the skyline they are towards the left side of the view where the road climbs the hill. There are sporadic lights on the valley floor but in my view the floodlit training area and the lighting associated with the car park and access would have a dramatic detrimental impact on the night view from Winter Hill”.

“In longer views from the AONB looking south the proposed facilities would be seen in the distance in the valley bottom and would again have a slight detrimental impact by reinforcing the encroachment of urban forms into the predominantly rural open landscape. The same effect, but with greater impact, would be seen at closer quarters by those passing along the A4155. The widened access would have a more urban appearance and the facilities would be seen through the existing boundary trees”.

2. The potential for development to impact on the setting of the **Dorset AONB**, and hence being a material matter in the consideration of the acceptability of a development, has been affirmed by the Planning Inspectorate in connection with an appeal against the refusal of permission for the [creation of a new static caravan community of 30 bases and a reduction of 30 bases elsewhere on the park](#) (see APP/P1235/A/06/2012807, 2007). The Inspector wrote:

“I consider that the area immediately abutting an AONB will be relevant where the appreciation of the natural beauty of the designated area may be affected by what lies outside it. In my view, this is analogous to development outside of a Green Belt, where Planning Policy Guidance Green Belts (PPG2) advises, at paragraph 3.15, that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design. I therefore agree with the Council that the effect on the AONB is a material consideration”.

3. Further consideration was given to the issue of setting of the **Dorset AONB** by the Inspector in appeal ref APP/P1235/A/08/2072794, 2008 where he stated, with respect to a proposal for the **change of use of land from existing touring caravan site to site for 45 static holiday caravans**, that:

“However, given that the Secretary of State has now published the Proposed Changes to the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), I attach significant weight to RSS Policy ENV3, which requires particular care to be taken to ensure that no development is permitted outside AONBs which would damage their natural beauty, special character and special qualities – in other words to their setting”.

4. Detailed consideration of the adverse impacts of the **construction and operation of a four 100m turbine wind farm for electricity generation** on the special qualities of **Exmoor National Park** was given by the Inspector in appeal ref APP/Y1138/A/08/2084526, 2008:

“I turn now to views south from Exmoor, and the setting on the National Park. Although it was suggested that the evidence presented in opposition to the proposal was tantamount to the creation of a buffer zone to the south of Exmoor, I accept that this is not the case. The special qualities of Exmoor include the description of ‘a landscape that provides inspiration and enjoyment to visitors and residents alike’. In my judgment part of the enjoyment stems from the appreciation of Exmoor in its rural setting, and the land to the south is a significant element in that. The National Park clearly has a setting framed by the land to the south, and proposals must be considered individually or cumulatively in respect of the setting. The definition of setting is difficult to pin down in many instances. For a particular building it might involve hard boundaries such as walls, but for a landscape it involves concepts such as topography, land use, character, vegetation and more”.

“So the effect on the character and appearance of the area, and the setting of Exmoor, can be summarised thus. The visual experience will vary from location to location, and will be of a major and substantial intrusion in places. There would be serious harm to landscape character. But from some places there would be levels of visibility and intrusion which would not, in my judgment, be so harmful as to weigh against the proposal. I consider that the skyline views and movement of blades would, notwithstanding the separation from Exmoor, impinge upon the appreciation of the special qualities of Exmoor to a material degree”.

5. An Inspector, in dismissing appeal ref: APP/H1840/A/06/2023564, addressed the issue of the proposed development of a **haulage depot and storage buildings** outside the AONB that impacted adversely on views out from the **Cotswolds AONB**:

“From the elevated vantage point of the Cotswold Way [within the AONB] the greater density of the development would be readily apparent, as although the site forms part of a vast panorama, it would be towards the front of that view”.

6. And towards the Cotswolds AONB:

“From lower viewpoints ... the breach of the AONB skyline would not be mitigated”.

Special qualities of the Chilterns AONB¹⁵

- The steep chalk escarpment
- Open, flower-rich, chalk downland
- Large tracts of beech woodland
- Areas of common land
- Locally distinctive flint and brick architecture
- A rich historic environment with many grand houses, designed landscapes, ancient routes, hill forts and chalk figures
- Extensive public rights of way network, including the Ridgeway and the Thames Path National Trails, and other accessible sites which receive 55 million leisure visits a year
- Natural features such as chalk rivers and streams which are a globally scarce habitat supporting a range of specialised wildlife including the water vole
- Tranquillity
- Arable and livestock farms managed with consideration for biodiversity, particularly farmland birds and other wildlife

¹⁵ As detailed in the vision for the Chilterns AONB and introduction of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13: A Framework For Action

Item 8 Chilterns AONB Planning Forum - feedback

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisation: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time.

Summary: The recent Chilterns AONB Planning Forum took place on 10th May. A number of officers and Members from local authorities were present and various topics were discussed.

Purpose of report: To inform the Committee about the feedback from the recent AONB Planning Forum.

Background

1. The most recent Chilterns AONB Planning Forum took place on the morning of Tuesday 10th May at the Wycombe District Council offices in High Wycombe. 13 people attended the forum. There were 6 officers from 5 of the Chilterns local planning authorities. 1 other authority was represented by a Conservation Board member. Also in attendance were people from a parish council, The Chiltern Society and Natural England as well as the Conservation Board. The lack of officers is a cause for concern as is the fact that, with the exception of one or two, we do not generally seem to get the same people turning up to each forum. This may be a reflection of the pressures that officers are under, which are likely to increase in the future. It would be useful to have a discussion about this both at the Committee meeting and outside it.
2. The intention was to discuss in some detail the likely implications for the Chilterns local planning authorities arising out of some of the proposals in the Localism Bill. Sue Frost from Central Beds Council gave a good presentation on the issue of neighbourhood plans. The Council has been thinking about neighbourhood planning and has been giving presentations to Parish Councils. Other authorities have also been asking Parish Councils about the issue. More powers will be devolved to neighbourhoods and communities. The neighbourhood development plans will not replace what we already have they will be in addition to it and must conform with it and will be part of the LDF and therefore have increased weight. Such plans cannot promote less development.
3. Once prepared such plans will be subject to independent assessment but not necessarily by a planning expert. The local authority will help to run the assessment and with the requirement for them to input to the plan in the first place this has significant resource implications. The assessor's report will be non-binding, unlike the inspector's reports for LDF examinations. More than 50% must be in favour of the plan (via a referendum) for it to be adopted. There was a query about the numbers of people that would have to vote for it to be a proper referendum. This and much more will be subject to regulations and practice guides. Such plans are likely to cost between £17,000 and £200,000 to produce depending on the issues and location, but most are likely to be at the lower end. Much of this cost is likely to fall on the local authorities.

4. There was quite a lot of support for the neighbourhood plan process and product from Parishes with the Central Beds area, though many are still not sure about the implications. Within other authority areas work has just started on awareness-raising of the issue. In some places there is a general reluctance to produce such plans. Some areas are keen to progress neighbourhood development plans as these are seen as documents that could influence design, permitted development rights and development in Conservation Areas and there may be flexibility in their production. The Board will keep a close eye on any emerging plans and will need to rely on both local authorities and local people to keep it informed about such issues.
5. The forum then discussed the impacts of financial cuts at the local authorities that have come about as a result of the comprehensive spending review. Some information had been provided by Laura Wood at Dacorum BC, though she was not able to attend. Most authorities had lost staff. This was usually as a result of a freeze on recruitment to vacant posts rather than redundancies, though in some instances these had occurred with re-organisations taking place. The implications of cuts are quite stark when account is taken of the possible increase in input required at the local level with the new neighbourhood development plans.
6. A discussion took place about the sharing of resources. This already takes place in South Oxfordshire with the Vale of the White Horse. A number of Bucks authorities have agreed to share a Chief Executive and apparently senior management team. This will almost certainly lead to redundancies but may result in closer working arrangements with other staff. Some thought that this may lead to the desire to create a unitary authority. Financial cuts were also raised those these do not appear to have been a significant problem to date. Authorities are looking at generating income and those that do not already charge for pre-application advice are investigating this. This led on to a short discussion about the Board charging for advice when asked to comment on an application and there appeared to be general support for this.
7. The draft position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB was also discussed though this is subject to another report on this agenda where all the issues raised are dealt with.
8. There was a brief discussion about future events and venues. Some thought that the forum could discuss climate change, flooding (strategic flood defence plans for example), sustainable urban drainage, biodiversity offsetting in relation to PPS9 and conservation/biodiversity target areas and any emerging planning policy statements or national policy statements.
9. The room and refreshments were very kindly provided free of charge by Wycombe District Council. The next forum will take place in November (week beginning 14th November) and this may be at the AVDC offices in Aylesbury. The Planning Officer will investigate and report to the next Committee meeting.

Recommendation

1. **That the Committee notes the feedback from the last AONB Planning Forum.**

Item 9 Chilterns AONB Planning Conference 2011

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisation: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: £1,200 plus staff time.

Summary: The annual Chilterns AONB Planning Conference is due to take place in the autumn and 5th October is proposed as a date, whilst arrangements for a venue and speakers also need to be put in place.

Purpose of report: To inform the Committee about the arrangements for the next AONB Planning Conference and to encourage its advertisement.

Background

1. The Board organises an annual planning conference which takes place in the early autumn. This year will be the 9th such conference and will focus on renewable energy. With changes being made to the feed in tariffs will there be as much uptake in solar photovoltaics? Will more be made of the energy that flows down the River Thames each day? Can we encourage more people to use biomass boilers? All of these issues and more could be addressed and the Planning Officer will be seeking speakers. Invitations will be sent out to possible speakers and if Committee Members have any suggestions these can be discussed at the meeting.
2. It is proposed that the conference takes place on Wednesday 5th October. A venue has not yet been organised but it is proposed that one be sought in the north of the AONB. Once the date and venue have been confirmed the event will be promoted in order to get it into people's diaries.
3. As with previous years it is proposed that the event should start at 9.30 with refreshments. A number of talks will be split by refreshments and a question and answer session and then followed by a panel discussion.
4. In the most recent conferences we have undertaken site visits by coach after lunch. This has proved to be costly in the past and we may need to revisit this or raise the price to cover costs. The venue may also be dictated by the availability of sites that have a bearing on the content of the day (the Planning Officer has yet to sort out a visit to an energy from waste facility/biomass/digester and this might be possible as part of the conference). The conference should conclude at 4.30 after a final discussion about the findings from the afternoon session.
5. The programme and booking form will be widely circulated and the Committee is asked to promote the date and content of the conference as soon as possible..

Recommendations

1. **That the Committee notes the draft arrangements for the 9th Chilterns AONB Planning Conference.**

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- 2. That the Committee suggests possible speakers and locations for the Conference and promotes it as widely as possible.**

Item 10 Chilterns Buildings Design Awards 2011

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisation: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time and costs of £1,500.

Summary: The Board and The Chiltern Society organise the annual Chilterns Buildings Design Awards and the judging for this took place recently. Arrangements for the awards ceremony are in place.

Purpose of report: To inform the Committee about the winners for this year's Chilterns Buildings Design Awards and the arrangements for the awards ceremony.

Background

1. The annual Chilterns Buildings Design Awards scheme is organised by the Board and The Chiltern Society. This year is the thirteenth time that the awards will be given out and although there were not huge numbers of entries the quality remains very high.
2. The judges met in late March to go through the 10 entries in order to produce a short list for more detailed visits. Six of the entries were then visited on 3rd May. The judges took a long while to deliberate over the entries and ultimately decided that this year there would be joint overall winners. These are for the extension and refurbishment of a traditional cottage at Studridge Lane, Speen, and the reconstruction and restoration of a Victorian farm complex to accommodate a modern business at Green Street, Chorleywood. Two other awards will be made for the restoration of a market office and its conversion to a museum at Brook Street, Tring (highly commended) and for the extension and refurbishment of a clubhouse at Aylesbury Sailing Club, World's End Lane, Weston Turville (special project).
3. The awards will be given out at a ceremony that takes place on the morning of Wednesday 8th June at the Village Hall, Church Road, Chinnor. The event will start at 10.30 and conclude with a buffet lunch at about 1 o'clock. Although the arrangements for the running of the ceremony are being finalised the invites have been sent out. There will be two or three speakers and then a summary of entries and winning entries by the chairman of the judging panel, Richard Wheeler. This will be followed by the awards being given out by the Chairman of the Board and the Chairman of The Chiltern Society.

Recommendations

1. **That the Committee notes the winners of the 2011 Chilterns Buildings Design Awards.**
2. **That the Committee notes the arrangements that have been made for the Design Awards ceremony and informs the Planning Officer if any Member wishes to attend.**

Item 11 Development Plans Responses

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisations: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time.

Summary: Responses have been sent in connection with public consultations on the following development plan documents: **National Grid** proposed approach to undergrounding new electricity transmission lines and **Central Beds, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Councils** – Mineral Safeguarding Areas Consultation. The Board is also aware that in some cases Core Strategies may be delayed due to Planning Inspector’s concerns about soundness.

Purpose of report: To inform the Committee about, and approve, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with development plan documents and to inform the Committee about possible delays in Core Strategy preparation in some cases.

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 listed.

National Grid’s proposed approach to undergrounding new electricity transmission lines

1. The Board understands that National Grid is the holder of a licence to distribute electricity and, as such, its actions are constrained by the Electricity Act 1989. Schedule 9 of the Act requires that the licence holder should prepare and review a statement which sets out the manner in which the licence holder proposes to perform the duty to ‘have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archeological interest’, and ‘shall do what he reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects’.
2. National Grid has not made it clear whether the current consultation document is meant to represent the statement mentioned above and the Board therefore considers that National Grid should clarify the intended status of the document that is being subject to consultation.
3. The consultation document has, as its basis, the ‘Holford Rules’ which were drawn up in 1959 as guidelines for overhead line routing. The Board considers that these should be referred to in the statement.

4. At various points in the consultation document mention is made of the fact that National Grid is subject to 'various statutory duties'. However, the Board understands that licence holders are also subject to the statutory duties as set out in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and Section 11(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. These statutory duties require such bodies, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB or National Park, to have regard to the purposes of designation of the AONB or National Park. These statutory duties should also be specifically referred to in the statement.
5. In the 'background' section, the opening statement acknowledging that 'burying high voltage electricity lines can have landscape and visual benefits' is welcomed. Reference is also made to underground cables having been used in the past when 'passing close to or through parts of nationally designated landscape areas'.
6. The 'our duties and obligations' section refers to the duty set out in Schedule 9 but omits the words 'natural beauty', and instead refers to 'landscape and visual amenity'. The Board considers that reference to the desirability of 'preserving natural beauty' as required by the Electricity Act should therefore be included in this section.
7. Reference is made in this section to Government policy as set out in National Policy statements for energy. It should be noted that paragraph 5.9 of the draft Overarching NPS for energy (EN1): clarifies the important protection provided by Planning Policy Statement 7 for nationally designated landscapes (including AONBs and National Parks); reiterates the criteria for assessing major development in protected landscapes as outlined in PPS7 (and this clarifies that the NPSs will not override PPS7 for such developments); recognises that development outside the boundary of a protected landscape may affect the designated area, and refers to the duties placed on the IPC to have regard to the purposes of designation of AONBs and National Parks.
8. Whilst the Board does not expect that all this detail needs to be included in the statement, specific requirements with respect to nationally designated landscapes should be highlighted in the statement. For example, the following statement could be included: 'National Grid also has particular responsibilities with regard to National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). We will recognise the special protection afforded to these areas when planning new transmission infrastructure'. The 'particular responsibilities' will be of relevance to National Grid when finding the 'appropriate balance' between all its obligations referred to in the statement.
9. In the 'our process' section, it would be helpful if, in Paragraph 1, it could be made clear that the 'alternative options' for new transmission lines also include alternative route options, rather than just alternative methods of construction along a preferred route.
10. The Board welcomes the fact that National Grid will consider undergrounding new lines in order to try and avoid the impact of pylons. However, the Board considers that National Grid also needs to recognise that undergrounding can bring with it environmental problems of its own, for example disturbing flora, fauna and ground features. Any consultation that is undertaken needs to include a thorough assessment of the implications of any undergrounding options as well.

11. The Board considers that the consultation process that is outlined in the 'our process' section is thorough. However, it would be useful if the statement also included more detailed information about which consultees would be involved. For those proposals that are likely to affect AONBs or National Parks the relevant AONB Conservation Board, Joint Committee or National Park authority should clearly be consulted alongside local planning authorities, local Parish and Town Councils and other interested groups (Natural England, English Heritage, the Environment Agency for example).

Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Councils – Mineral Safeguarding Areas Consultation

12. The Board's key concern relates to the mineral safeguarding area (MSA) for the chalk group. Safeguarding seeks to ensure that minerals are not sterilised by development in the future. The importance of the Kensworth Quarry is recognised by the Board. The chalk safeguarding options are – A: do not safeguard the chalk resource, B: limit the MSA to current permitted chalk quarries using a 250m buffer zone and C: safeguard the entire chalk resource area as defined by the existing Minerals Consultation Areas.
13. The Councils have stated that option B is the preferred option. The Board does not object to the principle of safeguarding the existing resource. However, on closer examination, the plan detailing the preferred MSAs shows that the MSA for Kensworth Quarry extends for quite some distance in all directions beyond the currently worked area. The Board is concerned that to the west the plan shows the MSA extending beyond the B4541 road onto Dunstable Downs. Any development in this area would clearly affect the AONB as well as the SSSI in this location and the main road. The Board is also concerned about the extent of the MSA to the north west, east, south east, south and south west and notes that a large area of the AONB that is currently undeveloped would be included as well as various buildings at Isle of Wight Farm and Churchend Kensworth. The Board considers that development of the quarry to this extent would have a significant detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the AONB. The Board therefore considers that the MSA for Kensworth Quarry should be reduced in size to properly reflect a 250m buffer zone that is mentioned in option B alongside a consideration of the actual extent based on geographic features. A more detailed plan should be produced arising from any changes made.
14. Policy MSA3 deals with development within an MSA. The latter part of the policy states that prior extraction of the mineral should take place subject to 'the environmental impacts of mineral extraction'. The Board understands the apparent meaning of this but considers that this part of the policy is not clearly worded at present. We suggest that this part of the policy should be reworded to make it clearer, and think that it could state that 'the mineral planning authority will seek prior extraction of that mineral subject to the provision of satisfactory information including a full assessment and acceptability of: ... the environmental impacts of mineral extraction'.

Soundness concerns

15. The Board has made representations on numerous development plans in the past. Under the current system objections have to relate to the soundness of the document.

In many cases the Board's objections are concerned with the soundness because the documents do not properly relate to the CRoW Act or PPS7.

16. Recently the Board has been invited to a Core Strategy examination exploratory meeting for the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy. Though the Board questioned the soundness of possibly allocating land in the AONB for housing development this issue didn't feature as one of the Inspector's key issues of concern. The Inspector was more concerned about the lack of conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy and he was being asked by a number of legal representatives to direct the Council to do one of a number of things – delay the examination to gather more evidence, delay the examination to see what happens with the Localism Bill and the clause that would lead to the revocation of the RSS or to cancel the examination.
17. It appears that a similar thing has happened to the Luton and southern Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy which was subject to an exploratory meeting on the 18th May. It is understood that the Luton and Central Bedfordshire Joint Technical Unit is seeking a 6 month delay in the examination programme.
18. A number of other local planning authorities have not progressed as far as South Oxfordshire and Luton/Central Beds and this sort of meeting may lead to delays in the production of their own core strategies. This is likely to lead to a number of core strategies being consulted on at about the same time.

Recommendations

1. **That the Committee notes and approves the responses already made on behalf of the Board in connection with the consultation exercises on the development plan documents detailed above.**
2. **That the Committee notes the position in connection with core strategies within the Chilterns.**

Item 12 Planning Applications Update

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Lead Organisations: Chilterns Conservation Board

Resources: Staff time.

Summary: Representations have been made regarding a small number of planning applications and appeals and a number of previous cases have been determined.

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

Background

1. Last year details of 152 planning applications or appeals were brought to the attention of, or requested by, the Planning Officer. All of these were responded to, with 21 being the subject of formal representations (18 objections and 3 supports). The applications that have resulted in formal comments are for: 12 affordable housing units (design), the part-change of use to offices of a farm building, further details in connection with restoration of Quarry 2 at Pitstone, replacement dwelling and staff accommodation, equestrian use (two applications), materials recovery site, aerodrome (application and enforcement appeal), landscaping for an office development, 10 dwellings, redevelopment of college site for 326 dwellings, astroturf pitch with fence and lights, roundabout advertising, retention of building as lambing shed, stationing of mobile home, new dwelling and a new access and track (objections) and variation of phasing and restoration (brickworks) and agricultural workers dwelling (cress site with associated appeal) (support). Of the 17 applications thus far determined 12 are in line with the Board's comments.
2. This year the Board has been consulted on 18 applications and has responded to 14 of these thus far. There have been no formal representations (either support or objections).
3. The Planning Officer is aware that an application has been submitted to Aylesbury Vale DC for the large milk processing plant at Aston Clinton. No details have thus far been put on to the Council's website though some information can be obtained from the Arla website using the following address: <http://www.arlafoods.co.uk/aylesbury/>. As more details emerge the Committee will be informed.
4. There is also no more information about the possible stadium development at High Wycombe. This situation may be complicated by various changes in Councillors at the District Council as a result of the recent local elections. As more details emerge the Committee will be informed.
5. The outstanding formal representations are detailed in Appendix 4, and where decisions have been made by the local planning authorities these are detailed.

Recommendation

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

APPENDIX 4

Location	LPA	Development	Ref. No.	Status	AONB Planning Officer's Response	Date
Pitstone Quarry 2, Pitstone	BCC	Extraction of chalk and restoration to agricultural and amenity uses by importation of inert waste	03/20002/A CC	Refused – 22.03.11	Object – change in circumstances regarding waste, greater rates of recycling and less need for landfill space, there are more suitable places for materials recycling centres than at Pitstone. The Board considers that the disadvantage of recycling and filling (particularly noise and visual disturbance from machinery and stockpiles of materials) outweigh the advantage of a more natural final landform for only part of the quarry (much would remain unchanged with vertical faces). There is a lot of concern about lorry movements which would be 1/3 more over a shorter time period thus having a significant detrimental impact on the enjoyment of users of the AONB and Ridgeway National Trail. The cumulative impact from other noise sources (aircraft in particular) should also be considered. Chalk extraction rates are not as high as suggested probably due to a lack of demand. Potential impacts on groundwater have still not been resolved and may mean the site could not be licensed.	17.06.10
					Additional information received about noise and proposal to relocate recycling element – objections remain though accepted that noise implications are likely to be less.	30.11.10
Newland Park, Gorelands Lane, Chalfont St Giles	CDC	Redevelopment of site to provide 326 dwellings, fitness and sports facilities and energy /	CH/2010/09 76/FA	Pending	Object – (see copied information sent out for full details) the Board does not object to the principle of the proposal and a redevelopment of parts of the site would bring about enhancement of the AONB if undertaken in the most sensitive manner, using the best designs and most appropriate	03.11.10

		recycling centre			materials. There are elements of detail the Board objects to including: the design and materials for various buildings (both parkland dwellings and apartment blocks), the lack of provision of solar pv and solar hot water, provision of extra lighting (particularly in association with the playing pitches), the lack of provision of affordable housing, lack of facilities such as shops and employment and lack of public transport provision thus leading to significant amounts of car traffic on minor local roads and the likely impacts of large numbers of lorries on the same roads during construction (to bring materials in and take spoil away).	
Kitcheners Field, Berkhamsted	DBC	Astroturf pitch, fence and floodlights	Pre-app	Pending	Object - development would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. The pitch itself would have limited implications, however, both the fencing and lighting would be particularly intrusive features in the landscape. It is difficult to see how the detrimental impacts could be resolved without removing the fence and lights completely from the proposal. A lower fence using different materials that are more appropriate to the rural setting would be more acceptable (wooden post and wire for example) but it is accepted that the purpose of the fence is to keep balls within the playing area. The lighting columns themselves would be tall and their use would introduce an incongruous feature into the AONB to the detriment of the tranquillity of the area.	29.09.10
Ploughmans, Howe Hill, Watlington	SODC	New access and track	P11/E0006/RET	Pending	Object – to the loss of the hedgerow that fronted onto the main road (and any trees that were within it), and the loss of an important part of the character of the rural road have not been taken account of by the applicant. Other parts of the	10.02.11

				<p>hedgerow are also likely to be affected by any possible change to the currently constructed visibility splays and this should clearly be taken account of.</p> <p>Based on the very small size of the holding that this application relates to (with significantly less than 5 hectares available for any agricultural use, now markedly reduced by the new fence that has been built) the Board considers that the Council should undertake a very careful examination of Classes A and B of Part 6 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. The Board remains to be convinced that the applicant has permitted development rights for the access and associated drive even for agricultural purposes. Though the access itself might be used for agricultural purposes, the Board considers that this would not be frequent based on the limited use of the site at present. The Board cannot see how the drive would be needed for agricultural purposes, it appears to be solely for domestic use and the Board is not aware that permitted development rights exist for this.</p> <p>The Board has also noted the construction of a significant length of close board fencing along the south west boundary of the site. This has had a detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the AONB and that impact is compounded when account is taken of the new access and drive.</p> <p>As constructed the access and drive are inappropriate development and have resulted in a suburbanisation of this part of the nationally designated Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. They neither conserve nor enhance the</p>	
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					natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and the Board therefore considers that they should be removed and the site returned to its former condition, including the reinstatement of the hedge and any bank that it was on. The previously approved access and track (P04/E1426) did not constitute a similar harm and the Board would not object if they were constructed in the correct place and as previously permitted.	
Grange Farm, Widmer End	WDC	Agricultural building to be used as potting shed	07/06948/F UL	Pending	Object - The proposal seeks to construct a very large (30m by 15m and 5.6m high) utilitarian, agricultural, building that will be clearly visible to users of the local rights of way. The principles of the AONB appear not to have been taken on board by the applicants. The development could not be assimilated into the Chilterns AONB. The proposal could create a dangerous precedent. The Board is mindful of the need to facilitate growth in the local economy and the evident importance of the applicant's business, however, it considers that the proposal would neither conserve nor enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB.	07.09.07
Wycombe Sports Centre, Handy Cross, High Wycombe	WDC	Coachway, park and ride, business development, car parking, hotel	09/07309/R 4OUT	Pending	Object – Whilst not objecting to the principle of the development a number of concerns have been submitted. The development proposes the inclusion of a number of wind turbines that would almost certainly sit idle for most of the time based on their location within the development where the wind resource will be affected by both the topography and adjacent buildings. It would be better to investigate other forms of energy generation, particularly wood fuel (which should be conditioned should approval be given). Any lighting used should take full account of the site's proximity to the nationally protected Chilterns AONB. The	06.01.10

				<p>Board objects to the bulk, mass and draft designs for the hotel and headquarters buildings as these would be up to 8 storeys high and, despite the visual appraisals in the supporting information, the Board considers that they would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Chilterns AONB. The Board has suggested that greater work is required on photomontages that show these prominent buildings in their setting and has yet to see this information. This objection would be removed if the scale, mass and bulk of these two buildings were significantly reduced. The Board is also concerned about the level of parking that is to be provided for the proposed office buildings. At the level proposed the Board considers that this will be unlikely to lead to modal shift. Increased bus provision and re-routing would also be required.</p> <p>Changes proposed – reduced height for prow building and hotel that would significantly lessen the potential impact on the setting of the AONB and on views from the AONB. If developed as proposed the changes, combined with the imposition of a proposed condition 12 and the inclusion of appropriate tree planting (not screening to hide the development), enable the Board to withdraw its previously stated objection.</p>	24.02.10
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