



LOCAL PLAN for Buckinghamshire

Draft Plan Consultation
Part B – Development Management Policies
September 2025



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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document forms Part B of the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire draft plan consultation, setting out the proposed Development Management Policies. This is not the full set of policies as there will be other policies to follow which are reliant on emerging evidence that is not yet complete. These are referenced at the end of the document and will be available for the Regulation 19 version of the plan, in the next round of consultation. As a general approach, national standards are followed unless there are local reasons and evidence to depart away from this. The policy approach also follows best practice.
- 1.1.2 When considering a development proposal, the starting point for making decisions is the Development Plan. All relevant policies in the Development Plan will need to be taken into account. Each policy is not standalone and is subject to all other policies in the Development Plan and national policies.

2. Development Management Policies

Housing

2.1 Housing Mix

HO1 Housing Mix

New residential development, including conversions, will be required to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The mix for market housing shall be in general conformity with the council's latest evidence*, and Neighbourhood Development Plan evidence where applicable for the relevant area, but can be negotiated having regard to available evidence from developers on local market conditions and any physical factors limiting a particular mix for conversions.

*The council's latest evidence is in the draft Buckinghamshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2025, but this will be subject to monitoring and review and will be updated periodically.

- 2.1.1 A variety of housing types and sizes is necessary to meet current and future housing needs of the local population to enable households to more easily find housing which suits their needs and that they can afford.
- 2.1.2 Policy HO1 sets out local market conditions should be taken into account if evidence demonstrates this is justified. It is imperative to recognise that an appropriate housing mix will vary between urban and rural locations for example, large scale flatted developments are not generally provided on small sites in villages. Equally sites in urban areas with good transport links will be more suitable for higher density flatted developments.
- 2.1.3 The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 provides conclusions on the required mix of market and affordable housing need by house type and size for the plan period, shown in the table 1 below. These conclusions take into account projected changes in the population and estimates future demand. The proportions are however a guide rather than a requirement as they may need to be varied on the basis of specific circumstances or evidence. Any variation in the proportions will need to be fully justified and variations should not take place to simply accord with a developer's preferences.

Table 1: Mix of market and affordable housing by housing type

Type	Market housing	Affordable Housing
1 bedroom	12%	24%
2 bedroom	28%	42%
3 bedroom	32%	22%
4+ bedrooms	22%	6%
Specialist older person housing	5%	6%

The housing mix policy sets out the mix of housing types to be provided in new development. It seeks to ensure that new housing is of a size and type to meet the needs of different groups in the community.

HO1) Do you agree or disagree with the proposed housing mix for Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.2 Affordable housing

HO2 Affordable housing

Requirement

1. Residential developments of 10 or more dwellings (gross) or sites of 0.5ha or more will be required to provide a minimum of 40% affordable homes on site unless one of the following applies

a) If the residential development is on land in, or through this plan being released from, the Green Belt it should instead provide a minimum of 50% affordable homes on site

b) If the residential development is on land within the Chilterns National Landscape, schemes of 5 or more dwellings will be required to provide a minimum of 40% affordable homes

Tenure mix

2. The tenure mix will be agreed with the council, taking into account the council's latest evidence. The council's latest evidence is in the draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025, but this will be subject to monitoring and review and will be updated periodically. This demonstrates a need for the following proportions

a) minimum 60% social rent

b) 20% affordable rent

c) maximum 20% shared ownership

For flatted schemes, reasonable effort should be made to separate affordable tenures with market dwellings, and rented affordable tenures from shared ownership dwellings to ensure service charge affordability.

Affordable housing mix

3. The appropriate mix for the size of affordable housing units is set out in policy HO1 Housing Mix.

Location and clustering

4. The affordable homes will be required to be integrated throughout the development site. They aesthetically and in quality should be indistinguishable from the wider development.

5. Large concentrations of affordable housing should be avoided with a maximum cluster size of:

Total dwellings in development site	Maximum cluster size (unless otherwise agreed)
10-24	4
25-49	6
50-99	10
100-149	12
150-199	15
200+	15 (18 for apartments)

Quality standards

6. Any affordable homes need to be delivered to Future Homes Standards (or subsequent legislation that supersedes it) and be 100% compliant with Nationally Described Space Standards.

Financial contributions

7. Affordable housing should be delivered on site. Exceptionally affordable housing provision may be provided via a financial contribution made in lieu of such provision. This will need to be justified as an exception to normal policy as part of the planning application.

8. The contribution charge will be index linked to the House Price Index to increase in line with inflation and should equate to the cost of the land and construction of the number of units that would be required on site.

Threshold

9. Where a site forms part of a larger site of a size which is capable of being developed, the affordable housing requirements will be applied on a cumulative basis.

More detail is set out in the supporting text and further detail will be included in an annex to be produced.

- 2.2.1 Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). This can include social rent, discounted market sales housing which is sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value, shared ownership and rent to buy. However, the Council is committed to bringing Shared Ownership tenures forward on development sites unless exceptional circumstances can be proven. Discounted Market Sale is not an affordable tenure within Buckinghamshire, made evident by the Local Housing Needs Assessment.
- 2.2.2 For context, the level of affordable housing required is currently different in the legacy authority areas depending on what the requirement is in the relevant Local Plan. In the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), which covers the north and central areas, Policy H1 requires 25% affordable housing on developments of 11 or more dwellings, or sites of 0.3ha and above. In the Wycombe District Local Plan (WDLP), which covers the west area, Policy DM24 requires on developments of 10 or more dwellings or more than 1,000 sqm of residential floorspace that are greenfield land or last used for Class B business use or similar use to provide 48% affordable housing. For other developments of 10 or more dwellings or more than 1,000 sqm of residential floorspace they should provide 35% affordable housing. In the Core Strategy for Chiltern District, which covers the east area, Policy CS8 requires 40% affordable housing in developments of 15 dwellings or more with a stepped requirement for sites below 15 dwellings. In the South Bucks Core Strategy, which covers the south area, Policy CP3 requires sites of 5 dwellings or more, or sites of 0.16 ha and above to provide 40% affordable housing. Since some of the policies were adopted national policy has introduced a threshold for affordable housing requirements, which is currently that affordable housing requirements shouldn't usually be sought for developments under 10 dwellings.

- 2.2.3 NPPF paragraph 63 requires Local Planning authorities to establish the needs of those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent). The draft Buckinghamshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2025 has therefore been prepared.

Requirement

- 2.2.4 The majority of affordable housing in Buckinghamshire is achieved by requiring developers to provide affordable homes as part of open market housing developments. To enable the council to meet the identified need, it will seek to secure 40% affordable housing with specifically 59% of Social Rent required on qualifying development sites. The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 identifies an affordable housing need of 35,552 dwellings during the Plan period. This equates to 40% of Buckinghamshire's overall housing need, whilst more affordable housing will be delivered on sites within or being released from the Green Belt to achieve the required number of affordable homes an allowance must still be made for the developments which will be below the 10-house threshold, outside of the Chilterns National Landscape, and will not deliver affordable housing. It considered that a rate of 40% on the housing sites over 10 or more dwellings, and a financial contribution towards specialist/supported housing proposed in policy HO8, will deliver the required total of affordable housing within the plan period.
- 2.2.5 These requirements apply to all residential schemes that include self-contained units which provide all the facilities of a single dwelling, regardless of their use class. This includes C2 or extra care units.
- 2.2.6 In line with the NPPF the provisions set out in the policy above will be reduced by a proportionate amount if the proposal supports vacant buildings which are being reused or redeveloped, cases where this doesn't apply are set out in footnote 30 of the NPPF.
- 2.2.7 Where the affordable housing policy would result in a requirement that part of an affordable home should be provided, the calculation will be rounded upwards, with social rent units taking precedence in all circumstances.

Tenure Mix

- 2.2.8 For the tenure mix, a tenure other than shared ownership will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances for that proportion of the mix and where evidence has been provided.

Location and Clustering

- 2.2.9 Affordable housing should be provided on the application site as this offers the best prospect of ensuring a mixed and balanced community. To achieve this, it will be important to avoid the affordable dwellings being overly concentrated in only a few areas of a development. Affordable homes will therefore be expected to be integrated throughout the development site.
- 2.2.10 Service charge affordability will be a material consideration when concerning location and clustering of affordable housing proposed on sites. While tenure blindness is crucial in ensuring cohesive mixed communities, registered providers have a preference for managing buildings that are 100% affordable. This can still achieve tenure blindness through separate entrances and cores which should be considered an acceptable design response.

Financial contributions

- 2.2.11 Exceptionally, off-site provision or financial contributions in lieu of affordable housing may be considered by the council where it can be demonstrated by an applicant that on-site provision cannot be achieved. Exceptional circumstances where this might be acceptable include sites that are too small to attract a Registered Provider, it can be evidenced that Registered Providers are not willing to take on the type of affordable housing proposed, if the proposal is for C2 development that is not self contained flats, the tenure is being delivered in one block which would result in financial hardship to residents and quality standards can not be achieved to abnormally high constraints. All exceptional circumstances are examined on a case-by-case basis during the application process.

Threshold

- 2.2.12 Planning applications will be checked to ensure that sites have not been sub-divided to take them below the threshold. This is to ensure that applicants and sites provide the appropriate level of affordable housing contribution or affordable housing units on sites that are suitable. If this is the case each parcel of the larger site, even if it's under 10 units, will be expected to provide affordable housing on a pro-rata basis.
- 2.2.13 Only organisations that are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing are accepted as being registered providers (RPs). RPs own and manage affordable housing stock in Buckinghamshire. Early engagement with RPs is beneficial as this can reduce design related issues with the dwellings. The council maintains a list of RP partners that are known to be active in Buckinghamshire, which can be provided upon request. The Council will expect new affordable housing to be transfers to RPs who will own and manage their stock.
- 2.2.14 The allocation of affordable housing will be made in accordance with the Council's relevant allocations policy. Affordable homes are to remain affordable in perpetuity or, if this restriction is lifted, the subsidy should be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision within Buckinghamshire.

This policy sets out how affordable housing will be delivered. It sets out the size of developments on which affordable homes will be provided and the types of affordable housing required to address the needs of different groups in the community.

H02) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to affordable housing in Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.3 Accessible housing

HO3 Accessible Housing

1. In order to create accessible homes:

- a. all housing development must meet the Building Regulations requirement M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'; and
- b. 30% of the affordable housing component of every housing development providing or capable of acceptably providing self-contained affordable homes, must meet Building Regulations requirement M4 (3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' to be wheelchair accessible, or be easily adapted for residents who are wheelchair users.
- c. 20% of market homes on sites providing affordable housing must meet Building Regulations requirement M4 (3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' to be wheelchair accessible, or be easily adapted for residents who are wheelchair users.

2. Compliance with the criteria should be demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application.

- 2.3.1 An accessible home supports changing needs of residents from raising children through to mobility issues faced in old age or through disability. This essentially allows people to live in their home for as much of their life as possible. Such homes have design features that have been tailored to foster accessible living, helping to accommodate old age, injury, disability, pregnancy and pushchairs or enable future adaptation to accommodate this diversity of use.

This policy seeks to ensure that homes are accessible for all and an appropriate 30% of housing is wheel accessible and / or capable of being adapted for wheelchair use.

HO3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to accessible housing?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.3.2 The standards for housing to meet Building Regulations requirement M4 (2) and M4 (3) relate to the layout of self-contained homes for permanent occupancy. Meeting Building Regulations requirement M4 (2) and M4 (3) will normally be controlled through the use of a planning condition to ensure that the relevant homes are delivered to meet the standards. The Council is able to accept minor variations to the standards under exceptional circumstances. The National Planning Practice Guidance¹ states that local plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should only be applied to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling. In the interest of mixed and balanced communities, the Council would also encourage developers to build wheelchair accessible market homes.

2.4 Self and custom-build housing

HO4 Self and custom-build housing

1. Self-build and custom housebuilding will be permitted if the proposed development is consistent with the policies of this plan.
2. Proposals for 60 or more dwellings must provide serviced plots to deliver at least 5% of the total number of market dwellings on the site as self-build or custom build homes (that meet the definition of self-build and custom housebuilding plots within the Housing and Planning Act 2016 or as amended by subsequent legislation). The plots should be grouped together and be separately accessed from the remainder of the site.
3. Developers will be required to enter into a section 106 agreement that will secure issues including timescales and phasing of serviced plot delivery and the marketing strategy. Once fully serviced, plots must be marketed for a 24 month period after which any plots that have not been sold will either remain on the open market for

¹ Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327

self or custom build or be offered to the Council or a Registered Provider, before being built out by the developer for market housing.

4. All self-build plots on sites of 60 or more dwellings must be provided with a plot passport.

- 2.4.1 'Self-build' is the practice of creating an individual home for yourself. The self-builder's input into this process may vary, from undertaking the actual building work to contracting it all out to an architect or building company or contracting the development of the shell of a building before completing the internal work themselves. 'Custom Build' housing is where the home is custom built to the individual's specification, as opposed to being designed and built by a construction company to a standard specification for sale. It can also be built or commissioned by individuals or groups of individuals.
- 2.4.2 The legal definition of self-build and custom housing contained in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) is 'the building or completion by individuals, associations of individual, or persons working with of for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals... (but) does not include the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person'. For the purposes of this policy, the definition will be used to determine whether or not a proposal can be considered as a self-build or custom build.
- 2.4.3 Under the Act, we are obliged to maintain a register of people who are seeking to acquire land to build their own home in Buckinghamshire. The Act also obliges us to give enough development permissions for serviced plots to meet the demand from the people on the register – Policy HO4 aims to help achieve this.
- 2.4.4 The NPPF (2024) para. 63 states that planning policies should reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community including people who wish to commission or build their own homes. Supporting the delivery of self-build or custom housebuilding can contribute to greater housing choice and potentially provide lower cost options for households than the traditional housing market. It can also result in innovative and sustainable design and construction and result in high quality, efficient homes.

2.4.5 A plot passport should be issued with every self/ custom build plot, setting out the rules for design as well as a summary of the main features to be delivered. The passports will serve as a key reference point for the purchaser, capturing relevant information from the planning permission, design code, design constraints and procedural requirements in a simple format. They must include, as a minimum:

- the plot location and size;
- back-to-back distances;
- permissible building lines;
- side spacing requirements;
- developable footprint;
- building height restrictions; and
- boundary treatments
- parking and cycle storage.

This policy aims to support individuals in building their own homes or commissioning custom homes.

HO4a) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the self and custom-build housing policy will help us meet the future needs of Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

HO4b) Is the proposed threshold of 5% on sites over 60 dwellings appropriate?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.5 Houses in multiple occupation

HO5 Houses in multiple occupation

Proposals for large houses in multiple occupation (sui generis) must:

- a. not create an over-concentration of such a use in the local area, or cause harm to residential amenity or the surrounding area for example impacting local character or causing an excessive impact on the availability of existing parking;
- b. be buildings or sites (including any outbuildings) that are suitable for use as housing in multiple occupation, with provision made, for example, for appropriate refuse and recycling storage, cycle and car parking and drying areas; and
- c. be accessible to sustainable modes of transport, shops and other local services.

Appropriate management arrangements should be put in place in order to monitor and minimise antisocial behaviour and adverse impact on local residents. A condition to this effect may be applied to any planning consent.

2.5.1 Housing in multiple occupation (HMO) are flats or houses permanently occupied by more than one household, where each household does not have exclusive access to all cooking, washing and toilet facilities behind a locked front door. In planning terms, HMOs are split into two different use classes, based on the number of occupants:

- **A small HMO** – a shared dwelling house occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom. This falls into use class C4 and permitted development rights enable a flat or house (in use class C3) to change use to use class C4 without submission of a planning application;
- **A larger HMO** – more than six unrelated individuals sharing basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom. This falls outside the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order and is categorised as sui generis.

2.5.2 Proposals for smaller HMOs (use class C4) will be considered in the same way as a proposal for C3 residential development. HMOs have an important role to play within the local housing market. They provide a range of shared accommodation, predominantly occupied by students and young professionals. However, it is acknowledged that HMOs can reduce the number of family homes and impact negatively on the character of an area and contribute to local parking problems. Furthermore, people living in HMOs often struggle to have their own private open space and this makes access to parks and public open spaces especially important to their occupants.

2.5.3 An over concentration of HMOs can result in:

- Areas with poor upkeep and maintenance of rented housing
- Dilapidation of some housing stock and housing facades (e.g. windows, doors and guttering)
- Unkempt gardens and yards, with the dumping of some unwanted white goods and furniture
- Removal of some garden hedges/fences/walls to allow tarmacking for car parking on gardens and driveways
- Predominance of loft conversions and housing extensions
- Prevalence of to-let signs, and non-removal of signs
- Seasonal depopulation, pointing to relatively high levels of population transience and turnover
- Overspill from refuse bags and wheelie bins, particularly in alleyways
- Some fly-tipping of white-goods and unwanted furniture in backs of streets of terraced housing
- Streets crammed with parked cars

2.5.4 Other authorities have adopted specific thresholds above which new HMOs are not permitted. For example, these authorities use the following thresholds:

- Milton Keynes: the number of HMOs should not exceed 35% of the total number of properties within 100m of the application property;
- Northampton: it should not result in more than 10% of the total number of HMO dwellings within 50m radius of the application site; and

2.5.5 Bedford: the total number of HMO households will not exceed 30% within 100m radius of the property. The Council will develop guidance to support the definition of over-concentration of HMOs.

This policy outlines the rules and regulations for managing properties where three or more people, forming two or more households, share common facilities like a kitchen or bathroom.

H05) Please share your views on the appropriate definition of over concentration of HMOs?

2.6 Travelling communities' accommodation needs

H06 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision

The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment (2025) identifies the need for permanent pitches and plots for the period 2025-2045 as:

- a) 360 (net) additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers that meet the PPTS definition
- b) 23 (net) additional plots for Travelling Showpeople that meet the PPTS definition

In addition, the potential need for permanent pitches and plots for the period 2025-2045 are:

- c) 321 (net) additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers where it is undetermined if they meet the PPTS definition
- d) 15 (net) additional plots for Travelling Showpeople where it is undetermined if they meet the PPTS definition

In order to meet these requirements, and to provide and maintain a five-year supply of deliverable sites allocations will be made to meet at least the first 10 years of this need.

Existing lawful Traveller sites will be safeguarded for Traveller use.

- 2.6.1 The council is required to set pitch and plot targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs. It is required to identify and annually update a five-year supply of deliverable Traveller sites and to identify a supply of specific, developable sites.
- 2.6.2 Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers form an ethnic minority group and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Government guidance sets out that councils should assess and meet Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs in the same way as other accommodation needs, including the identification of land for sites. The Government guidance on this is specifically set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). This was first published in March 2012 and updated in December 2024.
- 2.6.3 The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment (2025) assessed the needs for travellers during the plan period. It sets out the following needs for Buckinghamshire, breaking it down into 5 year periods.

Table 2: Need for Gypsy and Travellers households

Year Period	Dates	PPTS Need	Undetermined Need	Total
0-5	2025-29	226	224	450
6-10	2030-34	38	28	66
11-15	2035-39	42	30	72
16-20	2040-44	46	33	79
21	2045	8	6	14
0-21	2025-2045	360	321	681

Table 3: Need for Travelling Showpeople households

Year Period	Dates	PPTS Need	Undetermined Need	Total
0-5	2025-29	18	9	27
6-10	2030-34	1	2	3
11-15	2035-39	1	2	3
16-20	2040-44	2	2	4
21	2045	1	0	1
0-21	2025-2045	23	15	38

- 2.6.4 The PPTS, December 2024, sets out in Annex 1 the definition of gypsies and travellers for the purposes of planning policy as:

“Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.”

- 2.6.5 The needs of those households who were surveyed during the GTAA and met this planning definition are captured in the PPTS Needs columns of tables 2 and 3. For the households where interviews were not undertaken, their needs are captured as undetermined needs. Whilst their status has not been determined it is assumed that they are likely to meet the new planning definition.

This policy sets out the level of new accommodation needed to meet those in the travelling community.

HO6) Do you agree or disagree that the evidence setting out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment will meet the needs of Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.7 Travelling communities' accommodation policy

HO7 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Policy

Proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation sites will be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is an identified need, and will be required to meet following criteria:

- a) Sites should be suitably designed and the layout include sufficient space to accommodate the proposed number of caravans, provision of day rooms, space for tourer caravans, landscaping, SuDs mitigation, Biodiversity Net Gain, vehicles and ancillary areas as appropriate. Larger sites should provide residents some amenity space on site.
- b) It has reasonable and safe access to existing local services and facilities (which should include food shops, schools, healthcare and public transport).
- c) The size and scale of the site, alone or in combination with other nearby traveller sites, respects the size and density of the local settled community and does not dominate the nearest settled community
- d) Have safe and suitable vehicular access without giving rise to adverse impacts on highway safety. Wherever possible there should also be safe and suitable pedestrian and cycle access provided.
- e) Be able to achieve a reasonable level of visual and acoustic privacy for both people living on the site and those living nearby
- f) Not have a significantly adverse impact on environmental assets such as the countryside, protected landscapes, the historic environment, biodiversity, watercourses (including an ecological buffer zone), open space and green infrastructure
- g) The site should not be located where there is a risk of flooding or be affected by environmental hazards that may affect residents' health or welfare

h) The site must be capable of being adequately serviced by drinking water, utilities and sewerage disposal facilities

In the case of Travelling Showpeople, proposals will also be assessed, taking into account the needs for mixed use yards and the nature and scale of the Travelling Showpeople's business in terms of land required for storage and/or the exercising of animals.

Sites meeting an identified need will be conditioned for the occupation of the intended occupiers.

- 2.7.1 This policy sets out a criteria-based approach to assess potential allocations and any applications for new sites or for expanding current sites within Buckinghamshire. This is required to ensure that Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation is provided in suitable locations. When considering the location of a proposed site and if it has reasonable and safe access to local services and facilities regard should be given to if there are known to be children living on the site and if so access to schools are of particular importance. The larger the site that is being proposed then the more important access to services and facilities are.
- 2.7.2 It is important to identify sites that are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally; have access to services, facilities and potential sources of employment; and which will promote inclusive communities, but which will not be out of scale with or dominate nearby settled communities. When considering whether a proposed Gypsy and Traveller site would dominate settled communities, regard will be given to existing Gypsy and Traveller sites outside Buckinghamshire boundary but still in close proximity to the settled community. As set out in the national planning guidance there is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission should be made permanent.

- 2.7.3 For Gypsy and Traveller pitches previous guidance² has recommended that, as a general guide, an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer (a static caravan or park home) and touring caravan, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area. Although there is no guidance on the size of a pitch, the GTAA recommend an average pitch size of 320m². It is important however to allow for a variety of sized pitches to accommodate different family's needs and to help contribute toward affordability.
- 2.7.4 For Travelling Showpeople a plot is a space occupied by one household and often includes space to store and maintain equipment. There is no recent standard on plot size, however The Showmen's Guild³ recommends an average plot size of 2,000m². This guidance is old and does not take into account changes in practices amongst Travelling Showpeople. Flexibility in plot size will allow for different family make up, businesses use and affordability.

This policy seeks to ensure that sites can be provided for travelling communities in a way that recognises their traditional and nomadic way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community.

H07) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the criteria listed is appropriate for meeting the needs of the travelling communities?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

² Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Good Practice Guide, CLG, 2008; revoked 2015

³ The Showmen's Guild: *Travelling Showpeople's Sites – A Planning Focus* (2007).

2.8 Specialist Housing

HO8 Specialist Housing

The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 sets out a high level of need for specialist and supported accommodation. This includes housing that meets the needs of older people, and also other groups of people such as those with disabilities.

Sites will be allocated to meet the needs of older people.

Proposals for extra care villages and C2 accommodation will be supported provided the following criteria are met:

- a. The proposal is in a sustainable location for amenities and services and does not cause harm to residential amenity or the surrounding area for example impacting local character or causing an excessive impact on the availability of existing parking.;
- b. There is an identified package of care provide on site
- c. Facilities for social and recreational activity are provided

How the needs of other groups of people who require specialist and supported accommodation are met is still being considered. One of the options for this is to require a financial contribution from residential development towards this. This would be in addition to any affordable housing provisions (including both onsite dwellings and financial contributions) and would need to be viability tested.

- 2.8.1 As set out in paragraph 63 of the NPPF local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community, including older people, students and people with disabilities. The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 for Buckinghamshire shows that the population of people aged 75 or over is projected to increase by 38,000, which is nearly 30% of the total population growth. Therefore there is likely to be a significant need for housing which will be able to meet the needs of older people. The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 identified the demand for this housing as:

Table 4: mix of specialist housing by tenure

Housing type	Market Housing	Affordable Housing	Total number of units
Housing with Care (C3)	634	377	1,011
Housing with Support (C3)	2,254	1,867	4,121
C2 bedspaces (equivalised to dwellings)	n/a	n/a	1,306

2.8.2 The housing needs of older people cross over the C2 and C3 use classes and take a variety of forms. The types of accommodation set out above are mostly provided through the private sector, particularly those in use class C3. However, Buckinghamshire Council may commission services to provide an element of C2 care. Other options to meet this need include:

- making specific allocations to meet this need, not enough suitable sites may have been promoted for this use so sites promoted for other uses could be considered
- requiring developments over a certain size to provide an element of older person accommodation
- require a financial contribution from development towards this, similar to if affordable housing is provided off site and
- having criteria set out in policy to assess schemes led by the market.

2.8.3 The draft Buckinghamshire LHNA 2025 sets out a need for an additional 130 units of supported housing for people with a mental health need and an additional 405 units of accommodation for people with a learning disability or autism. It concludes that housing for students is likely to have a very limited impact on the general needs housing stock in Buckinghamshire.

2.8.4 Homes provided to meet specialist accommodation needs should be of good quality to prevent a worsening of health and wellbeing

This policy seeks to ensure that there is sufficient specialist housing provision for older and disabled people in Buckinghamshire.

HO8) Do you agree with the approach identified for meeting specialist and supported housing needs to be met in Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.9 Rural exception sites

HO9 Rural Exception Sites

The council will support proposals for affordable homes on Rural Exception Sites where all the following criteria are met:

- a) they meet a clearly established local need identified through a robust housing needs assessment in accordance with a methodology agreed with the Local Planning Authority;
- b) affordable housing meets the requirements of policy HO2;
- c) the homes would be broadly the right tenure mix and size to reflect the local need;
- d) reflects affordability in that location in Buckinghamshire;
- e) is located within a settlement* or adjacent to an existing settlement*;

f) the proposed development is of size and scale commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement they are within or adjacent to and the established local housing need;

g) there are satisfactory arrangements to ensure that the affordable housing is owned and managed by a Registered Provider, and remains affordable housing in perpetuity; and

h) they have access to local services and facilities.

The council will support a small proportion of units as market housing where robust evidence establishes that viability issues would prevent the delivery of a Rural Exception Site which is 100% affordable housing. The amount of market housing will be the minimum level needed to make the development viable and ensure the provision of additional affordable housing to meet local needs. Where market housing is provided it should be indistinguishable in appearance and be integrated into the site.

*Settlements are of at least 100 people as listed in the Local Plan settlement hierarchy

2.9.1 This policy supports Rural Exception Sites to deliver affordable housing in locations which would not otherwise be permitted through the development plan.

2.9.2 This policy supports additional affordable homes on sites of a proportionate size to the settlement they are and in areas where there is an identified need and policy criteria are met.

2.9.3 The required housing needs survey submitted by applicants will need to demonstrate the extent of the housing need arising from people with a local connection. The applicant will need to agree the methodology for this with Local Planning Authority at an early stage in seeking planning permission. The local housing needs survey will have due regard to the Local Planning Authority's latest evidence on local housing needs. It will also enable a Registered Providers to identify and bring forward Exception Sites. Rural Housing Enablers (or a council recognised equivalent) may be commissioned to undertake a survey by a community group, parish council, local authority, Registered Provider, landowner, or private developer.

- 2.9.4 The survey should be initiated in consultation with the local community. The geographical extent of the survey should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. It is essential to publicise a forthcoming Housing Needs Survey to ensure engagement across the whole of the relevant community including, where appropriate, those who work locally. To be up to date this Survey should be no more than 3 years old at the time of submission of a planning application for the development. The Survey will be used to justify the necessity of the release of the site and also to ensure that the housing proposed broadly meets the identified need and that this need cannot be met on a more suitable site that would otherwise accord with policy. The applicant should assess local plan and neighbourhood plan allocations or planning applications to establish there is no such alternative suitable sites and use a Rural Housing Enabler (or a council recognised equivalent) and evidence of this will need to be provided to the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.9.5 On Rural Exception Sites, the council will support a small number of open market sale homes. This is to ensure the site can be commercially viable to develop. This will be only once an open book viability assessment demonstrates that 100% affordable housing cannot be delivered on a Rural Exception Site. Due to affordability issues within Buckinghamshire, there is strong preference to deliver 100% affordable housing sites.
- 2.9.6 Viability appraisals are sensitive to minor changes in the figures used to calculate viability and to variations in methodology. The council will assess the Viability Appraisal to ensure that the maximum viable level of contribution to planning obligations are received. An editable electronic version of the viability model should be made available to the council, or anybody acting on its behalf, to enable a robust review of the submission. The council should also be provided with all the assumptions and calculations included in the appraisal. Where possible, applicants should seek to maximise the level of public subsidy available from Homes England (or subsequent bodies) to deliver the maximum level of affordable housing on site.

- 2.9.7 Only those households who meet the council's Allocations' Policy for affordable housing will be able to occupy rented (social and affordable rented) affordable housing on Rural Exception Sites. Applicants must be registered with Bucks Home Choice (or subsequent system) before they can be nominated for a social or affordable rented property. Where more applicants than vacancies exist, the council will allocate dwellings in accordance with our current Housing Allocations Policy (or as replaced). Eligibility criteria for homeownership properties will accord with national requirements.
- 2.9.8 This policy supports Rural Exception Sites in locations not otherwise supported in the Local Plan. It does not however support isolated development away from existing settlements, services and facilities. The site should have access to a range of local services and facilities proportional to the size of the proposed development and the settlement it is within or adjacent to. Access to such services and facilities from the development should be, or be capable of being, safe and convenient.
- 2.9.9 Rural Exception Sites can include (subject to meeting all policy criteria) proposals for rural workers working within food production to maintain the rural economy.
- 2.9.10 The Local Planning Authority requires a planning obligation to ensure that the homes provided meet a local need, and that satisfactory arrangements are made to ensure that the affordable housing remains affordable housing in perpetuity.
- 2.9.11 The council will prepare a Technical Note to advise further on the delivery of Affordable Housing developments including Rural Exception Sites.

Rural exception sites are located within or on the edge of rural settlements and are usually small. These sites would not normally be granted consent for development, but this policy sets out when an exception can be made in the interest of providing affordable housing that will help sustain the local community.

H09) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the approach to rural exception schemes?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.10 Windfall policy

HO10 Windfall

1. Development on unallocated sites in settlements within tiers 1-5 will be permitted provided that it is of a scale, density and character that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement and does not adversely impact its character and appearance, through being:

- a) Within the existing built-up area of a settlement, including the redevelopment of suitable previously developed sites for both housing and employment purposes, or
- b) development that consolidates existing settlement patterns without harming important settlement characteristics, and does not comprise partial development of a larger site.

Residential developments in excess of the following dwelling thresholds are judged to be of an excessive and harmful scale to come forward as unplanned development:

- i. Tier 1 settlements - there is no specific limit on individual scheme size for development and redevelopment;
- ii. Tier 2 settlements - residential development and redevelopment up to a scheme size of 100 homes will be permitted;
- ii. Tier 3 settlements - residential development and redevelopment up to a scheme size of 50 homes will be permitted;
- iii. Tier 4 settlements - residential development and redevelopment up to a scheme size of 25 homes will be permitted;
- iv. Tier 5 settlements - residential development and redevelopment up to a scheme size of 10 homes will be permitted;

v. Settlements* outside of tiers 1-5 may be able to sustainably accommodate some small scale residential development and redevelopment, up to a scheme size of 5 homes

2. Development on unallocated sites will have to meet all of the following criteria:

c) be located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the settlement*⁴ except where there is a made neighbourhood plan which defines a settlement or development boundary, where the site should be located within that settlement boundary

d) not lead to coalescence with any neighbouring settlement

e) not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure, and

f) there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development, and provision is made for any appropriate infrastructure required.

*Settlements are of at least 100 people as listed in the Local Plan settlement hierarchy

2.10.1 The Local Plan will allocate sites over a certain size of threshold to meet the majority of the development needs of Buckinghamshire, while some homes will be delivered on smaller unallocated sites. This figure will be supported by the Council's evidence on windfall. This policy provides guidance on the appropriateness of sites to come forward to meet the identified windfall supply.

⁴ The existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the settlement, and generally excludes remote individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. The exclusion covers former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings (but does not preclude permitted development for converting agricultural buildings to residential – Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended – Class Q) and associated land on the edge of the settlement and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the settlement.

- 2.10.2 In general, windfall sites will be smaller than the threshold above which the Local Plan will allocate sites, as suitable sites larger than this threshold have been allocated through the Local Plan. The NPPF, at paragraph 73, sets out the important contribution small and medium sized sites can make to housing delivery. The policy provides guidance on the appropriate scale of sites within individual settlements, this is intended to ensure windfall sites reflect the level of infrastructure, services and facilities that existing settlements have. Appropriate infrastructure referred to in criteria g includes utilities such as water, sewerage and electricity, healthcare facility contributions, school contributions, greenspace, leisure facilities and retail units.
- 2.10.3 In exceptional cases exceeding the thresholds set out in criteria c might be justified outside of the plan making process if a scheme offers particular benefits to the community. Benefits could include the reuse of a vacant brownfield site, the provision of community facilities or preservation of a historic building or asset.

Windfall housing sites are sites for potential development that have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. This policy regulates the process for taking such sites forward for development.

HO10) Does the windfall housing policy give enough direction but still allow some flexibility for development of sites not allocated?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.11 Residential Annexes

HO11 Residential Annexes

A residential annexe will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a) The proposed annexe is intended for someone with a demonstrable connection to the resident(s) in the existing dwelling.
- b) The annexe will have a functional relationship with the existing dwelling and be of a scale that is subordinate to it.
- c) The annexe must be capable of being easily assimilated back into the existing property when it is no longer necessary for its original purpose.
- d) Vehicular access and garden areas must be shared, with no boundary demarcation or sub-division of garden areas.
- e) Where the annexe is to be created through an extension to an existing dwelling, it must be constructed with an internal link to that dwelling.
- f) Where an annexe is created through the conversion of an outbuilding, such as a garage, or if this is not possible through the construction of a new detached building:
 - i. this must be close to the main house to ensure reliance on it.
 - ii. any proposed new buildings must be within the residential curtilage of the main dwelling.
- g) All proposals must also comply with policies BE5 and BE6 to ensure they are appropriate in terms of the existing dwelling, surrounding area and amenities of occupants of nearby properties.

- 2.11.1 A residential annexe is accommodation that is ancillary to the main dwelling, within the residential curtilage and which provides additional accommodation for members of the same family, for example older relatives who require support or older children seeking a degree of independence, or others with a demonstrable link to the host dwelling including for domestic staff accommodation.

- 2.11.2 An annexe can be created through an extension to an existing dwelling, the conversion of an existing outbuilding or through construction of a new detached building. An extension is normally the most appropriate as it better integrates the annexe into the dwelling for the use of shared facilities and for access, as well as normally minimising the impact on the surrounding area. The next most appropriate would be the conversion of an existing building, while if neither of these are possible then a new building for the annexe may be acceptable. Annexes as a new building are more likely to be appropriate in the built-up area rather than the open countryside.
- 2.11.3 A statement providing justification for why the proposed annexe is required and how the intended occupant(s) is/ are connected to the main dwelling must be provided by the applicant. The statement should also provide justification for the proposed floor area for the annexe, which should be the minimum level of accommodation required to support the needs of the occupant(s) and also indicate what the functional relationship of the annexe to the main dwelling would be.

HO11) To what extent do you agree or disagree with our policy approach to residential annexes?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Economy

- 2.11.4 The net target for new employment development in the Local Plan is 45.9 hectares. The target is derived from the evidence in the Lichfield's Employment and Retail study (2025). The Local Plan will deliver this employment land through new allocations, a supportive employment policy, intensification of existing sites and through the protection of current employment sites from loss to other uses. New employment land can be delivered from smaller schemes such as through rural diversification, mixed use developments and redevelopments.
- 2.11.5 Employment is defined as land within use classes E part g, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, i.e. offices, light and heavy industry, research and development, storage, distribution and warehouses. Sui generis uses which are similar to these use classes will also be assessed under these policies.
- 2.11.6 The delivery of employment land links closely to the draft Buckinghamshire Growth Plan (2025). The Plan seeks to deliver productivity growth across Buckinghamshire with a focus on existing high-growth sectors and growing the small and medium sized business community within existing and future employment sites which includes the sub-regional town centre areas of Aylesbury and High Wycombe.
- 2.11.7 Some types of employment development are of national importance under the NPPF. These are called Modern Economy Uses and those that are relevant to Buckinghamshire are Data Centres and Laboratories. Data centres are covered by Policy EC04 Data Centres.
- 2.11.8 Nationally, permitted development rights to convert offices and light industrial units to housing will inevitably reduce the supply of employment floorspace in Buckinghamshire. Any changes arising will be monitored during the plan period and the supply of floorspace will be managed to ensure that an appropriate supply of premises continues to deliver an up-to-date portfolio of employment land attractive to the market.

We need to plan for different types of employment sites. This could include incubator space for small businesses research and innovation, premises for medium-sized businesses (defined as one for 20 – 250 employees), and more support for rural business locations.

EC a) Which types of employment sites should we plan for? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Incubator space for small business research and innovation
- ☐ Premises for medium-sized businesses
- ☐ Locations for rural businesses
- ☐ Other (please state below)

EC b) Please tell us which towns or other locations you think could help meet the need for new employment sites.

2.12 Strategic and Key Employment sites

EC1 Strategic and Key Employment sites

Employment sites which are of strategic or key importance are listed in the Employment Site Hierarchy (Appendix A). These sites include the three Enterprise Zones in Buckinghamshire and the Pinewood Studios site.

The regeneration and improvement of the strategic and key employment sites, and proposals for the intensification for employment use, will be supported where they accord with other policies in the plan.

The sites are protected for employment use, i.e. use classes B2, B8 and E (g) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended by subsequent legislation, and their loss to non-employment uses will be resisted.

Other similar employment-generating uses may be permitted on these Strategic or Key employment sites provided that:

- a) they are complementary to the current use of the site;
- b) they support the employment function of the site; or
- c) they provide economic enhancements or increased employment opportunities at the site; and
- d) they do not have a significant adverse impact on the employment function of the site.

- 2.12.1 There are specific Local Plan policies for the Enterprise Zones and Employment sites at Westcott and Silverstone and for the Pinewood Studios site. These have additional policy requirements because the scope for new employment development at these locations is part of the wider Local Plan and the Buckinghamshire Growth Plan for economic growth needs.
- 2.12.2 Strategic and key employment sites are a vital part of the Buckinghamshire economy, and their protection will help the economy grow in future. The sites have been assessed in the Lichfields Employment and Retail study (2025) and their protection for employment is recommended in the Employment site hierarchy within the study. The policy aims to protect their economic contribution and to support developments which complement the uses already on the sites. This would apply to small scale support facilities such as on-site cafes and other infrastructure which are ancillary to their main role. Developments which facilitate a better working environment on the sites are also within the scope of the policy for ancillary facilities, e.g. for healthy food opportunities, green space and active travel.
- 2.12.3 This policy is in line with paragraph 86 of the NPPF that planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth. The map below shows the sites assessed in the Employment Land review.

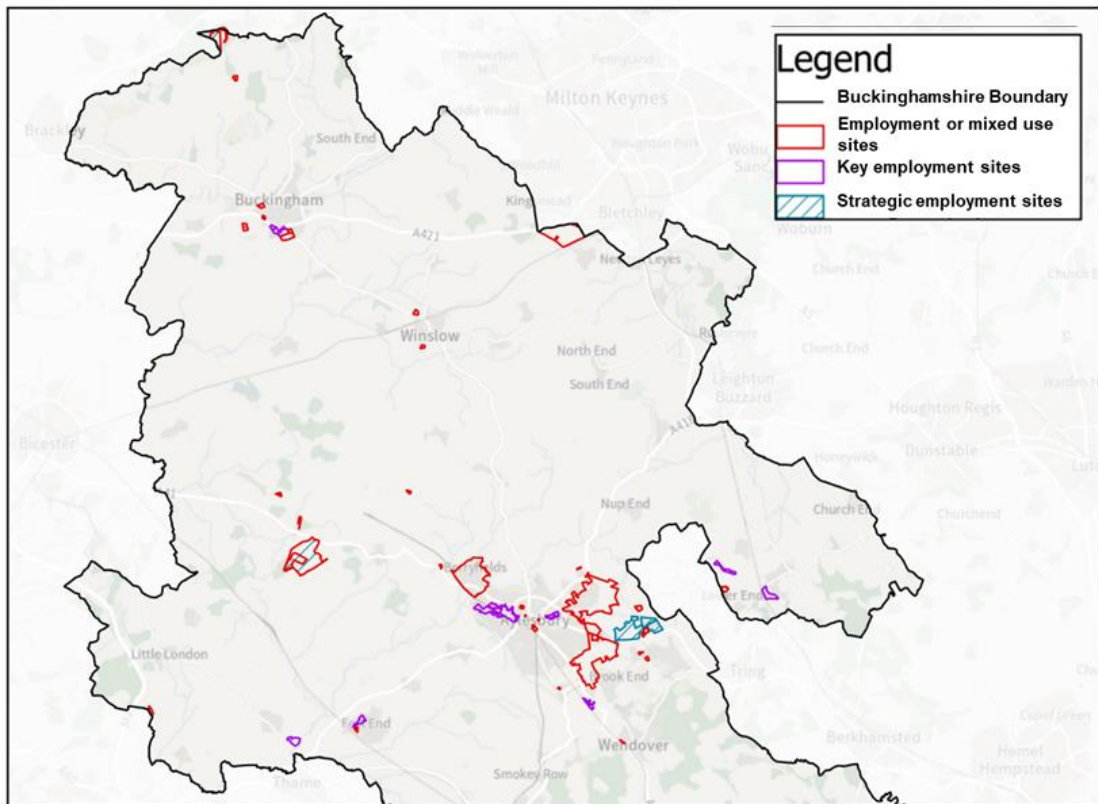


Figure 1 Employment Strategy for northern part of Buckinghamshire

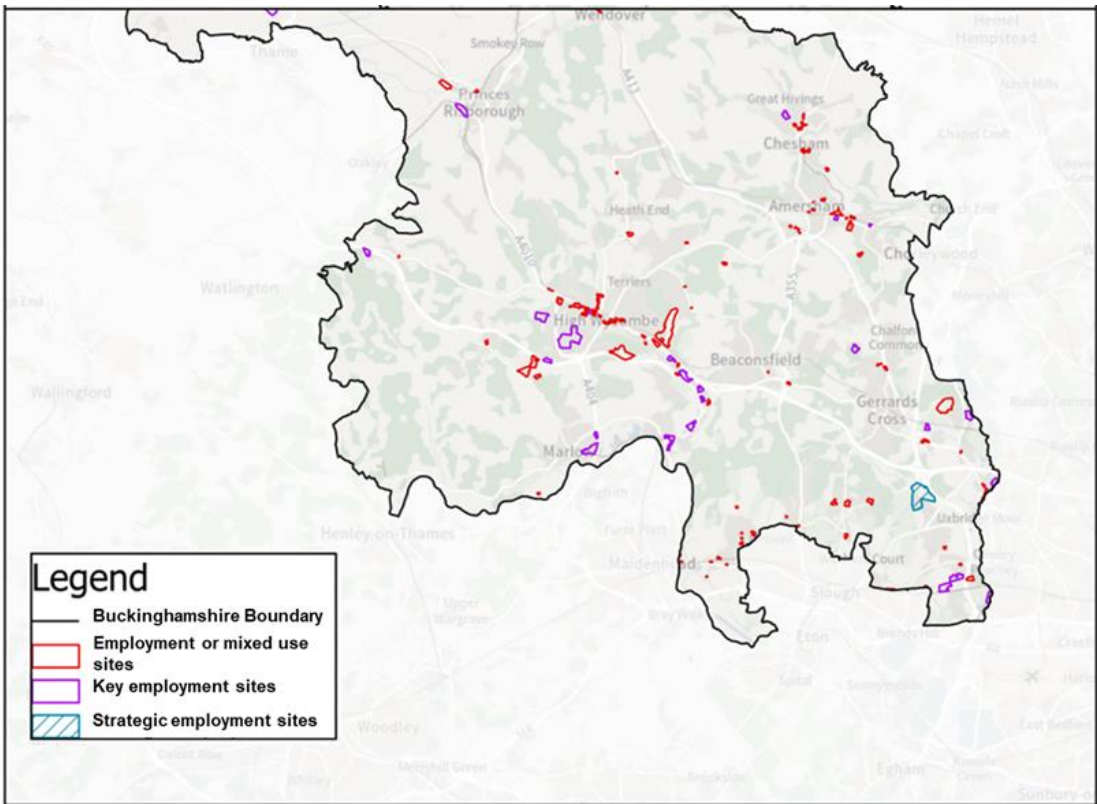


Figure 2 - Employment Strategy for southern part of Buckinghamshire

This policy sets out the circumstances in which the regeneration and improvement of key employment sites will be supported.

EC1) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to strategic and key employment sites?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.13 Other Employment Sites

EC2 Other Employment Sites

This policy applies to sites which are not listed in Appendix A (Strategic and Key Employment sites).

Development proposals for the intensification and regeneration of other employment sites (defined as use classes B2, B8 and E (g) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended by subsequent legislation) for new employment uses will be supported.

Development proposals for the change of these employment uses to non-employment use must provide credible and robust evidence including the following:

1. The site has been robustly marketed for employment use suitable to the site and location for a continuous period of 18 months with no viable interest;

2. The marketing must have been carried out prior to submitting the planning application;

3. The price or rental value of the site in the marketing exercise and the other marketing particulars and methods are appropriate to an employment use

4. Marketing should be related to the tenancy or ownership status of the site

5. If a site is marketed while it is occupied the evidence should cover why the site is not needed for its lawful uses or purpose;

4. Any employment – generating businesses affected by the proposals can be relocated to alternative premises so that viable businesses are not affected; and

5. The development will not prejudice the efficient and effective employment use of the remainder of the site.

The size, location and type of the existing and proposed uses will also be taken into consideration, including whether a proposed use generates employment or whether an existing employment use has significant adverse impacts on local amenity which cannot be mitigated.

This policy applies to existing lawful employment sites within urban and rural areas.

2.13.1 Development proposals which help deliver good quality premises attractive to the market are important to local economic growth. It is accepted that some changes to current employment sites will be needed so that stock can be renewed, regeneration / mixed use schemes can proceed and so that Buckinghamshire's employment stock is attractive to the market. It is important that the policy is sufficiently flexible to avoid long term vacancies which in themselves can undermine interest in an area. This is especially important in town centre locations. Combining residential, commercial, and employment spaces can create vibrant, sustainable communities. Developments which facilitate a better working environment on the sites are also within the scope of the policy for ancillary facilities, e.g. for healthy food opportunities, green space and active travel.

- 2.13.2 If businesses are proposed to be relocated, they should ideally be within Buckinghamshire, dependent on their specific circumstances to ensure that their contribution to the local economy continues. This policy applies to the loss of employment within Buckinghamshire, in rural and urban areas.

This policy protects employment sites. It has an 18 month marketing requirement for the evidence needed to support changes from employment use to other uses.

EC2) Is this an appropriate timeframe?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.14 Skills and Local Employment

EC3 Skills and Local Employment

New major developments of 100 or more dwellings or 1,000 sqm or more floorspace in Use Classes B2, B8 or E (g) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended by subsequent legislation should contribute to local employment and skills.

New development will be supported if the applicant commits to a Local Employment and Training section 106 Agreement. This should set out how the development will support local skills and employment, in agreement with the Council.

The planning application will need to be accompanied by a report on the skills and employment opportunities arising from the proposed development. This should include the following:

- a) Provision of construction jobs, apprenticeships, and upskilling opportunities for local people. This may include offering job interviews or work placements to participants of local skills and employment programmes;

- b) Consideration of the longer-term occupancy of the development in securing jobs and apprenticeships for local people in its operational phase;
- c) How the proposed development links with local schools, the College, Universities and other education providers to promote jobs and opportunities to local students and graduates;
- d) Procures a proportion of local construction materials;
- e) Procures a proportion of the operational supply chain needs locally; and
- f) Other appropriate measures to support local skills and employment.

- 2.14.1 The Buckinghamshire Skills and Employment Strategy 2024-2029 sets out a range of measures to support and enhance local skills and employment. This Local Plan policy is a key part of this Council strategy. It will help ensure that there are localised benefits from new development in terms of jobs and training. This can relate to the construction phase of a development, but it may also be relevant to the day-to-day operation of a development, e.g. an office, warehouse or factory.
- 2.14.2 This policy links with the Council's Corporate Plan⁵ (2025) protecting the vulnerable and increasing our prosperity (bullet 2).
- 2.14.3 This Policy can help improve basic skills. For example, 26,930 Buckinghamshire residents aged between 18 to 64 years old had no qualifications in 2021 (Census). There were 9,600 Buckinghamshire residents who are not in work but wish to and require support to do so (2023 Population Survey – ONS). Measures that provide training or support individuals to gain qualifications contribute to the local economy, life chances and quality of life.

⁵ [Corporate plan | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

2.14.4 The term local within this policy relates to Buckinghamshire. This policy will be implemented with the use of section 106 legal agreements. Financial contributions could include support towards training and employment schemes within Buckinghamshire. Applicants will need to confirm that they accept the principle of a Local Employment and Training section 106 Agreement as part of the supporting documentation with their planning application.

The policy states that new housing developments of over 100 dwellings or 1,000 square metres of office, industrial or storage/distribution floorspace should have a component that delivers skills and employment for local workers. The policy also applies to new data centres.

EC3a) Do you agree that the threshold for new developments of 100 or more dwellings or 1,000sqm or more floorspace is appropriate?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

EC3b) Should this policy be extended to other types of major developments, e.g. retail or other employment-generating developments?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.15 Data Centres

EC4 Data Centres

Proposals relating to data centres will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria will be complied with:

- a) Their electricity, digital connectivity and water supply needs should be capable of being met without adverse impacts on the local supply of electricity, digital connectivity and water supply for local residents and businesses.
- b) Their visual impact should be mitigated by high quality design and landscaping, especially within the Green Belt or other sensitive landscapes and areas
- c) The use of sustainable technologies for heating and cooling is maximised
- d) The use of renewable and low-carbon energy sources for their operation is maximised
- e) They are accompanied by a fire suppression strategy
- f) They are accompanied by robust evidence of need for the facility at that specific location, including justification of the data centre needs where they may be proposed as an ancillary use for an existing business or premises.
- g) The proposal will contribute to local skills and employment in accordance with Policy EC3

2.15.1 Data centres are referred to in the NPPF as nationally important infrastructure to support economic growth. There is no defined national or regional need for the number and capacity of new data centre provision. There is very significant pressure for data storage, especially for cloud computing in businesses and local institutions expands.

2.15.2 The Modern Economy study for the Local Plan shows that Buckinghamshire is an important location for the development of new data centres. The Ivers area is within the Slough – Hayes availability zone as a prime location for data centre provision. The study recommends that the Local Plan should have a specific policy and may need site allocations for new data centres. The need for clear support for data centres is set out in the NPPF paragraphs 86 and 87.

2.15.3 In Buckinghamshire there is one data centre under construction in Saunderton and one in operation at the Cressex Business Park. Four others have been permitted, these are at Thorney Business Park, Dromenagh Farm, Woodlands and Court Lane Iver.

- 2.15.4 Data centres do not generate significant levels of direct employment, and their provision may not count towards meeting the Local Plan targets for new employment land. However, they are needed to meet national needs for data storage and processing, supporting economic growth.
- 2.15.5 The electricity supply capacity criteria also relate to back-up power supply systems. Applicants should engage with the National Energy Supply Operator (NESO) to secure evidence of electricity supply. This should include a response from the electricity distribution network operator showing an electricity connection agreement, any modification agreement with their electricity supplier and a likely electricity supply connection date. The criteria relating to ancillary uses is needed because future innovations may see a requirement for smaller scale data centres to support local schools, hospitals or businesses for their data storage needs. Data centres need to have back – up energy supply to provide consistent services and may require large areas for diesel storage. This could impact on source protection zones for water supply and upon air quality. Other policies in the Local Plan address flood risk and water supply.
- 2.15.6 There is a specific reference to local skills and employment requirements in this policy because the Use Class of data centres can be uncertain, depending on the type of premises proposed. This gives certainty that the Council will expect contributions to local skills and employment from these developments.

EC4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with our policy approach to the development of data centres?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.16 Silverstone Circuit and Silverstone Park Enterprise Zone

EC5 Silverstone Circuit and Silverstone Park Enterprise Zone

The council will support the Circuit as an international venue and destination for world-class motorsport and a leading business, education, leisure and entertainment venue. The following types of uses and proposals will be supported:

Motor sports – related proposals for the improvement of track-related facilities and the promotion of Silverstone as the home of British motorsport and racing.

Facilities and ancillary office accommodation supporting motorsport activities.

Proposals which enhance and strengthen Silverstone Circuit as the centre of automotive and high technology excellence for the UK.

New employment uses and the intensification & improvement of existing employment uses at the Silverstone Technology and Research Business Park.

Proposals to support the Silverstone University Technical College (UTC) for secondary education and as a centre for excellence in high performance engineering and business and technical events management

On site accommodation for students attending the UTC.

Proposals for leisure, entertainment, recreation and hotel activities which support uses on the Circuit site.

All proposals should comply with all the following criteria:

- a) They should not cause unreasonable disturbance to those who live in the area
- b) They should provide or, where agreed by the Council, make contributions to sustainable transport links and strengthen sustainable transport connections to nearby settlements
- c) They should protect the rural and visual character of the countryside adjacent to the Circuit with particular attention to the Stowe Area of Attractive Landscape, and
- d) They should not harm the archaeological significance of Luffield Priory.

- 2.16.1 Silverstone Circuit is a motor sports venue of global significance and international importance, and, as an iconic destination, it attracts visitors from across the world. The Circuit also lies at the heart of the British motorsport industry where the motorsport business cluster referred to as the Silverstone Technology Cluster has grown and established and as a whole, making a valuable and significant contribution to the local and national economy.
- 2.16.2 The Silverstone Enterprise Zone comprises 27.2 hectares of land to the west of the circuit.
- 2.16.3 The Local Plan policy aims to support the continued success of this important economic asset. The Silverstone Visioning 2035 Study⁶ sets out the longer-term vision for Silverstone and the Local Plan policy is in accordance with that.
- 2.16.4 The Circuit straddles the boundary between Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire with the northern part coming under the jurisdiction of West Northamptonshire District Council and the southern part coming under the jurisdiction of Buckinghamshire Council (BC). The policy refers to the focus of growth being within the wider Silverstone Park, as a reflection of the opportunities at this site. The intention is that enhancements at the Park will support the success of the Circuit.
- 2.16.5 The Local Plan policy framework is in accordance with the implementation of current commitments which are part of major planning permissions for mixed use development comprising education, including on-site student accommodation, etc.
- 2.16.6 The Policy provides a part of a holistic framework for the development of Silverstone Circuit and Silverstone Park.

EC5) To what extent do you agree or disagree with our policy for the future of Silverstone Circuit and Silverstone Park Enterprise Zone?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

⁶ [Silverstone-Vision-2035-Report.pdf](#)

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.17 Westcott Venture Park Enterprise Zone and Strategic Employment site

EC6 Westcott Venture Park Enterprise Zone and Strategic Employment site

1. Proposals which support the economic function and growth of Wescott Strategic Employment site and Enterprise Zone will be permitted. This includes proposals relating to the following uses:

- a) Employment within Use Classes B2, B8 and E (g) (i – iii)
- b) Sui generis uses closely similar to the uses in clause a) provided that they do not undermine the main employment function of the site
- c) Small scale temporary residential accommodation for workers at or visiting the site to facilitate the use of the site for innovation and testing of new technologies
- d) Small scale private market housing to enable workers to live closer to the site provided that the level of housing does not prejudice the employment function of the site
- e) Ancillary uses which support the employment function of the site, such as facilities for training.
- f) Supporting infrastructure, such as for new transport facilities which support the employment function of the site

2. All proposals should comply with all the following criteria:

- a) They should improve the sustainability performance of the site in terms of travel use and opportunities, connecting to the Bucks Greenway and ensuring sustainable connectivity to Aylesbury and

- b) They should not cause unreasonable disturbance to those who live in the area, and
- c) They should promote sustainable transport links and strengthen sustainable transport connections to nearby settlements, especially to Aylesbury and Bicester and
- d) They should not harm the rural and visual character of adjoining countryside.

- 2.17.1 The Westcott Enterprise Zone and strategic employment site is an advanced engineering and space hub and a key economic asset for Buckinghamshire which forms the Westcott Space Cluster. It is a centre of excellence in rocket propulsion, 5G and autonomous systems Research and Development. The main employment sectors at the site are space, automotive technology, distribution, manufacturing, engineering, waste recycling, and renewable energy. Westcott Venture Park is one of the largest employment sites in Buckinghamshire and is currently home to about 90 businesses.
- 2.17.2 The designated Enterprise Zone is 35.4 hectares. The wider strategic employment site is 198.0 hectares. It adjoins the A41 8km north-west of Aylesbury.
- 2.17.3 The continued success of the site needs to build on its strong history of partnership working, for example with the Satellite Applications Catapult, UK Space Agency, government departments, businesses and education providers. The shared ambition is to grow the Westcott Space Cluster within the site and drive inward investment and development of existing and new facilities to support the UK space and related industry sectors.
- 2.17.4 The flexibility in uses for the site within this policy is intended to support its longer-term success. This should enable businesses to respond to new innovations and changing market conditions. This will also help address the specific locational characteristics of the site as its out-of-town location currently presents a challenge for attracting new firms and workers.

- 2.17.5 There is a need for short term / temporary residential accommodation within the site to support the drone testing, anti – gravity chamber and unique bespoke innovation opportunities within the site. This is because the facilities can be hired for short term periods and having the chance to stay at the site will enable firms to make the best use of the facilities. This enhances the overall success of the site.
- 2.17.6 The level of any housing proposals should be subordinate to the main function of the site for employment. For example, they will need to be located away from areas of the site used for rocket testing and other potentially sensitive uses so that they do not create a constraint to the success of the businesses on the site. This is the only strategic employment site where new small scale housing proposals are potentially suitable as a result of its specific location and characteristics.
- 2.17.7 Ancillary uses have already been provided to enhance the attractiveness of the site, such as the Skylark conference centre and restaurant, but further facilities and improvements may be needed. It is important that the policy supports these.

EC6) To what extent do you agree or disagree with our policy for the future of Westcott Venture Park Enterprise Zone and Strategic Employment Site?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.18 Pinewood Studios

EC7 Pinewood Studios

The Council will support Pinewood Studios as a key economic asset in Buckinghamshire for film and television production activity use.

Extensions, new buildings, conversions, and other development within the site will be permitted provided that the proposals are for uses directly connected with film and TV production activity and its associated industries; for supporting infrastructure provision at the site or uses that are ancillary to the main function of the site.

Proposals for redevelopment or re-use of all or part of the site for other uses will only be permitted where:

- a) it is demonstrated that the site is no longer required or viable for TV or film-production related uses; and
- b) the proposal would be for an employment generating use; and
- c) the proposal would result in a reduction in the overall footprint of buildings on the site, and
- d) the proposal would not include buildings or structures which would harm local character and
- e) the proposal would incorporate substantial landscaping; mitigation of its environmental impacts and impacts on local transport and other infrastructure.

In all cases supporting transport and other infrastructure must be delivered alongside the new development and there should be no significant additional impact on the surrounding Green Belt.

- 2.18.1 Pinewood Studios is a site of national and international significance. It is located within the nationally important West of London Screen cluster. The Pinewood West and East sites are not within the Green Belt. There are associated extant planning permissions on land to the south and north which are within the Green Belt.

- 2.18.2 The site has grown over recent years with a partly implemented permission on land to the south in 2013, permission in 2022 under PL/20/3280/OA (Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (except for principal points of access) for the phased development of a screen industries global growth hub of up to 750,000 sq. ft) and permission on land to the south and north of the site under application PL/22/2657/FA (for film production buildings, education and business hubs).
- 2.18.3 Creative industries are an important sector for Buckinghamshire and are one of Buckinghamshire's economic strengths. A supportive policy for Pinewood studios will help deliver the economic growth ambitions in the Council's draft Local Growth Plan.
- 2.18.4 A planning policy context for any future proposals is necessary because the retention and growth of this unique site for film and TV production is extremely desirable. Therefore, the Policy allows for new development within the site boundary for film / TV studio and related uses to provide an opportunity for growth and updating of the premises within its wider Green Belt location.
- 2.18.5 If it is proposed to redevelop or re-use all or part of the site, the Council will need to be satisfied that TV / film production use is no longer required or viable.
- 2.18.6 As the site currently contains employment generating development, redevelopment should only be for another employment generating use. Any new uses at the site should include provision for the mitigation of transport impacts because the site is not well located in relation to public transport.
- 2.18.7 In the event of the site being redeveloped or re-used there should be a reduction in the footprint of buildings to create a more spacious form of development appropriate to a site virtually surrounded by Green Belt. Substantial landscaping should be an integral part of any development.

EC7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with our policy for the future of Pinewood Studios?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.19 Rural diversification

EC8 Rural Diversification

1. The re-use and adaptation of an existing buildings, and new buildings where re-use is not possible, that is of permanent and substantial construction will be permitted provided that all of the following assessment criteria are met:

- a) The proposed new development or re-use is of a scale that would not have an adverse impact on its surroundings;
- b) The redundant or disused status of the building has been demonstrated and the re-use of the building would enhance the immediate setting
- c) Structural survey information must be provided to ensure that the buildings are suitable for conversion. Conversion works should not involve major reconstruction or significant extensions and should respect the character of the building and its setting. If major works are required, it must be demonstrated that dereliction was the result of severe accidental damage or accidental destruction; and
- d) Where the building proposed to be converted is suitable for modern agricultural practice, its loss would not give rise to a future need for another building in the near vicinity.

2. Conversion of existing rural buildings to new uses in the National Landscape is supported where it complies with the requirements above plus the following:

- a) The building is not a building that was erected within the preceding 10 years; and
- b) The proposed use will support the vitality and sustainability of the local rural community, the rural economy, or local services.

- 2.19.1 This policy sets out the approach of Buckinghamshire council for development proposals to support the rural economy. It covers change of use and diversification of rural and farm buildings to other employment uses. Employment uses are defined as offices, industrial and warehousing under use Classes E (g), B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning, Use Classes Order 1987 as amended by subsequent legislation. Sui generis uses which are similar to these use classes will also be assessed under these policies.
- 2.19.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2024 paragraphs 88 and 89 support the need for economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity.
- 2.19.3 The re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings located in the countryside is important to meet employment needs in rural areas and provides the opportunity to maintain a viable business. It encourages the creation of new sustainable rural enterprises and often provides premises for start-ups and small and medium enterprises. The demand for new building in the countryside can be reduced by reusing rural buildings, avoiding leaving an existing building empty or underused. Buckinghamshire Council will seek to prioritise the re-use or conversion of existing buildings over the development of new buildings.
- 2.19.4 Diversification in the Chilterns National Landscape will need to have regard to Social and Economic Wellbeing objectives of the Chilterns Management Plan which seeks to continue a functional working landscape with a viable rural economy. The Management Plan intends to address skill shortages in key occupations required to maintain the National Landscape.

EC8) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to rural diversification

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.20 Tourism

EC9 Tourism

New or expanded tourism and visitor facilities within or adjacent to existing settlements will be supported.

Elsewhere, proposed development must:

- a) Support growth of existing tourism and visitor facilities;
- b) Involve the conversion or replacement of buildings which form part of an existing tourist facility or well-designed new building(s) which promotes diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; and
- c) be an appropriate location and minimise environmental impacts.

In the case of seasonal structures these must be temporary in nature and not have an adverse impact on the landscape.

The loss of existing tourism and visitor facilities will not be supported unless replacement facilities are proposed in suitable alternative locations. Alternatively, robust evidence must be provided to demonstrate there is no longer a need for that use in the area, or the existing use is unviable, and its retention has been fully explored including active and comprehensive marketing of the use for a period of 12 months.

2.20.1 Tourism plays an important role in generating income for local residents.

Buckinghamshire is a popular tourist destination, providing leisure and recreation activities for its own residents and those visiting. Much of Buckinghamshire tourism offering is based around our heritage and history and our built and natural environments. Attractions including National Trust properties such as, Stowe, Waddesdon Manor, Hughenden Manor and Cliveden, Discover Bucks Museum (our county museum), as well as Chilterns National Landscape, country parks such as Langley Park, and the motor racing circuit at Silverstone.

- 2.20.2 Buckinghamshire's tourism sector in 2022⁷ comprised of 169 visitor attractions, 115 annual events and over 1,000 places to stay. Tourism within Buckinghamshire consists of 2,125 businesses employing more than 21,000 people. Many of our tourism businesses are 'micro' businesses (under 10 employees) which gives opportunities to cluster, curate and promote the broad range on offer at the level of place.
- 2.20.3 Tourism development within Buckinghamshire is generally welcomed, which can provide opportunities for employment and a means of supplementing rural incomes, as well as supporting our town centres. However, it can have negative impacts on the surrounding area if located insensitively, is out of scale with its context, or if it fails to take proper account of local character and appearance. This policy seeks to locate most development within or close to defined settlements, where local shops and facilities are most accessible and stand to benefit the most. and this makes use of existing transport links
- 2.20.4 Applications for tourism development in the countryside will need to be justified by the applicant to show that it meets demand. Tourism development should benefit local businesses, the environment, communities and visitors in the long term.
- 2.20.5 The council wants to encourage visitors to Buckinghamshire whilst recognising that a balance needs to be maintained with regards to preserving the high quality environmental, historic, and cultural assets of Buckinghamshire. The re-use of existing buildings limits harm to the environment and may help farm diversification schemes.
- 2.20.6 Evidence supporting a countryside location should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the tourism proposal being considered. Larger tourism attractions such as museums, outdoor activity centre or hotels may have a significant impact on the countryside and the local road network, so in these cases more comprehensive supporting evidence will be required.

⁷ [Visitor Economy Strategy Update report to Growth, Infrastructure & Housing Select Committee 7th September 2023](#)

- 2.20.7 Seasonal structures related to tourism such as marquees can provide additional support to the local economy. Proposals of this type should be temporary in nature and not have an adverse impact on the landscape.

EC9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed policy approach to tourism in Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.21 Retail Hierarchy

EC10 Retail Hierarchy

The Council will promote the role and function of its centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and public realm. The retail hierarchy for town centres in Buckinghamshire is defined as follows:

Sub-regional town centres: Aylesbury and High Wycombe.

Town centres: Amersham on-the-Hill, Beaconsfield New Town, Buckingham, Chesham, Gerrards Cross, Marlow and Princes Risborough.

District centres: Amersham Old Town, Beaconsfield Old Town, Burnham, Chalfont St. Peter, Great Missenden, Wendover and Winslow.

Local centres: Bourne End, Chalfont St. Giles, Denham Green, Farnham Common, Flackwell Heath, Haddenham, Hazlemere, Holmer Green, Iver, Little Chalfont and Prestwood.

- 2.21.1 The NPPF requires us to define a hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability.
- 2.21.2 All centres have designated centre boundaries. Sub-regional town centres also have a designated Primary Shopping Area (PSA). Primary shopping frontages are designated in sub-regional town centres and town centres. The boundaries of centres and these designations will be defined on the proposals map.
- 2.21.3 Aylesbury and High Wycombe are designated as sub-regional town centres, they are the focus for retail development, serving communities within the northern and southern halves of Buckinghamshire. Other town, district and local centres play an important role as a focal point in their respective settlements / community areas but have a lesser range and choice of facilities compared to Aylesbury and High Wycombe.
- 2.21.4 These policies protect all centres to ensure appropriate accessibility to important facilities for all sections of the community and to ensure sustainable shopping patterns.

Table 5: Retail, food / beverage and leisure / cultural floorspace needs

	Convenience retail (sq.m gross)	Comparison retail (sq.m gross)	Food / beverage (sq.m gross)	Leisure / cultural (sq.m gross)	Total (sq.m gross)
2030	4,380	9,772	8,725	6,026	28,930
2035	9,798	20,612	17,033	11,767	59,210
2040	15,869	32,580	26,321	18,186	92,956
2045	24,071	54,315	36,700	25,356	140,442

- 2.21.5 Capacity projections indicate that an element of new retail development needs can be met in existing centres through the re-occupation of vacant units in the plan period. For example, if the shop vacancy rate reduced by 10%, this could accommodate 14,300 sqm of new space. Reducing the vacancy rate further would deliver more new space in our town centres. Larger scale new developments proposed in this Local Plan will be required to provide their own centres or small-scale shops to serve the new communities. This can also go some way to meeting the remaining retail needs of the plan.
- 2.21.6 The uncertainty around the forecasts and changes in shopping patterns, means the Council is likely to be looking to plan to meet the needs to 2035, and would then review the situation in a future Local Plan.
- 2.21.7 Further work will look at this before the next iteration of the Local Plan and we welcome views on how retail needs can be met within existing and new centres.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires us to define a hierarchy of town centres as part of the promotion of their long-term vitality and viability.

EC10) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the retail hierarchy?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.22 Development within Buckinghamshire's centres

EC11 Development within Buckinghamshire's centres

Development within primary shopping frontages

Within the primary shopping frontages in the sub-regional town centres and town centres at ground floor level, only shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b), and E(c)) will be permitted subject to achieving a good mix of retail uses overall² and provided the proposal meets all the below criteria:

a) Either cumulatively or individually contributes positively to the vitality and viability of the centre. This should take into account:

- i. the mix of uses in the primary frontage;
- ii. what is currently located there and what development already has planning permission;
- iii. location, prominence and length of frontage of the premises;
- iv. nature of the use proposed, including the level of pedestrian activity associated with it; and
- v. the number of ground floor vacancies in the area;

Consideration will be given to the size of the proposed unit, the width of the frontage and surrounding uses. A window and entrance should be provided or retained which relates well to the design of the building and to the street scene and its setting.

Development for uses other than shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b) or E(c)) will not be supported at ground floor within primary shopping frontages.

Residential and office development is encouraged within the primary shopping frontage above ground floor levels subject to appropriate accessibility requirements.

Development outside primary shopping frontages within primary shopping areas

Proposals for shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b), and E(c)) which are outside the defined primary shopping frontage but within the primary shopping area will be supported.

Proposals for uses which are for other main town centre uses outside the defined primary shopping frontage but within the primary shopping area will be supported if:

- b) The proposal complements the existing uses within the primary shopping area;
- c) The proposal contributes positively to the vitality and viability of the primary shopping area; and
- d) The proposal maintains or improves the attractiveness and interest of the street scene.

Proposals for uses which are not for main town centre uses outside the defined primary shopping frontage and within the primary shopping area will be supported if criteria b. c. and d. are met and the proposal does not cause an undue concentration of non-main town centre uses within the primary shopping area.

Development outside primary shopping frontages and outside primary shopping areas

Within centres and outside of the primary shopping frontages and primary shopping areas, proposals for shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b) and E(c)) or any main town centre uses will be permitted provided the proposal:

- e) Either cumulatively or individually contributes positively to the vitality and viability of the centre. This should take into account the mix of uses in the centre, what is there currently and what development is committed, location, prominence and length of frontage of the premises, nature of the use proposed, including the level of pedestrian activity associated with it, and the number of ground floor vacancies in the area;
- f) Would not result in more than three units in a row which are not either shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b) or E(c)); and
- g) Would not result in the loss of a shops, cafes / restaurants, financial and professional services (Use classes E(a), E(b) or E(c)) use on a visually prominent site.

A window and entrance should be provided or retained which relates well to the design of the building and to the street scene and its setting.

Proposals for non-main town centre uses will be supported if criteria g. and h. are met and the proposal does not cause an undue concentration of non-main town centre uses within the primary shopping area.

Residential and office development is encouraged outside the primary shopping frontage above ground floor levels.

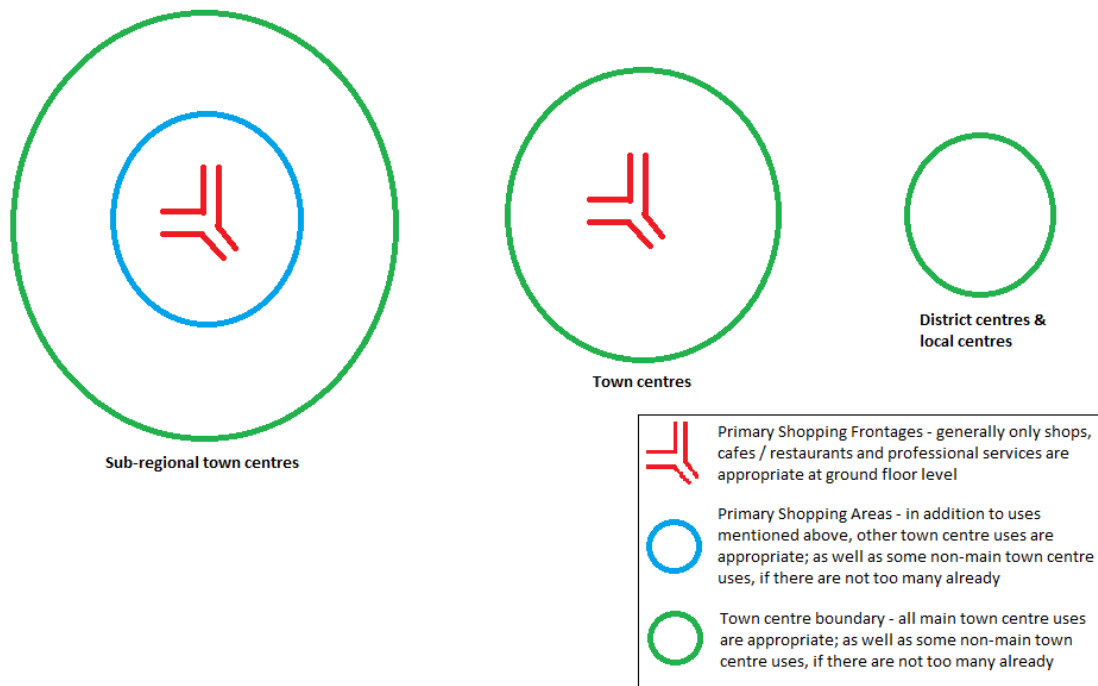


Figure 3 providing diagrammatic representation of policy EC13

EC11) Do you agree with the approach to uses within and outside primary shopping frontages?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.23 Development for main town centre uses outside Buckinghamshire's centres

EC12 Development for main town centre uses outside Buckinghamshire's centres

Proposals for main town centre uses that are greater than 400sqm gross and are not within defined centres must follow the sequential test, as set out in the NPPF and PPG. Where the sequential test indicates there are one or more suitable alternative sites to the proposal site within a town centre or on the edge of a town centre, development will be refused in line with national policy.

Furthermore, proposals for main town centre uses that are greater than 400sqm gross and are not within defined centres must also be subject to the impact test, as set out in the NPPF and PPG. Where the impact test indicates significant adverse impacts on an existing centre, development will be refused.

Proposals for new small shops (up to 400sqm) or extensions to existing shops within or adjacent to existing settlements that serve local needs will be supported.

- 2.23.1 Shops in centres provide a vital role in supporting the sustainability of settlements, reducing the need for residents to travel to meet day-to-day needs. Retail and other main town centre uses are directed towards our existing centres. In smaller settlements, they also provide an important community function, forming a hub for village life and supporting those who have difficulty travelling. Proposals for small-scale new shops and facilities to serve local needs are supported by the plan.
- 2.23.2 There are benefits to the clustering of retail and other main town centre uses within centres – a cluster of complementary uses creates an attractive destination that allows residents to shop for different things, go for a drink or meal and the cinema all in one place. The impact and sequential tests in this policy seek to ensure that new development for retail and main town centre uses are located in existing centres and do not have significant impacts on their vitality and viability. The thresholds set out in this policy are informed by evidence that the small scale of many of Buckinghamshire's centres means that they are vulnerable to out of town proposals.
- 2.23.3 Proposals for main town centre uses in out of centre locations that pass the sequential and impact tests should be in locations that are well served by public transport and accessible by active travel routes. This will still allow these uses to support relatively sustainable travel choices.

2.23.4 Future stages of the plan will consider mixed use allocations, these will likely include an element of main town centres uses. It will not be necessary to apply the sequential and impact tests within policy EC12 to main town centre uses proposed within allocations in the plan.

EC12) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to this development?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Natural Environment

2.24 Water Quality

NE1 Water Quality

Effects of development

1. Development proposals will only be supported where they will not adversely affect the water quality of surface or underground water bodies (including rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs, drinking water safeguard zones, source protection zones and groundwater aquifers).
2. A Water Framework Directive assessment is required when there are potential adverse impacts of development on a waterbody. This includes the potential of the development to prevent achievement of good ecological and chemical status of the waterbody in the future.

Drinking Water Safeguard Zones and Source Protection Zones

3. In order to protect and improve water quality, potentially contaminating developments affecting principal aquifers, including the Chalk Aquifer, or within the county's Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (surface water) or Source Protection Zones (groundwater) as defined by the Environment Agency and water companies, will need to demonstrate that surface water and groundwater are adequately protected to prevent a deterioration of water quality and pollution of the water source.
4. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for developments located within Drinking Water safeguard zones and SPZ must carefully consider the risk of contamination to both surface and ground water sources and ensure appropriate mitigation measures are implemented to minimise impacts.
5. Developments which fall within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone will be required to be designed to allow for all the following:
 - a) The potential to encounter shallow groundwater and the restriction on the use of soakaways;
 - b) Avoiding direct discharge of hazardous substances to groundwater;
 - c) The potential for historic contamination to be encountered during development;

d) Restrictions on deep penetrative foundation methods if contamination is encountered.

2.24.1 Development affecting waterbodies are expected to contribute to achieving the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives. River Basin Management Plans are a tool used to deliver the WFD objectives and Buckinghamshire Council has an obligation to have regard for such plans.

2.24.2 It is important that water quality is maintained and enhanced by avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment. Population growth and new housing are increasing pressure on waterbodies, including chalk streams, through changes in land use, demand for water, water quality and habitat loss. To reduce the impact of development, adequate infrastructure should be in place to ensure there is no increase in unsustainable abstraction or overloading of the sewer network or sewage treatment infrastructure. Mitigation responses include precluding development alongside chalk streams, the use of infiltration and deep borehole SuDS to aid chalk aquifer recharge.

2.24.3 There are many opportunities for improving the ecological condition of waterways and the following examples will be particularly encouraged:

- locating open space next to rivers
- retaining river habitat as public space
- designing schemes that positively integrate with river corridor habitats
- maximise health and wellbeing capacity of access to natural watercourses
- integrating flood attenuation with landscape and biodiversity enhancements
- utilising bio-engineering solutions and avoiding hard bankside engineering
- restoring natural river courses and corridors where these were previously modified, culverted or channelled
- incorporating features to support aquatic wildlife including fish, and working with relevant river catchment partnerships to identify the most appropriate enhancements for watercourse habitats.

2.24.4 Drinking water safeguard zones (surface water). Drinking Water Safeguarding Zones (WSZs) are the areas at risk of failing the drinking water protection objectives of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017. WSZs define areas where actions and measures will be targeted to address water contamination and avoid or minimise extra treatment needed by water companies. Actions proposed for each DWSZ are provided in Actions Plans produced by the Environment Agency with the water companies.

2.24.5 In Buckinghamshire's DWSZs, the following general guidance applies to the use of SuDS:

SuDS Type	Guidance for Drinking Water Safeguard Zones in Buckinghamshire
Infiltration SuDS (e.g., soakaways, infiltration basins)	Not permitted in SPZ1 and generally avoided in SPZ2 unless proven safe. Lined or engineered alternatives preferred.
Permeable paving	Use only with impermeable liners in sensitive groundwater areas.
Detention basins / wetlands	Allowed with proper treatment. Avoid direct infiltration. Ensure sufficient retention time.
Swales, filter strips	Acceptable for surface water pre-treatment.
Green roofs	Low-risk; acceptable in all locations.

2.24.6 The Environment Agency has designated in certain areas of Buckinghamshire Source Protection Zones (groundwater) for clean water supply, and principal aquifers, (including the chalk aquifer) which are sensitive receptors. Potential risks to these receptors come from contaminated land with past historic uses of some sites. In other cases, it can be linked to pollutants in surface water which infiltrate to the groundwater table.

2.24.7 All developments should consider the sensitivity of the underlying Chalk Aquifer and the large number of public water abstractions in the areas protected by Source Protection Zones.

2.24.8 In considering SuDS solutions, development proposals must consider the need to protect surface water and groundwater quality, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. SuDS which contribute to removing pollutants, and to managing flows, will be strongly preferred. See SuDS in Source Protection Zones guidance: [suds-in-spz-guidance.pdf](#)

NE1) Does the policy identify the right priorities for improving water quality including where they affect Drinking Water Safeguard Zones in the Chilterns and Source Protection Zones?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.25 Watercourses and Associated Corridors

NE2 Watercourses and associated corridors

1. Development is required to conserve and enhance the functions and setting of any affected watercourse and associated corridor, including in terms of biodiversity, landscape, flood management and recreational/amenity value.
2. Opportunities for de-culverting and re-naturalising watercourses should be actively pursued when planning applications present the opportunity through works on site works or through making s106 contributions to help enable works on areas of a river in the vicinity.
3. Proposals will only be supported where they do not involve the canalising or culverting of watercourses and do not prejudice future opportunities for de-culverting / re-naturalising.
4. Development proposals for new development adjacent to or containing a watercourse must provide or retain at least a 10 metres buffer between the top of the river bank and the development and include a long-term landscape and

ecological management plan for this buffer. Where the watercourse is a Chalk Stream as listed in this policy, this buffer must be at least 15 metres.

5. Chalk streams (including headwaters) in Buckinghamshire are:

- a) Hughenden Stream
- b) River Chess
- c) River Misbourne
- d) River Wye
- e) Upper Colne
- f) Escarpment chalk streams

6. A long-term management plan must be in place for the watercourse and its buffer zone, including the management of invasive non-native species. In new developments, publicly accessible space must be designed to include watercourses to ensure adequate maintenance of the watercourse.

2.25.1 Strategic Policy NE2 emphasises the importance of conserving and enhancing watercourses, as part of improving the wider water environment (see also policy NE1 on water quality). Watercourses and their associated corridors are a vital element of the Green and Blue Infrastructure of Buckinghamshire. They have several valuable functions – as a landscape and amenity feature, for biodiversity as a habitat and as a corridor to allow movement of species, for flood management, for recreation, as a water resource and to allow access for river maintenance. Enhancements and improvements to river habitats and their buffers will provide resilience to climate change.

2.25.2 This policy covers Main Rivers (as defined by the Environment Agency), ordinary watercourses, and canals. Ordinary watercourses are passages of water that do not form part of a Main River; they can include streams; ditches, drains, mills, dams, culverts and weirs.

- 2.25.3 Of particular importance in the county are the River Wye, River Chess, River Misbourne, Upper Colne and their tributaries as these are chalk streams which are a globally rare habitat that has been designated as a priority habitat within the UK Biodiversity Framework. Additionally, the River Thames has a nationally important landscape value.
- 2.25.4 Opportunities for the built environment involving watercourses include creating attractive places where people want to live, work and play through making space for water and green spaces in the built environment. They can also provide cost-effective infrastructure that uses fewer natural resources and has a smaller whole-life carbon footprint. One of the aims of the policy is to help create developments that are more able to cope with changes in climate; protecting people and property from increased flood risk from climate change.
- 2.25.5 Most watercourses have been altered in some way by either straightening the channel, replacing natural banks with hard engineering, dredging or widening. These changes over time have led to the loss of natural features such as bankside habitats, gravel riffles, pools and meanders, and in many cases, banks have been increased in height, disconnecting the watercourse from its floodplain.
- 2.25.6 Developments which contain or are adjacent to watercourses offer an opportunity to provide ecological buffers, restore bankside and in-stream habitats, create pond complexes and natural floodplains. Carefully designed developments along watercourses can greatly increase the ecological and biodiversity value of the features within them, and the value of the overall development.
- 2.25.7 Canalising is the use of hard engineering (including walls, piles, gabions and plastic geo-bags) to create structure instead of more natural riverbank.
- 2.25.8 Developers will need to refer to the detailed Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) information on the website regarding responsibilities and requirements for Consents / Permits prior to work on any watercourse being undertaken. Early engagement with the LLFA should also be pursued for works in and around ordinary watercourses.
<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-flood-risk-management/>

- 2.25.9 The policy requires a 10m buffer (with the exception of chalk streams – see below). This width of buffer provides the minimum width of habitat needed to provide for the functioning of wildlife habitats, while being able to facilitate informal access for enjoyment of the river (see VALP watercourse advice note on the website for more details). This width also ensures that the river is buffered from land-based activities, e.g. reducing the levels of diffuse pollution reaching the watercourse. Furthermore, this buffer allows for ease of access for maintenance of the watercourse to ensure flood risk is not increased due to lack of maintenance and/or blockage. Developers are encouraged to engage early on with the council to understand what is appropriate for inclusion within the buffer strip.
- 2.25.10 Development can enable good opportunities to increase public access to rivers and riverbanks. Increasing public access provides a great opportunity to engage the general public and connect people with nature. This should be achieved in an environmentally sensitive manner to ensure biodiversity is not adversely affected by human activity.
- 2.25.11 Buffer zones should be of natural character, free from built environment (including paths, residential gardens and play areas), with no light pollution greater than 2 lux and a warm white' colour temperature of 2700k or less.
- 2.25.12 The importance and vitality of chalk streams to Buckinghamshire's Chilterns Landscape cannot be underestimated. Chalk rivers and their ecosystems provide a unique habitat for fish, animals and plants. Healthy chalk streams are the most biodiverse of rivers. They face increasing pressure from climate change, population growth and development, pollution and abstraction. Ensuring no further deterioration from current baselines involves affording them stronger policies for their protection.
- 2.25.13 Chalk-stream ecological health depends on three factors.
- water quantity (the naturalness of the flow regime)
 - water quality (how clean the water is)
 - physical habitat quality (the physical shape of the river, but incorporating biological factors like invasive species which can degrade habitat directly and indirectly)

2.25.14 Chalk streams are also highly dependent on the geomorphology and biodiversity of the riverbank, necessary to maintain the condition of the chalk habitat and the species it supports. As a result, a wider buffer of a minimum of 15 metres is required for designated Chalk streams and their headwaters. This zone should extend further than 15m where necessary in line with the natural flood plain. Where development is proposed in areas close to modified chalk streams, planning can help to seek to return the river to a more natural state. Other consents/ permits from the relevant authorities will still apply.

2.25.15 Opportunities to expand ecological buffers, corridors or stepping stones such as existing riverine vegetation that link up with existing green infrastructure should be maximised.

2.25.16 The policy requires a Water Framework Directive assessment where development could have an adverse impact on the water body. This is because development adjacent to watercourses are expected to contribute to achieving the Water Framework Directive objectives. River Basin Management Plans are a tool used to deliver the WFD objectives and Buckinghamshire Council, water companies and developers have an obligation to have regard to such plans.

This policy seeks to ensure that developments conserve and enhance watercourses and their associated corridors in terms of biodiversity, landscape, flood management and amenity.

NE2a) Are the proposed watercourse buffers appropriate?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE2b) Are the measures proposed in the watercourse buffers sufficient?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.26 Biodiversity – protection and enhancement of sites of high biodiversity and geodiversity importance

NE3 Protection and enhancement of sites of high biodiversity and geodiversity importance

1. Development proposals adversely affecting sites of biodiversity or geodiversity importance will not normally be supported.
2. The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international and national importance. Considerable weight must be given to their protection.
3. Development proposals which would harm directly or indirectly other designated sites of nature conservation or geological interest or protected species will only be supported where it has been demonstrated that:
 - a) there is no suitable alternative site for the proposed development, and
 - b) the impact can be mitigated or compensated to enhance the feature(s) of interest in a favourable status within Buckinghamshire, and
 - c) it has been clearly demonstrated that the benefits of the development outweigh the harm to the biodiversity or geological conservation interests.
4. Sites of high biodiversity or geodiversity importance will be protected and enhanced via the use of appropriate buffers of natural habitat and the enhancement of ecological functionality on a landscape scale. Buffers will be
 - a) 50 metres for Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - b) 50 metres from ancient woodland unless local circumstances justify otherwise,
 - b) 30 metres for sites of local importance.
5. Development proposals in or potentially affecting a designated site, important habitat or notable species will be required to be accompanied by impact assessments

undertaken in line with best practice guidance relevant to the type of impact of the development on the species or features of interest on the site.

6. Exceptions will only be made where the public benefits significantly outweigh any adverse impacts. In such cases where development is permitted, we will require that the intrinsic natural features of particular interest are safeguarded and enhanced following the mitigation hierarchy.

2.26.1 The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a core objective of the Local Plan and an essential component of the measures to mitigate climate change.

2.26.2 Biodiversity gain and nature recovery are integral to sustainable development and delivering other services to people and the environment. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, including plants and animals, the variety within and between species, and the diversity in ecosystems (the complex systems formed by interactions between living things and the inanimate world). Geodiversity is defined as the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.

2.26.3 Designated sites, important habitats and protected species form a vital part of the biodiversity and geodiversity resource of the county. The Council supports the creation, restoration, retention, protection and extension of all areas designated internationally, nationally and locally as well as all Habitats and Species of Principal Importance within the county.

2.26.4 This policy applies to the following:

Sites of national importance

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Designated Chalk Streams

Sites of local importance

- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- Biological Notification Sites (BNS)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

- Local Geological Sites (LGS)
- Ancient Woodland, aged or veteran trees
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats
- Legally-protected species, UK BAP Species and Habitats of Principle Importance defined in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) as amended by subsequent legislation.

2.26.5 For clarity, all habitats and species covered under the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) as Areas of Particular Importance in the LNRS mapping are covered by this policy.

2.26.6 The policy sets out a buffer for SSSIs of 50 metres and 30 metres for local sites.

2.26.7 The policy also sets out a buffer for ancient woodlands, in line with the Woodland Trust guidance; it will be for applicants to demonstrate the justification for any smaller buffer.

2.26.8 Standing advice from Natural England and the Forestry Commission states that at least 15 metres buffer should be provided for root protection but that other impacts are likely to require greater buffers. The size and type of buffer zone should vary depending on the:

- scale and type of development and its effect on ancient woodland
- ancient and veteran trees character of the surrounding area

For example, larger buffer zones are more likely to be needed if the surrounding area is:

- less densely wooded
- close to residential areas
- steeply sloped

NE3) Are the proposed buffers to natural habitat appropriate?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.27 Biodiversity – protection and enhancement of notable species

NE4 Protection and Enhancement of notable species

1. All development proposals will be required to consider potential impacts upon notable species (including protected, priority (of principle importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act) or those which are suffering significant declines).
2. Where there is a reasonable likelihood of notable species being negatively impacted, appropriate surveys must be undertaken which can inform an assessment.
3. Where adverse impacts can be quantified, they must be compensated for in excess of 1:1 basis, so that the resources are provided to support a greater number of identified species.

- 2.27.1 To comply with part 1 of the policy, surveys should be done prior to determining the application.
- 2.27.2 Buckinghamshire Council holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or 'District') Licence granted by Natural England. The associated District Licensing Scheme, which is currently administered and managed by NatureSpace Partnership, provides an alternative licensing option for developers to address impacts on protected great crested newts by enabling a 'conservation payment' towards high quality habitat creation and long-term management and monitoring.

2.27.3 In the District Licensing Scheme, developers can engage with NatureSpace at the pre-application stage or at the planning application stage. It is based on a great crested newt landscape-scale conservation strategy, which aims to focus the creation of new habitats where they will be of maximum benefit to the species, whilst also reducing risk and uncertainty through the planning process for developers and planning authorities. The strategy results in a range of other biodiversity benefits and contributes towards nature recovery at the landscape scale.

NE4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to protecting and enhancing notable species?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.28 Biodiversity gain and nature recovery

NE5 Biodiversity Gain and Nature Recovery

1. All development proposals should be designed to maximise biodiversity by conserving, enhancing or extending existing ecological resources or creating new areas or features, tailored to the priority habitats and protected species present within the site and surrounding area. Opportunities to create, expand, enhance or link ecological networks are particularly encouraged.
2. Where potential biodiversity interest is identified on a site or the development creates an opportunity to increase biodiversity, the Council will require an ecological survey and report to be submitted which demonstrates how biodiversity will be protected and enhanced.

3. All development not subject to an exemption for Biodiversity Net Gain requirement under national regulations should achieve the following percentage of biodiversity net gain:

- a) 10% if delivered on site
- b) 15% if delivered off site within Buckinghamshire
- c) 20% if delivered using national credits

4. Calculations are required to use the most recent Statutory Metric.

5. Biodiversity Net Gain Units should deliver gains that are significant at a local or landscape scale. Habitat enhancements should be designed to provide significant contributions to nature's recovery in line with the latest Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

6. Net gain should be achieved in line with the biodiversity gain hierarchy. Where Biodiversity Gain Sites are used, they should be located close to the development. In situations where this is not considered possible or appropriate, then alternative arrangements must be clearly set out and justified, the last resort is to purchase national biodiversity credits.

7. Where proposals involve the creation of significant natural areas and habitats which are integral to development, they should be accompanied by a long-term management and monitoring plan which must be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

- 2.28.1 Any new development presents an opportunity to contribute to maintaining and enhancing ecological network (Lawton principles of bigger, better, more of, and more joined up) to support thriving habitats and species in the right places.
- 2.28.2 As stated in Buckinghamshire's Strategic Vision to 2050⁸, the Council seeks developments which trigger the mandatory requirement for BNG should achieve a 20% biodiversity net gain.
- 2.28.3 The applies to all developments unless they are exempted under national regulations.

⁸ [Bucks Strategic Vision](#)

- 2.28.4 The Council supports the objectives of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Nature Partnership (known as the NEP), including their commitment to a doubling of nature: working towards a doubling of the land in Buckinghamshire is positively managed for wildlife and nature-based solutions.
- 2.28.5 When preparing the emerging plan, the Council is considering how the areas mapped and identified in the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the measures proposed in them should be reflected in the local plan. In doing so, we are considering what safeguarding would be appropriate to enable the proposed actions to be delivered, noting the potential to target stronger safeguarding in areas the local planning authority considers to be of greater importance. This will enable the Council to support the best opportunities to create or improve habitat to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including where this may enable development in some locations.
- 2.28.6 When taking decisions, the Council will have due regards to the objectives, priorities and measures of the LNRS, which can form material considerations. LNRSs provide a robust evidence base for opportunities for nature recovery, informing Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans, and the proposed new Spatial Development Strategies. They are not intended to provide red line boundaries preventing or placing new restrictions on land use which may be changed either through development or in taking advantage of new opportunities identified through the strategy. This has been established by national guidance. Development Plans remain the primary tool used by local planning authorities to determine which land should be developed and how.
- 2.28.7 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes LNRS is expected to be adopted by Autumn 2025. Please see <https://bucksmknep.co.uk/nature-strategy/>
- 2.28.8 The Draft LNRS 9 themes are:
- Conserve, create, enhance and restore land-based habitats
 - Improve rivers, their floodplains and the quality of their waters
 - Conserve, create, enhance and maintain wetland habitats
 - More farmers and rural land managers to adopt wildlife-friendly management practices and take action to improve soil health
 - Improve biodiversity in built-up areas
 - Create connections between high quality areas for wildlife and habitats to flourish

- Manage the effects of a changing climate and improve air quality
- Tackle non-native invasive species, pests and diseases
- Improve the environment for important species

2.28.9 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Biodiversity Action Plan⁹ to 2030 remains in place for the time being, as it forms part of the evidential basis for the LNRS. When developing this plan, the Council is therefore also taking into consideration the aims and principles for existing Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

2.28.10 The management of natural areas and newly created sites to be an integral part of the development will require an endowment or some other means to support maintenance and longer-term future. This may include the creation of Biodiversity Net Gain units. The stewardship arrangement and the potential need for off-site BNG units should be discussed with the local planning authority at the earliest date since it may affect the design and nature of proposals for the natural environment and Biodiversity Net Gain requirements on the site.

2.28.11 In assessing Biodiversity Net Gain, the Council will consider proposals against the mitigation hierarchy set out below. BNG should be assessed against the latest statutory metric.

2.28.12 The Mitigation Hierarchy

1. **Avoid.** Through the earliest design stage. Avoid developing a whole site or avoid important habitats. then
2. **Minimise.** Reduce the scale of development or a design solution such as buffering. then
3. **Mitigate.** Reduce the chance of impacts occurring. Consider the timing of development, construction and design elements. And only then,
4. **Compensate.** A last resort. This is either done onsite with enhancement and creation or offsite with for example Section 106 contribution or Habitat Bank units.

2.28.13 For all stages: **Enhance.** Always enhance through BNG, ecological enhancement features and multifunctional GI design to maximise ecological value.

⁹ [Forward to 2030 – Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership](#)

- 2.28.14 Seeking advice from a suitably qualified ecologist on the ecological enhancements selected is encouraged. The chosen measure(s) will need to be clearly highlighted on landscape and elevation plans and/or within the design and access statement. In addition, all new tree and soft landscaping must incorporate an element of native planting, and where non-native planting is proposed this should comprise species beneficial to UK pollinators and/or chosen to be well-adapted to future changes in climate. Proposals incorporating invasive plant species will not be supported.
- 2.28.15 Significant habitat enhancement includes habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness, creates many biodiversity units relative to the baseline, is of a large area or enhances habitats to 'good' condition.
- 2.28.16 The Local Planning Authority will require a biodiversity monitoring contribution to review progress towards the creation of significant habitat enhancement over the management period where it is of a scale or technicality that the monitoring would be reasonable to ensure the proposed ecological outcomes are achieved. For example, a nature reserve or an area of priority habitat.
- 2.28.17 All maintenance and management requirements of the proposed enhancements must be specified within planning applications and secured via planning conditions. Management plans should be for a period of at least 30 years (where used for BNG) and often in perpetuity (where the habitats form an integral part of the development's green infrastructure) or planning obligations, as appropriate.
- 2.28.18 As they set opportunities for habitats creation and enhancement at landscape-scale, Local Nature Recovery Strategies can inform the strategic delivery of offsite biodiversity gain in the right places, where offsite provision is needed to meet the biodiversity gain condition for a development and it cannot be met in full through onsite habitat enhancements.
- 2.28.19 Once a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is published, a "strategic significance" uplift can be applied post-intervention if:
- a) The intervention is in a location where a LNRS potential measure has been proposed and
 - b) the intervention is consistent with the potential measure proposed in that location.

Policy NE5 seeks to secure Biodiversity Net Gain which is in line with meeting the priorities of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

NE5) Do you agree with this policy to seek incentivise the provision of BNG within Buckinghamshire rather than further afield?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.29 Green Infrastructure

NE6 Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure (GI) must provide a range of functions and provide multiple benefits for wildlife, improving quality of life and water quality and flood risk, health and wellbeing, recreation, access to nature and adaptation to climate change. The council will support proposals for green infrastructure that meet the range of functions listed.

New housing developments of more than 10 units or which have a combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area) will be required to demonstrate that it meets Natural England's Accessible Green Space (AGS) standards to meet the additional demand arising from new residential development. The standards are set out in Appendix B.

A Green Infrastructure Statement must be submitted to and agreed with the council setting out how a proposal performs against the AGS standards.

Amenity green space as part of AGS will be required to be provided on site.

Formal outdoor sports areas, play areas, and allotments all serve a specific purpose and may be located within or outside AGS. Either way such facilities must be located on land that is additional to the AGS provided by a developer and be complimentary to it. Sports and recreation facilities can be provided as required on the same site where these are compatible with publicly accessible green infrastructure. To count

towards any AGS quantitative/accessibility requirement, such green space must meet the definitions of 'accessible' and 'natural' in supporting text to this policy.

The Accessibility Standards in Appendix B will be required to be met by providing accessible natural green space on or off site for developments of more than 10 homes, and which have maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area), unless it has been demonstrated in an assessment for a planning application that accessible natural green space provision has already been met, when including the increased population of the new development and any other committed development.

Management and Maintenance of GI

Green infrastructure being provided must have a long-term management and maintenance strategy to be agreed by the council with assets managed for at least 30 years after completion and during this time secure a mechanism to manage sites into perpetuity. The management and maintenance strategy shall set out details of the owner, the responsible body and how the strategy can be implemented by contractors.

Definition of Green Infrastructure

- 2.29.1 National planning policy sets out that Local Plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats - for wildlife - and green infrastructure – for people, recognising the wide range of benefits that such green spaces can provide. This policy expects all green infrastructure to provide a range of benefits appropriate to its type, scale and location. Further to green infrastructure design principles, the policy identifies several principles relating to the planning process to ensure the successful delivery of green infrastructure. Green Infrastructure is designed, developed and managed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of communities and wildlife.

- 2.29.2 Green Infrastructure is part of open space which also includes civic space including market squares and other hard surfaced community areas used for community activities. However, hard surfaced or civic spaces do not count as providing green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is a strategically planned network of high quality multi-functional green spaces in both urban and rural areas as well as associated features such as trees, hedgerows, ponds, waterways, green roofs and green walls. The term includes open green spaces such as parks and gardens, country parks, allotments, cemeteries, green corridors (including cycleways and rights of way), village greens and trees. It also includes informal amenity green spaces and accessible countryside such as river and canal corridors, woodland, natural grassland, wetlands, lakes and nature reserves (water related green infrastructure is also known as 'Blue Infrastructure').
- 2.29.3 Well-planned multi-functional green infrastructure is an important component of achieving sustainable communities. Green infrastructure helps to deliver conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, create a sense of place and appreciation of valuable landscapes and cultural heritage, increase recreational opportunities and support healthy living, improve water resources and flood management as part of environmentally sustainable design. It can also positively contribute towards combating climate change through adaptation and mitigation of impacts and production of food, natural fibre and fuel. It helps deliver NHS initiatives around improving people's health and tackling obesity. Buckinghamshire's high quality green infrastructure is a vital asset and an important element in ensuring that Buckinghamshire is somewhere people choose to live and locate their businesses. The Policy will be used to ensure a green infrastructure network is provided throughout Buckinghamshire with enhancements helping to replace existing green infrastructure deficiencies.
- 2.29.4 The character of Buckinghamshire is defined by a wide variety of green infrastructure assets such formal country parks and meadows, forest including former royal hunting forests such as Whaddon Chase and Bernwood Forest, canals, reservoirs riverside walks, and the Chilterns AONB/National Landscape. These features should be recognised, enhanced and connected where possible, such as improving pedestrian and cycle links to existing natural trails in the Chilterns National Landscape.

Policy NE6 sets out the council's approach to green infrastructure. It aims to ensure that all new development is provided with green infrastructure and that any Green Infrastructure provided has a management plan in place to allow for its continuing maintenance.

When green infrastructure is not provided as part of a proposed development, the Council has the option of securing additional green infrastructure to support the development through two methods of obtaining developer contributions to funding: 'Section 106' payments and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

NE6a) What should the Council's preferred approach be to obtaining developer contributions to green infrastructure where it isn't provided as part of the planning application?

In January 2023, Natural England launched the [Green Infrastructure Framework](#) to guide the creation of high-quality green and blue infrastructure, maximizing benefits for both people and nature.

NE6b) Do you agree or disagree that the Council should use the national green and blue infrastructure standards proposed by Natural England?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE6c) Should we publish further technical guidance for the application of the national green and blue infrastructure standards?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.30 Resisting the loss of existing Green Space

NE7 Resisting the Loss of Existing Green Space

For the loss of existing accessible natural green space to be accepted by the Council all the following criteria must be complied with. This policy also applies to development to incorporate public accessible green infrastructure into private garden land.

- a) For developments of more than 10 homes, and which have maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area), the Green Infrastructure has been subject to an assessment which proves it is surplus to requirements based on the Natural England's quantitative/accessibility standards.
- b) The land does not fulfil a positive contribution in terms of its appearance, landscaping, recreational use or wildlife value.
- c) Following an ecology assessment, the land does not host an element of semi-natural habitat or any other feature of value to wildlife contributing to Biodiversity Net Gain than would be the case if it were planted as a garden.
- d) The loss of GI would not cumulatively have an adverse effect on the locality or the environment
- e) The Green Infrastructure lost must be replaced by equivalent or better provision following an assessment justifying this need based on applying the AGS standards in Appendix B. The replacement GI will be in the catchment area (see AGS standards) for the GI lost.

- 2.30.1 This policy is concerned with the loss of existing green space, not just accessible space for recreation and wellbeing but also allotments which are important to local food production. The policy sets out the terms for how existing green space should be retained or circumstances where it could be replaced. This element of the policy links to Policy SE3 Community Food Growing Opportunities which also calls for new allotment provision.

Green Infrastructure Strategies in Buckinghamshire

- 2.30.2 The following Green Infrastructure and related Strategies cover Buckinghamshire:

- **Vision and Principles for the Improvement of Green Infrastructure in Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes.** County-wide. Produced by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (“NEP”), the Vision and Principles set out 9 Principles which should be followed to achieve the NEP vision by 2030.
- **Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013).** County-wide. The Delivery Plan includes specific project areas - Aylesbury Linear Park, Whaddon Chase, Wycombe, Amersham and Chesham, Gerrards Cross, Burnham and Farnham.
- **Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Study (2025).** County-wide. This document is currently in preparation. The Green Infrastructure Study will provide the latest strategic vision, show the extent of GI across the council area and any deficiencies and priorities for GI. The 2025 Study will identify the number of dwellings that do not meet any of Natural England’s Accessible Green Space standards (AGS).
- **Aylesbury Garden Town.** Aylesbury and surrounding parishes have an accompanying Masterplan which will set out how Green Infrastructure will be integrated into new and existing Garden Town developments.

Accessible Green Space Standards (AGS)

2.30.3 These standards, formerly known as Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGST) were developed nationally in the 1990s and reviewed by Natural England in 2008 and 2023. The [standards](#) (see link) are a response to Natural England’s belief that everyone should have access to good quality natural greenspace near to where they live. The Green Infrastructure Headline Standards states everyone should have access to good quality green and blue spaces close to home for health and wellbeing and contact with nature, to meet the Accessible Greenspace Standards, with an initial focus on access to green and blue spaces within 15 minutes’ walk from home. The Accessible Greenspace Standards define good provision based on different size, proximity, capacity and quality criteria.

- 2.30.4 In terms of meeting the standards, to be 'Accessible' a place must be available for the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some sites may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle). The places must be available to all, which means that every reasonable effort must be made to comply with the requirements under the Equality Act (2010 as amended by subsequent legislation). For a space to be 'Natural' it must be a place where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate. Areas for biodiversity and flood mitigation, car and cycle parking (unless incidental) don't count as meeting the AGS standards. To meet the AGS standards, the space also has to be 'green' and so a form of green infrastructure defined in 2.32.2.
- 2.30.5 The AGS accessibility/quantitative and qualitative standards will apply to development proposals of 10 homes or more and which have maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area). These thresholds are a national standard in Planning Practice Guidance for securing infrastructure contributions through planning applications. It is also considered a threshold whereby at 10 or more homes the development is more likely to itself create a deficiency. Where the standards are applicable, development proposals will need to demonstrate to the Council that a development itself, with committed developments, would not create a deficiency.
- 2.30.6 The Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Study (2025) will identify deficiencies across Buckinghamshire against the AGS standards for access to natural greenspace. This section will summarise deficiencies in Buckinghamshire once that study has been completed.
- 2.30.7 The emerging Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Nature Recovery Strategy will provide an important framework for developing and applying green infrastructure policy approach in this local plan to promote urban nature conservation, meet local biodiversity priorities and support delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 2.30.8 In addition to meeting the AGS standards, all major developments must provide sufficient provision to meet local needs for play space (see Policy SE3), with provision for all ages and based on accessibility and current provision. This will be done by meeting the Fields In Trust latest standards. These advise on the mix of different play spaces depending on the size of housing development proposed.

Principles for Delivering Green Infrastructure in Buckinghamshire

- 2.30.9 Development proposals, particularly on larger sites, provide an opportunity to improve the strategic green infrastructure network (as demonstrated through the Berryfields and Kingsbrook sites near Aylesbury), this Policy seeks to achieve this. green infrastructure will be delivered through development proposals and on site or off-site obligations will be imposed through the CIL regime, S106 contributions or conditions to the planning permission as appropriate. HS2 mitigation works will also deliver some green infrastructure in the south of the County. All green infrastructure proposals should include details of management and maintenance to ensure these areas are permanently protected.
- 2.30.10 Development proposals will be expected to identify, retain and enhance existing green infrastructure assets, including corridors and to ensure new links are provided between existing green spaces. Local green space designations, which are now commonplace in neighbourhood plans, will provide protection for those areas.
- 2.30.11 Green infrastructure must ensure permeability for wildlife through development and provide sufficient beneficial habitat to support target species, independent of its connective function. The policy requirement for significant habitat enhancement is the difference between creating habitat which is meaningful for biodiversity rather than low value habitats such as cropland.
- 2.30.12 The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems can contribute to green infrastructure provision as well as help to alleviate flooding and provide other biodiversity benefits. New landscaping areas are important and will be required in larger development schemes to assimilate development into the landscape and assist in the transition between the urban and rural boundary. The size and location of green infrastructure is expected to be suitable for the function it is intended to fulfil.

2.30.13 There are areas of the green infrastructure network in Buckinghamshire which are not in the council's ownership or control, so partnership working is required to plan, provide and manage the network to achieve the objectives of the policy.

2.30.14 Long term stewardship of the public realm is important to ensure that open space provided from development is maintained to high standards. A maintenance and management strategy agreed by the council will ensure the developer put in place arrangements for at least 30 years maintenance regime. Then during that time arrangements shall be agreed by the council with the landowner for site management into perpetuity - an indefinite period.

This policy sets out the circumstances where the council can accept the loss of accessible natural green space.

NE7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to resisting the loss of green space?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.31 Trees, Ancient and Veteran Trees, Woodlands, Orchards

NE8 Trees, Ancient and Veteran Trees, Woodlands, Orchards

1. Development will contribute to the overall aim of conserving and enhancing Buckinghamshire's tree, woodland, orchard and hedgerow resource. Development will also contribute to the expansion of the resource to achieve the objectives of enhancing the amenity value of developments and also enhancing the wider ecosystem services

they can deliver. Species of local significance should be given special consideration in development proposals.

2. Where trees within or adjacent to a site could be affected by development, a full tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment to BS 5837 (or such other standards that supersedes or replaces them) will be required as part of the planning application. The implementation of any protective measures it identifies will be secured using planning conditions.

3. There is a presumption to refuse developments which would result in the loss or deterioration of:

- Ancient or veteran trees,
- Ancient Woodland,
- Traditional Orchards,
- Native hedgerows which would be considered important (under the hedgerow regulations)

Unless there are exceptional circumstances which can demonstrate:

- There is no suitable alternative site for the proposed development,
- The mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, mitigate, compensate and always enhance) has been followed to the greatest extent to satisfaction of the council, and there will be a biodiversity net gain as per policy NE5 , and
- A clear and overriding public benefit which would result from the development.

4. For other trees, woodlands, orchards and hedgerows, which are worthy of retention for their amenity, historic or wildlife value, it should be demonstrated how the mitigation hierarchy has been followed and where they cannot be retained, appropriate replacement of their functions will be expected.

5. To avoid unacceptable deterioration, development will be required to include the following buffers:

- a) Ancient Woodland –50 metres (from the mapped boundary)- as per policy NE3
- b) Hedgerows – at least five metres (either side of the centre line)

c) Ancient or Veteran Trees – the larger of:

- Root Protection Area (RPA) as determined by the latest version of British Standard 5837 but using 15 as the multiplier of the stem diameter to derive the radius of a circle equating to the RPA
- 5m beyond the canopy edge

d) Other trees worthy of retention – The Root Protection Area (RPA) as determined by the latest version of British Standard 5837.

6. Within buffers, appropriate native trees should be planted along with the inclusion of other ecology features to secure net gains in biodiversity and/or landscape mitigation.

7. It is expected that opportunities to enhance the ecological condition of retained trees and hedgerows and the habitats they are part of, will be proposed as part of an application and that plans will be put in place for their long-term management.

8. Where a development site presents an opportunity to join up fragmented areas of woodland or connect hedgerow networks, this should be achieved through additional planting as part of the development's Green Infrastructure.

2.31.1 This policy sets out the council's position on protecting Trees, Ancient and Veteran Trees, Woodlands, and Orchards.

2.31.2 This policy provides a local definition of traditional orchard and veteran trees to reflect the local context and protect the orchards and trees meeting this definition.

2.31.3 Traditional Orchard of Local Significance are:

Open grown fruit trees with herbaceous vegetation meeting all the following criteria:

- Identifiable on OS maps in 1955 or earlier and/or containing veteran or ancient trees;
- Containing fruit trees (primarily in the Rosacea family) on any root stock other than extremely dwarfing (i.e. where the trees would be expected to reach over 1.8m height once grown)
- Consist of more than 5 fruit trees spaced between 5m and 30m apart

Inclusions:

- Nut trees, such as hazel, cobnuts and walnuts
- Community orchards meeting the above criteria
- Abandoned or overgrown orchards retaining their fruit trees

Exclusions:

- Fruit trees within private gardens
- Intensive Orchards
- Ornamental varieties

2.31.4 The policy also provides clarification as to the definition of a ‘veteran tree’ that the LPA considers would constitute an irreplaceable habitat is as defined within [the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)

Policy NE8 seeks to protect trees, ancient and veteran trees, woodlands and orchards across Buckinghamshire

NE8) Please provide any comments you have on the policy approach for protecting trees and woodland?

2.32 Ecological enhancements

NE9 Ecological enhancements

Development is required to create new ecological features (over and above any required for direct species compensation) and incorporate provisions to maximise opportunities for biodiversity at the following rates:

- At least one feature per dwelling;
- At least one feature per 100 square metres of GIA floor space (rounded up to the nearest whole number of features) for non-residential development.

The ecological enhancements should be varied to take into account the local context. Developers will be required to provide a concise ecological enhancement plan.

2.32.1 Discrete ecological enhancement features are not included within Biodiversity Net Gain. However, they can inexpensively provide vital support for priority and threatened species.

2.32.2 Features can include bats/birds /bee boxes, hedgehog gaps, stag beetles loggeries etc. (see appendix D for more details).

2.32.3 The ecological enhancement plan should be secured either with the development or by condition, which includes the following:

- a plan showing the location of features (on site plan and elevations drawings)
- details on the specification of the features, including if boxes are to be integrated or retrofitted
- details on the height and aspect for installation
- management requirements for the features
- a brief summary of how the proposed features support local wildlife – consider local species records where possible when choosing enhancements
- a copy of a letter or leaflet which will be distributed to new home-owners, explaining the features included at the site, why they are important and the need to keep them.

2.32.4 For all developments which requires more than 5 ecological features, the conditioning of an inspection report following installation and prior to first occupation.

Policy NE9 seeks to secure small scale ecological enhancements.

NE9) Do you agree with the proposed approach to Ecological enhancements?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.33 Mitigating light impacts

NE10 Mitigating light impacts

In developments where external lighting is required, all of the following criteria must be met:

- a. The lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for the security and safety of working activities
- b. Light spill and potential glare and the impact on the night sky is minimised through the control of light direction and levels, particularly in residential and commercial areas, areas of wildlife interest or the visual character of historic buildings and rural landscape character
- c. The choice and positioning of the light fittings, columns and cables minimise their daytime appearance and impact on the streetscape, and
- d. Where possible, in considering development involving potentially adverse lighting impacts to wildlife, the council will expect surveys to identify wildlife corridors and ensure that these corridors are protected and enhanced..

Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) can have negative impacts upon wildlife, most notably bats. Dark corridors should be protected as they are essential for the movement through the landscape which facilitates feeding, breeding and migrating of some protected species.

A mitigation hierarchy set out below should be followed to ensure the use of lighting is appropriate to the level of impact.

Development involving or adjacent watercourses, ecological corridors and major developments must ensure that an informed assessment of potential Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) impact on wildlife is made and that ALAN is kept to the minimum level required to ensure health and safety. Where areas are identified as important to be kept dark for wildlife, lighting must be avoided.

1. Avoidance - methods might include, situating development that requires lighting, away from the sensitive dark area.
2. Minimising - methods might include changing the lighting design strategy to reducing the impact (e.g. reducing lux levels, the Kelvin light temperature, or installing baffles or screens, or other interventions). Use best practice techniques for reducing or removing lighting where ALAN could adversely impact on ecological networks.
3. Compensation - might include creating an alternative dark corridor which serves the same function.

In all instances ALAN should have a clear purpose, be directed to only where it is needed, be no brighter than necessary and be turned off when not needed. ALAN should use warmer colour lights where possible.

The 'Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, ILP Guidance Note 2023' (or successor) provides best practice guidance which informs how lighting should be considered in development.

- 2.33.1 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Nature Recovery Strategy <https://bucksmknep.co.uk/nature-strategy/overview/> notes the importance of dark skies to reduce light pollution. It states:
- 2.33.2 There is a need to create dark sky areas and reduce light pollution for wildlife, so that animals and plants perceive day and night correctly. Light pollution has an overall negative impact on wildlife because it disturbs the way animals and plants perceive daytime and nighttime which upsets their natural systems and behaviour including navigate on and feeding habits. All light should have a clear purpose, be directed to only where it is needed, be no brighter than necessary and be turned off when not needed. Use warmer colour lights should be used where possible.
- 2.33.3 Measure 99 of the LRNS is linked to the importance of dark corridors.
- 2.33.4 At least two thirds of all animal species are active at night and require appropriate conditions to thrive, this includes invertebrates such as glow worms, mammals such as badgers and bats, fish including salmon and birds such as owls.
- 2.33.5 Artificial Light at Night (commonly referred to by the acronym ALAN) is rapidly increasing, distribution nocturnal wildlife behaviour, migration and reproduction and having impacts on ecosystems.
- 2.33.6 Examples of Dark Corridors include watercourse corridors, interconnected woodland and hedgerow networks.

- 2.33.7 Two thirds of invertebrates are partially or wholly nocturnal and even diurnal species can be impacted by light. The charity Buglife report that light pollution is reducing nocturnal pollinator visits to flowers by 62% in some areas. Caterpillar populations declined by 52% in areas with streetlights. Glow-worm populations are reduced in artificially lit areas and their ability to communicate by 'glowing' is reduced. Dung beetles navigate using the moon and stars. Under light-polluted skies, they become disoriented and unable to find their way.
- 2.33.8 Birds are also vulnerable to artificial light, causing them to fly toward lit areas. Research shows more birds migrating over urban compared to rural areas, this deviation could have a significant impact on energy levels and lead them to stop in suboptimal habitats.
- 2.33.9 Artificial lighting can cause many problems for bats, including disrupting their roosting and feeding behaviour and their movement through the landscape; in the worst cases, causing direct harm. As all bats in the UK feed on insects the loss of food sources is also a considerable threat.
- 2.33.10 The policy seeks to ensure the protection of dark corridors to be treated equally to green and blue infrastructure. Requirements for Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) should be kept to a minimum required for health and safety. Developers should use current best practice techniques for reducing or removing lighting where ALAN could impact ecological networks that could impact flora and fauna known to be sensitive to light.
- 2.33.11 Although appropriate lighting can help to enhance community safety and reduce the fear of crime, caution must be taken to ensure that lighting only illuminates the intended areas or structures and does not negatively impact surrounding areas. This must not compromise a purpose of lighting to encourage the use of public urban areas and green infrastructure as part of a healthy lifestyle.

2.33.12 Consideration will be given to the impact of the proposed lighting on the natural environment and the effect on wildlife. Lighting within and around any development is expected to respect the ecological functionality of wildlife movement corridors. Certain species of invertebrate and mammal are highly sensitive to inappropriate lighting. In these circumstances, surveys are expected to determine where these wildlife movement corridors are and measures put forward that demonstrate how these will be protected and enhanced.

NE10) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to mitigating light impact?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.34 Colne Valley Regional Park

NE11 Colne Valley Regional Park

The extent of the Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) within Buckinghamshire defined on the plan below. As a member of the CVRP, the Council will expect development to meet all the following criteria:

- a. Maintaining and enhancing the landscape, historic environment and waterscape of the park in terms of its scenic and conservation value and overall amenity;
- b. Conserving and enhancing biodiversity within the Park through the protection and management of its species, habitats and geological features and providing joined up nature corridors;

- c. Providing opportunities for countryside recreation and ensure that facilities are accessible to all including vulnerable groups and provide excellent walking and cycling routes; and
- d. Enabling a vibrant and sustainable rural economy within the Park
- e. encourage community participation, including volunteering and environmental education, and promote the health and social well-being through high quality green space and its contribution to the wider green infrastructure network
- f. Delivering the aims and objectives of the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and Buckinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- g. Helping to reduce pollution to the River Colne, other connected watercourses and elsewhere affecting the Regional Park
- h. Positively affecting climate change by reinforcing green infrastructure for climate resilience, carbon offsetting and reducing the urban heat island effect.

- 2.34.1 The Colne Valley Regional Park covers over 10,000 hectares and straddles many local authority boundaries. It includes the eastern part of the Plan area from the east of Chalfont St Peter and Gerrards Cross extending southwards to include the areas around the Ivers and Richings Park.
- 2.34.2 The Colne Valley Regional Park was established for recreation and leisure by the Greater London Authority and the local authorities within its area. The boundaries were established in 1967. The Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company was established in 2012 to manage and enhance the landscape, safeguard the countryside, conserve and enhance biodiversity, provide opportunities for countryside recreation, achieve a vibrant and sustainable rural economy and encourage community participation.
- 2.34.3 The Park has potential to link strongly with the objectives in the emerging Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Park extremely valuable to biodiversity and contains part of one Special Protection Area, part of one National Nature Reserve, 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and seven Local Nature Reserves. There are also many non-statutory county wildlife sites, ancient woodlands and informal nature reserves.

- 2.34.4 A Colne and Crane Green Infrastructure Strategy was developed by the Colne Valley Regional Park authority and Crane Valley authority in 2019 for the Colne and Crane Valleys: [Green Infrastructure Strategy - Colne and Crane Valleys - Colne Valley Regional Park](#).
- 2.34.5 The forthcoming Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Study will help enhance connectivity and recreational space from the rest of Buckinghamshire into the Park. The Grand Union Canal runs through the Colne Valley Regional Park and is ideal for leisure cruising, boat trips and walking. Several organisations provide access to the excellent fishing and the lakes at the northern end of CVRP offer sailing, wind surfing, canoeing and other activities.
- 2.34.6 There are several excellent cycling routes to choose from in the Park, including the Colne Valley Trail, a seven-mile country route linking Uxbridge with Rickmansworth. The route is shared by cyclists, walkers and horse riders and is a great way to reach several country parks.
- 2.34.7 The Colne Valley is fed by several rivers, including the Colne itself. They provide important habitats and help maintain the floodplain grazing marshes and other riparian habitat across the Park. There are several opportunities to re-naturalise rivers fed by the River Colne, to improve their flow and habitats. The River Colne is impacted by pollution from a variety of diffuse and point sources; these include wastewater from the water industry, as well as pollution related to agriculture and urban and transport infrastructure. A major cause of pollution of the Colne, is raw sewage entering the river via drains and sewers that are meant to only carry rainwater.
- 2.34.8 Developments can help ensure they do not add to worsening pollution of the River Colne and linked watercourses but also may be asked to help contribute to schemes to reduce pollution elsewhere in the vicinity of the Park.
- 2.34.9 Watercourses are an important feature in the Colne Valley Regional Park with over 200km of river and canals with over 60 lakes supporting a great variety of wildlife while providing the public with drinking water as well as opportunities for business and recreation. People and wildlife need water to survive from day to day but unfortunately our water sources are under threat with high water consumption, climate change, over extraction of water sources, and an ever-increasing population.

2.34.10 The location of the Park presents the opportunity with green spaces, vegetation and trees to help reduce urban heat island from London and other large built-up areas. The Park can also provide opportunities to offset from other sites climate change emissions from transport and buildings.

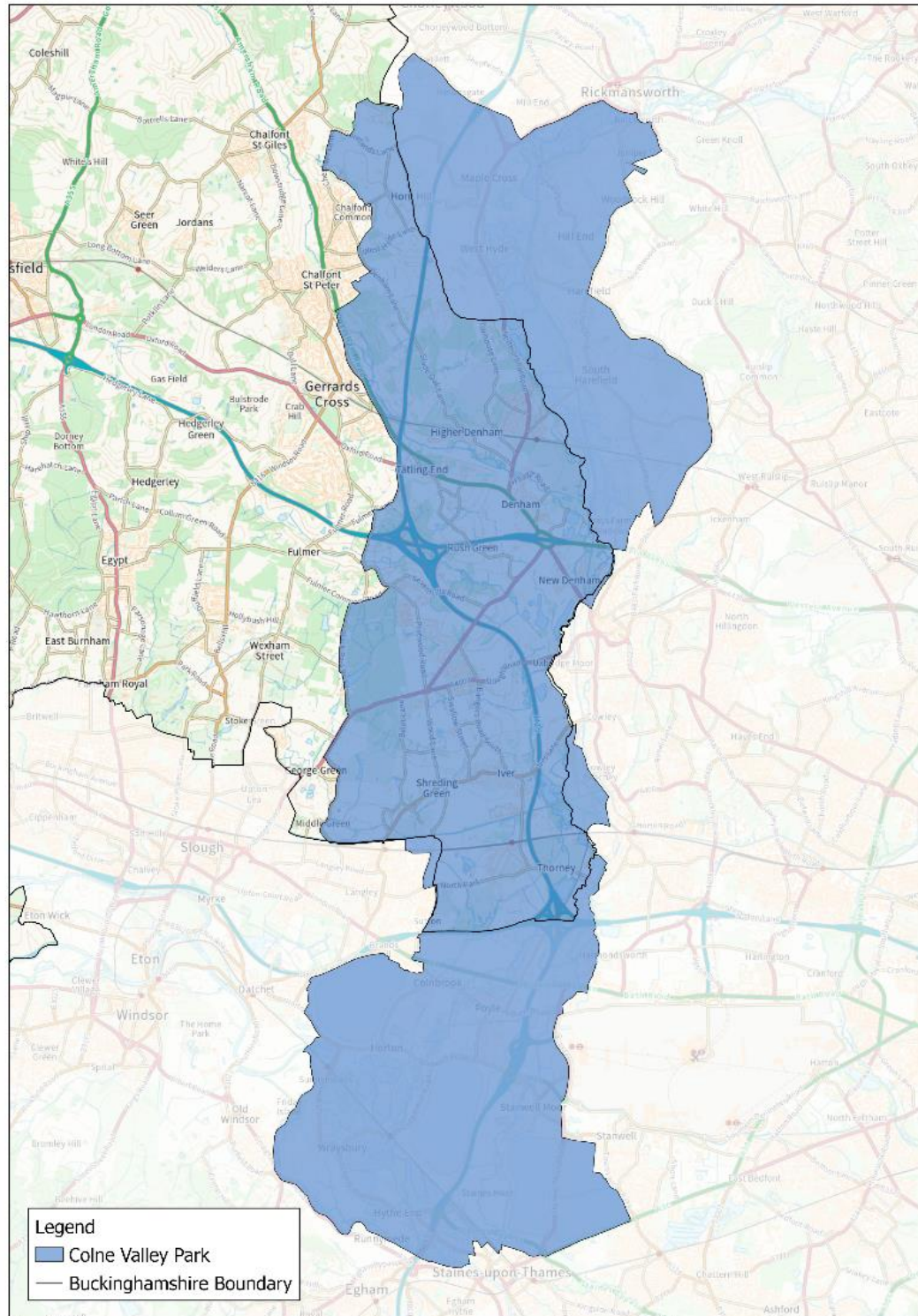


Figure 4 - Map showing Colne Valley Park

NE11a) Are the policy aims for the Colne Valley Regional Park consistent with neighbouring councils and other relevant organisations?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE11b) Should the Council do more to deliver improvements to the Regional Park through contributions gained from housing or other development nearby in southeast Bucks?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.35 Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites

NE12 Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites

1. Proposals with potential to affect the Aston Rowant Special Area of Conservation, Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation, Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation, Windsor Forest and Park Special Area of Conservation and South West London Waterbodies Special Protection Area / Ramsar site will be required to demonstrate that no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC/SPA/Ramsar site would arise resulting from the plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
2. Where development is located within an identified Exclusion Zone in relation to a Special Area of Conservation, development which could lead to increased recreational pressure will not be permitted.

3. Where development is located within an identified Zone of Influence in relation to a Special Area of Conservation, mitigation will be provided in line with the relevant Mitigation Strategy for that Special Area of Conservation or component part.

2.35.1 Habitat sites is the common name by which Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Areas and Ramsar sites are categorised. Candidate sites to these categories are also covered. Habitat sites have the highest level of environmental protection (see policy NE3).

2.35.2 Based on early Habitats Regulations Assessment work Scoping Report (2023)¹⁰, the Habitats sites needing consideration as part of the plan preparation are:

- Chilterns Beechwoods SAC – regarding recreational pressure, urbanisation, air quality and impact on functionally-linked habitat for stag beetle
- Burnham Beeches SAC – regarding recreational pressure, urbanisation, water resources (water quality, quantity, level and flow) and air quality
- Aston Rowant SAC – regarding air quality
- Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC – regarding air quality and recreational pressure
- South-West London Waterbodies SPA/Ramsar site – regarding public access/ disturbance, loss of functionally linked land, water resources (quantity, level and flow) and water quality.

¹⁰ [Buckinghamshire Local Plan - Habitats Regulations Assessment scoping report 2023-03-17](#)

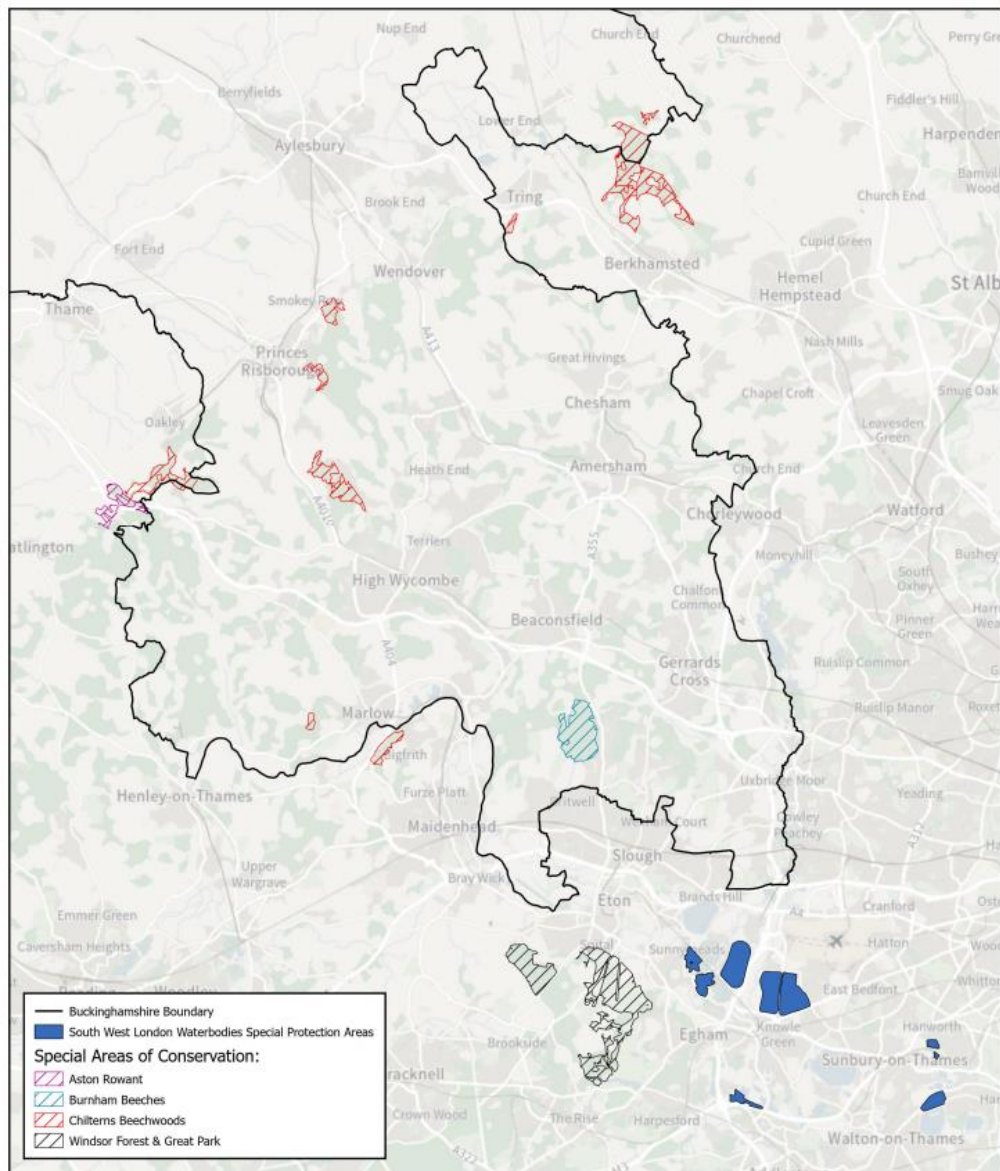


Figure 5 - Map showing Special Areas of Conservation and South West London Waterbodies Special Protection Areas.

2.35.3 Buckinghamshire is home to part of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (CBSAC), an extensive area that is designated and given the highest level of protection for its importance to nature. SACs often have a unique character and draw which can be difficult to replicate. The CBSAC is designated for its beech forests, semi-natural dry grasslands and scrub, and population of stag beetles, and forms part of the national site network¹¹.

¹¹ Following the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, the national site network replaces the Natura 2000 ecological network.

2.35.4 The Chilterns Beechwoods SAC is made up of nine separate sites that are partly located across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire.

- Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI (partly in Dacorum Borough Council)
- Aston Rowant Woods SSSI (part in Oxfordshire)
- Bisham Woods SSSI (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)
- Bradenham Woods, Park Wood and the Coppice SSSI
- Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI
- Naphill Common SSSI
- Pullingshill and Hollowhill Woods SSSI
- Tring Woodland SSSI (Dacorum BC)
- Windsor Hill SSSI

2.35.5 Buckinghamshire is also home to the Burnham Beeches SAC in the south east of the County and is neighbouring the Aston Rowant SAC west of Stokenchurch, and Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC south of Windsor. They also form part of the national sites network:

- The Burnham Beeches SAC is designated for its beech forests. It is an extensive area of former beech wood-pasture with many old pollards and associated beech and oak forests. Surveys have shown that it is one of the richest sites for deadwood invertebrates in the UK, including 14 Red Data Book species. It also retains nationally important epiphytic communities.
- Aston Rowant SAC is designated for its rare lowland juniper scrub on chalk. It is one of the best remaining examples in the UK.

2.35.6 Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC is designated for its oak and beech. It has the largest number of veteran oaks *Quercus* spp. in Britain (and probably in Europe), a consequence of its management as wood-pasture. It is also designated for the rare violet click beetle (one of only three sites in England).

2.35.7 The South-West London Waterbodies SPA/Ramsar site are also potentially impacted by in-combination effects of the plan. They are designated due to its internationally important populations of wintering waterbirds, particularly Gadwall and Northern Shoveler. The site comprises a network of reservoirs and former gravel pits that provide critical habitat for these species, especially during the non-breeding season.

- 2.35.8 The SACs and SPAs have conservation objectives that are in place to help their conservation and restoration, and to prevent the deterioration or significant disturbance of their qualifying¹² features. SACs also have Site Improvement Plans.
- 2.35.9 We have a legal duty as the 'competent authority' under the Habitats Regulations to ensure the integrity of the Aston Rowant SAC, Burnham Beeches SAC and Chilterns Beechwoods SAC are not adversely affected by new planning proposals, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.
- 2.35.10 In relation to Chilterns Beechwoods SAC, an assessment in 2022 showed Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI under pressure from recreational visits, affecting its conservation objectives. Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI, situated on the Hertfordshire/Buckinghamshire border, forms a significant part of the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC, and is part of the Ashridge Estate, managed by the National Trust.
- 2.35.11 The Council's approach to protecting Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI from adverse recreational impacts can be found in the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Mitigation Strategy¹³, which was prepared in partnership with Natural England, the National Trust and the affected adjoining local authorities, Dacorum Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and St Albans City and District Council. The Council continues to work collaboratively with the partner authorities to coordinate implementation and delivery.
- 2.35.12 The strategy sets out the types of development proposals that will be 'screened in' through the first stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment and will require an Appropriate Assessment (stage 2). It also establishes an Exclusion Zone, a Zone of Influence, and mitigation measures that will be delivered through:
- A) Implementing a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) at Ashridge Estate by the National Trust; and
 - B) The provision of new or enhanced green space across the area comprising either Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace that absorbs recreational pressure, or a Gateway site (see policy NE13) that deflects recreational pressure away from Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI.

¹² i.e. the habitats or species for which they are legally protected.

¹³ [Chiltern Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy](#)

- 2.35.13 The SAMMS measures are designed to directly manage, avoid, mitigate and monitor identified issues at Ashridge. The SAMMS tariff for each net new home built can be found on the Council's website.
- 2.35.14 The SAMMS measures and related charge will be regularly reviewed. The National Trust is also preparing a spatial plan to guide the future management of the Ashridge Estate.
- 2.35.15 At Burnham Beeches, a similar issue relating to adverse recreational impacts requires mitigation in the form of alternative SANG and SAMM payments. As part of the preparation for the Local Plan, this strategy will be reviewed to provide consistency across the former district areas.
- 2.35.16 Key evidence studies drawn upon in preparing the Plan's policy comprise:
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Dacorum Local Plan (October 2024);
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment Appropriate Assessment for this local plan
 - Buckinghamshire Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Mitigation Strategy;
 - Visitor survey¹⁴, recreation impact assessment and mitigation requirements for the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC and the Dacorum Local Plan, 2022.
 - Burnham Beeches Supplementary Planning Document
 - Updates to the above
- 2.35.17 The [Draft Plan HRA](#) has concluded that where increased recreational use is predicted to cause adverse impacts on a site (all Habitats sites apart from Aston Rowant SAC), avoidance and mitigation should be considered. Avoidance of recreational impacts at Habitat sites involves locating new residential development further away (where possible). Strategic plans, such as Local Plans provide the mechanism for this. Where avoidance of impacts is not possible, mitigation will usually involve a mix of access management, habitat management and provision of alternative recreational space. At this point in time as the sites are not known, the appropriate assessment cannot be undertaken. However, the draft Plan envisages that Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Gateway sites will be required to be allocated to sufficiently mitigate any potential adverse impacts on the designated sites. This will be reviewed as the plan progresses and the HRA of the final plan is refined in further stages.

¹⁴ New surveys are being prepared, and outputs are expected to be available in March 2026.

2.35.18 We will continue to monitor the SACs over the lifespan of the Plan and update the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy and Burnham Beeches SAC Mitigation Strategy to reflect updated evidence. This may include adding mitigation measures for further impact pathways or component sites of the SAC.

This policy sets out the protections for existing Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites.

NE12) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to protecting these sites?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.36 Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

NE13 Suitable Natural Green Space

1. Proposals for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) will be supported where they meet all of the following principles:

- a) Provide capacity to mitigate adverse effects of recreational pressure on a Special Area of Conservation at a minimum of eight hectares of SANG per 1,000 new occupants (or subsequent capacity advised by Natural England);
- b) Provide a minimum 2.3km circular walk on the SANG
- c) Provide the experience of visiting the countryside by being free from unnatural intrusion (including, but not limited to, noise, odour and urban views);

d) Provide suitable parking of at least one car parking space per hectare of SANG and appropriate cycle and wheeling parking provision

e) Be delivered prior to the occupation of the qualifying development(s) to which it relates;

f) Be secured for a period of at least 80 years with an appropriate level of funding and an enduring body for the management of the site agreed by the Council in consultation with Natural England;

g) Be subject to a SANG Monitoring and Management Plan agreed by the Council in consultation with Natural England; and

2. Where proposals are within the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC zone of influence, SANGs should be in accordance with the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy and any further bespoke criteria as agreed by the Council, in consultation with Natural England.

3. Where proposals are within the Burnham Beeches Zone of Influence, they should be in accordance with the Burnham Beeches SAC Mitigation strategy and any further bespoke criteria as agreed by the Council, in consultation with Natural England.

4. SANG must be located according to the scale of the proposed scheme seeking allocation as follows:

a) Developments of 10 or more net dwellings or equivalent, will provide either contributions to a Strategic SANG or a bespoke on-site or off-site SANG as part of the proposed development.

b) Major developments of 10 or more net dwellings or equivalent must be within the catchment of a specified SANG to be able to use its capacity.

c) Minor developments of fewer than 10 net dwellings or equivalent may rely on a Strategic SANG located anywhere within the Zone of Influence, or a Gateway site.

5. Development proposals that use a bespoke or third party owned SANG must demonstrate that:

a) The SANG is being managed by an enduring body

b) The SANG allocation has been agreed with the landowner;

c) The SANG has sufficient capacity; and

d) The SANG credits (where one credit equates to capacity for one dwelling or equivalent) have been secured by an appropriate legal agreement.

6. Proposals for a SANG or alteration to an existing SANG must consider how access for vulnerable groups has been provided.

- 2.36.1 Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, or SANG, is the term given to greenspaces that are created, or enhanced, with the specific purpose of absorbing recreational pressure that would otherwise occur at National Sites, such as the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC at Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI or Burnham Beeches SAC. The Plan's principles for SANG draw from features which have been found to attract visitors to the Ashridge Estate, Natural England's SANG guidelines and best practice that has been established at other SAC and Special Protection Areas (SPA) across England.
- 2.36.2 The standards within the SANG principles are based on the Council's evidence and should be read in conjunction with the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy¹⁵ and the Burnham Beeches SAC Mitigation Strategy once available. The Mitigation Strategies also set the catchment area for SANG, which vary in size depending on their particular characteristics and location. SANG must be secured for at least 80 years from the occupation of the last dwelling for which it provides mitigation.
- 2.36.3 The Council's allocation protocols within the Mitigation Strategies define how we will assess applications from development to use Council-owned Strategic SANG. The allocations protocols will be periodically updated to reflect the Council's priorities for enabling new homes and the available SANG supply. When Council owned SANG capacity will not be made available, developments will be expected to find their own SANG solution, which may include a bespoke SANG either on or off-site. We will consult with Natural England on proposals for new SANG, which must be in place for residents to use before new homes are occupied. The tariff per net new home for Strategic SANG is published on the Council's website.

¹⁵ [Chiltern Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy - accessible](#)

- 2.36.4 Further guidance is provided within the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy and once completed, Burnham Beeches SAC Mitigation Strategy, on our website, and any further bespoke criteria as advised by the Council, in consultation with Natural England.

This policy sets out the criteria for supporting proposals for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

NE13) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to supporting proposals for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.37 Gateway sites

NE14 Gateway sites

1. Gateway proposals will be supported where they relocate existing visitor facilities away from the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (CBSAC) and demonstrate that they will reduce recreational pressure within the SAC.
2. Proposals that intensify or expand uses within, or are likely to increase visitor numbers to, the CBSAC will not be supported.
3. Gateway sites must meet the SANG principles as stated in policy NE13 and all the additional following principles:
 - a) Be located adjacent to, and within a radius of, 500m of the boundary of the SAC;

- b) Be greater than 8 ha in area, with preference being given to sites greater than 15 ha in area;
- c) Be a destination venue, offering a variety of facilities that will maximise dwell time within the Gateway for a large proportion of visitors; and
- d) Provide a range of facilities and amenities to draw visitors to the location, in preference to the CBSAC, to include as a minimum:
 - i) Visitor services (refreshments and toilets), information and wayfinding;
 - ii) Designed to meet the needs of families, dog walkers and accessibility for all requirements;
 - iii) Sufficient parking to meet expected demand (or subsequent requirements advised by Natural England); and
 - iv) Designed to reflect local heritage, environment and the character of the Chilterns.

4. The catchment area for a Gateway is the Zone of Influence of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation.

5. Development proposals that mitigate related recreational pressure impacts by using a Gateway will need to demonstrate that:

- a) The Gateway is being managed by an enduring body
- b) The Gateway allocation has been agreed with the landowner;
- c) The Gateway has sufficient capacity; and
- d) The Gateway credits (where one credit equates to capacity for one dwelling or equivalent) have been secured by an appropriate legal agreement.

- 2.37.1 A Gateway site is a new type of mitigation to protect national sites from recreational pressure, in this case in relation to the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC element at Ashridge. The purpose of a gateway is similar to that of SANG, to create an attractive alternative to Ashridge that deflects visitors away from there, reducing recreational pressures as a result. The key differences are that a gateway is located adjacent to the SAC, drawing visitors away from its protected features to a new welcome hub that is outside of the designated area, and that it offers a greater range of facilities compared to a SANG, to encourage visitors to remain within the gateway for a longer period of time. The catchment for a gateway is a much wider area than for SANG and is set at the Zone of Influence for Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI.
- 2.37.2 The National Trust is preparing gateway proposals as part of its Spatial Plan for the Ashridge Estate. Applications are anticipated to be submitted in Spring 2026, subject to NT funding. Further guidance on the procedures for gateway mitigation will be provided on the Council's website.

NE14a) Beyond the measures to create and maintain the park as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), should there be further visitor facilities or infrastructure on or near the site?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE14b) If you answered "Yes" what additional facilities or infrastructure would you like to see?

2.38 Little Marlow Lakes

NE15 Little Marlow Lakes

1. The Little Marlow Lakes area is allocated for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and wider outdoor recreational uses as shown on the Policies Map.

2. Within the Little Marlow Lakes allocation, Spade Oak is allocated as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to mitigate adverse effects on the Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation from development within the defined Zone of Influence. Development that comes forward in the SANG will be consistent with the Little Marlow, Spade Oak Lake SANG Management Plan (December 2024 as amended).
3. Development should not preclude future proposals for enhanced visitor experience at the Country Park, such as a café and toilet facilities.
3. Measures should be taken to reduce odour and water pollution and contribute to the long-term management of the area.
4. Parking facilities should be provided on and adjacent the restored Gravel Yard accessed from Muschallick Road.
5. Development within the Little Marlow Lakes area should not have an adverse effect upon the amenities or setting of the River Thames, watercourses, flood risk, lakes, wet woodlands, adjoining conservation areas, or listed buildings, or which prejudices the function of the area for which it is allocated.
6. Any development will be required to provide safe, convenient and direct access to Marlow and Bourne End for pedestrians, cyclists, and disabled and other users. The Council supports the creation of new or improved pedestrian wheeling and cycling links to help connect Marlow to Bourne End.
7. Any development close to an existing waterbody or other wetland feature should protect and enhance that feature's ecological value, biodiversity, hydrology, water quality, and its natural setting within the area.

2.38.1 The Little Marlow Lakes area occupies an area of 329 ha between the A4155 Bourne End and Wooburn to Marlow Road and the River Thames and between the A404 and Coldmoorholme Lane. The area is in the Green Belt, and adjacent to the Chilterns National Landscape and the River Thames. The proposed SANG at Spade Oak Lake forms only a small part of the 329ha.

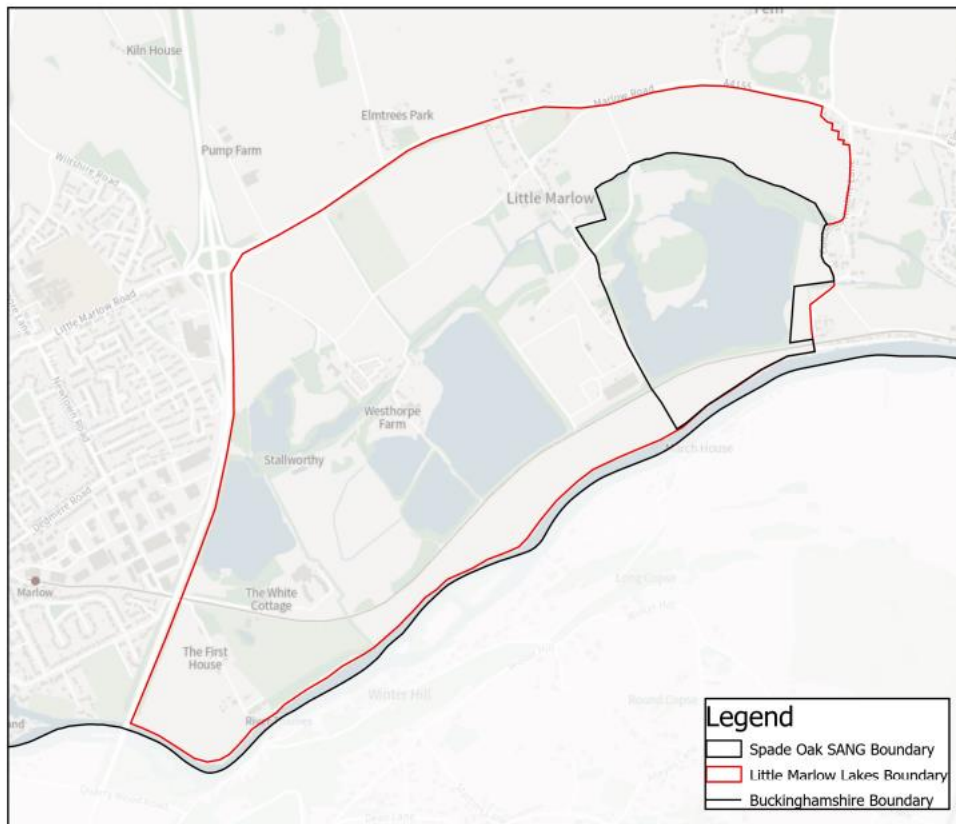


Figure 6: Map showing Spade Oak SANG boundary and Little Marlow Lakes boundary

2.38.2 The area includes Little Marlow village, several former gravel pits (restored as lakes, meadows or arable land) and a number of areas of woodland, including ecologically valuable wet woodland habitat. There is also an athletics track with part of a cycleway and a water sports site.

- 2.38.3 It has the main purpose of providing and improving opportunities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public. The area is used for a variety of formal and informal recreational and sporting uses and is crossed by several public footpaths including an extensive network of circular routes of varying length with increasing use by the public, including disabled users. The wider Lakes area is used for fishing, water sports, open-water swimming, camping and outdoor exploration activities. These uses mean that it is already meeting the principal purpose of a Country Park, as defined by the Countryside Act 1968, to provide or improve opportunities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public.
- 2.38.4 Part of Little Marlow Lakes, known as the Spade Oak Lake area, presents an opportunity to deliver an alternative destination to Burnham Beeches in the south-east of Buckinghamshire, in the form of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). Burnham Beeches is a Special Area of Conservation and a large part of the SAC is also designated as a Nature Reserve. This presents a need to balance a role for biodiversity, and its role in providing for outdoor recreation and public enjoyment of nature. Providing a SANG destination with improvements at Spade Oak Lake area provides an opportunity to offset visitor pressures on Burnham Beeches (see policies NE11 and NE12).
- 2.38.5 On the Spade Oak Lake SANG area, the mitigation management plan provides for publicly accessible open space, ecological and biodiversity enhancements. There are also opportunities for further enhancements that may take place to support the enjoyment of the SANG and new country park. These can include a cafe and associated facilities, public toilets, a play area, additional parking and storage facilities. These facilities must be consistent with the Green Belt and SANG and have no adverse harmful effect on the ecological value of the site.
- 2.38.6 The whole of the area of the Little Marlow Lakes Country Park lies within the Green Belt. Development opportunities must preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- 2.38.7 There are also important nature conservation interests in the area and it contains an extensive area of open water. The former gravel pits are exceptionally important in biodiversity terms, particularly for wintering and breeding birds. This must be considered in all development proposals to deliver a biodiversity net gain.

- 2.38.8 The potential may exist for additional comprehensively planned outdoor recreation and tourism uses as the area develops. There may be scope for such development on the western side of the site, to the west of the Crowne Plaza hotel.
- 2.38.9 The site contains critical drainage areas; as a result any flood risks presented by surface water and groundwater flooding should be assessed and mitigated for in accordance with Policy development should reflect the open nature of the site and the long distance views of and over the site from the National Landscape, from Winter Hill, and vantage points from footpaths across the river. Development should not propose the raising of land within the Flood Zones, including the floodplain of Main Rivers. Where this is unavoidable and necessary, appropriate compensatory measures will be required, in consultation with the Environment Agency.
- 2.38.10 Care should be taken to give space for ‘spring points’ of groundwater or ‘natural springs’, where there has been historical records or evidence of them in the area. Recreational spaces developed for sporting purposes should also consider the impact on infiltration of rainwater into the ground. The low-lying areas are likely susceptible to groundwater emergence.
- 2.38.11 Development must also respect and enhance the setting and amenities of both the Little Marlow Conservation Area, which is washed over by the site, and the Abbotsbrook Conservation Area, which lies to the east. Development must also have regard to the listed buildings in those Areas, their settings and other buildings of interest identified in the Conservation Area documents. The setting and amenities of the River Thames must also be preserved and policies for the landscape and river protection will apply. Areas of existing or potential wildlife habitat should be maintained and enhanced.
- 2.38.12 Development proposals must also have regard to the ground conditions and land stability due to mineral extraction and landfill activities in the area. Proposals for development may need to be accompanied by reports to show the suitability of the land for the purpose intended and to assess and/or manage the presence of migrating landfill gas or other sources of pollution.
- 2.38.13 Development should also provide the opportunity to create new means of access to the site for walkers, cyclists, and disabled users, and links to the wider highway network.

- 2.38.14 Development is required to enable the creation of pedestrian and cycle access on the east side of the area to secure easy access to residents of Bourne End. This could take the pressure off the Thames Path which has significant visitor pressure at times of the year. Any active travel scheme in proximity to Spade Oak needs to take account of the Little Marlow-Spade Oak Lake SANG Management Plan.
- 2.38.15 Further improvements to the area as a whole will also be eligible for CIL funding. This would assist in the wider delivery of green infrastructure in this part of Buckinghamshire. This could include flood risk management measures (e.g. Natural Flood Management projects). This could also include walking, wheeling and cycling opportunities through the delivery of inter-settlement corridor improvements between Marlow and Bourne End.
- 2.38.16 Car parking facilities are to be provided at the restored Spade Oak Lake Gravel Yard, accessed from the A4155 and Muschallick Road in accordance with the Little Marlow Spade Oak Lake SANG Management Plan 2024. This will encourage visitors to the site from Wooburn, Bourne End, and the wider area. There is some limited parking at the running track to the west. Parking further west on Little Marlow Lakes is likely to be 'dual use' parking shared with the Globe Business Park. Development should also consider the opportunity for a new rail halt which could improve overall accessibility both for the formal and informal recreational potential of the area.

NE15) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to Little Marlow Lakes?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.39 Protection of the Green Belt

NE16 Protection of the Green Belt

1. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate except where it is on previously developed land that meets the criteria below or meets one of the following exceptions:

- i buildings for agriculture and forestry
- ii the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- iii The replacement or extension of buildings;
- iv. Limited infilling only within the built-up villages identified on the Policies Map and in accordance with the definition in paragraph 1.304 below;
- v. Limited affordable housing for local community needs only in accordance with Policy HO9 Rural Exception Sites.
- vi. Other forms of development specified in the NPPF provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

2. Inappropriate Development will not be supported unless there are very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will exist when the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations

3. The extension or replacement of a building will only be considered appropriate development in the Green Belt when it satisfies one (or more) of conditions (a) to (c) below. The volume of existing outbuildings unless proposed to be demolished will not be included in any calculations.

- a) The total volume of the resulting building is increased by no more than 30% greater than the original building volume;
- b) A site-specific assessment of the impact of openness of the Green Belt will be required in the case of extension to a dwelling over 30% and up to 50% volume
- c) It accords with a made Neighbourhood Plan

4. Extension or replacement of a dwelling by more than 50% of the original building volume is disproportionate, likely to harm the openness of the Green Belt and would not be supported.

5. The erection of residential outbuildings will be considered not inappropriate development in the Green Belt within a built-up village identified on the Policies Map. Elsewhere in the Green Belt, any increase in the volume of residential outbuildings will only be considered appropriate development when all of the following conditions apply:

a) The total volume of all existing and proposed outbuildings on the property would not exceed 25% of the volume of the original dwelling and existing outbuildings;

b) No more than 50% of the total area of the curtilage (excluding the ground area of the dwelling) shall be occupied by outbuildings;

c) No part of the development would exceed 4 metres in height (measured from the highest part of the surface next to the building where that has not been raised).

6. Proposals for the extension or replacement of a dwelling or the erection of an outbuilding will also be required to respect the open character of the Green Belt and appear proportionate to the original dwelling, taking account of visual impact.

2.39.1 Whilst in many instances National Policy provides sufficient detail to determine whether a proposal is appropriate development in the Green Belt there are instances which require clarification in the interests of certainty and consistency. These are set out in the Policy above and include, for example, our benchmark approach to determining the degree to which a dwelling can be extended without resulting in disproportionate additions. Hence the inclusion of 3(a-c) in this Policy. Note, a Neighbourhood Plan still has to accord with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

2.39.2 The clarification in 5(b and c) are necessary to ensure the openness of the Green Belt is not harmed by development which might share the outward form and design of agricultural buildings but which are not reasonably necessary for agriculture (or forestry).

2.39.3 For the purposes of this policy, the term 'original building' means a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

- 2.39.4 For the purposes of Green Belt policy, a residential outbuilding will be classed as an extension providing it after development is located within 5m of the main dwellinghouse on the site. The erection of any residential outbuildings more than 5m from the main dwelling is unlikely to be classed as an 'extension'.
- 2.39.5 The villages that we have identified as appropriate for limited infilling are those villages which are washed over by the Green Belt but which are identified in the Settlement Hierarchy as sustainable locations for incremental growth. The villages are Tiers 4 and 5 in the Settlement Hierarchy. The Green Belt Review 2025 is reviewing the extent of parcels and so is likely to affect which of these villages will remain in the Green Belt.
- 2.39.6 Limited infilling must have regard to the settlement pattern and the grain and morphology of the village. It does not need to be frontage development, it can be a backland plot. 'Backland' normally refers to the development of land that sits behind an established building line of existing housing or other development, and is often land that is used as a garden. Whereas, 'Infill' is a small gap within an otherwise built-up street frontage.
- 2.39.7 To be limited infilling (whether in a frontage or backland), the plot must be comparable in size and shape to the average house plots in the village (excluding any that are atypically large or small). The proposed building must be similarly comparable in size and scale (again, excluding outliers). This is assessed on the size of the building proposed (not the size of each dwelling) to allow flexibility for smaller pairs of semi-detached houses as infilling in areas of larger detached housing (or vice versa).
- 2.39.8 Suitable infilling plots can be created by the subdivision of larger residential gardens (or other previously developed land) but not by the artificial sub-division of agricultural fields, or paddocks, or similar land that has not been previously developed, where this is likely to result in incrementalism.
- 2.39.9 The site-specific green belt assessment referred to in 3 (e) of the policy will follow the same methodology as the council's Green Belt Review 2025. That Review identifies existing Green Belt parcels and then assesses them for performance against the purposes of the Green Belt. The site's assessment area will be agreed with the council.

2.39.10 It is important to support expansion and improvement of rural economy and for that our Rural Diversification policy covers the different aspects that can affect it.

NE16a) To what extent do you agree that the protection of Green Belt should be a priority?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE16b) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the volume calculations proposed for extensions and outbuildings in the Green Belt?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE16c) Would the policy benefit from a technical guide for clarity and consistency when using the volume calculations?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.40 Development in the Countryside outside the Green Belt

NE17 Development in the Countryside outside the Green Belt

Within that portion of the countryside outside of the Green Belt, and subject to other relevant policies, developments will only be supported where it is for at least one of the following:

- a) Development that accords with a made Neighbourhood Plan;
- b) Development for agriculture and forestry, outdoor sports and recreation, and for cemeteries where there is an evidenced need;
- c) Additional buildings where these are required to support an existing rural enterprise or business located in the countryside, which are proportionate to the existing;
- d) The construction of additional buildings only within settlement built up areas. These also apply to any made neighbourhood plan settlement boundaries;
- e) Rural Exceptions Site housing
- f) Sites for travellers
- g) Housing for rural workers
- h) Extensions, outbuildings and alterations to existing dwellings
- i) The conversion of existing buildings
- j) The redevelopment of previously developed land, provided this respects the rural character of the surroundings and has no greater impact than the existing building or structure

2.40.1 This policy implements the remaining aspects of the Housing Spatial Strategy. It applies to those areas of the countryside that are not in the Green Belt and are not otherwise allocated for development in this Plan. It reflects the general principles of other Policies in this Chapter which ensure that new development is located where it is capable of contributing to sustainable development. It also supports the NPPF aim to avoid isolated new dwellings in the countryside.

2.40.2 This policy and the Housing Spatial Strategy also recognise that there will be some small housing sites that come forward that have not been allocated in this or other plan documents; these are known as windfall sites. The NPPF defines windfall sites as those that have not been specifically identified as available in the Development Plan. Not all locations, however, will be suitable or sustainable. This policy aims to make it clear that existing settlements are the most sustainable locations for new developments. Alongside this however the Council wishes to support the reuse of existing buildings. Many such proposals will be deemed Permitted Development, but only outside of the Chilterns National Landscape. This policy sets the criteria for considering in principle whether development in the countryside beyond the Green Belt is acceptable.

2.40.3 This policy aims to support rural enterprises and businesses located in the countryside, recognising the rural diversification they can provide (See Policy EC10). The policy recognises that any new development can have a positive impact on the local economy without any further significant impact on the countryside. This will ensure that the existing character is maintained whilst managing development appropriately in the countryside.

NE17a) For policy NE17 is it clear on the land uses the council should support that come forward in the countryside outside the Green Belt?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

NE17b) Please give any suggestions for other land uses that should be supported and added into the policy

2.41 National Landscapes and their setting

NE18 National Landscapes and their setting

The Chilterns National Landscape is a nationally designated landscape of the highest value. Major developments will be refused unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated as defined by national planning policy.

Proposals for all development affecting the Chilterns National Landscape, including those within its setting must demonstrate how they:

- a) take a landscape-led approach to development;
- b) conserve and enhance the Chiltern National Landscape's special qualities in accordance with national planning policy, the purposes of its designation and local landscape character assessments;
- c) meet the aims of the Chilterns National Landscape Management Plan, making practical and financial contributions as appropriate;
- d) respond to the Chilterns Building Design Guide, Technical Notes and Position Statements, including that on the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape;
- e) avoid adverse impacts from individual development proposals and any cumulative effects, unless these can be satisfactorily mitigated and
- f) are appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.

Proposals for major development will need to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) produced in accordance with current guidance from the Landscape Institute. At the Council's request, non-major development may require a LVIA or landscape appraisal. The scope of any LVIA or landscape appraisal, including methodology, study area and representative viewpoints, should be agreed with the Council prior to its preparation and submission with a planning application.

Chilterns National Landscape

- 2.41.1 The primary legislation for National Landscapes is the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 also strengthened the duty on public bodies to protect these landscapes. National Landscapes incorporate areas of high scenic quality, and, in landscape terms, are intended to enjoy equal status with National Parks. The primary purpose of National Landscape designation is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape, which is also supported by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.41.2 The Chilterns National Landscape was designated in 1965 and extended in 1990, covering 27% of the Buckinghamshire Council area. It is managed by the Chilterns Conservation Board, who is responsible for reviewing and implementing the Chilterns National Landscape Management Plan. The Board also publishes the Chilterns Building Design Guide along with a series of Technical Notes and Position Statements, including that relating to the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape. These documents are a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 2.41.3 The Chilterns National Landscape covers nine local authorities, who work together to safeguard the future of this valued landscape in conjunction with the Chilterns Conservation Board. It is a living landscape that supports homes, economic activities and leisure uses that complement and contribute to its distinctive character and biodiversity.
- 2.41.4 The Chilterns National Landscape covers nine local authorities, who work together to safeguard the future of this valued landscape in conjunction with the Chilterns Conservation Board. It is a living landscape that supports homes, economic activities and leisure uses that complement and contribute to its distinctive character and biodiversity.
- 2.41.5 All development should, as a minimum, conserve the natural beauty of the Chilterns National Landscape. Development should also, wherever possible, enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns. The Council recognises that not all development can enhance natural beauty, but where there are opportunities to do so, then permission may be refused if these opportunities are not taken.

- 2.41.6 The setting of the Chilterns National Landscape has no defined geographical boundary, but is the area within which developments, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials or design have scope to impact upon the natural beauty and special qualities of the Chilterns. Where development in the setting of the National Landscape would demonstrably harm the National Landscape and having regard to the scale and significance of harm, consent will be refused unless this harm is outweighed by other land use planning benefits.
- 2.41.7 All development in the National Landscape or its setting should demonstrate a landscape-led approach to site selection and development design. A landscape-led approach begins with an appraisal of the site's contribution to the character and cohesiveness of the wider landscape, including relevant Landscape Character Area(s) and designations such as the Chilterns National Landscape. Public views to, from and across the site should also be assessed. Subsequent development proposals should then retain, enhance and supplement valuable landscape features, connections and views/vistas, responding with sensitive high-quality design that reinforces or complements established landscape character and visual amenity. Development proposals should demonstrate how any adverse impacts on landscape character or visual amenity have been avoided, minimised or mitigated.
- 2.41.8 Where required, assessment of likely landscape and visual effects of development should be carried out in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' ("GLVIA"), currently in its third edition, published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). This document is supported by a series of Technical Guidance Notes (TGNs) also published by the Landscape Institute, which should also be addressed where relevant.
- 2.41.9 The term "major development" for this policy does not refer to the familiar planning application thresholds (10 dwellings) or any other numerical threshold but instead requires the Council to judge the significance of a proposal in its specific context.

This policy seeks to protect the Chilterns National Landscape and its setting

NE18) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to protecting the Chilterns National Landscape?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.42 Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

NE19 Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

Development must protect and enhance Buckinghamshire's landscapes with an appropriate response to the site and its surrounding landscape. All Development must meet all the following:

- a) take a landscape-led approach to location, layout and design;
- b) draw upon Buckinghamshire' Landscape Character Assessments for context and inspiration;
- c) reflect the positive aspects of existing local development patterns, including location, scale, form and detail;
- d) reinforce or enhance local character and distinctiveness in the built and natural environment
- e) incorporate development within a robust landscape framework that contributes to local green infrastructure
- f) avoid the loss of, or harm to key local views that encompass the site;
- g) avoid and minimise adverse impacts on local visual amenity generally;
- h) avoid and minimise the effects of lighting on the landscape at night, especially in those areas which are intrinsically dark, and avoid light pollution to the night sky
- i) avoid noise pollution in areas relatively undisturbed by noise, especially those areas of recreational or amenity value;

j) enhance public rights of way and provide other opportunities for walking.

The first stage in mitigating impact is to avoid any identified significant adverse impact. Where it is accepted there will be harm to the landscape character, specific on-site and/or off-site mitigation will be required to minimise that harm and, as a last resort, compensation may be required as part of a planning application. This reflects the mitigation hierarchy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Applicants must consider the enhancement opportunities identified in the LCAs and how they apply to a specific site

2.42.1 All the landscape in Buckinghamshire is considered to have character and particular distinctive features to be conserved, positive characteristics to be enhanced and detracting features to be mitigated or removed. The Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs) are the primary evidence base which divides the entire landscape (beyond towns and the Chilterns National Landscape) into landscape character areas and landscape character types. There are four Landscape Character Assessments and an addendum which cover Buckinghamshire;

- Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment (May 2008, minor amendments May 2013)
- Chilterns Landscape Character Assessment (October 2011)
- South Bucks Landscape Character Assessment (October 2011)
- Wycombe Landscape Character Assessment (October 2011)
- Landscape Character Assessment Addendum (due Autumn 2025)

2.42.2 A review of the above Landscape Character Assessments was undertaken in 2025 as an addendum to the existing LCAs and should be considered as part of the evidence base. The 2025 study sets out landscape conservation guidelines for each landscape character area. Therefore, all the landscape in Buckinghamshire can have innate 'value' as referred to in the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) (2024).

This policy sets out how development must protect and enhance Buckinghamshire's landscapes with an appropriate response to the site and its surrounding landscape.
NE19) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach landscape character and visual amenity?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.43 Pollution, Air quality and Contaminated Land

NE20 Pollution, Air quality and Contaminated Land

Pollution

Significant noise-generating development will be required to minimise the impact of noise on the occupiers of proposed buildings, neighbouring properties and the surrounding environment.

Applicants may be required to submit a noise impact study or to assess the effect of an existing noise source upon the proposed development, prior to the determination of a planning application.

Developments likely to generate more significant levels of noise will be supported only where appropriate noise attenuation measures are incorporated which would reduce the impact on the surrounding land uses, existing or proposed and sensitive human and animal receptors, to acceptable levels in accordance with Government guidance.

Where necessary, planning conditions will be imposed and / or a planning obligation sought to specify and secure acceptable noise limits, hours of operation and attenuation measures.

Noise-sensitive development, such as residential, schools and hospitals, will not be supported if its users would be affected adversely by noise from existing uses (or programmed development) that generate significant levels of noise.

Air quality

Developments that may have an adverse impact on air quality will be required to prove through a submitted air quality impact assessment that:

- a. The effect of the proposal would not exceed the National Air Quality Strategy Standards (or such other standards that supersedes or replaces them) or
- b. The surrounding area would not be materially affected by existing and continuous poor air quality.

Potentially polluting developments will be required to assess their air quality impact with detailed air dispersion modelling and appropriate monitoring. Air quality impact assessments are also required for development proposals that would generate an increase in air pollution and are likely to have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity.

All development proposals which may cause significant impact on air quality directly or indirectly within Air Quality Management Areas will need to submit an air quality impact assessment to the council. This needs to demonstrate how the proposal would impact on local air quality, whether the proposed use is appropriate, and how it would avoid, reduce and mitigate local pollutant emissions.

Where appropriate, planning conditions or Section 106 agreements will be sought to minimise harmful air quality impacts arising from development.

Contaminated land

Development on or near land that is or may be affected by contamination will only be permitted where:

- c. an appropriate contaminated Land Assessment has been carried out as part of the application to identify any risks to human health, the natural environment, water quality or food production.
- d. where contamination is found which would pose an unacceptable risk to people's health, the natural environment or water quality, the council will impose a condition, if appropriate, to ensure the applicant undertakes a desktop study, and if required, an intrusive site investigation, remedial measures and a validation report to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use and that the development can safely proceed.

Remediation works will usually be carried out prior to first occupation or use of any part of the development. Required remediation methods will be secured through a planning condition.

Pollution

- 2.43.1 The council will ensure that no development creates or triggers unacceptable levels of pollution and land instability that could impact on human health, property and the wider environment, including environmental designations. Consideration must be given to adopting environmental best practice measures in all cases.
- 2.43.2 Similarly, the effects of noise on amenity can be limited by separating noise-sensitive development such as homes, schools and hospitals from major noise sources. In cases where separation is not possible, the impact of noisy development and vibration on ambient noise levels should be assessed, for example by an environmental assessment, using the best available techniques and relevant technology and design guidance. This assessment will be relative to the scale of development being considered. Inconvenience can also be caused to local residents by late night opening, odours from cooking bars, restaurants and similar facilities.
- 2.43.3 It is important to stress that in addition to development proposals potentially having pollution impacts that require mitigation, applicants need to consider the impact of existing sources of pollution on proposed development (for example, proposals for residential development adjacent to railway lines, and associated noise and vibration impacts). As such, necessary supporting survey information will be required as appropriate.

Air quality

- 2.43.4 Improved air quality through reducing air pollution in Buckinghamshire can bring considerable health benefits. The council's annual status report 2024 has identified that road traffic is the main source of air pollution in Buckinghamshire with poor air quality increasing the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease and being a cause of premature death. The pollutants of greatest concern in Buckinghamshire are nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, although other pollutants such as carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide can also impact on health at high concentrations.
- 2.43.5 Nitrogen oxides from both industrial and vehicle emission can have a significantly detrimental effect on wildlife habitat. Therefore, any large development needs to be carefully assessed through monitoring and air quality impact assessments prior to planning application determination.

Contaminated land

- 2.43.6 The presence of contamination may affect or restrict the use of land, but equally development may address the issue for the benefit of the wider community and bring the land back into beneficial use. In determining whether land contamination is an issue when assessing a planning application, the council will consider a range of information sources including its database of past industrial and commercial land uses, information provided by developers and third parties, statutory guidance, historic maps, and the council's contaminated land strategy.
- 2.43.7 In April 2000, Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 came into force, introducing a new regime for the regulation of contaminated land in England. The main purpose of Part IIA is to provide a system for the identification of land that is posing unacceptable risks to health or the environment, and for securing remediation where unacceptable risks cannot be controlled by other means.
- 2.43.8 Although most developments are rural in nature, there is development built on previously developed land, some of which may formerly have been employment land of an industrial or commercial nature, and may therefore be affected by contamination and require further investigation. The term 'contaminated land' describes land polluted by, for example heavy metals and hydrocarbons, all of which may harm soils, fauna, flora, water resources and construction components.
- 2.43.9 Redeveloping such land provides an opportunity to remediate the site of any contamination, so that any risk to human health, the environment and the structure itself is removed. The assessment and remediation of contaminated land is complex, with each site being judged individually to make it fit for end use. When carrying out an assessment, interested parties should use guidance set out in the council's Technical Guide for Planning Applicants and Developers. This document provides a guide for developers on how to deal with land contamination and what information should accompany a planning application for the development of affected sites. It should also be read in conjunction with the Environment Agency's Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

- 2.43.10 It is essential that a contaminated land assessment is carried out by a competent person and in accordance with BS10175 (2011) + A2:2017 Code of Practice for the Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites. Where there is evidence of contamination, remedial measures will need to be specified to ensure the development will not pose a risk to human health, and where appropriate, improve the wider environment.
- 2.43.11 Consideration should also be given to the protection of groundwater from areas of contamination, in particular where source protection zones (SPZs) are present. Reference should be made to the Environment Agency's Groundwater Protection: Principals and Practice (GP3) document (or such other standards that supersedes or replaces them).

Policy NE20 seeks to provide the steps that development proposals must take to be acceptable where they may cause pollution, adversely affect air quality or involve contaminated land.

NE20) Are the steps needed to be taken to avoid adverse environmental impacts clear including an assessments and mitigation required?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Transport

2.44 Transport requirements in new developments

- 2.44.1 Transport facilitates the movement of people between their home, work, shops and services, including education, across Buckinghamshire and beyond. It supports sustainable growth opportunities, inward investment, regeneration and contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development. The way we move also affects our health as individuals and as a community.

- 2.44.2 Buckinghamshire being a predominantly rural area, many residents and workers often have limited travel options other than the private car (i.e. infrequent bus services due to financial viability, distance means that walking/cycling not an option). Car ownership in Buckinghamshire is higher than the national average. Traffic congestion is a key issue disrupting people's everyday journeys and impacting on the local economy. Traffic congestion is predicted to increase across the county if current travel patterns continue. Through the Local Plan, the Council will need to ensure that the right infrastructure is in place to support future demand and in step with the growth in the area. In order to address these challenges, plan-making and planning decisions should consider many aspects of transport need to improve people's transport choices and enable people to choose sustainable transport modes³, whilst understanding that car use may be the only viable option for some journeys (particularly in rural locations). This will help to tackle congestion, reduce carbon emissions and create healthy and thriving neighbourhoods.
- 2.44.3 To achieve this broader consideration of transport needs and ensure people have real travel choice, we need to take a different approach to previous plans. The policies in this Chapter are therefore based on a vision-led place-based approach to shape future development and transport infrastructure in Buckinghamshire.
- 2.44.4 A place-based approach to net zero transport should focus on solutions that create well-connected places and healthier, happier, more resilient communities. These objectives are critical to good planning, linking the imperative to reduce transport emissions with wider objectives related to decarbonisation, sustainable housing and employment growth and nature recovery.
- 2.44.5 This approach identifies the need to follow a sustainability hierarchy in terms of transport needs: substitute (avoid), shift and switch/ improve. It is however recognised that connectivity by motorised vehicles, particularly on a strategic level, is essential in facilitating many journeys.
- 2.44.6 This basic hierarchy is summarised in the "Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility (SAM) Framework"¹⁶ below, which seeks to prioritise interventions in the following order:

¹⁶ [RTPI | Net Zero Transport: the role of spatial planning and place-based solutions](#)

- I. Substitute Trips: replace the need to travel beyond your community: Do I need to travel, can I do it online?
- II. Shift Modes: Could I walk, cycle, or use public transport?
- III. Switch Fuels: If I need to use the car, could it be alternative fuel?

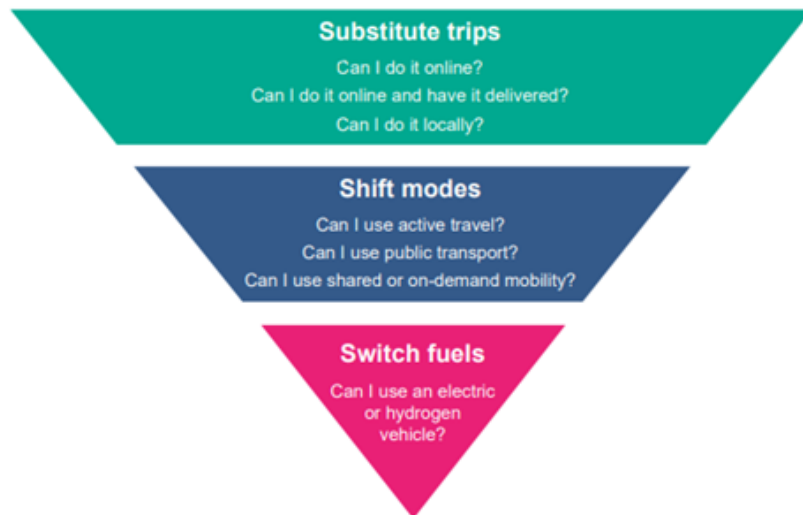


Figure 7: Source: rtpi-net-zero-transport-january-2021.pdf

- 2.44.7 To help achieve this, the location of development in sustainable locations, and the supply of accessible sustainable transport modes, including walking, wheeling and cycling, will be prioritised. Roads will be carefully designed to support developments and minimise severance.
- 2.44.8 We will also work in partnership with National Highways, Network Rail, Great British Railways Transition Team, Active Travel England and others to bring forward improvements to strategic transport infrastructure, services and freight movements. This will support local travel movements and also strategic.

TR1 Transport requirements in new developments

Vision-led transport planning

1. All new developments are required to embed the principles of the transport sustainability hierarchy, the Council's vision-led approach to transport planning, and the Local Transport Plan. Where transport modelling is required, a range of plausible scenarios will need to be considered in line with a defined vision.

Delivering the vision

2. Transport Statements or Transport Assessments will be required to demonstrate how the development will positively contribute to sustainable travel and strategic access. Where appropriate, developments will be required to:

Walking, wheeling and cycling

- a) prioritise provision of routes within the site for pedestrians, those with impaired mobility, non-motorised vehicles and cyclists, which are designed to be coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive;
- b) Provide new coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive access to the site on foot, by cycle and other non-motorised vehicles, maximising connections with local services (including schools) and destinations and with existing footways, public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and cycle ways. Whole route assessments will be required for a range of services and full integrated routes should be provided addressing shortfalls in these routes;
- c) provide safe, direct and accessible walking, cycling and wheeling routes to local schools following Road Safety GB standards or replacement;
- d) provide dedicated changing and showering facilities in any new non-residential building over 2,500m² of net internal floorspace.

Public Transport

- e) provide access to a high quality, fully accessible, attractive public transport service.
- f) provide a new or enhanced service where development is not already served by a high-quality attractive bus or train service. This may be provided directly or by way of a financial contribution, so that the service is maintained for a period of at least five years from an agreed occupation level.

Travel plans

- g) provide and implement travel plans that set out the long-term travel management strategy for an organisation or site, built on an appropriate package of measures aimed at promoting sustainable travel. They must include modal share targets and mitigation measures, in accordance with the Council's guidance.

Car clubs

h) provide car club infrastructure in the form of parking spaces, drop off and pick up points and, where appropriate, car club vehicles or provision of subsidised cost of car club membership for electric vehicles, in accordance with the Council's car club guidance.

Car sharing

i) provide priority parking spaces for car sharers at developments that are primarily destinations (i.e. non-residential uses).

Mobility Hubs

j) deliver mobility hubs in accessible locations which are close to community facilities on site and provide sustainable transport connections to wider services, in accordance with the Council's guidance.

Road Infrastructure

k) provide strategic road improvements where required, ensuring minimal severance and connectivity provisions.

Highways safety

3. Development will be supported where there is no demonstrable unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be found less than severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

Design Requirements

4. Design of transport in new developments is required to:

a) allow for bus routes through the site and priority routing of buses onto the main traffic network,

b) include traffic management to mitigate any safety issues within and accessing the site, and any impacts of the development traffic on the main highway network.

c) deliver a layout and design of transport infrastructure that creates high quality, permeable, coherent, safe and locally distinct places. Maximising opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling should be given priority, followed by the needs of vehicular traffic.

Vision-led transport planning

2.44.9 The first part of the policy sets the strategic context for transport planning in Buckinghamshire. As an approach, a way of thinking or mindset, a vision-led approach to transport planning is relevant to all scales of development and its application can be tailored accordingly. Therefore, all new developments need to contribute at scale to the transport objectives of the Local Plan and adopted Local Transport Plan. Where sites are allocated, the vision is set in the Plan.

2.44.10 Transport modelling will still be necessary in vision-led transport planning. Developers will be required to model a range of plausible scenarios which assume different assumptions about trip generations and mode shifts.

2.44.11 Plausible scenarios will be based on:

- characteristics of the proposed development site's location,
- its existing connectivity,
- the mitigation or connectivity improvements that will be either delivered directly by the site developers or through financial contributions towards Buckinghamshire Council's schemes and
- the extrapolation of trends in travel behaviour.

2.44.12 Developers will need to engage at the earliest opportunity with the Highway and Planning Authorities to agree on a vision-led methodology.

2.44.13 The Council will develop further guidance on vision-led transport planning.

Delivering the vision

2.44.14 The second part of the policy applies to any development proposal which requires the submission of a transport statement or transport assessment as set out in the Department for Transport guidance.

2.44.15 Transport Assessments and Transport Statements primarily focus on evaluating the potential transport impacts of the development proposal and the scope/impacts/mitigation will vary from site to site. They may also consider net reductions of impacts and therefore no mitigation is required.

- 2.44.16 Sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised in new developments to promote accessibility and integration with the wider community and existing networks. Priority should be given to walking, cycling, wheeling and access to public transport including the provision of new or enhanced existing bus services. It should be easier and quicker to walk, wheel or cycle to key locations across the site (and nearby) in order to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling to be the first choice for short trips. New developments need to consider access to and provisions at local rail stations to ensure that they can accommodate increased rail demand.
- 2.44.17 Developers should ensure that all schools on new developments have safe, direct, accessible walking and cycling routes both within the development and also take into account routes children and young people might take into schools on new developments from outside the development.
- 2.44.18 People also need access to open spaces and recreational facilities and should be able to easily get there by walking/bike. These spaces are in their own right going to be used for walking/cycling, therefore provisions should be made for walking/cycling routes through all green spaces.
- 2.44.19 Developers will need to refer to the latest detailed guidance from the Highway Authority, including on Travel Plans⁶, Car Clubs and Mobility Hubs. Cycling provision must follow LTN1/20 guidance, or any future update to it, subject to safety requirements.
- 2.44.20 The vision-led approach recognises that journeys by car will still be required. To support those that need to drive, measures should be included to encourage zero emission vehicles, car sharing, and reduce journey lengths such as mobility hubs. The design of developments should also ensure motor vehicle movements are routed appropriately.
- 2.44.21 To ensure that all transport users needs are considered and genuine travel choice is provided in new developments, highway upgrades for cars / HGV use should only be considered after all other options have been explored.
- 2.44.22 A car club provides access to private vehicles for hire. The cars are usually parked in reserved parking spaces specifically for car club vehicles. They provide more sustainable vehicles and travel choice.

- 2.44.23 The guidance will support the parking standards and will outline the benefits of car club schemes, the types of schemes, operational models and management, and the parking space requirements (location, infrastructure and design).
- 2.44.24 A mobility hub is a physical location that facilitates the integration of multiple transport options e.g. buses, trains, bicycles, e-scooters and carsharing services making it easier for people to switch between different types of transport. In Buckinghamshire, mobility hubs will facilitate and enhance connections between new developments, existing rail and bus interchanges and key tourist and employment zones.
- 2.44.25 Where and how mobility hubs are implemented will vary depending on specific site constraints, existing transport provision, user demand, future transport and economic trends. Developers should refer to the mobility hub guidance to ensure that the right mix of sustainable transport modes are viably implemented.
- 2.44.26 The Council is currently developing Mobility Hub guidance as part of LTP5 which will outline the types of mobility hubs, where they are likely to apply and the proposed mix of components for each mobility hub types. The guidance will outline minimum requirements that each mobility hub must meet.

Highway safety

- 2.44.27 In line with the NPPF, developments should not have a severe adverse impact on the network. Mitigation following a vision-led approach will need to be provided as appropriate.

Design requirements

- 2.44.28 Detailed design requirements will need to be discussed and agreed at the earliest opportunity with the Highway Authority.

This policy sets out the requirements for new developments in terms of following a vision-led approach and providing active travel and sustainable transport.

TR1a) Given the vision-led approach to transport set out by the government, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the emphasis on active travel and public transport in the policy?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

TR1b) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the policy provides clarity on the active travel and public transport provision that is required from development?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

TR1c) To what extent do you agree that private car is likely to remain an essential component of many journeys in Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.45 Transport improvements

TR2 Transport improvements

1. Development will not be supported where they would prejudice the provision of new or improved transport infrastructure on the Transport Improvement Lines identified on the council's website.
2. Major development sites are required to identify, protect and help to deliver strategic transport infrastructure, both existing and new, where there is robust evidence the infrastructure is critical to widening transport choice and realising opportunities for large scale development.

- 2.45.1 In line with the Highway Authority priorities, the local plan formally safeguards Transport Improvement Lines through this policy to ensure that that no development could prejudice the delivery of these schemes.
- 2.45.2 The Council will not permit development that would prejudice the implementation of any of the schemes safeguarded by the Council ([see transport improvement lines](#) on the website). There are different types of road and junction improvement lines and they are required to provide improvements to road networks, to increase road capacity, improve road safety, as well as creating additional public transport or non-vehicular routes for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- 2.45.3 In addition, major development sites are required to identify, protect and deliver strategic transport infrastructure where there is robust evidence it is critical to widen transport choice or support delivery of large-scale development. Strategic transport infrastructure may be required to improve the current transport network or support future travel requirements.
- 2.45.4 Strategic transport infrastructure includes new roads, improvements to road networks and creation of additional public transport or non-vehicular routes for walking, wheeling and cycling. Infrastructure will be delivered on site or through contribution towards its delivery. Due to the nature of Buckinghamshire, roads will remain an important part of transport infrastructure.
- 2.45.5 Strategic transport infrastructure does not include rail which is considered separately through the safeguarded land policies.

This policy sets out the requirements for major developments to identify, protect and help to deliver strategic transport infrastructure, both existing and new.

TR2) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to transport improvements?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.46 Parking standards

TR3 Parking standards

Development proposals are required to comply with the latest Buckinghamshire Parking Standards* and the parking standards and design principles in the national model design code.

*Parking standards are currently being reviewed, and this policy refers to these future standards, not the current ones.

- 2.46.1 Car parking and its location has an impact on the quality of the environment – how it looks, how it functions – and on safety. The availability and convenience of parking at the destination can have a real effect on the choices people make regarding travel.

- 2.46.2 Policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have given local authorities the flexibility to tailor parking provision based on local market demands, community needs and future transport ambitions. Buckinghamshire's Local Transport Plan sets out the local priorities for promoting modal shift and influencing the quality and character of local streets. The Parking standards takes the many demographic and economic variations in Buckinghamshire's urban and rural areas as well as the significant variations in accessibility of public transport and reflects these variations in the parking standards to ensure adequate parking provision.
- 2.46.3 Development proposals will be required to comply with the latest parking standards to ensure that parking provision (including designs and layouts) are implemented for the benefit of all users.
- 2.46.4 Current vehicle parking standards, including for cycles and motorcycles, are on the council website. An update to the Parking Standards is under way, and is expected to be completed next year. We wish to encourage electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support all electric vehicles in use. Electric vehicle infrastructure requirements will be defined as part of the new Parking Standards being prepared.

This policy sets out the principle for following the future parking standards requirements for new developments.

TR3a) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the future parking standards, once adopted, should be included in the Local Plan itself?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

TR3b) Please share your views on key issues and challenges the future parking standards should address?

2.47 Public rights of way

TR4 Public Rights of Way

1. Development will be required to:

- a. Protect and enhance public rights of way to ensure the integrity and connectivity of this network is maintained.
- b. Ensure the safe and convenient use and enjoyment of existing public rights of way, such as footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways, is maintained.
- c. Avoid unacceptable harm to the efficient operation of public rights of way.

2. Proposals should accommodate existing access routes on their original alignment through green corridors. If diversions are required to enable a proposal to come forward, this will only be supported if the safety and convenience of the route is of similar or greater merit than the existing.

3. Upgrade the status of public rights of way to maximise sustainable transport networks, where necessary, to allow additional use by cyclists.

4. New routes used for active travel, both on- and off-site, should be upgraded to adoptable standard to support increased use, providing an attractive travel choice. They should be safe by design and overlooked by active frontages.

2.47.1 As of June 2025, there are 2,084 miles of Public Rights of Way in Buckinghamshire which form the primary means by which residents and visitors access the countryside, but also schools and workplaces. Management of the network is guided by the Buckinghamshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030, which acknowledges the network's critical role in the rural economy.

2.47.2 Public Rights of Way are complimentary to the footway and cycleway network for walking and cycling which will contribute to the delivery of the Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

2.47.3 The Local Plan will seek to protect this resource and ensure improvements or enhancements are secured through the planning process to encourage active travel by new residents and discourage short journeys by car.

- 2.47.4 The protection and conservation of public rights of way need to be reconciled with the benefits of new development, to maximise the opportunity to form links from the development to the wider public rights of way network, public transport, recreational facilities and green infrastructure.
- 2.47.5 When delivering sustainable transport solutions for strategic sites, there may be instances where it is necessary to upgrade Public Rights of Way as an alternative to the Highway network. For example, to use a section as a cycleway as well as footpath.
- 2.47.6 Any changes to a Public Right of Way will require a separate legal process, either under s257 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by subsequent legislation) if impacted directly by a development's footprint or otherwise under s119 Highways Act 1980 (as amended by subsequent legislation). The diverted route should be of similar or greater merit than the existing.

TR4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to public rights of way?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.48 Freight and logistics

TR5 Freight and logistics

1. Facilities that enable sustainable freight activity and first mile / last mile solutions, in accordance with the adopted Local Transport Plan, will be supported.

2. Smart warehousing through retrofitting of existing stock will be supported.
3. New proposals (temporary or permanent) for freight and logistics movements should not have a significant detrimental impact on the local area.
4. Developments with retail or food-retail must ensure suitable access arrangements, loading and unloading facilities are provided.
5. Employment sites must have suitable facilities and access arrangements for ongoing freight deliveries.

- 2.48.1 Local authorities are required to plan for the modern economy; this includes freight and logistics. Freight is essential for servicing industry, communities, and supporting economic development. The Council is working on updating its Freight strategy alongside the emerging Local Transport Plan 5.
- 2.48.2 The transportation of goods by freight (road and rail) plays a key role in servicing Buckinghamshire's industry, communities and enabling our growth and economic development. Freight offers our residents choice as consumers and businesses: allowing them to grow, thrive and develop.
- 2.48.3 Whilst we recognise the importance of freight, there are also local challenges with the movement of goods by road. This includes freight's contribution to transport carbon emissions and local traffic or road safety issues. Therefore, where deliveries are required, developments need to ensure appropriate access, loading and unloading arrangements. We will also support measures to enable sustainable deliveries and contribution towards our net zero ambitions.
- 2.48.4 As the most established modern economy presence within Buckinghamshire [freight and logistics dominate the employment figures at both the Buckinghamshire and national level, representing 72.1% of modern economy roles in Buckinghamshire in 2023], there are many businesses within the wider freight and logistics supply chain. Most prominently, these businesses are wholesalers, including pharmaceuticals, food and agricultural products, and office machinery and equipment.
- 2.48.5 These businesses positioned along key road connections, with clusters in and around the main settlements and business parks.

- 2.48.6 The Council is involved in developing a regional freight strategy as part of its involvement in England's Economic Heartland.
- 2.48.7 Buckinghamshire's relative lack of strategic freight infrastructure such as ports, airports, and rail freight terminals places limits its potential comparative advantage in the sector. Conversely, logistics, which includes warehousing and storage, demonstrates considerably stronger demand conditions, indicative of excess demand for logistics services.
- 2.48.8 The Employment Land Review Modern Economy Report has concluded that there is a need for smart warehousing via retrofitting of existing stock (pre-2000 for most) which would improve their efficiency through digitalisation and automation.

TR5) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to freight and logistics?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.49 Aviation development

TR6 Aviation development

1. Aviation development that affects Buckinghamshire, including flight paths and construction traffic, will only be supported where it would not have a significant adverse impact on:

- a) the environment, landscape, nature conservation interests and

b) residents and businesses in terms of noise, adverse lighting, residential amenity, public rights of way, or health and safety.

2. Diversification of operational airfields to include wider economic uses is supported, provided it does not prejudice or limit their effective operation.

3. Any proposed development within a statutory or non-statutory Safeguarding Zone will need to be safely designed in accordance with each aerodrome safeguarding maps.

- 2.49.1 The Council will seek to mitigate severe impacts from aviation developments where applicable. National guidance to local planning authorities is included in the DfT's general aviation handbook¹⁷.
- 2.49.2 Local airfields are important local facilities. On small airfields such as Denham or Wycombe Air Park the Council will seek to ensure that proposals do not prejudice the operational users already in place.
- 2.49.3 In relation to major airports in adjacent authorities, namely Heathrow and Luton, development in Buckinghamshire should not prejudice the safe operation of these international airports.
- 2.49.4 There are a number of statutory and non-statutory aviation safeguarding zones from airfields within Buckinghamshire, as well as airports and airfields within neighbouring authorities. Safeguarding zones are identified by each aerodrome based on their operational requirements. Any proposed development within an identified Aviation Safeguarding Zone will be subject to consultation with the operator of the aerodrome and the Ministry of Defence. Restrictions in height, placement of buildings and equipment or changes to the detailed design of development may be necessary to mitigate the risk of aircraft accident and interference with equipment to maintain operational integrity.

¹⁷ [General aviation handbook](#)

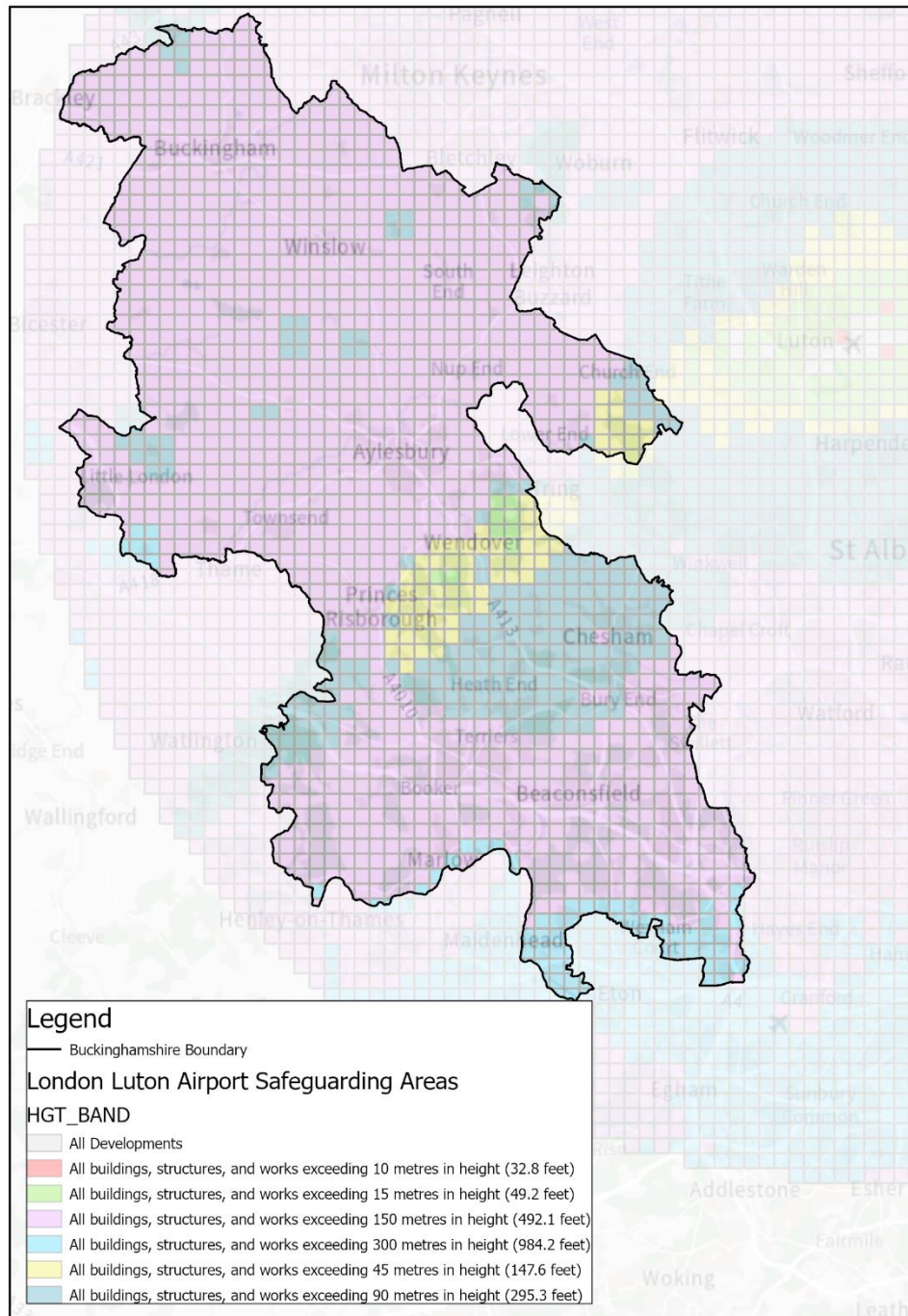


Figure 9 - Map showing London Luton Airport safeguarding areas

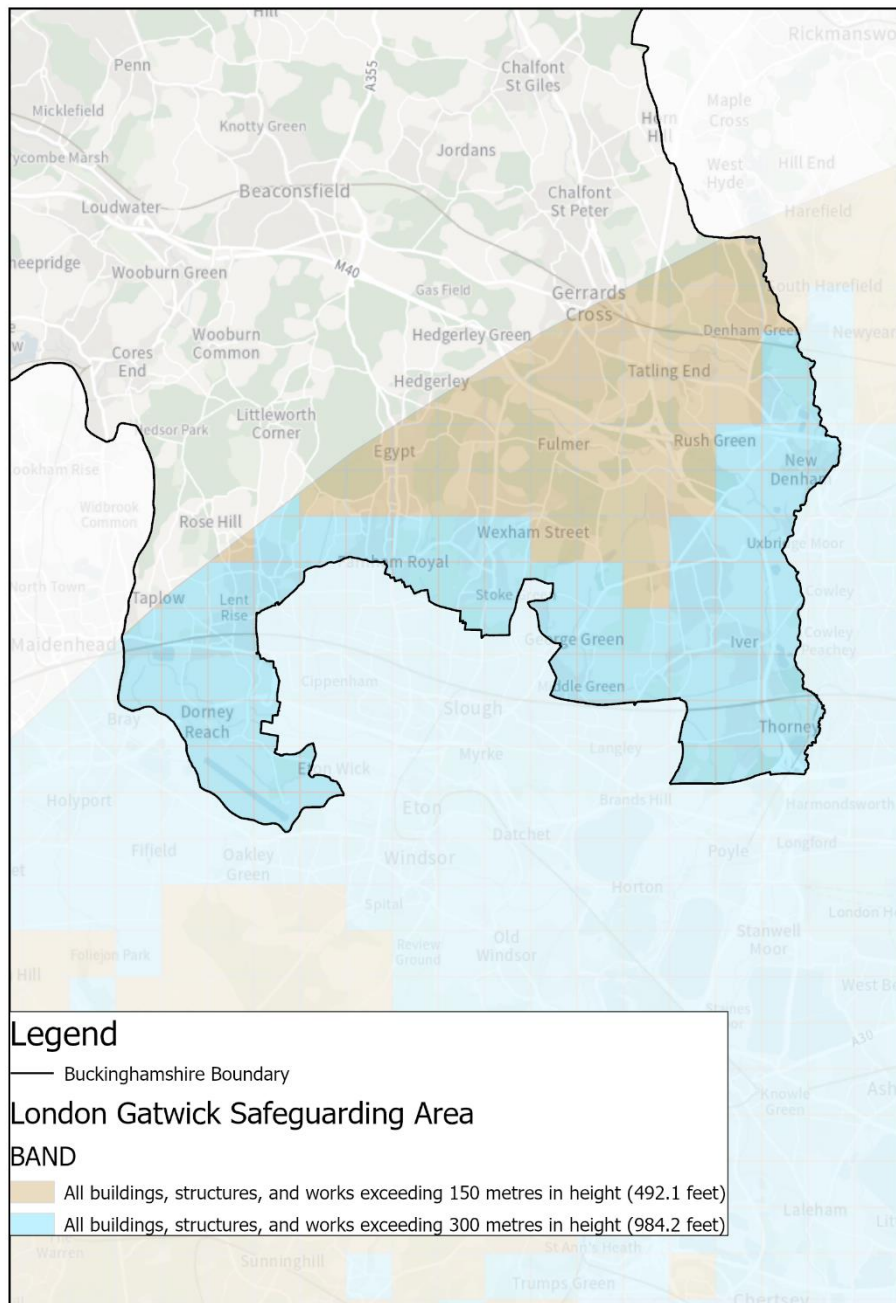


Figure 10 - Map showing London Gatwick Airport safeguarding areas

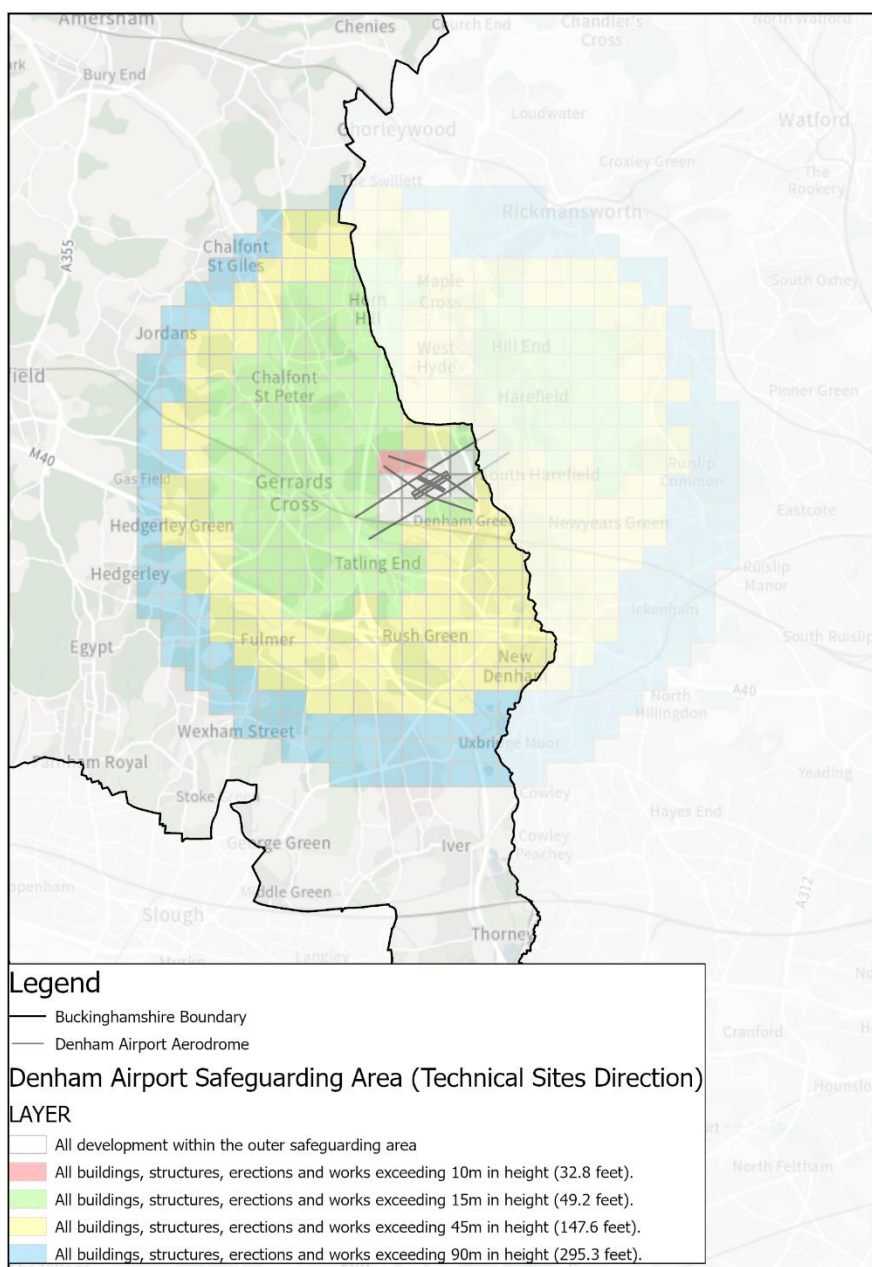


Figure 11 - Map showing Denham airport safeguarding areas

TR6) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to aviation development?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.50 East West Rail

TR7 East West Rail

1. Any development which would prejudice the delivery of East West Rail, including the Aylesbury- East West Rail Link, will not be supported.
2. Development should also enable future overhead line electrification of the route without major civil engineering works e.g. removal or reconstruction of permanent structures.
3. Development of land adjoining the Princes Risborough to Aylesbury railway line must not prejudice the future double-tracking of the line.
4. New structures introduced across the line shall make passive provision for future double-tracking.

2.50.1 The delivery of East West Rail is vital for the subregion's prosperity and for improving sustainable travel alternatives to the car for commuting and leisure.

2.50.2 The East West Rail (EWR) project will provide a new east-west orbital route between the east of England and south-central England making use of existing infrastructure where available. The EWR project is aiming to provide connectivity to Reading, Didcot, Oxford, Bicester, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Cambridge, Norwich and Ipswich and supports sustainable growth across the corridor. The council is one of a consortium of local authorities in England's Economic Heartland (the subnational strategic transport body) working with Network Rail and the Department for Transport, influencing and supporting the early implementation of this key infrastructure project.

- 2.50.3 The East West Rail western section (Phase 2) involves the upgrade and reconstruction of sections of line linking Bedford to Bicester and Milton Keynes, via Winslow. This will allow passenger and freight services to run between Bedford, Milton Keynes, Bletchley and Bicester, with a new station in Winslow. EWR are also proposing passing loops for freight near Middle Claydon.
- 2.50.4 East West Rail Phase 1 Bicester to Oxford is in operation and preparation for Phase 2, Bicester - Milton Keynes is well advanced. Train services are due to commence operation in the latter half of 2025.
- 2.50.5 Proposals by EWR Co and the Department for Transport do not currently include provision for the Aylesbury-East West Rail Link. This would provide a connection from Aylesbury to East West Rail, enabling direct services from Aylesbury and Aylesbury Vale Parkway to Winslow, Bletchley, Milton Keynes and other destinations further east. Services would run via an upgraded existing freight-only line north from Aylesbury Vale Parkway, joining East West Rail at Claydon West Junction. Provision for the Aylesbury Link is already being partially delivered by HS2 as part of its work in the Calvert and Claydon area.
- 2.50.6 The Council strongly supports delivery of the Aylesbury Link-East West Rail Link, including a continuous two-track railway corridor between Aylesbury railway station and Claydon West Junction, and provision for future overhead line electrification (OLE). It is appropriate to ensure that development adjoining the line does not prejudice this. In that context, all planning applications within 50 m of the branch line will be subject to consultation with Network Rail.
- 2.50.7 The Princes Risborough to Aylesbury branch is a single-track line with speed restrictions serving Monks Risborough and Kimble. Double-tracking this branch line is outside of the scope of current projects but was identified by Network Rail in their West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study 2017.

- 2.50.8 The indicative Train Service Specification for 2043 developed to support Network Rail's route study shows a requirement for up to three trains per hour along the line, in place of the current one train per hour. This level of service would require the line to be doubletracked. Increasing the train paths to two an hour could be a requirement sooner than this, within the plan period. This increase in capacity is required to support the planned level of sustainable growth across the Chilterns network area.
- 2.50.9 The Council strongly supports the mid to long-term aspiration of Network Rail to double-track the Princes Risborough to Aylesbury line. It is appropriate to ensure that development adjoining the branch line does not prejudice this. In that context, all planning applications within 50 m of the branch line will be subject to consultation with Network Rail.

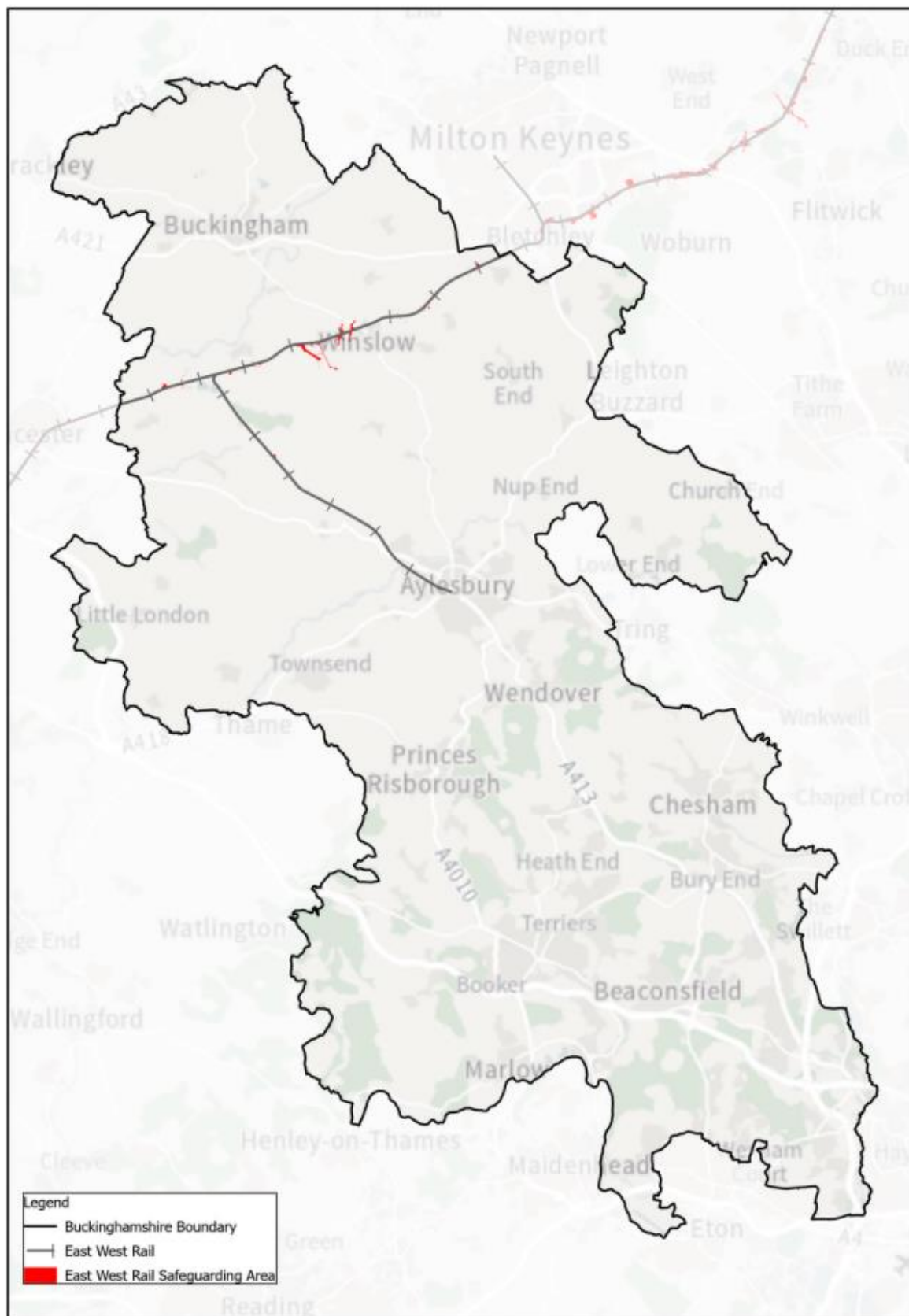


Figure 12 - Map showing East West Rail line and safeguarding areas

TR7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to East West Rail?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.51 High Speed Two

TR8 High Speed Two

1. Development which would prejudice the implementation of High Speed 2 (HS2) will not be supported.
2. New development which impacts on the implementation of HS2 will be expected to:
 - a) Manage its construction to minimise the impact on communities and the environment; and
 - b) Make use of careful design to protect communities and the environment from noise, visual intrusion, loss of accessibility and impacts on biodiversity, mitigating unavoidable impacts where practicable.

2.51.1 High Speed 2 (HS2) is a national infrastructure project that will link London to Birmingham. The Secretary of State for Transport issued a safeguarding direction for the route between London and Birmingham in July 2013. The HS2 Bill received Royal Assent in February 2017.

2.51.2 The safeguarded land runs through the centre of the county and will be defined on the Policies Map in the final plan. The safeguarding directive requires the notification to HS2 Ltd of any planning application which affects the safeguarded land.

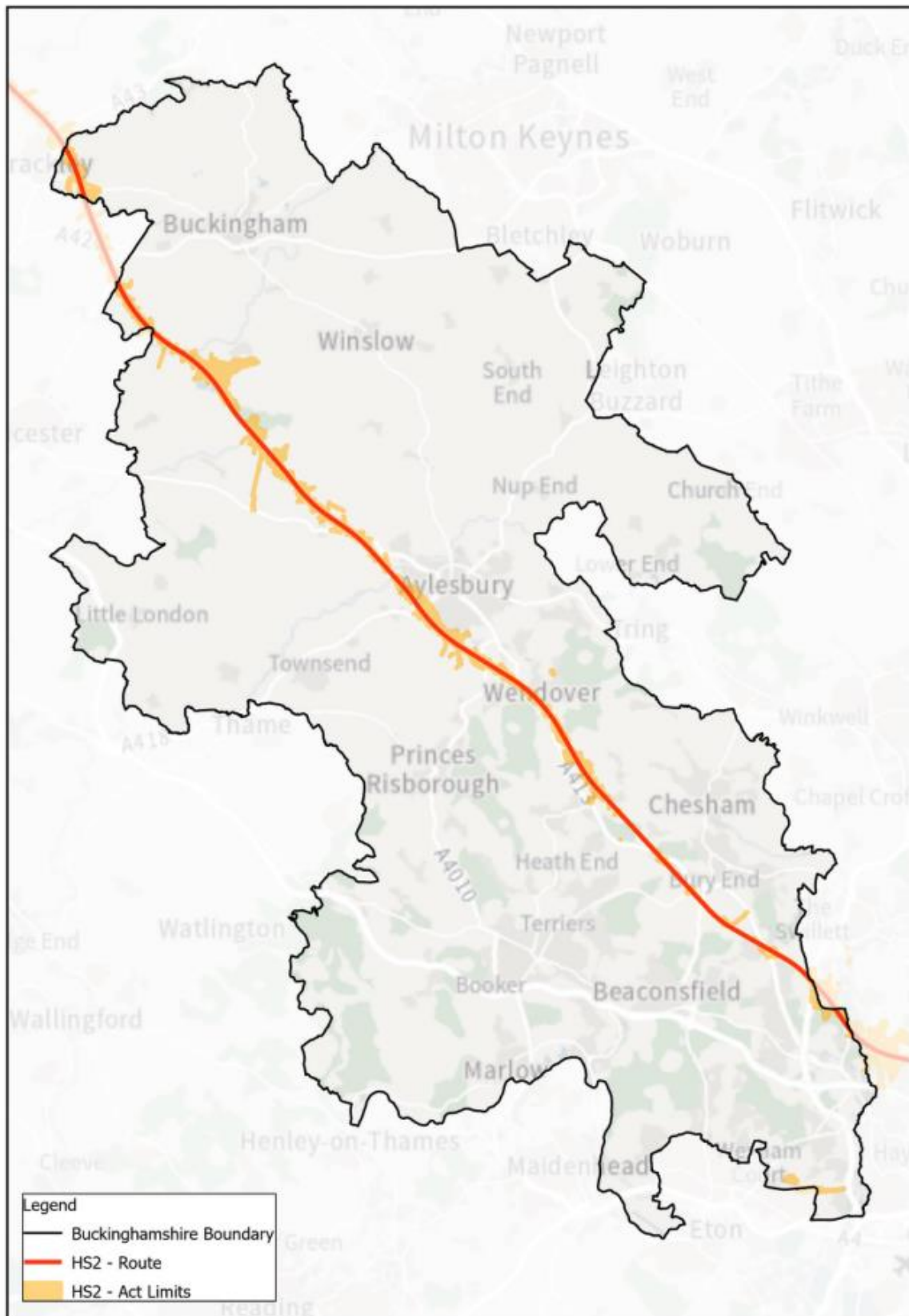


Figure 13 - Map showing HS2 rail line and safeguarding land

TR8) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to High Speed Two?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.52 Former Bourne End to High Wycombe to railway line

TR9 Former Bourne End to High Wycombe railway line

1. The former Bourne End to High Wycombe Railway Line is proposed as a new walking / wheeling /cycle route.
2. Developments will not be supported where they would prejudice the construction of a 5m wide walking, wheeling and cycling corridor between Bourne End and High Wycombe town centre/railway station, utilising the track bed of the Bourne End to High Wycombe disused railway line. This route is to be separated from vehicular traffic where practicable. If in creating this new route, it is necessary to make diversions from the former railway track bed, the route chosen should not be significantly less direct or attractive.
3. The development of major sites (10 or above) within 800 metres of the corridor will be required to provide convenient links to the route (and sections of the route where appropriate), in order to maximise the opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling.
4. Any future development proposals that would prejudice construction or operation, or prevent suitable diversions being created to provide the walking, wheeling and cycling corridor, will not be supported.

- 2.52.1 The track between High Wycombe and Bourne End was closed in 1970 and has been safeguarded since 1976. The Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for the former Wycombe District safeguarded the route in 2013 for its potential to be developed as a high-quality public transport corridor.
- 2.52.2 A study¹⁸ recommended that “the relevant local authorities should prevent further development along the alignment, so that the route is preserved in the event of the case for the re-instatement of public transport route here strengthening in the future.”
- 2.52.3 Following further work the Council considers that the prospects for a public transport route being created are now very unlikely. However, the route does offer great potential as a walking and cycling route as it is direct and well connected to homes, schools, jobs, railway stations, open space and town/district centres on a largely flat, largely traffic free route through an attractive landscape. The route – much of which remains undeveloped - is therefore safeguarded for the provision of a dedicated walking/wheeling/cycling route. The route also has potential to enhance green infrastructure. It is identified in the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy as an Area that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity.
- 2.52.4 Creation of an active travel route along the former railway line would deliver economic and health benefits by encouraging cycling, wheeling and walking and could form part of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. Its route along the valley floor is well positioned, as it runs through/is adjacent to urban areas for almost all its length – close to schools, houses, work places, rail stations and town /district centres, so it could be used for all types of cycling and walking journeys and in many places could be separated from vehicular traffic in order to make this route more attractive to users. Studies have shown it is not otherwise practicable to meet modern design standards for a cycle route between High Wycombe and Bourne End.
- 2.52.5 The Council will seek delivery of convenient links to the route, and sections of the route where appropriate, through direct delivery or s106 contributions as necessary. To this effect, a buffer of 800 metres from the corridor boundary is proposed to capture s106 contributions from major sites (10 or more). This corresponds to a 10 minutes’ walk / 3 minutes cycling and is deemed reasonable.

¹⁸ Atkins, Thames Valley multi-modal study (2003)

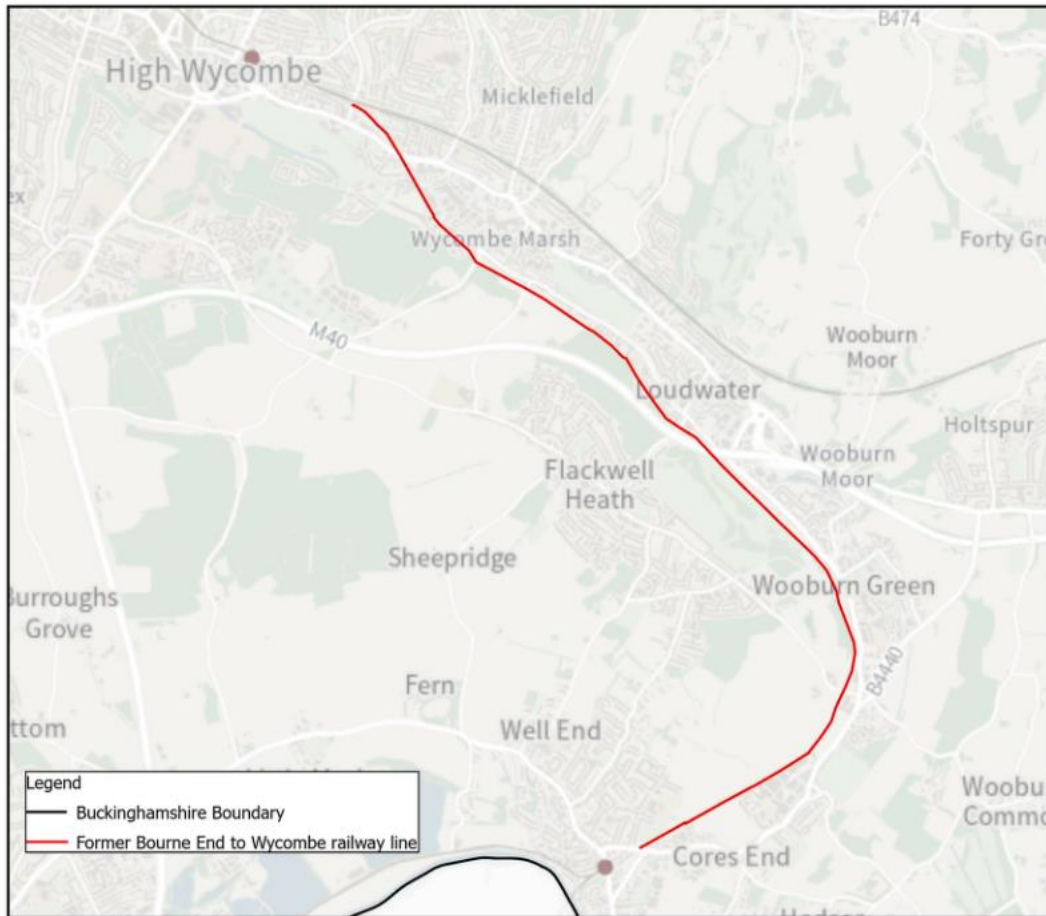


Figure 14 Showing former Bourne End to Wycombe Railway line

TR9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to the former Bourne End to High Wycombe railway line?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Infrastructure

2.53 Infrastructure delivery

IN1 Infrastructure delivery

1. All proposed major development must identify and provide necessary infrastructure taking account of the nature, scale and location of the development. This includes both new infrastructure and direct ring-fenced contributions to the delivery or improvement of infrastructure.
2. When determining necessary infrastructure, developers must consider the current level of infrastructure, any standards detailed in this Local Plan, and the requirements in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
3. The phasing of development must account for infrastructure provision to ensure timely and comprehensive delivery. Long-term management and maintenance of the infrastructure must also be considered and should avoid adding unnecessary costs on public authorities.

2.53.1 The NPPF states that Local Plans should include strategic policies to deliver, amongst other things, the provision of infrastructure, and should plan positively for the development and infrastructure required to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the NPPF.

2.53.2 It is vital that the required infrastructure is delivered to support new development. To support future growth in Buckinghamshire, providing the necessary infrastructure at the right time is essential. Infrastructure includes:

- Emergency Services - including ambulance, police, and fire and rescue.
- Healthcare - including hospitals, and GP surgeries.
- Utilities – including broadband, mobile technology, electricity, and gas.
- Waste Management – including household recycling centres.
- Education – including early years and childcare, primary and secondary schools, Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), adult learning, and higher education.
- Crematoriums and Cemeteries
- Parks and Green Spaces
- Leisure, Sports and Recreation
- Community Services

- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- The Water Cycle – including water supply, wastewater treatment, and drainage.
- Transport – including, trains (lines, stations, and services), buses (stops, and services), roads, pedestrian paths, and cycling (paths, lanes, and storage).
- Facilities for criminal justice

2.53.3 Infrastructure needs may change over the lifetime of the plan as different options for meeting needs could become available or if new requirements came into force. These would need to be assessed at the planning application stage.

2.53.4 Through consultation with various infrastructure providers, [a Baseline Infrastructure Study](#) has been completed which gives an initial picture of infrastructure issues and opportunities across the area. A more detailed Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) is being developed to inform the Local Plan and viability testing. The IDP outlines:

- What infrastructure is needed
- How much infrastructure is required
- Where infrastructure is needed
- Infrastructure costs and funding sources
- Delivery responsibility and timing

2.53.5 Infrastructure will be delivered by various stakeholders either individually or in partnership, including developers/landowners, the Council, government departments, public agencies, and utility service providers. Collaboration among these parties is crucial to align funding sources and ensure timely delivery.

2.53.6 Developers must take account of infrastructure requirements arising from their developments, and where appropriate, incorporate infrastructure delivery into their development proposals. They are responsible for engaging in the planning process, considering costs (including profit expectations and risks), and ensuring compliance with Local Plan policies. However, developers are only responsible for infrastructure related to new growth, not for addressing existing deficiencies, unless the development will make them significantly worse.

2.53.7 In determining planning applications, the need for infrastructure will be assessed taking into account relevant local and national policies as well as other relevant evidence (such as modelling) and site-specific assessments.

- 2.53.8 The Council mostly prefers direct delivery of infrastructure by developers (the provision of schools and school places is one exception to this). The provision or improvement of infrastructure needed to support development will usually be secured through the use of planning conditions attached to a planning permission, or through legal agreements. In some cases, such as when the cost of infrastructure requires contributions from different developers to be pooled, the Council will consider accepting financial contributions secured through a legal agreement. Where developers rely on the Council to provide infrastructure, contributions must take account of all relevant project costs, including for officer time, design and feasibility work, land acquisition and consultation.
- 2.53.9 In addition to the above, a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge levied on new developments by Buckinghamshire Council to help fund supporting infrastructure. This levy is applied across Buckinghamshire, except in the former Aylesbury Vale District Council area, where its introduction is in the process of being considered. The Council also has a duty to pass on 15% of the collected CIL funds to town and parish councils to support the development of their local area, with this percentage increasing to 25% in areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan in place.

IN1) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to infrastructure delivery

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.54 Water infrastructure

IN2 Water infrastructure

Water supply

1. Developments are required to demonstrate how they will be served by adequate water supply infrastructure. Capacity of distribution systems must be demonstrably adequate prior to occupation of development.

The location of, and likely impact on, private water supplies within Buckinghamshire must also be taken into account in ensuring that there is adequate water infrastructure capacity in place to serve development.

Wastewater

2. Developments are required to demonstrate how they will be adequately served with foul drainage, wastewater and sewage treatment without leading to significant problems for existing users or contamination of waterbodies and water supply.

3. Planning applications must demonstrate that adequate capacity of distribution systems is available or can be provided within the foul sewerage network and at wastewater treatment works in time to serve the development.

4. The Council will expect new development (new buildings such as new dwellings and employment units) to connect to mains foul drainage and will restrict the use of non-mains drainage for foul water disposal, in line with Environment Agency guidance.

Delivery

5. Phasing conditions will be attached to planning permissions to ensure that new developments are not occupied until the required water supply and wastewater capacity is in place.

2.54.1 Water resources need to be safeguarded from the potentially negative impacts of development. This includes pollution from wastewater.

2.54.2 The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire provides information on the growth required and estimated during the plan period and the National Planning Policy Framework supports the need to make sufficient provision for water supply in those locations.

- 2.54.3 Buckinghamshire Council working in partnership with key stakeholders has developed a Water Cycle Study that sets out existing issues at the time of the study and where upgrades are needed. The outcome of the Water Cycle Study is fed into the Local Plan which then can be used by water companies to finalise future asset management plans.
- 2.54.4 Early engagement between developers and water supply and wastewater companies through their developer advice service, as well as with the council, to demonstrate adequate infrastructure capacity is / will be in place before development coming forward is necessary and will have to be evidenced.
- 2.54.5 The council will use phasing conditions to ensure development only proceeds to completion and occupation with adequate water services infrastructure.

IN2) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to water infrastructure?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.55 Telecommunications Infrastructure

IN3 Telecommunications Infrastructure

Incorporating telecommunications infrastructure in new development

1. All new housing and commercial developments should be designed to include underground ducting for cabling for telecommunications networks, to ensure efficient connections to existing networks and provide sites for telecommunications

masts where additional mobile network capacity is required to service the development. If this is not feasible, developers must provide evidence and justification.

Visual Impact

2. Above-ground telecommunications infrastructure should be designed to minimise visual impact. It should not negatively affect the character or appearance of the area. For equipment on buildings, the impact on the building itself should also be minimized.

Alternative Sites

3. Developers must consider alternative sites, including mast sharing and using other buildings or structures that have less visual impact. Technical evidence must be provided to demonstrate that no other more suitable sites are available.

Sensitive Areas

4. In areas such as the Green Belt, designated areas of National Landscape, other areas of landscape importance, areas of ecological interest, conservation areas, listed buildings or other designated heritage assets including within their settings, developers must demonstrate that the benefits of high masts and large structures outweigh any harm. All reasonable alternatives to avoid or mitigate impacts should be considered.

Replacement Equipment

5. If redevelopment displaces existing telecommunications equipment, the new development must include replacement equipment to ensure that network capacity and coverage are maintained.

Removal of Equipment

6. Mechanisms, such as conditions or planning obligations, must ensure the removal of equipment when it is no longer required.

- 2.55.1 Telecommunications is the general term for the transfer of information over varying distances using technologies such as telephone, television, radio, mobile phones and the internet. High quality communications infrastructure includes the recent advances in broadband and wireless technologies.

- 2.55.2 Improved access to high-speed broadband and new communications technologies across Buckinghamshire will be encouraged and facilitated. The importance of delivering superfast broadband to rural areas is recognised.
- 2.55.3 The council expects high quality communications infrastructure to be incorporated into the design of all new housing and commercial development, ensuring the futureproofing of telecommunications, enabling them to be easily provided and/or upgraded in the future.
- 2.55.4 The council will therefore expect developers to explore the option of providing on-site infrastructure, including ducting for broadband and new masts to improve the capacity of mobile networks in any new residential, employment or commercial development, for efficient connection to existing networks. If such measures cannot be delivered, the developer will need to submit evidence to justify the reasons why this is the case.
- 2.55.5 High quality telecommunications are important for economic growth – attracting new businesses and allowing existing businesses to remain competitive. Telecommunications also have social benefits – increasing social inclusion through better access to internet-based services. Full fibre broadband can also encourage homeworking. Focus on developing networks in urban areas has however led to rural areas being relatively disadvantaged.
- 2.55.6 The importance of delivering superfast broadband to rural areas is recognised, and development should facilitate where possible the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems to ensure people and rural businesses have a choice of providers and services.
- 2.55.7 At the same time any adverse impact on the character of the locality and the environment should be minimised. Nevertheless, the Government has given permitted development rights to some telecommunications development, and they cannot be addressed by policies in this Plan. Applications for prior approval for new telecommunication masts will be expected to demonstrate that all other alternative sites have been considered, and that development has been designed to minimise its impact on the character, appearance and visual amenities of the surrounding area.

- 2.55.8 The NPPF requires planning policies to set out how high-quality digital infrastructure is expected to be delivered.
- 2.55.9 Planning for new development should be co-ordinated with the telecommunications infrastructure it requires with consideration for the capacity of existing infrastructure. Delivery of infrastructure will be dependent upon maximising the contribution from the development process, whilst recognising that a contribution from both the public and private sector will be necessary. This includes the Government's role in providing the necessary investment to achieve sustainable growth, including appropriate revenue support to those agencies required to manage or serve such development.
- 2.55.10 In determining all applications for telecommunications installations, the council is required to consider its decisions in the light of site-specific issues, such as siting, design, effect on the street scene and highway safety. The council is also required to make its decisions in accordance with nationally established policy. National planning policy provides guidance on planning for telecommunications development - including radio masts, towers and antennas of all kinds.
- 2.55.11 In undertaking installations, the telecommunications operators must comply with the requirements of Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended by subsequent legislation (GDPO), which gives deemed planning permission subject to exclusions and conditions.

IN3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to telecommunications infrastructure?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Built environment

2.56 Sense of place

BE1 Sense of place

The Council will deliver a distinctive high-quality sense of place within Buckinghamshire through:

1. Conserving the natural and historic environment and implementing measures for their enhancement;
2. Requiring development to achieve a high quality of design which contributes positively to making places better for people and which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
3. Directing development to areas of lower environmental value;
4. Optimising the development of previously developed land;
5. Optimising the density of development to make best use of land whilst respecting the distinctive character of the area.

2.56.1 Buckinghamshire has a rich and varied natural and historic environment. It is from this that it gains its fundamental sense of place. The Chilterns National Landscape is the jewel in the crown – a nationally significant landscape and a major asset for the area. But Buckinghamshire has many additional natural and historic features treasures including a distinctive topography, the Vale of Aylesbury and River Thames landscapes, historic market towns and villages and areas of biodiversity interest ranging from local to international significance. In terms of the historic environment there are a large number of listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and parks and gardens of historic interest. The current green infrastructure network is well understood, with disparities between GI networks in the north (less developed) and south of the county. There is also a strong evidence base identifying the special character and quality of the natural and historic environment.

2.56.2 Neighbourhood plans have the opportunity to implement local policies, to help support a local sense of place for a particular area.

- 2.56.3 Sense of place is about ensuring that development responds in a holistic way, and that all the various requirements, assets and constraints are brought together through design that responds to the place, integrating them, and making sure the place makes sense for the past, and the future, for humans, and for other species.
- 2.56.4 The Plan also contains detailed policies which participate in strengthening the sense of place.

BE1) What improvements can be made to the Local Plan to support neighbourhood planning groups in the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans?

2.57 Space Standards

BE2 Space Standards

All new dwellings and conversions will be required to meet up-to-date nationally described technical housing standards for minimum internal space requirements.

- 2.57.1 These standards deal with internal space within new dwellings and are suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.
- 2.57.2 These standards are already in place in the legacy Wycombe district area and the viability of their implementation across Buckinghamshire will be tested through the evidence for the plan.
- 2.57.3 The current standards are set out in Appendix E.

BE2) Please provide any comments you have on space standards

2.58 Conservation areas

BE3 Conservation Areas

Proposed new buildings, extensions, alterations or changes of use to existing buildings in a Conservation Area, will be required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Development proposals should have regards to the siting, the established pattern of development, density, scale, bulk, height, design and external appearance.

Materials

Natural materials which match in type, colour and texture, or are very similar to, the materials used in existing buildings, should be used. The use of synthetic materials will not be permitted.

Views

Any proposed development should preserve or enhance, the important views within, looking out of, or into a Conservation Area.

Demolition

The Council will give permission for the demolition of an unlisted building in conservation area unless the building is considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or it is designated as a local heritage asset.

Trees

The council will seek to retain any tree in sound condition which makes a significant contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area by reason of its position, size, shape and/or foliage characteristics, and its amenity value protected. To achieve this objective, a Tree Preservation Order will be made in appropriate cases.

- 2.58.1 Buckinghamshire Council, as Local Planning Authority, is required to consider from time to time which parts of its area are "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance", and to designate such areas as "Conservation Areas". Conservation areas are locally designated heritage assets.
- 2.58.2 Conservation areas can include groups of listed or non-Listed buildings, historic village greens and open spaces, important trees, unusual distinctive historic field patterns closely associated with a historic settlement (where these have a -wide significance), historic parkland, linear features such as canals and railways, well-preserved archaeological remains and/or surviving historic street patterns. When defining a conservation area, it is the special architectural or historic interest of the whole area, rather than the merits of individual buildings and features, that is important. Interest may be characterised by uniformity of architectural style or variety.
- 2.58.3 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out guidelines for development in Conservation Areas.

Existing Conservation Areas

- 2.58.4 Buckinghamshire Council has 179 Conservation Areas (as at 24/1/25). Their locations and their boundaries are shown on the adopted Policies Map. In most cases there are documents which explain the reasons for designation and describe the history, special interest and characteristics of each Conservation Area which are available on the council website - <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-heritage-and-archaeology/heritage/conservation-areas-in-buckinghamshire/> .
- 2.58.5 These documents will be a material consideration when dealing with planning applications. This Conservation Area policy will apply to any new or altered Conservation Areas designated during the period of this Local Plan.
- 2.58.6 Buckinghamshire has commenced a programme to review all of the existing conservation areas. Whilst positive change should be welcomed as an important part of the organic growth of a settlement, there is always a risk that development may harm an area's special interest.

2.58.7 Development immediately adjacent to, or within the setting of, a conservation area can greatly influence the character and appearance of the area. Development that does not reflect the traditional form, layout and scale of buildings within the conservation area can have an adverse effect and will not be supported.

2.58.8 The protection of the views within, looking into and out of Conservation Areas is fundamental in conserving their special character or appearance. For a variety of reasons, including the lie of the land, developments at some distance from a Conservation Area could intrude upon views of it and detract from its character or appearance unless special care is taken to avoid this. The need to safeguard important Conservation Area views is acknowledged in Central Government Guidance. The Conservation Area leaflets referred to include plans showing important Conservation Area views. These leaflets should not be interpreted as indicating that these views are the only ones which should be safeguarded. When individual proposals are considered, it may become apparent that there are other important views which warrant protection.

Permitted Development

2.58.9 Within a conservation area the amount of development that could be erected without the need for planning permission is reduced. The stricter rules are intended to ensure that the correct checks are in place to prevent harm to the significance of the heritage asset. In determining applications relating to conservation areas, the council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. The council is also required under NPPF (2024) to consider whether the proposal will cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset. If harm is likely to be caused, this must be weighed in the wider planning balance.

Trees

2.58.10 In a Conservation Area, trees which are not already subject to a Tree Preservation Order are automatically protected to the extent that anyone wishing to cut down, top, lop or uproot such a tree, must give the Council six weeks' notice in writing of the intention. This gives the Council the opportunity to consider the merits of the proposal and to make a Tree Preservation Order where appropriate. This protection does not apply to hedges, bushes or shrubs, nor to trees with a trunk diameter less than 75 mm (3 inches) at a point 1.5 m (5 ft) above ground level, nor to fruit trees cultivated for fruit production. The penalties for contravening these controls are like those for Tree Preservation Orders.

2.58.11 Trees are often an important part of the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and in some places, they dominate that character. Therefore, the Council will generally aim to retain trees where they are in a healthy condition and positively contribute to area character or appearance. However, in some cases other considerations may take precedence and no Tree Preservation Order will be made.

BE3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to conservation areas?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.59 Heritage Assets

BE4 Heritage Assets

All development, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, must seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, including their setting, and seek enhancement wherever possible.

Where a development proposal is likely to affect a designated heritage asset and/or its setting negatively, the significance of the heritage asset must be fully assessed and supported in the submission of an application.

The impact of the proposal must be assessed in proportion to the significance of the heritage asset and supported in the submission of an application.

Heritage statements and/or archaeological evaluations will be required for any proposals related to or impacting on a heritage asset and/or possible archaeological site.

Proposals which affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset must be carefully considered, weighing the direct and indirect impacts upon the asset and its setting.

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining heritage assets wherever practical, including archaeological remains in situ, unless it can be demonstrated that the harm will be outweighed by the benefits of the development.

The council will:

- a. Support development proposals that do not cause harm to, or which display better the significance of heritage assets
- b. Require development proposals that would cause substantial harm to, or loss of a designated heritage asset and its significance, including its setting, to provide a thorough heritage assessment, setting out a clear and convincing justification as to why that harm is considered acceptable because of public benefits that outweigh that harm. Where that justification cannot be demonstrated proposals will be refused, and
- c. Require development proposals that cause less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset to weigh the level of harm against the public benefits that may be gained by the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Development affecting a heritage asset should achieve a high-quality design and the council will encourage modern, innovative design which respects and complements the heritage context in terms of scale, massing, design, detailing and use.

- 2.59.1 The history of an area contributes to our quality of life and to the character of Buckinghamshire. Historical features once lost cannot be replaced therefore it is important that the Local Plan seeks to protect such features.
- 2.59.2 Heritage assets are defined as those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest, over and above their functional utility. Significance can be made up of many different aspects of an asset's interest and may be harmed by development directly affecting the physical fabric or within the setting of the asset. The NPPF 2024 sets out guidance for conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraphs 202-221).
- 2.59.3 The council's aim is to protect and enhance Buckinghamshire's heritage assets. As part of any enhancement, where possible and applicable, the council will support proposals that improve accessibility to a heritage asset. The effect of a planning application on the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset will be considered in determining any application. The LPA will require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected including any contribution made by their setting. As a minimum the Historic Environment Record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise.
- 2.59.4 In weighing up applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Designated heritage assets

- 2.59.5 Designated heritage assets include World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered park and gardens, or registered battlefield, or conservation areas (see conservation area policy BE3). Designated heritage assets are protected by statute, as set out in relevant legislation, as well as by policy contained within the NPPF (2024).

Listed buildings

- 2.59.6 Listed buildings are buildings or structures which are included on the national List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. They are nationally designated heritage assets. Buildings are listed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, based on recommendations from Historic England. Anyone can nominate a building for listing via the Historic England website if it meets their criteria.
- 2.59.7 There are 5,877 listed buildings, bridges, statues and other structures in Buckinghamshire. Of these listed buildings: 135 are Grade 1, 299 are Grade II*, 5,443 are Grade II. Most of the buildings in Buckinghamshire were listed between 1970 and 1990. Several buildings have been added to the lists since then because of requests for individual listings. Others, including 20th century concrete structures and war memorials have been added to the list due to Historic England's thematic listing programme.
- 2.59.8 In addition to the normal planning application process, listed building consent is required for all works that would affect a building's special interest. The requirement for listed building consent ensures that checks and balances are in place to prevent harm to the structure and interest of a listed building. This protection applies to the whole of a listed building or structure, and to other ancillary structures that sit within the curtilage of the listed building that were in existence before 1 July 1948, and in the curtilage of the building or structure at the time of listing. The need for consent extends to all works, both external and internal.
- 2.59.9 Listed building consent is required for any works that affect the character of the building including alterations, extensions, and demolition. It is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works to a listed building. If unauthorised work has taken place to a listed building an enforcement notice may be served requiring the work either to be remedied or reversed. In determining applications relating to listed buildings, the council has a statutory duty to have a special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Registered historic parks and gardens

- 2.59.10 Registered historic parks and gardens are sites which have been assessed to be of particular significance, in terms of the special historic interest. They are nationally designated heritage assets. Historic England has been enabled by Government to compile a register of historic parks and gardens. Anyone can nominate a park or garden for inclusion on the register via the Historic England website. The register includes gardens, grounds and other planned landscapes and open spaces. The register focuses on the interest of the designed landscape, rather than on planting or botanical species. Most sites registered are the grounds of historic private houses, but public parks and cemeteries can also be included.
- 2.59.11 Within Buckinghamshire there are 412 parks and gardens of special historic interest included in the national register. They are graded in a similar way to listed buildings. The purpose of registering historic parks and gardens is to celebrate designed landscapes of note and to define the elements that make it important or distinctive, and to ensure appropriate protection. The inclusion of a historic park or garden in the register carries obligations on the Local Planning Authority to consult Historic England and the Garden History Society on all applications for development likely to affect the area of special interest. In considering the impact of a proposal the council will have regard to the special character of the park or garden and public views within, into or from it. The council will also consider the impact of development upon the significance of the heritage asset.

Scheduled monuments

- 2.59.12 Scheduled monuments are sites of national archaeological importance. They are nationally designated heritage assets. Scheduling of sites as ancient monuments is the oldest form of heritage protection and started in 1882. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport designates scheduled monuments, based on recommendations from Historic England. Sites from all periods are eligible for inclusion on the schedule if they meet the criteria adopted by Historic England for scheduling of that asset type.

2.59.13 There are 147¹⁹ sites in Buckinghamshire that are included in the statutory schedule of ancient monuments. A list of sites is maintained by Historic England, available on their website²⁰. The consent of the Secretary of State is required for any proposals that may affect the special interest of a scheduled monument. This scheduled monument consent can cover any works affecting a scheduled monument either above or below ground, including groundworks, demolition, destruction, damage, removal, repair, alteration, addition, flooding or tipping operations. Consent may even be required to enter a scheduled monument with digging machinery. Where an application for planning permission affects a scheduled monument, the council will consult with Historic England and will take advice as to the likely impact of that development upon the significance of the heritage asset.

Non-designated heritage assets

2.59.14 A non-designated heritage asset can be a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

2.59.15 Significance is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest that can be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Every effort will be taken to identify non-designated heritage assets as early as possible in the planning process.

Defining significance

2.59.16 The significance of any heritage asset, whether designated or non-designated is set out in Historic England's Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment and Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing.

¹⁹ As of 14th July 2025

²⁰ [Search the List – Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more | Historic England](#)

Evidential

- 2.59.17 Evidential value is the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This can include land use, the hierarchy of places, historic building techniques, fashion and trends in architectural design. The setting of places, for example the rural hinterland of Buckinghamshire's villages, can contribute to this value as it shows historic linkages between places and economic functions.

Historic

- 2.59.18 Historic value lies in the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present and is often illustrative or associative. The links between places and people or events in history feeds into this value, and the tangible way in which modern day settlements have been affected by historic events (such as the setting up of a mediaeval market square) is key to understanding the development of a place.

Communal

- 2.59.19 The collective experience or memory of a place and the meaning that it holds for people who relate to it form the communal value of an asset. Neighbourhood plans and associated documents offer a good opportunity to try to define the communal value of a place or heritage asset.
- 2.59.20 There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of people and cultures that made them. Identification of archaeological interest will be made in conjunction with the Buckinghamshire Council Archaeological Service. Sub-surface archaeological interest is considered and advised on separately by the service.

Architectural interest

- 2.59.21 The architectural interest of a building or structure may be aesthetic, based on the intrinsic design value derived from local styles, materials, workmanship or any other distinctive local characteristic. It may be in part derived from the local context of a place, or an association with a known architect or designer of regional or national note.

2.59.22 The integrity of a building or structure may add to its interest – a degree of intactness and lack of harmful external alteration may make a building more significant. Equally, the ongoing organic development and growth of a building over centuries may be what gives it its value and interest.

2.59.23 If a building sits as a landmark, by virtue of its design, age, innovation, construction, position, use or communal associations contributes, within the local scene or as a valuable member of a group of buildings this may also add to its interest.

Setting

2.59.24 The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings within which the asset may be experienced. It is not fixed and may evolve over time. Elements within a setting may be positive, negative or neutral, and so the ability to appreciate setting may be harmed or improved by development within the setting of an asset. Setting must not be confused with curtilage, to avoid confusion with residential curtilage for permitted development rights as this may differ.

Curtilage

2.59.25 Curtilage in heritage terms, refers to an area around a building and, with listed structures, the extent of curtilage is defined by consideration of ownership, both past and present, functional association and layout. The setting of a historic asset will include, but generally be more extensive than, its curtilage

Non-designated buildings and structures

2.59.26 Within the Buckinghamshire Council area, several heritage assets have been identified locally either through Conservation Area Appraisals where a few buildings are identified as 'Buildings of Local Note', through neighbourhood plans, which often identify buildings of local importance, or as part of a Buckinghamshire local Heritage list²¹. From time-to-time other non-designated heritage assets/buildings may be identified through the planning process.

²¹ Buckinghamshire's local Heritage List [Home - Buckinghamshire's Local Heritage List](#)

2.59.27 Planning applications that could cause harm to non-designated heritage assets will not be supported by the Council. Where it is not practicable to retain a building which is a non-designated heritage asset, the council will expect to see a full appraisal of the significance of the building and the reasons why it is not practicably repairable, or reusable submitted as part of the planning application. In addition, the council may require a full record of the building to be made prior to demolition.

Archaeological remains

2.59.28 There are a number of identified sites of archaeological importance, known as Archaeological Notification Areas, listed on the County Historic Environment Record system. From time-to-time other sites of archaeological interest may become apparent because of the planning process. The council is committed to protect these sites from development that would damage or endanger them and will afford protection to archaeological remains in accordance with their archaeological importance.

2.59.29 Applications for development of sites containing or likely to contain archaeological remains will require an archaeological field evaluation. It is recommended that prospective developers consult the council at pre-application stage in this respect. The council will expect proposals for sites containing important archaeological remains to be preserved, where possible, in situ, i.e. preservation undisturbed in the monument's existing location and setting. Where preservation in situ is not justified, the council will seek preservation by record. This involves digging the site, exposing and removing whatever archaeological remains are found and making a record of the findings. The developer will be required to make satisfactory arrangements for the excavation and recording of the archaeological remains and the publication of the results. This will be achieved by the imposition of suitable conditions and/or agreement between the council and the developer.

Heritage at Risk

2.59.30 The council will support endeavours to repair and reuse heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and to provide long-term viable uses for buildings and structures that are vacant and at risk through cooperation with owners and Historic England. The council will continue to feed into national projects to record Heritage at Risk, such as the Historic England Heritage Counts surveys, and will support local communities who wish to partake in these projects. The council will continue to work with Historic England to identify options for known Heritage Assets at Risk within Buckinghamshire and take action to address risks where appropriate. The council will cooperate with owners to find acceptable solutions where possible but will take formal action where necessary.

2.59.31 Proposals that could cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset will not be supported by Buckinghamshire Council.

BE4) Do you agree with our proposed approach to protecting the heritage assets in Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

2.60 Residential amenity

BE5 Residential amenity

All new residential development must ensure a high standard of living for residents in new and existing dwellings.

Privacy and Overlooking

- New development must be designed to provide a reasonable degree of privacy with limited overlooking to habitable rooms of new and existing dwellings.

- Buildings should be oriented to minimise direct overlooking of neighbouring properties.
- Neighbouring habitable rooms and private outdoor spaces should be distanced from each other to enhance privacy and minimise overlooking. A minimum 25m separation distance should be provided between the back of existing and the back of new dwellings, except for development on Brownfield land within a built-up area.

Daylight and Sunlight

- All habitable rooms in new and existing dwellings must receive adequate natural light.
- New residential developments must be designed to maximise daylight and sunlight penetration for new and existing dwellings.

Environmental Disturbance

- New residential development must be sited and orientated in a way that minimises external and internal sources of environmental impact (such as noise, odour, light and air pollution) to habitable rooms and areas of private outdoor space. New residential development should also incorporate measures to mitigate these impacts.

Outdoor Amenity Space

- Each dwelling must have access to private outdoor space, such as a garden or balcony, that is of a usable design, shape. Private outdoor space must be proportional to the size of the dwelling and should be directly accessible from a habitable room.
- Communal outdoor spaces must be well-designed to be usable, accessible, and functional for residents, incorporating green landscaping.

Good Outlook

- All dwellings must have access to good outlook, preferably to good quality green landscaping. Outlook that is dominated by built form or areas of hard landscaping or carparking should be avoided.

Shared circulation spaces

- Shared internal and external circulation spaces and routes to private residential entrances must be welcoming, legible, accessible, safe and secure, and naturally lit and ventilated.

Safety and Security

- Dwelling design must provide surveillance of public and communal areas to enhance safety.
- Secure boundary treatments and clear demarcation between private, communal and public areas should be provided to prevent unauthorised access and enhance the sense of security for residents.
- Adequate vertical and/or horizontal separation from public and communal areas must be provided for all dwellings to enhance the sense of safety and security for residents.

Servicing and Refuse

- Servicing and refuse storage and collection areas must be easily accessible, functional, safe, and convenient for all residents and waste removal operators. They should be designed to minimise visual, odour, and noise impacts for new and existing residents and the street scene.

2.60.1 The NPPF emphasises the importance of creating high-quality, safe, and inclusive environments that promote health and well-being. It highlights the need for adequate daylight and sunlight, high-quality open spaces, and measures to mitigate noise and pollution. The NPPF also stresses the importance of designing developments that enhance safety and security, provide good outlooks, and ensure a high standard of amenity for both existing and future residents.

2.60.2 Each policy element seeks to ensure all new residential development maintains a high standard of living for both new and existing residents in Buckinghamshire, detailed as follows:

- Designing to ensure privacy and minimise overlooking enhances residents' comfort and security.
- Ensuring all habitable rooms receive adequate natural light and designing developments to maximize daylight and sunlight penetration improves residents' well-being.
- Designing to respond to potential environmental impacts in new developments ensures a peaceful living environment, reducing stress and enhancing residents' quality of life.
- Providing private and well-designed communal outdoor spaces enhances the living experience by offering areas for relaxation, recreation, and social interaction.

- Ensuring dwellings have access to good outlook improves mental health, reduces stress, and enhances the amenity of the living environment.
- Designing good quality shared circulation spaces ensures they are pleasant to use and enhances the overall living experience of residents.
- Enhancing safety and security deters criminal activity and promotes a sense of security, well-being and peacefulness for residents.
- Designing accessible, functional, and convenient servicing and refuse areas contributes to a higher quality of life for residents.

This policy seeks to ensure that all new residential development provides a high standard of living for residents in new and existing dwellings.

BE5) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to residential amenity?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.61 Design of Developments

BE6 Design of Developments

1. All new development proposals must strongly align with the latest Buckinghamshire Local Design Code and the following ten design characteristics of the National Design Guide to ensure the creation of well-designed, sustainable, and enduring places:

- a) Context: New developments must enhance their surroundings by understanding and positively responding to the site's local and wider context, including its history, culture, and landscape.

b) Identity: New developments must contribute to creating attractive and distinctive places by responding to and enhancing local character and identity, ensuring high-quality and visually appealing designs.

c) Built Form: New developments must establish a coherent pattern of development that integrates well with existing urban forms, optimises land use, and promotes walkability.

d) Movement: New developments must provide a connected network of routes that are accessible and easy to navigate for all modes of transport, prioritising active travel and public transport.

e) Nature: New developments must integrate and enhance natural features to create a network of high-quality green spaces that support biodiversity, water management, and climate resilience.

f) Public Spaces: New developments must create well-located, high-quality, and attractive public spaces that are safe, inclusive, and encourage social interaction.

g) Uses: New developments must provide and/or support a mix of uses to support daily life, including residential, commercial, and community facilities, promoting social inclusion and vibrancy.

h) Homes and Buildings: New developments must design homes and buildings that are functional, healthy, and sustainable, providing high-quality internal and external environments that meet the needs of diverse users.

i) Resources: New developments must be efficient and resilient, following the energy hierarchy, using sustainable materials, and incorporating measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

j) Lifespan: New developments must ensure that places are designed to last, with robust management and maintenance plans, adaptability to changing needs, and fostering a sense of ownership among users.

2.61.1 High quality design is key to preserving and enhancing the quality of the built environment and delivering successful new places that are sustainable, distinctive and fit for purpose. A design-led approach is required that respects, maintains and enhances the character of towns, villages and the countryside, whilst introducing innovative and creative design solutions. New developments should have an individual identity that either complements or forms an attractive contrast with its surroundings.

- 2.61.2 Buckinghamshire has many distinct and diverse towns and villages with unique cultural heritage, local geology and geography and built form. Local building traditions determine this local distinctiveness through their siting and the use of local materials and building styles that define its character.
- 2.61.3 There are a wide variety of landscape character types including the nationally recognised Chilterns National Landscape. There are also many unique settlement characteristics that take on a particular built form and type of building material. Therefore, designs that may be acceptable in one part of Buckinghamshire may not be appropriate elsewhere.
- 2.61.4 Good design should conserve and enhance settlements and create solutions that are attractive and distinctive. This refers to the unique quality of buildings, landscape and topography in a locality that defines its character and reinforces a sense of place.
- 2.61.5 All developments must positively contribute to the character of the built environment and landscape, having regard for the local context and surround amenity.
- 2.61.6 The Buckinghamshire Local Design Code includes localised design requirements to ensure new development proposals are well-designed with regard to local character and amenity.
- 2.61.7 The National Design Guide requires that good design is embedded in planning policy and the places being created. The National Design Guide sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places that aim to create its physical character, sustain a sense of community and positively address environmental issues affecting climate. The ten characteristics are:
- Context
 - Identity
 - Built form
 - Movement
 - Nature
 - Public spaces
 - Uses
 - Homes and buildings
 - Resources

- Lifespan

BE6) Do you agree with our proposed approach to the design off new developments within Buckinghamshire?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

Social environment

2.62 Health Impact Assessment

SE1: Health Impact Assessments

1. Development proposals that meet the following criteria must submit a Health Impact Assessment (HIA):

- a) Residential development of 100 dwellings or more;
- b) Non-residential development of 1000+ sqm; or
- c) Development falling within uses for: education, health and social care, residential care homes, leisure, community, fast food outlets and sui generis uses.

2. Development proposals will be required to submit a HIA at the earliest possible stage prior to the submission of a planning application to identify the positive health impacts, and minimise the negative health impacts, while maintaining a focus on addressing health inequalities. The conclusions of the HIA must be considered in the design of the scheme. The HIA must follow the methodology set out in the Buckinghamshire HIA toolkit.

- 2.62.1 HIAs are a powerful lever to improve public health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. The impacts on, and enablers of, good physical and mental health should be considered in the early stages of development proposals, often at pre-application stage.
- 2.62.2 HIAs should demonstrate how a development proposal contributes to addressing current and projected health and wellbeing needs across the user's lifespan, to reduce health inequalities, meet the needs of vulnerable groups, promote health equity and enhance stakeholder engagement. The Council will support proposals that actively reduce health inequalities, prevent ill-health and promote healthier lifestyles, improving the health and wellbeing of our existing and new communities.
- 2.62.3 A HIA is used to identify the potential positive and negative health and wellbeing impacts of a proposed development on population health. It should demonstrate how, through appropriate measures, any potential negative outcomes may be mitigated, and any benefits maximised, to reduce health inequalities and promote healthy, inclusive and safe places. It will also inform design and detail and include early involvement of public health, planning officers and applicants.
- 2.62.4 All major developments meeting any of the criteria set out in Policy SE1 will be required to submit a HIA demonstrating how the development contributes to shaping healthy communities and delivering high quality sustainable places. The HIA will identify the positive health impacts and minimise the negative health impacts across 6 key themes (neighbourhood design, healthy homes, healthier food environments, natural and sustainable environments, transport and movement and healthy economy) to maximise the opportunities for promoting healthy lifestyles within new developments. Applicants should refer to the council's toolkit for the methodology.

SE1) To what extent do you agree with the criteria threshold of 100 dwellings to provide an HIA?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.63 Fast food outlets and takeaways

SE2: Fast food outlets and takeaways

Location

Where planning permission is required, proposals for fast food outlets and takeaways outside of designated town centres will not be permitted if they are:

- a) Within a walking distance of schools, playgrounds and leisure centres; or
- b) in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour

Delivery-Only Models

Proposals for fast food and takeaway delivery-only models will be assessed according to this policy.

- 2.63.1 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should refuse applications for fast food outlets and takeaways within walking distance of schools and other places where children and young people congregate or in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health and wellbeing.
- 2.63.2 In Buckinghamshire, there is evidence that the distribution of fast food outlets and takeaways within walking distance of schools and concentrations in areas of deprivation contributes to poor diet, child obesity and health inequalities, thus having an adverse impact on the health of local communities. This evidence is set out in the Health and Wellbeing Evidence Study. This policy supports Buckinghamshire's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing strategy – 2035 to improve population health, reduce the high prevalence of child obesity and to tackle health inequalities. It contributes to Buckinghamshire's Whole Systems Approach to a Healthy Weight to create healthier food environments.

2.63.3 Walking distance is typically measured as 400 metres ‘as the crow flies’ from the main entrance of a school or place where children and young people congregate. This distance equates to approximately a 5-10 minute walk. Planning decisions should consider any major physical barriers (e.g. motorways or rivers) that would prevent children being exposed to an outlet on walking routes to schools, playgrounds or leisure centres.

2.63.4 This policy applies to new fast food outlets and takeaways that are subject to planning application processes. Fast food outlets refer to businesses selling fast food where consumption may take place on or off the premises or through online delivery services. Fast food refers to energy dense food (i.e., calories, kcal per gram of food) that is available quickly and is often high in fat, sugar and salt. Fast food outlets cover a range of outlets selling fast food including, but not limited to burgers, pizza, kebabs, chicken, Indian takeaway, Chinese takeaway and fish and chips. Takeaways refer to the sale of hot food where consumption of that food is mostly undertaken off the premises. Fast food and takeaways delivery-only models, commonly referred to as dark kitchens, are facilities that prepare hot food for delivery only without the option for the public to enter the premises.

SE2) Do you think the policy is specific enough in terms of establishing a walking distance to restrict fast food outlets and takeaways from around schools, playgrounds and leisure centres?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

2.64 Community food growing

SE3: Community food growing

The council will support community food growing by:

- a) Protecting existing spaces community gardens, allotments and orchards;
- b) Enabling new provision of community gardens, allotments and orchards; and
- c) Requiring all new developments, where 50 to 99 dwellings are proposed that do not have a private garden, to include a 150m² plot of land for the provision of a community garden, allotment or orchard.
- d) Requiring all new developments, where 100 dwellings or more are proposed that do not have a private garden, to include a 300m² plot of land for the provision of a community garden, allotment or orchard.

- 2.64.1 The National Planning Policy Framework identifies community food growing and access to healthier food as a means to enabling and supporting healthy lives. Ensuring access to community food growing spaces aligns with the framework's goal of fostering healthy, inclusive environments that encourage social interaction. These spaces create opportunities for people to connect, including those who might not typically engage with one another.
- 2.64.2 Community food growing supports Buckinghamshire Council's Whole Systems Approach to a Healthy Weight by fostering healthier local food environments. It also aligns with Buckinghamshire's Healthy Ageing Strategy 2024-2029, helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- 2.64.3 Community food growing opportunities provide residents with access to spaces to grow food. Community food gardens are local spaces where residents or community groups come together to grow food. Allotments are small plots of land let to individuals for food growing purposes. The provision and conservation of parish and council-owned allotments are protected under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 and the Allotments Act 1925 as amended by subsequent legislation. Community orchards are places for people to come together to plant and cultivate fruit trees or nut trees.

- 2.64.4 Community food growing opportunities support residents' physical and mental health, provide access to healthy food and green spaces, with opportunities to be active, meet others and participate in society. These spaces support social cohesion and inter-generational interactions by enabling and bringing people together from diverse backgrounds and ages, around a common interest. They provide relief for households on food costs and often donate surplus food to local charities. These spaces can support knowledge and skill development in food production, distribution, preparation and waste, and support cooking initiatives and educational opportunities for residents, schools and colleges.
- 2.64.5 Community food growing can increase biodiversity, turn barren spaces into green productive areas and provide opportunities to regenerate derelict or underused urban spaces into high quality, safe, social public spaces.
- 2.64.6 Community food growing sites can be made more accessible in different ways by ensuring toilet facilities, seating, storage provision and shelter from the elements are provided.

SE3) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the provision of a 150m² plot of land for a community garden, allotment or orchard is a suitable requirement for developments proposing 50 to 99 dwellings that do not have a private garden, or the provision of a 300m² plot of land for developments proposing 100 or more dwellings that do not have a private garden?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.65 Community, sport and leisure facilities

SE4 Community facilities, infrastructure and assets of community value

The council will refuse proposals for the change of use of community buildings and facilities for which there is a demonstrable local need. To allow the change of use of a community building a developer will be required to prove that the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

In considering applications for alternative development or uses, the council will consider the viability of the existing use, that the site/use must have been marketed for a minimum period of 12 months at a price commensurate with its use together with proof there has been no viable interest, the presence of alternative local facilities and the community benefits of the proposed use. Where permission includes converting the use of a building, conditions will be imposed to ensure later resumption of a community use is not excluded.

In considering applications for residential development, the council will consider the need for new community facilities and community infrastructure arising from the proposal. Conditions will be imposed on permissions, or planning obligations sought to secure appropriate community facilities, or financial contributions towards community facilities, reasonably related to the scale and kind of development proposed.

A financial contribution will be required subject to compliance with the CIL Regulations to provide or enhance community facilities or community infrastructure on developments of more than 10 homes.

- 2.65.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) promotes healthy inclusive communities where residents have opportunities to meet through safe and accessible environments. Community facilities and services include public halls, schools, local shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship, libraries, museums, community centres, theatres, arts centres, crèches, day centres and doctor's surgeries. (see further information below in relation to doctors surgeries). They make a vital contribution to the social and economic life of the community, particularly in rural areas, and are especially important for elderly and disabled people and for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport.

- 2.65.2 The council therefore generally aims to resist proposals that would result in the erosion of the valuable community facilities and services, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no long-term requirement for their retention. In the case of a proposal affecting a commercial venture which operates as a community facility, it is important that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and to prove that a genuine attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern.
- 2.65.3 Doctors' surgeries are an important community facility, however for the purposes of the Local plan for Buckinghamshire they are covered by the infrastructure policy. This is because doctor's surgeries are unique in that the surgeries are run by independent General Practitioners (GP's) but funded by the NHS. The provision of a new doctor's surgery therefore needs to meet the NHS criteria and have a set of GP's willing to run the facility. As such provision of a new doctor's surgery is controlled by factors outside normal planning powers and will involve negotiation with the infrastructure provider the NHS.
- 2.65.4 Similarly, new development, depending on its scale, creates an additional need for community facilities and community infrastructure. This may be new provision or enhancement/maintenance of existing provision. The type of facilities and infrastructure needed depends on existing infrastructure facilities in the locality, and the type of development proposed.
- 2.65.5 An asset of community value (ACV) is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on their local authority's register of assets of community value. ACV status is a material consideration when dealing with planning applications that affect an asset.

SE4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to community facilities, infrastructure and assets of community value?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

2.66 Sport, Leisure and Recreation

SE5 Sport, Leisure and Recreation

The council will support development proposals involving the provision of new sport and recreation facilities that are accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, wheelers and public transport where available and which must have no unacceptable impact upon the following:

- a. visual, noise or other impact on public amenity including safety
- b. the highway network
- c. on wildlife and habitats
- d. the historic environment
- e. flooding or drainage

New housing development of more than 10 units or commercial development which has a combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area) will be required to meet the Standards in Appendix C to secure adequate provision of sports and recreation facilities increased capacity to meet the additional demand for sports and recreation facilities arising from new residential development. Facilities are required to be provided on-site except where off-site provision is acceptable according to the circumstances in Appendix C.

Accessible natural green space will be treated separately to formal outdoor sports areas, equipped play facilities and allotment provision, which must be located within or outside such accessible natural green space, on land that is in addition to the accessible natural green space required.

Conditions will be imposed on permissions or planning obligations sought in order to secure appropriate sport and recreation facilities reasonably related to the scale and kind of housing proposed. The recreational benefits to be obtained or provided by the

Council by virtue of the obligation will be directly relevant to the development permitted and the needs of its occupiers and fairly and reasonably related to its scale and kind.

Proposals involving the loss of existing sports and recreation facilities are required meet any of the following:

- f. An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the sports and recreation facilities are surplus to requirements; or
- g. The development will significantly enhance the Open Space network as a whole and help boost the Council's Green Infrastructure. In some cases, enhancements could be provided at nearby locations off site; or
- h. The loss of sports and recreation facilities would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quality and quantity in a suitable location; or
- i. The developments is for other types of sports or recreational provision or ancillary development associated with the Open Space and the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

Sports and recreation facilities being provided must have a long-term management and maintenance strategy agreed by the Council that shall set out details of the owner, the responsible body and how the strategy can be implemented by contractors.

2.66.1 Participation in sport and recreation activities has many physical and health benefits while promoting community cohesion. Facilities that allow for this participation help deliver NHS initiatives around improving health and tackling obesity.

Buckinghamshire has a wide range of sports and recreation facilities which provide for a variety of recreational sporting needs. There are important leisure centres in in the main towns Aqua Vale Swimming & Fitness Centre -Aylesbury, The Beacon Sports Centre - Beaconsfield, Chalfont Leisure Centre – Chalfont St Peter, Chesham Leisure Centre, - Chesham, Chilterns Lifestyle Centre –Amersham, Court Garden Leisure Complex – Marlow, Evreham Sports Centre – Iver, Little Marlow Athletics Track – Little Marlow, Risborough Springs Swim and Fitness Centre – Princes Risborough, Swan Pool & Leisure Centre – Buckingham, Wycombe Leisure Centre – High Wycombe, Wycombe Rye Lido Outdoor Swimming Pool – High Wycombe.

- 2.66.2 Stoke Mandeville receives global recognition as the birthplace of the Paralympic Games. Within Buckinghamshire there is also Silverstone racing circuit which has established itself as a premier motor sport venue.
- 2.66.3 The Sport, Leisure and Recreation policy applies to all types of sports and associated built facilities required for their operation or facilities of a more community nature where sports can take place within. This includes sports halls, swimming pools, community centres and village halls, artificial grass pitches (such as for football), grass playing pitches (such as for cricket), climbing walls, stadia and facilities for outdoor and indoor tennis, outdoor and indoor bowls, athletics, golf, health and fitness, squash and climbing walls.
- 2.66.4 Accessible natural green space does not need to be planned separately and can co-exist within a properly master planned approach for open space on a development site. However, sports and leisure facilities provided must be treated separately to accessible natural green space so these areas can function to ensure financial sustainability. Sports facilities are usually hired for a fee and may include built facilities such as a pavilion or club house. Access is usually limited, and sports facilities may be co-located or shared with a school, college, community hall or sports club or other facility.
- 2.66.5 A number of bodies are responsible for delivering and managing sport and recreation facilities, including Buckinghamshire Council, town and parish councils, Sport England, developers, and private sports clubs and associations. Effective partnership working is required to maintain and enhance the provision in Buckinghamshire.
- 2.66.6 A large part of Buckinghamshire has a rural nature, which can mean that access to sport and recreation facilities can be difficult. However current provision across Buckinghamshire is generally sufficient. New housing developments are likely to create additional need for sport and recreation facilities. Buckinghamshire Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy identifies the existing provision of indoor sports and recreation facilities and identifies deficiencies and opportunities for future provision.

- 2.66.7 The council is working on a Buckinghamshire Playing Pitch Strategy and other sports facilities studies. The work will look closely at the users of facilities and the existing facilities and set out whether the existing facilities are adequate or not, need replacing, or can be expanded. The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) will ensure a strategic approach to playing pitch provision. The PPS will act as a tool for Buckinghamshire Council and partner organisations to guide resource allocation and to set priorities for pitch sports in the future. The PPS will provide robust evidence for capital funding. As well as proving the need for developer contributions towards pitches and facilities, the PPS provides evidence of need for a range of capital grants. Current funding examples include the Sport England Funding Programmes, Heritage Lottery Fund (for park improvements), the Football Foundation and the Big Lottery.
- 2.66.8 The PPS is being produced in consultation with Sport England, National Governing Bodies of Sport, Neighbouring Local Authorities, Leisure Operators and Developers, Outdoor Sports Leagues, Major Sports Clubs, LEAP and Parish and Town Councils and will follow Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance.
- 2.66.9 Long term stewardship of sports and recreation facilities is important to ensure facilities provided from development are maintained to high standards.

SE5) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the policy approach to sport, leisure and recreation?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

Climate change

2.67 Flood risk

CC1 Flood Risk

1. All development should be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding from all sources, taking account of climate change, and should reduce the causes and impacts of flooding both on and off-site.
2. Inappropriate development in areas with a high or medium risk from all sources of flooding will not be supported.
3. The functional flood plain (Flood Zone 3b) is safeguarded for the purpose of storing and allowing water to flow in times of flood.
4. Development in any area at risk of flooding will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential test and, where necessary, the exception test as set out in national policy and guidance and latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Exceptions to this requirement for sequential testing include:
 - a) Development in accordance with a Development Plan allocation that has been sequentially tested. Developments for more vulnerable uses than the allocated use will still require sequential testing
 - b) Minor development or changes of use (excluding change of use to a camping, caravan or mobile home site)
 - c) Development where a site-specific FRA demonstrates that all development is located outside areas of flood risk from all sources, now and in the future.
5. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is required for:
 - a) All development in areas at risk of flooding (now or in the future)
 - b) All sites greater than 1ha.
6. The FRA must demonstrate all of the following:
 - a) The risks from all sources of flooding now and taking account of climate change allowances, including – but not limited to – fluvial flooding, groundwater flooding and surface water flooding;

- b) A sequential approach to site layout, directing the most vulnerable uses to the areas of lowest flood risk;
- c) The feasibility of safe access and egress routes to the site and emergency planning procedures for the lifetime of the development;
- d) Resilient and resistant construction methods for managing residual risk;
- e) Opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding both on and offsite;
- f) The drainage characteristics of the site and the feasibility of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), taking account of climate change;
- g) cumulative impacts on flood risk and, where appropriate, how the proposal will contribute to catchment-wide modelling or mitigation measures.
- (h) the impacts on vulnerable groups have been considered

7. Sites including 50 dwellings or more, or 1 ha or more for non-residential sites, will be required to produce a strategic drainage strategy which will inform the masterplanning and comprehensive delivery of SuDS across the site, maximising drainage and other co-benefits (such as biodiversity, landscape and amenity). This must consider climate change allowances and residual risk.

8. Development must not be located above existing culverts. Culverting of open watercourses is not permitted except where essential for infrastructure crossings and where no practicable alternatives exist. New culverts must comply with the Council's Culvert Policy and CIRIA C786 (as replaced).

9. Development proposals must use the most up-to-date flood risk data and consult the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) as appropriate.

Definition of Flood Risk

- 2.67.1 Flood is formally defined within the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, as occurring “where land not normally covered by water becomes covered by water”. Flood risk is defined as the combination of the probability of a flood occurring and the consequences or harm should that flooding occur.

- 2.67.2 Development proposals must meet the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility Table set out in the NPPF. Inappropriate development in areas with a high or medium risk from all sources of flooding will not be supported.
- 2.67.3 For the purposes of this policy, 'Residual risk' comes in two main forms: Residual risk from flood risk management infrastructure; and Residual risk to a development once any site-specific flood mitigation measures are taken into account. Residual risk is the risk remaining after avoidance, control and mitigation have been utilised.
- 2.67.4 The term 'Inappropriate Development' in (2) this refers to the Flood Risk Compatibility in Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change Table 2 and the NPPF Annexe 3 Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification.

Split of responsibility

- 2.67.5 The operational responsible bodies for flood risk management on Buckinghamshire's watercourses are:

Buckinghamshire Council are responsible for:

- surface water runoff (including snow and other precipitation)- water on the surface of the ground, which has not entered a watercourse, drainage system or public sewer;
- ordinary watercourses (all watercourses not designated as 'main rivers', typically smaller than main rivers);
- groundwater (all water which is below the surface of the ground and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil).
- fixing drainage and flooding issues on highways and roads across Buckinghamshire.

Environment Agency are responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. Also has operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea (as well as being a coastal erosion risk management authority).

Canal River Trust are responsible for canals.

Riparian owners are responsible for maintaining the watercourse or ditch running through, underneath, or adjacent to the boundary of their land. If the watercourse

forms the boundary of the land, the riparian ownership responsibilities are shared equally between the landowners on either side.

Water companies are responsible for public sewers and watermains.

Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards responsible for watercourses in their area (<https://www.idbs.org.uk/about-us/boards-drainage-district/>)

Early development proposals

- 2.67.6 It is recommended that as part of the early discussions relating to development proposals, developers discuss requirements relating to site-specific flood risk assessment and drainage strategies with both the Local Planning Authority and the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), to identify any potential issues that may arise from the development proposals.

Planning application stage

- 2.67.7 At the planning application stage, developers will need to undertake more detailed hydrological and hydraulic assessments of the watercourses where required, using channel, structure, and topographic survey. This should happen particularly where there are no detailed hydraulic models. The modelling should verify flood extents with the latest climate change allowances. Developers should engage at the earliest opportunity with the EA and LLFA on detailed modelling requirements.

Sites in Local Plan versus sites not in Local Plan

- 2.67.8 For clarity, the council uses the term 'Development Plan' as this policy applies to both this Local Plan, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, and also Neighbourhood Development Plans. For sites allocated within the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority should use the information in the SFRA produced for the Local Plan evidence base to inform the Exception Test.

2.67.9 For developments that have not been allocated in the Local Plan, developers must undertake the Sequential Test followed by the Exception Test (if required) and present this information to the Local Planning Authority for approval. In areas at risk of flood this will need to demonstrate that there are no sites available in a lower flood risk zone. This assessment will need to include allocated sites. The scope of the sequential test should relate to the scale and location of a development and should be agreed with the Council beforehand. The Council needs to be satisfied that the sequential test assessment justifies the site being developed before planning permission can be granted. Applicants should refer to tables 1 to 3 in the National Planning Practice Guidance. Depending on vulnerability of users, developments may need to demonstrate that they can meet the Exceptions test before being deemed appropriate.

2.67.10 The policy makes provision for exceptions, including in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk).

2.67.11 Developers should consider flood resilience measures for new developments. New development and re-development of land should wherever possible seek opportunities to reduce overall level of flood risk at the site, for example by:

- Reducing volume and rate of runoff through the use of SuDS.
- Relocating development to areas with lower flood risk.
- Creating space for flooding.

2.67.12 For the purposes of this policy, 'Minor development' means:

- Minor non-residential extensions: industrial/commercial/leisure etc. extensions with a footprint less than 250 square metres.
- Alterations: development that does not increase the size of buildings e.g. alterations to external appearance.
- Householder development: For example, sheds, garages, games rooms etc. within the curtilage of the existing dwelling, in addition to physical extensions to the existing dwelling itself. This definition excludes any proposed development that would create a separate dwelling within the curtilage of the existing dwelling e.g. subdivision of houses into flats.

- 2.67.13 Green and blue Infrastructure should be considered within the mitigation measures for surface water runoff from potential development and consider using areas at risk of flooding as public open space. Consideration must be given to the potential cumulative impact of development on flood risk. This requires catchment-based modelling or developer contributions toward the outputs of such modelling where this has been done on another site. When designing a building, the finished floor levels should be a minimum of either 600mm or 300mm above the 1 % Annual Exceeded Probability (AEP), plus climate change peak flood level, depending on the development vulnerability classification.
- 2.67.14 Developments should look for opportunities for betterment where surface water flooding issues are present, which could be implemented through masterplans for individual strategic sites or new settlements. Proposals should integrate water conservation through rainwater harvesting and water butts and promote land management practices to attenuate runoff and alleviate potential issues downstream. Finally, development proposals should identify opportunities to help fund future flood risk management through developer contributions to reduce risk for surrounding areas and identify opportunities to make space for water to accommodate climate change.
- 2.67.15 Culverting open watercourses will not be acceptable, except where essential to allow highways and/or other infrastructure to cross, and where there are no reasonably practicable alternatives to culverting. In any case, the LLFA will not support development above existing culverts. Where new culverts are necessary, their design must comply with Buckinghamshire Council's Culvert Policy, secure Land Drainage Consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority and be designed in line with CIRIA's Culvert, Screen and Outfall Manual (C786). Planning permission does not negate the requirement for land drainage consent, nor does it guarantee that consent will be given.

Access and Egress

- 2.67.16 Planning applications must ensure development is 'safe', dry pedestrian egress from the floodplain and emergency vehicular access should be possible for all residential development. If at risk, then an assessment should be made to detail the flood duration, depth, velocity and flood hazard rating in the 1% AEP plus climate change flood event, in line with Flood Risk Guidance for New Development FD2320 (as replaced).
- 2.67.17 Safe refuge areas should be provided wherever there are significant residual risks to developments associated with extreme flood events and/or rapid inundation.
- 2.67.18 Access and egress should be considered at the site, but also in the vicinity of the site, for example, a site may have low surface water risk, but in the immediate locality, access/ egress to and from the site could be restricted for vehicles and/ or people.

Floodplains

- 2.67.19 The extent of the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) is defined through the local plan's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- 2.67.20 Development proposals should identify long-term opportunities to remove development from the floodplain and to make space for water. Development concerning brownfield sites in the functional floodplain should seek to reduce risk to the wider floodplain and provide flood risk betterment.

Other Important Considerations

- 2.67.21 If an ordinary watercourse is within or immediately adjacent to the site area, consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority should be undertaken. If alterations or discharges are proposed to the watercourse, a land drainage consent will be required. Where necessary, blockages of nearby culverts may need to be simulated in a hydraulic model to confirm residual risk to the site.

- 2.67.22 Surface water risk should be considered in terms of the proportion of the site at risk in the 3.3% AEP (30-year), 1% AEP (100-year) or 0.1% AEP (1,000-year) events, whether the risk is due to a wider overland flow route. Surface water risk and mitigation should be considered as part of a detailed site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy.
- 2.67.23 Sites where there is a canal within or immediately adjacent to the site area, developers should consult the Canals and Rivers Trust. Any proposed alterations to the canal or discharges must be agreed with the Canals and Rivers Trust. If a site is located within 250m of a landfill site, there could be amenity, dirt, and contamination issues. Sites could be sensitive from the perspective of controlled waters and therefore any redevelopment must ensure there is no pollution risk to the water environment.
- 2.67.24 Please see the SFRA and any other technical guide from the council for advice on development affected by Chalk streams including the sensitive management of run off and drainage. The SFRA and Water cycle studies have been produced to inform this local plan and utilise the best and latest available data. However, developers preparing planning applications will need to use the most up to date flood risk and water resources information available, in consultation with the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 2.67.25 Users of the Local Plan must check for the latest information on flood risk from the Environment Agency and other responsible bodies. It is important to note that the information relating to flood risk in this Local Plan and the latest SFRA is based upon the best data available at the time of writing. Mapping of flood risk, however, always involves a level of uncertainty and can never be an exact science. It should be recognised that areas that are highlighted as having high risk of flooding now or in the future in this document may not flood and areas with low risk are not guaranteed to be safe.

Strategic drainage strategies

- 2.67.26 Given the scale of strategic sites, developers will be required to submit a site-wide drainage strategy ahead of individual plot applications, to ensure the potential amenity, biodiversity and water quantity and quality improvements are maximised. If such measures are implemented at plot scale, there is the risk that while they would be implemented their benefits would not be maximised as they would be developed in isolation to other plots. For the purposes of this policy, strategic is defined as 50 dwellings and above or 1 hectare or more site area of non-residential development.
- 2.67.27 A strategic site-wide Drainage Strategy should consider local sources of flooding including ordinary watercourses, surface water and groundwater flooding across the expansion area. This would identify drainage issues, make allowance for extreme weather events caused by climate change and inform a strategic Sustainable Drainage scheme, making it clear to developers what is required from individual development parcels as these come forward.
- 2.67.28 Further guidance is available in the latest version of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

This policy seeks to manage flood risk across Buckinghamshire by following a sequential approach to the location of development and mitigating any residual risk. It will require sites to be safe for their lifetime and major developments to take a comprehensive approach to drainage.

CC1a) Is the policy clear on using the latest strategic flood risk assessment and flood map updates?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

CC1b) Will the policy be effective in steering development away from vulnerable areas and reducing risk to communities generally?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes

- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

2.68 Sustainable Drainage Systems

CC2 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

1. All new development, except householder development* must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) ensuring that all of the following criteria are met:
 - a) There is no material increase in run-off rates at the site boundary.
 - c) For greenfield sites, limit run-off rates to existing greenfield rates or lower where feasible;
 - d) For brownfield sites, reduce run-off rates as close as practicable to greenfield run-off rates;
2. SuDS should be designed in accordance with the most recent version of the National Non-Statutory SuDS Standards (June 2025 as replaced) and the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753 as replaced), which provide nationally recognised best practice guidance. This includes but is not limited to:
 - No flooding in 1 in 30-year storm events.
 - Safe containment of flooding in 1 in 100-year storm events plus climate change.
 - 10% urban creep allowance where appropriate.
3. When designing a surface water drainage scheme, consideration must be given to the drainage hierarchy outlined in national guidance. The order of preference is as follows:
 - a) infiltration to ground ;

- b) discharge to a surface water body where this has been agreed by the responsible authority for that water body;
 - c) to a surface water sewer, or another drainage system;
 - d) to a combined sewer; only in exceptional circumstances will surface water connections to the combined system be permitted. Applicants will need to demonstrate consultation with the sewerage undertaker to demonstrate that there is no feasible alternative and that there will be no detriment to existing users.
4. SuDS must be supported by site-specific ground investigations and infiltration testing. Where infiltration is not viable, above-ground attenuation must be used.
5. SuDS must be accompanied by a maintenance schedule and operation manual. Maintenance responsibilities and funding mechanisms must be secured via planning condition or legal agreement.
6. Within the site:
- a) SuDS strategies should demonstrate how site constraints have been considered in the design of the drainage strategy and how the design provides multifunctional benefits e.g. water quantity, water quality, amenity and biodiversity;
 - b) Priority must be given to exemplar above-ground source control SuDS which mimic and reflect natural drainage processes;
 - c) Details for SuDS future maintenance over the lifetime of the development must be included in the form of a management plan to be agreed and contributions will be required for the maintenance of the SuDS;
 - d) Proposed hard surfacing must be permeable and development proposals should include rainwater re-use and collection mechanisms such as green roofs/walls, rainwater gardens and in residential proposals water collection and recycling facilities such as a rainwater butt;
 - e) SuDS for hard-standing areas for parking of 50 or more cars, or equivalent sized areas, will be expected to include appropriate additional treatment stages/ interceptors to ensure that any pollution risks are suitably addressed.
 - f) SuDS required must consider the impact on food production areas and reducing the risk of damaging crops
7. Documentation requirements for SuDS must be proportionate to the scale of development and include drainage strategy, infiltration testing and maintenance

plan.*Householder development to be exempt from the above requirements must demonstrate the use of permeable surfaces and increased greening and or rainwater storage to control runoff. Where no external space exists (for example flatted development) exemptions must be justified and alternative mitigation provided.

Definition of SuDS

- 2.68.1 Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) aim to reduce the impact of development by replicating the natural processes through which rainwater is captured, stored, and transported within a development. Traditional piped drainage systems remove runoff from a site as quickly as possible, however SuDS slow flow and store runoff onsite before infiltrating into the ground or slowly releasing it offsite. When designed correctly, SuDS provide multifunctional benefits: water quantity, water quality, biodiversity and amenity.
- 2.68.2 All SuDS should be designed in accordance with the most recent National Non-Statutory SuDS Standards and CIRIA SuDS Manual. The National SuDS Standards (2025) were developed collaboratively by DEFRA, the Environment Agency, and industry experts. They reflect the latest understanding of climate resilience, water quality, and multifunctional SuDS design. Their use ensures that developments meet the highest standards of sustainable water management. While non-statutory, they are considered material to the assessment of planning applications under this policy and represent nationally endorsed best practice.
- 2.68.3 Applicants should also refer to Buckinghamshire Council's SuDS Guidance, which aligns with the National Standards and provides local interpretation and implementation advice. Examples of SuDS are also set out in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- 2.68.4 SuDS must be designed early in the planning process to influence site layout and not be retrofitted. Drainage information must be submitted at the application stage.

SuDS considerations

- 2.68.5 A detailed assessment of site constraints (as set out in CIRIA) must be undertaken at the outset of the planning process to determine the suitability of SuDS features. Site layouts must be informed by this assessment at an early stage to ensure that sufficient space is provided for above-ground multifunctional SuDS components.
- 2.68.6 While the National SuDS Standards are non-statutory, they represent the most up-to-date and nationally endorsed technical guidance on sustainable drainage. As such, they will be treated as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications under Policy CC2. Applicants should also refer to Buckinghamshire Council's SuDS Guidance, which aligns with the National Standards and provides local interpretation and implementation advice.
- 2.68.7 The National SuDS Standards (2025) were developed collaboratively by DEFRA, the Environment Agency, and industry experts. They reflect the latest understanding of climate resilience, water quality, and multifunctional SuDS design. Their use ensures that developments meet the highest standards of sustainable water management.
- 2.68.8 SuDS strategies must be informed by site-specific ground investigations, including infiltration rate testing. Where sites are at risk of high groundwater, ground-water level monitoring over the winter period may be requested to ensure groundwater does not ingress into infiltration components and groundwater is not contaminated through infiltration (through the provision of a suitable freeboard).
- 2.68.9 Exemplar source control SuDS should be prioritised. This may include the use of permeable paving for hardstanding areas such as access roads, parking bays and driveways, and patios. The use of SuDS such as basins, ponds, swales, rain gardens/planters and tree pits are also strongly encouraged. Where infiltration is viable, these features can be used to provide storage prior to infiltrating into the underlying geology. Where infiltration is not viable, above-ground SuDS must be prioritised for attenuation prior to discharge offsite.

- 2.68.10 Brownfield sites typically have higher existing runoff rates compared to greenfield sites due to their existing impermeable area, therefore, the proposed discharge rate may be higher (the proposed discharge rate must not exceed the brownfield rate). However, through the use of well-designed SuDS strategies, it is possible to reduce discharge rates close to the greenfield rate. This approach must be adopted wherever feasible.
- 2.68.11 Where the final discharge point is the public sewerage network, the runoff rate agreed by the LLFA will also need to be agreed with the sewerage undertaker (through the provision of a Pre-Planning Enquiry).
- 2.68.12 It must be demonstrated that the designed SuDS strategy does not flood up to the 1 in 30-year storm event, and any flooding up to the 1 in 100-year storm event plus climate change must be safely contained onsite. Where appropriate, 10% urban creep allowance must be included.
- 2.68.13 Green above SuDS components are encouraged as they are easier to maintain than below ground SuDS components such as attenuation tank. A maintenance schedule is required to set out who will maintain the system, how the maintenance will be funded and should be supported by an appropriately detailed maintenance and operation manual.
- 2.68.14 The council supports making existing hard surface areas to be permeable under this policy.
- 2.68.15 Areas for parking and servicing should be planned for in a comprehensive manner as part of surface water management but the policy criteria adds detailed requirements necessary to address contamination risks.
- 2.68.16 Planning applications must demonstrate how the proposed SuDS strategy complies with the National SuDS Standards through submission of a compliance checklist or equivalent summary. More detailed information on how to demonstrate compliance with SuDS requirements can be found in Buckinghamshire Council's guidance on the website.

This policy seeks to ensure that SuDS are planned appropriately as part of new developments

CC2) Is the policy approach to exclude householder development from requiring SuDS correct?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

2.69 Water efficiency standards

CC3 Water efficiency standards

1. Development proposals must demonstrate how they incorporate water efficiency measures to minimise consumption of water.
2. All new dwellings are required to achieve a water efficiency standard of 85 litres per person per day – or future tighter national requirement.
3. Proposals for non-residential development (new, extended or redeveloped) are required to achieve full credits in the BREEAM water calculator, with at least three credits under the BREEAM “Wat01” measure, or a future equivalent replacement nationally accepted standard.
4. Proposals involving the refurbishment or change of use of existing building are required to undertake retrofitting to increase water efficiency to the standards set out in 2. and 3. above.

- 2.69.1 The South-East region is an area classed as under serious water stress by the Environment Agency²². Water supply services are provided by Affinity Water, Anglian Water and Thames Water. Water companies are required to undertake measures to reduce and to minimise the use of portable water and are working with the Environment Agency to reduce the abstraction of water from rivers and chalk aquifers.
- 2.69.2 Planning can also help to mitigate the effects of climate change on water scarcity by setting ambitious standards for water efficiency to minimise water demand from development. To achieve this, new development which results in the creation of one or more dwellings is required to be built to high standards of water efficiency using water efficient fixtures and fittings, or rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling.
- 2.69.3 The Environment Agency, Natural England and several water companies (in our area, Anglian Water and Affinity Water) have produced guidance on shared standards²³ as part of Water Resource East. These standards for the whole of Buckinghamshire are set out in the policy.
- 2.69.4 Water efficiency improvements to the existing building stock where planning permission is required including changes of use to residential can also help offset the demand from new homes.
- 2.69.5 The council supports rainwater harvesting as a contribution to water efficiency through building design, landscape and parking areas.
- 2.69.6 These water efficiency standards are set at a point in time, based on current evidence. Developers will need to use the most up to date information available, in consultation with the Council and the water companies.

This policy sets out the standards that have to be met by development proposals to demonstrate how they incorporate water efficiency measures to reduce the consumption of water. These are based on national requirements.

²² [Water stressed areas final classification 2021.odt](#)

²³ [shared-standards-in-water-efficiency-for-local-plans.pdf](#)

CC3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the measures in the water efficiency standards policy?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

3. Emerging Policies

Known development management policies that are in development and will be available as part of the final Local Plan (this list is not exhaustive)

Climate Change

- Sustainable construction – residential development
- Sustainable construction – non-residential development
- Renewable energy
- Renewable energy allocation
- Retrofitting and re use of existing buildings
- Waste and circular economy

Housing Chapter

- Housing allocations
- Small housing allocations
- Community-led housing

Economy chapter

- Data centre allocations

Environment

- Grey Belt

Infrastructure Chapter

- Energy Infrastructure
- Viability
- Education

We welcome your thoughts to help further shape the plan and some of the emerging policies.

GCa) Do you agree we have struck the right balance of policy requirements to deliver high quality development, whilst maintaining reasonable costs?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

GCb) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the topics proposed to be covered in emerging development management policies?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reasons for your answer

GCc) Please share further suggestions for topics that should be the subject of a development management policy

Renewable energy allocation policy

Central government are suggesting we allocate sites for various types of land uses.

EPa) Do you think we should allocate sites for renewable energy generation (such as wind farms, solar farms)?

Please tick (✓) one option

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please give the reason for your answer

4. Glossary

Term	Definition
Active Frontage	Frontages that have lively internal uses, particularly at ground level, which are either visible from the street or spilling out onto the street, via frequent doors and windows. Narrow plots or buildings with a variety of uses provide a better quality active frontage than single large plots or uses.
Accessible Housing?	Homes designed or adapted to make them usable by people with disabilities, including wheelchair users, those with mobility issues, and those with other physical or sensory impairments. Building Regulations Part M Categories M4(2) and M4(3) are optional requirements which local authorities can apply through local planning policies where they have identified a local need and where the viability of development is not compromised.
Accessible Greenspace Standards	Accessible Greenspace Standards developed by Natural England in 2023. https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf Replaced the previous 'Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards 'ANGSt'.
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as low-cost market housing, are not currently considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.
Ancient Woodland	Woodland that has existed continuously since at least the year 1600.
Active Streets	Roadway designed to prioritise walking and wheeling over motorised transport and where space for play and other social interaction is important.
Aquifer	A layer of permeable rock which stores and transmits water through its mass. There are different types of aquifers, and these have different properties which affect how water flows underground. For instance, for the chalk aquifer (like the Chiltern), this water movement is mainly through the fractures and fissures.
Asset of Community Value	Land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on their local authority's register of assets of community value.
Aylesbury Garden Town	The vision for Aylesbury Garden Town builds on the Town and Country Planning Association principles of sustainable development with the delivery of high quality new homes, new jobs, new transport improvements, and community facilities.

Biodiversity	A collective term for plants, animals, micro-organisms and bacteria which, together, interact in a complex way to create living ecosystems.
Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy	defined in in 37A of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595
Black or Ethnic Minority (BME)	A socio-economic grouping used with other such groups in housing and economic analysis including from the latest Census data. Utilised within background studies informing the Plan.
Blue Infrastructure	Part of Green Infrastructure - see Green Infrastructure Policy. Blue infrastructure is the green infrastructure elements linked to water. They can be pools, ponds and pond systems, artificial buffer basins or watercourses.
Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM)	A sustainability assessment method used globally to evaluate the environmental performance of buildings and infrastructure projects.
Brownfield Register	Brownfield land registers provide up-to-date and consistent information on sites that local authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development having regard to the criteria in national regulations.
Buffer Zone	A landscape feature used to protect. Or for water and ecological buffer it is a distance between development and a habitat or waterway.
Carbon Footprint	A measure of the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organisation or community.
Chilterns Building Design Guide	Produced by the Chilterns Conservation Board, the Guide contains practical advice on how to build or restore properties in a way that is appropriate in and around the Chilterns National Landscape. It covers such topics as the setting of buildings, the design of vernacular features and the use of traditional local materials. By promoting the use of the Guide the Board aims to ensure consistency of design and materials across the Landscape.
Climate Change	Climate change refers to a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures. Since the mid 1800s, humans have contributed to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air. This causes global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes to the climate.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A charge on new buildings and extensions to help pay for supporting infrastructure. This new charge replaces the Section 106 tariff, but Section 106 agreements will still be used for the specific impacts of a development (such as a new access road) and for affordable housing. Unlike Section 106, CIL is non-negotiable and collection is purely an administrative process. The levy and what it covers is set out in a charging schedule that is consulted on prior to submission to Government and a public examination prior to adoption by the council.

Conservation Area	A locally designated area of special architectural interest, where the character or appearance is desirable to preserve or enhance. The council carries out occasional reviews of the special interest through character appraisals and management plans.
Council Monitoring Reports	Provide a snapshot of how we are performing against our planning policies. For example the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is an annual snapshot. This includes information on housing, employment, and the environment. It is a record of how the council is performing and how much development is taking place. The AMR is made up of documents that will be updated at least annually, when information becomes available.
Community Facilities	Multi-purpose community buildings such as community centres, village halls, church halls, indoor and outdoor sports facilities available for public and community use and public open space including green infrastructure.
Cultural Facilities	Purpose-built arts and entertainment venues such as cinemas, theatres and arts centres.
Custom Build Housing	Custom build is a supported route to creating a bespoke self-build home, usually on multi-plot serviced sites where planning permission and utilities are already in place. Custom build home plots are ready to go with options ranging from a turnkey approach to a more hands-on method whereby customers have more control over design, layout, finishes and build route.
Defined Town Centres	(Is specific to the policy - Definition needs to come from the persons writing the policy).
Development Plan	The statutory development plan for determining planning applications and appeals in Buckinghamshire. This comprises the adopted Buckinghamshire Local Plan, any made neighbourhood plans and the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
Diversification	Rural/ agricultural (Is specific to the policy - Definition needs to come from the persons writing the policy).
Duty to Co-operate	The 'duty to co-operate' is a legal requirement on the council in the local plan preparation process. The duty concerns the council and neighbouring district/borough councils, county councils and other identified public bodies. The council is required to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the duty has been undertaken appropriately for the Plan.
East-West Rail	A new railway network, partly using existing track that will connect Reading and Oxford across to East Anglia via Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. In the shorter term, the East West Rail Consortium's priority is to deliver the western section of the route comprising Oxford to Milton Keynes. This section will open in late 2025 with services calling at the new Winslow station. There is planning for the section further east to Bedford. The council and other stakeholders support a future spur line from Winslow to Aylesbury.
Economic Development	Any development for the following Use Classes, B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution), C1 (Hotels), D1 (Non-residential institutions), D2 (Assembly and Leisure), E (Commercial, Business and Service) and Sui Generis

	uses (other than Houses in Multiple Occupation and Hostels. The term 'economic development' land is mainly used in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) study.
Enterprise Zone	Enterprise Zones are designated areas aimed at stimulating economic growth by offering incentives to businesses to establish or expand their operations within them. The incentives are business rates discount, enhanced capital allowances and the use of Local Development Orders. Buckinghamshire Enterprise Zone is facilitating the strengthening of infrastructure at Silverstone Park, Westcott Venture Park and Arla / Woodlands sites; attracting and developing new business investment; accelerating the growth and development of local enterprise; and helping address the business critical infrastructure needs of the sites.
Extra Care Housing	The term 'extra care' housing is used to describe developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living. It comes in a huge variety of forms and may be described in different ways, for example: very sheltered housing, housing with care, retirement communities or villages. Occupants may be owners, part owners or tenants.
Flood Zones	Areas of land assessed as being of low risk (Flood Zone 1), medium (Flood Zone 2), high (Flood Zone 3a) and the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) where no development should take place. The Environment Agency identifies where the flood zones are and reviews them quarterly. Buckinghamshire Council must carry out a strategic flood risk assessment to look at all forms of flooding and the impact of flood defences. Guidance on planning and flood risk is set out in the NPPF (2012) and Planning Practice Guidance.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.
Golden Rules	Introduced by the NPPF 2024. Para 156. a. affordable housing which reflects either: (i) development plan policies produced in accordance with paragraphs 67-68 of the NPPF; or (ii) until such policies are in place, the policy set out in paragraph 157; b. necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.
Green Belt	A policy designation for controlling urban growth to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another, assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. <i>Within the Green Belt, guidance for which is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), land is to be kept permanently open and only used for agriculture open space, forestry and outdoor recreation and limited infilling of villages and previously development land.</i>
Green Infrastructure	A planned network of high quality multi-functional green space and interconnecting links in urban and rural areas with environmental features

	designed in delivering a wide range of environmental social and economic quality-of-life benefits for local communities. Green infrastructure includes urban and country parks, green open recreation spaces, commons and village greens, woodland, natural and semi-natural habitats for wildlife, Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites, historic parks, ancient monuments and landscapes, watercourses, lakes, ponds, footpaths, cycleways, allotments and other recreational routes.
Greenfield Land	Land which has not been previously developed.
Green Roofs/ Walls	A roof or wall of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing structure. Sometimes known as a living roof or wall.
Grey Belt	Land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.
Groundwater Source Protection Zone	Source Protection Zones (SPZs) are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs Assessment	The Government requires each local planning authority to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area. The four former district authorities in Buckinghamshire worked collaboratively to bring forward a traveller accommodation needs assessment in conjunction with Opinion Research Services (ORS).
Habitable Room	A habitable room is a room used or intended to be used for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking purposes. This includes spaces like living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, and dining rooms. Bathrooms, toilets, hallways, and storage areas are not considered habitable rooms.
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required under the European Directive 92/43/EEC on the 'conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora for plans' that may have an impact on Habitats (Natura 2000) Sites. Its purpose is to consider the impacts of a land-use plan against conservation objectives of the site. This is to ascertain whether it would, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, adversely affect the integrity of the site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects. The three stages of HRA after evidence gathering are Screening then Appropriate Assessment then Derogations. The first two stages have been completed for this Draft Local Plan.
Heritage Assets	A collective term for either designated or non-designated assets. Designated assets are listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, registered battlefields and conservation areas. Non-designated assets

	ae those buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having enough significance that they should be considered in planning decisions.
High Speed 2 Rail (HS2)	The Government's high speed railway line from London to Birmingham (phase 1 due to open in 2026) and the north of England (phase 2), cutting through Aylesbury Vale from the southeast near Wendover and Aylesbury to northwest near Turweston. The council is working with other partner organisations to minimise its impact.
Historic Environment	A collective term to encompass people's interaction with heritage assets which include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest.
Historic Parks and Gardens	The Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England provides a listing and classification system for historic parks and gardens similar to that used for listed buildings. The register is managed by Historic England under the provisions of the National Heritage Act 1983. Over 1,600 sites are listed, ranging from the grounds of large stately homes to small domestic gardens, as well as other designed landscapes such as town squares, public parks and cemeteries.
Homes England	The government's housing and regeneration agency supporting house building and regeneration projects across the country. Can purchase land, form partnerships and provide funding.
5 Year Housing Land Supply	The supply of specific deliverable housing sites on which housing completions are expected. The five-year housing land supply is the number of dwellings expected to be completed in the next five years, compared to the Local Plan target for the next five years (this is normally expressed in terms of the number of years worth of supply).
Housing Market Area (HMA)	A geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)	A key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing and employment to meet the community's need for more homes. The HELAA is an assessment to identify land for housing and assess the deliverability and developability of sites. These assessments are required by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) is a study required by Government of Local Planning authorities to inform Local Plans in terms of housing targets, housing need, demand, migration and commuting patterns and the development of planning and housing policy as well as the future quantity of land or floorspace required for economic development needs.
Housing Trajectory	A table (optionally accompanied by a graph) included in the Local Plan which sets out information on past and projected annual housing completions in comparison to the Local Plan target. The trajectory is a tool for analysing and illustrating whether or not housing delivery is on track.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)	The IDP's role will be to identify all items of infrastructure needed to ensure the delivery of the growth targets and policies contained in the Buckinghamshire Local Plan. This ensures that an appropriate supply of essential infrastructure is provided alongside new homes, workplaces and other forms of development up to 2033.
Landscape Character Assessment	The process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas. They also show how the landscape is perceived, experienced and valued by people. There are older LCAs for Aylesbury Vale, Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks areas and a more recent Buckinghamshire review and update for the new local plan.
Lead Local Flood Authority	The Lead Local Flood Authorities are responsible for reducing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The LLFA is responsible for investigating, mitigating and planning for flooding that does not come from statutory main rivers or reservoirs. In Buckinghamshire, the council is the LLFA.
Lifetime Homes	Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 Design Criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life. Lifetime Homes are about flexibility and adaptability.
Listed Building	A listed building is a building that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
Live Work Space	A property that combines a dwelling with commercial or industrial working space within a single unit as a requirement or condition of planning permission.
Local Green Space	Local Green Space designation takes place through a Neighbourhood Plan. It is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Local Green Spaces being designated must meet the tests of the designation in the NPPF to pass the neighbourhood plan examination.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The detailed timetable and project plan of all development plan documents and supplementary planning documents that are to be produced over a set period – normally three years.
Local Geological Site	Local sites are non-statutory areas of local importance for nature conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological and wildlife sites (previously Regionally Important Geological Sites).
Local Nature Recovery Strategy	These agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities. Every strategy must contain a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities. Each strategy works with Natural England and has a wide variety of local stakeholders involved. The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes LNRS is due to be adopted in autumn 2025.

Local Nature Reserve	Local Nature Reserves are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally for both people and wildlife.
Local Nature Partnership (LNP)	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it. In Buckinghamshire this is called the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership, established in 2012, including the Delivery Group.
Local Plan	This plan (The Local Plan For Buckinghamshire). More generally, the term “local plan” can refer to any development plan document adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, such as the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. These local plans, together with any made neighbourhood plans, form the development plan for Buckinghamshire which is the basis for determining planning applications and appeals in Buckinghamshire.
Local Wildlife Site	Previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation or County Wildlife Sites, these are areas of land with significant wildlife value. They are typically an area of ancient woodland, a flower-rich hay meadow or a village pond.
Low Carbon	Low carbon energy refers to sources of energy that release significantly lower levels of greenhouse gases compared to traditional energy sources such as coal, oil, and gas. These sources include renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal, as well as nuclear power. It recognises more sustainable options are needed because renewable sources are not available all the time. Low carbon is materials, an energy source, construction method and a lifestyle.
Market Housing	Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government sets national planning policy in England, as well as determining what local government does, how well it is working and how it is funded.
National Design Guide / National Model Design Code	Provides detailed national guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.
National Landscape Area	An area of countryside designated as having natural features of exceptional beauty and therefore given a protected status. The Chilterns National Landscape Area covers 27% of Buckinghamshire.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the Government’s statement of national planning policy and all Local Plans must be in general conformity with it and this is tested at a Local Plan Examination. The NPPF that the VALP was prepared and examined under was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced

	numerous planning policy guidance documents, statements and circulars. It was accompanied by Technical Guidance to the NPPF on flood risk, on minerals and waste and a planning policy statement on Traveller sites.
Neighbourhood Plan	A type of planning policy document that after 'making' can be used (alongside the Buckinghamshire Local Plan) to determine planning applications. The plans are prepared by a parish/town council or designated neighbourhood forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Localism Act 2011) and have to be in general conformity with the Buckinghamshire plan, undergo Examination and a Referendum. A neighbourhood plan should support strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. A neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory development plan once it has been made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority.
Net Zero	The point at which greenhouse gas emissions produced are balanced by greenhouse gas emissions prevented or removed from the atmosphere.
Office for National Statistics (ONS)	The UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK.
Planning in Principle (PIP)	The Homes and Planning Act 2016 requires local authorities to keep a register of brownfield land within its area capable of being granted 'planning permission in principle' (PIP) for housing. Proposals include extending PIP for sites identified in local and neighbourhood plans providing permission in respect of matters relating to location, uses and the amount of development on particular sites.
Planning Practice Guidance	Practical guidance that supplements policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Government launched the Planning Practice Guidance on 6 March 2014, replacing a raft of separate detailed best practice guidance covering many areas of town planning issues.
Playing Pitch Strategy	Buckinghamshire study to assess existing playing pitch facilities and to set out where they are sufficient or where they need to be replaced or expanded.
Policies Map	A map (or maps) that illustrates the application of policies and proposals in a Local Plan. The Policies Map is a development plan document.
Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages	Cover specified rows of ground floor units within identified town centres and seek to retain activity-generating uses including a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for diversity of uses within the frontages such as restaurants. The defined frontages from AVDLP have been reviewed in the Aylesbury Vale Retail Study, 2015.
Primary Shopping Area	An area defined in a Local Plan where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).
Previously Developed (Brownfield) Land	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry

	buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.
Registered Providers of affordable housing	A registered provider of social housing as defined in Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 who is registered with Homes England and has not been removed from the register.
Renewable Energy	Renewable is energy made from renewable natural resources that are replenished on a human timescale. The most widely used renewable energy types are solar energy, wind power, and hydropower.
Rural Exception Sites	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
Self-Build Housing	Where the plot purchaser is responsible for all elements of their build. From browsing building plots for sale at the beginning, and later achieving planning permission on the house design. Through to sourcing builders and trades, taking on the role of project manager, and sometimes carrying out construction work.
Self-Build and Custom Housing Register	The Homes and Planning Act 2016 requires local authorities to keep a register of people seeking to acquire land to build or commission their own homes and to grant sufficient suitable development permissions of serviced plots to meet demand.
Scheduled Monument	Nationally important archaeological site or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change.
Section 106 Agreement	An agreement entered into between a local authority and a landowner and/or developer under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The agreement will contain planning obligations which the local authority wish to secure, or which the developer wishes to offer, in return for planning permission being granted.
Settlement Hierarchy	A way of identifying and arranging the settlements of greater than 500 population into an order for the purposes of distributing housing and employment land growth to towns and villages in Buckinghamshire based upon sustainability criteria.
Site Allocations	Designations of land use, types and levels of development and other details identified in a Local Plan. Allocations are made in this Buckinghamshire Local Plan and in Neighbourhood Plans
Sites of National and	These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). For these sites the harm that may be caused to the wider national network of sites will also be

International Importance	considered. Developments that are likely to affect the integrity of SACs are required to follow the protocol as outlined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A national designation indicating one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites. SSSIs include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats: wetlands teeming with wading birds, winding chalk rivers, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote upland peat bogs.
Strategic Drainage Strategy	Studies which identify and assess the level of flood risk for a development sit as a whole and provide understanding of required drainage requirements.
Sustainability	In planning policy terms, sustainability refers to a guiding principle that ensures development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It encompasses a balanced approach to economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.
Sustainable community	<p>A place or area that is designed to meet the needs of its residents while ensuring the health of the environment and the economy for future generations. It emphasizes a balance between social equity, economic viability, and environmental protection, fostering a high quality of life for all members.</p> <p>To measure sustainability in a community, various indicators can be used including those in sustainability appraisals.</p>
Sustainable Development	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development is defined in paragraphs 7 to 14 of the NPPF.
Sustainable Transport	The NPPF defines sustainable transport as modes of transport that are efficient, safe, and accessible with a low overall environmental impact. This includes walking, cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing, and public transport. The NPPF emphasizes that transport policies should contribute to sustainable development, reduce carbon emissions, and promote healthy communities.
Special Areas of Conservation	An area which has been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. SACs provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. The SACs relevant to the Buckinghamshire Plan are Burnham Beeches, the Chiltern Beechwoods and Aston Rowant. The impact of the Local Plan proposals on these will be considered in the Appropriate Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment.
Starter Homes	A new dwelling only available for purchase by qualifying first-time buyers and which is made available at price which is significantly less than its market value, but which is below a price cap. Outside Greater London, the price cap will be significantly lower. There are commonly age limits on eligibility for starter homes.

Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out the approach of the authority to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and review of Local Development Documents and in the consideration of significant planning applications.
Strategic Accessible Natural Greenspace	An area of land designated for recreational purposes that is designed to offset disturbance and pressures on sites that are protected for their habitat value under Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This legislation governs sites that are internationally important, typically either Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are valued for their rare, threatened or vulnerable bird populations, or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which are valued for their flora and fauna (excluding birds). To be a SANG, the space has to meet standards set out by Natural England for example the space which is freely available and useable to all, is natural in form and is green so typically a park.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Environmental assessment of policies, plans and programmes required under the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	A study and final report identifying all types of flood risk in Buckinghamshire and the considerations that development should adhere to including avoiding building in higher areas of flood risk and incorporating mitigation measures including sustainable drainage systems. A new SFRA will be prepared to support the growth identified in the Buckinghamshire Local Plan.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	More detailed planning guidance to supplement what is in Development Plan Documents. SPDs cannot make new policy; there must be 'policy hook' to a policy or proposal in a Development Plan Document.
Sustainability Appraisal	An evaluation of the social, environmental and economic effects of policies and proposals in the Buckinghamshire Plan. The purpose is to ensure that the Local Plan documents are produced in accordance with the Government's definition of sustainable development included in the NPPF (2012). Sustainability Appraisals are carried out in line with Government Guidance to meet the terms of Strategic Environmental Assessment which are required under an EU Directive.
Town Centre	Defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area.
Vulnerable Groups	Those at greatest risk of experiencing health inequalities which include, but are not limited to, children and young people, older adults, ethnic minorities, traveller communities, people with physical, sensory or non-visible learning disabilities, people with mental health issues, people living in areas of deprivation or those who can be socially marginalised (for example, people experiencing homelessness, traveller communities and people in contact with the criminal justice system).

Water Cycle	A term used for the assessment of the impact of development on wastewater treatment work capacity, surface water management, wastewater networks, water quality and water supplies.
Windfall Sites	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available for new development.
Zero Carbon	Zero carbon emissions associated with the total energy use (regulated + unregulated) across the course of each year. This is achieved by meeting best-practice energy efficiency targets that are in line with the performance needed for the UK's carbon reduction trajectory, as established by industry thought-leading bodies. Also, annually generating renewable energy equal to the building's energy demand over the course of each year, achieving a balance of renewable energy export and grid energy import. Finally, achieving this renewable generation on site, or, where this is demonstrably unfeasible, contributing to off-site renewable energy directly or through an energy offsetting fund implemented within Buckinghamshire.
Zone of Influence	The area where increased residential development will result in likely significant effects on part of a Special Area of Conservation. Any new residential development within the Zone of Influence will be required to mitigate the effects of the development and show how this will be achieved prior to approval of planning permission.

Common Abbreviations

AAL	Area of Attractive Landscape
ACV	Assets of Community Value
AGT	Aylesbury Garden Town
ANGSt	Accessible Natural Green Space Standards
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CROW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
DPD	Development Plan Document
DtC	Duty to Co-operate
EA	Environment Agency
FEMA	Functional Economic Market Area
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GB	Green Belt
GI	Green Infrastructure
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order
GTAA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
ha	Hectares
HEDNA	Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment

HELAA	Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
HER	Historic Environment Record
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HMA	Housing Market Area
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
HS2	High Speed 2
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
JNSA	?
LLA	Local Landscape Area
LDS	Local Delivery Scheme
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MUGA	Multi-Use Games Area
NEP	Natural Environment Partnership
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG (or PPG)	National Planning Practice Guidance, sometimes referred to as Planning Practice Guidance
PPTS	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
S106	Section 106 Planning Obligation
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SANG	<i>Strategic Accessible Natural Greenspace??</i>
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SDS	Strategic Drainage Strategy
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEP	Strategic Environmental Plan
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SQM	Square Metre
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUDS (or SuDS)	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
WFD	Water Framework Directive

5. Appendices

Appendix A: List of existing strategic and local employment areas (new areas to be identified through the Local Plan)

Draft List of Strategic and Key Employment Sites

The following sites are subject of the employment sites policy EC2 which seeks to protect them for employment use.

Strategic Employment Sites / Allocations

1. Silverstone (employment site and Enterprise Zone)
2. Westcott Venture Park (employment site and Enterprise Zone)
3. Arla/Woodlands (employment site and Enterprise Zone)
4. Pinewood Studios

Key Employment Areas

1. Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe
2. Gatehouse Industrial Area, Aylesbury
3. Rabans Lane Industrial Area, Aylesbury
4. Baker Street, High Wycombe
5. Globe Park, Marlow
6. Pitstone Green Industrial Estate, Westfield Road, Pitstone
7. Sands Industrial Estate, High Wycombe
8. Thorney Business Park, Thorney Lane, Iver
9. Regent Park and its Expansion, Princes Risborough
10. Long Crendon Industrial Estate, Thame Road/Drakes Drive, Long Crendon
11. Ridgeway Trading Estate, Iver
12. Knaves Beech Way, Loudwater
13. Buckingham Industrial Park, Buckingham
14. Haddenham Business Park, Thame Road, Haddenham
15. The Old Airfield Industrial Estate, Cheddington Lane, Long Marston
16. Broadwater Park, North Orbital Road, Denham, UB9 5HR
17. Stocklake Industrial Area, Aylesbury
18. Soho Mills Industrial Estate / Wooburn Industrial Park, Wooburn
19. Swan Business Park, Osier Way, Buckingham
20. Thorney Mill Road, Iver
21. Chalfont Grove, Chalfont St Giles
22. Uxbridge Business Park, Oxford Road, New Denham, Uxbridge

23. Triangle Business Park, Stoke Mandeville
24. Martin Baker, Denham
25. Anglo Business Park, Amersham
26. GE Healthcare (HQ Little Chalfont and White Lion Road), Little Chalfont
27. Chess Business Park, Chesham
28. Asheridge Road, Chesham
29. Johnson & Johnson, High Wycombe
30. Peregrine Business Park, High Wycombe
31. Glory Park, High Wycombe
32. Kingsmead Business Park, Loudwater
33. Mercury Park, Wooburn Green

Appendix B: Accessible Green Space standards

Accessible Green Space standards (2023)

These are Appendix 2 of this Natural England document (2023)

“Green Infrastructure Standards for England - Summary Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England January 2023 Version: 1.1”

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf>

Appendix C: The standards for Sports, Leisure and Recreation

1 This appendix identifies the standards of provision for sports and recreation facilities and how they are to be applied to proposals for new development as required by Policy SE6 Sports, Leisure and Recreation.

2 The starting point for calculating the requirement are the standards set out in the table below. The precise type of on-site provision that is required will depend on the nature and location of the proposal, the existing facilities in the surrounding area and the quantity/type of sports and recreation facilities needed in the area. This should be the subject of discussion/negotiation at the pre-application stage.

3 If either of the following apply (a) the proposed residential development site would be of insufficient size in itself to make the appropriate provision in accordance with the standards below; or (b) taking into account the accessibility/capacity of existing sport and recreation facilities and the circumstances of the surrounding area, the sports and recreation needs of the proposed residential development can be met more appropriately by providing either new

or enhanced provision off-site, then proposals will be acceptable if the developer has first entered into a planning obligation to make a financial or in-kind contribution towards meeting the identified sport and recreation needs of the proposed residential development off-site. The precise contribution/obligation will be negotiated on a case-by case basis.

4 Where appropriate, the council will seek to enter into a Section 106 agreement with the developer for the future management and maintenance of the sports and recreation facility provision, before granting planning permission.

5 To apply the standards the population figure is the existing population of the closest settlement plus the number of people living on the proposed development.

6 If development proposals are considered to be unviable when complying with the above requirements, open book financial analysis of proposed development will be expected. In accepted circumstances, a reduced provision can be made.

Fields in Trust Standards,

Category of Space	Type of Space	Requirement
Open space	Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 0.80 hectares per 1000 people (8 metres squared per person)
	Amenity green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 0.60 hectares per 1000 people (6 metres squared per person)
	Natural and semi-natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 1.8 hectares per 1000 people (18 metres squared per person)
Outdoor sports	Outdoor sport pitches, courts and greens, tracks and trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 1.6 hectares per 1000 people (16 metres squared per person) (consisting of 1.2 hectares sport pitches, 0.4 hectares courts, greens, tracks, trails or sports equipment) within 1200

		metres walking distance from homes
Play space.	Equipped designated play areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 0.25 hectares per 1000 people (2.5 metres squared per person), Local Areas of Play (LAPs) within 100 metres, Local Equipped Areas of Play LEAPs within 400 metres and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPS) within 1000 metres walking distances from homes
	Informal play provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum of 0.30 hectares per 1000 people (3 metres squared per person) distributed throughout a development, larger facilities such as Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) or pump tracks within 700 metres walking distance from homes

Total space requirements
Total open space: minimum of 3.2 hectares per 1000 people (32 metres squared per person)
Total play space: minimum of 0.55 hectares per 1000 people (5.5 metres squared per person)

Overall total: minimum of 5.35 hectares per 1000 population (53.5 metres squared per person)
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Appendix D: Ecological enhancements

The following list of ecological features is not considered exhaustive but includes the vast majority of anticipated features.

Swift bricks or boxes

Swift bricks are often described as “universal” as they also provide nesting opportunities for other bird species.

Height: >5m where possible. While swifts particularly benefit from a height over 5m, swift bricks should be a priority in all schemes.

Aspect: north / East and out of direct sunlight

Requirements and guidance

Ideally install boxes:

- under eaves
- with open flight-line into the box
- in groups of 3 or more
- avoiding installing directly above windows, doors or other possible disturbance

Installing ‘swift callers’ with the box can help improve uptake.

More information is available from Swift Conservation (www.swift-conservation.org).

House martin cups

Height: >2m

Aspect: north / east / west

Requirements and guidance

Most relevant for rural or semi-rural buildings, close to rivers and wetlands where there is a supply of mud for nests and insects for food.

Ideally install nest cups under eaves, soffits or at the roof apex.

A board can be placed under the nest cups to catch droppings - this must be at least 2m below.

More information is available from House Martin Conservation.

Garden bird boxes

Height: See manufacturer guidance, but usually 1m to 3m

Aspect: north / east / west

Requirements and guidance

Consider including a variety of shapes, sizes and with different entrance holes, to provide opportunities for different species.

Peregrine nest boxes

Height: >20m - roof-top of tall buildings

Aspect: north / north-east

Requirements and guidance

A priority for very tall buildings in town centres.

A shallow tray with gravel in the bottom is usually required. Bespoke advice should be sought.

Barn owl boxes

Height: >3m

Aspect: north / north-east

Requirements and guidance

Only relevant for rural, open countryside locations. Priority should be given to providing nesting opportunities within a building.

More information is available from the Barn Owl Trust. (www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-nestbox/)

Bat boxes, bricks or tubes

Height: >2m, ideally >4m

Aspect: south / south-west / south-east

Requirements and guidance

Ideally install boxes and integrated bricks or tubes:

under or close to eaves

close to hedges and tree lines

away from artificial light

More information is available from the Bat Conservation Trust (www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes).

Stag beetle loggeries

Logs need to be large, partially buried and in partial shade.

Note: smaller, informal log or brash piles are welcomed but should be in addition to the requirement for 1 feature per dwelling.

Guidance: How to build a log pile - Stag Beetles (<https://stagbeetles.ptes.org/how-to-build-a-log-pile/>)

Reptile or amphibian hibernacula

Hibernacula for reptiles should be in a warm, sunny, well-drained area.

Hibernacula are best placed in a site with a variety of habitats, such as areas of longer grass, shrubs and some more open areas.

Guidance: [How to make a reptile hibernaculum - PTES](https://ptes.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/How-to-make-a-reptile-hibernaculum.pdf) (<https://ptes.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/How-to-make-a-reptile-hibernaculum.pdf>)

Bee bricks

Bricks can be purchased which can be built into walls.

Refer to manufacturer instructions, but typically these should be at least 1m from the ground and south-facing.

Bee bank

Bee banks should be south or south-east facing in full sunshine and sheltered from prevailing wind.

Guidance: How to create a bee bank – Buglife (<https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2020/04/Bee-bank-booklet-4.pdf>)

Hedgehog gaps (a requirement that does not count towards feature numbers)

Hedgehog gaps must be provided in addition to the requirement for 1 enhancement feature per dwelling.

Gaps should be 13cm x 13cm. The layout and provision of gaps should take into account changes of levels to make sure hedgehogs can make use of the gaps.

Preferably a small sign should be included above the hole to inform residents.

Guidance: Link your garden with a hedgehog highway - Hedgehog Street (www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden/)

- of 2 dwellings or fewer, or a small non-residential development, have to submit an enhancement plan before starting work, which must be approved and complied with
 - a) of 3 to 10 dwellings or larger non-residential developments have to submit an enhancement plan before starting work and an inspection report following installation
- of more than 10 dwellings have to submit an enhancement plan, including details of information to be provided to homeowners and an inspection report

This suggestion has been based in a large part upon: [Biodiversity enhancements for developments | Bracknell Forest Council](#)

Appendix E: Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard

Full accompanying text setting out how these standards are applied is set out on the gov website here: [Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - GOV.UK](#)

Table E.1. Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
1b	2p	50	58		1.5

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
2b	4p	70	79		2.0
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
3b	5p	86	93	99	2.5
3b	6p	95	102	108	2.5
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
4b	6p	99	106	112	3.0
4b	7p	108	115	121	3.0
4b	8p	117	124	130	3.0
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
5b	7p	112	119	125	3.5
5b	8p	121	128	134	3.5
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
6b	8p	125	132	138	4.0

End of document
