

THE IVERS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2040

DECEMBER 2021

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

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1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared by The Ivers Parish Council ("the Parish Council") to accompany its submission of the The Ivers Neighbourhood Plan ("the Neighbourhood Plan") to the local planning authority, Buckinghamshire Council ("Bucks Council"), under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations").

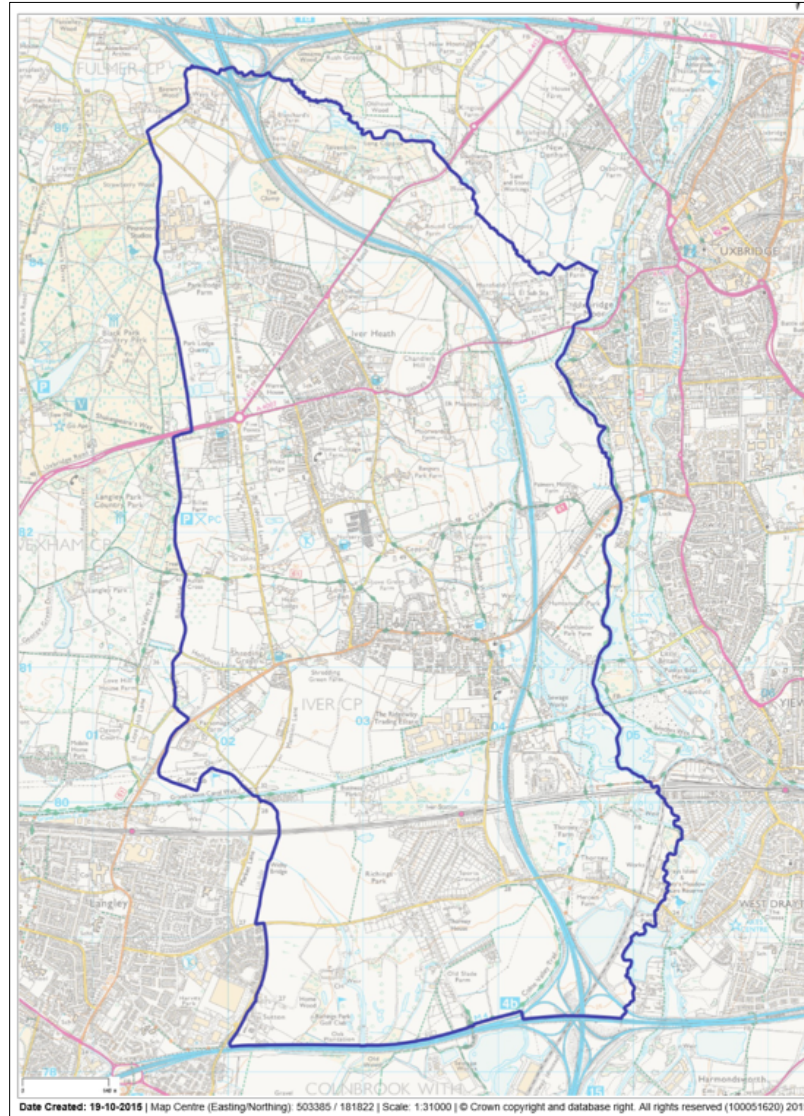
1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council, the 'Qualifying Body', for the Neighbourhood Area ("the Area"), [which coincides with the boundary of the Parish of The Ivers shown on Plan A below. The former South Bucks District Council (now Bucks Council) designated the Area in November 2016.

1.3 The policies described in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Area. They do not relate to 'excluded development', as defined by the Regulations. The plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan is from 2021 to 2040, the end date of which corresponds with the proposed plan period of the emerging Bucks Local Plan ("the emerging Local Plan"). This will enable the two plans to neatly operate alongside each other and to be monitored and reviewed on a similar timeframe.

1.4 The statement addresses each of the four 'Basic Conditions', which are relevant to this plan, required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.

1.5 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the Conditions if:

- a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan,
- b) (Not relevant for this Neighbourhood Plan),
- c) (Not relevant for this Neighbourhood Plan),
- d) The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
- e) The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
- f) The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.



Plan A: The Ivers Designated Neighbourhood Area

1.6 The responsibility for determining if a Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to national policy and is in general conformity with strategic policy rests with a combination of the qualifying body, the local planning authority and the independent examiner (Planning Practice Guidance §41-070 and §410-074). Case law, established in the Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan in 2014 (see §82 of EWHC 1470) but endorsed by the Courts on a number of occasions since, makes clear that:

“... the only statutory requirement imposed by Condition (e) is that the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole should be in general conformity with the adopted Development Plan as a whole ... any tension between one policy in the Neighbourhood Plan and one element of the ... Local Plan (is) not a matter for the Examiner to determine.” (our emphasis)

1.7 The case acknowledged that there will often be tensions between different strategic policies when considered against the non-strategic policies of a specific local area covered by a Neighbourhood Plan. It sensibly concluded that such tensions can only be resolved by the qualifying body using its planning judgement to strike an appropriate balance across the plan as a whole. The examination tests the extent to which the qualifying body has exercised its judgement in a reasonable way. The fact that the local planning authority, in its representations on the plan, indicates that it would strike the balance differently, does not disable the qualifying body from doing so.

1.8 It is noted that the case law has not yet explicitly established the same principle for Condition (a) in respect of the regard to national policy, but it seems reasonable to expect the Courts would reach the same conclusion, given there will also be a range of national policies influencing plan making, and that some of those policies may also be in tension. It is therefore expected that the examination of this Condition will take the same approach as Condition (e).

1.9 For these reasons, sections 3 and 5 of this Basic Conditions Statement highlight how policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to meet Conditions (a) and/or (e), explaining how the qualifying body has exercised its judgement in those cases “where different parts of national policy need to be balanced” (§070) and how it has taken into account the criteria of §074 on general conformity. Finally, it explains how the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole meets Conditions (a) and (e).

1.10 The Parish Council is also mindful of the ‘Planning for the Future’ White Paper published by the Government in August 2020. The Paper proposed to make significant changes to both the development plan and management systems and indicated that there is a future for neighbourhood planning in that system, but the precise role that plans will play is not yet clear. We expect the new system will still require local communities to engage in shaping how their settlements will develop and in ensuring their heritage and landscapes are given proper protection. It will also enable communities to define local design standards, and the Neighbourhood Plan contains proposals in all of these respects. It may be that how those proposals are implemented may change and this will be taken into account in a first review of the made Neighbourhood Plan.

2.BACKGROUND

2.1 The decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan was made by the Parish Council in summer 2016. The key driver of this decision was a sense of wanting to plan positively for the future of the Parish, but within the context of the then emerging Chiltern & South Bucks Local Plan, which contained a series of major proposals in the Parish. That Plan highlighted a significant difference between the visions of the Parish Council, and the communities of the Parish, and the planning authority on the future role of this area in the wider spatial strategy of the District, now County.

2.2 The Parish Council wished to use its neighbourhood plan as a means of demonstrating the validity of its vision and how this would lead to more sustainable development in keeping with the rural village character and sensitive Green Belt status on the very edge of west London. It accepted that simply rejecting the District Council vision without proposing an alternative would undermine its case, even though national policy places significant constraints on neighbourhood planning in the Green Belt. The project gathered momentum with the withdrawal of the Local Plan ("the withdrawn Plan") from its examination in October 2020.

2.3 A committee was formed comprising the residents and Parish Council representatives. The group has been delegated authority by the Parish Council to make day-to-day decisions on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying body, the Parish Council approved the publication of the Pre-Submission plan in June 2021 and the Submission Plan now.

2.4 The Parish Council has consulted local communities extensively over the duration of the project. It has also sought to work closely with officers of the former District Council and since April 2020 of Bucks Council to collate and examine the evidence base, to design and iterate policy proposals and to define the proper relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the emerging Local Plan. The nature and outcome of these various publicity and consultation exercises are set out in the separate Consultation Statement.

2.5 A schedule of the policies showing the position of Bucks Council in respect of whether or not in its planning judgement each policy meets the basic conditions is included in Section 5 below as an equivalent to a 'statement of common ground' for the benefit of the examiner. In this respect, the Parish Council acknowledges that the Planning Practice Guidance (§41-053) states that "it is only after the independent examination has taken place and after the examiner's report has been received that the local planning authority comes to its formal view on whether the draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions."

2.6 However, the Parish Council is also mindful that, once submitted for examination, it has no further opportunity to modify the Neighbourhood Plan, other than through its withdrawal and resubmission. Further, S12(4) of Schedule 4B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 defines the local planning authority as the decision maker in respect of determining if the basic conditions have been met in order to make a neighbourhood plan, with modifications to the submitted plan as necessary. But, the Planning Practice Guidance regards the task of arriving at a planning judgement to be shared by the local planning authority, the qualifying body and examiner during the examination, in collectively considering if the basic conditions have been met (§41-070 and §41-074).

2.7 In which case, it is vital that both the qualifying body and the examiner are left in no doubt of the position of the local planning authority at the examination stage. But it is also important that the examiner's position is also properly understood, most especially if the examiner intends to come to a different planning judgement to that of the local planning authority and the qualifying body. In this regard, the Parish Council notes the advice to the examiner in §2.9.6 of the NPIERS 'Guidance to service users and examiners' (2018) in respect of the standard of proof that the examiner must apply in reaching a planning judgement and in its §2.14.1 in respect of the requirement for accuracy, clarity and simplicity.

2.8 The Neighbourhood Plan contains 17 land use policies (IV1 – IV17), which are defined on the Policies Map where they apply to a specific part of the Area. The Plan has deliberately avoided containing policies that duplicate adopted development plan policies or national policies that are already used to determine planning applications in the Area. The policies are therefore a combination of site-specific allocations or other proposals and of development management matters that seek to refine and/or update existing policies.

3. CONDITION (A): REGARD TO NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The Parish Council has been prepared with full regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans. As demonstrated in Table A, this plan has taken to opportunity to revise development plan policies to reflect the amendments to the Use Classes Order introduced in September 2020 as they apply to this Area (PPG 13-009c). In overall terms, there are four NPPF paragraphs that provide general guidance on neighbourhood planning, to which the Neighbourhood Plan has directly responded:

General Paragraphs

3.2 The Parish Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan “support(s) the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans ... and ... shape(s) and direct(s) development that is outside of these strategic policies” (§13). It considers the Neighbourhood Plan contains only non-strategic policy proposals or proposals that refine strategic policy to fit the circumstances of the Area without undermining the purpose and intent of those strategic policies (§18). It considers that the Neighbourhood Plan sets out more “detailed policies for specific areas” including “the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies” (§28).

3.3 The Parish Council considers that its Neighbourhood Plan has provided its communities the power to develop a shared vision for the Area that will shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, albeit in a modest way, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan contains no site allocation proposals nor any other policies that will unreasonably result in less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area (§29). In this regard, the NPPF provisions of meeting local housing needs (as per §65/§66) are not relevant to this Neighbourhood Plan as the Parish lies within the Green Belt and its three inset villages are small, offering no realistic brownfield or other land to allocate for development (§29). The Plan is underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This is considered to be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned (§31).

Specific Paragraphs

3.4 Each policy engages one or more specific paragraphs of the NPPF. Those that are considered to be of the most relevance and substance are identified in Table A below.

Table A: Neighbourhood Plan & NPPF Conformity Summary			
No.	Policy Title	NPPF Ref.	Commentary
IV1	Gaps between settlements	28, 174	<p>The policy sets out the way in which proposals in key locations in the Parish will conserve its natural environment (§28). It contributes to conserving the natural and local environment by protecting a specific type of valued landscapes in a manner that is commensurate with their identified quality in the evidence base (§174). The goal of preventing the visual or physical coalescence of settlements is a long established principle in development plan making, even if the quality of the land itself is unremarkable.</p> <p>The evidence base identifies a series of gaps and corridors that serve this essential purpose and are valued by the local community for that reason. Although all of the land is in the Green Belt, in future exceptional circumstances may be justified for removing land from the Green Belt in these locations, or very special circumstances may be justified by proposals for inappropriate development. In those cases, this policy seeks to ensure that development proposals understand and respond to the value of each gap and corridor in maintaining the separate identity of the villages when determining their developable area, layout, built form and landscaping strategies.</p>
IV2	Design in Iver Heath	126 – 128 and 203	<p>The policy identifies an Area of Special Character at Iver Heath as a non-designated heritage asset and establishes a simple design code to manage future development proposals to conserve and enhance its special local character. It also identifies outside of that Area a number of other essential features of the villagescape that make contributions to defining the distinct character of the wider village, in addition to cross referencing the existing District-wide design guidance covering the village.</p> <p>In this sense, the policy acknowledges that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this (§126). The policy sets out a clear design vision and expectations and</p>

			<p>the local community (including the Residents Association) have been engaged in the process of finalising it (§127). Its geographic area, level of detail and degree of prescription is tailored to the Area and village, where only a moderate scale of change is anticipated and both clauses allow for a suitable degree of variety and personalisation of new or improved buildings within the set design parameters (§128).</p> <p>The Area of Special Character is significant in representing an important part of the early Twentieth Century origins of this part of the village, and as such has local heritage value that has survived for the most part. As such it is a valid heritage asset and engages §203 in its provisions.</p>
IV3	Design in Iver Village	126 - 128	<p>This policy serves two purposes. Firstly, it identifies a number of other essential features of the villagescape within and beyond the Conservation Area that make contributions to defining the distinct character of the village, in addition to cross referencing the existing District-wide design guidance covering the village. Secondly, as part of that guidance it identifies land that detracts from the special character of the Conservation Area and sets a design brief for its potential beneficial redevelopment.</p> <p>The policy acknowledges that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this (§126). The policy sets out a clear design vision and expectations and the local community have been engaged in the process of finalising it (§127). Its geographic area, level of detail and degree of prescription is tailored to the Area and village, where only a moderate scale of change is anticipated and both clauses allow for a suitable degree of variety and personalisation of new or improved buildings within the set design parameters (§128).</p>
IV4	Design in Richings Park	126 – 128 and 203	<p>The policy identifies an Area of Special Character at on the edge of Richings Park as a non-designated heritage asset and establishes a simple design code to manage future development proposals to conserve and enhance its special local character. It also identifies a number of other essential features of the villagescape that make contributions to defining the distinct ‘planned estate’ character of the wider village, in addition to cross referencing the existing District-wide design guidance covering the village.</p> <p>In this sense, the policy acknowledges that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested,</p>

			<p>is essential for achieving this (§126). The policy sets out a clear design vision and expectations and the local community (including the Residents Association) have been engaged in the process of finalising it (§127). Its geographic area, level of detail and degree of prescription is tailored to the Area and village, where only a moderate scale of change is anticipated and both clauses allow for a suitable degree of variety and personalisation of new or improved buildings within the set design parameters (§128).</p> <p>The Area of Special Character is significant in representing an important part of the early Twentieth Century origins of this part of the village, and as such has local heritage value that has survived for the most part. As such it is a valid heritage asset and engages §203 in its provisions.</p>
IV5	Local Heritage Assets	203	This policy identifies a number of local heritage assets to engage the provisions of §203. They have been derived from local history analysis and from the Townscape Study and design review carried out as part of the neighbourhood plan. The policy wording matches that of §203 to aid its implementation.
IV6	Sustainable Travel	101, 104	The policy requires that transport issues are considered from the earliest stages of development proposals so that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued (§104). It also seeks to improve the use of public rights of way to encourage walking in the Parish, as per §100.
IV7	Air Quality	105, 106, 174, 186	This policy aims to improve air quality and public health across the Parish but especially at key locations that are blighted by poor quality at present. By securing appropriate investments from development proposals that are likely to contribute to additional traffic (as per §57), the policy will lead to improvements in the public realm and air quality as provided for by §105, §106, §174 and §186.
IV8	Managing Traffic	104	This policy seeks to tackle the harmful environmental effects of traffic by identifying measures to manage traffic in key locations, as per §104.
IV9	Reducing Heavy Goods Vehicles	81, 104	This policy seeks to tackle the harmful environmental effects of HGV traffic, which blights the Parish, by encouraging the change of use of HGV traffic-generating sites to other employment or other uses, as per §104. As part of the wider vision for the Parish, the policy aims to place some parameters around the future nature and scale of employment uses in the Parish to recognise that its larger, better connected, neighbouring towns are more sustainable locations to accommodate economic growth, as per §81.

IV10	Community Facilities	93	This policy seeks to protect popular and cherished community facilities across the villages in line with §93.
IV11	Village Centres	84, 93	This policy seeks to promote the retention and development of the village centres to secure their vitality and viability in line with §84 and §93.
IV12	Local Green Spaces	101	This policy designates Local Green Spaces having taken into the criteria in §102. It is consistent with planning for sustainable development as any future opportunities for growth in the Parish will be determined by the Local Plan making exceptional circumstances for releasing Green Belt land for development, which is not in the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. With the villages being inset from the Green Belt, the pressure for development of land within their boundaries is high and the designation of these Spaces will prevent the loss of precious green spaces, but leaving opportunities for plot redevelopment and intensification in line with the design and other policies of the development plan. The owners of the land proposed for designation have been notified of this intention and given the opportunity to make representations in line with the advice set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.
IV13	Colne Valley Regional Park	174, 179	This policy sets out green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery provisions within the context of the location of all of the Parish in the Regional Park, which has adopted strategies covering these policy objectives. It is therefore consistent with the aims of §174 and §179 in these respects.
IV14	PassivHaus Buildings	56, 152, 155, 157	This policy is a local response to a global challenge, the local community being convinced by the international evidence that ensuring zero carbon building performance through the PassivHaus standard is the most simple and cost-effective approach to take. In doing so, it is consistent with the aims and provisions of §152, §155 and §157. It is inspired by innovative development plan making work in other parts of the country that has demonstrated this type of provision is necessary and possible in managing development proposals until national policy provisions are implemented. Its provision for post-occupancy evaluation of buildings constructed outside of the standard is consistent with PINS model conditions of this type and is therefore considered in line with the use of planning conditions, as per §56.
IV15	Thorney Business Park	15, 18, 28, 29, 31, 60, 81, 119,	This policy seeks to fill a policy vacuum left by the withdrawal of the Local Plan in respect of an important parcel of land in the Parish. Although large in relation to neighbouring Richings Park and Iwer, the site is non-strategic in scale in relation to the Bucks Local Plan area and therefore the

		120, 140, 148	<p>Neighbourhood Plan is an appropriate policy vehicle to ensure the future positive planning of the land is plan-led, in line with §15 and §18.</p> <p>As per §28, the policy sets out a basic framework and design principles for managing all of the land as a comprehensive development and redevelopment opportunity, taking into account the locational advantages and scape to deliver significant upgrades in local community facilities, as well as leading to the earliest removal of one of the most problematic HGV traffic-generating uses. The Neighbourhood Plan has presented a timely opportunity to engage the community in planning the future (as per §29) of what is envisaged as the new, northern half of Richings Park, taking advantage of Iver Station on the QE rail line and the Grand Union Canal as a site boundary.</p> <p>Although the policy will lead to the provision of a significant number of new homes (§60) and economic development (§81), it is not being driven by those outcomes and, given the location of all of the Parish in the Green Belt, there is no indicative local housing figure for the Neighbourhood Plan (as per §67). Instead, the goal is to remove the HGV traffic from that part of the site that is mostly inset from the Green Belt but recognising its unusual spatial relationship within the Green Belt, which it is crucial to consider as a whole. It is expected that proposals will be made for that part of the site – all brownfield land – and it is important that there is an up to date policy framework to ensure that goal is met and that makes as much use as possible of that brownfield land, as per §119 and §120.</p> <p>A challenge presented by the Local Plan policy vacuum is how to address that part of the site lying within the Green Belt, in the absence of an up to date strategic policy enabling the Neighbourhood Plan to modify the Green Belt boundary here (as per §140). As it is crucial for the proper planning of the whole to realise its opportunities for Richings Park and the whole Parish, the policy therefore sets out the very special circumstances by which the community considers the public benefit of an ‘inappropriate’ development proposal will outweigh the harm of that development to the purpose of maintaining the land in the Green Belt, as per §148. Refining NPPF policy to a local area – in this case a specific site – is an essential function of any type of development plan making exercise, including neighbourhood planning. As noted above, §28/§29 encourage non-strategic and neighbourhood plans to shape the future of land in precisely this way, with no exception being made for Green Belt policy (other than per §140 for removing land from the Green Belt, which is not proposed here).</p> <p>The Parish Council supported many of the provisions of the proposed allocation of the land in the withdrawn Local Plan. However, a combination of the failure of that plan, the out of date</p>
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			framework provided by the old South Bucks Local Plan and Core Strategy (as covered in Section 5 below) and the abandoning of the Iver Relief Road project (for which the earlier proposal had made provision through this site) have meant that a new policy framework is required, but benefiting from much of the evidence base prepared for the Local Plan (as per §31). In that respect, its evidence base – most notably on the poor contribution the land-locked site makes to the Green Belt, which was uncontested – has been used here. The concept framework sketch aims to capture the basic spatial principles of good practice masterplanning, and makes provision for maintaining an effective non-developed visual gap between Richings Park and Iver to maintain their separation.
IV16	Link Park Heathrow & Thorney Mill Sidings	81, 104, 145, 174, 179	This policy seeks to tackle the harmful environmental effects of HGV traffic, which blights the Parish, by encouraging the change of use of this HGV traffic-generating site to other employment or other uses, as per §104. As part of the wider vision for the Parish, the policy aims to place some parameters around the future nature and scale of employment uses in the Parish to recognise that its larger, better connected, neighbouring towns are more sustainable locations to accommodate economic growth, as per §81. It also seeks to improve the appearance of the site within the Green Belt as per §145, and to improve the local environment, as per §174 and §179.
IV17	Pinewood Studios	81, 105	This policy seeks to set some parameters within which the future growth of the Studios is planned, to acknowledge the adverse effects of its operations on the amenities of local residents in Iver Heath. It does not prevent growth, as so is consistent with §81, but it does seek to mitigate its harmful effects, as per §105, in requiring effective traffic avoidance and management measures.

3.5 It is considered that all of the policies have had full regard to national policy. One policy – IV17 – engages two national policies that are in tension (economic growth versus environmental management) requiring the Parish Council to strike a balance between them. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan, as a whole, meets Condition (a).

4. CONDITION (D): CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 As a Strategic Environmental Assessment Report has been required of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Statement sets out in Table B below how each of the policies contribute to the achievements of sustainable development. It does so by identifying the potential of each policy to lead to significantly positive (dark green), moderate positive (light green), neutral (yellow), moderate adverse (light red) or significant (dark red) adverse effects, taking into account the proposed mitigation measures.

Table B: Neighbourhood Plan & Sustainable Development					
Policy		Social	Economic	Environmental	Commentary
IV1	Gaps between settlements				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect and a moderate social effect in maintaining the separate identities of the villages in the Parish by preventing their visual coalescence. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV2	Design in Iver Heath				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect and a moderate social effect in conserving the essential character of the village, and some of its history, which local people care about. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV3	Design in Iver Village				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect and a moderate social effect in conserving the essential character of the village, and some of its history (especially that of its Conservation Area and clusters of Listed Buildings), which local people care about. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV4	Design in Richings Park				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect and a moderate social effect in conserving the essential character of the village, and some of its history, which local people care about. Its economic effect is neutral.

IV5	Local Heritage Assets	  	The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect and a moderate social effect in ensuring that features of local historic and/or architectural value are understood and kept as far as possible in new development proposals as part of retaining the character of the Parish, for the enjoyment of the local community. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV6	Sustainable Travel	  	The policy will have significant positive environmental and social effects in reducing traffic to improve air quality and in encouraging healthier lifestyles by walking and cycling. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV7	Air Quality	  	The policy will have significant positive environmental and social effects in improving air quality. It will have a moderate adverse economic effect in curtailing and discouraging some types of economic activity that generate higher air quality problems, notably through the scale and type of traffic they generate.
IV8	Managing Traffic	  	The policy will have significant positive environmental and social effects in improving the public realm in the village centres and other popular locations in the Parish to encourage walking, cycling and recreation in safe and pleasant surroundings. As a result it will have a moderate economic benefit in encouraging the use of local shops and services in those locations.
IV9	Reducing Heavy Goods Vehicles	  	The policy will have significant positive environmental and social effects in removing the blight of HGV traffic from the villages to improve amenity and to encourage walking, cycling and recreation in safe and pleasant surroundings. As a result it will also have a moderate economic benefit in encouraging the use of local shops and services in those locations. There are many more appropriate locations in the many larger centres of population around the edges of the Parish to avoid the policy having any adverse economic effect.
IV10	Community Facilities	  	The policy will have a significant positive social effect in protecting the range of community facilities that are well used and cherished by the village communities. Its economic and environmental effects are neutral.
IV11	Village Centres	  	The policy will have significant positive social and economic effects in seeking to protect the critical mass of shops and services in the two village centres. Its environmental effect is neutral.
IV12	Local Green Spaces	  	The policy will have a significant positive social effect in protecting a range of publicly accessible open spaces within the villages from inappropriate development. The policy will have a moderate environmental effect in as some but not all the spaces have some environmental (e.g. biodiversity, heritage) value. Its economic effect is neutral.

IV13	Colne Valley Regional Park				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect in ensuring that development proposals contribute to the special landscape, historic environment and waterscape value of the Regional Park. It will have moderate social effect as the Park comprises a range of publicly accessible spaces that will benefit from the policy provisions. Its economic effect is neutral.
IV14	PassivHaus Buildings				The policy will have a significant positive environmental effect in maximising the zero carbon performance of all new buildings. It will have moderate social and economic effects in the ongoing financial savings to the building (residential and commercial) occupiers in energy costs.
IV15	Thorney Business Park				The policy will have significant environmental and social effects by removing a major source of HGV traffic from the Parish, by remediating an extensive area of despoiled brownfield land and by developing a set of new community facilities for Richings Park and the wider Parish. It will also open up better walking and cycling access to the station and deliver biodiversity gain. The policy will have a moderate economic effect in replacing existing jobs on the site with a higher number of new jobs in the data centre operation.
IV16	Link Park Heathrow & Thorney Mill Sidings				The policy will have a significant environmental effect in removing another source of HGV traffic, in improving the appearance of the site within its sensitive Green Belt setting, and in protecting and improving the network of green and blue infrastructure assets on the site. It has neutral social and economic effects in that it does not reduce the economic development potential of the site (provided uses do not generate HGV traffic).
IV17	Pinewood Studios				The policy will have neutral environmental and social effects in seeking to focus any future proposals to intensify or expand the facilities on measures that will not make existing traffic generation problems for the local community any worse than they are at present. It will have a moderate adverse economic effect in setting traffic-related parameters that may limit further growth at the site if proposals do not include measures to tackle the problems created by the site for the local community.

4.2 The cumulative effect of the policies will be to make very significant positive differences to the quality of the local environment, with the benefits they will deliver for people living and working in the Parish. Each village has had to live with increasing commercial traffic as past economic, minerals, waste and infrastructure development decisions have regarded the Parish as suited to those purposes. With the main mitigation measure being abandoned – the Relief Road – the future health and well being of the Parish will rest on this suite of policies transforming the patterns of land use and the way people and goods move about its roads, cycleways and footpaths in the next decade.

4.3 The economic effects are not considered to be more than moderate adverse. Well-established employment uses – Pinewood for example – can continue to operate successfully, but within parameters that place sensible limits on their growth to protect the amenity of those that live in the Parish. Besides, there are many, much larger and far better connected towns and cities in this area that are more sustainable locations for future economic growth (and where there will be many more opportunities to reuse brownfield land for that purpose).

5. CONDITION (E): GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure its general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the former South Bucks District, that is the South Bucks District Local Plan 1999 ("the 1999 Local Plan"), the South Bucks Core Strategy 2011 ("the Core Strategy") and the Bucks Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2019 ("the Minerals & Waste Plan"), taken as a whole. However, the Parish Council has been very mindful of the lengthening age of both plans, which predate the NPPF, and especially of some policies that are now more than 25 years old in their formulation.

5.2 In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance (§ 41-009), this Statement does not seek to demonstrate general conformity with the policies of the emerging Local Plan, which in any event is too early in its preparation to be of any help. However, it is noted that the proposals and evidence base for the withdrawn Local Plan may be used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. This is especially important as the Parish Council seeks to fill the vacuum of meaningful, up-to-date planning policy and to re-assert the value of the plan-led system for as long as it takes Bucks Council to adopt its first Local Plan.

5.3 The Core Strategy defines Iver Heath and Iver Village in the settlement hierarchy of the District as 'Secondary Settlements' and Richings Park as a 'Tertiary Settlement'. The Wood Lane Close residential area south west of Iver Heath is defined separately as a 'Rural Settlement'. Its Policies Map shows the entire Area as lying in the Metropolitan Green Belt between the west of London at Uxbridge and the large town of Slough to its south west. However, its three main settlements are inset from the Green Belt, with the Wood Lane Close area identified (by Policy GB3 of the 1999 Local Plan) as a 'washed over' settlement where suitable infill development may be acceptable. The other 'settlements' in the Area – Shreding Green, Iver Lane/Palmer's Moor, Seven Hills Road and Thorney Mill Road – are all washed over.

5.4 There are also a number of development policies that cover a wide range of matters affecting the Parish, including its Listed Buildings, Conservation Area, and Ancient Woodland. The majority of the Parish also lies within one or more Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and all of the Parish lies within the Colne Valley Regional Park, which extends from Rickmansworth north of the Parish to Staines-upon-Thames to its south. The Regional Park has a strategy to manage development in its area and has published the 'Colne and Crane Valleys Green Infrastructure Strategy': the Parish lies within its 'Mid Colne' area.

5.5 The Core Strategy (Policy 16) identifies the South of Iver Opportunity Area (see Plan B below). The policy states that, *"The District Council will generally support appropriate employment generating development or redevelopment on Court Lane, Thorney Business Park and the Ridgeway Trading Estate, with particular encouragement to be given to uses that would result in a reduction in HGV movements"*. It then sets out specific proposals for the Court Lane site. The supporting text notes the emerging Bucks

Minerals & Waste Local Plan (BMWLP) to carry forward the safeguarding of land to the west of Thorney Business Park for a Multimodal Waste Transfer Facility.

5.6 However, that proposal was not carried forward in the Minerals & Waste Plan adopted in 2019, although its Policy 13 Spatial Strategy for Waste Management identifies the same three locations as 'secondary areas of focus for waste management' serving the south east of the county. Such locations are regarded as *"largely outside of the remaining Buckinghamshire urban locations ... sites within these secondary areas outside of the urban centres may be suitable for facilities that are not appropriate to locate in or adjacent to urban areas"*. It considers (in §5.89) that, *"Facilities that are incompatible with, or not complementary to, urban development should be encouraged to locate in appropriate rural industrial estates, existing waste management sites outside the urban areas or other appropriate rural locations"*.

5.7 It notes (in §5.85) that, *"Some of the locations ... are industrial estates or employment areas that include existing waste management facilities/uses, whilst others are existing industrial estates or employment areas where the receiving environment is considered suitable to accommodate such use ... it may be that a secondary area of focus is not the most appropriate location and that it would be better directed to a primary area of focus"*. It also notes (in §5.88) the (then) emerging proposals of the Local Plan for the redevelopment of Thorney Business Park, observing that its inclusion as a location would remain until the redevelopment is programmed to be implemented.

5.8 The withdrawn Local Plan was comprehensive in its policy coverage and detail. It sought to release three major strategic sites from the Green Belt in the Parish to deliver new homes, office space and community uses at Iver Heath, North of Iver Station and East of Ridgeway Business Park. It continued to identify the shopping area at Iver Village as a 'Local Centre' for retaining and enhancing 'town centre' uses and Pinewood Studios and Ridgeway Trading Estate as 'strategic employment sites', as well as 'key employment sites' at Thorney Mill Road to offer different levels of protection from changes of use to non-economic uses.

5.9 In addition to the strategic allocations, it recognised the potential housing numbers from HELAA Sites in the Ivers and provided a figure of 223 dwellings as an indicative housing requirement figure for the Parish. The Settlement Capacity Study Update of January 2020 anticipated that 377 dwellings would come forward from other sources for the plan period of 2016 – 2036 in the Ivers (186 completions, 31 commitments, 76 from HELAA sites and 84 from windfall allowance). The HELAA Sites fall within the Green Belt and can therefore not be allocated by this Neighbourhood Plan.

5.10 There were also a number of development policies in relation to Colne Valley Regional Park, Burnham Beeches SAC, Air Quality – defining the voluntary Iver Clean Air Zone supporting ULEVs in developments, requirements to support parking and recharging of Clean Air Zone compliant vehicles for public transport; walking and cycling accessibility – and design, including Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

5.11 The most recent Bucks Council Local Development Scheme of XX indicates that the emerging Local Plan setting out the timetable for its adoption by 2024 and it currently highlights the potential role of Neighbourhood Plans. Frustratingly, Bucks Council chose to pause preparation in the light of the Planning White Paper of August 2020. Aside from a 'Call for Brownfield Sites' in early 2021, there has been no further published progress.

5.12 For completeness, the Parish Council has also had to take into account the emerging Slough Local Plan. The 'Proposed Spatial Strategy for Slough' consultation, was held in winter 2020/21 and a report on the consultation is expected to be published in due course. The strategy proposes that nearly all of the Borough's growth will take place in the centre of Slough. However it notes that there may need to be some release of Green Belt sites on the edge of Slough to meet housing needs. The selection of these areas will have to go through a separate consultation process, which will also take account of the results of the Wider Area Growth Study.

5.13 It notes that these sites are unlikely to meet the need for commercial floorspace and new homes predicted for Slough. The strategy therefore also recognises that it will be necessary to consider a major expansion of Slough outside of its borders. The Northern Expansion of Slough, extending into Iver Parish, remains Slough Council's preferred option, however the strategy recognises that it is one option of many that are currently being assessed in the joint Wider Growth Study Part 2 which had been expected to be published in late 2020. As a result, the Spatial Strategy is just promoting the "cross border" expansion of Slough.

5.14 The strategy also reverts back to restraining development in order to protect the Green Belt, Colne Valley Park and Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London in the absence of any policy support or any demonstrable need for the expansion of Heathrow airport. The Strategy does not address or recognise the proposed changes to calculating housing need which may have an impact on the number of homes needed to be accommodated in Slough and Buckinghamshire.

5.15 There are other waste and minerals development plans that apply in the Parish, but they are not considered relevant in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. There are no made neighbourhood plans in the vicinity, but others in the District are also in the process of being prepared, most notably the adjacent parishes of Fulmer, Gerrards Cross and Denham in Bucks and Ickenham Neighbourhood Forum in the adjacent London Borough of Hillingdon.

Summary of Context

5.16 The Parish Council welcomed the withdrawal of the Local Plan as its disjointed proposals would only have exacerbated the amenity and environmental problems its residents face. However, there are some elements of its evidence base that remain up-to-date and relevant for underpinning this Neighbourhood Plan.

5.17 This combination of strategic policies, which regards the Parish as sufficiently rural and benefiting from legacy industrial land to justify otherwise harmful waste development, has led to the significant HGV and air quality problems, when combined further with the growth of Pinewood and other minerals, utilities and infrastructure operations. There is no evidence that Core Strategy Policy 16 has had any effect in reducing HGV movements and no account was taken in the BMWLP of the cumulative effects of locating all three waste facilities serving the south east of the county on the edge of one small village. In practice, the combination has been a self-fulfilling prophesy of employment land justifying 'poor neighbour' waste schemes justifying only employment reuse and not residential (until the withdrawn Thorney Business Park proposals).

5.18 The Parish Council considers this spatial approach to the Ivers as out of date, especially in the light of its failure in implementation and of the abandoning of an effective relief road proposal and major traffic generating proposals in the Parish since. The approach has taken insufficient account of the close proximity of the three Green Belt villages and the limitations of the local road network to accommodate HGV and other traffic. In Section 5, the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to establish a more forward-thinking and appropriate future for the Parish that acknowledges the BMWLP provisions but within a different spatial context.

5.19 With that summary of the current strategic policy context in mind, an assessment of the general conformity of each policy, and its relationship with emerging policy where relevant, is contained in Table C below.

Table C: Neighbourhood Plan & Development Plan Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title & Refs	Commentary
IV1	Gaps between settlements	<p>There is no strategic policy relating to strategic or local gaps. CS Policy CP9 Natural Environment requires landscape character to be conserved unless outweighed by other considerations. Here, all of the land lies in the Green Belt, but its policy framework (LP GB1) relates, as one of the purposes of the Green Belt, to preventing the coalescence of higher order settlements than those in the Parish. The policy is consistent with this framework in that it no more or less permissive than the operation of CP9 or GB1.</p> <p>Rather, it refines both to identify at this more local scale the specific local importance that a small number of gaps and corridors between settlements have in defining those settlements. This serves two purposes: for proposals that are considered appropriate in the Green Belt in these locations it requires that account is taken of their visual function (for which they are valued). And where future development plan proposals may be made (under exceptional circumstances) to remove the effected land from the Green Belt, those proposals also mindful of that function and value. The policy does not prevent appropriate development as a matter of principle.</p>
IV2	Design in Iver Heath	This policy refines policies EP3, H9 and CP8 to enable their general design requirements to be applied more specifically to the village. In doing so, it operates as a form of design code that defines what 'character', 'intrinsic qualities', 'respect' and 'harmonise' etc mean in the consideration of proposals in Iver Heath. The proposed Area of Special Character is consistent with H10 in its definition, purpose and application.
IV3	Design in Iver Village	This policy refines policies EP3, H9 and CP8 as well as C1 in relation to that part of the village in the Conservation Area, to enable their general design requirements to be applied more specifically to the village. In doing so, it operates as a form of design code that defines what 'character', 'intrinsic qualities', 'respect' and 'harmonise' etc mean in the consideration of proposals in Iver, including for a specific, prominent site on its High Street. The proposed Area of Special Character is consistent with H10 in its definition, purpose and application.
IV4	Design in Richings Park	This policy refines policies EP3, H9 and CP8 to enable their general design requirements to be applied more specifically to the village. In doing so, it operates as a form of design code that defines what 'character', 'intrinsic qualities', 'respect' and 'harmonise' etc mean in the

		consideration of proposals in Richings Park. The proposed Area of Special Character is consistent with H10 in its definition, purpose and application.
IV5	Local Heritage Assets	This policy aids the implementation of policy CP8, which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance local heritage assets (or 'locally important heritage features'), including historic landscapes. Then policy wording is consistent with the NPPF which postdates CP8.
IV6	Sustainable Travel	This policy refines Policy CP7 in defining a network of sustainable travel routes in the Parish.
IV7	Air Quality	This policy fills a gap in current strategic policy in respect of addressing the significant air quality problems facing the Parish. It relates to TR5 and TR10, which both serve a similar but indirect purpose in terms of traffic generation and HGV movements. However, neither tackle this matter directly. It is consistent with CP7 in terms of encouraging safe and attractive pedestrian environments, but again does not directly address air quality, and is out of date in respect of the Iver Relief Road (see IV15 below).
IV8	Managing Traffic	This policy refines TR5 in providing a means by which traffic management effects and measures are tackled and invested in by development proposals in this Parish.
IV9	Reducing Heavy Goods Vehicles	<p>This policy replaces TR10 for this Parish by discouraging proposals for new HGV-traffic generating development. More than ten years on, it is now considered that no such proposal will be capable of meeting criteria of TR10. The challenge is now in encouraging the removal of existing HGV traffic generating uses, in line with the ambition of CP16 in relation to part of the Parish, that is the only effective means of tackling the goals of TR5 and CP7 not that the Iver Relief Road project has been abandoned.</p> <p>There is a moderate degree of conflict with CP10 in respect of seeking to reduce the number of existing employment uses in the Parish (at least of those that generate this type of traffic) and of discouraging further such uses. But this conflict is more than outweighed by the significant conformity of the policy with a wider range of LP and CS policies.</p>
IV10	Community Facilities	This policy refines COM2 in defining those facilities in the Parish to which that policy applies.
IV11	Village Centres	This policy updates the outdated policies S2 to S4 by focusing on managing ground floor frontages of existing commercial, business and service uses in its variety of village centres, in so far as proposals require planning permission. It is consistent with the aims of those policies and of CP11

		in seeking to maintain a critical mass of viable and vital services.
IV12	Local Green Spaces	There are no strategic policies relating to Local Green Spaces. However, the policy is consistent with the aims of CP5 in seeking to protect the most important open spaces within the inset settlements from harmful development.
IV13	Colne Valley Regional Park	This policy refines CP9 in relating its broad natural environment principles to this Parish, which lies entirely within the Regional Park.
IV14	PassivHaus Buildings	This policy complements some, and replaces other, parts of CP12 to bring this policy context up to date with contemporary thinking and national policy provisions for tackling climate change through the energy performance of new buildings. In those respects CP12 is significantly out of date.
IV15	Thorney Business Park	<p>This policy brings up to date CP16 and is consistent with CP10 in retaining an employment use on the land. CP16 promotes employment generating development on the part of this land not in the Green Belt that would reduce HGV traffic. The policy is consistent but is more specific in focusing the employment use on a specific use – a data centre – that is normally regarded as sui generis and with a relatively low employment density. This use is very well suited to this location is being compatible with the potential residential use of the remainder of the site that lies in the Green Belt.</p> <p>This new policy does not – cannot – allocate land in the Green Belt but rather sets out the development management criteria by which very special circumstances may justify the development of that remainder. GB1 is not consistent with the NPPF in acknowledging that such circumstances may exist to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The policy benefits from the uncontested Green Belt evidence base prepared by South Bucks in the past that clearly demonstrates that the land serves only one of the five essential purposes of the Green Belt, a purpose (preventing the coalescence of Iwer and Richings Park) that can be maintained in the redevelopment of the site.</p> <p>Updating the vision for the site – as the withdrawn Local Plan had intended to do – would enable the policy to actively promote the aims of many other strategic policies, notably on housing delivery (CP1 – where there is ne a considerable and growing under-supply in the former District), on delivering affordable housing (CP3 – in an area with an acute affordability problem), on upgrading community facilities (CP6 – delivering a much-needed replacement medical centre for the Parish and a primary school and community centre for Richings Park), on promoting</p>

		<p>access to public transport (CP7 – with the site adjoining Iver Station on the new Queen Elizabeth line and enabling improved cycling and walking connectivity between Richings Park and Iver, on the natural environment (CP9 – delivering significant biodiversity gains, surface water management improvements and land remediation), and on bolstering village centres (CP11 – supporting the future viability at Richings Park).</p> <p>In overall terms, the policy is in general conformity with almost all of the strategic policy framework, even though that framework is more than a decade old and predates the NPPF. It provides an opportunity for the plan led system to continue to operate in the absence of an up to date strategic policy framework until at least 2025.</p>
IV16	Link Park Heathrow & Thorney Mill Sidings	This policy is consistent with CP10 in encouraging new (non HGV generating) employment uses of this land and with CP9 in requiring improvements to the natural environment on and around the developable area within the wider site boundary. The policy does not – cannot – seek to relate to the established use as a minerals and waste ('excluded development') operation, only to its future once the use and operations are finished.
IV17	Pinewood Studios	This policy updates E2 to reflect the significant increase in size and operations of the site in the 22 years since that policy was adopted. E2 relies on the application of other generic traffic-related policies of the Local Plan (and since then the Core Strategy) to manage and mitigate its traffic effects. The updated policy draws specific attention to the matter relating to Pinewood in an attempt to define some parameters within which this successful use should operate, given its relatively isolated location on local roads that also serve Iver Heath. The policy does not prevent the improvement or expansion of the studios – they are an important employment use (CP10) – but it does require that their traffic implications are properly understood and proposals contain effect mitigation measures.

5.20 It is considered that all of the policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan. Where two or more strategic policies are in tension, notably in respect of policies IV15 and IV17, the way in which the Parish Council has come its judgement on how to strike a balance between them is explained in fill above. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan, as a whole, meets Condition (e).

6. CONDITION (F): COMPATABILITY WITH EU LEGISLATION

6.1 As noted in Section 4, Bucks Council provided a screening opinion that has determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required, following consultation with statutory bodies, as per Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). A copy of the screening opinion is published separately. The Parish Council Forum has therefore met its obligations in relation to the EU Directive 2001/42 in respect of assessing the potential for significant environmental effects of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.2 The Parish Council has also met its obligations in relation to the habitats provisions of EU Directive 92/43/EEC (and the associated Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)). In this regard, the Parish Council provided the Bucks Council with all the necessary information it required for the purposes of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment was required or to carry out the Appropriate Assessment if one was required. Bucks Council's Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment concludes that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the 2017 Regulations) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

6.3 The Parish Council has been mindful of the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights in process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and considers that it complies with the Human Rights Act. The Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to extensive engagement with those people local to the area who could be affected by its policies and their views have been taken into account in finalising the Plan.

6.4 In respect of Directive 2008/98/EC – the Waste Framework Directive – the Neighbourhood Plan does not include any policies in relation to the management of waste. On that basis, this Directive is not considered relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore could not be breached.

6.5 In respect of Directive 2008/50/EC – the Air Quality Directive – the Neighbourhood Plan includes some policies relevant to Air Quality. These policies are tested in accordance with national policy and guidance relevant to their content. The policies are not considered to breach the requirements of the Air Quality Directive as they comprise small-scale interventions and do not negate from the framework for measurement and improvement of air quality set in the Directive.