

Hambleton Parish Council

Planning Policy Statement

Version History			
Version No.	Date	Changes made	Author
1.0	24.11.2019	Initial Draft	Charles Hussey
1.1	07.02.2020	2 nd Draft	Charles Hussey
1.2	11.02.2020	Version adopted at Council meeting on 10.02.2020	Parish Council
1.3	23.08.2025	Updated to take account of change in Buckinghamshire Councils and rebranding of the AoNB	Charles Hussey

1) Preamble

1. This document has been drawn up as an aid to Councillors when assessing planning applications as a Statutory Consultee, with the intention of providing consistent and fair guidelines.
2. It draws upon content from:
 - a. the Wycombe Local Plan,
 - b. the Chiltern Conservation Board (CCB)
 - i. Management Plan,
 - ii. Buildings Design Guide,
 - iii. Position Statement on Renewable Energy,
 - iv. Lighting Planning Guidance,
 - c. Historic England's advice on Conservation Areas,
 - d. the National Trust Greenland's Covenant.
 - e. Guidance from the National Landscapes Association for Local Planning Authorities (see Section 8)
3. Councillors are not planning professionals and our role in planning matters should be to:
 - a. Represent the interests of our parishioners
 - b. Safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of the parish
 - c. Have regard to conserving and enhancing the National Landscape
 - d. Where possible, ensure the existence of an appropriate mix of housing stock
 - e. Have regard to the needs of agricultural and commercial interests (including the provision of services that benefit residents, such as village shops, garages, etc.)
4. It is not the role of the Parish Council to provide planning, or-pre-planning, advice. Any request to do so should be declined and the applicant referred to the Local Council Planning Department or, where appropriate, to the National Trust Covenants Officer.
5. Notwithstanding the above, we would encourage owners to engage with us so that we may fully understand their proposals. However, the Parish Council will not come to a decision until a copy of the application has been received from the Planning Authority and discussed at a meeting of the Parish Council.
6. Only in exceptional circumstances would our written response actively endorse an application. The normal response would either be "no objection" or to object, giving clear and unbiased reasons for doing so.
7. Change is to be expected and accepted but the special character of our area, particularly the designated Conservation Areas, should be preserved.

2) Introduction

We are all fortunate to live in a beautiful rural parish. The beauty is derived both from the Chilterns landscape and from the distinctive vernacular architecture, construction and placement of traditional buildings. That it is a desirable place to live is reflected in the sale prices that properties command. The Parish is well-endowed with heritage assets with six conservation areas (Mill End, Hambleden, Pheasants Hill, Skirmett, Frieth, Fingest) and 100 listed buildings and structures.

We wish to foster an appreciation of the beauty of the area amongst our residents, businesses and visitors together with an understanding of the threats posed by, among others: insensitive development, loss of tranquillity, loss of biodiversity, climate change. As the whole of the Parish lies within the Chilterns National Landscape, the Parish Council has a legal duty to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty". This means ensuring that the beauty of our Parish is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

3) Material Planning Considerations

In considering a planning application, the Parish Council should only comment on a "material consideration", comments relating to other matters will not be considered by the Planning Officer. To carry weight in the decision-making process, objections need to be based on material planning considerations. A single objection based on material planning considerations will carry more weight in the decision-making process than a large volume of objections that are not giving planning reasons. The most common "material considerations" include the following (Note: this list and the list of what cannot be considered are not exhaustive).

Material Planning Considerations:

- Planning policies
- Highway safety issues
- Impact on countryside
- The National Planning Policy Framework
- Traffic generation
- Loss of important trees
- Government circulars, orders and statutory instruments
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Design, visual appearance, and materials
- Impact on listed buildings/Conservation Areas
- Loss of daylight or sunlight
- Layout and density of buildings
- Archaeology
- Overshadowing/loss of outlook (but not loss of view)
- Noise and disturbance from use
- Risk of flooding
- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Smells
- Hazardous materials and ground contamination
- Light pollution
- Nature conservation
- Disabled persons access

What cannot be taken into account?

- Loss of view
- Breach of restrictive covenant

- Loss of property value competition or loss of trade to a competitor
- Private issues between neighbours e.g. land/boundary disputes, damage to property, private rights of way, covenants etc.
- Personal circumstances of the applicant (in most cases)
- Matters controlled under Building Regulations or other non-planning laws, e.g. structural stability, drainage, fire precautions etc.
- Moral objections e.g. to uses such as amusement arcades and betting offices
- The development is already completed
- Problems arising from the construction period of any works, e.g. noise, dust, construction vehicles, hours of work etc.
- Party wall issues

4) Local Authority Policies

The Wycombe District Local Plan (adopted August 2019) contains policies that will be used to make decisions on planning applications. When we comment on an application, we should reference the policies that we feel that the application contravenes. The Plan will remain in force until superseded by a new plan for the whole county which is being developed by the Unitary Authority (Buckinghamshire Council). The following points are extracted from the Local Plan but more a complete treatment, the Plan itself should be consulted at: <https://media.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/documents/Wycombe-District-Local-Plan-Adopted-August-2019-accessible.pdf>. The Wycombe Local Plan will remain in force until replaced by a new Buckinghamshire Local Plan (which may take 5 years to produce).

Two of the strategic objectives that guide and shape the Local Plan are:

1. Cherish the Chilterns

Cherish the Chilterns by conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape of the Chiltern Hills. [This is] central to the strategy of the Local Plan.

2. Strengthen the Sense of Place

Strengthen the sense of place throughout Wycombe District by:

- protecting and enhancing the District's natural and built environment, including landscape, biodiversity, green and blue infrastructure, historic and cultural assets;
- maintaining place identity by using Green Belt to keep main settlements separate;
- securing high quality, bespoke responses in the design of new development.

Development within the District must take that sense of place as its starting point, providing bespoke quality responses for each place, to achieve sustainable development.

The following policies may be pertinent to planning applications:

The first five are strategic policies and relate mainly to new development. The first is about achieving sustainable development and the following four are about how development will be delivered.

- CP1 – Sustainable Development. The NPPF states that the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It includes an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.
- CP9 – Sense of Place. The Council will deliver a distinctive high-quality sense of place within the District 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.
- CP10 – Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment. The landscape character and green infrastructure within the District are vital to its sense of place. Protecting and enhancing existing assets through planning is of strategic importance. *Inter alia* WDC will:
 - [Take] a landscape character-based approach to considering proposals.
 - [Ensure] there is a net gain in biodiversity within individual development proposals and across the District as a whole over the plan period.
 - [Ensure] through development management policies that all development is required to maximise the opportunities to protect, enhance, expand, connect, improve and use the existing green infrastructure, including across the border of the development site.
- CP11 – Historic Environment. The numerous historical and architectural features of the District contribute to the sense of place and to what makes the Wycombe District a place people want to live in and visit, and so it is important that the character of heritage assets, including non-designated heritage assets, is retained, particularly in areas where there is pressure from development. The Council will promote the conservation and enhancement of the Historic Environment of the District through:
 - 1. Conserving, and where possible enhancing, the significance, special interest, character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes; and taking opportunities to reinforce the positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness by sustaining the historic environment.
 - 2. Ensuring the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes conserves or where possible enhances the special interest of the asset or landscape.
 - 3. Ensuring that heritage assets are appropriately managed and promote sympathetic re-use of vacant and “at risk” buildings, to prevent the deterioration of their condition, to aid in their protection, and to reduce the number of heritage assets on the “Heritage at Risk” register.
 - 4. Promoting the understanding of the character of our conservation areas through the production and periodic review of conservation area appraisals; and where necessary, employ Article 4 Directions where the identified character of a conservation area is at risk from Permitted Development.
 - 5. Promote the understanding and conservation of non-designated heritage assets by maintaining and periodically reviewing a list of locally important assets of historical or architectural merit.
 - Any development proposal that affects the significance or special interest of heritage assets, including by being within their setting, needs to consider the protection, conservation, and enhancement of that significance or special interest. The more important the asset, the greater the weight will be. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be taken into account in determining the application. In this policy, a non-designated asset of archaeological interest of demonstrably equivalent significance to a scheduled monument shall be treated as a designated heritage asset. Development proposals should be mindful of not only the heritage asset itself, but also its setting and how it fits into the wider historic environment. Wherever possible, new development should reflect and integrate with the existing character of the local area, and seek to avoid the loss of any features of architectural or historical significance.
- CP12 – Climate Change. The threat of climate change is real and the Plan mitigates and adapts to climate change in a variety of ways. This will include:
 - Supporting the integration of renewable technologies into residential and commercial developments of all sizes and the use of district heating or combined heat and power on larger scale developments.
 - The approach set out in this Plan to maintain and improve tree canopy cover provides not just to improve biodiversity and visual amenity, but to also help offset the “urban heat island” effect and pollution issues.

The remaining policies relate to development management

- DM25 – Rural Exceptions Affordable Housing. It is envisaged that the future need for affordable housing to meet local needs in rural areas should mainly be assessed and addressed through Neighbourhood Plans. This policy provides an alternative route for communities to bring forwards rural exception affordable housing
 - The Council will require development for small scale, rural affordable housing (including starter homes) to demonstrate that:
 - a) There is specific, identified local housing need within the community;
 - b) This need cannot be met on a site that would otherwise accord with policy;
 - c) The location proposed is the best practicable location within the local area with regards to material considerations such as access to schools, jobs and services via sustainable transport modes;
 - d) Any element of open market housing is necessary to secure the delivery of the affordable housing.
- DM27 – Housing for Rural Workers. Policy DM27 sets out an approach for considering applications for accommodation in the countryside, where the accommodation is for workers supporting rural enterprises and permission for accommodation would not otherwise be granted.
 - 1. Permanent accommodation for rural workers in locations where permission would not normally be granted is required to be:
 - a) Essential to sustain the functioning of an established agricultural, forestry or other appropriate rural enterprise;
 - b) Related to a functional need for a full-time worker or one who is primarily employed by the business to be resident at the location proposed;
 - c) Supported by evidence that demonstrates that all alternative accommodation options have been explored and no satisfactory alternative means of providing accommodation has been identified;
 - d) Of a size and cost commensurate with the established functional requirement for the enterprise and not exceeding 120 sq m in gross external floor area.
 - 2. For new rural enterprises, only temporary accommodation in the form of a caravan or mobile home will be permitted.
 - 3. The removal of existing occupancy conditions on relevant planning permissions will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that:
 - a) The dwelling is genuinely surplus to the current and foreseeable future employment needs of the holding or business that the dwelling is currently associated with; and
 - b) There is no foreseeable need for housing for persons employed or last employed in agriculture or other rural enterprises in the locality.
 - The NPPF makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should avoid granting permission for isolated new homes in the countryside. One of the few circumstances where such development may be justified is where accommodation is required to support the operation of an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise. The core principle is that there must be an objective assessment of need to justify an exception to the normal restrictions on the location of new housing. A permanent residential presence must be required for the business to function, and the business must be one that requires a rural location by the nature of its activities.
 - Where permission is granted under this policy a condition will be imposed which limits occupation of the dwelling to a person solely, mainly or last working in a local rural enterprise, or a widow, widower or resident dependants of such a person.
 - Proposals to remove existing occupancy conditions like this will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will need to be supported by clear evidence. The Council recognises that changes in the scale and character of farming or other rural enterprises may affect the requirement to retain dwellings of this type in particular locations. To establish the current market interest in a restricted property it should be widely marketed on terms reflecting its occupancy condition normally for at least 12 months or an appropriate period as agreed with the Local Planning Authority and no interest in occupation has been indicated. However, the general presumption will be to retain such restrictions, as it will normally still serve a planning

purpose to maintain the existing stock of workers' dwellings in the long term, notwithstanding any current lack of need in an area.

- DM30 – The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council will consider all proposals for development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty very carefully, and will not permit any development that would unacceptably harm its natural beauty. In applying this policy, the Council will require developers to provide a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for any significant proposals within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or its setting. The Council will advise on a case-by-case basis whether this is required
 - 1. The Council will require development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to:
 - a) Conserve, and where possible enhance, the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB;
 - b) Be appropriate to the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the AONB, or to promote the understanding or enjoyment of the AONB;
 - c) Deliver the highest quality design which respects the natural beauty and built heritage of the Chilterns and enhances the sense of place and local character.
 - 2. Planning permission for proposals which constitute major development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will only be permitted in accordance with national policy, and will otherwise be refused.
 - 3. Development in the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty must not have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- DM31 – Development Affecting the Historic Environment. Heritage assets are defined as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their historical, architectural, artistic or archaeological interest. They can be formally designated, or non-designated. Where development is proposed that could affect the significance of any heritage asset, the Council will require a heritage asset statement to be submitted.
 - 1. All development is required to conserve and, where possible, enhance the Historic Environment. Great weight will be given to the conservation of a designated asset's significance, its setting, and other character features or positive elements of special interest.
 - 2. Developments likely to affect the significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets, or their setting, are required to evidence a thorough understanding of context, the significance of the asset and any potential impacts on that significance through the preparation of a proportionate heritage impact assessment.
 - 3. Developments which secure the preservation of buildings and other heritage assets that are deemed to be at risk by national and local heritage at risk registers will be supported.
 - 4. Where development would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, consent will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that cannot be achieved otherwise and which outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
 - a) The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
 - b) No viable use of the heritage asset can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
 - c) Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible;
 - d) The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
 - 5. Where development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, consent will be refused unless this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
 - 6. Where development would demonstrably harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, and having regard to the scale of harm and the significance of the asset, consent will be refused unless this harm is outweighed by other land use planning benefits.

- DM32 – Landscape Character and Settlement Patterns. This policy applies across the whole District, not just to the area within the AONB.
 - 1. Development is required to protect and reinforce the positive key characteristics of the receiving landscape and existing settlement patterns.
 - 2. Development is required to evidence a thorough understanding of the landscape and demonstrate a positive response to its attributes, taking account of:
 - a) Existing landscape/townscape character appraisals and design guidance;
 - b) The existing and historic pattern of fields, hedgerows, woodlands, trees, water bodies, the underlying topography, and other landscape features on and around the site;
 - c) Tranquillity and darkness;
 - d) Views and vistas, both from and towards the site, paying particular attention to hilltop and skyline views and areas that contribute to separation between settlements.
 - 3. Development is required to demonstrate that a mitigation hierarchy has been followed in a cumulative way, to avoid, minimise and mitigate harm; and that opportunities for enhancement have been taken.
 - 4. Development must not, individually or cumulatively, result in the actual or perceived coalescence of settlements.
- DM33 - Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation. This policy does make the point that:
 - Opportunities exist in every development to integrate renewable technologies, such as heat pumps and photo voltaic cells. The provision needs to be proportionate to the development proposed, and must not make the development unviable. If it is not appropriate for a particular development, a statement explaining why this is the case needs to be submitted with the application. As technologies improve and prices fall, building renewables in as an integral part of a scheme will become normal practice.
- DM34 – Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development. This Policy refers to both Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure. These are distinct concepts and policy objectives, but they relate to many of the same features of the environment. Green Infrastructure refers to all of the natural or semi-natural components of the environment at whatever scale, everything from the Chilterns escarpment to individual gardens or trees, whether carrying a formal designation or not. It includes land and water habitats (sometimes called blue infrastructure) essential for biodiversity, areas and features important to our appreciation of the landscape, and areas created or managed for human enjoyment which bring us closer to nature, such as parks and cycle ways, and greenspaces... Biodiversity refers to the diversity of species and habitats in the environment and biodiversity assets are those parts of the environment that contribute to biodiversity.
 - 1. All development is required to protect and enhance both biodiversity and green infrastructure features and networks both on and off-site for the lifetime of the development.
 - 2. Developments proposals are required to evidence a thorough understanding of context through the preparation of a proportionate assessment of existing and planned green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological features and networks both on the site and in the locality, and demonstrate how:
 - a) Through physical alterations and a management plan for the lifetime of the development:
 - i. Existing green infrastructure and biodiversity assets will be maximised;
 - ii. Opportunities to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure and biodiversity assets will be maximised;
 - iii. Development will deliver long lasting measurable net gains in biodiversity;
 - iv. Where appropriate, a monitoring plan will be put in place to review delivery of i - iii.
 - b) The mitigation hierarchy has been applied by following a sequential approach to avoid, minimise, mitigate, and finally compensate for (on then off-site) any harm to

biodiversity. If significant harm cannot be avoided in this way, development will not be permitted.

- DM35 – Placemaking and Design Quality
 - 1. All development is required to improve the character of the area and the way it functions.
 - 2. Development is required to evidence a thorough and holistic understanding of the functions, qualities, and character of the proposed development's natural and built context and demonstrate a positive response to this context including how:
 - a) Existing positive characteristics will be retained;
 - b) Opportunities for improvements and enhancements have been maximised;
 - c) A sequential approach has been taken to avoid, minimise and mitigate any harm.
 - 3. Development is required to:
 - a) Create positive and attractive buildings and spaces;
 - b) Take a comprehensive approach to site layout and design including adjacent sites where these are suitable for redevelopment.
 - f) Provide a level of privacy and amenity for future occupants appropriate to the proposed use;
 - g) Prevent significant adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring land and property;
 - h) Demonstrate attractive and high quality design, and appropriate character in the scale, form, layout and detailed design of buildings, and the structures and spaces around them;
 - i) Demonstrate the efficient use of land through the scale and height of buildings.
 - The NPPF clearly sets out the importance of design in achieving sustainable development and the role it plays in good planning and contributing positively to making places better for people. It further states that: "Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions."
 - The detailed design of buildings and spaces is also important. This entails (amongst other things) consideration of the scale and massing of building forms, the composition and detailing of elevations, the quality and choice of materials, and detailed hard and soft landscape proposals. Green infrastructure networks and high quality connected streets are essential. Consideration of this point should start with an assessment of the existing networks around and across the site. Policy DM34 provides further guidance on green infrastructure planning in development.
- DM36 – Extensions and Alterations to Existing Dwellings
 - 1. Development will be required to:
 - a) Achieve a high quality in the detail of the design;
 - b) Respect the character and appearance of the existing property;
 - c) Be subservient in scale and ancillary in function to the existing dwelling;
 - d) Respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
 - e) Preserve the amenities of neighbouring properties.
 - 2. Proposals to extend or alter an existing dwelling that would be tantamount to the creation of a new dwelling in respect of their layout, scale, massing, form, access or scope for independent occupation will be refused.
 - Cumulative small scale changes can have a detrimental effect on the quality and character of an area – it is therefore appropriate that there are policies to manage these developments.
 - It is recognised that small-scale development of residential properties through the addition of extensions, outbuildings or residential annexes may be required as the needs of residents change. These should fulfil an ancillary function to the existing dwelling, and not be used as a means to circumvent planning control and lead to the creation of accommodation which is capable of occupation as an independent dwelling. Proposals for new dwellings may of course be acceptable, subject to other policies in the Plan.

- The underlying rhythm of traditional plot divisions is particularly important in town and village centres with a historic core.
- DM44 – Development in the Countryside Outside the Green Belt
 - 1. Within that portion of the countryside outside of the Green Belt, and subject to other relevant policies, permission will only be granted for:
 - 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 a genuine 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 dwellings and other buildings only within settlement boundaries identified in accordance with CP3 and DM21 as shown on the Policies Map;
 - e) Rural exceptions housing in accordance with DM25;
 - f) Sites for travellers in accordance with DM26;
 - g) Housing for rural workers in accordance with DM27;
 - h) Extensions and alterations to existing dwellings in accordance with DM36;
 - i) The conversion of existing buildings in accordance with DM45;
 - j) The redevelopment of previously developed land, provided this respects the rural character of the surroundings.
- DM45 – Conversion of Existing Buildings in the Green Belt and Other Rural Areas. Policy DM45 sets out a framework to inform developments proposing the conversion of existing buildings within the Green Belt, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and elsewhere in the countryside.
 - 1. The conversion of existing buildings to new uses in the Green Belt, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and elsewhere in the countryside is acceptable where:
 - a) The existing foundations, floors, walls and roof of the building are of sound and permanent construction suitable for the proposed use;
 - b) The building is not a building that was erected within the preceding 10 years;
 - c) The proposed use will support the vitality and sustainability of the local rural community, the rural economy, or local services.
 - Over the last several years the Government has introduced a range of Permitted Development Rights for the conversion of agricultural buildings to a range of other uses. However, not all locations benefit from these permitted changes. Perhaps most significantly for our District, the deemed change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling does not apply in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - The Council considers that barn conversions in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and other similar projects, are acceptable in principle subject to the two basic criteria that the building has existed for at least 10 years prior to its conversion and that the proposed use will be a benefit to the community by providing homes or jobs or services as the case may be.
 - Building works to facilitate the conversion will normally be acceptable along with the change of use. The extent of building works required to facilitate the conversion should be fully described in any planning applications. The detail of proposed conversions may be subject to other policies in the Plan.

5) Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance from the Planning Authority

Wycombe District Council have produced a number of SPDs and guidance notes which can be found here: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-planning-guidance/>. Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They are a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan. It is expected that further SPDs to support the new Local Plan will be developed in due course.

One of the adopted Supplementary Planning Documents is the Chilterns Design Guide, published by the Chilterns Conservation Board <https://www.chilterns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/CBDGChilternsBuildingsDesignGuide2010.pdf>. This can be referenced if we feel that an application does not conform to acceptable design and materials.

One other SPD is of particular relevance to the planning applications that we receive. This is the *Householder Planning and Design Guidance* SPD, which was adopted in January 2020 (https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/documents/9748/Householder-planning-and-design-guidance-SPD-adopted_9Nn5axz.pdf). The following points should be noted:

- This Guidance applies to all householder development in the District. It is a guide to help householders when considering extending or altering their home or building detached outbuildings. This guide is intended to give good practice advice to help achieve a well-designed extension, alteration or outbuilding which will enhance the house and neighbourhood.
- This SPD shows and explains in detail how to achieve the design quality required from Policy DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) and DM36 (Extensions and Alterations to Existing Dwellings) in the new Wycombe District Local Plan.
- The original design of the building and its setting (including the general character of the area) should be the main influence on the design of the proposal. Works should not dominate or detract from the original building or character of the area. Extensions should be subservient in scale, mass and bulk to the original dwelling.
- Existing inappropriate extensions and alterations, which may have been permitted previously, will not be accepted as an argument in favour of further unacceptable alterations.
- The materials, design and detailing should match the existing building. The pitch, shape and materials of the original roof should be considered when designing your proposal.
- However, modern designs using contemporary and sustainable materials may be acceptable in some cases. The Council does not wish to restrict creative designs, providing they fit in well with the street scene and consider all other material issues.
- You should also consider the relationship with other properties, including the building line, eaves and ridge line, orientation and levels/slope.
- Special care and attention is required when extending a Listed Building, or a property within a Conservation Area. The design and materials of your extension or outbuilding should be informed by the historical context of the site, and this should be explained in the Heritage Statement. This statement will be required to accompany any application for a Listed Building, or within a Conservation Area.
- If your property is a Listed Building or within a Conservation Area, you are advised to use our Planning Advice Service to help you understand how your proposal can be carried out sensitively.
- [For properties lying within the Chilterns AONB] Extensions should conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape and the distinctive character and special qualities of the Chilterns. The design of extensions needs to be sympathetic to the Chilterns in their shape, scale and bulk; roof size and shape; chimneys; walls; materials; colours and textures; shape and size of windows and doors; porches; garages; landscaping, walls and hedges.

The SPD provides further detailed guidance on:

- Front Extensions
- Side Extensions
- Rear Extensions
- Roof Extensions and Alterations
- Garages and Parking
- Decking
- Loss of Light and 45/60 Degree Guideline
- Unneighbourly Form
- Overlooking
- Outbuildings
- Self-contained Residential Annexes

- Boundary Treatments

6) National Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out what the Government expects of local authorities. The overall aim is to ensure the planning system allows land to be used for new homes and jobs, while protecting valuable natural and historic environments. The Local Planning Authority draws upon the NPPF in developing its Local Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>). The NPPF includes sections on:

- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The NPPF is supplemented by over 50 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) notes covering a wide range of topics (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>). The guidance is a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. Pertinent topics include:

- Climate change - Advises how to identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in the planning process to address the impacts of climate change.
- Design: process and tools
- Determining a planning application
- Environmental Impact Assessment - Explains requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, including the preparation of an Environmental Statement
- Flexible options for planning permissions
- Historic environment - Advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment. Includes designated and non-designated heritage assets (a heritage asset can be a structure or conservation area).
- Lawful development certificates
- Light pollution - Advises on how to consider light within the planning system.
- Natural environment - Explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements.
- Noise
- Renewable and low carbon energy
- Rural housing
- Self-build and custom housebuilding
- Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal
- Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas - Explains the legislation governing Tree Preservation Orders and tree protection in conservation areas.
- When is permission required? - Sets out when planning permission is required and different types of planning permission which may be granted.
 - What is development?
 - Planning permission is only needed if the work being carried out meets the statutory definition of 'development' which is set out in section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 - 'Development' includes:
 - building operations (e.g. structural alterations, construction, rebuilding, most demolition);
 - material changes of use of land and buildings;
 - engineering operations (e.g. groundworks);
 - mining operations;

- other operations normally undertaken by a person carrying on a business as a builder.
- subdivision of a building (including any part it) used as a dwellinghouse for use as 2 or more separate dwelling houses
- The categories of work that do not amount to 'development' are set out in section 55(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - interior alterations (except mezzanine floors which increase the floorspace of retail premises by more than 200 square metres)
 - building operations which do not materially affect the external appearance of a building. The term 'materially affect' has no statutory definition, but is linked to the significance of the change which is made to a building's external appearance.
 - a change in the primary use of land or buildings, where the before and after use falls within the same use class.

7) Chilterns Conservation Board

The Conservation Board seeks to conserve and enhance the Chilterns National Landscape. They produce a 5-year Management Plan that sets out the vision, policies and actions for the management of the National Landscape from 2025 to 2030 (<https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/future-proofing-the-chilterns/management-plan/>). This Management Plan include a section on planning and development and its objectives and policies are material considerations in planning decisions (<https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-development/>).

Besides the Chilterns Design Guide, previously mentioned, the CCB has produced a number of Technical Notes (see <https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-development/published-advice-guidance/>). These include Planning Guidance on Lighting, and Chalk Streams, and Position Statements on Cumulative Impacts of Development and on Renewable Energy.

The Board has a Planning Committee and employs chartered town planners to provide specialist planning advice on both development plans and planning applications. A protocol has been agreed, setting out when to consult the Board, including on all applications for:

- Major housing development (for example 10 dwellings or more or 0.5 hectare or more) or employment and similar development (1,000 square metres or 1 hectare or more)
- Telecommunications masts
- Extraction of brickearth and development related to the local brick making industry
- Waste activities
- Floodlighting or other intrusive lighting
- Equestrian development, particularly larger in scale and in prominent locations
- Large scale agricultural or employment development
- Single, large isolated dwellings (new or replacement)
- Land operations that involve significant cut or fill or alterations to landform
- Noisy or intrusive recreation proposals ☐ Gypsy and traveller accommodation
- New visitor facilities ☐ Airport development likely to lead to overflying of the National Landscape
- Renewable energy developments, particularly for major energy generation

Other smaller proposals including those in prominent locations or likely to set a precedent, or involving the loss of a community facility, should also be referred to the Board for comment.

Whilst they are unable to monitor all applications across the Chilterns, we should alert them to planning applications of concern (at planning@chilternsaonb.org). NOTE: they would not normally be expected to comment on householder applications.

Key planning issues for the National Landscape include:

Small-scale changes: Piecemeal changes to land and buildings can progressively harm the natural beauty of the Chilterns National Landscape. Examples include pony paddocks, garden extensions, newly landscaped grounds, the spread of fencing, replacement windows, new external lighting, private leisure buildings and

children's play equipment. Electric gates, high fencing and CCTV over public rights of way make the area feel more exclusive, and people feel excluded. Collectively, they can change the distinctiveness, heritage and character of the landscape, and leave less space for nature.

Cumulative impact of development: A single planning proposal may affect only a small area of the National Landscape. However, a number of similar developments in the area, incremental changes over time, or a series of new developments in sequential views along an important trail, can have a significant cumulative impact. The character of the National Landscape, its wildlife and people's enjoyment could slowly diminish over time.

The following policies in the Planning & Development section of the Management Plan are to be noted:

DP2 Reject development in the National Landscape unless it meets the following criteria:

- it is a use appropriate to its location,
 - it is appropriate to local landscape character,
 - it supports local distinctiveness,
 - it respects heritage and historic landscapes,
 - it enhances natural beauty,
 - ecological and environmental impacts are acceptable,
 - there are no detrimental impacts on chalk streams,
 - there is no harm to tranquillity through the generation of noise, motion and light that spoil quiet enjoyment or disturb wildlife, and
 - there are no negative cumulative effects, including when considered with other plans and proposals.
- Policy DP2 sets out what to consider in order to give great weight to conserving and enhancing the National Landscape. It applies to all development in the National Landscape, both minor and major.

DP5 Require a professionally-produced landscape assessment that meets the Landscape Institute's published standards for all development proposals where there are any concerns about impacts on the natural beauty of the area or more broadly on landscape and visual amenity.

Many development proposals, including relatively minor projects, can have impacts both positive and negative on the character of the surrounding landscape. Landscape assessments help to ensure that these impacts are assessed and understood. The Landscape Institute publishes guidance on methodologies for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which must be used for any proposal requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or for one likely to have a significant character or visual effect on an existing landscape or townscape setting, and for Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) which is recommended for less significant or complex proposals... To be effective, a landscape assessment must address effects on both the National Landscape as a resource in its own right (whether visible or not), and assess the significance of effects on views and visual amenity (as experienced by people). The assessment should be prepared early enough to inform the evolution of a project, so that it is genuinely landscape-led, demonstrably contributes to conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the National Landscape, and fully integrates landscape character and qualities into the planning, design, construction and management of the development, from the very beginning of the project's inception. Visualisations and photomontages can help developers, decision makers and communities understand the effects of proposals. Assessments should include night time effects as well as day time, to identify any risk of light pollution.

DP7 Only support development that is of the highest standards of design that respects the natural beauty of the Chilterns, the traditional character of Chilterns vernacular buildings, and reinforces a sense of place and local distinctiveness. Require a Design and Access Statement to accompany every application, explaining how it complies with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide.

The Chilterns has a distinctive vernacular architecture based on the consistent use of local materials: Chilterns brick, clay roof tiles and flint. Attractive villages like Ewelme, Turville, Hambleden and Aldbury are among our most popular visitor destinations. New development of all types needs to respect vernacular architecture, historic settlement character and the local landscape. This will require developers to do more than use standard designs. New design must also exhibit the highest environmental standards in terms of energy and water conservation whilst complementing the character the National Landscape. Local natural resources should be used in new construction (local timber, locally made bricks and tiles, clunch and flint) to continue the vernacular materials tradition and support the last remaining local producers, recognising

their vital importance for historic buildings repair. The Board has published the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide which is recognised as a supplementary planning document by many of our LPAs, where it holds significant weight in the decision-making process; elsewhere the Guide still carries weight as a 'material consideration' that is based on detailed research and was subject to extensive engagement with stakeholders and the public. It covers topics such as the setting of buildings, the design of vernacular features and the use of traditional local materials. Conserving and enhancing natural beauty does not simply mean screening development behind vegetation or using designs which clad a standard house type with local materials.

DP8 Keep skies dark at night by only using light where and when needed. All new lighting should be the minimum required and demonstrate that it complies with published guidance for intrinsically dark zones. Avoid architectural designs that spill light out of large areas of glazing.

The Chilterns National Landscape has relatively dark skies for the south east, making it a place people can still experience the wonder of starry skies and which is good for wildlife. National Landscapes are recognised as intrinsically dark environments (Zone E1 in the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance) and planning conditions should be applied to restrict and control lighting. Light pollution of all types should be first prevented, by avoiding light where it is not needed, and where it is, by designing lighting to mitigate harm, through shading, height of fixings, beam orientation, LUX, colour temperature and the proposed hours of use. For example, downward pointing, shielded, operated on timer, and with a 'warm white' colour temperature of 2700-Kelvin maximum. Traditional Chilterns vernacular buildings have small windows. Modern designs with large areas of glazing should be avoided so that buildings do not appear as boxes of light in the countryside at night, and glinting glazing in the daytime.

8) Other agencies

Buckinghamshire Council

Our Ward Councillor, Mark Turner, can be alerted to significant or controversial planning applications. He is a member of the Council's Planning Committee and they have the power to call in applications to be scrutinised at a meeting of the Planning Committee (the Parish Council can also request that an application can be called in – but this is at the discretion of the Chair of the Planning Committee). If an application goes to committee, a representative from Hambleden Parish Council is entitled to speak for up to 3 minutes at the meeting.

Campaign to Protect Rural England

The CPRE have produced a guide on how to respond to planning applications:

Chilterns Conservation Board

The Conservation Board seeks to conserve and enhance the National Landscape and aim to ensure the National Landscape's special qualities are recognised (<https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-development/>). Besides the Chilterns Design Guide, previously mentioned, the CCB has produced a number of Technical Notes (see <https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-development/published-advice-guidance/>). These include Position Statements on Cumulative Impacts of Development and on Renewable Energy.

The CCB has a part-time Planning Officer. Whilst they are unable to monitor all applications across the Chilterns, we should alert them to planning applications of concern (at planning@chilternsaonb.org). NOTE: they would not normally be expected to comment on householder applications.

Chiltern Society

The Chiltern Society have a strong planning group with volunteer Planning Field Officers covering every parish. Our local PFO covers Wycombe South West – contact details can be found at <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/directory/#planning>.

The Society should be alerted to applications of concern. The Society produce a number of Planning Guidance Statements (see <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/planning/>).

Historic England

The Historic England website provides guidance on a number of topics (<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/>). There is specific advice on Conservation Areas, Rural Planning, and Heritage Consents.

National Landscapes Association

<https://national-landscapes.org.uk/guidance-for-local-planning-authorities-on-crow-s-85-duty>. They have also produced a position statement on housing in AONBs: <https://national-landscapes.org.uk/housing-in-aonbs-a-position-statement>

- Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 has been strengthened to require 'relevant authorities' to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty."
- This is a statutory duty, which has been in force since December 26, 2023. The use of the word 'duty' in the legislation means that it is something all 'relevant authorities' must do; it is not discretionary.
- The duty is considered to be a strengthening of the previous s.85 'duty of regard' and seeks positive outcomes for the natural beauty, in its holistic sense, of our AONBs.
- Within the planning context, relevant authorities are the Local Planning Authorities, the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State (e.g., for called-in decisions), along with Parish Councils producing Neighbourhood Plans. The duty applies to all aspects of the development management process and the plan-making process: e.g., planning application decisions, enforcement, and decisions relating to planning policies and site allocations in Local Plans, etc.

National Trust

We will normally inform the National Trust's Covenant Officer of any planning application affecting a property that is subject to the Greenlands Covenant. However, whilst it is hoped that any applicant would consult the National Trust before submitting a planning application, it should be noted that the fact that a property is subject to the covenant is not a material consideration in deciding an application but is a private matter between the owner and the National Trust.

The Trust will only comment on an application in exceptional circumstances.

9) Further considerations

Adapting to climate change

We would expect to see evidence in an application of energy efficiency measures and the provision for the use of renewable energy where practicable. We would have concern for the carbon footprint of a proposed development, particularly in regard to choice of materials (e.g. the amount of energy required to produce cement or steel).

Affordable Housing

The days of subsidised estate cottages for local workers has passed but there is still a need for affordable housing so that local families can remain in the area. We will continue explore opportunities to create affordable accommodation within the our own and neighbouring parishes.

Agricultural and Commercial buildings

We are concerned at the visual impact of modern agricultural buildings and, where possible, we would seek to ensure that they employ traditional materials and are of a scale that sits well within the landscape.

Cumulative effects (creeping suburbanisation)

We would encourage owners to have regard to the effect of their actions on the sense of place and to consider their responsibility to conserve and enhance their property and land for both current and future generations.

Ecological and Landscape considerations (Principle of biodiversity net gain)

Nature's recovery should be the concern of everyone. We would like to see proposed developments not just avoid damage to nature and wildlife but positively improve conditions. We would look for unbiased ecological surveys where any development impacts on the natural environment.

Housing stock (getting the right mix)

We would wish to see an appropriate mix of housing stock. In particular we have concerns that extensions, demolition and rebuilding, and joining properties together, all result in a growth in larger dwellings and a diminution of smaller dwellings. Where appropriate, we would like to see a few larger properties subdivided into smaller units, for sale or let (as has happened at the former mill buildings at Mill End).

Permitted development

The Government allows certain classes of development to proceed without requiring a planning application. However, constraints apply within AONBs. Guidance on what is permissible can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance>.

Preserving the historic built-environment

We have a duty to future generations to preserve the integrity of traditional vernacular buildings and groups of buildings.

Second Homes and Holiday Lets

Our preference is for a vibrant local community and, whilst recognising the importance of tourism for the region, we would encourage long-term permanent residency with a good social mix. As far as the planning process allows, we would press for owner-occupied dwellings with full occupancy.

Setting, views and outlook - Relationship to neighbouring properties

When assessing an application we will have regard to the impact on the setting, views and outlook and relationship to neighbouring properties.

Site visits

We would seek to carry out a site visit whenever we require to clarify aspects of the design or impact of the development.

Trees and TPOs (single, group, area)

We will encourage the retention of existing trees and net gain in tree cover where possible. We would stress the importance of planting native species of known provenance, certified disease-free. We would encourage boundaries utilising hedging with native species.

Tree Preservation Orders affecting trees and woods in the Parish have been mapped in Parish Online.

Tranquillity

Part of the pleasure of visiting a rural location is the tranquillity and peacefulness that it affords. Quietness means lack of traffic noise, no loud music, no agricultural machinery, no leaf blowers! This is not normally a planning issue but another threat to tranquillity is light pollution. This is a material consideration and is also the subject of a PPG. We would want to see an understanding of this in any application with appropriate mitigation measures. Darkness at night is important for wildlife as well as humans (we still have glow-worms in our parish) and we endorse the Dark Skies initiatives from the CCB

(<https://www.chilterns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Chilterns-Lighting-Planning-Guidance-2025.pdf>) and the CPRE (<https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/dark-skies/englands-light-pollution-dark-skies-map/>).