



South Bucks
District Council

South Bucks District Local Plan



Written Statement

Adopted March 1999
Consolidated September 2007 and February 2011

FOREWORD

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE DISTRICT AND TO THE PLAN	Page
District Profile	1
The Development Plan	2
The Purpose of the Local Plan	3
Stages of Preparation and Changes From Deposit Version	4
The Relationship with Other Plans and Policy Guidance	5
The Format of the Plan and How to Use it	5
Implementation	6
Monitoring and Review	6
2. BROAD STRATEGY	8
Strategic Context	8
The Council's Aims	8
The Strategy	8
The Objectives	10

POLICIES

3. GREEN BELT

GB1	Green Belt Boundaries and the Control over Development in the Green Belt	15
GB2	Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt	16
GB3	Residential Infilling in Green Belt Settlements	18
GB4	Employment Generating and Commercial Development in the Green Belt (excluding Green Belt Settlements)	19
GB5	Employment Generating and Commercial Development in Green Belt Settlements	20
GB6	Agricultural Workers' Dwellings	21
GB7	Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions	22
GB8	Other Agricultural or Forestry Buildings	23
GB9	Agricultural diversification	24
GB10	Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt	26
GB11	Rebuilding of Dwellings in the Green Belt	28
GB12	Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries	30
GB13	Extensions of Residential Curtilages in the Green Belt	31
GB14	Wilton Park, Beaconsfield	31
GB15	Agricultural Land	32
GB16	Former Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital site, Cliveden Road Taplow	33

4. LANDSCAPE

L1	The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	35
L2	Areas of Attractive Landscape	36
L3	Local Landscape Areas	37
L4	River Thames Setting	37
L5	Historic Parks and Gardens	38
L6	Colne Valley Park	39

L7	Protection of Green Space	40
L8	Protection of Incidental Green Space	41
L9	Woodlands	41
L10	Proposals Involving Felling or other Works affecting Trees Covered By a Tree Preservation Order	42

5. CONSERVATION

C1	Development within a Conservation Area	45
C2	Demolition of Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas	47
C3	Development Outside of, but Affecting a Conservation Area	48
C4	Traffic and Parking in Conservation Areas	49
C5	Enhancement in Conservation Areas	50
C6	Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings	51
C7	Change of use of a Listed Building	53
C8	Proposals Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building	55
C9	Demolition of Listed Buildings	56
C10	Key Nature Conservation Sites	57
C11	Other Nature Conservation Sites	59
C12	Management of Nature Conservation Sites	60
C13	Nationally Important Archaeological Remains	61
C14	Other Archaeological Remains	61
C15	Sites of Geological Importance	62

6. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

EP1	Environmental Improvements	64
EP2	Art and Development	66
EP3	The Use, Design and Layout of Development	66
EP4	Landscaping	68
EP5	Sunlight and Daylight	69
EP6	Designing to Reduce Crime	70
EP7	Signs and Advertisements	71
EP8	Noise-Sensitive Development	72
EP9	Noise-Generating Development	73
EP10	Air Pollution	74
EP11	Water Resources and Quality	75
EP12	Protection From Flooding	75
EP13	Infrastructure Provision	76
EP14	Energy Conservation	77
EP15	Renewable Energy Developments	78
EP16	Hazardous Substances	79
EP17	Aerodrome/Air Traffic Safeguarding	79
EP18	Telecommunications Development	80
EP19	Overhead Electricity Lines	81

7. LEISURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM

R1	Protection of Existing Leisure and Recreation Facilities	84
R2	Provision of Leisure and Recreation Facilities in the Developed Areas	85
R3	Provision of Leisure and Recreation Facilities in the Green Belt	87
R4	Public Open Space Provision in New Residential Developments	89
R5	Horse Related Facilities	90
R6	Specialist Sports	92
R7	Allotments	92
R8	Floodlighting	93
R9	Golf Courses	94

R10	Golf Driving Ranges	96
T1	Serviced Accommodation in the Developed Areas	98
T2	Serviced Accommodation in the Green Belt	99
T3	Camping and Caravanning	100
T4	New Built Development to Provide Tourist Facilities	121

8. HOUSING

H1	Housing Provision	103
H2	New Housing Allocations	104
H3	Phasing of Residential Development	107
H4	Loss of Housing Accommodation	108
H5	Affordable Housing	109
H6	Specialist Residential Accommodation	110
H7	The Provision of Smaller Dwellings	112
H8	The Sub-division of Dwellings in the Developed Areas	113
H9	Residential Layout and Design	113
H10	Residential Areas of Exceptional Character	115
H11	Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings	116
H12	Self-contained Residential Annexe to Provide Ancillary Accommodation	118
H13	Ancillary Buildings within Residential Curtilage	120
H14	Gypsy Sites	121

9. SHOPPING

TC1	Development in Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham, and Gerrards Cross	125
S1	District Shopping Centres	126
S2	Local Shopping Centres	128
S3	Neighbourhood Shops	130
S4	Individual Shops	131
S5	New Shops, Redevelopment or Extensions	132
S6	Out-of-Centre Shopping Development	133
S7	Change of Use to Class A3 (Food & Drink)	135
S8	Shopfronts	136
S9	Markets, Car-boot Sales, etc.	138

10. ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

E1	Employment Generating Development	141
E2	Pinewood Studios	143
E3	Industrial Areas	144
E4	Business Areas	145
E5	Other Employment Generating Sites	146
E6	Employment Generating Uses in the Green Belt	147
E7	Working from Home	148

11. TRANSPORT

TR1	Encouraging the Use of Public Transport	152
TR2	Cycling Facilities	153
TR3	Pedestrian Facilities	154
TR4	Provision for those with Special Needs	155
TR5	Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation	158
TR6	Traffic Calming	159
TR7	Parking Provision	160
TR8	Park and Ride	161

TR9	Motorway Service Areas and Trunk Road Service Areas	163
TR10	Heavy Goods Vehicles	166
TR11	Goods Vehicle Operating Centres	167
TR12	West Drayton to Poyle Railway Line	167
TR13	Freight Facilities	168

12. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

COM1	Provision of Community Facilities	173
COM2	Loss of Community Facilities	174

APPENDICES

1	Landscape Areas	176
2	Historic Parks and Gardens	178
3	Minimum standards for public open space, outdoor sport and children's play areas	179
4	Residential Areas of Exceptional Character	180
5	Conservation Areas	182
6	Parking Standards	183
7	Guidelines for the Development of Agricultural Workers Dwellings	199
8	House Extensions Design Guidance	203

ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

~~Summary of Appraisal~~

1. INTRODUCTION

DISTRICT PROFILE

1.1 South Bucks District lies in the western sector of the South East region, situated between Greater London to the east and Reading and Oxford to the west. The District is bordered by a number of larger urban areas, in particular, Greater London to the east, Slough to the south, Maidenhead to the west, and High Wycombe to the north-west. The location of the District is shown on Diagram 1.

1.2 The District was established on 1 April 1974, when, as a result of the Local Government Act 1972, the former Beaconsfield Urban and Eton Rural Districts were abolished. From 1974 until 1 April 1981 the District was known as Beaconsfield District. The District currently has an area of 14,157 hectares, and in 1991 had a population of 62,482.

1.3 The District is principally rural, being located wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt around London. Some 87% of the land in the District is designated as Green Belt and agriculture is the most extensive land use. The only areas not designated as Green Belt are the larger settlements of Beaconsfield, Burnham, Denham Green, Farnham Common, Farnham Royal, Gerrards Cross, Iver, Iver Heath, New Denham, Richings Park and Stoke Poges. The settlements are primarily residential in nature and of a very pleasant character. The District also has a number of smaller and more rural settlements situated within the Green Belt. A number of the settlements include Conservation Areas.

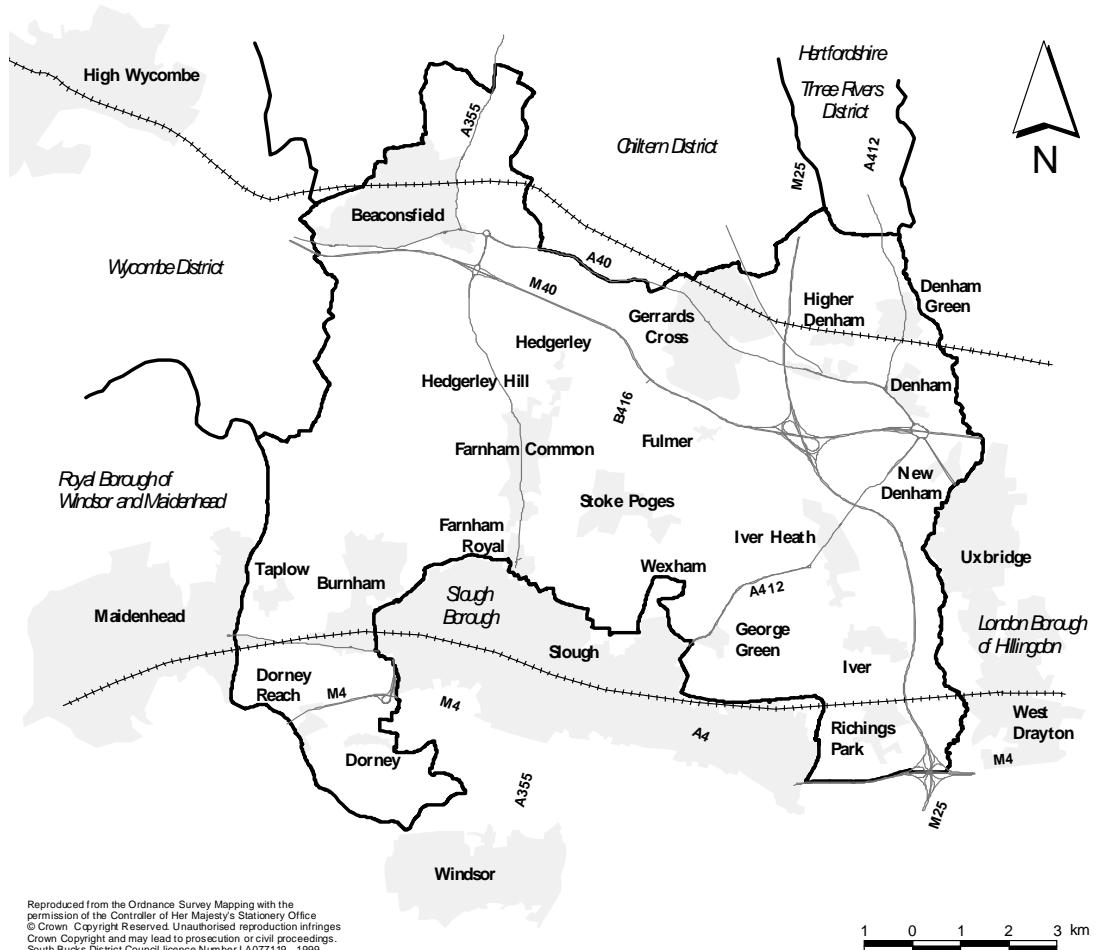
1.4 Large parts of the District's countryside are very attractive, crossed by rural lanes, and include extensive woodlands (including Burnham Beeches), heathland, agricultural land, private parks and estates. A small part of the District lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. ~~Some 25% of the District is designated as Areas of Attractive Landscape, with further extensive areas designated as Local Landscape Areas.~~ Undeveloped reaches of the River Thames form the west and south-western boundaries of South Bucks. However, some localities in South Bucks have been damaged by gravel extraction or development inappropriate to a rural area, particularly parts of the Colne Valley Park in the east of the District.

1.5 Transport links with adjoining areas are very good, with the M4, M25 and M40 motorways all crossing the District. There are also good rail links to London and to Banbury via the Chiltern line and to London and the West via the Thames line. The District's population is highly mobile, with about one out of every two households having the use of at least two cars. Heathrow Airport is situated just to the south east of the District.

1.6 South Bucks is within an area which consistently has one of the lowest unemployment rates in England. Of the resident population, 32,000 (50%) are economically active. Around 60% of those in work commute out of the District for their employment, principally to Slough and Greater London. Conversely about 60% of the jobs in the District are taken by people commuting into South Bucks.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1.7 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and supplementary legislation provide that local planning authorities must prepare Development Plans. A Development Plan for a District Council area consists of a Structure Plan and one or more Local Plans.



SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

County District Area (1991 Census)	Buckinghamshire 14,157 hectares	Town/Parish Councils Population	12 62,482
Green Belt (1991 Census)	12,300 hectares	No. of Dwellings	24,938
Conservation Areas hectares	15	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	390
Listed Buildings	700 (approx)	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	8
Local Nature Reserves	4	Scheduled Ancient Monuments	11
		National Nature Reserve	1
Length of Railways	14.9 kilometres		
Lengths of Motorways		Lengths of Waterways	
M40	14.9 km	River Thames	12.6 km
M25	13.1 km	Grand Union Canal (Slough Arm)	5.5 km
M4	2.3 km	Grand Union Canal (Willow Bank)	1.2 km

Neighbouring Authorities

Hertfordshire County Council, London Borough of Hillingdon, Three Rivers District Council, Chiltern District Council, Wycombe District Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council.

1.8 The Structure Plan deals with strategic issues at the broad County level. Structure Plans seek to ensure that the provision for development is realistic and consistent with national policy. They also provide the strategic policy framework for the preparation of Local Plans.

1.9 Local Plans set out the planning authority's policies for the control of development and may make proposals for the development and use of land. This Local Plan is a district wide Local Plan. The former district wide Local Plan, entitled "The Local Plan for South Bucks" was adopted in 1989 and has now been replaced by this Plan.

1.10 In addition to the district wide Local Plan, there are two other types of Plan which may be prepared, a Minerals Local Plan and a Waste Local Plan prepared by the County Council. The Buckinghamshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan, prepared by Buckinghamshire County Council, was adopted in January 1995. The Waste Local Plan for Buckinghamshire was adopted in March 1997.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL PLAN

1.11 The town and country planning system is designed to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest. Local plans are an important component of the planning system and set out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land, and should guide most day-to-day planning decisions. The preparation of local plans also gives local communities the opportunity to participate in planning choices about where development should be accommodated in their area.

1.12 With a few exceptions as provided for by legislation, planning permission is required for the "development" of land. "Development" is defined by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of a material change in the use of any buildings or other land". Furthermore, other forms of consent are also required under other associated legislation for various types of proposals, for example, listed building consent, conservation area consent, advertisement consent, and hazardous substances consent.

1.13 Development plans, including the local plan, provide the main considerations on which such planning decisions should be based. This Plan sets out objective criteria against which applications will be considered, and accordingly it will ensure that there is a consistent approach to such decisions. The policies in this Plan are fundamental, because when adopted this Local Plan will form part of the Development Plan, and when dealing with applications for permission, regard should be had to the provisions of the Development Plan so far as they are material to the proposal. Legislation goes on to provide that where the Council is making a planning decision on proposals, that decision should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.14 The Plan covers the period up to 2006.

STAGES OF PREPARATION AND CHANGES FROM DEPOSIT VERSION

1.15 Diagram 2 shows the various stages involved in the preparation of the Local Plan.

Diagram 2. Stages in the Local Plan Preparation Process

Public Consultation Version	April 1995
Deposit Period	June - August 1996
Inquiry	April - July 1997
Inspector's Report Received	September 1997
Modifications Placed on Deposit	February - March 1998
Further Modifications	October - December 1998
Notice of Intention to Adopt	19 February 1999
Plan Formally Adopted	22 March 1999

This adopted version contains a number of changes from the earlier deposit version. The table below indicates those policies and/or their explanatory text which were modified as the plan progressed from the deposit stage to its final adopted version. There were also various changes to the Proposals Map.

Deposit Version policies which were modified or deleted. Policies H14 and E8 have been renumbered H6 and E2 respectively.			
GB1	L3	EP16	H13
GB2	L8	EP17	H14 (becomes H6)
GB4	L9	EP18	TC1
GB6	C1	R1	S5
GB8	C4	R4	S6
GB9	C7	R6	E2 (deleted)
GB10	C10	R9	E8 (becomes E2)
GB11	C11	H1	TR3
GB12	C13	H2	TR5
GB14	C14	H3	TR6
GB15	C15	H4	TR8
GB16 (new policy)	EP9	H5	TR12
L1	EP11	H6 (deleted)	TR13
	EP13	H7	COM3 (deleted)

THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS AND POLICY GUIDANCE

1.16 There is a substantial volume of national guidance covering a range of matters from, for example, general policy and principles to telecommunications developments. The principal source of national guidance is the series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), although other sources include, in particular, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Circulars.

1.17 Regional Guidance is provided in RPG9, 'Regional Planning Guidance for the South East' issued in March 1994. At the time this plan was adopted the Government was revising RPG9 and has issued draft regional planning guidance. It was expected that the final revised regional guidance would be published in late 1999.

1.18 Strategic policy at the county level is provided by the **Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011** adopted March 1996. This Local Plan has been prepared under the framework provided by that replacement Structure Plan.

1.19 The Council considers that it may be necessary, on occasions, to prepare supplementary planning guidance in furtherance of some of the policies set out in this Plan. This accords with PPG12 'Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance' which acknowledges that supplementary planning guidance can provide helpful advice. The existing leaflets relating to each of the Conservation Areas will remain as supplementary guidance to this Plan.

THE FORMAT OF THE PLAN AND HOW TO USE IT

1.20 The Plan comprises a Written Statement and a Proposals Map.

1.21 This document is the Written Statement. The Written Statement is divided into a number of chapters dealing with different types of development, such as housing, or geographic areas such as the Green Belt.

1.22 The Written Statement sets out the Council's policies to guide planning decisions. The policies are distinguished from the remainder of the document by being shown in emboldened text within boxes. The lower case text following each of the policies provides the reasoned justification for the policy. Unless otherwise specified, all policies relate to the whole of the Plan area.

1.23 The Proposals Map is on an Ordnance Survey base at a scale of 1:10000 with various insets at 1:2500. It shows how the policies in the Written Statement relate to areas of land in the District. In particular, where a policy relates only to specific areas in the District, such as for example, Areas of Attractive Landscape, the Proposals Map identifies those areas and their boundaries.

1.24 In considering whether or not a proposal is acceptable, regard should be had to all relevant policies in the Plan. To establish which policies are likely to be relevant, reference should be made to the location of the site shown on the Proposals Map. This will indicate any particular designations which might apply to the site. Reference should also be made to this document, to establish which policies may be relevant. There is a list of all of the policies at the beginning of each chapter to assist in this process.

1.25 Although policies are contained in separate chapters each dealing with a major topic, those policies cannot be viewed in isolation. Proposals will only be acceptable if they

comply with all relevant policies in the Plan. Policies in the Plan often contain cross references to some of the other principal policies which will normally be relevant. However, a cross reference is not made to all other policies which may be relevant, since to do so would have resulted in the Plan being unnecessarily lengthy and over complex.

1.26 Floorspace or floor area is frequently referred to in this plan. This generally means gross floor area and any floor area calculations required by a policy must normally be based on external dimensions.

IMPLEMENTATION

1.27 The Plan will be implemented principally by means of the District Council determining applications in accordance with the policies set out herein and where permission or consent is granted, by the carrying out of development. In most cases developments will be undertaken by the private sector (ranging from an individual to a major company), but in some cases the District Council or other public bodies may undertake development. Some specific aspects of the Plan will rely upon implementation by the Council; for example the positive action taken by the Council in relation to the carrying out of environmental improvements.

1.28 The main resources needed for the implementation of the Plan are land and finance. Land is a scarce resource and accordingly this Plan seeks to ensure that it is used most effectively. Much of the land in the District is in private ownership and accordingly its availability for development in accordance with this Plan will be a matter for individual landowners. The availability of finance will be dependant upon the economic climate and individual decisions regarding investment in development. Where off-site works are necessary to serve a proposed development, the developer will need to fund those off-site works on which the scheme is dependant. The Plan has also had regard to the limitations on public expenditure.

Planning Obligations

1.29 In some cases the policies and objectives of the Local Plan will be achieved through planning obligations associated with development proposals. Planning obligations are legally binding agreements normally between an applicant for planning permission and the planning authority, although a developer is permitted to enter into a binding obligation unilaterally. Planning obligations will be sought by the Council in a number of cases to secure an acceptable form of development where planning permission would not otherwise be forthcoming, and where conditions would be insufficient to overcome a planning objection. They could relate, for example, to providing open space, recreational, social or community facilities (including housing) where the need for the provision has arisen from the development. In other cases they may be necessary to restrict the use of a development, or to ensure appropriate access and parking. Planning obligations may also be required to secure affordable housing in accordance with local plan policies, or they may take the form of management agreements where it is necessary to safeguard landscape or nature conservation interests. Unacceptable developments will not be permitted because of unrelated benefits offered by a developer in the form of a planning obligation.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

1.30 The environment, the economy and society are the subject of continuous change. A Local Plan needs to respond to changing circumstances. It also needs to be monitored to establish whether it is achieving its aims and whether its policies are proving to be effective.

1.31 The Council wish to ensure that the South Bucks District Local Plan remains relevant and up to date in order that it continues to provide a clear basis for future planning decisions. Accordingly the Council will continually monitor the Plan and will review it in whole or in part in order to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date.

2. THE BROAD STRATEGY

2.1 The Local Plan contains many policies which deal with a range of planning issues and development types, both major and minor. However, when taken together, they set out an overall planning strategy. This broad strategy for the District is influenced by two main factors; i) strategic planning policy set at central government, regional and County level and, ii) the District Council's planning aims.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.2 In strategic terms the most significant planning influence is the District's location in the Green Belt to the west of London. Government policy gives great emphasis to the protection of Green Belts and states that their essential characteristic is their permanence. Regional planning guidance confirms that southern Buckinghamshire is an area of environmental restraint, and that a reducing rate of development is appropriate; the emphasis is on consolidation rather than growth.

2.3 The County Structure Plan confirms the District as an area of development restraint. It provides for a decreasing rate of new houses to be constructed into the next century and does not allow for the creation of new sites for employment generating development. These restraint measures help to reduce pressure on the Green Belt which covers 87% of the District.

THE COUNCIL'S AIMS

2.4 Within the overall context set out above the Council has devised the following aims for planning in the District;

1. To balance the need to protect the environment, especially the Green Belt, for current and future generations whilst meeting local needs over the plan period.
2. To enhance the quality of life for the District's residents.
3. To maintain a strong and healthy local economy as a source of jobs and prosperity.
4. To protect, care for and enhance the District's landscape, heritage and character.
5. To make the best use of land and other resources.

THE STRATEGY

2.5 The ability to meet present needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to do likewise is central to a sustainable development principle, and so the Plan identifies the environmental constraints within which development needs to be controlled. Environmental constraints severely limit the capacity of the District to accommodate new development. Therefore it is essential that any development which is permitted is targeted at meeting the needs of the local population, and that any services provided are fully accessible and convenient to all sectors of the community they aim to serve. Therefore, the planning strategy for South Bucks can best be summed up as one of restraining development, with local needs met by the efficient and sensitive use of land within the built up areas. This strategy reflects the principles of sustainable development

set out in "Sustainable Development : The UK Strategy". It helps to provide for industrial development, food production and new homes while respecting environmental objectives. It focuses development in already developed areas and helps to shape development in ways which minimise the need to travel. The local plan strategy has the following key features which are reflected in the policies in this plan;

- **Maintaining the Green Belt and protecting it from inappropriate development.** This is the paramount feature of the Council's planning strategy. It contributes to the strategic objective of restraining development and directing it to more appropriate locations whilst at the same time protecting the District's highly valued countryside. The Council particularly aims to ensure that the existing fragmentation of the Green Belt is not made worse.
- **Focusing development in existing built up areas whilst avoiding town cramming.** Protecting the Green Belt means that development which is required is mainly located within the existing built up areas, encouraging the re-use of land. However, the planning strategy also aims to avoid over-development or town cramming. This is reflected in policies for the protection of green space and ensuring new residential development respects the character of its surroundings.
- **Minimising, as far as possible, the need to travel.** This part of the strategy is consistent with national policies aimed at reducing the length and number of motorised journeys. Focusing development in existing centres is a key component of this element of the strategy.
- **Maintaining the stock of employment sites in the District whilst not adding to them.** To maintain the strength of the local economy and help to secure a close correlation between jobs and places where people live it is important to retain existing employment sites. This feature of the strategy is particularly important as no new sites will be developed in order to keep a firm restraint on development.
- **Providing for sufficient land to meet the Structure Plan housing allocation up to 2006.** The District is required to make an appropriate contribution to meeting the need for new dwellings in the County. The plan provides for a reducing rate of housing development over the plan period. It contains a phasing policy to ensure the allocation is not significantly exceeded. Within the overall housing provision the Council will seek a proportion of affordable houses.
- **Town and village centres to continue to provide for the needs of their communities.** The Council wishes, in particular, to maintain and enhance the shopping function of the town and village centres of the District. These centres also act as a focus for other uses, including community and leisure facilities which are protected by the Plan's policies.
- **Environmental protection, conservation and improvement.** The Plan has a range of policies aimed at protecting the quality of life in the District. These range from policies to protect the landscape or historic buildings to those which protect the living conditions around residents homes. The Council is also proactive in improving the environment, especially in shopping areas.

THE OBJECTIVES

2.6 The Plan's detailed objectives are set out in the table below:

Restraint Objectives	Policies
To protect the countryside from encroachment and urbanisation.	GB1,GB3,GB4,GB10,GB11,GB13
The ensure that communities maintain some semblance of distinct individuality.	GB1, GB3, GB12 ,GB13,EP3,H9,H10
To prevent the sprawl of built-up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another.	GB1,G13
To protect open spaces with urban areas	L1,L8
To avoid town cramming	GB3, GB12

Local needs	Policies
To ensure only sufficient land is identified to meet the Structure Plan housing allocation.	H1,H2,H3
To ensure that the limited amount of land available for new housing is targeted at local needs, particularly affordable housing.	H4,H5,H7
To ensure adequate land is maintained in business and industrial use to enable a sufficient and diverse range of employment opportunities.	E3,E4,E5,E6
To assist small businesses to set up and prosper.	GB9, E3,E4,E5,E6,E7
To ensure the provision of facilities and services is accessible and convenient for use by all sections of the community.	TC1,S1-S4,COM1,COM2, R1,R4,TR3,TR4
To assist the necessary diversification and health of the rural economy.	GB2,GB4,GB5,GB9, GB15
To ensure that the recreational, sporting and cultural needs of the local population are catered for in so far as this is compatible with the protection of the environment and accompanied by the proper management of the District's natural resources.	R1-R10-R5, R6, R8-R10
To reduce the opportunities for crime.	EP6
To assist in improving the safety and amenity of the population.	EP1-EP18, TR4-TR7,TR10,TR11,S7 ,H9,H11

Environmental Protection, Care and Enhancement	Policies
To maintain and enhance the District's high quality landscapes.	L1-L6,L4 ,GB1
To improve areas of damaged landscape.	L6 ,L10,R10
To conserve and enhance the setting of the River Thames and carry out improvements in the Colne Valley.	L4, L6
To protect and enhance the District's trees and woodlands, particularly the ancient woodlands and historic landscapes.	L5,L9 ,L10
To promote woodland planting where it would assist in enhancing the landscape.	L9
To protect and enhance the District's designated nature conservation sites, enhance the nature conservation value of land and encourage the creation of new habitats.	C10-C11

To protect areas of archaeological and geological importance.	C13-C15, EP1, TR2, TR3
To minimise the impact of urbanisation at settlement edges.	GB12
To foster accessible, convenient, vibrant and interesting town centres which have a sense of identity and individuality.	TC1, S1, S2
To ensure high quality design for all buildings and their setting.	EP3 and most other policies
To improve areas of poor quality environment.	L6, EP1, TR6, L9
To preserve and enhance the special character of the historic towns and Conservation Areas.	C1-C6
To protect the District's listed buildings and their setting.	C6-G8
To safeguard areas of special character.	C1-C15, C1, C6, C15, H10

Resource management	Policies
To promote the re-use or redevelopment of derelict, disused or under-used land.	GB1, Employment Policies, Housing Policies
To minimise the need to travel.	TR1 , Employment, Housing, Shopping Policies etc.
To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and other environmentally friendly modes of transport.	TR1-TR3, TR6
To reduce the need for long distance commuting.	E4 , other employment policies
To ensure full and effective use is made of land and resources.	GB1, Housing policies, employment policies, shopping policies
To avoid the irreversible loss of high grade agricultural land.	GB15
To encourage energy conservation.	TR1, EP14
To reduce pollution.	EP10, EP11

3. THE GREEN BELT

3.1 The Green Belt concept is a long established one, forming part of town and country planning at national, regional and local level, for around 40 years. Over the years the Government has given local planning authorities policy guidance on defining Green Belts and the kinds of development which could be allowed or which should be resisted within them, most notably in Circulars 42/55, 50/57 and 14/84, together with the 1962 and 1988 Green Belt booklets and PPG2 'Green Belts' issued in 1988. The most up to date Government advice on Green Belts is contained in the revised PPG2 which was published in January 1995. This advice has been taken into account in the Plan.

3.2 The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and the Council aims to retain its openness and undeveloped character. Government guidance continues to emphasise that Green Belts are as relevant today as they have ever been, and that they remain an essential element of planning policy. The five purposes of Green Belts are set out in PPG2 as:-

- (i) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- (ii) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- (iii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- (iv) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- (v) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.3 Current regional policy is set out in RPG9 'Regional Planning Guidance for the South East' published in March 1994. Regional policy has consistently upheld the strategic importance of the Green Belt around London, and the current RPG9 is no exception to this. As one of its fundamental principles RPG9 indicates that firm protection will be maintained over Green Belts in the region. It confirms that the Green Belt is an essential planning tool and that whilst the western sector of the region remains the subject of considerable pressure for development, much of southern Buckinghamshire is constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt. As unconstrained land is used up, the scope for new development will be limited to the redevelopment and renewal of sites excluded from the Green Belt.

3.4 London's Green Belt, which includes South Bucks, was the first to be established and was defined in the Greater London Development Plan of 1944. It was described as:-

"a zone with sufficient openness to have enabled attempts to be made to create a Green Belt, a zone in which the communities still maintain some semblance of distinct individuality."

3.5 The boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt were first defined in parts of South Bucks in the Buckinghamshire County Development Plan of 1954, and the Green Belt was extended further westwards by an amendment to the County Development Plan in 1958. The Green Belt was reaffirmed by the Secretary of State for the Environment when he approved the Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan in 1979.

3.6 As the strategic planning authority for the District, Buckinghamshire County Council

has considered the issue of whether or not any land should be released from the Green Belt in order for the southern Districts in Buckinghamshire to meet development pressures. Having had regard to Government and regional guidance the County Structure Plan confirms that the broad extent of the Green Belt should remain unaltered and that there should be no strategic releases of land from it.

3.7 The Green Belt in South Bucks serves the five purposes set out in paragraph 3.2 above. The eastern part of the District lies immediately adjacent to Greater London, whilst much of the southern part of the District adjoins the large urban area of Slough. The need for a firm Green Belt in South Bucks is evidenced by the expansions in the post war period of Slough eastwards onto the former Langley airfield and westwards towards Burnham, of Heathrow Airport and of Greater London in the area now covered by the London Borough of Hillingdon. Indeed the whole of the Green Belt is important in order to keep these larger urban areas in check, not just those parts of it immediately adjacent to them.

3.8 The safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment is similarly a purpose which relates to the whole of the Green Belt in the District. There are thirteen settlements which are sufficiently built-up as to be excluded from the Green Belt. There are also ten identified settlements and **one** 'major development sites' to be found within the Green Belt, together with many other buildings scattered throughout it. The Green Belt serves not only to restrict the expansion of the larger urban areas, but also to maintain land of an open and undeveloped character between smaller settlements.

3.9 The Green Belt to the west of London, including South Bucks, is acknowledged as being the most seriously fragmented of all. Nevertheless, whilst it is fragmented in parts, Government and regional guidance emphasises that this does not affect its value as a fundamental planning tool. PPG2 states that:-

"although Green Belts often contain areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land within a Green Belt or to its continued protection."

Land which is an eyesore always has the potential to be improved; land which has been built on is lost forever as open land. The fact that the Green Belt is so fragmented is not, therefore, a justification for allowing further development, but rather it emphasises the importance of Green Belt policies in preventing the further fragmentation of the Green Belt by inappropriate development. Further fragmentation would involve encroachment into the Green Belt, contrary to objective (iii). Encroachment would also be contrary to the other objectives of the Green Belt. The purpose of the Green Belt is important throughout the whole of the District in safeguarding the surrounding countryside from encroachment.

3.10 In some parts, large urban areas, settlements excluded from the Green Belt and settlements within the Green Belt are located relatively close to each other. For example, the stretches of the Green Belt between Greater London and Slough at Iver, and between Slough and Maidenhead in the vicinity of Bath Road, Taplow, are very important buffers which serve to prevent the coalescence of these urban areas. The remainder of the Green Belt is of equal importance in preventing the coalescence of other settlements.

3.11 Some towns have a special historic character and setting which needs to be preserved by the Green Belt. Beaconsfield, Burnham and Iver are but three examples where the historic cores of these towns lie immediately adjacent to open and undeveloped land in the Green Belt. Many places in the Green Belt also comprise Conservation Areas, and Green Belt restrictions prevent further development which would damage the special

character of these historic places.

3.12 Finally, as a constituent part of the complete Metropolitan Green Belt around London, the Green Belt in South Bucks assists in urban regeneration by redirecting pressures to other areas. This is perhaps of greatest importance at a regional scale. However it can also be important at a more localised level by redirecting development to nearby urban areas, whilst otherwise had it not been for Green Belt restraint, development would have taken place on green field sites.

3.13 The whole of South Bucks District is included within the Metropolitan Green Belt with the exception of the following settlements which are excluded from, but enclosed by, the Green Belt:-

Beaconsfield
Burnham
Denham Green
Farnham Common
Farnham Royal
Gerrards Cross
Iver
Iver Heath
New Denham and Willowbank
Richings Park
Stoke Poges
Industrial areas at Iver (Ridgeway Estate, Bison Concrete)

3.14 PPG2 states that detailed Green Belt boundaries defined in adopted local plans should be altered only exceptionally, and that the essential characteristic of Green Belts is their permanence and their protection must be maintained. It also advises that detailed boundaries should not be altered or development allowed merely because land has become derelict. Indeed the quality of landscape is not a factor in determining whether or not land is appropriately included in the Green Belt.

3.15 The Council notes the content of PPG2. It states that:-

"Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless alterations to the Structure Plan have been approved or other exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision."

It also adds that local planning authorities should satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period. It indicates that in some cases this may mean identifying safeguarded land, and that in such cases this issue should normally be addressed in the Structure Plan.

3.16 The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt were defined in the Local Plan for South Bucks adopted in 1989. The only differences between the Green Belt boundaries in the 1989 Plan and this adopted local plan are the correction of some boundary anomalies and the removal of an area of land at Pinewood Studios from the Green Belt. The County Structure Plan does not propose or necessitate alterations to the Green Belt boundary in South Bucks. Having considered possible future development needs beyond the plan period the Council is satisfied that the provision of safeguarded land is not necessary. The structure plan does not require the setting aside of such land in this District which is not one of the county's three centres for new urban development. Furthermore, the Structure Plan covers the period up to 2011, with the housing allocation in that Plan reflecting the

capacity of the District to accommodate development up to 2011 without breaching Green Belt or other fundamental constraints. Therefore, the Council is satisfied that future development needs can be met within existing green belt boundaries until at least 2011 and probably well beyond.

POLICY GB1 - GREEN BELT BOUNDARIES AND THE CONTROL OVER DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT

The area in which Green Belt policies will be applied is defined on the Proposals Map.

Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for development other than for the change of use of existing buildings or land or the construction of new buildings or extensions to existing buildings as set out below:-

- (a) Development for agriculture or forestry, ~~in accordance with Policies GB6 and GB8 of this plan~~;
- (b) Essential facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation or outdoor leisure, in accordance with the policies in Chapter 7 of this Plan;
- (c) Mineral working and subsequent restoration of the land, in accordance with the policies in the Buckinghamshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan;
- (d) Cemeteries;
- (e) Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings, in accordance with Policies GB10 and GB11 of this Plan;
- (f) Limited infilling in existing villages, in accordance with Policy GB3 of this Plan;
- (g) Other uses of land and essential facilities for them which would not compromise the purposes of including land in the Green Belt and which would permanently retain its open and undeveloped character;
- (h) The re-use of buildings of permanent and substantial construction in accordance with policy GB2.

Development falling into the categories above will only be permitted where:-

- (i) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the Green Belt, nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (ii) the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials of any new building would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the Green Belt, nearby properties or the locality in general and the proposal would be in accordance with Policy EP3; and
- (iii) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and
- (iv) the proposal would comply with all other relevant policies in this Plan.

Explanation

3.17 The purposes of the Green Belt are set out in paragraph 3.2 above. In order that these purposes can be sustained it is important that only development which is appropriate to the Green Belt is permitted. Consistent with Government guidance, the District Council considers that only those uses identified in this policy are appropriate in the Green Belt and that any other development would result in harm to interests of acknowledged importance. Furthermore, development which is inappropriate in the Green Belt is not rendered acceptable because it cannot be seen; for example, where it is screened by woodland or located under the ground.

3.18 It is essential to ensure that any development which may take place in the Green Belt does not compromise the overriding aim of the Green Belt or its purposes. PPG 2 states that the quality of the landscape is not a material factor influencing continued protection of land in the Green Belt. Some land in the Green Belt is not of a high landscape quality, and some sites may have existing uses which detract from or do not contribute to, landscape quality. Development of such land for purposes not in accordance with Green Belt policy will not be permitted even where improvements to the landscape are proposed. The Council considers that all of the land designated as Green Belt fulfils an essential Green Belt function, and development which would be contrary to the overall aim or any of the purposes of the Green Belt will not be permitted.

3.19 Even where development is deemed appropriate, other factors will need to be considered such as the character and amenity of the area, nature conservation and traffic generation, and any development will therefore need to be judged against the remaining policies of this Plan.

POLICY GB2 - RE-USE OF BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT

Proposals for the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt will only be permitted provided that:

- (a) the buildings to be re-used are of permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major or complete re-construction; and
- (b) the form, bulk and general design of the buildings to be re-used are in keeping with their surroundings; and
- (c) the proposed new use does not detract from the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt; and
- (d) any associated new uses of land surrounding the buildings to be re-used do not detract from the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt; and
- (e) the proposal would not result in the loss of employment generating activities in accordance with Policy GB4; and
- (f) except in the case of a building currently or last used for authorised and lawful employment generating uses, any new employment generating development would be of a small scale and constitute agricultural diversification in accordance with policy GB9; and

- (g) the proposed use does not detract from the character and amenities of its surroundings or the locality in general and is in accordance with all the other relevant policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), ~~Policy EP9 (Noise Generating Development)~~ and Policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) and GB9 (Agricultural Diversification).

Extensions to buildings proposed for re-use will only be acceptable where:-

- (i) they are essential to facilitate a new use which is otherwise acceptable in planning terms; and
- (ii) they would be strictly ancillary to the main use; and
- (iii) they would not detract from the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt; and
- (iv) they are of a very limited size and floorspace and subordinate in height, form, bulk and scale to the main building; or
- (v) in the case of proposals within the settlements listed in Policy GB3 the proposal is in accordance with Policy GB5

Explanation

3.20 The Government advises that, with suitable safeguards, the re-use of buildings should not prejudice the openness of Green Belts, since the buildings are already there. The District Council recognises this and the contribution the re-use of buildings can make to agricultural diversification and maintaining employment opportunities in rural areas. However, it considers that only buildings whose form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings should be re-used as it would not be appropriate to allow for the re-use of buildings which have an adverse effect on the surrounding area. In some cases external changes may be proposed as part of a re-use scheme which would render an otherwise unacceptable building acceptable in visual terms. In such cases the Council will secure the improvement with planning conditions.

3.21 Not all uses and their associated development will be appropriate to the Green Belt. Proposals for re-use which would involve associated extensive external storage, or extensive hardstanding, car parking, boundary walling or fencing will not be acceptable as they would conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it. Whilst the re-use of buildings for residential purposes is not ruled out, residential conversions may have harmful effects; for example, the creation of a residential curtilage around a newly converted building can have a harmful effect on the character of the countryside or may be detrimental to the fabric and character of historic farm buildings. However, proposals for self-catering accommodation for visitors may be more acceptable, especially as part of a farm diversification proposal, as this form of residential accommodation is less likely to need extensive curtilages and other developments associated with residential use.

3.22 In considering the impact of a new use on its surroundings the Council will take into account the rural context of the proposal. Uses which may be appropriate within a town or village may be inappropriate to the character and amenities of the countryside. Uses which are considerably more intensive than the previous use of the building, are likely to be contrary to the other relevant policies in this Plan. Proposals which would result in a

large amount of traffic generation, for example, would be liable to be contrary to Policy TR5.

3.23 Green Belt policies allow for re-use of buildings rather than the creation of additional building in the countryside. Extensions to buildings to facilitate their re-use must be very limited in scale and strictly ancillary to the new use. If extensions were permitted to converted buildings beyond that allowed for in Policy GB2 there would be a danger of adding to built development in the Green Belt and detracting from its openness.

3.24 Whilst the principle of re-use is acceptable under Policy GB2 the Council is concerned that certain uses which are already present are not lost. ~~For example, Policy H4 resists the loss of housing accommodation and this applies equally within the Green Belt and in built up areas.~~ Policy GB4 seeks to retain employment uses in the Green Belt. The Council considers that this assists the overall economy of South Bucks District and in particular the economy of the rural parts of the area. New employment generating development is restricted in accordance with ~~policy E1 and~~ the plan's restraint of development objectives although buildings currently or last used for authorised and lawful employment generating uses may be re-used for other similar purposes in accordance with policies GB4 and GB5 (Employment Generating Development in the Green Belt/Green Belt Settlements). Special provision is made to allow for agricultural diversification.

POLICY GB3 - RESIDENTIAL INFILLING IN GREEN BELT SETTLEMENTS

The one for one replacement of existing dwellings and limited infilling within the boundaries of the Green Belt settlements, as defined on the Proposals Map and listed below, will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal would not detract from the open, and undeveloped character of the Green Belt.
- (b) the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and the proposal would be in accordance with policies EP3 (the Use, Design and Layout of Development) and H9 (Residential Design and Layout); and
- (c) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies ~~H7 (Smaller dwellings) L7 & L8 (Protection of Green Space and Incidental Green Space) and E6 (Protection of Employment uses in the Green Belt)~~, GB11 (Rebuilding of Dwellings in the Green Belt) ~~and GB12 (Development adjacent to Settlement Boundaries)~~.

The settlements to which this policy applies are:-

- Denham (south of old village)
- Dorney Reach
- George Green
- Hedgerley Hill
- Higher Denham
- Taplow Riverside

Tatling End
Wexham (Church Lane /Wexham Park Lane)
Wexham Street
Wood Lane Close (Iver)

Explanation

3.25 Policy GB3 reflects Government policy in PPG2 'Green Belts' in that it identifies the larger and more compact settlements within the Green Belt where some limited infill development could take place provided it does not harm the overriding aim or purposes of the Green Belt. Infilling is defined as the filling of small gaps within the settlement and would normally involve development in a gap in a continuously built up frontage. Plot sizes should be in keeping with surrounding development. The Council considers that to allow limited new housing within these settlements may assist in helping meet locally generated housing needs, particularly if some smaller dwellings can be provided without detriment to the character of the locality.

POLICY GB4 - EMPLOYMENT GENERATING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT (EXCLUDING GREEN BELT SETTLEMENTS)

Proposals to establish new employment generating or other commercial sites or extend the curtilages of existing sites will not be permitted in the Green Belt. Where the proposal involves the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt new employment generating development may be acceptable subject to the provisions of Policy GB2 (Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt).

Extensions or additional buildings for existing employment generating or other commercial development will not be permitted in the Green Belt, unless, in the case of extensions, they are in connection with the re-use of buildings subject to Policy GB2 (Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt).

The change of use of employment generating or other commercial premises will only be permitted in the Green Belt in accordance with Policy GB2 and where:-

- (a) the proposal would be for another employment generating use; and
- (b) the proposal would be compatible with, and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the Green Belt, of nearby properties or the locality in general, and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) and;
- (c) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision), ~~E6 (Employment Generating Uses in the Green Belt)~~ and EP4 (Landscaping).

Explanation

3.26 The policy relates to employment generating and commercial sites located outside of the Green Belt settlements listed in policy GB3. Sites located within those Green Belt settlements are covered by policy GB5. For the purposes of this policy employment

generating uses are defined as those set out in Part B of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order (see paragraph 10.11). They do not include agriculture or forestry.

3.27 Proposals to establish new employment generating or other commercial sites within the Green Belt will not be permitted, as such development would be contrary to long-established Green Belt policies. Similarly, the Council considers that proposals for extensions or additional buildings at employment generating and other commercial sites in the Green Belt would harm the overriding aim and purposes of the Green Belt, given that such sites are not within a Green Belt settlement. The fact that a proposed building may be well screened is not a justification for allowing it - that argument could be repeated too often. Furthermore, additional floorspace in Green Belt locations is likely to result in an increased demand for use of the car, since most Green Belt locations will be poorly served, or not served at all by public transport.

POLICY GB5 - EMPLOYMENT GENERATING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT SETTLEMENTS

Proposals to establish new employment generating or other commercial sites or extend the curtilages of existing sites will not be permitted in the Green Belt settlements identified in policy GB3.

Within the Green Belt settlements any proposals which, through limited infilling or extensions would result in an increase in floorspace, or proposals involving a change of use, will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal would be for an employment generating use; and
- (b) any increase in floorspace would be of a small-scale and the development would not exceed the height of the existing buildings; and
- (c) the visual impact of any extensions or additional buildings would be minimal and located within the built-up part of the site; and
- (d) the proposed development would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the Green Belt, of nearby properties or the locality in general, and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (e) in the case of a new use, the building is of permanent and substantial construction whose form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision), ~~E6 (Employment Generating Uses in the Green Belt)~~, EP4 (Landscaping), ~~and GB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries)~~.

Explanation

3.28 There are a number of employment generating and other commercial sites located within the Green Belt settlements identified in policy GB3, including for example offices, warehouses, manufacturers, garden centres and garages. The Council recognises the fact that in some cases limited infilling of these sites with additional small buildings and small

extensions will be acceptable.

3.29 Proposals to create additional floorspace will be acceptable only if any extensions or additional buildings are of a small scale and would not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. In considering whether proposals are of a small scale the Council will have regard to other permissions which have been granted for additional floorspace. As regards the re-use of buildings the matters referred to in Policy GB2 apply equally to buildings within Green Belt settlements.

3.30 Any proposals to provide additional floorspace must also be acceptable on highway grounds and comply with the Council's parking standards. All car parking must be provided within the existing site curtilage. Proposals which would involve an extension of the curtilage onto other Green Belt land to provide parking or any other facilities will be refused. In all cases, the Council may require, and will encourage, additional landscaping in connection with any new development on such sites.

POLICY GB6 - AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

~~In the Green Belt the construction of a permanent new dwelling for agricultural workers will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) It is essential for the proper functioning of the agricultural activities for the full time worker or workers to be readily available on the site at most times; and~~
- ~~(b) the need for a dwelling could not be fulfilled by an existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the full time worker(s) concerned; and~~
- ~~(c) the applicant is able to demonstrate that the unit and agricultural activity concerned are well established and profitable, currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so; and~~
- ~~(d) the dwelling proposed is not unreasonably large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit/enterprise; and~~
- ~~(e) the scale, height, siting, form, design and materials would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general; and~~
- ~~(f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policies GB9 (Agricultural Diversification), H9 (Residential Layout and Design), EP4 (Landscaping) and EP3 (The Use, Design and Layout of Development).~~

~~Temporary agricultural workers accommodation to support a new farming activity will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~i) there is clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned and that it has been planned on a sound financial basis; and~~
- ~~ii) it is essential for the proper functioning of the agricultural activities for the full time worker or workers to be readily available on the site at most times;~~

~~and~~

iii) ~~the need for a dwelling could not be fulfilled by an existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the full time worker(s) concerned; and~~

iv) ~~the scale, height, siting, form, design and materials would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general; and~~

v) ~~the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policies GB9 (Agricultural Diversification), H9 (Residential Layout and Design), EP4 (Landscaping) and EP3 (The Use, Design and Layout of Development).~~

~~In all cases a condition will be placed on permissions for agricultural workers dwellings restricting their use to agricultural workers, their widow(er)s and resident dependants.~~

~~In considering applications for agricultural workers' dwellings the Council will have regard to its Guidelines for Agricultural Workers' Dwellings as set out in Appendix 7.~~

Explanation

3.31 ~~Normally it will be as convenient for agricultural workers to live in nearby settlements as it will be for them to live near their work. However, the Council recognises that in some circumstances it will be essential for workers to live at, or very near, their place of work. This provides one of the very rare circumstances in which a new dwelling in the Green Belt may be justified. The concession the planning system makes for agricultural workers' dwellings may be subject to abuse, especially in an area which experiences considerable development pressure. Therefore, the Council will thoroughly scrutinise all planning applications for such dwellings and seek appropriate evidence to ensure that the application is genuine. In doing so it will be guided by its "Guidelines for Agricultural Workers' Dwellings". The Guidelines at Appendix 7 set out the evidence the Council requires to ensure that the dwelling is needed and the circumstances when different types of evidence will be sought. They also give guidance on temporary accommodation, occupancy conditions and the size and siting of new dwellings.~~

3.32 ~~Modern methods of forestry management use a largely peripatetic workforce and new dwellings for forestry workers are unlikely to be justified. In considering any application which may be received for forestry workers the Council will apply the criteria set out in Policy GB6 (Agricultural Workers' Dwellings).~~

GB7- REMOVAL OF AGRICULTURAL OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS

~~The removal of an agricultural or forestry workers' occupancy condition from a dwelling will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that:~~

- (a) ~~there is no longer a need for a worker on the holding, nor is there likely to be within the foreseeable future; and~~
- (b) ~~there is no foreseeable need for such a dwelling in the area.~~

Proposals for the removal of a condition should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Agricultural Workers' Dwellings at Appendix 7.

Explanation

3.33 In some cases there may no longer be a need for agricultural or forestry workers to be housed at their place of work, resulting in an occupancy condition becoming redundant. However, the Council will need to be satisfied that any occupancy condition is only removed where there is genuinely no further need for them, and no need for an agricultural or forestry workers' dwelling in the locality. The Council will consider proposals for the removal of such conditions against the guidelines at Appendix 7 which indicate the evidence required in support of an application for the removal of a condition.

~~POLICY GB8 OTHER AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY BUILDINGS~~

~~Proposals to construct or extend agricultural or forestry buildings within the Green Belt will be permitted provided that:-~~

- ~~(a) the scale, height, siting, form, design and materials of new buildings would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general, and the proposal would be in accordance with EP3 (the Use, Design and Layout of Development). Buildings should be sited within an existing group or complex of buildings or, where such a siting is not possible, they should be sited in a readily screened, unexposed location; and~~
- ~~(b) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and~~
- ~~(c) In the case of proposals for intensive livestock units and associated development within 400 metres of a protected building there should be no significant risk of smell to that building. The Council will also wish to ensure that new protected buildings are not located so that there could be potential future conflict with intensive livestock units.~~
- ~~(d) the proposals would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy EP4 (Landscaping).~~

Explanation

3.34 One of the few types of development which may be acceptable in the Green Belt is development for agriculture or forestry. South Bucks is predominantly rural in nature and the Council recognises that cases will arise where new buildings will be required to serve purposes relating to agriculture or forestry. The Council wishes to avoid a proliferation of obtrusive or incongruous structures in the countryside and therefore, in assessing proposals for such development, it will take account, inter alia, of the siting and scale of the proposed building and its prominence in the landscape. Proposals which would cause demonstrable harm to the amenities of the Green Belt will not be permitted in accordance with Policy GB1. In assessing proposals, the Council will wish to be assured that the proposal would be reasonably necessary for and designed to meet agricultural or forestry needs. In considering whether a proposal would be reasonably necessary the Council will have regard to any recent or proposed changes in the nature or operation of the holding and whether any buildings have been demolished, sold or separated from the holding. In

~~cases where the Council considers that the proposal is not reasonably necessary it will not grant permission unless the applicant is able to demonstrate by the submission of an independent agricultural/forestry consultant's report that the proposal is reasonably necessary for the purpose of agriculture or forestry.~~

~~3.35 Where new buildings are proposed, the District Council will encourage these to be located within an existing group of buildings or farm complex, although, if such a building cannot be so located, then the District Council may consider allowing the erection of a building in another location, provided that there is unlikely to be an adverse impact on local amenity or character. Buildings proposed in exposed or isolated situations will not be permitted. It will also be necessary to ensure that the planning system is not abused by the construction of a new farm building with the intention of early conversion to another use which would be unacceptable within the Green Belt. In considering whether to grant permission for new agricultural or forestry buildings the District Council will have regard to whether any such buildings have recently been converted to another use or separated from the holding.~~

~~3.36 Planning permission is required for buildings to be used for the accommodation of livestock within 400 metres of a 'protected building' which is defined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as "any permanent building which is normally occupied by people or would be so occupied, if it were in use for purposes for which it is apt; but does not include i) a building within the agricultural unit; or ii) a dwelling or other building on another agricultural unit which is used for or in connection with agriculture". Through policy GB8 the Council will take a positive approach towards proposals which are designed to achieve compliance with new environmental, hygiene and welfare regulations. Whilst ensuring that livestock units do not cause a nuisance to 'protected buildings' it is also important to ensure that potential problems of conflict are not created by new 'protected buildings' being located in the vicinity of livestock units. Therefore, new 'protected buildings' including changes of use should be avoided within 400 metres of an existing livestock unit unless it can be demonstrated that the new building will not be subjected to nuisance.~~

~~3.37 Policy GB8 applies to those agricultural buildings which require the permission of the local planning authority. Certain development, reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit, may be carried out without the need for planning permission. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 grants planning permission for a wide range of development associated with agricultural and forestry uses of land. However, in certain cases, this planning permission cannot be exercised unless the farmer or other developer has applied to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether its prior approval will be required for certain details. The District Council will require the submission of details where there is likely to be a significant impact on the local amenity. In considering the impact on local amenities, the Council will be guided by the principles set out in Policy GB8.~~

POLICY GB9 - AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION

Proposals to diversify the use of land or buildings on an agricultural holding within the Green Belt will be permitted provided that:

- (a) the proposal would not compromise the overriding aim or purposes of including land in the Green Belt; and
- (b) the proposal would not involve the construction of new buildings or extensions to existing buildings other than as provided for in policy GB1; and

- (c) the proposal would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the landscape, nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (d) any re-use of buildings should be in accordance with Policy GB2; and
- (e) in the case of a proposal for the re-use of a building constructed under agricultural permitted development rights substantially completed within the last four years, clear evidence is submitted that the building was used for agriculture, was genuinely required for that purpose and is no longer required for agriculture. Where it is proposed to use agricultural buildings for non-agricultural uses the Council may impose a condition withdrawing permitted development rights for new farm buildings on the agricultural unit or holding; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision) and relevant policies in Chapter 7 (Leisure, Recreation and Tourism).

The Council may seek a planning obligation to tie the re-used building to the land.

Explanation

3.38 The increasing efficiency of agricultural producers and changes in agricultural policy have meant that retaining as much land as possible in agricultural use no longer has the same importance that it once had. Accordingly some agricultural land and buildings are surplus to agricultural requirements. The use of agricultural land and buildings for other uses should be considered acceptable provided that certain criteria are met. Indeed agricultural diversification can provide opportunities for employment to meet local needs and can help to secure the viability of farms. The Council, therefore, wishes to encourage appropriate development proposals.

3.39 Agriculture is of vital importance in managing and maintaining the type of landscape found in the Green Belt and in supporting the rural economy. Accordingly it is important to ensure that diversification demonstrably helps to maintain the viability of agriculture. Proposals which threaten the viability of agriculture will not be regarded as diversification and will not be considered acceptable under this policy.

3.40 Diversification is only acceptable if the proposed use would not compromise the overriding aim or purposes of the Green Belt. Proposals which would adversely affect the open and undeveloped character will not be appropriate.

3.41 The re-use of buildings in connection with a diversification scheme should accord with Policy GB2. New buildings or extensions to existing buildings will only be allowed where they are ancillary to an appropriate use of land which would retain the open and undeveloped character of that land. However, diversification proposals which do not involve open land but which only involve the re-use of existing buildings will often be acceptable. Where it is proposed to re-use agricultural buildings constructed under permitted development rights the Council will need to be assured that they have been used for the purpose they were built. Where there could be a risk of proliferation of agricultural buildings, the Council may withdraw permitted development rights for additional buildings.

3.42 Proposals for agricultural diversification will need to show that they would preserve the character and amenities of the locality and would not materially change the nature of development to such a degree that it would have an adverse impact on the character and amenities or prejudice the purposes of the Green Belt.

POLICY GB10 - EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS IN THE GREEN BELT

Extensions to existing dwellings in the Green Belt will normally be permitted provided that:-

- (a) the proposed extension together with the existing dwelling would be for single family occupation or alternatively would comply with Policy H12 (Self-Contained Residential Annexes to Provide Ancillary Accommodation); and
- (b) the extension together with any earlier extensions, would be integral to, and (with the exception of very small dwellings lacking in basic amenities) of a small scale, in relation to the size of the original dwelling; and
- (c) the dwelling as enlarged would be of a small scale in relation to the size of the residential curtilage; and
- (d) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the landscape, nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (e) in the case of ancillary buildings within residential curtilages in the Green Belt, the building together with any other ancillary buildings would be of a small scale in relation to the size of the dwelling and of a small scale in relation to the size of the residential curtilage; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy H11 (Alterations & Extensions to Dwellings) and Policy H13 (Ancillary Buildings within Residential Curtilages).

Explanation

3.43 There is the strongest restraint upon development in the Green Belt. However, extensions to dwellings are one of the very few types of development which, in principle, may be considered to be acceptable in the Green Belt. Extensions will however, only be acceptable in principle where the existing dwelling is lawful, not abandoned and has been capable of habitation (e.g. not structurally unsound) over the last 12 months, albeit that in some cases a few dwellings may lack some basic modern amenities.

3.44 Whilst there is the strongest restraint upon development in the Green Belt, the Council acknowledges that the occupiers of residential properties may wish to alter and extend existing dwellings in order to meet their needs. However, given the restraint upon development there is a limit to the amount of extensions which will be acceptable. Without such restrictions the character of the Green Belt would be eroded. Extensions which are not small in scale in relation to the original dwelling would not only affect the character of that dwelling, but would also be seriously detrimental to the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt. In assessing proposals the Council will take into account all previous extensions to the dwelling. It is important to consider the cumulative effects of extensions, since the sum of a number of small extensions may erode

the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt.

3.45 Extensions, which together with all previous extensions, are not of a small scale in relation to the original dwelling will be considered unacceptable in the Green Belt. In this connection, extensions or alterations which would result in the original dwelling having increased its floorspace by more than half will not be regarded as small scale. In some cases proposals which increase the floorspace by less than half may also be unacceptable due to their overall size, design and impact on the Green Belt. For the purpose of this policy the original dwelling is defined as that which existed at 1 July 1948, or as subsequently originally constructed (i.e. excluding replacement dwellings). In the case of properties which have replaced an original dwelling proposed extensions which would increase the total floorspace by more than half the size again of the original property will not be considered as small scale.

3.46 Any extension (including subterranean extensions) which has been added to the original dwelling shall be taken as comprising increased floorspace, irrespective of whether it was permitted development or was constructed with the benefit of planning permission. Also, outbuildings and other structures which are in close proximity to the dwelling will often have as great an impact as if they were extensions attached to the dwelling itself. Therefore, all outbuildings or structures erected since the original dwellinghouse was built, and sited within 5 metres of the dwelling, will be included in any calculations of the floorspace as extensions to the dwelling.

3.47 The District Council will look more favourably upon proposals which comply with the terms of this policy if the additional floorspace is provided within the confines of an existing building with the minimum of additional building volume. Additional floorspace can sometimes be provided within an existing roofspace without the need for large extensions or substantial roof alterations. Such proposals will normally be encouraged, since they can provide the additional floorspace needed with minimal impact upon the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt. Only that development which actually increases the volume of the building, for example dormer windows, will count as an extension to the house.

3.48 The Council accepts that some very small dwellings which lack basic modern amenities, such as a bathroom, an inside w.c., or a kitchen, may require an extension which would result in the floorspace increasing by more than half that of the original dwelling. In such cases a larger extension may be permitted than would otherwise be acceptable provided that the proposal would still comply with the criteria set out in (a), (c), (d) and (f) of the policy.

3.49 In the Green Belt settlements covered by GB3 notation, it may be possible to allow some extensions a little larger than would be acceptable elsewhere in the Green Belt. Such extensions will nevertheless still have to comply with the criteria set out in the policy.

3.50 Notwithstanding the fact that residential properties do exist in some areas of the Green Belt, those areas still remain relatively undeveloped and open in character and accordingly fulfil a Green Belt function. In implementing this policy the Council will wish to ensure that an enlarged dwelling still remains of a small scale in relation to its residential curtilage. Proposals which would result in the dwelling as enlarged not being of a small scale in relation to the curtilage will be unacceptable since they would result in a density of development which would seriously harm the undeveloped and open character of the Green Belt. Dwellings will not normally be considered as being of a small scale unless, having regard to the overall size of the dwelling and the curtilage and its relationship with surrounding buildings, sufficient curtilage space is retained around the dwelling to ensure that the openness of the Green Belt is preserved. Dwellings which are not small scale in

this context would seriously harm the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt by virtue of their density.

3.51 It is also important that where extensions are acceptable in principle, the detailed design and the external materials to be used, reflect the existing building. Without these controls extensions would appear as if they have been grafted on to existing dwellings and the quality of development would be seriously harmed.

3.52 The District Council will also wish to ensure that an enlarged dwelling would not be intrusive in the landscape and would harmonise with the character of the area in all other ways. Accordingly, consideration will also be given to the proximity and relationship of the enlarged dwelling to adjacent dwellings and other buildings. Proposals will only be considered acceptable where they would not result in the open and undeveloped character of the area being eroded. Proposals for an extension which would result in the dwelling becoming more intrusive in the landscape will not be acceptable.

POLICY GB11 - REBUILDING OF DWELLINGS IN THE GREEN BELT

The rebuilding of existing habitable dwellings in the Green Belt will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the replacement dwelling would be for single family occupation, and
- (b) the size of the replacement dwelling would be no greater than:-
 - (i) that of the original dwelling plus any extensions which would comply with the terms of policy GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt); or
 - (ii) that of the existing dwelling if this would be larger than that permitted under (i); and
- (c) the replacement dwelling would be of a small scale in relation to the size of the residential curtilage; and
- (d) the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the landscape, nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (e) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy H9 (Residential Layout and Design). Where permission is granted for a replacement dwelling which is larger than the original, a condition may be imposed withdrawing specified permitted development rights.

Where permission is granted for a replacement dwelling which is larger than the original, a condition may be imposed withdrawing specified permitted development rights.

Explanation

3.53 There is a very strong policy restraint against inappropriate development in the

Green Belt. However, the District Council accepts that, in principle, it may be appropriate to allow the rebuilding of some dwellings in the Green Belt, subject to certain safeguards. However, rebuilding of dwellings will only be acceptable in principle where the existing dwelling is lawful, not abandoned, and has been capable of habitation (e.g. not structurally unsound) over the last 12 months, albeit that in some cases a few dwellings may lack some basic modern amenities. The Council accepts that there may be some occasions where an occupier wishes to rebuild his dwelling for one reason or another. However, given the restraint upon development in the Green Belt, it is necessary to limit the size of the replacement dwelling, for otherwise the character of the Green Belt would be eroded.

3.54 A proposal will be considered unacceptable where the floorspace of the replacement dwelling would be more than half the size again of the original dwelling. However, where the existing dwelling has a floorspace greater than one and a half times the size of the original dwelling, as a result of earlier extensions, the floorspace of any replacement dwelling should not exceed the floorspace of the existing dwelling. For the purpose of this policy the original dwelling is defined as that which existed as at 1 July 1948, or as subsequently originally constructed.

3.55 Existing outbuildings, and other structures which are in close proximity to the dwelling, will often have as great an impact as extensions attached to the dwelling itself. Accordingly, the floorspace of the original dwelling will be taken as comprising the dwelling, and any outbuildings or structures which existed on 1 July 1948 and which were situated within 5 metres of the dwelling. However, any extensions, subterranean extensions, outbuildings or other structures which have been constructed since 1 July 1948 will not be treated as part of the original dwelling and, if sited within 5 metres of the dwelling, will count towards the calculation of the floorspace of extensions.

3.56 There may be a few instances where very small dwellings exist which have not been extended since 1948, and which still lack basic modern amenities such as a bathroom, an inside W.C. or a kitchen. In such cases the Council accepts that it may be necessary to allow a slightly larger increase in floorspace than would otherwise be permitted, to enable adequate facilities to be provided.

3.57 The Council wishes to ensure that any replacement dwellings would not exceed the size specified in either (b)(i) or (ii) above accordingly. When granting permission for replacement dwellings under this policy the District Council will normally impose a restrictive condition withdrawing future permitted development rights where the new dwelling is larger than the original dwelling. In the Green Belt settlements covered by GB3 notation it may be possible to allow slightly larger replacement dwellings than would be acceptable elsewhere in the Green Belt. Notwithstanding this, it will still be necessary for proposals to comply with the other criteria set out in the policy.

3.58 The Council will also wish to ensure that a replacement dwelling is of a small scale in relation to the size of its residential curtilage. Dwellings will not be considered to be of a small scale unless, having regard to the overall size of the dwelling and the curtilage and its relationship with surrounding buildings, sufficient curtilage space is retained around the dwelling to ensure that the openness of the Green Belt is preserved. Dwellings which are not small scale in this context would seriously harm the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt by virtue of their density.

3.59 Policy GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt) would control any future extensions to re-built dwellings. However, floorspace limits could be exceeded if extensions were constructed under permitted development rights. Therefore, where extensions subsequently constructed under permitted development rights could result in

floorspace limits being exceeded, the Council will impose a condition withdrawing those permitted development rights which allow for extensions to dwellings.

3.60 Furthermore, the Council wish to ensure that a replacement dwelling would harmonise with the character of the area in all other ways and would not be intrusive in the landscape. The Council will normally expect a replacement dwelling to be located in the least conspicuous position within the curtilage subject to the new dwelling having a satisfactory relationship with any surrounding development. Permission will not be granted for a replacement dwelling if it would be more intrusive in the landscape than the existing dwelling.

~~POLICY GB12 DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES~~

~~Proposals within a settlement excluded from the Green Belt, or within a Green Belt settlement identified in policy GB3 should ensure that:~~

- ~~(a) any development in close proximity to the boundary of the settlement should be sited and of a scale to ensure that there is a progressive reduction in density towards the settlement boundary, in order to maintain a more open and rural character in proximity to the Green Belt; and~~
- ~~(b) a suitable landscaped area would be provided as an integral part of the proposals adjacent to and within the settlement boundary so that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character and amenities of the surrounding Green Belt; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy H9 (Residential Layout and Design) and Policy EP4 (Landscaping).~~

Explanation

3.61 Development within the developed areas or Green Belt settlements, can have a detrimental effect on the openness and undeveloped character of the Green Belt especially where the development would form a very hard or urban edge to the settlement. Therefore, the District Council will require any development on the edge of a settlement to be designed so as to ensure that development would appear open or rural in character in order to respect its proximity to the Green Belt land outside the settlement. This may commonly require that development in close proximity to the boundary of such settlements would be at a lower density than is generally found elsewhere in that settlement. The District Council will also have regard to the height and bulk of buildings proposed in considering whether or not they are sufficiently open and rural in character. Suitable landscaping is likely to be that which reflects the character of the adjoining Green Belt and assists the visual transition from Green Belt to urban area.

3.62 The Council will also require proposals to incorporate suitable landscaping within the settlement boundary in order to further limit the impact on the surrounding Green Belt. This policy will also apply to developments which, although sited further from the Green Belt boundary, would have a high visibility from Green Belt land outside the settlement.

GB13 EXTENSIONS OF RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGES IN THE GREEN BELT.

Proposals to extend residential curtilages in or into the Green Belt will not be permitted unless the proposal would be entirely contained within the boundary of a settlement listed in Policy GB3 (Residential Infilling in Green Belt Settlements).

Explanation

3.63 The extension of residential curtilages in or into the Green Belt can have a harmful effect on its character and appearance and will detract from its open and undeveloped character. Such extensions will not, therefore, be permitted. The exception to this is where the proposal is entirely within the boundary of a green belt settlement identified in Policy GB3. In such cases the openness of the green belt is unlikely to be adversely affected by the proposal as the areas identified are largely built-up.

POLICY GB14 - WILTON PARK, BEACONSFIELD

~~The Wilton Park site as defined on the Proposals Map is identified as a major developed site in the Green Belt.~~

~~Within the site boundary limited infilling will only be permitted where;~~

- ~~i) the development is directly related to the use of the site as a military educational establishment;~~
- ~~ii) there would be no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development;~~
- ~~iii) any buildings would not be greater than 3-4 storeys in height; and~~
- ~~iv) the development would not lead to a major increase in the developed portion of the site; and~~
- ~~v) the development would accord with all the other policies in this plan.~~

~~If it is clearly demonstrated that the site is no longer required for its existing use the defined site may be redeveloped for a use appropriate to its surroundings. Any redevelopment should be comprehensive and;~~

- ~~i) have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the current buildings; and~~
- ~~ii) be no greater than 3-4 storeys in height; and~~
- ~~iii) result in the removal of the existing tower block (the equivalent floorspace may be replaced on the site provided it would not materially detract from the openness of the Green Belt); and~~
- ~~iv) incorporate substantial landscaping; and~~

v) ~~conform with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) and TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).~~

Explanation

3.64 Wilton Park is currently used by the Ministry of Defence as an army base. It is principally used for education (Defence School of Languages), and accommodation. The site has been used for many years as a military facility but its future has been under review as part of national changes in defence policy. The Council considers that continued military education use as existing is appropriate. Policy GB14 allows for limited infilling at the site for continued military education purposes only.

3.65 Should it be demonstrated that the site is no longer required by the MOD, policy GB14 allows for comprehensive redevelopment for an appropriate use. The Council is not proposing any particular new use or uses for the site. However, the Council will need to be assured that any new use accords with all the other policies in this plan and is consistent with its Green Belt location. Redevelopment as, for example, an office campus, may be unacceptable as it could result in an excessive intensification of employment contrary to the policy of strategic restraint. Educational use may be more acceptable and could make use of the existing residential accommodation outside the defined area.

3.66 A key objective for any comprehensive redevelopment would be the removal of the existing tower block. This is an extremely incongruous feature in the countryside visible over a wide area. The floorspace lost as a result of its removal may be replaced elsewhere on the site within the defined area provided this would not conflict with the openness of the Green Belt.

3.67 Policy GB14 only applies to the two areas identified on the Proposals Map, the larger of which forms a substantial built up area. The smaller area is liable only to be suitable for development for residential purposes due to its proximity to dwellings. The dwellings which form part of the complex but are not included with the defined area should continue in residential use.

POLICY GB15 AGRICULTURAL LAND

~~Planning permission will not be granted for proposals involving the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.~~

Explanation

3.68 Much of the open countryside within the District is well farmed and productive agricultural land and this will continue to be the major land use in the rural areas. However the pressure for change is widely recognised; some agricultural land is now 'set aside', being temporarily taken out of productive use, there are increasing demands for countryside recreation and a greater emphasis on woodland management and nature conservation. However, it remains essential that the best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a under MAFF's Agricultural Land Classification) should be protected and thus the loss or cumulative loss of such land will not be permitted. The irreversible loss of agricultural land should therefore be directed at the poorer quality land, namely grades 3b, 4 and 5. If the grade of a site is unclear the District Council may require the applicant

~~to submit a report from a mutually agreed agricultural consultant to verify the classification. Where the proposal involves the loss of 20 hectares or more of grades 1, 2 or 3a, or where the loss is likely to lead to further losses amounting cumulatively to 20 hectares or more the District Council will consult with MAFF.~~

~~**POLICY GB16 FORMER CANADIAN RED CROSS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL SITE, CLIVEDEN ROAD, TAPLOW.**~~

~~The former Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital site as defined on the Proposals Map is identified as a major developed site in the Green Belt. The defined site may be redeveloped for a use appropriate to its surroundings and consistent with other policies in this plan. Any redevelopment should be comprehensive and;~~

- ~~i) have a lesser impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the current buildings by reducing building footprints and the spread of buildings on the site; and~~
- ~~ii) be no greater in height than the existing buildings; and~~
- ~~iii) incorporate substantial landscaping; and~~
- ~~iv) conform with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to L2 (Areas of Attractive Landscape), L5 (Historic Parks and Gardens) EP3 (Use, Design, and Layout of Development) and TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).~~

Explanation

~~3.69 The Canadian Red Cross Hospital has been vacant for some years. In 1989 South Bucks District Council granted outline planning permission for redevelopment of the site as a comprehensive care community incorporating a nursing home, care centre and associated facilities. The Council resolved to grant permission for a similar scheme (excluding the nursing home) in 1994. Most recently the Council resolved to grant planning permission subject to a legal agreement for 135 age restricted dwelling units, medical centre and other associated facilities (Application Ref: S/95/0563/00). Since proposed redevelopment was first considered, national policy guidance on Green Belts and other issues has been revised. In particular, PPG2 Annex C now gives advice on the redevelopment of 'major developed sites' in the Green Belt and Circular 12/91 which covered redundant hospitals has been replaced by the annex.~~

~~3.70 The existing buildings cover most of the site. However, they are of utilitarian construction and design, mainly single storey, with some two, three and four storey structures, and interspersed with grassed areas. There are relatively few existing roadways or areas of hardstanding within the site. In view of the nature of the existing development the policy requires that any redevelopment provides a reduction in both the footprint of buildings and the spread of the buildings on the site. The extent to which the Council considers that this can be achieved is illustrated on the schemes referred to in paragraph 3.66A above.~~

~~3.71 To accord with the policy all new buildings should be low rise. Predominantly two~~

~~storey development is likely to be acceptable. Any development will be expected to be of a high standard of design as the site is located in an Area of Attractive Landscape and adjoins the Historic Park and Garden at Cliveden.~~

~~3.72 The Council will need to be assured that any development accords with all the other policies in the plan, does not generate excessive amounts of vehicular traffic and is consistent with the site's quiet location in the Green Belt. Employment uses will be unacceptable as they would be contrary to the local plan's overall strategy of development restraint. A scheme in line with proposals the Council has previously found acceptable, which incorporates specialist residential units and possibly a care facility is likely to be acceptable.~~

4. LANDSCAPE

4.1 The landscape within South Bucks is very varied ranging from the higher quality landscapes such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), to the areas of damaged landscape, the latter being particularly concentrated within the Colne Valley Park. The natural beauty of much of the District's countryside is of great importance to the quality of the life enjoyed by residents and visitors and so must be protected. It is important also that the areas of the District which have been damaged in the past, are now improved as quickly as possible, in terms of their landscape quality, in order that residents and visitors within these areas enjoy a more acceptable quality of life.

4.2 It is not only the wider and essentially rural landscape areas, such as the AONB ~~or the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs)~~, which are important to the landscape of South Bucks. It is also the smaller green spaces within the urban areas which are important to the amenity of these built up areas. The Plan therefore identifies a complete hierarchy of sites of landscape or local amenity value to which protective policies are applied, including the protection of the historic parks and gardens of national interest which lie in the District. The River Thames is generally acknowledged as being of significant landscape importance, especially the stretch within South Bucks. The Plan sets out the Council's policy for the protection of the setting of the River Thames.

4.3 One of the principal objectives of the Plan is the conservation and enhancement of both the urban and rural environments. Within this chapter are contained policies which set out how the District Council and development industry should be improving the environment of the District, including the areas of damaged and threatened landscape; as well as preserving the higher quality landscapes and encouraging woodland planting.

~~POLICY L1 THE CHILTERN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY~~

~~The boundary of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is shown on the proposals map.~~
~~In determining applications for development within the AONB, very special attention will be paid to the likely impact the proposed development will have on the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and wildlife interest of the landscape. Development will not be permitted within the Chilterns AONB, where that development would have an adverse impact on the special character, landscape, quiet enjoyment or amenity of the Area. Development which, although not itself within the AONB, would have a detrimental impact on the special character, landscape, quiet enjoyment or amenity of the AONB will not be permitted.~~
~~Any proposals should comply with all other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy GB1 (Green Belt Boundaries and the Control over Development in the Green Belt).~~

Explanation

4.4 ~~The Chilterns AONB was designated by the Government in 1964, confirmed in 1965, with a boundary Variation Order confirmed in 1990. The Chilterns were designated as an AONB in order to conserve and enhance their distinctive, nationally important landscape character and natural beauty. The Chilterns AONB also has a rich diversity of wildlife habitats and is particularly well known for its beech woodlands which are a feature of the rounded plateaux and the escarpments. Man's influence is also extensive and the~~

~~conservation of the numerous and widespread archaeological, architectural and other traditional features is also very important. Some 4 sq. km. of the District is within the Chilterns AONB, including areas of ancient woodland, archaeological sites, and sites of nature conservation interest.~~

~~4.5 In accordance with Government policy as set out in PPG7, the environmental effects of new proposals will be a major consideration in all cases, although it will also be appropriate to have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. The Council will have regard to the special needs of agriculture but will seek to ensure that the special character, landscape and amenity of the AONB is preserved. Major developments will harm the special character, landscape, quiet enjoyment or amenity of the AONB and will therefore be inappropriate unless applicants are able to prove that such development is essential and in the national interest and that no alternative site exists. Such circumstances may be considered as having sufficient weight to allow the development to take place in the AONB.~~

~~4.6 The Council is a member of the Chilterns Conference, whose principal aim is the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. The Council supports the implementation of The Management Plan for the Chilterns AONB. The Framework for Action 1991. The Management Plan is an advisory document which provides a framework for co-ordinating and directing management activity towards the conservation and enhancement of the landscape.~~

POLICY L2 AREAS OF ATTRACTIVE LANDSCAPE

~~The boundaries of the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) are shown on the proposals map.~~

~~In determining applications for development within or adjacent to an AAL, special attention will be paid to the likely impact that the proposed development will have on the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and wildlife interest of the AAL. Development will not be permitted within an AAL, where there would be an adverse impact on the special character, landscape or amenity of the area. Any proposal should also comply with all other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy GB1 (Green Belt Boundaries and the Control over Development in the Green Belt).~~

Explanation

~~4.7 The Areas of Attractive Landscape were broadly identified in earlier Structure Plans, and the detailed boundaries given statutory status in the Local Plan for South Bucks adopted in 1989. These areas are of significant county wide value and a brief description of them is given in Appendix 1 of this Plan. The criteria used in defining the Areas of Attractive Landscape are :-~~

- ~~(a) the area has to be large enough to warrant identification at the countywide scale; and~~
- ~~(b) the area has to have a special quality which is characteristic of the attractive landscape of the county.~~

~~4.8 Applications for development will be assessed so as to identify any potential impact that the development may have on the AAL. Development which will have an adverse effect on the special landscape, character or amenity will not be permitted. By its nature, major development would have a significant effect on the character, landscape or~~

~~amenity of an AAL, and will therefore be inappropriate within an AAL. Applicants will need to prove that there is an essential need for such development and that no alternative site exists in order to justify an exception to this policy. The Council will have regard to the special needs of agriculture but will seek to ensure that the special character, landscape or amenity of the AAL is preserved.~~

POLICY L3 LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

~~The boundaries of the Local Landscape Areas (LLA's) are shown on the proposals map. Development will not be permitted within or adjacent to an LLA, where there would be an adverse impact on the special character, landscape or amenity of the area. Any proposal should also comply with all other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy GB1 (Green Belt Boundaries and the Control over Development in the Green Belt).~~

Explanation

~~4.9 Local Landscape Areas are of significant importance at the local level. The criteria used in defining the Local Landscape Areas are:~~

- ~~(a) the area has to be large enough to warrant identification at the district wide scale; and~~
- ~~(b) the area has to have a special quality which is characteristic of the attractive landscape of the District; and~~
- ~~(c) the area should be largely unspoilt and free from major intrusions which harm the character of the landscape.~~

~~On the basis of these criteria Local Landscape Areas have been defined within South Bucks and a brief description of them is given in Appendix 1. Although not as large, the LLA's may be very similar in character to the AAL's. They constitute an important part of the District's landscape and their value must not be underestimated. The Council will have regard to the special needs of agriculture but will seek to ensure that the special character, landscape or amenity of the LLA's is preserved.~~

POLICY L4 - RIVER THAMES SETTING

~~The District Council will seek to conserve and enhance the setting of the River Thames as defined on the proposals map and will not permit development which would have an adverse impact on the special character, landscape or amenity of the River Thames. The loss of any buildings, walls, open spaces, views, trees or other features which contribute to the special character, landscape or amenity of the river setting will only be permitted where their loss would not have an adverse effect on the River Thames setting. The loss of uses associated with the river itself which contribute to the special character of the area will only be permitted where their loss would not have a significant adverse effect on the river environment.~~

Explanation

~~4.10 The River Thames flows through the District from Cookham Lock to Boveney Lock, a distance of some 12 kilometres. The river and its setting is an important landscape feature in its own right and ought therefore to be protected from the adverse effects of development. The Thames Path has also been designated as a National Trail by the~~

Countryside Commission. The extent of the River Thames setting is shown on the proposals map and has been identified on the following basis:-

- (a) along that reach where the valley side is steep the boundary has been drawn to include all of the valley side and any other land which is important to the setting of the river and where development would be likely to affect the special character, landscape or amenity of the river and its environs; and
- (b) along those reaches where the river is bordered by its floodplain the boundary has been drawn to include the whole curtilage of sites which are visible from or have views of the river or the towpath and sites where development would be likely to affect the special character, landscape or amenity of the river and its environs.

4.11 Applications for development will be assessed so as to identify any potential impact that the development may have. The change of use of land or buildings or the erection of any structure within the area which would, through visual intrusion, noise or pollution, adversely affect the setting of the river will not be permitted. Also some features such as buildings, walls, open spaces, views and trees are important to the landscape of the river and their loss is likely to adversely affect it. Where these are subject to planning control their loss will not be permitted. The Council will not permit proposals involving the loss of uses associated with the river itself, such as boatyards, boathouses, etc. which contribute to the special character of the area. Proposals involving development for leisure or recreation purposes will also need to comply with the policies set out in Chapter 7.

POLICY L5 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

~~In determining applications for development within or adjacent to an Historic Park or Garden identified on the proposals map special attention will be paid to the likely impact that the proposed development will have on the conservation and enhancement of the historic qualities and character of the landscape. Development will only be permitted where there would be no adverse impact on the special qualities and character of the historic landscape.~~

Explanation

4.12 ~~The Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England is prepared by English Heritage and designates sites of national importance. There are currently 13 such historic parks and gardens within South Bucks contained in the Register. These are listed in Appendix 2. These parks and gardens are often designed ornamental landscapes, such as Stoke Park, public parks and landscape parks.~~

4.13 ~~Information as outlined below may be required to be submitted with any application for development. A field survey is a prerequisite for any application which might affect an historic landscape and it should note the stylistic character of the landscape and the state of repair and management of existing features. An assessment of the historical development of the landscape from estate archives, estate maps, or tithe maps, and so on, is necessary to make sense of the evidence of different phases, identify important features in the landscape and provide a guide to future restoration and development. A clear statement of the historic interest of a site is necessary before an analysis of a proposal's impact can be made. This statement should include archaeological sites and monuments, traditional working landscapes, historic parks and gardens and the settings of listed buildings and conservation areas. The submission of an assessment of the proposal's impact on historic features and character and an assessment of the opportunities~~

~~presented by the development may also be required.~~

~~4.14 The proposals, together with any ancillary buildings, roadways and car parking will be tested against the various aspects of existing historic interest. Proposals which would have an adverse impact on this interest will not be permitted. The Council will consult English Heritage on proposals affecting a park or garden listed in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and take account of its views. The Council will also consult English Heritage on development which, although located outside the historic park and garden, has an impact on it through such effects as visual or noise intrusion, water pollution or the possibility that the local water table will be affected.~~

~~4.15 There are other parks and gardens of historic interest which are of more local importance within the District. Some of these may also be worthy of protection, therefore information regarding their significance may be required prior to determining proposals on these sites. Should, in the light of further information, the District Council consider them worthy of inclusion in the Register, the District Council will notify English Heritage.~~

~~POLICY L6 - COLNE VALLEY PARK~~

~~Proposals in the Colne Valley Park will only be permitted where:-~~

- ~~(a) they maintain and enhance the landscape, waterscape and townscape of the Park in terms of its character, its scenic and conservation value and its overall amenity; and~~
- ~~(b) they safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development and do not involve urbanisation of the Park; and~~
- ~~(c) they conserve the nature conservation resources of the Park; and~~
- ~~(d) where outdoor sport or outdoor recreation is involved it does not compromise (a) or (b) or (c) above.~~

~~Explanation~~

~~4.16 A substantial part of the District lies in the Colne Valley Park. The District Council is a member of the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference which has recently published a new strategy for action in the Park. That strategy seeks to bring about improvements to the Colne Valley through joint working by means of implementing a co-ordinated and planned programme of improvements.~~

~~4.17 The Council will, in its role as local planning authority for that part of the Park in South Bucks, seek to complement the work of the Standing Conference by ensuring that development proposals meet the criteria set out in the policy.~~

~~4.18 The Colne Valley Park has in some parts been seriously damaged by previous developments and by landscape deterioration arising from neglect and the inappropriate use of land. A previous study by the Standing Conference on London and South East Regional Planning (now SERPLAN) entitled "The Improvement of London's Green Belt" recognised the extent of the problem. The Green Belt in this area to the west of London is the most fragmented part of the Metropolitan Green Belt. At the same time it is an area under pressure for further development which would, if it were allowed, not only further fragment the Green Belt, but also result in a deterioration of the landscape, character and amenity of the Park.~~

~~4.19 The safeguarding of the countryside in the Park from urbanisation and inappropriate development is of fundamental importance and is consistent with and complementary to~~

~~Green Belt policy. The maintenance and improvement of the urban and rural landscape is a key aim and it is important to ensure that all proposals comply with this because it would be inappropriate for the local authorities to expend resources on improvement if this were to be offset by other development which would detract from the urban and rural landscape in the Park. The Council does not consider that because the Park has been damaged by previous development that it would be acceptable to allow further damaging proposals to take place. Rather, the positive action being undertaken by the Standing Conference Authorities to bring about improvement should be matched by other proposals. It is important that proposals should not harm the amenities of the Colne Valley or its residents.~~

~~4.20 Proposals for leisure and recreation development will need to comply with this and other relevant policies in the Plan. It is important to acknowledge that whilst some forms of recreation may be acceptable in the Park others will not if they would result in damage to the landscape, character and amenities of the area. The Council acknowledges the role that the Park has to play in providing appropriate outdoor sport and outdoor recreation for its immediate population, but considers that the Park would be irreparably damaged by provision of recreation facilities on a large scale to serve a much wider regional demand.~~

POLICY L7 PROTECTION OF GREEN SPACE

~~Planning permission will not be granted for proposals involving the loss, fragmentation or reduction in size of any Green Space identified on the proposals map. Proposals which would harm the visual amenities of Green Spaces or significantly diminish their function will not be permitted.~~

Explanation

~~4.21 Within the settlements in the District there are a number of spaces which are particularly important because they make a significant contribution to the character of the locality:-~~

- ~~(a) because they are of a pleasant character and are either visually prominent from a public area or are publicly accessible; and~~
- ~~(b) because they provide a green lung within that settlement, a break from continuous development; or they provide an important setting for the edge of the settlement in relation to the Green Belt.~~

~~4.22 Green Spaces may also provide public or private recreation facilities on a formal or informal basis, although they need not necessarily do so. Policy R1 also provides protection against the unacceptable loss of public or private open space. Green Spaces vary considerably in their nature and may include, for example, playing fields, sitting out areas in residential areas, densely wooded areas, and other important undeveloped areas of land. Green Spaces are therefore important functionally and aesthetically and their loss in whole or part will not be permitted.~~

~~4.23 Areas of Green Space in the settlements excluded from the Green Belt and in the GB3 settlements, are shown on the proposals map. Whilst many Registered Commons in the District would meet the criteria listed above, they are in any case largely protected by other policies in this plan, notably those relating to the Green Belt and conservation areas. The Green Spaces shown on the proposals map are those which are considered to be large enough to warrant specific identification. There are however, many other smaller spaces which are also important in the same way, but which are too small to specifically identify in the Local Plan. Such spaces are the subject of policy L8 (Protection of incidental green~~

space).

POLICY L8 PROTECTION OF INCIDENTAL GREEN SPACE

~~Planning permission will not be given for proposals involving the loss, fragmentation or reduction in size of incidental green spaces where they contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the area. Proposals which would harm the visual amenities of such incidental green spaces or significantly diminish their function will not be permitted.~~

Explanation

4.24 Incidental green space, such as small landscaped areas in housing, commercial and industrial developments, can make a significant contribution to the environment. Unlike Green Spaces identified in policy L7, incidental green spaces are too small to be shown on the proposals map, but they are particularly important to the amenity of the localised environment and should therefore be afforded protection. A group of such spaces can sometimes provide the only area of amenity value in a locality dominated by hard landscaped features. Incidental green spaces are often an integral part of the character of developments and an important component in the design of schemes, such as in the case of open plan housing developments. Areas of incidental green space can provide an attractive setting for buildings, a visual buffer within developments and opportunities for landscaping which can soften the hard edges of buildings and provide for visual contrast.

POLICY L9 WOODLANDS

~~The Council will oppose proposals for clear felling which would result in the loss of woodland.~~

~~Proposals for felling licences involving clear felling will not be opposed when:~~

- ~~(a) they are part of the management of the woodland and are carried out as part of the implementation of an accepted management plan which proposes replacement with appropriate tree types and densities; or~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenity of the landscape or the locality in general, or the nature conservation value of the woodland.~~

~~The District Council will encourage woodland planting where appropriate for the purpose of securing the most beneficial use, especially amenity, of land for the community, particularly in the Colne Valley Park, on the edges of settlements and in other locations where it would assist in enhancing the landscape. The satisfactory management of woodland in conjunction with the Forestry Authority will be encouraged.~~

Explanation

4.25 Wooded areas are an important characteristic feature of the District especially in the areas of special landscape character. The District Council supports the guidelines for woodland management in the Chilterns AONB set out in A Plan for the Chilterns Woodland Policy (1992). In other areas of the District woodland is quite sparse and in these areas new woodland planting may bring benefits. In particular, parts of the Colne Valley Park are deficient and its landscape could be considerably improved by woodland planting. A Planting Strategy has been prepared for the Colne Valley Park. The District Council has endorsed much of that strategy and will use it as a basis for encouraging new woodland

planting. However it will not always be appropriate to encourage new areas of woodland planting as this may destroy the important character of an area. Woodland planting can play an important role in softening the edge of settlements and in reducing the impact of existing development on the landscape. Notwithstanding this, where development is proposed which is inappropriate within the Green Belt, it will not be given more favourable consideration if proposals for woodland planting are included.

4.26 The District Council only has a direct control over the felling of woodlands where they are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. However, regardless of whether a Tree Preservation Order exists the felling of woodland normally requires a felling licence to be obtained from the Forestry Authority. The District Council is consulted on felling licence applications where there is a Tree Preservation Order, where proposals do not follow Forestry Authority management guidelines or where the scale or impact of proposals may significantly affect the overall character of woodland. Woodlands are commonly an integral and intrinsic part of the landscape. The District Council will therefore oppose proposals involving their loss, except where such felling would be in the interests of good silvicultural practice, and an appropriate scheme of replacement planting or natural regeneration forms part of a management scheme submitted to the Forestry Authority. The Council will also have regard to the cumulative impact on the landscape of schemes involving the felling of woodlands.

4.27 The Council accepts that there may be instances where the felling without replacement planting would be in the interests of good management. At Stoke Common for example, the felling of pine stands would be a major benefit to the good management of the nature conservation interest of this area, being a Site of Special Scientific Interest. However the loss of woodland for any other reason would not be acceptable unless it was shown to be required to meet a regional or national need.

4.28 Ancient woodlands are particularly important and are defined by English Nature as being those which have had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 A.D. to the present day and have only been cleared for underwood or timber production. There are many such woodlands within South Bucks and their importance both for nature conservation and for their contribution to the landscape is widely acknowledged. The loss or fragmentation of any of this type of woodland is likely to be detrimental to the local landscape of the area and the nature conservation value of the woodland itself, and will therefore not be permitted.

POLICY L10 - PROPOSALS INVOLVING FELLING OR OTHER WORKS AFFECTING TREES COVERED BY A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

The District Council will assess applications for consent to fell or carry out other works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders, having regard to:-

- (a) the health and stability of the trees; and
- (b) the continuing contribution of the trees to public amenity and the character of the area.

In the case of any tree for which felling consent is granted, the Council will normally impose a condition requiring replacement planting to be carried out.

Proposals for felling or other tree works which would negate the objectives of a Tree Preservation Order or otherwise damage the public amenity of the trees or their contribution to the character of the locality will not be granted consent except where special circumstances can be demonstrated and acceptable alternative planting and management proposals agreed.

Explanation

4.29 The Council has powers to make Tree Preservation Orders on trees and woodlands which contribute to the amenity and character of an area. Trees protected by an Order may only be felled or the subject of works when express consent is granted, or when they are dead, dying or dangerous. It is an offence to cut down, uproot or wilfully destroy a tree in contravention of a Tree Preservation Order. Trees may be included in an Order for any of a number of reasons, for example, their intrinsic beauty, their contribution to the landscape, their screening effect and their rarity value.

4.30 Once a Tree Preservation Order has been made, most works to the tree or trees included in the Order may not be undertaken without the prior written consent of the Council. This policy applies to applications for consent to fell or carry out other works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders or to development proposals involving the felling or works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Legislation requires that when any tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order is removed, uprooted or destroyed in contravention of the Order, or (except in a woodland) is removed as dead, dying or dangerous, the owner of the land must plant a replacement tree of an appropriate size and species as soon as reasonably possible, except where the Council agrees to waive the requirement. Similarly the Council will normally require replacement planting when granting consent for the removal of trees.

4.31 Replanting will normally be insisted upon in order to secure the quality of the environment in the long term. Replacement trees will often be of the same species as the felled specimens unless an alternative species would be better suited to the site and its surroundings. Tree surgery should be carried out in accordance with accepted practices to ensure the health and future attractiveness of trees.

4.32 The Council will strongly resist proposals which threaten the contributions to public amenity which Tree Preservation Orders seek to protect, especially in cases where Orders have recently been made, or development proposals recently permitted subject to the retention and safeguarding of Order-protected trees. Only where there are exceptional benefits for carrying out such work, or where substantial planting and management proposals are included in the application, sufficient in the Council's opinion to overcome the loss of the particular tree in question, will the Council consider granting Consent for the work, subject to conditions to safeguard the amenity of the locality.

5. CONSERVATION

5.1 The overall objective of this chapter is the preservation and enhancement of the District's historic fabric and sites of nature conservation interest. South Bucks is fortunate in having a great deal of conservation interest within its District, with many buildings of historic interest, Conservation Areas, ancient monuments, ancient woodlands, historic parks and gardens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other sites of archaeological or nature conservation interest.

5.2 There are approximately 700 buildings on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest, ranging from telephone kiosks to stately homes. The thirteen Conservation Areas include historic landscapes, commons and historic village centres. There are many sites of archaeological interest within the District including seven ancient monuments. The gravel terraces of the Thames valley within South Bucks are of geological and geomorphological interest.

5.3 There are a variety of sites within South Bucks which are designated because of their nature conservation interest, including sites of special scientific interest (SSSI's), ancient woodlands, local nature reserves and the sites of biological interest. There also exist many rare plants, animals and birds within South Bucks in locations outside these designated sites.

5.4 ~~Policies concerning woodlands and historic parks and gardens are contained within the landscape chapter of this Plan, although the nature conservation aspects of these sites are also very important.~~

Conservation Areas

5.5 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to determine whether any part of their area should be designated a conservation area by virtue of its special architectural or historic interest. Fifteen Conservation Areas have been designated within the District and are shown on the Proposals Map.

5.6 The existing Conservation Areas vary quite considerably in terms of their size and special character. Some are to be found within the built up parts of the District which are excluded from the Green Belt, whilst a number are centred on small villages or hamlets in the countryside. Some, such as the Beaconsfield Old Town Conservation Area, incorporate a very considerable number of buildings whilst others, such as that at Hedgerley Green, incorporate only a handful of buildings. Other Conservation Areas, such as Stoke Park, derive their special character from the historic interest of grounds as well as buildings.

5.7 There is no doubt that individual buildings or groups of buildings are often a vitally important component of the special architectural or historic interest of Conservation Areas. However, designation as a Conservation Area does not mean that all or even the majority of its buildings are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. Neither will all of its buildings be of a high standard of design and well maintained, but the area will have a number of features of special architectural or historic interest and will often have an overall defined character which predominates throughout the area which the Council will seek not only to preserve but also to enhance.

5.8 Conservation Areas often also exhibit some characteristics which do not contribute towards its special character, but which rather detract from it. Accordingly, the District

Council will consider more favourably those proposals which involve not only preservation but also enhancement of the special character.

5.9 It is important to recognise that no two Conservation Areas have the same characteristics or have been designated for the same reasons. Documents setting out some of the important characteristics of each of the Conservation Areas have been published either prior to or following designation, and account should be taken of these in determining whether proposals would preserve or enhance the special character of the Conservation Area.

Review of Conservation Areas.

5.10 The District Council has a duty to keep its area under review with a view to considering whether the designation of further Conservation Areas or the alteration of existing areas is warranted. Within the plan period the Council will therefore undertake a comprehensive review of the District. The review will also examine the existing designated conservation areas and consider whether any areas no longer possess the special character which led to designation, or whether any further areas now make a contribution to that special character. As part of the Conservation Area review, the District Council will publish new and replacement Conservation Area documents for all designated areas setting out information on the special architectural or historic interest which justifies their designation, and which accordingly ought to be preserved. Those documents will also set out broad proposals for the enhancement of the conservation areas.

POLICY C1 - DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA

Development within a Conservation Area that fails to preserve or enhance its character or appearance will not be permitted. Development will only be permitted where:-

- a) the proposal would preserve or enhance important features which contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area including:
 - i) views into or out of the Conservation Area,
 - ii) hedges or trees,
 - iii) walls and other means of enclosure,
 - iv) spaces between buildings,
 - v) roofscape; and
- b) the proposal would be of a high standard of design sympathetic to the existing building or site and the Conservation Area as a whole in terms of its:
 - (i) siting and layout,
 - (ii) plot size,
 - (iii) size in relation to its plot or curtilage,
 - (iv) scale, height and bulk,
 - (v) horizontal and vertical emphasis,
 - (vi) external appearance of the building and detailed design of fenestration features or other notable features,
 - (vii) type, quality, colour and texture of materials; and
- c) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies ~~C4 (Traffic and Parking in Conservation Areas)~~, EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), EP7 (Signs and Advertisements), TR5

(Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

Explanation

5.11 The designation of an area as a Conservation Area is not in itself a bar to all further development. Conservation Areas possess a variety of existing features which contribute to the character of an area and that those features, including views and spaces, should not be lost or damaged. This policy seeks to ensure that new building work is sympathetic to the character of a Conservation Area and the existing buildings within it. It would, however, not be appropriate to require that new building work is sympathetic to existing buildings which already themselves detract from the character of a Conservation Area.

5.12 Whilst development should be sympathetic this does not mean that the design of new buildings must copy that of other buildings in the area. What is required is that development blends with other buildings in the Conservation Area. Development would not be sympathetic if it were to contrast sharply with other buildings in the Conservation Area, particularly those in close proximity to it. For example, if a new building were to be designed so as to be much taller than many other buildings in the Conservation Area, then it would be likely to be unsympathetic. Similarly a building with a strong horizontal emphasis would be inappropriate in a frontage where all other buildings have a vertical emphasis. The policy lists a range of other criteria against which development will be evaluated.

5.13 The external appearance of the building and detailed design of fenestration features will always be an important consideration, but particularly so when considering proposals for the alteration and extension to an existing building. Alterations and extensions to an existing building will normally be required not only to blend in with the character of the Conservation Area, but also to reflect very closely the detailed design of the existing building, (particularly in terms of its horizontal or vertical emphasis), its external appearance and detailed design of fenestration features, and in the use of materials.

5.14 The use of unsympathetic materials can result in development having a serious adverse impact on the character of a Conservation Area, even though all other aspects of the design may be appropriate. Facing materials, rainwater goods, roofs, shop fronts, fascias, canopies and fenestration features should normally consist of natural materials in their traditional form and use. The use of unsympathetic or other non-traditional materials will often have an adverse impact on the character of a Conservation Area and will not be permitted. Indeed the detailing of materials including their colour and texture, is essential. For example, whilst a clay roof tile may reflect the character of a Conservation Area better than a concrete roof tile, in some cases it is necessary to use hand made rather than machine made clay tiles to reflect the character of the Conservation Area.

5.15 In the case of a new building it will not always be necessary to use materials the same as those on adjacent buildings. However in the case of an extension or alteration to an existing building the Council will expect matching traditional materials to be used and this may necessitate the use of second-hand materials.

5.16 Some Conservation Areas in the District are centred on commercial and retail areas. Proposals for new shopfronts will only be considered acceptable provided that their design would preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. ~~See policy S8 (Shopfronts). In considering applications, particular account will be taken of criteria (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) listed in the policy.~~ Proposals involving security shutters will not generally be considered appropriate in Conservation Areas. However, where they are

acceptable in principle, the Council will seek to encourage the use of open mesh shutters fixed inside the window.

5.17 The character of a Conservation Area is not only determined by its physical features such as buildings and walls, but also by the type of uses and the intensity of use to which buildings and land are put, and a change of use can sometimes have a very significant impact on the character of a Conservation Area. Conservation Areas, both rural and urban, can be particularly sensitive to change of use proposals, particularly if such proposals were to bring about greater traffic generation or an increase in the number and/or size of commercial vehicles.

5.18 Conservation Areas often also exhibit some characteristics which do not contribute towards its special character, but which detract from it. Accordingly, the District Council will consider more favourably those proposals which involve not only preservation but also enhancement of the special character.

5.19 Applications for development in Conservation Areas should be submitted giving full details (both existing and proposed) of buildings, landscaping, materials, advertisements and any demolition or loss that may be involved and other relevant information so that the full impact of the proposal can be assessed. If an outline planning application is made the Council will normally require the submission of full details of proposals through the use of its statutory powers. Street elevations will also be required in order to properly assess the proposals relationship to the other buildings and features of the Conservation Area. Plans showing details of the existing buildings and the site are considered necessary in order to ensure a full consideration of whether the proposals would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

5.20 Proposals involving an alteration, extension or change of use of a listed building in a Conservation Area must also comply with policy C6 ~~and C7. Similarly proposals which affect the setting of a listed building will also need to comply with policy C8.~~

~~POLICY C2 - DEMOLITION OF UNLISTED BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS~~

~~The Council will not grant consent for the demolition of an unlisted building in a Conservation Area where that building makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.~~

~~Where an unlisted building does not make a positive contribution to, or where it detracts from, the character or appearance of a Conservation Area then consent for its demolition may be granted provided that:-~~

- ~~(a) there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area if the building to be demolished were not replaced by another building; or~~
- ~~(b) where there would be harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area if the building were to be demolished and not replaced by another building, replacement proposals have been approved in accordance with policy C1 which would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The District Council will impose a condition on the consent for demolition such that demolition cannot take place until a contract for carrying out the redevelopment has been placed and planning permission for those works granted.~~

Explanation

5.21 The coherence of buildings to each other and the relationship between buildings and open spaces will often be a vitally important part of the character of a Conservation Area. Many of the Conservation Areas in the District have groups of buildings, large, small, compact or dispersed where their coherence is an important part of the area's character or appearance. In some of the Conservation Areas groups of buildings are not only important for their coherence but also because of the relationship to open spaces, particularly where they clearly define the visual limit of a space.

5.22 Many buildings make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, regardless of whether or not they have any special individual merit. Where an existing building already makes a positive contribution, its demolition and replacement is unlikely to make a greater contribution or enhance the character and appearance further. Accordingly, consent will not be forthcoming for the demolition of buildings which do make a positive contribution, since once demolished that element of the special character will be lost forever and cannot be replaced.

5.23 There will often be a limited number of buildings which, although located in a Conservation Area, do not make any contribution to it or which detract from it. There will normally be no objection to the demolition of such buildings in principle. However it would not be appropriate to allow the demolition of a building if it were not to be replaced by another building and the special character or appearance were to be harmed as a result of this.

5.24 There are opportunities for redevelopment which can enhance the character of a Conservation Area. However, the District Council wishes to prevent unsightly gaps especially in continuous built up frontages. It will therefore be necessary to impose a condition on Conservation Area Consents for demolition so as to control the timing of such demolition to that of the commencement of an approved development scheme. A condition would normally require the commencement of redevelopment within 3 months of commencement of demolition.

5.25 There will be some cases where the demolition of a building may not harm the character or appearance of a Conservation Area even if that building is not replaced by another one. Such cases might include the demolition of a small ancillary building within the curtilage of another building and which is not visible from a public or semi-public place, or where a beneficial area of open space were created or views opened up.

POLICY C3 DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF, BUT AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA

Development which, although not within a Conservation Area, would have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted.

Explanation

5.26 The duty of local planning authorities to have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing a Conservation Area is not limited to development proposed within the designated area, but applies equally to proposals which although outside of it, may affect its character or appearance. Indeed the Council is required to advertise all applications, which in the opinion of the authority, affect the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, and any such advertised applications which are not located within the designated area, will be considered against this policy. As in Conservation Areas detailed

~~applications will also be required for development which although not within the designated Conservation Area, would be likely to have an impact upon it.~~

~~5.27 Development outside a Conservation Area can have a considerable impact on it especially where the massing, siting or design is not in sympathy with the general character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This is especially so where development lies on the line of important views to or from the Conservation Area. Therefore the District Council will expect development to respect the character of Conservation Area as a whole, including important views.~~

~~5.28 Normally development affecting a Conservation Area will be located very close to the boundary of the designated area. However, on occasions, development which is some distance from a Conservation Area may also affect it. This is especially so where a proposal would result in a significant increase in the number or size of commercial vehicles passing through it.~~

POLICY C4 - TRAFFIC AND PARKING IN CONSERVATION AREAS

~~The District Council will:-~~

- ~~(a) promote and support appropriate schemes which seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas by reducing the impact of traffic on them; and~~
- ~~(b) press the Highway Authority to ensure that, within the requirements of highway law, highway signs and other highway equipment is kept to the minimum necessary, carefully sited and of a design appropriate to a Conservation Area; and~~
- ~~(c) expect any new parking provision within Conservation Areas to be sensitively located and designed, and to incorporate appropriate hard and soft landscaping; and~~
- ~~(d) seek improvement to existing parking provision through revised layouts and landscaping; and~~
- ~~(e) resist the conversion of front garden areas to car parking.~~

Explanation

~~5.29 Traffic can have a considerable impact on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, both from the movement of through traffic and from the parking of vehicles. The Council can, through the planning process, exert a degree of control over proposals on private land involving additional traffic generation and parking provision.~~

~~5.30 The streetscape is often a crucially important part of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. A significant part of the streetscape is the treatment and use of spaces between buildings which is in the direct control of the highway authority.~~

~~5.31 The implementation of highway improvements will normally be carried out as part of the highway authority's programme and where these schemes will reduce the impact of traffic in a Conservation Area the District Council will support such highway improvements. There may be special circumstances where even though it is not included in the highway~~

authority's programme, an improvement to the highway or parking arrangements will be promoted by the District Council in order to preserve or enhance the character of a Conservation Area, although ultimately implementation will depend upon the highway authority. In particular, the District Council may promote such improvements as an integral part of its environmental improvement programme. The District Council will, subject to policy TR7 (Parking Provision), also seek to look favourably upon development proposals which preserve or enhance a Conservation Area by reducing the impact of traffic on it.

5.32 A number of the Conservation Areas in the District suffer from a proliferation of highway signs or highway equipment which has an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the designated area. When consulted on highway authority proposals and when considering a programme or scheme of environmental improvements for any Conservation Area, the District Council will press the highway authority to rationalise traffic signing and to use new smaller signs more appropriate to a Conservation Area setting. The Council will also press the highway authority to remove other unnecessary street furniture and to use more sympathetic designs for bollards, street lighting and other highways equipment. The Council will also seek the use of narrower yellow lines.

5.33 The retention and re-introduction of traditional surfacing materials and street furniture will be encouraged in Conservation Areas. Most equipment installed by statutory undertakers does not require permission, but again, when the opportunity arises the Council will press for the most sympathetically designed equipment consistent with the character of the Conservation Area.

5.34 Proposals for development will need to comply with Policy TR7 regarding car parking standards. However, as with other aspects of development within Conservation Areas, new parking areas need to be sensitively located, designed and include proposals for landscaping. Depending upon its location and the character of that part of the Conservation Area it may be necessary to incorporate soft as well as hard landscaping. Parking should be located and designed so that its impact is minimised. However, that does not mean that proposals for car parking in the rear gardens/plots of premises will always be acceptable, for provision on a large scale or where it would adjoin other land already used for parking might prove to be harmful to the Conservation Area.

5.35 Where existing parking areas already have an adverse impact on the special character and appearance the Council will wish to see this impact reduced when considering new applications for development on or affecting that site.

5.36 The visual intrusion of cars in front gardens is a particular problem and can be detrimental to the appearance of many Conservation Areas, especially where traditional features, such as cast iron railings, are removed. The conversion of front gardens to car parking will not be permitted.

POLICY C5 ENHANCEMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS

As resources permit, the District Council will undertake a programme of environmental enhancement in Conservation Areas. Where development is proposed close to areas improved, or proposed for improvement by the Council under its environmental enhancement programme, applications will be assessed to ensure that there would be no adverse impact upon these improvements, and if possible that the proposal contributes to it.

Where development proposals involve land which is prominent in the street scene, the District Council will seek, as an integral part of the development proposals, the

~~environmental enhancement of that land so as to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.~~

Explanation

5.37 ~~The Council has a duty to formulate and publish from time to time proposals for the preservation and enhancement of designated Conservation Areas. Through the design of schemes and the allocation of finance the District Council has already carried out environmental improvements in some of the Conservation Areas in South Bucks, and other improvements are planned. The Council will continue this initiative which is dependent not only upon the co-operation of landowners, other authorities and interested parties, but also upon the availability of finance from both the public purse and other sources. The Council will, under policy EP1 (Environmental Improvements), seek to ensure that environmental improvements undertaken by the Council are not adversely affected by development proposals.~~

5.38 ~~Land other than that which is in public ownership can also have an important impact upon the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. The forecourts to some shops are entirely open, with no physical or visual demarcation from the public highway, but are in private ownership, and are an important part of the streetscene. Other land involving forecourts at the front of some other types of premises, particularly business premises, also form an important part of the streetscene. Except in the case of very minor proposals, the Council will seek, as an integral part of development proposals, the environmental enhancement of that land.~~

5.39 ~~The Council takes the view that the enhancement of Conservation Areas should not be the sole responsibility of local planning authorities. Enhancement of Conservation Areas should also be shared by those implementing development proposals involving land prominent in the streetscene. Such land will involve business interests as well as residential properties and the enhancement of the local environment will normally be to the benefit, rather than detriment, of both businesses and residents.~~

POLICY C6 - ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

Consent will not be granted for alterations or extensions which would harm the character or appearance of a listed building or its features of special architectural or historic interest. Consent will only be granted provided that:-

- (a) the proposals would be of a high standard of design and would not detract from the intrinsic historic interest of the building; and
- (b) the physical features of special architectural and historic interest are to be retained and not damaged; and
- (c) the proposal would not detract from the intrinsic architectural interest, character or appearance of the building; and
- (d) the proposal would not detract from the setting of the building; and
- (e) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt) and S8 (Shop fronts).

Applications should incorporate detailed plans, to scale, showing the building before work and the building as proposed to be altered or extended. Detailed plans should normally include external elevations, internal floor plans and for all but the very simplest work, internal elevations.

Explanation

5.40 The District contains about 700 listed buildings, these being put to a wide variety of uses including residential, offices, hotel, retail, manufacturing, leisure and agriculture. The nature of many of the uses to which listed buildings are already put is such that from time to time those uses may demand alterations or extensions to the fabric of the listed building. There will also be other occasions where a new use is proposed for a listed building but that use will also require alterations or extensions.

5.41 Once a building is listed, legislation provides that as well as any planning permission which may be necessary listed building consent must also be obtained for any works, internal or external, which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Fixtures, buildings and other structures which are not specifically mentioned in the list description but which are either fixed to a listed building or are within its curtilage and have been so since before July 1948, are treated as part of the listed building. They are thus subject to listed building control, provided that any such structure is ancillary to the listed building. Repairs only require consent if they involve alterations which would affect the character. Similarly consent will be required for painting if it would affect the building's character. It is important to note that consent is required for all proposals which would affect the character of a listed building and that control is not limited to those proposals which would affect that character adversely.

5.42 The designation of a building as a listed building is not in itself necessarily a bar to alterations or extensions to that building. Indeed the Council recognises that the best way of securing the retention and upkeep of listed buildings is to keep them in active use, and that this may sometimes be assisted by alterations or extensions.

5.43 However, listed buildings are a very important part of our heritage, and accordingly it is essential to ensure that they are protected from proposals which would harm the very qualities which contribute to their character as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. It would not be appropriate to allow an extension or alteration to a listed building where the proposals could damage the character of the building. The policy lists those criteria which proposals will be expected to meet if the character and special interest of listed buildings is to be preserved.

5.44 It is of course important to ensure that any specific physical features of architectural or historic interest are not lost or damaged. The list description will highlight some physical features of a building which are important, but the description is not exhaustive and there will often be other features not mentioned which warrant protection and preservation. It will be for the District Council, following consultation with consultees, to consider the impact of proposals on all these features of special interest. Externally, features of special interest may include a wide variety of matters such as wall materials, pointing, external painting, roof materials, decor and window openings, redundant doors and windows, wrought and cast iron fittings, parapets, balconies, verandas, porches, inscriptions, signs, plaques, carved details, dormers, rooflights, chimney stacks, glass and shopfronts. Listed buildings sometimes include features internal to the building which are of special interest, and these may include items such as walls, plasterwork, chimney pieces, chimney breasts, staircases, paintwork and floors.

5.45 In addition to retaining and protecting specific features it is also important to ensure that any proposal respects and reflects the character of the building. This will be especially important where an extension is proposed, and the District Council will have regard to matters such as height, massing, detailed design and materials. The District Council will not look favourably upon proposals which are alien to the design and character of the existing building. At the same time it will wish to avoid extensions which would be a poor imitation of the existing character and, accordingly, will require use of the highest quality traditional materials.

5.46 It is important to ensure that all of the intrinsic qualities of a building are not damaged. Some buildings will have been listed more for their historical interest or association than for any particular architectural merits. Others may have been listed not for any particular special feature but because they incorporate construction techniques used during a particular historical period. These intrinsic qualities may often be just as important as any individual features and it is important to ensure that any proposals do not detract from them.

5.47 The setting of a listed building is often an important aspect which contributes significantly to its special character and it is important to ensure that this is not damaged. ~~Accordingly proposals will be expected to comply with policy C8.~~

~~POLICY C7 CHANGE OF USE OF A LISTED BUILDING~~

~~The District Council will normally look favourably on applications for a change of use of a Listed Building where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposed use would secure the long term future of the building and its regular maintenance and repair; and~~
- ~~(b) if the proposed use would require alterations or extensions, or would affect the setting of the building, the proposals would comply with policies C6 (Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings) and C8 (Proposals Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building) respectively; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would comply with the other policies of this Plan.~~

~~In some circumstances applications for a change of use may be granted even though they conflict with one or more of the policies in the Plan. Applicants would need to demonstrate that, in addition to (a) and (b) above, no other viable use which complies with the Plan exists.~~

~~Where a building is of limited special interest, for example because it has been seriously damaged by previous alterations or extensions and is in good repair then the District Council will not grant permissions which are in substantial conflict with the policies of the Plan.~~

Explanation

5.48 ~~The best way of securing the future of listed buildings is to keep them in active use, and in turn this should secure their upkeep and regular maintenance. There can be no doubt that the best use for a listed building will normally be that for which it was originally designed. However, it may not always be possible for an owner to retain a building in its original use, or if it has previously been converted to another use to reconvert it back to its~~

original use.

5.49 The Council recognises the importance of listed buildings to our heritage and considers that their retention and maintenance must be a high priority. It will not normally be appropriate to resist a change of use purely because the use proposed is not that for which the building was originally designed. Accordingly, the District Council will not seek to prevent listed buildings being put to new uses unless this would be harmful to the building or its setting, or would be contrary to the other policies of this Plan. The Council believes that it is important to secure the long term future of listed buildings and accepts that it may be necessary or even desirable, subject to the terms of the policy, to allow new uses in order to achieve this.

5.50 Where a change of use of a building also requires the carrying out of alterations or extensions to the building, it is important to ensure that these works would not harm the character or appearance of the building. It will therefore be necessary for such proposals to also comply with policy C6. Accordingly applications for a change of use of a listed building should incorporate detailed plans required by policy C6 showing all of the works necessary (including those for which listed building consent would be required) to implement such a change of use. Where no alterations or extensions are required then this should be clearly stated in the application. Furthermore some new uses may also demand alterations to the layout of land around a building, for example to provide parking facilities, and it will be necessary to ensure that such proposals do not detract from the setting of the building and would therefore need to comply with policy C8. Applications should include all matters where there may be some alteration to or impact upon the setting of the building.

5.51 Listed buildings require the highest standards of preservation and maintenance, and without such exacting standards they may be damaged or fall into disrepair. The cost of keeping a listed building will often be higher than for other types of building due to the special materials and construction methods often necessary to maintain architectural or historic character. The Council wishes to avoid buildings falling into disrepair or being altered unsympathetically. Short term and temporary uses may also discourage other prospective purchasers who may have acceptable proposals which would secure the long term future of a listed building.

5.52 Occasions may arise where an application would secure the long term future of a listed building and would comply with policies C6 and C8, but where there would be conflict with one or more of the other policies in this Plan. Such proposals will not be considered favourably unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that there is no other viable use which would comply with the terms of this policy. Where such an application is submitted the applicant will need to set out what other possible uses have been considered and a summary of why none of them is considered to be viable. Other possible uses should include those which might be carried out by persons other than the applicant or existing owner, and accordingly it will often be necessary for an applicant to demonstrate what efforts have been made to find another more appropriate use for the building, including the unrestricted freehold of the building having been offered on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition and the planning restraints on its potential use. Whilst the Council wishes to ensure that listed buildings are preserved and maintained, it also wishes to ensure that the other policies of the Plan are not undermined. Accordingly it will only be as a last resort that permission would be given for another use which is contrary to other policies set out in this Plan.

5.53 Where there is no use which would comply with the other policies of this Plan then the Council's approach will be to seek to secure that use which would involve the least conflict with other policies but which would still secure the long term future of the

~~building, its features and setting. That use may not necessarily be the most profitable one. The degree of conflict with other policies will vary considerably, but will not simply be determined by the number of other policies with which there is a conflict. For example, a proposed use which had a very marginal shortfall in terms of parking provision would be considered to involve less conflict than an industrial use likely to cause severe noise problems contrary to policy EP9. The importance of a building, its state of repair, physical features and setting will be important considerations and these will need to be balanced against the degree of conflict that there is with other policies in the Plan.~~

~~POLICY C8 – PROPOSALS AFFECTING THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING~~

~~Permission or consent will not be granted for any proposal which would adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building.~~

Explanation

~~5.54 The setting of a listed building is often an important part of its character. Such settings vary widely and applications will need to recognise that all types of settings must be respected. Some buildings stand as a focal point in their own grounds and that setting will be an important part of the character. In some such instances those grounds may also be historic parks and gardens where it will also be necessary to consider policy L5, and in other cases they may also be an important part of the wider landscape covered by policies L1 – L4. Notwithstanding this, it will still be necessary for proposals to meet policy C8. Where the setting is important because of factors such as its openness, the vistas or views of or from the building, or because of its setting in landscaped grounds, then any proposal which would harm this special character will not be allowed.~~

~~5.55 In other areas the setting of a building will be important because that building is an integral part of a group or complex of buildings. Groups of such buildings can be found in both rural areas, such as a farm complex, but perhaps more commonly in developed areas, often already designated as Conservation Areas. Unlisted buildings may be an integral part of a group or complex of buildings contributing to the setting of listed building within that group. The test of whether the setting is part of the character of a building is whether a building would lose any of its special character if it were to be located in a different or altered setting from the one in which it currently stands.~~

~~5.56 A number of different types of proposal may affect the setting, including not only the erection of new buildings or structures, but also the demolition of existing buildings and walls, the felling of trees, and the removal of other landscape features. The use of land around a building, together with any ancillary works will also often have an impact. The effect of the motor vehicle will often be a particularly important matter to consider. It will not normally be appropriate to grant permission for development which would require the provision of car parking or additional vehicular access if that permission would be detrimental to the setting of the listed building. Not all proposals involving additional parking will be unacceptable for it may be possible to provide parking facilities without adversely affecting the setting of the building.~~

~~5.57 Consideration of the setting of a building will not be limited to those parts of the setting which are either accessible to the public or visible from public areas. The setting of a building will often constitute private land including in some cases land which is not publicly visible or accessible. Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a building will not be acceptable even if they would not be visible to the general public or~~

~~from other private land.~~

~~5.58 There may be some cases where the setting of a building has already been adversely affected by existing works or uses. Where this is so then any application for development will offer the opportunity for improvements to the setting to be made and indeed the District Council will expect applications to incorporate proposals to this end.~~

~~POLICY C9 DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS~~

~~Consent will not be granted for any proposal which involves the demolition of a Listed Building. Exceptionally, where prior planning approval has been given, consent may be granted for the partial demolition of a Listed Building where this would both protect and enhance the character and setting of that building.~~

Explanation

~~5.59 Once demolished, historic buildings are lost forever and cannot be replaced. The destruction of historic buildings is very seldom necessary for reasons of good planning; more often it is the result of neglect or failure to make imaginative efforts to find new uses for them or to incorporate them into new development.~~

~~5.60 Nearly 93% of the listed buildings in the District are grade II. Whilst not individually as important as grade I or grade II* they do represent an essential part of the District's heritage. Accordingly consent for total or partial demolition of a listed building irrespective of its grading is unlikely to be granted.~~

~~5.61 The other policies of this Plan give a wide enough degree of flexibility to encourage and facilitate listed buildings to be put to new uses which would safeguard them and secure their upkeep and maintenance, including sympathetic extensions and alterations. The Council considers that this degree of flexibility should enable listed buildings to be retained, maintained and put to active use, thus dispensing with the need for their demolition. Given this framework the Council will expect owners of vacant or underused historic buildings to have explored the possibilities of the widest possible range of uses for a listed building before submitting an application involving its demolition. In considering an application for demolition, the Council will normally consider that inadequate efforts have been made to find an appropriate use for the building unless the landowner has also offered the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market, at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition and potential for new uses.~~

~~5.62 There may be very exceptional circumstances where consent for the partial demolition of a listed building can be granted. For instance where a small part of a listed building is to be replaced by a larger scheme of development. However, if such a demolition is to be allowed, then it will be necessary to ensure that the replacement development would protect, but preferably enhance, the character and setting of the listed building as a whole, and also that planning permission for the replacement development has already been granted. It would not be appropriate to allow proposals which could damage the special character or setting of a listed building. A condition will be imposed on listed building consents for demolition so as to control the timing of such demolition to that of the commencement of an approved development scheme. A condition would normally require the commencement of redevelopment within three months of commencement of demolition.~~

~~5.63 Nature Conservation~~

~~The important role of nature conservation in conserving our natural heritage is widely recognised. The commitment to sustainable development and conserving the natural heritage for the benefit of this and future generations has been developed on a national and an international basis. This commitment has led to the signing of international agreements including the Biodiversity Convention. Biodiversity (biological diversity) is defined as "the sum total of life's variety on earth". This Convention includes provisions on habitat conservation and impact assessment. In response to the Convention the Government published "Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan" which sets out our national conservation strategy.~~

~~5.64 The significant weight to be accorded to nature conservation is outlined in PPG9. This identifies the key role of local planning authorities and English Nature in the protection of the habitat on which our wildlife depends. This guidance is supported by a framework of statutory controls including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which provides wildlife protection based on a network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). PPG9 also emphasises the importance of undesignated sites; "but protection of wildlife is not an objective which only applies to SSSIs; it depends on the wise use and management of the nation's land resources as a whole". Nature conservation is therefore an important element of this Plan and the policies provide protection to all land of conservation value.~~

~~POLICY C10 KEY NATURE CONSERVATION SITES~~

~~Development which would cause demonstrable harm to the whole, or any part of, the following proposed or designated sites will not be permitted:~~

- ~~(a) Internationally designated nature conservation sites (Special Protection Areas or Special Areas of Conservation);~~
- ~~(b) National Nature Reserves;~~
- ~~(c) Sites of Special Scientific Interest;~~
- ~~(d) Local Nature Reserves;~~
- ~~(e) the habitat of a protected species~~

~~Designated sites are identified on the Proposals Map.~~

~~In assessing proposals the Council will carefully consider the following points:-~~

- ~~(i) whether the effect on the site or habitat is likely to be significant (in terms of the ecological objectives for which the site or species was, or is proposed to be, designated/protected), either individually or in combination with other proposals;~~
- ~~(ii) the importance of the site for nature conservation and the need to pay very special attention to the conservation of sites of international and national significance;~~
- ~~(iii) whether an environmental assessment is needed of the effects of the proposed development on the site/habitat;~~

- (iv) ~~the availability of alternative suitable sites for the proposed development, or different approaches which would have a lesser or insignificant effect;~~
- (v) ~~if a proposed development is likely to have an effect on a proposed or designated site of the habitat of a protected species, how that development and the site / habitat will be managed to ensure that the interests of the designated site / habitat are to be enhanced and protected;~~
- (vi) ~~whether adverse effects of development can be controlled by the imposition of appropriate conditions to ensure they would not cause unacceptable harm.~~

Explanation

5.65 ~~The protection of wildlife is an important element of this Plan. The key to achieving that is the protection of habitats on which that wildlife depends. Important habitats once lost can very rarely be recreated. South Bucks has eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) covering some 4% of the District, one of which, Burnham Beeches, is also designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR). SSSI's and NNR's are sites of national importance for nature conservation. Three LNRs are located within the District and one of these, at Black Park, incorporates a SSSI. LNRs are sites of nature conservation importance at the regional or local level. No international nature conservation sites are currently designated within the district, however, this policy will apply to any future designations. These are all sites which are of vital importance for nature conservation within South Bucks.~~

5.66 ~~These key nature conservation sites and habitats of protected species are a vital part of our wildlife heritage. Given their importance it would be inappropriate to grant permission for development which would be likely to cause demonstrable harm to them. Account will be taken not only of the effect of the proposals on the site as a whole, but also on any part of it.~~

5.67 ~~Damage to sites is not limited to proposals for development within them, for development beyond their boundaries, even some distance away can have an effect on the nature conservation value of a site. In particular, key sites may be prone to proposals which affect the quality or quantity and flow of water. For example, the discharge of pollutants upstream might affect a key site based on a river valley, and similarly proposals which generate airborne pollution may affect key sites some distance away. Flora and fauna is often by its very nature, susceptible to changes in environmental conditions. This is particularly the case with rare species which have, in effect, become rare because of their inability to adapt to such changes in environmental conditions.~~

5.68 ~~Legislation also provides for the protection of a number of species, even where they are found outside of designated sites. In many cases legal protection is afforded by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the relevant schedules of which list protected plants and animals and are updated every five years. The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 also provides for control over interference with badger setts. Because of the importance of such species it is sensible to offer them a similar degree of protection to that afforded to SSSI's. Accordingly, where the existence of such species on a site is known to the Council, these species and their habitats will be safeguarded from proposals which would cause demonstrable harm to them.~~

5.69 ~~Where the Council believes that a proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on a designated site, or on the habitat of a protected species, it may require an environmental impact assessment to establish the likely impacts and provide suggestions for amelioration. The Council will consult English Nature in the case of~~

~~development that is likely to affect SSSIs or protected species.~~

~~5.70 There may be instances where an alternative site could be found for the proposed development which would not directly or indirectly affect a key site, or where a different form of development would have a much lesser effect, to the point where the adverse effects on the nature conservation interest of a site would be less than significant. The Council will expect applicants to show that alternative sites and proposals have been examined. Where adverse effects would be less than significant, it may be necessary to impose conditions on any permission to ensure that these effects are strictly limited and therefore they would not become significant at some time in the future.~~

~~5.71 The Council is the freehold owner of Stoke Common which it purchased in 1993 specifically to safeguard and manage its nature conservation interests. Similarly, the Council believes that other SSSI landowners should be proactive, and in determining applications directly affecting key nature conservation sites the Council will expect those applications to also incorporate proposals for protecting and enhancing the nature conservation interest of the site through positive management measures. A legal agreement may be necessary in this connection.~~

~~POLICY C11 OTHER NATURE CONSERVATION SITES~~

~~Development will not normally be permitted which would be likely, directly or indirectly, to destroy or have a significantly adverse effect on the nature conservation interest of:~~

- ~~(a) any site with significant nature conservation interest which is not included under Policy C10 above;~~
- ~~(b) any land subject to a management agreement under section 39 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.~~

~~Development will only be permitted on, or close to, such sites where the Council considers the effect on the nature conservation interest of the site could be effectively limited by the imposition of appropriate conditions or through the applicant/landowner entering into a management agreement as set out in Policy C12.~~

~~The Council will, where appropriate, encourage the enhancement of the nature conservation value of any land within the District and will specifically encourage the creation of new habitats.~~

Explanation

~~5.72 Wildlife is not confined to areas such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Indeed our natural wildlife heritage needs to be conserved in the wider landscape, not just in designated areas. All areas of the countryside and parts of our towns and villages have some existing nature conservation value, and nature conservation interests will often be a material consideration in determining any planning applications which are likely to have a significantly adverse effect on such interests. Where appropriate, the Council will look to applications to incorporate proposals for the enhancement of nature conservation.~~

~~5.73 Taken to the extreme, every part of our landscape harbours some nature conservation interest. However, it is not possible or appropriate to provide protection from development for every site or landscape feature. A balance needs to be struck between~~

development and conservation.

5.74 Accordingly, this policy seeks to safeguard those sites which are of significant nature conservation value. Many, though not necessarily all, of the sites shown on the Buckinghamshire Biological Notification Maps will have some significant nature conservation value. The Council will use these maps as a guide and will consult with the Environmental Records Centre on all proposals affecting such sites either directly or indirectly. Other sites not shown on those maps may also have significant nature conservation value. In particular landscape features such as rivers with their banks, hedgerows, woodland and ponds are valuable because they act as refuges or corridors for wildlife, which link with and can help maintain the viability of other areas of nature conservation importance, provide food and breeding habitats and enable movement, all of which help to maintain a diversity of wildlife and the survival of important species.

5.75 Where adverse effects would occur, but would be less than significant, it may be necessary to impose conditions on any permission to ensure that these effects are strictly limited and therefore they would not become significant at some time in the future.

5.76 The Council is empowered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to enter into management agreements to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty or amenity of any land. Where appropriate, the Council will seek such agreements under policy C12. Where such agreements exist it is important that development should not have a significantly adverse effect on the land covered by the agreement and, therefore, the Council will not normally permit such development.

5.77 As is indicated by the term 'normally' in the policy, the degree of protection afforded to sites the subject of this policy will be less than that afforded to the key sites identified in policy C10. Protection will also be limited to safeguarding the nature conservation value of a site as a whole rather than, as is the case with designated areas, also seeking to safeguard the value of the smaller component parts of the overall site. Accordingly this policy is more flexible than C10 and it may be possible to allow development on one part of a site, whilst maintaining the overall nature conservation interest of the site as a whole, by enhancing the nature conservation value of another part of the site. Where possible, the Council will also encourage proposals which seek to enhance the overall importance of a site for nature conservation.

5.78 The creation of new habitats for wildlife can provide opportunities for and information about conservation. This can be especially useful for school children who can gain essential first hand experience from field trips to local nature conservation sites. The creation of such habitats will be encouraged in appropriate developments, subject to the other policies of this Plan.

POLICY C12 MANAGEMENT OF NATURE CONSERVATION SITES

The Council will seek a management agreement with the owner of land proposed for development in order to protect and enhance its nature conservation interest.

Explanation

5.79 The wildlife of the District cannot be sustained through site protection alone, but is dependant upon the proper management of suitable habitats to ensure its long term preservation. Therefore the Council will seek such management agreements in order to conserve and enhance the nature conservation interests of the District.

POLICY C13 – NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

~~Development will not be permitted which is likely to cause demonstrable harm to a site of, or the setting of, nationally important archaeological remains, whether Scheduled or not. When assessing applications affecting nationally important archaeological remains the Council will have regard to the following factors:~~

- ~~(a) the results of evaluation by fieldwork;~~
- ~~(b) the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains;~~
- ~~(c) measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development; and~~
- ~~(d) whether any of those measures can and need to be secured by the imposition of conditions or by legal agreement.~~

Explanation

5.80 There are currently 11 scheduled ancient monuments within South Bucks and these are shown on the Proposals Map. The Council considers that archaeological remains, and in particular ancient monuments, are a finite, non renewable resource, which are highly fragile and provide valuable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. It is important therefore that any proposed development should not be permitted if it would be likely to damage archaeological remains of national importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, or their setting, in order to preserve these remains in-situ for future generations.

5.81 In order to properly assess the effects of a proposed development it is necessary for the Council to be able to consider the results of evaluation by fieldwork, an assessment of the impacts and any measures proposed to mitigate these impacts. In assessing these factors the District Council will consult with the County Museum.

POLICY C14 – OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

~~When assessing proposals affecting other archaeological remains the Council will have regard to the following:~~

- ~~(a) the results of evaluation by fieldwork;~~
- ~~(b) the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains;~~
- ~~(c) measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development; and~~
- ~~(d) whether any of those measures can and need to be secured by the imposition of conditions or by legal agreement.~~

~~Where in-situ preservation is merited development which is likely to cause demonstrable harm to the site or its setting will not be permitted.~~

~~Where the Council is minded to grant permission for development which would involve~~

~~the destruction of remains, archaeological investigation and recording of evidence will be required prior to the commencement of and during, the development.~~

Explanation

5.82 ~~In addition to Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's) the District also contains many other archaeological remains which the Buckinghamshire County Museum has identified as being of importance, although due to the buried and often invisible nature of archaeological remains, there may exist some other sites which have not yet been so identified~~

5.83 ~~The degree of protection afforded to these other archaeological remains may be less than afforded to nationally important archaeological remains. However, as a result of evaluation by fieldwork it may still be important to protect some of these sites and their settings in situ. Before making a planning application developers should make an initial assessment of whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains.~~

5.84 ~~In order to properly assess the effects of a proposed development it is necessary for the Council to be able to consider the results of evaluation by fieldwork, an assessment of the impacts and any measures proposed to mitigate these impacts. Conditions may be imposed, or the applicant required to enter into a legal agreement, to ensure that the adverse impacts are effectively limited and would not become significant.~~

5.85 ~~Where development is to be permitted, it is essential that work is not started on site until any archaeological features which may be permanently lost have been properly assessed and recorded on site, and that a watching brief is kept at the development site to record any other archaeological features which become apparent as construction progresses.~~

POLICY C15 - SITES OF GEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Development will not be permitted which would be likely, directly or indirectly, to destroy or have a significantly adverse effect on the geological interests of any Site of Special Scientific Interest, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological site or other site of geological importance.

Development will only be permitted on, or close to, such sites where the Council considers the effect on the geological interest of the site could be effectively limited by the imposition of appropriate conditions. The Council may seek a legal agreement in order to secure the geological interest.

Explanation

5.86 It is not only wildlife or archaeological features which require protection, but also sites which display the visible evidence of the Earth's formation and transformation through rocks, fossils and landforms. South Bucks has one Site of Special Scientific Interest at South Lodge Pit, which is designated for its geological importance. There exist five Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) within the District and many other sites of geological/geomorphological interest exist which are shown on the Buckinghamshire Geological Notification Maps. The Council will use these maps as a guide and will consult the County Museum on all proposals affecting such sites either directly or indirectly. Other sites not shown on these maps may also exist and will be afforded similar protection. The RIGS sites are identified on the proposals map.

5.87 Where adverse effects would occur, but would be less than significant, it may be necessary to impose conditions on any permission, or for a legal agreement to be sought to ensure that these effects are strictly limited and would not become significant.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

6.1 In September 1990, the Government published its Environment White Paper ("This Common Inheritance"), which set out all aspects of environmental concern from local to global problems and outlined what action the Government and others could take to care for and safeguard the environment. The Government has since issued further relevant advice including Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 (PPG12) "Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance", other PPGs and Circulars on matters such as pollution, noise and renewable energy. These require that the environment be considered in its very widest context, embracing not only the familiar concerns such as Green Belt, landscape and wildlife protection, but also the newer concerns of worldwide importance. These include the need to reduce global warming and pollution and to conserve non-renewable resources such as land, minerals and water.

6.2 Local authorities are asked to play a key role in achieving the vision set out in the White Paper, with a major responsibility to ensure that development plans are drawn up in such a way as to take environmental considerations comprehensively and consistently into account. In this way, improvement of the environment can be plan-led, and individual development decisions taken against an overall strategic framework that reflects environmental priorities.

6.3 In most parts of South Bucks the scope for substantial improvement of environmental quality is limited, particularly given that the District is rural in nature, is not densely populated and has little industry or other uses which might be considered to be major polluters. Whilst large parts of the District are subject to pressures for mineral extraction, this Local Plan does not deal with the careful husbanding of mineral resources as that is a matter which is dealt with in the Buckinghamshire Replacement Minerals Plan. Also, the opportunities for additional development are limited by the policies of strategic restraint in this part of Buckinghamshire.

6.4 If the environmental quality of South Bucks is to be protected and improved, then the Council must establish a framework for considering the impact of proposals on the environment. The policies set out in this Plan provide such a framework. This chapter in particular contains a number of policies, covering all forms of proposals, which seek to ensure that development integrates with its surroundings, provides a suitable environment and makes a positive contribution to the environment both locally and globally. It also deals with air and water quality, noise and flood risk areas. There is a policy framework for dealing with energy resources. Telecommunications development and advertising, which can both have significant impacts on the visual environment, are also addressed in this chapter.

~~POLICY EP1—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS~~

~~The District Council will continue to ensure that positive action is taken to improve the environment in the District. This will be done directly through its Environmental Improvement Programme, as resources permit, and in partnership with other organisations and individuals.~~

~~Where development is proposed close to areas previously improved or proposed for improvement, applications will be assessed to ensure that:~~

- i) ~~there would be no adverse impact on the improvements; and~~
- ii) ~~the proposal would be well integrated with existing and planned improvements; and~~
- iii) ~~where possible, the proposal would enhance the improvements.~~

Explanation

6.5 ~~The District Council is committed to working towards the enhancement of the environment to ensure that it will be attractive, well designed, functional and in keeping with the intrinsic character of the District.~~

6.6 ~~Improvements are carried out in both the urban and rural areas although the priority is currently focused on the town and village centres, with emphasis on street improvements in the shopping and historic areas. Such improvements aim to help sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of these centres and bring the benefits of the programme to the maximum number of people. The improvements aim to create an environment which can be easily used by all members of society, including the disabled, the elderly and parents with children. They seek to minimise the conflicts between different user groups and especially between pedestrians and vehicles, and ensure settlements retain a distinctive, convenient and attractive character. This programme is therefore particularly consistent with the advice in PPG6 and complements the Council's policies for town centres and shopping.~~

6.7 ~~The District Council also aims to provide a focus for co-ordinating the activities and investment decisions of the public, private and voluntary sectors and seeks to ensure that available resources are most effectively utilised. Close working arrangements exist with the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference and Groundwork Colne Valley. These help to bring about a range of improvements within the Colne Valley Park area, particularly in areas of damaged landscape, and degraded areas.~~

6.8 ~~In carrying out these environmental enhancement schemes, the District Council is seeking to demonstrate what can be achieved and to provide environmental awareness and greater public involvement in environmental matters and works. A Community Grants Scheme administered by the Council is aimed at helping to finance environmental works by voluntary groups or organisations wishing to carry out small scale environmental improvements themselves.~~

6.9 ~~It is important that where the local environment has been improved by the Council, future development would not result in that environment being harmed. Therefore, the Council will expect proposed developments to respect the hard and soft landscaping improvements and the character of the area to ensure that the benefits already brought to the local environment are not diminished. Where possible, development should aim to complement the District Council's programme of environmental improvements, with both the District Council and the development industry working towards the enhancement of the environment to make South Bucks a more attractive place in which to live, work, shop and visit.~~

POLICY EP2 - ART AND DEVELOPMENT

~~The Council will seek the inclusion of works of art in major developments.~~

Explanation

6.10 ~~The Council wishes to encourage the development of the arts in the District. It recognises that new developments often provide an opportunity to include art and craft works. Works of art could be free standing items such as sculptures or incorporated into the fabric of a scheme such as specially commissioned railings or a mural. Such features can help to make a development more distinctive and assist in making positive use of a site's intrinsic qualities as referred to in Policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development).~~

6.11 ~~This policy does not compel developers to include works of art in a proposal. However, the Council will positively encourage developers of large proposals to include works of art at the outset so that they can be considered as an integral part of a scheme.~~

POLICY EP3 - THE USE, DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT

Development will only be permitted where its scale, layout, siting, height, design, external materials and use are compatible with the character and amenities of the site itself, adjoining development and the locality in general. Poor designs which are out of scale or character with their surroundings will not be permitted.

In assessing proposals, the Council will have regard to:-

(a) Scale of Development

Development should be in scale with surrounding development, including any buildings which are to be retained on the site, and should not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general.

The retention and provision of space between buildings should respect the scale of spaces in the locality.

(b) Layout of Development and Siting of Buildings

The layout of development and the siting of buildings should make positive use of the intrinsic qualities and features of the site including its topography, landscaping, water features, and views into or out of the site.

The siting of buildings should not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general.

The layout should not be dominated by large areas set aside for parking, servicing or access, and where extensive space is required for such activities, it should be sub-divided by landscaping.

The layout of new development should, where possible, create attractive groupings of buildings and spaces between buildings.

(c) Height of Development

The height of new development should respect the height of surrounding development, including any buildings on the site which are to be retained, and the height of buildings in the locality generally.

Proposed extensions to existing buildings should reflect the height of those buildings.

(d) Building Form, Design and Fenestration

Buildings should be of a form and design which would respect and harmonise with surrounding properties, including any buildings on the site which are to be retained, and with buildings in the locality in general.

Proposed extensions to existing buildings should reflect the form and design of those buildings.

The fenestration of extensions to existing buildings should respect the fenestration of those existing buildings.

The fenestration of buildings should safeguard against the loss of privacy to residential properties by reason of overlooking.

(e) Materials

The external materials to be used in new developments should be of a type and quality which harmonise with the materials of surrounding development including any existing buildings on the site which are to be retained. Where an existing building is to be extended, the extension should usually be constructed in materials to match the existing building as closely as possible.

(f) Use of Land and Buildings

The use of land and buildings should be compatible with the uses of adjacent land and buildings and with the character and amenities of the locality in general. Permission will not be granted for uses which would be, or which would have the potential to be, detrimental to the character and amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general by reason of noise, vibration, smell, pollution, disturbance, visual intrusion, loss of privacy, the impact of traffic, or other nuisance.

The scale of a proposed use should be compatible with and not adversely affect the character or amenities of neighbouring properties or the locality in general.

Where permission is granted, conditions may be imposed in order to minimise to an acceptable level the impact on adjacent uses.

Explanation

6.12 The Council wishes to ensure that developments are of a high standard of layout and design. Development should make the best use of features of the development site, and respect adjoining development and the locality in general.

6.13 The opportunities for development in the District are very limited, principally as a result of policies of strategic restraint and especially those relating to the Green Belt. Accordingly the pressure for development will be concentrated in those areas where, in principle, development is acceptable. It is important that development is compatible with the character and amenities of the site itself, adjoining development and the locality

in general, and the Council will therefore judge all applications against the criteria listed in the policy.

6.14 The criteria listed in the policy do not generally require that the design or layout of development should be identical to existing surrounding development. Indeed such an approach could stifle innovation or produce an uninteresting environment. It is nevertheless important that development respects the character and amenities of buildings and spaces on and adjacent to the site and in the locality.

6.15 New development should respect the scale of surrounding development and not appear unduly prominent or obtrusive in the street scene or when viewed from adjoining properties. The height of buildings should also be in keeping with any surrounding development and not appear incongruous. Siting and layout of buildings should relate satisfactorily not only to any surrounding buildings, but should also take advantage of any existing topographical or natural features on the site, including existing trees and vegetation. The topography of a site, for example, should be utilised where possible to minimise the impact of new development. Existing natural or built features, such as trees, water features, walls or walled gardens, can be utilised to provide some element of screening or to enhance the visual appearance of the development.

6.16 Buildings will be required to be of a form, design and fenestration which would harmonise with surrounding developments; extensions will be expected to respect the existing building. Conditions will be imposed on any permission granted requiring that materials to be used for the development be approved by the planning authority, or alternatively that materials match the existing building. The re-use of materials, or the use of second-hand materials, will often be preferable and may especially be required in the case of listed buildings and Conservation Areas.

6.17 Development can have an impact upon character and amenity not only in terms of its design and layout but also in terms of its use. It is important that development does not have an unacceptable impact on adjacent properties or the locality by reason of those matters set out in clause (f) of the policy. The Council accepts that a new use of land or buildings will often, merely by the nature of change, have some impact upon character and amenities. In this context the Council is not seeking to prevent change itself and will not refuse permission where the impact on the character and amenities would not be detrimental. In assessing whether a new use would be detrimental the Council will take account of the level and nature of the impact of the proposed use and the type of existing development adjacent to the application site. Proposals for a new use in a residential area especially must respect surrounding development as residential development is particularly sensitive to disturbance. In some circumstances it may be necessary to impose conditions in order to limit the impact of the proposed use. One such example is the imposition of **strict** conditions relating to proposals for food and drink establishments ~~as set out in policy S7~~.

POLICY EP4 - LANDSCAPING

Development proposals will be expected to:-

- (a) incorporate appropriate hard and soft landscaping as an integral part of the development proposal; and
- (b) take account of, and retain, existing planting and landscape features, which are or may become important elements in the character and appearance of the site or the wider area; and

- (c) where appropriate provide for the planting of appropriate additional trees and shrubs including native species and;
- (d) make proper provision for the subsequent maintenance and retention of the existing and proposed planting.

Explanation

6.18 Hard and soft landscaping contributes significantly to the provision of an attractive setting for development and to the character of an area. It is essential that landscaping proposals are prepared as an integral part of the development. Except in the case of outline applications, the District Council will therefore require details of landscaping to be submitted as part of the application.

6.19 South Bucks owes much of its attractive character to the presence of large numbers of mature trees, hedges and shrubs. It is considered vital that existing trees and other planting is retained where it is or may become important in the character and appearance of the site or wider area and that new planting is provided. In many cases the retention of existing soft landscaping and new planting are essential to help integrate the new development with its surroundings.

6.20 Sufficient details will be required to enable a proper assessment of the adequacy of the landscape proposals, and the likely success of the retention and provision of landscape features. Where existing trees form a major feature of development sites, the District Council will require planning applications to be accompanied by tree surveys. Conditions will be imposed requiring that the landscaping scheme is implemented in the first planting season following completion or occupation of the development and that it is maintained for a specific period to enable the new planting to become established.

POLICY EP5 - SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT

Development will only be permitted where its design and layout:-

- (a) would provide for adequate daylight, and where possible sunlight, to reach into spaces around and between buildings and other physical features; and
- (b) would not result in a significant loss of daylight or sunlight to adjacent buildings or land; and
- (c) would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy EP3 (the Use, Design and Layout of Development).

Explanation

6.21 It is important for amenity and public health reasons that land should receive adequate daylight and sunlight, particularly where that land is used or is intended to be used by people. If land does not receive adequate light its intended users may be discouraged from using it. Alternatively the land may still be used but because of inadequate daylight the land and its users become more prone to the possibility of crime. Neither situation is considered to be acceptable. The Council will therefore endeavour to ensure that public and private areas to which the public have easy access receive adequate daylight and, where possible, sunlight. This policy also relates to private land and

buildings to which there is no public access.

6.22 One of the ways in which development can have an impact on its surroundings is by causing the loss of daylight or sunlight. Whilst the Council considers that the amount of light penetrating a new building is primarily a matter for the developer and the subsequent user, the effect of the development on the amount of light penetrating adjacent buildings and land is a matter which the Council will consider in assessing any proposal for built development. New development which would result in a significant loss of light to adjacent properties will not be considered acceptable due to the reduction in the level of amenities to the existing properties. Some uses, including residential, are dependent upon adequate daylight and sunlight. Where adequate light is prevented from reaching into existing buildings and land, the amenities of those properties will be unacceptably impaired. At the extreme, a loss of light could prevent buildings or land being put to the use for which they were intended. Loss of light can in some cases have a very significant impact on the amenities or use of adjoining buildings or land. Where this is so the Council will not normally be prepared to grant permission.

6.23 In assessing proposals the Council will take account of the nature of adjoining development and the level of light loss. In considering proposals for development adjacent to residential development, for example, account will be taken of the rooms affected and whether the garden area affected is a private sitting-out area. Proposals which would not affect habitable rooms will not be considered as detrimental to amenity as those which would affect primary windows to habitable rooms.

POLICY EP6 - DESIGNING TO REDUCE CRIME

Development should be designed and laid out to reduce the opportunity for crime against both people and property. In particular, developments should:-

- (a) clearly demarcate private from public areas; and
- (b) ensure that areas to which the public have easy access are overlooked for security reasons; and
- (c) incorporate the provision of facilities which would discourage crime.

The proposal should also comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy EP3 (the Use, Design and Layout of Development).

Explanation

6.24 Good planning will not necessarily prevent crime, but can be an important factor in helping to reduce the opportunities for crime against people and property. The greatest protection against crime in new developments can be achieved treating it as an important consideration from the outset. The Council will be guided by the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO) when considering proposals where crime may be an issue. Applicants are advised to consult the ALO themselves at an early stage. Attention is drawn to the Police "Secured by Design" initiative which aims to foster design principles which help reduce crime and DOE Circular 5/94 which contains a useful bibliography on crime prevention.

6.25 People, particularly residential occupiers, are normally very defensive of their own land, especially where the boundary is well defined. As well as being more defensive people tend to take a greater pride in their property and ensure its maintenance if the

boundaries are well defined. In other cases where boundaries are not clearly defined, such as in some open-fronted developments and flats, people are less defensive and may take less pride in their properties. It is therefore important that development should clearly demarcate private from public land. Such demarcation is likely to be most effective if it involves a physical demarcation, such as a wall, fence, gate or landscaping. Private gardens to the rear or side of dwellings should be securely bounded, ideally by hedges or possibly by walls or fencing.

6.26 One of the greatest deterrents against crime is the fear of being seen committing the crime. It is therefore important to ensure that public areas, and private areas to which easy access can be obtained, are overlooked. Such private areas would include the front gardens of dwellings and private car parks. Whilst recognising the need for privacy, development should generally be laid out to facilitate the maximum surveillance of such areas and the creation of alleyways or other blind spots should be avoided.

6.27 In some instances it may be appropriate for developments to incorporate specific physical measures to discourage crime. New shopfronts should incorporate brick plinths or concrete stallrisers to provide protection against ram-raiding, whilst security grilles may also be necessary for some types of retail business. Security grilles will normally be more acceptable from a visual point of view than security shutters, as the former are visually penetrable whilst the latter are not. ~~In assessing proposals which incorporate such crime prevention measures the Council will also have regard to policy S8 Shopfronts.~~ In some private parking areas it may prove necessary to incorporate lockable or removable bollards. The provision of security lighting may also be desirable in some circumstances. Where planning permission or listed building consent is needed for such lighting the Council will endeavour to facilitate its provision subject to the lighting being as discreet as possible and there being no conflict with the other policies of this Plan.

POLICY EP7 - SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Express consent for the display of a sign or advertisement will only be granted where:-

- (a) its positioning, size, design, colour, materials, method and degree of illumination (if any) would not adversely affect the visual amenities or character of the building, site or locality; and
- (b) it would not, together with other signs and advertisements, adversely affect the character and visual amenities of the building, site or locality; and
- (c) it would not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring properties; and
- (d) it would not adversely affect public safety.

Explanation

6.28 The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations governs the requirement for consent to be obtained. Some signs and advertisements may be lawfully displayed without the need for express consent from the Council. However, large parts of the District, in particular the rural areas, are designated as an Area of Special Advertisement Control. The principal effect of this designation is that some advertisements which would normally be exempt from requiring express consent require consent within this area.

6.29 Legislation controlling the display of advertisements is founded upon two principles:-

- (a) the maintenance of local amenity; and
- (b) the interests of public safety.

The criteria listed in the policy are those which the Council considers it is necessary to meet in order to uphold these principles.

6.30 It is important that an advertisement respects the character and visual amenity of the building and site on which it is to be located, and that of the locality generally. In considering this the Council will have regard not only to the details of the proposed advertisement but also to the cumulative impact together with other advertisements in the locality. In considering proposals the Council will also have regard to the character and amenities of the building, site and locality. Advertisements which are acceptable on one building may not necessarily be acceptable on another, particularly on listed buildings. Similarly an advertisement which may be acceptable within a town centre or on industrial estate may not be acceptable in a primarily residential area or in the countryside.

6.31 The town and village centres in the District are relatively small scale and this is reflected in their character. Advertising is generally in sympathy with the amenities and character of the locality. In particular, excessive advertising has been avoided by a general absence of fascia boxes and illuminated projecting and fascia signs. The Council wishes to maintain the amenity of these areas by continuing to resist the introduction of these signs. The Council will also refuse consent for corporate signs where these would conflict with the policy. The Council wishes to ensure that signs are well related to the buildings on which they are to be displayed and, in particular, will not generally grant consent for the display of signs above ground floor level on a building.

6.32 Most signs are to be found in town centres and in other commercial areas. However, other parts of the District are not completely immune from the pressures for signs and advertisements. The Council will not normally be prepared to grant permission for signs and advertisements in localities where they would be detrimental to the character and amenities of those areas, including particularly Conservation Areas, residential areas and the Green Belt.

6.33 In dealing with all applications for consent the Council will have regard to public safety, especially in relation to the positioning, size, colour and illumination of advertisements. In considering this aspect the Council will consult with the highways authority on all relevant proposals.

POLICY EP8 — NOISE SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

~~Applications for residential or other noise sensitive development such as hospitals, schools or some community facilities will not be permitted in areas subject to existing or predicted high levels of noise from road, rail, air traffic or noise producing industrial or commercial activity. Exceptionally, where planning permission is to be granted for such development, conditions will be imposed to mitigate the effects of the noise on the full enjoyment of the proposed development.~~

Explanation

6.34 Noise has the capacity to irritate, annoy, interrupt sleep, increase stress, disrupt concentration and even damage one's health. There are many sources of noise and they often have a major impact on the character of an area and people's amenity. The Council will use its powers under other relevant legislation to deal with unacceptable noise from neighbours, industrial and trade processes and installations, construction sites and sporting, recreation and entertainment activities. There are some sources of noise over which the Council as local planning authority has no control, such as noise from road, rail or aircraft. However, regardless of the source of the noise or whether the Council has control over it or not, it clearly would not be appropriate to grant planning permission for uses which are sensitive to noise in locations which are already subject to high levels of noise or are predicted to be so.

6.35 There are some areas of the District which already suffer from high noise levels as a result of existing activities. It is important that development which is particularly sensitive to noise is kept separate from major noise generating uses such as major roads, railways, noisy commercial or industrial activities, and from areas which suffer considerably from aircraft noise.

6.36 In exceptional circumstances, noise sensitive development may be allowed in a location subject to high noise levels, provided that adequate noise insulation measures are provided. It might for example, be inappropriate to refuse permission for redevelopment of a site where the proposal would result in fewer people than existing being affected by high noise levels. In such cases, internal noise levels will need to be kept below those expected for that particular use as set out in Annex 6 to PPG24 Planning and Noise and Section 3 to BS 8233, and conditions will be imposed to ensure that measures are taken to achieve these levels.

POLICY EP9 — NOISE GENERATING DEVELOPMENT

Development which would, or which would have the potential to, cause noise disturbance to adjacent uses or the locality in general will not be permitted unless it can be established that the predicted ambient noise levels could be kept to acceptable levels either:

- (a) through the design or insulation of any buildings or the provision of a structure to form a sound barrier; or
- (b) by limitations on the type and duration of the activities to take place either within or outside of any buildings on site.

Development which would, or which would have the potential, by reason of traffic movements to cause noise disturbance to noise sensitive uses in the locality, or substantial disturbance to the character and amenity of the locality, will not be permitted.

Explanation

6.37 It would be inappropriate to grant planning permission for development which would cause noise disturbance affecting other uses or significantly affecting the character and amenities of a locality in general. In particular, the Council wishes to avoid allowing noise generating development where noise disturbance would affect residential and other noise sensitive developments such as hospitals, schools and some community uses.

6.38 ~~However, it is not only noise sensitive uses which need to be protected from noise disturbance. Large areas of South Bucks are characterised by their relative peace and tranquillity, this being an important part of their amenity. It would be inappropriate to grant permission for development which would cause noise disturbance resulting in a significant adverse effect on the character or amenity of such an area. For example, noise generating development would be unacceptable if it would have an adverse effect on the peace and tranquillity of the countryside.~~

6.39 ~~It may be possible in some instances to alleviate noise levels through careful design, building insulation or the creation of other noise protection measures. In other cases limitations on the type of activities or the times during which they may take place could reduce disturbance to acceptable levels. The Council will determine the suitability and enforceability of planning conditions to control noise generating development in liaison with relevant bodies, as considered appropriate, on a case by case basis. They will also have regard to all the advice and information set out in PPG24 (Planning and Noise) and its annexes.~~

6.40 ~~It would be inappropriate to grant permission for a development which did not generate noise disturbance from the site itself, but where traffic movements to and from that development would be likely to cause substantial noise disturbance to nearby noise sensitive uses or substantial disturbance to the locality in general. The countryside has already been mentioned. In addition several of the town centres in the District are dissected by important roads, but it might be undesirable to grant permission for development which would significantly increase noise levels to the extent where this detracted considerably from their retail function and associated amenities.~~

POLICY EP10 AIR POLLUTION

~~Development which would, or which would have the potential to, result in significant pollution of the air, either by itself or cumulatively together with other generators of pollution, will not be permitted.~~

~~Conversely, the Council will not normally grant permission for development in a location where it would be likely to be significantly affected by air pollution.~~

Explanation

6.41 ~~Air pollution not only has an adverse effect on human, animal and plant life, but increasingly, particular pollutants are becoming a major concern because of their effect on climatic changes. In the past too little regard has been paid to the pollution of air.~~

6.42 ~~The Council is concerned to ensure that development would not by reason of air pollution, have an adverse effect upon the character and amenities of the District. The District has very little development which in itself is a serious polluter of the air. Probably the greatest form of air pollution in South Bucks is pollution arising from motor vehicles, particularly given that the District is crossed by three motorways. The Council will use this policy to restrict new developments which would be likely to result in significant pollution affecting the character and amenity of South Bucks.~~

6.43 ~~The Council's concern however is not limited to South Bucks. The Council acknowledges that it has a role to play, in conjunction with other authorities, in seeking to safeguard the global environment from pollution. The Council will use this policy to safeguard the wider environment from development which would result in significant levels~~

of pollution.

6.44 The Council will not use the policy to impose controls that are properly the responsibility of other pollution control bodies. It would however, be inappropriate for the Council to grant permission for developments which clearly would result in the emission of significant pollution into the air. In considering proposals against the policy the Council will seek the advice of the appropriate pollution control authorities.

6.45 Similarly it will not generally be appropriate for permission to be granted for developments in localities which are significantly affected by air pollution. Developments which would not involve use by people, for example an electricity sub station, may nevertheless be acceptable in areas subject to pollution.

POLICY EP11 WATER RESOURCES AND QUALITY

~~Development will only be permitted where :~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the flow, level or quality of water in a stream, river, canal, lake or other water body; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on the quantity and quality of water resources and supplies.~~

Explanation

6.46 It is important that streams, canals, and rivers maintain an adequate flow of water for a variety of reasons, one being that they are an important part of the landscape. A loss of flow can mean the loss of an important landscape feature, whilst a low flow can lead to the stagnation of water and thus a loss of amenity. Changes in flows can also have an adverse effect on the nature conservation value of the water course and its banks. The deterioration in water quality in lakes can have a similarly adverse effect.

6.47 Whilst other bodies have controls over the discharge of pollution into water, the Council in its role as local planning authority should nevertheless safeguard against development which would pose a risk to the quality of water resources and supplies, both surface water and groundwater. Indeed some forms of development may not intend to discharge into the water cycle, but may pose a significant risk should pollution occur accidentally. In considering the degree of risk the Council will have regard to the Environment Agency groundwater vulnerability maps and will consult with the Environment Agency and British Waterways on relevant proposals.

POLICY EP12 PROTECTION FROM FLOODING

~~In the floodplain areas identified on the Proposals Map, planning permission will not be granted for development which would be likely, either by itself or cumulatively in conjunction with other development, materially to:~~

- ~~(a) impede the flow of flood water; or~~
- ~~(b) reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store flood water.~~

~~Exceptionally where development is permitted in the floodplain areas appropriate flood~~

~~protection measures will be required.~~

~~Throughout the Plan area, permission will not be forthcoming for proposals which, either individually or cumulatively with other developments, would be likely materially to increase the number of people or properties at risk from flooding.~~

Explanation

6.48 ~~After sustained periods of heavy rainfall some areas of land adjacent to rivers within the District may be subject to flooding. The protection of these floodplain areas from development which would either impede the flow of water or reduce the capacity of the floodplain to store flood water, is essential to ensure the problem of flooding does not affect a larger area.~~

6.49 ~~Parts of the District have been subject to extensive flooding in the past, most notably in 1947. The rivers most at risk are the Thames and the Colne, although part of the Misbourne has also flooded in the past. The floodplain areas shown on the proposals map are based on the areas flooded in 1947 and modelled floodplains. In recent years the Environment Agency has undertaken some flood alleviation works on the River Colne. It is also undertaking the construction of the Maidenhead Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Channel, which will pass through the Dorney area.~~

6.50 ~~Where development is allowed in the flood plain it will be the responsibility of the developer, not public bodies, to provide any necessary flood protection measures. It is important that such measures do not detract from the character and amenities of the locality.~~

6.51 ~~Whilst the floodplains are those areas which are most prone to flooding the Council wish to safeguard against developments throughout the Plan area if those developments would materially increase the number of people or properties at risk from flooding. Outside of the floodplain areas, new developments can, by virtue of surface water runoff, cause flooding.~~

6.52 ~~The Council will consult with the Environment Agency on proposals in the Plan area as a whole and in the floodplain areas as set out in Town and Country Planning Liaison Procedures 1994 published by NRA Thames Region (now Environment Agency) and will consult British Waterways on proposals affecting the Grand Union Canal and its Slough Arm.~~

POLICY EP13 - INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

~~Where water and sewerage infrastructure is inadequate to meet the needs of proposed development, planning permission will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that the inadequacies can be overcome.~~

~~Permission will not be granted for proposals which are likely to require new infrastructure where the provision of that infrastructure would be likely to have an adverse effect on the environment or on amenity or where it would be contrary to another policy in the Plan.~~

Explanation

6.53 Many types of infrastructure are the responsibility of and are controlled by other statutory bodies and utilities, for example sewerage and sewage treatment, water supply, gas, electricity and telephone communications. New development will need to comply with the requirements of these bodies regarding infrastructure. Adequacy of infrastructure can be a material consideration in deciding whether permission should be granted. However, withholding of permission on these grounds is rare because where provision does not currently exist it may be possible to make provision with relative ease. Lack of a sewerage system for example, could be overcome by providing an on site sewage treatment system. The Council will be advised by the relevant statutory undertakers and utilities as to the adequacy of infrastructure provision. Highway infrastructure is dealt with in Policy TR5.

6.54 Where development would be likely to require the provision of new built infrastructure such as a pumping station, permission will only be forthcoming for that development if the necessary infrastructure can be provided in an acceptable way. It would be wrong to grant permission for a development if the necessary infrastructure could not be provided in an acceptable way.

POLICY EP14 ENERGY CONSERVATION

Permission will not normally be granted for major development proposals in locations where the proposals would be likely to generate a substantial demand for the use of the motor car unless the criteria in policy TR1 (Encouraging the Use of Public Transport) are met.

Permission will not normally be granted for major development proposals where their design and layout would be inefficient in conserving energy.

Explanation

6.55 Energy conservation can be achieved in two ways. It can be achieved by reducing the demand for energy, and also by using it more efficiently. Both the overall demand for energy and the efficiency with which it is used can be influenced by the location of the development and by the careful design, layout and orientation of buildings. It is therefore important that new development maximises its energy conservation potential to ensure the greatest protection of the environment.

6.56 In its role as a planning authority, however, the Council cannot and will not seek to duplicate the Building Regulations controls. These Regulations will provide controls to ensure that new buildings meet certain energy conservation standards. Nonetheless, both RPG9 "Regional Planning Guidance for the South East" and the Structure Plan indicate that development should maximise energy efficiency. Accordingly the Council will use this policy to ensure that the broad design and layout of major developments are energy efficient. In this context the Council will wish, for example to ensure that tree shelter belts would be retained, that development would not be sited on exposed hillsides and that as far as possible the orientation of buildings would be such as to be able to take advantage of solar gain. However, there may be some instances where energy efficient measures would be unacceptable because they would conflict with other policies within this Plan, and in particular those policies relating to design. Solar collectors or panels may not, for example, be appropriate on listed buildings or within Conservation Areas.

6.57 One of the objectives of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) is to facilitate

accessibility, to reduce the growth in reliance on private vehicles and to increase the proportion of travel using modes less likely to have an adverse environmental effect and in particular public transport. Major developments can generate large numbers of private vehicle movements and they will therefore be assessed against Policy TR1 to ensure that a greater emphasis is placed on the use of public rather than private transport. Policy TR1 provides a framework for reducing reliance upon the motor car, thus not only reducing pollution but also conserving energy.

POLICY EP15 – RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS

~~Proposals for harnessing of the energy potential of landfill gas at a large landfill site will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) any building, structure or other form of development would be of small scale, unobtrusive in the landscape and strictly essential to the operation; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan.~~

~~Permission will only be granted for forms of renewable energy development in the Green Belt where they are demonstrably appropriate to a rural area and would not harm its rural amenities.~~

Explanation

6.58 Regional electricity companies are required by the non fossil fuel obligation contained within the Electricity Act 1989 to obtain a certain proportion of their electricity from sources which do not involve fossil fuels such as coal, gas and oil. Solar energy, wind and tidal power, hydro electricity and waste incineration are perhaps the best known examples of such sources.

6.59 Many of the mineral sites in the District are restored by landfill. Landfill with industrial, commercial or domestic waste will, through the process of anaerobic digestion, result in the production of landfill gas. This can be collected and burnt to generate electricity which can then be fed into the National Grid. There is one such facility in the District, located at the large Wapseys Wood landfill site in Gerrards Cross. It may prove possible in the future to harness the landfill gas resource from other large landfill sites. Whilst such sites are all necessarily located in the Green Belt the Council considers that subject to the criteria listed in the policy such proposals should be encouraged. Not only would such developments conserve valuable and finite fossil fuels but they would also help control the accumulation of landfill gas by acting as a safety valve, thereby reducing the dangers arising from landfill gas build up.

6.60 Some forms of renewable energy exploitation, such as the growing of bio fuels, will not require planning permission. Other forms of renewable energy development will normally constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The Local Plan cannot make provision for such proposals. The Council would not wish to preclude renewable energy development in those areas excluded from the Green Belt but considers the possibilities for such development to be very limited in this District due to the pressures on land.

POLICY EP16 - HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Council will not grant Hazardous Substances Consent for the use or storage of controlled quantities of hazardous substances, as defined in Schedule 1 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992, where there would be a risk to the people living in or using the surrounding area. Where the Council, after consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, is minded to grant permission, conditions will be imposed to ensure that the development is properly controlled.

Development in close proximity to hazardous substances will not be permitted unless it can be proven that there would be no risk to the potential occupants of the proposed development.

Explanation

6.61 The Council is able to exercise a degree of control over the presence of hazardous substances via the development control process, where the use or storage of these substances involve development under the Town and Country Planning Act. Additionally, since 1992 the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act has required Hazardous Substances Consent to be obtained for the use or storage of hazardous substances at or above certain controlled quantities. These substances and their quantities are defined in Schedule 1 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992: certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations and Major Accident Hazard Pipelines and Notifiable Installations. The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive on all applications for Hazardous Substances consent and strict regard will be had to their advice in determining whether there is a risk, given the proximity to areas of human activity including residential areas, commercial areas, retail centres or community facilities.

6.62 The area covered by this Local Plan already contains a number of installations handling notifiable substances and Major Accident Hazard Pipelines. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under health and safety legislation, it is prudent to control the levels of development permitted in their vicinity. In determining applications for development where human activity is likely to be in close proximity to an existing hazardous substance the Council will, after consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, determine whether there is a risk to health and safety.

POLICY EP17 - AERODROME/AIR TRAFFIC SAFEGUARDING

The District Council will not permit development which would interfere with the safe operation of an aerodrome or with the movement of air traffic over the District.

Explanation

6.63 Many areas of South Bucks are affected by aircraft, most of which are in flight to or from airports outside the District. There is also an aerodrome in the District at Denham. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Aerodrome and Technical Sites) Direction 1992, the District Council is required to consult the Civil Aviation Authority on certain types of proposals within specified distances of aerodromes. The Council is also required to consult the CAA on certain types of proposals in close proximity to the aircraft navigation beacon at Burnham. The Council will also consult the Denham Aerodrome Management in accordance with the consultation procedures established under the Direction. The heights of buildings or other structures could potentially interfere with air traffic safety as could other proposals which would attract large numbers of birds on flight

paths and lead to the possibility of a bird strike. Where the advice of the Civil Aviation Authority is that a proposal would be likely to interfere with safety, the Council will normally refuse permission.

POLICY EP18 - TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for telecommunications development will only be permitted provided that:-

- (a) where the proposed development would be located within the Green Belt, or would affect the character of the Green Belt due to its proximity to the boundary, the development is for a code system operator and it is demonstrated that no other more suitable site exists; and
- (b) it is demonstrated that the sharing of other existing masts is either not possible or would result in a greater environmental impact; and
- (c) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, ~~the Areas of Attractive Landscape, Local Landscape Areas,~~ the River Thames setting, any nearby properties or the locality in general; and
- (d) the proposal would comply with all other relevant policies in this Plan.

Explanation

6.64 The demand for telecommunications apparatus has been increasing and is expected to continue to increase. This is due to greater commercial and domestic demand, the development of new technology and the Government's commitment to ensure that in the future, people will have a wider range of choice of telecommunications services. The District Council is aware of the needs of the telecommunications industry and recognises that in some cases the development of telecommunications networks will conflict with other planning policies. Telecommunications development often requires a particular operating height or a prominent location to work most effectively, but it is these prominent locations and heights which can conflict with policies which seek to protect the high quality landscapes, the Green Belt, and the quality of the developed areas.

6.65 The Council will assess applications for telecommunications development to ensure that such schemes would not have a significantly adverse effect on the character and visual amenities of the locality. The Council considers that telecommunications masts and aerials (and other equipment fixed to masts and aerials) do not constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt. Whilst the Council will endeavour to facilitate such development, environmental considerations and Green Belt policy will remain of paramount importance. Where possible new masts should be sited on tall buildings within the developed areas, in a wooded area, or on other well screened sites. In all cases it will be necessary to ensure that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the character and amenities of the surrounding area. Operators will have to demonstrate that the sharing of other masts is not technically possible, especially if proposing a new mast in relatively close proximity to an existing mast. This will be particularly important on Green Belt sites. The Council considers that every opportunity must be taken to ensure that the best use is made of existing facilities and therefore the possibility of sharing facilities will be a material consideration when assessing an application for telecommunications development.

6.66 Within designated landscape areas, particularly the AONB, ~~AALs, LLAs~~ and the River

Thames setting, the introduction of masts, aerials or other telecommunications equipment can have a particularly damaging effect on the special character and qualities of the landscape. Telecommunications development should be guided to other areas.

6.67 Proposals for telecommunications development may come forward in the developed areas excluded from the Green Belt. Such locations will often be more suitable than a location in the Green Belt. In such locations the Council would wish to ensure that the proposals would not have a significant impact on the character and amenities of the locality or neighbouring properties. It would be important to ensure, for example, that proposals did not adversely affect a Conservation Area or a Residential Area of Exceptional Character, or impinge significantly on the residential amenities of any nearby dwellings.

6.68 In considering the impact on the locality and on neighbouring properties the Council will have regard to:-

- (a) the size, colour and appearance of the antenna, mast, aerial or other proposed equipment or buildings; and
- (b) the topography of the area in which the application site is situated; and
- (c) the proximity of dwellings, and any other buildings or structures; and
- (d) the presence of trees in the vicinity of the site, with particular reference to the contribution made to screening the proposed development. Account will also be taken of any tree felling which may be required.

6.69 A significant amount of domestic telecommunications development is "permitted development" under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, provided that any antenna is sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building on which it is installed. Where such development would not constitute "permitted development" the Council will consider the proposal against this policy. Proposals for other types of domestic telecommunications development, including masts required by amateur radio operators, will also be considered against this policy. In considering proposals for all types of telecommunications development, regard will be had to the impact not only on the locality generally, but also on neighbouring uses, particularly if these are residential. It would not be appropriate to grant permission for substantial structures or equipment in residential areas if they would have a significant impact on residential character and amenity of neighbouring properties.

6.70 Certain telecommunications apparatus may require the prior approval of the District Council, even where such apparatus is to be installed under permitted development rights. The Council may not prevent the development in principle but can require changes to siting or appearance with the aim of protecting amenity. The Council will have regard to matters listed in paragraph 6.68 above when assessing whether prior approval is required.

POLICY EP19 - OVERHEAD ELECTRICITY LINES

~~The Council will object to the erection of any overhead electricity line where it would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the character and amenity of a locality, unless it can be shown that there is no more acceptable alternative that can be provided at economic cost, or that the proposed new lines would replace and reduce the number of existing lines.~~

~~Where there is no acceptable alternative to a new overhead line the Council will seek to ensure that the line is located close to tree screens or in other locations where the visual impact would be minimised.~~

Explanation

6.71 ~~Most new overhead electricity lines are permitted development by virtue of the General Permitted Development Order. However, the installation of certain electricity lines requires the consent of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and in such cases the Council is consulted under the Electricity Act 1989. This policy sets out the approach that the Council will adopt in considering such proposals.~~

6.72 ~~Although the District itself is primarily rural and is not likely to bring about a substantial demand for increased consumption of electricity, there may in the future be pressure for additional overhead lines in South Bucks. Indeed, the National Grid has a major substation at Denham, and if gas from landfill sites is harnessed to produce electricity, demand for lines could arise in connection with such proposals. The Council wishes to safeguard against proposals for new overhead lines where they would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment, and would prefer electricity supplies to be laid underground in rural areas. However in some cases overhead electricity lines may, of necessity, have to be accepted. To protect the character and amenities of the rural areas, the Council will seek to minimise the visual effects of overhead electricity lines on the rural scene. Where there is no acceptable alternative to overhead lines the Council will seek to ensure where possible, that they are located close to tree screens or other physical features which would minimise their effect. The Council will usually oppose routes across open fields and those which intrude on skylines, because the rural views which can be affected by such sitings are often extensive.~~

7. LEISURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM

LEISURE AND RECREATION

7.1 Leisure and recreation covers a wide variety of activities ranging from formal activities such as golf, tennis and football to informal activities such as walking and horse riding. Sport and recreation is of considerable importance for a number of reasons including the contribution that it makes towards good health, the promotion of sporting excellence, the enhancement of the quality of life, and the help that it provides to the local economy. It can also serve to assist in the protection of the countryside. It is also important that leisure and recreation pursuits are available for all sections and age groups in society.

7.2 Leisure and recreation provision in South Bucks is primarily influenced by the predominantly rural character of the District. South Bucks is characterised by large tracts of open countryside and woodland. The public has access to large areas of such land, with areas such as Burnham Beeches and Black Park Country Park providing particular focal points. The Colne Valley Park is an important recreational resource and may provide opportunities for further recreational use. ~~The policy relating to the Colne Valley Park is set out in the Landscape chapter of this Plan since~~. The Council and the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference consider that improvement of the landscape in the Park is of greater importance than the provision of recreation facilities. Other parts of the District are similarly important and may offer further opportunities, such as the River Thames and the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal. Indeed, policy L4 seeks to protect the character and setting of the River Thames and the Council will not permit proposals involving the loss of recreational uses where such uses contribute to that special character. There is also an extensive network of footpaths in the District, some of which provide circular walks, and a variety of bridleways which provide access for horse-riders.

7.3 The District has a large number of golf courses, which cater not only for the resident population of South Bucks but also draw golfers from outside the District. Other than playing fields, there are few other large scale formal recreational areas or developments in the Green Belt areas of South Bucks.

7.4 The majority of built facilities for sport and recreation such as sports centres and tennis courts, including for example the Evreham Centre in Iver, are provided within the developed areas. The location of such facilities within the developed areas not only protects the Green Belt areas of the District, within which such recreational developments would be unacceptable, but also ensures that the facilities are close to the population base which they serve.

7.5 Apart from the opportunities presented by such purpose built facilities, there are numerous leisure and recreation activities catered for in various village halls and other buildings. These include, for example, badminton, keep-fit and dancing classes, local operatic and choral groups and a range of non-vocational evening classes. The location of South Bucks close to a number of major urban areas also provides relatively easy access for residents to a wide range of recreation and leisure activities outside the District.

7.6 Due to the constraints imposed by the Metropolitan Green Belt, the prospects of providing substantial new sporting or recreation facilities in the District are extremely limited. The Council is also concerned that, because of the Green Belt restrictions on

development, there can be a tendency to use available land within the District intensively and even to seek to build on land used for recreational purposes. This would not only result in existing residents having fewer facilities, but would also increase the number of residents using the remaining facilities. The Council will therefore endeavour, through the implementation of the following policies, to protect existing facilities and maximise existing potential, with the ultimate aim of conserving and managing the natural resources of the District to provide for sustainable development.

POLICY R1 PROTECTION OF EXISTING LEISURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

~~Proposals which would result in the loss or change of use of land or buildings currently used, or whose last use was, for leisure or recreational purposes will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a current and foreseeable future need for such facilities or that acceptable alternative provision of at least equivalent size, suitability and convenience is made as part of the proposal; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies L7 (Green Space) and L8 (Incidental Green Space).~~

~~Applicants may be asked to enter into formal agreements with the Council to ensure acceptable alternative facilities are provided as part of a proposal.~~

Explanation

7.7 This Council acknowledges the importance of leisure and recreation and will endeavour to ensure that sufficient facilities are available to meet the needs of those who are dependent upon the District for them. For some forms of leisure and recreation the District has insufficient provision to meet the needs of the resident population and it is dependent upon facilities in other areas to meet such needs. The provision of new facilities for leisure and recreation activities, whether indoor or outdoor, is constrained by the limitations on the amount of land available for development within the District, principally due to the designation of most of it as Green Belt. The Council will therefore endeavour to protect existing facilities, since once a facility is lost, it is difficult, if not impossible, to replace.

7.8 This policy relates to all leisure and recreation facilities within the District, whether indoor or outdoor and whether owned or operated publicly or privately. The policy is not limited solely to sporting facilities, but relates to all forms of leisure and recreation facilities including, for example, other buildings used for leisure activities such as theatre.

7.9 The Council will only accept loss or change of use when sufficient evidence is produced to show that existing facilities, whether currently utilised or not, are not required now or in the foreseeable future, or if alternative facilities of at least equivalent size, suitability and convenience are provided as part of a development proposal. The Council will continue to monitor the level of leisure provision in the District and assess how it meets the needs of the District and the wider area. In addition the Council will be undertaking research which will seek to establish the appropriate level of outdoor playing space provision for the area in relation to the need. It will identify existing resources and any deficiencies. It is proposed to publish this information in the form of supplementary planning guidance.

7.10 When considering proposals involving the loss of outdoor playing space including playing fields, pitches, greens, courts, training areas, children's play grounds and children's informal play space the Council will have regard to the level of provision in relation to the level of need, the use made of the outdoor playing space, the extent of its catchment area, the accessibility of outdoor playing spaces (particularly on foot) and the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) and other relevant standards (see Appendix 3). The Council considers that the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) minimum standard of 6 acres per 1000 of population represents the absolute minimum level of provision which is necessary to meet the needs of the resident population of the District. The needs of the District's own residents will often be above the NPFA standard. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that many of the outdoor playing spaces, both public and private, in South Bucks serve the needs of a wider population, including residents and employees from surrounding urban areas. Since the NPFA standard is only a guide to the absolute minimum level of provision required to meet the needs of residents of the District it will normally be necessary to protect playing spaces even if that playing space appears to exceed the NPFA minimum in a particular locality. It should also be noted that many outdoor playing spaces will be designated as Green Spaces under Policy L7. As these areas have an amenity value as open space, in addition to their recreational role, their loss or fragmentation will not be permitted.

7.11 Where there remains a need for facilities, permission will not be given for proposals which would result in the loss of outdoor playing space or land last used for such purposes. This is consistent with the guidance in PPG17 'Sport and Recreation'. The Council will not generally seek to regulate the specific recreational use to which land is put – it would be inappropriate, for example, for the Council to seek to protect, say a rugby field from being turned into a bowling green.

7.12 To ensure that appropriate alternative facilities are provided as part of a new development scheme, the Council may ask the applicant to enter into a formal agreement. Such an agreement would contain details of the proposed replacement facility as well as details of its future management and maintenance. This policy should be read separately to policy R4 which relates to the provision of children's playspace in connection with residential schemes.

~~POLICY R2 – PROVISION OF LEISURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE DEVELOPED AREAS~~

~~Proposals to provide leisure or recreation facilities within the developed area, through development, redevelopment, change of use or extensions, will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposed use would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general; and~~
- ~~(b) the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials of any proposed buildings and other structures would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and~~
- ~~(d) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with~~

~~mobility problems; and~~

~~(e) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

~~In localities where there is a deficiency of provision for public use the Council will encourage new leisure and recreation developments to make provision for use of the facilities by the public.~~

Explanation

7.13 This policy is designed to facilitate the provision of leisure and recreation facilities in the District in a manner appropriate to its location within the Metropolitan Green Belt and suited to the needs of local residents. Because of the restrictions on development in the Green Belt, it is probable that most new leisure and recreation facilities involving buildings or other structures will be provided on sites within the developed areas.

7.14 Indeed the provision of such facilities in the developed areas will generally assist in reducing the demand for travel, since in many cases facilities will be of a scale to meet only locally generated needs and accordingly facilities will often be located close to the population which they serve.

7.15 This policy seeks to ensure that leisure and recreation development in the developed areas does not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or of the locality in which it is sited. It is important that proposed buildings or other structures respect the character and amenities of the nearby properties and of the surrounding area. In assessing proposals, the Council will take account of the potential impact of proposed buildings, structures including floodlighting and perimeter fencing, and of car parking areas. It will be important to ensure that these do not have a significant adverse impact by reason not only of their appearance but also by reason of their use. In particular, floodlighting will not normally be acceptable where its use would seriously harm the amenities of adjacent residential properties. In considering the impact of proposals the Council will have regard to the nature of the proposed use, its frequency and likely hours of use, and the level of traffic likely to be generated. The Council would not wish to grant permission where the proposed use would have a significant adverse effect on the character or amenities of the area.

7.16 This policy relates to the provision of a variety of leisure and recreation facilities within the developed areas and is not limited solely to sporting forms of recreation. Other leisure and recreation development is also considered acceptable in principle in the developed areas provided that it complies with the policy. In this context the Council considers that, subject to the policy, development for the arts or for other forms of cultural entertainment is appropriate in the developed areas, including non-participating entertainment such as cinemas.

POLICY R3 - PROVISION OF LEISURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE GREEN BELT.

~~Proposals in the Green Belt involving either the use of land or the erection of structures for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, or the re-use of existing buildings for leisure and recreation purposes will only be permitted where they would not:~~

- ~~(a) compromise the aim or purposes of the Green Belt; and~~
- ~~(b) harm the landscape, rural character or the amenities of the locality or of neighbouring uses.~~

~~The Council will expect applications for leisure and recreation facilities to be comprehensive and to incorporate all development which is likely to be required as part of the proposal.~~

~~Proposals in the Green Belt involving either the rebuilding or extension of existing buildings or the construction of new buildings for leisure and recreation purposes will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the development is strictly ancillary and essential to the provision of outdoor sport or outdoor recreation on associated land; and~~
- ~~(b) the maximum re-use of existing buildings has been made; and~~
- ~~(c) the building as proposed to be constructed or enlarged is of a small scale in terms of its floorspace, bulk and height; and~~
- ~~(d) the building would not be intrusive in the landscape and, where appropriate, would be closely related to any existing buildings; and~~
- ~~(e) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of neighbouring uses or the locality in general and would be in accordance with EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(f) in the case of an extension, that extension harmonises with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building; and~~
- ~~(g) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems; and~~
- ~~(h) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

~~Other forms of leisure and recreation development not listed above, including particularly new buildings which are not ancillary and strictly essential to the use of land for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, will not be permitted in the Green Belt.~~

Explanation

7.17 Green Belts can have a positive role to play in providing access to open countryside. Such access may be for outdoor sports or for other more informal forms of outdoor recreation. However it is important to ensure that outdoor sport and outdoor recreation

would not harm the purpose of the Green Belt, nor the landscape, rural character or amenities of the locality and its existing uses.

7.18 By its nature, outdoor sport and other outdoor recreation often requires very little, if any, form of built development. Accordingly such uses will normally be considered appropriate in the Green Belt since they would be unlikely to compromise its purposes. In addition, the construction of new buildings essential for outdoor sport and the re-use of existing buildings are amongst the few specified exceptions to the restrictions on development within the Green Belt.

7.19 Not all forms of outdoor sport or outdoor recreation will be appropriate in the Green Belt, even if they do not require other development directly serving the proposed use. Some proposals do not require buildings or structures directly serving that use, but nevertheless under this policy they may be unacceptable from the loss of amenity arising from, for example, increased noise. For instance the use of land for clay pigeon shooting would not meet the provisions of this policy if it were to result in a loss of amenity by reason of increased noise. Such proposals will also be assessed against the provisions of policy R6. Proposals will also be unacceptable where the type of use proposed or its intensity would harm the landscape or rural character of the locality or the amenities of the locality and neighbouring uses.

7.20 Some other sports may require or involve the erection, either now or at a later date, of structures which would harm the character of a locality. An example of this is an all weather playing surface which will usually include high perimeter fencing and floodlighting. Such structures normally have a very significant urbanising impact and would therefore be unacceptable in the Green Belt. They will often also adversely affect the character and amenities of an area.

7.21 Proposals for golf courses and golf driving ranges are dealt with under policies R9 and R10 respectively.

7.22 Some outdoor sports or other outdoor recreation which may be appropriate within the Green Belt may need to provide facilities which directly serve that use, such as a club house with storage space and changing rooms. However, other new built development which is not strictly essential to the outdoor sport or outdoor recreation itself, such as spectator grandstands, saunas, squash courts or restaurants, are not considered to be development appropriate to the Green Belt. The District Council will expect applicants to demonstrate that the greatest re-use of existing buildings has been made when considering the provision of facilities. Where possible, any existing under utilised or redundant buildings should be used, or alternatively removed as part of the proposal. New buildings within the Green Belt will only be permitted where they are essential to the outdoor use of the land. It is important that where they are essential, they are small in scale so as to ensure that they are subservient to the primary use of the land for outdoor sport or outdoor recreation and not vice versa. Any such new buildings must not be intrusive in the landscape, and for this reason also that they should be of a small scale. Where new buildings are necessary they should normally be located close to any existing buildings so as to minimise scattered development in the Green Belt.

7.23 Situations have arisen in the past, and may arise again in the future, where existing facilities at an outdoor sports or outdoor recreation site are demonstrably substandard or in a poor state of repair. In such cases this Council will endeavour, where possible, to facilitate the provision of more appropriate facilities at the site provided any development complies with the criteria identified in this policy. Small scale increases in size over the original, through extensions or redevelopment, may be acceptable if such an increase in size is required to provide essential facilities directly connected with the sporting or

recreational use. Proposals to provide new indoor sporting facilities within the Green Belt will not be permitted. Government policy indicates that the re-use of existing buildings in the Green Belt for other types of leisure and recreation use may well not prejudice the openness of the Green Belt. However, proposals for the re-use of buildings for leisure and recreation will only be acceptable where they would meet the criteria in this policy. Permission will not be forthcoming where proposals would harm the landscape, character or amenities of the locality. Where the re-use of buildings would require structures, site works or other uses of land which would have a significant urbanising effect, such proposals will be unacceptable.

7.24 This policy seeks to ensure that the impact of any built development associated with sports or recreational use is minimised, thereby protecting the local environment. The policy strictly limits the type and amount of new built development within the Green Belt to that which would not compromise the Green Belt and to that which would be strictly essential to an outdoor sporting or outdoor recreational use.

POLICY R4 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PROVISION IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Council will not grant permission for new housing development unless adequate and appropriate provision already exists or is proposed to be made for children's playspace. It may be necessary for a planning obligation to be entered into to secure the provision of open space together with its future management and maintenance.

Explanation

7.25 The Council considers that the provision of open space within settlements is important due to its amenity and recreational value. Policies L7 and L8 seek to protect existing spaces for their amenity value. In addition it is important that where new development is proposed, that adequate provision is made for recreation. The Council uses the NPFA standard as a guide to the minimum level of provision that should exist within the constituent parts of the District to meet the needs of the resident population of South Bucks. However the Council acknowledges that because much development in the District is of a small scale and because the opportunities for major new provision are very limited, it would be inappropriate for the Council to seek new developments to make provision for youth and adult use as set out in the NPFA standards. However the Council considers that new housing development should have access to provision for children's play.

7.26 The Council will be guided by the NPFA standard for children's casual or informal play space within housing areas. That standard indicates that 0.4-0.5 hectares of casual or informal play space should be provided per 1,000 population. On site provision of children's play space is only likely to be practicable on larger housing sites in the District. The requirement to provide children's play space will therefore normally be limited to housing sites of over 1 hectare or schemes of 25 or more dwellings. The level of provision required in connection with a proposal would be influenced by the range and location of existing facilities which are within the catchment area of the new housing development. Where sufficient and suitable open space is already available in a locality to serve the needs of future residents of the new housing development, the Council will not require the developer to make further provision for children's playspace. In assessing the suitability of existing children's playspace, account will be taken of the need for such playspace to be within safe and easy walking distance.

7.27 The Council will take account of the type of units to be provided in assessing the children's playspace requirement of a development. Development schemes which involve

~~the provision of one-bedroom flats only, for example, will not be required to provide any children's playspace. The amount of garden space available to dwellinghouses will also be taken into account.~~

~~7.28 In general, where it is provided, proposed playspace should be concentrated in one location on the site, rather than split up into a number of small areas around the site. Larger areas of open space tend to have a greater recreation value than a number of small pockets of land and are easier to maintain to the benefit of local residents.~~

~~7.29 The Council will wish to ensure that where provision is proposed, that this actually comes to fruition and that proper provision is made for its future management and maintenance. Accordingly it may be necessary for agreements to be entered into to this effect.~~

POLICY R5 - HORSE RELATED FACILITIES

Proposals for the use of land for equestrian purposes, or for the construction of new or extensions to existing equestrian facilities, including riding schools, stud farms and livery stables or other private facilities, will only be permitted where:-

- (a) buildings or other structures would provide facilities which are strictly ancillary and essential to an outdoor equestrian use; and
- (b) the floorspace, bulk and design of buildings and other structures would be appropriate to the character of the area; and
- (c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would be small scale and harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and
- (d) buildings associated with the equestrian use would be sited within an existing group or complex of buildings or, where such a siting is not possible, would be sited in a readily screened, unexposed location; and
- (e) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (f) the proposal would not lead to a concentration of such uses in the locality, to the detriment of the landscape, character or amenities of the surrounding area or neighbouring uses; and
- (g) ~~the proposal would not adversely affect a nature conservation site covered by policies C10 (Key Nature Conservation Sites) or C11 (Other Nature Conservation Sites); and~~
- (h) adequate ancillary grazing land is and will remain available; and
- (i) adequate arrangements are made for the collection, storage and disposal of waste from the site; and
- (j) close access to bridleways and open land for riding is available; and
- (k) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic

Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

Planning conditions may be imposed requiring that, at all times when not actually being used, exercise equipment including jumps and other non-fixed structures, shall be stored within a building or enclosure. Conditions relating to the materials used for all-weather riding areas may also be imposed to ensure that such areas are not unduly obtrusive. The Council will normally seek a legal agreement to be entered into to ensure that adequate grazing land remains available.

Explanation

7.30 Although planning permission is not required for the use of land for grazing, it is nearly always required for the use of land for keeping horses, for riding schools and for other non-agricultural equestrian activities, as well as for the erection of buildings and other fixed structures associated with such uses. One of the few possible exceptions is the erection of a stable or loose-box within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse which does not, in certain circumstances, require planning permission. This policy relates to all forms of horse related development which require permission.

7.31 The Council acknowledges that the keeping and riding of horses is a popular recreational activity. Subject to the safeguards set out in the policy development for such purposes will be acceptable. The Council will seek, through the implementation of this policy, to ensure that the impact of any proposed new development on the character and amenities of the area is minimised.

7.32 Due to the nature of the use, many horse related facilities are to be found in the Green Belt. The use of land for the keeping of horses will normally maintain the open and undeveloped nature of the Green Belt. The erection of buildings or other structures will only be considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt where they would be strictly ancillary and essential to the main outdoor equestrian use. The erection of buildings or other structures will not be considered acceptable if the main equestrian use would not be outdoor.

7.33 The Council will also take account of the recommended standards for the safety and comfort of horses as well as other material planning considerations in assessing applications and, where appropriate, will seek independent professional advice to ensure that adequate grazing land is available for the proposed use. Where permanent grazing is proposed the Council will normally seek to ensure that a minimum of 1 hectare is, and will remain, available per two horses or ponies. If a combined system involving stabling the horse for part of the time is proposed less land may be required. In all cases, the Council will seek to ensure that adequate land is associated with any built development to ensure that the impact of such development is minimised. The Council will also require evidence that access to open land and bridleways is available for riding and that excessive riding on public roads to the detriment of road safety would not occur.

7.34 Agreements may be sought, by the Council, to ensure proper land management. Such an agreement could include provisions to protect trees and hedges from excessive browsing and to maintain buildings and equipment in a satisfactory condition.

7.35 In assessing development proposals for equestrian purposes, and particularly for commercial ventures such as riding schools, the Council will take account of associated development such as hardsurfaced yards, car parking areas and all-weather exercise areas. It is important to ensure that such developments do not adversely affect the character or visual amenities of the area.

7.36 The Council will also seek to minimise the impact of equestrian developments by ensuring that there is not such a concentration of horse-related uses in a locality as to affect demonstrably the character and amenities of that area. In assessing any application for a new equestrian development account will be taken of any similar establishments existing in the locality and the Council will consider the cumulative impact on the landscape, character and amenities of the locality and neighbouring uses. Where the combined impact of the new and existing developments would be significantly detrimental to the locality the proposed development will be resisted by the Council.

7.37 The Council would like to encourage appropriate recreational use of land, particularly where this would enhance the appearance of damaged land which cannot practicably be returned to agricultural use. Equestrian uses which would not compromise the open and undeveloped nature of the Green Belt may be an appropriate use for such land. Equestrian uses may also be an acceptable means of farm diversification provided that such a use would not adversely affect the viability of the agricultural activities.

POLICY R6 - SPECIALIST SPORTS

Proposals involving the use of land or water for specialist or organised sports and activities, including motorised sports and gun sports, will only be permitted where:-

- (a) ~~the proposal complies with policy R2 or R3; and~~
- (b) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the landscape, nearby uses or the locality in general, for example through noise and general disturbance; and
- (c) ~~the proposal would not adversely affect a nature conservation site covered by policies C10 (Key Nature Conservation Sites) or C11 (Other Nature Conservation Sites); and~~
- (d) adequate parking for participants, and where necessary spectators, would be provided within the application site; and
- (e) proposals for water-based sports would not conflict with policy L4 (River Thames Setting) or have an adverse impact on the character, landscape or amenity of any other waterway or lake.
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies ~~EP9 (Noise Generating Development)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

In assessing proposals the local planning authority will have regard to the hours, days and frequency of operation. ~~Proposals for any associated buildings will be assessed with regard to policy R2 or R3 as relevant.~~ Where possible locations for specialist sports should be well served by public transport.

Explanation

7.38 Many of the activities covered by this policy occur throughout the District, operating on an infrequent basis with the benefit of permitted development rights. Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 planning permission is not required to use open land for most purposes for certain limited periods. If it is proposed to use the land for a period in excess of that specified in the General Permitted Development Order planning permission is required.

7.39 In assessing any proposal for a use, on land or water, one of the main concerns of the Council will relate to the potential impact of the use on the surrounding area, particularly through noise or traffic generation. Proposals which would adversely affect the character or amenities of the area will be resisted by the Council. Regard will be had to the level of traffic generation and any car parking associated with the use.

7.40 It will also be important to ensure that where such uses involve land in the Green Belt that the development meets other relevant policies of this plan which seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

POLICY R7 - ALLOTMENTS

~~Proposals involving built development on allotments will not be permitted unless:~~

- ~~(a) it can be demonstrated that the reduced area of allotments would still be sufficient to meet local demand or that an acceptable alternative means of meeting local demand is available as an integral part of the proposals; and~~
- ~~(b) it can be demonstrated that there has been a continuing lack of demand for plots over a significant period.~~

Explanation

7.41 ~~Allotments can provide a very valuable informal recreational resource, particularly in areas where dwellings have small gardens or no garden at all. Allotment areas are also often important havens for wildlife. Unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that an allotment area is no longer required and that there has been a continuing lack of demand for such a facility over a significant period, proposals involving development on such areas will be resisted. Allotments may however be put to other uses such as grazing which do not involve built development and which serve to meet local needs.~~

7.42 ~~The Council will not seek to resist the loss of an allotment site if there is a lack of demand for such facilities. Some areas of allotments may nevertheless also be subject to other restraint policies which might affect their future use or development. In particular some areas may have an important amenity value and be protected by policies L7 or L8, whilst others may be located in the Green Belt and thus be subject to strong restraints on development.~~

POLICY R8 - FLOODLIGHTING

~~Proposals for floodlighting of outdoor sports facilities, whether in the developed area or the Green Belt, will only be permitted where they would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general having regard to:~~

- ~~a) the impact of the light; and~~
- ~~b) the appearance of the structures; and~~
- ~~c) the increased level of activity resulting from the lighting.~~

~~Where floodlighting is permitted conditions will be imposed to ensure light does not unduly spill beyond the playing area and to restrict the times of illumination.~~

Proposals will also be expected to comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).

Explanation

7.43 Proposals to floodlight outdoor sports facilities, such as playing pitches and tennis courts, can have a significant detrimental effect on nearby properties not only from the impact of the light but also through noise and general disturbance as a result of extended playing hours. Such noise and general disturbance results not only directly from players and possibly spectators, but is also caused by other sources such as the arrival and departure of cars.

7.44 In assessing applications the Council will take account not only of the impact of the light and proposed structures, but also the effect that the extension of playing hours would have on adjacent properties. The Council will also take account of the nature and proximity of surrounding development in assessing applications.

7.45 The erection of floodlighting in the Green Belt will often have a significant effect on the character and amenities of the area. Floodlight columns will often appear alien and inappropriate in rural areas, and constitute an urbanising feature. However, their greatest impact arises when the lights are in use, this having a very significant urbanising impact on the Green Belt. The intensity of use arising as a result of floodlighting would also be likely to have a detrimental impact on the character and amenities of the Green Belt.

POLICY R9 - GOLF COURSES

Proposals for new or extended golf courses will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal is situated outside the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ~~or any Area of Attractive Landscape or Local Landscape Area~~; and
- (b) the proposal would not result in an over-concentration of golf course facilities in any particular part of the District; and
- (c) the proposal would not involve the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land ~~in accordance with policy GB15 of this Plan~~; and
- (d) ~~the proposal would accord with nature conservation policies C10 (Key Nature Conservation Sites) and C11 (Other Nature Conservation Sites)~~; and
- (e) the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general; and
- (f) the course layout would preserve or enhance the safety, convenience and enjoyment of users of any existing public right of way; and
- (g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), ~~EP11 (Water Resources and Quality)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic

Generation) and TR7 (Parking provision).

In the Green Belt, golf club houses and facilities ancillary to golf use should normally use existing buildings where they are suitable for conversion. ~~Schemes involving the rebuilding or extension of existing buildings or the construction of new buildings may only be acceptable where they meet the criteria set out in policy R3 (Provision of Leisure and Recreation Facilities in the Green Belt).~~

Planning applications for golf courses should be accompanied by full layouts and landscaping details. An ecological assessment may also be required.

Explanation

7.46 There is an extremely high level of golf course provision in South Bucks with 17 existing and permitted courses covering a substantial area of the District's countryside. The Sports Council suggests a minimum standard of one nine-hole course per 12000-15000 population. On this basis, South Bucks has sufficient provision to meet the golfing needs of a population of 415,000. In comparison the combined population of South Bucks, Slough and Hillingdon amounted only to 392,482 in 1991, thus demonstrating the high overall golfing provision within South Bucks. The District's 6 pay-as-you-play courses alone would meet its own minimum golfing requirements. Indeed, whilst South Bucks may assist in serving the golfing needs of residents within the urban areas of Slough, Hillingdon and High Wycombe, these needs are also likely to be met in part by the neighbouring districts/boroughs of Windsor and Maidenhead, Three Rivers and Chiltern, which all have high levels of golfing provision.

7.47 Provision in South Bucks is at such a high level that large areas of the District are given over to golf courses and their concentration in certain areas has been undesirable, particularly due to their manicured effect on substantial areas of landscape. Their cumulative impact has now reached a level where they have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the District's Green Belt countryside as a whole. The Council considers that further developments will fail to enhance the natural environment of the District unless they are carefully controlled. Therefore, developments will only be permitted away from areas designated for their landscape importance.

7.48 ~~In accordance with Policy GB15 of this plan~~ Proposals should not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Whilst golf developments normally result in a large amount of land remaining open, once a golf course has been developed a return to best quality agricultural use is seldom practical.

7.49 Golf course proposals should not result in the loss of areas of woodland, protected trees or other trees with amenity value. Any important trees or hedgerows on the site should be incorporated into the course design and protected during construction. In all cases golf course proposals should not result in adverse impacts on neighbouring properties, they should respect their landscape setting and accord with all relevant policies in this plan. Where golf related buildings are essential these should make use of existing buildings in order to protect the open character of the Green Belt. New buildings should only be constructed if they are genuinely ancillary to golf use and they should be designed and sited so that they are unobtrusive in scale and location.

7.50 The Council will expect full details of golf course proposals, including any proposals to re-use existing buildings or develop new ones, to be submitted with applications in order that the effects of the proposal on the landscape, neighbouring properties, footpaths, access, highways and nature conservation can be properly considered.

POLICY R10 - GOLF DRIVING RANGES

Golf driving ranges, including the erection of driving stalls or other structures, will not be permitted in the Green Belt, unless:

- a) any driving stalls and associated building would involve the re-use of existing buildings in accordance with policy GB2 (Reuse of buildings in the Green Belt); and
- b) the proposal would be of a small scale; and
- c) the proposal does not result in floodlighting, the erection of obtrusive fences or other visually intrusive features; and
- d) the proposal would accord with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), ~~L1 (Chilterns AONB), L2 (Areas of Attractive Landscape), L3 (Local Landscape Areas) and GB15 (Agricultural Land)~~.

Explanation

7.51 Golf driving ranges have a much higher intensity of use than golf courses and are more urban in nature as they normally involve the erection of driving stalls, high perimeter fencing, floodlighting and target signs. Golf driving ranges would have a detrimental effect in that they would lead to the urbanisation of the locality contrary to the purposes of the Green Belt, and the facilities provided would serve to fragment the Green Belt. The only occasions where driving ranges would be acceptable is where they re-use existing buildings in accordance with policy GB2 of this Plan. In such cases proposals must not harm the landscape by the erection of obtrusive fences, floodlighting or other visually intrusive features.

OTHER RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

7.52 There are a number of other opportunities for sporting and recreational activities in the District which do not come under the immediate control of the Local Planning Authority. The dual use of buildings such as schools and public buildings, for example, can maximise the potential of existing resources without compromising established planning policies. This is particularly important in this District where Green Belt restrictions limit the potential for providing new built facilities. The Council will, where possible, seek to support such opportunities to improve the range of recreational activities available to the resident population.

7.53 The Council will also encourage improved public access to the countryside for informal recreation where such provision can be accommodated without detriment to the local environment, including wildlife habitats and landscape, or the amenities of local residents. The Council will promote cycling and walking opportunities ~~through the implementation of policies TR2 and TR3 of this Plan~~. Public rights-of-way and bridleways are outside the direct control of this Authority, but the Council will, where possible, support action to retain and improve the network of paths which exist in the District. The stopping-up or extinguishment of any public footpaths or bridleways will be opposed by this Council unless exceptional circumstances exist which justify such action. Proposals for the diversion of a path, for example as part of a development scheme, will only be supported if

the length of route, its accessibility to the public and the land which it crosses, are of similar or greater merit than the existing route.

7.54 The Council will assess any proposals to promote or develop major attractions within the District, such as Burnham Beeches and Black Park Country Park, with regard to the policies contained within this chapter and elsewhere in this Plan. Proposals to improve signage and advertisements will be assessed against policy EP7. The Council will balance proposals for the improvement or expansion of existing facilities to cater for the needs of visitors against environmental considerations, the need to conserve the rural landscape, to protect the character and amenities of a locality, and Green Belt policy. The aim of the Council is to provide for sustainable development and to conserve existing resources within the District whilst providing for the recreational and sporting needs of both the resident population and visitors to South Bucks.

TOURISM

7.55 South Bucks is predominantly rural in nature and consequently its countryside areas, which include Burnham Beeches and Black Park Country Park, provide some of the District's main attractions. The District also possesses a number of historic buildings, one of the most famous being Cliveden, and attractions such as Bekonscot Model Village which draw visitors to the area. Nevertheless, whilst the District has some such attractions it could not be said to be a major tourist destination.

7.56 A survey (Buckinghamshire Visitor Survey 1991, by Buckinghamshire Tourism Marketing Initiative) undertaken in 1991 found that only 53% of visitors to Buckinghamshire came from outside the county and primarily from other parts of England. It was found that the main purpose for almost half of all visitors was to visit one specific site. The survey results showed that most visitors came to Buckinghamshire for a half to a full day visit, and concluded that the county can be profiled as a regional tourist destination with visitors coming for day trips.

7.57 In terms of transport used, the survey found that the vast majority of visitors to attractions in Buckinghamshire used private cars. Many visitors only stay for a period of one to three hours. Approximately one-fifth of visitors from outside the county stayed overnight, of whom 63% stayed with friends and relatives. Many visitors from outside the county indicated that visiting friends and relatives was the main purpose of their visit. Where overnight stay was involved the average length of stay at all types of accommodation was found to be less than four nights.

7.58 South Bucks District tends to primarily attract day visitors due to the nature of its attractions and thus the findings of the survey, which was in part carried out within this District, are directly relevant. The type of tourism generated by the District is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future and therefore the main emphasis in this Plan relates to conserving and managing the natural resources of the District to provide for sustainable development.

7.59 Most of the tourist attractions and facilities within the District also cater for the local population and thus the tourism section of this Plan should be read in conjunction with policies elsewhere in the Plan, and particularly those relating to recreational facilities and landscape.

POLICY T1 - SERVICED ACCOMMODATION IN THE DEVELOPED AREAS

~~Built development, or changes of use, to provide or extend serviced accommodation within the developed areas will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(b) the scale, height, layout, siting, form and materials would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general, and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP3; and~~
- ~~(c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and~~
- ~~(d) it would not involve the loss or change of use of any existing residential building that can still be used, with or without adaptation, for residential purposes falling within class C3 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987; and~~
- ~~(e) suitable provision is made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems; and~~
- ~~(f) adequate servicing facilities are provided; and~~
- ~~(g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

7.60 Whilst there appears to be only a limited demand for hotel and other overnight accommodation by visitors to countryside areas and other local attractions, these facilities cater not only for such demand but also for other custom including that generated by business and conference visitors. The Council, through this policy, seeks to ensure that a suitable accommodation base can be provided within the District to cater for such needs, as long as such provision meets the criteria in the policy.

7.61 Proposals to provide new hotels or other serviced accommodation or to extend existing premises, will only be permitted where such development would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the area or the amenities of nearby properties. It is also important to ensure that sufficient car parking provision would be available for the development in accordance with this Council's vehicle parking standards. In assessing proposals, the Council will also take account of the impact of any associated facilities such as car parks on the character and amenities of the area.

7.62 The Council will resist any proposals to provide serviced accommodation, if such development would result in the loss of existing residential units. Since the amount of land for new housing in South Bucks is strictly limited by Green Belt and other restraint policies it would be inappropriate to accept the loss of existing residential accommodation, as any reduction in the existing housing stock caused by demolition, or change of use, would be difficult to replace and would make any increase through new development less effective.

7.63 Proposals to provide bed and breakfast, or guest house accommodation, within an existing dwellinghouse will only be acceptable where such use remains ancillary to the

~~primary use of the building as a dwellinghouse. Such uses, which can widen the range of tourist accommodation available, will only be considered acceptable within large, detached properties which have ample land available to provide sufficient and unobtrusive car parking without detriment to the amenities of any nearby properties. In assessing applications the Council will take account of the nature of the locality in which the building is sited and will seek to ensure that there is not an over concentration of such uses in any residential area within the District.~~

~~7.64 This policy seeks to ensure that the impact resulting from the provision of tourist accommodation, which by its nature can generate significant levels of traffic, is minimised as far as possible, whilst accepting that such facilities are necessary within the District. The policy aims to ensure that the impact of such new development, including hard surfacing to provide car parking, is minimised.~~

POLICY T2 - SERVICED ACCOMMODATION IN THE GREEN BELT

Proposals for new buildings in the Green Belt to provide serviced accommodation will not be permitted.

Proposals for the change of use of existing buildings in the Green Belt to provide serviced accommodation will only be permitted where:-

- (a) in the case of a listed building it would secure the long term future of that building ~~and meet the other criteria in policy C7 (Change of Use of a Listed Building)~~; and
- (b) the proposals would comply with Policy GB2 (Reuse of buildings in the Green Belt); and
- (c) it would not involve the loss of existing permanent residential accommodation falling in class C3 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987; and
- (d) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems; and
- (e) adequate servicing facilities would be provided; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development).

Applicants may be asked to enter into a legal agreement to prevent the building being subsequently used for a dwelling falling within Class C3 of the Use Classes Order.

Explanation

7.65 Most of South Bucks District is designated Green Belt, within which there is a strong presumption against inappropriate development. Proposals to construct a new hotel or other serviced accommodation within the Green Belt will not be permitted as it would constitute inappropriate development. However the Council accepts that the re-use of existing buildings for serviced accommodation may be acceptable if it secured the long term future of a building of special architectural or historic interest. ~~Proposals including such listed buildings would, however, need to also comply with policy C7.~~ As well as listed buildings the Council accepts that other rural buildings might in some cases be suitable for

providing low key forms of serviced accommodation.

7.66 In assessing any application for such development the Council will take account of the impact any proposed car parking area and associated features such as walls, fencing, lighting and signage would have on the visual amenities of the area, as well as the impact of the building itself.

7.67 This policy, which should be read in conjunction with policy GB9 (Agricultural Diversification), seeks to promote the aims of the Green Belt. Where a proposal is acceptable in principle, the policy seeks to ensure that the impact of the development would not have a significant effect on the character or amenities of the area.

POLICY T3 CAMPING AND CARAVANNING

~~Proposals for the establishment of a new site for touring caravans or camping, or for an increase in the number of pitches on an existing site, will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) in the case of a new site, the proposal is small scale, and is on an agricultural holding where a genuine need exists to support the agricultural holding and the proposal would materially assist in maintaining the principal agricultural use. The maximum reuse of existing buildings should be made for the provision of toilet or other ancillary facilities. New buildings or large extensions will not be permitted; and~~
- ~~(b) it would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).~~

~~Where screening of the site is only fully effective during the summer period a condition will be imposed to restrict the use of the site to that period.~~

Explanation

7.68 ~~A large number of people spend their holidays staying on static caravan sites, or touring with caravans or tents. The existing caravan and camping sites in South Bucks, which in general are quite small scale in nature, cater for such demand.~~

7.69 ~~Sites within the District serve as a base to visit not only places within South Bucks, but also attractions in adjoining areas including Windsor and London. Bearing in mind the fact that most visitors come to the county of Buckinghamshire for a half to a full day visit, the Council considers that limited demand for such sites is generated by attractions within South Bucks. New sites can have a considerable impact, both on the landscape, and on the character and amenities of rural areas. Accordingly the Council would not wish to encourage generally the growth of such accommodation in the District. However the intensification of use of existing sites may be permitted when such development meets the criteria outlined in the policy. Factors such as screening will be critical when assessing the impact of such a development.~~

7.70 ~~This policy seeks to protect the Green Belt from the establishment of new sites for camping or caravanning other than those acceptable as part of an agricultural diversification plan. Caravan and camping sites can have a detrimental impact on the~~

~~Green Belt, representing additional encroachment into the countryside not only from the stationing of the caravans or tents, but also through associated developments such as access drives, roads and ancillary buildings. Agriculture is a major use of land in the rural areas and is vitally important in assisting in the maintenance of the Green Belt. Government policy is to encourage diversification where this would materially assist in maintaining farm income. The Council considers that new caravan and camping sites would normally be inappropriate in the Green Belt but will be prepared to accept them in accordance with this policy where they would help secure the continued use of an agricultural holding. The policy therefore aims to achieve a balance between protecting the environment and allowing limited tourist facilities and facilitating agricultural diversification.~~

~~7.71 The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 and exemptions from licensing in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 also allow for some additional facilities to be provided within the District for limited periods without planning permission being required.~~

~~7.72 This policy does not provide the policy basis for dealing with proposals for gypsy provision. Provision for gypsies is dealt with in policy H11 in the housing chapter of this Plan.~~

POLICY T4 - NEW BUILT DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE TOURIST FACILITIES

New, purpose-built tourist facilities will only be permitted within the developed areas, subject to compliance with (d), (e) and (f) below. Outside the developed area, such facilities will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the building is strictly essential and ancillary to the tourist potential of associated land or buildings; and
- (b) the building is small-scale in terms of floorspace, height and bulk, and of a design appropriate to the character of the area; and
- (c) the building is sited within an existing group or complex of buildings or, where such a siting is not possible, is sited in a readily screened, unexposed location; and
- (d) it would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (e) adequate parking for both staff and visitors would be provided within the application site; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and EP7 (Signs and Advertisements).

Explanation

7.73 Small, purpose-built structures may be required to cater for tourist demand in connection with an existing attraction. These could include ancillary buildings such as toilet facilities or small gift shops and tea houses. The provision of new or additional car parking would also be assessed under this policy. In assessing any such application, the

Council will take account of the designation of the land on which the development is to be located and the policies normally applicable to development within the area.

7.74 Proposals for development within the Green Belt will normally be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the development would meet an essential need and would not have a significant adverse impact on the character or amenities of the area. Proposals for additional signage will be assessed against policy EP7 relating to advertisements and signs.

7.75 This policy seeks to ensure that the essential needs of tourists are catered for with least detriment to the local environment.

8. HOUSING

8.1 Demand for housing in South Bucks is very strong due to its attractive countryside, its accessibility to major employment centres, and to the very high quality of its residential areas. Some 13% of the District is excluded from but enclosed by the Green Belt. The areas excluded from the Green Belt comprise the larger settlements of the District, including Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross, Burnham, Farnham Common and Iver/Iver Heath. A full list of those settlements excluded from the Green Belt is set out in the Green Belt chapter. The effect of Green Belt policy has been to concentrate the bulk of new housing development in the settlements excluded from the Green Belt. In addition some limited infilling on a small scale has been allowed to take place within identified settlements in the Green Belt where this is in accordance with local plan policy.

8.2 The result of the strong demand for housing has been that in the 1986-1994 period the number of permissions granted has been greater than envisaged in the former Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan (incorporating Alterations Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4). The effect of sites having come forward at a faster rate during the 1986-1994 period has been to reduce the capacity for dwelling permissions in later years. In summary, the capacity of the existing settlements to accommodate housing development in the 1996-2006 period has been limited by faster rates of growth pre 1994. The Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 acknowledges the limited scope for future housing development and accordingly indicates that South Bucks should only be expected to accommodate 1800 new dwellings in the 1991-2001 period and a further 300 in the 2001-2006 period.

8.3 The effect of the constraints on development has been that the total population of South Bucks has only increased by 1% between 1981 and 1991, from 61,717 in 1981 to 62,482 in 1991. However in this same period the number of households increased substantially by 12% to 24,259, this being due to a decline in average household size. The change in the number of households has arisen as a result of social changes. This trend is expected to continue with the population remaining relatively stable and the number of households increasing. The projected increase in the number of households will be largely as a result of an ageing of the population, with a 21% increase in the 60+ age group and a decline of 8% in the 25-59 age group. This will of course have some implications for the type of dwellings which will need to be provided if local needs are to be met.

8.4 The Structure Plan allocation of 2100 dwellings in the 1991-2006 period is more than sufficient, in numerical terms, to meet locally generated needs arising in the District. However, there can be no certainty that new dwellings which may be provided will actually meet those needs which are generated locally, particularly given the relatively high market price of properties in the District. Indeed planning authorities cannot seek to regulate property prices or tenure and accordingly the impact that planning policies can have in ensuring that locally generated needs are met is limited. Nevertheless, the Government advises that the need for affordable housing is a planning consideration which can be taken into account in determining applications, and accordingly this Plan seeks to provide a framework for the provision of such housing.

8.5 Having taken place at a relatively fast rate in the pre 1994 period, new housing development has, particularly as a result of its cumulative impact in some areas, started to have an adverse affect on the character and amenity of these settlements. Whilst the lower rate of housing in the Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 will assist, the policies in this Local Plan provide further detailed guidance to ensure that future housing development does not lead to unacceptable damage to the character and amenity of residential areas.

POLICY H1 - HOUSING PROVISION

~~Within the plan period provision will be made for new dwellings in the District as follows:-~~

1991-2001	1800 dwellings
2001-2006	300 dwellings

~~Subject to all other relevant policies of this plan permission will normally be granted for new dwellings in the developed areas excluded from the Green Belt, or in Green Belt settlements in accordance with policy GB3 (Residential Infilling in Green Belt Settlements). Permission will not be granted for new dwellings in the Green Belt outside of GB3 settlements other than in accordance with policies GB2 (Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt) or GB6 (Agricultural Workers Dwellings).~~

Explanation

8.6 The Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 requires 2,400 net additional dwellings to be provided in South Bucks between April 1991 and March 2011. In the period 1991-2006 the Structure Plan indicates that 2100 net additional dwellings should be provided. Net additional dwellings refers to all additions to the dwelling stock (ie completed dwellings) from all sources, including those resulting from new construction, conversions and changes of use, minus demolitions and any other permanent losses to the dwelling stock.

8.7 The housing provision figures for South Bucks as set out in the Structure Plan are based on an assessment of the ability of the District to accommodate future housing development within the plan period without the need for release of land from the Green Belt. The figures also reflect the capacity of the District to accommodate housing development without harm to the character and amenity of those areas in which residential development would be acceptable in principle.

8.8 The Council acknowledges that some permissions may not in fact be implemented. There may be a variety of reasons for this including land ownership and land assembly constraints. Previous joint housing land availability studies carried out in conjunction with the House Builders Federation have been based on the premise that 15% of permissions are not implemented. Accordingly, the Council acknowledges that it will probably be necessary to grant permission for in excess of 2100 dwellings from 1991 to 2006 in order that the Structure Plan requirement is met. There is sufficient capacity in the District to achieve this without the release of land from the Green Belt and without causing unacceptable damage to the character and amenity of the existing settlements.

8.9 Between 1 April 1991 (the base date of the Structure Plan) and 1 April 1996 some 1055 dwellings had already been constructed. In line with previous housing land availability studies the Council has assumed that about 15% of permissions may not be implemented. Accordingly in order to meet the Structure Plan allocation up to 2006 it may be necessary for up to 1230 permissions to be granted in addition to those completions which have already taken place. However, the existing stock of 403 unimplemented permissions must be balanced against this, leaving some 827 new permissions to be granted during the 1996-2006 period. Table 1 below sets out the calculations.

8.10 Table 1 Housing Provision 1991-2006

	1991-2001	2001-2006	1991-2006
Housing requirement	—1800	—300	—2100
Less completions 1991-1996	—1055		—1055
Completions required	—745	—300	—1045
Total permissions needed in order to meet completions requirement (adjustment to take account of unimplemented permissions).	—877	—353	—1230
Less outstanding permissions as at 1st April 1996	—403		—403
New permissions needed	—474	—353	—827

Note: Figures based on 1 April 1996 initial results of permissions and completions survey. The Council produces a document which updates this table on an annual basis.

8.11 Table 1 shows that permission for 827 dwellings is expected to be needed in the period up to 2006 if the Structure Plan allocations are to be met. In order to demonstrate with reasonable confidence that the housing requirement will be able to be met the Council has sought to identify a number of sites, which in principle, would be suitable for residential development. These sites are listed in policy H2 (New Housing Allocations). They are all large sites of 0.4 hectare or more, that is with the exception of land at Hardings Row, Iver and land adjacent to Denham Green Service Station, Denham, both of which have been brought forward from their allocation in the existing adopted Local Plan.

8.12 The nature of opportunities for housing provision in the District will mainly be from infill development and redevelopment. It is expected that there will be a limited contribution to the housing stock from conversions. In accordance with policy H4 (Loss of Housing Accommodation) there will be minimal losses to the housing stock from demolitions. The Structure Plan allocation will be met by permissions on sites listed in policy H2 (New Housing Allocations) and by permissions on other sites, including not only new constructions but also conversions and changes of use. During the 1989-1994 period permissions for some 1900 dwellings were granted, whilst during the 1984-1994 period permissions were granted for over 3400 dwellings. Very few of these dwellings were on sites identified in the Local Plan for South Bucks 1989. The Council considers that unidentified sites will continue to play a major role in meeting the Structure Plan requirement and is firmly of the view that sufficient permissions from such sites will come forward in the 1996-2006 period. The Council will keep the rate at which permissions are implemented under review in order to ensure both that sufficient permissions are granted to meet the Structure Plan requirement and that a considerable excess of permissions does not arise. The phasing of housing development is covered by policy H3.

8.13 Table 2 Meeting the Structure Plan Provision Figure.

	dwelling permissions	dwelling completions(i)	residual requirement
Structure Plan provision figure		2100	2100
completions to 1.4.96		1088	+1012
outstanding planning permissions	343	292	+720
allocated sites(ii)	386	328	+392
windfall allowance: small unidentified sites	358	304	+88
large (0.4-1ha) unidentified sites	286	243	-155
surplus provision	182	155	
Potential additional surplus provision from very large windfall sites:	139		
Notes:			
(i) 15% deflator applied to planning permissions figure to calculate completions to take account of permissions which may not be implemented.			
(ii) Figures include 3 allocated sites identified at the Local Plan Inquiry for which residential planning permissions have subsequently been granted; Land rear of 25-35 North Drive, Beaconsfield (4), Butlers Court, Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield (35) and land at Slough Road, Iver Heath (12). Capacity of Former Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital site dependent on accommodation type - maximum capacity 135 specialized residential units (refer to application S/95/0563/00).			

POLICY H2 - NEW HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The following sites are identified as being suitable in principle for housing development. The Council will be prepared to grant permission for residential development on the following sites, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies in this plan. The sites are shown on the proposals map.

Site	Settlement	Gross Area (ha)	Est.net dwelling capacity (i)
Land at Hedgerley Lane	Gerrards Cross	5.45	15
Land adj.to Denham Green Service Station North Orbital Road	Denham	0.11	9
Land at Hardings Row	Iver Heath	0.35	10
Thames Water land Gore Road	Burnham	0.50	18
Land at Lent Rise Rd	Burnham	2.00	69
Land at Candlemas Lane (ii)	Beaconsfield	0.26	9
Land at Station Rd	Beaconsfield	1.70	50
Land at Former Oakdene School	Beaconsfield	3.68	20(v)
Former Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital (iii)	Taplow	6.3	(iv)

Notes:

(i) The estimated net maximum dwelling capacity figures are guidelines only. The actual capacity of sites will be determined through the submission of individual planning applications.

(ii) ~~Subject to policy H5 which allocates the site for affordable housing.~~

(iii) See Policy GB16

(iv) Capacity dependent on accommodation type - maximum of 135 specialized residential units (refer to application S/95/0563/00).

(v) The capacity estimate of 20 dwellings relates only to the part of the site covered by application S/96/0263/00. The Council has made no estimate for the site as a whole.

Explanation

8.14 Government policy in PPG3 indicates that Local Plans will convey greater certainty the more sites that they identify as being suitable for housing development. Annex B of PPG3 indicates that housing land availability studies should not normally attempt to identify small sites of less than 0.4 hectare and accordingly the Council has sought to identify only large sites of more than 0.4 hectares. The exception to this is that those sites of less than 0.4 hectares which were identified in the adopted Local Plan for South Bucks and which have not yet been developed have been brought forward to this Plan and

included in policy H2. In addition a small site owned by the District Council and allocated for affordable housing is included. As regards large sites of 0.4 hectares or more the Council has identified those in policy H2 which it currently considers are suitable, in principle, for residential development.

POLICY H3 - PHASING OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

~~Planning permission will not be granted for housing developments involving either 5 or more not additional dwellings or where the site is 0.4 hectares or larger if the total plan provision of 1800 dwellings in the 1991-2001 period or 2100 dwellings in the 1991-2006 period has been significantly exceeded, unless the proposal involves the development of a site wholly for affordable housing.~~

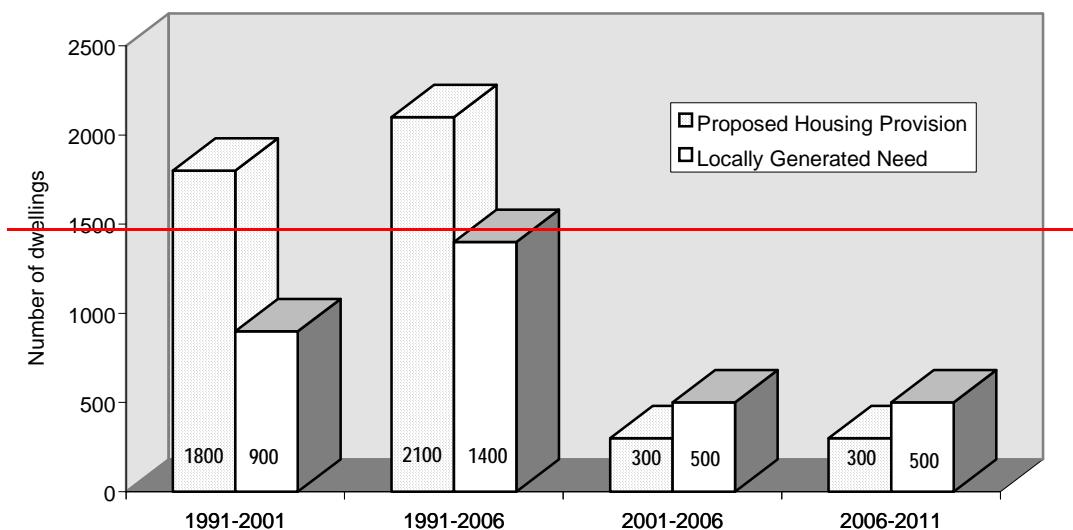
Explanation

~~8.15 South Bucks lies in an area of strategic restraint where the demand for housing is probably insatiable and could not be met within the context of other policies in this Plan. The Council is concerned to ensure that the limited supply of land for housing is carefully husbanded in order that it is not developed at a significantly faster rate than planned for in the Structure Plan. The Local Plan for South Bucks adopted in 1989 did not incorporate a clear phasing policy and accordingly the dwelling requirement of 2000 dwellings over the 1986-2001 period set out in the former Structure Plan had been met and surpassed by 1994, with seven years of that plan period still to run. Clearly this is strong evidence that the District is under strong pressure for housing development. The Council is firmly of the view that a similar scenario in the period covered by this Plan would be unacceptable.~~

~~8.16 The total Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 housing provision for South Bucks is sufficient to meet locally generated needs. Diagram 3 shows the level of locally generated need compared with the level of housing provision set out in the Structure Plan. The Council is concerned to ensure that provision is not made at a rate significantly faster than set out in the Structure Plan since to do so would not only result in further in-migration in the early years of the Plan, but would also further reduce the ability of the District to provide for locally generated needs in the period post 2001. Furthermore, if development were to take place at a significantly faster rate, then this would be likely to result in pressure for the release of land from the Green Belt. However, there are no exceptional circumstances which would warrant a release of land from the Green Belt.~~

8.17 Diagram 3

Housing Provision 1991 - 2011 and Locally Generated Housing Needs



~~The Council will monitor the number of completions and dwellings with outstanding planning permission through its housing land availability studies. In determining whether the plan's housing provision has been significantly exceeded, the Council will have regard to the number of dwellings which have been completed and to the number of dwellings with outstanding permission. If a circumstance were to arise whereby the Plan provision had already been met and exceeded or was likely to be exceeded by more than 10% having regard to outstanding consents, then the Council would consider the Plan provision had been significantly exceeded and would invoke this policy. Outstanding consents will be subject to a 15% deflator as described in the footnote to table 2, in Policy H1.~~

POLICY H4 LOSS OF HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

~~Proposals which would result in the loss of residential land or residential accommodation which could still be used with or without adaptation for residential purposes will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) at least equivalent replacement residential accommodation would be provided within the curtilage of the site and such development would accord with the criteria set out in policy H9 (Residential Layout and Design); or~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would secure the long term future of a listed building where continued residential use would no longer ensure the preservation of the building and such a change of use would accord with the criteria set out in policy C7 (Change of Use of a Listed Building); or~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would provide an essential community facility or service.~~

~~Proposals will only be acceptable where they would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and where they comply with the other policies in this Plan.~~

~~Proposals which would involve the loss of a separate means of access to a residential unit will not be permitted~~

Explanation

8.18 This policy seeks to prevent a reduction in the number of existing dwellings and amount of residential land in the District, as any losses may affect the capacity of the District to meet its housing requirement as set out in the Structure Plan. Any reduction in the existing housing stock, caused by demolition or change of use, would increase the pressure for new housing in the District. Since the housing allocation set out in the Structure Plan reflects the capacity of the District to provide additional dwellings without breaching Green Belt or other fundamental constraints it would be inappropriate to grant permission for proposals which would result in a loss of residential accommodation where that accommodation could still satisfactorily be used for residential purposes with or without adaptation. This policy applies to buildings used wholly or in part for residential purposes or where the last authorised use was residential and includes the upper floors of commercial buildings where relevant.

8.19 Proposals to redevelop sites which contain some residential accommodation will only be permitted when an equivalent amount of residential accommodation is proposed as part of the scheme. In assessing such proposals the Council will also have regard to the criteria listed in policy H9 (Residential Layout and Design) and seek to ensure that the proposed dwellings and any surrounding residential development would have an acceptable level of amenity.

8.20 Proposals to change the use of a listed building from residential may be acceptable if such a change of use is necessary to ensure the preservation of the building and the proposal would comply with policy C7 (Change of Use of a Listed Building). Permission for a change of use may also be granted in cases where it can be demonstrated that an overall planning benefit would be gained through the change of use of a residential building to provide an essential community service or facility.

POLICY H5—AFFORDABLE HOUSING

PROVISION FROM PRIVATE SECTOR SCHEMES

Subject to site suitability, the economics of provision and other appropriate policies in this plan, the Council will seek to secure, by planning condition or planning obligation, a minimum of 20% of the bedspaces in housing schemes of 15 or more dwellings to be provided in the form of units of affordable accommodation. The Council will wish to ensure that secure arrangements are made which would ensure that initial and subsequent occupancy is restricted to people in need of affordable accommodation.

SITES COMMITTED TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The fire station and depot site, Candlesmas Lane, Beaconsfield is allocated for affordable housing.

Explanation

8.21 The Council's Housing Strategy Statement indicates that the cost of housing in the District is at a level where local low paid residents are at a severe disadvantage should they wish to become owner occupiers. Their income and resources are insufficient to enter even at the lowest end of the housing market due to the high cost of property. At the same time there is only a very small supply of private sector properties which are available for rent and where such properties are available their rental values are often much too high.

for local low paid residents.

8.22 Given the constraints on the future availability of land for housing development the Council considers it is important to ensure that once provided, affordable housing remains affordable and that both initial and subsequent occupancy is limited to those people with a need for such affordable accommodation. The Council considers that the best way of ensuring that accommodation remains affordable is for it to be managed by a registered social landlord.

8.23 Affordable housing should generally be provided for rent or shared ownership by a registered social landlord whose continuing interest in the property should ensure that the housing will be occupied by successive as well as initial occupiers of a property who could not afford housing on the open market. Given the high cost of open market housing in South Bucks even low cost market housing is unlikely to be available to those in housing need. However, provided that it is genuinely accessible to those in local affordable housing need and will remain so, low cost market housing would be considered as affordable under the terms of Policy H5, subject to the establishment of suitable mechanisms of occupancy control, normally a planning obligation.

8.24 The Council in its housing enabling role, considers that the Council's Housing Survey together with the Priority Housing Register are currently the best indicators of the need for affordable housing in the District. The register is maintained by Beacon Housing Association, currently the main provider of such accommodation in the District. Those local housing needs for which affordable housing is intended to be occupied will be taken to comprise initially those people on the Priority Housing Register and subsequently those people on the General Housing Register and those residents whose household income level is insufficient for them to obtain suitable accommodation in the District.

8.25 The need for affordable housing is recognised as being a material factor which can be taken into account in determining applications. The Council will therefore seek to secure in private sector housing schemes of 15 or more dwellings, the inclusion of an element of affordable accommodation, which would normally be at least 20% of the bedspaces. This will be the starting point for the consideration of proposals. However, the Council accepts the need for some degree of flexibility since exceptional circumstances could arise whereby exceptional site development costs reduce the ability of a scheme to bear the costs of provision of affordable accommodation. Conversely, other circumstances may arise where very low site development costs would allow the inclusion of more than 20% of the bedspaces as affordable accommodation. The figure of 15 dwellings is justified, in accordance with the advice in Circular 6/98, due to the limited number and size of residential development sites which come forward in the District. As the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector concluded, it is necessary to seek affordable housing on sites of this size and above in order that an appropriate amount of affordable housing will be provided consistent with Structure Plan and government policy objectives.

8.26 Policies H7 (Provision of Smaller Dwellings) and H9 (Residential Layout and Design) indicate that the Council wish to encourage the provision of an increased number of smaller dwellings and to also ensure that housing sites are developed to their maximum potential consistent with the character and amenities of the site and locality. Accordingly, the Council will not look favourably upon schemes which fail to comply with these policies and which, as a result, fall short of the 15 dwelling threshold for affordable housing.

8.27 In addition to seeking the provision of affordable housing in private sector schemes the Council is also itself active as a housing enabler. The Council is the freehold owner of

~~the fire station and depot site at Candlemas Lane, Beaconsfield. The County Council occupies part of the depot site as a civic amenity facility and has user rights in this respect, however the County Council is actively seeking to relocate this facility. Upon relocation of the civic amenity facility the District Council would intend that this site is developed wholly for affordable housing.~~

POLICY H6 - SPECIALIST RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

Proposals to provide new accommodation or extend existing accommodation specifically for people with limited mobility or for people in need of care, including nursing homes, residential care homes and sheltered housing schemes, will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (b) proposals for extensions would harmonise with the scale, height, form, and design of the original building; and
- (c) in the case of a site which is not currently used for such purposes, the site is conveniently located for shops, services and public transport; and
- (d) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems; and
- (e) adequate garden space is provided or retained to meet the needs of residents; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision), H9 (Residential Layout and Design), H10 (Residential Areas of Exceptional Character), H11 (Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings) and policies in the Green Belt chapters.

Explanation

8.28 The latest population projections for the District show a continuing increase in the number of people of pensionable age. A proportion of those people of pensionable age will wish to or may need to reside in accommodation specifically tailored to meet the needs of the elderly. Other people may also need specialist accommodation, including particularly the disabled. The likelihood is that the number of people in need of specialist accommodation will increase and accordingly this policy provides a framework for allowing the further provision of such accommodation.

8.29 New accommodation may be provided through new buildings or through the change of use of an existing building. The Council will seek to ensure, through the implementation of this policy, that such new accommodation is located in close enough proximity to local shops, public transport and essential facilities such as post office counters and health care facilities to allow easy access for residents and staff. Proposals to provide such specialist accommodation should therefore generally be located within the developed area or within a defined Green Belt settlement where such facilities are easily accessible.

8.30 Proposals will only be permitted where they would not affect the character of the locality or amenities of neighbouring properties. It is also important that proposals retain an appropriate garden area to meet the needs of residents because the quality of life of such residents is often very dependent upon having a suitable garden area in which to walk and sit out and over which there are views from sitting rooms or other principal habitable rooms. It is also important that proposals comply with the Council's parking standards, are acceptable on highway grounds and meet with all other relevant policies in this Plan.

POLICY H7 - THE PROVISION OF SMALLER DWELLINGS

~~Provision should be made for a high proportion of small dwellings, particularly those with one and two bedrooms, in schemes of residential development where this can be achieved without detriment to the amenities and the character of the surrounding area and neighbouring properties. Permission will not be granted for proposals which do not incorporate a high proportion of small dwellings on a site, subject to marketability, where a high proportion could be provided without detriment to the locality and neighbouring properties.~~

Explanation

8.31 ~~The aim of this policy is to diversify the local housing stock to help satisfy the increased demand for smaller dwellings and generally to improve choice. The existing housing stock in South Bucks District consists predominantly of three or four bedroomed properties. The Buckinghamshire Population Projections 1991-2011 show that the average size of private households in South Bucks is currently lower than in all other parts of Buckinghamshire and that it will continue to fall from 2.53 persons/dwelling in 1991 to 2.34 persons/dwelling in 2006. Similarly the number of elderly households is projected to increase considerably over the same period.~~

8.32 ~~The provision of a stock of small housing units would give the elderly an opportunity, if they wish, to vacate their larger dwellings, yet remain resident in South Bucks and provide an opportunity for one and two person households to find suitable accommodation in the area. Better utilisation of the existing housing stock is unlikely to occur unless smaller units are available either by the construction of new small dwellings or by the conversion of existing properties.~~

8.33 ~~More small units can be provided on a given site than large units. The provision of a higher proportion of small dwellings ensures that available land is used to maximum effect. It is important to appreciate that there is no direct correlation between density and the quality of design. It is possible to have a poorly designed low density development on a given site or a well designed attractive development at a higher density. Naturally the reverse can also be true.~~

POLICY H8 - SUBDIVISION OF DWELLINGS IN THE DEVELOPED AREAS

~~Proposals to subdivide a dwellinghouse within the developed area into two or more residential units will only be permitted where:-~~

- ~~(a) the proposal is not in a Residential Area of Exceptional Character; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with~~

- ~~policy EP3 (Use Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(c) adequate garden space would be available for each unit of accommodation; and~~
- ~~(d) the proposal would comply with all other relevant policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highways Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

8.34 This policy complements other policies within the Plan in attempting to diversify the housing stock to help satisfy the increased demand for smaller dwellings and generally to improve choice. The stock of smaller dwellings can be increased not only through new construction, but also as a result of the sub-division of large dwellings into a number of smaller units.

8.35 In general, subdivision and conversion will only be considered acceptable within large, detached properties which have ample land available to provide sufficient and unobtrusive car parking without detriment to the character and amenities of the locality and any nearby properties. Schemes which would involve car parking in rear gardens will not normally be acceptable because of the impact on the amenities of adjacent properties including particularly the amenity of their gardens. Proposals to sub-divide large properties will not however, necessarily be acceptable in all parts of the District. Many residential roads in the District derive a great deal of their charm and character from the presence of large properties situated in extensive grounds, for which there still is a demand. Where the sub-division of properties in this type of location would lead to a deterioration in the local environment by reason of the intensification in the use of the building, increased car movements and general disturbance, such proposals will be resisted. In particular subdivision will not be permitted in a Residential Area of Exceptional Character.

8.36 The conversion of terraced and semi-detached houses into flats, bedsits or other types of accommodation for multiple occupation will often have an adverse impact on the character and amenities of adjacent properties and the area generally. In many such cases it will not prove possible to provide adequate garden space or parking facilities.

8.37 In assessing proposals under this policy, the Council will have regard to the physical characteristics of the site, including its size and shape and its surroundings. Proposals should seek to maintain the appearance of the building and its grounds by minimising the visual intrusion of car parking, refuse storage and other communal facilities. Proposals must result in the maintenance or establishment of a satisfactory environment both for residents of the proposed dwellings and of existing neighbouring properties. The Council will seek to ensure that there is adequate sound insulation between units. A prime consideration in assessing applications will be the traffic and highway implications of the proposal.

8.38 The policy aims to facilitate the provision of smaller dwellings by means of subdivision. It also aims to safeguard the environment by minimising the impact of dwelling subdivisions, ensuring an acceptable level of amenity both for existing development and the future occupiers of the new accommodation.

POLICY H9 - RESIDENTIAL LAYOUT & DESIGN

Proposals involving the development of land for residential purposes will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal would be compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of density, layout, design, height, scale, form and materials. Development adjacent to the areas defined in Policy H10 (Residential Areas of Exceptional Character) should be sympathetic to the character of these areas. In assessing whether proposals are compatible the Council will have particular regard to the size and shape of the site and its physical characteristics; and
- (b) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general, for example through overdominance, obtrusiveness, loss of important trees or important groups of trees, loss of privacy or loss of daylight, and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (c) the proposal includes provision for conveniently located, usable amenity space; and
- (d) satisfactory access would be available for emergency vehicles and for refuse collection; and
- (e) the proposal would comply with all the other relevant policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies H10 (Residential Areas of Exceptional Character), EP4 (Landscaping), ~~R4 (Public Open Space Provision)~~, GB2 (Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt), GB3 (Residential Infilling in Green Belt Settlements), GB11 (Rebuilding of Dwellings in the Green Belt), ~~GB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

The Council will not grant permission for proposals which do not make as full and effective use of land as would be possible whilst remaining consistent with all other policies in this Plan. Permission will not be granted for proposals which sterilise adjacent land or which reduce its availability or suitability for future development.

Explanation

8.39 The Council will, through the implementation of this policy, continue to encourage development which is compatible with the character and amenities of the surrounding area and which contributes overall to the visual and environmental qualities of South Bucks. The policy will apply throughout the District to all residential development. There are some areas which have a very special character but which do not meet the stringent criteria for designation as a Residential Area of Exceptional Character. In such areas the policy will be applied to ensure that their special character is not lost or destroyed.

8.40 Proposals for new residential development, whether in the form of a single dwelling or a larger development, should safeguard and where possible enhance the character of the surrounding area. New development should respect the general density of development in the locality of the application site, as well as being appropriate in terms of layout, siting, design, height, building form and scale. The policy does not seek to prevent development at higher densities where this would not be out of character with the locality.

In certain cases, for example, a development of flats may relate satisfactorily to surrounding residential development at a lower density. Sharp contrasts in density, design, layout, siting, height, building form, scale or elevational detail will often harm the character and amenities of a locality and where this is so such proposals will be contrary to the policy. The Council particularly wishes to ensure that such constraints are avoided when proposed development adjoins a Residential Area of Exceptional Character as defined in Policy H10. Therefore, whilst not subject to the controls in Policy H10, development adjoining those areas should relate sympathetically to them.

8.41 New development should satisfactorily relate to existing development, ensuring appropriate standards of residential amenity for the occupiers of both existing and proposed dwellings. Backland or tandem development can sometimes give rise to unacceptable relationships between existing and proposed dwellings, and often results in disturbance through the creation of a new access drive alongside existing development. The Council will resist such proposals where an unacceptable relationship between existing and proposed development would arise. Similarly the Council would wish to safeguard against proposals which would result in a loss of amenity affecting neighbouring properties by reason of loss of privacy or the overdominance of new buildings or means of enclosure.

8.42 All residential developments should include amenity space for residents that is attractive, usable, conveniently located in relation to the dwelling itself and of an appropriate size. The best amenity is provided when dwellings have their own individual private gardens, however, it is accepted that in the case of flats communal provision may be necessary. The site and characteristics of external space and ancillary facilities should reflect the type and level of use to which the space is likely to be put.

8.43 It is not intended to stifle imaginative or innovative design through the application of rigid rules. It may not always be appropriate for example for the design of a new building to imitate the elevational features of existing buildings. Where such an approach would produce unsatisfactory results, a contrast in siting, materials or design may be preferable.

8.44 The amount of land available for housing development in the District is very limited. Accordingly, it is important that full and effective use of land is made, whilst at the same time ensuring that development complies with the other policies in the Plan and does not result in an overdevelopment of a site to the detriment of the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general. The policy seeks to ensure that development is sustainable. Full and effective use of land must be made because land is a very scarce resource and because development in any other form would not be sustainable.

8.45 This policy seeks to protect both the amenities of existing development and the local environment generally by ensuring that new development relates satisfactorily to surrounding properties and the character of the area.

POLICY H10 - RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTER

Residential Areas of Exceptional Character are defined on the proposals map. Within any of these areas proposals for residential development including house extensions and ancillary buildings which would have an adverse effect on their exceptional character will not be permitted. In particular the Council will not normally permit proposals involving the development of sites which do not reflect the prevailing density of the area, the conversion of single dwellings into flats or the introduction of backland development. In assessing proposals the District Council will have particular regard to the following factors:-

- (a) the plot of any proposed dwelling should be larger or similar in shape and size to that of the majority of others in the area of exceptional character; and
- (b) the plot frontage of any proposed dwelling should be larger or similar in width to that of the majority of others in the area of exceptional character; and
- (c) the siting of any proposed dwelling, extension or ancillary building should be consistent with the spacing and layout of dwellings in the vicinity of the application site in the area of exceptional character; and
- (d) the majority of important features which are characteristic of the site or the street scene should be retained, such features include for example trees, shrubs, hedges, walls, verges, lack of kerbs and footways; and
- (e) the design of each proposed dwelling extension or ancillary building should be of a high standard and compatible with the character and size of existing development in the vicinity of the application site; and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies H9 (Residential Layout and Design), TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development).

Explanation

8.46 Over the last 40 years, the effect of Green Belt policy has been to constrain the supply of land for housing. The result of this has been that most new dwelling provision has taken place within the settlements excluded from the Green Belt, through infill and redevelopment of existing sites. The cumulative effect of this has been a gradual and progressive change in the character and amenity of many parts of the excluded settlements. The Council is concerned to ensure that whilst the housing requirement from the Structure Plan is met, that the cumulative effects in residential areas of new housing provision by redevelopment, infilling, backland development and conversion does not cause serious harm to the character and amenities of those residential areas.

8.47 Policy H9 (Residential Layout and Design) provides the framework for guiding and controlling the design and layout of residential development throughout the District. However, there are residential areas which have an exceptional character and which merit especially sensitive planning control. Indeed PPG3 recognises that it may be necessary to develop policies to secure the protection of older established residential areas which have an exceptional character. In line with government policy and to safeguard against a loss of this exceptional character, policy H10 provides a clear and strong framework for the consideration of proposals in these areas of exceptional character. The Council has identified a number of older established residential areas which meet very stringent criteria justifying their designation as residential areas of exceptional character. The special character of each of these areas is described at Appendix 4. There are also a considerable number of other older established residential areas which do not have an exceptional character but nevertheless have special environmental qualities. Those areas are not subject to this policy because if they had been, the likelihood would have been to concentrate new housing development into more limited areas of the District, and to devalue the concept of protecting those residential areas with the most highly valued character.

8.48 The Residential Areas of Exceptional Character were all developed mainly prior to

1948 and exhibit a residential environment which is of an exceptionally high quality in terms of landscaping, spacious layout and building design. A number of principal common characteristics are present in all of these areas. They are low density, being between about 3 and 7 dwellings per hectare; they have a spacious layout characterised by generous plot sizes, wide frontages and wide spaces between buildings; they are largely detached houses of an individual design but which exhibit common characteristics having been built during the same period; each area exhibits a consistent character and is of sufficient size to warrant identification and the protection afforded by the policy; they have been largely untouched by new development which would harm their exceptional character; and they each incorporate substantial mature and well established landscaping which is a significant feature in the street scene.

8.49 The Council is concerned to ensure that due to their low density these areas of exceptional residential character do not attract proposals which would erode their character. The potential of these areas to accommodate further development will be very limited. The development on infill plots may well be acceptable if the criteria in the policy are met in full. However, the Council considers that the development of sites to produce densities higher than prevailing in the area, the conversion of single dwellings into flats or the introduction of backland development would normally have an adverse effect on the exceptional character of these areas and accordingly such proposals will not be considered acceptable. Development can have a considerable impact on the character of these areas, not only in terms of the visual impact of new buildings and an increase in density, but also in terms of increased traffic generation, the loss of hedges and trees, punctuation of the street scene with access roads and the introduction of other more urban features including additional hard surfacing, new footways and kerbing, lamp columns, walls and fences. To properly assess the impact of new dwellings and their relationship to other buildings within the area the Council will normally require the submission of street elevations as part of the planning application.

8.50 Whilst this policy is primarily aimed at proposals involving the provision of new dwellings, for the purpose of this policy 'residential development' is taken to include all development associated with residential use. The Council would not wish to see harm caused to the exceptional character of these areas arising from proposals for extensions to dwellings or the construction of other outbuildings or structures.

POLICY H11 - ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS

Proposals to alter and extend existing residential dwellings will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the extension would be integral to the dwelling and would harmonise with the existing building in terms of scale, height, form, and design; and
- (b) the extension would not adversely affect the amenities of any adjacent properties, for example through overlooking, overdominance, obtrusiveness and loss of daylight. The Council will consider the effect of proposals on the amenities of dwellings and their gardens. In considering the impact on a dwelling the Council will pay particular attention to the impact on the primary windows of habitable rooms and kitchens; and
- (c) the extension would not have an adverse impact on the character or amenities of the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and

- (d) where the proposal is for an extension of more than one storey or for an extension at or above first floor level, the extension would be at least one metre from either flank boundary of the site; and
- (e) satisfactory access and adequate off-street car parking would be provided, or retained on site in accordance with policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision); and
- (f) the proposal would conform to the guidelines set out in Appendix 8; and
- (g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt), C6 (Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings) and EP5 (Sunlight and Daylight).

Explanation

8.51 Some limited alterations and extensions do not require planning permission by virtue of the fact that they are "permitted development" under the provisions of Part 1, Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). This policy applies to all alterations and extensions which are not "permitted development" and which therefore require permission.

8.52 Extensions to dwellings will in most cases have some impact on nearby properties and where visible from public vantage points on the character of the area. This policy seeks to ensure that such impact does not adversely affect the amenities of adjacent properties or the character of the locality.

8.53 Oversized, poorly designed and badly sited extensions can result in loss of natural light and a poor outlook for neighbours. As well as overdominance and obtrusiveness, problems may arise from overlooking and loss of privacy. The Council will seek to ensure the impact of extensions on neighbouring properties is minimised by resisting extensions which are adjacent to and which project excessively behind or in front of neighbouring properties or which because of poor siting or the positioning of windows would cause unacceptable overlooking. Conditions may be imposed requiring that certain windows be high level or obscure glazed, where such conditions would overcome potential problems of overlooking.

8.54 Visually poor alterations and extensions can detract from the appearance of the original dwelling and disrupt the general street scene. The Council considers it important that extensions should harmonise with the character of the existing building and that as far as possible such extensions should not have the appearance of having been an addition to the existing dwelling. The policy sets out the criteria to be considered. In particular flat-roofed extensions at or above first floor level to dwellings with pitched roofs and flat-roofed single-storey front or side extensions to dwellings with pitched roofs do not generally relate satisfactorily to the existing property and tend to produce an unsatisfactory visual effect. It is the Council's practice to require that such extensions to pitched roof properties are themselves pitch roofed in order to match the existing building.

8.55 The Council will require that two-storey extensions or any extension at or above first floor level should be set at least one metre from the flank boundary of the site. Such a gap is important in order to safeguard the character of the residential areas in the District. The Council considers that the retention of such gaps are necessary in order to maintain the relative spaciousness of development and in order to help prevent overdominant building and the terracing effect which would otherwise occur. Such gaps can also assist in retaining

adequate daylight and sunlight for adjacent properties. This requirement may be waived in certain cases where the extension would be located adjacent to an area of open land, including for example a field, a public highway or a commercial car park, which is likely to remain permanently open.

POLICY H12 - SELF-CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL ANNEXE TO PROVIDE ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION

Proposals to provide a self-contained annexe ancillary to a dwelling will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the annexe would be in the form of an extension to the existing dwelling and would be capable of being fully integrated with the dwelling when no longer required for its original purpose; and
- (b) it is designed so that sub-division into a separate unit of accommodation would be impracticable; and
- (c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and
- (d) the new accommodation would be clearly subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling; and
- (e) it is required for a relative or domestic employee of the occupier of the main dwelling; and
- (f) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (g) the proposal conforms with the guidelines set out in Appendix 8; and
- (h) it would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies H11 (Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings), GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

Explanation

8.56 A requirement for self-contained accommodation may arise in cases where relatives or domestic staff need to live permanently with the occupier of the main dwelling. Such accommodation may be provided in the form of an extension providing only bedroom accommodation, where the occupant shares facilities in the main dwelling. However, it is not uncommon for elderly relatives or for domestic employees to want a certain level of privacy from the occupants of the main dwelling, by having other separate facilities such as a living room and a small kitchen. Accommodation of this type is referred to as an annexe and will only be permitted where it is subordinate in scale to the main dwelling and for use solely by a relative or domestic employee. It would be inappropriate to grant permission for an annexe unless it were to be clearly subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling, for otherwise the proposal would almost be tantamount to a proposal for an additional dwelling on the site. For the same reason it is important that subdivision into a separate unit of accommodation would be impracticable and that it is capable of full integration with the existing dwelling if the annexe were to cease to be required for its original

purpose. Accordingly in assessing proposals for annexes the Council will take account of the internal layout of the proposed annexe and linkages to the main dwelling. Linkages should ensure that the annexe could not easily be used as an entirely separate unit of accommodation. For example, if the proposed annexe is two-storey, a new staircase serving the annexe only will not normally be acceptable as this would facilitate the use of the extension as an entirely independent dwelling unit.

POLICY H13 - ANCILLARY BUILDINGS WITHIN RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGES

Proposals to erect a building within the curtilage of a dwelling will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the building would be used for purposes ancillary to the dwelling; and
- (b) the building would be very subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling; and
- (c) the proportion of the site remaining free from buildings would not decrease significantly; and
- (d) adequate garden space would remain to serve the existing dwelling; and
- (e) adequate off-street car parking would be retained to meet the standards in accordance with policy TR7; and
- (f) the building would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the landscape, nearby properties or the locality in general, for example through overdominance, obtrusiveness or the carrying out of noisy activities and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (g) the proposal would conform with the guidelines set out in Appendix 8; and
- (h) the proposal would comply with all other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Policy GB10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt).

Explanation

8.57 Many ancillary buildings within a residential curtilage do not require planning permission because they are classed as permitted development under the provisions of Class E, Part 1 to Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). However, in some cases permission will be required for ancillary outbuildings such as domestic garages and garden sheds. This policy seeks to ensure that where permission is required, such development does not detract from the amenities of neighbouring properties, the character of the area and does not result in overdevelopment of the application site.

8.58 In assessing proposals, the Council will take account of the scale of the building in terms of both floorspace and height and the level of visibility of the building from its surroundings. Account will be taken of the proximity of the building to boundaries shared with adjacent properties

8.59 Buildings in the front gardens of properties will need to be located sensitively and be of a scale and design which is appropriate to and not incongruous or obtrusive in the street

scene. The Council will, in such cases, take account of the proximity of the building to the front of the site, the level of screening likely to remain permanently on site, the topography of the site and the nature of development in the locality.

POLICY H14- GYPSY SITES

~~Proposals to establish or extend gypsy caravan sites may only be permitted provided that:~~

- ~~(a) there is clear and unequivocal evidence that the proposed occupants have a nomadic pattern of life and habitually reside in or resort to South Bucks District; and~~
- ~~(b) the site is located within the developed area excluded from the Green Belt; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would not result in the loss of employment land protected by policies in the Economy and Employment chapter of this Plan; and~~
- ~~(d) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(e) an adequate level of services would be provided as part of the proposal; and~~
- ~~(f) adequate provision would be made for a safe playing area for children; and~~
- ~~(g) the proposal would comply with all other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

8.60 There are four official gypsy caravan sites in South Bucks managed by Buckinghamshire County Council. These are located at Mansion Lane in Iver, Wapseys Wood in Gerrards Cross, Bottom Waltons in Burnham and Whites Hill in Beaconsfield. All, with the exception of White Hills in Beaconsfield, are high facility residential sites. The site in Beaconsfield is a low facility transit site. In total, the residential sites provide 58 double pitches including the warden's plots. The transit site at Beaconsfield has 7 double plots. Several private sites have also been permitted in the District, the largest of which is a site at Dudley Wharf in Iver.

8.61 The Council considers that the existing provision for official sites, together with those private pitches already granted planning permission, is adequate to meet the current needs of those gypsy families who habitually reside in or resort to this District. The Council therefore has no current plans to provide additional official sites. Proposals for private sites will be assessed against the criteria outlined in this policy.

8.62 In assessing applications for the provision of new or the extension of existing gypsy sites, the Council will expect evidence to be provided that the proposed occupier falls within the definition of a gypsy as set out in Section 80, Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and accordingly has a nomadic habit of life, that a pattern of residing in or resorting to this area has been established and that the requirement is for a pitch for a caravan.

8.63 ~~Circular 1/94 'Gypsy Sites & Planning' emphasises that applications for gypsy sites, as with any other type of planning application, should be determined solely in relation to land use factors. Proposals for such sites must be consistent with agricultural, countryside, environmental and Green Belt policies. Furthermore, the Circular makes it clear that previous guidance indicating that it may be necessary to accept the establishment of gypsy sites in protected areas, including the Green Belt, is withdrawn. The Circular specifically states that Green Belt land should not be allocated for gypsy sites in development plans.~~

8.64 ~~Proposals to establish or extend gypsy sites will therefore only be acceptable within the developed areas. In general, sites on the outskirts of the excluded settlements are likely to be more acceptable for gypsy use than are sites in other locations. In assessing proposals the Council will take account of the relationship of the site with existing residential areas, the capacity of the local road network, landscape factors and the provision of on-site services including childrens' playspace. It clearly would not be appropriate to encourage proposals where adequate on-site services could not be reasonably provided. Proposals which would impinge on the character of the area or upon the amenities of existing development will not be permitted.~~

9. SHOPPING AND TOWN CENTRES

9.1 One of the Council's main aims in planning for the District is to foster accessible, convenient, vibrant and interesting town and village centres which have a sense of identity and individuality. Protecting and enhancing the shopping facilities of each centre is one of the main ways of achieving this aim. However, town and village centres, particularly the larger areas, have a range of other uses which contribute to their overall identity. This Chapter includes a policy to cover a range of developments in the larger centres of Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and Gerrards Cross. It also contains policies which deal specifically with the shopping function of these centres and the smaller villages and provides a context for considering all forms of shopping proposals throughout the District.

9.2 The shopping characteristics of the District are largely defined by its location within the Metropolitan Green Belt and its proximity to major shopping centres at Uxbridge, Slough, Maidenhead and High Wycombe. The District is also close to London with the larger towns and villages served by public transport and with relatively easy access to the city by private transport. As a result, the main shopping centres in South Bucks are generally of a nature suited to serving the requirements of the resident population of the District, with even the largest centres of Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross only catering primarily for the needs of people living within South Bucks and the southern parts of Chiltern District.

9.3 The District Council will have particular regard to the importance of sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres, and maintaining the rural economy in implementing its shopping policies. This approach is supported by policies to promote a mix of uses in the District's largest centres and to direct new retail development to those centres. The District Council will also seek to ensure that new development is located in existing centres where it can be of maximum benefit to local communities and where it is likely to be accessible by, and encourage the use of, public transport.

9.4 For the purposes of this Plan the types of shopping areas within this District are divided into four classes, namely District Centres, Local Shopping Centres, Neighbourhood Shopping Areas and Individual Shops, each of which serve a vital yet different function for the community. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the retail function and attractiveness of these shopping areas. The Council will also seek to maintain the vibrancy of shopping areas while allowing for some diversification where changes of use would not have an adverse impact on their retail function or the character or environment of the area. This hierarchy of shopping functions meets the District's local shopping needs. A few large out-of-centre stores are also located within the District; Sainsburys in Burnham and the Bishop Centre on the A4 nearby. Whilst recognising the role of these out-of-centre retail developments the Council's prime aim is to focus shopping development in existing centres.

9.5 The District's largest centres provide for convenience and comparison shopping, however, a proportion of the District's comparison shopping needs are met by major shopping centres outside of the District. It is unlikely that substantial provision could be made for new comparison goods shopping within South Bucks given the constraints of Green Belt policy. In addition potential demand is limited by ease of access to neighbouring shopping centres, high car ownership rates and low population growth. The Council will direct future retail development to existing centres. It is, however, not possible to identify potential sites as it is likely that future development will result from the redevelopment or amalgamation of sites. The Council has not allocated land for retail warehouse developments in this Plan, taking account of the number of such developments in other urban areas, including Slough, Maidenhead and the West London area, which currently meet the needs of this District.

POLICY TC1 - DEVELOPMENT IN BEACONSFIELD (NEW TOWN), BURNHAM AND GERRARDS CROSS

Within the centre inset areas of Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and Gerrards Cross, as shown on the proposals map, the Council will seek to retain key uses which enhance the vitality or viability of the town centre. Planning permission for the change of use or redevelopment of such sites will not be granted unless the proposal is considered to preserve the vitality or viability of the centre.

The District Council will seek to protect and where possible strengthen, the retail function of these centres, whilst facilitating or maintaining an appropriate level of diversification.

A mix of uses will also be encouraged within the centre inset areas provided that proposals are considered to enhance the vitality of the centre and would not detract from the viability or retail attractiveness of the centre.

The re-use or redevelopment of sites currently or last used for lawful employment generating development, within the centre inset areas, may be permitted as an exception to the employment policies in the plan provided that;

- a) the proposal is for retail development or leisure or entertainment uses or other uses appropriate to a town centre location or a mixed use development comprising housing and offices; and
- b) the proposal enhances the vitality of the centre; and
- c) the site is not currently, or likely to be in the future, a major source of employment for residents of that settlement or its immediate locality; and
- d) the cumulative impact of such proposals within each centre would not result in a significant increase or a significant decrease in employment levels; and
- e) the proposal is of a scale and design commensurate with the size, character and role of the centre in which it is sited; and
- f) the proposal would comply with all other policies in the plan.

Explanation

9.6 The Council wishes to protect and promote vitality within the centres of the District's largest settlements Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and Gerrards Cross. The value of having a range of uses in the centres is recognised and to this end the Council will protect existing key uses and encourage proposals which add to the diversity of the centres provided such development is appropriate to the centre adding to its vitality and viability.

9.7 The centre inset areas of Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and Gerrards Cross identified for the purposes of this policy are defined on the proposals map. These centres provide a broad range of facilities and services, are accessible by public transport and act as a focus for the community. The boundaries of these centres are drawn to incorporate the shopping frontages to which specific policies apply, and extend beyond these to incorporate other uses found within town centres, in order to reflect the wider function of these centres.

9.8 The centres are reasonably accessible by public transport and are therefore the most appropriate location for uses which attract large numbers of people. The retention of key town centre uses which not only generate trips but also enhance the vitality of the centres will be encouraged. In the context of this policy key town centre uses would include retailing, housing,

leisure and entertainment. Examples of key town centre uses which the Council wishes to retain include large retail units, cinemas and libraries. Proposals which would result in the loss of such key uses will not be considered acceptable.

9.9 To allow for a greater mix of uses within the centre inset areas the loss of employment space may be acceptable, as an exception to the employment policies in the plan, but only where the proposal is considered to enhance the vitality of the centre and would not detract from the viability or retail attractiveness of the centre. The loss of an employment use within a town centre would only be acceptable where the proposed scheme would lead to significant benefits. The Council considers that the vitality of town centres would be enhanced by proposals for retail development or leisure or entertainment uses or other such uses appropriate to a town centre location or mixed use development comprising both housing and offices. The re-use of an employment site solely for housing would not be acceptable. To ensure the retention of key employment uses sites must not be present or prospective sources of major employment for residents of that town or its immediate locality. Employment generating development is defined in Chapter 10.

9.10 All new development should be of a scale and design which harmonises with the character and role of the town centre and any adjacent buildings and will be expected to be of high quality design. An urban design statement demonstrating the proposal's impact on its surroundings will be required for all significant new development or redevelopment.

POLICY S1 - DISTRICT SHOPPING CENTRES (BEACONSFIELD AND GERRARDS CROSS)

The District Council will seek to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the District Shopping Centres of Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross.

Proposals to change the use of an existing shop unit to any other use will only be permitted where:-

- a) the proposal would not result in a loss in the overall amount of frontage given over to A1 retail uses within the primary shopping frontages as defined on the proposals map centre insets;
- b) the proposal would not result in a continuous frontage of more than 10 metres in non-A1 use within the primary shopping frontages; and
- c) the proposal would not result in a predominance of non-retail uses within the secondary shopping frontages as defined on the proposals map centre insets; and
- d) the proposal would not involve the loss of A1 retail frontage on a visually prominent site in the primary or secondary shopping frontages; and
- e) a shop front appropriate to the shopping area would be maintained; and
- f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TC1 (Development in Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and Gerrards Cross), EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), ~~55 (New Shops, Redevelopment or Extensions) S8 (Shopfronts)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

The change of use of a unit within Part A of the Use Classes Order to any use outside Part A will not be permitted in the primary or secondary shopping frontages unless the proposal is appropriate to the District Shopping Centre and would add to its vitality and attractiveness.

Explanation

9.11 The overall context for development in the District's three largest centres is provided in Policy TC1. Policy S1 focuses on the shopping function of two of the three centres, Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross. In retail terms these centres have been classed as District Shopping Centres. Such centres provide a range of facilities including shops, offices, banks and restaurants to meet the needs not only of their immediate locality but also significant parts of the surrounding areas. They are accessible by both public and private transport and the concentration of retail outlets in these towns provides a wide range of goods including much of the District's comparison shopping allowing for competition to the benefit of consumers.

9.12 Beaconsfield (New Town) has a catchment area primarily in the western part of the District, and parts of Chiltern District, for local shopping, while Gerrards Cross serves its immediate hinterland including part of Chalfont St. Peter in Chiltern District. Both of these District Centres cater primarily for convenience goods shopping and contain most of the District's comparison shopping. A variety of commercial uses are also located within these centres many of which can help to contribute to the vitality and viability of a centre. Policy TC1 seeks to retain such key uses within the District Centres and promote an appropriate mix of uses.

9.13 There are a number of multiple stores in Beaconsfield (New Town), including Sainsburys, Waitrose, Boots, W.H. Smiths & Woolworths, which provide the main retail attraction in the town. Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and Class A3 (Food and Drink) uses are very well represented. Gerrards Cross does not have a particular shop which is obviously the main attraction and has very few multiple shops, the most notable being W.H. Smiths and Boots the Chemist. However, Gerrards Cross does contain a significant amount of specialist shops which together add to the town's vitality and viability. The town has a high proportion of Class A2 and Class A3 uses.

9.14 There are a number of factors which influence the attractiveness of a shopping area to shoppers. Such factors include vehicular accessibility to the centre; the provision of adequate and well sited parking facilities; the availability of good public transport to the centre; the provision of other public facilities; the level of pedestrian/vehicular segregation; and the general quality of the environment. However, perhaps of greatest importance is the number and range of shops and the fact that these are all conveniently located together within the shopping area.

9.15 Shops grouped conveniently together assist the process of search and comparison of goods and hence attract shoppers. The introduction of unsuitable non-retail uses can diminish the attractiveness of the District shopping centres, dependant on their size, nature of use, location and cumulative impact together with other non-A1 uses. A high proportion and concentration of non-retail units in a shopping area can reduce its overall attraction to shoppers and can also marginalise other shops further out of centre.

9.16 The Council considers that present levels of shopping provision should be safeguarded thereby ensuring the availability of essential goods within a reasonable travelling time for local communities. This can in part be achieved by controlling the amount of premises used for purposes other than retail. A variety of non-retail uses which provide services to shoppers can, however, contribute to, rather than detract from, the retail attractiveness of a shopping area. Although, where such uses become unduly prominent particularly in the core area of a town, they can adversely affect the vitality and viability of the centre.

9.17 To protect the main shopping centres of Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross the Council has identified primary retail frontages within which any loss in the total amount of frontage given over to A1 retail uses including vacant A1 units will be resisted. Broadly speaking, primary retail frontages are those which normally form the core, or main part, of a

shopping area and their continued use for predominantly A1 uses is considered essential to the vitality and viability of the shopping centre. Account will also be taken of the amount of continuous frontage in non-retail use. Within the primary frontages of Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross, favourable consideration will be given to applications for a change of use only if they would not result in a continuous frontage of more than 10 metres in non A1 use.

9.18 In recognition of the restrictions on non-A1 uses within the primary frontages, the Council will take a more flexible approach to proposals for non-retail uses in secondary frontages in the main centres. There is scope for some diversification in the secondary frontages, where a range of commercial uses can exist without detriment to the vitality and viability of the centre. However, the Council will seek to ensure that a mixture of uses remains in these secondary areas and that the retail function does not decline to an extent that would lead to a decrease in the attractiveness of those areas to the public or the creation of expanses of dead frontages.

9.19 In assessing proposals for changes of use within the secondary frontages, the Council will take account of the number of retail and non-retail uses already existing in the frontage, and particularly the number of non-retail units adjoining or in the immediate vicinity of the application site. The level of customer attraction of the proposed use will also be taken into account, with regard to the potential contribution the proposed use could make to the vitality of the area. Proposals which would be likely to reduce pedestrian flow in an area already lacking in vitality with few uses attractive to passing members of the public will be resisted.

9.20 The Council will resist the loss of Class A1, A2 or A3 uses within the primary and secondary frontages. In addition the introduction of uses falling outside Part A of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) will be resisted where they would not be appropriate to the District Shopping Centre or contribute to its vitality and attractiveness.

POLICY S2 - LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRES

The District Council will seek to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Local Shopping Centres of:-

Beaconsfield Old Town

Burnham

Farnham Common

Iver

Proposals to change the use of an existing shop unit to any other use will only be permitted where:

- (a) the proposal would not result in the predominance of non-retail uses in the Local Shopping Centre; and
- (b) the proposal would not result in a concentration of non-retail uses within the Local Shopping Centre; and
- (c) the proposal would not involve the loss of an A1 retail frontage on a visually prominent site in the Local Shopping Centre; and
- (d) a shopfront appropriate to the shopping area would be maintained; and
- (e) the proposal would comply with all other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TC1 (Development in Beaconsfield (New Town), Burnham and

Gerrards Cross), ~~S5 (New shops, Redevelopment or Extensions)~~, EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), ~~S8 (Shopfronts)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), and TR7 (Parking Provision).

The change of use of a unit within Part A of the Use Classes Order to any use outside Part A will not be permitted within the Local Shopping Centre unless the proposal is appropriate to the Local Shopping Centre and would add to its vitality and attractiveness.

The Local Shopping Centres are shown on the proposals map.

Explanation

9.21 Local Shopping Centres serve a more localised function than District Centres, although they are still of vital importance to the community. The range of shops, offices, banks and restaurants available is however more limited than that of the District Centres. They are less likely to include any major multiple shops, but are in general still reasonably accessible by public and private transport. Beaconsfield Old Town, Burnham Village, Farnham Common, and Iver Village have been classed as Local Shopping Centres.

9.22 Burnham Village is the largest Local Shopping Centre containing a number of office, service and non-retail uses in addition to its shops. A context for development in the centre as a whole is provided in policy TC1. With regard to its shopping function, however, it is smaller than the two District Centres, with a more restricted variety of retail outlets and, as such, it has a more localised function as reflected by its designation as a Local Shopping Centre. Although its further growth as a shopping centre has undoubtedly been limited by the presence of Slough nearby, it does provide an important focus for shopping within the locality.

9.23 Beaconsfield Old Town, a designated Conservation Area, comprises a mixture of commercial and residential uses. The retail premises are mixed in nature, and include uses such as grocers and newsagents serving the local community, as well as specialist shops which also cater for visitors to the centre. There are a high proportion of Class A3 and Class B1 uses within this centre. The Council wishes to retain the mix of retail and A3 uses within Beaconsfield Old Town which form an important part of the character of the Conservation Area.

9.24 The Local Shopping Centres of Farnham Common and Iver cater almost exclusively for the local communities. These centres are small in size and, as such, do not provide the range of goods or services available in the larger centres.

9.25 The Local Shopping Centres of Beaconsfield Old Town, Burnham Village, Farnham Common, and Iver Village do not possess easily identifiable primary and secondary frontages. The loss of an A1 retail unit within these centres could impact significantly on the vitality and viability of the centre depending on the size and location of the unit, due to the limited availability of retail floorspace. In assessing proposals for a change of use within these centres the Council will therefore have regard to the surrounding uses, the level of customer attraction of the proposed use and the overall impact on the vitality and viability of the centre. To prevent the creation of expanses of dead frontage or significant separation between retail units, proposals which would result in a concentration of non-retail uses within the identified frontages of the local centres will be resisted. Account will be taken of the cumulative effect of proposals on the retail function of these centres.

9.26 The Council will resist the loss of Class A1, A2 or A3 uses within the Local Shopping Centre frontages. In addition the introduction of uses falling outside Part A of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) will be resisted where they would not be appropriate to the Local Shopping Centre or contribute to its vitality and attractiveness.

9.27 These Local Shopping Centres also contain community facilities which serve the needs of

local residents. The Council wishes to encourage the provision and retention of such community facilities which add to the vitality, viability and function of Local Shopping Centres. Policies in chapter 12 of this plan set out criteria for the provision and protection of community facilities.

POLICY S3 - NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING AREAS

The Council will seek to sustain and enhance neighbourhood shopping areas, comprising two or more shops situated outside the District Centres and Local Shopping Centres.

Proposals to change the use of an existing retail unit within a neighbourhood shopping area to any other use will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal would help to protect and where possible strengthen the vitality and viability of the neighbourhood shopping area in catering for the daily needs of the local population; and
- (b) the proposal would not result in the predominance of non-retail uses and the non-retail use would complement the existing retail function of the neighbourhood shopping area; and
- (c) the proposal would comply with all other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development), ~~S7 (Change of Use to Class A3 (Food & Drink)) and S5 (New Shops, Redevelopment or Extensions)~~.

In assessing applications the Council will have regard to the number and type of non-retail uses already existing in the immediate area, any relevant unimplemented permissions and the proximity of any other retail units in the vicinity.

Explanation

9.28 Neighbourhood Shopping Areas include both small groups of shops and shopping parades. They provide an essential service for local communities offering a range of convenience goods for sale close to residential areas. Easy accessibility to a grocers, newsagent and a post office counter, for example, is important. The service provided by such shops is particularly important to the less mobile members of the community, including the elderly, those with special needs and those without access to a car who have to rely on these shops to cater for their day to day needs. Whilst neighbourhood shopping areas may be served by public transport many of the customers of such shops are likely to walk or cycle rather than use public transport for such a localised trip.

9.29 In order to sustain neighbourhood shopping areas the Council will seek to retain sufficient units in Class A1 use to provide vital retail services such as post office counters and pharmacies which serve local demand. The neighbourhood shopping areas are vulnerable to the loss of A1 uses given that the area may include only a small number of existing A1 uses and any loss of such a use could result in the area becoming less attractive to shoppers and would therefore have a seriously adverse impact upon the whole shopping area.

9.30 To ensure that sufficient units remain in Class A1 retail use and that non-retail uses remain secondary in nature, the Council will seek to retain a minimum of two-thirds of the floorspace of any shopping parade or group of neighbourhood shops in retail use. However, in reaching its decision on any proposal within the larger neighbourhood shopping areas, the Council will take account of any evidence, including for example the long-term vacancy of shop units which have been offered on the open market at a reasonable rent, which demonstrates that demand for a Class A1 use in a specific shop premises does not exist as other existing facilities cater adequately for the needs of the local community.

9.31 The change of use of an existing A1 retail unit in a neighbourhood shopping area to another use will not normally be permitted unless adequate shopping provision, particularly in respect of convenience goods, can be shown to exist in close enough proximity to cater for the day-to-day needs of the local population. This would thus reduce the need to travel to town centres or out-of-centre shops for essential goods, and ensure adequate local shopping provision, particularly for the less mobile members of the community.

9.32 Non-retail uses can in some cases co-exist with retail uses to the benefit of the local community. Some non-retail uses can result in a substantial customer attraction to a unit within a neighbourhood shopping area and may be acceptable, particularly in larger parades and groups of shops, provided that a sufficient number of retail outlets remain. The non-retail use proposed, however, should serve a local need and thus, in general, only changes of use to Class A2 (Financial & Professional Services) or Class A3 (Food & Drink) will be permitted. Uses which do not serve passing trade will not normally be appropriate within a neighbourhood shopping area. In addition non-retail uses should not impinge on the retail function of the neighbourhood shopping area, but should complement the existing retail function.

9.33 In general, as is reflected by the existing situation throughout the District, A2 uses (Financial & Professional Services) will be more likely to be acceptable in the larger parades or groupings of shops, rather than in small parades and groups of shops containing only three or four shop units, provided that such A2 uses remain secondary in nature and do not dominate the parade.

~~9.34 The considerations raised in policy S7 relating to changes of use to Class A3 (Food & Drink) will, where applicable, be taken into account in assessing proposals which would result in the loss of a retail unit in a neighbourhood shopping area through such a change of use.~~

POLICY S4 - INDIVIDUAL SHOPS

The change of use of individual shops will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is insufficient local demand for such a facility and that there are sufficient existing retail facilities within the area which cater for the daily needs of the local population.

Explanation

9.35 Corner shops and village shops serve a vital role in catering for local need, offering essential goods for sale at a convenient and accessible location. Often such shops also contain a post office counter. The Council will seek to ensure that, where possible, any such individual shop is retained. A change of use will only be permitted where it can be shown that sufficient local demand for such a facility does not exist and where it can be demonstrated that there are satisfactory alternative facilities in the vicinity. The Council will require evidence that a thorough marketing exercise has been undertaken.

9.36 Where it is proposed to change the use of an individual shop and the loss of the retail use would be acceptable in principle, it will be very important to consider the impact of the proposed use on the surrounding amenity given the fact that such shop units are normally located within predominantly residential areas. In general a change of use to residential is likely to be most appropriate given the location of such shops within a residential area. Any other use which would have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding residential amenity will not be permitted. A residential use would also be most appropriate given the extent of the Green Belt within South Bucks which constrains the amount of land for housing. Thus every opportunity needs to be taken to ensure the maximum re-use is made of buildings for residential purposes, which contribute to the supply of housing within the District.

POLICY S5 – NEW SHOPS, REDEVELOPMENT OR EXTENSIONS

~~New shopping development, redevelopment and extensions to existing shop premises located within or adjacent to a District Shopping Centre, Local Shopping Centre or Neighbourhood Shopping Area only, will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the vitality or viability of the above areas; and~~
- ~~(b) new development or redevelopment is of a scale and design commensurate with the size, character and role of the centre or the area in which it is sited, and any extension would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original building; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(d) adequate servicing facilities are provided; and~~
- ~~(e) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies S8 (Shopfronts), GB4 (Employment Generating and Commercial Development in the Green Belt), TR5 (Accesses, Highways Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

9.37 This policy relates to new built development for retail purposes which will normally be located within the established shopping areas of the District. It excludes out-of-centre shopping facilities which are covered by policy S6 but includes edge-of-centre shopping facilities which are within reasonable walking distance of a District Centre or Local Shopping Centre. Such shopping facilities should incorporate parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes. The policy seeks to ensure that new retail development would preserve or enhance the character of an area, thus aiding its vitality and viability, and that such development would not impinge upon the amenities of any existing properties.

9.38 The policy aims to ensure that new retail development, redevelopment and extensions preserve and enhance the vitality and viability of shopping areas. The Council will resist proposals which individually or cumulatively would lead to a decline in the attractiveness and vitality or viability of any of the District's retail centres. Similarly proposals which relate to smaller groups or individual shops will only be permitted where they do not detract from the character of the area or the amenities of any nearby properties, and preferably should enhance the area.

9.39 In assessing planning applications for such retail development, the Council will have regard to the scale and design of the proposed development in relation to the surrounding properties. All new built development should be of a scale and design which harmonises with the character and role of the centre and with the scale and architectural composition of any adjacent buildings. Details of materials and any landscaping proposals will also be taken into account in considering applications.

9.40 The relationship of the proposed development with adjacent properties will be assessed and proposals which would significantly impinge on the amenities of such properties, particularly

~~if they are in residential use, will be resisted. New built development can also provide an opportunity to improve security and safety, and the Council will encourage developers to consider this issue in relation to proposals for such development.~~

~~9.41 Planning permission will not be granted for any new built development unless the Council is satisfied regarding the traffic and parking implications of the proposal. New development or redevelopment will be expected to comply with the Council's parking standards. A possible relaxation of standards may be made in the case of a corner or village shop where additional car parking cannot be provided, if the Council is entirely satisfied that such a relaxation would not result in an unacceptable reduction in road safety.~~

~~9.42 The Council aims to promote the role of the District Centre and Local Shopping Centres and will, where appropriate, take account of existing public car parking facilities within these centres, and their proximity to the application site, when assessing proposals for new retail development.~~

~~9.43 The Council will also seek to ensure that proposals for large scale retail development incorporates recycling facilities for items such as glass, cans and newspapers.~~

~~9.44 In assessing proposals under this policy, account will also be taken of the provisions of policy EP1 (Environmental Improvements) and policies TR1-4 in Chapter 11 regarding transport issues.~~

POLICY S6 - OUT-OF-CENTRE SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT

Out-of-centre shopping developments will only be permitted where:-

- (a) it can be adequately demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that the proposed development would not, either individually or cumulatively with other such developments, have a detrimental impact on the vitality or viability of any nearby District Shopping Centre or Local Shopping Centre, or any nearby neighbourhood shopping area, or on the rural economy; and
- (b) it can be shown that there are no suitable town centre sites or edge-of-centre sites; or the proposal is for very small scale retail development, including extensions, to provide for local shopping needs; and
- (c) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (d) the proposed development would be well-related both to existing retail development and to the resident population, thereby minimising the need for travel; and
- (e) the site is, or would be, readily served by public transport, ~~and would accord with policy TR1 (Encouraging the Use of Public Transport)~~; and
- (f) adequate servicing facilities are provided; and
- (g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies GB4 (Employment Generating and Commercial Development in the Green Belt), TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

Explanation

9.45 The primary focus of this plan with regard to shopping provision is to sustain or enhance the vitality and viability of town and village centres which serve the whole community. The Council will encourage new retail development to locate within an existing centre where possible, if a suitable site is available within the centre. Town and village centres provide a focus for retail development, with a range of shops and supporting uses facilitating competition from which consumers benefit. The Council's first preference for the location of retail development will be for town centre sites. If no town or village centre site is available the Council will encourage new retail development to locate on an edge-of-centre site. In applying a sequential approach to the location of new retail development, as outlined in PPG6, out-of-centre shopping development will not be considered acceptable, unless it can be shown that there are no suitable town centre or edge-of-centre sites or the proposal is for very small scale retail development, defined as approximately 100 sq.m gross floor area, such as a local corner shop to provide for local shopping needs.

9.46 New out-of-centre development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that such development, both in its own right and in conjunction with any similar existing developments, would not detrimentally affect the vitality and viability of any nearby shopping area within or outside the District. The impact on the rural economy, including the role of village shops, will also be a very important consideration in assessing any such proposal, in view of the rural nature of most of this District. The Council may require the applicant to submit a retail impact study.

9.47 In assessing applications for developments which may affect a nearby centre, the Council will have regard to the benefits to the public and weigh these against other economic, social and environmental impacts, including:-

- (a) the likely effect on future private sector investment needed to safeguard vitality and viability in that centre, taking account of the likely growth in population and expenditure;
- (b) the extent to which the development would affect the strategy for the centre set out in this Plan, particularly in this chapter;
- (c) changes to the quality, attractiveness and character of the centre, and to its role in the economic and social life of the community;
- (d) changes to the physical condition of the centre;
- (e) changes to the range of services that the centre will continue to provide;
- (f) likely increases in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area; and
- (g) the likely effects on investment in the nearby centre.

9.48 The Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 indicates that South Bucks District is adequately provided with large convenience stores. It is therefore unlikely that favourable consideration will be given to any further large out-of-centre foodstores unless an identifiable need can be demonstrated and the vitality and viability of any nearby centre, or the rural economy, would not be adversely affected as a result of the proposal. Any such proposal would also have to comply with the other criteria listed in the policy and to policies ~~TR1 (Encouraging the Use of Public Transport)~~, TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), and TR7 (Parking Provision) of this Plan regarding public transport, access and parking.

9.49 Whilst the Structure Plan shows that there is a shortfall of retail warehouse and comparison good provision in South Bucks, account must be taken of the proximity of the District to large commercial centres in assessing any proposals for such development. There is considerable outflow from South Bucks to retail warehouses in Slough and also Maidenhead, and perhaps to a slightly lesser extent to the west London area. It is unlikely that substantial provision could be made for comparison goods shopping in the District given the constraints of Green Belt policy unless, for example, opportunities for redevelopment arise within a town centre. If a suitable out-of-centre site becomes available for such development and all of the criteria listed in the policy are satisfied, the Council may impose conditions on any permission restricting the main range of goods to be sold, to ensure that the development does not subsequently change its character unacceptably through selling other types of goods which could lead to the development affecting the vitality and viability of a nearby centre.

9.50 Out-of-centre stores can have a detrimental impact on the environment due to the scale of new development involved, and associated features such as large hardsurfaced areas to provide for car parking. The out-of-centre store can also have a negative impact both on the vitality and viability of any nearby shops and town and village centres, and the character and amenities of the area in which it is located. This policy seeks to ensure that, if such a proposal were considered to be acceptable in principle, the impact would be minimised and the development would be located where it would not have a significant impact on the local environment or any nearby centres or other shopping areas. The Council will seek through the implementation of this policy to ensure that, if a suitable site becomes available for such development, town and village centre and out-of-centre developments complement each other in meeting demand without adversely affecting existing shopping facilities.

~~POLICY S7 – CHANGE OF USE TO CLASS A3 (FOOD & DRINK)~~

~~Proposals to change the use of properties to restaurants, cafes and hot food take away shops, or any other use falling within class A3, will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would comply with the criteria set out in policies S1 (District Shopping Centres), S2 (Local Shopping Centres) and S3 (Neighbourhood Shopping Areas); and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general including for example, through noise, smell or general disturbance and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development).~~

~~Conditions controlling the emission of odours and the hours of opening of such premises will be imposed in order to maintain environmental standards.~~

~~Proposals will also need to comply with all the other policies of this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policy S5 (New Shops, Redevelopment or Extensions).~~

~~Explanation~~

9.51 ~~Town and village centres are characterised by a diversity of uses. However, it is essential to strike a balance between the retail function of a centre and the supporting uses including, for example, pubs and restaurants. The policy seeks to ensure that Class A3 uses, which can contribute to the vibrancy of an area, do not have adverse environmental implications, through controlling those factors which could potentially lead to a degradation of the environmental quality of an area.~~

9.52 ~~In assessing any such proposal, the Council will have regard to the impact of the use on the environment and amenities of the area by reason, for example, of general disturbance,~~

~~noise, smell, fumes, refuse disposal, parking or traffic related problems. Different types of use within Class A3 can generate different types of activity. Some restaurants for example, trade mainly during office hours, unlike others which rely primarily on evening trade. Hot food take aways can cause particular problems to local amenity, depending on the location of the premises, the hours of opening, the type of food sold and whether a delivery service is provided.~~

~~9.53 In general uses which are open in the evening are often more likely to result in damage to the character and amenities of the area. Uses which are likely to attract a significant number of pedestrian or vehicular movements in the evening periods, such as hot food establishments offering a take away service, or public houses, are more likely to generate noise or disturbance from customers or their vehicles to the detriment of the locality. It is particularly important to consider this aspect where there are residential properties close by. Some uses, such as those involving hot food, may result in problems of fumes and smell during both the daytime and evening period. Accordingly the Council will seek to ensure that applications for such uses incorporate a suitable extraction system. Such systems must be visually acceptable and not cause any noise disturbance. The Council will also seek, where appropriate, to encourage applicants for take aways to provide a litter bin on the pavement as part of their proposal, of a design in keeping with the surrounding streetscape.~~

~~9.54 In considering planning applications for a change of use to A3, the advice of the environmental health officers will be obtained and appropriate conditions to ensure environmental protection may be imposed on any planning permission granted.~~

~~9.55 Whilst a change of use of any premises to an A3 (Food & Drink), or A2 (Financial & Professional Services) use requires planning permission, under the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) permission is not required for a change of use from Class A3 to Class A2. It will therefore be necessary, in assessing proposals for a change of use of a premises to Class A3 use, to establish the impact of such a change of use on the retail function of the centre, bearing in mind that the premises could subsequently change to a financial or professional use without planning permission. In line with policies S1(District Centres) proposals which would result in a reduction in the amount of primary frontage in retail use in Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross will be resisted. In addition, within the primary frontages of Beaconsfield (New Town) and Gerrards Cross, favourable consideration will be given to applications for such a change of use only if they would not result in a continuous frontage of more than 10 metres in non A1 (shop) use.~~

~~9.56 Within the Local Shopping Centres (Policy S2), the Council will only give favourable consideration to changes of use provided that the proposal would not result in more than two adjoining units being in non A1 use, and provided that non A1 uses within the Centre remain secondary in nature.~~

~~9.57 This policy is also applicable to proposals to change the use of premises outside of town or village centres to Class A3.~~

POLICY S8 — SHOPFRONTS

~~Proposals to install new shopfronts or replace existing ones will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(a) the scale, design details and materials of the shopfront are in keeping with the existing building into which the shopfront is to be installed, and with the character of the area as a whole; and~~
- ~~(b) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems.~~

~~The Council will seek to ensure that any other external alterations to existing shop premises do not detract from the appearance of the area or the building, for example, through the~~

~~provision of visually unacceptable shutters, canopies or advertisements. The Council will also seek to facilitate the incorporation of appropriate deterrents to crime in the design of new shopfronts.~~

~~On listed buildings and in conservation areas, new or replacement shopfronts will only be permitted where they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the listed building or conservation area.~~

~~Any proposal for a non retail use in a shopping area will normally be required to have a window display consistent with a shopping area and appropriate planning conditions to that effect will be applied.~~

Explanation

9.58 The visual appearance of a shopping area can significantly affect the ability of a centre to attract custom and thus affect its vitality and viability. Whilst the control of shopfronts and other external alterations to buildings is of particular importance within conservation areas such as Beaconsfield Old Town and Burnham Village, it is also essential to maintain or enhance the appearance of the newer shopping areas.

9.59 The external appearance of buildings is one of the primary factors which influence a person's perception of the character of a place. Poorly designed shopfronts, canopies, shutters and advertisements can all detract from the appearance of a centre. It is therefore essential that control over alterations is maintained and the individual and cumulative impact of proposals assessed. The replacement of a shopfront can provide an opportunity for visual improvements which help to enhance the appearance of a centre. It can also provide scope for improving security without detriment to the townscape, for example through maintaining or providing a brick plinth below a shop window thus deterring ram raiders and reducing the need for shutters and bollards, or by ensuring that the design of the shopfront avoids large dark recesses by the front door. In general, shutters will only be acceptable where their design and the materials used do not materially and adversely change the appearance of the building from when the shutters are not in use. Strong control will be maintained over shutters on listed building and conservation areas where if acceptable in principle, the Council will seek to encourage the use of open mesh shutters fixed inside the windows. This policy aims to reinforce and support relevant policies in this Plan relating to conservation areas, listed buildings, transport and advertisements.

9.60 The Council considers it imperative that the needs of the less mobile members of the community, and particularly the disabled, are taken into account. The installation of a new shopfront provides an ideal opportunity to ensure that access arrangements are suitable for those with mobility problems and the Council will seek to ensure that satisfactory access is provided. In applying this policy the Council will pay heed to the Building Regulations 1991, Approved Document M, Access and Facilities for Disabled People (1992 edition).

9.61 This policy applies not only to town centres but to individual shops and groups of shops. Unattractive shopfronts can detract from the character of a village or residential area, as well as larger commercial centres. Because of the less commercial nature of the area in which these shops are located, such alterations can be more prominent and unattractive than within a commercial centre.

9.62 In order to further maintain the vitality of shopping centres or parades, the Council will seek to ensure that a shopfront and display area appropriate to a shopping area is maintained where a change of use to a non retail use is permitted. Many non retail uses provide no visual attraction to passing members of the public. The Council considers that shopping frontages with their varied and changing window displays contribute to the character and interest of the area, and will seek to ensure that non retail uses also contribute to this visual display. This will

~~help to avoid the creation of dead frontages in shopping areas.~~

~~9.63 Improving the visual attractiveness of shops helps to enhance the appearance of the area and can lead to positive benefits to the environment. By improving people's perception of an area and attracting custom, such visual improvements can enhance the vibrancy and viability of an area.~~

POLICY S9 - MARKETS, CAR-BOOT SALES ETC.

A proposal for an open air market, car boot sale or other retail use of land, or the use of a building for an auction or market, will not be permitted unless:-

- (a) it would be sited within the developed area excluded from the Green Belt, and would not have a detrimental impact on any statutorily designated area or building, or any other areas designated within this plan; and
- (b) it would not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of established shopping areas; and
- (c) it would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general for example through noise or general disturbance, and would accord with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (d) it would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision). Adequate parking for both traders and customers would need to be provided within the application site.

In assessing proposals, the local planning authority will have regard to:-

- (a) the number of stalls or, in the case of an auction, the number of lots for sale; and
- (b) hours, days and frequency of operation; and
- (c) storage and display facilities; and
- (d) the site's accessibility by public transport.

Explanation

9.64 The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) allows the use of any land, excluding buildings or land within the curtilage of a building, for up to 14 days in any calendar year for the purpose of holding a market. Where permission is sought for a market or other retail use of open land, such as a car boot sale, for a longer period of time, the Council will have regard to the likely impact of the proposal on the character of the area and on the amenities of any nearby properties. The highway implications and the adequacy of the car parking arrangements will also be taken into account in assessing any such proposals.

9.65 Most of South Bucks District, with the exception of the towns and larger villages, lies within the designated Metropolitan Green Belt. Proposals to run a market or other open air retail use on land within the Green Belt will be resisted by this Council, as such a use would be contrary to Green Belt policy, representing encroachment into the countryside. The use of existing buildings within the Green Belt for auctions or markets will also normally be resisted by

the Council as such an intensive commercial use generating large amounts of traffic, would be inappropriate and contrary to long-established Green Belt policy, and in conflict with policy GB9 (Agricultural Diversification).

9.66 Permission for a market or similar use will therefore only be granted if the use is sited within a developed area, excluded from the Green Belt. In assessing such proposals the Council will have regard to the likely impact of the use on the character or amenities of the area, together with the potential impact on the vitality and viability of any existing nearby shops or centres. Whilst markets within a town can in some instances benefit a retail centre by increasing the number of customers to the centre, often they can divert customers from established shops to the detriment of the viability of a centre. Car boot sales can also have a detrimental impact on the amenities of an area as they often commence early on weekend mornings when there is very little other activity in the area. Problems from litter, lack of toilet facilities, parking, traffic, noise and general disturbance to local residents can also occur from these types of use in some instances. Adequate toilet facilities and waste disposal arrangements will be required in connection with any such use to satisfy environmental health requirements.

9.67 Proposals for markets and other open air retail uses require sufficient land for stalls and other facilities to be set up, as well as generating a considerable demand for parking provision. Permission for such a use of land will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that the market, and customer and trader car parking, can be accommodated within the site, or on adjacent land, without detriment to users of the highway or local residents or to the character of the locality. The Council will also assess the level to which any site proposed for such a use is served by public transport, while recognising that public transport services in the District are limited and may be particularly infrequent on certain days of the week. Similar considerations will apply in respect of auctions or markets held within buildings, when the Council will also have to be satisfied that no open storage would result on the site.

9.68 Markets and similar uses can generate large amounts of traffic over a relatively short period of time. Planning permission will not be granted for any such use which does not comply with the Council's parking standards, as failure to provide adequate parking would be likely to result in on-street parking and traffic congestion. The likely traffic generation and implications for road safety will be assessed in determining any application and regard will be had to the provisions of policy TR5 (Access, Highway Works and Traffic Generation). In addition proposals for sites in close proximity to residential dwellings are likely to be resisted unless it can be shown that the amenities of the residential properties would not be significantly affected through noise, traffic or any other form of disturbance.

9.69 The Council recognises the problems that can arise in connection with markets and similar uses. Through the implementation of this policy the Council seeks to ensure that such uses contribute to the vibrancy of an area and do not detract from the vitality and viability of nearby shops or centres, or have a detrimental impact on the environment.

10. ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

10.1 Planning policy plays an important role in integrating many environmental and economic objectives. The maintenance of a healthy local economy is important not only for the employment opportunities that it may offer, but also because it has an important impact on the quality of life and on the quality of the environment. A healthy local economy, where there is a close balance between jobs and local workforce skills, offers residents the chance to work locally where they do not have to commute long distances. Other benefits can include buildings being put to an active use, where they may otherwise have remained vacant and derelict to the detriment of the character and amenities of an area.

10.2 In bringing forward its policies in relation to employment and the economy the District Council is aware of the need to ensure that these not only maintain and strengthen the local economy, but are also compatible with environmental objectives. In order to sustain a strong and diversified local employment base yet ensure that the basic restraint policies are not compromised it is essential that the best possible use is made of the limited amount of land available for economic development. The importance of small businesses to the economy must also be recognised; hence the need for policies which can help these businesses to set-up, become established and expand, subject to environmental and planning constraints.

10.3 The local economy of South Bucks has remained buoyant throughout the 1980s. Although unemployment rose in the early 1990's in line with national and regional trends, it has now declined and remains well below the national average. Nevertheless it is important to support the processes of economic restructuring.

10.4 Considerable restructuring of the employment base has been taking place over the past few years. The Census of Employment shows manufacturing as a percentage of total employment in the District has been declining, falling from 29.9% to 25.6% between 1981 and 1991, whilst service sector employment increased from 62.1% to 67.8% during the same period. Some loss of service sector jobs has taken place since 1989.

10.5 The 1991 Census of Employment showed that there were approximately 32,000 economically active residents in the District and approximately 22,500 jobs. Given that 60% of these jobs in the District will be taken by people commuting into the District from elsewhere, this indicates a substantial amount of travelling out of the District for work. Indeed the travel to work data available (10% sample) from the 1991 Census of Population indicate that around 60% of economically active residents travel out of the District to work. Furthermore the same data indicates that around 85% of these commute by car.

10.6 An examination of the future balance between potential new jobs in the District and the projected local labour supply shows that if outstanding planning permissions were implemented and vacant floorspace were occupied the number of new jobs could increase by 1,500 by 2011, whereas the labour supply could fall by 1,800.

10.7 It is however very difficult to make any assumptions about the effects of these potential changes. Simply matching potential jobs to labour supply does not take into account skills or abilities in the labour force. It also does not take account of the possibility that the number of anticipated jobs may not emerge because permissions may not be implemented or sites may be used for a different purpose, or that employment densities (staff/square metres) may change over time.

10.8 Even if this increase in jobs does take place, the imbalance between economically active and jobs is likely to remain substantial. Therefore if any impact is to be made on the levels commuting out of the District for work it is essential to protect existing employment sites, as

there is no opportunity to replace such sites elsewhere once lost.

10.9 The need to protect and encourage small firms is recognised by central Government in PPG4 'Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms'. This advice is particularly relevant to South Bucks where currently 41% of the jobs occur in firms of less than 25 employees.

10.10 The four main objectives of the policies set out in this chapter are:-

- (a) to encourage employment generating development which would not be likely to result in commuting, particularly long distance commuting, or in further pressure for housing, or other development provided such employment generating development would not compromise any other policies in this plan;
- (b) to maintain a prosperous economy in the District's towns, villages and countryside, particularly by protecting employment sites which provide local jobs, thus minimising unemployment and the need to commute;
- (c) to provide a planning context which can assist small businesses;
- (d) to secure environmental improvements on employment generating sites.

10.11 For the purposes of this Local Plan 'employment generating uses' are those classes of development set out in Part B of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Any proposal of a 'sui-generis' nature, involving a use not falling within any specific Use Class, will be carefully considered and if its main purpose and function is broadly similar in nature to Use Classes B1-B8 then the Council will treat it as employment generating development and it will be subject to the policies in this Chapter.

POLICY E1 EMPLOYMENT GENERATING DEVELOPMENT

~~Proposals to provide an employment generating use, through development, redevelopment or change of use, will only be permitted where:~~

- ~~(i) the site is within a Business or Industrial Area identified on the proposals map; or~~
- ~~(ii) the site is currently or was last used for authorised and lawful employment generating uses; or~~
- ~~(iii) the proposal would be in accordance with Policies GB2 (Re Use of Buildings in the Green Belt), GB11 (Wilton Park, Beaconsfield), S1 (District Shopping Centres), S2 (Local Shopping Centres) and TC1 (Development in Beaconsfield New Town, Burnham and Gerrards Cross); and~~

~~All proposals will also be required to meet the following criteria:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general, and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to the other policies in this chapter, Policy H4 (Loss of Housing Accommodation) and to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

~~The Council will encourage proposals which make as full and effective use of land as is possible whilst remaining consistent with the other policies of the Plan. Permission will not be granted for proposals which would sterilise employment generating land or which would reduce its availability or suitability for future development.~~

Explanation

10.12 In accordance with the Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011 policy E5, no provision is made in this Plan for new sites for employment generating development anywhere in the District. This is consistent with the Regional Strategy for the South East which indicates that the western part of the region, including southern Buckinghamshire, should now have reduced rates of economic and housing development.

10.13 The restraint on employment generating development is inextricably linked to the policy of providing continued protection for the Green Belt. There is no new land suitable for employment generating development which is also unconstrained by planning policy. The release of land from, or the provision of new land within the Green Belt for employment generating development would be unacceptable and cause harm to the purposes of the Green Belt. There is also no new land available within the developed areas suitable for employment generating development.

10.14 The Council therefore envisages that most new employment generating development will take place on sites already used for such purposes. Proposals which would result in the change of use from one employment generating use class to another may be acceptable if the new use would not adversely affect the character or amenities of the area.

10.15 Due to the lack of availability of new sites for employment generating uses, the Council will resist any proposals for other types of development which would prevent the effective use of existing employment sites. Development which would sterilise an employment site, for example by preventing access to such a site, will not be permitted. Similarly proposals which would reduce the availability of such land, as a result for example of incompatibility, will be resisted by the Council.

10.16 Whilst it may still remain substantial, the imbalance between the number of jobs and the number of economically active residents is likely to decrease, as set out in the introduction to this chapter. In addition the Council will, where appropriate, continue to grant permission on existing employment generating sites for new buildings and extensions to buildings. This is likely to result in a further increase in potential jobs. However, the Council is concerned that employment generating development beyond this would be likely to put even further pressure on the supply of housing, or could alternatively increase the levels of commuting. Further pressure on the supply of housing could lead to an increase in the price of property, to the detriment of affordability, or demands for the release of land from the Green Belt to meet this additional demand. Both of these situations would be unacceptable.

POLICY E2 - PINEWOOD STUDIOS

The Pinewood Studios site as identified on the proposals map is allocated for film studio use. Extensions, new buildings and conversions within the site will be permitted provided that:

- a) the proposals are for uses directly connected with film production or associated industries; and
- b) the proposals would be in accordance with all the other policies in the plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) ~~and CB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries)~~.

Proposals for redevelopment or re-use of the studios will only be permitted where:

- i) it is demonstrated that the site is no longer required for studio use; and
- ii) the proposal would be for an employment generating use; and
- iii) the proposals would not result in a significantly higher level of employment than currently exists at the site; and
- iv) the proposal would result in a reduction in the overall footprint of buildings on the site and incorporate substantial landscaping; and
- v) the proposal would be in accordance with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) ~~and CB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries)~~.

In the event of any redevelopment the Council will prepare a development brief for the site.

Explanation

10.17 Pinewood Studios is a site of national and international significance for the production of films. The Council is not aware of any plans for the studio to relocate or close in the foreseeable future. However, the Council considers that a planning policy context for any future proposals is necessary and that the retention of this unique site for film production is extremely desirable. Therefore, Policy E2 allows for new development within the site boundary for studio and related uses.

10.18 If it is ever proposed to redevelop or re-use all or part of the site, the Council will need to be satisfied that studio use is no longer required or viable. As the site currently contains employment generating development which the Council seeks to protect, redevelopment should only be for another employment generating use. However, any new uses at the site should reflect the existing permanent employment levels. It would not be appropriate for any redevelopment or re-use to result in a substantial intensification of employment as the site is not well located in relation to public transport. It could also result in employment growth inconsistent with the policy of strategic restraint which applies in southern Buckinghamshire.

10.19 In the event of the site being redeveloped or re-used there should be a reduction in the footprint of buildings to create a more spacious form of development appropriate to a site virtually surrounded by Green Belt. Substantial landscaping should be an integral part of any development.

POLICY E3 – INDUSTRIAL AREAS

~~Within the Industrial Areas identified on the proposals map permission will only be granted for:-~~

- ~~(i) development, redevelopment, changes of use or extensions for uses falling within Use Classes B1-B8 (inclusive). The Council will particularly support proposals for uses falling within Use Class B2; or~~
- ~~(ii) development, redevelopment or extensions for a use falling outside of Use Classes B1-B8 (inclusive) where the proposed use is the same as the existing use of the site;~~

~~All proposals will also be required to meet the following criteria:-~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with Policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(b) it would not restrict the authorised operations of adjacent users; and~~
- ~~(c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original buildings; and~~
- ~~(d) suitable measures would be included as an integral part of the proposal, to reduce the visual impact of the development if the site is close to the Green Belt boundary; and~~
- ~~(e) provision would be made for adequately maintained landscape or other environmental improvements and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP4 (Landscaping); and~~
- ~~(f) provision is made for the necessary transport infrastructure improvements to serve the proposal; and~~
- ~~(g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Assesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

~~10.20 In order to support local economic activity and to ensure that employment opportunities can continue to be provided locally the District Council intends to safeguard most land currently used for business and all land used for industry and storage or distribution. The District has only a very limited stock of such land and if lost it could not be replaced elsewhere in the District since there is no other land free of constraints which would be suitable for such employment generating development. Given the limited supply of land available for other uses as well, employment generating sites are likely to come under increasing pressure for, in particular, housing development. Accordingly the Council wishes to avoid the loss of land from employment generating uses. The Council has therefore identified on the Proposals Map the main areas of land in employment generating use in areas excluded from the Green Belt. In doing so a distinction is made between 'Industrial' and 'Business' areas.~~

~~10.21 On the whole the Industrial Areas are situated away from the main residential areas and are therefore more suited to employment generating uses falling outside of Class B1. These areas include the Ridgeway and Bison Estates in Iver and Broadwater Park at Denham. The Council is also mindful of the declining role of manufacturing industries in the District and the increasing reliance upon service industries for employment. Furthermore, the volume of outstanding unimplemented permissions for Class B1 uses suggests that even greater reliance may be placed on the service sector for future employment. The danger is that too great a reliance on the service sector could have unacceptable consequences for unemployment if that sector were to be badly hit by future economic or other pressures. Furthermore, the nation's economy and prosperity has historically been built on a manufacturing base, with service industries being supplementary to that manufacturing base. The Council considers that it would be wrong to further increase the loss of that manufacturing base particularly given the limited~~

amount of land suitable for industrial uses in the District. Accordingly, the Council would prefer to see a diversification in the employment base where possible, and accordingly will particularly encourage uses falling in Class B2 in the industrial areas.

10.22 Where new development occurs in industrial areas additional pressure is likely to be placed on transport infrastructure. Therefore, the Council will require provision to be made for any necessary improvements. Where improvements are required off site these will usually need to be secured by a legal agreement. Redevelopment of the Bison Estate in Iver will require the construction of a new link road to access the site from the west. Any major developments within the nearby Ridgeway Estate are only likely to be acceptable if a new link is developed to the west. At the time of publication a precise route for this new access had not been determined and was being jointly investigated by the District and County Councils.

10.23 It is important that the nature of a new use does not adversely affect an existing use, whereby it puts jobs at risk by virtue of the existing use no longer being able to operate properly. It is also important to ensure that the traffic impacts of proposals are carefully considered. There has also in the past often been a tendency for little attention to be given to landscaping or other improvements on industrial estates. The Council will seek to ensure that proposals include appropriate landscaping and, where possible, bring about other environmental improvements in order to improve the quality of the environment in the Industrial Areas.

POLICY E4 BUSINESS AREAS

~~Within the Business Areas identified on the proposals map, permission will only be granted for:~~

- ~~(i) development, redevelopment, changes of use or extensions to existing premises for uses falling within Class B1, or in appropriate cases Class B8; or~~
- ~~(ii) development, redevelopment, or extensions for a use falling outside of Use Classes B1 and B8 where the proposed use is the same as the existing use of the site;~~

~~All proposals will also be required to meet the following criteria:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(b) it would not restrict the authorised operations of adjacent users; and~~
- ~~(c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original buildings; and~~
- ~~(d) suitable measures would be included, as an integral part of the proposal, to reduce the visual impact of the development if the site is close to the Green Belt boundary; and~~
- ~~(e) provision would be made for adequately maintained landscape or other environmental improvements and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP4 (Landscaping); and~~
- ~~(f) provision is made for the necessary transport infrastructure improvements to serve the proposal; and~~
- ~~(g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision) and EP8 (Noise Sensitive Development).~~

Explanation

10.24 In addition to the main Industrial Areas covered by Policy E3 there are a number of other areas of employment generating development scattered throughout the District in the developed areas, including some in close proximity to residential areas. The main areas are identified on

~~the Proposals Map as Business Areas.~~

~~10.25 These Business Areas are also important for the same reason as the Industrial Areas, because if they were to be lost to other non employment generating development this would reduce the size of the economic base in the District. Once developed for other uses, such sites would be lost from employment generating development forever and it would not be possible to replace the employment generating land elsewhere.~~

~~10.26 Because of their proximity to other uses, and particularly residential uses, these Business Areas are not considered to be appropriate for general industrial use. Accordingly, the type of employment generating activity on these sites should be limited in the main to B1 uses in order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents and other uses. Proposals for change of use or redevelopment of sites to provide uses outside of Class B1 will not generally be acceptable. The development of sites for B1 uses is also likely to assist in expanding the size of the economic base since B1 uses generally have a higher density of employees/floorspace than other employment generating uses. This may assist in providing a closer balance between jobs and workers with a resultant reduction in the levels of commuting.~~

~~10.27 In some circumstances Class B8 uses may be acceptable, although this would depend on the location of the site, on the scale of development proposed, and on the levels of disturbance which might be caused by reason of noise or heavy vehicle movement.~~

~~10.28 Some of these Business Areas currently support uses falling outside Classes B1 and B8. Where such uses do exist and require additional floorspace the Council will endeavour to facilitate such development where appropriate. The Council will only look favourably on such proposals, however, if they meet the criteria in the policy and do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of any nearby uses, particularly residential properties.~~

~~10.29 Where development occurs in business areas additional pressure is likely to be placed on transport infrastructure. Therefore, the Council will require provision to be made for any necessary improvements. Where improvements are required off site these will usually need to be secured with a legal agreement.~~

~~POLICY E5 – OTHER EMPLOYMENT GENERATING SITES IN THE DEVELOPED AREAS~~

~~On sites currently or last used for lawful and authorised employment generating development in the developed areas (excluding Industrial and Business Areas identified in policies E3 and E4) permission will only be granted for:~~

- ~~(i) development, redevelopment, changes of use and extensions to existing premises for uses falling within Classes B1-B8 (inclusive); or~~
- ~~(ii) development, redevelopment and extensions for a use falling outside of Use Classes B1-B8 (inclusive) where the proposed use is the same as the existing use of the site;~~

~~In shopping frontages the change of use of an employment generating use to a commercial use appropriate to a shopping area may be acceptable. Attention is also drawn to Policy TC1 (Development in Beaconsfield New Town, Burnham and Gerrards Cross).~~

~~All proposals will also be required to meet the following criteria:~~

- ~~(a) the proposal would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(b) it would not restrict the authorised operations of adjacent users; and~~
- ~~(c) proposals for extensions to existing buildings would harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the original buildings; and~~

- (d) suitable measures would be included as an integral part of the proposal, to reduce the visual impact of the development if the site is close to the Green Belt boundary; and
- (e) provision would be made for adequately maintained landscape or other environmental improvements and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP4 (Landscaping); and
- (f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), TR7 (Parking Provision) and EP8 (Noise Generating Development).

Explanation

10.30 Policies E3 and E4 identify the main Industrial and Business Areas in the District. There are however many other smaller employment generating premises scattered throughout the developed areas. These premises often make a significant contribution to the local economy and provide opportunities for small businesses to set up and become established. Given the demand for land arising from other uses, particularly housing development, the Council aims to ensure that these employment generating sites, which are valuable elements of the local economy, are not lost to redevelopment proposals for other more profitable uses. The retention of these sites is important not only because they may provide for small businesses but also because their location within centres of population affords the opportunity for locally based employment. If these sites were to be lost from the economic base then there can be little doubt that additional outward commuting from the District would result. An exception is made in shopping frontages. The Council is seeking to promote the vitality and viability of shopping areas and considers that circumstances may arise where, for example, the loss of a B1 use to another use which is appropriate to a shopping area would be beneficial to the area.

10.31 The employment generating potential of sites in the District is limited when compared with the number of residents in the District who are economically active. Accordingly, the Council will not generally be prepared to accept the loss of employment generating sites to other uses even where the site is in a primarily residential area. If a site is to be redeveloped or its use changed then the new use should be an employment generating use which would not have an adverse impact on the character of the locality or the amenities of surrounding properties.

POLICY E6 PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES IN THE GREEN BELT

Within the Green Belt including Green Belt Settlements identified in policy GB3, proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of an existing building or site last used for employment generating activity to uses falling outside use classes B1-B8 (inclusive) will not be permitted. The only exception to this would be where the proposal was for the change of use to a local shop in accordance with the policies in the plan.

Explanation

10.32 A number of employment generating uses are currently located in the Green Belt, including some in the Green Belt settlements. Often these uses pre-date the town and country planning system and the Green Belt designation. Some of these firms employ a considerable number of people on such sites, particularly the larger office and research and development establishments. Wyeth Laboratories in Burnham, for example, is one of the largest employers in the District. Often these firms are located in prestigious buildings converted from a former use. Both larger firms and the many smaller ones operating in the area are important in the local economy and the District Council wishes to see such sites remain in employment generating use.

POLICY E7 - WORKING FROM HOME

~~Permission will only be granted for part of a dwelling to be used for the purposes of working from home where:~~

- ~~(a) the proposed use would be operated by the residential occupier of the dwelling; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposed use would be of a small scale and the main use of the property would remain residential; and~~
- ~~(c) the proposal would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenity of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~
- ~~(d) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Access, Highway Works and Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).~~

Explanation

10.33 PPG4 'Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms' recognises that many small business are started by people working from home. In many instances the activity may not necessitate the need for a planning permission if a material change of use is not involved. However where there is a material change in the overall residential character of a dwelling and permission is required, the Council will take into account the effect of the proposal on the adjacent residential properties and the character of the residential area. Proposals which would significantly alter the character of the dwelling will not be permitted. In assessing proposals, the Council will take account, inter alia, of the type of business proposed, the number of employees, the hours of operation and the number of visitors.

11. TRANSPORT

11.1 Located to the immediate west of London, South Bucks is crossed by a number of major transportation routes which serve not only to give access to the towns and villages in the District, but which also have a much more strategic function within the regional and sub-regional contexts. Many of these transportation routes radiate outwards from London in an east-west direction. Although north-south links do exist, most notably in the form of the M25 motorway, they are not as well developed, and there are no north-south main railway lines through the District.

11.2 Roads dominate the transportation network within South Bucks. The M25, M40 and M4 motorways all pass through the District. All three motorways carry a significant volume of traffic, with further increases envisaged on both the M4 and M25 motorways. Given their national and regional function there can be little doubt that only a relatively small proportion of the traffic using these roads emanates from or terminates in South Bucks. The other roads in the strategic highway network also essentially provide inter-urban links between urban areas and other large towns, many of which lie outside the District. Some of these roads such as the A4, Bath Road, and the A355 through Farnham Common also carry a high level of traffic. There is a greater concentration of strategic highways in South Bucks District than in any of the other Districts in Buckinghamshire.

11.3 Various proposals have been made by the Government for the widening of all three motorways within the District. The stretch of the M40 to the west of its intersection with the M25 motorway has recently been widened to four lanes in each direction.

11.4 Vehicle flows on the M25 and M4 which pass through the District are expected to increase considerably. In the mid 1990s Government proposals for parallel trunk roads adjoining these motorways were dropped. The District Council has vehemently opposed these proposals. The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions subsequently carried out an overall review of the roads programme, the results of which were published in "A New Deal for Trunk Roads in England". That document announced that there were to be studies of the most severe and urgent problems on the trunk road network. The M25 will be considered under the London Orbital Study and the M4 under the London To Reading Study.

11.5 The County Council has defined, within the County Structure Plan, a hierarchy of roads which are of national or county importance. These roads are defined as being the Strategic Highway Network which in South Bucks comprises the M4, M25 and M40 motorways together with the A355, A412, A413 and those parts of the A40 east of Tatting End and west of the A355 at Beaconsfield. In addition to those included in the strategic highway network there are many other roads serving more localised functions. The highway authority has been requested to identify a complete road hierarchy in the District indicating the purpose of the different categories of road within the District. However, one of the intrinsic parts of the attractive character of South Bucks are the many quiet, lightly trafficked rural lanes, lined by trees and tall hedgerows which cross the District.

11.6 The District is also crossed by two major railway lines, both of which radiate outwards from London. The Chiltern line runs through the northern parts of the District linking Birmingham, Banbury and High Wycombe with London Marylebone, with stations in the District at Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross, Denham Golf Club and Denham. The Thames line runs through the southern parts of the District linking major centres such as Slough, Reading, Bristol and the West with London Paddington. Settlements in the District served by this line include Taplow, Burnham (although the station itself is outside the District) and Iver. New Networker Turbo trains have been introduced on both lines and it is understood that patronage on the Chiltern line has increased significantly as a result. The east-west Crossrail would provide improved links between stations on the Thames line and central and east London, although completion of that scheme is not expected much before the turn of the century. The Council supports the

Crossrail proposal but wishes to ensure that any necessary works do not adversely affect Brunel's listed railway bridge over the Thames at Taplow. There is one other single track siding line in the District in the Thorney area of Iver.

11.7 The River Thames which is to be found on the south-western and western boundaries of the District provides mainly for recreational movements, and lock statistics show that this volume of traffic has been steadily decreasing over a number of years. The Grand Union Canal passes through a small part of the District at Denham, and the Slough Arm of this canal runs in an east-west direction through the Iver and Wexham areas, linking Slough with West Drayton. These waterways are not heavily used, again with most traffic being recreational in nature.

11.8 Denham Aerodrome is to be found in the north eastern part of the District. It does not provide scheduled transportation but does provide a mixture of business aviation, flying training and private flying, some of which is recreational in nature. Whilst located to the south east of the District, it must be noted that Heathrow is a major transportation interchange which is undoubtedly of importance to some companies who have located in this area.

11.9 Nationally, the demand for road travel is projected to increase at relatively very high rates. With three major motorways running through the District, the likelihood is that the District will experience a very high rate of growth in traffic movements.

11.10 The 1991 Census shows that 85% of the District's householders had at least one car, with 47% of households owning two or more cars, and that almost 75% of the District's working population travel to work by car. Since much of the development in South Bucks is residential in character, local growth in car ownership levels gives an indication of the increasing demand for travel arising in the District. Table 3 indicates the rise in the average number of cars per household since 1971 in South Bucks, Buckinghamshire, and England and Wales, and shows the higher rate of car ownership within the District.

Table 3 - Cars per household 1971-1991

	South Bucks	Buckinghamshire	England & Wales
1971 - Average number of cars per household.	1.03	0.89	0.62
1981 - Average number of cars per household.	1.28	1.09	0.80
1991 - Average number of cars per household	1.43	1.27	0.96

Note:- Derived from 1971, 1981 and 1991 Census data.

11.11 The highway network in the District is already very heavily used, and in a number of cases roads carry a greater volume of traffic than that for which they were originally designed. The Transport Policies and Programme prepared by the County Council shows that the strategic highways in South Bucks generally carry higher traffic flows than do their counterparts in other parts of Buckinghamshire. The roads within the District also carry a high volume of heavy goods vehicles, partly due to the large number of mineral and landfill sites located in South Bucks.

11.12 There is no doubt that traffic represents a major impact on the local environment and

amenity in South Bucks. Road traffic in particular represents an increasing impact, both in the form of nuisances arising directly from the use of vehicles themselves, such as traffic noise, and also from the impact of new transport infrastructure including widening roads such as the M25. Increases in road traffic may also lead to demands for other transport infrastructure such as petrol filling stations and other services to meet the increasing demands of the motorist. Indeed transport has an impact not just on the local environment but also on global sustainability and on natural resources, particularly air quality. The Council considers that it is not appropriate to plan for development which would result in increased demands for travel, particularly for the mobility afforded by the car. Such an approach would not be sustainable and would compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

11.13 Land use planning has an important role to play in minimising the impact of transportation. There is a clear link between planning and transportation. Other than in the case of certain types of recreational trips, transport is only needed to get from one location to another. By influencing the location of new development, land use planning can reduce the need to travel. Where travel will still be necessary, then land use planning can guide development to locations where that development can be easily served by more environmentally friendly forms of transport than the car, such as public transport, cycling or walking. Similarly the provision of new transport infrastructure can also influence both travel patterns and the location of new development.

11.14 To the extent that it is able to, this Plan has taken an approach of co-ordinating land use planning and transportation so as to minimise the impact of car and lorry transport on the environment. However the desirability of reducing the demand for transport has to be weighed in the balance against other objectives and the broad strategy of the Plan, including the protection of the Green Belt. Accordingly, proposals which might help minimise the need for travel or the impact of it, will be unacceptable if they would result in major conflicts with the objectives, broad strategy or other important policies in the Plan. Whilst seeking to take a proactive approach to this issue, the District Council acknowledges that, given the slow rate of new development comparative to the amount of existing development, although the policies in this Plan will have some influence on travel patterns, they are unlikely to bring about a fundamental shift in these during the lifetime of the Plan. However, it is important that this shift should begin, albeit in a limited way, in order to adopt a sustainable approach.

11.15 Whilst the District Council as the local planning authority has responsibility for planning at the local level, including most development control decisions, other authorities have responsibility for transport. The Government is responsible for national and regional transport policy including particularly motorways and other trunk roads. The County Council as the local highway authority is currently responsible for all other adopted roads. Railtrack is responsible for the railway network with various train operating companies currently operating rail services. Bus services in the District are provided by several operators. Therefore, whilst the Plan has taken an approach which seeks to integrate planning and transportation, its success in this field is also dependant upon the co-operation not only of the development industry but also of those with transport responsibilities indicated above.

11.16 The policies within this chapter aim to reduce the need for travel by car and encourage the use of other forms of transport such as bus, rail, cycle or foot, thus reducing the harmful effects of cars on the global, natural and local environments such as the emission of harmful gases, the use of fossil fuels and increases in traffic congestion. However, some policies, such as those concerning motorway services areas or site access, relate only to facilities associated with the use of the motor vehicle, which therefore provide little opportunity for reducing the need for travel or bringing about reductions in the harmful effects of vehicles.

POLICY TR1 - ENCOURAGING THE USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

~~Proposals which would be likely to generate a substantial demand for use of the car will not be granted permission unless the proposed development would be likely to encourage, as an alternative to the car, the substantial use of public transport or other communal forms of transport for journeys to and from that development. In particular, proposals must:~~

- ~~(a) be located where they would be well served by public transport; and~~
- ~~(b) be designed and laid out to encourage the use of public transport and to encourage local journeys to be made on foot or by cycle.~~

~~The Council will also look to other developments to encourage the use of public or communal transport where possible.~~

Explanation

11.17 ~~New developments will inevitably have an impact on the demand for travel, which in turn has an impact upon sustainability. Some trips will be entirely new ones generated by the development of a new facility which was not previously available, whilst others will be trips which were previously undertaken to a different destination. Irrespective of whether the trips likely to be generated by a development are entirely new ones, it is sensible to try to reduce the demand for and impact of car trips. Where development would be likely to encourage the substantial use of the car the local planning authority will look to those developments to encourage the substantial use of public transport or other forms of communal transport in order to reduce the number of car trips. Communal transport initiatives might include, for example, a specific dedicated private bus service provided by a major retailer which transports customers to its store. The District Council will actively encourage large scale employers to consider new initiatives such as communal transport provided for staff and car sharing schemes in order to reduce the number of car trips.~~

11.18 ~~One way the number of car trips can also be reduced is where the planned development would be located within easy reach of local housing, not only by public transport but also by cycle or on foot. If there is a safe and convenient route along which to cycle or walk then the need for the car to undertake very local trips may be eliminated. Development will therefore be assessed against policies TR2 and TR3, particularly in respect of its proximity to local housing. Although a reduction in the number of car trips should be encouraged, it is likely to be inappropriate for a development which would generate a substantial demand for the use of the motor car to actually be located within a housing area, but it should be easily accessible from such a housing area.~~

11.19 ~~It is particularly important that new developments which would be likely to generate a substantial demand for motor car travel are located where they would take advantage of existing or new public transport infrastructure. Accordingly development which would be likely to generate a substantial demand for use of the car will normally be expected to locate in town centres or on existing or planned bus routes or in close proximity to a railway station. Generally, proposals which would require less than 50 parking spaces under the parking standards in Appendix 6 will not be treated as involving a substantial demand. Whether a proposal is likely or not to generate a substantial demand for use of the car is not determined only by the number of parking spaces needed but also in some cases by the likely turnover in the use of those spaces.~~

11.20 ~~The Council accepts that it may not be possible to implement this policy where the proposal is for the redevelopment of an existing site not located in close proximity to public transport. There may be some sites which have considerable existing floorspace and are otherwise suitable for redevelopment but for the fact that they are not in close proximity to~~

existing public transport infrastructure. The Council will not seek to frustrate such redevelopment provided that the redevelopment proposals would not be likely to result in a greater demand for the car than the existing use of the site. The policy will be applied in all cases where proposals would be likely to generate a substantial demand for use of the motor car, but where the previous use of the site did not generate such a demand.

11.21 Development which would be likely to generate a less than substantial demand for the motor car will also be encouraged to locate where it can facilitate the use of public transport. All applications for development involving traffic generation will be assessed to consider the extent to which they would encourage the transfer from the motor car to other modes of transport such as public or communal transport, cycling or walking.

11.22 It is not sufficient for development to merely be located where it is well served by public transport. The design and layout of that development must be such that it positively encourages the use of public transport. For example, a major retail development is not likely to encourage the use of local buses if the bus stop is too far away from the shop for people to be able to carry their purchases. It may be necessary for a proposal to include off site highway works whereby a bus lay by or shelter is provided outside the development. In other cases it might be appropriate for the layout of circulation space within a site to allow for the possibility of buses to enter the site and serve the proposal directly. Developments should ensure that access to the public transport infrastructure is very convenient and safe.

POLICY TR2 CYCLING FACILITIES

~~The District Council will work with the Local Highway Authority to secure suitable, safe, secure and convenient provision for cycling. In particular:~~

- ~~a) proposals which would be likely to generate a substantial demand for the use of the car will only be permitted where the proposal incorporates appropriate provision for cycle parking. Wherever possible, other proposals should also incorporate appropriate provision for cycle parking; and~~
- ~~b) the District Council will make appropriate provision for cycle parking at its own establishments, and will encourage the County Council to do so at its establishments and where possible in town and village centres and in other shopping areas; and~~
- ~~c) permission will not be granted for proposals which would have an adverse effect on the safety or convenience of cycling; and~~
- ~~d) the District Council will work with the local highway authority to identify locations where improvements are needed to improve the safety and convenience of cycling.~~

Explanation

11.23 The District Council wishes to encourage cycling as a form of transport as much as possible. Because of the rural nature of much of the District there are of course limitations to the extent to which this can be achieved. Nevertheless the infrastructure for cycling needs to be improved in order to give people the encouragement to cycle. A considerable amount of travel is localised and improving facilities for cyclists is an important way of making local facilities such as shops, and schools more accessible to local housing, thus encouraging cycling and reducing the dependence on cars.

11.24 Developments likely to generate a substantial demand for the use of the motor car do not only draw their custom from more distant locations, but also from localities nearby. Indeed, it is part of the strategy of this Plan that development should be of a type which would meet local

needs and so those people with localised journeys should be encouraged to cycle. Provision should be made for staff working at the proposed development and visitors to it.

11.25 Developments generating a substantial demand for the motor car will, by their very nature, almost always be proposed on larger sites where it would be possible to incorporate cycle parking facilities. This opportunity must be taken and the Council will expect proposals to make adequate provision of safe, convenient and secure cycle parking facilities. The level of cycle parking required by this policy will vary according to the development proposed and therefore will be determined when assessing each application. The provision of cycle parking should not be an afterthought, it should be designed and located where it is likely to be used. Ideally, cycle parking facilities should be located close to the pedestrian access into a building, in an overlooked and well lit area, and have a convenient and safe access onto the public highway. The location and design of cycle parking facilities should enable cyclists to secure their cycles from theft.

11.26 There are of course many other developments which would generate a less than substantial demand for use of the motor car. The Council would wish to encourage these developments to make provision for cyclists where it is physically possible to do so.

11.27 The District Council accepts that it has responsibilities not only as the local planning authority, but also as a landowner. Where the Council runs establishments in the District which could be accessed by cyclists, the Council will look to make appropriate provision for the parking of cycles. The County Council also has a number of establishments in the District including educational premises, libraries, and recreational facilities such as Black Park. The District Council will encourage the County Council to similarly make appropriate provision for cycle parking at its establishments. When undertaking environmental improvement schemes in shopping areas the District Council will look to incorporate cycle parking facilities, including on private forecourts used by the public, and will also encourage the highway authority to do so on highway land in the town and village centres and in other shopping areas. Other public and private organisations should also be encouraged to make provision for cyclists, including Railtrack at railway stations.

11.28 The provision of cycle parking facilities alone is not enough. If cycling is to be positively encouraged then the route between origin and destination also needs to be safe and convenient. The heavy volume of vehicular traffic discourages cycling on some roads, whilst on others the high speed of vehicles may be a deterrent. The District Council will work with the highway authority to identify roads and areas where traffic conditions are discouraging cycling. Some such locations may be evident from accident statistics, whilst others may not due to their inherent dangerous traffic conditions having largely discouraged cycling. It will then be for the highway authority to implement and fund the improvements needed to encourage cycling. These improvements might include, for example, the demarcation of cycle routes clearly marked within highway land, signing, sharing of pedestrian routes or facilities to cross roads carrying heavy traffic flows.

11.29 The local highway authority has a programme of works to be undertaken on highway land, and in designing such works it should have regard to the needs of cyclists so as to provide a safe and convenient cycling environment. This should include adequate maintenance of the highway so as to avoid significant changes in the level of the road surface close to the edge of the road.

11.30 The Council will have regard to the safety and convenience of cyclists in considering proposals which incorporate cycle parking facilities, and in considering other proposals which might affect cycling by virtue of, for example, a new access onto a highway, off site highway works or traffic generation. It is important that access from a site onto the highway is safe and convenient for cyclists. Where a proposal also necessitates off site highway works, the needs of cyclists will be taken into account in the design and layout of those works. Whilst the District Council is responsible for most development control decisions, it is not the highway authority. Nevertheless, the Council seeks the advice of the local highway authority on most proposals with

highway implications. Accordingly the implementation of this policy will in many cases be reliant upon the highway authority having due regard to the policy in formulating its view on proposals.

POLICY TR3 PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

~~The District Council will work with the local highway authority to secure suitable, safe, convenient and attractive provision for pedestrians. In particular:~~

- ~~a) permission will not be granted for proposals which do not make appropriate provision for pedestrians or which would have an adverse effect on the safety, convenience and attractiveness of footways and footpaths (including public footpaths and bridleways). Particular attention is drawn to Policy EP6 (Designing to Reduce Crime); and~~
- ~~b) the District Council will work with the Local Highway Authority to see the provision of improved facilities for pedestrians particularly in town and village centres, and in other shopping areas.~~

Explanation

11.31 In today's society there is often a tendency for people to use the car when the same journey could be undertaken on foot. If the impact of the car is to be reduced then people need to be encouraged to walk whenever this is possible. It is of course important that a range of facilities is available locally, and that these are easily accessible on foot from local housing in order that people should have the opportunity of being able to walk to them. Indeed this Plan recognises that different uses can, depending upon their nature, coexist happily side by side. Where this is so, and subject to their being no conflict with the other policies of the Plan, the District Council would welcome the integration of different uses in a locality if it were to reduce the demand for vehicular movement by enabling and encouraging journeys to be undertaken on foot instead. For example, a corner shop in a residential area may not cause particular conflict with the other policies of this Plan and yet it may encourage people to purchase food locally, making their journey on foot rather than by car.

11.32 Many development proposals generate pedestrian movement and where this is the case the needs of pedestrians will be taken into account. Proposals which generate pedestrian activity can vary considerably as to the amount of pedestrian movement likely to be involved. The requirement to have regard to the needs of pedestrians is not limited to schemes over a particular size, although minor developments may offer less opportunity to make new provision for pedestrian access and movement. Nevertheless, even the most minor of applications must ensure that access for pedestrians is suitable, safe and convenient. With some minor developments, such as proposals for changes of use, it will not be necessary to incorporate specific new proposals for pedestrian access provided that the existing access is safe and convenient. On the other hand larger developments are not only likely to involve greater numbers of pedestrian movements but are often more capable, with good design, of incorporating improved pedestrian facilities.

11.33 Meeting the needs of pedestrians for a safe, convenient and attractive environment might involve, for example, on a large retail development, the provision of a separate pedestrian link between the shop and the public highway, this link reflecting likely pedestrian desire lines, and also being well lit. It is important to ensure that the design and layout of schemes not only provides safety for pedestrians, but that it does so in such a way that pedestrians are likely to feel safe. In the same way that off site highway works are sometimes required to meet the needs of the motorist, some proposals might require off site highway works to meet the needs of pedestrians, and in such cases the developer will be expected to enter into a legal agreement.

For example, in the case of a major retail store which is close enough to residential areas to attract significant pedestrian usage, it might be necessary, in the interests of public safety, to provide pedestrian crossing facilities to enable pedestrian shoppers to cross an intervening heavily trafficked road. As well as being safe and convenient it is also important to ensure that pedestrian facilities are attractive. Unattractive pedestrian routes run the risk of not being used.

11.34 Even where proposals are not likely to generate pedestrian movements themselves, the Council will wish to ensure that such proposals do not adversely affect the safety, convenience or attractiveness of existing pedestrian routes. It would be inappropriate, for example, to grant permission for a new vehicular access to a highway if this would result in a diminution of safety for pedestrians using an adjacent footpath. Proposals will not be acceptable which result in a loss of convenience or safety to pedestrians. Similarly the needs of pedestrians will be taken into account where it is proposed to divert a footpath. These guidelines will also be used by the District Council in formulating its response to consultations from the highway authority regarding proposals for the closure and diversion of footpaths.

11.35 The highway authority has a programme of works of improvements to the highway, and in designing these works regard should be had to the needs of pedestrians to ensure a safe, convenient and attractive pedestrian environment.

11.36 It is important that the network of footways and footpaths is such as to encourage pedestrian movement. Provision is sometimes made as part of a new development. It is also possible for the highway authority to bring forward proposals for improvement and extension of the footway/footpath network, and such improvements will normally be supported by the District Council where they would encourage walking.

11.37 The town and village centres are the most heavily used pedestrian areas in the District. The District Council has a programme of environmental improvements in town and village centres and in other shopping areas and will normally, as an integral part of those schemes, seek to bring about improvements for pedestrians on both public footways and also on private forecourts to which the public have access. In designing and implementing such schemes the District Council will work with the highway authority and will seek highway authority funding for those elements of schemes on highway land where an improvement in footway surfacing is needed or where a revised layout is required in order to improve pedestrian safety to an acceptable level. The District Council will also encourage the highway authority to bring forward improvements to pedestrian facilities in those parts of town and village centres and in other shopping areas where there are no current proposals for wider ranging environmental improvements. The improvement of pedestrian facilities can vary widely in nature from the removal of safety hazards and unsightly street furniture, to the extension and upgrading of footways, and to the provision of new facilities such as seating and lighting.

POLICY TR4 - PROVISION FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The District Council will encourage improved access for all persons having special needs, including those people in wheelchairs, with walking difficulties, those who are partially sighted or blind, the elderly, and those with young children needing pushchairs. In particular permission will not be granted for proposals which do not make appropriate provision for those with special needs in relation to the site layout and the access into buildings. Neither will permission be granted for proposals which have an adverse effect on the safety or convenience of facilities for those with special needs.

Explanation

11.38 Some groups of people have specialist needs in relation to both transportation and access

into buildings. It is not just those persons who have to use wheelchairs who need to be considered, but also those with walking difficulties, the partially sighted or blind, the elderly, or those with young children needing pushchairs and prams. The needs of such groups should be taken into account when considering proposals. However, the internal layout and design of a building is not normally a matter which falls to be considered in determining a planning application. All development (including the internal layout and design of a building) intended to be used by the public needs to make proper provision for access by disabled persons as specified in the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, Part M of the Building Regulations 1991, and the Code of Practice for Access for the Disabled to Buildings (BS5810). Guidance relative to planning is given in Circular 10/82 and PPG1. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 may also contain relevant provisions.

11.39 It is important that the external layout of development proposals has regard to the requirement of people with special needs. The layout of a site should facilitate the safe and convenient movement of those with special needs. Development will need to provide special parking spaces for those with special needs, including an additional area between spaces to allow for restricted mobility, in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix 6 of this Plan. It is important that where such parking spaces are to be provided, sufficient signs or surface markings are provided clearly indicating that the spaces are intended to be dedicated to those with special needs. It is equally important that dedicated parking spaces are located as close as possible to the entrance to the building, and that there is a safe and convenient pedestrian access between these parking spaces and the building.

11.40 Where possible, access to buildings should be level with the footway from which access is gained. However where buildings are likely to be accessed by the general public the design should incorporate a ramped access if there is a difference between the external ground level and the internal floor level. In some cases it may not be appropriate to provide such a ramp, for example, where a ramp would be dangerous to other pedestrians including the blind, or where it would need to be provided on the adopted highway and the consent of the highway authority would not be forthcoming.

11.41 The District Council has a programme of environmental improvements within South Bucks, mainly within the shopping areas. The Council will consider the requirements of special needs groups as an integral part of the design of these schemes and, where possible, bring about improvements for such groups. The Council will seek highway authority funding of those elements of schemes on highway land where improved provision is needed.

11.42 The highway authority has a programme of improvement works to the highway, and in designing these works regard should be had to the needs of special needs groups for a safe and convenient pedestrian environment. The District Council will support the highway authority when carrying out alterations and improvements to the highway where improvements such as the provision of tactile paving, the introduction of footway ramps at road junctions, or the removal of dangerous street furniture is proposed. The enforcement of the provisions of the Highway Acts to secure the removal of highway obstructions such as 'A' boards on pavements will also be supported.

11.43 The Council acknowledges that those residents of the District whose immobility prevents them from using conventional bus services are severely disadvantaged in terms of personal mobility. The Council considers that the needs of such people are important and has established a Dial-A-Ride service in order to cater for these needs. The service is run under contract by a private contractor and the Council will look to continue provision of the service, subject to demand and the availability of financial resources.

POLICY TR5 - ACCESSES, HIGHWAY WORKS AND TRAFFIC GENERATION

In considering proposals involving a new or altered access onto the highway, works on the highway, the creation of a new highway or the generation of additional traffic the District Council will have regard to their effect on safety, congestion and the environment. Development will only be permitted where:-

- (a) the proposal complies with the standards of the relevant Highway Authority; and
- (b) the operational capacity of the highway would not be exceeded, or where the proposal would not exacerbate the situation on a highway where the operational capacity had already been exceeded; and
- (c) traffic movements, or the provision of transport infrastructure, would not have an adverse effect on the amenities of nearby properties on the use, quality or character of the locality in general, including rural lanes.

Where off-site improvements to the highway are required to serve a development, the District Council will not grant permission unless the applicant enters into a planning obligation to secure the implementation of those works.

Proposals involving either the construction of a new site access, or a material increase in the use of an existing site access, directly onto the strategic highway network will not be acceptable if they would be likely to result in the encouragement of the use of the network for short local trips or compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road by others.

Explanation

11.44 Where development involves the alteration or creation of an access or the generation of additional traffic it is important to ensure that such proposals will not interfere with the free flow of traffic on the highway and that there would be no risk to the safety of people using that road including vulnerable groups such as pedestrians and motorcyclists. Accordingly, where proposals involve that part of the highway network for which the local highway authority is responsible, the District Council will require applications to conform to current design standards set out by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions in its relevant documents, the highway authority and best practice. Where proposals are likely to generate a significant amount of traffic developers will be required to submit a traffic impact assessment.

11.45 It is not only the location of an access onto the immediate road network which needs to be considered. The proximity of other accesses nearby is important, as is the effect that the generation of additional vehicles onto the road network will have. It is important that highways should be able to operate properly and to fulfil their intended functions. It is of course particularly important that roads do not become overloaded whereby they are unable to operate properly. The operational capacity of a road can be determined by a number of factors including its width, alignment and gradient. However in the case of the Strategic Highway Network the existence of site accesses and other road junctions can significantly limit the operational capacity. For example, where an existing road already carries a significant amount of traffic, a proposal involving either the generation of a large volume of traffic or the construction of a new site access onto that road may result in increased turning movements which would cause congestion on that road whereby it became overloaded and was not able to operate properly. Where an existing road already exceeds its operational capacity, a new site access or additional traffic is likely to make this worse and will not normally be permitted.

11.46 There can be an effect on the environment resulting from the creation of a new or

improved access, or where the local road network is improved as a result of a proposed development. Trees, hedgerows or wildlife habitats can be lost to provide sufficient visibility or road width; footpaths provided alongside a rural road thus giving it a more urban or suburban appearance; and rural roads provided with uncharacteristic kerbing. Other proposals may involve a material increase in, for example, noise disturbance, pollution, or visual intrusion arising from an increase in the volume of traffic on rural roads, or from a significant change in the type of traffic (e.g. an increase in heavy goods vehicles) using rural roads. Where proposals would have a detrimental effect on the amenities of nearby properties or on the quality or character of the local environment they will not be permitted.

11.47 Improvements to the road network in the immediate vicinity of a site may be required in connection with a proposed development where the traffic generated from that development is likely to have an adverse effect on the safety of a road or a particular road junction or cause traffic flows to exceed its design capacity. Without these improvements permission will be refused. Where improvements are proposed by applicants, they will need to enter into a planning obligation under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in order to ensure that these improvements are implemented as a part of the proposal. Roads Circular 6/91 refers to developer contributions for new and improved accesses.

11.48 The Strategic Highway Network serves to carry much of the longer distance traffic travelling within and through the District. To enable these roads to perform their function it is important that the number of access points is not increased, as this is likely to result in a decrease in safety and an increase in congestion on these roads. Therefore, applications which propose a new site access onto the Strategic Highway Network will be discouraged. As PPG13 advises access onto primary routes should be avoided as far as practicable. Applications which would result in a material change in the level or type of traffic generated from an existing site access may conflict with the policy and be unacceptable..

11.49 In implementing this policy the District Council will be very reliant upon the advice of the highway authority, particularly in relation to the highway authority's standards and to the issue of operational capacity.

POLICY TR6 – TRAFFIC CALMING

~~The District Council, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, will seek and promote opportunities for implementing traffic calming and road safety measures which will improve road safety and minimise the impact of traffic on the environment.~~

~~Permission will not be granted for proposals which would prejudice the implementation of a proposed scheme, or which would reduce the effectiveness of a scheme already implemented.~~

~~11.50 From time to time the District Council may identify areas where it considers there are significant road safety problems, which need to be resolved. In such instances it will work with the highway authority to promote traffic calming and road safety schemes which improve road safety and minimise the impact of traffic on the environment. However, it is important to ensure that such schemes do not result in adverse impacts such as noise, inappropriate displacement of traffic to other areas, or undue inhibition of essential access or public transport. The Council will therefore consult widely on such schemes. The responsibility for funding and implementing schemes rests with the highway authority.~~

POLICY TR7 - PARKING PROVISION

Development will only be permitted only where:-

- (a) it complies with the parking standards set out in Appendix 6; and
- (b) parking provision is made on land owned or controlled by the applicant and the proposals would not reduce the level of parking provision serving other development; and
- (c) parking provision is made on the development site or, where this is not possible, on other land in the immediate vicinity provided that it is likely to be used to meet parking needs associated with the development; and
- (d) it would not be likely to result in non-residential on-street parking in residential areas.

Explanation

11.51 Whilst the Council wishes to minimise dependence on the car, it also accepts that travel patterns and modes of travel are unlikely to change fundamentally within the lifetime of this Plan. Therefore, it will be necessary for developments to make provision for the off-street parking of cars and other vehicles attracted by development proposals, and to do so on land owned or controlled by the applicant. Parking provision should in most cases be on the development site, but provision may also be acceptable on other land very close by provided that it is located, and laid out where it can be tied to, and is likely to be used in connection with, the development. Proposals must not reduce the parking facilities serving other premises unless those other premises have a surplus of provision. The provision of adequate new off-street parking is essential to reduce the problems caused by vehicles parked on the street, such as the risk of accidents and the damage to the visual environment.

11.52 The parking standards set out in Appendix 6 are the minimum operational standards considered necessary to serve a proposal. The standards also indicate the maximum level of provision which will be acceptable. In some town centres where A1, A2 and A3 uses are sufficient in number and are grouped in close proximity to each other, and where the centre has an acceptable level of off-street parking which is accessible to the general public, the Council will reduce the minimum standards by 15%. This reduced standard is justified because many people who visit a town centre do so to visit a number of the premises there, and only utilise one parking space for the whole of their visit. However, this must be balanced against the fact that the parking standards are intended to cater not only for visitors and patrons, but also for employees and other people who may not visit other premises. Accordingly, the Council considers that a reduction of 15% represents an appropriate balance without the likelihood of it putting further pressure for on-street parking.

11.53 The reduced standard would only be acceptable in the following town centres which have a significant level of parking provision to serve the general public:-

Beaconsfield New Town

Burnham

Farnham Common

Gerrards Cross

Stoke Poges

11.54 It is essential that the reduction is only applied in these town centres. Other areas would be unsuitable because of their lack of public parking facilities, which often results in on-street parking. A reduction of the standards in such areas is likely to result in further on-street parking to the detriment of safety and amenity.

11.55 Food and drink establishments often have a greater degree of use during the evening than during the daytime, although in the evening those patrons will not also be visiting other premises such as shops. It is essential therefore that the reduced standard of 15% should only be applicable to food and drink establishments in those town centres listed above and provided that the proposal would not be likely to result in on-street parking. Such public parking will need to be located close to the development and it must have spare capacity in the evening periods. Failing this the Council consider that a reduction in the standards would be likely to result in on-street parking.

11.56 The provision of extensive areas for car parking might detract from the character and appearance of a Conservation Area or the setting of a listed building. In the case of a listed building for which there is no other viable use which would comply with policy C7 (Change of Use of a Listed Building) it may be appropriate to relax the parking standard required in order to preserve the setting of that building.

11.57 The Council does not wish to encourage further on-street parking, particularly parking in residential areas by non-residential traffic. Where on-street parking is a major problem the Council will support the highway authority in examining ways to control on-street parking so as to improve the environment and safety for those people living in such areas by restricting non-residential parking and allowing residents to park near their homes.

11.58 The parking standards seek to ensure that adequate provision would be made for the parking of vehicles. The application of maximum standards is intended to limit proposals which seek to encourage use of the car. Furthermore, a reduced parking standard within town centres will cement the important role of those centres by encouraging uses to locate within them rather than in other areas.

POLICY TR8 PARK AND RIDE

~~Permission will not be granted for park and ride proposals in the Green Belt. In areas excluded from the Green Belt, a park and ride proposal may only be permitted where:-~~

- ~~(a) the size and location of the scheme would result in a reduction rather than an increase in the amount of travel undertaken by car; and~~
- ~~(b) the proposal would not result in traffic generated by the scheme using residential roads, rural lanes or other roads of only local importance which are in principle not suitable for such traffic; and~~
- ~~(c) the site would not be visually intrusive and would be satisfactorily integrated into the surroundings; and~~
- ~~(d) the proposal would not be likely to result in parking on street or on other land unsuitable or not designed for parking; and~~
- ~~(e) the proposal would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and~~

(f) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies GB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries), L7 (Protection of Green Space), EP4 (Landscaping), C1 (Development within a Conservation Area), EP9 (Noise Generating Development), EP10 (Air Pollution), TR1 (Encouraging the Use of Public Transport), and TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).

Explanation

11.59 Government guidance in PPG13 'Transport' indicates that local plans provide the opportunity to consider whether provision should be made for park and ride schemes.

11.60 The District Council does not consider the provision of park and ride facilities in the Green Belt to be appropriate. Such facilities would compromise the purposes of including land in the Green Belt and would not permanently retain its open and undeveloped character. The development of a large area for car parking would unacceptably introduce urban elements into rural and open land.

11.61 There are two types of park and ride schemes:

- (a) those providing parking at railway stations on radial routes serving major urban centres, such as London, and used mainly by commuters; and
- (b) those providing parking on the fringes of urban areas to encourage transfer to buses travelling to the town centre.

11.62 It is important that park and ride schemes encourage the use of rail services rather than increase car travel for the latter would defeat the primary purpose of park and ride. The Council is concerned that significant increases in parking provision at railway stations in the District could encourage long distance commuting by a combination of car and rail, particularly to London. This could lead to a material increase in car travel contrary to the aims of local and national transport policies. Therefore, the Council will wish to be satisfied that any additional car parking at railway stations is aimed at encouraging a switch from car to rail travel rather than increasing the overall number and length of car journeys.

11.63 Park and ride schemes must not be located where they would result in traffic using roads which are unsuitable to serve such facilities. Where roads providing the access to a park and ride facility are intended by their position within their road hierarchy to carry only very localised traffic the Council will consider such proposals to be unacceptable. In particular, residential roads and rural lanes will not be considered as providing appropriate access routes.

11.64 It is also important that traffic generated by park and ride proposals, together with any associated transport infrastructure does not have a detrimental effect on the use, quality or character of the local environment. Highway improvements or significant increases in traffic movements can be detrimental to both the local or rural environments. Where this is so proposals will not be acceptable.

11.65 Care needs to be taken when locating and designing park and ride facilities to ensure that the site is not intrusive, that the proposal retains as many existing landscape features as possible and makes provision for additional landscaping in order that the scheme can be satisfactorily integrated into the surroundings. It is not only trees which are important but the levels of the site, details of the lighting, fencing and surfacing materials. The lighting of such schemes can be particularly intrusive at night. Sites which are at present intrusive in the landscape will not be suitable, since new landscaping can take a significant amount of time to integrate proposals of this type into the surroundings.

11.66 The noise generated by vehicles and users of park and ride schemes can be intrusive, especially for local residents during the early morning, or late at night when the surrounding noise levels are reduced. Therefore, applications will be assessed to ensure that there will be no adverse effect on the amenity of local residents.

11.67 The development of park and ride facilities can sometimes lead to a reduction in the length of car trips, pollution and congestion in town or city centres. However, it is possible that such facilities can encourage longer trips, for example where a new park and ride scheme makes a town more attractive to shoppers thus drawing their custom away from more local shops. In order to prevent this the District Council will normally only look favourably upon those schemes whose size helps to relieve congestion, but do not encourage longer vehicle trips.

POLICY TR9 - MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS AND TRUNK ROAD SERVICE AREAS.

Permission will not be granted for motorway service areas (MSAs) or trunk road service areas (TRSAs) in the Green Belt or the Colne Valley Park. Neither would permission be granted, unless:-

- (a) the proposed service area would be at least 15 miles from an existing or approved service area or from a site allocated for that purpose in a Development Plan; and
- (b) it is clearly demonstrated that the whole range of possible alternative sites has been examined and that there is no site more suitable for the development than the proposed site; and
- (c) the type and scale of facilities would serve only the essential and immediate needs of motorway or trunk road users; and
- (d) the site would not be visually intrusive and would be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape; and
- (e) the proposal, including the use and the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (f) the development would avoid the risk of congestion or slowing on the main carriageway, and would not result in the operational capacity of the surrounding road network being exceeded; and
- (g) if a service area is to be accessed direct from a motorway or trunk road, there should be no other link to the surrounding road network other than an access strictly limited to emergency services and staff vehicles; and
- (h) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies GB12 (Development Adjacent to Settlement Boundaries), L2-L4 (Landscape Areas), L6 (Colne Valley Park), GB15 (Agricultural Land), EP4 (Landscaping), C1 (Development within a Conservation Area), EP6 (Energy Conservation), EP9 (Noise Generating Development), EP10 (Air Pollution), T2 (Serviced Accommodation in the Green Belt) and TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation).

Explanation

11.68 The responsibility for the development of roadside facilities including motorway service

areas and trunk road service areas rests with the private sector. However, where they are developed, service areas will often need to provide certain facilities and levels of service; for example motorway service areas are required to have free parking, toilets, a picnic area and fuel available 24 hours a day every day of the year.

11.69 Government guidance set out in PPG13 and Circular 1/94¹ states that approval should not be given for a motorway service area within a Green Belt except in very special circumstances, such as the lack of any signed motorway service areas. All the motorways in South Bucks are in the Green Belt and therefore applications for the development of motorway service areas will not be permitted. The only existing stretch of trunk road within the District is the A40(T) from the Denham roundabout east towards London which also lies within the Green Belt. This road is in effect an extension of the M40 and is of a similar standard to a motorway and therefore the same criteria will apply as to motorway service areas. Service areas will not be permitted within the Colne Valley Park in accordance with policy TR9 of the County Structure Plan.

11.70 The Green Belt to the west of London, including South Bucks, is acknowledged as being the most seriously fragmented of all. Given that service areas would not maintain the open and undeveloped character the Council considers that such proposals would only serve to further fragment the Green Belt within South Bucks and will therefore not be permitted. Furthermore the Colne Valley Park has in some parts been damaged by previous developments, and it would be inappropriate to allow proposals for service areas which would cause further harm to the Park particularly given that the local authorities are working to bring about substantial improvements to the area.

11.71 The minimum interval between motorway service areas has been set by the Department of Transport (now the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) at 15 miles, although the guidance also states that this does not mean that the Government positively recommends provision of motorway service areas at 15 mile intervals but that the need for a new facility nearer than about 15 miles to an existing one would not normally be sufficient to outweigh objections on road safety and traffic management grounds. It will be important to consider not only existing service areas on the motorway or trunk road involved, but also those located on other motorways or trunk roads close to the proposed development. Account should also be taken of any sites which have been given permission or which have been allocated in a draft or adopted development plan for such purposes. Alternative locations, both within and outside South Bucks, for a service area need to be examined in order to ensure that even if there were to be exceptional circumstances, that the location proposed would be the most suitable location which would have the least environmental impact.

11.72 Circular 1/94 states that intervals between services have not been much more than 30 miles and that this remains a desirable general aim from a transport point of view. However, the Circular goes on to state that this cannot be a hard and fast rule especially in areas of restraint. South Bucks lies within an area of strategic restraint and therefore the Council will expect alternative locations to be examined over a wide area and well in excess of thirty miles from existing facilities.

11.73 Given that the M40 motorway, which commences at Denham within this District, extends in a north westerly direction towards Birmingham for less than 9 miles, any application for a motorway service area within this section of the M40 will be less than 15 miles from the commencement of the motorway. The Council does not consider that there is a need for services on this part of the M40 so close to the beginning of the motorway and existing facilities on the A40(T).

¹ The Government revised its policy on motorway service area development in July 1998 in its MSA Policy Statement.

11.74 Service areas should be designed in order that vehicles freely flow both on and off the motorway or trunk road and that traffic will not have to queue into the facility which would result in queuing traffic on the main road. One aspect of the design is that sufficient parking should be provided within the development to cater for the number of vehicles wishing to stop at the facility.

11.75 Where a service area is served directly from a motorway or trunk road, it is preferred that no other access is permitted onto the local road network. However, if this cannot be avoided it will be necessary to ensure that any such additional link to the local road network is only to be used by emergency, service and staff vehicles and that the layout prevents such a link being used by other traffic. It will also be necessary to ensure that the impact of these vehicles is properly assessed to ensure that existing local roads would not become overloaded, or that road safety, congestion or residential amenity would be adversely affected. The local highway authority will be consulted regarding the impact of a proposed service road upon the local road network.

11.76 Irrespective of whether it is accessed directly from a motorway or trunk road, motorway service areas and trunk road service areas should only serve the immediate needs of users of the motorway or trunk road. Service areas will normally include free short term parking, toilets, fuel facilities, a picnic area and a refreshment facility. However, facilities such as a hotel or recreation or conference facilities will not be considered favourably since they are not matters for which the motorist has an essential immediate need and, indeed, such facilities would be likely to result in the service area becoming a destination in its own right, thus generating travel demand.

11.77 Proposed service areas have the potential to have a significant adverse effect on many aspects of the environment. Accordingly the Council will also assess applications against all other policies of this Plan.

11.78 Policy TR9 deals solely with motorway service areas and trunk road service areas and sets out the criteria which would be applied if very exceptional circumstances arose whereby the need for such facilities on the national long distance road network justified, as an exception to the policy, a location in the Green Belt. Roads other than motorways and trunk roads are intended to carry traffic shorter distances and accordingly the Council considers that exceptional circumstances will not arise which would justify the location of other roadside facilities in the Green Belt. Such roadside facilities, including petrol filling stations and refreshment facilities should be provided in areas excluded from the Green Belt. They will be considered in the context of other policies in this Plan.

11.79 The provision of roadside facilities are specifically designed for the benefit of the motorist and where such benefits occur then it is likely that both the number and length of motorised journeys will increase to the detriment of the whole environment. In addition the location of such a facility can have a significantly adverse effect on the local environment, although this is dependant upon location. This policy does not permit the development of motorway service areas or trunk road service areas within the Green Belt. If such very special circumstances are proved to exist, then the remainder of the policy seeks to limit such development to ensure that the effects on the environment are mitigated to a level acceptable to this Authority.

POLICY TR10 - HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES

Development which is likely to generate heavy goods vehicle trips will only be permitted where:-

- a) vehicle movements would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general, for example through noise, vibration, disturbance or visual intrusion, and the proposal would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- b) in the case of a proposal likely to generate a significant number of heavy goods vehicle trips, the access would not be onto a residential road, rural lane or other road which is not suitable in principle for such traffic, and that vehicles would be able to conveniently access the strategic highway network without using such roads; and
- c) the proposal would comply with all other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works and Traffic Generation), ~~TR2 (Cycling Facilities), TR3 (Pedestrian Facilities)~~ and TR6 (Traffic Calming).

Explanation

11.80 South Bucks is located close to the urban areas of Slough and Hillingdon, and to Heathrow Airport. The District is also very accessible by road to London and the rest of the country, because three major motorways pass through the area. Most freight is therefore carried by road, despite recent and continuing encouragement by the Government to increase the share of freight carried by rail or water.

11.81 Lorries can intimidate road users, especially vulnerable users such as children, elderly people, cyclists and those with disabilities. Heavy goods vehicles can also have an adverse effect on amenity, for example through noise. Proposals will therefore be assessed against the other policies of this Plan to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on these groups or on especially sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas.

11.82 Part (b) of the policy applies to developments where the proposed use would involve a significant number of heavy goods vehicle trips, including where these proposals are trips for construction purposes, on a daily basis and over a prolonged period. Because the impact of a heavy goods vehicle is much greater than that of a car, a "significant number of HGV trips" would be considerably less than a "substantial demand for the car". Similarly, heavy goods vehicles can vary from 7.5 to 40 tonnes gross laden weight, and the greater the weight the fewer the number regarded as being significant. Proposals will be expected to comply with other relevant transport policies, irrespective of whether or not they involve a significant number of heavy goods vehicle trips.

11.83 Sites generating a significant number of heavy goods vehicles should only have access to roads which are suitable, and preferably designed, for their use. The rural lanes of South Bucks are not considered suitable for significant heavy goods vehicle movements since such traffic would have an adverse affect on the quality and character of these lanes and the Council wishes to maintain their rural aspect. Similarly residential roads will not be suitable and neither will roads in Conservation Areas.

11.84 It is of course, also important that proposals involving heavy goods vehicle movements do not result in a loss of safety to other road users. Proposals which would be likely to result in a loss of safety will not be acceptable. In this respect not only will the access from a site need to meet highway authority standards, but it is also important to ensure that roads in the immediate vicinity of the site are capable of accommodating this traffic without compromising safety. Similarly it is important to ensure that the operational capacity of the surrounding highway

network is not exceeded or further exceeded by the introduction of heavy goods vehicles.

11.85 Whilst this policy is unlikely to decrease the number or length of lorry movements, it aims to limit the impact that such movements can have on the local environment in order to ensure that mitigation measures are implemented which reduce the adverse effects of lorry-related development to an acceptable level. The proposed location of such development is critical to the assessment of its impact on the various aspects of the local environment.

~~POLICY TR11 - GOODS VEHICLE OPERATING CENTRES~~

~~The District Council, in conjunction with the Local Highway Authority, will object to applications for goods vehicle operating centres where:~~

- ~~(a) the safety of the entrance and exit arrangements is unsatisfactory; or~~
- ~~(b) the proposed operating centre has insufficient parking and turning space to accommodate the number and size of vehicles and trailers proposed; or~~
- ~~(c) the operation of the goods vehicle centre would severely damage the amenity of the locality.~~

~~Explanation~~

~~11.86 Applications can be made to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, as licensing authority, to operate a goods vehicle centre. The Department publicise applications both in local newspapers and in a list of applications which is sent to both the District Council and the local highway authority.~~

~~11.87 It is important that the type of vehicle sought in the licence is able to manoeuvre safely into and out of the site and once at the operating centre is able to turn around and park properly. Therefore the local highway authority's "Road Layout Standards" and the District Council's parking standards will be used when assessing these applications.~~

~~11.88 As already mentioned, lorries can have an adverse effect on amenity and other environmentally sensitive areas and heavy goods vehicle licence applications will be assessed against the relevant policies of this Plan in order to protect the amenity of local residents and other environmentally sensitive areas. In particular the District Council will have regard to the criteria set out in policies EP3, TR5 and TR10.~~

TR12 - WEST DRAYTON TO POYLE RAILWAY LINE

~~Development which would prejudice the potential use of the West Drayton to Poyle railway line for rail services will not be permitted.~~

~~Explanation~~

11.89 In the south east corner of the District at Thorney there is a single track rail freight siding which connects West Drayton and Poyle. This line has been identified as having potential for improving public transport access to Heathrow Airport from the west although no specific proposals have been presented. The line has been identified in the County Structure Plan as a route within the County Rail Network to be safeguarded for possible rail service provision.

11.90 At the time of publication the Council was not expressing a view on the merits or

otherwise of either improved passenger or freight services on this route. However, it supports the principle of improved public transport to Heathrow airport and considers all feasible options should remain open for consideration. Therefore, no development will be permitted which could prejudice the provision of improved rail services on this route.

TR13 - FREIGHT FACILITIES

Proposals for freight facilities in the Green Belt will not be permitted. Proposals for rail and water freight facilities should ensure that:

- a) any significant increase in road freight traffic would be confined to the strategic highway network and would not result in additional flows through developed areas; and
- b) the proposal would not require major highway infrastructure development or improvements; and
- c) the proposal would not be visually intrusive and would be satisfactorily integrated into the locality; and
- d) the proposal, including the use and the scale, height, layout, siting, form, design and materials would not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development).

Explanation

11.91 National planning policies seek to encourage the carriage of freight by rail and water. The County Structure Plan indicates that favourable consideration will be given to the establishment and development of rail and water freight depots, including those for handling aggregates for the construction industry. The Council agrees that the best use should be made of existing railways provided that there is no conflict with Green Belt policies, environmental protection or the living conditions of residents.

11.92 Due to its proximity to west London and the existing railways passing through the Green Belt there is pressure for freight depot facilities in the District. However, such development would constitute inappropriate development in an already fragmented Green Belt. Such development should, therefore, be located outside the Green Belt including areas where it could make use of existing sidings or other developed sites.

11.93 The Council takes the view that proposals which result in a significant increase in the flow of goods vehicles will not be acceptable where it would affect local roads leading to severance of communities and harm to their amenities. Whilst major highway infrastructure works may assist in increasing the operational capacity of a road, such works would have an unacceptable effect on the amenities, quality and character of the locality.

12. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

12.1 Government policy indicates that social considerations should be taken into account in the preparation of local plans, and that plans should incorporate policies which enable the provision of community facilities to be realised. The Structure Plan also acknowledges the importance of community facilities.

12.2 An important element of the broad strategy of the Plan is to aim to ensure that new development meets the needs of residents of the District. Following such an approach will not only enable those needs to be met, but they will be met locally in the areas where those needs arise. As a result they will not generally result in increased demands for travel. Furthermore, locally provided facilities will also benefit those groups in society who have limited mobility. They can also encourage a sense of community.

12.3 A wide range of community facilities may be necessary to serve the needs of residents, especially those facilities related to education, health and religion. This chapter is concerned with the whole range of such community facilities, other than those primarily related to leisure and recreation which are covered in Chapter 7. For the avoidance of doubt, community facilities include, for example, crèches, nursery schools, first, middle and upper schools, further education establishments, adult education centres, libraries, doctors' surgeries, dentists, day care centres, hospitals, churches, church halls, village halls and community centres. In some cases a public house could be considered as a community facility where it is the sole focus for a village or neighbourhood and provides for a range of local community activities. Whilst many community facilities are provided by public bodies, some are privately owned. The policies in this chapter relate to all community facilities regardless of the nature of ownership.

12.4 The District already has a base of existing community facilities which provide essential facilities for the resident population. Inevitably some of those facilities provide for some needs arising outside South Bucks. Similarly residents of the District will be dependant upon some community facilities located outside South Bucks, such as Wexham Park Hospital in Slough. This Plan does not seek to limit community facilities to provide only for the needs of the residents of South Bucks but aims to ensure that residents' needs for such facilities are met locally. Indeed there are many advantages in certain community facilities meeting some wider needs, particularly if those facilities would not otherwise have been provided, or would not have been viable had they been designed to cater solely for needs arising in the District.

12.5 The need for different types of community facilities has changed over time and those needs will inevitably continue to change and evolve during the period of this Plan. In terms of educational facilities there is likely to be an increasing demand for pre-school education such as nursery schools, whilst changes to the funding and control of schools, particularly in the form of grant maintained schools, is likely to result in some demands for development. Similarly, changes taking place in the health service, such as the trend towards general practitioners providing a much wider range of healthcare, are likely to result in new demands for development.

12.6 There are however some community facilities over which the District Council does not have any control. Examples are post boxes and public telephones, which may be essential but are generally exempt from planning control. Permission is not usually required for the provision of such facilities and neither is it required for their removal, unless the structure is listed.

POLICY COM1 - PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals for community facilities will be permitted provided that:-

- (a) the proposed facility would be located within the developed area; and
- (b) in the case of a site which is not currently in a community use, it is in an accessible location where it would be likely to be able to meet the needs of its intended users; and
- (c) the proposal would be compatible with and would not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general and would be in accordance with policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development); and
- (d) any extension to an existing building would harmonise with that existing building in terms of its scale, height, form and design; and
- (e) the site would retain areas of open space adequate to meet needs likely to arise in connection with the proposed use; and
- (f) suitable provision would be made for access for the disabled or people with mobility problems; and
- (g) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan. Particular attention is drawn to policies ~~TR1 (Encouraging the Use of Public Transport)~~, TR4 (Provision for those with Special Needs), TR5 (Accesses, Highway Works & Traffic Generation) and TR7 (Parking Provision).

Conditions may be imposed in order to mitigate the potential impact of some forms of community facility where these are located close to noise sensitive development.

Explanation

12.7 A need for new or different community facilities will inevitably arise. Whilst the Council is not currently a direct provider of community facilities, it is considered that the Plan should provide a framework to enable locally generated needs to be met. This policy provides that framework by allowing extensions to existing community facilities and by enabling the provision of new community facilities in appropriate locations.

12.8 Community facilities need to be located close to the population which they are intended to serve in order that they can be fully utilised by that population. The location is particularly important if such facilities are required to serve the elderly, those with special needs and those without access to a car. Furthermore, the location of facilities close to public transport routes, within existing town centres or within easy reach of residential areas would also reduce the need for travel. Community facilities in such locations will generally be best placed to serve the needs of intended patrons. The developed areas are the main centres of population and accordingly most new community facilities should be located within them.

12.9 Even where a facility is proposed which would benefit the community as a whole, it is important that the development would not be harmful to the character of the locality, its immediate surroundings or the amenities of neighbouring properties. This is especially important given the likelihood of some community services being located in close proximity to residential properties. It may be appropriate in some circumstances to consider restricting the hours of use to prevent an unacceptable impact upon local residents from users of a community facility late at night.

12.10 The Council will endeavour to facilitate the provision of childcare facilities such as nurseries or crèches, including those which may be directly associated with employment, education, shopping or leisure uses where such facilities would not adversely affect the character and amenities of the area. The provision of such facilities can significantly increase the opportunities for residents, especially women, in terms of the availability of jobs or training. The Council would not however be prepared to accept such provision if it were to be contrary to other policies in the Plan.

12.11 Some community facilities are dependant not only upon floorspace, but also upon the provision of open areas in order to meet community needs. Schools, for example will need to ensure that adequate open areas are provided and retained in order to meet needs for recreation. Similarly, village halls and community centres may need space for summer outdoor activities.

POLICY COM2 - LOSS OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

Proposals involving the loss of community facilities will only be permitted where:-

- (a) a replacement facility would be provided in an equally or more convenient location which would comply with policy COM1. Applicants may be asked to enter into a legal agreement with the Council to ensure that acceptable alternative facilities are provided as part of a proposal; or
- (b) it is demonstrated that there is no longer a need in the District for the facility or for any other community use which could be appropriately provided on the site without conflict with any of the other policies in the Plan; or
- (c) the community facility is provided within part of a dwelling and the proposal involves the reversion of the whole of the dwelling to residential use; and
- (d) in the case of community facilities provided by a local authority, the site is proposed to be put to a use which would meet other local needs for leisure and recreation or affordable housing.

Explanation

12.12 In view of the general shortage and difficulty in obtaining premises for community use, it is important to protect the existing facilities wherever possible by resisting their loss to another use. This is particularly important in town or village centres where the high cost of land creates pressure for alternative income generating uses. The Council will therefore not normally permit any development which would result in the loss of community facilities. However, where it can be proven that there is no longer a need for the existing or any other type of community facility to serve needs arising within the District, then an alternative use may be permitted. There are also a number of community facilities, such as crèches, which are provided within part of a dwelling, and the Council would not consider it appropriate to protect the loss of these where the owner wishes to reclaim the floorspace for residential use.

12.13 Where a proposal for development would result in the relocation of an existing community facility to an equally, or more, convenient location, then this may be permitted provided that the services offered to the local community would be maintained and that policy COM1 is complied with. The applicant will be asked to enter into a suitable planning obligation to ensure that the relocated community facility, when permitted, is constructed and available for use before the existing facilities are lost, so as to provide continuity of service.

12.14 There are some needs arising in the District which may be particularly difficult to meet

given the limited supply of land which is free from constraints. Two forms of such need are those relating to leisure and recreation and affordable housing. The Council considers that where community facilities provided by local government are to be closed those sites should be put to a use which would meet local needs for leisure and recreation or affordable housing. The Council considers that these needs are of very considerable importance, and local authorities should act corporately in order to take advantage of the limited circumstances which may arise to secure such provision.

~~APPENDIX 1 - LANDSCAPE AREAS~~

AREAS OF ATTRACTIVE LANDSCAPE

~~The Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) are broadly identified in the Structure Plan. The boundaries of the AALs have been re-assessed having regard to the criteria set out in the explanation to policy L2. This Appendix sets out a brief description of each of the AAL's.~~

THAMES VALLEY

Dorney and Dorney Common

~~An area of flood plain, typically flat and generally open with occasional hedgerows and tree clumps. Predominantly pasture land with cattle roaming across Dorney Common unhindered by fences. The open character of the area with only intermittent farm buildings and dwellings affords panoramic views towards Windsor Castle, Taplow and across the Thames to Bray and Oakley Green.~~

Taplow River Valley and Cliveden

~~The land rises sharply from the banks of the Thames to Taplow and Cliveden where the ridge top merges into the Southern Plateau area. The steep sides are covered by mature mixed woodland providing a dramatic backdrop to the Thames. Distant views along the Thames Valley can be gained from numerous open locations along the ridge.~~

SOUTHERN PLATEAU

~~The whole of the area from Cliveden through to Tatting End and south to Slough is, geologically, a gravel covered plateau which in the past would have supported Oak, Birch and Pine woodlands in the light soils. The area is, in part, fragmented by urban development and only the best, largely unspoilt areas remaining have been included in the defined area. These include Burnham Beeches and other woodland areas between Burnham and Beaconsfield and the Black Park, Langley Park and Rowley Wood area in Wexham Parish.~~

LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

~~The boundaries of the Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) have been re-assessed having regard to the criteria set out in the explanation to policy L3. This Appendix sets out a brief description of each of the LLAs.~~

THAMES VALLEY

Dorney to Taplow

~~The area is mainly open pasture, compartmentalised by hedgerows and small woodland copse. The southernmost section forms part of the flood plain and is characteristically flat but rises becoming more undulating north of the A4, Bath Road.~~

SOUTHERN PLATEAU

Taplow and Burnham

This comprises an area between Taplow village and Hitcham Park, the area around Brickfield and Chalk Pit Lanes and Burnham Golf Course. These areas include a number of Thames Terraces, which make a significant contribution to the local landscape, and the historic landscape surrounding Taplow House. The predominant land use is rough grazing/pasture land controlled with hedges and traditional timber/wire fencing. Views are restricted by the hedgerows allowing only glimpses into the fields.

Beaconsfield

This area is to the west of Dipple Wood, centred on Broad Lane and Lillyfee Farm Lane. This is a level area of open farmland which contrasts favourably with the other, more undulating areas.

Seer Green

The area to the south of Seer Green is open pasture fringed by beech woodland which divides Seer Green from the east of Beaconsfield.

Alderbourne Valley

This area lies to the east of the main Southern Plateau Area of Attractive Landscape and includes Hedgerley Park and the historic landscape of Fulmer Hall. The Alderbourne Valley has an undulating topography and its mixed landscape of farmland and woodland is similar to that of the adjoining Area of Attractive Landscape and is considered worthy of protection.

Stoke and Farnham Commons

Stoke Common SSSI is a flat plateau containing the largest remnants of the once extensive South Buckinghamshire heathland complex. The open heathland is enclosed by semi mature/mature secondary oak/birch woodland interspersed with large stands of pine.

The Farnham Common area comprises the woods bordering Templewood Lane on the west side of Stoke Poges parish and Ingram's Copse and Parson's Wood in Farnham Royal Parish. These extend southward and link with more managed landscapes of Farnham Park and Stoke Poges Golf Courses.

Denham Green

The topography of this area is similar to that further south with the land rising from the North Orbital Road and the Amersham Road. The southern slopes are covered with mature woodland, predominantly beech whilst the flatter hill top is more open pasture land.

~~APPENDIX 2 PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC
INTEREST~~

~~1. Grade I~~

~~Cliveden~~

~~Stoke Park~~

~~2. Grade II*~~

~~Bulstrode Park Hall Barn (partly coincident with a medieval hunting park)~~

~~3. Grade II~~

~~Berry Hill~~

~~Denham Place~~

~~Dropmore Hedsor House (part of)~~

~~Huntercombe Manor~~

~~Langley Park~~

~~Nashdom~~

~~Stoke Poges Gardens of Remembrance~~

~~Taplow Court~~

~~APPENDIX 3 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, OUTDOOR SPORT AND CHILDREN'S PLAY~~

National Playing Fields Association standard.

Outdoor Playing Space

~~2.43 hectares (6 acres) per 1000 population~~

Breakdown of the Standard

~~Depending on the population profile of the locality concerned, the total standard should be met by an aggregation of space within the ranges given below:~~

Youth and Adult Use:

~~1.6 - 1.8 ha (4 - 4.5 acres)~~

Childrens Use:

~~Playgrounds 0.2 - 0.3 ha (0.5 - 0.75 acres)~~

~~Casual or informal play space
within housing areas 0.4 - 0.5 ha (1 - 1.25 acres)~~

APPENDIX 4 - RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTER

BEACONSFIELD

1. In Beaconsfield there are two areas of similar exceptional character, namely Penn Road, and a large area based around Burkes Road/Gregories Road. These areas exhibit a high quality residential environment characteristic of suburban development of the 1930s. The overall character is spacious and semi-rural.
2. Their exceptional character comprises a combination of the following factors:- low density of development; generous plot sizes in excess of about 2500 sq.m.; wide frontages of about 25m; generous spacing between houses of about 10m; individually designed detached buildings giving rise to a variety of architectural styles of mainly the pre-war era; and mature trees and hedges which produce a street scene which is semi-rural.
3. The boundaries of these areas have been drawn to exclude insensitive development. For example, the area between Gregories Road, Furzefield Road and Burkes Road has been excluded because the character of that area has recently experienced a change in density by virtue of backland development and redevelopment. The southern part of Burgess Wood Road South has been excluded for the following reasons: (a) architectural merit - the central part of the road is characterised by modern architectural styles, whilst in the area of Pennington Road the houses are semi-detached (b) landscaping - in the southern part of the road the character changes with the landscaping being less dominant in the street scene thereby giving more extensive views of the buildings.

GERRARDS CROSS

4. In Gerrards Cross there are two separate areas of exceptional character based around Windsor Road/Manor Lane/Camp Road and Vicarage Way/Marsham Way/Hill Waye/Woodhill Avenue. These areas have a residential character in which mature trees and hedges dominate the street scene.
5. Windsor Road has an exceptional character consisting of:- large detached houses individually designed in the pre-war period by local architects (e.g. Hamp); houses set back from the roadside; a plot size of about 1700 sq.m; a plot frontage 20m; and mature landscaping which screens the houses from view. Overall, the character is that of a rural road with the buildings largely hidden from view.
6. The exceptional character of Manor Lane consists of a lane with sizeable trees and hedges which obscure the houses and produces a semi-rural setting. In particular the exceptional character is one of mature landscaping which dominates the street scene; an architectural style of the pre-war period with large individually designed detached houses including mock Tudor and other innovative designs; and a road which is narrow without footways.
7. The exceptional character of the Camp Road area is one of very spacious development with landscaped gardens rolling towards the highway, initially established in the pre-war period. In particular the exceptional character consists of the following elements:- large

detached houses of a mix of architectural styles from the pre-war period to present day; plot size of about 2500 sq.m; frontages of 30m; a generous spacing between buildings of about 15m; a narrow road system without footpath or kerb stones; and a spacious street scene with properties unobscured by mature landscaping.

8. Adjoining the Camp Road area but with a somewhat distinctive character is Hedgerley Lane. It has a semi-rural character but also exhibits pre-1948 buildings in a low density layout set amid mature landscaping. There are a number of post war buildings but these are set in extensive grounds set well back from the road.
9. The area of Hill Waye/Woodhill Avenue has exceptional character which consists of a mature residential setting with a high quality of landscaping which produces a semi-rural appearance. The exceptional character has the following elements:- large detached dwellings established in the pre-war period; plot frontages of 20m; generous plot sizes of 1200 sq.; a road layout which has no kerbs and has footways which are not hardsurfaced and are behind the highway verge; a regular pattern of trees within the highway verge and other features including mature hedges and trees within gardens. Vicarage Way/Marsham Way adjoins the Hill Waye/Woodhill Avenue area and exhibits the same character as this area in terms of density and landscaping. There are a number of more recent infill developments but these do not detract from the exceptional character of the area.

APPENDIX 5 - CONSERVATION AREAS

There are fifteen designated Conservation Areas in the District which are listed below with their year of designation:

- Beaconsfield (1969)
- Boveney (1996)
- Burnham (1977)
- Denham (1971)
- Dorney (1996)
- Fulmer (1979)
- Gerrards Cross Common (1987)
- Hedgerley (1981)
- Hedgerley Green (1987)
- Huntercombe (1977)
- Iver (1982)
- Stoke Green (1987)
- Stoke Park (1987)
- Taplow (1975)
- Taplow Riverside (1999)

APPENDIX 6 - PARKING STANDARDS

APPLICATION OF PARKING STANDARDS

- 1.1 Where planning applications are made for new development, redevelopment, extensions to existing development, conversions or changes of use, the adequacy of the proposed parking facilities should be assessed against the parking standards set out in this Appendix. The standards indicate the normal operational minimum requirement for parking spaces, though they can be varied in the circumstances set out in the Plan. The **maximum** standard can be taken to be 10% above the operational minimum standard. Proposals should ensure that development proposals meet the minimum standard and do not exceed the maximum standard.
- 1.2 Where a type of development is proposed which is not included in these standards the parking requirement will be assessed by taking into account the information submitted with the application, site and locality characteristics and experience with similar developments. Similarly, where these standards do not indicate the amount of provision required in connection with a proposal (eg servicing requirements for Class A1 retail units less than 1000 sq. m. Gross Floor Area) the parking requirement will be assessed in the light of the same factors.
- 1.3 It is not uncommon for a proposed use of land/buildings to involve a secondary or ancillary use. For example an A1 retail use will often also involve an element of ancillary storage. Except as where specifically provided for in the standard, when an ancillary use is involved the whole of the proposed development will be required to meet the parking standards for the primary use, rather than part meeting the standards for the primary use and part meeting the standards for ancillary use. The reason for this is that provided the primary use of a building remains the same, the Council as local planning authority have no control over the internal arrangements of floorspace within a building. In other developments where there are two or more uses there may not be a primary use - in such mixed use developments the parking standards for each of the different uses will be applied.
- 1.4 The standards are all based on gross floor area unless otherwise specified. Where parking standards are based on the gross floor area, the gross floor area will be taken to be the total floor area of the building(s) including basement, ground and upper floors proposed. The gross floor area will be measured using the external dimensions of the building(s).
- 1.5 Where the application of parking standards indicates that a proposal requires less than 0.5 of a parking space then the number of spaces should be rounded down (eg rounded down from 7.39 spaces to 7 spaces). Conversely where a proposal required 0.5 or more spaces it should be rounded up (eg 3.58 spaces rounded up to 4 spaces).
- 1.6 The Council will consider whether or not the parking standards should be relaxed where the provision of parking to meet the standards would harm the setting of a listed building and there is no other viable use for that building which would comply with policy C8 (Proposals Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building).
- 1.7 The minimum and maximum standards for A1, A2 and A3 uses as set out in this Appendix shall be reduced by 15% only in the following town/village centres:

Beaconsfield (New Town)
Burnham
Farnham Common
Gerrards Cross
Stoke Poges

provided that in the case of proposals for A3 uses public parking is located close to the site in such a location where it is likely to be used in connection with the proposed use and that public parking has spare capacity in the evening periods.

- 1.8 In the case of limited extensions to A1, A2 or A3 uses in the defined areas, the standards may be relaxed completely provided that any existing parking facilities for staff or loading are retained and it can be demonstrated that existing public car parking provision, or public transport services, can meet any increased travel demands.
- 1.9 In certain cases in town centres it may be possible for a developer to make a financial contribution towards the provision of public car parking spaces instead of providing car parking on site. The Council will only consider requests for commutation of car parking liability in the following circumstances:
 - (i) Where there would be a planning or traffic benefit in the provision of additional public off-street car parks as opposed to car parking provision being made on individual development sites; or where the developer could have provided adequate parking on site but elects to use the space otherwise; and
 - (ii) The Council has firm proposals to provide extra car parking in the locality.

It is stressed that any agreement relating to the commutation of car parking liability is entirely voluntary on both sides. If it agreed to accept a commuted payment the Council would require the commuted cost per space to reflect the cost to the authority of providing suitable off-street parking facilities at that point in time.

- 1.10 Provision will be required on site for delivery to and servicing of a site in connection with the proposed use.
- 1.11 Where the standards require provision to be made for the parking of vehicles (including cars, vans, lorries, motorbikes or other specialist vehicles such as ambulances) provision should also be made for access into those spaces and the manoeuvring of such vehicles on the site.

PARKING PROVISION FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- 2.1 Policy TR4 (Provision for those with Special Needs) indicates that proposals which would require a significant amount of parking should include parking provision for those with special needs (eg disabled, people with young children). The standards set out below indicate the level of provision that should generally be made. However there may be other specific forms of development (such as doctors' surgeries) which require less than the total number of spaces indicated below but where provision for those with special needs would be necessary. Such proposals will be considered on their individual merits.
- 2.2 The standards set out below do not represent parking spaces in addition to the parking standards for the uses set out in Part 4 of this Appendix, but rather they represent the

number of spaces within the total requirement which should be given over to special needs. Special needs spaces should be located close to an entrance to the building and the layout shall allow for uninterrupted access into the building by those with special needs.

2.3 Developments with no normal public access.

Total car parking spaces	Special Needs parking spaces
up to 24	0
25 and over	4% of total spaces

2.4 Developments with normal public access.

Total car parking spaces	Special Needs parking spaces
up to 9	0
10 and over	6% of total spaces

- 2.5 For the purpose of these standards "normal public access" will be taken to include all developments other than those, which by their very nature, members of the public would not normally visit in any capacity (eg industrial premises would not normally include public access). Car parking spaces for those with special needs must be marked as shown in Diagram A and, in the case of developments with public access, signposted at the entrance.
- 2.6 Further information on parking for people with disabilities is contained in Department of Transport Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/95 "Parking for Disabled People".

DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF PARKING AREAS

- 3.1 The following standards are intended as a guide to the layout of parking and servicing areas, but may be varied at the discretion of the local planning authority. For instance, the width of circulation space between rows of cars may be reduced subject to a corresponding increase in the width of individual car spaces.
- 3.2 Generally, dimensions of 2.4m x 4.8m should be provided for normal parking spaces with a distance of 6m between rows for access where the parking spaces are at right angles to the traffic lane (Diagram B).
- 3.3 The distance between rows can be reduced where the spaces are angled to the circulation space. Where the angle between the parking spaces and the circulation space is 45°, a distance between rows of 3.5m will be required (Diagram C). Where the angle is 60°, a

distance between rows of 5m will be required (Diagram D).

- 3.4 A 6m traffic lane will be required for a single row of parking spaces (Diagram E)
- 3.5 Lorry parking spaces should be 3m x 15m, with adequate space included for turning and manoeuvring. Diagrams F-H show layouts which would provide adequate space for turning and manoeuvring.
- 3.6 The size of special needs parking spaces is indicated in Diagram A.
- 3.7 Landscaping is considered an essential element in the design of parking areas. Development proposals will be expected to include details of the landscape treatment to all parking areas and soft landscaping should be used to break up large areas of parking as well as providing screens nearer the edges of parking areas.
- 3.8 Within larger parking areas and those likely to have a rapid turnover, safe pedestrian routes should be included. In order to avoid opportunities for crime all types of parking areas should be open to natural surveillance by vehicle owners or passers by (see Policy EP6 - Designing to Reduce Crime).

PARKING STANDARDS

- 4.1 See following tables.

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
SUI GENERIS			
Repair garages and vehicle sales		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 spaces/repair bay Car display: • 1 space/100 sq.m. gross floor area Storage/office/ancillary areas: • 1 space/15 sq.m. gross floor area 	Provision to be made for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles and for the parking of breakdown service vehicles where the garage has a breakdown service.
<i>NOTES:</i>			
	(i)		<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>
	(ii)		<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
<u>RETAIL</u>			
Less than 1,000 sq.m. gross floor area	A1	• 1 space/30 sq.m. gross floor area	Provision shall be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
Greater than 1,000 sq.m. gross floor area	A1	• 1 space/20 sq.m. gross floor area	1 lorry space/500 sq.m. gross floor area to be provided for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
Garden Centres	A1	• 1 space/20 sq. m. gross floor area and 1 space/100 sq.m. external display area.	Provision shall be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
Retail warehouse (Large single level stores specialising in the sale of household goods and bulky DIY items)	A1	• 1 space/15 sq.m. gross floor area	1 lorry space/500 sq.m. gross floor area to be provided for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
Food warehouse/superstore (Single level, service stores selling mainly food with between 2500 & 10,000 gross floor area)	A1	• 1 space/9 sq. m. gross floor area	1 lorry space/500 sq.m. gross floor area to be provided for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
NOTES:	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv)	<p><i>In those centres which are served by public off street parking, the standards above will be relaxed by 15%. (see paragraph 1.7 and also 1.8)</i></p> <p><i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i></p> <p><i>For retail warehousing a condition on the planning permission will be imposed preventing its use for a food warehouse/superstore.</i></p> <p><i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i></p>	

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES			
All uses falling within A2	A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 200 sq.m. gross floor area - 1 space/20 sq. m. gross floor area Additional floorspace - 1 space/40 sq.m. gross floor area. 	Provision shall be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles.
NOTES:			
	(i)	In those centres which are served by public off street parking, the standards above will be relaxed by 15%. (see paragraph 1.7 and also 1.8)	
	(ii)	Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.	
	(iii)	Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.	
FOOD AND DRINK			
All uses falling within Class A3	A3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 space/4 sq.m. of public floor space 	Provision shall be made for the loading, unloading, and overnight parking of delivery vehicles
NOTES:			
	(i)	<i>In those centres which are served by public off street parking, the standards above will be relaxed by 15%. (See paragraph 1.7 and also 1.8)</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(iii)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	
BUSINESS			
All uses falling within Class B1 except where permission is specifically sought for a B1(c) use only.	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 space/25 sq.m. gross floor area 	Provision shall be made for the loading, unloading, and overnight parking of delivery vehicles. Where the proposal involves 500 sq.m. or more 1 lorry space to be provided for each 500 sq.m. gross floor area
NOTES:			
	(i)	<i>A minimum of 3 car parking spaces should be provided.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Where a proposal is restricted to Class B1(a) and/or (b) the requirement for overnight parking of delivery vehicles and for lorry spaces may be waived.</i>	

	<i>(iii)</i>	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>
	<i>(iv)</i>	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
<u>INDUSTRY</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class B2 and uses falling in Use Class B1(c) where permission is specifically sought only for a B1(c) use.	B2 and B1(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 235 sq.m. gross floor area - 1 space/30 sq.m. gross floor area Additional: 1 space/50 sq.m. gross floor area 	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles. Where the proposal involves 500 sq.m. or more 1 lorry space to be provided for each 500 sq.m. gross floor area.
<i>NOTES:</i>			
	(i)	<i>Where offices form part of the industrial use, the standard for "B1 (a) and (b) Business" will apply to this part of the development.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Where a number of small industrial units are proposed, car parking may be provided in the form of communal car parks.</i>	
	(iii)	<i>Where permission is sought and granted specifically for a B1(c) use only a condition will be imposed on the planning permission to prevent change of use to B1(a) and (b).</i>	
	(iv)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(v)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	
<u>STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class B8	B8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 235 sq.m. gross floor area - 1 space/30 sq.m. gross floor area Additional - 1 space/100 	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles. Where the proposal involves 500 sq.m. or more 1 lorry space to be provided for each 500 sq.m. gross floor area.
<i>NOTES:</i>			
	(i)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
<u>HOTELS</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class C1	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/bedroom • 1 space/3 non-resident staff • 1 space/resident member of staff Conference/Function Room: • 1 space/10 seats or 10 sq.m. public floorspace. Bars/Restaurant: • 1 space/ 4 sq.m. public floor area 	1 coach space/100 bedrooms. Provision to be made for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles.
<i>NOTES:</i>	(i) (ii)	<p><i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i></p> <p><i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i></p>	
<u>RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS</u>			
"Care Institutions"	C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/4 residents • 1 space/resident member of staff 	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles and other service vehicles.
Residential School, College or training centre.	C2	To be assessed individually	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and overnight parking of delivery vehicles and other service vehicles.
Hospitals	C2	To be assessed individually	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and parking of delivery and other service vehicles including ambulances.
<i>NOTES:</i>	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v)	<p><i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i></p> <p><i>Care institutions are defined as residential accommodation for people in need of care by reason of old age, disablement, past or present dependence on alcohol or drugs or present mental disorder or the personal care of children and medical care or treatment.</i></p> <p><i>Where a hospital includes residential accommodation the standard for C3 dwellinghouses will be applied.</i></p> <p><i>All spaces provided are to be for communal use.</i></p> <p><i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i></p>	

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
<u>DWELLINGHOUSES</u>			
Dwelling 4 bedrooms or more	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents: 3 spaces/dwelling 	
Dwelling 2 or 3 bedrooms	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents: 2 spaces/dwelling 	
Dwelling 1 bedroom	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents: 1 space/dwelling 	
Houses in multiple occupation/ bedsits	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 parking space/bedroom. 	
Sheltered accommodation	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 space/2 dwellings of two or more bedrooms 1 space/4 dwellings of only one bedroom <p>Warden's accommodation: the standard for ordinary residential accommodation will be applied.</p>	
Retirement accommodation	C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 space/ 2 dwellings 	
NOTES:	(i)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Sheltered accommodation is defined as warden controlled housing for persons over 60 years of age.</i>	
	(iii)	<i>Retirement accommodation is defined as being self contained accommodation which has specific features for persons over 60 years of age.</i> <i>However, such accommodation does not include the services of a resident warden.</i>	
	(iv)	<i>The pedestrian route between the nearest parking space and the dwelling entrance should normally be shorter and more convenient to use than would be the case if parking were on the carriageway.</i>	
	(v)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
<u>NON RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS D1(a)</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class D1 (a). eg. health centres/ doctors surgeries/ veterinary surgeries dentists.	D1 (a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 spaces/consulting room 	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and parking of delivery vehicles and other service vehicles including ambulances where appropriate.
NOTES:	(i) (ii) (iii)	<p><i>This standard applies to all uses D1(a), and to uses which would fall within D1(a) except for the fact that they are attached to the residence of the practitioner.</i></p> <p><i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i></p> <p><i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i></p>	

<u>NON RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS D1(b) - D1(c)</u>			
Nursery School/ Creche/ Day Nursery/Day Centre	D1(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/2 staff member 	Provision to be made for parking whilst parents set down and pick up children.
Primary/Middle/ Upper schools	D1 (c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 spaces/classroom 	<p>Provision to be made for parking whilst parents set down and pick up children, and for children getting on and off school buses.</p> <p>Provision to be made for the parking of bicycles and in the case of Upper Schools, motorbikes.</p> <p>Provision to be made for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles.</p> <p>Vehicular access to hard playing areas shall be provided so that they are capable of being used for overflow parking when there is exceptional demand for parking spaces e.g. parents evenings.</p>
NOTES:	(i) (ii)	<p><i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i></p> <p><i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i></p>	

Land Use	Use Class	Car parking	Servicing
----------	-----------	-------------	-----------

<u>NON RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS D1(d) - D1(f)</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class D1 (d) and (f) eg. Art galleries/ museums/ libraries.	D1 (d)-(f)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/40 sq.m. of public floor space 	Provision to be made for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles including library vans.
NOTES:	(i)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	

<u>NON RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS D1(g) + D1(h)</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class D1(g) and (h) eg. Public halls/ places of worship	D1 (g&h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/10 sq.m. public floorspace or 1 space/10 fixed seats. [See note (i)] 	1 coach space/100 sq.m. public floorspace or 1 coach space/100 fixed seats [see note (i)]. Provision to be made for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles.
NOTES:	(i)	<i>The standard to be applied will be the measure which indicates the greatest parking requirement.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	
	(iii)	<i>Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.</i>	

<u>ASSEMBLY AND LEISURE</u>			
All uses falling within Use Class D1 (a) - (d) eg. Cinemas/ bingo halls/dance hall/concert hall/ casino	D2 (a)-(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 space/10 fixed seats; or • 1 space/10 sq.m. public floor space <i>Bars:</i> • 1 space/4 sq.m. public floor space [See note (i) below] 	1 coach space/100 seats Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and parking of delivery vehicles and coaches.
All sport and recreation facilities falling within Use Class D2 (e)	D2(e)	To be assessed individually.	Provision to be made for the loading, unloading and parking of delivery vehicles and coaches.
NOTES:	(i)	<i>The standard to be applied will be the measure which indicates the greatest parking requirement.</i>	
	(ii)	<i>Maximum provision is 10% above the operational minimum standard. See paragraph 1.1.</i>	

(iii)

Provision for parking for people with special needs may be required as a proportion of the total spaces provided. See paragraphs 2.1-2.6.

Diagram - A

PARKING FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

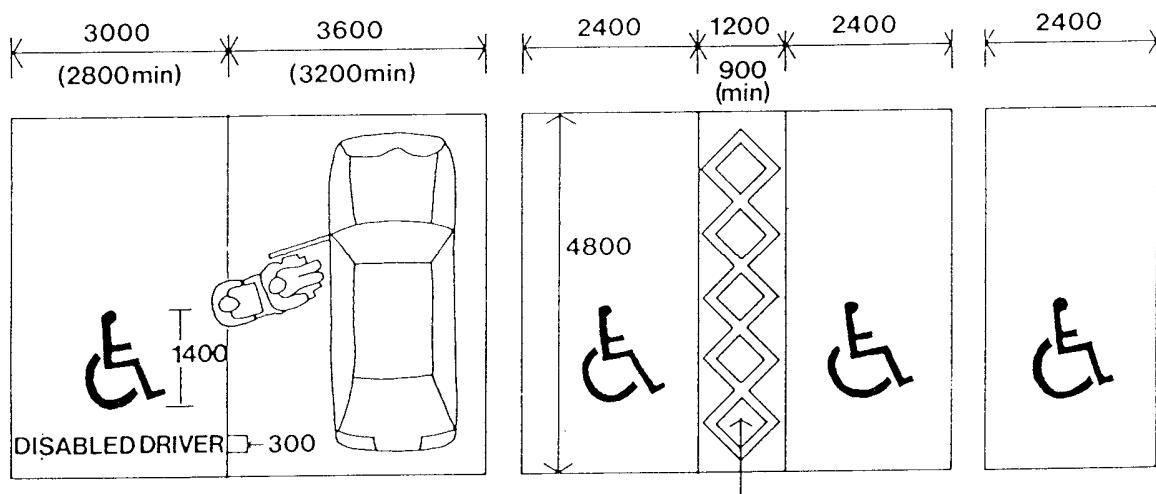
Further information on parking for people with disabilities is contained in Department of Transport Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/95 "Parking for Disabled People"

Car Parking

- Located as close as possible to accessible entrance
- Desirably undercover
- On level ground

Parking Bays

- Wide enough for wheel chair transfer to and from the car
- Designated for use by those with special needs (disabled mothers with young children) and clearly signed at entrance

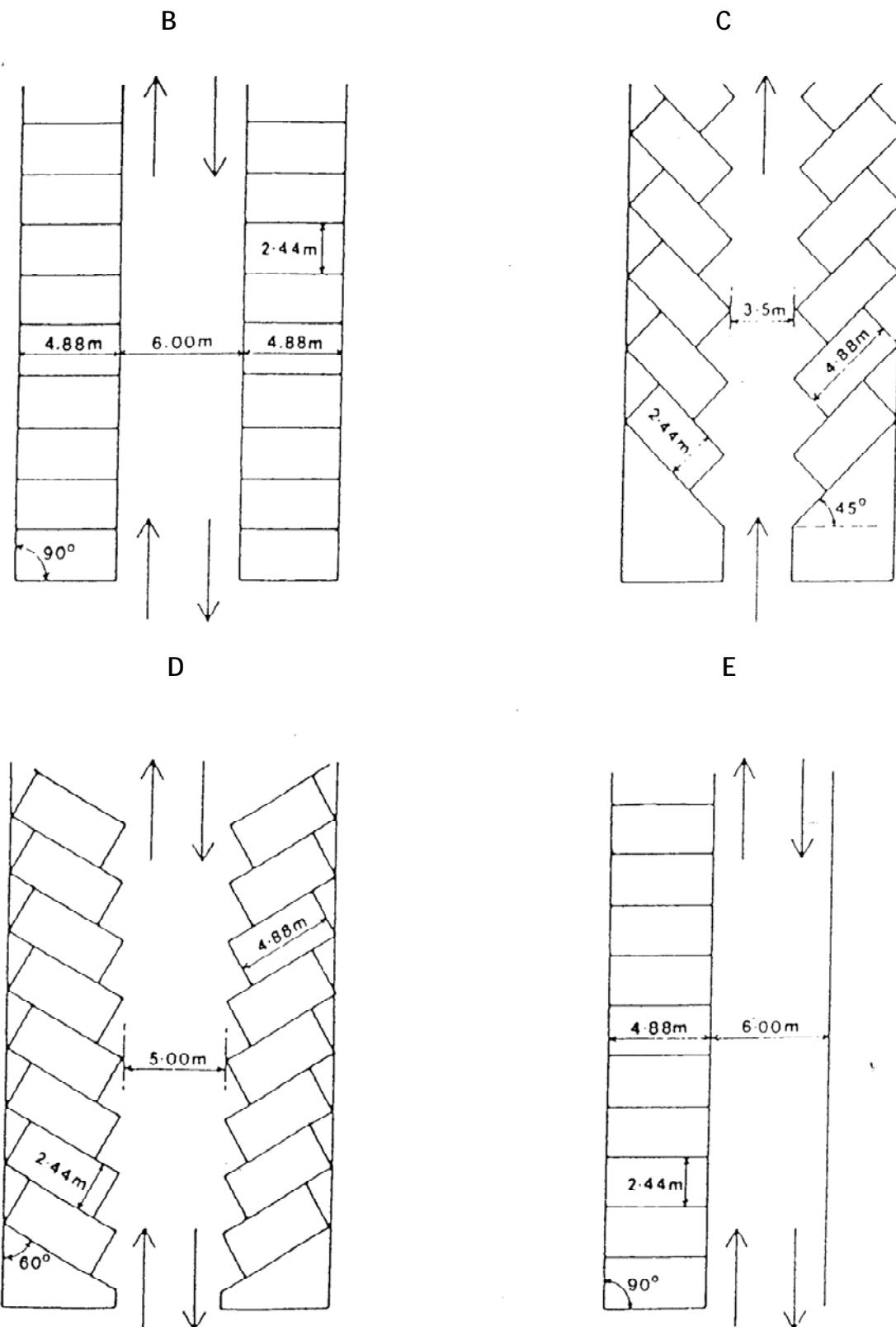


Ambulant disabled
Wheelchair user
user only where
space is limited,
full width for
wheel-chair user
preferred
particularly in
public car parks

Wheelchair user

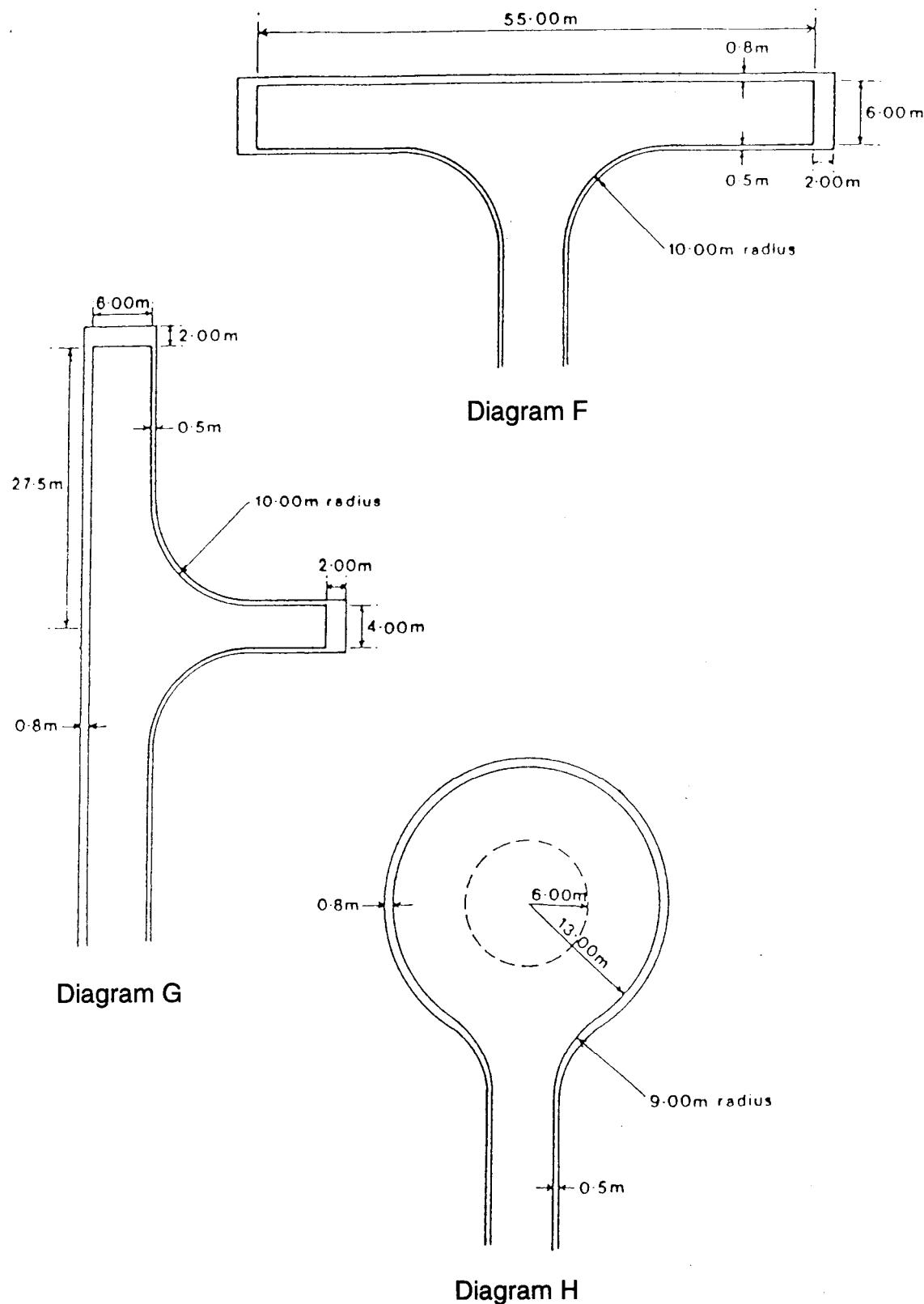
Marked out
shared space
between 2
standard bays

Standard end
bay with long
side open for
access



Suggested Layouts of Car Parking Areas

LORRY TURNING AND MANOEUVRING



~~APPENDIX 7 - GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS~~

~~The Council will have regard to the following guidelines when considering applications for agricultural workers' dwellings.~~

Introduction

- ~~Whilst there has been a substantial reduction in agricultural employment in recent years the Council recognises that there may, on occasions, be a requirement for agricultural workers to live at, or very close to, their place of work. Therefore, its planning policies allow for new dwellings for such workers as a rare exception to the general restraint on development within the Green Belt.~~
- ~~In South Bucks District there is a very strong demand for new dwellings in the countryside in spite of Green Belt constraints. The special concessions the planning system allows for agricultural workers' dwellings can therefore be abused by those seeking to exploit the physical and financial advantages of a new dwelling in the countryside. It is important for the Council to carefully scrutinise applications to ensure that the proposal is necessary.~~
- ~~Where an applicant follows the guidelines in putting together an application the more likely it will be that the Council will have the necessary information to reach a decision on a planning application.~~

Functional Need for a Permanent Dwelling

- ~~Applicants will be expected to demonstrate the existing functional need for a new permanent dwelling. The requirement for a worker (or workers) to be available on site at all times may arise where:~~
 - ~~animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice;~~
 - ~~there is a need to deal quickly with emergencies which could cause serious loss of crops or products.~~
- ~~Agricultural dwellings will not be permitted where the requirement arises from food processing rather than agriculture. Retirement homes for farmers cannot be justified by agricultural need.~~
- ~~In order to demonstrate a functional need for a new dwelling applicants are advised to submit an independent agricultural report prepared by a mutually agreed consultant. This would indicate why there is an existing need for a worker to be present at all times and why this need will be sustained.~~

Financial Evidence

7. New permanent accommodation cannot be justified on agricultural grounds unless the farming enterprise is economically viable. Financial information is therefore required in support of applications. The applicant will be required to show that the unit and the agricultural activity concerned:
- i) have been established for at least three years; and
 - ii) have been profitable for at least one of those years; and
 - iii) are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so.

Temporary Accommodation

8. Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new farming activity, whether on a newly created agricultural unit or an established one, the Council may grant permission for temporary accommodation such as a mobile home. To be acceptable there should be clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned. This could be demonstrated by significant investment in new farm buildings or equipment. Evidence should also be submitted to clearly demonstrate that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis.
9. As with a permanent dwelling the functional need for temporary accommodation will need to be demonstrated (see paragraphs 4-6). It must also be demonstrated that the need could not be fulfilled by existing accommodation.
10. Permissions for temporary accommodation will only be permitted for a maximum of three years. Permission will not be granted to extend a temporary permission beyond three years. For a permanent dwelling to be permitted in place of temporary accommodation the part of Policy GB6 which applies to permanent accommodation, and the relevant sections of this guidance, will have to be satisfied.

Existing Dwellings

11. Applicants should submit information setting out the recent history of the holding giving particular attention to existing or former farm dwellings and other farm buildings. Where a farm dwelling, or building suitable for conversion to a dwelling, has recently been sold or rented separately from the farm land concerned, the Council will normally consider this as an indication of lack of agricultural need for a dwelling. Therefore, in cases where dwellings have been sold or rented separately the reasons for the sale or rental should be clearly stated. If it is clear that the selling off of the dwelling has led to the application for new agricultural workers' accommodation the Council will not grant planning permission.

Occupancy Conditions

12. Where the need to provide new accommodation has been accepted, it will be necessary to ensure that the new dwelling or temporary accommodation is kept available for meeting agricultural needs. Therefore, a restrictive occupancy condition will always be imposed.

~~The condition will typically read as follows but may need to be varied depending on individual circumstances:~~

~~"The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last employed, in the locality in agriculture, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants."~~

~~When granting permission for a new agricultural dwelling such conditions may also be applied to any existing dwellings on the unit which are under the control of the applicant, do not have occupancy conditions and need at the time of the application to be used in connection with the farm.~~

- ~~13. In granting permission for a new agricultural worker's dwelling the Council will consider any existing dwellings on the unit which need at the time of the application to be used in connection with the agricultural business. The Council may impose conditions on those dwellings restricting their use in the same way as the new dwelling. This measure would be used in order to help protect the countryside against the risk of pressure for new houses.~~
- ~~14. In some circumstances the Council may seek a planning obligation to tie a farm house to adjacent farm buildings and to the agricultural land of the unit, to prevent them being sold separately without further application to the Council.~~
- ~~15. In the case of temporary accommodation, the Council may impose a condition preventing the occupation of such accommodation until other works necessary for the establishment of the enterprise or new farming activity have been completed.~~

Removal of Occupancy Conditions

- ~~16. The removal of occupancy conditions will only be permitted in the circumstances set out in policy GB7. The Council will need to be satisfied that there is no longer a continuing need for the dwelling in the area. Furthermore it will require evidence of a marketing exercise to indicate whether there is demand for a dwelling for someone solely, mainly or last working in agriculture in the area as a whole. The dwelling should have been comprehensively marketed for a substantial period of time at a realistic price. The marketing exercise should specifically target the local agriculture and forestry community. The use of specialist agents is recommended. Independent advice from a body specialising in agricultural matters should be sought to determine a realistic value. The Council may wish to verify such information or obtain additional opinions.~~

Size and Siting of Dwellings

- ~~17. The size of a new agricultural worker's dwelling or temporary accommodation should be related to the requirements of the enterprise rather than of the prospective owner or occupier. Dwellings which are unusually large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit, or unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income the business can sustain in the long term, will not be permitted. In cases where a proposal is suspected of being unusually expensive the Council will request an estimate from a mutually agreed source.~~

18. Great care should be taken with the siting of new dwellings or temporary accommodation as they will normally be in situations where new properties would not normally be permitted. Dwellings or temporary accommodation should be suitably located to meet the identified functional need. They should also be well related to existing buildings on the unit in question and should make use of existing screening. Landscaping should be included in order to provide additional screening where this is necessary.
19. The height, scale, form, design and materials of the new dwelling should be in keeping with their rural surroundings. Dwellings or temporary accommodation will not be permitted where they are in an exposed situation.
20. Details of the size and siting of the dwelling or temporary accommodation would be subject to all the other relevant policies of the Local Plan. Attention is drawn to policy EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development) and EP4 (Landscaping).
21. Subsequent extensions to new agricultural workers' dwellings will not be permitted where they would result in the dwelling becoming of a scale which exceeds that which can be justified by the functional requirement. The Council will impose a condition withdrawing specified permitted development rights (i.e. those which allow for extensions) to ensure that extensions which could result in too large a dwelling are not constructed under those rights.

Appendix 8 - House Extensions Design Guide

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This design guide sets out useful information for people who are considering extending their house.
- 1.2 Planning permissions will normally be granted for extensions provided that they meet the policies in the Local Plan. The main policies in the 'South Bucks District Local Plan - Adopted Version' are H10, H11, H12, H13, EP3 and GB10.
- 1.3 This design guide is based on the policies in the Local Plan. If the guidance is followed, your extension is more likely to be granted planning permission, and unnecessary delays should be avoided.
- 1.4 The guide uses the term extensions to include not only conventional extensions constructed of brickwork or blockwork, but also all forms of other additions including conservatories, porches and dormers.

2 General overview

- 2.1 When designing a house extension there are three golden rules to follow. Extensions should;
 - be neighbourly, respecting the privacy and outlook of adjoining properties,
 - normally be indistinguishable from the original dwelling and integrated with it,
 - be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

This guidance note shows how you can achieve these basic principles.

- 2.2 The retention of existing trees, hedges and other landscaping will often help reduce the impact of an extension on the character of the surrounding area. This is particularly important in the Residential Areas of Exceptional Character defined in the Local Plan and in Conservation Areas.

3 Two Storey Extensions

- 3.1 Two storey extensions, or any extension at or above first floor level, should be set at least one metre from the flank boundary of the site (see figure 1). A gap will ensure that a terracing effect is not produced and the spacious character of the area is maintained. The second reason for a 1m gap is to ensure that an extension will not have an over dominant effect on an adjacent property. In some cases, for example in Residential Areas of Exceptional Character (see policy H10 of the South Bucks District Local Plan), even greater gaps to the boundary may be required. If the extension is located adjacent to an area of open land, including for example a field, or a public highway which is likely to remain permanently open, this requirement could be waived.

Figure 1 the one metre rule



- 3.2 Where the original building has a pitched roof, two storey extensions should be constructed with a pitched roof. The angle of the roof should be the same as, or close to the angle of the existing roof. Flat roofs for two storey extensions will usually be unacceptable (see figure 2).

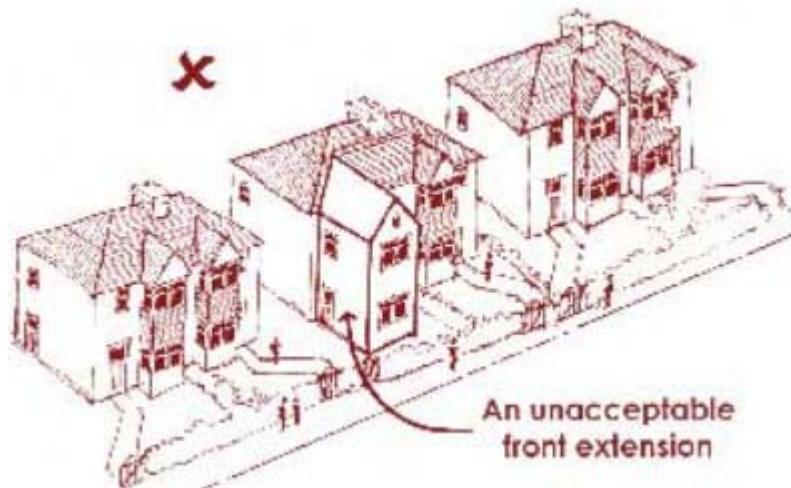
Figure 2 Pitched roof extensions will be encouraged



4 Front Extension

- 4.1 It is important to ensure that front extensions do not detract from the continuity of the street scene. Extensions are not generally acceptable where there is a clear and visually obvious 'building line' which would be disrupted. Conversely, where the building line is staggered or indistinct, a front extension could be acceptable.

Figure 3 Front extensions and the street scene



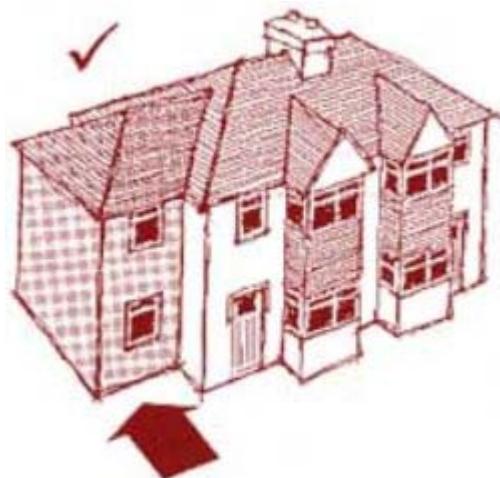
5 Materials

- 5.1 To ensure that the extensions can be viewed as an integral part of the original dwelling, the materials used should harmonise with the existing materials. If your extension requires planning permission, it is likely that a condition will be imposed to the effect that matching materials should be used. Roof tiles, facing bricks and other materials should usually be the same size, colour and design as the existing ones.

Material Matching

Material Matching If an exact match cannot be achieved, for example due to the effects of weathering, it is better to design the extension in such a way that the front wall is set back so that there is a slight visual break between any different materials used.

Figure 4 Extension set back to provide visual break



Design Detailing

Look at any detailing around the doors, windows and at the eaves and reflect this in the new design. Older houses in particular often have interesting arches and other special features which add character. However, unnecessary details should be avoided. Georgian columns, bow windows and other architectural features which are not in keeping with the design of the original dwelling and the area could look out of place.

Figure 5 Unnecessary detailing



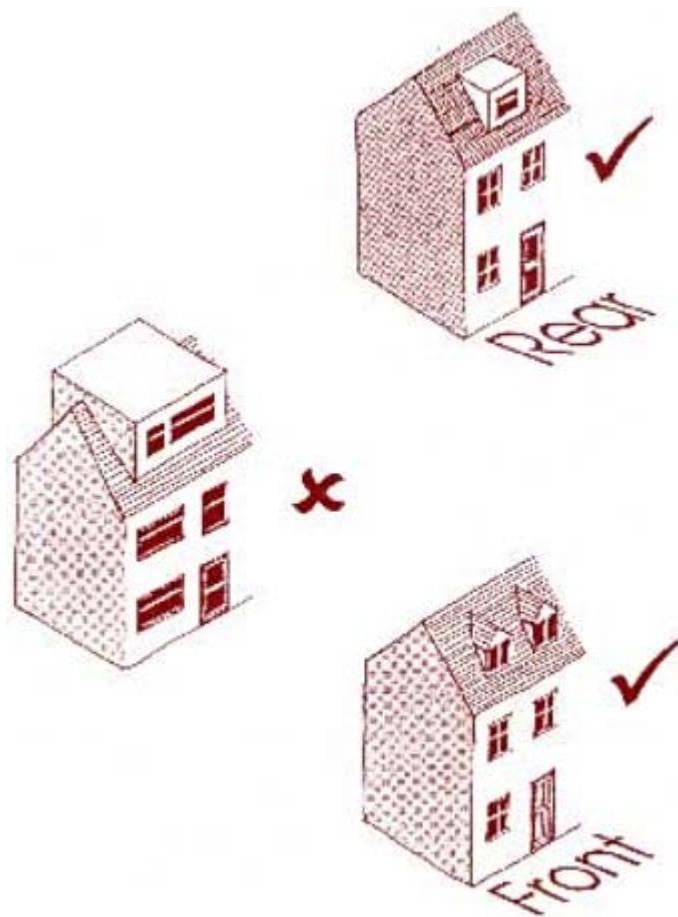
Windows

Windows To ensure that the extension is fully integrated with the original building, the windows of the extension should be aligned to the existing fenestration, both vertically and more importantly horizontally. Window design is also important, a mixture of timber and metal framed windows could appear incongruous.

6 Dormer Windows

6.1 Dormer windows should be small, unobtrusive and designed so as to be in harmony with the existing building. In general these should be considered simply as a means of lighting and ventilating the existing roof space and thereby allowing it to be used as a room, not as an extended room pushed out into the roof pitch. When the dormer is at the front of the building, it is likely to interfere with both the original design of the existing building and cause a visual intrusion into the street scene. It will therefore need to be carefully designed to be acceptable.

Figure 6 Acceptable and unacceptable dormers



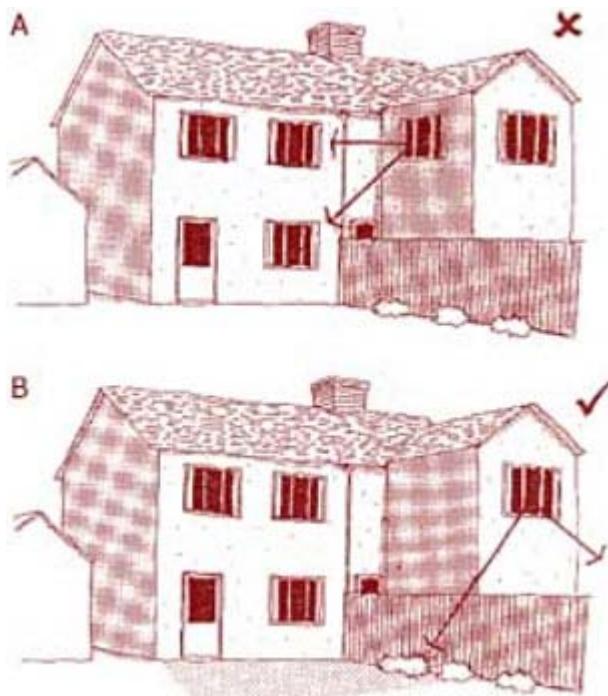
7 Effects on neighbours

- 7.1 Any extension should not detract from the amenities of the adjoining property with regard to loss of privacy, loss of sunlight and daylight or by unduly harming their outlook.

Privacy

- 7.2 The windows of any extension should not look directly or obliquely into those of an adjacent property. Neither should there be any overlooking of adjoining rear gardens to an unreasonable level as shown in Figure 7A. This should be achieved through careful design of the extension's internal layout. The retention of mature trees and hedges may sometimes help prevent overlooking. It is particularly important to ensure that the most private area of the garden is protected from overlooking, ie. that part nearest the house; see Figure 7B. Fixed non-opening windows in obscure glazing or high level windows (ie. those with a cill height of not less than 1.8m from the internal finished floor level) may be permissible in flank walls where no alternative is available. Additional features such as balconies and dormer windows that result in overlooking will not be acceptable.

Figure 7 A shows an unreasonable level of overlooking whereas the shaded area in B has retained its privacy.



Outlook

- 7.3 An extension's projection can seriously affect the outlook or light provision to an adjoining owner's nearest habitable room. Two storey rear extensions to semi-detached and terraced dwellings are usually very prominent in views from adjoining dwellings and will dominate outward views from adjoining ground floor windows, appearing excessively large and dominant.

Figure 8 A detrimental impact upon a neighbour's outlook caused by a badly sited extension



Daylight and Sunlight

- 7.4 Care should be taken not to significantly reduce the daylight and sunlight enjoyed by adjoining dwellings. Figure 9 shows the effect of shadow at near midsummer in the case of a two storey extension constructed on the rear of an east facing house. The daylight enjoyed in the ground floor room of the adjoining dwelling will also be greatly reduced.

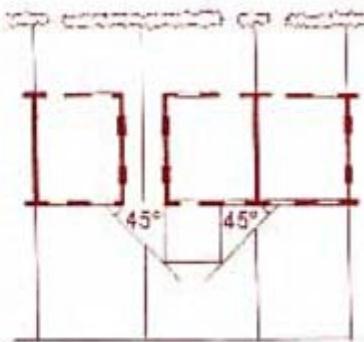
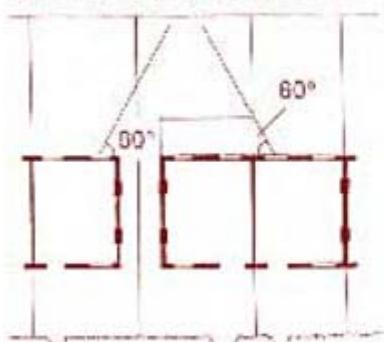
Figure 9 An unacceptable example of overshadowing



- 7.5 Projections will be determined as shown in figure 10. Extensions should project no further than a line drawn at 60° (for single storey) or 45° (for first floor and two storey extensions) from the mid point of the window of the nearest habitable room of adjacent properties. Habitable rooms include kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms but exclude bathrooms, toilets, halls, landings and store rooms.

Figure 10 Code for house extensions projection

Ground Floor Extension

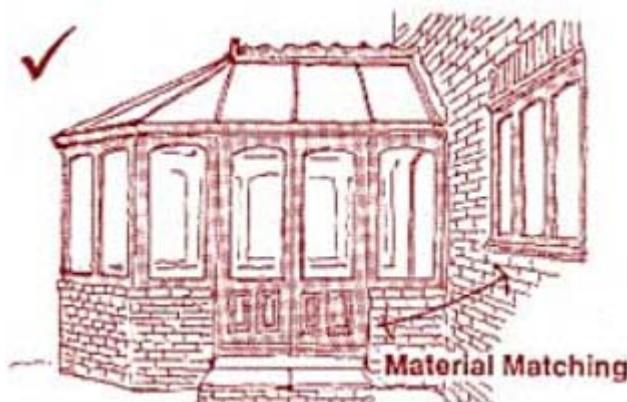


First Floor Extension

Conservatories

The principles that apply to house extensions also apply to conservatories. Ensure that the materials and design of the conservatory harmonise with the rest of the house so that it will not look out of place.

Figure 11 A well designed conservatory



8 Self Contained Residential Annexes

- 8.1 These are sometimes referred to as granny annexes. Typically they are house extensions for relatives to live with their family but with a degree of independence. Such annexes would only be granted permission when they would clearly be subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling. If this were not the case, the proposals would be rather like creating another dwelling on the same site.
- 8.2 Annexes should be designed so that they will be capable of being fully integrated within the existing dwelling. This can be achieved in a number of ways. The entrance to the annexe should be via the entrance to the main dwelling, a separate entrance at the front elevation will not normally be acceptable.
- 8.3 The accommodation should be linked internally to the main dwelling and should be designed in such a manner as to easily enable the annexe to be later used as an integral part of the main dwelling.

9 Garages and Outbuildings

- 9.1 Buildings within the residential curtilage such as garages, sheds and greenhouses will only be permitted where the building would be very subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling. As with extensions, the building should not adversely affect the character of the area, for example by being over-dominant or obtrusive. The Council will take account of the scale of the building in terms of both floorspace, height and the level of visibility of the building from the surroundings.
- 9.2 As with extensions to dwellings, it is important to ensure that buildings within the residential curtilage, whether in the front or rear gardens do not affect the privacy, sunlight or daylight provision to any neighbouring properties, and do not unduly restrict their outlook.
- 9.3 Buildings within the front gardens of properties will have to possess a scale and design appropriate to the character of the area. Incongruous designs may interrupt the street scene. To be acceptable, any outbuildings in front gardens should be unobtrusive in scale and design.
- 9.4 To ensure the highway is not blocked while the door is being opened, new garages or car ports which give access to the public highway should retain a 5 metre driveway within the residential curtilage. Those which give access to a shared private driveway should be at least one metre into the residential curtilage in order that the garage door does not cause an obstruction.

10 Green Belt

- 10.1 If your property is in the Green Belt it will be subject to additional restrictions, particularly in relation to its size. You can find out if your property is in the Green Belt by checking in the Local Plan.
- 10.2 Permission will not be granted for an extension where the floorspace of that extension, together with any others (including buildings close to the house) already built, would be more than one half of the floorspace of the original house which existed at 1 July 1948. For example, if the original house had a floorspace of 120m² , permission will not normally be granted for extensions which take the total floorspace of the house over 180m².
- 10.3 In the case of very small houses lacking basic modern amenities, or houses which are in a Green Belt settlement specified in the Local Plan, slightly larger extensions may be permitted.

If your property is within an **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** or a **Conservation Area** or if it is a **Listed Building**, it will be subject to additional controls.

This guide is published in order to help guide proposals to make them more acceptable. However it provides general advice which may not necessarily be relevant to every site. There may therefore be occasions where proposals which follow this advice are unacceptable.