



DEMOCRATIC AND ELECTORAL SERVICES

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Dear Councillor

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

The next meeting of the Sustainable Development Policy Advisory Group will be held as follows:

DATE: THURSDAY, 12TH JUNE, 2014
TIME: 6.00 PM
VENUE: ROOM 6, CAPSWOOD, OXFORD ROAD, DENHAM

Please note that this meeting is not open to the public

Only apologies for absence received prior to the meeting will be recorded.

Yours faithfully

Jim Burness

Director of Resources

To: The Sustainable Development Policy Advisory Group

Mr Reed
Mr Bagge
Mr Denyer
Mr D Dhillon
Mr Egleton
Mr Lidgate
Mr Samson
The Earl of Stockton

Declarations of Interest

Any Member attending the meeting is reminded of the requirement to declare if he/she has a personal interest in any item of business, as defined in the Code of Conduct. If that interest is a prejudicial interest as defined in the Code the Member should also withdraw from the meeting.

A G E N D A

- | | (Pages) |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Apologies for absence | |
| 2. Minutes | |
| To receive the minutes of the meeting of the PAG held on 13 March 2014. | (1 - 4) |
| 3. Duty to Co-operate | |
| To consider report of Head of Sustainable Development. | (5 - 6) |
| <i>Appendix</i> | (7 - 8) |
| 4. Townscape Character Assessment | |
| To consider report of Head of Sustainable Development. | (9 - 14) |
| 5. Accommodating the Needs of the Travelling Community in South Bucks: Feedback on Issues and Options and Call for Sites Public Consultation | |
| To consider report of Head of Sustainable Development. | (15 - 20) |
| 6. Definition of Key Shopping Areas for Development Management Purposes | |
| To consider report of Head of Sustainable Development. | (21 - 22) |
| 7. Any other business | |
| Any other business which the Portfolio Holder considers is urgent. | |

The next meeting is due to take place on Thursday, 4 September 2014

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting - 13 March 2014

Present: Mr Reed (Chairman)
Mr Bagge and Mr Lidgate

Also Present: Cllr Woolveridge (for minute 25)

Apologies for absence: Mr Denyer, Mr D Dhillon, Mr Egleton, Mr Samson and The Earl of Stockton

24. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 January 2014 and 21 February 2014 (virtual) were received.

25. HEATHROW AIRPORT EXPANSION OPTIONS

The PAG received two PowerPoint presentations on the two options for the possible expansion of Heathrow Airport.

- 1) Matt Gorman (Heathrow Airport's Sustainability Director) gave a presentation on Heathrow Airport's preferred option namely to build a new runway to the northwest of the existing airport. The presentation covered several areas including the following:
 - The case for growth
 - Details on the third runway north west proposal (including maps)
 - The cost and benefits of this option
 - Public consultation events taking place
 - Information on whether the option will be politically deliverable
- 2) Captain Jock Lowe gave a presentation on the Heathrow Hub option which involves extending the existing northern runway to approximately 6,600 metres, enabling it to operate as two separate runways. The presentation covered several areas including the following:
 - Why expansion is required
 - Details of the Heathrow Hub proposal (including maps)
 - Benefits of this option
 - Steps which can be taken to improve the noise climate

Following the presentations, a question and answer session took place during which Captain Lowe confirmed that no village communities would be destroyed with the Heathrow Hub option and that Iver and Richings Park would in fact benefit in the noise reduction which would result from the changes being proposed. In response to a question, Captain Lowe also confirmed that whilst there was no proposal to build a terminal in Iver, there was a proposal to create a gateway reception.

In response to a query regarding the changing of flight paths, Matt Gorman explained that Heathrow Airport had yet to look at flight paths in any detail and so was unable to comment. Captain Lowe stated that at this stage Heathrow Hub had no intentions to change flight paths significantly.

In response to a concern regarding the potential increase in the number of the staff who would drive to work, Matt Gorman explained that Heathrow Airport was predicting that a significant number of staff would use public transport to get to the Airport.

26. UPDATE ON AIRPORTS COMMISSION'S INTERIM REPORT

The PAG received an information report which provided an update on the Airports Commission's Interim Report, published in December 2013. The report set out the main conclusions of the Interim Report and the Commission's next steps.

The overall recommendation in the Interim Report was that one net additional runway would need to be in operation in the south east by 2040 with the likelihood for the need for a second additional runway to be operational by 2050.

The Airports Commission intend to carry out a detailed study on their current proposed locations for the first runway, covering three options at Heathrow and Gatwick airports. The PAG noted that the maps, illustrating the Heathrow Hub option and Heathrow Airport's own proposal for a second north runway, were attached as Appendix A.

The comments received via email from Members of the Sustainable Development PAG on the Council's response to the Appraisal Framework were submitted to Full Council, which approved the response on 25 February 2014.

The final report by the Airports Commission was due to be published in the summer of 2015 and a public consultation on the shortlisted options would commence towards the end of 2014.

The PAG expressed concern regarding the detrimental impact that an expansion of Heathrow Airport would have on the residents of South Bucks, especially for the residents of Iver and Richings Park.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

27. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE NOTE FOR BURNHAM BEECHES

The PAG received a report which asked Members to advise the Portfolio Holder as to whether to recommend to Cabinet that the Development Management Guidance Note for Burnham Beeches be approved.

The PAG noted that South Bucks, City of London (owners of the publically accessible part of the Beeches), Natural England and Environment Agency have been working together to produce evidence based planning policy to be included in the forthcoming Development Management Local Plan (DMLP). The City of London and South Bucks have jointly funded two evidence based studies: a visitors' survey and hydrology. This development guidance note stems directly from the hydrology report and should be treated as interim guidance until the DMLP is adopted.

In the discussion which followed, clarity was provided on the 10 metre built exclusion zone and how this would be enforced. The PAG supported the proposal to approve the new Guidance Note for Development Management purposes.

Having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that the new Guidance Note for Burnham Beeches be approved for Development Management purposes.

28. DUTY TO COOPERATE AND PLANNING FOR STRATEGIC CROSS BOUNDARY MATTERS

The PAG received a report on the Duty to Cooperate and Planning for Strategic Cross Boundary Matters.

The duty to co-operate was created in the Localism Act 2011, and amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and specified public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation relating to strategic cross-boundary matters. The report set out a number of recommendations in relation to this new duty, which the PAG were in support of.

Having considered the advice of the PAG the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that authority be delegated to the Head of Sustainable Development to respond, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, to requests from other local planning authorities for input to their local plans/evidence base, and to provide comments to the Mayor of London on the London Plan.

Furthermore, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** that the Sustainable Development PAG will now receive regular updates on the duty to co-operate together with suggestions for action where appropriate.

29. **ACCOMMODATING THE NEEDS OF THE TRAVELLING COMMUNITY IN SOUTH BUCKS: DRAFT ISSUES AND OPTIONS AND CALL FOR SITES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The PAG received a report which asked Members to advise the Portfolio Holder on whether the Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper on the accommodation needs of the travelling community should be published as a basis for public consultation.

The Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper is the first stage in the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Plan. It sets out to provide an understanding of Gypsy and Traveller communities and the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the ten year period from 2013 to 2023. The paper explores a series of options of how the Council could accommodate the future growth of the Gypsy and Traveller population and seeks comments on such options.

The Portfolio Holder, referring to the table in paragraph 3.11, was concerned to note that the requirement for the number of additional pitches of 31 appeared disproportionate compared with the requirements identified for the other local authorities particularly bearing in mind their geographical size. He undertook to have discussions with the other districts on this matter under the duty to cooperate.

The PAG asked that the wording for the criteria for location, in appendix 1 of the paper, be made less ambiguous. The PAG were of the opinion that the paper should be published as a basis for public consultation.

Having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** that the Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper on the accommodation needs of the travelling community be published as a basis for public consultation.

The meeting terminated at 7.45 pm

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SUBJECT:	Duty to Co-operate		
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team	-	Director of Services
	Prepared by	-	Head of Sustainable Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report records the interactions that have taken place in relation to the statutory “duty to co-operate”.

2 Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 Because the duty to co-operate is a key element in testing the soundness of plans, this issue links to the Council’s aim of “sustainable and clean environment, protecting our heritage, protecting our future.”

3 Background

- 3.1 A report on the “Duty to Co-operate” was presented to the meeting of the SDPAG held on 13 March 2014. The Portfolio Holder agreed that the PAG should receive regular updates on the way in which the duty was being applied.

4 Duty to Co-operate Interactions

- 4.1 The attached spreadsheet sets out recent interactions in the form of correspondence, meetings and telephone discussions, setting out comments on work being undertaken by this Council and the ways in which we have responded to other organisations.

5 Resources, Risk and Other Implications

- 5.1 This report has no direct cost implications. Ensuring the Council meets its “Duty to Co-operate” is vital in the plan-making process in order to reduce the chance of plans being found to be unsound at Examination. Keeping Members informed and ensuring an appropriate political dimension to interactions via the Portfolio Holder and/or Cabinet is essential.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 This report is for the information of Members.

Officer Contact:	Paul Geehan, 01895 837298
Background Papers:	None

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Duty to Co-operate: Other Local Authorities' Formal Consultations, From 1 March 2014

Local Authority	Local Plan Document	Strategic Cross Boundary Issue(s)	SBDC Officer(s)	Deadline	Response Date	Comments	Political Interaction
Three Rivers District Council	Gypsy & Travellers Plan	Gypsies & Travellers	HB	07/03/14	05/03/14	No objection but drew attention to our G&T needs.	
Three Rivers District Council	Site Allocations LDD Modifications	None	HB	18/03/14	18/03/14	Generally supportive but acknowledged had made difficult decision to use Green Belt.	
RBWM	Local Plan	Housing need	PG	21/03/14	05/03/14	Objections: no consultation on SHMA and no clarity on meeting overall housing need.	
Bucks County Council	Statement of Community Involvement	None	PG	31/03/14	26/03/14	No fundamental problems. Suggested could be shorter with some of the text in the LDS.	
Wycombe District Council	Local Plan Options Consultation	Gypsies & Travellers	JG	04/04/14	03/04/14	Drew attention to our G&T needs.	
Wycombe District Council	Local Plan Options Consultation	Housing need	JG	04/04/14	03/04/14	Raised possibility of joint SHMA.	
Chiltern District Council	Delivery DPD	Gypsies & Travellers	JG	04/04/14	03/04/14	Concerns re. G&T site delivery.	
Mayor of London	Further Alterations to the London Plan	Housing need	AB	10/04/14	10/04/14	Support ambition to achieve a step-change in housing delivery in London, but London needs to do more to meet its own housing needs. Object to policies that plan for 42,000 homes per year.	
London Boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond-Upon-Thames	West London Waste Plan	Waste	HB	11/04/14	11/04/14	Support for waste hierarchy and removal of Tavistock Road Coal Depot as a potential site. Continued reliance on waste movements out of West London is not sustainable in the long-term.	
Chiltern District Council	Chalfont St Peter Neighbourhood Plan	None	HB	22/04/14	22/04/14	No comment.	
Aylesbury Vale District Council	SHMA	Housing need	PG	25/04/14	25/04/14	Welcomed the clear statement that AVDC recognise that AVDC may need to make some provision for other authorities' unmet need and that there is likely to be unmet need in S Bucks. Comments on appropriate geography for a SHMA for Aylesbury Vale.	
Aylesbury Vale District Council	Vale of Aylesbury Plan Scoping		PG	28/05/14	16/05/14	It is important to consider the needs of the sub-region and consider more houses than in the previously submitted VALP	

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SUBJECT:	Townscape Character Assessment		
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team	-	Director of Services
	Prepared by	-	Head of Sustainable Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the outcome of work on an assessment of the townscape character of the main settlements in South Bucks and recommends that the Council should take the assessment into account in making planning decisions.

2 Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 This issue particularly links to the Council's aim of "sustainable and clean environment, protecting our heritage, protecting our future."

3 Background

- 3.1 Work is under way preparing a Development Management Local Plan (DMLP). When adopted, this will replace the saved policies in the 1999 Local Plan and will provide detailed policies in line with the context provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance. The DMLP will also provide more detail in respect of some of the policies in the adopted Core Strategy. It is expected that an Examination into the DMLP will be heard early in 2016 and that the plan will be adopted later that year.
- 3.2 The NPPF advises that local plans should include robust and comprehensive policies setting out the quality of development that will be expected for their areas. Local Planning Authorities are required to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of the area as part of their evidence base, in order to identify appropriate design policies and to assist in determining capacity for development.
- 3.3 As part of the work on the DMLP, the District Council commissioned work to assess the character of the townscape within the District's main settlements. An initial scoping assessment identified key areas and characteristics, but enormous value has come out of the Part 2 Work and a more detailed [Townscape Character Assessment \(TCA\) by consultancy firm Tibbalds](#). The preparation work included consultation with parish councils, all of whom were invited to attend meetings. Meetings were held with representatives of Beaconsfield Town Council and Gerrards Cross Parish Council and there was a third meeting to which all parish councils were invited, which was attended by representatives from Iver PC and Farnham Royal PC. The meetings took the form of workshops and enabled a discussion of the consultants' early findings, and provided an opportunity to identify local issues and concerns. There were similar meetings with development management staff.
- 3.4 Because preparation of the DMLP has only just commenced and adoption is over two years away, consultees and officers share the view that it is desirable that the TCA should be used as soon as possible. Although it will not have undergone testing by a local plan inspector, it is considered that the quality of the TCA, together with its status as an independently produced report prepared by experts in the field, provides a very good context for making decisions.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the TCA should be adopted and used as Interim Planning Guidance (IPG). The purpose of this would be to provide prospective applicants and other parties with a summary of the existing townscape qualities of the eleven main settlements within the District and eight areas of Special Character and to indicate the issues of importance and concern in these areas whilst detailed policies are being prepared and adopted. The IPG would not establish new policy but would aim to help encourage the type of development that is in keeping with the character of these areas. The IPG would not constitute a Supplementary Planning Document as part of the Local Development Framework. It has however been subject to consultation with local stakeholders prior to its recommended adoption by the District Council. It accords with policies in the Adopted Local Plan and the NPPF. As such, it is considered that the IPG would be a material consideration when determining planning applications.

4 Content of the TCA

- 4.1 The TCA outlines the ways in which each of the eleven main settlements in South Bucks have developed, the main points of their character and an indication of their potential for change. The TCA goes on to identify 12 different character typologies such as “woodland roads”, “open plan suburban” and “park edge”. There are elements of many different typologies in each settlement. Each typology is analysed in detail and comments are set out about townscape, built form, hard and soft landscape and vegetation and boundary treatments. Two of the most important elements of each analysis include identification of threats to character and a series of recommendations.
- 4.2 As just one example, here are the threats and recommendations which relate to woodland roads:



Typical Woodland Road

Threats to Character

- A level of homogeneity in style of new buildings that fails to contribute to the diversity of architecture;
- New dwellings do not relate well to the existing topography, using retaining walls rather than working with existing levels;
- New dwellings have hard surfaced front gardens - this diminishes the green landscape character of this typology;
- 2 storey buildings with a large area of additional accommodation in the roof and/or undercroft parking appear out of scale with the surroundings;
- Use of high, hard boundary treatments such as walls and railings;
- Buildings are too close together or too near boundaries, giving less space for landscape;
- Symmetrical, formal design of new houses, i.e. three bays with central portico.

Recommendations

- Retain woodland character by retaining trees and hedgerows around buildings and in backdrop and views to and from homes;
- Allow enough space on plot for new landscape to mature;
- Retain existing plot ratios and rhythm;
- Front gardens should generally be planted, not hard landscaped;
- Building heights should be limited to two storeys (including accommodation in the roof);
- Where boundary treatments are tall enough to require planning permission, they should avoid use of hard materials such as walls and railings. Railings should only be acceptable if they are constructed with hedges;
- Buildings should relate well to topography and avoid the use of retaining walls;
- A variety of architectural styles should be encouraged;
- Conserve roadside treatment and avoid over engineered highway design and road markings;
- Where areas are located around edges of settlements, it is essential to preserve them as a soft green edge.

- 4.3 The threats identified and the recommendations that seek to retain and improve the quality of our townscape areas are clearly expressed and it is considered that they could set a very good context for providing planning advice, negotiating on schemes and for making decisions.
- 4.4 Saved Policy H10 of the South Bucks District Local Plan sets out policies for Residential Areas of Exceptional Character (RAECs). Within 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 permit proposals involving the development of sites which do not reflect the prevailing density of the areas, the conversion of single dwellings into flats or the introduction of backland development. A number of factors are set out to which particular regards will be had when assessing proposals in those areas. The areas currently covered by Policy H10 are:
- Camp Road, Gerrards Cross
 - Gregories Road/Burkes road area, Beaconsfield
 - Penn Road (north part, up to the Chiltern District boundary)
 - Hillcrest Way Area/Woodhill Avenue, Gerrards Cross
- 4.5 In the 2014 Study, Tibbalds have recommended that the Council should consider identifying eight Areas of Special Character, including four areas which are already covered by policy H10, either in part or in full, as follows:
- Camp Road, Gerrards Cross - large houses in large plots amongst mature trees and lush planting - essentially the same area as that in Policy H10
 - Seeleys Road, Beaconsfield - open plan suburban area - new listing
 - Thornbridge/Church Road Iver Heath - formal suburban oval-shaped blocks - new listing
 - The Ridings, Richings Park - small but distinctive pocket of houses at southern edge of Richings Park - new listing
 - St Huberts Close and Meadway Park, Gerrards Cross - open plan suburban - new listing
 - Gregories Road and Burkes Rd Beaconsfield - large house in large plots amongst mature trees and lush planting - already an H10 area
 - Penn Road and Ledborough Lane - woodland road - partly existing H10 area but extended
 - Hillcrest Way/Woodhill Avenue Area green suburban road typology already an H10 area.
- 4.6 The eight recommended Areas of Special Character are shown on the maps on the next two pages. The four new Areas of Special Character will not have the status of the H10 Areas until such time as a new local plan is adopted but it is considered that a resolution to adopt the TCA as interim planning guidance in the context of paragraph 58 of the NPPF would give them greater standing than simply noting them as background evidence.

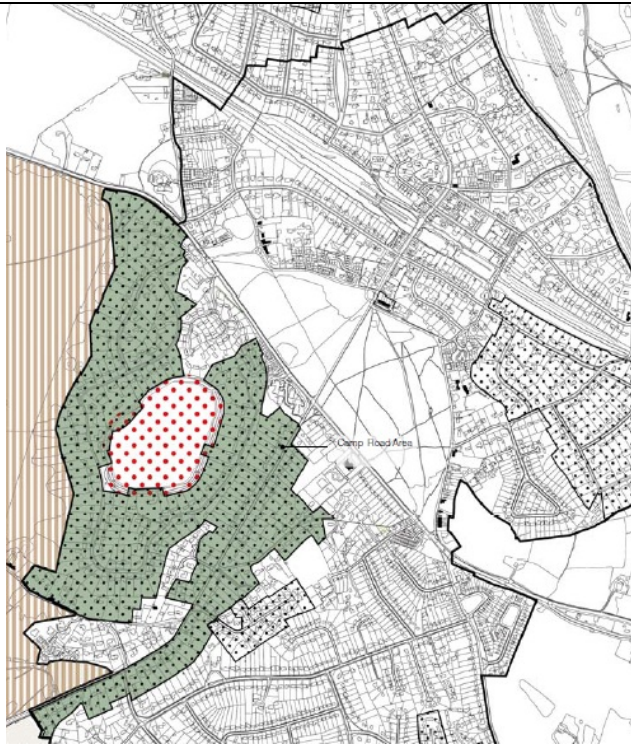
5 Resources, Risks and Other Implications

5.1 There are no direct cost implications of this report. The IPG would not be a statutory document and would not form part of the Development Plan for South Bucks. Accordingly there is a risk that Inspectors might take less account of it on appeal than the Council would wish. The alternative of waiting for the TCA to be incorporated in the DMLP arguably carries greater risks of loss of character of the District's residential areas.

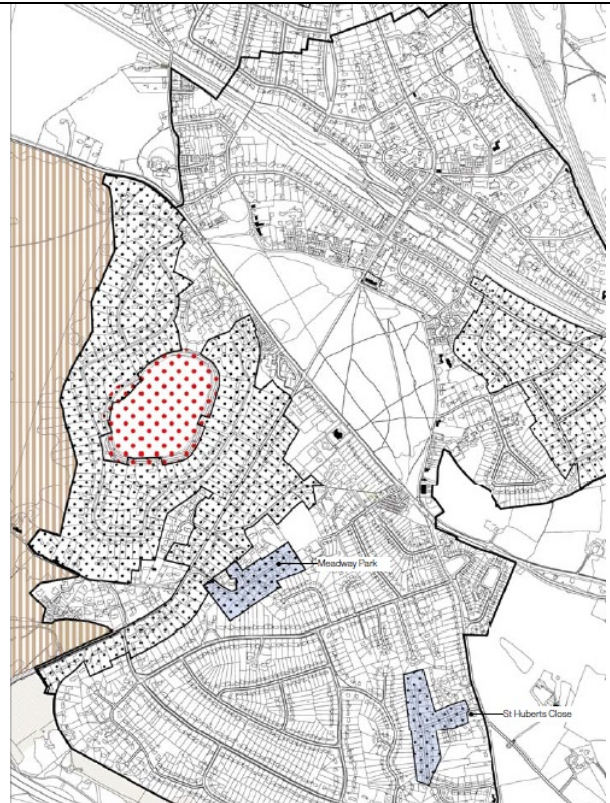
6 Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the PAG advise the Portfolio Holder to recommend that Cabinet should adopt the South Bucks Townscape Character Study Part 2, February 2014 prepared by Tibbalds on behalf of the District Council as interim planning guidance.

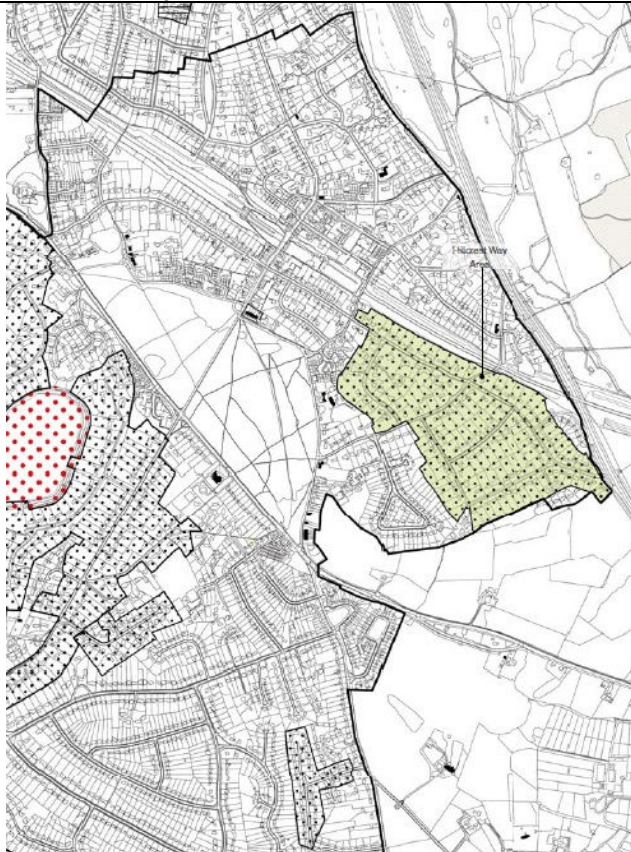
Camp Road, Gerrards Cross



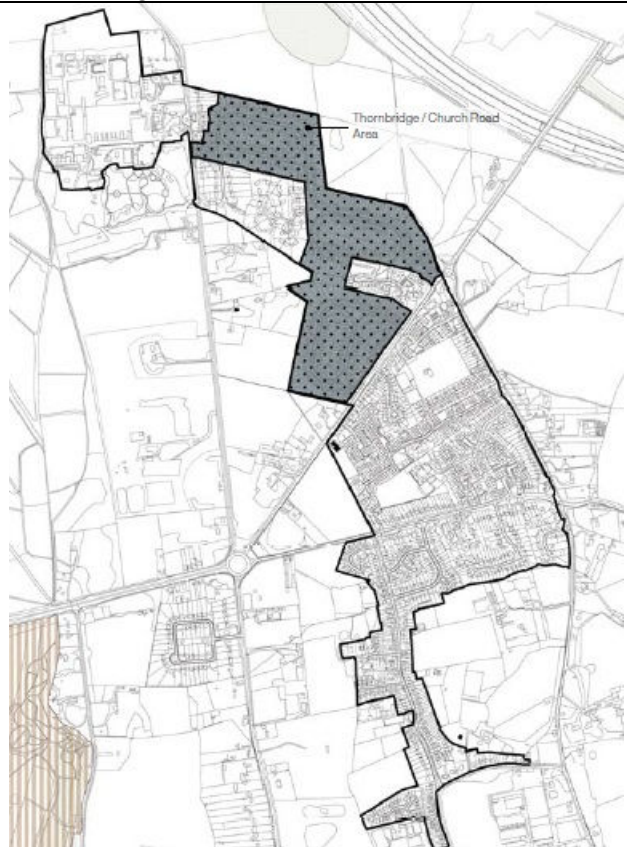
St Huberts Close/Meadway Park, Gerrards Cross

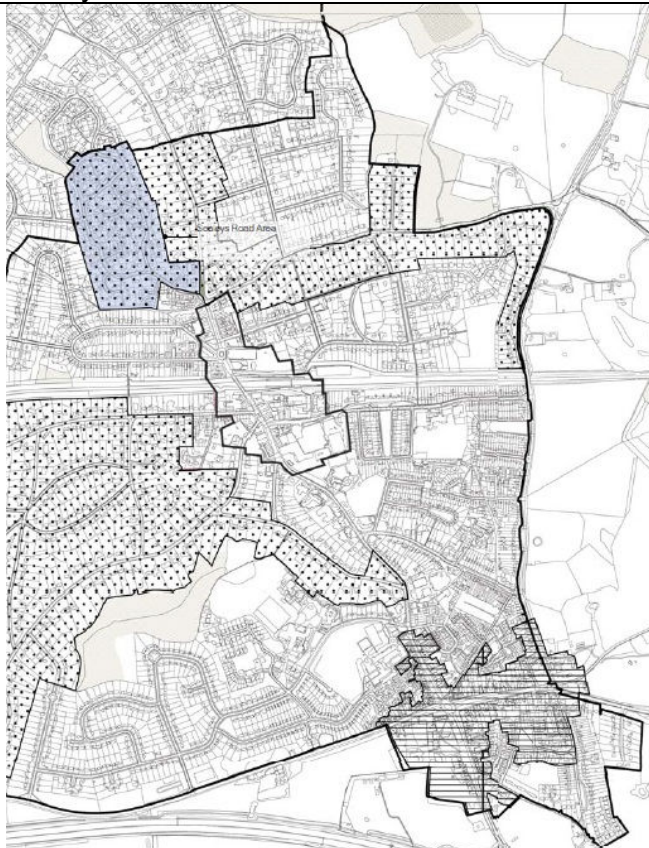
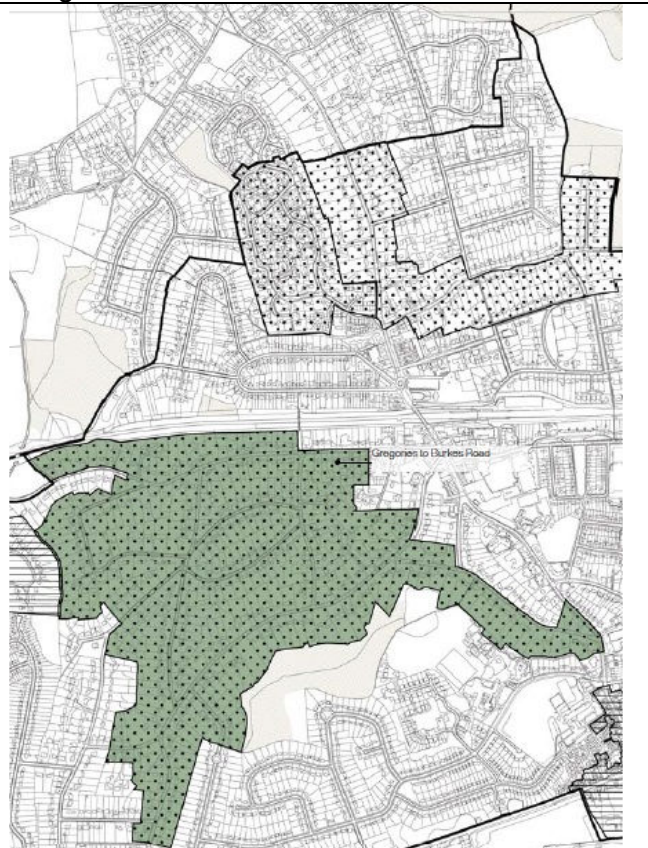

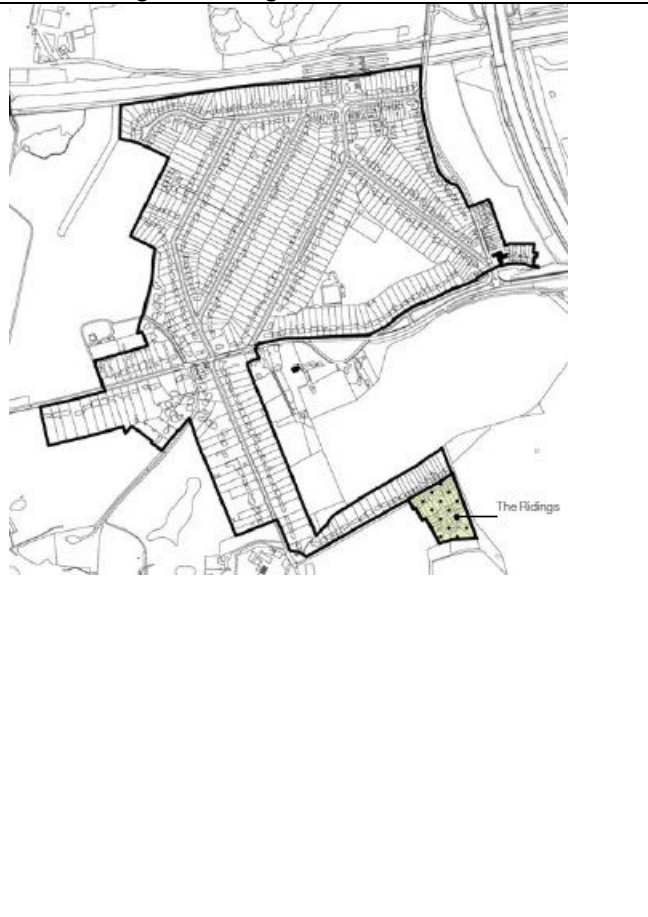


Hillcrest Way/Woodhill Avenue, Gerrards Cross



Thornbridge/Church Road, Iver Heath



<p>Seeleys Road, Beaconsfield</p>  A detailed street map of the Seeleys Road area in Beaconsfield. A specific region is highlighted with a blue stippled pattern. The map shows a dense network of residential streets and some open spaces.	<p>Gregories Road to Burkes Road, Beaconsfield</p>  A detailed street map of the area between Gregories Road and Burkes Road in Beaconsfield. A large area is highlighted with a green stippled pattern. The map shows a mix of residential streets and open land.
<p>Penn Road and Ledborough Lane, Beaconsfield</p>  A detailed street map of the Penn Road and Ledborough Lane area in Beaconsfield. A large area is highlighted with a green stippled pattern, and another area to the north is highlighted with purple vertical hatching. The map shows a complex residential layout.	<p>The Ridings, Richings Park</p>  A detailed street map of The Ridings in Richings Park. A small area is highlighted with a green stippled pattern. The map shows a residential area with some open spaces and a road network.

Officer Contact:	Paul Geehan, 01895 837298
Background Papers:	South Bucks Townscape Character Study Part 2 http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4876&p=0

SUBJECT:	Accommodating the needs of the Travelling Community in South Bucks: Feedback on the Issues and Options and Call for Sites Public Consultation
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team - Director of Services Prepared by - Head of Sustainable Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to Members on the recent public consultation on the Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper.

2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 The Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper on Gypsies and Travellers related directly to the delivery of Core Strategy Policy 4 in the Core Strategy. In addition, the paper addressed each of the five broad themes in the South Bucks Sustainable Community Strategy:

- Thriving economy
- Sustainable environment
- Safe communities
- Health and well-being
- Cohesive and strong communities

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has recently run a public consultation on the Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper, which is the first stage in the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Plan. The paper set out to provide an understanding of Gypsy and Traveller communities and the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the ten year period from 2013 to 2023. The paper explored a series of options of how the Council could accommodate the future growth of the Gypsy and Traveller population, and consulted on such options.
- 3.2 Responses have now been collated from the public consultation which ran for a period of four weeks from 19 March - 16 April 2014. A total of 32 responses were received from a range of organisations including statutory consultees like Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage; neighbouring authorities; a handful of Parish Councils; travellers from some of the public sites in the District; and some individuals. The responses amounted to 177 individual issues.

4. Discussion

- 4.1 The Issues and Options and Call for Sites paper included a set of ten questions. A handful of sites were submitted to the Council as part of the Call for Sites element of the consultation. Key issues raised through representations received are listed below, taking each question individually.

Q1: Should the Council use the Gypsies and Travellers Plan to safeguard authorised permanent Traveller sites in the District?

- 4.2 All respondents to this question supported the option for safeguarding sites in the District and some considered it essential to do so in order to meet on-going and future traveller needs within the sub-region.

Q2: Should the Council consider meeting some of its need by extending existing sites, where possible and appropriate? If so, which sites would be suitable for extension?

- 4.3 Every respondent who answered this question agreed that the Council should consider extending sites where possible and appropriate. Certain areas were identified through responses as unsuitable for expansions, for example, Iver, which already has a large number of sites in a small area, and Chalfont St Peter, which, although not within South Bucks, borders the district boundary at Gerrards Cross. Wapseys Wood was identified by residents of the existing site as not suitable for expansion.
- 4.4 The Environment Agency, although not giving opinions on which sites are, and which aren't, suitable for extensions, provided a list of factors and constraints on particular sites which need to be considered if sites were to extend.

Q3: Should the Council seek to allocate non Green Belt sites with temporary permission as permanent authorised sites? If so, which sites do you recommend?

- 4.5 The majority of respondents agreed with this question that non Green Belt land could be allocated if a site already has temporary permission on it. Most respondents also caveated this by stating 'yes' but only where suitable and emphasised not areas of Green Belt land.
- 4.6 One adjoining authority did place emphasis on national policy, which states that insets into the Green belt boundary are allowed in exceptional circumstances. It stated that if the Council wished to make such designations, then the Green Belt would have to be de-designated.

Q4: Should the Council consider allocating new sites to accommodate future need for travellers? If so, where?

- 4.7 Most respondents agreed that new sites should be allocated in South Bucks as long as they do not cause unacceptable harm to the environment, to the Green Belt and the historic environment. Other concerns were listed, but Green Belt was emphasised as a key issue when looking for new sites.
- 4.8 Some respondents stated that new site allocations were a positive way forward; however they would prefer the focus to be on extending existing established sites first as that was where the need was located.

Q5: Do you own or know of any pieces of land that may be suitable for use as a traveller site? If so, please submit site information as part of your consultation response.

- 4.9 The majority who answered this question stated 'no' to having any potential sites that could be explored for use as a traveller site; however some travellers noted that Bottoms Walton, an existing site in the District has potential. Chiltern District Council also stated that through an earlier Call for Sites consultation run by their Council, some sites were submitted that were located within South Bucks, so recommended looking back at those sites for potential to be taken forward and assessed.

- 4.10 A handful of sites were also submitted through the Call for Sites form available through the consultation. These will be addressed later in the report.

Q6: Where the need cannot be met through any other means, should the Council consider allocating new sites to accommodate the future need for travellers on designated Green Belt land?

- 4.11 Mixed responses were received on this question. Some gave a straight 'no' to allocations on the Green Belt due to it being under threat already, whilst others emphasised that Green Belt land must be de-designated in order to place an allocation on it. Others highlighted that this should only happen in exceptional circumstances where need cannot be met in any other way.

Q7: Do you agree that the Council should develop policies to assess planning applications for additional traveller sites?

- 4.12 All respondents agreed that policies should be developed to assess planning applications for traveller sites. Some included additional requirements and criteria they wished to be considered as part of the policies, such as heritage assets, the Chilterns AONB, and the emphasis of need for new pitches for travellers in the District. Chiltern District Council also noted that South Bucks may wish to consider policies including "unidentified proposals which may come forward through the plan period".

Q8: Do you agree with the GTNA conclusions that no transit sites or temporary stopping places are required for travellers within the District?

- 4.13 All agreed that transit sites were not required within South Bucks, with two Councils notably supporting the outcomes of the GTNA. Some Travellers responses noted that they had not seen the GTNA, but noted that transit sites are a "waste of time and money" and that permanent sites would be far better to allow travellers to feel more settled on sites.

Q9: Do you agree with the GTNA conclusions that no plots for Travelling Showpeople are required in the District?

- 4.14 Most agreed that there was no need to provide for Travelling Showpeople in South Bucks. Some noted that demand needed to be assessed to adapt if the need was present in the District. One traveller responded saying that there was a known need in the District, but no details were provided on this, so it will be important to monitor the situation in the future.

- 4.15 Notably, Chiltern District Council have a known need to accommodate Travelling Showpeople, so have expressed an interest in any such responses received in relation to Travelling Showpeople or sites within the District, which may help meet their known need to 2026.

Q10: Do you agree with the site selection criteria? Do you agree with the weighting given? If not, how could the methodology be improved?

- 4.16 This was undoubtedly the most talked about question through the consultation. Although a handful of respondents agreed with the criteria listed in the site selection criteria, the majority had something to say on the issue. The most common issue was in relation to the weighting and scores assigned to each issue; many respondents felt that this did not expressly help in the assessment of sites as some issues were given higher or more positive/negative scores than others. There were also comments on the lack of justification provided with regards to the site selection criteria.

- 4.17 The main concern in the site selection criteria related to Green Belt. One concern was that it had two criteria listed with different scores (-5 for site location in the Green Belt and -4 for whether a site would cause significant harm to the openness), with one respondent noting that one criteria on looking at the overall assessment of impact on Green Belt purposes (in line with the NPPF) may be more appropriate. Other concerns stated that Green Belt should have a far higher weighting, stating that nothing could outweigh the detrimental impact that would occur from development on the Green Belt.
- 4.18 English Heritage generally agreed with the site selection criteria listed, however suggested changes to the weighting with regards to a potential sliding scale of impact upon heritage assets, such as positive scores if a site has no impact on a heritage asset or setting, and sliding progressively negative if a site were to have an impact upon a Grade I or II* listed building. English Heritage also suggested that greater weight should be given to the conservation and enhancement of nationally designated heritage assets and protected landscapes.
- 4.19 Other responses included criteria which have potentially been omitted from the table which have been requested to be included. These include drainage (including foul drainage), landscape character, the Chiltern AONB, more detail on flood risk, more clarification on safety and contaminated land and relating the criteria more closely to national policy.

Call for Sites

- 4.20 Sites submitted to the Council through the Call for Sites forms are listed below. As yet, these sites have not been assessed for their suitability; they have simply been submitted through the public consultation as having the potential to be a traveller site.
- A site in Hedgerley, which has planning permission for a residential dwelling
 - The Warren, Rowley Land, Wexham, SL3 6PB
 - Land at Little Sutton Lane, Langley, SL3 8AN
 - Bottoms Walton, Walton Lane, SL2 3TS
 - Pyebush Lane, Beaconsfield, HP9 2RX

General comments made through public consultation

- 4.21 Most of the more general comments made were from consultees noting issues to be aware of when identifying sites, for example, the Aerodrome Safeguarding, Bird Strike and Wind Turbine Development around Heathrow airport, which are all identified on maps and flood zones and other constraints from the Environment Agency.
- 4.22 Other comments received that were of a more general nature were from neighbouring and local authorities, all of which welcomed the study to help meet the needs of travellers in South Bucks. The main concerns from such authorities however was the suggestion of depending upon neighbouring authorities to help meet some of the unmet need in South Bucks. This was listed as an option within the issues and options paper along with every other option; however it was intended that all other options for sites would be fully explored prior to asking authorities to help meet such need.

Duty to Co-operate

- 4.23 As stated in the previous paper to Members, the Council now has a duty to co-operate, in line with the Localism Act 2011, which places a legal duty on local authorities and public bodies to engage, constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise effectiveness of Local Plan preparation relating to cross boundary matters.

4.24 Through this public consultation, South Bucks has worked closely with neighbouring authorities and has had meetings with some districts, both prior, during and post public consultation. The table below sets out how the Council has consulted neighbouring local planning authorities to date.

Local Authority	Correspondence	Consultation response received?
Wycombe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty to co-operate meeting took place on 25 October with Wycombe • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A consultation response was received on 4 April 	Yes
Three Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Three Rivers on 14 April • A consultation response was received on 16 April 	Yes
Chiltern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A follow up email was sent on 20 April offering further time to respond • A consultation response was received on 20 April 	Yes
Hillingdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Hillingdon on 5 February • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A follow up email was sent on 20 April offering further time to respond. • Email correspondence took place agreeing to Wed 23 April as a final deadline • No consultation response has been received 	No
Slough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A follow up email was sent on 20 April offering further time to respond • An email was received on 28 April recognising that no response had been sent, but no consultation response has been received • A duty to co-operate meeting had since taken place with Slough Council between officers on 28 April 	No
Windsor and Maidenhead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty to co-operate meeting took place on 13 November • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A follow up email was sent on 20 April offering further time to respond • No correspondence or consultation response has been received 	No
Bucks County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting took place with Bucks CC on 17 March about the public traveller sites within the District • The consultation email was sent out on 19 March • A follow up email was sent on 20 April offering further time to respond • No correspondence or consultation response has been received 	No

4.25 Aylesbury Vale District Council also responded to the Issues and Options consultation as a Bucks authority, but is not an adjoining authority to South Bucks. Aylesbury Vale District Council was also involved in the Bucks GTNA study, so it was expected that the District would share views through the public consultation.

4.26 During and post public consultation, the four Bucks authorities involved in the GTNA (Wycombe, Chiltern, Aylesbury Vale and South Bucks) have had a meeting regarding the evidence base study and the needs within Bucks; this took place at Chiltern District Council offices on 1 April 2014. Another meeting regarding travellers needs also took place at Chiltern, however this was directly in relation to the Chiltern Delivery DPD, and how needs

could be met through their plan. This meeting took place on 24 April 2014 and included the same four Districts as well as Three Rivers Council as a neighbouring authority.

4.27 The Council will continue to work closely with all neighbouring authorities.

Next Steps

4.28 As set out in the Issues and Options paper, the next stage in the preparation of the Gypsies and Travellers Plan is the publication of the draft plan. At this point, sites will be formally identified as those that are deemed suitable to take forward in the plan. This stage will also include a public consultation to give people an opportunity to comment on the chosen sites.

4.29 A copy of the timetable is set out below.

Stage	Indicative Date
Scoping and evidence gathering Undertake need assessment and scope Sustainability Appraisal	May 2013 - February 2014
Issues and Options / Call for sites Consultation paper setting out options to meet identified need, including Call for Sites consultation	March 2014 - April 2014
Working towards a Draft Plan	Current Stage
Publication of Draft Plan This will formally identify the sites that the Council feels are suitable for use as traveller sites and invite comments on the chosen ones.	Autumn 2014
Submission to Secretary of State At this stage the Plan will be formally submitted to the Government along with all the comments received. An independent Inspector will then be appointed to examine the document.	February 2015
Examination in Public Formal examination of the Plan by the Government appointed inspector	June/ July 2015
Adoption	December 2015

5 Resources, Risk and Other Implications

5.1 The main resource implication is officer time. The results of the public consultation have been analysed and are being taken forward to inform the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Plan for the District. There could be considerable risk in not proceeding with the Gypsy and Traveller Plan as there would be more likelihood of applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites being allowed on appeal.

6 Summary

6.1 It is recommended that Members of the Sustainable Development PAG note the outcomes of the recent public consultation.

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Background Papers:	Accommodating the needs of the Travelling Community in South Bucks: consultation on Issues and Options and Call for Sites Paper http://www.sbdc-spider.southbucks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=2071&Ver=4

SUBJECT:	Definition of Key Shopping Areas for Development Management Purposes	
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team	- Director of Services
	Prepared by	- Head of Sustainable Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to request Members to adopt a definition of key shopping areas for use in development management.

2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 The Guidance links directly to Core Policy 11 Council's Adopted Core Strategy.
- 2.2 The Core Policies and this recommendation directly support the objective within the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan for Thriving Economy - lifelong enterprise, the entrepreneurial heart of Britain.

3. Background

- 3.1 Changes to permitted development rules which came into effect on 6 April 2014 allow a change of use to residential (use class C3) from shops (use class A1 and A2) providing the change involves a shop not larger than 150 sq m. The change must also not have an impact on the adequate provision of services of the sort that may be provided by a building falling within Class A1 and A2 such as a post office (where there is reasonable prospect of the building being used) or, where the building is located in a key shopping area, on the sustainability of that shopping area. Current local policy defines District and Local centres but does not use the term key shopping area. This report suggests that the District and Local centres as defined in the Core Strategy and the Proposals Map be categorised as 'Key Shopping Areas' for the purpose of interpreting the new legislation.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Core Policy 11 of the Core Strategy states that:

Proposals for new retail, office and other main town centre uses should enhance the vitality of centres in South Bucks, and support the following hierarchy:

- *District centres - Beaconsfield New Town and Gerrards Cross*
- *Local centres - Beaconsfield Old Town, Burnham, Farnham Common, Iver Village and Denham Green*

- 4.2 The policy goes on to state that Neighbourhood Centres will be protected (*but does not define them*).
- 4.3 The Government has introduced the new provisions in order to support the High Street: *"The government recognises the importance of ensuring a vibrant and varied high street, and retaining an adequate provision of services in other areas. A prior approval will enable local planning authorities to consider the potential impact of the loss of the retail unit, and whether there is a reasonable prospect of it being occupied by another retail use."*
- 4.4 Recent appeal decisions involving shops have recognised that changes of use from shops to hot food takeaway and restaurants are considered appropriate in the Local Centres.

Annual surveys of the district and local centres show a low vacancy rate generally and generally healthy town centres. The only Local Centre where regeneration and enhancement is required is Iver Village, but this too appears to be reasonably healthy.

4.5 In terms of Neighbourhood Centres, such as Richings Park and Stoke Poges, these are not defined in the policy and not shown on the Proposal Map and although the aim is to protect them, it may prove difficult to resist changes of use from shops until such time as more detailed guidance is prepared in the Development Management Local Plan.

4.6 It is therefore recommended that only District and Local Centres as defined in Core Policy 11 and as shown on the Proposals Map are designated as Key Shopping Areas where change of use to residential through the Prior Approval process will be subject to close scrutiny in terms of potential impact on the sustainability of the relevant shopping area. These changes will be monitored and will influence the development of more detailed policies.

5. **Resources, Risk and Other Implications**

5.1 Possible threat to the existence of Neighbourhood Centres from change of use.

6. **Recommendation**

6.1 Members of the Sustainable Development PAG advise the Portfolio Holder to recommend that Cabinet approve the new definition for Key Shopping Areas for development management purposes.

Officer Contact:	Jane Griffin, 01895 837315, jane.griffin@southbucks.gov.uk
Background Papers:	The Use Class change legislation https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/local-planning