



South Bucks Local Development Framework

Habitats Regulation Assessment Addendum

July 2010



South Bucks
District Council

South Bucks Proposed Submission Core Strategy

Addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (March 2010)

Introduction

- 1.1 A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) was prepared, under Regulation 85 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 (as amended, to ascertain whether or not the Core Strategy required an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations for its effects on European sites.
- 1.2 The HRA Screening Statement (March 2010) concluded the Core Strategy would not lead to any significant effects on Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC), or any other European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and it did not require an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.
- 1.3 Representations were invited on the Proposed Submission Core Strategy for a six week period between 31st March and 12th May 2010. A total of 62 representors made a total of 220 representations. Officers have reviewed these representations, and upon Submission will be suggesting some limited changes to the Core Strategy.
- 1.4 This short addendum Report considers whether any of the suggested changes will have any significant sustainability implications - that would alter the conclusions drawn in the Habitats Regulations Assessment on the Proposed Submission Core Strategy (March 2010).

Proposed Changes

- 1.5 A Schedule of Proposed Changes has been prepared for Submission alongside the Proposed Submission Core Strategy. The majority of the suggested changes are very minor - and either aid clarity, provide updated information or correct factual inaccuracies. It is not considered that these changes warrant further Habitats Regulations Assessment work. The schedule also includes a number of changes relating to the recent amendments to PPS3 (Housing) and the revocation of the South East Plan, as well as some changes in response to representations.
- 1.6 The more substantive changes are considered in Table 1 below:-

Core Strategy Page / Para	Proposed Change	Commentary - HRA Implications
Page 11, paragraph 1.2.25	Amend paragraph 1.2.25 to change "Four" to " <u>Five</u> " and add " <u>Gomm Valley</u> " to the list.	Positive - highlights a further Biodiversity Opportunity Area which will which will help support biodiversity across the District and in Burnham Beeches SAC.
Page 21, paragraph 1.4.3	Amend the second Critical Success Factor under Strategic Objective 12 to read: "Delivery of a net gain in biodiversity resources, <u>including in the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas</u> (see Core Policy 9)". Also amend this Critical Success Factor under Core Policy 9, in Appendix 8 (page 122).	Positive - comments strengthen support for biodiversity in the area which, in turn, will support biodiversity in Burnham Beeches SAC and across the District.
Page 27	Add the mainline Grand Union Canal to the Key Diagram (see the Consolidated Version of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy).	Positive contribution, adds a biodiversity corridor to the Key Diagram.
Page 40-41, Core Policy 1 (and paragraph 3.2.8 / Appendix 8)	References in Core Policy 1 (and paragraph 3.2.8 and Appendix 8) to the District aiming to provide at least 95% of all new residential development on Previously Developed Land (PDL), in accordance with PPS3 (Housing), will need to be amended or deleted.	No effect. This change is needed as a result of the changes to PPS3, which changes the definition of PDL.
Page 46, Core Policy 3	Amend Core Policy 3 to read "350-500 affordable dwellings will be provided..." with a new footnote to explain the reason for the change.	No effect. This clarifies that less affordable housing is likely to be delivered if the Opportunity sites do not come forward.
Pages 48 and 49, paragraph 3.2.28, Core Policy 5	Add footnote to the first "open spaces" reference in paragraph 3.2.28 and the first "open space" reference in Core Policy 5, as follows: " <u>In applying Core Policy 5, "open space" will be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water. PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sports and Recreation, provides a typology illustrating the broad range of open spaces that may be of public value.</u> "	Adds positively to recognising the value of land and water for biodiversity, albeit indirectly.
Pages 54 and 56, paragraph 3.2.49, Core Policy 7	Replace second sentence of paragraph 3.2.49 with new text referring to proposed development exacerbating existing traffic problems, for example at M40 J1. It adds that mitigation measures may be needed later in the Plan period.	No change. This reflects the final conclusions of the Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) study more accurately. The final ETI does not indicate that proposed

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	Add new sentence at end of penultimate paragraph of Core Policy 7: <u>"Impacts on Junction 1 of the M40 will be kept under review, with mitigation measures, including infrastructure improvements, potentially being needed later in the Plan period."</u>	development would result in any over-capacity issues on the A355 at Farnham Common during the Plan period. The reference to mitigation measures is a positive change.
Page 57-58, paragraphs 3.3.4 and 3.3.5	Delete second sentence of paragraph 3.3.4 (see also Schedule 3 below). Replace with: <u>"To reflect character and accessibility considerations, new housing schemes in the District have tended to be permitted at relatively low densities. Annual monitoring data confirms that in the period 2004-2009, the net average density of permitted development (on land excluded from the Green Belt) was between 22 and 34 dwellings per hectare (dph)"</u> .	No effect. This change is needed as a result of the changes to PPS3, which removes the indicative minimum density requirement of 30 dph.
Page 58, Core Policy 8 and 9	Re-title Core Policy 8 as "Built <u>and Historic</u> Environment" (amending also other references to the policy title throughout the document). Move the penultimate paragraph of Core Policy 9 to the end of the second paragraph of Core Policy 8, and add <u>"and its setting"</u> after "The historic landscape...". Also see Proposed Changes to pages 61-62 and Core Policy 9, below.	Positive effect - the conservation of historic landscape will help support the biodiversity of Burnham Beeches and the District.
Page 58-59, Core Policy 8	Amend the first sentence of the penultimate paragraph of Core Policy 8 to read: <u>"On land excluded from the Green Belt, new housing should be built at an average density of between 25 and 35 dwellings per hectare."</u>	No effect. This change is needed as a result of the changes to PPS3, which removes the indicative minimum density requirement of 30 dph. The proposed revised density of 25 to 35 dwellings provides more flexibility but is similar to previous average density figure of 30 dph.
Page 59, paragraph 3.3.9	Add a new sentence after the first sentence of paragraph 3.3.9: <u>"The Chilterns Conservation Board has prepared a Management Plan for the AONB which contains policies and actions to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB."</u>	Positive effect - recognises the importance of the AONB Plan, which in turn should enhance the conservation and biodiversity of Burnham Beeches SAC and the District.

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Page 59, paragraph 3.3.10	Amend the last sentence in paragraph 3.3.10 to read, 'In addition, <u>five</u> Biodiversity Opportunity Areas have been identified in South Bucks...' Replace the final line of paragraph 3.3.10 with " <u>where targeted conservation action will have the greatest benefit.</u> "	Clarity of message provides positive statement for biodiversity enhancement.
Page 61-62, Core Policy 9	<p>Add a new second sentence in the first paragraph of Core Policy 9 to read: "<u>The conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns AONB and its setting will be achieved by ensuring that all development complies with the purposes of the AONB and its Management Plan.</u>"</p> <p>Amend the fourth line onwards of the first bullet point to read: "<u>...harm caused, the Council is satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm and appropriate mitigation or compensation is provided resulting in a net gain in Biodiversity.</u>"</p> <p>Second bullet, add after "non-designated land", "<u>, on rivers and their associated habitats</u>"</p> <p>Add a new bullet, after the second bullet, to read: '<u>Maintaining existing ecological corridors and avoiding habitat fragmentation.</u>'</p> <p>Change the second to last paragraph to read: "<u>The historic landscape and its setting (arising from Representation No. 2091, as above), including archaeological sites, Historic Parks and Gardens and Ancient Woodland will also be strongly protected and enhanced where possible, informed by the Bucks Historic Landscape Characterisation Study and other evidence.</u>" Move this paragraph to the end of the second paragraph of Core Policy 8.</p> <p>In the last sentence of Core Policy 9, add "<u>and enhancement</u>" after "protection".</p>	Positive statements which emphasise the importance of biodiversity across the District. This will support biodiversity across Burnham Beeches, in particular the need to avoid habitat fragmentation for species movement.

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Page 65, Core Policy 10	Amendments to Core Policy 10 (Employment) - see Schedule of Proposed Changes for full details.	No effect. This change reflects latest national guidance in PPS 4 and provides some additional flexibility for the reuse of some employment sites for alternative economic uses.
Page 67-68, Core Policy 11	<p>Add two new sentences at the end of paragraph 3 of Core Policy 11 to read: “Redevelopment of the Bishop Centre is supported, <u>although the actual form and scale of new retail provision will be subject to a more localised need, impact and sequential analysis, at the time a planning application is submitted. The Bishop Centre must maintain a scale and role which does not impact adversely on other centres, including Burnham, Slough and Maidenhead</u>”.</p> <p>Delete the last paragraph of Core Policy 11 (included in the text above).</p>	No effect. This change recognises that there will need to be a more localised assessment of retail need at the Bishop Centre at the time of any planning application.
Page 83, Paragraph 3.6.29	Add after "It lies...." (in second sentence of paragraph 3.6.29) " <u>within the Colne Valley Park and Biodiversity Action Area,</u> ".	Positive statement as landscape and biodiversity are clearly recognised in the text and are therefore comprise part of the context of the South of Iver area.
Page 110-111, Appendix 6	<p>Add new rows to Appendix 6 (Infrastructure Schedule), under heading of Core Policy 7, as follows:</p> <p><u>DELIVERABLE:</u> <u>Location: DISTRICT WIDE</u> <u>Infrastructure issue to be addressed: Improve and encourage sustainable travel</u> <u>Project/Scheme: Encourage new and existing employers to produce Travel Plans for their organisations</u> <u>Who: SBDC, BCC, Highways Agency, Developers, others</u></p>	Positive statement - greater use of travel plans will reduce transportation impacts on Burnham Beeches SAC.

Core Strategy Page / Para	Proposed Change	Commentary - HRA Implications
	<u>Possible Funding Sources: Employers</u> <u>When: Throughout plan period</u>	

Conclusion

There were no significant negative comments or likely negative impacts on Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC), or any other European site as a result of the Schedule of Proposed Changes. In the light of this and the positive changes listed above, no further Habitats Regulations Assessment work is required.



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