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## 6 Enterprising Places

**6.0.1** Promoting balanced economic growth is one of the key elements of delivering sustainable development. This Plan adopts a positive approach to development proposals which contributes towards building a strong, responsive and enterprising economy and ensures that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation. Economic growth sits comfortably alongside other objectives of the Plan, such as protecting and enhancing the environment and planning positively to meet the social needs of our local communities.

### Retail and Town Centres

**6.0.2** The Plan area has a network of town centres that offer retail and service provision. Higher order shopping, particularly for comparison goods, is provided in the main by a series of larger centres that are outside the Plan area, including High Wycombe, Maidenhead, Slough and Uxbridge. The presence of higher order retail and leisure facilities in these centres provides an established retail hierarchy, within which this Plan aims to retain the position of Chiltern and South Bucks town centres. Out of town retail within Chiltern and South Bucks includes one retail park, the Bishop Centre in Taplow, anchored by a large format Tesco and two other large format supermarkets, Tesco in Old Amersham and Sainsbury's in Taplow.

**6.0.3** The Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy sets out an objective to enhance the competitiveness and vitality of town centres so they continue to develop as places of employment and commerce with a varied retail offer complementing their leisure and recreation and cultural offers. The policies in this section support that objective.

### 6.1 Enterprising - Retail Hierarchy

**6.1.1** The retail hierarchy includes town, district and local centres to reflect the extent and type of retail provision across Chiltern and South Bucks. The retail hierarchy is shown in Policy SP EP1 below.

**6.1.2** Chiltern and South Bucks retail strategy is to encourage an appropriate level of development across the centres. The expectation is that small scale development to serve local needs can occur across the hierarchy, while larger developments that would attract customers from further afield will be concentrated within the higher order centres. Proposals for main town centre uses that are appropriate in scale and type to the centre within which they are proposed, will be supported.

**6.1.3** Many parades and individual shop units exist across the plan area. These provide for day-to-day shopping needs. These do not form part of the retail hierarchy and proposals for any new sites or any loss of sites will be assessed on their merits.

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## Policy SP EP1

### Enterprising–Retail Hierarchy

Town Centres within the plan area are listed below and their boundaries are defined on the Policies Map. The Council recognises that these centres play an important economic and social role and will aim to retain and enhance main town centre uses in these centres in order to promote their vitality and viability.

#### Retail Hierarchy

Town Centres:

- Amersham on the Hill
- Beaconsfield New Town
- Chesham

District centres:

- Amersham Old Town
- Beaconsfield Old Town
- Chalfont St Peter
- Gerrards Cross

Local Centres:

- Burnham
- Chalfont St Giles
- Denham Green
- Farnham Common
- Great Missenden
- Holmer Green
- Iver Village
- Little Chalfont
- Prestwood

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Main town centre uses will be permitted within town centre boundaries on the Policies Map. Mixed use development schemes that include main town centre uses at ground floor level will be supported where they would enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.

When determining applications for new development or alterations to existing development, the starting point will be whether the scale and type of the proposal is compatible with the position of the centre within the retail hierarchy. Large developments that would attract customers from a wide area will be supported within a town centre but would be inappropriate elsewhere. Proposals for small scale development serving local needs will be supported in local centres.

Where a proposal is appropriate in scale and type to the centre, account will also be taken of:

- 1 compatibility with the land uses within the existing centre;
- 2 the extent to which the proposed development supports the vitality and viability of the centre; and
- 3 where required, the findings of a retail impact assessment.

#### Retail Development Outside Defined Centres

Proposals for retail development (Use Class A1) not exceeding 500 square metres (gross) will be permitted where a local need has been demonstrated provided that it accords with the sequential approach set out in national policy

Proposals for retail development (Use Class A1) outside defined centres, consisting of a net increase of 1,000 square metres or more (gross), will be required to be accompanied by a retail impact assessment.

Existing shops (Use Class A1) outside defined centres should be retained. Changes of use or redevelopment of such shops will only be permitted where it can be shown that a retail shop is no longer commercially viable and the marketing requirements outlined in Appendix EP1 have been followed.

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## 6.2 Enterprising - Retail Need

**6.2.1** The Nexus Retail and Leisure Study in 2017, as updated by Lichfields in 2019, provides the retail and leisure trends, a health-check assessment of the main town centres and estimates of future changes in floorspace requirements for convenience, comparison, food and beverage and other main town centre uses.

**6.2.2** The 2019 study also assessed how much retail growth might reasonably be accommodated within vacant floorspace within the town centres and assessed potential development opportunities.

**6.2.3** The retail market has experienced significant changes in recent years. As a result, the role and character of the town centres is changing and will continue to change over the Plan period. Larger centres that attract customers from a wide area and smaller centres that fulfil a local community role are likely to be more successful in future. Mid-sized centres, such as are found in the market towns, will need to adapt and diversify in order to thrive. The Plan is therefore designed to be supportive of diversification of town centres, while providing protection to the key retail provision within those centres.

**6.2.4** One key conclusion from the studies is that the Plan area has a lack of large sites that would be available and suitable for the development of any sizeable retail provision. Heritage and conservation aspects are both important constraints in almost all of the key settlements and their surrounding countryside. The studies note that the town centres are characterised by a high proportion of in-town centre trade, relative to out-of-centre trade. It is relevant to consider the desirability of the potential impact on such in-town centre trade if there is more competition from outside the town centres. As a result, bringing forward any sizeable retail floorspace that is not in-centre would have potentially significant adverse impacts on any or all of the existing centres which are, in the main, characterised by high footfall and low vacancy rates.

**6.2.5** Both studies recommend a cautious approach to planning for retail capacity over a 10 year period, rather than for the whole development Plan period. This approach accords with advice in national policy. Long-term floorspace capacity forecasts beyond 10 years are susceptible to unforeseen circumstances, and must be treated with caution and kept under review.

**6.2.6** The 2019 study observes that, in relatively affluent areas such as the Plan area, food stores can trade comfortably above national average sales densities. Affluent areas have much higher than average expenditure per capita, because households are likely to buy higher value or luxury products rather than just purchasing a higher volume of products. This is borne out by the average convenience goods expenditure per capita in the study area at 2017 being £2,399 per annum, which is 10.3% higher than the national average (£2,174 per annum). This has an important implication for retail floorspace provision in the area, in that providing new floorspace would not reduce trade in existing stores down to their company average sales density.

**6.2.7** The 2019 study concludes that there is retail capacity for both new convenience and, to a much lesser extent, comparison goods floorspace. Up to the year 2026 there is capacity for 6,517 square metres (gross) for convenience goods and 1,793 square metres (gross) for comparison goods. For food and beverage, a capacity is identified for 2,551 square metres (gross) by 2026.

**6.2.8** The overall identified retail capacity for A1 retail and food & beverage is 10,861 square metres (gross). In terms of accommodating retail capacity, the 2019 study identifies a number of influencing factors. These include new retail developments in town centres, the re-occupation of vacant floorspace, the effect of online shopping on the demand for retail property and the level of operator demand for floorspace in town centres. All these factors influence whether centres within the Plan area can or should maintain their current market share of expenditure.

**6.2.9** New local centres planned within strategic site allocations have the scope to provide approximately 2,400 square metres of new floorspace. The re-use of vacant floorspace has the potential to provide for a further 1,600 square metres of identified needs. Together these reduce the required level of provision to approximately 6,500 square metres.

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**6.2.10** Organic change within existing centres is likely to make up a proportion of the remaining provision. In addition, the studies identify a number of possible locations for new retail-led development within town centres. Not all will be delivered; not all sites are immediately available and some would require land assembly or other preparatory work before they could come forward. In total, 16 sites have been identified which together have a theoretical capacity of some 25,200 square metres (gross). This is significantly in excess of the identified need and so, even if only one in four of the sites was to come forward, there is scope to meet the floorspace needs identified in the study.

**6.2.11** The sites that appear to have the best prospects of delivery during the Plan period are:

- 1 East Building Supplies, Amersham (3,000 square metres gross);
- 2 Postal Sorting Office, Amersham (700 square metres gross);
- 3 Star Yard Car Park / Darvell's Bakery, Chesham (5,500 square metres gross);
- 4 Coal Yard and Station Car Park, Station Approach, Chesham (2,500 square metres gross); and
- 5 Library / Ambulance Station, Chalfont St. Peter (500 square metres gross).

**6.2.12** In respect of opportunities for a food store, the study identifies that the only potential development sites that would be physically capable of accommodating a food store of between 2,000 and 4,000 square metres gross are:

- 1 East Building Supplies, Amersham (up to 3,000 square metres gross);
- 2 31 Red Lion Street, Chesham (up to 2,500 square metres gross);
- 3 Burkes Road / Gregories Road, Beaconsfield (up to 3,000 square metres gross);
- 4 Mercedes Benz, Station Rd, Beaconsfield (up to 3,000 square metres gross).

**6.2.13** Regarding leisure provision, the studies conclude that the Plan area provides well for the existing and projected population, particularly in terms of restaurants, pubs, bars and clubs. The studies conclude that there is notable leakage in terms of health and fitness, indoor sports, cinemas and ten-pin bowling trips. This is mainly due to the number of larger towns surrounding Chiltern and South Bucks that can more readily cater for the more substantial leisure facilities.

**6.2.14** The studies identified demand for 3–4 extra health and fitness facilities across the Plan area. The Chiltern Pools site will take up some of this capacity in Amersham. No significant demand or operator desire was found to deliver new cinema, bingo, ten pin bowling or cultural facilities. The studies recommend that the development strategy should be flexible to respond to emerging opportunities for new cultural facilities, potentially as part of mixed use developments.

**6.2.15** Changes to shopping and leisure patterns and the way that town centres operate will be kept under review and will influence future floorspace demands during the Plan period. The Plan provides an enabling and supportive policy environment that allows for emerging needs and trends to be met in appropriate locations, and there are development opportunities identified within town centres and new local centres that could help to contribute towards improving the retail offer of Chiltern and South Bucks.

## 6.3 Enterprising - Retail Allocations

6.3.1 There are a number of opportunities within town centre boundaries that could accommodate the additional Class A floorspace. In each case the amount of floorspace to be provided should be subject to an up-to-date assessment of retail capacity and supply and should maximise the efficient use of the site.

### Policy SP EP2

#### Enterprising – Retail Need

Planning permission will be granted for retail development within the town centre boundaries of the centres listed in Policy SP EP1. The Council will:

- 1 promote, protect and enhance the retail and service functions of centres in the retail hierarchy;
- 2 support proposals for main town centre uses in these locations where they are appropriate to the size, scale, function, catchment area, historic and architectural character of the centre; and
- 3 support the creation of new local centres within this Plan's site allocations.

To ensure the centres maintain their role and market share, provision will be made for up to 10,861 square metres (gross) of additional Class A floorspace over the period up to 2026, including the reoccupation of vacant floorspace, consisting of:

- 1 1,793 square metres (gross) comparison goods (e.g. clothes, shoes, furniture, carpets);
- 2 6,517 square metres (gross) convenience (e.g. food, drink, toiletries); and
- 3 2,551 square metres (gross) food and beverage outlets under Use Classes A3–A5 (restaurants, takeaways, pubs and bars).

The 10,861 square metre (gross) figure is derived from the retail capacity projections for four areas, as indicated below. These areas are part of the polycentric relationship of centres and so it should not be assumed that a need identified in a particular location should necessarily be met in that location.

| Retail Capacity by Area               | 2017 (square metres) | 2021 (square metres) | 2026 (square metres) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Chesham / Great Missenden / Prestwood | 901                  | 1,294                | 1,812                |
| Amersham / The Chalfonts              | 592                  | 1,381                | 2,385                |
| Beaconsfield                          | 672                  | 1,593                | 2,606                |
| Gerrards Cross / Denham / Iver        | 1,611                | 2,905                | 4,058                |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>3,776</b>         | <b>7,173</b>         | <b>10,861</b>        |

## Policy SP EP3

### Enterprising – Retail Allocations

#### *Town / District Centre Allocations*

Planning permission will be granted for retail development falling within Use Classes A1–A5, subject to an up-to-date retail impact assessment where required, at the following locations:

- 1 East Building Supplies, Amersham  
Approximately 3,000 square metres (gross);
- 2 Postal Sorting Office, Amersham.  
Approximately 700 square metres (gross);
- 3 Star Yard Car Park / Darvell's Bakery, Chesham  
Approximately 5,500 square metres (gross) to include the reprovion of the existing car park;
- 4 Coal Yard and Station Car Park, Station Approach, Chesham  
Approximately 2,500 square metres (gross) to include the reprovion of the existing car park ;
- 5 Library / Ambulance Station, Chalfont St. Peter  
Approximately 500 square metres (gross), subject to the reprovion of the library;
- 6 Burkes Road / Gregories Road, Beaconsfield  
Approximately 3,000 square metres (gross) to include the reprovion of the existing car park.

Redevelopment will provide approximately 10,861 square metres (gross) retail floorspace, from the potential supply of 15,200 square metres (gross), subject to an up-to-date assessment of retail capacity and supply; and subject to the following:

- 1 Class A1–A5 uses being at ground floor level;
- 2 Main Town Centre Uses or residential on upper or basement floorspace where these can additionally be accommodated in design, layout and transport terms; and
- 3 Other Main Town Centre Uses at ground floor level where these can additionally be accommodated in design, layout and transport terms.

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## 6.4 Enterprising - Main Town Centre Uses

**6.4.1** Retail operations and the way that people use town centres have changed considerably in recent years and future trends are uncertain. The growth of online and mobile commerce has changed the way that people interact with town centres and to some extent diluted the importance of traditional bricks and mortar retailing. Nevertheless, current evidence and market predictions indicate that retail development in the form of destination shopping will continue to play an important role in town centres. Crucially, shopping trips will now often form part of a broader day out that sees shopping linked with eating out and leisure activities. Food & beverage and leisure uses are also playing an increasingly significant role in town centres and in many cases are driving visits to retail uses.

**6.4.2** The Council is committed to maintaining and improving the attractiveness, vitality and viability of the area's network of town centres. Part of this approach is to protect the right balance between ground floor retail uses and other uses in different parts of the centres. Primary shopping areas are defined where necessary to guide the appropriate mix of uses within centres, and are shown on the Policies Map.

**6.4.3** Primary Shopping Areas indicate the part of a centre where retail development is concentrated. Any future large scale retail development will be guided towards these areas. Primary Shopping Areas should include a large proportion of retail uses falling within Use Class A1 so as to provide for a critical mass of comparison goods retailing.

**6.4.4** These uses are important as they often include prominent high street chains and other shops with active daytime frontages. This in turn generates high pedestrian flow which is important to the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole. Supporting uses such as food & beverage and health & wellbeing (e.g. beauty treatments) also play a key role in sustaining pedestrian flows and extending dwell time in the centre. Such uses will also be appropriate within primary shopping areas as long as Class A1 retail remains the dominant use.

**6.4.5** Non-retail services that are also important to a centre, such as restaurants, banks, estate agents, leisure uses and other uses that contribute to the overall success of a centre will be appropriate elsewhere within the centre. If no primary shopping area is designated, main town centre uses will be appropriate throughout the centre.

**6.4.6** Many changes of use within centres can happen under permitted development rights and have the scope to significantly alter the balance between different uses. This makes it important to exercise control over any changes that do require planning permission, intervening positively to enhance the centres and protect their retail function.

**6.4.7** In order to maintain the vitality and viability of the centres in which they are situated, developments will be required to maintain or provide active ground floor frontages. The following policy sets out criteria to be addressed when considering proposals for the loss of retail units.

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## Policy DM EP1

### **Enterprising – Main Town Centre Uses**

Planning permission will be granted for Main Town Centre Uses that provide active ground floor frontages, provided that the criteria below are met.

#### Primary Shopping Areas

The Council will only permit changes of use or redevelopment of ground floor units within primary shopping areas from shops (Class A1) to other uses where such proposals would:

- 1 contain supporting services and facilities that would enhance the character and function of the centre;
- 2 not result in adverse impacts on existing retail uses within the centre; and
- 3 not result in the loss of a prominent\* retail unit.

Where a proposal will result in the loss of A1 shop(s) the applicant will be required to demonstrate that they have carried out an assessment of the unit's existing or potential contribution to the vitality and viability of the centre, and that the alternative use would make an equally positive contribution or provide sustainability benefits to the centre.

#### Parts of Town Centres not within Primary Shopping Areas

Within town centres but outside primary shopping areas, or in centres where no primary shopping area is defined, main town centre uses will be permitted where they would contribute to the overall success of the centre and would not adversely impact on the existing character, function, vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

\*When determining whether a retail unit is 'prominent', judgement will be informed by its size, permanence, position in the streetscene and ability to generate footfall within the centre or part thereof. Whether a unit is occupied or vacant will have no bearing on this consideration.

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## 6.5 Enterprising - Markets

**6.5.1** Many of the markets (including car boot sales) operate for more than 14 days in a year and form an important part of the character and overall retail economy. High Street markets provide a more varied shopping experience and also benefit local producers by enabling them to sell their produce. A variety of car boot sales, farmers' markets and other events (such as food festivals and arts and crafts fairs) operate sporadically throughout the year. These often generate significant levels of traffic and require large areas for parking provision. The Council will consult the Highways Authority in cases which could potentially impact on highways matters.

**6.5.2** Where permission is required, the policy below will ensure that proposals for new market uses or changes to existing market uses and other events will be supported where they do not adversely impact on the surrounding area. Provision should also be made for temporary small-scale amenities and supporting infrastructure such as bins, storage areas and power supplies.

### Policy DM EP2

#### Enterprising – Markets

Where planning permission is required, proposals for new markets and changes to existing temporary markets will be permitted provided that the following matters can be satisfactorily addressed:

- 1 the impact on traffic generation and highway safety;
- 2 the overall scale of the proposed use and any impacts on the character of the area;
- 3 the hours, days and frequency of operation;
- 4 accessibility by public transport;
- 5 the provision of operator and visitor parking; and
- 6 the provision of temporary ancillary small-scale amenities and supporting infrastructure.

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## 6.6 Enterprising - Economic Development

**6.6.1** Planning helps to support a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure. Policies help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, with significant weight afforded to the need to support economic growth and productivity.

**6.6.2** The Plan area has an extremely productive and prosperous economy and, as a part of the prosperous south east, plays a key role in supporting the national economy. As set out in the Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy 2017–2026, employment and economic activity levels are above the English average, with the majority of residents employed in highly skilled, well remunerated, knowledge intensive occupations. Levels of entrepreneurialism are high and, whilst micro and small businesses make up around 98% of the local business base, the Plan area is also home to major employers including GE Healthcare, Bosch and Pinewood Studios. There are recognised strengths in the creative industries, life sciences and professional services sectors.

**6.6.3** Sustainable growth needs to be achieved whilst ensuring that Chiltern and South Bucks unique heritage and high quality environment is protected.

**6.6.4** To ensure that Chiltern and South Bucks continue to grow and thrive economically, it is essential that new and growing businesses have access to appropriate commercial space and a skilled labour force, and that the infrastructure is in place to support both physical and digital connectivity.

**6.6.5** The Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy 2017–2026 sets out the strategic objectives and activities to ensure Chiltern and South Bucks has ‘prosperous and diverse economies that encourage local employers and small business so we can protect the areas’ economy for the future and achieve a better balance between the jobs available and the people to fill them’. This includes actions around connectivity, business growth, space for business and skills.

**6.6.6** At the sub-regional level, the emerging Local Industrial Strategy for Buckinghamshire is being prepared by the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and proposes a focus on driving economic growth through four key economic assets. Of these, the inclusion of Pinewood Studios and the National Film and Television School as one of the assets is particularly relevant to Chiltern and South Bucks. Also relevant is the emphasis upon skills, digital infrastructure and business scale-up, all of which need to be successfully addressed to support the continued growth of the local economy.

### Background

**6.6.7** The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) indicates a demand for Class B floorspace, (between 2016 and 2036) as follows:

- B1a / b floorspace of 40,000 square metres;
- B8 floorspace of 48,000 square metres; and
- a surplus of B1c / B2 floorspace of 34,000 square metres.

**6.6.8** The need for more economic floorspace over the Plan period emphasises the strong need to protect existing economic sites. The Plan area is very tightly constrained with competing demands on the limited land supply. The Plan allocates additional economic sites. The allocations comprise site allocations at Denham, Taplow, Beaconsfield, Ridgeway and a re-provision in Iver. Additional economic floorspace could also be provided through the intensification of uses at existing economic sites including Pinewood Studios.

**6.6.9** While the available evidence and research focusses mainly on B Use Classes, it is acknowledged that other sources of employment are also important locally and will play a major part in the future economic prosperity of Chiltern and South Bucks, providing a wide choice of jobs for local people. Employment in other sectors such as retail or education will be facilitated by the Local Plan.

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**6.6.10** The pressure on economic sites to be lost to other uses is high and, once lost, they are unlikely to revert back to their economic use. The Council will consider the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights to change economic floorspace to residential use on Key Protected Economic Sites. This would mean that such proposals would require planning permission.

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## 6.7 Enterprising - Economic Site Allocations

6.7.1 To support economic growth the Council has:

- put in place policies to support the redevelopment of existing economic sites to provide a greater intensity of use or different types of development and for spaceless growth (economic growth without a commensurate increase in floorspace);
- made revisions to Green Belt boundaries to enable the development of economic floorspace; and
- reached agreement with Aylesbury Vale District Council that a proportion of the Chiltern and South Bucks housing and economic needs will be met outside the Chiltern and South Bucks Plan area.

6.7.2 The Plan's strategy for meeting employment needs combines these actions. Site allocations have the potential to provide some 56,000 square metres of new floorspace, of which the bulk would be office floorspace. This is shown in the table below.

### Policy SP EP4

#### Enterprising – Economic Site Allocations

Planning permission will be granted for approximately 56,000 square metres (gross) of economic floorspace, provided that the criteria in the relevant policies are met in the following allocations:

SP BP9 Beaconsfield – 20,000 square metres (gross);

SP BP11 North of Iver Station – 12,000 square metres (gross);

SP BP12 East of Ridgeway Business Park, Iver – 4,000 square metres (gross);

SP BP13 North of Denham Roundabout – 16,000 square metres (gross); and

SP BP14 Land Adjacent to Taplow Station – 4,000 square metres (gross).

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## 6.8 Entreprising - Economic Land

**6.8.1** The Strategic and Key Economic Sites, as shown on the Policies Map, will be safeguarded to ensure that the growth required from the site allocations is not undermined by the loss of other economic floorspace.

**6.8.2** Strategic Economic Sites are those considered to be of prime importance for the national or regional economy or are significant employers or sectors in the Plan area. They are primarily offices, often with elements of industrial and warehousing floorspace. Some are large and contain a variety of sites and uses while others are occupied by a single important employer.

**6.8.3** Key Economic Sites are those of importance to the local economy. This could be for reasons of the type of floorspace provided or the presence of an important employer. In some cases, they represent the only significant example of a particular type of floorspace in an area. The sites have been assessed as having the ability to perform well and have long-term potential for economic uses.

**6.8.4** Businesses within the Plan area make a significant contribution to the regional and national economy. For this reason, it is important to protect Strategic and Key Economic Sites, both for the current roles and for the potential for intensification. This would help to meet the demand for new economic floorspace and respond to future development requirements and technological change. Equally it is important to allow some flexibility within policy to allow for potential changes in circumstances and ensure the strongest possible economic base. For this reason, the policy supports small-scale and ancillary development on these sites that would help to support existing economic uses.

**6.8.5** Other economic sites mainly comprise smaller sites and those not performing as well as those that are defined as Key Economic Sites. This could be for reasons of location or access difficulties, or because they do not perform such an important economic function, or it is considered unlikely they will be able to do so in the future. Should these sites become available for development, it will be first required to explore the potential for other economic uses, and then, subject to criteria, to explore alternative uses that would help deliver the broader aims and strategy of the Local Plan. This approach affords a suitable degree of flexibility about the future of economic sites, allowing for alternative uses where these can be properly justified.

**6.8.6** Town centres provide a further category of sites that can accommodate economic development. They do not fall within the categories of economic sites described above.

## Policy DM EP3

### Enterprising – Economic Land

#### *Intensification of Uses*

Planning permission will be granted for the intensification, modernisation or regeneration of any economic site provided that it can be demonstrated that the proposed development:

- 1 is for economic uses;
- 2 provides an equal or higher-density development than the current provision (with more economic floorspace or jobs per hectare) and seeks to make the best and most efficient use of land; and
- 3 does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts.

#### *Economic Site Categories*

In order to meet the needs for economic growth over the Plan period the Council will protect the economic land at the Strategic and Key Economic Sites shown on the Policies Map.

#### *Strategic Economic Sites*

Within Strategic Economic Sites the Council will permit development proposals for new B Use Class premises, and extensions and alterations to make them more efficient and desirable locations for economic uses. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would result in the net loss of economic floorspace on Strategic Economic Sites. No non-economic uses will be permitted on Strategic Economic Sites except for ancillary uses that directly support the main economic function of the site.

#### *Key Economic Sites*

Within Key Economic Sites the Council will permit development proposals for B Use Class and other economic uses. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would result in the net loss of economic floorspace on Key Economic Sites.

#### *Other Economic Sites*

Planning permission will only be granted for the net loss of economic floorspace on other economic sites subject to the following criteria:

- 1 the site or building is no longer suitable for its existing or last economic use; and
- 2 evidence is produced to show that the site and building have been marketed both for their present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative economic uses for a period of at least twelve months and that the marketing has been unsuccessful in identifying future occupiers (see Appendix EP1 for details of marketing evidence required).

Strategic Economic Sites and Key Economic Sites are listed in Appendix EP2 and shown on the Policies Map.

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## 6.9 Enterprising - Pinewood Studios

**6.9.1** Pinewood Studios is a film and television studio complex of international importance which makes a significant contribution to the UK film industry and the national economy. The Council will support film studio and media use on the site.

### Policy DM EP4

#### **Enterprising – Pinewood Studios**

Planning permission will be granted for extensions, new buildings and conversions within the Pinewood Studios site provided that it can be demonstrated that the proposals are for uses directly connected with film production or associated media industries and would not cause unacceptable transport or environmental impacts or effects.

The Pinewood Studios site is shown on the Policies Map.

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## 6.10 Enterprising - Smart Economic Growth

**6.10.1** National policy encourages new and flexible working practices such as live-work accommodation. This is in order to meet the economic development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

**6.10.2** Smart growth is a strategy to drive economic growth through knowledge, innovation and creativity. It is about extracting 'more for less' and means using technology and innovative ways of working to increase productivity without damaging people's quality of life or the environment. Innovation is synonymous with working smarter and is a major driver in the development of this approach.

**6.10.3** Smart growth can lead to increased efficiency in the use of floorspace, through the introduction of new technology or through more flexible working practices including agile working. This is sometimes called 'spaceless growth', in other words it means that the local economy can develop and grow without the need for a commensurate increase in economic floorspace.

**6.10.4** The Council will encourage flexible working patterns, agile working and home working. This includes taking a positive approach towards development that encourages efficiency in the use of floor space. This could be through the introduction of new technology or enabling more flexible working practices. This type of development will be supported, as will the provision of live-work accommodation.

**6.10.5** Many small businesses are started by people working in their own homes. Home working is likely to increase as high speed broadband has become faster and more readily available and as flexible working becomes more prevalent. Small and micro businesses make up a significant part of the economic base of Chiltern and South Bucks and are likely to play an important role in facilitating and sustaining economic growth throughout the Plan period.

**6.10.6** High quality communication infrastructure is an essential part of sustainable development and will be a key contributor to achieving a number of the Plan's strategic objectives including those relating to supporting economic activities, promoting inclusive communities and delivering services to best meet local needs.

**6.10.7** The Council supports the objectives of Government, local organisations and service providers to deliver high speed communication technology to all parts of Chiltern and South Bucks in the most efficient and effective ways. This includes requiring new developments to assist in providing opportunities for residents, users of and visitors to their developments, to have the best access available to technological communication services and infrastructure. The use of the latest Government standard for technology is required for such infrastructure.

### Policy DM EP5

#### Enterprising – Smart Economic Growth

Planning Permission for new live-work accommodation will be granted provided that it does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts or effects.

Planning permission will be granted for development that provides efficiencies in floorspace to create additional capacity through the introduction of new technology or enabling more flexible working practices.

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## 6.11 Enterprising - Partial Change of Use of a Home to a Commercial Use

**6.11.1** Permission is not normally required where the use of part of a home for business or non-residential purpose (such as the use of a room as an office) does not change the overall character of the property's use as a home. Where the business use (such as selling goods or services to people who visit the property) increases to the extent that it has created a material change in the property's character, permission may be required. Those considering working from home are advised to seek prior advice from the Council to determine whether planning permission is required.

**6.11.2** The policy below facilitates and supports flexible and agile working patterns, especially home-working, where planning permission is required.

### Policy DM EP6

#### Enterprising – Partial Change of Use of a Home to a Commercial Use

Planning permission will be granted for development consisting of the partial change of use of a home or the change of use of outbuildings within the curtilage of the home to a use falling within Use Classes A2, B1a, B1b or D1 provided that:

- 1 the occupiers of the proposed use are also the residents of the home;
- 2 the proposed change of use is of a small scale and the home remains predominantly in use as a home;
- 3 parking provision in accordance with the Plan's parking standards is provided based on the scale of the proposed business use;
- 4 the proposed use will not generate unacceptable impacts in relation to noise, waste, traffic or visitor movement that would adversely impact the amenity of neighbouring properties; and
- 5 the proposed use is compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

New outbuildings or alterations/extensions to existing homes to be used as a business falling within the Use Classes listed above will also be assessed based on criteria a) to e) above.

## 6.12 Enterprising - Tourism

**6.12.1** Tourism is an important element of the Plan areas economy. Significant tourist attractions within the area include: the Roald Dahl Museum in Great Missenden, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Milton's Cottage, the Chilterns AONB, Bekonscot Model Village, Odds Farm, Cliveden (National Trust), country parks and the historic parks. Business tourism – travelling to and staying in an area for business purposes – is also important for the local economy.

**6.12.2** The Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy 2017–2026 includes the promotion of tourism and town centres as one of its strategic objectives. The Strategy recognises the strong and established tourism offer, particularly for the Chilterns, but also recognises that few day visits are converted into overnight stays. Consequently, the Strategy seeks to promote and support tourism uses to help convert day visits to overnight stays, with the associated uplift in local spending as well as improvement of town centres. The Council will encourage the provision of overnight accommodation such as hotels, bed & breakfast accommodation and campsites so as to increase visitor numbers for both business and leisure tourism.

**6.12.3** The Council will support proposals which can demonstrate that they will improve tourism locally within the urban or rural areas where they would comply with the sequential test and would not severely impact the surrounding area or the factors that draw visitors to the area. This includes:

- Expansion of existing tourism businesses;
- Provision of new or upgraded tourist accommodation; and
- Introduction of new tourist facilities and infrastructure to support tourism.

**6.12.4** Proposals for tourism development in locations that are well related to existing or proposed tourist and leisure related areas will be particularly encouraged.

### Policy DM EP7

#### Enterprising – Tourism

##### *Tourist attractions*

Planning permission will be granted for new tourist attractions provided that:

- 1 they are realistically and easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport; and
- 2 they will not cause unacceptable environmental or traffic impacts.

##### *Tourist accommodation*

Proposals for short-stay accommodation must meet all the following criteria:

- a) it is acceptable in terms of access, parking, highway safety and traffic generation;
- b) there is no loss of a home; and
- c) it will not result in an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance to nearby residents.

Planning permission will be granted for a change of use from holiday and other short-stay accommodation provided that either of the following criteria is met:

- 1 no other occupier can be found following a realistic effort to market the premises as set out in Appendix EP1 for continued use as holiday and other short-stay accommodation (whether or not of the same form as the existing use); or
- 2 evidence of non-viability is submitted.

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## 6.13 Enterprising - Local Employment, Training and Businesses

**6.13.1** Securing employment, training and business opportunities from new developments can contribute towards sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Through the construction phase, there are opportunities for local employment and apprenticeships, for engagement with schools to raise awareness of careers within the sector and for local procurement.

**6.13.2** New development offers a significant opportunity to secure real benefits for the local community beyond those directly related to the use provided. The construction phase of a development offers the chance for local people to be employed in the building industry; Community Employment Plans (CEPs) linked to legal agreements can make provision, for example, for apprenticeships and training, or links to local schools and colleges. Similar mechanisms can be used to secure commitment from the developer to procuring material and labour locally, keeping the income in the local community which then gets recycled in local shops and services. This approach can be extended into the operational phase of development with agreements to secure a proportion of the longer-term workforce or supply chain locally, for example.

**6.13.3** The Council is keen to make sure that every opportunity to secure community employment training and procurement benefits from new development is explored and pursued where possible. Much of this will be employer-led and the approach taken will vary according to the size of the scheme, the type of development, and the long-term ownership / management regime. Community Employment Plans have an important role in securing the opportunities that arise from new development. These issues should be considered in all major developments, and the Council will require information demonstrating the applicant's approach alongside planning applications. The level of detail and commitment to such social clauses will vary according to the scale and type of development. Where appropriate, the Council will secure these commitments through a legal agreement.

### Policy DM EP8

#### **Enterprising – Local Employment, Training and Businesses**

Planning permission will be granted for development of 40 homes or more, 4,000 square metres (gross) or more of non-residential floorspace or sites of 1 hectare or more provided that a legal agreement commits the applicant to:

- 1 securing construction jobs for local people;
- 2 providing construction apprenticeship opportunities;
- 3 linking with local schools and colleges;
- 4 procuring a proportion of construction materials locally;
- 5 securing jobs for local people in the operational phase (if appropriate); and
- 6 procuring a proportion of the operational supply chain needs locally.

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## 6.14 Enterprising - Cultural and Social Activities

**6.14.1** The Plan area has a rich infrastructure of cultural and social activities and venues, from museums, cinema, galleries, sports and other venues to restaurants, social clubs and pubs. These uses help to keep the centres vibrant and active and add greatly to the local quality of life. However, such uses can be vulnerable to redevelopment pressures from higher land value uses. The Council wishes to protect cultural and social venues and encourage such uses to develop, modernise and adapt for the benefit of the communities they serve.

**6.14.2** The Council will encourage new proposals for cultural and social uses in the Town, District and Local centres that add vibrancy and activity. Existing facilities will be protected in accordance with the policy.

### Policy DM EP9

#### Enterprising – Cultural and Social Activities

Planning permission will be granted for proposals which add to the cultural and social scene of town, district and local centres provided that the use is appropriate to the scale and function of the centre.

Outside town, district and local centres, planning permission will be granted for cultural, entertainment, leisure and tourism uses provided that the following criteria are met:

- 1 that a sequential test if required can be met;
- 2 they are realistically and easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport for the majority of people expected to travel to and from the site; and
- 3 they will not cause unacceptable environmental or traffic impacts, or adversely affect residential amenity.

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## 6.15 Enterprising - Public Houses, Social Clubs and Community Festivals

**6.15.1** Public houses and social clubs make a valuable contribution to the community and cultural life of the Plan area. At a neighbourhood level, they offer a source of identity and distinctiveness, provide opportunities for social interaction and provide places to meet which supports community cohesion. Public houses and social clubs are part of that fine grain mix of uses, which provides not only historical continuity, but contributes economically to the vitality of residential communities and the character of an area. They are an essential ingredient for promoting healthy communities and maintaining diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods and are capable of being designated as Assets of Community Value under the Localism Act 2011.

### Policy DM EP10

#### **Enterprising – Public Houses, Social Clubs and Community Facilities**

Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of a public house falling within Use Class A3 or A4 or a social club or other community facility provided that all of the following criteria are met:

- 1 all reasonable efforts have been made to market the premises for its existing use in accordance with Appendix EP1 and no other potential occupier can be found;
- 2 all reasonable efforts have been made to improve the operation and management of the business or facility;
- 3 evidence of non-viability is submitted;
- 4 it is demonstrated that, in the case of the loss of a public house, suitable alternative public houses exist to meet the needs of the local community; and
- 5 it is demonstrated that, in the case of the loss of a social club or community facility, suitable alternative clubs or facilities exist to meet the needs of the local community.

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## 6.16 Appendix EP1 - Standard Marketing Requirements

### Standard Marketing Requirements

**6.16.1** In all cases, land or buildings should be marketed for its existing use or, if vacant, its last authorised use, for a minimum period of twelve months. The applicant should then submit a supporting statement to accompany a planning application for change of use that contains:

- Evidence to confirm: the length of time for which the land or building has been marketed; details of the agent used; and information to show where and how the marketing has taken place;
- Confirmation of the price and terms at which the land or building was advertised and demonstration that it has been offered at a rate that would generate interest from potential buyers or tenants; and
- A summary of the interest received and the reasons why any offers received have not been accepted.

### Specific Marketing Requirements

**6.16.2** In addition to the above standard requirements, the following extra, specific requirements will apply to the uses specified below:

- For employment sites: both the site freehold and the current building must be marketed;
- For public houses and social clubs: marketing must be on a freehold and free of tie basis;
- For sport, recreation or leisure sites: marketing must include alternative sport, recreation or leisure purposes.
- For public houses and social clubs: marketing must be on a freehold and free of tie basis;
- For sport, recreation or leisure sites: marketing must include alternative sport, recreation or leisure purposes.

## 6.17 Appendix EP2 - Hierarchy of Economic Sites

### Hierarchy of Economic Sites

#### **Strategic Economic Sites**

The following sites are defined as Strategic Economic Sites and are shown on the Policies Map.

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Town</b>       | <b>Site</b>                    |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| SE1         | Amersham          | King George V House            |
| SE2         | Amersham          | Raans Road                     |
| SE3         | Amersham          | St George Industrial Estate    |
| SE4         | Chesham           | Chess Business Park            |
| SE5         | Chesham           | Asheridge Road                 |
| SE6         | Chalfont St Peter | Chiltern Hill                  |
| SE7         | Chalfont St Peter | Chalfont Grove                 |
| SE8         | Chalfont St Peter | Chiltern Park                  |
| SE9         | Denham            | Broadwater Park                |
| SE10        | Denham            | Martin Baker Engineering       |
| SE11        | Iver              | Ridgeway Trading Estate        |
| SE12        | Iver Heath        | Pinewood Studios               |
| SE13        | Little Chalfont   | GE Healthcare (Amersham Place) |
| SE14        | New Denham        | Rivermead                      |
| SE15        | New Denham        | Uxbridge Business Park         |
| SE16        | Stoke Poges       | Sefton Park                    |
| SE17        | Stoke Poges       | Wexham Springs                 |

#### **Key Economic Sites**

The following sites are defined as Key Economic Sites and are shown on the Policies Map.

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Town</b>     | <b>Site</b>                     |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| KE1         | Amersham        | Decimal Place                   |
| KE2         | Amersham        | Anglo Office Park               |
| KE3         | Burnham         | Grenville Court                 |
| KE4         | Burnham         | The Priory                      |
| KE5         | Chesham         | Alma Road Industrial Estate     |
| KE6         | Chesham         | Crown and Mead Business Centres |
| KE7         | Chesham         | Higham Mead                     |
| KE8         | Denham          | Chalfont House                  |
| KE9         | Iver            | Thorney Mill Road               |
| KE10        | Little Chalfont | Boughton Business Park          |
| KE11        | Little Chalfont | GE Healthcare (Grove Centre)    |

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|      |                 |                               |
|------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| KE12 | Little Chalfont | GE Healthcare (Pollards Wood) |
| KE13 | Old Amersham    | Broadway                      |
| KE14 | Old Amersham    | St Mary's Court               |
| KE15 | Old Amersham    | Badminton Court               |
| KE16 | Penn Street     | De Havilland Court            |
| KE17 | Tatling End     | Capswood Business Centre      |
| KE18 | Tatling End     | Phoenix House                 |