



Chilterns National Landscape

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF
THE CHILTERNES CONSERVATION BOARD held on Thursday 22nd January 2026 at the
offices of the Chilterns Conservation Board, The Lodge, 90 Station Road, Chinnor OX39
4HA commencing at 10.15 AM**

Present:

Cllr Sue Rowland	Board Member	Parish Councils
Cllr Louise Price	Board Member	Local Authorities
Cllr Charles Hussey	Board Member	Parish Councils
Chris Hannington	Co-opted Member	
Paul Hayes*	Co-opted Member	
Simon Mortimer	Board Member	Secretary of State
Cllr James Norman	Board Member	Local Authorities

In attendance:

Matt Thomson*	Head of Strategy & Planning; Deputy Monitoring Officer	Officer
Mike Stubbs	Planning Adviser (Dev Mgt)	Officer
Victoria Thomson*	Planning Adviser (Policy)	Officer
Lorna Coldwell	Clerk to the Board and Minute taker	Officer

*listened online

No public present.

The Chair welcomed all present including those online.

25/26.14 Apologies for absence

Apologies received and accepted from Committee members:

Matthew Stanton – Secretary of State member

Apologies received and accepted from Officers:

Elaine King – Chief Executive Officer

25/26.15

Declarations of Interest

None declared.

25/26.16 Notice of Urgent Business

None.

25/26.17 Approval of Notes of the previous meetings

The minutes and notes from the meetings of 23rd January 2025, 17th April 2025, and 23rd October 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair. It was noted that the meeting of 23rd

January, Chris Hannington and Paul Hayes did not receive an invitation and were therefore absent by default.

25/26.18 Matters Arising

The Chair requested and was provided with updates on the following matters:

Luton Airport

The Secretary of State approved the application. Discussion focused on interpretation of the strengthened s85 duty and mitigation funding. A contribution of £250k was secured, deferred until a trigger point in the 2030s, with no associated administration funding. Judicial Review proceedings brought by LADACAN (Luton and District Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise) were dismissed on all five grounds.

Action – MT to circulate Judicial Review summary to Planning Committee members

Watlington Relief Road

No decision has yet been made. Officers continue to monitor progress.

Pitstone Quarry

No update.

Potten End SANG

This was refused by Dacorum Borough Council but allowed on appeal (covered later in the agenda).

Grand Union Canal Transfer

Consultations are being monitored, with a further round expected.

Strategic Planning Capacity

It has been recognised that responsibility for CNL strategy, especially the Management Plan, would be shared across the Senior Leadership Team going forward, rather than the sole responsibility of the Head of Strategy and Planning.

25/26.19 Considerations of Motions Submitted by Members

No motions received.

It was noted that the agenda contained an incorrect date which had not been updated from the previous meeting. The Head of Strategy and Planning apologised for this oversight.

25/26.20 Public Question Time

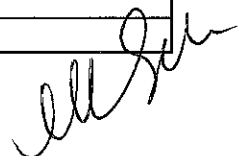
None in attendance.

25/26.21 Planning Committee work programme – Future of Planning Committee

Matt Thomson, Head of Strategy and Planning had provided a report outlining ongoing and future work on planning guidance, funding opportunities and lessons learned from previous guidance projects.

The membership of the Planning Committee is confirmed as:

Local Authority members	Cllr Robert Carrington (Buckinghamshire) Cllr James Norman (South Oxon) Cllr Louise Price (Three Rivers) – Deputy Chair Cllr Philip Spice (Central Beds) (recognising likely online attendance)
Secretary of State members	Simon Mortimer



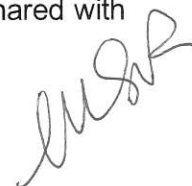
	Matthew Stanton <i>One vacancy</i>
Parish Council members	Cllr Charles Hussey (Bucks Parish Councils) Cllr Sue Rowland (Oxon Parish Councils) – Chair

If members need to contact the Planning team, it is best to do so via the generic planning@chilterns.org.uk email as all 3 Planning Officers monitor this email and the work can be allocated appropriately.

The production of new and reviewing of existing planning guidance was discussed, which is an ongoing process as part of the planning work programme. Due to the upcoming significant reforms in planning guidance and age, some of the existing documents are out of date. The recent Chilterns Chalk Stream guidance was produced with external funding that was identified by other members of the Chilterns National Landscape team and was agreed by all as efficient and effective way to produce new guidance. Matt Thomson, Head of Strategy and Planning, is keen to work with the extended team in the future to identify any other potential funding for other guidance. It was noted that any guidance specific to the Chilterns would be better completed “in house”, including with the support of consultants, but more general policies could be left to the National Landscape Association or produced in partnership with them or other National Landscapes. Whilst all agreed that further guidance on the strengthened s85 duty of the CROW Act would be useful, the ongoing interpretations depending on various rulings mean that the Government and/or Defra are better suited to provide. In the meantime, the Committee requested a short interim statement on interpretation of the s85 duty in relation to planning. The Planning Committee advised Officers that the most important new guidance is for colour and colour palettes in new buildings, as part of the suite of design guidance. Issues relating to colour have arisen frequently in the last 12 months. This would need expert external assistance to devise. Whilst any guidance provided by the Chilterns National Landscape is only guidance, many Local Authorities are receptive to it and will use in determining applications. In addition to this and the s85 duty briefing, the Committee noted a continued need for some guidance on SANGs (not as a high priority), and agreed to retain the existing Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and technical notes for the time being pending the ongoing planning reforms.

Future of Planning Committee

A lengthy discussion was held with a number of differing views expressed, following the various options as set out in the agenda papers. There are several suggestions for moving forward, and feedback at the December Board meeting indicated significant support for retaining the committee, although the Board resolved that officers should explore options. A committee entails various administrative burdens, such as Officer time, and the need for various members in person attendance to be quorate. This is set out in legislation. An advisory group would require less administrative need and be able to meet online. The dissolution of the Planning Committee is not a decision that can be undertaken lightly, but any solution needs to recognise the best way to carry out work. A proposal to retain the Planning Committee but meet more often as an advisory group was tabled. This would enable members to be more responsive when needed but retain the committee which could be called upon if the need arose. Local Authority Planning Officers are usually unaware of whether an Officer or the committee has submitted comments unless it is raised during a hearing. The key item is to ensure that whatever is put in place best serves the needs of the Board best in terms of planning, which is and will continue to be an important matter. It was requested that the proposal be shared with the Planning Committee members prior to being put forward at the Board meeting.



It was agreed by all that better communications are needed between Officers and members regardless and the proposed regular planning update to Planning Committee members and likely the wider Board members was be welcomed in the proposed format.

Action: Planning Team to provide a short interim briefing on interpretation of the s85 duty in planning.

Action: MT has steering for way forward in relation to new planning guidance – colour and colour palettes used for planning applications within the National Landscape

Action: MT to carry out regular (monthly) planning updates to be distributed

- 1. The Committee NOTED these updates and OFFERED FEEDBACK as noted above regarding the future of the Planning Committee**
- 2. The Committee OFFERED GUIDANCE on priorities for the review and preparation of planning guidance, as noted above**
- 3. The Head of Strategy and Planning will provide a paper for the next steps on the Planning Committee to be discussed at a future Board meeting**

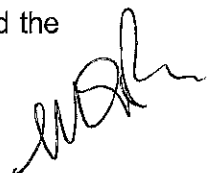
25/26.22 Development Management Casework Update Q3 2025/26

Mike Stubbs, Planning Advisor (DM) had provided a detailed paper on live cases with updates since the last Planning Committee meeting. The Committee was provided with feedback on the following cases:

- BC 23/02077/APP and PINS APP/J0405/W/25/3372885 Land to the south of Bishopstone, Dinton Bucks (Kimblewick Solar) – the application was granted by the Planning Inspector following appeal.
- TRDC 23/2073/OUT Land to north of Little Green Lane – will be heard by the Planning Committee at Three Rivers District Council
- BC PL/25/3225/OA OS Parcel 7124 Bledlow Road Saunderton – the impact on the Chilterns National Landscape is a material consideration,
- BC PL/25/2744/OA Land at Cutlers Farm Marlow Road Lane End – observations were made on the merit of a major development in the Chilterns National Landscape
- BC-C&SB PL/25/2447/FA Mop End Farm battery storage facility near Amersham substation – a new objection submitted that supersedes the previous objection in September.
- BC PL/25/4490/FA Manor Farm Ibstone – an objection was submitted in relation to the extraction of water to the aquifer due to the sensitivity of the nearby chalk stream.
- PINS APP/X0415/C/24/3356478 Land at West of Field Cottage Chartridge – an enforcement notice appeal to remove surfacing/hardstanding outside the permitted area; decision issued on 12th January to uphold the notices and dismiss the appeal.

22.1 Special Report Marlow Film Studios decision

The appeal was allowed by the Secretary of State in November 2025. The Planning Inspector did not believe that the s85 duty of the CROW Act had been fulfilled; the Secretary of State determined that in following Defra guidance the mitigation factors such as the colour palette, planting and enhancement of previously developed land was sufficient to meet the duty and therefore the Inspector's comments were overridden. This is a similar situation to the Luton Airport decision in which, when deciding applications involving major infrastructure, some harm is unavoidable. However, in such cases it was decided that the duty can be fulfilled through mitigations put in place and off-site financial contributions. Considerable weight was attributed to the increased number of jobs that would be made by the film studio in the area and the education facilities that will be on site.



- 1. The Committee NOTED the updates in the paper and endorsed the responses made in relation to applications**

25/26.23 Planning Policy Casework Update Q3 2025/26

The Planning Committee were informed by Planning Officers about policy developments.

Buckinghamshire Council Local Plan

A response has been submitted, mostly supportive and offering advice on improving the plan's compliance with national policy and legislation. Buckinghamshire Council are continuing to engage with CCB officers as the plan progresses.

Eye and Dunsden Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft 2011-2035

A response was submitted in support of the plan and noting the promotion of a "valued landscape status." This phrase has been omitted from the proposed new NPPF.

23.1 Reforms to the Statutory consultee system (submitted 13th January 2026)

Victoria Thomson, Planning Adviser (Policy) informed the committee of the response to the recent consultation on proposed revisions to statutory consultees in the planning system. Following a discussion at the December Board meeting, a response was submitted requesting the Chilterns Conservation Board be included as a statutory consultee for planning applications and for Local Plans. This would grant the Board more profile and weight within the planning system. If this is not permitted, Officers will pursue the opportunity to formalise more robust engagement protocols with Local Authorities. The response also requested that Natural England clarifies the status of its own responses with regard to National Landscapes. The Chair commended the Officer on an excellent piece of work and gave thanks.

23.2 Introduction to the NPPF review (live consultation)

Matt Thomson, Head of Strategy and Planning informed the Committee of the current consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework that came out before Christmas and runs until March 2026. As yet there has not been a meaningful discussion with colleagues from other National Landscapes, which will likely be done via email. Careful consideration is needed as to what the changes will mean. Some elements are to be welcomed, such as a much clearer division in the proposed NPPF for Local Plan making and decision making, along with a much clearer indication of what is a policy rather than supporting text which should be helpful for interpretation. It is frustrating that the existing faults within the NPPF have not been addressed. It was noted that the use of "valued landscape" has been omitted. It was questioned if there was anything related to giving weight to not developing certain types of land, following a recent report about national security effected by lack of biodiversity and food security issues. He surmised that a co-ordinated response would be ideal but would want the Chilterns National Landscape to contribute significantly to this.

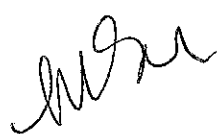
- 1. The Committee NOTED the contents of the paper**

25/26.24 Urgent Business

None.

25/26.25 Date of Next and Future Meetings

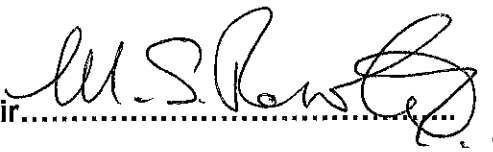
- Thursday 30th April 2026, Chinnor Offices
- Thursday 29th October 2026, Chinnor Offices



Chilterns Conservation Board

Planning Committee meeting 22nd January 2026

The meeting was closed at 13.05.

The Chair.....

Date.....