

Appendix 7 - Landscape Character

1) Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important landscape designation, and development proposals are expected to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty within the AONB, its cultural significance and wildlife habitats.

There is a presumption against major development (10 dwellings or more, or greater than 0.5ha) in the AONB unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances and the development is in the public interest. Whether a development constitutes a 'major development' will be assessed on a site-by-site basis taking account of the nature and scale of the proposal and its relation to the local context and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes of the AONB designation.

Planning permission will only be granted for development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) if proposals:

- a) conserve and enhance the special qualities, distinctive character and natural features which contribute to the natural beauty of the AONB;
- b) have regard to the AONB Management Plan and the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and technical notes by being of high-quality design which respects the natural beauty of the Chilterns and its traditional built character, and reinforces the sense of place and local character;
- c) avoid adverse impacts from individual proposals and any cumulative effects, unless these can be satisfactorily mitigated; and
- d) do not harm important views into, out of or within the AONB.

2) A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment will be required to be submitted with planning applications for developments within the AONB or for applications affecting its setting.

3) Landscape Regions

Proposals that have an impact on the distinctive landscape character in which they are set will be required to demonstrate that they have taken into consideration the key characteristics, attributes and sensitivities of the landscape type in which the proposed development is to be located, together with the landscape guidelines set out in the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment for Three Rivers.

The Council will support proposals that:

- a) Lead to the removal or a reduction in the impact of existing structures and land uses that are detrimental to the visual quality of the landscape;
- b) Enhance public access and recreation opportunities without detriment to the landscape or wildlife;
- c) Contribute to the delivery of Green Infrastructure; and
- d) Contribute to the measures identified in the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment to strengthen, reinforce, safeguard, manage, improve, restore and reconstruct landscapes.

Deleted: In all landscape regions, The Council will require proposals to make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape. Proposals that would unacceptably harm the character of the landscape in terms of siting, scale, design or external appearance will be refused planning permission.

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