

EE1 Policies ECONOMY AND EDUCATION



POLICY EE1 BUCKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE

- A.** The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Buckingham Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of maintaining a healthy mix of uses, enhancing public spaces and the historic streetscape, and improving the journey to and around the town. Within this context, all proposals for development, including change of uses, should conserve and enhance the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the Buckingham Conservation Area and other heritage assets, and their settings.
- B.** Development proposals within the defined Town Centre boundary will be supported provided that the resulting layout of schemes, where relevant and appropriate can demonstrate it:
1. Improves the sense of arrival into the Town Centre;

2. Achieves a positive relationship with existing green infrastructure provision in the Town Centre and incorporates new green infrastructure in line with Policies ENV1 Green Infrastructure and ENV2 Urban greening;
3. Retains and enhances walking and wheeling routes to improve movement into and around the town in a healthy and safe manner in line with the provisions of Policy CLH1 Active and sustainable travel;
4. Contributes to the attractiveness of the Town Centre through public realm and streetscape enhancements; and
5. Contributes to the enhancement of public transport to the town centre.

- C.** The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages within the Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map. On ground floors within Primary Shopping Frontages, development proposals for commercial, business or service (Class E) uses will be supported. On ground floors within Secondary Shopping Frontages, development proposals for commercial, business or service (Class E), Pub or drinking establishment (Sui Generis) and other leisure, tourism, cultural and community uses will be supported.
- D.** Residential uses (Class C3) on upper floors in the Town Centre boundary, will be supported, where it can be demonstrated that:
1. The active town centre use of a ground floor frontage is not compromised, and
 2. Satisfactory residential amenities can be achieved.

E. Development proposals that require some loss of ground floor floorspace to facilitate access to upper floor residential uses will be supported where this can be achieved without undermining the integrity and viability of the existing unit(s); and provided it will not result in a proliferation of residential accesses that would undermine the vitality and viability of an individual shopping frontage.

1. The Town Centre Report published in the evidence base shows that nearly three-quarters (71%) of town centre premises are now occupied by businesses within use Class E. It also encourages planning policy to investigate what options there are for maintaining the primary and secondary retail frontages including restricting permitted development as housing. The policy therefore seeks to retain these policy levers. It is recognised that some changes of use do not now require planning permission and new permitted development rights has enabled future changes of use from what are now Class E uses to residential (C3) uses. The Town Council hopes that Buckinghamshire Council will consider requesting an Article 4 Direction from the Secretary of State to protect Class E uses at Primary Shopping Frontages premises. An Article 4 Direction can remove permitted development rights in areas or from specific premises to enable changes to remain in planning control so that their effect can continue to be properly assessed. This is noted here so that the Town Council can signal its intent to the community to submit a formal request for this following the referendum of the plan.
2. In the meantime, proposals for a change of use from Class E to residential use made a premises with a Primary Shopping Frontage will still require the submission of an application titled 'Prior Approval' to Bucks Council.
3. It is now widely accepted that high streets need to diversify to become more community focussed in their use and to do so requires planning for a mix of different uses. Whilst the main focus for the established Primary Shopping Frontage is focussed on Class E uses, the wider Secondary Shopping Frontages provides an opportunity to focus on other town centre uses which not only includes retail, but also leisure, tourism, cultural and community as identified by VALP Policy D7. The policy therefore encourages other town centre uses in the Town Centre within the Secondary Shopping Frontage.
4. It is also now widely accepted that residential uses (Class C3) in Town Centres contribute to maintaining and/or enhancing its vitality and viability. The policy therefore also makes pro-

cil. Bucks Council is required to consider the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the Buckingham Conservation Area amongst other matters by way of Class MA.2.(e)(ii) of the 2015 General Permitted Development Order). The Town Centre lies entirely within the Buckingham Conservation Area and so Bucks Council will need to consider this impact for each prior approval application of this kind in this location. Although the Neighbourhood Plan policy (as part of the development plan) is not engaged in that prior approval determination (by way of S38(6) of the 1990 Planning Act), together with the Buckingham Conservation Area Review from 2005 the policy demonstrates that commercial, business and service uses play an important part of the distinct function and character of the Conservation Area and protecting the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages from such changes is important. The policy and its evidence base therefore informs decisions on prior approval applications for proposals that will harm the character or sustainability of the Conservation Area. This is noted here to draw attention to this evidence base.

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4. It is also now widely accepted that residential uses (Class C3) in Town Centres contribute to maintaining and/or enhancing its vitality and viability. The policy therefore also makes pro-

vision for Class C3 uses on upper floors ensuring that active frontages remain at ground floor level and access schemes do not harm frontages.

5. Clause B of the policy seeks to focus on those matters that the Town Centre Study highlighted as important in delivering town centre revitalisation for Buckingham.

POLICY EE2 EMPLOYMENT

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates Land west of London Road, as shown on the Policies Map, for 10 hectares of new employment development.**
- B. Employment development will be located on that part of the site closest to Buckingham Industrial Estate. The southern edge of the allocation will comprise a landscape buffer to protect the views between the site and the Padbury Valley. The remainder of the site is allocated as a reserve employment allocation. This will only be developed should it be demonstrated that further employment development is necessary.**
- C. The development of employment land must accord with the following requirements:**
 - i. Appropriate vehicular access from existing sites or minor roads;**
 - ii. A pedestrian / cycle link must be provided to proposed or existing cycleways;**
 - iii. Improvements to pedestrian / cycle links into Buckingham;**
 - iv. New footpaths or cycleways on site should be overlooked but not dominated by buildings and well lit so that users feel secure;**
 - v. Highways and access arrangements that does not harm the provision of and/or enhances strategic access around the south of the town;**
 - vi. Positive building frontages and landscaping must overlook the site access;**
 - vii. Have a buffer between the proposed**

employment land and any existing housing provision to ensure that new buildings are not overbearing on existing buildings.

1. The policy retains the made Neighbourhood Plan policy for this site. It is anticipated that the employment site should be aimed at high quality jobs principally in office/business use and hi-tech office/industrial use. This would complement the developments taking place at Silverstone. Uses other than B8 will be preferred, B8 usage will be granted if it can be shown that attempts have been made “to market”, at a suitable market rate, the site/unit for other B-use classes for a reasonable period of time. During public consultation it was highlighted that local people felt that B8 storage or distribution would not be suitable in Buckingham due to its low ratio of jobs and likely increase in volume of traffic. The site has recently been subject to an application for residential development but has been refused due to insufficient marketing evidence and being contrary to existing development plan policies (23/00178/AOP). An appeal is expected to be submitted June 2024.
2. The development of the town as an employment area is key to ensuring that Buckingham does not become a dormitory town. With large employment development taking place at Silverstone this can be an opportunity for more jobs within Buckingham. It also takes into account the loss of the employment land through the loss of the Tingewick Road Industrial Estate.
3. Finally, it also reflects the importance of any highways and access arrangements to take into account the longer-term planning for strategic access around the south of the town.

POLICY EE3 UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies existing University education provision, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of protecting these sites for this purpose.**
- B. Development proposals for new, and the refurbishment of existing, academic buildings will be supported. Proposals will need to demonstrate that any resulting university accommodation needs can be met.**

1. The University is an important establishment within the town and the way in which it delivers education provision may change over the plan period. This may be through expansion or utilising existing space differently. The policy therefore seeks to safeguard existing space used for educational purposes whilst supporting proposals for new buildings or the refurbishment of existing buildings. The plan seeks to ensure that the growth of the University's education services is accompanied with the provision of the necessary University accommodation needs. The policy therefore works alongside Policy HP2 to ensure this.

POLICY EE4 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies existing primary and secondary school provision, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of protecting these sites for educational provision.**
- B. Land off Verney Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is safeguarded for the expansion of The Buckingham School.**

1. The policy seeks to safeguard existing educational provision in Buckingham. Clause A of the policy therefore identifies existing sites on the Policies Map. Provision has been made for a new primary school to serve the town in site specific allocations.
2. Clause B of the policy safeguards land for the expansion of The Buckingham School. Current plans include relocating existing sixth form provision at Buckingham School to this location to free up capacity within the main school building to admit additional 11-15 pupils. Site constraints and limited options available to expand Buckingham School within its existing site means that it is necessary to find additional land to enable this. The land has been made available for this purpose.