

CHAPTER 10 TOWN / VILLAGE SETTLEMENT INSETS

MINEHEAD

10.44. PARA. 10.10.20

Objections

460	Mr O Davies
461	Mr O Davies
462	Mr O Davies
1000	Somerset County Council
1001	Somerset County Council

Issues

- (i) Whether Queen's Hall, buildings in The Strand (Warren Road West), and 1-3 Holloway Street should be included in the Conservation Area (objections 460, 461, and 462).
- (ii) Whether the criteria for the designation of conservation areas should be revised.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

I share the objector's concern for the protection of such buildings in Minehead as Queen's Hall which characterise the traditional English seaside resort in its Victorian and Edwardian heyday as well as for the housing typical of the period at Holloway Street. However, as paragraph 2.9 of PPG15 makes clear, the designation of Conservation Area boundaries and their revision is a matter formally independent of the procedure for making Local Plans. It is therefore inappropriate for me to make any recommendations on objections 460, 461 and 462.

Issue (ii)

The Wellington Square conservation area was significantly extended when it was reviewed in the mid 1990s. The LPA then considered any further extension along Warren Road to include, for example, Queen's Hall and the Carlton Hotel at Blenheim Road unnecessary. As paragraph 4.2 of PPG15 points out, conservation areas are concerned with the quality of areas rather than that of individual buildings. I note, however, that Policy TO/1 affords protection, albeit of a lower degree than in a conservation area, to the buildings which concern the SCC. In the circumstances I do not consider that any change in the CA policies of the draft deposit plan is necessary.

10.44.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that no modification be made in response to objections 1000 and 1001.

10.45. PARA. 10.10.24

Objection

760	Environment Agency-South West Region
-----	--------------------------------------

Issue

Whether additional reference should be made to the disposal of surface water.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

I agree with the EA that the wording in para 10.10.24 is misleading. Surface water issues are not addressed in the draft deposit Plan. However, the objection is met in the amendment of paragraph 10.10.24 by PC 288, which I support. Surface water issues in relation to development proposals will fall to be dealt with under the Water Environment policies, in particular Policy W/6 as modified by PC 67 and paragraph 4.4.9 as modified by PCs 64-66.

10.45.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PC 288.

10.46. POLICY MINE/2

Objections

197	Minehead Town Council
459	West Somerset Railway Plc
872	Government Office for the South West

Issues

- (i) The provision of car parking near the railway station and whether the Plan should clarify the long term status of Vulcan Road Car Park.
- (ii) The justification for the requirement for car parking in Policy MINE/2.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

Objection 459 raises the question of the provision of car parks adjacent to the Railway Station. It does not see the Vulcan Road car park as a viable alternative to current parking nearer the station and suggests the Mart Road Market Site be made available for car parking with direct access from the Station car park. That would involve the relocation of the market to land nearer to Seaward Way. At the same time objection 197 seeks clarification regarding the future of the Vulcan Road site.

The LPA reports that the status of car parking and other uses on land to the north of Mart and Vulcan Roads is the subject of the Development Framework the formulation of which is currently in course and is referred to in PC 110. The District Council's intentions will become clearer on completion of the Framework study later in 2002. In the meantime the Station Road and Mart Road car parks are identified within the Minehead Tourism Area and are subject to Policy TO/2. Pending the completion of the Development Framework I have no evidence to justify any alteration in the Plan regarding these car parking areas.

Issue (ii)

GOSW finds no justification for providing car parking under this Policy and suggests the LPA should show that it has explored all alternatives to the provision of parking and should explain how such provision supports the Plan's overall objectives. The Plan should not seek to encourage additional car-borne journeys or to meet access requirements solely throughout the provision of car parking. However, I note that the approximately 100 parking spaces provided at Warren Road as part of an overall Seafront Enhancement Scheme referred to in paragraph 10.10 26 of the plan replace about 250 places formerly provided at the Lido site. Car parking in Minehead is proposed to be subject to the additional Policy T/7 (inserted by PC 173) and PC 175. So far as concerns future provision for car parking I am satisfied that those provisions are consistent with the national policy in PPG13 and that no modification of Policy MINE/2 is required.

10.46.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that no modification be made in response to these objections.

10.47. NON RESIDENTIAL OMISSIONS - MINEHEAD

Objections

100	Council for the Protection of Rural England
198	Minehead Town Council
199	Minehead Town Council
200	Minehead Town Council
759	Environment Agency-South West Region
1007	Tesco Stores Ltd

Issues

- (i) Whether the coastal zone boundary is correctly drawn.
- (ii) Whether Minehead Town Centre, as defined by the Plan, is so closely constrained as to encourage out-of-town development; and whether the Plan should include policies relating to such sites outside the defined town centre boundary as that of the former Lido.
- (iii) Whether Settlement Inset Map 10 should show the permitted use of The Promenade in front of Butlins at Warren Road as a car park.

- (iv) Whether the roundabout outside the Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club at Warren Road should be shown on Settlement Inset Map 10.
- (v) Whether the Plan deals adequately with surface water disposal in Minehead.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

Objection 100 observes that there are certain points on the Inset/Proposals Maps where the Coastal Zone boundary appears to deviate from the natural course and excludes areas the CPRE considers warrant this status. (i.e. Butlins site, the former marshes and shore).

Paragraphs 4.5.6-7 of the Plan define the criteria used in delineating the West Somerset Coastal Zone boundary and closely follow the national advice in PPG20 *Coastal Planning*. I accept that the landward limits of the zone follow natural boundaries which respect the geographical extent of natural coastal landforms. It is therefore inappropriate to include the Butlins site as that is developed land contiguous with the built-up area of Minehead. I consequently find no justification to change the Coastal Zone boundary

Issue (ii)

Objection 198 advocates the inclusion in Section 10.10 of the Plan of policies incorporating site-specific proposals outside the area of the town centre inset map. It is considered, for example, that there is a compelling case for including such a policy providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to future development of the former Lido site at Warren Road, comprising a mix of retail and tourism-related uses rather than leaving the site to piecemeal redevelopment.

So far as concerns retail development Policy SH/3 incorporates the sequential approach to development, propounded on a national basis in PPG6, indicating the circumstances under which edge-of-centre and out-of-centre sites should be considered. In the case of the former Minehead Lido I note that its site is the subject of full planning permission for residential and recreational use dating from the early 1990's and that a housing scheme for the whole site is currently under development. In that context I find no need for a specific policy for the Minehead Lido site as suggested in objection 1007.

Issue (iii)

The on-street car parking on the Promenade at Warren Road opposite Butlins is part of the highway. Although as an authorised existing use it contributes to the parking capacity of the town it is clearly no longer merely a proposal and it is not appropriate to show it on the Settlement Inset Map.

Issue (iv)

In my view it is not normally necessary to show a roundabout at the scale of the inset map save where substantial non-highway land take is needed for major highway construction or improvement. However, while stating that limitations of scale prevent better depiction on the

Settlement Inset Map of the mini roundabout outside the Golf Club at Warren Road the LPA adds that this matter will be addressed in the production of revised Inset Maps for the modification stage of the Plan. In the interest of greater clarity I shall recommend that action.

Issue (v)

I also deal in section 10.24 of this report with the matter of liability to flooding in relation to the EA's objection 760 to paragraph 10.10.24 of the draft deposit Plan. The EA objects to development in the flood plain. Any new development will need to identify surface water disposal to the existing surface water system that will not exacerbate flooding problems caused by the tide backing up on the receiving water course. In the EA's view 3 source protection areas (Middlecombe Spring, Morebrake Boreholes and Periton Hill Spring) which fall within the Minehead area require protection.

I am satisfied that the Plan's general policy guidance on development in flood plain areas, including PCs 67, 70, and 71, which I refer to in section 10.24, is adequate and that no further modification is required specific to Minehead in response to objection 759. The 3 source protection areas noted by the EA are all outside the Local Plan area and it is therefore inappropriate for me to recommend inserting reference to them in the Plan.

10.47.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that:

- (i) No modifications be made in response to objections 100, 198, 1007 and 759;
and**
- (ii) Settlement Inset Map 10 be modified to show more clearly the roundabout
outside the Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club at Warren Road**

10.48. SETTLEMENT INSET MAP 10 – DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

Objections

34	Renscombe Properties Ltd
64	Dr S Jordan
347	Miss Thorne
466	Mr B Gurnett
1058	Hon R T Lytton

Conditionally withdrawn objection

447	Mr G Symons
-----	-------------

Supporters

5	The Woodcombe Society
417	J and C Durham
463	Mr H Mason
668	Mrs R Underhill
672	Mr and Mrs B Cawsey
681	Mr and Mrs R Andrew

Inspector's note

The Council's original calculations in 1998 indicated that there would be a slowing in windfall sites in the 2006 to 2011 period. However, the subsequent Urban Capacity Study indicated that the supply of such sites would be more likely to increase. The Round Table Session divined that this would result from the subdivision of extensive curtilages, the more intensified use of existing buildings, and a gradual release of existing of hotel sites for redevelopment.. I recognise the uncertainty which emerged during the inquiry period about the availability of the Council's office site at Williton for redevelopment for housing could result in a small reduction of dwelling sites available there with consequent effect on the demand in Minehead. However, in view of the existence of a 5 year supply of land as advised in PPG3 I accept that there is no immediate requirement to allocate further greenfield land in Minehead. Objection 447 is conditionally withdrawn.

While objections 347, 466 and 1058 are nominally objections to the settlement development limit they are essentially substantial housing omission sites, which are in some cases duplicated as objection to Policy H/1 but with different numbers. I deal with them in Chapter 8 of this Report at sections 8.10C.4, 8.10C.6, and 8.10C.3 respectively.

Issues

- (i) Whether land west of Woodcombe Cottages should be incorporated within the settlement development limit.
- (ii) Whether, in view of the inclusion of an area south of Manor Road within the settlement development limit,. an area of existing development to the north of Manor Road

including Staunton Lane and Long Combe Lodge should be included within the settlement development limit.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

The triangular objection site, a 0.2 ha tract of overgrown land with a wooden building, described in objection 34 as a church hut but in a poor state of repair, adjoins properties known as Woodcombe Cottages. I note that the site was included within the settlement development boundary in the consultative draft of the Plan but was deleted in the deposit draft.

Residential development is stated by the LPA to have previously been rejected on the grounds of landscape policy and inadequate access and permission for a community hall was refused in 1998 on similar grounds together with settlement policy. In the Plan it falls within the Blue Anchor Bay Character Area (Minehead Exmoor Fringe Sub-Area which is subject to Policy LC/3 and PC 28. The LPA regards the site as part of the buffer zone between the built-up area of the town and Exmoor National Park, which clearly defines Minehead on its western side.

The south eastern boundary of the site is contiguous with residential development. The north western boundary abuts that of a series of plots at the rear of, and separated by a lane, from Woodcombe Cottages. That land has the appearance of detached garden areas of the curtilages of the cottages. I am mindful that though subject to the proposed new policy SP/5 the site is nevertheless contiguous with the built-up area. In my view its openness serves little visual purpose in the local scene as it neither shares the character of, nor opens a window on, the open country beyond. It appears to me that the boundary of the settlement development limit to the north and south of the site follows a clearly defensible line. I regard the resiting of that line along the south western boundary of the site as logical. Notwithstanding, therefore, that there exist within the Minehead development limits areas subject to unimplemented planning permission as well as potential sites identified in the Residential Urban Capacity Study and the residue of the allocation of housing land at Seaward Way I consider the inclusion of this relatively small site within the settlement development limit of the town justifiable.

Issue (ii)

The omission site area, north of Manor Road/Staunton Lane, includes a ribbon of low density dwellings, which in my view does not form part of the coherent built up area of the town, It falls within the buffer of open land around Minehead identified in the 1999 Landscape Character Assessment as the Blue Anchor Bay - Minehead - Exmoor Fringe area. I am inclined to agree with the LPA that the western boundary of Staunton Cottage on the north side of Manor Road marks a recognisable limit of the continuously built up area, beyond which, notwithstanding that much of the land consists of private gardens, there is a notably more open rural feeling. I consider the inclusion of this area within the settlement development limit would be inappropriate in view of the existing commitments to and windfall opportunities likely to arise for residential development in the town without any extension of the settlement development limits

10.48.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that:

- (i) Land West of Woodcombe Cottages (objection 34) be included within the settlement development limit; and**

(ii) No modifications be made to the Plan in response to objections : 64, 347, 466, and 1058.