

CHAPTER 10 TOWN / VILLAGE SETTLEMENT INSETS

WATCHET

10.79. POLICY WAT/1.

Objections

445	Mrs J Walcot
457	West Somerset Railway Plc
765	Environment Agency-South West Region
878	Government Office for the South West

Issues

- (i) Whether criterion (i) of the Policy provides appropriate safeguarding of the view of the harbour from East Wharf.
- (ii) Whether, in view of possible erosion and the effects of winds and waves in extreme weather conditions, development should take place in the East Wharf area of Watchet.(iii) The suitability of Goviers Lane crossing as access to the East Wharf development area.
- (iii) Whether the Policy should clearly identify the 'associated community uses' to be provided at the East Wharf.
- (iv) Whether criterion (vi) of the Policy conforms with national policy regarding planning agreements.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

Objection 445 asserts that criterion (i) of the Policy requires strengthening in recognition of the association of the view of the harbour from East Wharf with the Ancient Mariner. However, I am satisfied that the emphasis in the criterion on safeguarding visual amenity is adequate.

Issue (ii)

Objection 765 erroneously refers to the East Wharf as in the Coastal Zone. However, development constraints under Policy CO/2 are relevant only to sites outside settlements whereas the East Wharf development site is within the settlement development limit. Though the East Wharf abuts the Conservation Area I consider the latter enjoys appropriate protection under criterion (i) of Policy WAT/1.

Issue (iii)

So far as concerns access to the East Wharf the relevant policies are requirements (ii) and (iii) of Policy WAT/1 as modified by PC300 and Policy T/14 as modified by PC181 together with Policy 49 of the Structure Plan. In my view the policies provide for the adequate safeguarding of the interests of, amongst others, pedestrians, the disabled, and cyclists.

Issue (iv)

The 'associated community-related uses' in the Policy are subject to a legal agreement between the District Council and the developer of the marina which has been confirmed since the publication of the draft deposit Plan. The LPA suggests the description of the development in paragraph 10.19.13 be updated to reflect the present position. I concur with that.

Issue (v)

The modification of the Policy by PC300 eliminates the requirement to make contributions to the provision of social and community facilities. I welcome the cross reference to Policies PO/1 and T/14 but there is no need for the statement to be in brackets. Similarly, the asterisk should be deleted as it is not linked to the Policy text. Hence in my view the last sentence should be a plain rider following criteria (i) to (v).

10.79.1 RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that

- (i) Paragraph 10.19.13 be modified to reflect the progress of the East Wharf scheme;**
 - (ii) Policy WAT/I be modified by PC300, subject to the deletion of the brackets and asterisk in the last sentence;**
 - (iii) No modification be made in response to objections 445, 457 and 765.**
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10.80. SETTLEMENT MAP NO 19

Objections

8	Mr J Richards
38	Mrs J Howe
1008	Mr I Aldridge

Issues

- (i) The definition of land north east of the railway at Watchet as amenity open space.
- (ii) Whether the development limit should be changed to facilitate road improvement at the entrance to Knights Templar School.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

With regard to Objections 8 and 38 the definition as open space of the land north east of the railway at Watchet does not imply any right of public access. Nor does Paragraph 25 of PPG17 make public access a criterion of the definition of this kind of land. As the representations were misunderstandingly expressed in terms of objection to the conferral of a public right of access I consider PC224 satisfactorily clarifies the situation.

The amenity value of the land was not a matter raised in Mr Richards' formal objection. As his

representation regarding it in the inquiry does not relate to a duly made objection it does not fall to me to make any recommendation on that subject.

Mrs Howe's concern that she might wish to re-site her caravan park on the objection site in the event of the loss of its current site by coastal erosion would fall to be dealt with by a normal planning application in the event of such an occurrence. I do not consider that concern justifies any alteration to the Plan.

Issue (ii)

The objection site, an area of about 0.1 ha immediately south of Knights Templar school, is a level tract of agricultural land. I note that the site is outside the development boundary line of Watchet on Settlement Map 19. The development of a single detached house on it, suggested by the objector, could render less anomalous the cluster of houses at Cherry Tree Way that are surrounded by open land. At the same time by reason of its extent and location I attach little weight to its importance as a component of a wider open rural landscape. Nevertheless, it appears to me that the provision of a residential access adjoining the access for school transport would not necessarily contribute to an improvement. I consider that a more comprehensive approach to the traffic problem is required, possibly involving the objection site. In the circumstances I find no convincing need to modify Settlement Map 19.

10.80.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

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