

CHAPTER 38 - RUARDEAN HILL

General

Objections

394/70607	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
833/70622	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70652	Mr B Whittington
837/70690	Clearwell Caves

Issue

Statutory Forest status.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 48.1 Elsewhere in this report I recommend that the boundary of the Statutory Forest be shown on the Proposals Map. The settlement of Ruardean Hill lies within that boundary and Policy (R)FBE.8, modified as I recommend, will set out the planning policy for the change of use of Forest Waste or other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest. Whether other legislation will affect the use or development of land within the Statutory Forest is considered elsewhere in this report and is not a matter that it would be necessary or appropriate to address by the modification of this chapter, other than by the minor textual amendment below.

Recommendation

- 48.2 **I recommend that Paragraph 38.1 be modified by adding after the second sentence: ‘The village lies within the boundary of the Statutory Forest as shown on the Proposals Map and Policy (R)FBE.8 would apply to proposals for the change of use of Forest Waste and other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest’.**

Policy (R)F.Ruardean Hill 1 – Restriction on Development

Issues

Justification for and terms of the Restriction on Development.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 48.3 On consideration of the Plan as a whole I have reached the general conclusion, for reasons set out after policy (R)FBE.1 in Chapter 6 of Part 1 of this report, that the Restriction on Development policies are inappropriate and that adequate protection can be accorded the settlement areas concerned by other policies including policy (R)FBE.1, when read in conjunction with the descriptive text for each settlement in Part 2. For general consistency I therefore recommend below the deletion of policy (R)F.Ruardean Hill 1.
- 48.4 The supporting text sets down an appropriately balanced approach that contemplates small scale new development in certain circumstances, and thus duly supplements the provisions of policy (R)FBE.1 and policy (R)FH.5. However, I regard these considerations as applying to all development, not only residential, and text para 38.7 should be modified accordingly.

Recommendation

- 48.5 **I recommend that Policy (R)F.Ruardean Hill 1 be deleted and that Paragraph 38.7 be modified to:**

The eastern part of the settlement retains most clearly many of the features of the original settlement form and character. This area is particularly open and dispersed in character resulting in its vulnerability to the cumulative process of infilling which risks detracting from its special qualities. The area is positioned on an exposed hillside where new residential or non-residential development could appear very prominent and where vehicular access is restricted. These factors will be taken into account when considering the potential impact of any development on the character and appearance of the area as required by policies including (R)FBE.1 and (R)FH.5.

Omission Site OH38.1 – Land adjoining Windrush Inset Map 38 - Ruardean Hill

Objection

130/52187

B L Boseley Ltd

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 48.6 Ruardean Hill lies approximately 4km north of Cinderford within the statutory boundary of the Forest. The current population is about 350, and it contains a housing stock of 142. In common with many settlements in the area it has a limited range of services, containing a chapel, social club and recreation ground. The nearest schools and post offices are in the nearby settlements of Ruardean Woodside and Drybrook. The local bus services are infrequent. There is some local employment at a sawmill within the village.
- 48.7 The site is greenfield in nature and extends to about 0.6ha. It lies in the south west of the village within the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB], and is designated under Policy (R)FBE.7 as an Important Open Area [IOA] A footpath runs along the eastern boundary and separates the site from Windrush. A post and rail fence on the southern boundary separates the site from a metalled road. The north and west boundaries comprise mature hedgerows and trees. The site is generally level, although the land drops away sharply to the north where the site adjoins a paddock. On the far side of the road to the south is a large sports and recreation ground. A grass track along the western boundary leads back to the village. The site is uncultivated and overgrown with a large coverage of bushes and bracken. There are several derelict sheds within the site, and evidence of fly-tipping, including an abandoned car.
- 48.8 Ruardean Hill is one of a number of settlements within the Statutory Forest where, as Policy (R)FBE.7 recognises, the open areas of varying types are considered to make a valuable contribution, either as informal recreational space, in providing links between developed and open areas, or in links with countryside. Whilst, in its present condition, there would appear to be little likelihood in the site having recreational potential, it does in my view have a significant role to play in providing a linkage between the centre of the western part of the village, and the open countryside to the south-west.

- 48.9 There are five continuous parcels of land designated as Important Open Areas, with the omission site occupying a visually prominent location at the top of the slope within the green wedge or finger of open land. It plays a pivotal role in linking the formal recreation ground to the south-west with the paddock and grazing land towards the centre of the village. I consider that any development on this site would not only sever this link, but would also have a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the area, in view of its prominent location.
- 48.10 The limited level of services and facilities, including employment provision, and the infrequent nature of the bus service, lead me to believe that any additional housing, other than infilling as allowed by Policy (R)FH.5, would result in a significant increase in private car journeys on a day-to-day basis. In this respect the site performs poorly in terms of the locational criteria set out in paragraph 31 of PPG3. I also consider that this greenfield site in a small rural settlement also performs poorly when assessed against the sequential approach outlined in paragraph 30. I conclude that the housing development on this site unacceptable in principle, and that the IOA designation should remain.

Recommendation

- 48.11 **I recommend that the Land adjoining Windrush be not allocated for development and that its designation as an Important Open Area remain.**
- 48.12 **I recommend no modification to Inset Map 38**
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CHAPTER 39 - RUARDEAN WOODSIDE

Introduction and Development Strategy

Objections

136/51347	Mr B Brain
394/70608	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
833/70623	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70653	Mr B Whittington
837/70691	Clearwell Caves

Supporting Statements

90/51157	Mr L Barnett
92/51160	Mrs T Barnett
139/50116	Mrs J Brain
198/51179	Dr P Coones
244/50117	Mr R F D Edgecombe
436/50094	Ms H Marfell
484/51182	Mr A J Nedoma
547/51176	Mr C Reid
597/51164	Ms V Simonds
604/50074	Mr I R Smith
606/50100	Mr J W Smith
606/50101	Mr J W Smith
609/50102	Mrs M B Smith
613/50097	Mrs S J Smith
629/51169	Miss E J Stibbs
710/51147	Mr G J Williams
714/51151	Mrs R Williams

Issues

- a. Objection to development adjacent to the village hall with respect to loss of a recreational facility.
- b. Statutory Forest status

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 49.1 The Local Plan does not propose any development on land adjacent to the village hall.
- 49.2 Most of the settlement lies within the boundary of the Statutory Forest and elsewhere in the Report I have recommended that the Statutory Forest Boundary be shown on the Proposals Map and relevant Inset Maps. I have also recommended the modification of Policy (R)FBE.8 which relates to the development of Crown Land in the Statutory Forest. However it would be misleading to include the wording proposed by the objectors as the Forest laws to which they refer apply mainly to Crown Land and not to the private land of which the settlement is mainly comprised. The first paragraph of the chapter refers to the location of Ruardean Woodside within the statutory Forest in any event.

Recommendation

- 49.3 **I recommend no further modification in respect of these objections.**

Omission Site OH39.1 – Land to the North West of Roebuck Meadows

Objection

106/52789	Mr K W Bell
106/52786	Mr K W Bell
106/52788	Mr K W Bell

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 49.4 Ruardean Woodside is a small village with an estimated population in 2000 of 340 occupying 140 dwellings. The village has limited local services comprising a shop, school and village hall. There is only a little local employment and this is unlikely to provide for the employment needs of the majority of the local population. Bus services are limited and most residents would be likely to rely on the car to access services, facilities and employment in other settlements.
- 49.5 There has been a recent development of 16 dwellings adjacent to the omission site but Policy (R)FH.5 would now only permit developments of 1 or 2 dwellings on sites within the Defined Settlement Boundary, from which this site is excluded. The site is greenfield land which does not appear to have been previously developed. It is characteristic of the areas of open space which are found in many of the Forest Ring settlements and contribute to their spacious character. Part of the site is designated by Policy (R)FBE.9 of the Plan as a protected Outdoor Recreation Space.
- 49.6 Given the poor access to services, facilities and employment by means other than the car, Ruardean Woodside is a relatively poor location for significant housing development, which the Plan seeks to concentrate in and adjacent to settlements with good accessibility. In national and local policy, greenfield land has a lower priority for housing development than previously-developed land in urban areas and the Plan makes adequate provision for housing development in more accessible locations. There is a lack of evidence that the recreation space is surplus to requirements and a housing development on the scale proposed would also harm the spacious character of the settlement.
- 49.7 I conclude that the DSB should not be extended to include the site and that the site should not be allocated for housing development. The settlement is appropriately covered by Policy (R)FH.5.

Recommendation

- 49.8 **I recommend that the Land North West of Roebuck Meadows be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Ruardean Woodside.**

Omission Site OH39.2 – Land adjacent to Wesley Road

Objection

58/52102 Mr G Adams

Reasoning and Conclusions

49.9 This is greenfield land of about 0.22ha which fronts Wesley Road and which adjoins the Defined Settlement Boundary to the south east. There are a number of similar areas of land on the outskirts of the settlement. Were the land to be included within the DSB, Policy (R)FH.5 would allow the consideration of developments of 1 or 2 dwellings. That would be a relatively inefficient use of the land since the Plan provides, consistent with government guidance, that housing development should be at densities of 30 dwellings per hectare or more.

49.10 In its present form the site makes a positive contribution to the spacious rural character and appearance of this part of the settlement. That would be harmed by built development and I conclude that the site has been appropriately excluded from the DSB.

Recommendation

49.11 **I recommend that the Land adjacent to Wesley Road be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Ruardean Woodside.**

Inset Map 39 - Ruardean Woodside

Objections

58/52102 Mr G Adams
106/52789 Mr K W Bell

Supporting Statements

84/50246 Mr A A Baldwin
87/50243 Mrs N Baldwin
90/51158 Mr L Barnett
92/51161 Mrs T Barnett
106/52789 Mr K W Bell
138/50113 Mrs I D Brain
141/50112 Mrs W Brain
179/50272 Mr J M Claridge
187/50277 Ms L A Claridge
197/50216 Mr A L Coones
198/51180 Dr P Coones
199/50373 Mrs W Coones
200/50261 Ms B Cooper
221/50270 Ms J Davis
237/50248 Mr P Duberley
238/50230 Mrs N Duberley
284/50128 Mrs J Gibbons
285/50125 Mr S R Gibbons
296/50075 Mrs J Green
310/50251 Mrs M Haines

311/50253	Mr R Haines
317/50279	Mr A S Harris
338/50287	Mr P Hoare
339/50285	Mrs T Hoare
344/50265	Mrs C M Horlick
345/50268	Mr R M Horlick
361/50281	Mrs E P James
365/50283	Mr K G James
381/50220	Mrs Jones
382/50228	Mr Jones
384/50258	Mrs A K Jones
392/50237	Mr H J Jones
393/50241	Miss J R Jones
395/50232	Mr N Jones
397/50239	Mrs S Jones
436/50093	Ms H Marfell
437/50056	Mrs M Marfell
441/50120	Mrs I Mason
484/51184	Mr A J Nedoma
491/50263	Mrs M Nightingale
517/50050	Mrs J Pennock
518/50052	Mr P M Pennock
547/51177	Mr C Reid
575/50256	Mr R Sadler
597/51166	Ms V Simonds
604/50070	Mr I R Smith
609/50104	Mrs M B Smith
613/50096	Mrs S J Smith
629/51170	Miss E J Stibbs
638/50124	Mrs M Taylor
660/50121	Mr H Toomer
710/51148	Mr G J Williams
714/51153	Mrs R Williams

Issues

- a. Omission of lands for development.
- b. Opposition to housing development.

Reasoning and Conclusions

49.12 I deal omission sites above.

49.13 The large number of supporting representations endorse the Plan’s restrictive approach to housing development in Ruardean Woodside.

Recommendation

49.14 **I recommend no modification to Inset Map 39 [other than the addition of the boundary of the Statutory Forest].**

CHAPTER 40 - SLING

General

Objections

394/70609	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
833/70624	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70654	Mr B Whittington
837/70692	Clearwell Caves

Issues

Statutory Forest status.

Reasoning and Conclusions

50.1 I have recommended elsewhere that the boundary of the Statutory Forest be shown on the Proposals Map and that Policy (R)FBE.8 be amended to apply generally to Forest Waste and other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest. Privately owned land in the Statutory Forest is not subject to the same statutory Forest laws and I conclude that it would be misleading to insert the statement sought by the objectors. The statutory Forest location can be mentioned in text para 40.3 by a simple insertion.

Recommendation

50.2 **I recommend that the second sentence of Paragraph 40.3 be modified by inserting ‘statutory’ before ‘forest.**

Policy (R)F.Sling 1 – Employment Site - Safeguarding

Objections

41/51173	Countryside Agency
394/70610	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
833/70625	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70655	Mr B Whittington
837/70693	Clearwell Caves

Issues

- a. Statutory Forest status.
- b. Landscape impact.

Reasoning and Conclusions

50.3 I refer above to the matter of statutory Forest status.

50.4 I consider that the Revised Deposit modification to text para 40.10 meets the landscape objection.

Recommendation

50.5 **I recommend no modifications consequent upon these objections.**

Omission Site OH40.1 – Land adjacent to the Miners Arms PH

Objections

686/51711

Mr P Watkins

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 50.6 This 0.5ha of open land off the B4228 abuts the Miners Arms and is contiguous with the eastern Defined Settlement Boundary of Sling. The proposal is to include it within the settlement as a housing allocation, whereas in the Revised Deposit Plan Sling is only subject to infilling under policy (R)FH.4. The site is conveniently located for access to jobs at the major protected employment site in Sling and at the southern edge of nearby Coleford, to which there are reasonable public transport links. The Council does not deny that, as one of the larger villages of the District with some 900 inhabitants, Sling might offer a suitable opportunity for additional residential development.
- 50.7 However, the Council describes the land as an important open area on the approach to the village. In principle I agree with that assessment but take the view that, with careful design based on a suitable development brief, a small development on the land could be integrated within the village fabric without major detriment. Open land to the north and south of the site would continue to maintain the characteristic Forest setting of the locality. Indeed, such development could also bring benefit by way of an improved road layout and some visual enhancement at the entrance to the village, as well as a due contribution to affordable housing under policy (R)FH.13
- 50.8 On balance therefore I conclude that the site should be incorporated in the Defined Settlement Boundary. On the basis of the minimum PPG3 density of 30 dwellings per hectare but allowing for some design flexibility, a stated number of approximately 15 dwellings appears reasonable.

Recommendation

- 50.9 **I recommend that Chapter 40 be modified by the addition of the following policy:**

Housing Allocation – Land adjacent to the Miners Arms

Policy (R)F.Sling 3

0.5ha of land adjacent to the Miners Arms PH is allocated for approximately 15 dwellings. The development will be required to:

- 1. Provide an appropriate number of affordable housing units.**
- 2. Provide for safe access to the B4228.**

- 50.10 **I recommend that the Chapter 40 be modified by the addition of the following paragraph 40.16:**

The allocated site comprises an area of land close to the village facilities and employment sites, as well as being conveniently situated especially with respect to the employment areas at the southern edge of Coleford. Careful design based on a development brief will be required to ensure that the development is integrated within the village fabric without detriment to its character or to the character of the open land to the north and south of the site which provides the characteristic

Forest setting of the locality. Some of the dwellings will provided affordable housing. The development will need to address any necessary improvements to the existing access from B4228. Any other necessary contributions to meet infrastructure requirements will be addressed under other Plan policies.

Omission Site OH40.2 – Land at Myrtle Villas

Objection

508/52935

Mr M Parry

Reasoning and Conclusions

50.11 The proposal is to include land for a single dwelling immediately outside the Defined Settlement Boundary adjacent to the major protected employment site at the north end of Sling. I agree with the Council that this is not a suitable location for residential development. In the first place, there is no reasoned justification for extending the settlement into the countryside to include sporadic development such as Myrtle Villas, which is characteristic the Forest fringe. Further, residential development in such a location, isolated from the main residential area of Sling, could not be satisfactorily integrated into the settlement so as to provide an acceptable living environment.

Recommendation

50.12 **I recommend that the Land at Myrtle Villas be not allocated for development nor included within the Defined Settlement Boundary.**

Inset Map 40 - Sling

Objections

508/52935

Mr M Parry

686/51711

Mr P Watkins

797/70240

Mr B Williams

Issues

- a. Objection to the Revised Deposit inclusion of land adjacent to 16 Hawthorn Drive in the Defined Settlement Boundary.
- b. Omission of certain lands from the Defined Settlement Boundary.

Reasoning and Conclusions

50.13 The Revised Deposit extension to the Defined Settlement Boundary is a logical modification to include an existing house and does not appear to contemplate new development.

50.14 I deal with the omission sites above and my sole recommendation for the Inset Map is consequent upon my conclusions concerning Omission Site OH40.1.

Recommendation

50.15 **I recommend that Inset Map 40 be modified by including within the Defined Settlement Boundary the land outlined red on the Plan appended to Document**

686A annotated for housing under the new Policy (R)F.Sling 3 recommended in connection with Omission Site OH40.1 above.

CHAPTER 41 - ST BRIAVELS

Policy (R)F.St Briavels 1 – Restriction on Development

Objections

None

Issues

Justification for the Restriction on Development

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 51.1 On consideration of the Plan as a whole I have reached the general conclusion, for reasons set out after policy (R)FBE.1 in Chapter 6 of Part 1 of this report, that the Restriction on Development policies are inappropriate and that due protection is accorded the settlement areas concerned by policy (R)FBE.1 when read in conjunction with the descriptive text for each settlement in Part 2. For general consistency I therefore recommend below the deletion of policy (R)F.St Briavels 1.
- 51.2 In the particular case of St Briavels, most of the area around the St Briavels Castle Ancient Monument Site, where the Council is concerned to resist new development, is a designated Conservation Area. Thus, in any event, it is already accorded special protection to its character and appearance. The supporting text sets down an appropriately balanced approach stating that there are no obvious opportunities for new development in and beyond the Conservation Area. It thereby duly reinforces the provisions of policy (R)FBE.1 in the particular settlement context. Text para 41.8 should be modified to delete reference to policy (R)F.St Briavels 1 but to include the essential message of the policy.

Recommendation

- 51.3 **I recommend that Policy (R)F.St Briavels 1 be deleted and that Paragraph 41.8 be modified to:**

Parts of St Briavels, in addition to the designated Conservation Area, are sensitive to change and there are no obvious opportunities for new building because the quality of the environment is particularly high. Any new development, including replacement buildings and uses, will be required to complement the character of the settlement.

Omission Site OH41.1 – Land West of Lower Road

Objection

120/52539

Ms C Blackwell

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 51.4 The sole outstanding objection to this chapter is that a field outside the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] to the west of Lower Road should be included in the settlement so that it could be developed for one or two underground houses. Given national policy to make the best use of land, not all the 1ha field would be needed for such a development, and I consider the objection on that basis.
- 51.5 However, the site is relatively prominent and, even if only part of the land were used, any residential development would have the effect of visibly changing the character of the countryside of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty outside the current DSB. This would result from associated domestic activity and facilities for access and amenity space, notwithstanding that, with the innovative design proposed, the evident bulk of the dwellings themselves would be minimised, and grazing could probably continue over the roofs!
- 51.6 I respect the objector’s view that there is other development outside the settlement reducing the sensitivity of the locality to change. However, I consider that the DSB has been logically drawn around the denser built-up area, and co-incident with the Conservation Area boundary not far north of the omission land. I note that the proposed dwellings could contribute to resident and tourist accommodation but I have not been made aware of any particular need for additional housing in the village, beyond infilling that could take place under policy (R)FH.4.
- 51.7 I can only conclude for these reasons that the objection should fail. At the same time, it is not the role of planning to stifle initiative where development, even in a rural area, would not harm interests of acknowledged importance. Even in the absence of policy provision for innovative development, any proposal would fall to be considered against the broad framework of the Plan together with any other material considerations.

Recommendation

- 51.8 **I recommend that the Land West of Lower Road be not included within the Defined Settlement Boundary nor allocated for development.**

Inset Map 41 - St Briavels

Objection

120/52539

Ms C Blackwell

Issues

Omission of land for housing.

Reasoning and Conclusions

51.9 I deal with the omission site above.

51.10 My sole recommendation is consequential upon my conclusions above in respect of policy (R)F.St Briavels 1.

Recommendation

51.11 **I recommend that Inset Map 41 be modified by deleting reference to policy (R)F.St Briavels 1.**

CHAPTER 42 - STAUNTON (COLEFORD)

Inset Map 42 - Staunton (Coleford)

Omission Site OH42.1 – Land at the White Horse Inn

Omission Site OH42.2 – Land off Wellmeadow

Objections

273/80037	Mr R Freshwater
616/50333	Mr & Mrs A Smoralek
746/52565	Rowan Edwards Planning

Issues

- a. Lack of Democracy
- b. Omission of lands for development.

Reasoning and Conclusions

52.2 I refer in the covering letter to this report to the charge of lack of democratic procedure in connection with changes to the Plan.

Omission Site OH42.1 – Land at the White Horse Inn

52.3 This rectangular site of about 0.1ha lies outside the western edge of the Staunton but is surrounded on three sides by residential development within the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB]. The site is gently inclined to the south and currently comprises the beer garden of the White Horse Inn. Within the site and on the southern and eastern boundary are mature hedgerows and several trees. The western boundary comprises a two metre high close-boarded wooden fence. The White Horse Inn is a two-storey building with an adjoining gravel car park. It is argued that the site should be included within an amended DSB. In response the Council consider that to do so could allow infill development that would be damaging to the special qualities of the conservation area, and compromise the open nature of this part of the village.

52.4 As a maintained beer garden the site exhibits residential characteristics more in common with neighbouring properties than with the land immediately to the west, which is rural in appearance. Significantly, the western boundary of the site is marked by a substantial, close-boarded fence. I note the Council’s concerns regarding development of the site being potentially damaging to the conservation area and adversely affecting the open character of the village. Nonetheless, I consider that the west boundary of the site provides a logical boundary to the settlement. I propose that the Defined Settlement Boundary be modified accordingly.

Omission Site OH42.2 – Land off Wellmeadow

52.5 The greenfield site lies outside the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] at the northern edge of Staunton and extends to about 2.1ha. Access is from the Wellmeadow cul-de-sac which comprises housing of various dates and styles. The site is within the Wye Valley AONB and adjacent the Staunton (Coleford) Conservation Area. There is public footpath running diagonally across the site. The site has a mainly south-facing aspect and the north and east boundaries adjoin Highmeadow Woods. There is an unmade track outside the western boundary and domestic gardens to the south.

- 52.6 The objectors have raised two issues. First, the Plan fails to identify that the site has planning consent for a hotel and a small number of dwellings, and second, in view of this fallback position, there should be no objection to the allocation of the site for housing. In reply the Council believe the site is not a suitable housing allocation, as it would result in a supply above and beyond the needs of the village and that it would therefore be inappropriate to amend the DSB to include the land.
- 52.7 The Plan text makes explicit reference to this consent, which dates from 1971. It would not be practical to represent all such permissions on the Proposals Maps, and records of this nature can be found in other documentation sources kept by the Council. Assessing the site’s sustainability potential, bus services and village facilities are limited in Staunton and, given the scale of the site and the distance to the nearest secondary school, main shops, and employment opportunities, any development would be likely to encourage a considerable increase in private vehicle trips, thereby not meeting the criteria of PPG3 paragraph 31. This coupled with the fact that the site is on greenfield land gives the site a low priority for development within the sequential approach outlined in paragraph 30 of PPG3.
- 52.8 Further, I consider that development as proposed would have a detrimental impact on the AONB, given its visually prominent location within the area. I do not consider that the potential implementation of the hotel consent is valid justification to favour housing, which would be likely to be more intensive. I conclude that the Defined Settlement Boundary should not be extended to include this site.

Recommendation

- 52.9 **I recommend that Inset Map 42 be modified by the realignment of the Defined Settlement Boundary to include the Land at the White Horse Inn as defined in Annex 8 to Document FOD/P7.2.**
- 52.10 **I recommend that the Land off Wellmeadow be not included within the Defined Settlement Boundary nor allocated for housing.**
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CHAPTER 43 - STAUNTON/CORSE

Policy (R)F.Staunton/Corse 1 – Housing Allocation Land off Chartist Way

Objections

104/52382	Mr R J & Mrs E M Beckley
104/52381	Mr R J & Mrs E M Beckley
133/52376	Mr & Mrs M J Bradbury
133/52375	Mr & Mrs M J Bradbury
155/52372	Mr G Bruce
155/52378	Mr G Bruce
155/52379	Mr G Bruce
315/51005	Robert Hitchins Limited
315/51007	Robert Hitchins Limited
320/52020	Mr S & Mrs D Harris
320/52026	Mr S & Mrs D Harris
320/52028	Mr S & Mrs D Harris
320/52030	Mr S & Mrs D Harris
420/52018	Mr R Lazenby
420/52006	Mr R Lazenby
456/52057	Mr G & Mrs A Mellor
456/52064	Mr G & Mrs A Mellor
479/52066	Mr G W Munro
566/50357	Miss B Rogers
595/52370	Mr E T & Mrs S I Shirley
595/52369	Mr E T & Mrs S I Shirley
662/53021	Mrs P Tracey
724/50108	Mr D I Wylie
724/50098	Mr D I Wylie
734/50945	Consolidated Rank Properties

Supporting Statements

169/50063	Mr J Carroll
170/50066	Mrs J Carroll
210/52035	Miss M S Dancey
315/51004	Robert Hitchins Limited
368/50071	Mrs M Jeffcutt
460/50392	Ms F Miles

Issues

- a. Principle of development with reference to local facilities and employment.
- b. Accessibility and public transport.
- c. Road access.
- d. Impact on adjacent Conservation Area.
- e. Affordable Housing provision.
- f. Flood risk.
- g. Wildlife protection with reference to loss of water-retaining meadow.

Reasoning and Conclusions

Principle of development

- 53.1 At the close of the Inquiry, planning permission had not been granted for this development as one objector believed.
- 53.2 The Local Plan allocates most new housing development in the District to the four main towns in accordance with sustainable development objectives which seek to concentrate development in locations with good access to employment, services and facilities by means other than the car. However PPG3 says that there should also be adequate housing provision in rural areas. Paragraph 70 of that document advises that a village will only be a suitable location for additional housing where it would support local services that could otherwise become unviable, or is needed to meet local needs such as affordable housing to secure a mixed and balanced community, and the development can be designed in keeping with the local character.
- 53.3 The proposed allocation is a greenfield site. However greenfield development is not excluded where, as here, there is a lack of suitable previously-developed land within existing settlements.
- 53.4 Staunton/Corse is a relatively large village in the lightly-populated north east corner of the District. It provides a range of facilities within walking or cycling distance of most residents including a primary school, shops, public houses, a surgery, a community centre, a village hall and a sports field. These facilities also serve those living in smaller settlements nearby. If there is a lack of education capacity, the policy requires an appropriate contribution from the development to enhance provision. There is no evidence before me on the current viability of these services but the wider trend to smaller household sizes and the restraint of development in smaller settlements would risk a decline in the population of the area, were there no new housing development. That could in turn affect the continued existence of these services. There is a little local employment, although many residents are likely to commute to work elsewhere. On weekdays there are nine return bus services daily to Gloucester, seven to Tewkesbury and two to Ledbury, providing access to employment and a wider choice of facilities. There is also a school bus to the nearest secondary school in Newent. These provide alternatives to reliance on car travel.
- 53.5 I conclude that the settlement is in principle a suitable location for housing development on the scale proposed, subject to the provision of an appropriate type of housing to meet local needs and to acceptable effects on the character and appearance of the area. These matters are considered below.

Conservation Area

- 53.6 As the former early 19th Century Chartist settlement of Snig’s End, Corse and Staunton are of particular historic interest and have a distinctive layout and appearance. This is characterised by single-storey dwellings in large plots separated by hedges in an open, flat landscape. This layout survives in those parts of the settlement which comprise the designated Conservation Area and which have been excluded from the Defined Settlement Boundary in the Plan. Elsewhere, including on this allocation site, the character has been changed over the years by the division or amalgamation of the original plots and by new built development. Such areas have deliberately been excluded from the Conservation Area. The area around Chartist Way and Prince Crescent now has a distinctly different character dominated by

relatively high-density two-storey residential estate development from the latter half of the 20th Century.

- 53.7 The character and appearance of the development proposed by the allocation would relate more closely to that of this latter area than to that of the Conservation Area which adjoins the site to the north. It would be historically dishonest and an inefficient use of land to seek to replicate here the single-storey, spacious character of the agriculture-based Chartist development. The Development Brief [LPD 35.33] indicates that open space could be located adjacent to the northern boundary to provide a buffer between the built development and the Conservation Area. Moreover, the adjacent part of the Conservation Area comprises the long under-used rear plots of Chartist dwellings in Ledbury Crescent. Distance, hedgerows and existing built development would limit long views of the development. In particular, the development would be little visible from Ledbury Crescent. I therefore consider that, suitably designed, the development would preserve the setting of the historic Conservation Area.

Affordable Housing

- 53.8 Affordable housing can be sought by the ‘negotiated share’ method under Policy (R)FH.12 of the Plan as part of market housing developments in order to make efficient use of limited public resources and to promote mixed and inclusive communities. The Housing Needs Survey identified a need in 1999 for 6 affordable dwellings in Staunton and Corse. Higher levels of need were identified in nearby North Forest parishes, but many lack the services and facilities necessary to support any new housing allocations. These figures exclude the Council Housing Waiting List and are only valid for 5 years from the date of survey. Additional needs can be anticipated to arise during the Plan period after that date, as a result of newly emerging households that cannot afford the generally high market prices in the North Forest.
- 53.9 To address these needs, the Council is seeking the provision of affordable housing as part of housing development in Newent and other towns and in all developments of 5 or more dwellings or more than 0.2ha in smaller settlements such as Staunton/Corse. I generally support this approach although I have recommended modifications to the affordable housing policies as set out in the Housing Chapter of the Local Plan.
- 53.10 Within this allocation, the proportion of affordable housing would be unlikely to exceed the 40% which is the Council’s usual upper limit for negotiated provision. With an estimated site capacity of 20 dwellings the proportion would thus be unlikely to exceed 8 affordable homes. This would only meet a small proportion of the combined estimated needs in Staunton/Corse and other nearby villages. However it would be unreasonable to require a higher proportion to be provided by this method. To delete the requirement or to provide that it would be an optional matter for negotiation in principle would undermine the planning objective to meet the housing needs of all parts of the community.
- 53.11 There is a lack of evidence before me to substantiate claims that the inclusion of affordable housing would substantially reduce property values, which are rarely a material planning consideration in any event, or would cause social or other problems.

Access

53.12 The proposed allocation would be an extension of a modern estate development with access via Chartist Way. Even with the development, that road would serve less than 100 dwellings, whereby there would be no Highway Authority requirement for a second or emergency access. There is a lack of evidence to substantiate claims that the development would result in other problems of congestion or highway danger. I note that current Highway Authority guidance would seek speed restraint features every 60 metres on Chartist Way and that these are currently lacking. Similarly there is a lack of evidence before me as to whether any traffic calming features would be justified on the A417 as a result of the development, as one objector suggests. These matters would be best considered at the development control stage.

Flooding

53.13 There is no evidence that the site lies within a recognised floodplain. However Paragraph 3.4 of the Development Brief [LPD.35.33] refers to potential drainage problems and indicates that measures will be required to prevent increased risk of flooding. I consider that it would be appropriate to include such measures in the policy requirements, but it does not justify the deletion of the allocation.

Wildlife

53.14 There is no evidence before me that particular species are present on the site which would be adversely affected. However should species or features of habitat interest be identified at the planning application stage, other policies in Chapter 8 of Part One of the Plan provide for them to be taken into account.

Recommendation

53.15 **I recommend that Policy (R)F.Staunton/Corse 1 be modified by the addition of the following requirement:**

- 6. Provide appropriate measures to ensure that flooding does not occur as a result of the proposed development.**

Omission Site OH43.1 – Enlargement of the Site off Chartist Way

Objection

315/51007

Robert Hitchins Limited

Reasoning and Conclusions

53.16 Document 315W proposes an enlargement of the site to provide a 2.6ha net developable area capable of accommodating 80 dwellings at a density of 31 dwellings per hectare, with a further 1ha of open space extending west as far as a distinctive watercourse. Document 315CC sets out an alternative proposal which would delete the open space area and incorporate open space instead within the housing area. The allocation proposed in the Plan is a greenfield site outside the built-up area. Both of the Objector’s proposals would further extend the settlement into open countryside and increase the amount of greenfield land taken into the Defined Settlement Boundary.

- 53.17 Document 315CC does not state the number of dwellings proposed for the smaller site but I estimate that it would accommodate about 40 dwellings, twice the Plan allocation. That would add a total of 10% to the village housing stock. The larger omission proposal would add 80 dwellings or 20%. The 80 dwelling proposal would be the largest in any village in the District and the largest proportional addition to any settlement except Lydney where the plan proposes a balanced provision of employment, and improved services and facilities. No such provision accompanies the Objector’s proposals and most residents would be likely to have to commute to work and to access some facilities elsewhere. The 40 dwelling proposal would have a proportionally reduced, but still significant, adverse impact on the need to travel.
- 53.18 I acknowledge that either development would be likely to increase custom for local shops and public houses. However there is a lack of evidence to show that this would be necessary to their continued viability. Neither is there evidence of adequate spare capacity in other infrastructure and local facilities.
- 53.19 I acknowledge that the enlarged allocations would potentially increase the amount of affordable housing to be provided. However, I consider that any need for additional housing would be better provided either in or adjacent to towns with good access to jobs, services and facilities by means other than the car, or by spreading provision across other villages that have a similar or greater level of services and accessibility as Staunton/Corse.
- 53.20 I acknowledge that the enhanced open space provision would help to address an identified local shortage. However in my judgement this does not outweigh other considerations or justify such a large housing development. Neither in the case of the 80-dwelling scheme is the open space arranged to reduce the impact of development on the adjacent Conservation Area, as set out in the Council’s Development Brief. I acknowledge that this is achieved in the 40-dwelling proposal, however that does not clearly address how a second or emergency access might be achieved as required by the Highway Authority’s guidance to avoid Chartist Way providing the only access to more than 100 dwellings.
- 53.21 I conclude that Staunton/Corse is an inappropriate location in principle for an additional development of either 40 or 80 dwellings as proposed, due to the limited range of local employment, facilities and services and the likely need to travel to employment and facilities elsewhere. In addition, the 80 dwelling scheme would risk an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the adjoining Conservation Area. These conclusions are not outweighed by other factors.

Recommendation

- 53.22 **I recommend no enlargement of the Site off Chartist Way under Policy (R)F.Staunton/Corse 1.**
-

Omission Site OH43.2

Land off Princes Crescent/Jubilee Place adjoining Stone Road

Objection

734/50945 Consolidated Rank Properties
734/50948 Consolidated Rank Properties

Reasoning and Conclusions

53.23 I have concluded above in relation to a proposed extension to the Chartist Way site [Omission site OH43.1] that Staunton/Corse is an inappropriate location for further housing allocations in the Plan period beyond, that allocated by policy (R)F.Staunton/Corse 1. However this greenfield site is proposed by the objector as an alternative to the Chartist Way allocation.

53.24 Compared to the Chartist Way site I consider this omission site to be an inferior location for development for the following reasons. Firstly the site would be less contained by existing built development and would extend the settlement further into open countryside. This is a prominent location which is clearly seen from public footpaths and open countryside to the west and the development would be intrusive in the landscape. Secondly, the site is further than the Chartist Way site from village services and facilities and bus services and would be likely to encourage greater use of the car. For similar reasons, the area of open space proposed as part of the development would also be less accessible to village residents than would that indicated in the development brief for the Chartist Way site. Thirdly the access road is of an inferior standard to that of Chartist Way in respect of its width and alignment. Fourthly and finally, although this site does not adjoin the Conservation Area, the southern part of the site is close to a listed building which is one of the former Chartist cottages and development there would risk detracting from the setting of that building.

Recommendation

53.25 **I recommend that the Land off Princes Crescent/Jubilee Place be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Staunton/Corse.**

Omission Site OH43.3 – Land adjacent to Corse Grange

Objection

739/52001 JHS Land

Reasoning and Conclusions

53.26 The proposal is to intensify residential development of a 0.7ha site, currently in part use for haulage processing and storage of inert materials, but having planning permission for three dwellings at the rear of Corse Grange toward the south east of the settlement. The site is outside the Defined Settlement Boundary but inside the Snigs End Conservation Area [Appraisal adopted 2001 – LPD25]

- 53.27 I have concluded above in relation to a proposed extension to the Chartist Way site [Omission site OH43.1] that Staunton/Corse is an inappropriate location for further housing allocations in the Plan period beyond the scale of that allocated by policy (R)F.Staunton/Corse 1. I have rejected an alternative site proposed off Princes Crescent and Jubilee Place [Omission Site OH43.2]. However, given the fallback position of three dwellings permitted over land already accommodating some commercial activity, this site deserves assessment on its own merits as a further possible choice with a capacity of about 20 dwellings to provide an appropriate level of housing in the village at the accepted minimum density of 30 units per hectare.
- 53.28 I acknowledge that the site is comparatively concealed in general views compared with the open land allocated off Chartist Way, and that its development as proposed might bring the benefit of improved and safer access off the main road through the village. In addition there would be potential revenue to improve Corse Grange itself. The objectors also offer to include another 0.6ha of land to the south of the site as public open space.
- 53.29 However, higher density development than that already permitted, whilst using the land more efficiently in line with government policy, would still harmfully detract from the characteristic, open-textured, Chartist development pattern of this part of the Conservation Area, drawn specifically to preserve it. It follows that the as proposed would could not be satisfactorily integrated into the settlement nor be compatible with its form and character. I conclude that, notwithstanding accepted mitigating factors and benefits, intensified development of the omission land would be unacceptable.
- 53.30 My preference therefore remains for the Chartist Way allocation where a modern urban extension can be made to the Defined Settlement Boundary consistent with the existing adjacent development within it. By contrast, in addition to harming the Conservation Area, the Corse Grange site lies comparatively remote from the main part of the Defined Settlement and its community facilities and performs less well in terms of established principles of sustainability.

Recommendation

- 53.31 **I recommend that the Land at Corse Grange be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Staunton/Corse.**
-

Inset Map 43 - Staunton/Corse

Objections

104/52381	Mr R J & Mrs E M Beckley
133/52375	Mr & Mrs M J Bradbury
320/52026	Mr S & Mrs D Harris
420/52006	Mr R Lazenby
456/52064	Mr G & Mrs A Mellor
479/52066	Mr G W Munro
566/50357	Miss B Rogers
595/52369	Mr E T & Mrs S I Shirley
724/50098	Mr D I Wylie
734/50948	Consolidated Rank Properties
739/52001	JHS Land

Supporting Statements

169/50065	Mr J Carroll
170/50069	Mrs J Carroll
210/52036	Miss M S Dancey
368/50073	Mrs M Jeffcutt
460/50389	Ms F Miles

Reasoning and Conclusions

53.32 I deal with all these objections.

Recommendation

53.33 **I recommend no modification to Inset Map 43.**

CHAPTER 45 - TUTSHILL AND SEDBURY

Omission Site OH45.1 – Land at the Vicarage, Gloucester Road, Tidenham Objections

29/51317

Diocese of Gloucester

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 55.1 The Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] around this and other settlements in the Local Plan serves to distinguish from the countryside those areas where most development is to be concentrated. In particular, the DSB for Tutshill and Sedbury would in principle permit housing developments in groups of up to 12 dwellings, subject to criteria, which would not be permitted in the open countryside. Policy (R)FNE.1 seeks to strictly control development in the open countryside and would not permit general housing development there.
- 55.2 The Vicarage is a detached house set in a garden that is larger than those of most nearby houses. Extensive tree planting to all boundaries almost conceals the house from public view, particularly in summer but also in winter. The site thus appears as a small area of woodland when seen from a distance. Only a glimpsed view of the house is available along the entrance drive. The Vicarage and its curtilage are separated from all other built development by two roads with broad verges. I consider that the property appears more closely related to the attractive rural landscape to the north and east than to the relatively dense suburban development across Elm Road or to the on-going housing estate development across Gloucester Road which itself directly adjoins existing development to the west. Were the site to be included within the DSB, I consider that the more intense development which this would make possible would be likely to intrude on, and detract from, the rural landscape of the countryside. I do not consider the site is similar to either of the sites which were added to the DSB at the Revised Deposit stage.

Recommendation

- 55.3 **I recommend that the Land at the Vicarage, Gloucester Road, Tidenham, be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary.**

Omission Site OH45.2 Land at the junction of the A48 and B4228 Gloucester Road

Objections

134/52274

Messrs Bradley

Issues

- a. Strategic approach to development in Tutshill and Sedbury.
- b. Relationship to urban settlement of Tutshill and Chepstow.
- c. Loss of greenfield farmland.
- d. Visual impact.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 55.4 In connection with Part 1 Chapter 1, I find that the broad strategic distribution of development in the Plan is appropriate in terms of regional and Structure Plan policy but in Part 1 Chapter 2, I conclude that that some additional sites should be allocated in the larger of the settlements outside the four main towns. I confine myself here to assessing the particular settlement characteristics of Tutshill and potential effects of the proposed development of the omission site, comprising green farmland between the grounds of Bigstone at the eastern extremity of the Defined Settlement Boundary and the B4228 link road to the A48. The Council estimate its capacity as 76 dwellings.
- 55.5 Whilst past proposals for substantial development in Tutshill and Sedbury are not of direct concern to my consideration of the present objection, it is certainly of note that these two conjoined settlements have attracted considerations for expansion with their substantial level of community facilities commensurate with their 3500 population. Size alone places Tutshill/Sedbury in a class of its own, being midway between the smallest of the four main towns, Newent with 4500 residents, and the largest village of Bream, with about 2500 residents. In addition Tutshill and Sedbury are only separated from Chepstow by the River Wye and are directly linked by road to the town and its community and public transport facilities, as well as to the nearby M4 motorway. These factors make Tutshill/Sedbury unique in the District. It must be accepted that Chepstow is not part of the District and is subject to separate development plan provisions. However, its proximity means that Tutshill/Sedbury are a candidate for sustainable residential development on suitable sites where a need is identified.
- 55.6 I turn therefore to the omission site itself. Plainly it is open farmland contributing to the rural scene outside the established settlement of Tutshill and should not be developed if there is an alternative previously developed site to accommodate an identified need for new housing. However, the site is severed from other farmland by the B4228 and I have not seen evidence that its loss to agriculture would be critical. Nor have I been made aware of available previously developed sites inside the settlement.
- 55.7 There is no doubt that to develop the land would create a visually intrusive urban extension beyond the adjacent permitted housing site at Bigstone, right up to Gloucester Road. However, I consider that with sympathetic landscaping this could be integrated into the existing settlement, relying on the road as a distinctive and defensible boundary to built development, and obviating any overriding landscape objection. That is not to say that I disagree with the sentiments of the Inspector who dismissed a housing proposal here at appeal in 1989; but that decision was made on the basis of the settlement boundary adopted at the time and it is my role now to review that boundary in the light of present circumstances.
- 55.8 It is my overall conclusion that the omission land east of the Defined Settlement Boundary and west of the B4228 offers a potential opportunity for acceptable residential development. However, taking into account the potential expansion of the settlement at Bigstone adjacent, and due to its greenfield status and substantial size, it should not be allocated at this stage.

Recommendation

55.9 **I recommend that the Land at the junction of the A48 and B4228 Gloucester Road be not allocated for development nor included within the Defined Settlement Boundary of Tutshill/Sedbury.**

Inset Map 45 - Tutshill and Sedbury

Objections

29/51317	Diocese of Gloucester
134/52274	Messrs Bradley
377/52288	Mrs Johnson
400/50036	Ms D S Jovasevic
503/50035	Ms D M Olech

Issues

- a. Defined Settlement Boundary at Whirls End, Sedbury.
- b. Defined Settlement Boundary adjacent to Cliff Meadow, Beachley Road
- c. Omission sites at the Vicarage and at the junction of the A48 and B4228 Gloucester Road for residential development.

Reasoning and Conclusions

55.10 Revised Deposit revisions to the Defined Settlement Boundary appear to meet the objections regarding lands adjacent to Cliff Meadow and Whirls End.

55.11 I deal with omission sites above.

Recommendation

55.12 **I recommend no modification to Inset Map 45.**

CHAPTER 47 - UPPER SOUDLEY

Policy (R)F.Soudley 1 – Restriction on Development

Objections

None

Issues

Justification for the restriction.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 57.1 On consideration of the Plan as a whole I have reached the conclusion, for reasons set out after policy (R)FBE.1 in Part 1 Chapter 6 of this report, that the Restriction on Development policies are inappropriate and that due protection is accorded the settlement areas concerned by policy (R)FBE.1 when read in conjunction with the descriptive text for each settlement in Part 2. For general consistency I therefore recommend below the deletion of policy (R)F.Soudley.1.
- 57.2 The supporting text acknowledges the historic development of the settlement in terms of its relationship to the Statutory Forest within the Forest Ring. There is particular reference to an area between Tramway Road and the settlement boundary retaining the traditional forest settlement form of dispersed and randomly juxtaposed buildings with limited access. In my judgement, text para 47.6 sets down an appropriately balanced approach that contemplates small scale new development in certain circumstances, and thus duly supplements the provisions of policy (R)FBE.1. However, I regard these considerations as applying to all development, not only residential, and the essence of para 47.6, should be moved above the heading Housing, and the section headed Development Strategy should refer also to Settlement Character, with commensurate amendments.

Recommendation

- 57.3 **I recommend that the heading ‘Settlement Strategy’ be modified to ‘Development Strategy and Settlement Character’.**
- 57.4 **I recommend that Paragraph 47.4 be modified by deleting the final sentence.**
- 57.5 **I recommend that the heading ‘Housing’ be placed immediately above policy (R)F.Soudley 2.**
- 57.6 **I recommend that the subheading ‘Restriction on Development’ and Policy (R)F.Soudley 1 be deleted.**
- 57.7 **I recommend that Paragraph 47.6 be modified to:**
- An area of the village south of Tramway Road [*... retain existing wording between ‘Tramway Road’ ... and ... ‘worthy of retention.’*] Any new development, including residential infilling, will be required to complement the characteristic open and sporadic pattern of this area.’**

Policy (R)F.Soudley 2 – Former Coach Depot

Objections

6/70380	Barratt Bristol
216/52452	Environment Agency
521/70485	Mr A Perry
803/70258	Ms Y Migliavacca

Issues

- a. Visual intrusion into the countryside.
- b. Development density and local character.
- c. Effect on Cinderford Brook and Soudley Brook.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 57.8 I conclude in relation to Part 1 Chapter 1 of the Plan that the locational strategy of new development in the Plan is broadly appropriate having regard to national, regional and Structure Plan policy, including the priority given to re-using previously-developed land. In Part 1 Chapter 2, I identify a need for additional village housing allocations.
- 57.9 In that context I regard the previously developed land of the vacant former coach depot on the north side of Soudley as a clear candidate for redevelopment, subject to any proposals satisfying other planning criteria. I recognise the distinct and mainly open texture of Upper Soudley within the Forest ring, where the character of both the built settlement and the tightly surrounding Forest landscape should be protected, as set down in text paras 47.1-5, subject to my comments above on policy (R)F.Soudley 1.
- 57.10 I am satisfied that in principle a suitable small housing scheme could be designed, incorporating substantial landscaping to assist visual integration with both the fabric of the village and the wooded landscape. I see no reason why such a development could not provide acceptable access and off-street parking, private space and energy efficiency. Despite the comparatively narrow village roads, I do not consider that a modest new development would generate unacceptable traffic or congestion, especially compared with the existing coach depot use. The development would be close to the limited community facilities of the village and, in the opinion of the Council, likely to be of interest to new households formed from the present population, especially given a proportion of affordable homes. Being also not very far from the urban centre of Cinderford, the development could be regarded as reasonably sustainable, with the added advantage of bringing the land back into worthwhile use.
- 57.11 However, I agree with certain objectors that development density would be a critical aspect of any design. Design quality is a strongly material factor in deciding any planning application and in practice it may be found that as many as 10 dwellings might not fit onto the site whilst at the same time fulfilling the aim of protecting local character. Notwithstanding the drive to maximise land use with densities no lower than 30 units per hectare, I consider that other design factors could be the overriding consideration in this particular case. The outcome depends on what proposals come forward. I conclude that potential developers and the Council need greater flexibility

in submitting and assessing any design, by way of a reduced lower limit on the number of dwellings in the policy. I consider that this can be achieved simply by making the allocation for ‘up to 10 dwellings’. [For the strict sole purpose of calculating land supply, I assume a figure of 6.]

57.12 I consider that the interest of the Cinderford Brook and Soudley Brook bordering the site are properly safeguarded by the last sentence of text para 47.7.

Recommendation

57.13 **I recommend** that Policy (R)F.Soudley.2 be modified by inserting the words ‘up to’ before ‘10 dwellings’.

57.14 **I recommend** that paragraph 47.7 be modified by deleting ‘approximately’ and substituting ‘up to’ before ‘10 dwellings’.

Inset Map 47 - Upper Soudley

Objections

111/51096	Mr Bevan
803/70259	Ms Y Migliavacca

Issues

- a. Omission of coach depot for housing.
- b. Development density at coach depot site.

Reasoning and Conclusions

57.15 Both these objections are covered above.

57.16 In consequence of my consideration of policy (R)F.Soudley 1, I make the following recommendation.

Recommendation

57.17 **I recommend** that Inset Map 47 be modified by deleting the reference to Policy (R)F.Soudley.

CHAPTER 48 - WESTBURY ON SEVERN

Policy (R)F.Westbury 1 and Omission Site OH48.1 Housing Allocation – The Coalyard

Objections

628/52211	Mr & Mrs Sterry
628/52213	Mr & Mrs Sterry
679/51925	Westbury on Severn Parish Council

Supporting Statement

628/52210	Mr & Mrs Sterry
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Issues

- a. Principle of the allocation.
- b. Proposal to extend the allocation.
- c. Effect on character and appearance of Westbury on Severn Conservation Area.
- d. Road Safety.
- e. Flood risk.
- f. Affordable housing.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 58.1 The Council proposes Voluntary Change 8 [LPD75] to extend this Revised Deposit allocation beyond a present landscaped bank to the western side of the Westbury Brook to enable the site to accommodate the full allocation of 10 units, in addition as well as two houses already permitted. The landowners contend that this will not provide enough space for 10 dwellings and propose a further extension northward at least as far as the back wall of an existing outbuilding on the site. They further contend that additional land north as far as a distinct field boundary be included as a justified extension to the allocation.
- 58.2 I consider first the original allocation and then the Council’s proposed eastward extension in the light of objections by the Parish Council. I then go on to consider the landowners larger omission site, and finally their compromise smaller extension, contained within it.
- 58.3 I conclude in relation to Part 1 Chapter 1 that the locational strategy of new development in the Plan is broadly appropriate having regard to national, regional and Structure Plan policy, including the priority to using previously developed land. In Part 1 Chapter 2, I identify a need for village housing allocations. In that context I accept that the part-previously-developed Coalyard, at the eastern fringe of the village boundary, is a candidate for residential development.
- 58.4 However, much of Westbury is a Conservation Area extending well beyond the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] at the Coalyard to include outlying meadows. The development pattern is mainly linear with frontage dwellings on both sides of the main road. There is some departure from that, in particular the residential cul de sac Colchester Close but that is outside the Conservation Area. Much care would be needed in the design of any development to ensure the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with

established legal and planning policy provisions. I am satisfied that the land originally allocated, together with the extension proposed by the Council, could be acceptably developed in this respect. The Brook would form a clear and defensible boundary within the Conservation Area and the site could be re-landscaped to provide visual integration.

- 58.5 However, to extend development to the further, northern extent proposed would place domestic dwellings and gardens hard against the Conservation Area boundary with the outlying open countryside. This would create a comparatively harsh and widely visible urban edge, at the same time making a significant departure from the linear settlement pattern that would be obvious from the main eastern approach to the village. I consider that this would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and the Conservation Area as a whole, and for that reason alone the site should not be extended in this way.
- 58.6 Nevertheless, if development were extended only as far north as the current buildings on the site as illustrated by the landowners at the Inquiry, it would be seen from the east against other buildings as a far less prominent addition to the settlement. Sympathetically designed to a good standard, I believe such development could avoid harm to planning interests. Accordingly I support the extension of the allocation also northward to the line of the back wall of the outbuilding where there is a discontinuity in the side boundary, as shown on the plan attached to Document 628D. I make corresponding recommendation concerning the Inset Map. I do not propose to increase the stated number of about 10 dwellings, however, as a lower density would seem to me better to reflect the local development pattern.
- 58.7 I am satisfied that the traffic generated by the relatively modest number of dwellings contemplated on the land could be accommodated via an access road built to accepted standards of layout and visibility.
- 58.8 I recognise that the land is in the Westbury Brook flood plain but a Flood Risk Assessment submitted by the landowners [Document 628C] concludes that the buildings would lie above the level of a 1 in 100 year flood when access would not be seriously compromised. Any design would need to consider the need for flood risk and compensation measures, and an express criterion should state this, but in my opinion there is no substantial objection to the allocation in respect of flood risk.
- 58.9 Finally, I deal with affordable housing provision in connection with policies (R)FH.12-13 and I regard criterion 2 as a sufficient reminder that an appropriate element of affordable housing is to be negotiated on the basis of those policies.

Recommendation

- 58.10 **I recommend that policy (R)F.Westbury 1 be modified by the addition of a fifth criterion as follows:**

5. Any proposal must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment and incorporate any necessary flood prevention measures.

Omission Site OH48.2 – Land adjacent to the A48

Objection

723/52941

Mr R Worlock

Reasoning and Conclusions

58.11 The land in question is undeveloped pasture, prominently visible on the north eastern side of the A48 as it approaches Westbury and enters the Conservation Area from the north west. As such it contributes to the setting of the Conservation Area and to develop it would make a major departure from the linear settlement pattern and create an inappropriately abrupt change from countryside to village where presently there is a gradual transition across the omission land. I consider that this would be damaging to the Conservation Area as a whole. I have not seen overriding evidence of local need for housing and conclude that the land should not be allocated for development.

Recommendation

58.12 **I recommend that the Land adjacent to the A48 be not allocated for development.**

Omission Site OH48.3 – Land at Wintles Hill

Objection

679/51928

Westbury on Severn Parish Council

Reasoning and Conclusions

58.13 The Parish Council identify land evidently in use in association with present development at Wintles Hill across the A48 from Stantway east of Westbury for affordable housing as an alternative to the Coalyard site [policy (R)F.Westbury 1 and Omission Site OH48.1]. Given my recommendation above to retain and enlarge the Coalyard allocation the question of an alternative does not arise. However, I consider the omission site in its own right and bring together my conclusions on the settlement of Stantway under policy (R)FH.6 in Part 1 Chapter 2.

58.14 Whatever the present use of the land may be, it is detached from the Westbury, or any other, settlement boundary and is unsuitable for specific allocation for residential development due its rural location. Policy (R)FH.14 excludes the development of affordable housing on exception sites which are not within or adjoining defined settlement boundaries. Any proposal for affordable housing as an exception would not justify specific allocation in any event. Any proposal for affordable housing as an exception would not justify specific allocation in any event.

Recommendation

58.15 **I recommend that the land at Wintles Hill be not allocated for development.**

Inset Map 48 - Westbury on Severn

Objections

628/52213	Mr & Mrs Sterry
723/52941	Mr R Worlock

Issues

- a. Enlargement of allocation at the Coalyard.
- b. Omission of Land adjacent to A48.

Reasoning and Conclusions

58.16 Both these site-specific objections are dealt with in connection with policy (R)F.Westbury 1 and Omission sites OH48.1 and 2 above, and my only recommendation for the Westbury Inset Map is consequent upon the conclusions I reach on The Coalyard site .

Recommendation

58.17 **I recommend that the site of Policy (R)F.Westbury 1 – Housing at the Coalyard – be enlarged as shown on the plan attached to Document 628D.**

CHAPTER 49 – WHITECROFT and PILLOWELL

General

Objections

273/52569	Mr R Freshwater
394/70611	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
422/52684	West Dean Parish Council
697/52714	Mr T Wiffin
833/70626	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70656	Mr B Whittington
837/70694	Clearwell Caves

Issues

- a. Legal status of Statutory Forest land.
- b. The boundary between Pillowell and Yorkley.
- c. Employment or housing development at the Scotts [Kears] Bakery site
- d. The Defined Settlement Boundary should be amended to include land at Park Hill, Whitecroft. (ORX) [697/52714]

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 59.1 I have recommended elsewhere that the boundary of the Statutory Forest be shown on the Proposals Map and that Policy (R)FBE.8 be amended to apply generally to Forest Waste and other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest. Privately owned land in the Statutory Forest is not subject to the same statutory Forest laws and I conclude that it would be misleading to insert the statement sought by the objectors. The statutory Forest location can be mentioned in text para 49.1 by a simple insertion.
- 59.2 For reasons I explain below in connection with Inset Map 49, I propose no modification to the boundary of Pillowell with Yorkley and I deal with the Scotts [Kears] Bakery site in this chapter as part of Pillowell, referring to it as Omission Site OE/H49.1 I deal with the land at Park Hill below as Omission site OH49.3.

Recommendation

- 59.3 **I recommend that the fourth sentence of Paragraph 40.1 be modified by inserting ‘Statutory’ before ‘Forest’.**

Policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 1 – Pillowell – Residential Development

Objections

406/52169	H Kear Esq
540/52782	Mr F Rainer

Supporting Statements

540/52783	Mr F Rainer
847/70771	Mr J Kendrick

Issues

- a. Employment or residential use of the Scotts/Kears Bakery site.

- b. Justification for Restriction on Development provision.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 59.4 I deal with the Scotts [Kears] Bakery site in this chapter as part of Pillowell, referring to it as Omission Site OE/H49.1
- 59.5 On consideration of the Plan as a whole I have reached the general conclusion, for reasons set out after policy (R)FBE.1 in Part 1 Chapter 6 of this report, that the Restriction on Development policies are inappropriate and that due protection is accorded the settlement areas concerned by other policies including (R)FBE.1 when read in conjunction with the descriptive text for each settlement in Part 2. For general consistency I therefore recommend below the deletion of policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 1.
- 59.6 In the particular case of Pillowell most of the area where the Council is concerned to resist new development is a designated Conservation Area in any event, and thus accorded special protection in respect of character and appearance. The supporting text sets down an appropriately balanced approach that contemplates small scale new development in and beyond the Conservation Area in certain circumstances, and thus duly supplements the provisions of policy (R)FBE.1. However, I regard these considerations as applying to all development, not only residential. The heading Housing should also be deleted and the text modified accordingly. The section headed Development Strategy should refer also to Settlement Character.

Recommendation

- 59.7 **I recommend that the heading ‘Settlement Strategy’ be modified to ‘Development Strategy and Settlement Character’.**
- 59.8 **I recommend that the heading ‘Housing’ and Policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 1 be deleted.**
- 59.9 **I recommend that Paragraphs 49.9 and 49.10 be deleted and replaced by:**
- Most of Pillowell is a designated Conservation Area which exemplifies the sporadic and open pattern of development in the Forest Ring of settlements. Its buildings are set within a framework of open areas which include Forest Waste, woodland, paddocks, small agricultural enclosures, large gardens and amenity spaces. All development will be expected to complement the established character of the settlement.**

Policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 2 – Employment Areas - Safeguarding

Objection

41/51175

Countryside Agency

Issues

Landscape impact and protective status.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 59.10 This policy concerns safeguarding employment land use and needs no embellishment with respect to surrounding landscape quality, irrespective whether it has special

protection. Sufficient control over the environmental effects of development on established employment sites is afforded by policy (R)FE.2 as well as the landscape protection provisions of policy (R)FNE.2, subject to my conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 8 of Part 1.

Recommendation

59.11 **I recommend no modification to Policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 2.**

Omission Site OEH49.1 - Scotts [Kears] Bakery Site

Objections

273/52569	Mr R Freshwater
406/52169	Mr H Kear
540/52782	Mr F Rainer

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 59.12 The omission lands comprise the existing bakery site and the adjacent Important Open Area [IOA], all within the Defined Settlement Boundary of Pillowell where the built settlement is contiguous with Yorkley.
- 59.13 I share the opinion of the Council that the IOA serves as an important link between the countryside of the Statutory Forest and the dispersed Forest Ring settlements of Pillowell and Yorkley. Highly visible at the edge of the settlement, it contributes positively to local amenity and character, especially as it is also within the Pillowell Conservation Area. I conclude that this part of the omission land should retain its IOA status in the Plan.
- 59.14 Turning to the bakery itself, this is evidently vacant and potentially difficult to bring into better use due to highway access problems and the age and disposition of the buildings. The options exist to redevelop the site for employment or for housing, including elderly persons’ or affordable homes. Either would bring improvements to the local infrastructure. I therefore sympathise with objectors who wish to see such enhancement.
- 59.15 However, the site falls under the purview of two policies favouring such redevelopment in appropriate circumstances. Policy (R)FE.2 permits new business on employment sites and, more significantly, (R)FE.3, modified as I recommend, clearly contemplates changes out of employment use precisely when environmental problems or lack of re-use for employment militate in favour of redevelopment. I consider this to be a sufficient level of policy provision for this site on current evidence. However, the site plainly engages local opinion as to its future identity, and the Council should make a point of reassessing its potential in the next Plan review, if it remains under-used.

Recommendation

59.16 **I recommend no modification to the Important Open Area adjacent to Scotts/Kears Bakery.**

59.17 **I recommend no specific allocation of the Scotts/Kears Bakery site.**

59.18 **I recommend the Council to undertake a detailed assessment of the potential for redevelopment of the Scotts/Kears Bakery site as part of the next review of the Plan.**

Omission Site OH49.2 – Land at Banks Tump

Objection

448/51787

Mr R W McKernon

Reasoning and Conclusions

59.19 This site is outside the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] but inside the Conservation Area where the dispersed character of the Forest Ring settlement of Pillowell is specially protected. The site is prominent and visually associated with surrounding low density development also outside the DSB, and separated from the main part of the village by an open area. As such, the omission land is an important part of the fringe area of sporadic development, which I consider to be rightly excluded from the DSB. I judge that to develop it would have an unacceptably harmful impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area as whole.

Recommendation

59.20 **I recommend that the Land at Banks Tump be not allocated for development.**

Omission Site OH49.3 – Land at Park Hill, Whitecroft

Objection

697/52713

Mr T Wiffin

Reasoning and Conclusions

59.21 Although it might have been partially developed, this heavily wooded enclosure, opposite the property Oakdene, is detached from the settlement and unsuitable for inclusion in the Defined Settlement Boundary due to potential intrusion into the rural landscape, of which it clearly forms a part.

Recommendation

59.22 **I recommend that the Land at Park Hill be not allocated for development.**

Inset Map 49 - Whitecroft and Pillowell

Objections

273/52582

Mr R Freshwater

309/52965

Mr R P & Mrs P M Gwynne

422/52682

West Dean Parish Council

448/51787

Mr R W McKernon

489/52641

Ms S Newton

492/52425

Mr B J Norris

540/52781

Mr F Rainer

697/52713

Mr T Wiffin

Supporting Statement

28/70308

Forest of Dean Railway Company Ltd

Issues

- a. The boundary between Pillowell and Yorkley.
- b. Potential redevelopment of the Scotts/Kears Bakery site and adjacent Important Open Area.
- c. Omission from the Defined Settlement Boundary of land for development at Banks Tump and at Park Hill.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 59.23 With regard to the matter of the boundary between Pillowell on Inset Map 49 and Yorkley on Inset Map 53, and in particular the location of the Scotts [Kears] bakery site; tangible boundary features of road signs and street names indicate that the bakery is in Yorkley, but this Chapter and Chapter 53 place it in Pillowell. The Council should recognise strong local sensitivities about this and take steps to rationalise the position. However, in practice the precise boundary is somewhat academic where a major characteristic of this part of the Forest District is that settlements form a virtually continuous ring. In this instance I accept the Council’s explanation that Kear’s Field is important to the setting of the Pillowell Conservation area and is logically encompassed on the Pillowell side of the settlement boundary line along with the associated Bakery.
- 59.24 I therefore deal with Scotts [Kears] Bakery site in this chapter as Omission Site OH/E49.1, together with two other omission sites arising from objections to Inset Map 49.
- 59.25 I deal with omission sites above.
- 59.26 I make a recommendation consequent upon my consideration of policy (R)F. Whitecroft/Pillowell 1.

Recommendation

- 59.27 **I recommend no modification to the Defined Settlement Boundary on Inset Map 49 but I recommend the Council in the next Plan review to rationalise as far as possible the inconsistency between visible ground features and the definition of the Defined Settlement Boundary between Pillowell and Yorkley on the Inset Maps.**
- 59.28 **I recommend that Inset Map 49 be modified by deleting reference to policy (R)F.Whitecroft/Pillowell 1.**

CHAPTER 50 - WOODCROFT

Omission Site OH50.1 – Land to the West of the B4228

Objection

37/51792

RMC Group Services Ltd

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 60.1 Woodcroft is a small settlement with little employment and very few services and is reliant on Chepstow and other settlements in these respects. These factors and the location of part of the settlement within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty make it an unsuitable location for significant new housing development.
- 60.2 The Omission Site lies to the north west of the Defined Settlement and just within the AONB where national policy as well as Policy (R)FNE.4 give priority to the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. The site is greenfield land comprising three fields in agricultural use and extends to about 0.9ha. It can be seen from the adjoining B road and from two adjoining public footpaths. Housing development on the site would intrude into open countryside and would fail to conserve the natural beauty of the landscape. The Plan makes adequate provision for housing development in more appropriate locations and there is no overriding local social or economic need for the development.

Recommendation

- 60.3 **I recommend that the Land to the West of the B4228 be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woodcroft.**

Omission Site OH37.2 – Land at Hoyle Old School Lane

Objection

135/50369

Mr D Bradshaw (Inset Map 50)

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 60.4 For the same reasons I set out above in connection with Omission Site OH50.1, Woodcroft is an unsuitable location for significant new housing development. Although described by the Council as forming part of the curtilage of a residential property, the site appears to be largely overgrown and not in active use. It is thus at best arguable whether it does form part of a residential curtilage or thereby qualifies as previously-developed land in terms of Annex C of PPG3. The site adjoins the western side of the Defined Settlement Boundary and is within the AONB where priority is given to the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape.
- 60.5 The site can be seen from public footpaths on two sides. Even in its overgrown and disused condition, the site contributes positively to the informal rural character of the natural landscape. Housing development on the site would intrude into open countryside and fail to conserve the landscape of the AONB. The Plan makes adequate provision for housing development in more appropriate locations and there is no overriding local social or economic need for the development.

Recommendation

- 60.6 **I recommend that the Land at Hoyle Old School Lane be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woodcroft.**
-

Omission Site OH37.3 – Woodcroft Quarry**Objection**

741/52401

Matthews & Son

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 60.7 The proposal is to amend the Defined Settlement Boundary to permit the erection of one dwelling to supervise the use of the quarry for rock-climbing. The site is north west of and separated from the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] by the intervening land comprising Omission Sites OH37.1 and OH37.2, neither of which I support. In this countryside location, Policy (R)FH.6 would only permit new dwellings where they are essential to the efficient operation of agricultural or forestry. Policy (R)FTRL.2 does allow for tourism, recreation and leisure development in the countryside but subject to criteria which, exclude permanent or principal places of residence.
- 60.8 At the Inquiry the objector acknowledged that the proposed dwelling would likely be visible in its skyline location from the River Wye. It would also be seen from the adjacent public footpath. I consider that development here would intrude into the landscape and detract from the natural beauty of the AONB. I consider that attempts to screen the development would be unlikely to be effective or permanent.
- 60.9 The quarry is already in use for rock climbing and is stated to have been so used for some 25-30 years. I acknowledge that there is a problem with unauthorised access although it appeared that there would be scope to improve the security fencing near the entrance. No evidence has been presented of any accidents or injuries which have occurred in that period which would have been avoided had there been a dwelling on site. The objector conceded that climbers usually climb in company. They could thus rely on companions for assistance in the event of a fall or other accident. The objector acknowledged that the climbing activity would not support a self-sufficient business. Thus, even if there were a dwelling on this site, it would not be occupied at all times, as the occupier would need to leave the site for work or other purposes.
- 60.10 I conclude that there is insufficient justification to make provision in the Plan for a dwelling on this site.

Recommendation

- 60.11 **I recommend that Woodcroft Quarry be not allocated for development nor included in the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woodcroft.**
-

Inset Map 50 - Woodcroft

Objections

37/51792	RMC Group Services Ltd
135/50369	Mr D Bradshaw
741/52401	Matthews & Son

Issues

Omission of lands for development.

Reasoning and Conclusions

60.12 I deal with these objections in connection with omission sites above.

Recommendation

60.13 **I recommend no modification Inset Map 37.**

CHAPTER 51 - WOOLASTON (INCLUDING NETHEREND)

General

Objection

10/51815 Woolaston Parish Council

Issues

Factual errors in the text

Reasoning and Conclusions

61.1 The Council has suggested an alteration to the text of the second sentence of Paragraph 51.1 which goes some way to meeting the Parish Council’s concerns and should be made. As regards other inaccuracies highlighted by the Parish Council, I do not consider that text para 51.1 needs further alteration concerning the historic development pattern of the village. However, identification of the Netherend Farm housing allocation as being to the west of the village is misleading and the text should be amended accordingly. On the accuracy of information about numbers of dwellings, services and resident population, I consider it likely that disagreement arises due to the Plan only including houses and services within the Defined Settlement Boundary, whilst the Parish Council refers to parish-wide provision. This point needs clarifying in the adopted Plan.

Recommendation

- 61.2 **I recommend** that the second sentence of Paragraph 51.1 be modified to: ‘The majority of dwellings are situated to the north west’.
- 61.3 **I recommend** that the first sentence of Paragraph 51.7 be modified to: ‘The above site is located to the south of the centre of the village and is contained within dairy farm.’
- 61.4 **I recommend** that paragraph 51.2 be modified to clarify that it refers to facilities within the Defined Settlement Boundary and not those within the wider Parish.

Policy (R)F.Woolaston 1 – Housing Allocation – Netherend Farm Omission Site OH51.1 – Land at the rear of Bay Tree Cottage Omission Site OH51.2 – Land at the rear of Rose Cottage

Objections

10/51812	Woolaston Parish Council
412/52440	Mr J Kirk
688/53083	Mr & Mrs W J Weeks
688/53085	Mr & Mrs W J Weeks
688/70172	Mr & Mrs W J Weeks
688/70173	Mr & Mrs W J Weeks
713/52475	Mrs P A Williams

Supporting Statements

688/53073 Mr & Mrs W J Weeks

Issues

- a. Need for and terms of the allocation.
- b. Potential enlargement of the allocation.
- c. Alternative access.
- d. Developer contribution to education.
- e. Sewerage capacity.

Reasoning and Conclusions

Need

- 61.5 Woolaston has a relatively high level of services, and is close to Lydney with good public transport links. The village has been listed for infilling under Policy (R)FH.4, which I consider to be appropriate, given the level of local services. The site is also listed under Policy FH.3 as being capable of providing around 15 new dwellings on the Netherend Farm site, which appears to be a conservative estimate of its potential capacity. Elsewhere I have accepted the necessity for allocating housing sites in selected villages.
- 61.6 The allocated site to the south of the village centre consists of a roughly rectangular parcel of land occupied by farm buildings, that have outlived their current productive use, as well as Netherend Farm House. Given the relatively small number of houses proposed and the comparatively sustainable location of the village, the development of the site would not, in my judgement, unacceptably increase the number and duration of car-based journeys to and from the village. The site is largely made up of existing farm buildings, in an area of relatively flat land and is not visually prominent. The site is not listed under any nature conservation or landscape designations. Overall the development of the site would be acceptable as it would neither represent a significant intrusion into the open countryside nor have a detrimental effect on sustainability interests.

Omission Site OH51.1 – Land at the rear of Bay Tree House

- 61.7 The area behind Bay Tree House is already located within the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] with potential for infill development and is contiguous with the land allocated by policy (R)F.Woolaston 1 above. Although there is no direct need specifically to allocate the land for housing as it is open to developers to include it in any application for planning permission, neither is there any reason not to bring it within the purview of policy (R)F.Woolaston 1.

Omission Site OH51.2 – Land at the rear of Rose Cottage

- 61.8 This site is a greenfield plot of about 0.25ha on the south western edge of the village. It adjoins the western edge of the allocated Netherend Farm site described above. The site lies outside the DSB and is not covered by any specific landscape or nature conservation designation. The west of the site is bounded by agricultural land, and to the north east the site adjoins the rear of residential gardens. The site, currently an orchard, is mainly level, although the surrounding land falls away gently to the south and west.
- 61.9 Extending the housing allocation at Netherend Farm to include the site would amount to a modest and logical rounding off of an area of new development in the village and

would not present a significant intrusion into the open countryside. The extra land would bring additional benefits to the layout of the development of Netherend Farm, either in terms of a modest amount of additional housing or planned open space.

Enlargement of the Allocation

61.10 Even with the addition of both foregoing omission lands, increasing the total area to about 1ha, I consider that the number of dwellings provided, after establishing the requisite firm landscaped boundary, would still be comparatively modest [up to 30 at a density of 30 per hectare] yet would help to meet the economic and social needs of the village. Therefore the site should be included in the DSB and under the purview of the Netherend Farm housing allocation by policy (R)F.Woolaston.1. I recommend commensurate modifications to Inset Map 51 below.

Access

61.11 In terms of access to the Netherend Farm site, the suggested alternative access route would run along the western edge of the adjacent orchard and lead into Severn View Road. The suitability of this access, both in terms of highway safety and urban design considerations, and its relative merits compared to the access specified in the policy would only become apparent on submission of a detailed planning application. Therefore in this instance the acceptability of either access on a relatively small site like this is best addressed as a matter of development control and the policy should be amended accordingly. I consider that this also addresses other access objections.

Affordable Housing

61.12 In Part One Chapter 2 of this report I conclude that 5 dwellings is the appropriate minimum threshold in settlements of less than 3000 people for seeking by negotiation an element of affordable housing. The proposed allocation would far exceed this threshold. I can see no good reason why policy (R)F.Woolaston 1 should not require an appropriate contribution to affordable housing to be negotiated. The negotiations can take into account the suitability of the site and other factors referred to in Part One Chapter 2 in determining what level of provision would be appropriate.

Education

61.13 Regarding developer contribution to education, Circular 1/97 on planning obligations sets tests that need to be met in order for a planning obligation to be acceptable. Included within these tests is the requirement that any obligation sought must be related to the scale and needs of the development. Contributions to educational provision are often made as part of a package of measures that mitigate against the additional pressure on community resources that may result from new housing development. Any contribution is a matter for negotiation as part of the development control process. I propose that the policy be reworded, consistent with other recommendations in this report.

Sewerage

61.14 On sewerage capacity, I have seen no evidence from the Environment Agency or local sewage undertaker to suggest that the existing sewage system could not cope with the additional requirement that this modest development would cause. Any necessary improvements to the sewage system would be most appropriately addressed as a matter of development control.

Recommendation

61.15 **I recommend that Policy (R)F.Woolaston 1 be modified to:**

Approximately 1 hectare of land at and adjacent to Netherend Farm will be allocated for the provision of up to 30 new dwellings. The development will be required to provide:

- 1. appropriate landscaping to the site boundaries and within the site**
- 2. an acceptable means of vehicular access**
- 3. an appropriate number of affordable housing units**
- 4. an appropriate contribution to educational provision for future occupiers of the site.**

Omission Site OH51.3 – Land at Ashway

Objections

217/51726

Mr & Mrs T Davies

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 61.16 The site is greenfield land covering about 0.4ha beyond the northern end of the Ashway cul-de-sac at the southern end of the Woolaston. It lies outside the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB] and is not covered by any specific landscape designation. The north east and south east boundaries adjoin the gardens of residential developments, whilst the north west and south west boundaries are adjacent to agricultural land. A footpath runs from the A48 along the south western boundary. The site is generally level, although the wider surroundings fall away gently to the south and west. The site is in arable use.
- 61.17 The objector argues that the DSB should be amended to include the site, and that the site should be identified as a housing allocation. The Ashways site would amount to a similar modest extension to the village to that at Netherend Farm. However, their cumulative impact would be detrimental to the Plan’s development strategy and would lead to an oversupply of housing beyond that necessary to meet the economic and social needs of the village over the Plan period. It would also place unreasonable pressure on existing village services and would lead to an unacceptable increase in car based journeys. Moreover, the Ashways site is an open field that links into the open countryside to the south of the village and its development would form an intrusion into the open gap between the present Ashways development and Netherend Farm.
- 61.18 I accept that the definition of previously developed land found in Annex C to PPG3 does not extend to the Netherend Farm buildings. However, by comparison, the development of Netherend Farm would not result in the loss of such a large area of open space. On balance, I find that the Ashways site is not to be preferred to Netherend Farm, and should not be allocated at this time.

Recommendation

- 61.19 **I recommend that the Land at Ashways be not allocated for development nor included within the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woolaston.**
-

Omission Site OH51.4 – Lands at Cartref and The Reddings

Objections

428/52706
771/53183

Mr K E Lindley
Mr P & Mrs J Ball & Mrs Saunders

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 61.20 The Reddings Close site consists of an irregularly shaped parcel of land, sloping gently up to the north. The site’s southern boundary is located immediately behind Reddings Close and The Post Paddocks, a pair of small culs de sacs. The northern boundary is marked by the road leading through Woolaston Common, whilst the eastern boundary abuts domestic gardens to the east. The land is visually associated with isolated detached dwellings and some unintensified agricultural uses. The adjoining site at Cartref has similar northern and southern boundaries but omits the single detached house and garden at Cartref and three small fields to the east. Both these sites lie outside the village DSB.
- 61.21 The development of this land would involve a significant intrusion into a mostly undeveloped area that forms a large gap between two built up areas to the north of the village. Netherend Farm by comparison would not result in the loss of such a large area of open space. Therefore on balance the omission land both does not perform as well as Netherend Farm in terms of landscape impact. I conclude that this site should not be included in the Plan.

Recommendation

- 61.22 **I recommend that the Lands at Cartref and The Reddings be not allocated for development nor included within the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woolaston.**
-

Inset Map 51 – Netherend/Woolaston

Objections

217/51726	Mr & Mrs T Davies
412/52442	Mr J Kirk
428/52706	Mr K E Lindley
713/52477	Mrs P A Williams
771/53183	Mr P & Mrs J Ball & Mrs Saunders

Supporting Statement

688/53078	Mr & Mrs W J Weeks
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Issues

I deal with all the issues arising from these objections above.

Reasoning and Conclusions

61.23 I make recommendations only consequent upon my conclusions that the Netherend Farm housing allocation should be enlarged.

Recommendation

61.24 **I recommend that the Netherend Farm housing allocation be extended to include both the Land at the rear of Bay Tree House shown on the plan attached to Objection 412/52442 and the Land at the rear of Rose Cottage shown as Site A at Annex 1 to Document FOD/P6.7.**

61.25 **I recommend that Inset Map 51 be modified by realigning the Defined Settlement Boundary of Woolaston to encompass the whole of the Netherend Farm allocation as modified in accordance with my recommendation above.**

CHAPTER 52 - WORRALL HILL

General

Objections

394/70612	Mr & Mrs M J Jones
833/70627	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70657	Mr B Whittington
837/70695	Clearwell Caves

Issues

Statutory Forest status.

Reasoning and Conclusions

62.1 Elsewhere in this report I recommend that the boundary of the Statutory Forest be shown on the Proposals Map. The settlement of Worrall Hill lies within that boundary and Policy (R)FBE.8, modified as I recommend, will set out the planning policy for the change of use of Forest Waste or other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest. Whether other legislation will affect the use or development of land within the Statutory Forest is considered elsewhere and is not a matter that it would be necessary or appropriate to address by the modification of this chapter, save for the minor textual amendment below.

Recommendation

62.2 **I recommend** that paragraph 52.1 be modified by the addition after the first sentence of: ‘The village lies within the boundary of the Statutory Forest as shown on the Proposals Map and Policy (R)FBE.8 would apply to proposals for the change of use of Forest Waste and other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest’.

CHAPTER 53 – YORKLEY and YORKLEY SLADE

General

Objections

273/52576	Mr R Freshwater
394/70613	Mr & Mrs M J
833/70628	Mr & Mrs D Coe
834/70658	Mr B Whittington
837/70696	Clearwell Caves

Issues

- a. Legal status of Statutory Forest land.
- b. Employment at the Scotts [Kears] Bakery site [273/52576]

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 63.1 I have recommended elsewhere that the boundary of the Statutory Forest be shown on the Proposals Map and that Policy (R)FBE.8 be amended to apply generally to Forest Waste and other Crown Land within the Statutory Forest. Privately owned land in the Statutory Forest is not subject to the same statutory Forest laws and I conclude that it would be misleading to insert the statement sought by the objectors. The statutory Forest location can be mentioned in text para 53.2 by a simple insertion.
- 63.2 For reasons I explain in connection with Inset Map 53 below I deal with the Scotts Bakery site [also known as Kears Bakery] in Chapter 49, as Omission Site OH/E49.1 within Pillowell.

Recommendation

- 63.3 **I recommend that the final sentence of Paragraph 53.2 be modified by inserting ‘Statutory’ before ‘Forest’.**

Policies (R)F.Yorkley 1 and (R)F.Yorkley 2 – Restriction on Development

Objections

None

Issues

Justification for the restriction.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 63.4 On consideration of the Plan as a whole I have reached the conclusion, for reasons set out after policy (R)FBE.1 in Part 1 Chapter 6 of this report, that the Restriction on Development policies are inappropriate and that due protection is accorded the settlement areas concerned by policy (R)FBE.1 when read in conjunction with the descriptive text for each settlement in Part 2. For general consistency I therefore recommend below the deletion of policies (R)F.Yorkley 1 and (R)F.Yorkley 2.
- 63.5 The supporting text sets down an appropriately balanced approach that contemplates small scale new development in the areas concerned in certain circumstances, and thus duly supplements the provisions of policy (R)FBE.1. However, I regard these

considerations as applying to all development, not only residential, and the heading Housing should also be deleted and the text modified accordingly. The section headed Development Strategy should refer also to Settlement Character.

Recommendation

- 63.6 **I recommend** that the heading ‘Settlement Strategy’ be modified to ‘Development Strategy and Settlement Character’.
- 63.7 **I recommend** that Paragraphs 53.8 and 53.9 be deleted and replaced by:
- An area toward the west boundary of Yorkley contains several Important Open Areas. This and another area the east include many of the older traditional buildings of Yorkley. Although they have experienced a degree of change, these areas still retain much of their original character, most notably an open spacious layout punctuated by areas of Forest Waste and small paddocks. All new development in these areas should complement their established character.**
- 63.8 **I recommend** that the heading ‘Housing’ and Policies (R)F.Yorkley 1 and (R)F.Yorkley 2 deleted.

OMISSION SITES

Notes:

Omission Sites are identified in the order they appear in Council Document FOD/P6.24.

Where the objection relates to the omission of an Important Open Area it is covered in connection with the Inset Map below.

For the Scotts/Kears Bakery Omission Site see Chapter 49 – Pillowell ref OH/E49.1.

Omission Site OH53.1 – Land adjacent to the Nags Head Public House [between Greengables and the pumping station]

Objection

70/50391

Mr K & Mrs A Hyde

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 63.9 This is an area of undeveloped land which, whilst accessible from the highway and visually associated with the built development of the Nags Head PH and the pumping station only just outside the Defined Settlement Boundary [DSB], nevertheless plainly forms part of the open countryside. Its development would extend the settlement across the road and make a significant adverse impact on the rural surroundings that the DSB is there to protect. There is no overriding general or local shortage of housing that would justify extending the village in the manner sought by the objector.

Recommendation

- 63.10 **I recommend** that the Land adjacent to the Nags Head Public House be not allocated for development.

Omission Site OH53.2 – Land West of Yorkley Lane [Opposite Yorkley School]

Objections

576/50652

Mr A Samuel

Reasoning and Conclusions

63.11 Proposed by the objector for frontage dwellings and a school car park, this land is in agricultural use, being open and undeveloped and separated from the village by the road. If there were a specific need for a school car park, that could be considered under other policies of the Plan. Residential development would erode the countryside currently protected by the Defined Settlement Boundary. In the absence of a clear overriding need for new housing land in Yorkley, even frontage properties would not be acceptable. To create an enclosed street on this southern approach would be conflict with the sinuous development pattern of this established Forest Ring settlement.

Recommendation

63.12 **I recommend that the Land West of Yorkley Lane be not allocated for development.**

Omission Site OH53.3 – Land South of Bailey Hill [Oldcroft Road]

Objection

467/52236

Mr Morgan

Reasoning and Conclusions

63.13 The land is part of an Important Open Area [IOA] protected by policy (R)FBE.7 inside the area of Restriction of Development under policy (R)F.Yorkley 1. I discuss the latter policy above and recommend its removal. That leaves the question of the IOA and I assess this aspect of the objection in terms of my recommended modification to policy (R)FBE7.

63.14 The site plainly meets the IOA criteria of location within the settlement and public visibility. The land forms part of an area of open space, reaching out into the countryside across the road to the south west, thereby contributing to the open textured nature of the village. I consider that, although the site is rather unkempt, it also satisfies the IOA criteria that it make a positive contribution to amenity and settlement character. It should therefore retain its IOA designation.

Recommendation

63.15 **I recommend that the Land South of Bailey Hill be not allocated for development and that it remain part of the designated Important Open Area of which it forms part.**

Omission Site OH53.4 Important Open Area between High View and George Road

Objection

323/52791

Mr J E Hatton

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 63.16 I recognise that that this land is comparable with another site near the Nags Head where an appeal for residential development was dismissed in 1996; also that the objector has long advocated simply building a single house on the land. However, I address the objection to the whole of the enclosed paddock identified in the objection being designated an Important Open Area [IOA] in the light of current circumstances, including certain of my own findings.
- 63.17 In connection with policy (R)FBE.7 I propose four simplified criteria for choosing IOAs, and above I recommend the deletion of Restriction of Development policies such as (R)F.Yorkley 2. On that basis, if the IOA designations were removed from any of the land at High View a proposal for residential development would fall to be considered on its merits under general policy (R)FBE.1 in conjunction with the text of this chapter describing settlement character.
- 63.18 Within that framework, I agree with the Council that the paddock comprising the objection land performs a valuable role visually within the settlement, contributing positively to the dispersed character of Yorkley as a Forest ring settlement. Notwithstanding that it is largely inconspicuous from the surrounding area, its value is to be appreciated by other residents as well as from its short frontage to George Road. I conclude that it should remain protected as an IOA.

Recommendation

- 63.19 **I recommend no modification to the Important Open Area between High View and George Road.**

Inset Map 53 - Yorkley and Yorkley Slade

Objections

70/50391	Mr K & Mrs A Hyde
273/52585	Mr R Freshwater
323/52791	Mr J E Hatton
422/52685	West Dean Parish Council
467/52236	Mr Morgan
576/50652	Mr A Samuel

Issues

- Omission of various lands for development, either by non-allocation or restrictive designation.
- The boundary between Yorkley and Pillowell.
- Proposed designation of an Important Open Area to the rear of the Health Centre and Cockshoot Lodge.

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 63.20 Omission sites are considered individually above, together with the two restrictive housing policies. Consequential recommendations are set out below.
- 63.21 On the matter of the boundary between Yorkley on Inset Map 53 and Pillowell on Inset Map 49, and in particular the location of the Scotts [Kears] bakery site; tangible boundary features of road signs and street names indicate that the bakery is in Yorkley, but this chapter and Chapter 49 place it in Pillowell. The Council should recognise strong local sensitivities about this and take steps to rationalise the position.
- 63.22 However, in practice the precise boundary is somewhat academic where a major characteristic of this part of the Forest District is that settlements form a virtually continuous ring. In this instance I accept the Council’s explanation that Kears’s Field is important to the setting of the Pillowell Conservation area and is logically encompassed on the Pillowell side of the settlement boundary line along with the associated Bakery. I therefore deal with the Scotts [Kears] Bakery site as Omission Site OHE/H49.1 in Chapter 49 on Pillowell.
- 63.23 Turning to land behind the Health Centre just outside the village to the north; I recognise that this forms part of the locally important distinction between Yorkley and Yorkley Slade. However, it does not appear to me to contain features such that it makes a sufficiently positive contribution to visual amenity or settlement character to warrant Important Open Area designation. I consider though that the Parish Council, who made this objection, can draw comfort from the other controls that exist over development outside the Defined Settlement Boundary, and the fact the sports ground immediately to the west is specifically protected by policy (R)FBE.9.

Recommendation

- 63.24 **I recommend that Inset Map 53 be modified by deleting reference to policies (R)F.Yorkley 1 and (R)F.Yorkley 2.**
- 63.25 **I recommend no modification to the Defined Settlement Boundary on Inset Map 53 but I recommend the Council in the next Plan review to rationalise as far as possible the inconsistency between visible ground features and the definition of the Defined Settlement Boundary between Yorkley and Pillowell on the Inset Maps.**