

APPENDIX 5

WATERWAYS POLICY

Waterways

Waterways are important to both the natural environment and human activities.

The Grand Union Canal runs the length of the District and provides a significant Green and Blue Infrastructure resource and supports transport, biodiversity, recreation, drainage, water supply and in managing flood risk. It is also an important visual amenity and there are a number of heritage assets on or associated with the Canal.

The three rivers that give the District its name (the Rivers Colne, Gade and Chess) are important resources for the District in terms of landscape, biodiversity and access to open space, and form the basis of the District's Green Infrastructure network.

As well as these functions, the Canal is used by many houseboats and leisure craft. Concentrations of houseboats exist at Batchworth Lock, Rickmansworth and to a lesser extent at Cassiobury in Croxley Green.

Policy xx Waterways	
(1)	Development in the vicinity of waterways must protect and enhance waterway infrastructure and should enable water-dependent uses where appropriate.
(2)	Proposals for permanent moorings and marinas will only be permitted on the canal/waterways where adjacent to the existing built-up area and where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Not compromise the ability of leisure boat users to access moorings;b) Have no adverse effect on the nature conservation value of the canal or nearby land;c) Include sufficient space for essential facilities and landscaping;d) Provide adequate pedestrian and service vehicle access;e) Cause no harm to the historic or visual character of the canal;f) Not increase flood risk;g) Provide safe access and egress during a flood;h) Not impede navigation.
(3)	Major development schemes adjacent to waterways should consider the provision of new moorings, or facilities for water-based leisure and recreation as part of development proposals. Opportunities to use the canal for transport, including freight during the construction process, or as a renewable energy resource should also be considered.

Reasoned Justification

It is essential that the Canal and waterways are protected as an important resource for the District and area providing multiple benefits, and that these benefits are recognised and enhanced.

Making use of the Canal and waterways, houseboats are a lifestyle choice for some residents, and they contribute to increasing diversity of homes within the District. Residents can also provide valuable assistance to leisure boat users and aid security along the canal.

The Local Plan aims to deliver new development in sustainable locations and so the same principle will be applied to proposals for residential and other moorings. The policy aims to ensure that potential residents of houseboats benefit from the same level of access to services and facilities as those living in traditional housing.

As moorings are not recognised as an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt by national policy, applications for residential and other moorings outside of the urban areas will have to demonstrate 'very special circumstances' sufficient to outweigh harm to the Green Belt.

Major development schemes adjacent to waterways offer an opportunity to consider the provision of new moorings or facilities for water-based leisure and recreation as an integrated part of proposals. Any such proposals will be supported where they address the requirements of all other Policies within the Local Plan.

Development proposals are also encouraged to consider opportunities to use the Canal for transport, including for the transport of freight during construction, or as a renewable energy resource for heating and cooling.