

7.11 POLICY ON THE KENNET AND AVON CANAL (RL.5)

7.11.1 Policy E10 of the Structure Plan is concerned with protecting the character and setting of rivers, canals and streams. Particular attention will be paid to safeguarding the environment of the Kennet and Avon Canal and development likely to give rise to a significant increase in boating traffic will normally be resisted. It is therefore necessary for the Local Plan to set out the criteria which will be used in considering proposals for boating and moorings development along the Canal.

7.11.2 The following policy is based on policy KA7 from the 1993 District Local Plan. Extensions, additions and intensification of existing boating facilities will be judged against criteria (a), (b), (d) and (e) of Policy RL.5.

POLICY RL.5 The Council will permit proposals for the provision of mooring basins on the Kennet and Avon Canal only where the moorings basin together with ancillary buildings, the access arrangements and other uses specifically related to the use and enjoyment of the canal are:

- (a) not located in an area or in a form which would demonstrably harm the character or landscape setting of the canal or adversely effect the intrinsic ecological value of the canal; and
- (b) are not intrusive into open countryside or prejudicial to the wider landscape character; and
- (c) are located within or on the edge of an existing settlement or other built up area; and
- (d) would not result in significant harm to the amenity of nearby residents; and
- (e) can be satisfactorily provided with services, access and parking; and
- (f) includes the provision of watering, sewerage and refuse/recycling collection facilities for boat users of the moorings and the Canal.

7.11.3 The Kennet and Avon Canal is recognised as an important recreation and leisure resource. Policy KA.7 from the NDLP (1993) set a limit of 300 new moorings on the West Berkshire section of the canal. The position in May 2002 was that there were 404 existing berths and commitments for a further 209 giving an overall total of 613 berths. The length of the canal in West Berkshire is 22 miles or 24% of the total canal length.

7.11.4 British Waterways has set out its intentions for the Kennet and Avon Canal in various documents . It considered there was a need for 1500 private boat moorings by the year 2000, compared to the current provision of 1300. The NDLP (1993) provisions figure (300 new mooring berths) was based on a total requirement of 1,500 permanent moorings (net 1,150) taken from the British Waterways Leisure Strategy of August 1987. It is therefore generally considered by the Council that adequate provision has been made for new moorings on the West Berkshire section of the Kennet and Avon Canal, and that any significant increase over and above these levels should be resisted.