

This 'Village' specific section forms part of a wide-ranging consultation on the Local Plan Part II. It is therefore strongly recommended that you first read the 'Mendip' section to gain a wider understanding of the issues and options relating to the district as a whole.

# Meare & Westhay (Secondary Village)

Meare & Westhay lie to the far west of the district close to the towns of Glastonbury and Street. Together they represent a significant sized settlement. They sit upon the Somerset Levels - an area at significant risk of flooding as well as being an important area for protected birds. The surrounding areas are also characterised by the history of peat working.

The settlements are served only by minor roads. The age profile is relatively consistent with that of the district. There are a small number of households in housing need.

## Planning for Meare & Westhay...

- Meare & Westhay combined are designated in the Local Plan Part I as a Secondary Village.
- Part I of the Local Plan indicates that the villages are expected to deliver at least **40** new homes over the plan period 2006-2029.
- To date, **96** houses have either been built or granted conditional planning permission. It is not therefore expected that the Local Plan Part II will seek to allocate any further housing sites in the villages to 2029.
- However, we need to explore whether there are any reasons why additional housing should be planned e.g. to respond to a need identified by local people.
- Landowners have requested that we consider **15** sites that they have put forward.

## What you have said about Meare & Westhay...

A Parish Plan was produced for Meare & Westhay in 2004. The Parish Plan highlighted a few planning issues that were considered to be important:

1. More affordable and self build housing.
2. More job opportunities in Meare & Westhay.
3. A new village hall wanted.
4. A new play area wanted.
5. Community orchard.

### KEY FACTS

Parish population: **1,304**

Age profile:	Mendip average:
<b>19%</b> 0-15 yrs	<b>19%</b>
<b>7%</b> 16-24 yrs	<b>10%</b>
<b>21%</b> 25-44 yrs	<b>23%</b>
<b>43%</b> 45-74 yrs	<b>39%</b>
<b>10%</b> 75+ yrs	<b>9%</b>

Approximate housing stock of villages: **490**

Data sources:  
ONS Census Statistics 2011  
MDC Rural Settlement Role & Function Study 2012

### Key Facilities

Our most recent records show the villages have the following facilities:

- **Journey to work bus service**
- **Post office**
- **Shop**
- **Pub**
- **School**
- **Village hall**
- **Church**

Is this still correct? Are there any that we have missed?

## What does this mean for the villages?

- ❖ We do not expect to make further allocations of land for housing development in Meare & Westhay. However, we need to explore whether there are any reasons why further housing should be planned e.g. to respond to a need identified by local people.
- ❖ We could seek to allocate some land for local employment, although no site options have yet been put forward for this type of use.
- ❖ There is the potential for an area to be allocated for self build schemes.
- ❖ Sites for a village hall, a play area and a community orchard could be investigated through Part II.

## Have your say...

The following appendix has information on the designations in and around the villages as well as the sites that have been put forward for consideration by landowners. To ensure that the views of local communities and stakeholders are reflected in the Local Plan Part II, we would welcome views on a number of issues. Please answer as many (or as few) of the following questions as you wish:

### **Local Distinctiveness and Character**

M&WQ1: What makes Meare & Westhay special? Are there any specific areas, features or characteristics that should be protected or improved? In the event that future development is needed, are there any broad areas in the villages where this should be located / avoided? *Please answer in general terms – you can comment in detail on specific sites below.*

### **Housing**

M&WQ2: Although Meare & Westhay have met and exceeded the minimum housing requirement as set out in the Local Plan Part I, are there any reasons why we should consider identifying further sites for housing in the Local Plan Part II?

M&WQ3: If a need for further development is identified, would you support / not support any of the sites put forward by landowners which are set out in Table B. Why? Please include site reference(s) where applicable and have regard to the constraints outlined in Tables A and B in explaining your reasons.

M&WQ4a: Are there any other potential development sites that we have not identified which you would like to draw our attention to?

M&WQ4b: If further development is needed, what types of development would you like to see on any of the site(s) identified e.g. housing of a particular size or type, affordable housing, custom build or mixed use schemes?

### **Employment**

M&WQ5: Are there any existing employment or commercial sites in or around the villages that may be suitable for redevelopment? If so, where and for what type(s) of development?

M&WQ6: Are there any existing employment or commercial sites in or around the villages that you feel should be retained in their current use if at all possible? If so where and why?

M&WQ7: Is there a need for any additional land for employment/commercial development? If so, what types and where could such development take place?

### **Development Limit**

M&WQ8: Do the current Development Limits reflect the existing and likely future built up area(s) of the villages?

M&WQ9: Do you feel the current Development Limits should be changed? If so where and why?

## **Infrastructure/Facilities**

M&WQ10: Is there a need for further infrastructure or facilities in the villages e.g. open or recreation space, meeting place, car park? If so, please specify what and where.

## **Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Spaces**

M&WQ11: Looking at the Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Space criteria (see Mendip Section Appendix 2), do you think all of the sites listed still warrant designation? If so, why are they special?

M&WQ12: Are there any sites from which you feel the designation should be removed? If so which one(s) and why?

M&WQ13: Are there any new areas of land that you feel merit designation? If so please provide details of where and why.

## **Other Matters**

M&WQ14: Are there any other planning issues in Meare & Westhay that you feel should be addressed in the Local Plan Part II?

M&WQ15: Is any of the information presented incorrect or in need of updating (e.g. existing facilities and services)? If so, please specify?

# Meare & Westhay Appendix

**Table A: Key designations and other relevant planning information**

<b>Constraint</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Implications for Local Plan Part II</b>
<b>Agricultural Land Classification</b>	The land immediately adjacent to the settlements is Grade 3. The wider area is Grade 4.	In choosing development sites, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality. The grades of agricultural land range from best and most versatile to poor.
<b>Ancient Woodland</b>	None.	Ancient woodlands are an irreplaceable natural habitat and development should avoid their unnecessary loss or deterioration.
<b>Areas of High Archaeological Potential and Interest</b>	The majority of both settlements are covered by an AHAP.	Any development within an area of known or potential archaeological interest will have to take into account this archaeological potential.
<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</b>	None.	Development within an AONB is more strictly controlled and must be designed in a way which will not negatively impact upon the characteristics of the AONB.
<b>Coal Consultation Zone</b>	None.	The Coal Authority will need to be consulted on potential sites to see whether there are any possible issues from old coal mining works.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	None.	Any development within the Conservation Area will need to be sympathetic.
<b>Flood Zones</b>	Both settlements are surrounded by Flood Zone 3. The Flood Zone lies within 200m of the north of the settlements.	Development should generally be directed away from areas designated as at most risk from flooding (Zones and 2 and 3).
<b>Green Belt</b>	None.	Development in the Green Belt should be resisted in line with Chapter 9 of the NPPF.
<b>Groundwater Source Protection Zone</b>	None.	Particular care is needed in such areas to ensure development in such areas does not adversely affect the quality of groundwater.
<b>Historic Parks &amp; Gardens</b>	None.	Recorded by English Heritage in recognition of their special historic significance. Any proposed development should be considered against whether it would be likely to impact on the special character of any

		Historic Park and Garden.
<b>Landfill sites</b>	None.	Areas of land which are, or have been subject to landfill may be contaminated and/or lead to abnormal development costs.
<b>Listed Buildings</b>	There are a number of listed buildings in the villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Grade I listed buildings</li> <li>• 8 Grade II listed buildings</li> </ul>	Listed buildings are protected by national policy and development policy 3 of the Local Plan Part 1. Any development will need to ensure the integrity of these listed buildings.
<b>Local Wildlife Sites</b>	Two Local Wildlife Sites lie in close proximity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upper River Brue (7.42 ha) is a site with legally protected species.</li> <li>2. Fields north of Heath Rhyne (5.63 ha) support nationally scarce UK BAP Priority Species of invertebrate.</li> </ol>	Development should be directed away from these sites to ensure no negative impact upon the potential biodiversity there.
<b>Mendip Bat Consultation Zone</b>	None.	Any development within this area will need to take account of the potential for bats.
<b>Mineral Consultation Areas</b>	The settlements sit between two MCAs.	MCAs identify where mineral reserves exist which potentially could be needed at some point in the future.
<b>National Nature Reserves (NNRs)</b>	The Shapwick Heath NNR lies to the south of the settlements approximately 500m away.	National Nature Reserves are statutorily protected for their ecological and biodiversity value. Development should be directed away from such sites to ensure any adverse impacts.
<b>Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Spaces</b>	Four areas are designated as OALS/LGS (see Table 3 for details).	These areas are protected from development under development policy 2 of the Local Plan Part I. However, all of the areas designated as Local Green Spaces are being reviewed as part of the Local Plan Part II. More details can be found below.
<b>Protected Recreation Areas</b>	Three areas of open space within Meare are designated as protected recreation spaces.	These areas are protected from development under development policy 16 of the Local Plan Part I. Any development here will therefore be resisted.
<b>Quarries - SMLP Quarries</b>	None.	The existence of a quarry site may constrain the development of nearby sites due to noise etc...
<b>Ramsar Sites</b>	The Somerset Levels & Moors Ramsar site lies within 350m of Westhay and lies to both the north and south of Meare within 2km.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Ramsar site.
<b>Regionally</b>	None.	RIGS are locally designated areas of

<b>Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)</b>		importance for geology or geomorphology. Any new development would need to be assessed against whether there would be likely to be any adverse effects on such areas.
<b>Rights of Way</b>	Two Rights of Way access the villages from the surrounding countryside.	Routes over which the public enjoy a legal right to access by foot and sometimes other means. All public rights of way would need to be incorporated into, or reasonably diverted around, new development.
<b>Road Infrastructure</b>	Served only by minor roads. Meare is approximately 5km to A39 at Glastonbury. Westhay is approx 6km from the primary route A39 at Ashcott.	The standard of local roads may dictate the scale of development a settlement can accommodate.
<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)</b>	A number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments lie adjacent to the villages or in close proximity: 1. Abbots Fish House & Fishponds 2. Lake Villages north west of Oxenpill	Any development to the west of the village must ensure that the integrity of the SAMs is not damaged.
<b>Sewage Treatment Buffer Zones</b>	There is a sewage treatment buffer zone to the north of the centre of Meare.	Buffer Zones may constrain areas which are capable of being developed for housing in particular.
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</b>	Five SSSIs lie within close proximity to Meare & Westhay: 1. Tealham & Tadham Moors 2. Westhay Moor 3. Westhay Heath 4. Catcott Edington & Chilton Moors 5. Street Heath	Development should be directed away from these areas and from sites which may have a negative impact upon the integrity of these designated areas.
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</b>	None.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Special Area of Conservation.
<b>Special Landscape Feature</b>	The Meare Pool Special Landscape Feature covers a large proportion of the village of Meare. This is a local landscape designation, details of which can be found in the <a href="#">Mendip Assessment of Special Landscape Features</a> .	Any new development should not have a negative impact upon the special landscape feature and should ideally be located away from it.
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</b>	The Somerset Levels & Moors SPA/Ramsar site lies within 350m of Westhay and lies to both the north and south of Meare within 2km.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Special Protection Area.

<b>Tree Preservation Orders - Areas and Trees</b>	Two trees have TPOs to the west of the centre of Meare.	Any new development should take account of these areas and ensure that there is no negative impact upon them.
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**Table B: Sites put forward for Consideration by Landowners\***

**PLEASE NOTE: The sites listed below are NOT proposals for development put forward by the Council. They are simply a range of options that we need to consider should any additional development be needed.**

Ref and Location	Area (ha)	Key Site Characteristics	Constraints and Considerations	Initial Assessment	Option <u>IF</u> Development is Needed
<b>MEA002</b> Land Off Meareway Lane, Meare	0.60	A complex of older farm buildings, yards and open storage area lying on the north eastern end of Meareway, outside but adjoining settlement boundary. Extensive existing built development lies to the south of the site but other fringes are adjacent to open countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within Area of High Archaeological Interest and Importance.</li> <li>• Flood Zone 3 risk to the very north of the site.</li> <li>• Within sewage treatment buffer zone.</li> <li>• A right of way crosses the site.</li> </ul>	The developed southern portion of the site could be brought forward in a manner that relates to existing development. Development on the northern part of the site would protrude out into the open countryside. Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<b>MEA009</b> Land adjacent to 19 Ashcott Road, Meare	1.79	Site consists of an open area of grazing land with hard standing, portal frame buildings and a dwelling on the southern fringe of the site. It lies broadly adjacent to the existing development limit. To the west the significant Engineering Works creates a protrusion of development from the main part of the village. To the east and north a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjoins area of protected recreation space.</li> <li>• Potential noise issue from adjacent engineering works if housing were developed.</li> <li>• Adjoins Meare Special Landscape Feature.</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially

		number of consents have been granted for housing development outside of the defined development limits.			
<b>MEA027</b> Muddy Lane, Meare	0.25	A small area of paddock land on the southern side of the village outside, but adjacent to the development limit. Land to the north has been developed in recent years as a small residential cul-de-sac. Adjacent land on other boundaries is generally open with land to the east in use as a school playing field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site lies within a Special Landscape Feature.</li> <li>• Site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.</li> <li>• Adjoins protected recreation area.</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<b>MEA032</b> Land to the rear of 16 Glastonbury Road, Meare	0.42	Site consists of a builders yard adjacent to, and opposite, residential properties. Parts of the site have a domestic garden character and the south western half of the site lies outside the defined Development Limit. Potential for a linked scheme with MEA033.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partly existing employment site.</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<b>MEA033</b> Lin-Hay, Glastonbury Road, Meare	0.32	The site lies outside, but adjacent to, Development Limits and consists of an extensive residential garden to the rear of an existing residence fronting onto Glastonbury Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.</li> <li>• Access would need to be achieved across adjoining site (MEA032).</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially

		<p>The site has no access of its own and is dependent upon the adjacent site MEA032 which is also promoted. The site had development on 3 sides with the north western corner abutting a paddock which itself is contained by Glastonbury Road.</p>			
<p><b>MEA035</b> Smithfield, Millbatch Lane, Meare</p>	0.07	<p>Small but peripheral site extending linear development along Millbatch. The site currently consists of a parking area/garage and garden associated with Smithfield.</p> <p>The northern half of the site lies within the Development Limit and the southern half outside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No known constraints.</li> </ul>	Site is potentially suitable for development.	Potentially
<p><b>WESTH003</b> The Paddocks, Shapwick Road, Westhay</p>	0.81	<p>Site lies outside - approximately 300m – from the Development Limit. Two rectangular fields outside the settlement boundary. Shapwick Road runs along the northern boundary. Surrounded by open countryside and scattered dwellings to the west.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detached from built up area of village.</li> <li>• No clear defensible boundary to the east.</li> <li>• There are a number of mature trees on the western part of the site.</li> <li>• The site is prominent open land and affords views towards the wider open countryside.</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<p><b>WESTH004a</b> Lilac Farm,</p>	1.48	<p>Site lies outside, and removed from, the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site lies within an Area of High</li> </ul>	Potentially suitable for development subject to	Potentially

Westhay		development limits. It contains farm buildings associated with Lilac Farm. Access via Main Road which runs along the southern boundary. Surrounded by fields with the main settlement to the northwest and scattered development to the southeast. Adjoins two other sites (WESTH004b and 5).	<p>Archaeological Potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site lies within an Area of Archaeological Interest.</li> </ul>	careful consideration of identified constraints.	
<b>WESTH004b</b> Land surrounding Lilac Farm, Westhay	6.78	Site lies outside, and removed from, the development limits. Large field that wraps around Lilac Farm and Rushmead Farm. Bounded by Meareway and the B3151 on two sides. Main settlement to the west and scattered development to the south. Drainage ditches border parts of the site. Adjoins site WESTH004a.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small area to the north west of the site within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.</li> </ul>	Site is potentially suitable for development subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<b>WESTH004c</b> Land between Main Road and Heathway Lane, Westhay	2.17	Site lies outside, and removed from, the development limits. Field to the south of the village. Bounded to the east by Main Road (B3151) and to the west by Heathway Lane. Surrounded by two farms, open fields, an orchard and scattered residential development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No known constraints.</li> </ul>	Site is potentially suitable for development.	Potentially
<b>WESTH004d</b> Land to the	2.35	Site lies outside, and removed from, the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small area of Flood Zone 2.</li> </ul>	The site is potentially suitable for	Potentially

west of Henleaze Farm, Westhay		development limits. A long stretch of land made up of two fields separated by a hedge and drainage ditch. Existing residential property (the Barn) at the northern end of the site. Shapwick Road runs along the northern boundary. Remainder of site surrounded by fields. Drainage ditches border parts of the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public right of way skirts the south eastern boundary of the site.</li> <li>• No clear defensible boundary to the south/south west.</li> </ul>	development in principle subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	
<b>WESTH005</b> Middle Farm, Westhay	2.03	Large site that is adjacent to the Development Limit. Currently used for residential and agricultural purposes. Adjoins sites WEST004a and 4b. Access can be achieved from Meareway to the north and Main Road to the south west. There are buildings associated with Middle Farm on the western part of the site. Trees are scattered over the rest of the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is identified as a Traditional Orchards, a habitat of importance as stated in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.</li> <li>• Site is within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.</li> <li>• Site is within an Area of Archaeological Interest.</li> <li>• Drainage ditches border parts of the site.</li> </ul>	Site is not suitable for development due to it being classified as Traditional Orchard Priority Habitat under the UK BAP.	No
<b>WESTH007</b> Shapwick Road Garage, Westhay	0.11	Triangular piece of land within Development Limits currently used for car repairs, petrol sales and storage. Surrounded by existing residential development. Access can be achieved via Shapwick Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible ground contamination from existing use.</li> <li>• An existing business use would be lost (although the agent states that the existing building is outdated and</li> </ul>	Site lies within Development Limit and is suitable in principle subject to identified constraints.	Potentially

			unsuitable for alternative business uses).		
<b>WESTH008</b> Farm buildings at Fern Farm, Westhay	0.20	A complex of traditional style farm buildings, yards and associated land on the northern fringe of the village, outside but adjacent to the Development Limit. Surrounded on three sides by existing development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.</li> <li>• Site lies within an Area of Archaeological Interest.</li> </ul>	The site is potentially suitable for development in principle subject to careful consideration of identified constraints.	Potentially
<b>WESTH011</b> Land at Middle Farm, Westhay	2.12	A broadly rectangular field lying to the south-west corner of Westhay settlement boundary. A farm lies directly adjacent to the north and residential properties to the east. The site is otherwise surrounded by open countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majority of site lies within Flood Zone 2.</li> <li>• No clear defensible boundary to the south.</li> <li>• Public right of way crosses the site diagonally.</li> </ul>	Given the extent of flood risk area, the site is not suitable as a potential development site.	No

\*Please note that this excludes sites which have already been given planning consent.

### Table C: Local Green Spaces

Site Reference	Size of Site (in ha)	Description	Notes
<b>OALSMEA001</b>	0.57	Part of the site is currently used as a paddock bordered by trees and bushes.	Not covered by any other designations. Much of the site not visible from any angle except from a footpath on the southern border of the site, but is largely obscured by bushes.
<b>OALSMEA002</b>	0.05	Small wedge of green space alongside the main road, in use as a private garden.	Not covered by any other designations.
<b>OALSMEA003</b>	0.55	Churchyard of St Mary's Church and adjacent land in front of Meare Farm.	Not covered by any other designations.
<b>OALSMEA004</b>	0.28	Cemetery.	Not covered by any other designations.