

Suffolk Coastal District Council

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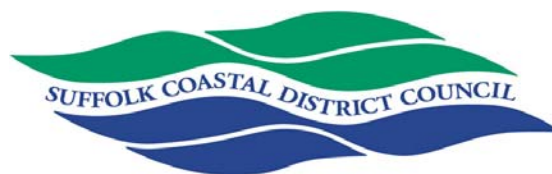
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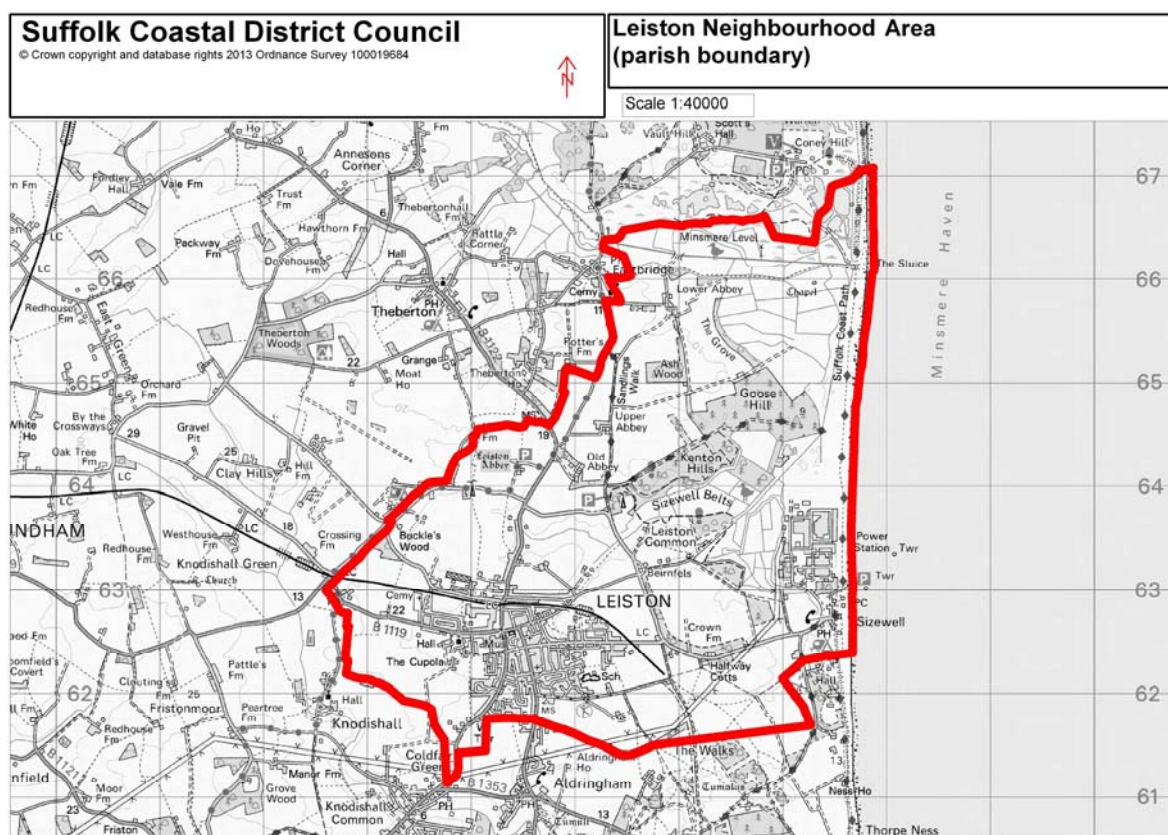
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Neighbourhood Area Determination and Decision

Name of neighbourhood area	LEISTON
Parish /Town Council	Leiston Town Council



The procedures governing the production of Neighbourhood Plans are set out in the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#). The first formal stage in the Neighbourhood Plan process is the application by the “relevant body” to the Local Planning Authority for neighbourhood area designation. (Part 2, paragraph 5).

The Local Planning Authority is required to publicise the application (Part 2, paragraph 6) to determine the application following consideration of representations received and to publicise its decision.

In determining an application the LPA must have regard to

*“the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area; and
The desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas”*

There is no requirement at this stage in the process for the applicant to state what issues it is intended that the Neighbourhood Plan would cover, it is purely the geographic area to which NP policies would apply.

DETERMINATION

1. Has the applicant fulfilled all the necessary requirements?

Yes. The Neighbourhood Area designation application has been submitted by Leiston Town Council who are the “relevant body” for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

The application was accompanied by a map and statement identifying Leiston parish as the area proposed to be designated and the reasons for that.

2. Has the application been properly advertised?

A copy of the application was placed on the Council’s website. Information provided included a copy of the application, details of how to make representations and the date by which representations should be received. The website provided a link to the town council website.

To bring the application to the wider attention of the people who live, work or carry on business in the area to which the application relates, a number of site notices were placed around the parish including on parish notice boards; information was also included in the parish magazine. This wider notification was undertaken jointly by the District and the parish council.

Individual letters of notification were also sent to the local district and county council members; to neighbouring parish /town councils including Suffolk County Council and to statutory consultees.

Comments were invited over an eight week period (26th April 2013 – 21 June 2013). Eight weeks was chosen rather than the six week requirement in recognition of the fact that some parish councils only meet every two months.

3. What comments have been received?

A total of four [comments](#) were received and are available for viewing on the Council’s website.

One individual supports the area designation as submitted.

A second individual submitted a letter of objection. The concerns it raises are based on a misconception that the area designation relates to a possible electoral boundary change and not to land use planning matters. Indeed the individual confirms that he is a part of the Neighbourhood Plan research group.

Natural England comments are in the form of an informative note providing advice in relation to international and European, national and locally designated sites within and within the vicinity of the parish boundary.

The final objection is from a planning consultant who considers that the boundary should be either more tightly drawn or substantially extended to take in numerous other parishes around Leiston. It notes that elsewhere round the country Neighbourhood Plans have been drawn up for up to 17 parishes. The alternative boundary suggested would be for Leiston parish and the surrounding parishes of Theberton, Westleton, Knodishall and Aldringham-cum-Thorpe, with others such as Middleton, Dunwich and Friston if they so wish. A second alternative would be for all of the above parishes with Saxmundham, Kelsale, Yoxford, Blythburgh, Walberswick, Sternfield and possibly Aldeburgh.

Reasons for including a significantly extended area include development proposals such as Sizewell C; the fact that the services and facilities provided by Leiston extend beyond the administrative boundary as do environmental designations.

4. Are there any reasons why the application should not be permitted as submitted?

As noted above, the matters that the Council is required to take into consideration at this time are:-

*“the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area; and
The desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas”*

There are no other existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.

Having regard to the objections received, I am not aware of any of the surrounding parishes having indicated a wish to go down the Neighbourhood Plan route. This in itself is not an issue as the District Council would expect to pick up issues of wider than local concern as part of its site specific allocations work. It will do this in conjunction with Leiston Town Council and the other parishes themselves.

With regard to environmental designations there is potentially an issue with regard to Minsmere insofar as the bulk of the reserve is outside of the Leiston parish area. This matter has been raised with the Town Council who would have no objection to its being excluded from the designated neighbourhood area, but who also confirmed that it is very unlikely that they would have any proposals relating to this area in the neighbourhood plan. They envisage the Neighbourhood Plan looking to achieve, which is predominantly linked to growth and development at the town of Leiston. On balance it is considered that this site is adequately covered by higher level policies and therefore the fact that it would be split across two plans is unlikely to be an issue

Conclusion:

There are no valid planning reasons why Suffolk Coastal District Council should not designate the proposed neighbourhood area for Leiston as submitted

**DECISION UNDER REGULATION 7 OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING
(GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2012**

The application for the designation of the Leiston Neighbourhood Area is

APPROVED.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Ridley', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Philip Ridley
Head of Planning and Coastal Management

Date: 29/10/2013