

CHAPTER 16

South Molton Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

16.1 The market town of South Molton is identified as an Area Centre. It provides a range of services, local employment opportunities and acts as a focal point for an extensive rural area. The town is situated in the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration (PARR). South Molton is also subject to the Government's Market and Coastal Town Initiative (MCTI). As part of this initiative, a Strategic Action Plan will need to be prepared to establish the regeneration measures for the town for up to twenty years.

16.2 The town of South Molton is situated approximately 14 kilometres south east of Barnstaple and is 1 kilometre to the south of the North Devon Link Road (A361). Its proximity to the Link Road has brought improved accessibility and enhanced prospects for the economic growth of the town. In order to develop and support its role as an Area Centre, and to take advantage of its economic prospects from its proximity to the North Devon Link Road, the majority of development outside Barnstaple is directed to South Molton.

ENVIRONMENT

Landscape

16.3 The prime characteristic of South Molton is that it is a hilltop town. The approaches from the North Devon Link Road utilising Station Road, and from the north-west via the B3226, are steeply rising. Ridges along the northern edge of the town screen its built extent, providing a setting of agricultural land and mature tree planting. A strong green visual wedge separates the town from the Pathfields Industrial Estate. The visual continuity of this landscaped setting should be retained with future development kept below ridge level.

16.4 The approach from Bish Mill facing westwards provides more open vistas of the town. These vistas highlight the importance of the scale and massing of the town centre, which is seen on the skyline from many viewpoints. The easterly and southerly approaches provide a smoother transition between agricultural land and the later expansion of the town.

16.5 South Molton is not within any landscape designations, although the surrounding landscape is still considered to be attractive countryside. Land to the north of the Link Road (A361) is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value where Policy ENV5 applies.

Nature Conservation

16.6 There are no sites of national nature conservation importance within the town. However, there are several sites of local nature conservation importance within and around South Molton including a County Wildlife Site at Common Moors to the north west of the town. To complement this site, biodiversity networks have been identified by Devon Wildlife Trust. The extent of the biodiversity networks are shown in detail in the document '*Local Nature Conservation Sites and Biodiversity Networks in North Devon*' produced by Devon Wildlife Trust as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Development affecting locally important wildlife sites and biodiversity networks will be considered against Policies ENV8 and ENV12.

16.7 The community woodland between the recreational ground and Pathfields Industrial Estate provides a valuable local resource for recreation, biodiversity and an attractive backdrop to the north of the town. It is proposed to extend the community woodland (see Proposal SMO7).

Historic Environment

16.8 The historic core of South Molton is concentrated along Broad Street, East Street and South Street, which formed the main routes within the original medieval settlement. The existing Conservation Area is focused along these streets, together with the land to the north along Barnstaple Street and St Mary Magdalene Church. The long narrow strips either side of East Street and South Street are typical of medieval burgage plots. Development proposals impacting on the Conservation Area or local archaeological interests will be subject to Policies ENV16 and ENV14 respectively.

Flood Risk

16.9 The River Mole flows from north to south on the eastern side of the town. The extent of the area liable to flooding is identified on Inset Map 5 based on the Environment Agency's indicative flood plain maps, although they do not identify more localised problems. To prevent the risk of flooding either on a site or elsewhere, proposals will be assessed against Policy DVS6 and should provide sustainable urban drainage systems in accordance with Policy DVS7.

Sewage Disposal and Water Supply

16.10 The existing sewage disposal system servicing South Molton both lack the spare capacity to accommodate the levels of growth proposed for the town during the Plan period. Major new sewerage infrastructure will be required in order to cope with the amount of new development proposed for South Molton over the Plan period. However, some sites could be suitably drained prior to this investment, as a result of improvements to the pumping station. Water supply issues have been substantially resolved, although localised issues will need to be addressed on a site specific basis. The improvements required to the sewage disposal system are identified within the Capital Programme for South West Water. Specifically, any increased demands on the treatment works at Poltimore Road will need major improvements or even relocation to a new larger site. Developers will be required to contribute towards the costs of these schemes.

HOUSING

16.11 The strategy for South Molton is one of growth in order to support and develop its role as an Area Centre and to take advantage of its proximity to the North Devon Link Road. As illustrated in Table 15, much of the land allocated for housing utilises previously developed land and the existing building stock. However, due to the number of new homes required in the area and consistent with the growth strategy for South Molton, greenfield land has also been proposed including urban extensions to the west and north east of the town.

Table 15 : Proposed Residential Sites in South Molton

PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES		
Site Name	Capacity (approx)	Affordable Housing Target (AHT)
Quince Honey Farm, North Road (SMO1a)	30	7
Mole Valley Farmers/ YMCA, Station Road (SMO1b)	25	6
Calor Gas Depot/ Moor's Garage/ Adaptacar, West of South Street and Moore's Yard, Cooks Cross (SMO1d)	70	15
TOTAL	125	28

GREENFIELD SITES				
Site Name	Capacity (approx)	AHT	Phase 1 (To 2006)	Phase 2 (2006-2011)
Land between South Street and Raleigh Park (SMO1d)	80	25	80	-
Land between Gunswell Lane and West Street (SMO2a)	45	15	45	-
Land west of Jury Park (SMO2c)	115	40	40	75
Land east of Parsonage Lane (SMO2d)	150	50	-	150
TOTAL	390	130	165	225

16.12 In order to prioritise the use of previously developed sites and buildings, the largest and most peripheral greenfield sites will not be released until the later phase of the Plan period following April 2006 and in accordance with Policy HSG1.

16.13 Each of the sites identified for residential development includes specific elements that should be incorporated into any proposal. However, in addition to these elements, each proposal will also need to provide the necessary physical and social infrastructure to support the development and to comply with other requirements in accordance with the general policies contained in Section 1 of the Plan. Many of these policies are not referred to in either the proposal or accompanying reasoned justification. Particular policies that will apply are contained in the chapters on Development Standards, the Environment, Travel, Transport and Communications. Proposals involving at least 50 dwellings will be expected to include renewable energy heating and power systems to provide at least 15% of the predicted annual energy requirements in accordance with Policy ECN15. In addition, Policy HSG7 will be relevant to all sites with an affordable housing target, whilst Policy REC5, which sets out the open space requirements, will be applied to all residential proposals.

Previously Developed Sites

Quince Honey Farm, North Road (SMO1a)

16.14 Quince Honey Farm is situated west of North Road and immediately to the east of the site of the new infants school. The site is likely to become available during the Plan period following the relocation of the Honey Farm. In accordance with Policy HSG7, at least 7 homes, or 25% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable, whichever is the greater. Beech House is Grade II listed and will need to be retained, together with the workhouse buildings. The conversion of these buildings and the surrounding redevelopment of the site will need to protect the historic integrity of Beech House in accordance with Policy ENV17. These requirements will affect the housing capacity that can be achieved on the site, through the preparation of a development brief. However, consideration will be given to removing some of the additional non-listed buildings attached to Beech House in consultation with English Heritage. Access into the site should be from the new link road serving the school. Subject to the feasibility of redeveloping the site, contributions may be sought towards:-

- ◆ *Improving bus services to the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A; and*
- ◆ *Providing additional secondary and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice on Education Contributions.*

Mole Valley Farmers/YMCA, Station Road and North Street (SMO1b)

16.15 The Mole Valley Farmers site and the YMCA, west of Station Road and south of North Street, are adjacent to the Conservation Area. The comprehensive redevelopment of the site should improve the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy ENV16. None of the existing buildings are worthy of retention. However, any redevelopment should reflect the character of surrounding properties in accordance with Policy DVS1. To comply with Policy HSG7, at least 25% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable. Any contamination on the site will need to be remediated in accordance with Policy DVS4. A new access will be required with pedestrian improvements along the site frontages in accordance with Policies TRA1A and TRA8. Subject to the feasibility of redeveloping the site, contributions may be sought towards:-

- ◆ *Improving bus services to the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A; and*
- ◆ *Providing additional secondary and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice on Education Contributions.*

Land Between South Street and Raleigh Park (SMO1d)

16.17 Land is proposed for residential development between South Street and Raleigh Park. The land is surrounded by residential development, the hospital and commercial properties along South Street. This land includes several previously developed sites, namely the Calor Gas Depot and Moor's Garage to the west of South Street, as well as the Adaptacar premises and Moor's Yard with access from Cooks Cross.

16.18 The whole site should be comprehensively developed in accordance with a development brief. In addition a Transport Assessment will be required.

16.19 In view of its size and fragmented ownerships, the site could be developed in phases provided the costs associated with the physical and social infrastructure are shared throughout the development to ensure the following requirements are met:-

- ◆ *A mix of accommodation sizes and types including at least 40 affordable dwellings or 25% of the total number of units proposed and a range of densities to reflect the different characteristics of the site. The Calor Gas Depot, Moor's Garage and the Adaptacar premises should be redeveloped at a minimum net density of 50 dwellings to the hectare. The remainder of the site should be developed at a lower net density in the range of 30 to 35 dwellings per hectare;*
- ◆ *The retention and conversion of the Old Coach House in accordance with Policy ENV18;*
- ◆ *The principal vehicular access should be provided from Raleigh Park as the first phase of development. A separate access may be acceptable from Widgery Drive to serve emergency vehicles and the northern most part of the site only because of the character and visibility standards of the road onto its western section and the amount of traffic generated by the hospital;*
- ◆ *The provision of traffic calming measures in Raleigh Park;*
- ◆ *Contributions to increase the viability of a bus route serving the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A;*
- ◆ *The provision of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the site linking to the open space to the west, the hospital and school to the north and the town centre to the east via Moor's Yard, Cooks Cross and South Street;*
- ◆ *Measures to retain the functioning and integrity of the biodiversity network on the site in accordance with Policy ENV8;*

- ◆ Measures to alleviate any contamination on the site in accordance with Policy DVS4;
- ◆ Measures to control surface water including the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in accordance with Policy DVS7; and
- ◆ Education contributions towards providing additional secondary and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice.

PROPOSAL SMO1 (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES)

1. THE FOLLOWING SITES, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, ARE ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THE ELEMENTS FOR EACH SITE ARE PROPOSED:-

QUINCE HONEY FARM, NORTH ROAD (SMO1a)

- A) A MINIMUM OF 30 DWELLINGS INCORPORATING A MIX OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES AND SIZES AND AT LEAST 7 AFFORDABLE HOMES, OR 25% OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLINGS, WHICHEVER IS THE GREATER;**
- B) THE RETENTION AND CONVERSION OF BEECH HOUSE AND WORKHOUSE BUILDINGS;**
- D) HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THE NORTH ROAD FRONTAGE; AND**
- E) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES.**

MOLE VALLEY FARMERS AND YMCA, STATION ROAD AND NORTH STREET (SMO1b)

- A) ABOUT 25 DWELLINGS AT A NET DENSITY OF 45 OR MORE UNITS PER HECTARE AND INCORPORATING A MIX OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES AND SIZES INCLUDING AT LEAST 6 AFFORDABLE HOMES; AND**
- B) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES.**

LAND BETWEEN SOUTH STREET AND RALEIGH PARK (SMO1d)

- A) ABOUT 150 DWELLINGS WITHIN A RANGE OF NET DENSITIES OF BETWEEN 30 TO 60 UNITS PER HECTARE OR MORE INCORPORATING A MIX OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES AND SIZES AND AT LEAST 40 AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS;**
- B) VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM RALEIGH PARK INCLUDING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES;**
- D) THE PROVISION OF PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES;**
- E) THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BIODIVERSITY NETWORK;**
- F) THE PREPARATION OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF; AND**
- G) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:**
 - .. PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES; AND
 - .. ENHANCING THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE TO THE WEST OF THE SITE.

2. A PLANNING OBLIGATION OR CONDITION WILL BE USED TO SECURE THE CONTRIBUTIONS PROVIDED.

Greenfield Sites

Land Between Gunswell Lane and West Street (SMO2a)

16.20 Land between Gunswell Lane and West Street is surrounded by residential development. In accordance with Policy HSG7, at least 35% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable. Access should be from West Street. Traffic calming measures should be provided on roads leading to the site. A safe pedestrian and cycle access should be provided between Gunswell Lane and the Infant School. Education contributions will be sought to providing additional secondary and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice. Contributions may be sought towards improving bus services to the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A.

Land West of Jury Park (SMO2c)

16.22 Land west of Jury Park represents a large urban extension and is situated on the western edge of the town. The land slopes from both north and south towards a channel that crosses the site. In accordance with Policy HSG7, at least 35% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable. A development brief will need to be prepared. In addition a Transport Assessment will be required. Access to the site should be from Nadder Lane to the north with its position as far to the west as possible and Livarot Walk to the south with pedestrian and cycle links to Jury Park. Land to the east of this site, north of Livarot Walk, has extant planning permission for 35 eco-homes.

16.23 The existing open space to the east of the site is one of the few public spaces within the locality. Smaller areas of open space should also be incorporated in the western part of the site in accordance with Policy REC5. Cutting across the site from east to west is a dry ditch that forms an important part of the biodiversity network for South Molton. This feature should be incorporated into the overall development of the site and linked into an area of public open space in accordance with Policy ENV8. In order to retain the integrity of the biodiversity network, no vehicular access will be permitted across the ditch to connect the northern half of the site with the southern part except for a bus route.

16.24 A bus waiting and turning area should be provided within the development with revenue contributions sought to increase the viability of a bus route serving the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A. Education contributions will be sought to providing additional secondary and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice. In the latter part of the Plan period, education contributions may also be sought to providing additional infant school places.

Land off Parsonage Lane and Station Road (SMO2d)

16.25 Land off Parsonage Lane is situated on the northern edge of the town and to the south of the proposed Community Woodland shown on Inset Map 5. The development of the site represents a major urban extension to South Molton and will require careful and sensitive planning to ensure that it is properly integrated into the urban fabric of the town and to protect its landscaping setting. A development brief will need to be prepared. In addition an Environmental Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment will be required. Particular issues to be addressed are set out below:-

- ◆ *A maximum of 150 dwellings to include a range of accommodation types and sizes including at least 50 affordable houses or 35% of the total number of units proposed with the site developed at a net density of no less than 35 units to the hectare;*
- ◆ *Housing concentrated on the western part of the site and avoiding the ridgeline to the north of the site;*
- ◆ *The submission of a comprehensive and detailed design statement in accordance with Policy DVS1;*
- ◆ *Extensive landscaping and a variety of public open spaces concentrated in the eastern half of the site with contributions towards extending the community woodland to the north in accordance with Policies DVS2, REC5 and SMO7;*
- ◆ *The creation of a new link road from Mole Ridge Way onto North Road with additional access onto Station Road subject to junction improvements onto the A361 at Borners Bridge;*
- ◆ *Measures to retain the integrity and functioning of the biodiversity network and to protect and enhance key network features on the site in accordance with Policy ENV8;*
- ◆ *The provision of pedestrian and cycle routes to enable links to the community woodland, the recreation area and Pathfields Industrial Estate to the north, the town centre to the south, including footway and cycleway provision along Station Road, and the new infant school to the west in accordance with Policy TRA1A;*
- ◆ *A bus waiting and turning area with contributions sought to increase the viability of a bus route serving the site in accordance with Policy TRA1A;*
- ◆ *Measures to control surface water and prevent the risk of flooding both on site and elsewhere including the extensive use of sustainable urban drainage systems in accordance with Policies DVS6 and DVS7;*
- ◆ *An assessment of the potential contamination on the site given its former use as a gasworks with measures to remediate any contamination found in accordance with Policy DVS4;*
- ◆ *Education contributions will be sought to providing additional secondary, infant and junior school places in accordance with the Code of Practice.*

PROPOSAL SMO2 (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON GREENFIELD SITES)

THE FOLLOWING SITES, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, ARE ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THE ELEMENTS IDENTIFIED FOR EACH SITE ARE PROPOSED:-

LAND BETWEEN GUNSWELL LANE AND WEST STREET (SMO2a)

- A) ABOUT 45 DWELLINGS AT A MINIMUM NET DENSITY OF 35 UNITS PER HECTARE AND INCLUDING AT LEAST 15 AFFORDABLE HOMES;**
- B) ACCESS FROM WEST STREET;**
- C) TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES ON ROADS LEADING TO THE SITE; AND**
- D) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES.**

LAND WEST OF JURY PARK (SMO2c)

- A) UP TO 115 DWELLINGS AT A MINIMUM NET DENSITY OF 35 UNITS PER HECTARE AND INCORPORATING A MIX OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES AND SIZES INCLUDING AT LEAST 40 AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS;**

- B) SEPARATE AND UNCONNECTED VEHICULAR ACCESSES FROM NADDER LANE AND LIVAROT WALK;
- C) PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS TO JURY PARK;
- D) PROVISION OF A BUS ROUTE, WAITING AND TURNING AREA LINKING BOTH PARTS OF THE SITE;
- F) THE RETENTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BIODIVERSITY NETWORK INCLUDING THE DRY DITCH/HEDGEROW ACROSS THE SITE;
- G) EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING ALONG THE WESTERN BOUNDARY;
- H) THE PREPARATION OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF INCORPORATING A PHASING PROGRAMME TO ENSURE NO MORE THAN 40 DWELLINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED BEFORE APRIL 2006; AND
- I) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY, INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLACES.

LAND EAST OF PARSONAGE LANE (SMO2d)

- A) UP TO 150 DWELLINGS AT A MINIMUM NET DENSITY OF 35 UNITS PER HECTARE AND INCORPORATING A MIX OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES AND SIZES INCLUDING AT LEAST 50 AFFORDABLE HOMES;
- B) A NEW LINK ROAD FROM NORTH ROAD TO SERVE THE SITE TOGETHER WITH ACCESS FROM STATION ROAD;
- C) EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING ALONG ALL ITS BOUNDARIES AND APPROXIMATELY 3.5 HECTARES OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL OPEN SPACE CONCENTRATED IN THE EASTERN HALF OF THE SITE;
- D) THE PROVISION OF, OR CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT TOWARDS PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS CONNECTING TO THE RECREATION GROUND, THE COMMUNITY WOODLAND, PATHFIELDS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, THE NEW INFANT SCHOOL, THE TOWN CENTRE AND ALONG STATION ROAD;
- E) THE PROVISION OF A BUS WAITING AND TURNING AREA;
- F) MEASURES TO RETAIN THE FUNCTIONING AND INTEGRITY OF THE BIODIVERSITY NETWORK;
- G) THE SITE IS NOT DEVELOPED BEFORE APRIL 2006 AT THE EARLIEST;
- H) THE PREPARATION OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF; AND
- I) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-
 - ♦ PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECONDARY, JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL PLACES;
 - ♦ THE CREATION OF THE COMMUNITY WOODLANDS TO THE NORTH OF THE SITE.

EMPLOYMENT

16.26 South Molton is within the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration and functions as an important employment centre for the surrounding rural area. As part of the MCTI, a small business strategy is being prepared in conjunction with the Chamber of Trade. This strategy will investigate the potential for the provision of managed workspace to complement the identification of Pathfields by the Regional Development Agency as a satellite location for such activities.

Pathfields Business Park

16.27 Employment within South Molton is concentrated at Pathfields Industrial Estate, which is located adjacent to the North Devon Link Road. Given the strategic significance of Pathfields and the need to foster the growth and diversification of the economy of the area to reflect MCTI objectives, an extension to the industrial estate is required. A landscape study and ecological assessment has been carried out to identify additional employment land that would cause least impact. In accordance with the recommendations of the Study, additional employment land is proposed north of the existing industrial estate and west of Hacche Lane, together with new structural planting to mitigate visual intrusion, as shown on Inset Map 5. The expansion of Pathfields should contribute towards the extension and enhancement of recreational open space and the community woodland to the south of the site in accordance with Policy REC5 and Proposal SMO7. In addition to providing recreational opportunities arising from the development, these requirements will also help to landscape the development and mitigate any loss of habitat.

16.27A The proposed extension of Pathfields includes a new access from North Road (B3226) in order to reduce the use of the junction onto the North Devon Link Road at Borner's Bridge. Nevertheless, the proposed extension will still need to contribute towards increasing the capacity and improving the safety of the Borner's Bridge junction. All proposals should include measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling throughout the employment estate to the town. In particular, a pedestrian, cycle and bus route should be created along Hacche Lane with enhancements to the existing network via the recreation ground to enable a link into the town centre. Depending on the scale of any

proposal, a Travel Plan may be required in accordance to meet the requirements of Policy TRA1A. A lorry park should also be provided within the estate. The proposed extension of Pathfields to the west of Hacche Lane will require this road to be upgraded to provide adequate vehicular access to this proposed extension, as well as providing an alternative means of access utilising a link through the proposed Livestock Market (Proposal SMO3A) and south onto the existing estate road.

16.28 The existing industrial estate, as well as the proposed extension, will be restricted to uses within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order. Sustainable urban drainage systems should be used to control surface water in accordance with Policy DVS7.

16.29 The Livestock Market is fundamental to the role of South Molton as an agricultural centre. The existing Livestock Market may need to relocate from its current town centre location during the Plan period to a more suitable site. In order to retain its presence within the town and to take advantage of its accessibility to the North Devon Link Road, a site for a new Livestock Market is proposed on land adjoining Pathfields, as shown on Inset Map 5. If some of this land is not required for a new Livestock Market during the Plan period then consideration will be given to making the remainder of the land available for a future extension of Pathfields Business Park provided an overriding need has been demonstrated and any extension is of an appropriate scale to meet that identified need.

PROPOSAL SMO3 (PATHFIELDS BUSINESS PARK)

LAND AT PATHFIELDS, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, IS ALLOCATED FOR EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8 OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE PROPOSED:-

- A) UPGRADING HACCHE LANE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE PROPOSED EXTENSION TO THE BUSINESS PARK;**
- B) EXTENSIVE STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING INCLUDING TREE PLANTING AND HABITAT PROTECTION, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5;**
- C) THE PROVISION OF BUS, PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS TO CONNECT TO THE TOWN CENTRE;**
- D) THE PROVISION OF A LORRY PARK; AND**
- E) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-**
 - ◆ THE PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE RECREATION AREA AND COMMUNITY WOODLAND SOUTH OF THE SITE;**
 - ◆ FUNDING TO IMPROVE BUS SERVICES TO THE SITE;**
 - ◆ IMPROVING THE A361 BORNER'S BRIDGE JUNCTION.**

PROPOSAL SMO3A (LIVESTOCK MARKET)

LAND ADJOINING PATHFIELDS, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, IS PROPOSED FOR A LIVESTOCK MARKET PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE PROPOSED:-

- A) EXTENSIVE STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING INCLUDING TREE PLANTING ALONG THE SITE BOUNDARIES; AND**
- B) THE PROVISION OF, OR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS, BUS, PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS CONNECTING TO PATHFIELDS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AND THE TOWN CENTRE;**
- C) CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS IMPROVING THE A361 BORNER'S BRIDGE JUNCTION.**

Hill Village

16.30 In addition to industrial land at Pathfields, the Chipboard Factory at Hill Village is a major source of local employment. The existing factory is on a hilltop location approximately 2 kilometres west of South Molton. A new southern link road between Pathfields and Hill Village may be required to improve access to the Chipboard Factory and to reduce commercial vehicles through the town centre and from the surrounding rural lanes.

16.31 Given the importance of the business to the local economy, further expansion may be acceptable subject to its impact on the landscape and local road network. To ensure the travel and transport implications are adequately addressed with any problems relating to the local highway network resolved, a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required, subject to the scale of any proposal in accordance with Policy TRA1A. Depending on its scale, an Environmental Impact Assessment may also be required with any proposal sensitively designed and landscaped in order to minimise any visual impact on the surrounding area in accordance with Policies DVS1 and DVS2.

16.32 An archaeological site recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record lies to the south west of the factory. The remains and its setting will need to be protected from any development proposals in accordance with Policy ENV14. Due to the prominence of the site and its location outside the town, further development unrelated to the existing factory will not be permitted.

POLICY SMO4 (HILL VILLAGE)

AN EXTENSION OF THE CHIPBOARD FACTORY, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) THE DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING OF THE DEVELOPMENT MINIMISES ANY VISUAL IMPACT ON THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE; AND**
B) THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT HARM THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ROAD NETWORK AND THE SAFETY OF HIGHWAY USERS.

Bray Leino, Filleigh

16.33 Although outside the town and situated in the rural settlement of Filleigh, Bray Leino is also important to the economy of the South Molton area. The business is especially important as it provides high quality and skilled jobs. In view of its importance to the local economy, further expansion of the business will be supported in accordance with Policy ECN3.

TOWN CENTRE

16.34 Based on the findings of the North Devon Retail Study, the town centre of South Molton is defined on Inset Map 5. It incorporates properties along Broad Street, East Street and South Street. The town centre's principal role is shopping, but it also provides important local services and a 'market' function. South Molton also contains some antique and specialist comparison shops that provide a distinctive shopping and visitor attraction. The level of service provision is well above the national average (28%) and is a reflection of its 'market town' function. The composition of South Molton town centre is summarised in Table 16 below.

Table 16 : South Molton Town Centre - Composition Summary

Business Type	July 2000	
	Number	%
Convenience	13	12.7
Comparison	42	41.2
Service	44	43.2
Vacant	3	2.9
TOTAL	102	100.0

Source : North Devon Retail Study (July 2000)

16.35 The Retail Study has concluded that, given the wide range of uses throughout the town centre inter-mixed with residential properties, there is no readily identifiable 'primary' shopping area. However, in order to retain and enhance its shopping function, uses other than shops (Use Class A1) will only be permitted at ground floor level within the town centre provided they do not exceed 50% of the total number of units and are restricted to financial and professional services (Class A2), restaurants and cafes (Class A3), drinking establishments (Class A4), hot food takeaways (Class A5) and community and leisure uses (Classes D1 and D2). If the 50% threshold is reached, proposals for non-shopping uses will be refused unless the level of vacancies exceeds 5% of the total number of units. In all cases proposals for non shopping will only be permitted where they do not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre.

POLICY SMO5 (THE TOWN CENTRE)

SHOPS (USE CLASS A1) WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5. WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE, FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (USE CLASS A2), RESTAURANTS AND CAFES (USE CLASS A3), DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS (USE CLASS A4), HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS (USE CLASS A5, AND COMMUNITY AND LEISURE USES (WITHIN USE CLASSES D1 AND D2) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL WHERE NO LESS THAN 50% OF ALL GROUND FLOOR UNITS ARE SHOPS (USE CLASS A1) UNLESS:-

- A) THE LEVEL OF VACANCIES EXCEEDS 5% OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS; AND**
B) THERE IS NO HARM TO THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE TOWN CENTRE.

Town Centre Expansion

16.36 In order to enlarge the town centre and improve its vitality and viability, a redevelopment area to the south of Broad Street and east of South Street has been identified, as shown on Inset Map 5. This area also includes the Livestock Market subject to its relocation to Pathfields (see Proposal SMO3A). If the Livestock Market is to remain in the town centre then it will need to be upgraded to meet new regulations. However, the intention is to relocate the Cattle Market to Pathfields in accordance with Policy TRA3A. Additionally, it is also proposed to relocate the existing lorry park and M Ways premises to Pathfields during the Plan period. It is proposed to redevelop this whole area comprehensively for a mix of uses incorporating the following elements:-

- ◆ A new foodstore of up to 1,000 sq metres net sales to reflect the recommendations of the North Devon Retail Study which identified a 'fundamental need for further convenience provision in the town centre';
- ◆ The retention of a significant amount of car parking either at ground level or decked to serve the town centre;
- ◆ A range of retail and leisure uses (see paragraph 16.45) incorporating an element of residential development above ground floor level;
- ◆ The provision of a range of community uses, including youth resource, community and tourist information centres and extension to the PIP centre. New premises are also required for the library, museum, medical centre and police station. Consideration should be given to combining complementary community uses where appropriate either in new purpose built premises as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of this area. However, consideration should also be given to utilising existing buildings such as the Pannier Market and Amory House;
- ◆ An environmental enhancement scheme incorporating soft and hard landscaping and the provision of public art in accordance with Policies DVS1, DVS2 and REC8;
- ◆ The provision of a bus interchange facility;
- ◆ Enhanced vehicular access between New Road and South Street; and
- ◆ Pedestrian and cycle links through the site to the existing shopping frontages.

16.37 The redevelopment of this area will need to respect both the integrity of the Conservation Area and listed buildings, including the public market and assembly room in accordance with Policies ENV16 and ENV17 respectively. Any contamination on the site will need to be remediated in accordance with Policy DVS4. Due to the strategic importance and the complexity and sensitivity in comprehensively redeveloping the area, the Strategic Action Plan includes a detailed development brief which has been prepared for the town centre redevelopment site.

PROPOSAL SMO6 (TOWN CENTRE EXPANSION)

LAND TO THE REAR OF SOUTH STREET AND BROAD STREET, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, IS PROPOSED FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE TOWN CENTRE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE INCLUDED:-

- A) THE PROVISION OF A FOODSTORE AND A MIX OF RETAIL, LEISURE, RESIDENTIAL AND COMMUNITY USES;**
- B) THE PROVISION OF A BUS INTERCHANGE FACILITY;**
- C) A COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME;**
- D) PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS THROUGH THE SITE TO THE EXISTING SHOPPING FRONTAGES; AND**
- E) A GOOD RANGE AND QUALITY OF CAR PARKING, SECURE CYCLE PARKING AND SERVICE PROVISION.**

Environmental Enhancement and Traffic Management

16.38 The town centre is a pleasant shopping environment. However, Broad Street requires improvements with better use made of the Square as a focus for seating and landscaping. Improvements are also required to the pedestrian linkages around the Square including the provision of a central bus stop. Although the amount of on street car parking in the town centre should be reduced to improve the environment for pedestrians, increased car parking is required in East Street as compensation for losses elsewhere to meet the need for shoppers and existing residential properties in the town centre in particular. A shop mobility system is also needed within the town to improve accessibility for all sections of the community. Consideration will also be given to providing a park and ride scheme for South Molton in the vicinity of Pathfields with the use of Hacche Lane as a bus priority route connecting to the town centre.

Reuse of Upper Floors and Vacant Buildings

16.39 In order to maximise the use of the existing building stock, support will be given to utilising empty space above the ground floor level in town centre properties for a variety of uses including flats. Making use of vacant space will add to the vitality and viability of the town centre and provide additional security and income for the property owner. It is also important to utilise the historic buildings in the town centre to ensure they are properly maintained including Amory House, the Pannier Market, the Old Infant School, library and Town Council buildings, cinema and sorting office.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Sport and Recreation

16.40 Existing public open spaces, including sports pitches, are identified on the Inset Map for South Molton. These include the recreation ground adjoining Hacche Lane, the rugby pitches either side of Station Road adjacent to Pathfields, the football ground and the playing fields of the Community College both of which are situated to the south of the town. Proposals to improve the existing facilities at the football ground and Community College include a new clubhouse, an all weather pitch and a multi-use games area. Other important public open spaces include the allotments north of Dart Park, Central Park and the cemetery. The Open Space Strategy for the District has identified the following deficiencies within South Molton:-

- ◆ *Mini soccer pitches*
- ◆ *Multi use games area*
- ◆ *Equipped children's play area*
- ◆ *Facilities for young people*
- ◆ *Good quality town park.*

16.41 There are relatively few public open spaces within the town. In order to overcome these deficiencies a range of new public open spaces are proposed. These include 'green wedges' either side of the stream between Brook Meadow and Dart Park as far as the junction of Poltimore Road and East Street, and land east of Parsonage Lane. Contributions will be required from developers in order to help fund the provision of the open space proposed between Brook Meadow and Dart Park and land at Olivers Gutter. The public open space east of Parsonage Lane will be provided as part of the proposed urban extension in accordance with Proposal SMO2d. The location and extent of public open space provision will be set out in a development brief for the site. In addition to increasing recreational opportunities, these 'green wedges' will provide environmental benefits, contribute to the local biodiversity network and improve pedestrian and cycle links within the town.

16.42 The majority of the proposed housing sites within South Molton are situated on the western side of the town, where there is the greatest deficiency of public open space. Consequently, new residential developments on the western side of the town will be required to both provide and contribute towards the provision of new public open space adjacent to Raleigh Park, which is shown on Inset Map 5.

16.43 All the existing and proposed public open spaces, as indicated on the Inset Map, will be protected from other forms of development in accordance with Policy REC6.

Community Park and Woodland

16.44 Working in partnership with South West Forest, it is proposed to extend the community woodland so that it abuts part of the proposed residential development east of Parsonage Lane. It is also proposed to extend the community woodland to the west of Hacche Lane. As recognised in the South West Forest Development Plan, these extensions to the community woodland will provide a valuable local resource for recreation and enhance biodiversity. It will also minimise any visual impact arising from the proposed extension to Pathfields Employment Estate and the residential development east of Parsonage Lane. Additional guidance on community woodlands is set out at paragraph 10.10A.

PROPOSAL SMO7 (COMMUNITY PARK AND WOODLAND)

LAND TO THE NORTH OF SOUTH MOLTON, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 5, IS PROPOSED AS AN EXTENSION TO THE COMMUNITY PARK AND WOODLAND.

Recreational Facilities

16.45 In addition to public open space, there is a swimming pool, bowling green and tennis courts at Central Park on the edge of the town centre. Dry side facilities are proposed to further enhance and develop the swimming pool. A skateboard park and ball area is also proposed at the Central Park in order to increase the range of recreational activities for the younger age groups. It is also proposed to build a new sports complex to join the bowling club with the swimming pool. This new complex could incorporate a range of sporting and recreational activities including a health and fitness suite, dance studio, long mat bowling as well as new changing facilities.

Education and Healthcare

16.46 A new infant school has been constructed to the north of Gunswell Lane with a new access to North Road. In view of the level of housing proposed for South Molton, the infant school may have no spare capacity before the end of the Plan period. Both the Junior School and Community College have no spare capacity at the present time. A new junior school will be required, although no site has been specifically identified. As the junior school may be upgraded to a primary school during the Plan period depending on pupil numbers, it is not possible to locate it adjacent to the new infant school. Contributions will be sought towards the costs of providing additional secondary and junior school places from residential development involving family type housing of five or more dwellings based on the Code of Practice. In the latter part of the Plan period, education contributions may also be sought to providing additional infant school places.

16.47 Once the new infant school is operational the existing school site off New Road will be surplus to educational requirements.

16.48 The existing health centre in East Street is inadequate and additional healthcare facilities are required. No site for a new medical centre has been identified, although the preferred location would be as part of the redevelopment of the town centre expansion area in accordance with Proposal SMO6. An alternative location could be adjacent to the hospital.

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