

CHAPTER 34

Morteheoe Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

34.1 Morteheoe is situated in a cliff top setting on the north west corner of the District. The village is approximately 1 kilometre north of the centre of Woolacombe with access along a steep narrow lane. Ilfracombe is situated approximately 6 kilometres east of Morteheoe. The settlement pattern of the village is broadly linear in nature with much of the development either side of North Morte Road. Morteheoe is located within the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint.

ENVIRONMENT

Landscape

34.2 The village is wholly situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) where Policy ENV2 applies. Morteheoe is located within the Heritage Coast and the development boundary for the village defines the extent of the Coastal Preservation Area (CPA). Proposals within these landscape designations will be considered against Policies ENV3 and ENV5 respectively.

34.3 The cliff tops to the north and west of the village are owned by the National Trust and retain their wild, unspoilt character. The land rises to the south and east of the village and is surrounded by coastal downland. Much of the land surrounding Morteheoe is owned by the National Trust.

Nature Conservation

34.4 The coastline to the north and west of the village forms part of the Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA) which stretches between Downend at Croyde as far as Hangman Point (within Exmoor National Park). The VMCA recognises the ecological and geological importance of the cliffs along this stretch of coastline. Proposals affecting the VMCA will be considered against Policy ENV12.

34.5 Morte Point, including the cliffs west of Morteheoe village, are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its maritime heath, coastal, cliff and foreshore habitats. All proposals affecting the SSSI will be considered against Policy ENV10. Immediately to the north of the SSSI is a County Wildlife Site at Bull Point and Rockham Bay where Policy ENV12 applies. The extent of the SSSI and County Wildlife Site are shown on Inset Map 22 and the Proposals Map.

Historic Environment

34.6 The centre of Morteheoe retains much of its historic pattern and character and has been designated as a Conservation Area. The more recent developments along North Morte Road are excluded from this area. Proposals within the Conservation Area will be considered against Policy ENV16.

HOUSING

34.7 A development boundary is identified for Morteheoe on Inset Map 22. Within the development boundary, residential development will be permitted in accordance with Policy HSG2. Outside the principle of residential development will not be acceptable unless it complies with Policies HSG8, HSG9, HSG9A or HSG10. There are no large previously developed sites within the village. No land is therefore proposed for residential development.

EMPLOYMENT

34.8 There are limited employment opportunities within the village with the local economy dominated by tourism.

34.9 There are numerous caravan and camping sites in the area surrounding Morteheoe, including sites at North Morte Farm, Twitchen Park, Easewell Farm, Damage Barton and Warcombe Farm. These sites are in addition to those caravan and camping sites either side of the B3343 east of Woolacombe. All of these sites are situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast and Coastal Preservation Area.

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34.10 Given the existing level of provision, the quality of the landscape and the tortuous road network surrounding the village, proposals for new or extensions to existing tourist accommodation will not generally be permitted in accordance with Policy ECN10. However, proposals to improve and upgrade the standards of existing accommodation and facilities may be permitted but only where they comply with Policy ECN11.

34.11 There are no existing or proposed industrial sites at Morteohoe. The main non tourist related employment opportunities are situated at Mullacott Cross Industrial Estate to the south of Ilfracombe. Any proposals for employment uses within Morteohoe will be assessed against Policy ECN3 together with the relevant landscape and travel and transport policies contained in Section 1 of the Plan.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Sport and Recreation

34.12 The only existing public open space within Morteohoe is the children's play area to the east of the Heritage Centre, which will be protected from other uses in accordance with Policy REC6. The Open Space Strategy undertaken for the District has identified the following deficiencies for Morteohoe:-

- ◆ *Multi use games area*
- ◆ *Facilities for young people*
- ◆ *Informal open space.*

34.13 However, the North Devon Coast Path follows the coast to the north and west of the village. It provides public access to a large area of open downland owned by the National Trust around Morte Point, which is well used by both residents and tourists. The beaches at Barricane and Woolacombe also provide an important resource for informal recreation and outdoor sports.

Education Provision

34.14 Morteohoe has no primary school of its own. The nearest primary school is at Woolacombe, which has no spare capacity, although there is not expected to be any significant increase in demand for primary school places.

Car Parking

34.15 The National Trust car park is well used and includes a seasonal extension. In view of its strategic importance and location outside the development boundary, this car park will be safeguarded from redevelopment in accordance with Policy TRA8A unless alternative provision is made available.