

CHAPTER 8

The Economy

INTRODUCTION

8.1 This Chapter is concerned with the planning issues relating to economic development and energy proposals. Although retailing plays an important part in the local economy, this topic is contained in the Town and Village Centres Retail and Community Facilities Chapter.

8.2 The policies contained in this Chapter are underpinned by the North Devon Economic Partnership Strategy. The overall aim of the Strategy is to work for the creation of a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy. The four key objectives of the Strategy are:-

- ◆ *To provide opportunities for wealth creation, employment and training;*
- ◆ *To improve access to services and transport;*
- ◆ *To target action to address identified problems;*
- ◆ *To secure balanced communities and vibrant towns.*

THE NORTH DEVON ECONOMY

8.3 North Devon has a relatively diverse and well balanced economic base. Between 1991 and 2001, the economy of North Devon has increased by 5.2% although the growth rate has been faster during the first half of the period. Service sector employment has increased steadily since 1981 and now accounts for 67% of all employment in the area. Until recently manufacturing in North Devon had steadily grown in contrast to the rest of the UK and accounted for around 17% of all North Devon employees in 2001. Employment in agriculture and forestry has continued to decline in line with national trends whilst fishing has grown significantly since 1991. All of these three sectors also create and support jobs in ancillary industries such as servicing and processing. Distribution, hotel and catering sectors are stronger than the national average and have experienced significant growth in recent years. Within the tourism sector, self-catering accommodation including caravans and camping are growing faster than serviced accommodation resulting in strong development pressures in the protected coastal countryside outside the main resorts. Improvements in the quality of tourist accommodation have led to a cascade effect of expenditure throughout the local economy.

8.4 The economy of North Devon is dominated by small businesses with 87% of firms employing less than 10 people. However, small businesses only account for about 25% of all employees. Additionally, 22% of the economically active population are self-employed as compared to the national average of 11.5%.

8.5 In addition to the above, other significant economic factors include:-

- ◆ *The low gross domestic product (GDP) per head, particularly in the rural areas, arising largely due to the low wages, which is partly explained by the relatively high level of female and part time employees. In 2001 average UK GDP per head was £14,854, compared to £11,221 in North Devon;*
- ◆ *The pockets of high unemployment and low income in parts of Barnstaple and Ilfracombe.*

ECONOMIC FUNDING

8.6 The South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) is an organisation whose role is to drive forward the economy of the region and provide regional strategic leadership in economic development and social regeneration. SWRDA has incorporated a number of organisations, including part of the Rural Development Commission (RDC), English Partnerships and Devon and Cornwall Development International. SWRDA aims through the Regional Economic Strategy to '*promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness; promote employment and develop relevant skills; and contribute to sustainable development*'. Specifically in North Devon, this Strategy sets out to maintain the area's rural character whilst enhancing its economic performance, promoting investment and encouraging the growth of a more highly skilled and flexible workforce through diversification and market expansion. The aims of the Local Plan set out in Chapter 2 will contribute towards the Regional Economic Strategy. The Plan will help to strengthen North Devon's economy by directing employment opportunities and economic growth to those areas requiring economic regeneration and diversification, including Ilfracombe Harbour, South Molton and the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration. All policies in the Plan will contribute to the principles of sustainable development.

8.7 The whole of the District has been designated as an EU Objective 2 area. The Objective 2 programme runs from January 2000 to December 2006 with funding available from both the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund. Funds from the programme will be used to improve the economic infrastructure, and support investment in businesses, manufacturing and sectors in transition such as tourism. Apart from Barnstaple and the surrounding parishes, the District is also a Rural Priority Action Area. South Molton and Ilfracombe have Coastal and Market Town Initiative (C&MTI) status. By 2011 these initiatives together with wider Plan policies have made a significant contribution towards strengthening and diversifying North Devon's economy and supporting economic growth of the District.

EMPLOYMENT LAND PROVISION

8.8 The Devon Structure Plan requires about 70 hectares of land to be made available in North Devon for employment purposes over the period of 1995 to 2011. The strategic aim underlying the provision of employment land in the Structure Plan is to sustain and diversify the economic base of Devon. The Plan has identified a level of provision above Structure Plan requirements to counter the anticipated loss of employment land to other uses, notably housing. Significant employment land allocated for other uses includes Anchorwood Bank, Mill Road and Evans Transport all in Barnstaple.

8.9 Most of the land proposed for employment development has been directed towards the towns of Barnstaple, South Molton and Ilfracombe and, to a lesser extent, Braunton in accordance with the settlement strategy. The selection of land proposed for employment purposes has been based on their accessibility to the principle road network, the lack of significant physical and environmental constraints and the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure. A variety of sites have been identified to meet the differing needs of firms and businesses including those being promoted for a mix of uses to encourage the integration of homes and places of work.

8.10 For the purposes of this Plan, employment development is defined as those uses within Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) unless otherwise specified.

Table 9 : Devon Structure Plan Employment Land Requirements for North Devon

	Employment Land (Hectares)
Devon Structure Plan Requirements (1995-2011)	70
Employment Land Developed (1995-2003)	15
Employment Land Commitments	
◆ Braunton 5	
◆ Ilfracombe 10	
◆ South Molton 25	
◆ Barnstaple 25	65
Total Employment Land Provision (1995-2011)	80

Figures rounded to nearest 5 hectares

THE LOCATION OF NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

8.11 The proposed distribution of new employment land reflects the policies and principles contained in the Devon Structure Plan and the overall strategy of the Local Plan. The distribution of employment land is summarised below:-

- ◆ *The majority of employment land is located in Barnstaple in recognition of its sub regional status and economic potential, its anticipated population growth and sustainable transport network. The majority of the employment land is concentrated at Roundswell to take advantage of its proximity to the A39 and its juxtaposition to a major residential area;*
- ◆ *Significant employment land is also proposed at South Molton and Ilfracombe. Extensive land is proposed at Pathfields in South Molton to reflect its prospects for securing employment close to the North Devon Link Road, its important role in serving most of the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration and in recognition of its C&MTI status. Similarly extensive land is allocated at Mullacott Cross in Ilfracombe to aid in the economic regeneration of the town, to reflect its role as a service centre for a large part of the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint in the north of the District, and in recognition of its C&MTI status;*
- ◆ *Outside the towns, employment growth is directed to the larger villages on a scale appropriate to their size, function and character, with a particular focus on Braunton and the local centres; and*
- ◆ *In the remaining areas of the District, the emphasis is on supporting the diversification and growth of the rural economy, especially in the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration, in a manner that does not harm the environmental quality of North Devon.*

EMPLOYMENT ON NON ALLOCATED LAND IN BARNSTAPLE AND THE AREA CENTRES

8.12 Purpose built employment estates are not always appropriate for all businesses, particularly small firms who may not be able to afford premium rental charges. Providing opportunities for employment development within the urban areas will help promote a greater choice of sites and premises for firms and businesses and a better integration of work and home. This approach is likely to reduce reliance on the motor car. New employment development will therefore be permitted within the development boundaries of Barnstaple and the Area Centres providing it does not lead to the loss of land that is protected or proposed for other uses. It is also important to ensure that residential amenities, the local environment or the functioning of the highway network is not harmed in accordance with the policies contained in the Chapters on Development Standards, Environment and Travel, Transport and Communications including Policies DVS3, DVS4 and TRA6. Generally, new employment development on windfall sites will be restricted to B1 Uses in order to reduce these types of problems.

POLICY ECN1 (EMPLOYMENT ON NON-ALLOCATED LAND IN BARNSTAPLE AND THE AREA CENTRES)

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES OF BARNSTAPLE, BRAUNTON, SOUTH MOLTON AND ILFRACOMBE PROVIDING THE CHARACTER AND SETTING OF THE SETTLEMENT IS NOT HARMED.

SAFEGUARDING EMPLOYMENT LAND

8.13 The protection of existing and proposed employment sites is important for a variety of reasons including:-

- ◆ *To ensure an adequate supply of land and premises is available to meet the employment needs of North Devon;*
- ◆ *To retain the considerable investment made in infrastructure to serve employment sites;*
- ◆ *To provide a choice for the differing and changing needs of businesses.*

8.14 There is currently pressure to release employment land and premises for more profitable uses, a situation partly fuelled by the emphasis to build new homes on previously developed sites. Alternative uses for employment land and premises will only be permitted where this does not harm business and employment opportunities in a particular area. In determining such proposals, favourable consideration will be given to the redevelopment of those sites or premises which are no longer suitable for the needs of modern businesses or where they create an insurmountable environmental problem due to their unneighbourly activities or through traffic generation.

8.15 Where employment land or premises is considered suitable for redevelopment and there is evidence of a local housing need, priority will be given to affordable housing schemes, including those being promoted by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), over other forms of development. This approach will enable the delivery of affordable homes and help meet a target of at least 1,200 new affordable homes in North Devon between 2003 and 2011 (see paragraph 7.34). Secure arrangements will be sought to ensure the housing remains affordable in the long term provided the need exists in accordance with Policy HSG7. If there is no interest or need to redevelop a site for affordable housing, the land or premises may be redeveloped for other uses.

8.16 Employment estates have been under pressure from retail and leisure uses. New retail and leisure development will not be permitted on such sites to both safeguard employment land and premises and also to protect the vitality and viability of town centres in accordance with Policies COM1 and REC1.

8.17 Exceptionally, developments of a quasi industrial nature such as car show rooms and commercial builders merchants, may be permitted on existing or proposed employment land due to the nature of their activities and because they require relatively large sites with good accessibility. In order to protect the vitality and viability of town centres and prevent any abuse of this concession, permitted development rights may be removed to prevent their change of use to Class A1 uses of the Use Classes Order.

POLICY ECN2 (SAFEGUARDING EMPLOYMENT LAND)

A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL INVOLVING THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT LAND OR PREMISES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT WOULD NOT HARM BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AREA; AND
B) THE LAND AND PREMISES ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.**

THE RURAL ECONOMY

8.18 The rural economy of North Devon has traditionally been based on agriculture. However, in recent years agriculture has been subject to radical changes which has steadily reduced employment opportunities. To compensate for the decline in agriculture, it is vital that there are appropriate development opportunities to diversify the economy as a primary means of sustaining rural areas. In accordance with this requirement, Policies ECN3 to ECN5 provide scope for new businesses and commercial activity to locate in rural areas, whilst preventing development which would harm the character of the countryside and conflict with the principles of sustainability. The general aim is to ensure that employment is available to enable people living in rural areas to work close to their home to reduce unnecessary travel.

Employment Development Within or Adjoining Settlements

8.19 Employment development will be encouraged to locate within or on the edge of the main built up area of a village or small rural settlement identified at paragraphs 3.22, 3.27 and 3.29. Any development should be sensitively related to the settlement pattern and the rural character of the area with its scale reflecting the employment needs of the locality. The appropriate size and scale of employment development will therefore vary according to the size, character and role of the settlement and the surrounding area.

8.20 New employment development will be permitted within the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint (ASLDC). However, the inherent landscape quality of this area will mean that there will be fewer opportunities relative to those less environmentally constrained parts of North Devon. Whatever the location, proposals should not harm the amenities of those living nearby nor give rise to unacceptable traffic generation in accordance with Policies DVS3 and TRA6. All proposals should be within easy walking or cycling distance from the settlement centre in accordance with Policy TRA1A. Wherever possible, employment related development should reuse existing rural buildings in accordance with Policy ECN5.

POLICY ECN3 (EMPLOYMENT WITHIN OR ADJOINING A RURAL SETTLEMENT)

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF AN IDENTIFIED VILLAGE OR SMALL RURAL SETTLEMENT WHERE:-

- A) THE SCALE AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATION OF THE RURAL SETTLEMENT; AND**
- B) IT DOES NOT HARM THE RURAL CHARACTER AND SETTING OF THE SETTLEMENT OR THE SURROUNDING AREA.**

Employment Development Related to Agriculture

8.21 Specific types of industry and business may justify an isolated site in the countryside due to their special locational requirements resulting from the nature of their operations and their contribution to the economy of North Devon. However, this recognition needs to be balanced against environmental and wider sustainability interests.

8.22 Allowing some employment development in the countryside recognises the demands of industries and businesses that have a direct connection with agriculture. To reflect initiatives that add value to agricultural produce and changing legislation to increase hygiene and inspection in the production of food, new facilities may be required in the future. The types of agricultural related industries and businesses may include intensive horticultural operations, cattle markets, abattoirs or packaging and processing plants.

8.23 Bad neighbour type industries may also require an isolated location because they cannot be satisfactorily sited in an urban area or on a conventional industrial estate due to their potentially polluting activities. Bad neighbour type industries will only be permitted in the countryside in exceptional circumstances. Such uses will only be permitted in the countryside where they contribute to the local economy.

8.24 Where possible, all forms of employment should be accommodated on existing or proposed sites within the towns and villages and, in all cases, locations that are well related to the existing highway network. All new employment development proposed in the countryside will be assessed against all the relevant policies contained elsewhere in the Plan including those in the Development Standards, Environment and Travel, Transport and Communication Chapters. Where the principle of allowing an employment use in the countryside is accepted, it must be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise the impact on the surrounding area.

POLICY ECN4 (EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO AGRICULTURE)

A PROPOSAL FOR EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO AGRICULTURE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE:-

- A) IT CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED ON EXISTING, COMMITTED OR PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT LAND OR WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF A TOWN OR VILLAGE;
AND
B) IT DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

The Re-use of Rural Buildings

8.25 Many rural buildings, especially those developed in connection with agriculture, are no longer required or suitable for their original use. These buildings are a potentially important resource. Their conversions to appropriate uses can reduce the need for additional buildings in the countryside. In order to protect the countryside from unnecessary and inappropriate development and in the interests of sustainability, rural buildings should only be converted when there is a genuine need for the use being proposed.

8.26 Given the objective to vary and widen the rural economy, favourable consideration will be given to the reuse and conversion of buildings in the countryside to meet the employment, tourism, recreation and community needs of a particular area. Such development may also help sustain local communities.

8.27 The residential conversion of buildings in the countryside will only be permitted where it meets the accommodation requirements of an agricultural or forestry worker in accordance with Policy HSG9, or it forms a subordinate part of a scheme for business reuse. In these situations, a condition may be imposed requiring that the work necessary to establish the business enterprise are completed before the dwelling is occupied (in order to ensure that the business reuse materialises), and that the occupancy of the dwelling is tied to the operation of the business enterprise (in order to prevent it from being sold separately).

8.28 A residential conversion in the countryside may also be permitted where it meets an identified local housing need in the community. Such conversions will be subject to a local occupancy condition restricting its availability to those persons in a community with a local housing need as defined in paragraph 7.45. The involvement of a registered social landlord will be the most effective means of ensuring that the converted building remains available to meet the affordable housing needs of the community both initially and in the future. Further opportunities for converted rural buildings to meet the affordable housing needs of the local community are provided by Policy HSG13. This policy provides scope for holiday conversions to be occupied by local people in housing need.

8.29 Residential conversions should avoid domestic features such as dormers and chimneys as these can damage the character of the building and the surrounding countryside. Similar harm can result from the creation of a residential curtilage and the associated domestic paraphernalia such as fencing, washing lines and sheds. For all residential conversions, a condition will be attached removing permitted development rights for extensions to ensure the building remains affordable to the local community, any environmental impact is minimised and the character of the building is retained.

8.30 Only buildings of a permanent and substantial construction should be converted for reuse in the countryside. Some rural buildings will not be suitable for reuse due to their form, bulk or because, in the case of pre-fabricated buildings, they were never designed to be permanent. Buildings in the countryside that require extensive rebuilding, alteration or extension will not be considered for conversion. A structural engineer's report will be required if there is any doubt about the condition of the building.

8.31 Inevitably, the reuse of buildings in the countryside will result in some car travel due to the limited availability of public transport options in rural areas. However, proposals that create significant car trips or widespread commuting from further afield will not be permitted in the interests of sustainability.

8.32 Conversions involving historic buildings will be examined with particular care in order to prevent any damage to their fabric and character. For example, the proportion and pattern of existing window openings and doors is an important feature of most traditional buildings and should be retained. The use and application of materials should match the existing building. Where it is considered necessary to protect the character of the building or the surrounding countryside, a condition will be imposed restricting any future alterations.

8.33 Rural buildings are often used by protected species as part of their habitat including bats and barn owls. Consequently, an application to convert a rural building should be accompanied by a survey for protected species. However, the existence of such species in buildings should not prevent their reuse if dealt with appropriately in accordance with Policy ENV11.

8.34 In order to avoid any abuse of the supportive approach towards the conversion of rural buildings, it may be appropriate to investigate the history of an agricultural building constructed with the benefit of permitted development rights in order to establish whether it was ever used for its intended purposes. This approach will ensure that such buildings are not constructed with the principal aim of early conversion to another use. Where a proposal involves the reuse or conversion of an agricultural building, and their proliferation would have a harmful impact on the surrounding countryside, permitted development rights will be withdrawn to control new farm buildings on a particular unit or holding.

POLICY ECN5 (THE REUSE OF BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE)

1. THE REUSE OF A BUILDING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT IS FOR EMPLOYMENT, TOURISM, RECREATION OR COMMUNITY USES; OR**
- B) IT IS A RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION SUBORDINATE TO A BUSINESS REUSE, OR FOR AN AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKER; OR**
- C) IT IS A RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION WHICH MEETS AN IDENTIFIED HOUSING NEED IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY;**

AND IN ALL CASES:-

- D) THE BUILDING IS OF A PERMANENT AND SUBSTANTIAL CONSTRUCTION, IS CAPABLE OF CONVERSION WITHOUT MAJOR RECONSTRUCTION, AND ITS FORM, BULK AND DESIGN ARE IN KEEPING WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS;**
- E) THE SCALE AND INTENSITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT GENERATE A LEVEL OF TRAVEL UNACCEPTABLE TO THAT LOCATION;**
- F) IN THE CASE OF AN HISTORIC BUILDING IT DOES NOT DAMAGE ITS FABRIC AND CHARACTER; AND**
- G) ANY ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY DOES NOT HARM THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE.**

2. A RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO SECURE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE IT IS SUBORDINATE TO A BUSINESS REUSE, OR IS OCCUPIED BY AN AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKER OR REMAINS AVAILABLE TO MEET THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY BOTH INITIALLY AND IN THE LONGTERM PROVIDED THE NEED EXISTS.

Farm Diversification

8.35 Due to the decline in agriculture, encouragement will be given to diversification schemes to help protect farm incomes and maintain local employment. Farm diversification enterprises are varied and can include adding value through the processing and packaging of local produce and specialist foods, recreation and education facilities, tourism, farm shops, fish farms, equestrian enterprises, craft workshops and the growing of a wide range of crops and plants other than foodstuffs for uses such as fibres, oils, dyes, medicine and energy.

8.36 To be effective, diversification schemes need to be of lasting economic benefit by providing continued employment and a long-term source of income to supplement the farming business. They should not conflict with the normal functioning of the farm. Where possible, existing farm buildings should be used. Any new buildings required should be justified and, where practicable, well related to existing structures within a farm complex. Diversification schemes will also be assessed against all the relevant environment policies and should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise the impact on the surrounding countryside. In particular, farm diversification schemes should not harm valuable natural and semi natural habitats and other nature conservation interests, either directly or indirectly.

8.37 Diversification schemes are likely to increase the number of car trips to a farm. An increase might be considered acceptable where there are economic benefits to both the farm and the local economy arising from such schemes and there is no unacceptable impact on the local highway network by increasing congestion or reducing road safety. However, diversification schemes will not be permitted where the scale and nature of activities is likely to generate an unacceptable level of car trips contrary to the policies contained in the Travel, Transport and Communications Chapter, or directly compete with and undermine existing uses in a nearby settlement.

8.38 Fish farms with their associated engineering operations can be visually intrusive and harm the character of the surrounding landscape. However, where fish ponds are located within natural depressions and providing there are no extensive above ground engineering works, fish farming may be considered an acceptable form of diversification enterprise. In addition to their visual impact, fish farms can also harm the flow and quality of water courses. To assess their impact on water courses and flooding, the advice of the Environment Agency will be sought with any proposals assessed against Policy DVS6. Environmentally acceptable measures to exclude potential predators should be included in any fish farm proposal in order to protect the stock.

8.39 The provision of horse riding centres, breeding and livery stables can also be an acceptable form of diversification in the countryside. In order to avoid conflicts with vehicular traffic, it is important that sufficient opportunities exist within the vicinity of the centre or stable to enable the riding of horses away from roads. It is also important to ensure that these uses are located where there is existing residential accommodation, as they often require an element of supervision.

POLICY ECN6 (FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEMES)

A PROPOSAL FOR A FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEME WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT DOES NOT PREJUDICE EXISTING AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS ON THE FARM;**
- B) THE SCALE OF ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND DOES NOT UNDERMINE THE VIABILITY OF USES IN THE SURROUNDING SETTLEMENTS;**
- C) EXISTING BUILDINGS ARE USED WHERE POSSIBLE; AND**
- D) ANY NEW BUILDING THAT IS JUSTIFIED IS WELL RELATED TO AN EXISTING GROUP OF BUILDINGS WHERE PRACTICABLE WITH ITS SITING, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING MINIMISING ANY IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

Agricultural Buildings

8.40 A wide range of development associated with agriculture or forestry uses on holdings of 5 hectares or more do not require planning permission. In many cases, however, prior approval must be sought from the Local Planning Authority. This procedure allows the impact of any building to be assessed in terms of its siting, design and external appearance, having regard to the operational requirements of the business concerned.

8.41 Where planning permission is required and it has been established that there is a functional need for a new agricultural building, it should be designed to minimise the impact on the surrounding landscape having regard to its form, bulk and general design and the use of materials, colour and landscaping. The size of the building should be related to its functional requirements. Where possible, it should be sited close to existing buildings and sensitively related to natural land forms and features of the landscape in order to minimise its visual impact. An isolated location will only be acceptable where this is required for functional reasons. Whatever the locational requirements, skyline sites should be avoided. DEFRA and the County Council have produced a design guideline for new agricultural buildings in Devon that will be used to assess any development proposals and prior notification procedures. Applicants will be required to provide facilities for encouraging barn owls and bats to breed except where these would be inappropriate.

POLICY ECN7 (AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS)

A PROPOSAL FOR AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) ITS FUNCTIONAL NEED CANNOT BE MET BY ANY EXISTING BUILDING;**
- B) IT IS POSITIONED CLOSE TO AN EXISTING BUILDING UNLESS THIS DOES NOT MEET THE FUNCTIONAL NEEDS OF THE BUILDING OR HOLDING;**
- C) THE SIZE OF THE BUILDING DOES NOT EXCEED ITS FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS; AND**
- D) ITS SITING, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING MINIMISES ANY IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

TOURISM

Introduction

8.42 Tourism is important to the economy of North Devon and is the second most popular holiday destination in the County after Torbay. Tourism is estimated to be worth approximately 25% of the Gross Domestic Product of the District. Information from 2001 relating to the number of bedspaces, tourist nights spent in the District and serviced accommodation occupancy rates for each month are contained in Table 9A. The tourism industry is changing with a marked decline in long stay holidays in traditional resorts and in serviced accommodation on which North Devon has and continues to rely. Conversely, self catering, countryside and off season short break holidays are increasing in popularity with more day visitors both into and within North Devon.

Table 9A : Tourism Information for North Devon – 2001

	Serviced	Flats and Houses	Holiday Park Units	Touring Pitches	Private Households	Total
Number of Bedspaces	10250	4820	11290	17900	-	44260
Tourist Nights (Thousands)	1226	652.3	1489.8	153.1	1473.3	6034.5

SERVICED ACCOMMODATION OCCUPANCY RATES (%)

Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
28.4	24.5	14.6	23.4	21.8	29.4	34.2	43.4	53.9	67.3	52.5	39.2

8.43 The main challenge is to strike the right balance between supporting tourism whilst maintaining and enhancing the character and diversity of North Devon's natural and historic environment, in recognition that this provides the underlying attraction for visitors. In order to achieve this balance, priority will be given to improving the quality of accommodation and facilities, particularly where this encourages 'green' or sustainable forms of tourism and a lengthening of the holiday season.

Tourist Accommodation

Serviced Accommodation

8.44 PPG21 'Tourism' emphasises the value hotels can bring to the local economy in terms of jobs and visitor spending. However, if market trends continue, there is unlikely to be much demand for new hotels or guesthouses during the Plan period. Consequently, encouragement will be given to proposals which upgrade and improve the quality of existing serviced accommodation. If there are proposals for new hotels and guesthouse accommodation, these should generally be located within the tourist resorts of Ilfracombe, Combe Martin and Woolacombe. Additionally, serviced accommodation may also be acceptable in Barnstaple, Braunton and South Molton to realise their potential as visitor centres and will be of particular value where they provide conference and on site leisure facilities available to the wider community. Outside these settlements, new hotels may also be acceptable where they are associated with an existing recreational facility or involve the conversion of a large country house.

8.45 Smaller forms of serviced accommodation such as guest houses and bed and breakfast establishments may be acceptable in rural areas where they involve the adaptation or the conversion of a building in accordance with Policy ECN5. Any proposals affecting the AONB, Heritage Coast, Coastal Preservation Area, National Park or AGLV will need to accord with the relevant environment policies. A further policy relating to serviced tourism accommodation and facilities, including the protection of hotels in Woolacombe, is set out in the Woolacombe Action Plan (see Policy WOO3).

POLICY ECN8 (SERVICED ACCOMMODATION)

A PROPOSAL FOR SERVICED ACCOMMODATION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT IS LOCATED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY OF BARNSTAPLE, BRAUNTON, COMBE MARTIN, ILFRACOMBE, SOUTH MOLTON AND WOOLACOMBE; OR**
- B) IT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING DWELLING HOUSE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR EXTENSIONS OR ALTERATIONS THAT WOULD HARM ITS CHARACTER; OR**
- C) IT IS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED AND COMPATIBLE IN SCALE WITH AN EXISTING RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT;**

AND IN ALL CASES:-

- D) THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF A SETTLEMENT OR THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
- E) ROADS LINKING THE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE COAST OR HIGH QUALITY ROAD NETWORK ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE VOLUME AND TYPE OF TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED.**

Self Catering Accommodation

8.46 For the purposes of this Plan, 'purpose built self catering tourist accommodation' is defined as a purpose built fixed structure that is constructed on site and offers at least the basic requirements of a dwelling house but is used for holiday purposes only. This definition therefore excludes both static and touring caravans and other mobile structures including some types of chalets. For the purposes of this definition none of these forms of accommodation are considered to have been intentionally constructed to remain permanently fixed in one location only.

8.47 Purpose built self catering accommodation places demands on public utilities, requires services and facilities and has an environmental impact similar to permanent residential development. For these reasons, this type of accommodation should generally be located within the resorts of Ilfracombe, Combe Martin and Woolacombe. However, in recognition of the economic importance of tourism to North Devon, schemes may also be allowed as part of a farm diversification scheme in accordance with Policy ECN6 or in association with an existing recreational facility. Purpose built self catering accommodation will be subject to an occupancy condition restricting its use for holiday purposes only in accordance with Policy ECN12.

8.48 Where the principle of allowing self catering accommodation is acceptable, schemes should be sensitively sited, landscaped and designed to make them as inconspicuous as possible. Proposals will not be permitted where they harm the character of the landscape especially the AONB, CPA, Heritage Coast, National Park and AGLV.

POLICY ECN9 (SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION)

A PROPOSAL FOR NEW OR ADDITIONAL PURPOSE BUILT SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT IS LOCATED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY OF ILFRACOMBE, COMBE MARTIN OR WOOLACOMBE; OR**
- B) IT IS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED AND COMPATIBLE IN SCALE WITH AN EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITY; OR**
- C) IT IS IN CONNECTION WITH A FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEME IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY ECN6; AND IN ALL CASES:-**
- D) THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF A SETTLEMENT OR THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
- E) ROADS LINKING THE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE COAST OR HIGH QUALITY ROAD NETWORK ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE VOLUME AND TYPE OF TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED.**

Caravanning and Camping

8.49 Tented camping and touring caravan pitches are more prone to seasonal fluctuations than other forms of holiday accommodation. Static caravans tend to be more popular throughout the year. Caravanning and camping represent popular forms of holiday making. The parishes of Georgeham, Mortehoe and Berryarbor have the greatest concentrations of caravans and tents in Devon.

8.50 Within the AONB, Heritage Coast and CPA, the environment is saturated in terms of existing caravan and camping provision. The emphasis in these areas will therefore be on improving the overall quality of sites in accordance with Policy ECN11. In inland locations outside these designated landscape areas, additional caravanning and camping sites may be permitted subject to their impact on the environment and local highway network.

8.51 The provision of any new camping and caravan sites will only be permitted where there is a proven need based on inadequate provision in comparison to known demand. Generally, such a need would be considered to have arisen in a locality when more than 90% of its available capacity at the peak of the season is occupied. In assessing the need for additional provision, advice will be sought from relevant organisations including the North Devon Marketing Bureau and Devon County Council. Additionally, it is important that caravan and camping counts are undertaken by the District Council. Proposals that support farm tourism or are initiated by national caravan or camping organisations will be given priority consideration.

8.52 In addition to the creation of new sites, pressures exist to expand existing caravan and camping sites or to change their use by replacing tents with caravans. Such proposals may be acceptable in inland locations as a means of increasing capacity to meet a proven need or to reduce the visual impact on the landscape. Proposals involving permanently stationed caravans are less likely to be acceptable than touring units due to their visual impact throughout the year.

POLICY ECN10 (CARAVANNING AND CAMPING)

- 1. A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW, OR THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING STATIC OR TOURING HOLIDAY CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITE WITHIN OR VISIBLE FROM THE AONB, HERITAGE COAST AND COASTAL PRESERVATION AREA WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY ECN11.**
- 2. ELSEWHERE A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW, OR THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING STATIC OR TOURING CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-**
 - A) THERE IS A PROVEN NEED FOR INCREASED CAPACITY;**
 - B) THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
 - C) ROADS LINKING THE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE COAST OR HIGH QUALITY ROAD NETWORK ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE VOLUME AND TYPE OF TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED.**

Improvements to Self Catering Accommodation, Caravan and Camping Sites

8.53 Established holiday caravan and camping sites are often out of character with the resorts or the countryside within which they are sited. Appropriate schemes for improving the visual quality of these sites and upgrading standards of accommodation and facilities will therefore be supported. Such improvements might include better access and facilities for the mobility impaired.

8.54 Proposals to improve the quality of existing holiday sites should normally be contained within the current boundaries of the site. Proposals that extend the site area will only be acceptable where this is the only practical method of achieving improvements to the layout and landscaping in order to reduce the visual impact of the original scheme on the surrounding landscape. Extensions to the boundary on a site are unlikely to be acceptable in the AONB, Heritage Coast and CPA to reflect Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV5.

8.55 Improvements to the range and quality of facilities available to tourists should be of a scale related to the amount of accommodation on the site. Restricting the scale will avoid competition with more appropriately located facilities and ensure that visitors are not attracted from further afield in compliance with the policies contained in the Travel, Transport and Communications Chapter.

POLICY ECN11 (IMPROVEMENTS TO SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION, CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITES)

A PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION OR FACILITIES WITHIN AN EXISTING SELF CATERING, CARAVAN OR CAMPING SITE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT REDUCES THE OVERALL VISUAL IMPACT OF THE SITE ON THE SURROUNDING AREA AND IS CONTAINED WITHIN THE EXISTING SITE BOUNDARIES; OR**
- B) IT EXTENDS BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE EXISTING SITE WHERE THIS IS THE ONLY PRACTICAL METHOD OF REDUCING THE OVERALL VISUAL IMPACT OF THE SITE ON THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
- C) THERE IS NO OVERALL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OR SIZE OF THE ACCOMMODATION UNITS ON THE SITE; AND**
- D) THE SCALE OF ANY NEW OR IMPROVED FACILITIES IS RELATED TO THE SIZE OF THE ACCOMMODATION COMPLEX.**

Camping Barns

8.56 The conversion of traditional rural buildings to camping barns provides basic low cost accommodation for walkers and cyclists. It also provides a new use for the building with minimal alteration and additional income for the owner at a relatively low cost. The provision of camping barns will be encouraged where they are well related to the existing network of footpaths and bridleways, particularly the Tarka Trail, Two Moors Way and the South West Coast Path. All proposals will be assessed against Policies ECN5 and ENV11.

Occupancy Conditions

8.57 Where tourist accommodation is considered unsuitable for permanent residential use due to its location in the countryside, a condition will be imposed restricting occupation to holiday use only. Restricting occupancy will prevent permanent residential occupation in the countryside, which would conflict with the principles of sustainability, and ensures that the accommodation contributes to the local

economy. A holiday occupancy condition will also be imposed where the accommodation is unsuitable for permanent residential use. Where these circumstances are applicable, a change of use from holiday to permanent occupation will not be permitted. The modification of holiday conditions applying to converted rural buildings is dealt with by Policy HSG13.

8.58 In addition to holiday use conditions, seasonal occupancy restrictions will be imposed where there is a need to protect nature conservation interests. The site may, for example, be near a sensitive wildlife habitat which requires peace and quiet to allow seasonal breeding, hibernation or winter feeding to take place.

POLICY ECN12 (HOLIDAY OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS)

TOURIST ACCOMMODATION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION:

- A) TO ENSURE THE ACCOMMODATION IS RESTRICTED TO HOLIDAY USE ONLY WHERE IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE OR SUITABLE FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL USE; AND**
B) TO PREVENT YEAR ROUND OCCUPATION WHERE THERE IS A NEED TO PROTECT NATURE CONSERVATION WITHIN AN AREA FOR A PERIOD OF THE YEAR.

Visitor Attractions

8.59 Indoor attractions are an essential part of the leisure and tourism industry. Intensive forms of indoor recreational facilities and visitor attractions such as cinemas, bowling alleys, sport and fitness centres should be directed towards the Sub Regional and Area Centres in accordance with Policy REC1 in the interests of sustainability. Additionally, visitor attractions may be acceptable within the resorts of Combe Martin and Woolacombe. Attractions in the other settlements of the District or the countryside may also be permitted but only where they have a direct relationship with the area in terms of its rural environment or heritage. Such forms of tourism may include farm related ventures as part of a diversification scheme, casual outdoor activities, historic houses and interpretation centres. Proposals that provide ancillary facilities linked to recreational trails may also be acceptable.

8.60 Visitor attractions in rural areas should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise their impact on the character of a settlement or the surrounding area. The scale and intensity of any development should not harm the amenities of those living nearby in accordance with Policy DVS3. All proposals will need to accord with the relevant environment and travel and transport policies.

POLICY ECN13 (VISITOR ATTRACTIONS)

A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW OR THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING VISITOR ATTRACTION IN A RURAL SETTLEMENT OR THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- A) IT HAS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT OR HERITAGE OF THE AREA;**
B) THE USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS IS MAXIMISED;
C) THE DEVELOPMENT AND INTENSITY OF THE ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH IT DOES NOT HARM THE SURROUNDING AREA;
D) IT IS ACCESSIBLE TO A RANGE OF TRANSPORT MODES; AND
E) ROADS LINKING THE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE COAST OR HIGH QUALITY ROAD NETWORK ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE VOLUME AND TYPE OF TRAFFIC LIKELY TO USE THEM.

Large Scale and Innovative Projects

8.61 The emphasis is to encourage 'green' or sustainable forms of new tourist developments which are relatively small in scale and to upgrade existing attractions and facilities. However, the possible benefits to the tourist industry arising from a large scale and innovative project must also be recognised. PPG21 'Tourism' acknowledges that 'such schemes can offer a high quality of buildings, landscaping and customer service, bring major benefits to the national and regional economy and may take pressure from popular but sensitive traditional tourist centres'. Such a project could include a tourist village complex with at least 1500 bed spaces and related recreation activities.

8.62 A proposal for a large scale and innovative project will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it clearly provides a valuable asset to the tourist industry and contributes to the economy of the south west region in general. The potential size and scale of such a proposal will mean that it will not be appropriate to locate it within the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint. Such a project should be located within the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration. It should also be located close to the High Quality Road Network to prevent inconvenience or danger on local roads and ensure it is accessible to a range of travel modes other than the car.

POLICY ECN14 (LARGE SCALE AND INNOVATIVE PROJECTS)

A LARGE SCALE AND INNOVATIVE TOURISM PROJECT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:-

- A) IT PROVIDES A SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO THE REGION;
 B) IT IS LOCATED WITHIN THE PRIORITY AREA FOR RURAL REGENERATION;
 C) IT DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND
 D) IT IS WELL LOCATED TO THE HIGH QUALITY ROAD NETWORK AND IS ACCESSIBLE TO A RANGE OF TRANSPORT MODES.**

ENERGY**Energy and the Environment**

8.63 Traditionally, energy has been produced by power stations that burn fossil fuels including coal, oil and natural gas. The supply of such fuels is limited whilst their burning is also a major contributor to the emission of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, which may contribute to global warming. In order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the priority is to strengthen the contribution of energy production from renewable sources and reduce energy consumption.

8.64 The Government published an Energy White Paper in 2003, 'Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy'. It sets out the Government's policy on energy to tackle the three challenges of climate change and its impact on the environment, the decline of the UK's indigenous energy supplies and the need to update much of the UK energy infrastructure. To address these three challenges, the White Paper has established four goals:-

- ◆ *To cut the UK's CO₂ emissions by some 60% by about 2050, with real progress by 2020;*
- ◆ *To maintain the reliability of energy supplies;*
- ◆ *To promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and improve productivity; and*
- ◆ *To ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated.*

8.65 In addition to producing energy from more sustainable sources, greater energy efficiency should be promoted in all new developments to reduce overall consumption and perhaps even achieve zero carbon emissions. Energy efficiency can be achieved by considering the design, layout, materials and orientation of new development, as well as taking micro climatic factors into account. These principles are set out in more detail in Policies DVS1A and DVS1 and the North Devon Design Guide which will have the status of supplementary planning guidance.

Renewable Energy

8.66 Renewable sources of energy are those which occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment and include solar, wind, wood fuel, biomass, hydro, wave and tidal power. These energy sources produce significantly lower levels of environmental pollutants than conventional sources of energy. To promote the use of renewables, the Government has set a target that by 2010, 10% of electricity sales by licenced suppliers should come from renewable sources. To deliver this target the Government have introduced:-

- ◆ *The Renewables Obligations for electricity suppliers to supply a percentage of their output from renewables sources;*
- ◆ *The climate change levy with exceptions for electricity and heat generated by renewable sources; and*
- ◆ *The expanded support programme for new and renewable energy.*

8.66A The Regional Planning Guidance for the South West has established a target of procuring between 11 and 15% of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010. To reflect this target and based on the findings of the North Devon and Torridge Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP), the aim is to contribute towards Devon's sub-regional target of 151 MW of electricity production from renewable sources by 2010. As set out in the REAP, North Devon has greater potential for certain types of renewable energy production than others including marine current turbine, tidal, onshore and offshore wind, agricultural and industrial waste and energy crops.

8.67 Energy can be generated from renewable sources at a variety of different scales. On a large scale, energy can be supplied direct to the national grid whilst smallscale renewable energy generation can supply the energy required by individual communities.

8.68 Renewable energy provides environmental, economic and community benefits. However, there are many different types of renewable energy sources, technologies and fuels that exhibit different characteristics and which may have an impact upon the environment.

8.69 To date, the greatest pressures for renewable energy have been for onshore wind turbines. The potential of wind turbines has long been recognised. The areas of highest annual mean wind speed, which offer the greatest potential for energy generation, largely coincide with coastal and upland areas which tend to be the most sensitive landscapes in the District. Such areas are often within the AONB, Heritage Coast, Coastal Preservation Area and AGLV or border Exmoor National Park.

8.70 The acceptability of all proposals for renewable energy will be considered against criteria in Policy ECN15 and in accordance with the policies contained in the Development Standards and Environment Chapters. Wind turbines are likely to have the greatest visual and landscape impact, although the effects of particular renewable energy developments will vary according to their type, size, scale, location and landscape setting. Potential visual impact should be minimised through appropriate siting and design. The rotation of turbine blades can also affect telecommunication signals. *The Landscape Implications of Windfarm Development in North Devon* provides a detailed assessment for the whole of the District in order to guide wind turbines to the most appropriate locations.

8.71 To help meet the renewable energy target, major proposals for employment, retailing and residential development will be required to incorporate appropriate renewable energy heating or power systems. The expectation will be that at least 15% of the predicted annual energy requirements of a particular development should be met by means of independent renewable energy generation. Depending on the scale and nature of development, such 'micro' generation could include combined heat power plants, fuel cells, wood fuel boilers, heat pumps, solar panels or photovoltaics. For the purposes of Policy ECN15 major development is defined as 1,000 square metres (gross) or more of employment or retail floorspace or at least 50 dwellings and a 'significant' size of housing scheme will include proposals in the order of at least 20 dwellings.

POLICY ECN15 (RENEWABLE ENERGY)

- 1. PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS DEVON'S SUB-REGIONAL TARGET OF 151 MW OF ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES BY 2010. IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY, THE BENEFITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT IN MEETING THIS TARGET WILL BE BALANCED AGAINST THE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT. A PROPOSAL FOR THE GENERATION OF ENERGY FROM A RENEWABLE SOURCE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-**
 - A) THE PROPOSAL, INCLUDING ANY ASSOCIATED TRANSMISSION LINES, ACCESS ROADS AND OTHER RELATED WORKS DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VISUAL CHARACTER OF ITS SURROUNDINGS;**
 - B) IT DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE OCCUPANTS OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES OR THE AMENITIES OF OTHER USES IN THE LOCALITY;**
 - C) IT DOES NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON AVIATION, OR MARITIME SAFETY OR TELECOMMUNICATIONS; AND**
 - D) IN THE CASE OF SMALL SCALE PROPOSALS FOR A LOCAL COMMUNITY, IT IS PRIMARILY FOR THAT COMMUNITY'S USE.**
- 2. A PROPOSAL FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE, EITHER ON ITS OWN OR IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER SCHEMES, IT WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY HARM THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE.**
- 3. MAJOR EMPLOYMENT AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS OF 1000 SQUARE METRES (GROSS) OR MORE FLOORSPACE, AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 50 DWELLINGS OR MORE WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION TO PROVIDE AT LEAST 15% OF PREDICTED ENERGY REQUIREMENTS. HOUSING SCHEMES BELOW THE THRESHOLD BUT OF A SIGNIFICANT SIZE WILL BE EXPECTED TO INCORPORATE RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION WHERE FEASIBLE AND VIABLE.**

Non Renewable Energy

8.72 Non renewable sources of energy are those for which there is a finite supply. In order to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and in view of the Government's commitment to ensuring secure, diverse and sustainable supplies of energy, priority will be given to energy production from renewable as opposed to non renewable resources. However, a power station is one of the uses proposed at Yelland Quay, Fremington by Proposal FRE4.

Transmission Lines

8.73 The Local Planning Authority has a limited role in influencing the location of major overhead lines that are the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whilst utility lines are controlled by the relevant service providers. Nevertheless, where new overhead lines will have a harmful impact on the environment, subject to technological and operational constraints, the Local Planning Authority will request their replacement underground or seek the least visually intrusive alternative overhead route. The undergrounding of existing overhead service lines will also be encouraged, wherever practicable, to mitigate any visual damage providing there is no harm to local archaeological features.