

CHAPTER 25

Ilfracombe Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

25.1 Ilfracombe is the second largest settlement within the District. The town is situated on the coast approximately 19 kilometres north of Barnstaple. It is identified as an Area Centre providing a range of services, local employment opportunities and acts as a focal point for the northern part of the District.

25.2 The town suffers from acute economic problems that have been compounded by its general decline as a major tourist resort. A lack of investment and economic growth has harmed the quality of the built environment, especially its extensive Victorian and Edwardian heritage with many buildings suffering from neglect.

25.3 The growth strategy for Ilfracombe is intended to promote an ‘urban renaissance’ for the town. It is based on encouraging economic growth and diversification and the regeneration of its urban environment, with long term and sustained investment directed towards improving its existing strengths which are its Victorian and Edwardian buildings, the seafront and harbour.

ENVIRONMENT

Landscape

25.4 The landscape setting of Ilfracombe is dramatic. The hills to the east and west of the town are within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Parts of the AONB which cover Torrs Park, Willow Close, Hele and Larkstone are within the development boundary identified on Inset Map 13. Proposals within the AONB will be assessed against Policy ENV2.

25.5 The Inset Map for Ilfracombe shows the extent of the Heritage Coast and Coastal Preservation Area (CPA) around the town. The Heritage Coast covers the land outside the development boundary to both the east and west of the town, with the exception of Hele Valley Caravan Park, Chambercombe Lane allotments and an area at Torrs Park. The extent of the CPA is defined by the development boundary. Proposals within the Heritage Coast and CPA will be considered against Policies ENV3 and ENV5 respectively.

25.6 Most of the land within the development boundary for Ilfracombe is not covered by any formal landscape designations. However, the landscape character within the town is also important, particularly the open space along the seafront including Capstone Hill and Lantern Hill overlooking the Harbour. These open spaces complement the undeveloped ridge tops surrounding the town.

Nature Conservation

25.7 A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) has been designated at Hillsborough and a further LNR is proposed for the Cairn and Old Railway. These reserves are identified on Inset Map 13. Proposals within or affecting these nature reserves will be considered against Policy ENV12.

25.8 The coastline between Hele and Samson’s Bay has been designated as a SSSI to protect the Devonian period geology and stratigraphy where Policy ENV10 applies. A Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA) has been designated along the coast, which stretches from Hangman Point (within Exmoor National Park) to Downend at Croyde. The VMCA is defined from the base of the cliffs or seawalls to the contour 20 metres below sea level, and recognises the ecological and geological importance of the cliffs along this stretch of coastline.

25.9 In addition to the Local Nature Reserves and VMCA there are several sites of local nature conservation importance within and around Ilfracombe. Many of these have been identified by Devon Wildlife Trust as County Wildlife Sites and are indicated on Inset Map 13. To complement these sites, 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. Policies ENV8 and ENV12 will apply to all these locally important nature conservation areas.

Historic Environment

25.10 Ilfracombe has a strong Victorian and Edwardian heritage due to its significance as a holiday resort during the 19th century. Many of these Victorian and Edwardian buildings survive within the historic core providing the town with its essential character. The character and heritage of Ilfracombe is also enhanced by the quality of its Georgian buildings.

25.11 The Conservation Area is extensive and includes all of the town centre, harbour, seafront and Torrs Park. It is proposed to review the existing Conservation Area within the Plan period. Consideration will be given to designating a new Conservation Area in the Hele area. Development proposals within the Conservation Area will be subject to Policy ENV16.

25.12 Ilfracombe has a large number of listed buildings, many of which are Victorian, including several grand terraces. The town also contains earlier buildings including parts of the medieval settlement around the Harbour and Fore Street. One of the most prominent buildings is St Nicholas' Chapel on Lantern Hill overlooking the Harbour, which is Grade I listed.

25.13 The Ilfracombe Harbour Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) runs until 2005 and provides grant aid for buildings within the Quay and Harbour areas. The THI has the dual roles of regenerating the economy and enhancing the built heritage.

25.14 The Cliff Castle at Hillsborough is a major promontory fort from the Iron Age with massive ramparts cutting off the entire headland. This site is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, as well as being a Local Nature Reserve.

Flood Risk

25.15 The East and West Wilder Brooks flow northwards through the western part of Ilfracombe and periodically cause flooding within the town. The Chambercombe Stream is also subject to serious flood risks. Additionally, the Quay and Harbour areas are liable to occasional tidal flooding. The extent of the areas liable to flood, based on the Environment Agency's indicative floodplain maps, are shown on Inset Map 13. To prevent the risk of flooding either on a site or elsewhere, proposals will be assessed against Policy DVS6 and should incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) where feasible in accordance with Policy DVS7.

Sewage Disposal

25.16 The existing sewage disposal infrastructure in the Ilfracombe area generally lacks spare capacity to accommodate the planned levels of growth. Some major improvements to the sewerage infrastructure will be required. Major development cannot be served until these improvements have been carried out. Developers will be required to contribute towards the cost of providing these infrastructural schemes.

HOUSING

25.17 As an Area Centre, Ilfracombe has the facilities and services to accommodate a reasonable level of new housing during the Plan period. The town has a good supply of previously developed land and buildings for housing as illustrated in Table 17. The high proportion of previously developed sites allocated for housing reflects the development strategy for Ilfracombe, which is to regenerate its urban fabric and direct investment towards improving its existing building stock.

Table 17 : Proposed Residential Sites in Ilfracombe

PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES		
Site Name	Total Capacity (approx.)	Affordable Housing Target (AHT)
Chambercombe Bakery (ILF1a)	20	5
Cliffe Hydro Hotel (ILF1b)	15	-
Ilfracombe Nurseries, Furze Hill Road (ILF1f)	15	4
Oxford Grove Car Park (ILF1j)	15	4
Bus Station, Ropery Road (ILF9)	15	4
TOTAL	80	17

GREENFIELD SITES				
Site Name	Total Capacity (approx.)	AHT	Phase 1 (To 2006)	Phase 2 (2006-2011)
The Shields/ Fernway (ILF3)	40	14	-	40
TOTAL	40	14	-	40

25.18 In order to prioritise the use of previously developed sites and buildings, the proposed greenfield land at The Shields and Fernway will not be released until the latter phase of the Plan period following April 2006 and in accordance with Policy HSG1.

25.19 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. 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 and Travel, Transport and Communications. 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

Chambercombe Bakery, Chambercombe Park Road (ILF1a)

25.20 The site at Chambercombe Bakery is situated between areas of high and medium density housing. It should therefore be redeveloped at a relatively high net density of at least 40 dwellings to the hectare. At least 25% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable in accordance with Policy HSG7. Any redevelopment should provide access onto Chambercombe Road with improvements at the junction with Chambercombe Park Road in accordance with Policy TRA6. Any contamination on the site will need to be remediated in accordance with Policy DVS4. Depending on the economic feasibility of redeveloping the site, developer contributions may be sought towards:-

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

The Cliffe Hydro Hotel (ILF1b)

25.21 The Cliffe Hydro Hotel is a large building to the north of Hillsborough Road overlooking Ilfracombe Harbour and adjoins St James' Park. The hotel is a prominent building overlooking the harbour making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The Hotel should be retained and converted rather than being redeveloped unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the building is structurally incapable or economically unviable to convert.

25.22 The Hotel is situated within the Conservation Area where Policy ENV16 applies. In addition, the setting of the listed buildings at Hillsborough Terrace and Castle House must not be harmed in accordance with Policy ENV17. The conversion or redevelopment of the hotel must be designed to the highest standard to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the harbour in accordance with Policy DVS1.

25.23 As the site overlooks the harbour, any development proposals will be expected to incorporate measures to facilitate its enhancement in accordance with the improvements proposed for the area. Loverings coach depot, which adjoins Castle House and is closely situated to the Cliffe Hydro Hotel along Hillsborough Road, is also considered suitable for redevelopment for high quality flats. Depending on the economic feasibility of redeveloping the site, developer contributions may be sought towards:-

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

Ilfracombe Nurseries, Furze Hill Road (ILF1f)

25.27 The Ilfracombe Nurseries site is on split levels and has restricted access from both Kingsley Avenue and Furze Hill Road. At least 25% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable in accordance with Policy HSG7. Any residential redevelopment should be accessed from Furze Hill Road with improvements in accordance with Policy TRA6. The red brick building on the site is worthy of retention and should therefore be converted. Any contamination on the site should be remediated in accordance with Policy DVS4. Depending on the economic feasibility of redeveloping the site, developer contributions may be sought towards:-

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

Oxford Grove Car Park and Adjacent Land (ILF1j)

25.31 The eastern part of the car park is proposed for high density housing in the form of flats with the western half retained for public car parking. At least 25% of the total number of dwellings proposed should be affordable in accordance with Policy HSG7. No new buildings should be sited within 3 metres of the public foul sewer crossing the site. As the site is within the Conservation Area, the design will be required to reflect its context in accordance with Policies DVS1 and ENV16. Contributions will be sought towards enhancing the existing public open space south of the site in accordance with Policy REC5. Depending on the economic feasibility of redeveloping the site, developer contributions may be sought towards:-

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

PROPOSAL ILF1 (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES)**1. THE FOLLOWING SITES, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, ARE ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THE ELEMENTS IDENTIFIED FOR EACH SITE ARE PROPOSED:-****CHAMBERCOMBE BAKERY, CHAMBERCOMBE LANE (ILF1a)**

- A) ABOUT 20 DWELLINGS AT A NET DENSITY OF 40 OR MORE UNITS TO THE HECTARE AND INCORPORATING AT LEAST 5 AFFORDABLE HOMES; AND
- B) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENT, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-
- ◆ INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND ILFRACOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE; AND
 - ◆ IMPROVING THE SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.

THE CLIFFE HYDRO HOTEL, ST JAMES' PARK (ILF1b)

- A) ABOUT 15 DWELLINGS INVOLVING THE CONVERSION OF THE HOTEL, OR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE IF IT PROVES TO BE UNFEASIBLE;
- B) MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE SETTING OF THE HARBOUR; AND
- C) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-
- ◆ INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND ILFRACOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE; AND
 - ◆ IMPROVING THE SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.

ILFRACOMBE NURSERIES, FURZE HILL ROAD (ILF1f)

- A) ABOUT 15 DWELLINGS AT A NET DENSITY OF 40 UNITS OR MORE TO THE HECTARE AND INCORPORATING AT LEAST 4 AFFORDABLE HOMES;
- B) THE RETENTION AND CONVERSION OF THE RED BRICK BUILDING;
- C) ACCESS FROM FURZE HILL ROAD WITH IMPROVEMENTS; AND
- D) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-
- ◆ INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND ILFRACOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE; AND
 - ◆ IMPROVING THE SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.

OXFORD GROVE CAR PARK AND ADJACENT LAND (ILF1j)

- A) ABOUT 15 DWELLINGS AT A MINIMUM NET DENSITY OF 60 OR MORE UNITS TO THE HECTARE AND INCORPORATING AT LEAST 4 AFFORDABLE HOMES; AND
- B) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENT, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS:-
- ◆ ENHANCING THE EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE TO THE SOUTH OF THE SITE;
 - ◆ INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND ILFRACOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE; AND
 - ◆ IMPROVING THE SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.

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

25.33 Previously developed sites at the former Bus Station and the Builder Centre are proposed for a mix of uses including an element of high density housing. These sites are covered by Proposal ILF9 under the section dealing with the Harbour area.

25.34 Due to the large number of 3 and 4 storey town houses within Ilfracombe, there is considerable potential for many of these properties to be sub-divided into smaller dwellings, flats and maisonettes. Conversion of non-residential properties for residential purposes will also be supported.

Greenfield Sites

Land at The Shields

25.35 The site at The Shields south of Fernway is the only greenfield site proposed for housing in the town. Any development proposed should include a mix of dwelling types and sizes including at least 35% affordable housing in accordance with Policies HSG6 and HSG7. It should be developed to provide a new link road between Marlborough Road and The Shields, thereby improving traffic circulation within the town. Not all of the land at The Shields can be developed for housing. Part of The Shields is identified as a biodiversity network which will need to be protected and enhanced in accordance with Policy ENV8, whilst part of the site is steeply sloping. The area of open land to the north of the cemetery is of greatest wildlife value and landscape prominence. Due to the site's visual prominence, the siting and design of any scheme should be sensitive to its landscape setting in accordance with Policy DVS1. Terraced houses that reflect the Victorian and Edwardian heritage of Ilfracombe are considered particularly suitable for the site. To mitigate any risks of flooding, improvements will be required to the foul sewers and drainage in the locality including the use of SUDS in accordance with Policies DVS6 and DVS7. Developer contributions will be sought towards:-

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

PROPOSAL ILF3 (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON GREENFIELD SITES)

1. LAND AT THE SHIELDS/FERNWAY, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, IS ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE PROPOSED:-

- A) UP TO 40 DWELLINGS AT A MINIMUM NET DENSITY OF 40 UNITS TO THE HECTARE INCORPORATING AT LEAST 14 AFFORDABLE HOMES;**
- B) A NEW ROAD LINKING THE SHIELDS AND MARLBOROUGH ROAD;**
- C) PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BIODIVERSITY NETWORK;**
- D) THE SITE IS NOT DEVELOPED BEFORE APRIL 2006 AT THE EARLIEST; AND**
- E) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND ILFRACOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.**

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

EMPLOYMENT

25.36 The town has relatively high unemployment and low wage levels which are compounded by its gradual decline as a major tourist resort. The underlying aim is therefore to regenerate its economy by promoting economic growth and diversification.

Mullacott Industrial Estate

25.37 The main employment allocation at Ilfracombe is at Mullacott Cross Industrial Estate. It is situated to the south of the A3123, approximately 2 kilometres south of Ilfracombe, and outside the landscape designations surrounding the town. The industrial estate will be restricted to uses within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order.

Killacleave

25.38 The existing farm buildings at Killacleave are south of the town and not immediately adjacent to residential properties. However, they have good access from New Barnstaple Road. These buildings are suitable for conversion to workshop units. They could compensate for the potential loss of workshop units at Scamps Yard and Greenclose Road. The site is identified on Inset Map 13 for light industrial and business uses within Class B1 of the Use Classes Order.

POLICY ILF4 (WORKSHOP UNITS AT KILLACLEAVE)

EXISTING BUILDINGS AT KILLACLEAVE FARM, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, ARE PROPOSED FOR CONVERSION TO WORKSHOP UNITS WITHIN CLASS B1 OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER.

Hele Industrial Estate

25.39 The Hele Industrial Estate is a former gas works site. The buildings have been converted and are occupied by industrial users. The southern part of the site remains available for redevelopment for employment purposes. The existing access to Watermouth Road is sub-standard, and the Council will endeavour to secure funding for junction improvements. Any development on the Hele Industrial Estate that increases traffic using the junction will be required to provide an analysis of the associated traffic pattern at the planning application stage. It should demonstrate that highway improvements are adequate to offset increased traffic movements, and that the scale of the improvement proposed is not disproportionate to the impact that the development might have.

TOWN CENTRE AND RETAILING

The Primary Shopping Area

25.40 Ilfracombe is an Area Centre providing key services along the north coast. Based on the findings of the North Devon Retail Study, the town centre shopping area in Ilfracombe is identified on Inset Map 13. This area includes the top of Fore Street and Portland Street to the far end of Church Street. Again, based on the Retail Study, the primary shopping area is identified on Inset Map 13 and is focused along the High Street between Northfield Road and Springfield Road. Within the primary shopping area, only shops in Use Class A1 of the Use Class Order 2005 will be permitted on the ground floor in order to retain its attractiveness to shoppers.

POLICY ILF5 (PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE)

PROPOSALS TO CHANGE THE USE OF GROUND FLOOR PREMISES TO NON SHOPPING USES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA AS DEFINED ON INSET MAP 13.

The Secondary Shopping Area

25.41 Outside the primary shopping area of the town centre, other uses as well as shops will be permitted at ground floor level provided they are restricted to 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 leisure (Use Class D2). Other uses at ground floor level, including community based facilities such as youth centres or meeting places, may be permitted in exceptional circumstances providing there is no harm to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

POLICY ILF6 (SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES)

WITHIN THE SECONDARY SHOPPING AREA, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL ONLY SHOPS (USE CLASS A1), FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (USE CLASS A2), RESTAURANTS AND CAFES (USE CLASS A3), DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS (USE CLASS A4), HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS (USE CLASS A5), LEISURE (USE CLASS D2) OR ANY OTHER USE THAT WILL ADD TO THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE TOWN CENTRE WILL BE PERMITTED.

Additional Shopping

25.42 The North Devon Retail Study has identified the need for further convenience shopping within the town centre, supplemented by *'appropriate and imaginative environmental and traffic improvements'*. This requirement is in addition to the extant foodstore with permission at Killacleave.

25.43 The retail study identified the Palmerston Hotel car park in Wilder Road as a suitable edge-of-centre site for a new convenience food store in the event of a town centre site not becoming available. Planning permission has been granted for a convenience store on the site of the Palmerston Hotel, with car parking on adjacent sites. It is recognised that this is the sequentially most-preferable site to accommodate the retail need identified in the North Devon Retail Study. Any other retail proposals outside the town centre will be assessed against Policy COM1, PPG6 and the contents of the North Devon Retail Study, and its supplementary report produced in May 2003.

Reuse of Upper Floors

25.44 In order to maximise the use of the existing building stock, empty space above the ground floor level in town centre properties should be utilised for a variety of uses including flats. Making use of vacant space will add to the vitality and viability of the town centre, provide additional security and income for the property owner and help maintain the building.

THE HARBOUR

25.45 The Harbour area is one of the oldest parts of Ilfracombe. The hills to the north and south of the Harbour create an impressive landscape setting. In order to improve this situation, the Ilfracombe Harbour Townscape Heritage Initiative has had the dual role of regenerating the economy and enhancing its built heritage.

25.46 The enhancement of the Harbour area is central to the regeneration of Ilfracombe. The first phase of the enhancement has involved the demolition of the old Pier, the restoration of a new Harbourmaster Office and the provision of toilets and visiting yacht facilities. Later phases to extend the Harbour and encourage more commercial and maritime interests may include:-

- ◆ *The creation of an inner harbour with floating berths for boats and other craft and half tide access over a sill;*
- ◆ *Additional seasonal berths in the outer harbour;*
- ◆ *The creation of an outer breakwater to provide a tourist attraction and deep water berthing for passenger ferry access to encourage links to other locations, including Wales; and*
- ◆ *New commercial facilities to develop the fishing industry.*

Any proposals to improve the harbour area should take into account the biodiversity interests in accordance with Policies ENV8 and ENV12, particularly as it forms part of the Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA). However, such interests should not prejudice any regeneration projects to enhance the harbour.

25.47 The enhancement of the Harbour and Harbour area also includes traffic management and pedestrian priority initiatives such as relocating parking provision away from the Pier, reducing traffic on the Quay and making Old Quay Road a more pleasant environment for walking. The Old Pier Head, provides an area suitable for a range of public uses including an all weather attraction as part of the environmental enhancement and regeneration package for the Harbour area.

25.48 As part of the overall enhancement of the harbour, high quality flats will also be permitted in the area. Potential sites include the Cliffe Hydro Hotel, the current RNLI premises providing it becomes surplus to requirements following the completion of the outer harbour all tide berth for the lifeboat and the current Quayside flats. High quality flats will improve the townscape of the harbour. Such development will also be expected to include measures to facilitate the enhancement of the harbour itself, including the creation of a marina.

POLICY ILF7 (HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT)

PROPOSALS FOR LEISURE, TOURISM AND/OR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE HARBOUR AND HARBOUR AREA, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, WHERE:-

- A) IT ENHANCES THE BUILT HERITAGE;**
- B) IT PRESERVES OR ENHANCES THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AONB, HERITAGE COAST AND CONSERVATION AREA;**
- C) IT PROTECTS EXISTING AND DOES NOT PREJUDICE NEW FACILITIES FOR FISHING VESSELS, PLEASURE CRUISE VESSELS, THE LIFEBOAT AND YACHTS;**
- D) IT DOES NOT PREJUDICE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY ON BROAD STREET, THE QUAY, QUAYFIELD ROAD AND FORE STREET; AND**
- E) ADEQUATE ACCESS AND SERVICING PROVISION IS MADE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT.**

The Harbour Shopping Area

25.49 The North Devon Retail Study identified a secondary shopping area centred upon the Harbour, including the Quay, Broad Street, St James' Place and part of Fore Street. Its strength lies in its role as an important retail and leisure area particularly for visitors. This area is identified on the Inset Map for Ilfracombe. The lower part of Fore Street has a concentration of restaurants and public houses providing a healthy and vibrant evening economy. Fore Street also provides an important link between the Harbour and High Street. Within the Harbour Shopping Area, there are a number of other uses including an amusement centre, tourist accommodation and residential properties. To build on these strengths, encouragement will be given to proposals which improve the vitality and viability of the area, particularly in the evenings, whilst ensuring the amenities of residents and tourists living in the locality are protected in accordance with Policy DVS3. In addition, any proposal that prejudices the safety and convenience of pedestrians will not be permitted in accordance with policies contained in the Travel, Transport and Communications Chapter.

POLICY ILF8 (ILFRACOMBE HARBOUR SHOPPING AREA)

WITHIN THE ILFRACOMBE HARBOUR SHOPPING AREA, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT THAT IMPROVES ITS VITALITY AND VIABILITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE EVENINGS, WILL BE PERMITTED.

The Bus Station

25.50 The Bus Station is within the Harbour area and provides a redevelopment opportunity to help regenerate the tourist economy and bring in new investment. It is situated within Ilfracombe Conservation Area and is surrounded by a number of listed buildings where Policies ENV16 and ENV17 are relevant. The redevelopment of this site must protect the amenities of surrounding properties in accordance with Policy DVS3 whilst adding to the environmental enhancement and visitor attraction of the Harbour area. It may be liable to tidal flooding where Policy DVS6 will be relevant. Any contamination on the site will need to be remediated in accordance with Policy DVS4.

25.51 The Bus Station site is proposed for a mix of leisure and commercial uses, with the western part identified for high density housing. As an alternative to the leisure or commercial uses proposed for the site, it could also be redeveloped for a mix of residential and public car parking to compensate for the spaces lost from the Pier and other parts of the Harbour. A bus interchange facility of an appropriate scale should be incorporated into any scheme on the Bus Station site or within its vicinity to encourage the use of public transport to the area. The redevelopment of the site must be carefully planned to ensure that additional vehicular traffic does not penetrate the Harbour area to enable pedestrian priority measures to be implemented.

PROPOSAL ILF9 (THE BUS STATION)

1. THE BUS STATION IS PROPOSED FOR A MIX OF RESIDENTIAL, LEISURE AND COMMERCIAL USES, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, WHERE:-

- A) THE NET DENSITY OF THE RESIDENTIAL ELEMENT IS NO LOWER THAN 50 DWELLINGS TO THE HECTARE AND SHOULD INCLUDE AT LEAST 25% OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING;**
- B) THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY ON BROAD STREET, THE QUAY, QUAYFIELD ROAD AND FORE STREET IS NOT PREJUDICED;**
- C) PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS TO THE HARBOUR AND TOWN CENTRE ARE IMPROVED; AND**
- D) A BUS INTERCHANGE FACILITY IS PROVIDED AT OR WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE BUS STATION SITE.**

2. PUBLIC CAR PARKING WILL BE PERMITTED ON THE BUS STATION SITE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEISURE AND COMMERCIAL USES PROVIDING CRITERIA B TO D ARE MET.

THE SEAFRONT

25.53 The larger late Victorian and Edwardian hotels along Wilder Road make a significant contribution to the character of the seafront as well as providing important tourist accommodation within the resort. PPG21 'Tourism', recognises that the conversion of hotel stock to alternative uses can weaken a seaside town's ability to retain its status as a tourism destination. However, evidence from more recent studies suggests that a policy to retain hotels in the area may have become counter-productive, preventing investment in seafront properties that might be converted to high quality apartments, whilst retaining their character and the appearance of the street scene. A flexible approach is now considered appropriate for Ilfracombe to assist the town's regeneration.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES**Sport and Recreation**

25.55 Existing public open spaces, including sports pitches, are identified on the Inset Map for Ilfracombe. The main sports provision within Ilfracombe is situated at Brimlands where there is a cricket and rugby/football pitch and a swimming pool. There are also sports pitches at Killacleave, Mullacott and Marlborough Park adjoining the Community College. Other sports facilities include Ilfracombe Golf Club to the east of the town and a bowling green in Highfield Road.

25.56 Additional sporting facilities are proposed at the Community College including an all weather pitch or multi use games area with additional changing facilities and parking provision. The extension of Killacleave playing field to allow for an additional football pitch is also proposed.

25.57 Bicclescombe Park is an important public open space and includes tennis courts. Other important public open spaces include the seafront, Capstone Hill and the Hillsborough Nature Reserve.

25.58 The North Devon Coast Path runs along the coast on either side of the town providing public access to the countryside for the benefit of both tourists and residents. There is also a recreational trail for walkers and cyclists along the old railway line from Ilfracombe to Braunton. This route is shown on both Inset Map 13 and the Proposals Map where Policy REC4 applies.

25.59 Although there are a wide range of public open spaces within the town, there is a shortage of playing pitches reflecting the lack of relatively flat areas due to the sloping nature of the town and its surroundings. The Open Space Strategy for the District has identified the following deficiencies within Ilfracombe:-

- ◆ *Football and rugby pitches*
- ◆ *Multi use games area*
- ◆ *Equipped children's play areas*
- ◆ *Facilities for young people*
- ◆ *Informal open space*
- ◆ *Public playing field.*

Larkstone and Brimlands

25.60 In order to improve the existing recreational opportunities at Larkstone it is proposed to formalise the public open space by creating new sports pitches to overcome some of the deficiencies within the town. Additional sporting facilities are also proposed at Brimlands including an extension of the swimming pool and the provision of a new sports pitch, multi-use games area and skateboarding and BMX facilities. Land at Brimlands adjoins the Scheduled Ancient Monument and Local Nature Reserve at Hillsborough. Both Larkstone and Brimlands are within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty forming part of the undeveloped landscape setting of the Harbour. Any proposals should therefore protect the open character and landscape setting of the area in accordance with Policies ENV2 and ENV14.

Slade Valley

25.61 Land at Slade Valley is proposed for informal open space to help overcome existing deficiencies in the western part of the town. This land is designated as a County Wildlife Site and the nature conservation interest in the site should be protected or enhanced as part of any proposal in accordance with Policy ENV12. Access into the land should be from Slade Valley Road.

PROPOSAL ILF11 (PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PROVISION AT LARKSTONE, KILLACLEAVE AND SLADE VALLEY)

1. LAND AT LARKSTONE AND KILLACLEAVE IS PROPOSED FOR SPORTS PITCHES AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, WHERE:-

- A) THE OPEN CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE IS NOT HARMED; AND**
- B) ANY NEW BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES ARE DESIGNED AND SITED TO MINIMISE THEIR VISUAL IMPACT.**

2. LAND AT SLADE VALLEY IS PROPOSED FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, WHERE:-

- A) THE OPEN CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE IS NOT HARMED; AND**
- B) ITS BIODIVERSITY VALUE IS PRESERVED OR ENHANCED.**

Cow Lane

25.62 A site at Cow Lane, as shown on Inset Map 13, is proposed for a community garden within the town centre. The site is sloping in nature with restricted vehicular access, although pedestrian access is available from Oxford Grove and the High Street.

PROPOSAL ILF12 (PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PROVISION AT COW LANE)

LAND AT COW LANE IS PROPOSED FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN, AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13, SUBJECT TO IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM OXFORD GROVE AND THE HIGH STREET.

Cemetery

25.63 Ilfracombe Cemetery is situated south of Marlborough Road and may need extending during the Plan period. A site to the south of the existing cemetery has been identified which is suitable for its extension. This land will be safeguarded from development for other purposes.

POLICY ILF13 (EXTENSION OF ILFRACOMBE CEMETERY)

LAND SOUTH OF ILFRACOMBE CEMETERY IS PROPOSED FOR ITS EXTENSION AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 13.

Education and Healthcare Provision

25.64 Ilfracombe has an infant and a junior school as well as a secondary school that also serves as a Community College. The growth planned for Ilfracombe will mean that all these schools will need to increase their capacity during the Plan period. Contributions will therefore be sought towards the costs of increasing the capacity of each of these schools in schemes incorporating family type housing of five or more dwellings.

Sure Start

25.65 A Sure Start Programme has been established covering Ilfracombe, Berrynarbor and Combe Martin that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of young children and their families. There is an identified shortfall of crèche and childcare facilities within Ilfracombe. Any new facilities proposed will be considered against Policy COM4. The Health Centre at Marlborough Road is to be redeveloped as a centre for Sure Start.

Car and Coach Parking

25.67A There is a lack of off street parking for properties in central Ilfracombe. New development will be required to provide adequate off street parking in accordance with Policies TRA7 and TRA8.

25.68 There are a number of car parks within the town centre, seafront and Harbour areas of Ilfracombe. These car parks meet a demand from both residents and tourists throughout the year but particularly during the summer months. The following car parks, which are identified on Inset Map 13, are of strategic importance and will be safeguarded from redevelopment in accordance with Policy TRA8A unless alternative provision of at least equal quality and accessibility is made available :-

- ◆ *Brookdale;*
- ◆ *Wilder Road;*
- ◆ *Rear of High Street;*
- ◆ *Jubilee Gardens;*
- ◆ *The Cove;*
- ◆ *Larkstone Lane;*
- ◆ *Hillsborough; and*
- ◆ *Hele.*

25.69 Additional car parks within the town are situated at Cheyne Beach and adjoining Palmerston Flats. Whilst these car parks are not safeguarded under Policy TRA8A, the redevelopment of these sites will be considered within the context of the transportation strategy for Ilfracombe, the reduction of traffic in the Quay and Harbour area and any net loss of parking spaces. In view of the loss of parking spaces on the Pier and Quay Head, the bus station site could be redeveloped to provide additional car parking to serve the Harbour and Fore Street areas. Any proposals will be considered against Proposal ILF9.

LEE

25.71 The settlements of Lee and Lincombe are situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast and Coastal Preservation Area where Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV5 apply. Lee is a scattered settlement within a valley approaching Lee Bay. The historic core of the village is within the Lee Conservation Area. The open spaces between existing buildings within the historic core and up the sides of the valley reflect the distinctive landscape character of the village. No new development is planned within Lincombe and Lee, and any new development will be considered against the relevant policies contained in the Environment Chapter.

25.72 The settlement of Lee and Lee Bay are popular tourist destinations for informal recreational activities. The private car park close to Lee Bay also provides an important local facility and the Council will oppose its redevelopment for other purposes in accordance with Policy TRA8A.

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