

Chapter 11 -The Main Area of Economic Activity

Fremington and Yelland

Paragraph 11.4

Objection 168/363/FD

Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd

Issue:

- The amount of development proposed in Fremington.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 11.1 Fremington is a Local Centre identified in Policy STY3. Growth opportunities are constrained by the visual quality and wildlife value of the Taw Estuary, by localised flooding from the Fremington Stream and the need to retain character and distinctiveness. Pearce Construction objects to the strategy of constraint being applied to Fremington. The village lies within the Barnstaple/Bideford Area of Economic Activity, and yet the Local Plan provides for only very limited housing development in Fremington, with sites limited to Samsons Plantation and Fremington Army Camp.
- 11.2 As a Local Centre, Fremington and Yelland should be able to support or improve its role as a focus for local social and economic activity. Provision has been made for about 50 dwellings in Fremington during the Plan period through Proposal FRE1, most of which is a previously developed site. This level of provision seems to be consistent with the role of a Local Centre, whilst protecting the environmental quality of the surrounding area.

Recommendation 11.1

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Chapter 12 – Barnstaple Action Plan

Barnstaple Action Plan The Bradiford Valley

Objection 159/332/FD

Mr and Mrs W G J Schiller

Issue:

- Proposed holiday development in Bradiford Valley.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.1 Mr and Mrs Schiller refer to the Bradiford Valley being mentioned for holiday development. The Council state however that there is no mention in the Local Plan of any holiday development (or any other kind of development) along the Bradiford Valley.
- 12.2 There is therefore nothing that can be deleted from the Local Plan.

Recommendation 12.1

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan An Eastern by-pass for Barnstaple

Objection 2/2/FD

Mr M J Watson

Issue:

- Whether a link road is required to the east of Barnstaple.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.3 Mr Watson would like to see a link-road from the Whiddon Valley through to the Bratton Fleming road. The main reason would be to provide an access to Exmoor from the south and west without the need to go into Barnstaple and out by the Bear Street road.
- 12.4 The Council's reply is that there is no need for such a road because the planned western by-pass will avoid the need for through traffic to enter the centre of Barnstaple. This is true up to a point,

but traffic wanting to go out along the Bratton Fleming Road would still have to come back into the centre to reach Bear Street, having already used the by-pass as far as the Braunton Road.

- 12.5 Whatever the merits of the idea for another road to the east, the fact that there is no such proposal in the highway authority's capital programme means that it cannot be part of the Local Plan in any event.

Recommendation 12.2

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

The Future of Barnstaple Bus Station

Objection 204/586/FD

D J Lamey

Issue:

- Whether the bus station should be used as a taxi rank.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.6 Mr Lamey's objection is to the omission of a proposal to use the bus station as a taxi rank. This is in the context of his proposed scheme to use the former cattle market as a bus station, with car parking above.
- 12.7 As there is no proposal in the Local Plan to use the former cattle market as a bus station, the idea of a taxi rank on land at present occupied by buses at the present bus station is not practical.

Recommendation 12.3

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Proposal BAR6 (Town Centre Expansion) Car Parking Provision

Objection 50/111/FD

Mr R W Forward

Objection 50/141/FD

Mr R W Forward

Objection 50/142/FD
Objection 287/1107/FD

Mr R W Forward
Barnstaple Town Centre Management

Issues:

- Whether there is sufficient car parking in Barnstaple.
- Whether there is a need to provide for additional commercial development on the Belle Meadow car park site.
- Whether it is necessary or practicable to provide for a multi-storey form of car parking on the car parks adjacent to North Walk and Pilton Causeway.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

Car parking in Barnstaple.

- 12.8 There is currently a considerable amount of public car parking within Barnstaple town centre and on sites surrounding the town centre. Two of these car parks have been proposed for redevelopment: Queen Street/Bear Street (BAR6a) and the former cattle market (BAR6b). These proposals should help to make more efficient use of land in the town centre by redeveloping extensive open air car parks. The redevelopment will not result in an increase of total car parking. The amount of shoppers' parking is likely to be maintained with the number of long stay places reduced. The availability of additional car parking spaces in the town centre could undermine proposals for park and ride schemes. No new car parks are therefore proposed in order to encourage sustainable travel options, rather than relying on private cars.

Additional commercial development on the Belle Meadow car park site.

- 12.9 The Belle Meadow car park lies just to the south of the town centre and opposite the bus station. Mr Forward proposes it be used for a multi-storey car park, releasing the rest of the site for expansion of the town centre. Although the site is too far from the present town centre, and on the wrong side of a busy main road to be an ideal candidate for town centre expansion, it could have some potential for redevelopment. The location close to the bus station makes it suitable for low car residential use, a use which could perhaps be combined with a redeveloped car park, either on the ground floor, underground or in some multi-storey configuration. A mixed use scheme could thus make better use of the site overall, and could provide additional alternative provision to counter potential loss of parking spaces following the redevelopment of the town centre sites mentioned above.

A multi-storey form of car parking on the car parks adjacent to North Walk and Pilton Causeway.

- 12.10 The North Walk and Pilton Causeway car parks function effectively as surface car parks. The Council sees them as providing and continuing to provide important parking for shoppers, and contributing to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Both sites however offer some potential for mixed use schemes, in which the number of parking spaces could be maintained, whilst putting the land to a more valuable use, such as residential use. North Walk also offers potential for commercial uses along the River Yeo frontage opposite Rolle Quay. To use the sites for multi storey car parks on their own would be to squander their potential for accommodating other uses, as well as introducing fairly unattractive buildings into sensitive settings.

Recommendation 12.4

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Inset Map 1 - Barnstaple (North)

Objection 435/1660/F

The Sanders Trust

Issue:

- Whether land north of Roborough Road should be included within the development boundary.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.11 This small parcel of land lies just to the north of the hospital on the north side of Roborough Road. The development boundary for Barnstaple follows the boundary to the hospital grounds, crosses the road to include two dwellings immediately west of the objection site but excludes the latter. The site was formerly occupied by an agricultural building. Annex C of PPG3 excludes agricultural buildings from the definition of previously developed land, and also excludes structures that have blended into the landscape over time. The site is not therefore a previously developed one. The site is overgrown and has blended back into the character of the adjoining countryside. It is rural rather than urban in character.
- 12.12 Whilst the site had planning consent for one dwelling in the 1970s, that is not a sufficient reason for extending the boundary today, as planning policies have changed markedly over the years. In addition, Roborough Road is a narrow country lane with no footways, and there is a sharp corner adjacent to Raleigh House where any increase in traffic movements would raise highway safety concerns.

Recommendation 12.5

I recommend no change to the development boundary in this location.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Phase 4 of Urban Relief Road

Inset Map 1 - Barnstaple (North)

Objection 634/2229/R

North Devon Friends of the Earth

Issues:

- The deletion of Phase 4 Urban Relief Road from Inset Map 1.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.13 Phase 4 of the Urban Relief Road was shown as safeguarded land on Inset Map 1 (Barnstaple North) of the First Deposit Plan and in the adopted Local Plan before that. The safeguarded land was between North Walk and the proposed western bypass. With commencement of work on the the Downstream Bridge and western bypass, Phase 4 of the Urban Relief Road is no longer required and is not identified in the Devon Local Transport Plan.
- 12.14 The Friends have objected to the deletion of the road as they believe it remains a necessary part of transport infrastructure. Whilst there are arguments in favour of the Phase 4 road, particularly in relation to the relief of traffic congestion in residential areas, the fact remains that it is no longer a part of the highway authority's plan for the area, and the authority is now pressing on with its alternative scheme. It would be irresponsible, and against the clear advice in PPG12, to retain in this Plan a scheme which will clearly not now be pursued.

Recommendation 12.6

I recommend no change to this part of the Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan**Inset Map 1 - Barnstaple (North)****Inset Map 2 - Barnstaple (South)**

<i>Objection</i>	<i>418/1610/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Holy Trinity Church PCC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>129/237/FD</i>		<i>Prowting Homes South West Ltd</i>

Issues:

- Whether land off Maple Grove should be shown as open space.
- Whether church buildings should be shown as open space.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.15 The area of land off Maple Grove is about 55 metres in length and some 20 metres wide. It adjoins other landscaped open space to the south which forms a green corridor that runs east west through the Roundswell residential area. The land is not currently maintained as open space, but even in its current state it provides a pleasant setting for nearby housing and a bit of green relief in a housing area that is not well provided with open space.
- 12.16 A planning application to erect 3 houses on the land was refused in February 2000, and was subsequently dismissed at appeal. The Inspector recognised the contribution that the green aspect of the site makes to the character and appearance of the area. The District Council has indicated its willingness to adopt the area as public open space. I am certain that such a course of action is the right one for this small but significant open area in the Roundswell estate.

- 12.17 Holy Trinity Church is situated between Victoria Road and Barbican Terrace, to the south of Barnstaple town centre. The Council has accepted that the existing church buildings and car parking area do not constitute open space, and Inset Map 1 has been amended to delete the open space designation covering the existing church buildings. This meets the objection.
- 12.18 The Council also accepts that the open space designation covering the main church at St Peter's Church, Paternoster Row should also be deleted. The rest of the land provides what the Council eloquently describes as *an important and well-used open space within the town centre, a haven of peace and tranquillity and a resting place from the surrounding hustle and hard urban environment of the town centre.*

Recommendation 12.7

I recommend the Local Plan is modified by the deletion of the open space designation covering St Peter's Church on Inset Map 1, in accordance with Appendix 5 of Statement LPA/Inset Maps 1 & 2/289.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Introduction

Paragraphs 12.1 to 12.3

<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/871/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/872/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>257/926/FD</i>	<i>John S Sharples</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/873/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- The role of Barnstaple as a sub-regional centre.
- The protection of environmental assets.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.19 North Devon Friends of the Earth have commented on Barnstaple's role as a sub-regional centre, and that it should not be allowed to hinder the vitality and activity of other towns and villages. The Friends point to a continuing policy of laissez-faire development in Barnstaple, coupled with cheap and plentiful parking for cars being likely to be detrimental to other towns and villages.
- 12.20 The Council refers to the Structure Plan, where Barnstaple is identified as a sub-regional centre in Policy S1a. Local Plan Policy STY1 confirms Barnstaple's role as a sub-regional centre, where a major part of new development for North Devon will be located during the Plan period. The Local Plan strategy recognises the role for the area centres of Ilfracombe, South Molton and Braunton. Whenever a particular centre is chosen to receive more development than its neighbours, there will be a cost to those other places in terms of lessened vitality, but that can be expected to be balanced by less of the direct and indirect detrimental effects that accompany urban growth. The basis of the

settlement strategy is set out in detail in General Paper 2. It is clearly a delicate balancing act that the Council has had to perform. After Barnstaple, most new development is directed to South Molton and Ilfracombe to promote the self-sufficiency of these settlements and aid in their regeneration.

- 12.21 The Friends comment that construction of the western bypass is not fundamental to the continued growth of the town, nor towards an essential package of measures to tackle congestion. The Council's reply is that the bypass complements the sustainable transport measures by relieving traffic congestion in the town, enabling the measures to be more effective. The Friends also comment on the guiding principle in paragraph 12.4, to protect environmental assets, and how this is undermined by the decision to build the downstream bridge through an SSSI, and a site recognised as being of national importance for birds. The Council points out that the route of the new road and bridge has been carefully considered following extensive research including an environmental assessment, while the design of the scheme incorporates appropriate mitigation measures. As the bypass is now being built, there seems no point in commenting further on its likely effects.
- 12.22 The issue of maintaining the gap between Roundswell and Fremington is already covered by bullet point three.

Recommendation 12.8

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan

Barnstaple Action Plan

Paragraphs 12.8, 12.10, 12.13

Nature Conservation and Historic Environment

<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/874/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>268/1041/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1083/F</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/349/FD</i>	<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>310/1161/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Archaeological Society</i>

Issues:

- The protection of local landscape and wildlife sites.
- Flood storage and flood prevention.
- The need for archaeological statements.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.23 The Friends objection is by way of a comment on paragraph 12.8, which describes some of the nature conservation assets of Barnstaple, including Anchorwood Bank and the Tarka Trail. The Friends consider that both of these sites would suffer considerable disruption from the western

bypass and new bridge. These projects are now underway and there is little point in speculating about their effects on nature conservation. The other site claimed by the Friends to be affected is Larkbear Plantation. This would have been affected to some extent by the Larkbear housing proposal. This has now been removed from the Local Plan. This decision also has a bearing on Mr Draper's objection and suggestion of a conservation area for Larkbear. Removal of the proposal from the Local Plan has led to the conditional withdrawal of the objection.

- 12.24 Objections by Barnstaple Town Council and Environment Protection Group SW wish to see changes to paragraph 12.13 to refer to the whole of the catchments of the River Taw and Bradiford Water and review flood risks from proposed developments. The Town Council ask for the Barnstaple flood prevention scheme to be updated in the light of changing conditions. Proposals for updating flood prevention schemes will be determined by the Environment Agency rather than through the Local Plan. The policies and proposals in the Local Plan have been subject to extensive consultation with the EA, but they have not identified a need for improved flood defences within the town, nor have they objected to the lack of reference to improved flood prevention schemes for Barnstaple.
- 12.25 EPGSW refer to the shortcomings of sustainable urban drainage schemes (SUDS). The requirement for SUDS is in accordance with PPG25, and paragraph 4.26 of the Local Plan recognises that they need to be properly managed and maintained. SUDS are required when development would exacerbate existing flood risk problems, but must be fairly and reasonably related to the development in scale and kind, in accordance with Circular 1/97. SUDS are considered more fully in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan.
- 12.26 The North Devon Archaeological Society acknowledges that the Local Plan shows awareness of the historical and archaeological sensitivity of Barnstaple's urban core. The society calls for the reference to be strengthened so that there is a presumption that an archaeological assessment will take place, and that the urban area includes Pilton and Newport.
- 12.27 The revision of paragraph 12.12 now refers to the district centres of Pilton and Newport. The paragraph states that any proposals within Barnstaple will need to be assessed against Policy ENV14, which states that development that would harm remains on a locally important archaeological site will only be permitted where an archaeological examination of the site or features is made. This meets the objection in my view.

Recommendation 12.9

I recommend that no modification be made to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Housing

Paragraphs 12.14 to 12.16

Table 11- Proposed Residential Sites in Barnstaple

Objection	287/1094/F	Conditionally Withdrawn	Barnstaple Town Centre Management
Objection	410/2154/R		Larkbear Consortium
Objection	249/875/FD	Conditionally Withdrawn	North Devon Friends of the Earth

<i>Objection</i>	<i>91/257/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>S J Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/2502/R</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2160/R</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>394/1471/F</i>		<i>Lawrence J Pitt</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/876/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/1095/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2155/R</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>280/1020/F</i>		<i>Tawstock Parish Council</i>

Issues:

- Affordable housing targets.
- Strategic urban extension at Larkbear.
- The capacity of previously developed sites.
- Clarification of development proposed.
- The phasing of green field sites and infrastructure provision.
- Requirements for renewable energy.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.28 North Devon Friends of the Earth object to Table 11 on the grounds that all new housing should be affordable to North Devon people. This is an unrealistic request, which ignores the wide range of ability to pay that is found in the existing population. In any event, requiring all new housing to be “affordable” would be uneconomic and unreasonable.
- 12.29 Mr Pitt would like to see the table broken down to differentiate between housing proposed for open market for sale, affordable for sale and affordable for rent. It would be very interesting indeed to see this information set out in the table. As the Council point out however, the tenure, size and type of affordable housing will depend on the nature of each development and the needs of the town at the time of each application.
- 12.30 The Friends objection about Larkbear is that it is called a strategic urban extension rather than a green field housing development. The removal of the proposal from the Local Plan obviates the need for a conclusion on this point. Larkbear Consortium objects to the removal of the proposal from the Local Plan. I concluded earlier in the Local Plan (Chapter 7: Housing) that the likely availability of previously developed sites is such that there is no need for a major urban extension at Larkbear, or any of the other sites proposed. The deletion of Larkbear from the Plan shifts the balance between previously developed and green field sites, from a ratio of 860/790 to one of 1060/140. The figures in Table 11 now indicate that most new houses will be built on previously developed sites, thus meeting the objection of S J Watson Davies.
- 12.31 Barnstaple Town Centre Management want a balance to be struck to ensure that brown field sites that remain viable as employment land should be retained in order to provide for a vibrant and mixed economy. The Council's response is that previously developed sites allocated for housing only include employment land where it is likely to become available during the Plan period, and is not of strategic importance to the local economy. Any windfall employment sites would have to be evaluated against Policy ECN2, which safeguards existing employment land to protect business and employment opportunities. The objection is conditionally withdrawn.
- 12.32 The deletion of the word “total” from the head of Table 11 is in recognition that the figures given

for each site listed are minimum figures and that in several cases planning applications have been submitted with much higher figures being proposed. The increase in densities is to reflect these changes in capacity and is a realistic assessment in my view. Changes to the site capacities of Proposals BAR1f (Telephone Repeater Station) and Proposal BAR1g (BT Depot, Old Station Road) are considered later. The viability of the various sites in Table 11 is based upon the findings of the Chesterton Study. I concluded in Chapter 7 that the 25% discount rate was reasonable to reflect the uncertainties associated with the previously developed sites.

- 12.33 Devon County Council call for greater clarity in how much housing is proposed over what time periods. The basic discrepancy is between the figure in Table 11 and the target shown in Policy STY1 and HSG1A. General Paper 2 indicates that the actual capacities being proposed through formal planning applications are exceeding the estimates contained in the Local Plan. These figures demonstrate that the estimated provision of 1500 dwellings for Barnstaple set out in STY1 and HSG1A is realistic and achievable, but to avoid increasing the indicative capacities for the sites listed in Table 11, the figures for Barnstaple in STY1 should be reduced from 1500 to 1375 to match the proposed changes to HSG1A. All three sources will now show the same figure, a great improvement.
- 12.34 Barnstaple Town Centre Management and Mrs Moore want to see brown field sites developed before any green field sites. Table 11 sets out the phasing plan for the limited amount of green field land that is to be developed. Paragraph 12.15 originally referred to two exceptions to this phasing scheme: one at Roundswell and the other a small part of the Larkbear strategic site. The latter has been deleted, while the Roundswell scheme has received planning permission, and will be implemented partly in the first phase to 2006, and mainly in phase 2 (2006-2011). The statement in Paragraph 12.15 that most of the proposed green field land will not be released until the later phase of the Plan period is therefore correct.
- 12.35 Tawstock Parish Council raises the matter of infrastructure provision in relation to housing developments. They call for services such as schools to precede development. Most infrastructure is generally provided alongside residential development, with contributions towards the cost of services in accordance with the best practice note (CD082). The provision of a new school will be a matter for Devon County Council and will depend upon existing capacity in the area.
- 12.36 The Larkbear Consortium object to the inclusion of the additional sentence in 12.16 referring to the renewable energy requirement. This matter is dealt with under Policy ECN15.
- 12.37 Two objections from British Telecom PLC (452/1728/FD and 452/2385/RD) refer to discrepancies between the figures in Table 11, paragraph 12.38 and Proposal BAR1g. These objections are considered under Proposal BAR1g.

Recommendation 12.10

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan**Proposal BAR1 (Residential Development on Previously Developed Sites)**

<i>Objection</i>	<i>380/1362/F</i>		<i>B I Down</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>409/1515/F</i>		<i>Barratt Exeter</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/628/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2156/R</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>89/166/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs R Harrop</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>50/69/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mr R W Forward</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>151/304/FD</i>		<i>Mrs L Tancock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>322/1239/F</i>		<i>Mrs Ruth Moore</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>55/74/FD</i>		<i>Mr B R Cox</i>

Issues:

- The availability, viability and capacity of identified sites.
- The lack of adequate infrastructure.
- Contributions towards improving public transport.
- Whether existing car parks should be redeveloped.
- Proposed housing on Sticklepath Primary School site.
- Proposed housing on the former GEI Ayre and Grimshaw site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.38 The Larkbear objection, similar to the one in the previous section above, raises concerns about the availability, viability and capacity of identified sites in Barnstaple. The viability of allocated previously developed sites was assessed in the Chesterton Report and discussed at great length at the round table session. I broadly support the conclusions of Chesterton and consider that the 25% discount rate applied to the potential capacity of these sites is cautious. Light has been shed on the accuracy of proposed densities and site capacities by a series of planning applications for much higher numbers of dwellings than the estimated figures indicated in Proposal BAR1.
- 12.39 Messrs Down and Forward are concerned about the need to improve infrastructure before additional houses are built. The Local Plan covers this issue in paragraphs 3.46 to 3.48, where the proposition is that development should only go ahead where an appropriate level of physical and social infrastructure is to be provided. There are adopted codes of practice relating to the provision of affordable housing, education, public open space and sport and recreation. These codes of practice are adequate to ensure appropriate phasing of infrastructure provided by new developments.
- 12.40 Devon County Council objects to Proposal BAR1 in general as all sites under the proposal should refer to the possible requirement for public transport revenue contributions, The Council has accepted this point and added the requirement for financial contributions to the relevant individual proposals within BAR1. This meets the objection.
- 12.41 Mr Cox and Mrs Moore would like to see some of the unsightly surface car parks used for housing, such as the civic centre car park. Whilst the redevelopment of the civic centre car park for housing would no doubt be popular with the residents of Barnstaple, it would be necessary to retain some operational parking for the council offices and the courts. In addition the car park performs a useful function at weekends serving the shopping centre. Because of the relatively high car dependency in North Devon, the notion of getting rid of car parks has to be balanced against the need to ensure

adequate provision of car parking to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Two existing town centre car parks are identified for residential and commercial redevelopment: Queen Street/Bear Street and the former cattle market. Both sites will retain the present level of short term parking provision for shoppers.

- 12.42 Mrs Tancock proposes the redevelopment of Sticklepath Primary School for housing once the new primary school is built at Roundswell. Whilst this site would be suitable for housing development, Devon County Council as education authority has not indicated that it is likely to become available. Sticklepath Primary School is considered to be required in addition to a new primary school at Roundswell, and any redevelopment of the existing school will depend on an alternative site being found. There is currently no proposal to replace this school and it is not appropriate therefore to include it in the Local Plan.
- 12.43 Barrett Exeter proposes the inclusion of the former GEI Ayre and Grimshaw site to the north of the Braunton Road as a housing site. The site is located in an area containing a mix of residential and commercial development, and the use is not therefore a non-conforming one. Following completion of the downstream bridge and by-pass, this area will have improved accessibility and will be enhanced as a commercial location. The site should therefore be retained for employment purposes in accordance with Policy ECN2. This policy would permit redevelopment for housing where it would not harm business and employment opportunities in the area.
- 12.44 Because of the exceptionally high need for affordable housing in Barnstaple however, the Council has stated that should the site be redeveloped for housing, it should be solely for affordable housing. This is not entirely consistent with previous statements that significant housing sites should contain a mix of types of housing, including affordable housing. Whilst this justification for resisting an allocation is perhaps rather thin, the need to retain an industrial site in a commercial area is on its own sufficient justification to resist a housing allocation.

Recommendation 12.13

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites Proposal BAR1a - Anchorwood Bank Paragraphs 12.17 to 12.21

<i>Objection</i>	<i>392/1453/F</i>	<i>Railfuture South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1722/F</i>	<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/877/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/878/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/879/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/880/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/889/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>634/2225/R</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/1098/F</i>		<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/2238/R</i>		<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1084/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1726/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>397/1487/F</i>		<i>Chelverton Group</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>397/2380/R</i>		<i>Chelverton Group</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>112/206/FD</i>		<i>D Evans</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/931/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>276/990/FD</i>		<i>Devon Wildlife Trust</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/350/FD</i>		<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>135/244/FD</i>		<i>Environmental Protection Group South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>225/705/FD</i>		<i>Government Office for the South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>389/1425/F</i>		<i>Highways Agency</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>421/1616/F</i>		<i>M Baker (Property Services) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>39/137/FD</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs B C Clayton</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1249/F</i>		<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>50/110/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mr R W Forward</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>194/527/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mrs J Long</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>322/1240/F</i>		<i>Mrs Ruth Moore</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>392/1454/F</i>		<i>Railfuture South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>459/1764/F</i>		<i>Richard Ford</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>91/170/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>S J Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>454/1740/F</i>		<i>Sharman Group</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>280/1017/F</i>		<i>Tawstock Parish Council</i>

Issues:

- Capacity and viability of the development.
- Provision of affordable housing.
- Retention of historic buildings.
- Requirement for retail development and business premises.
- Nature conservation issues, provision of public open space and flood storage.
- Sustainable transport proposals.
- Traffic generation and phasing.
- Other constraints.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**Capacity and viability of the development**

- 12.45 Anchorwood Bank is a site of great importance in both visual and strategic terms. It is situated on the southern bank of the River Taw, close to the Longbridge and with the western bypass cutting through its western side. The part of the site nearest the Longbridge is proposed for a mixture of uses including 400 dwellings with 25% affordable dwellings, light industrial and office uses, up to 10,000 square metres of non-food bulky goods retailing and community facilities to serve the

residential element of the scheme. The part to the west of the bypass is proposed for informal recreational open space and habitat enhancement.

- 12.46 An outline application for the redevelopment of the Anchorwood Bank site was submitted in September 2001. The resolution of the Planning Committee was to approve the application subject to a Section 106 Agreement and referral to the Secretary of State. The application has now been called in for determination after a public inquiry to be held in 2005.
- 12.47 Objections by M Baker and the Sharman Group are to the appropriateness of the number of dwellings suggested in the proposal: "about 400". This number is considered to be optimistic given the constraints of the site, its prominence, contamination from existing uses and noise and fumes coming from the bypass. The site is considered suitable for other uses than housing, given its proximity to the town centre.
- 12.48 As part of the planning application, an environmental statement was submitted. The statement addressed all of the constraints referred to by M Baker. The statement does not identify any particular problems of contamination, noting that further borehole tests will be required. The level of remediation will depend on the final layout of the proposed development. With regard to traffic noise, it is considered that the provision of a 2 metre acoustic barrier along the western side of the site may be needed to bring all the properties within the appropriate noise exposure category for residential development. In terms of the visual impact of the development, I note that detailed urban design advice has been obtained by the Council from Aaron Evans Architects. The resultant scheme has been welcomed by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.
- 12.49 The call-in inquiry is due to take place in 2005. Matters such as the appropriate mix between housing and retail will be considered at that inquiry. On the basis of the evidence before me, the reasons advanced for a reduction in the number of houses from 400 to 300 do not appear sufficiently significant for me to agree with that proposal. The site is a prominent one, and I see no reason in principle why a high density housing development, even involving multi-storey buildings close to the River Taw, ought not to be acceptable in this large-scale setting.
- 12.50 The objection from the Chelverton Group was concerned that the number, type and layout of dwellings would pre-empt the development brief being prepared. A development brief was adopted in March 2004. The requirement for a mix of dwelling types is in accordance with that brief. I do not find Criterion A) of BAR1a to be unduly prescriptive. The current planning application is considered by the Council to comply with this part of the proposal.
- 12.51 Reference to economic feasibility in paragraph 12.21 is in recognition of the potential costs involved in redeveloping the Anchorwood Bank site. The Best Practice Note on General Principles relating to Developer Contributions (CD082) recognises that planning contributions may be reduced where they would make a scheme financially unviable.

Affordable housing

- 12.52 A number of objectors call for the site to be used exclusively for affordable housing. Apart from matters of viability, it would be inappropriate to locate 400 affordable dwellings on one site, since it would not be in accordance with the Government objective of creating mixed communities. Reference in the proposal to economic viability has been removed, which should help to meet the objection of the Friends of the Earth. The counter-objection from Chelverton Group to revert to the original wording of "up-to" instead of "at least" 100 affordable dwellings is not substantiated with argument. The proposal as it stands includes the flexibility in the text of the alternative percentage of the total number of units and is reasonable in my view.

The Oliver Buildings

- 12.53 The Oliver designed buildings are considered by the Council to be locally important and distinctive buildings. The Local Plan has been amended to remove the possibility of their relocation elsewhere on the site. These changes are considered to overcome Mr Hames' concerns. The Chelverton Groups' assertion that the buildings have no merit and would prejudice redevelopment of the site is clearly undermined by the planning application making provision for their retention and conversion.

Retail and Commercial uses

- 12.54 The North Devon Retail Study identified potential capacity for about 10,000 square metres of floorspace for bulky goods which cannot be met in the town centre. Anchorwood Bank is considered by the Council to be the next best location, being an edge-of-centre site, easily accessible across the Long Bridge. This is challenged by the Friends of the Earth. Strictly in terms of PPG6 the site may be within the required distance to be called edge-of-centre, although a walk across the Long Bridge on a windy day carrying shopping bags might well suggest otherwise. In any event the matter will be examined in detail at the public inquiry.
- 12.55 GOSW objected to the provision for retail warehousing, on the grounds that it would need to be justified against the sequential test. The Council made a change to paragraph 12.70 to the effect that in the absence of any suitable town centre sites, bulky goods retailing could be directed to Seven Brethren or Anchorwood Bank, provided such proposals complement rather than compete with the town centre in accordance with the sequential approach. This would seem to meet the GOSW objection, subject to any view that it might take after the inquiry and the submission of the Inspector's report. The objection by Chelverton Group that the restriction to bulky goods is unduly restrictive, and that the proposal should refer to mainly non-food bulky goods retailing is out of step with the findings of the retail study and with Government policy on town centre viability and vitality.
- 12.56 Richard Ford objected that any new retailing should be on Seven Brethren rather than Anchorwood Bank. There is already a retail park at Seven Brethren, and a recent agreed statement issued by the Council and Brian Ford acknowledges that provision could be made at Seven Brethren for additional retail warehousing to meet the future shopping needs of Barnstaple and North Devon. Objections from British Telecom PLC indicate that alternative sites may be available for retail and leisure uses. Any alternative sites will be looked at in detail at the public inquiry. On the face of it, there would not appear to be any closer sites to the town centre than Anchorwood Bank.
- 12.57 The need for commercial business premises within the Anchorwood Bank redevelopment is justified by the Council by the need for additional office space in Barnstaple. This is an important strategic site and should provide mixed-use development in accordance with guidance in PPG1. Design and landscaping issues are set out in the development brief and should ensure that any commercial development is well designed and fits into its surroundings

Nature Conservation, Public Open Space and Flooding.

- 12.58 The Deposit Plan included recreational open space with formal playing pitches on land immediately to the west of the Anchorwood Bank site and the western bypass. Numerous objections were received indicating that this land is an important wetland area with ecological value within the biodiversity network. The land proposed for open space was also identified by Devon County Council as a location for biodiversity mitigation measures to be undertaken as a result of construction of the downstream bridge. To protect the biodiversity value, Criterion B) of Proposal BAR1a and paragraphs 12.19 and 12.20 were amended so that this site is identified solely for

informal recreational open space with habitat enhancement. Proposal BAR8 was also amended to delete reference to this site for new playing pitches. This use is now much more compatible with its function as an important wetland habitat and flood storage area. In my view the concerns of Devon CC, English Nature and Friends of the Earth are met.

- 12.59 Other changes have been made to paragraphs 12.18 and 12.20 to indicate that the riverside path, proposed sustainable urban drainage systems such as a reed filled ditch and environmental enhancements of the riverside adjacent to the SSSI and County Wildlife Site are all complementary. In my view these changes meet the objections of the Devon Wildlife Trust and English Nature.
- 12.60 Environment Protection Group SW object that the scheme will impact on floods elsewhere by pumping water into the River Taw, which will be funnelled upstream on incoming tides to meet flood waters coming downstream, causing catastrophic flooding in Barnstaple, Braunton and Bishops Tawton. They call for adequate measures to be taken to protect against flooding. Criterion F) and paragraph 12.20 ensure that adequate flood alleviation measures are proposed in accordance with Policy DVS6. This meets the objection in my view.

Sustainable Transport Proposals

- 12.61 A riverside walk around the Anchorwood Bank site is already proposed in Criterion D) and paragraph 12.18, which also requires pedestrian and cycle link improvements along the river frontage. The paragraph has also been amended to include reference to mooring and boat launching facilities where appropriate along the river frontage. In my view these changes meet the objections of Mrs Long, Mr Forward and the Devon Wildlife Trust.
- 12.62 A new footbridge link between Anchorwood Bank and the Heritage Centre on the Strand is proposed by the Friends of the Earth and Barnstaple Town Centre Management. As the fourth bullet point of paragraph 12.20 mentions contributions towards a new bridge over the River Taw, subject to feasibility, I consider that this meets these two objections. Barnstaple Town Council considers an underpass to be unnecessary. The feasibility of an underpass is yet to be shown, and an at-grade solution may emerge as the best option. Criterion D) and paragraph 12.20 are both flexible enough to facilitate alternative solutions.
- 12.63 The objection from Railfuture South West seeks to safeguard the ability to re-open the former Barnstaple to Ilfracombe railway line via Braunton. There is currently no proposal to do this and the costs of doing it are likely to be astronomic. Policy REC4 safeguards former transport routes including the Tarka Trail, so that a railway line could still be provided to the edge of Barnstaple at some point in the future. That is perhaps as much as Railfuture can expect from this Local Plan.

Traffic Generation

- 12.64 A number of objectors are concerned about the impact of the development on the road network. Construction of the downstream bridge and western bypass has now commenced and is scheduled for completion in 2007. Paragraph 12.20 requires a transport assessment as part of any proposal, which will identify traffic issues before and after the completion of the bypass. The proposed development is required to provide sustainable transport measures in accordance with Policy TRA1A and Criteria D) and I) of Proposal BAR1a. Traffic impact is one of the issues that will be examined in detail by the planning inquiry.

Recommendation 12.14

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites
Proposal BAR1b - Mill Road
Paragraphs 12.22 to 12.25

<i>Objection</i>	<i>408/2512/R</i>		<i>Gliddons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1089/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>408/2513/R</i>		<i>Gliddons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>408/2513/R</i>		<i>Gliddons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>408/2514/R</i>		<i>Gliddons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/1099/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/638/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/351/FD</i>		<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>408/1509/F</i>		<i>Gliddons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>321/1231/F</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs T Lock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/881/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- Phasing and comprehensive redevelopment of the site.
- Pedestrian and cycle links and access arrangements.
- Phase 4 urban relief road.
- Developer contributions and viability.
- Flood risk impact.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.65 The objection from Barnstaple Town Centre Management seeks to avoid fragmented redevelopment and this desire is supported by the Council. The amendments to paragraph 12.23 and the adoption of the development brief should ensure that the site is redeveloped in a coordinated manner. This meets the objection in my view. If the existing planning application for residential development goes ahead on the Gliddons and Squires site, then the requirements of the Local Plan will not apply to this part of the site. If the planning permission is not implemented, then any future proposals for the Gliddon and Squires part of the site will need to comply with the development brief.
- 12.66 Proposal BAR1b includes a new access road from the Evans Transport site and the adjoining park and change scheme. Whilst the site could continue to be accessed along Mill Road and Pottington Road, and the highway authority has accepted that this access will serve the Gliddons site, this route is poor and an alternative is surely needed. The widening of Pottington Road is accepted by the Council as not being an option, and it has deleted this point from 12.23.
- 12.67 The draft development brief identifies proposed walking and cycle routes which will link the site

with the Tarka Trail, Pilton Schools via Rolle Quay, the RGB site and Fairview car park. This amendment stating the destinations of the links, rather than a reference to a particular route along the River Yeo, meets the objection of Devon County Council.

- 12.68 North Devon Friends of the Earth object to the proposal for failing to mention Phase 4 of the Barnstaple Urban Relief Road. This road does not now form part of the downstream bridge and western bypass scheme, and the Local Plan proposes the deletion of its safeguarded route. The new link road to Evans Transport is a more cost effective and environmentally more acceptable solution for improving traffic circulation in this part of Barnstaple.
- 12.69 The developer contributions required under Proposal BAR1b are related to the proposal and appear to be necessary as a result of that development. The requirement for school places contributions is in accordance with the adopted code of practice, as is the requirement for the provision of public open space. The site area is approximately 2 hectares, so at a net density of 50 dwellings to the hectare the capacity will be 100 dwellings. The Council has control of part of the site, and can facilitate the provision of a higher proportion of affordable dwellings than would normally be sought. The normal figure of 25% rises to 30% as a result. This seems a reasonable target figure for the site.
- 12.70 There are concerns about increasing the risk of flooding at the site. Since the site is previously developed, it is unlikely to exacerbate existing flood problems. In any event, Criterion E) of Proposal BAR1b requires flood alleviation measures, including the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). The requirement for SUDS set out in 12.13 is in accordance with advice in PPG25.

Recommendation 12.15

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites

Proposal BAR1c - Evans Transport

Paragraph 12.26

<i>Objection</i>	<i>444/1690/F</i>	<i>Evans Transport</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/352/FD</i>	<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>444/1689/F</i>	<i>Evans Transport</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>321/1232/F</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs T Lock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>102/189/FD</i>	<i>Mrs R Barrett</i>

Issues:

- Flood storage and flood prevention.
- Current use of the site.
- Mixed use development.
- Infrastructure and developer contributions.

- Access through the site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.71 The Evans Transport site is situated adjacent to the junction of the western bypass on the Braunton Road. It is proposed mainly for residential development with provision for small workshops suitable for B1 type uses. Several objectors fear increased flooding as a result of this development. The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposal however. Criterion F) of the proposal calls for flood alleviation measures including sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to be provided. SUDS are required in order to control surface water run-off and to avoid exacerbating existing flood risk problems. The requirement to overcome flooding constraints is part of the physical infrastructure required to enable development to proceed.
- 12.72 One objector claims a long history of retail sales on the land. For many years the site was owned by Devon and Somerset Farmers, who had a significant retail section for the farming community that also served the wider rural community. For a period in excess of 10 years there has been a substantial retail element on the site for visiting members of the public. The objector uses this established retail use to justify retaining a strategic retail element on the site, at least the existing area of retail use and storage related to retail use, with the possibility of the primary development of the site as a food store also being acknowledged.
- 12.73 The North Devon Retail Study found no quantitative need for new convenience retail floor space in Barnstaple, but proposed a new food store within the town centre as a means of increasing its vitality. Sites have been identified within the town centre for such a use. The Study also proposed some extra provision for bulky goods retailing, and the Local Plan has identified both Anchorwood Bank and Seven Brethren as the preferred locations for this use. The Evans site is some 700 metres from the edge of the town centre and would be ruled out for retail development under the sequential test. Even if an established retail use can be substantiated on the site, this would not justify any increase in the scale of any retail element that might then be proposed within a mixed use. The idea of a strategic retail use, or a free-standing foodstore is against national policy for retail in PPG6.
- 12.74 Some objectors have queried the mixed use proposal. Because of the proximity of the site to the new road, noise attenuation measures will be required for residential use. By allocating the part of the site nearest to the road to workshops the need for such attenuation is reduced, and some of the existing employment benefit of the site is retained. This is wholly in line with current government thinking on the benefits of mixed uses.
- 12.75 The developer contributions required under Proposal BAR1c are related to the proposal and appear to be necessary as a result of the development. The requirement for school places contributions is in accordance with the adopted code of practice, as is the requirement for improving public transport to the site and the provision of cycle links to the Pilton Schools and the hospital.
- 12.76 Access proposals include a new road through the site to the Mill Road residential allocations and the park and change facility, together with links to the Tarka Trail. Residential amenities would be protected under policies in the Development Standards chapter, such as DVS3 (Amenity Considerations) and DVS1 (Design).
- 12.77 All in all I consider that the objections are met by the proposal and its explanatory text, incorporating changes at the Revised Deposit stage.

Recommendation 12.16

I recommend that no changes are made to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites
Proposal BAR1d - Kirkham Tyres, Fairview

Objection 197/639/FD Conditionally Withdrawn Devon County Council

Issue:

- Contributions towards pedestrian and cycle links.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.78 Devon County Council objected to this proposal on the grounds that it did not make provision for contributions to be made towards pedestrian and cycle links to the hospital, Pilton area schools and the Tarka Trail. The Council has included these items in the proposal now and the objection is conditionally withdrawn.

Recommendation 12.17

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites
Proposal BAR1e - RGB, Rolle Street

<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/640/FD</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>421/1617/F</i>	<i>M Baker (Property Services) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>321/1233/F</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs T Lock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>326/1263/F</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs T Mason</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1251/F</i>	<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/884/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/883/FD Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- Availability and viability of the site.
- Retention of terraced houses.

- Sustainable transport links and car-free areas.
- Flood storage and flood prevention.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.79 The Rawle, Gammon and Baker site is currently available for redevelopment, the builders merchants (RGB) having gained permission to relocate to South Molton. A recent planning application for residential development on the site has been approved, and awaits the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. In my view the existence of this planning approval, for 149 apartments including affordable and sheltered apartments, demonstrates the viability of the site for residential development. The objection by M Baker Ltd that the site is not likely to be developed within the Plan period and thus should be deleted as a housing allocation is overcome.
- 12.80 The former terraced houses along the Rolle Street frontage of the site are currently used as offices by RGB. Whilst this terrace contributes to the street scene along Rolle Street, its presence limits the scope for safe access to the site. The scheme with planning approval requires demolition of the terrace. The last sentence of 12.32 indicates that the cottages should be retained if possible, so that should the present scheme not go ahead, the possibility of keeping the cottages remains.
- 12.81 Devon County Council made a number of suggestions to improve the footpath and cycle links from the site. The Council has accepted them and made the necessary changes, with the exception of requiring the scheme to fund a new bridge across the River Yeo, rather than merely a contribution towards it. This is a matter for the Council as planning authority to negotiate in my view, in accordance with its code of practice.
- 12.82 The operation of Rolle Street as a public highway is a matter for the highway authority, and will not affect the suitability or availability of the site for redevelopment. Phase 4 of the Urban Relief Road is not in the capital programme, and the closure of Rolle Street to through traffic, desirable though it would be for the quality of life of its residents, is not a practical option at this time. Excluding cars from the site is also not practical, but reductions in the provision of car parking have been made in accordance with Policy TRA8 since the site is close to the town centre.
- 12.83 The site is already protected by flood defences, and being already developed, it is unlikely that there would be any increase in the rate of surface water run off. The Environment Agency has been consulted on the proposal and has not identified the need for improved flood defences for this site.

Recommendation 12.18

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites

Proposal BAR1f - Telephone Repeater Station, Rackfield

Objection	452/1727/F	British Telecom PLC
Objection	452/2381/R	British Telecom PLC
Objection	197/641/FD	Conditionally Withdrawn Devon County Council
Objection	325/1252/F	Mr P Hames

Issues:

- Access to the site.
- Provision of affordable housing.
- Density of the scheme.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.84 Devon County Council asked for Criterion B) to mention that access to the site should be to an adoptable standard. This has been done. A counter-objection regards the new reference as being overly prescriptive, given that it will be a private access road to the development. This seems a fair point to make, and it would be unfortunate if the scheme is delayed unnecessarily because an adoptable solution cannot be found. On balance it may be best to leave the reference to an adoptable standard out of the policy.
- 12.85 Mr Hames would like to see vehicular access to the site restricted. The existing access is from the northern end of Boutport Street at the junction with Rackfield. The site has a central location with good pedestrian access to the town centre. It should be possible therefore to limit the site to a relatively low level of residential parking. Vehicular access to the site will still be needed however for deliveries, refuse collection, emergency vehicles etc.
- 12.86 British Telecom object to the requirement for at least 10 affordable homes on a site of about 20 dwellings. This 50% affordable requirement is too high given the costs associated with redeveloping the site and the need for an archaeological assessment. The Council accepts it is higher than for other previously developed sites where requirements are for at least 25% or 30% affordable. Given the likely higher than average costs of redevelopment, and the possible difficulties in providing an acceptable access, it would be more realistic to reduce the affordable requirement to 30% at the outset, rather than rely on subsequent discussions about abnormal costs to arrive at a figure.
- 12.87 BT also objected to the proposed density of the scheme. The requirement for a net density of at least 50 dwellings to the hectare reflects the relatively high density of the surroundings, including Rackfield Court. A similar scale and density of development is proposed for this site, and in the interests of making more efficient use of land I consider it to be appropriate for this urban location. A final BT objection concerns contributions being sought towards additional school places: that the criterion is overly prescriptive and inflexible as need for secondary school places will change over time. Whilst there is currently a shortage of school places in Barnstaple, the Council accepts that the need for additional school capacity could reduce in the future, in which case provision would not be required in accordance with the adopted education code of practice. An assessment would be made for each planning application and would reflect current circumstances. This shows that the criterion would be used in a flexible manner, and meets the objection.

Recommendation 12.19

I recommend that the Local Plan is modified by rewording Proposal BAR1f as follows:

- A) About 20 dwellings at a net density of 50 units per hectare, and incorporating 6 affordable homes;**
- B) Improvements to the existing access from Rackfield;**
- C) Contributions towards providing additional school places, as required.**

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites
Proposal BAR1g - BT Depot, Old Station Road
Inset Map 1 - Barnstaple (North)
Table 11 - Proposed Residential Sites in Barnstaple
Paragraphs 12.38 to 12.40

<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/642/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>421/1618/F</i>		<i>M Baker (Property Services) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2481/R</i>		<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2480/R</i>		<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2479/R</i>		<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2479/R</i>		<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1733/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1735/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1736/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1732/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1728/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1729/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1730/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1731/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/2381/R</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/2383/R</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/2385/R</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>

Issues:

- Proposed density and site capacity.
- Requirement for affordable housing provision.
- The availability, suitability and viability of the site for residential redevelopment.
- Education contributions.
- Site access.
- Trunk sewer crossing the site.
- Alternative uses for the site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.88 The British Telecom Depot and adjoining land is proposed for a mix of dwelling types and sizes, including the provision of at least 15 affordable homes. Arguments that the site is unsuitable for residential development by virtue of its proximity to the A361 and commercial uses nearby are not convincing. The site is somewhat lower than the main road and buffered from its noise by a line of businesses including McDonalds, Majestic Wine and a car hire business. That the site can be considered to be potentially available is demonstrated by the submission of a planning application for a mix of leisure uses in 2000. This was withdrawn because the site was judged by the Council

to be inappropriate for town centre uses such as a cinema. Pre-application discussions for a residential scheme have been going on. The Chesterton Study concluded that the site is likely to become available in the short-term and that residential development would be viable.

- 12.89 BT objected to the requirements of BAR1g being too prescriptive, contrary to PPG3 and PPG12. Paragraph 58 of PPG3 indicates the minimum density acceptable to make efficient use of land. It suggests densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. The proposed requirement for a net density of at least 40 dwellings to the hectare is reasonable given this advice, and the character of the adjoining residential area with its relatively high density. The requirement for affordable housing is around 30%, a figure considered by Chesterton as being not unreasonable and not likely to threaten the viability of the site.
- 12.90 The issue of education contributions will be assessed at the time of the submission of a planning application. This flexibility is set out in the adopted code of practice on education contributions. There is no need to amend Criterion E) therefore.
- 12.91 The access to the site was originally proposed to be off Hollowtree Road. This was changed to Old Station Road in the Revised Deposit. There are now conflicting views as to the best location for an access, and the Council therefore propose to be non-specific about the position of the access, amending the reference in 12.39 and Criterion B) as appropriate. Criterion C) has been amended to delete reference to the position of the proposed pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre and existing pedestrian and cycle network. This change together with other amendments concerning the access, meet the concerns raised by Devon County Council.
- 12.92 One objector proposes alternative uses for the site. Being so far from the town centre, or any district centre, the site would not be suitable for retail or leisure uses. Having been used for a commercial use hitherto, the site could go on in such a use in future. The pressing need for houses on previously developed sites within the urban area however, makes the site particularly suited to residential use, given the proximity to the residential area to the south.

Recommendation 12.20

I recommend that the Local Plan be modified as follows:

- 1) Inset Map change IM1/3RD is deleted;**
- 2) The first sentence of paragraph 12.39 is amended to indicate “A new or improved vehicular and pedestrian access will be required to serve the site in accordance with Policy TRA6”;**
- 3) Criterion B) of Proposal BAR1g is amended to read “A new or improved access with junction improvements on to Hollowtree Road and Eastern Avenue”.**

12.93 At the round table session on housing supply, the Council agreed to the deletion of this site following recommendations in the Chesterton Report. I accept this deletion.

Recommendation 12.21

I recommend the Local Plan be modified by the deletion of Proposal BAR1h.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites Proposal BAR1i – Transco, Barbican Road Paragraphs 12.43 to 12.45

<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/2338/R</i>	<i>SecondSite Property</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/2339/R</i>	<i>SecondSite Property</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/2340/R</i>	<i>SecondSite Property</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/2341/R</i>	<i>SecondSite Property</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/1541/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>414/1543/F</i>	<i>SecondSite Property</i>

Issues:

- Remediation of contaminated land.
- Requirement for affordable housing.
- Access.
- Requirement for developer contributions.
- Requirement for a development brief.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.94 On the subject of remediation, the Council accepts that remediation must be achieved to the required standard for the intended use of the site. It has amended 12.45 accordingly, and the objection has been conditionally withdrawn.

12.95 On affordable housing provision, the objection is to the specific requirement for at least 10 affordable homes or 25% of the total housing provision, which it is thought inappropriate pending determination of the costs of remediating the site, and the need to ensure viability of the development. There was no agreement on the likely number of dwellings that the site could accommodate, but the need for careful treatment of the eastern and southern boundaries, which could rule out 3-storey building, suggested that the Council's target figure of 40 dwellings is on the high side. A net density of around 45 dwellings per hectare would seem feasible however, and not inappropriate given the relatively high existing densities of much of the surrounding residential area, particularly to the north and west. The Council accepted at Inquiry the deletion of "about 40 dwellings" from Criterion A) and deletion of the reference to 10 affordable homes provided "25% affordable homes" is substituted.

12.96 If the Council considers that 40 homes can be built on the site, even accepting the limitations

arising from the site layout and surroundings, it seems unlikely to me that this figure would be whittled down to the extent that the current threshold for affordable housing would not be met: i.e. a figure of less than 25 dwellings. However, as the Council point out, they are seeking a lower threshold, in line with policy emerging from revisions to PPG3. They justify this lower threshold on the basis of acute housing conditions for the less well-off in North Devon. I have accepted elsewhere in this report that North Devon does indeed appear to be a special case in this respect, and the lower threshold is justified in a number of places including Barnstaple, where the shortage of affordable dwellings is particularly acute. I consider that this site should provide an element of affordable housing, the exact scale of which might be varied when the costs of remediation are clearer. That is the point of paragraph 7.41 in the housing chapter. For now though, I think that the compromise agreed at Inquiry should stand.

- 12.97 Access to the site is not straightforward. The Council accepted that the expressed preference in the Local Plan for an access off Victoria Road may not succeed, and there needs to be recognition of the alternatives. They put forward an amendment to paragraph 12.44 which lists the three possibilities: Victoria Road, Barbican Close, and Barbican Road. It states that that the preferred option will depend on further investigation at the planning application stage. The Council proposed a change to Criterion B) to state simply that satisfactory vehicular access is to be provided. These proposals closely mirror those put forward by the objector, and are clearly acceptable.
- 12.98 Regarding contributions to public transport, the Council readily accepted that since the site is reasonably close to the bus station, contributions towards improving public transport can be waived. The objector proposed an amendment to the cycle route requirement, to link with existing routes to the town centre and employment areas to the east. This I judge to be reasonable. It was agreed that item C) should be deleted from BAR1i, and the second bullet should read: The provision of a pedestrian and cycle route to link with existing routes etc.
- 12.99 On the matter of the requirement for a development brief the Council accepted that such a brief was not necessary given the need for a transport statement and a design statement in accordance with Policy DVS1.

Recommendation 12.22

I recommend that the Local Plan is modified as follows:

- 1) **Paragraph 12.43**
References to 40 dwellings and 10 affordable homes is deleted from paragraph 12.43. Affordable dwellings should be expressed as *“25% of the total provision”*.

- 2) **Paragraph 12.44**
Delete the first two sentences. Replace with:-

Three points of access into the site have been considered:-

- 1) *an access off Victoria Road through the lock-up garages;*
- 2) *an existing access off Barbican Close, through the industrial area;*
- 3) *a new access off Barbican Road directly into the site.*

The preferred option will depend on further investigation at the planning application stage.

- 3) **Delete first bullet point of 12.44**

4) **Change second bullet point to: *The provision of a pedestrian and cycle route to link to existing routes to the town centre and employment/retail areas to the east.***

5) **Proposal BAR1 to be as follows:**

PROPOSAL BAR1

TRANSCO, BARBICAN ROAD (BAR1i)

A) Residential development at a net density of 45 units per hectare with 25% of the total provision as affordable homes:

B) A satisfactory vehicular access being provided:

C) Measures to alleviate any contamination to an acceptable standard:

D) Contributions will be sought towards:

- ***The provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre and employment/retail sites:***
- ***Providing additional school places if required.***

Barnstaple Action Plan: Previously Developed Sites

Proposal BAR1k - South West Water Depot, Youings Drive

Objection	380/1358/F	B I Down
Objection	380/2220/R	B I Down
Objection	159/330/FD	Mr and Mrs W G J Schiller
Objection	164/344/FD	Conditionally Withdrawn
		Mr J Jarvis

Issues:

- The extent of the site.
- Traffic congestion and infrastructure provision within Pilton.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.100 The South West Water Depot is a previously developed site on the northern side of Barnstaple close to North Devon District Hospital. Planning permission was granted in May 2004 for redevelopment of this site for 102 dwellings. The site is under construction and the proposal should therefore be deleted from the Local Plan.

12.101 Issues of traffic congestion within the narrow lanes around Pilton and on-street parking from hospital traffic were taken into account by the Council in determining the application. As the permission has been implemented these issues are no longer relevant to the Local Plan Inquiry.

Recommendation 12.23

I recommend the deletion from the Local Plan of Proposal BAR1k and paragraph 12.47, and deletion from Inset Map 1 of Proposal BAR1k and map change IM1/1RD.

Proposal BAR1l - St Josephs Nursing Home, Landkey Road**Table 11 - Proposed Residential Sites in Barnstaple****Paragraphs 12.47A, 12.47B, 12.47C**

<i>Objection</i>	649/2392/R	<i>Spiral Developments</i>
<i>Objection</i>	649/2393/R	<i>Spiral Developments</i>
<i>Objection</i>	649/2394/R	<i>Spiral Developments</i>
<i>Objection</i>	649/2395/R	<i>Spiral Developments</i>
<i>Objection</i>	571/2066/R	<i>A & J Kingsley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	605/2110/R	<i>B A Kneebone</i>
<i>Objection</i>	576/2071/R	<i>G R Spear</i>
<i>Objection</i>	595/2095/R	<i>J & R Hancock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	575/2070/R	<i>J Thayre</i>
<i>Objection</i>	603/2107/R	<i>M L A Smith</i>
<i>Objection</i>	587/2084/R	<i>Margaret & Nadine Norris</i>
<i>Objection</i>	588/2085/R	<i>Mr & Mrs A Good</i>
<i>Objection</i>	580/2075/R	<i>Mr & Mrs Bentley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	579/2074/R	<i>Mr & Mrs C W Bolt</i>
<i>Objection</i>	582/2077/R	<i>Mr & Mrs D J E Butler</i>
<i>Objection</i>	577/2072/R	<i>Mr & Mrs E J Warner</i>
<i>Objection</i>	584/2083/R	<i>Mr & Mrs F J Hind</i>
<i>Objection</i>	572/2067/R	<i>Mr & Mrs G Poole</i>
<i>Objection</i>	574/2069/R	<i>Mr & Mrs Isaac</i>
<i>Objection</i>	597/2096/R	<i>Mr & Mrs P Cross</i>
<i>Objection</i>	599/2101/R	<i>Mr C Evans</i>
<i>Objection</i>	581/2076/R	<i>Mr C W Yeo</i>
<i>Objection</i>	594/2092/R	<i>Mr D W Leach</i>
<i>Objection</i>	598/2099/R	<i>Mr E R Squire</i>
<i>Objection</i>	573/2068/R	<i>Mr I Dowling</i>
<i>Objection</i>	602/2106/R	<i>Mr P Baglow</i>
<i>Objection</i>	570/2065/R	<i>Mr P J White</i>
<i>Objection</i>	592/2090/R	<i>Mr T Allen</i>
<i>Objection</i>	590/2088/R	<i>Mrs D Breakspear</i>
<i>Objection</i>	604/2108/R	<i>Mrs M Piper</i>

<i>Objection</i>	<i>606/2113/R</i>	<i>Mrs S E White</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>601/2105/R</i>	<i>Paul & Helen Moscardini</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>583/2078/R</i>	<i>R & J A Jenkins</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>578/2073/R</i>	<i>S M Darch</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>649/2391/R</i>	<i>Spiral Developments</i>

Issues:

- Proposed site capacity and density of development.
- Requirement for provision of affordable housing.
- Retention of the historic building and protected trees.
- Provision of public open space.
- Pedestrian links, access and parking issues.
- Developer contributions towards additional educational infrastructure.
- Requirement for a development brief.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.102 The site of the former St Joseph's Nursing Home is situated on the southern edge of Barnstaple, immediately to the north of the A39 and to the west of Landkey Road. Proposal BAR11 covers about 1.4 hectares, of which 0.51 hectares is previously developed land. Some objectors are unhappy that the proposal includes the green field site immediately to the south of the former nursing home. Whilst extending a development boundary from a previously developed site to take in green field land would not normally be considered sustainable, in this case the land is a narrow wedge between the town and the A39. The land can be incorporated into the development without significant loss to the countryside.
- 12.103 The density of the adjoining housing areas is significantly lower than is proposed for this scheme. Marist Way and Convent Close have a density of about 20 dwellings to the hectare, a level of land take described by the Government in PPG3 as "historically very high and which can no longer be sustained". Local Planning Authorities are instructed to avoid developments which make inefficient use of land and encourage higher densities between 30 and 50 dwellings to the hectare.
- 12.104 The Council indicated at Inquiry that it was prepared to reduce the required number of dwellings from 40 to 35, whilst maintaining the density at 35 dwellings to the hectare. Such a scheme would require a larger area of residential development and a smaller area of open space than is shown on map IM1/4RD. I consider this to be a reasonable compromise, between the wishes of the local residents for a lower density scheme, and the wishes of the developers to push the numbers higher. I do not think that it is necessary to show the precise division of the site between residential and open space. Provided it is understood that open space will be provided towards the western, narrow end of the site, the exact dividing line can be left to the designers of the scheme.
- 12.105 Several objections relate to the number and proportion of affordable homes required. Criterion A) and paragraph 12.47A call for at least 15 affordable homes or 30% of the total provision. This proportion reflects the fact that part of the site is green field land which carries a higher affordable requirement than previously developed land. With a reduced total target of dwellings, the affordable component must also come down. The Council proposes "at least 12 affordable homes", but this would represent 30% of a development of 40 dwellings. For a development of 35 dwellings the appropriate figure would be 10. Paragraph 7.37 of the Local Plan explains that

the target for affordable homes will be reviewed at the time a planning application is made, taking into account both the extent of need and the opportunities for meeting the need on other sites.

- 12.106 I see no reason to delete the affordable component on the grounds that the site lies on the edge of a town away from essential services. The site is suitable for residential development in general, according to the criteria in paras 30 and 31 of PPG3. It follows therefore that it is suitable for affordable housing.
- 12.107 Following demolition of the former nursing home, the Council accepts that Criterion B): retention of the historic building and its features: and the final sentence of paragraph 12.47A should be deleted.
- 12.108 Some objectors were worried about the open space element of the scheme not being properly managed and leading to anti-social behaviour. The Code of Practice on open space provision requires payments to be made for the future maintenance of open space. Any such open space should be designed carefully to ensure safety and reduce any opportunities for crime. Other objectors voiced concerns about potential crime problems arising from footpath and cycle links to neighbouring residential areas. The Council believes that the provision and enhancement of pedestrian and cycle links through the site need not create any security risks if the development is designed in accordance with Policy DVS1.
- 12.109 The design principles set out in paragraph 4.4 indicate that incorporation in housing schemes of natural surveillance, defensible private spaces and well-lit routes clear of hiding places will help to reduce the opportunities for crime. The Council is nevertheless prepared to modify Criterion E) to allow for alternative options for routes, either for a pedestrian link between Landkey Road and Rumsam Gardens/Cherry Grove, or an enhanced pedestrian/cycle link between Landkey Road and Rumsam Gardens. Either would be acceptable in my view.
- 12.110 Objections concerning the lack of spare capacity in the primary school are met by Criterion G), which requires contributions towards providing additional school places in accordance with the education code of practice.
- 12.111 The last issue concerns the requirement for a development brief. The site is not particularly large or complex in nature. Much has already been agreed between the Council and the developers, such as access to the site, noise attenuation, and tree protection. It is doubtful if a development brief can be justified.

Recommendation 12.24

I recommend the Local Plan be modified by:

1) Re-wording Proposal BAR11 as follows:

ST JOSEPHS NURSING HOME, LANDKEY ROAD (BAR11)

A) *About 35 dwellings at a net density of 35 units or more per hectare, and including at least 10 affordable homes;*

B) **deleted**

C) and D) **as Revised Deposit Plan**

E) *The provision of new or enhanced pedestrian and cycle links between Rumsam Gardens and Landkey Road;*

F) **deleted**

G) **as Revised Deposit Plan**

2) The final sentence of paragraph 12.47A being deleted.

3) The dividing line between housing and open space being deleted on IM1/4RD.

Other Housing Options on Previously Developed Sites

Table 12 - Previously Developed Sites in Barnstaple

Objection 421/1621/F

M Baker (Property Services) Ltd

Issue:

- Viability of listed sites.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.112 The sites included in Table 12 are sites in Barnstaple which could be redeveloped for housing subject to the relocation of their present uses. They are not included within the housing figures and would be treated as windfall sites should they come forward for redevelopment. The Council considers that listing these potential sites provides clarification and guidance to potential developers which will help to bring them forward, thus maximising the amount of previously developed land that will be built upon. The objector does not see any reason to include the sites, since they are unlikely to come forward for redevelopment during the Plan period.

12.113 Whilst I was given plenty of evidence about the likelihood of the sites either coming forward or not coming forward during the period of the Local Plan, much of it was conflicting and I was unable to come to a clear view on any of the sites. In that the sites are not relied upon by the Council, their presence in Table 12 does no harm, and may as the Council claim, bring to the attention of a potential developer the existence of a previously developed site where the Council would be happy to see housing. In that sense, I can see some limited value in the table.

Recommendation 12.25

I recommend no change to Table 12.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green Field Land)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>380/1363/F</i>	<i>B I Down</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>106/195/FD</i>	<i>F M Colley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>101/188/FD</i>	<i>Mr E Meli</i>

Issues:

- The availability of alternative previously developed sites.
- The lack of adequate infrastructure.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.114 Mr Meli and FM Colley object to Proposal BAR2 on the grounds of loss of green field sites and trees, and that there are plenty of brown field sites available. The First Deposit Plan identified some green field sites to make up the shortfall between the discounted capacity available on previously developed land and the identified strategic housing requirements.
- 12.115 The urban capacity study was updated as part of the preparation of the Revised Deposit Plan, and identified a greater capacity on previously developed sites, which meant that much of the green field allocation in the earlier Plan (BAR2a: Larkbear) could be deleted. The two other green field sites are both within the urban area and would not extend development into the countryside. The site at Roundswell has planning permission and development is under construction. The other site, at St Georges Road, is only large enough to accommodate 10 dwellings.
- 12.116 BI Down objects to Proposal BAR2 on the grounds that traffic congestion in Barnstaple is getting worse, and the new bridge will not be able to cope with increased traffic when the proposed houses are built. The roads, schools, health and social services are already inadequate and no houses should be built until adequate infrastructure is in place.
- 12.117 The removal of Larkbear from the Local Plan has reduced considerably the number of new houses on green field sites in the town. The point about infrastructure however applies as much to housing being built on previously developed sites. The question of infrastructure is addressed by the Local Plan at paragraphs 3.46 to 3.48. The provision of necessary physical and social infrastructure, required as a result of new development will be assessed in accordance with the various codes of practice relating to affordable housing, education, public open space, sport and recreation. The use of these codes will ensure the appropriate phasing of infrastructure provided by new developments.

Recommendation 12.26

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Greenfield Land)

Objection 119/221/FD

Mrs F M Lane

Issue:

- Whether land at Pillmere should be proposed for residential development

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.118 The promoted site lies to the north of Pill Lane and west of the site for the second phase of the park and ride scheme (Proposal BAR17). It extends to 1.16 hectares, which could accommodate about 40 dwellings at a density of 35 dwellings to the hectare. However, there is no need for an additional green field site to meet the strategic housing requirements of the district.
- 12.119 There are two listed buildings nearby, and the open land of this field provides part of the setting for them. It is also open countryside that forms part of the open land separating Barnstaple from Bishops Tawton. Its development would affect the setting of the listed buildings and erode the openness. Access to the site would not be easy to achieve, as the response from Devon County Council makes clear (Appendix 4 to LPA/Pillmere/338). Access could only be achieved from the private road to Park School and across the bus turning loop for the park and ride site. Part of the site lies within the indicative flood plain, and any development would require a flood risk assessment. This part of the field could remain un-built on however.
- 12.120 If it proved necessary to look at small open fields on the edge of Barnstaple as a way of accommodating significant growth without major incursions into open countryside, then this site might be worth considering. As it stands however, given my conclusions elsewhere that Barnstaple does not need significant green field developments, the site can be discounted as a possibility.

Recommendation 12.27

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Greenfield Land: Portmore)

Objection 456/1749/F

Evata

Issues:

- Whether there is a need for additional housing provision for Barnstaple for the Local Plan period 2003-2011.
- If a case is proven for additional housing land, is this green field site the most appropriate location for such provision.
- Whether this site constitutes a logical extension to the urban development pattern of Barnstaple as

part of a sustainable pattern of development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.121 This objection promotes land to the east of the A39, and between the Landkey Road and the A361 North Devon Link Road for residential development. It is seen as the second phase of the “Fairacre” development, which effectively brings the urban edge up to the A39. The scheme is referred to as the Landkey Road site and the Portmore scheme, after the adjacent Portmore Farm, now a golf centre.
- 12.122 The first issue to be considered under this objection is the need for additional green field housing in Barnstaple. I have found elsewhere in my report (Chapter 7: paragraphs 7.10 to 7.15), that the amount of previously developed land should be enough to accommodate most of the housing needs of the district to 2011, augmented as necessary with very limited, allocated green field development and some windfall provision. The early signs from planning applications on previously developed sites are that there is a tendency for the estimated capacity of the sites to be exceeded by proposed development. If this proves to be merely a short-term trend, and the supply of previously developed sites starts to dry up, there is the opportunity in the preparation of the local development document to address any projected shortfall that may arise.
- 12.123 Much of the evidence on the Portmore site at Inquiry sought to compare the site with the Larkbear proposal. Whilst this was a reasonable approach to take at First Deposit stage, when Larkbear was the principal green field proposal in the Local Plan, the deletion of the Larkbear scheme at Revised Deposit stage meant that the comparative exercise became somewhat academic. I come to my own conclusions on the Larkbear proposal later, but for now I do not intend to carry out a comparative evaluation of the two sites, since I do not regard either site as being required for development.
- 12.124 The Portmore site itself would function as an urban extension, albeit one that is severed from Fairacre by the A39. Had it been possible to link Portmore more comprehensively with the Fairacre site, using several bridges across the main road, such that car and bus links as well as foot and cycle links would be possible, the sustainability of the site would have been greatly enhanced. As it is, it would have just the single bridge route to the district centre for pedestrians and cycles, which would link well into the route network on the other side of the A39, but on its own would not be sufficient to allow significant integration between the adjacent housing areas. All motor vehicle trips would have to use Landkey Road and either Hollowtree Road or the A39 to get to the district centre. Whilst schools, and other local services, and indeed the town centre would not be a great distance away, all routes to them would have to be via Landkey Road. Effectively the development would form one large cul-de-sac, and the northern end of it would be some distance from the buses that travel along the Landkey Road.
- 12.125 In its favour, the site is not particularly prominent in the landscape, although the development would be seen in the middle ground in views from the A39 Eastern Avenue roundabout, and as a longer distance impact from the Whiddon Valley and higher ground beyond. In such views the development would appear as a logical extension to the existing urban area, notwithstanding the fact that it is on the “wrong” side of the A39 in the Council’s view. Its great merit is that it would not intrude on to any of the higher ground that characterises the landscape of the environs of Barnstaple. The exposed and vulnerable ridges and higher slopes would not be threatened.
- 12.126 Also in its favour is the lack of serious impacts on wildlife and nature conservation that would result from development. Whilst the 1994 Devon Wildlife Trust inventory identified a possible county wildlife site within the site area, this site was not incorporated into the report on the

identification of local nature conservation sites and biodiversity networks in North Devon (CD072). A small woodland on the eastern side of the site (outside of the proposed development area) is included as a key network feature that links with a larger watercourse along the Whiddon Valley. A small block of scrub on the western side of the site is also a key network feature as it forms a stepping stone along the A39. Neither feature would be directly affected by development.

- 12.127 Whilst the site has some redeeming features, its lack of integration with the adjacent development is a serious drawback in sustainability terms. Even if a shortfall of housing land was to be identified in the medium term, I would not regard the Portmore scheme as currently promoted to be a contender.

Recommendation 12.28

I recommend that land at Portmore is not allocated for residential development in the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Green field Land

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green field Land)

Land north of Roborough Road

Objection 226/748/FD

Mr M T Westaway

Issue:

- Whether land north of Roborough Road should be proposed for residential development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.128 The site being promoted for residential development includes three fields to the north of Roborough Road, stretching as far east as the hamlet known as Roborough. If developed for housing the site could accommodate about 270 dwellings at 35 to the hectare, or some 200 dwellings on the basis of a net developable area of 75%. There is however no need for a green field development of this size in Barnstaple.
- 12.129 The response from the County Council indicates that Roborough Road would require major improvements to gain access to this site. The objectors suggest a new access direct from the main road, which would appear to be more feasible.
- 12.130 Whilst the lower parts of the site benefit from the screening effects of nearby trees, much of the higher parts would be relatively exposed in the wider landscape. The site is not therefore suitable for consideration as a possible urban extension, should the need for such green field development arise in the future.

Recommendation 12.29

I recommend that land north of Roborough Road is not allocated for residential development in the

Local Plan.

**Barnstaple Action Plan:
Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green Field Land)
Land at Chipmunk Walk**

Objection 23/33/FD

R C Jefferies

Issue:

- Whether land at Chipmunk Walk should be proposed for residential development

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.131 Chipmunk Walk is situated to the south of properties in Kings Road, and on the eastern side of Barnstaple Cemetery in the middle of the Gorwell Estate. There is a large area of public open space through the centre of the estate which serves the surrounding residential properties. The land slopes steeply and is not suited for active sports pitches, but serves as an area of informal open space.
- 12.132 Mr Jefferies has not indicated the precise boundary of the area that he is proposing for residential development, although he suggests that around 50 houses could be built on the land. There is no need for a site for 50 houses however. The land provides a very pleasant area of green open space with attractive trees and grass. To use it for housing would be to deprive the surrounding housing areas of a very pleasant open space.

Recommendation 12.30

I recommend that land at Chipmunk Way is not allocated for residential development in the Local Plan.

**Barnstaple Action Plan:
Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Greenfield Land)
Land at Waytown**

Objection 422/1625/F

Prowting Projects Ltd

Objection 314/1216/F

Trevor Cox

Objection 313/1214/F

Wendy Cox

Objection 161/340/FD

Mr V G Lacey

Objection 202/580/FD

Mr & Mrs M G Loder

Objection 328/1265/F

Mr K W J Bishop

Issue:

- Whether land at Waytown should be proposed for residential development.
- Whether land east of Whiddon Valley should be proposed for residential development.
- Whether land north and west of Whiddon Valley should be proposed for residential development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.133 Waytown is situated to the east of Barnstaple, to the north of Maidenford Hill and south of Goodleigh Road. The site is identified on Inset Map 1 as part of an area of community woodland under Proposal BAR9. Objections from Mr and Mrs Cox promote three fields between Goodleigh Road and the lane from Crookman's Corner for housing. This site covers 7.9 hectares which could accommodate about 276 dwellings.
- 12.134 The Prowting Projects site includes all of the first site, together with additional land to the east which slopes down to the Coney Gut and the northern end of the Whiddon Valley. This site covers some 11 hectares, which could accommodate about 385 dwellings.
- 12.135 The Council considers both sites to be poorly related to the built-up area of Barnstaple, and development of them would constitute in its view an undesirable and unnecessary consolidation of sporadic development in the countryside, rather than extending the town.
- 12.136 In many ways the objection sites have a parallel in the Forches and Whiddon Valley estates, which lap around the southern and eastern lower slopes of Maidenford Hill. If an extension to Barnstaple was needed, one which consolidated the ribbon development on the Goodleigh Road, or extended the Whiddon Valley in the Maidenford area might be considered to be reasonably organic forms of growth to the existing built-up area. No such urban extension is required however, and the local impacts of building development on this very pleasant part of the Barnstaple countryside would be unfortunate.
- 12.137 Objections from Mr Lacey and Mr and Mrs Loder proposed land at Whiddon Valley for additional residential development as an alternative to land at Larkbear. The land to the east of Whiddon Valley is open countryside, and the line of the Westacott Lane forms a natural boundary to existing development. Any encroachment to the east of this line would be highly damaging to the setting of Barnstaple, being visible from elevated points to the south such as Coddan Hill. In addition there are key network features and a county wildlife site just east of Whiddon Valley, both of which would be affected by development on the promoted sites. There are also two listed buildings at Westacott Farm, the setting of which would inevitably be adversely affected by closely associated development.
- 12.138 Two separate objections are promoting land to the north and west of Whiddon Valley. The site being promoted by Mr Lacey covers some 32 hectares over the eastern end of Maidenford Hill. The site being promoted by Mr and Mrs Loder covers the whole of Maidenford Hill with an area of some 46 hectares. Maidenford hill is a striking physical feature in the landscape surrounding Barnstaple. It has already been nibbled at by development along its southern flanks and to a lesser extent its north western and south eastern flanks as well. If development was to cover the hill, it would be possible to accommodate about 1040 dwellings, or 730 dwellings for the smaller site. There is no need however for green field housing land to be made available to take this level of development in Barnstaple. Maidenford Hill is an important landscape feature which should be kept free from development. It is in any event proposed in the Local Plan as a

community open space and forest.

Recommendation 12.31

I recommend that land at Waytown, land east of Whiddon Valley, and land north and west of Whiddon Valley should not be allocated for residential development in the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Greenfield Land)

Land at Westacott

Objection 421/1619/F

M Baker (Property Services) Ltd

Objection 393/1457/F

Mrs V Hardy

Issues:

- Whether there is a need for a major, planned urban extension of Barnstaple.
- Whether land east of Barnstaple, at Westacott, represents the most suitable location and constitutes a logical extension to the town.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.139 As with the Portmore proposal above (paragraphs 12.120 to 12.126) the first issue to be considered under this objection is the need for additional green field housing in Barnstaple. I have found elsewhere in my report (Chapter 7 paragraphs 7.10 to 7.15), that the amount of previously developed land should be enough to accommodate most of the housing needs of the district to 2011, augmented as necessary with very limited, allocated green field and windfall provision. The early signs from planning applications on previously developed sites are that there is a tendency for the estimated capacity of the sites to be exceeded by proposed development. If this trend continues there will be over-provision of housing in the Plan period. If it proves to be merely a short-term trend, and the rate of development on previously developed sites starts slow down, there is the opportunity in the preparation of the local development document to address any projected shortfall that may arise.
- 12.140 Either way I do not anticipate a need for a significant urban expansion for Barnstaple, whether on the Larkbear site as originally intended, or on the Portmore or Westacott sites to the east.
- 12.141 Much of the evidence on the Westacott site at Inquiry sought to compare the site with the Larkbear proposal. Whilst this was a reasonable approach to take at First Deposit stage, when Larkbear was the principal green field proposal in the Local Plan, the deletion of the Larkbear scheme at Revised Deposit stage meant that the comparative exercise became somewhat academic. I come to my own conclusions on the Larkbear proposal later, but for now I do not intend to carry out a comparative evaluation of the two sites, since I do not regard either site as being required for development.
- 12.142 I acknowledge that the Westacott site was one of the possible areas for expansion canvassed by

the Council in its Issues and Options Report. The scheme presented to the Inquiry was significantly larger than the Issues and Options development however. I also acknowledge that the present scheme is an urban extension of mixed development as envisaged in PPG3, offering housing, industrial development, playing fields, a primary school, retail and community facilities and a park and ride scheme. At a minimum density of 30 dwellings to the hectare, it would provide 912 dwellings. At maximum density of 50, the figure would be 1520. As well as park and ride, the scheme would provide the first stage of a possible eastern by-pass for Barnstaple, and could relieve some of the congestion at the Tesco roundabout.

- 12.143 If a major urban extension was to be required, I accept that the Westacott scheme has much to offer in terms of relative self-sufficiency that comes from having a mixed uses community. It would however, have major impacts on the landscape of the Landkey Valley. From any of the many viewpoints on rising ground to the south, from Landkey Road, the golf course, from Venn Road and from Codden Hill, the development would impose itself into an open and extremely pleasant green landscape in much the same way as the existing Forches and Whiddon Valley estates have done already. The effect upon the view of Acland Barton from the Landkey Road would be devastating. On the other hand, the view from the North Devon Link Road would not be seriously affected, because of the screening effect of the wooded copse which borders the road to the north. Being largely broadleaved however, this woodland would be less effective in the winter months. Extensive landscape planting within the development, and careful design to create clusters of built-form separated by green wedges could reduce the harshness of the urban intrusion, but in my estimation it would not overcome it.
- 12.144 To some extent such intrusion is unavoidable if a major urban extension is to be accommodated anywhere around Barnstaple. I do not however take the view that such development outside the existing urban boundary would be contrary to PPS7. Paragraph 30 of PPG3 is clear that urban extensions, which must by definition involve using up countryside, are legitimate targets in the search sequence.

Recommendation 12.32

I recommend that land at Westacott is not allocated for housing in the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Green Field Land

Paragraphs 12.51 to 12.54

Proposal BAR2a: Larkbear

<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/1529/FD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2161/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2163/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2164/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>229/750/FD</i>	<i>B Langley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2165/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2168/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>104/192/FD</i>	<i>A Gamble</i>

<i>Objection</i>	<i>388/1413/FD</i>	<i>A R Littlejohn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>349/1311/FD</i>	<i>Alan Smith</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>27/37/FD</i>	<i>Ann Edwards</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>122/226/FD</i>	<i>B F Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>382/1365/FD</i>	<i>Chris Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>112/208/FD</i>	<i>D Evans</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>112/607/FD</i>	<i>D Evans</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>112/204/FD</i>	<i>D Evans</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>28/38/FD</i>	<i>D Roulstone</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/643/FD</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>276/991/FD</i>	<i>Devon Wildlife Trust</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>228/749/FD</i>	<i>E Quick</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>114/213/FD</i>	<i>Elizabeth Twining</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/353/FD</i>	<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>135/243/FD</i>	<i>Environmental Protection Group South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>106/196/FD</i>	<i>F M Colley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>497/1875/FD</i>	<i>Fremington Parish Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>121/224/FD</i>	<i>G E Kempton</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>265/949/FD</i>	<i>G R Walker</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>389/1426/FD</i>	<i>Highways Agency</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>335/1285/FD</i>	<i>Ian Smallridge</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>99/184/FD</i>	<i>J A and J M Dove</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>31/41/FD</i>	<i>J Roulstone</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>32/42/FD</i>	<i>Jill and Barry Hancock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>257/928/FD</i>	<i>John S Sharples</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>449/1744/FD</i>	<i>L Tanner</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>421/1620/FD</i>	<i>M Baker (Property Services) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>103/190/FD</i>	<i>Miss D C Goodacre</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>216/624/FD</i>	<i>Miss S Kaye</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>202/579/FD</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs M G Loder</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>120/223/FD</i>	<i>Mr A Batchelor</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>275/973/FD</i>	<i>Mr A E Pratt</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>254/917/FD</i>	<i>Mr A Heale</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>39/51/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs B C Clayton</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>212/618/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs H Latham</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>89/164/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs R Harrop</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>266/951/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs T G Bellamy</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>326/1262/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs T Mason</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>55/73/FD</i>	<i>Mr B R Cox</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>183/434/FD</i>	<i>Mr C Symons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>493/2222/RD</i>	<i>Mr D J Williams</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>332/1279/FD</i>	<i>Mr G K and Mrs A L Lofthouse</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>315/1217/FD</i>	<i>Mr K T Endacott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>52/71/FD</i>	<i>Mr K T Saunders</i>

<i>Objection</i>	<i>328/1266/FD</i>	<i>Mr K W J Bishop</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>134/242/FD</i>	<i>Mr M R Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>152/305/FD</i>	<i>Mr M Trainor</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>342/1296/FD</i>	<i>Mr O Jeffery</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>268/955/FD</i>	<i>Mr P A Draper</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>269/957/FD</i>	<i>Mr P Dunn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>246/804/FD</i>	<i>Mr R E Hider</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>105/194/FD</i>	<i>Mr R Harrington</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>26/36/FD</i>	<i>Mr Richard Hampson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>161/337/FD</i>	<i>Mr V G Lacey</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>174/395/FD</i>	<i>Mr W B Hart</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>350/1313/FD</i>	<i>Mrs C Smith</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>189/513/FD</i>	<i>Mrs Cox</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>54/72/FD</i>	<i>Mrs E Hardy</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>253/915/FD</i>	<i>Mrs E Heale</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>464/2346/RD</i>	<i>Mrs E Olliver</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>385/1403/FD</i>	<i>Mrs E Thompson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>316/1218/FD</i>	<i>Mrs G Endacott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>123/228/FD</i>	<i>Mrs G M E Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>166/346/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J E Towns</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>387/1409/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J Littlejohn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>340/1291/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J Manning</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>151/303/FD</i>	<i>Mrs L Tancock</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>214/621/FD</i>	<i>Mrs M Cooper</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>490/1856/FD</i>	<i>Mrs M P Dyer</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>188/512/FD</i>	<i>Mrs M Symons</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>162/341/FD</i>	<i>Mrs P E Lacey</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>255/920/FD</i>	<i>Mrs P Walker</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>270/958/FD</i>	<i>Mrs R E Dunn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>341/1292/FD</i>	<i>Mrs S K Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>393/1456/FD</i>	<i>Mrs V Hardy</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>378/1351/FD</i>	<i>Mrs Y Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>213/619/FD</i>	<i>Ms P Brain</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>116/215/FD</i>	<i>N A Brice</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/885/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>381/1364/FD</i>	<i>R A Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>74/108/FD</i>	<i>R B Blatchford</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>264/948/FD</i>	<i>R Pettifer</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>320/1230/FD</i>	<i>Rev John and Mrs Ruth Carvosso</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>87/159/FD</i>	<i>S C Colley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>179/400/FD</i>	<i>S Harwood</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>91/168/FD</i>	<i>S J Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>91/256/FD</i>	<i>S J Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>115/214/FD</i>	<i>S Twining</i>

Objection 98/183/FD Sue Coleman
 Objection 280/1018/FD Tawstock Parish Council
 Objection 314/1215/FD Trevor Cox
 Objection 313/1213/FD Wendy Cox

Issue:

- Whether the proposed urban expansion at Larkbear should be reinstated.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.145 Most of the objections listed above were to the inclusion of the Larkbear proposal in the First Deposit Plan. The objections included concern about loss of green fields, loss of important wildlife habitat, loss of good agricultural land, additional traffic to gridlock the western bypass and cancel out any advantages from the new bridge, as well as lack of capacity in existing schools and hospitals. Residents of Lake Village and others were worried about the impacts on the village, loss of privacy and loss of conservation area values. There was also concern about the poor drainage of the site and consequential flooding risk. The Larkbear Consortium objected to the density prescribed in BAR2a, to the number of affordable homes, to the proposed community facilities, the scale of the community woodland, the contributions towards primary and secondary school places, the sustainable drainage proposals and various sustainable travel measures.
- 12.146 The Council responded by deleting the proposal from the Revised Deposit Plan, giving the justification that the site was no longer required during the Plan period to meet strategic housing requirements, as a result of increased capacity on previously developed sites following a review of the urban capacity study. The Larkbear Consortium objected to this deletion on the grounds that it would forego 210 affordable homes, education provisions, sustainable transport choices and the coherent integration of a range of strategies, namely the further development of the town centre, the regeneration of Anchorwood Bank, environmental and other improvements at Seven Brethren, the Roundswell strategic employment site and the sustainable transport strategy.
- 12.147 As to whether the Council's decision to delete Larkbear was a correct one, I have found elsewhere in my report (Chapter 7 paragraphs 7.10 to 7.15), that the amount of previously developed land allocated in the Local Plan should be enough to accommodate most of the housing needs of the district to 2011, augmented as necessary with very limited, allocated green field and windfall provision. The early signs from planning applications on previously developed sites are that there is a tendency for the estimated capacity of the sites to be exceeded by proposed development. If this trend continues there will be over-provision of housing in the Local Plan period. If it proves to be merely a short-term trend, and the rate of development on previously developed sites starts to slow down, there is the opportunity in the preparation of the local development document to address any projected shortfall that may arise. Either way I do not anticipate a need for a significant urban expansion for Barnstaple, whether on the Larkbear site as originally intended, or on the Portmore or Westacott sites to the east.
- 12.148 Development on the Larkbear site would have major landscape implications. While much of the site is reasonably low lying, the fields which lie on the slopes behind the row of bungalows on Andrew Road are extremely prominent in the landscape of the Taw Valley. Viewed from the Lake to Tawstock Road the existing development on Philip Avenue, Andrew Road and Elizabeth Drive appears to go over the skyline of the hill, defying the well-established local principle of building up to but not over significant hills. Developing the sloping fields of the Larkbear scheme would double the impact that this part of Barnstaple already exerts on the

landscape.

- 12.149 The objectors claim that the inclusion of the Larkbear allocation will make a significant contribution to the requirement for affordable housing. This is indeed the case, but affordable housing is to be required from all significant new housing schemes, to achieve the Council's target of 150 affordable dwellings each year. Although Larkbear would provide two years' supply on the one site, this is not a justification for allowing a scheme which is otherwise harmful.
- 12.150 With regard to the role of Barnstaple as a sub-regional centre, an allocation of an additional 1000 houses within a mile or so of the centre would be expected to help to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. It is not clear however that the deletion of the allocation would cause harm to the town centre. The centre appears to be a thriving commercial centre in a town which is to receive about 50% of the anticipated provision arising from housing allocations in the Local Plan. Whilst the town centre undoubtedly needs careful planning with regard to its redevelopment areas, particularly in achieving the right balance between residential and commercial uses and short-term parking, a reduction in activity due to there being no Larkbear must be regarded as unlikely.
- 12.151 Much was made at Inquiry of the sustainable transport benefits that the scheme would bring. There would certainly be some advantages that would assist the difficulties of moving east-west to and from Barnstaple. However important such measures were thought to be when the Larkbear scheme was in the Local Plan, it was demonstrated convincingly at Inquiry that the principle beneficiaries of the transport proposals would be the residents of the Larkbear development itself, and that to remove them would have no more than a marginal effect on the accessibility of other residential areas west of the Taw.
- 12.152 The objectors argued that the Council's latest scheme for the Herton Technology Park was a mere pipedream. The idea does seem to have emerged rather late in the day but may be none the worse for that. If it can be used to deliver some of the sustainable transport measures that would otherwise have come through the Larkbear scheme, then that will be a bonus. As the objectors pointed out however, a further education college does not seem to be the most fertile ground on which to plant a technology park.
- 12.153 The issue of conformity occupied a good deal of time at the Inquiry. In considering whether it is appropriate to extend the life of the Local Plan to 2016, to accord with the adopted Structure Plan, it is the view of the Council that no duly made objections have been made to the Local Plan in terms of the period covered. The purpose of the Local Plan inquiry is to consider duly made objections to the Plan. In any event there was no evidence that the County Council would not accept the Local Plan because it did not cover exactly the same time period as the now adopted Structure Plan.

Recommendation 12.33

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

**Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green field Land)
Land North of Lower Cross Road**

Objection 445/1691/F

Messrs Evans, Hobbs and Tucker

Issues:

- Whether land north of Lower Cross Road should be included within the development boundary.
- Whether there is a need for top of the range executive housing.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.154 This objection seeks the inclusion of 7.2 hectares of agricultural land within the development boundary of Bickington on Inset Map 2.
- 12.155 Part of the justification for the proposal is the claimed lack of top of the range housing in the Barnstaple area. Recent developments at Georgeham and in Newport show the demand for higher quality, lower density housing. Whilst Larkbear could have accommodated some such housing, its deletion from the Local Plan leaves a significant hiatus. The proposed land could accommodate a mixed scheme with some affordable dwellings and some at the other end of the range, perhaps £1m plus. Access could be from Lower Cross Road, with the removal of two existing houses.
- 12.156 I conclude elsewhere that there is no need to allocate additional green field land to meet the housing needs of the area. If a case is made for low density housing, to raise the profile of the Barnstaple area and attract higher paid executives to live in the area, this would not be an ideal site for such a scheme. The land forms part of a ridge with the estuary on one side and Bickington village on the other. Development would be prominent from the Tarka Trail, from across the estuary and from the A39 near Rookabear.
- 12.157 The land is good agricultural land, classified as Grade 2 and 3a, and its development would conflict with Policy ENV7 which seeks to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land. Whilst the value of the land for farming might be compromised by the difficult access and the proximity of residential development, this is a difficulty faced generally by farmers in the urban fringe and cannot be a justification for allowing development on otherwise unsuitable sites.

Recommendation 12.34

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

**Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green Field Land)
Land south of Old Bideford Road.**

Objection 448/1705/F

Messrs D J and R M Easterbrook

Issue:

- Whether land South of Old Bideford Road should be identified for housing.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.158 The site being proposed for residential development covers 4.6 hectares at the western end of Roundswell Business Park. It is identified by Proposal BAR3 for future employment development. The land is occupied by the objector who runs an agricultural engineering business.
- 12.159 Policy ST19 of the adopted Structure Plan specifies that a strategic development site for employment should be identified at Roundswell, and safeguarded for major investment proposals. Existing employment land is therefore of strategic importance to the County as a whole. Roundswell is well-located in relation to the strategic road network, allowing access by lorry without the need to travel through Barnstaple.
- 12.160 The development of the Roundswell area has followed the principle that housing would be situated north of the Old Bideford Road, with employment uses to the south of the road. The objectors seek an allocation that would allow for a mixed-use of the western part of the allocated site, for housing and employment uses. I see no justification for this proposal. There is every sign that the area of allocated land will be needed during the Plan period for strategic industrial uses, including the relocation of the Leaderflush and Shapland business. The land occupied at present by the agricultural engineering business is likely to be needed as part of this strategic site.
- 12.161 The Council has indicated that it would be in favour of the business moving westwards, to adjoining fields between the Old Bideford Road and the A39. Whilst this would be a new use for a green field site, it would be justified by the removal of an unsuitable activity from a strategic industrial site. To introduce housing into the strategic site would reduce its benefit for industry and compromise the extent to which normal industrial activities could take place.
- 12.162 My attention has been drawn to a difficulty presented by a ransom strip owned by Devon County Council. The District Council has indicated that it will continue to assist in negotiations with DCC regarding the abandonment of this ransom stance. The District Council does not have the powers to require DCC to take the roads up to the boundaries to avoid the ransom situation, as it is not the deciding authority on the existing employment land. Should the negotiations fail, I see no reason why the agricultural engineering business should not continue to have access to Old Bideford Road from its relocated site.

Recommendation 12.35

I recommend that land south of Old Bideford Road is not allocated for housing in the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan:

Proposal BAR2 (Residential Development on Green field Land)

Land west of Tews Lane.

Issue:

- Whether land west of Tews Lane should be proposed for residential development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.163 The site being proposed for residential development covers some 9 hectares of agricultural land. Tews Lane forms a strong boundary to the western edge of the Roundswell residential area. Despite this, the objectors argue that the land forms the next logical urban extension, being well-located in relation to public transport and existing facilities.
- 12.164 In terms of need, there is no need for a green field site of this size to be developed to meet the housing requirements of the Local Plan. My findings in Chapter 7 are that there are enough previously developed sites available to meet the bulk of the requirements, augmented by a small number of green field allocations and supported by windfall sites. There is therefore no justification for allocating this green field site.

Recommendation 12.36

I recommend that land west of Tews Lane is not allocated for housing in the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Proposal BAR3 (Employment Land)

Roundswell Strategic Employment Site

<i>Objection</i>	<i>404/1501/F</i>	<i>C H Brannam Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>448/1704/F</i>	<i>Messrs D J and R M Easterbrook</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2484/R</i>	<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>389/1428/F</i>	<i>Highways Agency</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>225/706/FD</i>	<i>Government Office for the South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>389/1429/F</i>	<i>Highways Agency</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>257/930/FD</i>	<i>John S Sharples</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>448/1706/F</i>	<i>Messrs D J and R M Easterbrook</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>71/2223/RD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs G C F Smale</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>493/2221/R</i>	<i>Mr D J Williams</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>464/2345/R</i>	<i>Mrs E Olliver</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>634/2228/R</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>168/2483/R</i>	<i>Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd</i>

Issues:

- Contributions towards enhancement of open space.
- Proposed alternative use of employment land for residential development.
- Proposed additional employment sites.

- Access and traffic generation.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.165 Employment in Barnstaple is concentrated at Roundswell, the Whiddon Valley and Pottington, with other significant estates located at Seven Brethren, Coney Gut, Derby Road, Barbican Road and Aviemore. Most of the existing estates have some capacity for additional employment uses. To meet Structure Plan requirements and provide alternative sites for firms seeking to re-locate from other parts of the town, a significant amount of employment land is proposed at Roundswell.
- 12.166 There were objections at First Deposit stage to Criterion D), on the grounds that contributions to the enhancement of recreational open space west of Tews Lane may be unreasonable. The Council has accepted these objections and removed the criterion. The relevant reference in paragraph 12.61 now contains a reference to the code of practice, which aids clarity. The Council would still intend to require contributions towards public open space provision from employment development, but would assess these at the time of the planning application.
- 12.167 One objector proposes an alternative use of employment land for residential development. The land in question is the western end of the BAR3 site, occupied at present by an agricultural engineering business. I deal with this proposal in paragraph 12.157 above.
- 12.168 Two separate objections promote additional sites for employment land at Roundswell. Land west of Old Torrington Road, promoted by C H Brannan was included as an extension to BAR3 in the Revised Deposit (IM2/2RD). The allocated area allows for a reasonable buffer zone of land around the dwelling "Sanmar", which partially meets the objection of Mr and Mrs Smale. The other part of their objection concerned the access to this land which they wanted to be off Old Torrington Road. The Local Plan leaves the latter as a possibility, since access via Gratton Way could come along either Oakwood Close or Old Torrington Road.
- 12.169 The other site being promoted is land south of Old Bideford Road. This land is immediately to the west of the existing employment site at Roundswell. Although the Council states that it does not wish to see the land allocated for employment development as it is west of the Tews Lane line, it indicated at Inquiry that it would be prepared to agree to a relocation of the existing agricultural engineering business from the allocated area to this site which it adjoins. If such a proposal comes forward, it could be dealt with under Policy ECN3, and would not require an allocation of employment land as such.
- 12.170 The Revised Deposit Plan identified additional employment land to the east of Old Torrington Road, formerly proposed for residential as part of the Larkbear proposal. There are several counter objections to this change. The objection from Friends of the Earth indicates that the area is populated by dormice. Dormice are a protected species and occupy the woodlands in the Larkbear plantation to the south of the A39. The new allocation would not harm any existing woodland, but the text in paragraph 12.59 refers to a modest extension into the Larkbear plantation, that could be allowed "exceptionally" to meet the operational needs of a business. Given that the woodland concerned, which lies immediately to the east of the additional employment land is a key network feature in the biodiversity network (CD072) the statement in 12.59 seems wholly inappropriate. In my view it should be removed.
- 12.171 Three objectors are broadly supportive of the principle of a new employment allocation if a need is justified. The addition of the two sites either side of Old Torrington Road to the employment land portfolio brings the total allocation to 75 hectares, 5 more than is required by the Structure

Plan. This additional provision is considered necessary to make up for the loss of land occasioned by the various businesses in Barnstaple that will be relocating to Roundswell, freeing their sites for housing and/or retail uses. Whilst the re-allocation is needed, there is also a need to ensure that the residential amenities of the house “Brynhyfryd” are protected from noise and other intrusion. I have considered whether residential amenities could best be protected by allocating a part of the site for residential use, as suggested in the representation from Pearce Construction. I have concluded that the need to safeguard land for major investment proposals, as set out in the Structure Plan (Proposal ST19) means that greater weight must be given to employment uses over residential, where the amount of previously developed sites appears sufficient to accommodate the need. If the site is to be used for employment, a 5m buffer zone of thick planting should be erected around the property to protect its amenity.

- 12.172 Pearce Construction raised objection to the access restrictions in Criterion B). The purpose of these restrictions is to prevent traffic generated by the employment uses from penetrating the residential area along Old Torrington Road, which already suffers congestion at the roundabout at the top of Sticklepath Hill. Restricting traffic to Gratton Way seems very sensible.
- 12.173 The Highways Agency is concerned about the traffic impacts of Roundswell allocations. They call for the Council to take a lead in the assessment of traffic impacts to avoid a piecemeal approach to traffic assessment. The Council point out that the scale of employment allocations at Roundswell reflects those contained in the adopted Local Plan and the strategic requirements contained in the Structure Plan. Given this position, it appears that the die is cast and traffic will have to be accommodated, or managed as a consequence.

Recommendation 12.37

I recommend that the Local Plan is modified by:

- A) deleting the last 8 lines of Paragraph 12.59;**
- B) add to Criterion A) of BAR3:- and a 5m landscaped buffer is provided around “Brynhyfryd” on Old Torrington Road.**

Barnstaple Action Plan: Residential Development on Green Field Land Proposal BAR2b - Roundswell

<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/664/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/354/FD</i>		<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>53/70/FD</i>		<i>Glenn Bengel</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>389/1427/F</i>		<i>Highways Agency</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>257/929/FD</i>		<i>John S Sharples</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>101/187/FD</i>		<i>Mr E Meli</i>

Issues:

- Vehicular access to the site.
- Traffic generation.
- The lack of adequate infrastructure.
- Flood risk impact.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.174 The allocation BAR 2b was the last remaining piece of the Roundswell residential area to be developed. Planning permission was granted for 111 dwellings in August 2003 and development has commenced on site. This action takes the allocation out of the Local Plan and away from my consideration.

Recommendation 12.38

I recommend that the Local Plan is modified by deleting Proposal BAR 2b from the Local Plan, along with paragraph 12.55 and the site identified as BAR 2b on Inset Map 2.

Barnstaple Action Plan; Residential Development on Green Field Land

Proposal BAR2c - St Georges Road

Objection 167/355/FD

Environment Protection Group SW

Issue:

- Flood storage and flood prevention.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.175 The policies and proposals in the Local Plan have been subject to extensive consultation with the Environment Agency, who raised no objection to Proposal BAR2c. Proposals for updating flood prevention schemes should be determined by the agency through their programme of works rather than through the Local Plan.
- 12.176 The requirement for sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) set out in paragraph 12.13 is in accordance with advice in PPG25. Where SUDS are considered to be appropriate as part of a new development, a planning condition or obligation will be used to ensure that these systems are managed and maintained properly.
- 12.177 PPG25 indicates that flood defences for most new housing developments should be designed and constructed to protect against flooding with an annual probability of 1% for river flooding. Measures to protect against flooding can reasonably be required for new development in order to enable it to proceed and overcome the constraints identified. It would not be appropriate to require rates of protection higher than those set out in PPG25, or to delete any previously developed site where adequate flood protection has been provided.

Recommendation 12.39

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Policy BAR3A - Herton Technology Park

Paragraph 12.61A

Objection	410/2171/R	Larkbear Consortium
Objection	410/2169/R	Larkbear Consortium
Objection	181/431/FD	CPRE

Issues:

- The need for a technology park.
- The suitability and availability of land at Herton.
- Impact on Roundswell strategic employment site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.178 The need for a technology park is predicated upon the recommendations in *2020 Vision: A Strategy for Sustainable Economic Regeneration in North West Devon*. The strategy encourages the focusing of effort on supporting and promoting the endemic small to medium enterprises, rather than trying to attract inward investment from large organisations relocating or outsourcing operations from outside the region. In focusing on the SME sector, it is desirable that new “sunrise” industries are encouraged, including environmental technologies, eco-tourism, high-tech and IT. Much of the activity that would flow from this strategy would be in the industrial premises of the district, but the Council would also like to see the establishment of a centre for technology and business incubation. It sees the land between the college and the western bypass as the best site for such a development.
- 12.179 The Council calls Herton Technology Park a policy rather than a proposal, because of the strong element of uncertainty that pervades the idea. It cannot be a policy however. It is not something that is to be applied in order to test other proposals. It is clearly a proposal in its own right, however vague. The fact that it would be using land that otherwise might be involved in a re-borne Larkbear scheme is not a good reason for dropping the idea. Larkbear no longer exists as a proposal for housing development. Should it be revived in any shape or form in the local development framework, I would not expect any of the fields on the hillside to be part of any scheme, including the land identified under this proposal.
- 12.180 The land has not been included within the strategic employment land requirements set out in Table 9. Should it become established it could well attract some B1 activities that might otherwise have gone to Roundswell. This is likely to be insignificant in terms of the range and quantity of activity in use classes B1, B2 and B8 that Roundswell will support. The requirements for a high quality building design and environment would weed out many.

Recommendation 12.40

I recommend the Local Plan is modified by changing Policy BAR3A to Proposal BAR3A .

Barnstaple Action Plan

Town Centre and Retailing

Paragraphs 12.62 and 12.63

Objection 388/1412/F

A R Littlejohn

Objection 249/887/FD

North Devon Friends of the Earth

Issue:

- Car parking provision in the town centre.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.181 Mr Littlejohn's objection is to the omission of a reference to providing adequate car parking facilities in the town centre at a reasonable cost, so as to make the town centre a viable shopping centre. The Council's response is that there is considered to be sufficient existing car parking provision within and accessible to the town centre. Existing car parks at Queen Street / Bear Street, and the former cattle market are proposed for redevelopment, but these proposals require a significant amount of car parking to be provided in any redevelopment scheme.

12.182 The Friends simply point out that the expressed strategy of reversing the trend of food shopping moving away from town centre locations may be undermined by recent policy to decentralise food shopping with the approval of new and greatly expanded free car parking for foodstores and warehouses. The Council faces the traditional dilemma of wanting to provide enough reasonably priced car parking handy to the town centre, without jeopardising the prospects of park and ride schemes in the pipeline. The provision of large amounts of free parking at supermarkets is widely acknowledged to be detrimental to town centre viability, although by removing much car traffic from town centre roads it may contribute to viability by making the shopping environment more tolerable for those who make the effort to go there.

12.183 Neither of these objections require any change to the Local Plan in my view.

Recommendation 12.41

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

**Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Policy BAR5 (Secondary Shopping Areas)**

Objection 287/1101/F *Conditionally Withdrawn* *Barnstaple Town Centre Management*

Issue:

- Use of upper floors in the town centre.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.184 The Council accepts that the First Deposit policy was unnecessarily restrictive. Its intention was not to prevent Use Classes A1, A2 and A3 and D1 on upper floors in the secondary shopping area, but to allow only those uses at ground floor level. The changes to the policy in the Revised Deposit Plan, and the additional sentence in 12.68 now make this clear and the objection is conditionally withdrawn.

Recommendation 12.42

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

**Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Proposal BAR6 (Town Centre Expansion)
Paragraphs 12.70 to 12.78**

<i>Objection</i>	287/1102/F	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	287/2232/R	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	452/1723/F	<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	249/888/FD	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	652/2487/R	<i>Tesco Stores Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	225/707/FD	<i>Government Office for the South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	249/893/FD	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- Clarification of the bulk, scale and mix of development proposed.
- Requirement for a department store.
- Alternative locations for additional retail development.
- Levels of car parking provision.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.185 The Government office made suggestions for changes to the First Deposit version of Proposal BAR6 to clarify the bulk, scale and mix of uses proposed on the Queen Street/Bear Street site. The changes made are supported by GOSW. The second issue raised by GOSW concerns the numbering and criteria in Proposal BAR6. The Council resists making any changes but as it stands the numbering is a little confusing. The presence of the solitary 1) at the top makes it look as though subsequent numbers are missing. This solitary 1) could be deleted, and the three proposals simply numbered 1, 2 and 3, thus allowing their respective criteria to be referred to in a straightforward fashion (1A, 2B etc.).
- 12.186 There is already a department store (Banburys) in the town centre. The reference to a second store was a finding of the retail study and is reported in paragraph 12.70 as a fact. No change is needed therefore.
- 12.187 Tesco Stores object to the changes to paragraph 12.70 on grounds that they do not reflect PPG6 or COM1, as all retail proposals follow a sequential test, not just bulky goods: whether a proposal complements or competes with the town centre is not an issue for the sequential test, unlike impact on town centre vitality and viability. The Council points out that paragraph 12.70 does not indicate that the sequential test applies only to bulky goods. The additional wording is clearly applicable to the special circumstances of a bulky goods outlet being unable to be accommodated in the town centre, in which case a home could be found for it at Anchorwood Bank or Severn Brethren. The Council proposes a small change to move the reference to the sequential test in front of the reference to complementing the town centre. This would help clarity in my view.
- 12.188 The objection by British Telecom promotes the Old Station Road depot as a better site for non-food retailing and indoor leisure uses. I consider this suggestion under Proposal BAR1G: paragraphs 12.88 To 12.92. The objection by Friends of the Earth to the Anchorwood Bank proposals are considered under Proposal BAR1A: paragraphs 12.45 to 12.64.
- 12.189 The Friends objection to BAR6 is that the redevelopment of the existing town centre car parks should not seek to maintain or increase the provision of town centre car parking. The Council is broadly in agreement with this stance, and has altered paragraph 12.76 to refer to the retention of some provision rather than the current level of provision at the cattle market site. The development brief for the site states that the level of parking provision for shoppers should be retained but that the long stay spaces should be drastically reduced from 486 to no more than 100 spaces. The actual amounts to be provided will have to reflect alternative provision elsewhere in the town centre and the state of play with park and ride schemes. Again, the Council must tread a very difficult path between over-provision of parking for the sake of the town centre and the need to seek sustainable solutions to traffic congestion and over-use of vehicles.

Recommendation 12.43

I recommend the Local Plan is modified as follows:

In the final sentence of paragraph 12.70, the words “in accordance with the sequential approach” are moved before “provided such proposals complement rather than compete with the town centre”.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Proposal BAR6a - Queen Street/Bear Street
Paragraph 12.75

<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/891/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2173/R</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1253/F</i>	<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>130/238/FD</i>	<i>Penrilla Consultants</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>125/233/FD</i>	<i>Somerfield Stores Limited</i>

Issues:

- The need for an additional foodstore.
- The need for car and coach parking provision.
- The need for residential accommodation and its location within the site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.190 Mr Hames queries the Local Plan proposal for more retailing at Queen Street. He refers to large retailing, saying there is enough in Barnstaple already. The justification for the proposal is the North Devon Retail Study, which concluded that there was a need for an additional 18 to 20,000 square metres of retail floor space in order to extend the retail base of the town centre to develop its role as a sub regional centre and to maintain its competitiveness. The study does not refer to large retailing as such, other than the reference to a department store.
- 12.191 The study also recommended a modest sized food store, for which the Queen Street site appears to be the best location. There have been objections to this on quantitative need grounds. The study recommended a food store on qualitative need grounds however, to create a better choice of town centre shopping. Need does not have to be justified in a town centre position. Mr Hames also requested the provision of a coach park / drop off point as part of any redevelopment. A drop-off and picking up point would no doubt be a useful asset to the town, but there is not sufficient room to accommodate a coach park as such. The bus station is on the edge of the town centre, and very close to the Queen Street site in any event. The need for cycle parking, another suggestion, is accepted by the Council and is already required by Policy TRA1A and Table 4 of the Local Plan.
- 12.192 Proposal BAR6a includes at least 80 residential units as part of a town centre mixed use development. The Larkbear objection is to these units on the grounds of no justification. There is ample justification in PPG3 and PPG13 for including residential schemes in town centres. They can be very sustainable, particularly if designed and marketed as no-car or low-car ownership properties. The Alexandra Road frontage appears to be the most suitable for a concentration of housing, provided any problems caused by traffic noise can be adequately dealt with. This is a matter for detailed site planning through the development brief.

Recommendation 12.44

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Proposal BAR6b - The Cattle Market
Paragraph 12.76

<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/2234/R</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/892/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>51/65/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1254/F</i>	<i>English Heritage</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>50/140/FD</i>	<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>204/584/FD</i>	<i>Mr R W Forward</i>
		<i>Mr D J Lamey</i>

Issues:

- The setting of the scheduled ancient monument at Castle Mound.
- The level of car parking provision on site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.193 This proposal includes the site of Barnstaple Castle, a scheduled ancient monument. The archaeological sensitivity of the site is acknowledged and the Council has reinforced reference to it in paragraph 12.76. English Heritage's objection is conditionally withdrawn. The development brief requires a management strategy to be prepared in partnership with English Heritage. Criterion C) indicates that a civic open space will be created around the castle mound. Mr Forward called for this to be landscaped to provide a central green lung and quiet area close to the town centre. Mr Forward's vision of something akin to a cathedral close may not be quite what the Council has in mind with their civic open space, with its hard landscaping and public art however. This is a detailed matter to be resolved through the brief and in partnership with English Heritage.
- 12.194 The current car park provides an extremely convenient place to leave the car and enter the main shopping street. Hence the importance of retaining a significant amount of shoppers parking in any redevelopment scheme. It would not be right, as Barnstaple Town Centre Management request for the amount of parking to be at the same level as now. Space would not permit this at ground level, but some underground parking and low rise parking might be incorporated into the design, without posing the threat to the setting of the ancient monument that a typical multi-storey car park undoubtedly would.
- 12.195 As with Queen Street, there are suggestions that the cattle market site should be used as a bus station and / or a coach dropping off point. The site is unsuitable for significant numbers of coaches in view of the traffic circulation problems in the locality, with the sole vehicular egress and access along Tuly Street. Queen Street is a better option, if direct access from the town centre by-pass can be obtained. The need for cycle parking is accepted by the Council and is already required by Policy TRA1A.

Recommendation 12.45

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Paragraph 12.79

Objection 452/1724/FD *British Telecom PLC*

Issue:

- Whether there are more suitable sites for non-food retailing and indoor leisure uses.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.196 This objection by British Telecom indicates that alternative sites may be available for non-food retail and indoor leisure uses, other than the two sites mentioned in paragraph 12.79, Anchorwood Bank and Seven Brethren. These two sites are close to the town centre and have a good choice of travel options including rail, bus and cycle links. The site promoted by BT, the depot at Old Station Road, is not as well sited in relation to the town centre, or other transport links. It is dealt with under Proposal BAR1G: paragraphs 12.88 To 12.92 of my report.

Recommendation 12.46

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing
Paragraphs 12.80 and 12.81

Objection 287/1104/FD *Barnstaple Town Centre Management*

Objection 325/1255/FD *Mr P Hames*

Objection 325/1256/FD *Mr P Hames*

Issues:

- Enhancing and protecting the evening economy.
- Signage for the Pannier Market.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.197 Paragraph 12.80 concerns the *evening economy* in Barnstaple town centre. Mr Hames makes the point that it ought to embrace a good age mix in population rather than catering for “*drink crazed youth intent on mayhem and violence*”. How right he is, but unfortunately the age range of people who wish to frequent the town centre in the evening is not a matter that can be influenced by the Local Plan. The Council has changed the first sentence to introduce the idea of catering for all ages and tastes, and that is about as far as the Local Plan can go.

12.198 Mr Hames also makes the suggestion that the signage at the pannier Market could be improved. Alas this is also a matter that is too detailed for the Local Plan to become involved with.

- 12.199 BTCM are concerned about the effects of amusement centres in the primary and secondary areas of the town centre. Paragraph 12.80 states that amusement centres are not considered appropriate within most parts of the town centre as they can detract from the attractiveness of the shopping streets. Policy BAR4 effectively bans them from the primary shopping areas. Policy BAR5 would allow them in the secondary shopping areas.

Recommendation 12.47

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Town Centre and Retailing

Paragraph 12.83

Objection 287/1106/FD Barnstaple Town Centre Management
Objection 93/173/FD Bernard Smith
Objection 197/669/FD Devon County Council
Objection 325/1257/FD Mr P Hames
Objection 94/174/FD Toymaster

Issue:

- Access to the town centre for delivery vehicles.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.200 BTCM objected to paragraph 12.83 on the grounds that too much restriction in favour of pedestrian access in the town centre could harm traders' ability to service their businesses properly. The Council accepts the general point that lack of rear servicing in an historic town centre means that special provision needs to be made for servicing.
- 12.201 It has included reference to a site at Bull Court for transhipment to incorporate parking for small vans. This is a Devon County Council scheme, the omission of which from the Local Plan resulted in an objection. The position seems to have been resolved to the satisfaction of most, and the two relevant objections are conditionally withdrawn.
- 12.202 The other objectors make the point that collection and delivery from high street shops is essential and that further restrictions would have economic implications. The Council accepts the general point and has amended 12.83 to clarify that any pedestrianisation will need to provide alternative unloading or transhipment facilities.

Recommendation 12.48

I recommend no change to the Local Plan.

**Barnstaple Action Plan:
Policy BAR7 (Local Shopping Centres)**

Objection 225/2456/RD *Government Office for the South West*

Objection 225/708/FD *Government Office for the South West*

Issue:

- Clarification of policy wording.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.203 The first objection by the Government office was to an inconsistency between the reasoned justification and the policy. The Council has altered this by removing “not generally” from paragraph 12.84.

12.204 The second objection points out that the revised wording of Policy BAR7 places a burden of proof on applicants contrary to PPG1. The Council has accepted this criticism and proposed a further change to the policy. It is clearer than the Revised Deposit version, which confused the viability of the uses with that of the centre as a whole. The new proposed version deletes “their” and can be taken to refer to the vitality and viability of the two centres as a whole.

Recommendation 12.49

I recommend the Local Plan is modified by changing the last part of Policy BAR7 to read “*will not be permitted where vitality and viability are harmed*”.

**Barnstaple Action Plan: Sport and Recreation
Proposal BAR8 (Formal Playing Pitches)**

Objection 197/675/FD *Devon County Council*

Objection 276/992/FD *Devon Wildlife Trust*

Objection 249/895/FD *North Devon Friends of the Earth*

Issue:

- Whether a formal playing field at Anchorwood Bank would harm nature conservation interests.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.205 Proposal BAR8 originally included some land at Anchorwood Bank, which is part of the floodplain of the River Taw and part of the biodiversity network. Creating playing fields would mean raising the land with consequent effects upon flood plain capability and wildlife interest. In the Revised Deposit Plan, the Council proposes deletion of the Anchorwood Bank proposal as

a playing field. Criterion B) of BAR1a was also amended to require provision of informal recreational open space rather than formal playing pitches. With these changes the objections are met in my view.

Recommendation 12.50

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Sport and Recreation Proposal BAR9 (Community Parks and Woodlands)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>104/193/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>A Gamble</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>382/1366/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Chris Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>323/1247/F</i>		<i>D H and J E Andrews</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>335/1286/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Ian Smallridge</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>99/185/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>J A and J M Dove</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/1530/F</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2175/R</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>275/972/FD</i>		<i>Mr A E Pratt</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>254/918/FD</i>		<i>Mr A Heale</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>315/1219/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mr K T Endacott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>253/916/FD</i>		<i>Mrs E Heale</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>385/1404/F</i>		<i>Mrs E Thompson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>123/229/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mrs G M E Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>123/230/FD</i>		<i>Mrs G M E Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>437/1664/F</i>		<i>Mrs J A H Luard</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>341/1293/F</i>		<i>Mrs S K Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>378/1354/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mrs Y Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>262/946/FD</i>		<i>Ms H N Watts</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>591/2089/R</i>		<i>Phillips Trust and Lovells</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>422/1626/F</i>		<i>Prowting Projects Ltd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>87/160/FD</i>		<i>S C Colley</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>319/1225/F</i>		<i>South West Forest</i>

Issues:

- General principles for community woodland.
- Issues of safety, security and residential amenity.
- Loss of agricultural land, landscape and ecological impact.
- Boundaries and coverage of community woodland.
- Proposed community woodland at Larkbear.

- Proposed community woodland at Waytown/Maidenford.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.206 Community Woodlands are areas of new tree planting incorporating informal open spaces that are close to settlements with good public access. Sites identified for potential community woodlands are set out in the settlement chapters and shown on the relevant inset maps. Paragraph 10,10A has been included in the Local Plan to set out the role of community woodlands. Given the existence of specific policies proposing community woodlands in the action plans for settlements (such as BAR9), I agree with the Council that a general policy is not necessary.
- 12.207 Several objections refer to safety and security issues, particularly due to trees being planted close to dwellings. This potential issue is recognised in Appendix 3 of the draft SPG. The sites identified in the Local Plan are indicative areas, and the precise siting and design of any proposal would need careful planning to address security issues. Consultation with the local community, with South West Forest and with the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's Architectural Liaison Officer would be important. Loss of privacy and over-shadowing are aspects of detail that could be addressed in a similar way. Several of these objections referred to the effect of the Larkbear community woodland on the village of Lake. Its deletion from the Local Plan resolves these objections.
- 12.208 Some objectors raise concern that community woodland would result in the loss of the natural ecology from open fields and hedgerows. The draft SPG recognises the need to identify any important habitats which can be retained or enhanced as part of a woodland proposal. Community woodland however would inevitably change one type of habitat into another, hopefully richer and more diverse than the original. Some objectors raise concerns about the loss of agricultural land and an adverse effect upon the open landscape character of the countryside. Again, a decision to plant community woodland must have a fairly drastic effect on any existing farming in the area. There would be scope for a degree of integration between farming and woodland, exploiting the open areas referred to by the Council as *glades*. They would probably not be extensive enough to support farming as it is practised at present in the area, but a degree of small holding ought to be possible.
- 12.209 Fears by some objectors that the proposal appears to take away their land in the form of domestic gardens are unfounded. The SPG states that there is no intention to plant woodland over existing gardens or private properties, or on land without the owner's consent. The extent of community woodland would be determined by the local community and landowners.
- 12.210 The proposal for community woodland at Larkbear was made in recognition of the lack of existing public woodland on the western side of the town. It would also have provided a good visual buffer to the extensive residential development above it. Following deletion of Proposal BAR2a in the Revised Deposit, and the extent of local concerns regarding community woodland in this locality, the community woodland proposal at Larkbear was also deleted. The Council still believes the need to exist however and would welcome any future proposal from the local community to bring forward a community woodland scheme.
- 12.211 The need for additional community woodland on the eastern side of the town was recognised in the Open Space Strategy for North Devon (CD071). The site of the proposed community woodland at Waytown / Maidenford is a prominent hill on the edge of the town. It would probably not be a very sensitive move to attempt to blanket the entire hill with trees, even though there are existing tree covered hills in the area. Much of the drama of this landscape

comes from the openness of the bare hillside, and some recognition of this aspect ought to be built into the community woodland planning.

- 12.212 It was put to me at Inquiry that there would be scope around the edges for some integration of residential development with woodland. The idea of integrating community woodlands with housing schemes is an interesting one. Whilst it is not difficult to envisage housing development on the edge of woodland, benefiting from its bio-diversity and screening effect in the landscape, it is not easy to see how the concept of woodland being accessed and used by the wider community could co-exist with the living spaces of individual property owners. New woodlands are not an appropriate setting for low density residential development outside a settlement boundary, and it would not be appropriate to include in the Local Plan any policy which appeared to give such a scheme the go ahead.
- 12.213 Two objectors believe that the community woodland would jeopardise developing the Waytown / Maidenford site for residential development. There are several objections promoting land at Maidenford and Waytown for residential development. They are considered under Proposal BAR2 at paragraph 12.132 of my report.

Recommendation 12.51

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Sport and Recreation Policy BAR10 (Recreational Activities at Portmore)

Objection 450/1710/F

Mrs J Westcott

Issue:

- Proposal for a major events location.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.214 Policy BAR10 proposes land at Portmore for outdoor recreation development. The designated area contains Portmore Golf Course and Portmore Farm. Mrs Westcott's objection proposes that the designated area be extended to include an area of land to the south of the Landkey Road.
- 12.215 This land has been used to accommodate the North Devon Show and has had a variety of uses from time to time under the 28 day rule. If it was to be developed into a permanent show site, it would require many thousands of pounds of infrastructure for parking and other services. The character of the open agricultural land would change, even if grasscrete and other discreet materials were to be used. Whilst the Council accepted that there was no permanent site for a Show, it was not happy to see this site designated, for landscape reasons, and for sustainability reasons. There is a bus service, but the site is otherwise a long way from a public transport focus.

- 12.216 If there was evidence of a strong need for a permanent site, and this site could be shown to be the best option available, its designation under BAR10 could be justified. As it stands however, the case for the site is not a strong one, and the risk in terms of landscape change and the erosion of the strategic gap between Barnstaple and Landkey rules against it.

Recommendation 12.52

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Education

Proposal BAR12 (Roundswell School)

Paragraphs 12.98 and 12.101

Objection 286/1087/FD Barnstaple Town Council

Objection 286/1086/FD Barnstaple Town Council

Objection 336/1287/F Mr Al Turland

Issues:

- The need for new secondary school provision.
- The need for new primary school provision.
- Access to the new primary school at Roundswell.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.217 These objections call for additional primary and secondary school provision to be made before further residential development is completed. The Council responds that there are currently no excess pupils in either of the two secondary schools in Barnstaple, and whilst there is currently no need for additional provision there may be before the end of the Local Plan period. In this case any new residential developments would be required to contribute towards future education provision in accordance with the code of practice.
- 12.218 Barnstaple Town Council has objected to the omission of any reference to the need for a new school for the Pilton area. The local education authority has not identified a need for a new school, although the Council accepts that the Pilton Bluecoat School has excess pupils. If the LEA does not propose a school, the Local Plan cannot make provision for one. Any further residential development in the area would have to make contributions towards additional school places, but it is for the education authority to decide whether a new school is required.
- 12.219 Whilst Mr Turland is basically in support of the proposal for a new school at Roundswell he had a number of questions to ask of the Council. He wished to know if the school will be for juniors up to the age of 11, and if it could have access from Old Torrington Road, which is wider and has less traffic than Old Bideford Road. Congestion caused by delivery lorries bound for Sainsbury's was a particular problem on Old Bideford Road. Clearly if a school is built it would not be acceptable to have large lorries reversing into the area set aside for dropping off children.

A traffic control or management scheme would have to be devised to solve the problem.

- 12.220 Devon County Council as education authority has advised that the school is intended for primary age pupils aged 5-11, but may also include nursery aged pupils from 3-5. Devon County Council as highway authority has advised that the sole vehicular access will be to the north-west corner of the site, on to Old Bideford Road. The pedestrian link at the end of this road will not be opened up for vehicular traffic. The alternative suggestion for an access from Old Torrington Road is considered to be inappropriate because the latter is already congested, presumably up towards the roundabout at the top of the hill where the access to North Devon College comes in. Any pupils living to the east of the site will be able to get to the school from established pedestrian and cycle routes without the need to travel by car. Provided the conflict with the Sainsbury's delivery lorries can be resolved, the proposal to use Old Bideford Road is acceptable.

Recommendation 12.53

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Education Proposal BAR13 (North Devon College)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>122/225/FD</i>	<i>B F Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2179/RD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/1531/FD</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>269/956/FD</i>	<i>Mr P Dunn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>385/1401/FD</i>	<i>Mrs E Thompson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>123/227/FD</i>	<i>Mrs G M E Kingshott</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>340/1290/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J Manning</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>270/959/FD</i>	<i>Mrs R E Dunn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>378/1353/FD</i>	<i>Mrs Y Bimson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/897/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- Whether there is a need for a link to the western bypass.
- Whether land at North Devon College should be identified for car parking.
- Whether the link road could be relocated.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.221 Proposal BAR13 makes provision for land for the expansion of North Devon College. There are current problems with parking and traffic congestion in the roads close to the college, so some of the land is required to accommodate students' cars to relieve surrounding streets. A new access direct to the western bypass would also help in this respect. One would have been provided courtesy of the Larkbear scheme, but with its demise that opportunity has gone. Nevertheless, the Council is of the view that a direct access is still required. Most objections accept the

principle but query the proposed point of access. The deletion of the Larkbear link road overcomes the substance of these objections however.

- 12.222 The Friends of the Earth object to the proposal on the grounds that an expansion of courses and facilities at the college need not lead to an increase in road traffic, and additional land should not be proposed for car parking which will encourage more cars. The Council accepts the principle that more courses should not mean more cars, but it is realistic in appreciating that the large catchment area for the college and the reliance and dependency on the car as the main mode of travel across the rural parts of North Devon has resulted in high student reliance on the car. The amendment to Map 2 (IM2/4RD) shows a larger site area identified for BAR13. This will allow the college to expand and provide recreational and bus facilities and an element of extra car parking on the site.

Recommendation 12.54

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Healthcare Paragraph 12.104

<i>Objection</i>	<i>226/747/FD</i>	<i>Mr M T Westaway</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1085/F</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>159/333/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs W G J Schiller</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>226/746/FD</i>	<i>Mr M T Westaway</i>

Issues:

- Car parking provision at North Devon District Hospital.
- Whether land north of Roborough Road should be proposed for hospital development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.223 Mr and Mrs Schiller object to the hospital trust charging its staff for parking, since it creates parking problems for Pilton. On the face of it, it does seem outrageous that the trust should charge its staff for parking. Its not as if the hospital is well located for public transport for use as an alternative to use of the car. However, as the Council point out this is essentially a management issue and not one that the Local Plan can get involved in.
- 12.224 The Town Council wish to see a moratorium on hospital development until the car parking is satisfactorily resolved. Again, this is essentially a management matter.
- 12.225 The North Devon Healthcare Trust has not identified the need for any additional hospital accommodation during the period of the Local Plan. The land to the north of Roborough Road is relatively prominent in the landscape, and would extend the town further into the countryside. If it turns out that more land is required, all possibilities can be looked at and evaluated under

Policy COM4.

Recommendation 12.55

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Cultural and Community Facilities Paragraphs 12.105 and 12.106

Objection 325/1258/FD Mr P Hames

Objection 163/343/FD Mrs C Chick

Objection 13/16/FD 1st North Devon (Barnstaple) Scout Group

Objection 410/1532/FD Larkbear Consortium

Issues:

- The need for a permanent indoor display venue.
- A proposed extension to the Queens Theatre.
- Proposed sites for new community facilities.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.226 Mrs Chick would like to see an indoor display building for artists, not an outdoor venue as listed in the bullet points to paragraph 12.105. The Council is happy to include reference to an indoor venue in the fourth bullet point.
- 12.227 Mr Hames is worried about the idea of an extension to the Queen's Theatre affecting the Pannier Market. However, the extension idea is quoted from the Cultural Strategy, and is not specific about how it would be extended. If it did affect the Pannier Market then relevant policies would apply.
- 12.228 The Scout Group wishes to see a reference to a community facility in the Victoria Street area in order to assist with fund-raising activities. The Council is happy to include a reference to a need for new community facilities in Barnstaple in general, rather than the specific area sought by the scouts. Given the likelihood of there being other equally worthy projects in the pipeline, the Council's general reference is probably fair. I note the suggested new policy put forward by the scouts. As it is specifically related to the Victoria Street area proposal, I consider it to be too specific in the light of other valid projects that may arise.
- 12.229 The Larkbear Consortium objection calls for a cross-reference to Proposal BAR2a, with the required community facilities determined as part of the master plan to be prepared. With the demise of Proposal BAR2a however, this objection is no longer relevant.

Recommendation 12.56

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Proposal BAR14 (Seven Brethren Regeneration)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>650/2397/R</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Brian Fords Discount Store</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>354/1324/F</i>		<i>M Holden</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>650/2396/R</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Brian Fords Discount Store</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1725/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>452/1734/F</i>		<i>British Telecom PLC</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/676/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/1533/F</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>354/1323/F</i>		<i>M Holden</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>342/1297/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Mr O Jeffery</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/886/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/898/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>459/1765/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Richard Ford</i>

Issues:

- Provision of a new link road between Seven Brethren Bank and Station Road.
- Provision of a new link from the western bypass.
- Proposals for retail development.
- Regeneration and mix of uses at Seven Brethren.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

The new link road

- 12.230 Seven Brethren is an important site on the west bank of the River Taw, within 400 metres of the town centre. Its strategic significance will increase when a direct public transport, pedestrian and cycle link is provided from the western bypass. This link will improve Seven Brethren's role as an important transport hub and interchange. Specific transport measures proposed for the area include a new link road joining Seven Brethren Bank with Station Road, a bus and rail interchange and pedestrian and cycle routes incorporating an underpass by the Long Bridge connecting to various parts of the town.
- 12.231 Paragraph 12.107 of the Plan refers to the link road joining Seven Brethren Bank and Station Road. The possible route of the new link is shown as an amendment to inset Map 2 (IM2/9RD). This was objected to by Brian Ford's Discount Store. The Council has accepted this objection and agreed to delete the specific route for the link road, whilst retaining the reference to it in Criterion C) of the proposal. The Council has also agreed to include the words "where

appropriate” at the beginning of Criterion C). The criterion refers to the payment of contributions towards a variety of transport provisions and the inclusion of *where appropriate* does not seem unreasonable.

The link to the bypass

- 12.232 Paragraph 12.107 also identifies the need for a direct link into Seven Brethren from the western bypass. The purpose of the new link from the bypass would be to provide an alternative access to serve the southern part of Seven Brethren, to help reduce traffic congestion at the existing entrance from Long Bridge and Sticklepath Terrace. The new link road will complement the emerging parking strategy for Barnstaple, by improving access to the parking at Seven Brethren and encouraging commuters, shoppers and visitors to park on the west side of the river rather than driving across Long Bridge into the town centre.
- 12.233 Having reviewed the evidence put forward by Brian Fords Discount Store, the Council has agreed to the deletion of any reference to the link road from the western bypass within the policy text of BAR14. The reference to the link for public transport, pedestrians and cycles in connection with the western bypass remains in 12.107, but the Council has accepted that a direct road link from the bypass is not to be pursued.

Proposals for retail development

- 12.234 Objections from British Telecom PLC indicate that alternative sites may be available for non-food retail and indoor leisure uses. Seven Brethren is close to the town centre and has a good range of travel options. It also has a range of existing retail and indoor leisure uses. No more preferable sites closer to the town centre have been identified. The suitability of the Seven Brethren area for non-food retailing reflects the recommendations in the North Devon Retail Study but the area only has limited capacity as a result of the existing uses.

Regeneration and mix of uses

- 12.235 Devon County Council objected to the lack of a design brief for Seven Brethren. A development brief has since been published and adopted and reference to this is proposed in paragraph 12.108. Brian Fords objected to the removal of reference to the proposed uses for the site in BAR14. Whilst the Council argued that the reduced form of words in the Revised Deposit Plan permits a wider range of potential development proposals, rather than just those listed, the wording is now so brief as to offer practically no guidance and certainty. Happily the Council has agreed to go back to a list similar to the original, with the deletion of the rail freight depot and playing pitches. The reference to retail warehousing is thus restored.
- 12.236 Mr Holden objected that the civic amenities recycling centre should be relocated to an industrial estate to reduce traffic. The central location of the Seven Brethren site cannot be disputed however, although the access arrangements are not ideal. A direct link to the bypass would help in this respect, reducing traffic congestion within the Seven Brethren area. Mr Holden also suggests that the recycling centre would make a good site for housing. The Waste Local Plan however indicates a future need of the recycling centre for waste management purposes. Devon County Council has not indicated that the site might become surplus to requirements. The prospects for housing are therefore non-existent.
- 12.237 The Council agreed a joint statement with Brian Fords which resulted in the conditional withdrawal of their objections. Having studied the agreed statement, and considered the extent to which it impacts upon issues raised by other objectors to BAR14, it is my view that the proposed text is a significant improvement on the Revised Deposit version, giving greater certainty and clarity to the proposal. I therefore recommend its inclusion in the Plan.

Recommendation 12.57

I recommend that the Local Plan be modified as follows:

1) That Policy BAR14 be amended to read:

“Land at Seven Brethren is proposed for retail warehousing and leisure facilities, together with a bus and rail interchange, car, coach and lorry park and improved civic amenity recycling centre, as identified on Inset Map 2 providing the following elements are included:

a) the environmental enhancement and improved use of the river frontage including the provision of pedestrian and cycle links and mooring and boat launching facilities;

b) hard and soft landscaping; and

c) where appropriate, the provision of or contributions sought towards a road link between Station Approach and Seven Brethren Bank and the improvement of public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes connecting to the town centre, Tarka Trail, Rock Park and Anchorwood Bank, including an underpass under the Longbridge.

2) That the reasoned justification accompanying Proposal BAR14 be amended to read:

Seven Brethren

12.107 *Seven Brethren is a key strategic location on the edge of the River Taw, within 400 metres of the town centre. Its strategic significance will increase when a direct public transport, pedestrian and cycle link is provided in connection with the Western Bypass which will improve Seven Brethren's role as an important transport hub and interchange. Specific transport measures proposed for the area include a new link road joining Seven Brethren Bank with Station Road, a bus and rail interchange and pedestrian and cycle routes incorporating, if feasible, an underpass by the Long Bridge connecting to various parts of the town. Contributions may be required from new development in the area including the proposed Herton Technology Park and the redevelopment of Anchorwood Bank to implement these initiatives.*

12.108 *Seven Brethren currently accommodates a variety of public uses including the main leisure centre, a tennis centre, playing pitches, retail developments, car, coach and lorry parking and a waste recycling centre. Although new development and enhanced landscaping has improved the overall environment of the area, it still has a run down appearance with the visual quality of the river frontage especially poor. For these reasons, and given the area's proximity to the town centre, Seven Brethren has considerable redevelopment opportunities based on the consolidation and enhancement of existing uses. Generally the area needs to retain a significant*

element of car, coach and lorry parking, not least to accommodate the annual fair. To ensure that Seven Brethren is redeveloped in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner a Development Brief will be prepared for the area to guide new development. Uses proposed for the area are summarised below:-

- *Indoor leisure activities including, subject to demand, the provision of a major facility such as a skating rink or bowling alley;*
- *Additional retail warehousing to meet the future shopping needs of Barnstaple and North Devon;*
- *Improved public transport interchange facilities;*
- *Recreational facilities which may include a BMX, and skateboard park;*
- *An improved civic amenity recycling centre;*
- *Environmental enhancement of the River frontage and throughout Seven Brethren, including improved provision for pedestrians and cyclists and, subject to its feasibility, the provision of a bridge linking both banks of the River Taw.*

12.109 Due to the visual importance of the site, new buildings should be of a high quality design and incorporate extensive landscaping, particularly along the River frontage and where prominent in views from the Western Bypass, in accordance with Policies DVS1 and DVS2. Much of the site is also contaminated with methane, reflecting its former use as a refuse tip. All proposals will therefore be required to ensure that any contamination issues are properly addressed in accordance with Policy DVS4.

**Barnstaple Action Plan: Travel and Transport
Traffic Management
Paragraph 12.110**

Objection 249/899/FD North Devon Friends of the Earth

Issues:

- Whether there is a need for town centre parking.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.238 More of a question than a specific objection, the Friends wish to know why there is still emphasis throughout the Local Plan on car parking within the town centre, including in some of the most sensitive sites such as the Cattle Market and Castle Mound area. The Council defends itself by pointing to the development briefs for the two principal central sites (Queen Street/Bear Street and the former cattle market site). On these sites there is to be comprehensive redevelopment with the retention of much less parking than hitherto, the parking to be reserved for short-term shoppers needs.

12.239 The Council states that it is working alongside the highway authority, Devon County Council towards more sustainable transport measures. Edge-of-centre car parks are to be promoted, but

in-centre parking will also have its place in the strategy.

Recommendation 12.58

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: Traffic Management Policy BAR15 (Protecting the Western Bypass) Paragraph 12.111

<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/900/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>204/587/FD</i>	<i>D J Lamey</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>28/129/FD</i>	<i>D Roulstone</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>265/950/FD</i>	<i>G R Walker</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>225/709/FD</i>	<i>Government Office for the South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>31/135/FD</i>	<i>J Roulstone</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>387/1408/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J Littlejohn</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>214/622/FD</i>	<i>Mrs M Cooper</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>341/1294/FD</i>	<i>Mrs S K Watson-Davies</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/901/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- The need for the Barnstaple western bypass.
- The need for an upper case proposal.
- Alternatives to the safeguarded route for the Barnstaple western bypass.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.240 Since the First Deposit Plan was published, orders for the Barnstaple western bypass and downstream bridge scheme were confirmed following a public inquiry. Work has now commenced on the schemes and is due for completion in 2007. Whilst North Devon Friends of the Earth have previously challenged the need for the by-pass and the downstream bridge, there is now no justification for re-opening past debates about the need for the scheme. Whilst some improvements to walking, cycling and public transport can be made without the construction of the western by-pass, reduced traffic levels within the town resulting from the scheme will give added effectiveness to such improvements.
- 12.241 PPG 12 indicates that land safeguarded for a future transport scheme should be done through a proposal in the Local Plan. The scheme for the by-pass and new bridge is a proposal of Devon County Council, granted planning permission by the County in 1999. This permission renders a proposal in the Local Plan unnecessary but there is merit in showing the route on the inset maps and in safeguarding that route from inappropriate development.
- 12.242 Some objectors propose alternative road schemes to the western by-pass, including a ring road around the town and an eastern by-pass, and an alternative link from Penhill Point towards the

A361 at Chivenor. None of these schemes are included within any capital programmes and even if they make it into the Local Transport Plan eventually, they would not be implemented within the Local Plan period to 2011. Further consideration of the merits of these proposals is therefore unnecessary at this stage.

Recommendation 12.59

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Barnstaple Action Plan: The Pedestrian and Cycle Network Proposal BAR16 (Pedestrian and Cycle Routes)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/902/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/903/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1259/F</i>	<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/904/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>39/96/FD</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs B C Clayton</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>194/544/FD</i>	<i>Mrs J Long</i>

Issues:

- Dependence on pedestrian and cycle routes on the western bypass.
- Requirement for provision of cycle parking.
- Upgrading of footpaths for use by cyclists.
- Proposed pedestrian/cycle route between Barnstaple and Bishops Tawton.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 12.243 The Friends of the Earth object to paragraphs 12.112 to 12.114 on the grounds that improvements to the walking, cycling and public transport networks do not depend on the construction of the western by-pass. The Council denies that the Local Plan states this dependency, but has made changes to the paragraphs to indicate where improvements might be expected following the completion of the by-pass and the consequent release of road space. In my view this clarifies the position considerably.
- 12.244 Mr Hames objects to paragraph 12.114 because there is no mention of provision of parking facilities within Barnstaple to complement the new cycle routes. Most cycle parking facilities will be promoted and provided by Devon County Council as the local highway authority, and do not require land to be allocated or safeguarded through the Local Plan. Policy TRA1A indicates when secure cycle parking should be provided on site for flats and non-residential development in accordance with standards set out in Table 4. Where cycle parking is required in association with new cycle routes, the proposal should be set out in the scheme design brief rather than the Local Plan.

- 12.245 Mrs Long generally supports proposal BAR16 but is concerned that some of the proposed routes are existing footpaths which should not be compromised if the route is to be upgraded to allow cycles. New pedestrian or cycle routes identified under Proposal BAR16 will be implemented by Devon County Council as the local highway authority. Any new routes or upgraded routes will be wide enough for both pedestrians and cyclists and designed to avoid conflict between these users. The design of any scheme is a matter for the County Council however, and is too detailed for inclusion in the Local Plan.
- 12.246 The proposed new pedestrian /cycle link between Barnstaple and Bishops Tawton is shown on Inset Maps 1, 2 and 9. There is an existing cycle route which forms part of the Tarka Trail between Park School and the northern end of Bishops Tawton. Through the village this route shares access with the main road traffic on the A377, a busy road. The alternative proposal under BAR16 is to follow the east bank of the River Taw to the point where the railway line crosses the river. From there it follows the eastern side of the railway line as far as the parish church in the centre of the village. This would clearly be a much safer alternative route for cyclists wishing to go from Bishops Tawton to Barnstaple.
- 12.247 Mr Clayton's objection is to loss of privacy on the western boundary of his property. He also raises the matter of safety to users of the route, from passing trains on the railway bridge, and from the effects of possible flooding by the River Taw. Mr Clayton's residence, The Bridges, is a detached house set in extensive grounds overlooking the River Taw. It allows its occupants wide views across the valley to the hills west of Barnstaple. The route of the proposed cycleway is visible from the house, but at a distance that is sufficient to make it a relatively minor part of the wider view. The movement of persons along this route may be noticeable to the occupant of the dwelling, but at the distance involved could not be described as intrusive. In the wider perspective of the extensive landscape views, the presence of a cyclist or walker on the footpath is a mere detail.
- 12.248 Matters of safety are for the County Council to consider and to take appropriate action to deal with. It is not unknown for a footpath route to accompany a railway line across a bridge. Clearly some form of separation would be needed between the different modes of transport. The banks of the River Taw may be steep and difficult to climb if one should slip down them. The County Council will presumably take whatever steps it considers necessary to warn users of any possible dangers.
- 12.249 From the users' point of view, the removal of the route from the main road through the village to the river / railway route must be seen as a benefit in terms of road safety. The possible loss of privacy to The Bridges and to the many other properties in Bishops Tawton which are significantly closer to the route would be minimal, and not threatening to the human rights of the occupants. In any event, the boundary treatment along the sides of the proposed cycleway would be considered alongside Policy DVS3 (Amenity Considerations) in order to mitigate any potential impact on the privacy, security and residential amenities of the occupants of the adjoining dwellings.

Recommendation 12.60

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan

Barnstaple Action Plan: Public Transport
Proposal BAR17 (Park and Ride Schemes)
Proposal BAR11 (Parking for Pilton School)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/726/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/732/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>276/993/FD</i>		<i>Devon Wildlife Trust</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>167/356/FD</i>		<i>Environment Protection Group SW</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/896/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/908/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1091/F</i>		<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/723/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1260/F</i>		<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/905/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/906/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>286/1090/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/907/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>194/546/FD</i>		<i>Mrs J Long</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>287/1135/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/715/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>257/927/FD</i>		<i>John S Sharples</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/909/FD</i>		<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>325/1261/F</i>		<i>Mr P Hames</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/910/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>280/1021/F</i>		<i>Tawstock Parish Council</i>

Issues:

- Inclusion of bus priority routes.
- Proposals for coach parking and dropping off for coaches.
- Details of proposed park and ride schemes.
- Parking for Pilton Schools.
- Proposed locations for additional park and ride schemes.
- Rail proposals.
- Additional car parking provision in Barnstaple.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

Bus priority routes

- 12.250 There is an existing park and ride scheme at Park School in Newport, which it is intended to extend. Park and ride schemes are proposed at the Clarks and Ayres Grimshaw Factories and adjacent to the Evans Transport site, both off the Branton Road. New park and ride schemes will be required at Roundswell and along the routes of Eastern Avenue, the Branton Road and the A39 although no specific sites have been identified. To help the park and ride schemes, bus priority lanes should be created allowing direct linkage to the town centre.

- 12.251 Devon County Council and the Friends of the Earth call for specific details of certain bus priority routes to be included in the Local Plan. The Council resists this in the interests of brevity, and also argues that such proposals are better included in the Local Transport Plan. A number of proposed bus priority measures are referred to by location in paragraph 12.116 of the Local Plan and this is probably as far as a land use document can be expected to go. The Council accepts that bus priority measures are not dependent on construction of the western by-pass, but maintains reasonably in my view that following its completion there will be increased road capacity within the town to enable the provision of initiatives such as bus priority measures, to improve reliability and convenience of public transport as an alternative to the motor car.
- 12.252 I accept the Council's argument that bus priority routes do not need to be shown on the inset maps as policies or proposals in the Local Plan do not refer to them. Also that the proposed pedestrian / cycle bridge across the River Taw is not shown on Inset Map 1, due to the uncertainty of its location and future implementation.

Coach parking and dropping-off

- 12.253 Barnstaple Town Council and Mr Hames would like to see reference to coach parking provision in the Local Plan. The Council accepts that no reference has been made to sites for coach parking and dropping-off. It points to paragraph 12.73, where coach parking and servicing requirements are included in a list of issues to be addressed in the transport assessments to be carried out for the three major redevelopment sites in the town centre: Queen Street/Bear Street, the former cattle market and land to the rear of Lower Boutport Street and Silver Street. Whilst specific proposals would be preferred, the intention to consider them is all that can be offered at this stage.

Proposed park and ride schemes

- 12.254 North Devon Friends of the Earth object to Proposal BAR17 on the grounds that it is vague, needs improving and should contain a commitment to make public transport the major tool in addressing Barnstaple's traffic, congestion, environmental and access problems. The purpose of BAR17 is to identify the land use elements of the park and ride schemes. It does this for the Park School site, and for the Evans Transport site but it is vague about the Roundswell, Eastern Avenue, A39 and the Braunton Road sites as these have not yet been identified. The proposal goes as far as it reasonably can therefore and more detail and commitment are contained rightly within the Local Transport Plan.
- 12.255 The Devon County Council objection to the wording of the First Deposit version Policy BAR17 has been met to some extent by the deletion of "major roads into the town" and the inclusion of specific schemes in the new proposal. The objection of the Barnstaple Town Council that no further park and ride schemes should be developed until after the western by-pass is opened is not supported by any reasoned justification. Although it is unlikely that a new scheme will come forward before the new road, the possibility should not be ruled out.
- 12.256 Mrs Long would like to see a reference to the cost of park and ride being low enough to encourage people not to drive into Barnstaple. Once again this is properly a matter for the Local Transport Plan to address. Costs of services cannot be dealt with effectively in a land use plan. Locating park and ride further from the town to enable a greater reduction in vehicular miles and CO2 emissions is again a matter for the Local Transport Plan to wrestle with, rather than the land use plan.
- 12.257 Mr Sharples objects to the location of the Park School P & R scheme because it is too close to the town centre. He would like to see future schemes sited well out of town, immediately adjacent to major approach roads. Whilst such locations would work well at intercepting traffic

and reducing car mileage they would not encourage residents of the town to use the facility as much as a site at the edge of the built up area, such as the Park School site. Costs in terms of disruption for residents need to be balanced against convenience in getting to the town centre without using the car, and fewer impacts on the countryside outside the town.

- 12.258 Two additional sites for park and ride schemes are proposed by objectors: at the SWEB depot on the Eastern Avenue and at Pottington. Both of these sites are fairly close to the town centre and would not benefit from reducing car miles by intercepting vehicles at the edge of the town. In addition the SWEB site could not benefit from provision of bus priority lane due to lack of space on Eastern Avenue. Neither site should therefore be included in my view.
- 12.259 Proposal BAR17 identifies two additional sites for park, ride and walk schemes in the Revised Deposit, in addition to the proposed extension to the existing site at Park School. All of these sites are to the east of the river, so it is recommended by the Council that Proposal BAR17 is amended to read “...as shown on Inset Map 1...”

Parking for Pilton

- 12.260 Proposal BAR11 identifies land to the rear of the Clarks and Ayres and Grimshaw factories for car and bus parking for Pilton schools and the community college. The proposal is not just for car and coach parking for the schools however, but is intended also as a park and ride scheme for commuters and shoppers visiting the town centre. It will be linked to the pedestrian and cycle networks to the north of Barnstaple. Although objected to by the Friends of the Earth on sustainability grounds, the proposal clearly is intended to encourage access by modes of travel other than the motor car, even if its prime purpose is to enable users of the schools to park more easily. Additional sentences have been added to the preamble to recognise the need for sustainable urban drainage to avoid risk of flooding, and of mitigation measures to protect the stream, a biodiversity network feature.

Rail proposals

- 12.261 North Devon Friends of the Earth and Mr Hames call for more in the Local Plan on rail services. The Friends would like to see new residential development at other locations along the Tarka Line to help its viability. The only settlement on the line outside Barnstaple with its own railway station is Umberleigh, a small place with very limited services and facilities. Whilst the idea of locating significant residential development at Umberleigh appears attractive as a means of helping usage of the Tarka Line, the lack of employment and other services would inevitably lead to lengthy car journeys from the village to South Molton and Barnstaple.
- 12.262 Mr Hames wants a policy on promoting rail links with Bideford and Taunton, and a shuttle bus service to Tiverton Parkway. The Local Plan can only deal with the land use implications of proposals that are viable and have a reasonable chance of being implemented during the Local Plan period. Unfortunately there are no specific proposals for railways within Barnstaple and it is not the role of the Local Plan to promote such rail links if they have not already emerged from the Local Transport Plan. Policy REC4 safeguards former transport routes to facilitate any future proposals to reinstate former railway lines. That unfortunately is as far as a land use plan can go in the absence of firm proposals involving land. A shuttle service does not come into this category, as it could be operated using existing infrastructure.

Car parking in Barnstaple

- 12.263 Tawstock Parish Council object to paragraph 12.120 claiming that adequate additional parking

space must be provided as there are insufficient spaces in the town, a situation which may considerably worsen if existing car parks are redeveloped. The Council's position is that no new car parks are proposed in Barnstaple town centre in order to encourage sustainable travel options rather than relying on private cars. People will not be encouraged to take the bus into town, if it is always easy to park the car in the town centre.

Recommendation 12.61

I recommend that the Local Plan be modified by altering “as shown on Inset Maps 1 and 2” to “as shown on Inset Map 1” in Proposal BAR17.

Barnstaple Action Plan

Objection 410/2152/R

Larkbear Consortium

Issue:

- A chapter called an action plan, as it is superficial re-branding and does not amount to an action plan.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

12.264 The Larkbear Consortium question whether the content of the chapter amounts to an action plan or a superficial re-branding of the chapter of the Local Plan. The same comment applies to the other action plan re-brands in the subsequent area chapters. The Council's response is that the settlement chapters were renamed as action plans to reflect the future need to produce area action plans as development plan documents within the proposed local development framework. It does not claim however that the chapters are Area Action Plans under the new definitions set out in draft PPS12.

12.265 Whilst the use of the *action* word might cause some confusion, it appears to be harmless enough in the context of the changes taking place in the planning process. All of the action plans will be saved into the new system in accordance with the transitory measures under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. This seems a good enough reason for giving them the *action* title at this stage.

Recommendation 12.62

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Chapter 13 - Fremington and Yelland Action Plan

Land at Chilpark, Fremington

Paragraph 13.10

Objection 168/365/FD Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd

Issue:

- Whether land at Chilpark should be proposed for residential development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.1 The promoted site is situated on the northern side of Fremington to the north of Chilpark. It is a green field site covering some 5.3 hectares. The land is visually prominent from the Taw-Torridge Estuary to the north, and from the Tarka Trail. If developed, it would extend the village into open countryside, although there would be some lateral screening from the two areas of mature woodland nearby. The woodland to the west of the site is a key network feature and the promoted site forms part of the biodiversity network, a factor which would in any event constrain development. There is some element of flood risk attached to the site, though not of a sufficient gravity to prevent development.
- 13.2 If developed to its full potential the site could accommodate about 185 dwellings at 35 dwellings to the hectare, or 139 dwellings at 75% net developable area. I have concluded elsewhere in my report (Chapter 7) that there is no need to identify a large green field site for residential development in order to meet strategic housing requirements. The previously developed sites identified in the district are sufficient to meet the strategic housing needs for the Plan period. Proposal FRE1 (Sampson's Plantation) is intended to meet the housing needs for Fremington and Yelland. There is therefore no justification for a green field development of this size to be pursued.

Recommendation 13.1

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan

Proposal FRE1 (Sampsons Plantation)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>449/1707/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>L Tanner</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/737/FD</i>		<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>276/994/FD</i>		<i>Devon Wildlife Trust</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>497/1874/F</i>		<i>Fremington Parish Council</i>

<i>Objection</i>	<i>497/2313/R</i>		<i>Fremington Parish Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>449/1708/F</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>L Tanner</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2180/R</i>		<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>566/2058/R</i>		<i>Mr A Wallis</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>564/2056/R</i>		<i>Mr B Ong</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>565/2057/R</i>		<i>Mr C Patience & Miss V Patience</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>563/2087/R</i>		<i>Mr Patience</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>567/2059/R</i>		<i>Mr Walker</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>561/2054/R</i>		<i>Mrs E Laing</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>49/563/FD</i>		<i>Toller Beattie</i>

Issues:

- Biodiversity Issues.
- Sustainable Transport Links and Access Issues.
- Land north of Sampsons Plantation proposed for housing.
- Density of Development.
- Contamination and Viability Issues.
- Affordable Housing Provision.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.3 The scrapyard at Sampson's Plantation is a previously developed site, part of which is suitable for residential development. The site lies to the south of existing housing fronting the B3233 at Yelland Road, but is well-screened by mature woodland on three sides. The Environment Agency objects to Proposal FRE1, calling for Criterion A) to be strengthened to protect the wetland features of the wood on the western part of the site. The Council has made changes to the criterion and to paragraph 13.11, which meet the objection in my view.
- 13.4 The existing site access is along a single track lane with poor visibility at the main road. This access would require improvements in width and visibility to be acceptable to the highway authority. Devon County Council objected to the proposal, calling for it to include the provision of good quality direct pedestrian and cycle links to and along the B3233, and possible contributions to the provision of bus waiting facilities, as well as an improved access. These points have been incorporated into the proposal and text to meet this objection. Paragraph 13.12 now recognises that an alternative access, achieved by demolishing one of the existing bungalows, may be acceptable in specified circumstances.
- 13.5 Two objectors propose that land to the north of the allocated site is included in the development for housing. The Council has proposed an amendment to the inset map, to use some of the land to the north for housing and the rest of the open area for public open space. This seems a good compromise, which increases the area of housing, and thus the viability of the scheme to accommodate remediation costs from contamination. It would provide much needed open space for Fremington, where there is a deficiency. The proposal includes a buffer of 5 metres of landscaping between the extended housing area and the rear gardens of the houses on Yelland Road. This should be enough to retain privacy, and overcome the concerns of counter objectors to the proposal that the open character of this backland is to be lost.
- 13.6 An alternative proposal to locate the additional housing further away towards the woodland would put greater pressure on this woodland and extend the built-up area of the village further into open

countryside. Whilst the additional housing land is part of a larger site considered by the Inspector to the previous Local Plan to be open country, the portion of the site to be developed is very much at the village end, and closely associated with existing development at Merrythorn Road.

- 13.7 The proposed amendment to the site area results in a developable area of 2.33 hectares, excluding the safeguarded woodland. Whilst it has been suggested that only a 5 metre strip of the woodland along its southern and western boundaries should be retained, it was clear to me at site inspection that the woodland is reasonably homogenous in character and its retention as a whole as a key network feature is justified. The Council proposes increasing the number of houses from 40 to 50, a net density of about 21 dwellings to the hectare. Though greater than the net density of the previous proposal in the adopted Local Plan, 17 dwellings to the hectare, this density is still well short of the range recommended in PPG3. The justification for this reduced density is not altogether clear. The provision of the open space to the west of the site, and the buffer strip to the north are presumably excluded from the net figure. There is no reason to do with the character of the site or its surroundings that would lead to the imposition of a low density, and I therefore consider that a density of at least 30 dwellings to the hectare should be achieved, giving a total of 70 dwellings for the site.
- 13.8 Improvements to existing infrastructure will be required where they are fairly and reasonably related to the proposal in scale and kind. Contributions towards educational facilities, towards sewerage improvements and for sustainable urban drainage will all be needed and are referred to in the criteria. Affordable housing provision is set at 30%, a figure which takes into account the remediation costs of the brown field part of the site. For 70 dwellings the affordable component would thus be 21 dwellings.

Recommendation 13.2

I recommend that the Local Plan is modified by changing Proposal FRE1 to 70 dwellings with 21 affordable homes.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Land south of Allenstyle

Objection 449/1743/FD

L Tanner

Issue:

- Whether land south of Allenstyle should be proposed for residential development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.9 The promoted site is a green field site consisting of three fields with a combined area of some 2.7 hectares, which could accommodate about 75 dwellings on the basis of 80% developable area at 35 dwellings to the hectare. The objector proposes low density development in character with the locality. Such development, at around 15 to the hectare would not make efficient use of land and would be in conflict with PPG3 advice to make the best use of land.
- 13.10 The easternmost part of the site is part of the Allenstyle Wood key network feature identified for its

nature conservation value in the Report on the Identification of Local Conservation Sites (CD 072). The Devon Wildlife Trust state that they would object to any building on this key network feature.

- 13.11 I have concluded elsewhere in my report (Chapter 7) that there is no need to identify a large green field site for residential development in order to meet strategic housing requirements. The previously developed sites identified in the district are sufficient to meet the strategic housing needs for the Plan period. Proposal FRE1 (Sampson's Plantation) is intended to meet the housing needs for Fremington and Yelland. There is therefore no justification for a green field development of this size to be pursued.

Recommendation 13.3

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Saltpill Duckpond and Allenstyle Wood Paragraph 13.4 Inset Map 3

Objection 497/2314/R

Fremington Parish Council

Objection 436/1662/F

Mr and Mrs J Day

Issues:

- The inclusion of Saltpill Duckpond as a County Wildlife Site.
- The deletion of Allenstyle Wood as a County Wildlife Site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.12 Saltpill Duckpond was identified as a County Wildlife Site in the Report on the Identification of Local Nature Conservation Sites and Biodiversity Networks in North Devon (CD 072), prepared by Devon Wildlife Trust and the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre. It was identified on the basis of its existing biodiversity, including broadleaved woodland and unimproved neutral marshy grassland, swamp and scrubland. The objector claims that the land has been planted with indigenous hardwoods under a woodland grant scheme. The Council does not comment on whether such an action would undermine the value of the site for nature conservation purposes. This is in any event a matter for the body primarily responsible for designation, the Devon Wildlife Trust.
- 13.13 At the Local Plan inquiry into the currently adopted Local Plan, an objection was considered about the status of Saltpill Duckpond. The Inspector's recommendation was that the duckpond site should be included within the designated Taw Estuary SSSI. At that time the duckpond had no other formal designation, but became a County Wildlife Site in 2001. The recommendation of the Inspector at that time, when the site had no other designation, cannot be used now to undermine the correctness of its status as a County Wildlife Site.
- 13.14 Allenstyle Wood is situated to the south and east of Allenstyle road on the southern side of

Fremington. The site was also identified as a County Wildlife Site in the Report (CD 072). The site was subsequently de-designated since there was lack of the landowner's permission for surveyors to inspect the land. In view of this de-designation the site was deleted from Inset Map 3 (IM3/2RD). It is for the Devon Wildlife Trust to accord status to sites and for the Council to act appropriately with regard to showing the designated status on its inset maps.

Recommendation 13.4

I recommend no change to the Local Plan.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Policy FRE2 (Fremington Army Camp)

Objection 197/738/FD

Objection 421/1622/F

Objection 168/364/FD

Devon County Council

M Baker (Property Services) Ltd

Pearce Construction (Barnstaple) Ltd

Issues:

- The need for a flood risk assessment.
- The availability of the site.
- Sustainable transport links.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.15 Fremington Army camp is a large site situated between the village and the Taw estuary, adjacent to Fremington Pill. The site is actively used by the Ministry of Defence and will only become available for redevelopment if it becomes surplus to MOD requirements. If it does become available, a development brief would be required to ensure the camp is redeveloped with a mix of residential, business, recreational and community uses.
- 13.16 The Council accepts the need for a flood risk assessment, and has included an appropriate reference in paragraph 13.17. The reference to the western boundary of the site should however read the eastern boundary at risk of flooding.
- 13.17 M Baker (Property Services) object to the inclusion of the army camp as an allocation in the Local Plan, since it is unlikely that it will come forward during the Plan period. The Council accepts that the site is not currently available for development, and the uncertainty as to whether it will come forward is reflected in its exclusion from the housing land commitments of the Local Plan. The site is also excluded from the potential capacity identified by the Urban Capacity Study. Its deletion from the Local Plan would not result in a shortfall of sufficient housing within North Devon to meet strategic requirements to 2011. Should the site become available, it would represent an important large previously developed windfall site, well related to the local centre of Fremington. In the Council's view Policy FRE2 is required to ensure it is redeveloped comprehensively and appropriately in view of the scale and nature of the site should it become surplus to MoD

requirements.

- 13.18 Whilst official advice is clear that allocations should only be included in Local Plans where there is a likelihood of them being developed in the Plan period, the uncertainty over the future of the Fremington Army Camp makes it something of a special case. Its non-inclusion in the critical housing figures in a sense leaves it to one side of the process and its presence in the Local Plan almost a matter of no consequence. If the criteria listed in FRE2 give some useful indication to the Ministry of Defence as to what the site can be used for, and the constraints upon that use, then the inclusion in the Local Plan can be seen to be of benefit. There is no disadvantage to any party from including Policy FRE2, and given the possible benefits I conclude that it should remain.
- 13.19 Devon County Council raised concerns over matters of sustainable transport links to improve access to the village and the Tarka Trail. These points have been taken up and included in the criteria and paragraph 13.17, and meet the objection in my view.

Recommendation 13.5

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Proposal FRE3 (Petrol Station Site)

Objection 197/739/FD

Devon County Council

Objection 225/710/FD

Government Office for the South West

Issues:

- The requirement for affordable housing.
- Access to Yelland Quay.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.20 Outline Planning permission for three dwellings on the former petrol station site at Yelland was allowed on appeal in June 2002. In view of this permission, Proposal FRE3 and paragraphs 13.18 and 13.19 were deleted from the Revised Deposit Plan. This deletion overcomes the concern of the Government Office that the requirement for 3 affordable dwellings on a site of a total of 6 dwellings was not in accordance with Circular 6/98.
- 13.21 Development of the former petrol station site should not prejudice potential improvements to the junction of the Yelland Quay access lane. Devon County Council had objected to the original proposal and called for the provision of good quality direct pedestrian and cycle links to and along the B3233 and possible contributions to bus waiting facilities. As a result of the allowed appeal, such benefits can now only be considered as part of any reserved matter application.

Recommendation 13.6

I recommend no change to the Local Plan, and that Proposal FRE3 and paragraphs 13.18 and 13.19A remain deleted.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan

Proposal FRE4 (Redevelopment of Yelland Quay)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/740/FD</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>276/995/FD</i>	<i>Devon Wildlife Trust</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>161/339/FD</i>	<i>Mr V G Lacey</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>249/932/FD</i>	<i>North Devon Friends of the Earth</i>

Issues:

- Environmental implications of the proposal.
- The need for sustainable transport links to and from the site.
- Whether the site should be used for housing.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.22 Yelland Quay is a large, previously developed site of 11.75 hectares, on which the former East Yelland Power Station was sited. Paragraph 13.22 lists a variety of possible uses for the site, including industry, recreation, a new power station, public open space and car parking for users of the Tarka Trail.
- 13.23 The Friends of the Earth object to Criterion C) of Proposal FRE4 as it promotes the use of non-sustainable energy production on an environmentally sensitive and important location. There has been a previous planning application for a new gas-fired power station on the site, and the potential for future use as a power station site remains a possibility. PPG20 indicates that a power station is a type of development which may require a coastal location, using water for cooling purposes. If a new power station is proposed for this site, it will need to be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment (EIA), where the national interest for power stations will be balanced against any potential impact on the environment. Criterion C) should therefore remain.
- 13.24 Devon Wildlife Trust draws attention to the existing nature conservation value of the area and its proximity to Braunton Burrows Special Area of Conservation, which has allowed some unusual species to develop. Any ecological impacts from development must be mitigated with off-site habitat creation. The Council accepts these points and has made appropriate changes to paragraph 13.23, which meet the objection in my view. All impacts on any nature conservation interest over the site and its surroundings would be considered as part of the EIA.
- 13.25 Devon County Council raises the matter of improved pedestrian and cycle links onto the B3233 and the Tarka Trail. Amendments to paragraph 13.23 of the Plan and Criterion E) of FRE4 take these into account.
- 13.26 Mr Lacey would like to see the site used for housing. Whilst it is previously developed land, the

site is nearly a kilometre from the development boundary for Yelland and 3 kilometres from the centre of Fremington. Residential development on this site would involve much use of the car for even local journeys and would thus be unsustainable. It would also conflict with any industrial use of the site, which could make living conditions unpleasant.

Recommendation 13.7

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Proposal FRE5 (Community Parks and Woodland)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>83/154/FD</i>	<i>Conditionally Withdrawn</i>	<i>Childrens Hospice South West</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>609/2123/R</i>		<i>M D & R M Stevens</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>629/2181/R</i>		<i>Mandy J Ridd</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>615/2149/R</i>		<i>Mr & Mrs D Fentiman</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>614/2135/R</i>		<i>Mr & Mrs Dearson</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>628/2178/R</i>		<i>Mr & Mrs Lavercombe</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>622/2167/R</i>		<i>Mr & Mrs P L Hogg</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>560/2052/R</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs A Preston</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>4/5/FD</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs D A Hall</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>436/1661/F</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs J Day</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>44/57/FD</i>		<i>Mr and Mrs J W Clarke</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>621/2166/R</i>		<i>Mr B R Argall</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>617/2157/R</i>		<i>Mr C C Withecombe</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>612/2130/R</i>		<i>Mr C E James</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>608/2118/R</i>		<i>Mr C J Pyne</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>613/2133/R</i>		<i>Mr D Green</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>616/2153/R</i>		<i>Mr D Nixon</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>562/2055/R</i>		<i>Mr Guy Richards</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>610/2124/R</i>		<i>Mr T Beer</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>619/2159/R</i>		<i>Mr V J Perry</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>623/2170/R</i>		<i>Mrs E Lewis</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>618/2158/R</i>		<i>P E Corner</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>611/2126/R</i>		<i>Sharon James</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>319/1226/F</i>		<i>South West Forest</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>470/1803/F</i>		<i>Diocese of Exeter</i>

Issues:

- General principles for community woodland.
- Issues of safety, security and residential amenity.
- Loss of views and landscape impact.
- Loss of agricultural land and biodiversity issues.
- Loss of property values.
- Location of mains sewer and damage to infrastructure.
- Parking and congestion in Yelland Road.
- Proposals for alternative locations for community woodland.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.27 Community Woodlands are areas of new tree planting incorporating informal open spaces that are close to settlements with good public access. Sites identified for potential community woodlands are set out in the settlement chapters and shown on the relevant inset maps. Paragraph 10,10A has been included in the Local Plan to set out the role of community woodlands. It deals with the objections of South West Forest, with regard to the First Deposit Plan. The need for community woodland has been questioned. The Open Space Strategy for North Devon identified major deficiencies for all types of open space provision within Fremington, and recommended that a community woodland accessible to Fremington be provided.
- 13.28 Several objections were received covering safety and security issues. There are fears of loss of security if new woodland is planted close to the boundaries of surrounding residential properties, including the Children's Hospice at Little Bridge House. This clearly could be a problem for some residents, so the Council is careful to point out that the sites identified are indicative only. The precise siting of the trees will have to be planned sensitively to ensure that security and community safety matters are properly considered. The draft SPG (CD091) indicates that community woodlands are expected to be implemented by a local community in partnership with the district and parish councils, and with South West Forest. Safety and security can be dealt with through public consultation, including taking the advice of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's Architectural Liaison Officer.
- 13.29 Some objectors raised concerns about loss of views and harm to the wider landscape character. Whilst it is difficult to imagine a mature mixed woodland doing anything other than enhancing a landscape, the position of the proposed wood adjoining the Yelland Road could have an adverse impact. The open views from that stretch of Yelland Road down towards and across the estuary are simply stunning, and it would be a shame if planting was allowed to rise in the foreground and block these views. They are not only enjoyed by the residents, but also by all those who pass along the road. The area of community forest shown could be drastically revised to relate more to the Tarka Trail and the existing wood to the north of Yelland Road, protecting the open aspect from the built-up parts of Fremington.
- 13.30 Some objectors query the potential loss of agricultural land. It is not the intention to turn good quality agricultural land over to trees. Most of the land which would be covered by community woodland is classified as Grade 3b (moderate). Its loss for woodland would not be considered significant in terms of the national agricultural interest. The provision of community woodland would create new opportunities for wildlife, although a woodland in Fremington would not be an ideal habitat for adders, as is feared by some objectors. Deer might well be encouraged to take up residence. Property values are unlikely to be affected by the presence nearby of woodland. In any event, the value of property is not a proper planning matter. The position of the mains sewer that crosses the proposed community woodland would be a constraint. Given my remarks about views, it would be better to keep the woodland to the north of the sewer.

- 13.31 Community woodlands are intended to be used and enjoyed primarily by the local population, and there should be good access to them on foot and by cycle, using the Tarka Trail for instance. The need for car parking is likely to be relatively low, and congestion on Yelland Road unlikely. If a small car park is required its location could be considered as part of the overall design and siting for the woodland.
- 13.32 Several objections query how and when the woodlands are to be implemented. This will have to depend on the local community and landowners, whose support is necessary if the woodland is to succeed. A number of proposals have been made for alternative sites for community woodlands. Some of these may well be feasible, and there is no limit to the number or size of community woodlands that could be provided around the villages of Fremington and Yelland. The areas shown under FRE5 on Inset Map 3 should be regarded as a starting point for the gradual development of community woodlands. I would expect the larger block to migrate northwards away from Yelland Road towards the Tarka Trail, and for other schemes to come forward in the next version of the Local Plan.

Recommendation 13.8

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan.

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan Proposal FRE6 (Community Centre) Paragraph 13.31

Objection 311/1197/F

Environment Agency

Objection 1/1/FD

Mr and Mrs G W Dunn

Issues:

- Impact on residential amenities.
- Sustainable urban drainage systems.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 13.33 A new community centre for Fremington and Yelland is proposed on land north of Beechfield Road. Proposal FRE6 refers to this. The Environment Agency would like to see a reference to the use of sustainable urban drainage systems to reflect Policy DVS7, with no drainage permitted into the Fremington Stream. The Council are happy to accommodate this request and have made the necessary change to paragraph 13.31.
- 13.34 Mr and Mrs Dunn are concerned about the proposal, fearing further disturbance from discos and other activities involving young people. A new building should be capable of being designed to contain noise rather than amplify it to the detriment of neighbouring amenities. This is a matter for detailed design and siting. The open space is currently used as a football pitch, car park and equipped play area and the site is therefore suitable in principle for a community building.

Recommendation 13.9

I recommend no change to this part of the Local Plan

Fremington and Yelland Action Plan

Proposal FRE7 (Safeguarding Car Parks in Fremington)

Objection 225/711/FD

Government Office for the South West

Objection 410/2182/R

Larkbear Consortium

Issues:

- Whether the wording of the policy is too elaborate.
- Whether car parking *of strategic importance* should be safeguarded.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

13.35 The GOSW objection was to Policy FRE7 being over-elaborate. It was not clear to the Government Office why these particular car parks need to be safeguarded. The Council is happy to see the policy deleted, since it relies on general Policy TRA8 to safeguard public car parks from redevelopment throughout the Local Plan area.

13.36 The counter objection from the Larkbear Consortium refers to paragraph 13.32, claiming that the car parks are of strategic importance. Whilst this is perhaps a rather grandiose claim on the part of the Local Plan, the Council attempts to justify its stance with reference to high levels of car ownership in rural Devon. Nonetheless, it is prepared to see the policy go. The Larkbear objection does not seek to justify its retention based on any specific local reason relating to traffic movements. I see no reason therefore why this specific policy should remain in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 13.10

I recommend that Policy FRE7 should remain deleted.

Chapter 14 – Instow Action Plan

Instow Action Plan

Land at Lane End Road, Instow

Objection 221/632/FD

Mr J Chichester

Objection 221/631/FD

Mr J Chichester

Issues:

- Whether land off Lane End Road should be proposed for residential development.
- Whether land off Lane End Road should be shown on Inset Map 4 as open space.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

14.1 The Land off Lane End Road was formerly used as allotments. It is shown on Inset Map 4 as public open space, but has permission for residential development for 4 dwellings, currently under construction. Mr Chichester's objection calls for it to be allocated for residential development. There is no need to do this as the site is being developed however. A proposed change to the Inset Map (IM4/2RD) deletes the open space notation.

Recommendation 14.1

I recommend that the open space provision off Lane End Road remains deleted.

Instow Action Plan

Land at Lane End Close, Instow

Objection 222/634/FD

Mrs Allen

Objection 222/633/FD

Mrs Allen

Objection 638/2284/R

Rose Day

Issues:

- Whether land off Lane End Close should be proposed for residential development.
- Whether land off Lane End Close should be shown on Inset Map 4 as open space.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

14.2 This site off Lane End Close is a prominent corner plot, intended to be maintained as a landscaped open space under a condition applied to an adjacent planning permission in 1988. Two applications to build a house on the site have been refused and dismissed at appeal. Nonetheless use of the land for housing may be a more realistic way forward for the site, which is unattractive. At 0.05 hectares

- 14.3 however, it is too small for a formal allocation, and if developed can be regarded as a windfall site. The village has a deficiency of public open space, but the Local Plan proposes a new larger area of open space on land west of the Atturm Camp (Proposal INS1). This larger site is very close to the site on Lane End Close, and the further safeguarding of the latter as open space is no longer justified.

Recommendation 14.2

I recommend that the land at Lane End Close remains deleted from Inset Map 4.

Instow Action Plan

Inset Map 4 – (Development Boundary)

<i>Objection</i>	<i>410/2184/R</i>	<i>Larkbear Consortium</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>589/2086/R</i>	<i>Mr Korzeneitz</i>
<i>Objection</i>	<i>197/835/F</i>	<i>Devon County Council</i>

Issues:

- Whether land at The Meadows and Barton Cross, Instow should be within the Coastal Preservation Area.
- The appropriate location for the development boundary around The Meadows.
- Impact on the development strategy for Barnstaple.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 14.4 Devon County Council object to the inclusion of two areas at Instow within the Coastal Preservation Area: the Royal Marines base at Barton Cross and land at The Meadows. The Royal Marine base is a previously developed site that is prominent from the beach and estuary. It is a site that has been substantially affected by development however and therefore fails to meet one of the criteria for inclusion in the CPA, as set out in paragraph 4.30 of the adopted Devon Structure Plan (Devon to 2016). Despite its prominence it does not justify inclusion in the CPA in my view.
- 14.5 Land at the Meadows is a large garden surrounded by hedges. It is a previously developed site and is not generally visible from the beach, sea or estuary. Again it does not merit inclusion in the CPA. The land was included within the development boundary under an amendment at Revised Deposit stage (IM4/3RD). A further extension has been proposed to the south, of more land surrounded by hedging, and its inclusion would produce a more logical boundary to the settlement.
- 14.6 A counter objection to this extension argues that it would invite further development, thus diluting the strategy of focusing development in Barnstaple. There are no sites in Instow proposed for residential development and the Coastal Preservation Area surrounding the development boundary will limit opportunities for new sites to be identified outside the village. Development of this small site for around 15 dwellings would come within the scope of Policy HSG2 as a windfall site, without threatening the overall strategy as claimed.

Recommendation 14.3

I recommend that the development boundary and the extent of the CPA on Inset Map 4 is amended to include both land at The Meadows and land adjoining Marsh Lane as shown in Appendix 1 to Statement No: LPA/INSETMAP4/411, and that the CPA boundary is amended to exclude the Royal Marine base at Barton Cross.

Instow Action Plan Sport and Recreation Paragraph 14.15

Objection 511/2289/R

Taw - Torridge Estuary Forum

Issues:

- Whether 'atturm' should be in capital letters.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

14.7 The issue here is how the Royal Marine base at Barton Cross should be described. The Taw-Torridge Estuary Forum indicates that the title should be "Amphibious Trials and Testing Unit Royal Marines". The acronym ATTURM should therefore be expressed in capital letters.

Recommendation 14.4

I recommend that "ATTURM" should be expressed in capital letters in the heading to paragraph 14.15 and in the paragraph itself.

Instow Action Plan Car Parking Policy INS3 (Safeguarding Car Parks)

Objection 225/712/FD

Government Office for the South West

Objection 410/2183/R

Larkbear Consortium

Issues:

- Whether the policy is too elaborate.
- Whether car parking of strategic importance should be safeguarded.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 14.8 The GOSW objection was to Policy INS3 being over-elaborate. It was not clear to the Government Office why these particular car parks need to be safeguarded. The Council is happy to see the policy deleted, since it relies on general Policy TRA8A to safeguard public car parks from redevelopment throughout the Local Plan area.
- 14.9 The counter objection from the Larkbear Consortium refers to paragraph 14.19 claiming that the car parks are of strategic importance. Whilst this is perhaps a rather grandiose claim on the part of the Local Plan, the Council attempts to justify its stance with reference to high levels of car ownership in rural Devon. Nonetheless, it is prepared to see the policy go. The Larkbear objection does not seek to justify its retention based on any specific local reason relating to traffic movements. I see no reason therefore why this specific policy should remain in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 14.5

I recommend that Policy INS3 should remain deleted.

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