

# **TOTNES / DARTINGTON DEVELOPMENT PLAN** **DOCUMENT– PREFERRED OPTIONS**

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# **Totnes / Dartington Development Plan Document**

## **Preferred Options**

**October 2007**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced major changes to the way the planning policy system operates. The old system of Structure Plans, Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance is replaced with a new development plans system. At the local level Local Plans are replaced by Local Development Frameworks (LDFs).
- 1.2 South Hams District Council welcomes the new system and has already adopted the initial documents of its new planning framework for the area – the South Hams LDF Core Strategy and an Area Action Plan for the Sherford New Community. The South Hams LDF will be shorter and more focused than the Local Plan. It will be a portfolio of documents, with more scope for community involvement and a positive approach to sustainable development.
- 1.3 The Totnes/Dartington Development Plan Document (DPD) will be one of the key LDF documents. It will focus upon the provision of approximately 400 dwellings and 5 hectares of new employment land in the Totnes/Dartington area for the period to 2016. It will also need to reflect an awareness of the evolving strategic planning horizon to 2026. It will provide an important mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality.
- 1.4 This document sets out the Preferred Options for the Totnes / Dartington DPD and is available from the Council or on the Council's website: [www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk). It was preceded by consultation on the Issues and Options stage during Autumn 2004.
- 1.5 The Council has set a challenging timetable and is amongst the first authorities to progress LDF documents under the new system. A project plan setting out the timetable for producing the Totnes / Dartington DPD and other LDF documents is included in the approved Local Development Scheme.
- 1.6 The Council is determined to vigorously address local priorities, particularly the delivery of affordable housing. It has adopted the aim of "improving the well-being of the people of the South Hams" and has set itself the following priorities:
- Secure a supply of housing for local people at affordable levels

- Create the conditions for the growth and maintenance of quality economic activity
  - Maintain the district's distinctive environment whilst enabling access and sensitive development
  - Maintain a clean environment
  - Work with others to improve access to key services
  - Improve core service performance in a cost-effective way
- 1.7 The South Hams LDF reflects these priorities, particularly those with a spatial dimension.
- 1.8 We want to involve our communities and other interested parties to help shape the contents of the new development policy framework. The LDF includes a Statement of Community Involvement which establishes the minimum standard the Council will deliver in engaging people in the process. If you would like to make any comments on the Totnes / Dartington document please feel free to do so. Your views are important and the Council needs to receive them by **XX December 2007**.
- 1.9 To help you structure your views, either supporting or objecting, a response form and guidance note have been produced. Please relate your comments on the form to the Government's nine Tests of Soundness<sup>1</sup> for LDFs. Copies of the response form and guidance note are available at the Council offices, in local libraries or via the Council's website ([www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk)). Completed forms should be sent to the forward planning team by post, fax or e-mail.
- **Post:** to the Forward Planning Team, South Hams District Council, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes TQ9 5NE
  - **Fax:** marked Forward Planning, Totnes/Dartington Preferred Options to 01803 861404.
  - **E-mail to:** [forward.planning@southhams.gov.uk](mailto:forward.planning@southhams.gov.uk)
- All comments must be received by 4.00pm on **XX December 2007**.**

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<sup>1</sup> More details on the nine Tests of Soundness are available in the Planning Inspectorate document 'Development Plans Examination – A Guide to the Process of Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan Documents' at [www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk](http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk)

## 2. THE NEW PLANNING SYSTEM

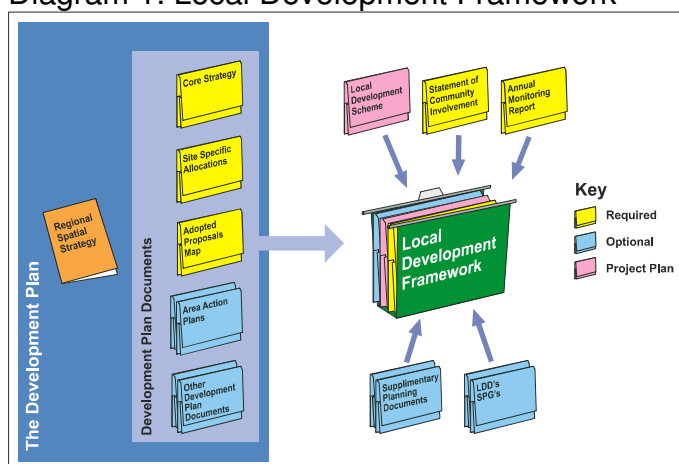
2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) for their area. LDFs must contain clear up to date spatial planning frameworks to enable efficient delivery of new development, especially housing. They are a major plank of the Government's reform programme and objectives for culture change in planning, particularly building around three themes:

- **Sustainable Development** (which is the underlying purpose of the planning system)
- A **Spatial Planning** approach (which deals with not only the use of land, but also the activities on it); and
- **Community Involvement** in planning.

2.2 Planning shapes places where people live and work and has a critical role to play in achieving balanced housing markets and sustainable improvements in the economic performance of an area. It should make places better for people and positively manage rather than simply control development. The South Hams LDF will aim to deliver these objectives.

2.3 An LDF comprises a portfolio of documents that together set out the planning policies and proposals for the area (see diagram 1). It will include a Core Strategy and Development Control Core Policies, site-specific allocations (such as the Totnes / Dartington DPD), Area Action Plans (where needed), a Proposals Map and a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Guidance that is more detailed will be contained within documents known as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). Diagram 1 below illustrates how the suite of documents relates to each other to form the South Hams Local Development Framework.

Diagram 1: Local Development Framework



- 2.4 The new planning system introduces many new acronyms and planning terms. In addition, the Totnes / Dartington DPD refers to many technical planning terms. Therefore, a **glossary of planning terms** has been provided at the back of this document at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.5 The South Hams planning documents can be found on the Council website: [www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk) or can be obtained from the Council offices at Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5NE.

### **3. The Role of the Totnes/Dartington DPD**

- 3.1 The Totnes/Dartington DPD deals with those spatial planning issues that need urgent attention in the market town of Totnes, the nearby community of Dartington and their immediate surrounds. The DPD covers the period up to 2016 but also has an eye to the emerging strategic planning scenario being set by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2026.
- 3.2 This DPD deals with the market town of Totnes and its wider function as an Area Centre. Parts of the built up area of the town lie within the parish boundaries of Dartington and Berry Pomeroy. It is necessary to consider these areas as part of this document, which also reflects the close functional relationship between Dartington and Totnes. Any needs arising from the villages within the parishes of Dartington and Berry Pomeroy will be addressed through the Rural Areas DPD (currently in preparation).
- 3.3 The document establishes the future planning framework for Totnes / Dartington and, in particular, includes site-specific allocations for new housing, employment and mixed development. It sets out and prioritises development principles and objectives, specifying and co-ordinating the requirements for new infrastructure and services. It also provides guidance on affordable housing targets. The document also addresses other local planning issues such as settlement development boundaries and the designation and protection of areas of environmental importance, including open space.
- 3.4 The local spatial context for the document is set by the LDF Core Strategy document that sets out the planning vision and strategy for the district. Subsequent DPDs must be in general accord with the content of the Core Strategy, further details of which are provided below.

#### **The current stage reached in the process**

- 3.5 The Totnes / Dartington DPD is at Preferred Options stage. It builds on earlier work, particularly the Issues and Options stage in October 2004. It is accompanied by a formal Sustainability Appraisal report that considers the social, environmental and economic effects of the options proposed.
- 3.6 Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks states that the preferred options stage in the LDF process should consider alternative options and set out the reasons for the selection of the preferred options. The Totnes/Dartington DPD details eleven proposals, of which (proposals 5, 6 and 7) are for housing and/or employment development. The consideration of the alternative options and selection of the preferred alternatives is detailed in section 8 'Site Selection Process', **Appendix X** the Sustainability Threshold

Assessment (STA) matrix and the Sustainability Threshold Assessment Evidence Base Paper.

- 3.7 For the remaining proposals a summary of options features after each policy. This sets out the alternative options considered and justifies the approach each policy takes.
- 3.8 The DPD provides an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to respond to the options proposed. It also provides an opportunity to examine alternative proposals provided that these meet the key objectives set out and are compatible with the spatial vision and spatial objectives of the South Hams LDF Core Strategy.

### ***Timetable***

- 3.9 The timetable for the Totnes / Dartington DPD is as follows;
  - Preferred Options Stage – October 2007
  - Submission and Formal Consultation – May 2008
  - Examination – November 2008
  - Adoption – June 2009

## 4. THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 The wider context for planning in the South Hams is set by national, regional and county guidance. The government's new planning system involves the replacement of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) and Structure Plans with Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), and the replacement of Local Plans with Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The Development Plan for the South Hams will ultimately consist of the RSS and the South Hams LDF.

### *National Level*

- 4.2 At national level, Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). These are available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk).
- 4.3 The Government's key planning objective is to create sustainable patterns of development. It published PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005) which sets the context of sustainability in the planning system. The aim of sustainable development is to create a better quality of life for all communities through balancing the objectives of providing housing and employment land and accessible facilities against those of protecting and enhancing the landscape and the social and cultural realm. Options that are likely to deliver sustainable development include:
- i) development within urban areas around existing town and suburban centres and other areas which are or can be well served by public transport, and
  - ii) extensions to existing urban areas that exploit or improve existing infrastructure and services and are well served by public transport, including developing in public transport corridors, or will generate good public transport as part of the development.
- 4.4 To identify the most appropriate forms of development, local planning authorities need to explore the order of preference for the location of development and the sequence in which development should take place. The principle of re-using previously developed sites is the most sustainable option. However, re-use of land (and buildings) is only one aspect of sustainable development. Other aspects relate to resource and energy implications, including the need to travel.
- 4.5 In sustainability terms, priority should be given to brownfield opportunities. Next preference is given to greenfield sites that can serve as urban extensions that are accessible by public transport, have

access to local employment opportunities, and a range of facilities and services.

### ***Regional Spatial Strategy & Devon Structure Plan***

- 4.6 At regional level, guidance to 2016 (RPG10) was approved in September 2001. This will be replaced by the RSS being prepared by the South West Regional Assembly, which will have an horizon to 2026. The Submission version of the RSS was published in June 2006, examined during summer 2007 and is due to be adopted in 2008. The RSS documents are available at [www.southwest-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk).
- 4.7 At county level, the adopted Devon Structure Plan sets the strategy for Devon to 2016. Structure Plans have been abolished under the new Act but the Devon Plan will be saved for three years from adoption (October 2004) or until replaced by the new RSS. Saved policies in the Structure Plan highlight the important role Area Centres such as Totnes play in serving their rural hinterland and this has been taken forward into the South Hams Core Strategy. Regarding provision for new development, the Structure Plan allocates a strategic level of housing and employment development for the South Hams as a whole, including specific figures for the rural part of the district outside of the Plymouth Principal Urban Area. The distribution of this development to specific settlements has been decided through the Core Strategy with approximately 400 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment land identified to meet the needs of the Totnes area.
- 4.8 RPG10 and the emerging RSS provide the wider strategy and set out the district wide planning context for the South Hams within which local development plans are prepared. However, they do not get down to the level of dealing with specific market towns such as Totnes.

### ***South Hams Local Plan***

- 4.9 The South Hams Local Plan (1989-2001) was adopted in April 1996. Although it had a 2001 horizon, its policies are still relevant to planning in the South Hams today and are “saved” under the provisions of the new Planning Act for a period of three years or more from September 2004 (with the scope to extend this period further) unless they are replaced before then by parts of the LDF. Appendix X sets out a schedule of policies in this document and which Local Plan policies (from part 6: Totnes Area) they will replace. It also sets out the links between the policies in this document and those in the adopted Core Strategy and emerging Development Control Core Policies.
- 4.10 The draft South Hams Local Plan Review (1995-2011) was published in January 2002 and was not continued beyond the First Deposit stage due to the Council’s decision to switch at an early stage to the new LDF system. However, much of the work in preparing the Local Plan Review, representations received in response to the plan, comments

made at subsequent meetings, and background research carried out have helped to inform preparation of the South Hams LDF.

## ***South Hams Local Development Framework***

### ***Core Strategy***

4.11 The Council adopted its Core Strategy in December 2006. This document contains the planning vision and strategy for the district and the Totnes/Dartington DPD must accord with it. The Core Strategy is available on the Council's website ([www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk)). Totnes is designated in policy CS1: Location of Development as an Area Centre and Dartington as a village. The Core Strategy defines Area Centres as "settlements that function as focal points for the sustainable provision of local housing and employment opportunities, education facilities and other local services. They should be accessible to the communities they serve and well related to public transport and the strategic road network". Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy allocates approximately 400 dwellings to the Totnes area up to 2016, whilst policy CS3 allocates approximately 5ha of employment land for the area during this period. The Core Strategy is not site specific about the precise location of these dwellings and employment land, which is the role of this document.

### ***Site Specific Allocations Document***

4.12 A thorough and detailed assessment of alternative options is required for the location of new development in the Totnes area. Work on this began as part of the "Area Action Plans / Site Specific Allocations: Issues, Options and Preferred Options" (October 2004). This document contained a section on the Totnes area that set out the local context and put forward a number of initial site options for the provision of new housing and employment land.

4.13 The Council canvassed opinion on the possible site options, which at that time, from the evidence available to the Council, appeared to be the most sustainable options. Responses indicated a similar level of support from the public for each of the sites proposed. The results of this consultation form part of the evidence base and are available on the Council's website ([www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk)).

### ***Emerging Policies***

4.14 The Council recently consulted on the Preferred Option stage of two emerging DPDs in July 2007. These DPDs have both fed into the preparation of this document, and will inform the delivery of the proposals included within it.

4.15 The Development Control Core Policies (DCCP) sets out key policies that will be used to determine planning applications. Policies include

design, sustainable construction, car parking, transport and access and Town Centre Zones and are of relevance to this document. The DCCP DPD is scheduled for submission in March 2008, Examination in October 2008 and adoption in June 2009.

- 4.16 The Affordable Housing DPD sets out the Council's policy on thresholds and percentages for affordable housing. In view of Affordable Housing being the Council's number one corporate priority, this document is scheduled for a more expedient timetable than the DCCP with submission expected December 2007, Examination in June 2008 and Adoption in January 2009. An Affordable Housing SPD has been prepared (draft published September 2007) that explains how the policy will work in practice, including mechanisms, formulas etc for the delivery of affordable housing. Adoption of this document is scheduled for January 2008.

### ***South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy***

- 4.17 The Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2011 is prepared by the South Hams Strategic Partnership (of which the District Council is a partner) and sets the overarching aim to improve the well being of the people of the South Hams in a sustainable way and sets the vision for organisations delivering services across the district for the next 5 years. It has the four key themes of:

- Sustainable Development
- Competitive Local Economy
- Community Vibrancy, and
- Quality Environment

It also sets two cross-cutting themes of social inclusion and climate change. The LDF is expected to give a spatial expression to these themes.

## 5. The Local Context & Evidence Base

5.1 The LDF needs to complement and be informed by other strategies. This document should give spatial expression to the priorities of the South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy, the Totnes and District Community Plan (prepared under the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative) and other plans relating to the Totnes Area. The document should also reflect the plans and strategies of other authorities such as the Devon Local Transport Plan and other strategies prepared by the Council itself such as the Housing Strategy and Prosperity Strategy.

5.2 Several studies looking at key issues in the district have been commissioned and these will help to inform the production of the South Hams LDF.

- Housing Needs Studies: A 2006 district wide Housing Needs Survey in conjunction with a Housing Market and Needs Assessment for the Plymouth Housing Market Area was commissioned in 2006 by South Hams District Council, Plymouth City Council, West Devon Borough Council, Caradon District Council in consultation with the private sector. This study was carried out by David Couttie Associates (DCA). An earlier Housing Needs Survey (1998) of Plymouth and South Hams and an update to this survey (2002), jointly commissioned by South Hams District Council, Plymouth City Council and the Housing Corporation had been carried out by Opinion Research Services (ORS).
- Detailed viability work including Baker Associates study on “viability of housing proposals in the First Deposit Local Plan” (April 2004) and the Adams Integra Viability Study (currently in preparation).
- An Employment Land Review undertaken by GVA Grimley, Commissioned by South Hams, North Devon and Torridge District Councils and West Devon Borough Council [September 2006].
- An Urban Capacity Study commissioned by the Council and undertaken by Baker Associates in October 2006.
- A district-wide Strategic Flood Risk Assessment commissioned by the Council and undertaken by specialists Scott Wilson (Level 1 study - spring 2007).
- A Landscape Character Assessment currently under preparation.
- A Study into Planning for Quality of Life in a Sensitive Rural Environment jointly commissioned by South Hams District Council and the Countryside Agency and carried out by the Planning Co-Operative (2002).
- Draft Public Open Space Strategy (2006)

5.3 In relation to the Totnes / Dartington area the following documents are also of relevance:

- South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy, including the South Hams Strategic Partnership Asset Mapping exercise (2007)
- Totnes Town Council Strategic Plan (Feb 2007)
- Dartington Parish Appraisal (1998)
- Totnes Conservation Area Appraisal
- Dartington Housing Needs Survey (Anticipated 2007/08)
- Southern Area Design our Space
- Concept Statements (particularly those published alongside the Local Plan Review 2002)
- Study of Totnes retail provision and street frontage analysis (July 2007)
- Indices of Deprivation (2004) available from [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

### **Key Issues**

5.4 The key messages emerging from the studies and strategies above are set out below. They have helped to shape the approach taken in this DPD to help tackle identified areas of concern:

- The Totnes and District Community Plan highlights the following issues as key themes that need addressing:
  - Access to services
  - Affordable Housing
  - Civic Hall and Market Square Regeneration
  - Economy and Tourism
  - Environment
  - Heritage, Culture and Arts
  - Traffic Management
  - Youth Facilities

5.5 The plan was reviewed in October 2006. This re-affirmed as priority issues the provision of affordable housing for local people and key workers, adding value to existing tourist numbers and encouraging new high value added businesses to provide all year round employment. Also highlighted were good quality and well designed housing stock, providing a range of housing and support for vulnerable people and developing arts, culture and tourism. In terms of physical development the plan review highlighted the creation of a town plan (since renamed the Urban Design Project) and the redevelopment of the Civic Hall and Market Square remained important. This DPD offers the opportunity to consider the issues raised in the Urban Design Project within a statutory planning framework.

## 5.6 Housing

- The Housing Market and Needs Study (2006) demonstrated that in the South Hams over 600 affordable homes per year are needed to address the backlog in supply and newly arising need. This very high level of need has almost doubled since the South Hams Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 1998 and updated in 2002. One of the key findings of the study is that well over half of the need for affordable housing is focused on Totnes town and its surrounding rural area.
- The South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy acknowledges the need for affordable housing and the impact that the lack of this provision can have on recruitment and retention of employees.
- The Totnes and District Community Plan established an affordable housing working group which is looking to support increased provision of affordable, low-impact, self-build housing in the Totnes and District area.

## 5.7 Employment

- The Employment Land Review (September 2006) has highlighted a lack of land and commercial premises in tandem with an increasing demand for premises district wide. In relation to Totnes, there is a continuing requirement to provide employment land to meet the economic needs arising from the town.
- The South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan aims to create conditions for new and innovative business to develop and encourage business practices that protect the natural environment.

## 5.8 Community

- The South Hams Community Strategy highlights the issue of an aging population, the loss the young adults and the impact this is having on mixed and balanced communities. The action plan seeks to increase access to key services and information.
- The South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy seeks to support opportunities for increasing community activity and volunteering. The improvements to existing community facilities and new facilities proposed in this document should enable this to happen at an increased rate.
- The draft South Hams Public Space Strategy (November 2006) identifies that the following deficiencies of outdoor sports facilities exist in Totnes: 1 adult football pitch, 1 junior football pitch, 3 mini-soccer pitches and 1 adult rugby pitch.
- Totnes Town Council's key priorities as outlined in their Strategic Plan are tourism, community, accessibility and heritage.

- The Totnes and District Community Plan identifies the following issues for the town that need to be considered:
  - a. increasing access to High Street and Fore Street;
  - b. better pedestrian links between station and town centre;
  - c. the opportunity to exploit the river in terms of its use for public transport;
  - d. the need for the Tourism Information Centre to be more centrally located;
  - e. the opportunity presented by a number of redundant buildings that could be used to provide locations for community needs such as creative industry starter units and affordable accommodation.;
  - f. Rotherfold as an underused public space within the town and calls for the regeneration of this to maximise the opportunity of this community asset;
  - g. an enhancement scheme for Bridgetown which would include a redesigned streetscape and the creation of public space outside St John's church;
  - h. the rich heritage and cultural uniqueness of Totnes;
  - i. the towns existing expertise in the arts, creative industries, independent retail and environmental / green business and the need to develop this further;
  - j. it also includes reference to the Bridgetown consultation day held in November 2003 which specifically identified Steamer Quay, Furze Road Play Area and traffic management as priority issues with a spatial dimension.
  - k. The review of this plan suggests Steamer Quay as a possible location for a Riverside Market prioritizing local traders and reflecting Totnes's local identity and areas of excellence (artisans and artists, local food etc.).

## 5.9 Environment

- The South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan seeks to protect and wherever possible enhance landscape and biodiversity. This forms an integral part of the site selection process.
- The Totnes and District Community Plan (2005) and Totnes Town Council Strategic Plan (2007) suggest a project to comprehensively redevelop and regenerate the Civic Hall and Market Square is needed. The review of the Totnes Community Plan acknowledges the environment as a key asset for the town's visitors and residents and is placed high on the community's agenda.
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (level 1) identifies areas of both Totnes and Dartington as falling within Flood Zones 2 & 3 (as defined in appendix D of PPS25: Development and Flood Risk). The provision of 400 dwellings in Totnes could mean that some development within Flood Zones 2 and 3 will have to be considered. Therefore, for sustainability reasons the level 1 report recommends a level 2 SFRA is required as

potential developments lie within Flood Zones 2 and 3. This second stage will apply the exception test to specific proposals (as set out in PPS25) and inform subsequent stages of this document.

- The Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 “Devon on the Move” identifies that Totnes experiences traffic congestion at key junctions which can be particularly severe during summer months. Furthermore, the town centre has a need to improve the quality of the streetscape and highway fabric to match the high quality of the historic built environment. This point is also picked up in the Totnes and District Community Plan which suggests a project to enhance and calm the traffic in Fore Street / High Street is needed.
- The Totnes Conservation Area Appraisal notes that Totnes is undoubtedly the most important historic settlement in the South Hams. The Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 and has as its focus the continuous thoroughfare across the River Dart that joins Bridgetown to Cistern Street via Fore Street and High Street. The original designated area has been extended on several occasions. It now includes 412 of the 438 Listed Buildings in the Parish of Totnes. Half of the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area front the continuous thoroughfare through the town. This represents one of the most impressive concentrations of Listed Buildings in any English country town.

## 6. VISION

### *The Vision*

6.1 The vision for the South Hams district is set out in the Core Strategy, which provides the spatial context for the LDF. This vision is clearly fundamental to this document but of particular relevance in developing the planning framework for the Totnes / Dartington area are:

- Meeting communities' needs locally;
- Securing sustainable development;
- Protecting the regeneration of market towns and villages and rural diversification;
- Prioritising developments for affordable homes and new jobs;
- Protecting and enhancing the area's precious environmental heritage.

Increasing importance must also be given to:

- Adapting to and mitigating the challenges of climate change

6.2 These aspirations can be translated to create a specific vision to underpin the provision of new development in the Totnes / Dartington set out below.

6.3 The location of Totnes alongside the River Dart has been the most significant factor influencing the form of the town's development over the centuries. The first bridge across the river is reputed to have been built by the time King John came to rule in 1216. Totnes remains the lowest bridging point on the River Dart and this is very significant in terms of how Totnes and the wider area function. Congestion along the main route through the town has become a frequent occurrence in recent years. The majority of the town's housing development during the second half of the twentieth century took place across the river from the historic town. This large residential area of Bridgetown accommodates about half of the town's population, yet nearly all of the facilities and services are across on the western side of the river. The lower end of the town centre adjoins the west bank of the river yet has a poor functional relationship to it. Much could be done to improve this and to enable the town centre and the river to jointly become a better community resource and focus of activity.

6.4 Apart from being such a significant physical element, the River Dart is a huge asset to Totnes. It is acknowledged as one of the most beautiful rivers in the country. When looking to the future, much more could be made of the opportunities that this location provides. There is scope to significantly enhance the function and appearance of the riverside areas of the town and for new development to utilise such a setting to provide high quality opportunities befitting Totnes. As a part

of this, there is scope to better integrate the two halves of the town, improving their connectivity, and expanding the opportunity for Totnes residents and visitors alike to enjoy and utilise the riverside setting of the town.

- 6.5 Totnes historical environment is also a key asset as illustrated by the Castle, conservation area and 412 listed buildings. Totnes is renowned for its cultural uniqueness, distinctive independent retail character, environmental credentials and active community. This is reflected in the many groups and activities that occur within the town. Of particular relevance to this document are the Totnes and District Community Plan Working Groups, Totnes and District Society, Transition Town Totnes and various groups with an interest in sustainable construction, environmentally responsible building and/or affordable housing. Partnership working with these and other groups offers a way to ensure the unique characteristics of Totnes the place are reflected in this document.
- 6.6 The cluster of hamlets that make up the parish of Dartington has a strong local identity and sense of community. The Dartington Hall Estate is a key feature of the area and a significant land owner. The village benefits from good provision from local services notably the primary school, village shop and post office and village hall. The Cider Press centre is a significant retail outlet which also serves to attract tourists. Engagement with land owners, Dartington Parish Council and other community groups is therefore essential to ensure that the identity of Dartington is reflected in this document.

### **The Vision**

*New development will provide for high quality, locally distinctive, low carbon, sustainable development, that meets the needs of the Totnes / Dartington area, particularly for affordable housing and jobs, in a way that protects and enhances the environment and is well-related to the existing urban fabric.*

*For Totnes the focus of the town will be widened from the town centre to include the River Dart. This will help to increase the vitality, community togetherness and self containment of the town as a whole and assist the well-being of Bridgetown.*

*For Dartington the settlement's sustainability will be enhanced through recognition of its inter-dependence with Totnes while ensuring that local character and identity will be preserved.*

- 6.7 Achievement of the vision will require close working and cooperation with key organisations and agencies that cover the area. The planned new development will be expected to deliver essential affordable housing and employment opportunities and contribute towards the provision of local community facilities. New development will need to

be located where it has good access to existing facilities and is able to enhance the relationship of Totnes with the River Dart.

## 7. OBJECTIVES

7.1 The vision for the Core Strategy is underpinned by a range of strategic objectives. The Totnes/Dartington DPD needs to show clear conformity to, and consistency with, these objectives. At the same time it needs to develop objectives that are more specifically geared to this document. This section sets out those objectives which are of particular importance to the planning framework for the Totnes/Dartington area. Some objectives have been modified from those that appear in the Core Strategy reflecting the particular circumstances of the area. The objectives are set out under the four key themes of sustainable development; 'housing', 'economy', 'transport and accessibility' and 'environment'. These also reflect the themes of the South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy which are 'Affordable Homes', 'Competitive Local Economy', 'Community Vibrancy' 'Quality Built and Natural Environment'. 'Social Inclusion' and 'Climate Change' are cross-cutting themes in the South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy and also underpin this document.

### 7.2 *Housing*

**SO1:** *Ensure that the current and future housing needs of the community are met;*

**SO2:** *Provide affordable housing to meet local needs;*

**SO3:** *Secure high quality, locally distinctive, low carbon, sustainable housing developments;*

**SO4:** *Promote mixed use, mixed type, tenure blind schemes to meet the range of identified housing needs;*

**SO5:** *Provide for housing at the highest densities suitable for the site to ensure an efficient use of land without compromising design and layout quality;*

**SO6:** *Ensure green infrastructure is integral to development.*

7.3 The Totnes/Dartington DPD addresses all of the strategic housing objectives and will help to achieve them in a number of ways. It will help meet the strategic requirements for housing in the South Hams and will require a high percentage of new housing to be affordable to help meet the needs of local people. Mixed use development will be promoted on suitable sites, incorporating mixed type and mixed tenure housing at the highest density suitable and exceeding the government's minimum target of 30 dwellings per hectare. Development will be expected to be high quality, locally distinctive, low carbon and sustainable. It should also be an attractive, well designed environment that promotes health and safety.

### 7.4 *Economy*

**SO7:** *Regenerate the district's towns, villages and their hinterlands, using previously developed land and existing buildings where appropriate;*

**SO8:** Provide for business growth and development, supporting indigenous growth, growth sectors, and providing year round sustainable well-paid employment;

**SO9:** Secure high quality, locally distinctive economic development including tourism;

**SO10:** Improve the district's economic infrastructure;

**SO11:** Increase the scope for additional retail activity to meet the needs of both residents and visitors whilst retaining a vibrant and viable Town Centre Zone

**SO12:** Maximise the opportunities for Totnes to develop and retain its heritage and cultural uniqueness, building on its existing expertise in the arts, independent retail and environmental / green business.

7.5 The DPD will help to achieve the strategic objectives for the economy listed above. It will allocate new land for employment and mixed-use which will help business growth and development to aid self-sufficiency within the Totnes/Dartington area. The emphasis will be very much on producing high quality employment development which recognises the high quality and sensitivity of the local environment. The DPD will also assist in promoting year round, well-paid employment opportunities.

#### 7.6 **Transport and Accessibility**

**SO13:** Develop an integrated transport system which minimises the need to travel, optimises the choices between travel modes and reduces the impact of travel on the environment;

**SO14:** Development that generates a high number of trips must be located where it is accessible to sustainable transport if possible within the Town Centre Zone;

**SO15:** Support the role of Totnes as a market town, especially the town centre;

**SO16:** Retain existing and promote new local services, facilities and amenities for residents and visitors.

7.7 The DPD includes a specific policy for the Totnes Town Centre Zone to provide a locational focus for a range of developments that requiring good levels of accessibility and which will generate a significant number of trips. New development in the Totnes / Dartington area will include both new community facilities and the requirement to contribute to the enhancement of existing services and facilities. For example, improvements are required to enhance pedestrian and cycle accessibility particularly across the River Dart, public transport provision, recreation and open spaces. Development will be expected to be located where it is accessible to sustainable transport and, where provision does not currently exist, this will be required from the development. Development should also ensure there is access for all including those with limited mobility.

## 7.8 **Environment**

**SO17:** *Conserve and enhance the quality of the locality's countryside and river landscape;*

**SO18:** *Conserve and enhance the area's geological resource and the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and species;*

**SO19:** *Conserve and enhance the historic, architectural and archaeological character and features of the area, with special regard to the Totnes Conservation Area, Totnes Castle and Dartington Hall;*

**SO20:** *Promote opportunities for increased sport, recreation and leisure facilities and opportunities in the Totnes and Dartington area including provision for greater enjoyment of the Dart valley;*

**SO21:** *Achieve development which is of a high quality, respects its location and is compatible with the sustainable management of land, soil, air and water; and*

**SO22:** *Promote low carbon sustainable development which will help to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and the emission of greenhouse gases.*

- 7.9 The DPD will aim to ensure that development respects and responds to the landscape and topography of the Totnes / Dartington area notably its riverside setting and surrounding landscape character. Development will be environmentally sustainable. It will minimise the use of non-renewable resources and maximise the use of renewable resources (including energy). It will also seek to ensure that development minimises its demand for energy and water and minimises waste and pollution. Development will be required to conserve and enhance biodiversity and local historic and archaeological features wherever possible.
- 7.10 The development proposals and policies contained in this DPD provide the means for the delivery of these strategic objectives. Each policy and proposal sets out which objectives it is linked to.

## **8. SITE SELECTION PROCESS**

- 8.1 To provide the development required by the Core Strategy, the Council has considered a range of possible locations for housing and employment and mixed-use development in the Totnes / Dartington area. In doing so, it has sought the informal views of a number of key organisations including Devon County Council, the Environment Agency, South West Water, and English Heritage. A detailed comparison of a number of potential development sites has been undertaken and this includes land put forward by landowners throughout the LDF process. The site selection process has been predominantly guided by the Sustainability Appraisal and Sustainability Threshold Assessment that considered a wide range of options and accompanies this document.
- 8.2 The Council has undertaken a thorough assessment of the development options. It has looked at a large number of sites in and around the two settlements and included areas within the search that have been put forward by landowners. This was done to ensure that a robust and comprehensive assessment was undertaken and in the interests of transparency. It should be understood that not all of these sites will be required to come forward for development during the plan period. The options that have been considered are set out in Appendix 1 (an indication is given of the suggested primary uses) and their location is shown on the accompanying Plan 1.

### ***Site Assessment Criteria***

- 8.3 The Council has carefully and thoroughly considered the above potential development site options in order to establish their potential for accommodating new development. To help ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of decisions at every stage of the plan-making process, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is undertaken during the preparation of local development documents. This assesses the perceived social, environmental and economic effects of an LDF document to ensure it accords with sustainable development. **Chapter 12** deals more fully with Sustainability Appraisal.
- 8.4 It is important that any comparative assessment of alternative site options is appropriate to the scale and level of the plan and accompanying SA. To undertake this, a process called Sustainability Threshold Assessment (STA) has been employed. STA is a suitable method to carry out the comparative assessment between the numerous site options at the level of detail required. It is a pragmatic assessment tool well suited for locational and site-specific comparative options assessment.
- 8.5 For STA, the relevant topics are scoped and an objectives-led assessment framework is used to ensure a systematic process and

compatibility with SA and SEA. STA recognises 5 levels of potential effects on Sustainable Development (SD). The importance and significance of effects, together with the possibilities for mitigation / enhancement for each topic are assessed according to its own methods and standards. The overall effects of options on SD are integrated. The use of colours in the overall summary matrix facilitates a clearer understanding of the comparative assessment between options. Additionally, the STA key provides clear definitions that distinguish each threshold level. STA is being used increasingly by planning authorities and developers in the UK to assess locational options and site-specific options.

- 8.6 STA is carried out using the SA Framework of Objectives for Sustainability that were consulted on and confirmed through the SA / SEA process for the Council. This ensures consistency and conformity with the SA / SEA of the other LDF documents. The compare and contrast approach considers all the sustainability objectives. The comparative assessment considers the characteristics of effects, mitigation of adverse effects, opportunities for enhancement, and evidence of commitment to implementation and delivery.
- 8.7 Each sustainability objective is graded accordingly to STA as illustrated in the following key. To help give a relatively quick impression of the outcome of the STA of each site, the result is colour-coded. The colours used follow the “traffic lights” principles with green being the most favoured and able to proceed, yellow – on hold awaiting further assessment but likely to be able to proceed, orange – on hold due to significant sustainability problems and unlikely to proceed, red - stop, not able to proceed due to absolute sustainability constraints. A matrix approach is taken to keep the assessment relevant to the scope and level of the DPD. The commentary on the comparative assessment is kept concise to focus on significant differences between the sites, commitments to mitigation and/or enhancement and referenced to particular evidence where relevant.

<b>Sustainability Threshold Assessment Key</b>	
<b>Red</b>	Absolute sustainability constraints to development
<b>Orange</b>	Problematical and improbable because of known sustainability issues
<b>Yellow</b>	Potential sustainability issues: Mitigation and/or negotiation possible
<b>Light Green</b>	No sustainability constraints and development acceptable
<b>Dark Green</b>	Development actively encouraged as it would resolve an existing sustainability problem
<b>Blue</b>	Neutral or unknown effect

8.8 The key Sustainability Appraisal Objectives used in the STA are:

- Balanced communities
- Access
- Housing
- Quality of the built environment
- Health
- Employment
- Economic growth
- Landscape
- Land and soil quality
- Biodiversity
- Historic environment and cultural heritage
- Minerals
- Energy
- Air Quality
- Waste
- Water

8.9 Appendix 2 presents the STA matrix which records the outcome of the STA process. The matrix provides an overview of how each site option performs against the 16 SA objectives. It is recognised that there are differences in the quantity and quality of the information available across the range of sites assessed.

8.10 The outcome of this STA of each site option has been the basis of the Council's decision making process in reaching its preferred options for development. These are set out in the following chapter.

## 9. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 9.1 Taking information from the range of work undertaken by the Council in preparing this document, together with the results of the 2004 LDF Issues and Options stage consultation work, information gathered from previous local plan consultation exercises and information provided by landowners and others, each potential site has been thoroughly assessed using the Sustainability Threshold Assessment approach (see **Appendix 2**).
- 9.2 Several potential development sites are on previously developed land and, although there is flood risk associated with some of these, they are generally sustainably located for development. However, in view of the need for and relative scarcity of employment land in and around Totnes, combined with the difficulty in identifying appropriate new land for employment development, such sites are primarily protected for continued employment use.
- 9.3 It has been found necessary to advance several greenfield sites in order to meet the Core Strategy requirement to provide for 400 houses and 5 hectares of employment land by 2016.
- 9.4 The Council has arrived at a set of “Preferred Options” that it considers best meets the development requirements of the area. These are set out in the table below.

**Table: 1 - Preferred Development Site Options**

Proposed Site	Site options	Dwellings	Affordable homes	Employment land	Community benefits
Riverside	Bridgetown Riverside and Steamer Quay (5 & 6)	220	More than 110	1.0 ha	Primary school, public open space, enhanced riverside and other public access, footbridge, landscaping and public art
Meadowside	Opposite Puddavine, Dartington Lane Plantation and Field (22, 23 & 24)	150	More than 75	0	Public open space and enhanced public access, landscaping

Civic Square	NA	30	More than 15	0	New community building, new library, scope for other new community facilities, enhanced public space, public art
Bidwell	Bidwell (20)	0	0	4 ha	Public access, landscaping
<b>Totals</b>		<b>400</b>	<b>More than 200</b>	<b>5 ha</b>	

9.5 There follow a series of proposals, both for the treatment of key sites on previously developed land which do not contribute to the Core Strategy housing and employment land requirements, and for the Preferred Development Site Options set out in the table above.

### Sites on Previously Developed Land

#### Baltic Wharf, Totnes

- 9.6 Occupying an important and prominent position on the western bank of the River Dart, Baltic Wharf, provides the west bank river-gateway to the town. Baltic Wharf used to be a timber yard but is now occupied by a range of employment uses, many marine-related including a significant boat yard. The long-established and important employment resource that the site offers is recognised by its designation as an Employment Policy Area over the lifetime of the former local plan. Larger sized employment sites within or close to Totnes are at a premium and the Council recognises the importance of Baltic Wharf to the local economy.
- 9.7 The Council considers that there is scope at Baltic Wharf for re-development and intensification of use. The site is within the Totnes development boundary and consists very largely of previously developed land. There are significant parts of the site that are under-utilised and where little in the way of efficient employment activity takes place. Many of the buildings are of a poor design and quality and inadequate for modern employment use – leftovers from the former use as a timber yard.
- 9.8 The Council supports in principle the regeneration of Baltic Wharf for employment use, believing that the significant potential of the site is presently under-utilised. Apart from the potential benefits that such re-development could bring to Totnes and the local economy more widely, the appearance of the site and its visual impact on the River Dart could be greatly enhanced. The site could also make a significant contribution

to helping achieve the Vision for Totnes through increasing public access to the river and providing significant public realm on the Totnes town side of the Dart.

- 9.9 In order to enable such re-development, it may be necessary for a comprehensive scheme for the whole of the Baltic Wharf site to include some provision for a limited mix of uses. Given the site's position in relation to the rest of the town, this might appropriately include some residential development which could also help to meet some of the need for affordable housing. To be able to support the principle of some housing at Baltic Wharf, the Council would need to be convinced that this is vital to enabling the site's regeneration for employment and would require that in excess of 50% should be affordable for local needs.
- 9.10 Flooding is a significant consideration for this site and any development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 9.11 Proposal 1 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.12

#### **Proposal 1 – Baltic Wharf, Totnes**

The Council considers that Baltic Wharf should be regenerated to provide for its continued employment use and to help deliver quality employment for the town. Key elements of the proposal are:

- a) Employment provision. 12,000 – 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new purpose-built employment floorspace, predominantly in Use Class B1, with some B2 uses;
- b) Retention of boatyard and associated facilities on an area of at least 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>;
- c) Public Open Space. An informal recreation area to the west of Baltic Wharf to be managed for its visual and ecological value, formal public realm within the site and along the river frontage and on-site play provision;
- d) Enhanced and formalised cycle path and footpath provision including riverside access on and adjacent to the site.

#### **9.13 Summary of Options**

A 'do nothing' approach would fail to address the opportunity for regeneration and better use of this site, contrary to the government's objective to promote effective and efficient use of land.

Residential development could remove an important employment resource for the town and surrounding areas.

## **Civic Hall and Square, Totnes**

- 9.14 The Council considers that the only way to deliver a significant improvement to the Civic Hall and Square and deliver a facility befitting Totnes is through the fundamental re-development of the whole area. This should include the small car park adjoining South Street and the 1960s retail buildings flanking the eastern side of the site. This approach would correspond to aspirations set out in several of the community's plans for the town and be in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy's aims for quality environment with community use and ownership of public spaces.
- 9.15 The scheme should be on a mixed-use basis appropriate to its town centre location, and, especially due to its location within the Conservation Area, of a very high design quality. Provision must be made for substantial indoor community space and external public open space. It would also be a good location for the new library provision needed for the town. Continued operation of the various markets must also be enabled.
- 9.16 Such a major redevelopment including the provision of substantial public facilities will be expensive. In order to facilitate such a scheme, the redevelopment is likely to have to be self-financing and will therefore need to include significant commercial and residential elements, including as much affordable housing as is viable (in excess of 50%). This approach would be appropriate given the highly sustainable location of the site in the heart of the town centre and consistent with the Town Centre Zone policy.
- 9.17 Proposal 2 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO1, SO2, So3, SO4, SO5, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO11, SO12, SO14, SO15, SO16, SO19, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.18 **Proposal 2 – Civic Square, Totnes**

Key elements of the proposal for the Civic Square are:

- a. Provision of a new indoor multi-function facility to serve the Totnes community;
- b. Provision of significant high quality outdoor public realm;
- c. The above two elements to provide for the continued functioning of the site as a civic area incorporating the town's markets;
- d. Retail uses at ground floor level;
- e. Scope for commercial, office and residential uses above ground floor level, including as much affordable housing as is viable (in excess of 50%);
- f. Access through the site to facilitate public pedestrian movement between High Street and South Street;
- g. All aspects of design to be of the highest standard respecting the setting of the site;
- h. Possible provision of a new library;
- i. Provision for public art.

## 9.19 Summary of Options

A 'do nothing' approach would neither provide community facilities of an appropriate standard befitting the town, nor address the need for the area and the community facilities located there to be improved and made more fit for purpose.

An entirely residential / commercial development would remove key community facilities for public meetings etc from a central location.

Relocation of community facilities away from the area could result in increased travel by private car and be less accessible to those parts of the community without access to private transport.

### **Dairy Crest site, Totnes.**

- 9.20 One of the town's longest established and most significant employment areas is located immediately to the north of Totnes station, between the main rail line and the River Dart. For many years the site, which extends to about 3.5ha, has had a single use as a milk processing plant / dairy. In May 2007, Dairy Crest, the site owner, announced the intention to cease operating at the site within a matter of months. The Council is very concerned about the likely level of resultant redundancies and the potential impact that this will have on the local economy.
- 9.21 The site is within the Totnes development boundary and consists largely of previously developed land. Although the entrance into the site for large vehicles is poor, its general accessibility is good - it adjoins the main road through Totnes that serves as a bus route and is adjacent to the main line rail station. As a "brownfield" site within the town, it is in principle a prime site for regeneration. The Council considers that re-development of the site should demonstrably contribute to the regeneration of the local economy and that, in the future, it should support at least as many jobs as were provided by Dairy Crest prior to any closure. The potential exists to maximise the site's excellent sustainability credentials and deliver high quality business accommodation with an emphasis on quality job opportunities. The site has the potential to accommodate a Business Centre of Managed Workspace.
- 9.22 The Council considers that the site, if vacated, should be redeveloped on a comprehensive basis for employment uses, believing that the significant potential of the site is presently under-utilised. In order to enable such a re-development on a comprehensive basis, it may be necessary to include some limited mixed-uses.
- 9.23 Any potential re-development scheme will need to be based on a robust viability assessment. In order to enable such re-development, it may be necessary for a comprehensive scheme to include some

provision for mixed uses. This might include some housing which could also help to meet some of the need for affordable homes. To be able to support the principle of some housing, the Council would need to be convinced that this is vital to enabling the site's regeneration for employment and would require that in excess of 50% should be affordable for local needs.

- 9.24 Amongst other issues to be addressed, vehicular access from the main road may need to be improved, a Flood Risk Assessment undertaken and any contamination dealt with. The potential offered by public transport links should be maximised and safe and convenient access provided for. In keeping with the Vision for Totnes, an attractive footpath / cyclepath through the site should be provided linking the A385 to the River Dart. The part of the site adjoining the river should be enhanced for public use and the riverside walk and pedestrian linkages to the town improved.
- 9.25 Again, flooding is a significant consideration for this site and any development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 9.26 Proposal 3 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO13, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

- 9.27 **Proposal 3 – Dairy Crest site, Totnes**  
The key elements of the proposal for the Dairy Crest site are:
- a) Employment provision in Use Classes B1 / B2;
  - b) Footpath / cyclepath through the site linking the main road to the riverside;
  - c) Enhanced public realm adjoining the River Dart with improved pedestrian linkages along the riverside and to the town.

## 9.28 **Summary of Options**

A 'do nothing' approach would fail to address the opportunity for regeneration and better use of this site, contrary to the government's objective to promote effective and efficient use of land.

Residential development could remove an important employment resource for the town and surrounding areas.

## **Webbers Yard, Dartington**

- 9.29 Webbers Yard Employment Estate is located on the north-western flank of Dartington adjoining the main A385. It contains a range of employment uses including significant office space in the architecturally important Lescaze building that occupies the eastern part of the site. The local plan designates the estate as an Employment Policy Area

and also proposes environmental improvement there. This recognises the important role that the estate plays in the local economy but also the fact that its appearance and visual impact on the locality could be enhanced.

9.30 The Council recognises that the Webbers Yard Estate does not currently meet its potential. The buildings there have arisen in an incremental, ad-hoc manner, access and movement within the site are difficult and poorly planned and there is an inefficient use of space overall. The majority of the buildings are of an unattractive design, are of poor quality, and the spaces around them are largely neglected. There is great scope for the appearance of the whole site to be improved. The architecturally significant Lescaze building is masked from view, whilst parking areas and utilitarian buildings dominate the road frontage.

9.31 The Council considers that there is scope at Webbers Yard for re-development and intensification of use. The site is within the Dartington development boundary and consists of previously developed land. The previous paragraph sets out the principal reasons why a comprehensive re-development of this site would be beneficial. In order to enable such regeneration, it may be necessary to include some limited housing development. The Council would need to be convinced that this is vital to enabling the site's regeneration for employment and would require that in excess of 50% should be affordable for local needs.

9.32 Proposal 4 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO16, SO17, SO19, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.33 **Proposal 4 – Webbers Yard, Dartington**

Key elements of the proposal for Webbers Yard, Dartington are:

- a) Employment provision. New purpose-built employment floorspace, predominantly in Use Class B1, with some B2 uses;
- b) Environmental enhancement including sensitive treatment of the A385 frontage;
- c) Retention of the Lescaze building and respect for its setting;
- d) High quality design of the buildings and spaces between them;
- e) Provision of public open space within the site;
- f) Enhanced pedestrian and cycle access in and around the site.

9.34 **Summary of Options**

A 'do nothing' approach would fail to address the opportunity for regeneration and better use of this site, contrary to the government's objective to promote effective and efficient use of land.

Residential development could remove an important employment resource for the area.

## **Preferred Development Site Options**

### **Riverside, Totnes**

- 9.35 Steamer Quay occupies an important, prominent position on the east bank of the River Dart, downstream from the old Totnes Bridge. A mix of uses occupies the area, including employment uses (principally marine related), a seasonal touring caravan site, car and coach parking, and significant public open space including a riverside walkway. The area is very important in tourism terms as Steamer Quay is the landing / disembarkation point for River Dart boat trips and this stretch of the river therefore serves as a significant gateway to the town and the east bank of the river.
- 9.36 The Council considers that this area has great potential for re-development opportunities, where its appearance and public realm could be significantly improved to provide a vibrant riverside – serving as a visitor gateway to the town and a destination in itself. The substantial spaces within the area are currently inefficiently used and the opportunities presented by its riverside location are neglected by the current poor arrangement of land uses. As principal landowner in the area, the Council considers that there is considerable scope for enhancement, including some intensification of uses.
- 9.37 The Sustainable Community Strategy includes a commitment from all the LSP partners to consider releasing any surplus land for Affordable Housing. This site represents an opportunity to do this. It will also be important to retain significant public open space adjacent to the waterside and continuous public access along the river's edge.
- 9.38 Following the sequential approach to searching for development opportunities and the need to utilise the potential offered by previously developed land, the Council considers that the Steamer Quay area of the town would greatly benefit from regeneration and enhancement. Given its location and the range of uses needing to be accommodated there, the Council considers it to be an appropriate location for mixed-use development.
- 9.39 Steamer Quay should be considered not in isolation but in relation to the town centre and opposite riverbank and, most importantly, to the rest of Bridgetown. Indeed, the Steamer Quay site relates closely to adjacent land, described below.
- 9.40 Immediately to the south of Culverdale lies an area of agricultural land forming part of the eastern slopes of the Dart valley. The land slopes towards the north and the existing area of Bridgetown, looking in towards the town rather than out towards to the open country to the

south. To its east is the housing at Lansdowne Park. Although the fields are prominent in the wider landscape from certain viewpoints, their northern and central parts could be developed in a manner which would integrate with the surrounding landscape.

- 9.41 Having looked very carefully at the area, the Council considers that a site immediately adjoining the southern edge of lower Bridgetown could also accommodate mixed use development, complementing the regeneration of and development at Steamer Quay.
- 9.42 The new development should also relate to the re-development of the existing housing at Culverdale, managed by Tor Homes. This does not meet modern standards and is programmed for re-development to use the land more efficiently and to increase the number of homes on the site. Vehicular and pedestrian access through Culverdale to the proposed new development site would be needed, and the schemes should be related closely to each other through a joint planning approach.
- 9.43 In combination, the regeneration of Steamer Quay and the development of the site south of Culverdale can make a significant contribution to meeting the development requirements and helping to realise the Vision for the town in a sustainable manner. The combined sites are suited to a mixed use approach, including housing (with more than 50% affordable homes), some employment (in Use Class B1) and strategic landscaping to assimilate and integrate the development in its setting. They have the potential to deliver:
- a) well over 200 homes, including more than 50% affordable;
  - b) employment as part of a mixed use approach;
  - c) a site for a new primary school;
  - d) significant public open space (about 3.4 ha);
  - e) enhanced public access, including to the riverside;
  - f) a footbridge across the river;
  - g) strategic landscaping which will help to assimilate not only the new but also existing development into its setting; and
  - h) an improved focus on the river as an asset and fundamental element of the town's fabric.
- 9.44 The amount of new housing proposed will trigger a requirement for equipped play provision for younger and older age groups. The Council will require a contribution towards the upgrading and rejuvenation of existing play areas in the vicinity and improved pedestrian/cycle linkages to them. Within the site the Council will also seek the provision of a small scale public open space and allotments. Other uses may also be appropriate as part of a comprehensive package to secure the development and regeneration of the area.
- 9.45 In order to help assimilate such development into the landscape and to "soften" the existing "hard" edge of Bridgetown where it abuts the open

countryside, a package of on-site and off-site strategic landscaping will be required as part of a comprehensive package of proposals. Strategic landscaping should principally be in the form of parkland trees and copses in keeping with the wider Bridgetown fringe area.

- 9.46 The extensive residential area of Bridgetown has developed in a way that relates poorly to its physical setting, particularly the open countryside beyond and the Dart valley alongside it. Connectivity between the housing and its setting is minimal, resulting in little scope for Bridgetown's residents to interact with and enjoy the superb environment on their doorstep. A key element of the Vision for Totnes is that the River Dart should become a focus for the town.
- 9.47 Provision should be made for a significant public open space that would afford community views of the Dart Valley, and for footpath links to the new housing and beyond. These should link to the existing residential areas of Bridgetown and to Steamer Quay Road, Longmarsh and towards the town centre. The Council considers that it is vital that any new housing in this area is well served by enhanced and additional pedestrian connectivity, so that the residents can access the facilities of Bridgetown and the town centre via safe and attractive pedestrian/cycling routes, thus minimising the amount of vehicular trips.
- 9.48 Flooding is a significant consideration for parts of this site and development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 9.49 Proposal 5 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5, SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO12, SO13, SO14, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO18, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.50 **Proposal 5 – Riverside, Totnes**

The key elements of the mixed use proposal for Bridgetown Riverside are:

- a) About 220 houses, with as high a percentage of affordable housing as is viable and deliverable (more than 50%);
- b) About 1ha of employment land, planned on a mixed use basis;
- c) A site of about 2ha for a new primary school;
- d) Public open space, including:
  - I. a significant single area of new public open space of about 3.4ha;
  - II. linkage via a new area of public open space between the riverside and the Bridgetown Green Corridor;
  - III. enhanced riverside public open space, including continuous riverside access and improved play provision;
- e) Children’s play provision on site and a contribution towards enhancement of existing facilities nearby;
- f) An extensive network of footpaths and cycleways within the site and linking to the adjoining and wider Totnes area, including:
  - I. A footbridge link from Steamer Quay to Vire Island and from the Island to the west bank;
  - II. A circular footpath link from Longmarsh to the top of Bridgetown at Weston Lane;
- g) A contribution towards off site improvements to the local highway network;
- h) Car and coach parking of at least the same amount as presently exists;
- i) Provision for enhanced tourist, visitor, café and boating facilities;
- j) Allotments on the site;
- k) A contribution towards education provision;
- l) Provision for public art; and
- m) Strategic landscaping and parkland / landscape enhancement.

9.51 **Summary of Options**

Please see section 8 ‘Site Selection Process’ for information on the summary of options considered.

**Meadowside, Dartington and Totnes**

9.52 This site is located on the eastern side of the A385 Ashburton Road, the main road approach to Totnes from Dartington and the A38 beyond. It is close to the physical edge of Totnes town but lies predominantly within Dartington Parish.

- 9.53 This is a greenfield site comprising two fairly large flat agricultural grazing fields, an adjoining coniferous crop plantation, and a small field immediately south of Dartington Lane. A watercourse in a deep channel crosses the site to the west of the plantation. The plantation also includes some broadleaf trees worthy of retention, especially along the lane frontage.
- 9.54 To the north of the site is Bidwell Brook, a low lying water meadow and the backdrop of Dartington Hill Plantation. To the south east are the existing residential areas of Swallowfields, Dartside and Riverside. To the south west are KEVICC and Puddavine House, and to the west is the existing housing at Puddavine Terrace.
- 9.55 The Council considers that this site is suitable for housing and that it could accommodate about 150 dwellings. Part of the site (adjoining Dartington Lane) was proposed for residential development in the deposit local plan review (January 2002) and was identified as a location for about 50 homes in the LDF Issues and Options report (October 2004). On both occasions, the public consultation responses showed majority support for the site coming forward.
- 9.56 A new access onto the main road would be required and there should be a direct footpath/cycle path link from the site to the existing Totnes-Dartington footpath/cycleway. To help assimilate any development on this site into the local landscape, especially from the public footpath/cycleway to the north, there should be a strategic landscaping area along the site's northern boundary which would link in with the existing mature trees to the north east boundary.
- 9.57 Proposal 6 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5, SO6, SO7, SO13, SO16, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.58 **Proposal 6 – Meadowside, Dartington and Totnes**

The key elements of the Meadowside proposal are:

- a) About 150 houses, with as high a percentage of affordable housing as is viable and deliverable (more than 50%);
- b) Public open space and children's play provision on the site;
- c) Direct linkage from the site to the Totnes-Dartington footpath / cycleway;
- d) A contribution towards education provision;
- e) Strategic landscaping, particularly along the site's northern boundary, including
  - I. retention of existing mature broadleaf trees at that boundary and across the site;
  - II. retention of hedge banks along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site and hedge bank reinforcement / landscaping along the Dartington Lane frontages.

## 9.59 **Summary of Options**

Please see section 8 'Site Selection Process' for information on the summary of options considered.

### **Bidwell, Dartington**

- 9.60 The adopted Core Strategy allocates 5 ha of new employment land to Totnes. Some of the town's brownfield site opportunities will play a role in helping to meet local employment needs, but these will not provide new land, which is what the Core Strategy requires.
- 9.61 The Employment Land Review (2006), shows that about half of the overall employment need in the wider Totnes area is for B2/B8 employment land. The locational needs of B2/B8 development are generally different to those of B1 employment users, requiring larger sites and buildings and good transport accessibility.
- 9.62 Local brownfield sites are unlikely to be suited to meeting that need. They are generally more suitable for smaller-scale B1 employment developments, including a significant amount of office space., compatible with residential use and not generating large amounts of vehicle movements.
- 9.63 These considerations point towards greenfield sites on the periphery of Totnes away from the more congested central areas. Having assessed the range of site options, the Council has concluded that the most suitable is at Bidwell, Dartington.
- 9.64 The Bidwell site is situated immediately to the west of the A384 in Dartington (Cott). Its current use is agricultural and it is bounded to the south and west by Bidwell Brook and to the north by housing at Broom Park and the road that runs from the A384 to the hamlet of Week. The south-eastern part of the site adjoins Bidwell Brook school and the site of the proposed new primary school.
- 9.65 The site lies within clearly defined boundaries which give it a good degree of enclosure. The local topography, including the undulating nature of the site, should enable a form of development that would not be too visually prominent. The western extent of any development here should be marked by the ridgeline running south from Broom Park. Strategic landscaping would be required on the remaining portion of the field to the west of this which would in time provide a strong visual backdrop to any development.
- 9.66 Access to the site from the wider area is good. A suitable access into the site could be achieved direct from the A384 which in turn provides a direct link to the A38 trunk road about 4 miles to the north. The A385 runs westward from Dartington to the A38 and also provides the main road link to Totnes. Dartington is quite well served by bus routes and

the Totnes/Dartington/Steiner School footpath/cycleway runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

9.67 Proposal 7 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO12, SO13, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO18, SO20, SO21 & SO22.

9.68 **Proposal 7 – Bidwell, Dartington**

The key elements of this proposal are:

- a) Employment development of 4ha of new employment land, providing for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses;
- b) Footpath/cycleway links from the site across Bidwell Brook linking to the existing footpath and beyond to the A385 and a connection from the Totnes/Dartington/Steiner School footpath/cycleway into the site;
- c) Strategic landscaping immediately to the west of the site

9.69 **Summary of Options**

Please see section 8 'Site Selection Process' for information on the summary of options considered.

## **10. SPATIAL PLANNING POLICIES**

### **Development Boundaries**

- 10.1 A Development Boundary is a firm limit around a town or village within which development is acceptable in principle. These boundaries are an established and proven method of managing development. Outside development boundaries development will be more tightly controlled. Policy CS1: Location of Development in the adopted Core Strategy specifies that both Totnes and Dartington development is acceptable in principle and therefore should have a development boundary. Policy DC1: Development Boundaries in the emerging Development Control Core Policies sets out the principles for determining applications within a development boundary, which will be subject to usual planning considerations such as access to the site, the scale, bulk and design of the proposal and the effect on local amenity. The development boundaries for Totnes and Dartington are shown on the Proposals Map. Until this document is adopted the development boundaries for Totnes and Dartington from the 1996 Local Plan are “saved”, and will carry on being used to assess potential new development in these settlements.

### **Totnes Town Centre Zone and Primary Shopping Area**

- 10.2 In keeping with its function as an Area Centre, Totnes performs an important role of supporting the diverse needs of its own community and those of the hinterland that it serves. Fundamental to this is providing appropriate opportunities for a wide range of services and activities that will encourage the enhanced sustainability of the town. This includes retail, leisure, health, education, entertainment, the arts, culture, tourism, office and commercial activities. Housing, including affordable housing, especially as part of mixed-use development schemes, may also be appropriate.
- 10.3 Development providing such services and activities is likely to generate a significant level of users. Therefore, whenever possible it needs to be located in the most accessible part of the town, which the Council considers to be in terms of position and accessibility, the town centre. The town centre currently provides such a focus of activity and additional development there will contribute to and benefit from this “critical mass.” In order to enhance these factors further, the Council considers that such activities should be focussed on a central hub in Totnes, called the Town Centre Zone.
- 10.4 The predominant activity and that which generates the greatest level of use within the Town Centre Zone is shopping. Totnes is a long established market town and provides for the shopping needs of a wide rural area. The long, single main shopping street of Fore Street and High Street runs from The Plains adjacent to the river Dart up the hill towards Totnes Castle and on to The Rotherfold square. Totnes is

widely renowned for its distinctive shopping experience, characterised by small traditional and specialised shops interspersed with a range of catering outlets. This attractive mix is treasured by local residents and visitors to the town alike and the Council wishes to help protect and enhance this special character.

- 10.5 To further help retain the special shopping character of Totnes town centre, a Primary Shopping Area (PSA) within the Town Centre Zone is defined, focused on Fore Street and High Street, where shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, should by first preference be located. The proposed PSA is slightly larger than the Central Shopping Area shown in the adopted local plan in order to provide some additional scope to enhance provision within what is still a fairly tightly defined area. Unless it is the subject of a specific LDF proposal, the Council will only consider permitting such development outside the PSA if it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable sites for such development inside it.
- 10.6 Policies for Town Centre Zones and Primary Shopping Areas are set out in the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Core Policies documents. In addition, the Council is concerned to protect the very special character of the principal shopping frontage of the main street. One of the characteristics that contributes significantly to the special shopping experience to be found in Totnes is the high percentage of shops (many of the traditional kind) that remain, unlike many other shopping centres where a higher percentage of offices, building societies, and agencies predominate. As at July 2007, 73% of units fronting the main street were shops (defined as being in Use Class A1). In order to protect this shopping character a Core Zone frontage is identified, running from The Plains along the main street up to its junction with Plymouth Road. Proposals for residential use at ground floor level would detract significantly from the shopping character of the Core Zone and will therefore not be acceptable. Development for financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments and hot food takeaways (Use Classes A2, A3, A4 and A5) will only be permitted providing that at least 70% of ground floor frontages along the Core Zone would remain as shops (Use Class A1).
- 10.7 Virtually all of the buildings fronting the main street are at least two storeys high and, in many of them, the upper floors are not well utilised. There could be scope to accommodate a range of other uses on upper floors in the Town Centre Zone to further support its vitality. Apart from adding to the level of use and vibrancy of the town centre, such development could add to the viability of these buildings, the majority of which are Listed Buildings with associated high maintenance standards and costs.
- 10.8 The Council is firmly of the opinion that amusement centres are not appropriate in the town because of their environmental impact and that they should therefore not be permitted. This is especially the case in

the Conservation Area, main shopping streets, residential areas and other sensitive or inappropriate locations.

- 10.9 Proposal 8 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO4, SO5, SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO11, SO12, SO13, SO14, SO15, SO16, & SO22.

10.10

**Proposal 8: - TOTNES TOWN CENTRE ZONE**

- a) A Town Centre Zone is designated to help sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of central Totnes. Within the Town Centre Zone, a Primary Shopping Area and a Core Zone are defined to provide a focus for retail activity.
- b) Within the Core Zone, in order to safeguard its special shopping character:
  - I. At least 70% of the frontage should remain in Use Class A1;
  - II. Proposals for residential development at ground floor level will not be permitted;
- c) Amusement centres will not be permitted in Totnes except where they would cause no harm to conservation interests, road safety or the amenity of local residents, and will not conflict with other Town Centre Zone policies.

**10.11 Summary of Options**

A more restricted TCZ would limit the scope for continuing development and regeneration of the town centre, adversely affecting the vitality and viability of the town and its status as an Area Centre.

A less restricted TCZ would not provide a central focus for development and regeneration and could result in dilution of the distinctive character of the town centre character, greater private car use and reduced accessibility for the community as a whole.

**TOTNES POLICY AREAS**

**KEVICC**

- 10.12 The King Edward VI Community College is a large establishment providing education for secondary age-group children. It currently has about 1,800 pupils and serves Totnes and a large surrounding area. Apart from its teaching function, the college places a strong emphasis on being a community resource and provides dual use of many of its facilities such as the Ariel Centre (arts) and a range of sporting facilities.

- 10.13 The college is presently undertaking a major building programme, principally to replace the temporary buildings that have been on-site for many years and are no longer fit for purpose. This substantial process is now about mid-way through and the College aspires to all of the

classroom teaching facilities being located on the upper school site. (A significant and long-term problem for the college has been the split nature of the site, with the upper and lower schools on opposite sides of the main A385 road). Although the split-site is a problem for the school, it has the fortune to be well blessed with a large campus.

- 10.14 The lower school site is predominantly used for sports activities. However, the existing all-weather pitch urgently needs replacing and the grass pitches are poorly drained and are often unusable for much of the year. The shared intention of the school, education authority, local sports clubs and the district council is to greatly enhance the sporting facilities provision and for them to serve the school and the wider local community. It is currently envisaged that this will involve replacing the existing all-weather pitch, the provision of an additional second all-weather pitch, up-grading the grass areas and tennis courts, and the building of a new sports hall / gymnasium. It is hoped that such a major improvement to the facilities along these lines will be eligible for significant external funding.
- 10.15 A detailed study looking at how best to provide for these enhanced facilities is being undertaken. The outcome of this will potentially have significant implications for the lower and upper school sites and immediately adjoining parcels of land. The Council supports in principle the continued improvement of the academic and sporting facilities at KEVICC so that the college can deliver its curriculum in the most efficient and effective manner to the benefit of pupils and the wider local community. If the outcome of the study indicates that the best way forward for the college involves a significant re-ordering of existing facilities and new provision, it may be necessary for a comprehensive scheme for the whole of the KEVICC campus to include provision for some other development. Given KEVICC's position in relation to the rest of the town, this might appropriately include some residential development which could also help to meet some of the need for affordable housing. It would have to be demonstrated that such development is a vital element of a comprehensive proposal for the substantial enhancement of facilities at KEVICC.

### **The Grove Primary School**

- 10.16 The Grove is one of two primary schools located in Totnes. It is situated just to the south of the town centre on a restricted site of about 0.6 ha. The small size of the site, the age and nature of the school buildings and the physical characteristics of the site itself mean that The Grove does not provide a fit for purpose school that can adequately deliver the standard of facilities required by a modern primary school. Devon County Council, the local education authority, has a long-held aspiration to replace The Grove Primary School with a new purpose built school capable of delivering an enhanced facility to meet the needs of local school children and the wider community.

Given that it is not possible to extend The Grove site, this has inevitably resulted in a search for a new site. Having searched widely, the County Council has identified a site at the bottom of the Western By-Pass / Barracks Hill as a potential location for a new primary school. This site known locally as the “sheepfield”, is part of the KEVICC campus’. The development of this site for such a use is provided for by the KEVICC policy area.

- 10.17 If the proposed new primary school is delivered, the existing Grove site will become available for other uses. There is a shortfall in youth provision within the town, principally for a suitable centre for teenage facilities. The Council considers that the existing Grove school building could be converted to such a use. It is well located within the town close to the town centre. The building, if converted, could provide a range of indoor facilities and there is scope for some outdoor space too. There is also a shortfall within the town, especially in the central area, of public open space, particularly for children’s play. The Council considers that the existing Grove school field should be retained and put to such use as part of any new package of uses there. Provision should also be made for a multi-use games area (MUGA). In order to facilitate such new community provision and to aid the viability of its provision, there may be scope for a very limited amount of residential development which could help to meet some of the need for affordable housing..

### **The Rotherfold**

- 10.18 The Rotherfold was originally a cattle market and covered a much larger area than is occupied by the current square which now marks the western extent of the town’s main shopping street. The almshouses that occupied the south side of the square were demolished in the 1960’s. This part of the square now comprises informal seating and an extensive paved area flanked by unattractive end gable walls. Over recent years there has been considerable discussion about the future of The Rotherfold including the “Rotherfold Design day” in 2003. The Council considers that there is scope for significant improvement to the Rotherfold that would improve its appearance and help it to function more extensively and effectively as a public open space. This could include a re-ordering of the public highway, parking and public open space elements. A very limited amount of residential development may be appropriate - this could replace some of the houses previously lost and enable a viable scheme to be delivered.

### **Employment Policy Areas**

- 10.19 The Council is keen to protect the town’s important resource of employment land and to maximise its potential to provide quality jobs. The significance of land currently or last used for employment is therefore highlighted as an employment resource for the future. Some such sites have been lost to other uses (primarily residential use) and it

is often difficult to set aside the requirements of firms seeking to move into the area or for relocation or expansion of existing employment premises. Therefore, the town's resource of existing employment land, including those sites outside of designated policy areas, needs to be treated carefully in order to maintain a wide and stable economic base.

- 10.20 Over the years, considerable employment development has taken place on some of the town's employment estates - especially at Babbage Road and adjacent to the river at Steamer Quay Road and St. Peter's Quay. These areas, together with the smaller employment area at Malt Mill, are protected for employment uses in order to maintain a wide and stable economic base. Changes of use from employment to other uses will not generally be permitted.
- 10.21 Some of the area's employment sites have seen little in the way of significant investment and new development for many years. As a result, these sites have over time become rather run-down in appearance and often contain buildings and infrastructure that are not fit for purpose for modern employment needs. Attracting new investment has often been difficult and the condition and appearance of the buildings and sites themselves have declined over time. Such employment sites are failing significantly to meet their potential and could provide opportunities for considerable new investment and subsequent provision of higher quality and also a greater number of jobs. Such opportunities exist principally at Baltic Wharf and Dairy Crest, Totnes and at Webbers Yard, Dartington. Proposals for these sites are included in the previous chapter. The Council considers that providing for the re-development of existing employment areas, together with the provision of 5 ha. of new greenfield employment land, is the most appropriate approach to meeting the future employment needs of the area.

### **Borough Park, Totnes**

- 10.22 Borough Park, which extends to about 4 ha, is the main park serving the town. It principally provides for formal sports and play facilities. Totnes Pavilion, comprising a sports centre and swimming pool, is located there, together with buildings for the town's bowling, rugby and tennis clubs. The park enjoys good accessibility, being located centrally within the town and adjoining public transport links, footpaths and a cycleway. It is tightly constrained on all sides by development, including Totnes rail station on its northern flank. This prohibits any scope for the expansion of the park, which experiences high levels of use and requires careful management to prevent this having a negative impact on the facilities provided. The Council acknowledges the important role that Borough Park plays in helping to meet the sport, recreation and public open space needs of Totnes. A policy area is proposed there to retain it for such uses.

## **Environmental Policy Areas**

- 10.23 The land around Totnes Castle, largely comprising the open area to its north west, is extremely important to the setting of the Castle (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and to the appearance of the Conservation Area and that part of town. Development which would alter its appearance or open character will not be permitted. In conjunction with English Heritage (which owns the Castle) and the Town Council (which owns the adjoining land), the Council will seek to achieve a greater degree of public access to this open area of land.
- 10.24 An area of southern Totnes in the vicinity of Cherry Cross, including Maudlin Road, Moat Hill and Totnes Down Hill, is characterised by narrow winding roads, many with steep gradients. Vehicular accesses onto these roads are generally of a sub-standard nature and visibility for road users in this area is poor. Developments that would result in an increase in the volume of vehicles using this area will not be permitted.
- 10.25 The residential area of northern Bridgetown, based on Jubilee Road, Bourton Road and Bridgetown Hill has a distinct character with a low density of housing and mature gardens. The appearance of this area is very important to the character of Bridgetown and views of it from across the river. This part of the town is designated as a policy area within which the existing low density and mature garden landscape should be retained. The Council considers that proposals for the intensification of development on plots already containing development such as a dwelling, or involving the sub-division of existing plots would be contrary to this policy. Intensification of development would include proposals for additional dwellings, but the policy does not apply to more minor proposals such as small-scale extensions and ancillary development. Low-density development of substantial plots that contain little or no development may not detract from the overall character of the area. The main A385 Bridgetown Hill is steep and generally busy. Additional vehicular access onto it would be likely to constitute a hazard. Developments that would result in an increase in the number of accesses onto or vehicles accessing Bridgetown Hill in this area will not be permitted.
- 10.26 The Council has promoted a co-ordinated approach to the environmental improvement of the important open area that runs through central Bridgetown. This area is an important local amenity, both in terms of the contribution that it makes to the visual character of the area and in terms of the recreational opportunities that it provides. The Council has undertaken much work in this area with close community involvement and assistance and close links have been created with the local primary school. Due to the importance of this area, development that would alter its appearance or open character will not be permitted. It is desirable to link the area to the riverside at

Steamer Quay. This will add to the visual integrity of the corridor and, importantly, will add to its attractiveness as a key pedestrian and cycling route linking the heart of Bridgetown with the river and town centre beyond.

- 10.27 The low-lying land on the east bank of the River Dart between Brutus Bridge and Bridgetown is an important wetland area. It is an important, visually prominent site alongside the main road route through Totnes. Much of the area floods on the higher tides and it is therefore unsuitable for development. The Council considers that this area should be protected and that it should be managed as a valuable wetland amenity and ecological resource. The scope to use the site more greatly as a local amenity and educational resource should be carefully examined. This, in conjunction with low-key public access, could enable the site to make a positive contribution to the Vision for Totnes.
- 10.28 Proposal 9 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO12, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO19 & SO20.

**Proposal 9: TOTNES POLICY AREAS**

- a. Development for educational, sport, recreational and community purposes will be permitted within the Policy Area at KEVICC.
- b. The Grove Primary School site, shown as a Policy Area, should be retained for community uses, providing a youth centre and associated facilities and public open space including retention of the existing play pitch and provision of children's play facilities.
- c. At The Rotherfold, shown as a Policy Area on the Proposals Map, re-development to deliver a comprehensive enhancement scheme will be acceptable in principle. This should include a substantial public open space and environmental enhancement.
- d. Changes of use resulting in the loss of land or premises from Use Classes B1 and B2 and other employment uses will not be permitted within Policy Area 1 at Malt Mill, Policy Area 2 at Babbage Road, Policy Area 3 at St Peter's Quay and Policy Area 4 at Steamer Quay Road.
- e. Borough Park, shown as Policy Area 5, should be retained for sport, recreation, leisure and public open space uses.
- f. The area around Totnes Castle, shown as Policy Area 6, should be kept free from development and retained predominantly as open space in order to maintain the vital contribution it makes to the setting of the Castle and the visual character of the area.
- g. Developments that would increase the number of vehicles on the roads in the area around Cherry Cross, delineated as Policy Area 7, will not be permitted.
- h. Development that would damage or alter the low density and character of, or increase the number of vehicles in, Policy Area 8 in northern Bridgetown will not be permitted.
- i. The open area comprising the Bridgetown green corridor, shown as Policy Area 9, should be retained as open space in order to maintain the contribution it makes to the visual character and amenities of the area.
- j. A wetland amenity area is proposed on the low-lying land adjacent to the River Dart between Totnes Bridge and Brutus Bridge.

### 10.30 Summary of Options

A 'do nothing' approach may result in the loss of finite areas in the town that fulfil an important role for employment, open space, sport and recreation or in protecting local distinctiveness (such as areas around Totnes castle).

No other options were considered realistic.

## ACCESS AND TRANSPORT

10.31 Along with many other thriving historic market towns Totnes frequently experiences traffic congestion of varying degrees. The difficulties, which tend to be seasonal and vary considerably through the day, are principally due to the convergence of the local main road network on Totnes as the lowest bridging point of the River Dart. The complex issues of roads, traffic management, public transport and parking are closely related and need to be considered as a whole if the transport issues facing the town are to be addressed. Any proposals must be sensitive to the important environmental and historic constraints within the town. The LDF Core Strategy, Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 "Devon on the Move", Devon Structure Plan and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy together set out an approach to access and transport in the South Hams. Further details on the Devon Local Transport Plan are available in section 5 'Local Context & Evidence Base'.

### Pedestrian Priority

10.32 Totnes town centre could benefit greatly from a carefully thought out, well-designed scheme affording greater pedestrian priority in the main shopping streets of Fore Street and High Street. These historically important and very attractive narrow streets could be made safer and more pleasant for shoppers, and congestion and damage to buildings would be reduced. The economy of the town centre in general, pedestrian and highway safety, the local environment and conservation interests would all benefit. More sympathetic surfacing and better street furniture could be provided. There may also be scope to further extend the concept in Ticklemore Street and elsewhere.

10.33 Extensive consultations with all affected and interested parties are essential, particularly because of the lack of rear servicing for many premises. In 1991, following consultation, a limited access scheme was introduced which has proved to be unenforceable. In 1998 a further extensive consultation was undertaken of both Totnes residents and those in surrounding parishes, and both the Totnes Community Appraisal and the Local Plan Issues consultation asked questions on this matter. Further consultation led by an independent facilitator has also taken place. The public response has been clearly in favour of

more effective traffic management in the town centre with greater priority given to pedestrians, and that such measures should be implemented on a permanent basis. Highway works in Fore Street and High Street were implemented in early 2007 but stopped short of a full pedestrian priority scheme.

### **Traffic Management**

10.34 The County Council has identified the A381 and A385 through Totnes as a peak pressure route, and has adopted a management plan for them as part of a traffic congestion strategy. Some measures for alleviation for the Station Road part of the route have already been implemented, and further studies are continuing.

### **Car Parking**

10.35 Convenient and adequate car parking is important to the town's trade and its role as one of the main tourist centres in the South Hams. However the Council believes that to endeavour to meet the full extent of the potential demand for car parking in the town would almost certainly be damaging to its valuable historic character.

10.36 The main car parks serving the town centre are those owned by the Council in the Southern Area, at Warlands and at North Street, with the Morrisons supermarket car park providing in the region of 420 spaces adjacent to the town centre. Steamer Quay provides some long stay car parking including limited provision for coaches. The re-development of the Southern Area provides for the re-ordering of the existing surface public car parks.

### **Coach Parking**

10.37 The provision of adequate parking for coaches and suitable drop off points for passengers is an important issue as it helps support the number of visitors to Totnes and sustain the contribution tourism makes to the economy of the town. Limited coach parking is available at Steamer Quay which is a reasonable walk from the town centre. Passengers are mainly dropped at the Plains which can become congested during the summer months. There has been local discussion concerning possible scope for further provision of coach parking and new dropping off arrangements for passengers. Existing coach parking facilities, the possible under provision, options to provide further parking and new dropping off arrangements need further consideration the Council is presently in discussion with Devon County Council and others about various options but as yet no suitable site has been clearly identified or fully assessed. As part of any comprehensive scheme for the re-development of Baltic Wharf the scope to provide some capacity for coach parking should be examined.

### **Park and Stride**

- 10.38 The attractiveness of the town gives rise to a high demand for car and coach parking, especially during the summer months. In such an important historic environment as Totnes it could be damaging to endeavour to meet all of these demands within the town itself. The Council together with Devon County Council (the Highway Authority) has previously sought to identify a suitable park and ride site which could help alleviate the pressure on town centre parking and the traffic movement problem. However it has proved to be very difficult to identify a site that could be successful from an operational point of view and also acceptable on sustainability and environmental grounds.
- 10.39 Having reassessed this concept, the Council accepts that a viable park and ride option does not currently exist and that other initiatives that could help address the issue should be examined. One such option would be the provision of a new parking site close enough to the town for people to be able to walk rather than travel on bus, hence “park and stride”. A site for such a facility is proposed on an area of land adjoining the River Dart immediately up-stream of Brutus Bridge. This site is located along the main road approaches to the town from Newton Abbot and Torbay and would therefore be suitable to attract holiday traffic. A short, attractive pedestrian route to the town centre could be provided over Brutus Bridge and along the riverside footpath to the old Totnes Bridge and The Plains. This facility could be introduced on a trial basis during the summer and by making operational allowances for the low-lying nature of the site, without the need for substantial ground works.

### **Riverside Access**

- 10.40 The River Dart is one of Totnes’ greatest assets and is a major attraction for both residents and visitors. Although there is public access to the riverside at some quaysides and on footpaths along stretches of the banks, there are many places with no public access to the water’s edge. The provision of a continuous riverside walk along both banks of the Dart would provide an excellent amenity for residents and visitors alike. It would deliver the Vision for Totnes by improving linkages along and across the river, thus enhancing the connectivity and relationship between the town centre and Bridgetown sides of the river.
- 10.41 Proposal 10 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO8, SO10, SO13, SO14, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO19 & SO20.

### **Proposal 10: Totnes Access and Transport**

1. A pedestrian priority scheme is proposed in Fore Street and High Street. Traffic management in the town centre will be promoted in conjunction with any pedestrian scheme.
2. A park and stride scheme is proposed at a site adjoining the A381 at Brutus Bridge.
3. Riverside walks on both banks of the River Dart and footpath connections to these from surrounding areas are proposed. A new pedestrian footbridge link across the river from Steamer Quay to Vire Island and on to Town Marsh is also proposed. Development schemes on sites adjoining the River Dart in Totnes should include provision for continuous public access to the riverside (or a financial contribution towards such provision) and a financial contribution towards the provision of a new pedestrian link across the River Dart.

### **10.43 Summary of Options**

A 'do nothing' approach would not help the congestion problems of the town, improve the visual appearance or shopping appearance of the Fore Street and High Street and may undermine the vision for Totnes and Dartington.

No other options were considered realistic.

### **DARTINGTON POLICY AREAS**

10.44 Although closely located and functionally related to Totnes, Dartington has its own separate identity and characteristics. Dartington is made up of a number of hamlets, the largest of which is Cott located about one mile to the north-west of Totnes. The parish contains the famous Dartington Hall and estate which is a centre for a wide range of activities and brings many people to the locality. The estate owns much land in the parish and the Dartington Hall Trust oversees many enterprises and activities which are centred there.

10.45 The village of Cott has a good range of community facilities including a large primary school. A focal point of the village is the area around Shinner's Bridge where the A384 and the A385 meet. This main road network makes Dartington very accessible – especially from nearby Totnes and the A38 trunk road about four miles to the west and north. The Cider Press Centre at Shinners Bridge is a major attraction, and Dartington Primary School, Bidwell Brook School, Meadowbrook Community Centre, a petrol station, village shop/post office and village hall are all situated nearby. The residential area of Cott is located to

the south of Shinner's Bridge, to either side of Cott Road. To the west of Shinner's Bridge, alongside the A385, lies the long established employment area of Webbers Yard and a substantial office complex accommodated in the architecturally important Lescaze building.

- 10.46 Dartington is one of the settlements identified in Policy CS1 of the adopted Core Strategy within which development is acceptable in principle. For these settlements a Development Boundary will be defined in the relevant settlement specific DPD, such as this one for Totnes/Dartington. Therefore, a Development Boundary is defined for Dartington (Cott), within which development is normally acceptable. The boundary has been aligned tightly around the settlement based on a careful assessment of the character and setting of the village, together with other important considerations such as access and service provision. Within the Development Boundary only limited scope for development exists and this is subject to the usual planning considerations. The relevant policy – DC1: Development Boundaries – is included in the Development Control Core Policies DPD (Preferred Options July 2007)
- 10.47 As in Totnes, Dartington contains specific areas within the settlement that warrant special protection. There are four areas of open land within the central part of Cott which are important to the village and its setting. These are:
- (i) the old orchard to the east of the Dart Business Centre and to the north of Forder Lane;
  - (ii) to the west of Newman Crescent;
  - (iii) between Hunters Moon estate and the Cott Inn; and
  - (iv) an open area within the Hunters Moon estate.
- 10.48 These areas should remain open and development which would alter their character will not be permitted.
- 10.49 The wooded and landscaped grounds of Hunters Moon House and Winthills are an attractive feature on the south eastern outskirts of the village. The low density of development in this area should be retained and no damage caused to the mature landscape.
- 10.50 These five areas are subject to Policy Area designation and are shown on the Proposals Map. The policies that apply are set out below.
- 10.51 The Council recognises and supports the important and unique role played by The Dartington Hall Trust in the social and economic life of Dartington and the surrounding area. The significance of this extends from the vicinity of the Dartington Estate to Totnes, the district and beyond. The Trust has a long-established reputation for its innovative work and undertakes many educational and research projects of national and international interest.

- 10.52 The Dartington Hall Trust's focus is on the generation and application of new ideas in the arts, ecology and social justice. Alongside this are the Trust's commercial enterprises and the significant responsibility of maintaining the estate's land and buildings including the Grade 1 Listed Dartington Hall. A significant recent development has been the proposal to re-locate the College of Arts away from Dartington. The Council shares the widely felt concerns about the loss of this institution from the locality and the impact that this will have on the economy and vitality of the area. The Council wishes to work in partnership with The Trust, the local community and stakeholders to explore how the potential gap left, if the college moves, can be filled, and to explore thoroughly future opportunities and how these can be secured for the benefit of the area.
- 10.53 In order to help facilitate innovative, appropriate initiatives, the Council intends to retain the long established special planning policy area designation on the Dartington Estate heartland. This policy area is appropriate here because the estate land lies outside the Dartington and Totnes development boundaries and would therefore be covered by a restrictive policy applicable to the wider countryside. The Dartington Special Policy Area is an exception to this general countryside policy, and provides for a specified range of developments subject to certain criteria. Developments for educational, agricultural, cultural, research, renewable sustainable energy and rural diversification may be permitted. The policy that applies to this area is set out below.
- 10.54 As part of the rationalisation of the Trust's activities and the potential generation of new employment-related activities, there is likely to be a need for some additional employment land in the vicinity of Dartington. This would support the proposed provision of new employment land at Bidwell, Dartington (see proposal X in Chapter 9) and would make a phased approach to that development appropriate.
- 10.55 Proposal 11 addresses the following strategic objectives: SO6, SO7, SO8, SO9, SO10, SO12, SO15, SO16, SO17, SO19 & SO20.

10.56

**Proposal 11: DARTINGTON POLICY AREAS**

- a) The open areas to the north of Forder Lane, west of Newman Crescent, between Hunters Moon Estate and the Cott Inn and within the Hunters Moon Estate shown as Policy areas 1,2,3 and 4 on the Proposals Map, should be retained as open spaces in order to maintain the contribution they make to the visual character of the area.
- b) Development which would significantly alter the density of buildings or damage the landscape and character of the area around Hunters Moon House and Winthills, shown in Policy Area 5 on the Proposals Map will not be permitted.
- c) A site of about 4.5 hectares opposite Webbers Yard is proposed for sports pitches and public open space.
- d) Development for educational, agricultural, cultural, research, renewable sustainable energy, small scale employment initiatives or rural diversification purposes within the Dartington Special Policy Area, shown on the Proposals Map will be permitted provided that it will have little adverse impact on the appearance, tranquillity or amenities of the area and that there is no significant loss of agricultural land. Alternative uses other than those listed above may be permitted to Listed and other historic buildings within the Special Policy Area, provided it can be demonstrated that the proposal will sustain the Listed or historic buildings.

**10.57 Summary of Options**

For the Special Policy Area, a 'do nothing' approach may result in diminution of the role played by the Dartington estate in the economy and vitality of the area and undermine its important functions for recreation, culture and education.

No other options were considered realistic.

## **11. DELIVERY**

### ***Delivery Mechanisms***

- 11.1 The delivery of the proposals identified in this plan will require a coordinated and joined-up approach involving a number of partners. In accordance with PPS12 critical issues such as access and broad design principles have been included in this DPD and greater detail will follow in Supplementary Planning Documents, for example a Development Brief or Design Brief. A detailed implementation plan for each site should be prepared. This would bring together the planning requirements, funding requirements, demonstrated need, community support and land owner and developer input in order to demonstrate the delivery in terms of mechanisms, phasing, time scales etc. This will require cooperation and input from a wide range of partners.
- 11.2 The developers of sites proposed in the Totnes DPD will be expected to fund the infrastructure and facilities / services that are directly required by the development in line with Core Strategy policy CS8: Infrastructure Provision. However, in order to ensure the financial viability of schemes and to satisfy wider planning requirements not wholly attributable to the schemes, the potential for external funding should be maximised. For example, highway management measures may need to be implemented in order to accommodate the additional traffic movements that will be generated by the development of certain sites. Such improvements may place an unacceptable burden on individual schemes alone and, therefore, a number of schemes may need to make appropriate contributions. The relevant public authorities must also consider additional sources of funding.

## 12. MONITORING

### *Targets and Measures*

- 12.1 Review and monitoring is an important aspect of evidence based policy making and it is a key factor of the Government's "plan, monitor and manage" approach to the new planning system. An important aspect of the new system is the flexibility to update components of the LDF to reflect changing circumstances. The ability to produce various local development documents will allow the Council to respond quickly to changing priorities in the district. Monitoring will play a critical part in identifying these and any review of the Totnes DPD that may be required. Part of the test of soundness of the DPD will be whether it includes clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.
- 12.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) every year and this will be the main mechanism for assessing the DPD's performance and effects. The AMR must be based on the annual period 1 April to 31 March and be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the end of the following December. AMRs are required to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme, and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being successfully implemented.
- 12.3 The Council has developed a framework for monitoring this DPD so that it can assess the extent to which the document is achieving its vision and spatial objectives are being achieved (at Appendix xx). This framework includes a series of indicators and targets which will be used to assess the extent to which policies in the Totnes/Dartington DPD are being implemented and, where this is failing, explain why and set out what steps are to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented or whether the policy is to be amended or replaced because it is not working as intended. Monitoring should also be undertaken to identify any significant effects that implementation of the policies in this DPD is having on the delivery of sustainable development, and to determine whether policies need to be amended or replaced. The outcome of this monitoring will be provided in the AMR.
- 12.4 To measure the performance of this DPD the Council has used the strategic objectives and related policies to guide the selection of meaningful indicators and targets as a means of ensuring effective policy implementation, monitoring and review. Targets and indicators have been set for each strategic objective to allow their direct effects to be monitored. The performance of policies will also be monitored in terms of their performance against the objectives and targets included in the sustainability appraisal to assess the strategy's contribution towards sustainable development.

- 12.5 Implementation of the policies contained in this DPD will require concerted action by a range of public, private and voluntary sector bodies working in partnership. The Council has neither the powers nor the resources to implement the DPD alone. The document's role is to provide a clear and robust framework for development in order that investment and action can be co-ordinated and geared to efficient and effective delivery.
- 12.6 In the short term, whilst the preparation of local development documents can be monitored, the assessment of this DPD implementation will be more complex. It may be some time before this DPD begins to have tangible benefits within the district that can be measured.

## **13. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)**

### ***Totnes DPD SA Report***

- 13.1 Local authorities are required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) during the preparation of local development documents. This is to ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of decisions at every stage of plan-making and is an integral part of the process. The Totnes DPD Preferred Options has been subject to an initial SA to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the DPD to ensure that it accords with sustainable development principles. The SA incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European UK legislation. (EU directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI No 1633) respectively).
- 13.2 The SA is an iterative, ongoing process and is integral to the preparation of the DPD. It has helped to shape and guide the preparation of this document. Need to update with words on STA. The SA has also considered the effects of the emerging DPD on the environment and other aspects for sustainability. Many of these initial findings have been incorporated into the DPD.
- 13.3 A Sustainability Report accompanies the Totnes DPD Preferred Options document. This report documents the SA and SEA process and findings, and explains in detail the difference the SA process has made.

### ***SA Monitoring***

- 13.4 The performance of policies and objectives in the DPD should also be monitored in terms of their performance against the objectives and targets included in the sustainability appraisal to assess the DPD's contribution towards sustainable development. This should be used to determine whether policies and objectives need to be amended or replaced if adverse effects are identified. The outcome of this monitoring will be provided in the AMR.

### ***Habitats Regulations Assessment***

- 13.5 This DPD has been subject to a detailed assessment relating to the Habitats Regulations. A draft of this assessment is available as part of the LDF evidence base and will be completed as required ahead of adoption of this DPD.

## **14. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### ***Statement of Consultation and Involvement on the Totnes DPD***

- 14.1 This DPD has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and relevant national policies and guidance. The DPD has met the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) requirements relating to public consultation. It has been through a six week consultation period at Issues and Options stage in October-November 2004. This Preferred Options stage will form the second consultation period. At each stage copies of the document were sent to a broad spectrum of organisations including the Government Office for the South West, the South West Regional Assembly, adjoining local authorities and town and parish councils.
- 14.2 Statutory organisations and all community and interest groups detailed in the SCI will be consulted and views sought throughout the process. A large number of organisations will be invited to submit response forms and participate in a series of events, including focused workshops, open days, and seminars. The strategy document and response forms were publicly advertised in local newspapers and through press releases were made available on the Council's website, at the Council offices and at libraries across the district.
- 14.3 Summaries of the representations received at the Preferred Options stage will be made available on the Council's website. Statements of consultation have also been prepared that provide an audit of each consultation period. They document who has been consulted, how the consultation was undertaken, the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed in subsequent stages of the document.

**APPENDIX 1: Development site options (not in order of preference):**

Site No.	Site name / location	Primary use
1.	Marlands Farm, Newton Road, Totnes	E
2.	Bourton Lane, Totnes	H/E
3.	Blackpost Lane, Totnes	H
4.	Great Court Farm, Totnes	H/E
5.	Bridgetown Riverside, Totnes	H/E
6.	Steamer Quay, Totnes	M
7.	Baltic Wharf, Totnes	E/M
8.	Broomborough, Totnes	H
9.	Follaton Bungalows, Totnes	H
10	Follaton House, Totnes	E
11	Follaton Farm, Totnes	H/E
12	Winsland House, Totnes	H
13	South of Coplands Meadow, Totnes	H
14	Barracks Hill, Totnes	H
15	Sawpit Lane, Dartington	H
16	Ashmore Field, Dartington	H
17	Droridge Lane, Dartington	H/E
18	Webbers Yard, Dartington	E/H
19	Opposite Webbers Yard, Dartington	E/H
20	Bidwell, Dartington	E
21	Puddavine, Totnes	H/E
22	Opposite Puddavine House, Totnes	H/E
23	Dartington Lane Plantation, Totnes	H
24	Dartington Lane Field, Totnes	H

25	KEVICC Lower School, Totnes	M
26	Dairy Crest, Totnes	E/M
27	Sheepfield, Barracks Hill, Totnes	H