



A380 South Devon Link Road (Kingskerswell Bypass)

Public Inquiry

**Devon County Council's Response to
Proofs of Evidence on behalf of Mrs K. Frith (OBJ/KA(45)/REB/2)
and
'Response to Proofs of Evidence'
by Steer Davies Gleave (OBJ/KA(45)/REB/4)**

Response by David Black

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides a response to the rebuttal of Karen Frith dated 29th June 2009 and to the technical notes received on 3rd July.

2 KAREN FRITH

Journey Times

- 2.1 Paragraph 2.3 describes Karen Frith's 'subjective' experience that the road operates reliably. Reference is made (paragraph 2.5) to the Kingskerswell Alliance journey time surveys, with comparison made to the Automatic Number Plate Recognition data collected by Devon County Council.
- 2.2 Diagram 1 of David Black's rebuttal to the evidence of the Kingskerswell Alliance shows a high degree of similarity between the two sets of data. The presence of a small number of large journey times around 3:00am suggests either an incident of some form on the road or traffic stopping for short periods rather than spurious data. The variability of the result reflects the fragility of the network and the resulting high variability in journey times on the route.
- 2.3 The data points on the chart along the free flow line show that on occasions vehicles are able to travel along the A380 without delay. This further demonstrates the unreliability on the road and illustrates the unpredictable nature of journey times.
- 2.4 The closure of St Marychurch Road will have impacted on the journey times on the route. It is for this reason that the 95% percentile travel time was illustrated on the chart. The ANPR data was collected over a 3-month period and is summarised by 5 minute intervals; this results in thousands of data points. Any short term variation on parallel side roads, which carries "rat running" traffic for short periods of the day, is unlikely to have a significant effect on the overall picture of conditions illustrated by the chart. Furthermore, the effect of closure of a side road is more likely to be additional peak spreading, cascading traffic further afield, or additional congestion on the approaches to the corridor.
- 2.5 Closures and incidents occur regularly on the A380 and therefore, in order to reflect the true conditions on the A380, no data has been removed from the analysis of ANPR data.
- 2.6 It is emphasised that average journey times given in DCC/P/4 table 4 are taken from moving observer surveys undertaken on weekdays in neutral months (outside holidays, no incidents etc) and not from ANPR data, which took place outside neutral months, included all weekdays, incidents, etc. Therefore the average journey times given in the table should not be expected to correlate fully with the results given in DCC/A/4 figure 5.

Inconsistent Reference Points, AADT/ AADF

- 2.7 Section 3 and 4 raise questions as to the source of traffic data analysed in section 3 of DCC/P/4. The classification of the road as a rural single carriageway is also questioned.
- 2.8 DCC/P/4 Section 3.3 refers to data collected from an Automatic Traffic Counter north of Kerswell Gardens but south of Penn Inn. The counter is located between Kerswell Gardens and Kingskerswell.
- 2.9 Paragraph 3.3 of Karen Frith's rebuttal refers to DCC/P/4 Diagram 1 which has two axes. The left hand axis is for traffic flow on the M5 and the data is represented by the annual traffic flow profile that has a pronounced peak in August of an average of 70,000 vehicles per day. The right hand axis is the A380 corridor which shows a flat profile that represents an average daily flow of between 30,000 and 35,000 vehicles.
- 2.10 Annual Average Daily Flows have been obtained by Karen Frith from the DfT website (paragraph 4.1); the method of data collection used by the DfT is important. The average will be calculated from a single traffic count (on a single day) and factored to AADF using factors from the DfT database (including flows for the A380 and other roads). The DfT do not operate automatic traffic counts, collecting long term data, on the A380 between Penn Inn and Jurys Corner. The flows obtained are taken from Karen Frith's Rebuttal proof of Evidence:

	prior to 1st July	as of 1st July
	2007	2008
Aller	27906	28437
Kingskerswell	26606	30917
Kerswell Gardens	26606	30917
LMVR	33448	not DfT website

Table 1: Comparison of AADF flows from DfT website and flows given in LMVR (CD5.29A)

- 2.11 The data reported in the LMVR (CD 5.29A) is from an almost continuous automatic traffic counter (357 days out of 365 days) which monitors every vehicle that passes the location. The A380 between Penn Inn and Jurys Corner is highly trafficked, DCC/P/4, Section 3 shows that the traffic flows on the route exhibit non-typical levels of variation. The DfT factors have been derived from several sites and are not sufficiently detailed to take account of the unique local circumstances.
- 2.12 The use of the Rural Road classification describes how the road operates under different traffic conditions; it defines the relationship between flow and speed, it also predicts the capacity for a route. Considerable thought was given to this classification by studying the existing relationship between speed and flow, the description in the COBA manual and the levels of flow that currently take place. After

careful consideration it was decided that the rural speed flow classification was most suitable. The Small Towns classification was briefly considered; it applies where there is a speed limit of 30 or 40 mph and to populations less than 70,000. Such a speed flow curve would be more appropriate for the roads within Newton Abbot, which is a small town, rather than Kingskerswell which is a village on a rural road. Similar conclusions would have been drawn within DCC/P/4, Section 3 had the Small Town classification been used, although higher benefits would have been derived had this classification been used.

- 2.13 The journey time saving between Torquay and the A380 / A38 junction will be much greater than 2 minutes. The data presented in DCC/P/4, table 4, shows the level of delay is much greater than the 2 minutes used in the SQW report. DCC/P/4, diagram 21 shows the journey time saving is 10 minutes southbound and 5½ minutes northbound. In addition the high levels of journey time unreliability will also be significantly reduced.

Jurys Corner Queue Length

- 2.14 Within paragraph 5.1 comments have been provided on the queue length observations given on the LMVR (CD5.29A).
- 2.15 For the purposes of the queue length survey a queue is defined as the continuous length of stationary vehicles running from the stop or give-way line. There were considerable problems in the survey at Jury's Corner due to the stop / start conditions propagating back from the end of the queue with traffic therefore travelling very slowly approaching the junction. In addition the enumerator operates on foot and has difficulty when the queue gets very long in identifying the end of the queue and keeping up with the stop start nature of the considerable congestion that occurs at the junction.
- 2.16 Often queues reached the maximum observable length, at this point the 'maximum observable queue length' was recorded. The true queue length would have been much longer.
- 2.17 Queues are low on the side roads at Jurys Corner due to the low vehicle demand on the approaches. The side roads are already given the minimum green time allowed on safety grounds; this is more than sufficient for the flow on these arms.
- 2.18 A queue of 70 to 100 metres is not considered low, particularly in light of the slow moving traffic approaching the queue. For roads of this type the road should be expected to run without congestion through the middle of the day; the queues of 10 to 20 vehicles observed at junctions in the interpeak suggests a level of congestion that is not acceptable. It should be noted that during the peaks periods, the queues are double this level and overall there is a material level of congestion.

3 STEER DAVIS GLEAVE

Economic Appraisal - Initial Year of Appraisal

3.1 Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) in their Response to Proofs of Evidence (July 2009) question the years of appraisal (paragraph 2.3), the discounting rates used in the economic analysis, the level of business benefits and the amount of benefits calculated due to delays during construction / maintenance.

3.2 The Scheme has been appraised from opening year (2013) of the Scheme and for 60 years in total (up to 2072). DMRB Volume 13 (CD4.35, Volume 13, Section 1, Part 7, Chapter 4) states that appraisal should start from the year in which the scheme opens. The appraisal is therefore correct and the benefits have not been overstated.

Economic Appraisal - Discounting Rate

3.3 The discounting rate quoted in DCC/P/4, paragraph 11.2.4 was given as 3% per annum which is a simplification of the process. The detailed methodology for the economic analysis used a discounting rate of 3.5% for the first 30 years starting with the current year and 3.0% thereafter.

Economic Appraisal - Ratio Between Working and Non-working benefits.

3.4 The proportion of business user benefits for the Scheme is approximately half of the total benefits; this result is questioned in paragraph 2.6 of the SDG document. The following tables show calculations made using default values from WebTAG Unit 3.5.6; these show that the split of business benefits (employers business, LGV and HGV) would be expected to be close to 60%. Therefore the split of business benefits for the Scheme is as expected.

	AM	PM	IP	Average
Emp. Bus.	18.1%	13.0%	19.9%	17.7%
Commuter	46.0%	40.8%	11.4%	27.4%
Other	35.9%	46.2%	68.7%	54.9%

Table 3	Adjusted Average Proportion (including LGV and HGV)	Values of Time	Weighted Benefits
	A	B	A x B
Emp. Bus.	14.4%	£ 21.86	£ 2.49
Commuter	22.3%	£ 4.15	£ 1.31
Other	44.7%	£ 3.68	£ 1.41
LGV	11.4%	£ 8.42	£ 0.96
HGV	7.2%	£ 8.42	£ 0.61
	Total	£ 7.29	£ 7.29
	Emp. Bus.		£ 4.72
	Proportion of Business Benefits		65%

3.5 Two other schemes for which the economic assessments have recently been completed show similar levels of employer's business benefits. Approximately 60% of the total benefits on the A38 Dobwalls bypass scheme will be accrued by business users. On the M25 Junction 30 improvement scheme, approximately 65% of benefits are accrued by business users. Therefore the split of business benefits for the Scheme is as expected.

3.6 The QUADRO has been completed to calculate the costs of delays during construction and maintenance. The split of consumer and business benefits is different to the TUBA assessment because the majority of maintenance has been assumed to take place at night when flows are lowest. During these times the proportion of business users is lower than the most highly trafficked times during the day where the majority of TUBA benefits are accrued.

Economic Appraisal - Cost Comparison

3.7 As the costs for the Next Best and Low Cost scheme were not updated from the submission of the Major Scheme Business Case, the costs for the 3 schemes detailed in the Economics Assessment Report (CD5.31A) have been given in different price bases. The costs for the 3 schemes have been entered into the economic analysis according to guidance given in WebTAG Unit 3.5.9.

Economic Appraisal - Optimism Bias

3.8 An optimism bias of 44% has been used in the appraisal of the Scheme, as recommended by the DfT.

Economic Appraisal - Annualisation Factors

3.9 The annualisation factors, based on of 253 weekdays in a year, are appropriate and the benefits calculated using these annualisation factors are most likely to have been understated and should be considered conservative. As the models represent an average hour, there will be an underestimation of the benefits in these hours; this underestimation will outweigh the overestimation of benefits in hours where flows are less than average (as congestion and hence travel times tend to increase exponentially with congestion).

- 3.10 The TUBA assessment does not include an assessment of off-peak hours (7pm to 7am) and times at weekends / bank holidays where flows are lower than in 3 modelled periods. The TUBA assessment has calculated benefits for 3,370 hours over the year, a further 5,000 hours have not been included in the assessment. DCC/P/4, diagram 3 and 4 show that flows of over 500 vehicles per hour were observed in another 1,500 hours. Therefore, the annualisation factors under represent the benefits that could be accrued by the Scheme.

Economic Appraisal - Construction Period Benefits

- 3.11 The QUADRO benefits for the Scheme are likely to have been understated, rather than over-stated as suggested by SDG (paragraph 2.14). The construction of the Scheme will impose costs to users, however these will be offset by the benefits that occur due to reduced and more easily managed maintenance of the Scheme compared to the existing road. If the Scheme were constructed the road maintenance would be eased considerably as there would be a new maintenance free new road for the first few years. In the longer-term night time closures could take place on one carriageway and traffic could still run freely on the available carriageway.
- 3.12 Maintenance of the existing road is a very complicated procedure as the flows are so heavy it is very difficult to maintain the road without causing excessive delays. Currently there are very rarely any road closures during the day (when flows are highest) due to maintenance works. However, if major structural maintenance were to take place this could result in significant delay for a prolonged period of time because night time working will be complicated by the numerous residential properties adjacent to the road. Such a scenario has not been included in the analysis, which is therefore considered conservative.

Economic Appraisal - Recession

- 3.13 The assessments completed and documented in the Economic Assessment Report (CD5.31) and the information provided in DCC/P/11 (Wider Economic Impacts) accords with guidance provided by the DfT in WebTAG.

Economic Appraisal - Changes from the December 2007 Release of Business Case

- 3.14 Table 4 provides a breakdown of costs and benefits of the Scheme from the 2007 Major Scheme Business Case and the updated Traffic and Economics report (CD5.31A).

	Dec '07	May '09	% Change	Absolute Change	% Change of Total
Accidents	£48,019	£60,858	27%	£12,839	2%
Travel Time	£686,080	£739,681	8%	£53,601	7%
Vehicle Operating Costs	£39,122	£4,733	-88%	£-34,389	-4%
Total	£773,221	£805,272	4%	£32,051	4%

Note: percentages vary slightly due to the inclusion of accidents, travel time and vehicle operating costs only

Table 4: Comparison of Costs and Benefits Between MSBC and Updated Assessments

- 3.15 The benefits have changed between the two assessments; however the changes are very small when compared to the overall benefits for the Scheme.

Kingskerswell Alliance General Proposals - Policy Background to the Scheme and Alternatives

- 3.16 The 'Policy Background to the Scheme and Alternatives' provides several useful quotations. These are as follows:

Para 3.6: one of the key priorities to support the RSS is:
'investment in urban transport systems and demand management with a step change in public transport support, with investment to enable high growth to be accommodated'

Paragraph 3.10: the RSS also states that to help achieve modal shift:

'Attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle networks linking residential areas, employment centres, town centres, schools, colleges and universities and universities...'

'Development of major public transport systems including bus 'showcase' routes on congested corridors including reallocating road space and re-engineering junctions to give bus priority'

- 3.17 A bypass Scheme is the only scheme which allows sufficient alleviation of congestion on the A380 to allow a step change in public transport to be achieved. The Kingskerswell Alliance proposals will neither alleviate congestion, nor provide sufficient improvements to public transport for an increase in public transport patronage to occur.

- 3.18 Furthermore the Scheme will allow the environment in Kingskerswell to be significantly improved, such that the attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian cycle networks can be provided. The Kingskerswell Alliance proposals do not offer the same opportunities.

Kingskerswell Alliance General Proposals - Alternative Proposals

- 3.19 In paragraph 3.12 it is claimed that the Scheme is in stark contrast to the prevailing policy, of which only 2 policies are identified, and that the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals follows policy closely.

- 3.20 With respect to policies, DaSTS (CD 4.42) has 5 goals and the corridor strategy has identified a range of objectives; all of which the Scheme fulfils, whereas the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals do not fulfil these goals and objectives.

- 3.21 SDG also bring attention to a Highways Agency report which suggests that the majority of bypasses introduce significantly more traffic than originally predicted.

- 3.22 The traffic model has incorporated the latest guidance given by the DfT in WebTAG. The model is fully Variable Demand compliant; the increases in traffic to which the Highways Agency report refers are unlikely to have included Variable Demand in their assessments as it is a fairly new DfT requirement and therefore the old methodology is more likely to under-predict flows on bypasses.

Kingskerswell Alliance General Proposals - Whether Alternatives have been Properly Considered

- 3.23 In paragraph 3.15 the view of SDG is given, i.e. that the Halcrow report 'A380 Newton Abbot to Torquay Corridor Study – Final Option Report' is considered outdated by SDG. The final option report was completed using the latest thinking at the time; whilst the report has not been updated the conclusions of the report do not change in light of any developments in traffic management and engineering. The latest revision of DaSTS puts greater emphasis on supporting national economic competitiveness and growth; this aligns closely with several of the objectives of the Scheme.
- 3.24 Paragraph 3.17 notes that bus priority, road user charging and workplace parking charges were mentioned in the final option report. Bus priority is an intrinsic part of the integrated strategy and will be provided through Kingskerswell and therefore has been considered. Workplace charging is being considered in Exeter by Devon County Council, as shown in the LTP (CD 3.9, page 143). Road user charging is unlikely to be applicable other than in major conurbations due to costs.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Points; Section 14.2 – Kingskerswell Alliance – Demand Management, Personalised Travel Planning and Travel Plans

- 3.25 SDG, in Paragraph 4.2, questions Devon County Council's innovation and commitment to demand management. In terms of innovation, Devon County Council were Local Transport Authority of the Year in 2006 and are short listed for the award in 2009. The CarShareDevon.com website is widely recognised as being one of the most successful schemes in the country, particularly in the marketing field. Devon County Council staff have received a Travelwise award for their efforts in promoting the scheme.
- 3.26 The transport plan for the Met Office won the Association of Commuter Transport Award with Devon County Council's support and Devon County Council are identified as a case study of best practice in the LTP (CD 3.9, page 50-54). It details the £0.6million allocated for measures to change travel behaviour, in addition to a team of staff to champion the process.
- 3.27 The recent Good Practice Guidelines: Delivery of Travel Plans through the Planning Process DfT & DCLG – April 2009 (Appendix 1 to this rebuttal) gives the following information, '*several County Councils are taking the lead in bringing skills and expertise together to ensure that travel plans and [sic] secured and monitored effectively in the future. This includes Devon, Lancashire, Surrey and Hampshire. They then work actively with their district planning authorities to support the process.*'
- 3.28 In the same document (given under Appendix 1), under the Research Report (September 2008) (section 2.15) 'The study found a number of authorities had secured travel plans through the planning process. Devon is identified as having among the **most** experience in school

travel plans. Further evidence is given in the following paragraphs (all given in Appendix 1): remove highlights in document

- 7E.1 ‘Officers from Devon County Council have had a significant level of experience in dealing with travel plans over the past six years.’
- 7E.2 ‘Devon County Council considers it has a good track record in seeking travel plans, linked with a clear policy base and strong corporate objectives.’
- 7E.6 ‘They feel they are proactive in securing as many travel plans as possible for the right types of development,’
- 7E.7 ‘The County Council has clear objectives as an authority when seeking travel plans and a strong policy commitment’
- 7E.10 ‘The Council has a good relationship with transport operators, particularly Stagecoach Devon’
- 7E.14 ‘The council itself is a key player in travel plans as well as being a significant employer.’

3.29 Paragraph 4.3 provides two quotes from the evidence of Devon County Council, these are as follows:

‘...a ‘Large-Scale TravelSmart Programme’ which would work in parallel to the construction of the Scheme to “lock in the benefits” of the Scheme’

‘In addition it would take a long period of time to achieve the reductions in demand identified and these measures are insufficient on their own to remove the need for the Scheme’

3.30 Paragraph 4.4 claims that the first quote is at odds with what is typically said about Smarter Choices interventions and paragraph 4.5 cites the lack of evidence to support the second quote.

3.31 Paragraph 4.6 describes the treatment of Smarter Choices in the proofs of evidence as ‘cursory’.

3.32 The evidence regarding the time taken to deliver a significant drop in traffic has been provided by SDG when they quote recent DfT research in paragraph 4.5, which states, ‘an intensive smarter choices programme over 10 years’. This can only take place with improvements to public transport which can only come about with the Scheme.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Points; Section 14.3 – Kingskerswell Alliance – Public Transport Measures

3.33 It is suggested in paragraph 4.9 that improvements to the rail network with corresponding improvements to the bus network/interchange may increase modal shift to public transport modes.

3.34 The information given in paragraph 4.9 is correct, and the improvements to the bus/rail network will increase modal shift to public transport modes. However these changes are very likely to be small and will not provide substantial relief to the A380.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Points; Section 14.5 to 14.7 – Kingskerswell Alliance – Traffic Engineering & Congestion Management Measures – Economic Assessment

- 3.35 The BCR is restated (the BCR is 3.69) in paragraph 4.12 of the SDG Response to the Proofs of Evidence. It is pointed out that the BCR is only one criterion on which Schemes should be assessed and that the BCR for the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals are in the same value bracket as the Scheme.
- 3.36 The BCR is the measure of the economic worth of a scheme, on this basis the Scheme is significantly preferable to the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals. The Kingskerswell Alliance proposals do not fall in the same value bracket as the Scheme, the BCR is lower than 4 (a value above which would rank any scheme as one of the very best as is the case for the Scheme). It is agreed that the BCR is only one criterion and there is a need to fulfil the other objectives set for the Scheme. The Scheme fulfils these objectives, whereas the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals do not.
- 3.37 Paragraph 4.13 questions the Devon County Council comment that the accidents due to the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals would almost certainly be higher than the existing situation.
- 3.38 SDG dispute that the number of accidents on the A380 will increase; instead they suggest the accident rate will fall due to the increased bus patronage. It is considered that the additional complexity of the layout, the higher traffic flows and increased width of the road for pedestrians to cross will increase the number of accidents along the route.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Point; Section 14.8 – Kingskerswell Alliance – Traffic and Engineering & Congestion Management Measures – Managing Demand

- 3.39 SDG suggest (paragraph 4.14) that no quantitative assessment of the effects of potential demand management measures has been undertaken. SDG also suggest that the economic case for the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals may improve if such a quantitative assessment of demand management measures can be included in the economic assessment.
- 3.40 The demand management measures proposed by the Kingskerswell Alliance have been assessed in turn and each shown to be likely to have marginal impact on the congestion on the A380 corridor. Many of the measures identified have already been implemented or have been shown to be ineffective for the corridor. Therefore the impact of these measures is unlikely to have a significant impact on the economic case for the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Point; Section 14.9 – Kingskerswell Alliance – Traffic Engineering & Congestion Management Measures – Traffic Engineering

- 3.41 SDG, in Paragraph 4.20, note the issue relating to elderly drivers using an unusual layout (as proposed under the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals). They draw comparison with the tidal flow schemes in Cardiff and overseas in places such as Brisbane, Australia (along Coronation Drive). The Kingskerswell Alliance proposals are not

comparable with the other examples given due to the considerable number of side roads and frontage development which make the proposals particularly difficult to implement.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Specific Point; Section 14.10 – Kingskerswell Alliance Traffic Engineering & Congestion Management Measures – Pedestrians, Cycle Provision, Local Access and Road Safety

3.42 Paragraphs 4.22 and 4.23 make the point that pedestrian crossings should be provided in appropriate locations, these locations should be identified using pedestrian desire lines.

3.43 The pedestrian crossings on the existing A380 have evolved to provide for the pedestrian demand crossing the road. Additional crossing may or may not be required but it must be recognised that any additional crossings will increase the delay on the A380 and reduce the economic value of the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals. In addition, even with additional crossings it will not be possible to eliminate all movements away from controlled crossings. This is particularly true at Jurys Corner where a pedestrian detour will be introduced due to the underpass and the difficulty in placing barriers at the junction.

Kingskerswell Alliance Alternatives – Summary

3.44 SDG state that they do not feel that the alternatives have been properly assessed and voice their doubts concerning the robustness of the conclusions reached.

3.45 Devon County Council has gone to considerable effort to appraise the Kingskerswell Alliance proposals. There has been extensive correspondence with SDG regarding the appraisal. A cost estimate has been produced, preliminary designs at Jurys Corner have been drawn and the economic appraisal has been completed. The work has provided sufficient evidence that the proposals are unworkable, there are several concerns, not least that they do not fulfil the objectives set for the Scheme. Furthermore the economic case for the Scheme is not strong enough for it to be likely to obtain funding through the RFA process.

Appendix 1

Delivering travel plans through the planning process

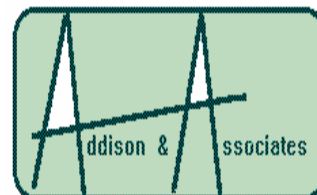
Research report

for

**Department for Transport
and
Communities and Local Government**

Addison & Associates

September 2008



- Varying threshold requirements to reflect local circumstances i.e. for new housing development.
- Use of external independent mediation to tackle under-performance against targets.
- Promoting area-based travel plan networks to encompass travel plans from all sources, and to continue engagement when formal requirements end.

Interviewee:

Bronwen Fisher, Community Travel Manager (Business and Development), Environment and Regulation Service, Surrey County Council

E - Devon County Council

1. Background and overall approach

7E.1 Officers from Devon County Council have had a significant level of experience in dealing with travel plans over the past six years. Their approach to and success with travel plans is summarised as follows:

“Devon County Council (DCC) requires travel plans of most reasonable sized developments. The approach has been to discuss requirements early on with a lot of discussion during the development of the travel plan. Travel plans are usually required at pre-application stage and recommended by DCC development control officers. It has been essential to encourage timeframes for action, and to provide assistance from DCC on practical measures. The difficulty has been in keeping up to date with occupation of sites, finding the right person to talk to in the new development once planning permission has been required.

Monitoring and enforcing travel plans is resource intensive. Currently the travel plan officer for DCC is responsible for all travel planning related work, including encouraging existing employers to develop travel plans, which in recent years has become increasingly popular. The major developments are normally monitored as they are seen as strategically important, and promote best practice. Smaller developments in practical terms are difficult to monitor.”

Travel plan experience and effectiveness

7E.2 Devon County Council considers it has a good track record in seeking travel plans, linked with a clear policy base and strong corporate objectives. Over 60 travel plans have been secured through the planning process in recent years, for a wide range of uses, with over 50 now being implemented. 80% of plans have been secured using section 106 Agreements, with 20% being secured through planning conditions. The Travel Plan Officer commented that they have difficulty in providing precise statistics:

They have a database of travel plans that are ‘planning related’ i.e. they have been included through a planning enquiry (pre app), or as a result of achieving planning permission. Sometimes the developer contacts the CC directly to advise, sometimes the occupier, sometime the planning officer from the relevant

district and sometimes via our highways officer. Some times planning officers approve a travel plan without comment from the CC's travel plan officer.

- 7E.3 This comment highlights the difficulties faced in providing accurate data, and the complexity of the process in a two-tier county/district situation. There are eight districts, plus two unitary authorities within the county at Torbay and Plymouth, (and potentially a third in Exeter if its status changes under current proposals) and National Parks Authorities covering Dartmoor/part of Exmoor.
- 7E.4 The current two-tier structure results in opportunities to secure travel plans being missed, and there is still a need to convince all the local planning authorities of the value of travel plans. LDF Briefing Papers on Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and related policies have been produced this year to try to embed the County's philosophy and requirements in emerging core strategies and LDDs. Joint working with the two unitary authorities is improving since posts in the authorities have been filled. Recent successes include the Devon CarShare Scheme and the construction travel plan for the Langage Energy Centre near Plymouth.
- 7E.5 DCC bases its requirements broadly on the national standards set down in PPG13, but will ask for travel plans whenever they consider there is an opportunity to promote their sustainable travel objectives. Officers are keen to engage with developers early in the process, particularly through pre-application discussions, and consequently assess each plan on its merits according to local policies, local knowledge and circumstances.
- 7E.6 Officers consider that they are on their way to achieving the sustainable travel objectives that underpin their activity in this field. They feel they are proactive in securing as many travel plans as possible for the right types of development, despite incurring problems around resources, structures and timing.

Objectives and commitment

- 7E.7 The County Council has clear objectives as an authority when seeking travel plans and a strong policy commitment, which is reinforced by national, regional and local policies including the County Structure Plan, the Local Transport Plan, and, more latterly, through influencing policies in emerging Local Development Frameworks and Documents. Senior officers and members recognise the need for effective travel plans when attached to development proposals. They also support and trust the judgement of officers to secure robust travel plans.
- 7E.8 Communities sometimes indirectly seek travel plans as a means of reducing the impact of traffic from development on their neighbourhoods, usually in connection with responses made on a particular proposal such as the relocation of a rugby ground. In these circumstances, comments and requests may be made for travel plan related measures i.e. to reduce parking or congestion.

Key partners

- 7E.9 Devon County Council officers identified a range of key partners and players, both within local government, such as development control officers at county and district/borough level, within adjoining unitary authorities in the county and outside, such as developers and end users. They consider that the main

- developers in the area are co-operative to a point, being happy to produce travel plan documents but perhaps less keen to deliver the measures and outcomes sought through the plans, especially on speculative developments.
- 7E.10 The Council has a good relationship with transport operators, particularly Stagecoach Devon, whom it considers has a good understanding of the benefits of travel plans. The Transport Co-ordination Service within DCC leads on liaison with transport operators on travel plan measures, in discussion with the Travel Plan Officer. These have included discount fare schemes in Exeter City Centre, support for bus service improvements and improved transport information. Other partners who can assist in delivering travel plan measures include car club companies such as Car Plus, operating in Exeter and Topsham, and More Car in Ashburton. A car share scheme has also been developed with adjoining unitary authorities in Torbay and Plymouth – see www.CarShareDevon.com.
- 7E.11 Large organisations such as educational establishments and health providers are regarded as partners, particularly when they are producing voluntary travel plans or incorporating travel plan principles into new schemes. The University of Exeter has adopted a voluntary plan with good targets and action plans, and the new Honiton Surgery is developing a comprehensive travel plan (initially sought through a condition) and will submit a full plan prior to occupation.
- 7E.12 Partners in the tourism industry are increasingly supporting the council's policy on travel plans, with good examples from the National Trust (Greenway Travel Plan restricting visitor car numbers, and providing alternative measures in Dartmouth) and the Jurassic Coast initiative (X56 long distance bus route) contributing to sustainable travel achievements. Devon is seeking travel plans across the county, but in the rural areas there are fewer development pressures and subsequently fewer opportunities to secure plans through the planning process. However, travel plans have been produced in connection with farm developments such as converting barns to visitor centres.
- 7E.13 Devon County Council also views the Highways Agency as an important partner, liaising with them on pre-application discussions for schemes on the M5, A30, A303 and A381. Their involvement is restricted to a limited number of developments, but the relationship is considered to be good, although at times diminished by their desire to protect capacity on their network. The HA is consulted on strategic section 106 agreements, with holding directions resolved through dialogue and suggested travel plan measures, as with the Match Day Access Strategy agreed for the Sandy Park Rugby Ground, just off the M5.
- 7E.14 The council itself is a key player in travel plans as well as being a significant employer. The County Hall Travel Plan derives from the corporate priority in the strategic plan, and has included a compulsory car free day since 2004. Under this plan, all grades of staff have to travel by other transport modes one day a week (Mon-Thurs). An annual staff survey is carried out in April, and the Senior Management Working Party considers regular monitoring reports.
- 7E.15 The Council also runs a grant scheme giving 50% match funded grants up to £4,000 total project cost for measures arising from voluntary travel plans such as cycle stands, and provides help to companies wishing to develop a voluntary plan. A helpful glossy leaflet sets out the Council's guidance on producing