

INSPECTORS REPORT

Inspectors Report - Grey Folder

Page 11: 5.8 St Lyones Church - Grade 1 listed.

Page 24:

- a) to assist economic growth by reducing transport costs
- b) to improve the environment by removing through traffic from unsuitable roads in towns and villages
- c) to enhance road safety

Page 25: 13.1 "... linking the major population centres of the county."

Page 26: 15.10 "... is designated as a conservation area."

Page 27: 16.1 "... the road itself falls well short of the standards considered appropriate for a trunk road."

16.3 "... only up to 7% of existing A35 traffic could eventually be encouraged to transfer to the alternative route."

(SEE ALSO - 16.5)

Page 32 19.1 etc

Page 33 20.2 Accident rates.

Page 37 26.3 Air Quality

Page 44 36.13 - 36.14 - 36.15 - 36.16

Page 45 36.23 - 36.24 - 36.25

Page 46 38.5 - 38.6 - 38.7

PAGE 139: PAGE 144 PAGE 146/7 PAGE 164 (121.1)

PAGE
178

PAGE:
174

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

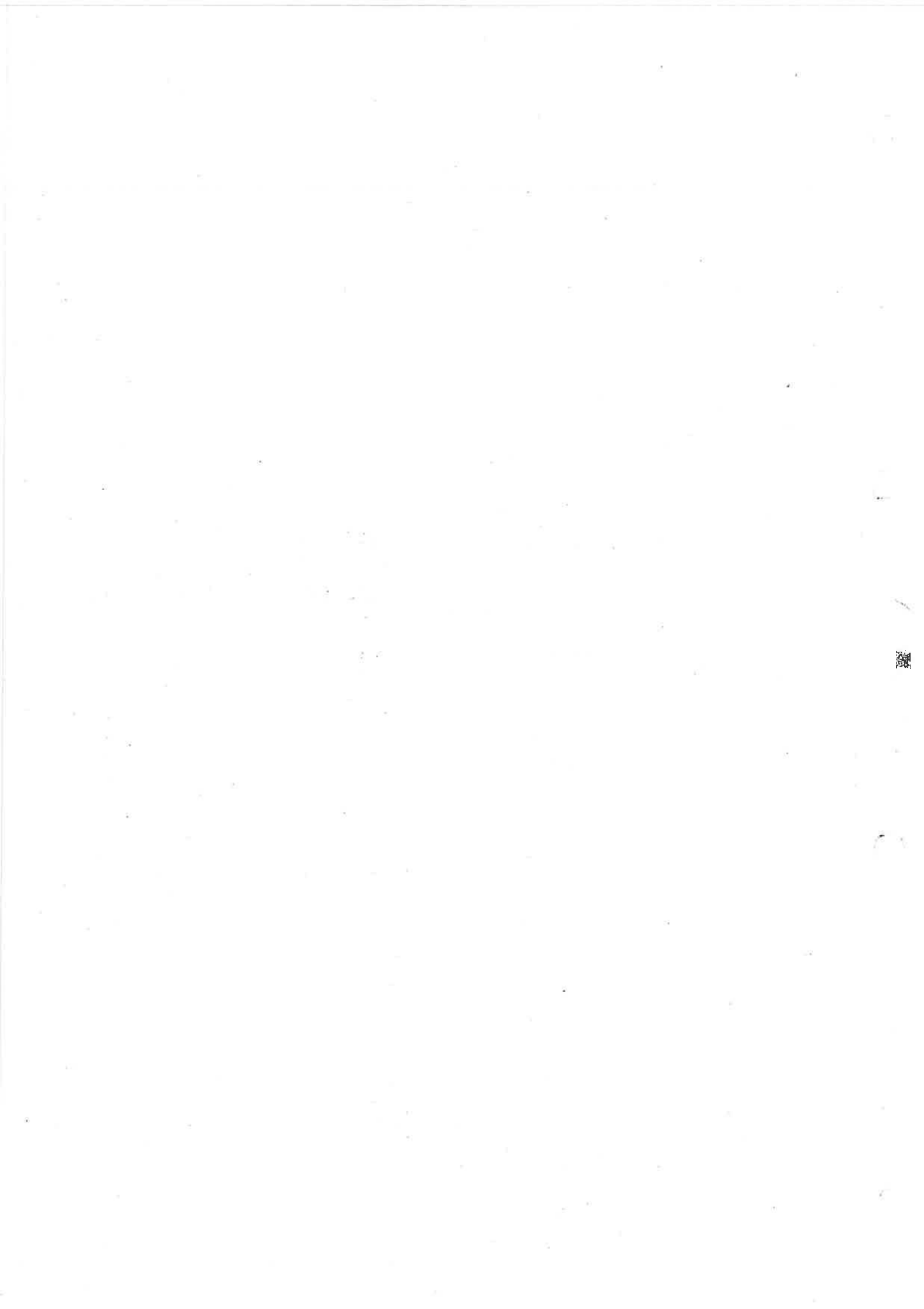
THE A35 TRUNK ROAD (CHIDEOCK MORCOMBELAKE BYPASS
AND SLIP ROADS) ORDER 199

THE A35 TRUNK ROAD (CHIDEOCK MORCOMBELAKE BYPASS
AND SLIP ROADS SIDE ROADS) ORDER 199

THE A35 TRUNK ROAD (CHIDEOCK MORCOMBELAKE BYPASS)
(DETRUNKING) ORDER 199

THE A35 TRUNK ROAD (CHIDEOCK MORCOMBELAKE BYPASS)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER (NO SW) 199

Inspector: John Moore MBE
Date of Inquiries: 12 April - 20 September 1994
File No: CSW237/5/55/1



INDEX

	<u>PARAGRAPHS</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
<u>PART I</u>		
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1.1 - 1.23	1 - 3
<u>PART II - DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING ROUTE</u>		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION	2.1 - 2.7	4
CHARMOUTH BYPASS TO WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE	3.1 - 3.19	4 - 6
WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE TO TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL	4.1 - 4.21	7 - 9
TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL TO EAST OF CHIDEOCK	5.1 - 5.13	9 - 11
EAST OF CHIDEOCK TO BRIDPORT LINK ROAD	6.1 - 6.8	11 - 12
<u>PART III - DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE</u>		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION	7.1 - 7.11	13 - 14
CHARMOUTH BYPASS TO WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE	8.1 - 8.26	14 - 17
WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE TO TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL	9.1 - 9.18	17 - 19
TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL TO EAST OF CHIDEOCK	10.1 - 10.13	19 - 21
EAST OF CHIDEOCK TO BRIDPORT LINK ROAD	11.1 - 11.24	21 - 23

**PART IV - THE CASE FOR
THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY**

GOVERNMENT POLICY	12.1 - 12.5	24 - 25
THE IMPORTANCE TO DORSET OF THE A35 TRUNK ROAD	13.1	25
THE A31 / 35 IMPROVEMENT PLANS	14.1 - 14.2	25
THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT	15.1 - 15.13	25 - 27
THE NEED FOR THE SCHEME	16.1 - 16.6	27 - 28
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHEME AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION	17.1 - 17.22	28 - 31
OPENING DATE AND DESIGN YEAR	18.1 - 18.3	31 - 32
HISTORIC AND PREDICTED 24 HOUR AADT TRAFFIC FLOWS	19.1 - 19.6	32
ACCIDENTS	20.1 - 20.7	32 - 33
COST AND COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS	21.1 - 21.5	33 - 34
LANDTAKE	22.1 - 22.8	34 - 35
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEME	23.1 - 23.8	35
BENEFIT OF THE SCHEME FOR MOTORISTS	24.1 - 24.3	36
EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS	25.1 - 25.3	36
EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON OCCUPIERS OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES	26.1 - 26.3	36 - 37
EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES	27.1 - 27.2	37
LANDSCAPE	28.1 - 28.2	37
ECOLOGY	29.1 - 29.5	37 - 38

ARCHAEOLOGY	30.1 - 30.4	38
HERITAGE	31.1 - 31.7	39
AGRICULTURE	32.1 - 32.5	39 - 40
MODIFICATIONS TO THE LINE ORDER	33.1 - 33.3	40
MODIFICATIONS TO THE SIDE ROADS' ORDER	34.1 - 34.11	40 - 41
MODIFICATIONS TO THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER	35.1 - 35.6	41 - 42
 <u>PART V - THE CASE FOR SUPPORTERS</u>		
SUPPORT FOR THE PUBLISHED ROUTE AND ORDERS	36.1 - 36.25	43 - 46
SUPPORT FOR THAT PART OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE BYPASSING MORCOMBELAKE	37.1 - 37.3	46
SUPPORT FOR THAT PART OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE BYPASSING CHIDEOCK	38.1 - 38.7	46 - 47
 <u>PART VI - THE CASE FOR OBJECTORS AND THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY</u>		
THE EFFECT OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE ON THE COUNTRYSIDE AND ON THE NATIONAL TRUST GOLDEN CAP ESTATE	39.1 - 39.50	48 - 54
ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION	40.1 - 40.57	55 - 62
GEOLOGY	41.1 - 41.21	62 - 65
THE VILLAGE ECONOMIES	42.1 - 42.16	65 - 67
PIECEMEAL APPROACH	43.1 - 43.10	67 - 68

REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES	44.1 - 44.6	68 - 69
PREDICTED TRAFFIC GROWTH AND ACCIDENT RATES	45.1 - 45.12	69 - 71
STANDARD OF CARRIAGEWAY	46.1 - 46.36	71 - 76
SURFACE OF BYPASS	47.1 - 47.3	76
PUBLIC CONSULTATION	48.1 - 48.6	76 - 77
FOOTPATHS	49.1 - 49.38	77 - 81
THE SECTION OF THE BYPASS WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE	50.1 - 50.8	81 - 82
THE MORCOMBELAKE SECTION OF THE BYPASS	51.1 - 51.18	82 - 84
IMPACT ON SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE	52.1 - 52.8	85
THE CHIDEOCK SECTION OF THE BYPASS	53.1 - 53.20	85 - 87
INTRODUCTION TO OBJECTIONS TO THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AND PROPERTY	54.1 - 54.9	88
MANOR FARM, CHARMOUTH	55.1 - 55.13	88 - 90
VENN FARM, PILSDON	56.1 - 56.3	90
BERNSIDE, CHARMOUTH	57.1 - 57.8	90 - 91
BELLAIR FARM, CHARMOUTH	58.1 - 58.6	91 - 92
BEFFERLANDS FARM, CHARMOUTH	59.1 - 59.8	92
BERNE MANOR FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	60.1 - 60.9	92 - 93
GRAND VIEW FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	61.1 - 61.8	93 - 94

LAND WEST OF TIZARDS KNAPP, MORCOMBELAKE	62.1 - 62.5	94
BARN CLOSE FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	63.1 - 63.7	95
SHIP FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	64.1 - 64.17	95 - 97
FULVENS HOME FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	65.1 - 65.12	97 - 98
WANEHOUSE FARM, MORCOMBELAKE	66.1 - 66.7	98
ST. GABRIELS, SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE	67.1 - 67.7	98 - 99
CHIDEOCK MANOR ESTATE	68.1 - 68.13	99 - 100
HIGHER PYMORE FARM, PYMORE	69.1 - 69.4	100
HIGHWAY FARM, SYMONDSBURY	70.1 - 70.6	100 - 101
SYMONDSBURY MANOR ESTATE	71.1 - 71.7	101 - 102
WATTON FARM, WATTON	72.1 - 72.3	102
LAND OFF NEW STREET, BRIDPORT	73.1 - 73.3	102
DOLPHIN RIVER PARK, CHARMOUTH	74.1 - 74.2	103
ROSE COTTAGE, SHIP KNAPP, MORCOMBELAKE	75.1 - 75.4	103
ST. GABRIEL'S CLOSE, MORCOMBELAKE	76.1 - 76.8	103 - 104
NO. 2 BRADPOLES, SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE	77.1 - 77.3	104
FRODSHAM MOTORS, MORCOMBELAKE	78.1 - 78.7	105

THE LODGE, CHIDEOCK	79.1 - 79.12	105 - 106
WOODLANDS, WEST ROAD, BRIDPORT	80.1 - 80.6	106 - 107
DOLTON HOUSE, WEST ROAD, BRIDPORT	81.1 - 81.11	107 - 108

PART VII - THE CASE FOR OBJECTORS'
ALTERNATIVE ROUTES AND THE
RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

INTRODUCTION	82.1 - 82.10	109 - 110
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 1	83.1 - 83.5	110 - 111
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 2	84.1 - 84.9	111 - 112
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 3	85.1 - 85.5	113 - 114
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 4	86.1 - 86.12	114 - 115
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 5	87.1 - 87.11	115 - 116
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 6	88.1 - 88.13	116 - 118
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 7	89.1 - 89.7	118
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 8	90.1 - 90.8	119
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 9	91.1 - 91.21	120 - 122
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 10	92.1 - 92.6	122 - 123
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 11	93.1 - 93.6	123 - 124
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 12	94.1 - 94.6	124 - 125
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 13	95.1 - 95.4	125
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 14	96.1 - 96.4	126
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 15	97.1 - 97.6	126 - 127
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 16	98.1 - 98.25	127 - 129

OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 17	99.1 - 99.6	130
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 18	100.1 - 100.4	131
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 19	101.1 - 101.5	131 - 132
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 20	102.1 - 102.3	132
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 21	103.1 - 103.4	133
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 22	104.1 - 104.4	133 - 134
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 23	105.1	134
OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 24	106.1 - 106.4	134 - 135

**PART VIII - FINDINGS OF
FACT AND CONCLUSIONS**

INTRODUCTION	107.1 - 107.8	136
THE EXISTING ROAD	108.1 - 108.13	136 - 140
OBJECTORS' ROUTES	109.1 - 109.32	140 - 143
THE PUBLISHED ROUTE	110.1 - 110.5	143
THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	111.1 - 111.10	143 - 144
PREDICTED 24 HOUR AADT TRAFFIC FLOWS	112.1 - 112.13	144 - 146
ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT SAVINGS	113.1 - 113.12	146 - 147
THE COUNTRYSIDE	114.1 - 114.34	148 - 152
NATIONAL TRUST LAND	115.1 - 115.17	152 - 154
GEOLOGY	116.1 - 116.17	154 - 156
ECOLOGY	117.1 - 117.23	157 - 159
FOOTPATHS	118.1 - 118.10	159 - 160

VILLAGE ECONOMIES	119.1 - 119.12	160 - 161
THE MORCOMBELAKE SECTION OF THE BYPASS	120.1 - 120.27	162 - 164
THE CHIDEOCK SECTION OF THE BYPASS	121.1 - 121.27	164 - 167
PIECEMEAL APPROACH	122.1 - 122.4	167 - 168
STANDARD OF CARRIAGEWAY	123.1 - 123.18	168 - 170
EFFECT OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE ON FARMS	124.1 - 124.24	171 - 173
EFFECT OF THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY	125.1 - 125.6	173 - 174
OVERALL ASSESSMENT	126.1 - 126.13	174 - 178
THE ORDERS	127.1 - 127.13	178 - 180
MODIFICATIONS	128.1 - 128.7	180 - 181
CERTIFICATE IN RESPECT OF COMMON LAND	129.1 - 129.9	181 - 182
APPRECIATION	130.1 - 130.4	182
 <u>PART IX - RECOMMENDATIONS</u>		
LINE ORDER	131.1	183
DETRUNKING ORDER	132.1	183
SIDE ROADS ORDER AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER	133.1 - 133.2	183
CERTIFICATE IN RESPECT OF COMMON LAND	134.1	183

10 April 1995

To: The Right Honourable John Gummer MP
Secretary of State for the Environment

The Right Honourable Dr Brian Mawhinney MP
Secretary of State for Transport

Gentlemen

PART I - GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 I have the honour to report that on 12 April 1994 I opened concurrent public local inquiries at Lyme Regis to hear objections, expressions of support, and representations concerning the following draft orders which the Secretary of State for Transport proposes to make:

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass and Slip Roads) Order 199

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass and Slip Roads Side Roads) Order 199

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass) (Detrunking) Order 199

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order (No SW) 199

1.2 The four orders are, respectively, referred to in this report as the line order, the side roads order, the detrunking order, and the compulsory purchase order.

1.3 The line order would be made under sections 10 and 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers.

1.4 The side roads' order would be made under sections 12, 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers.

1.5 The detrunking order would be made under sections 10 and 12 of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers.

1.6 The compulsory purchase order would be made under sections 239, 240 and 246 of the Highways Act 1980, as extended and supplemented by section 250 of that Act, and under section 2 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, and all other enabling powers.

1.7 If made, the orders would authorise the construction of the scheme described in Part III of this report.

1.8 The inquiries were held on a total of 70 days, and were closed on 20 September 1994.

1.9 I made unaccompanied site visits prior to and during the course of the inquiries. In addition, I made accompanied site visits on 8 days during the period 21 September to 4 October 1994.

1.10 This report contains a description of the existing and published routes, the material points of the cases presented, my findings of fact and conclusions, and my recommendations.

1.11 A list of appearances is at Appendix A.

1.12 A list of documents placed before the inquiries is at Appendix B.

1.13 A list of proofs of evidence is at Appendix C.

1.14 Readers of this report will find it helpful to have opened out before them the scheme plan at Appendix D. It shows the existing and published routes, the main place names and locations, and the chainages referred to in this report.

1.15 A topographical map of the area is at Appendix E. The area referred to in this report as the Morcombelake Bowl is the expanse of land south of Morcombelake bounded by Chardown Hill, Hardown Hill, Langdon Hill, and Golden Cap.

1.16 In this report, evidence given to the inquiries by organisations which were statutorily established or are statutorily recognised is generally attributed. Evidence given by others is not attributed unless such attribution is judged to be material.

1.17 There are 1,070 objectors to the scheme and 65 supporters. Six representations were made. Included amongst the objectors and supporters are those who only express objection to, or support for, part of the scheme (e.g. the bypassing of one of the villages) and do not express a view about the remainder of the scheme.

1.18 The numbers of objectors and supporters are approximate and should be regarded as indicative only. This is because in many cases it is not possible to be certain whether multiple objectors or supporters are joint or several; in other cases, there is no evidence that persons purporting to write on behalf of another or others are authorised so to do. In addition, it should be noted that the numbers quoted do not include the signatories of petitions which have been received and included as inquiries' documents.

1.19 Counter-objections have been made to all the alternative routes put forward by objectors.

1.20 The Highways Agency confirmed that there had been compliance with all the required statutory formalities and procedures.

1.21 Definitions. Throughout this report the term:

"the Agency" means "the Highways Agency"

"the bypass" means "the bypass proposed by the Highways Agency as described in the orders listed in paragraph 1.1 above"

1.22 Footpaths are described by their definitive map numbers. Some parish boundaries have recently changed. However, on the advice of the local authority, the previous parish prefixes and numbers, which are those shown on the definitive map current at the time of the inquiries, have been used.

1.23 Finally, as part of this introduction, I should make it clear that in preparing this report, in reaching my conclusions, and in making my recommendations, I have taken into careful consideration all submissions, objections, counter-objections, representations, and expressions of support, both written and oral. Written objections, counter-objections, representations, letters of support, and Highways Agency correspondence pertaining thereto are contained in Documents DT 159 - 161.

PART. II - DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING ROUTE

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 At its western end, the A35 trunk road begins at Honiton where it extends from the A30 trunk road. At its eastern end, the A35 trunk road extends as far as Bere Regis where the trunk road becomes the A31. From Bere Regis the A35 then becomes a county road to Bournemouth.

2.2 The A31/A35 is the only trunk road running east/west through the length of Dorset and provides the main route for long distance traffic passing through the county and seeking access to and from its communities and countryside.

2.3 The length of the existing A35 trunk road which would be superseded by the Chideock Morcombelake Bypass extends from the eastern end of the Charmouth Bypass to the western end of the Bridport Link Road.

2.4 The whole route is within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Part of the route is within the West Dorset Heritage Coast.

2.5 The 7.5km stretch of the existing A35 which would be bypassed is mainly single carriageway varying in width between 5.35m and 7.5m.

2.6 The detailed description of the road given below divides the route into four sections (moving from west to east): the eastern end of the Charmouth Bypass to the west of Morcombelake; west of Morcombelake to the top of Chideock Hill; the top of Chideock Hill to east of Chideock; and east of Chideock to the Bridport Link Road.

2.7 The description given below refers in places to details of the visibility available at junctions of minor roads with the existing A35. These are all taken from the minor road at a distance of 4.5m back along its centre line from the edge of the major road.

3. CHARMOUTH BYPASS TO THE WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE

3.1 The A35 Charmouth Bypass, opened in 1990, is generally a single 7.3m wide carriageway with 1m hardened strips and a climbing lane section for westbound traffic over part of the length.

3.2 At its eastern end, the Charmouth Bypass crosses the River Char. East of the Charmouth Bypass, the A35 is connected to the C87 Charmouth road to the south by a single lane dual carriageway junction, which is fully kerbed. It was constructed as part of the Charmouth Bypass. Visibility in both directions is good.

3.3 The trunk road at the junction consists of two 4m wide running lanes with a 14m wide central reserve tapering back to a single carriageway 100m east of the junction. Each lane has a 1m wide hardened strip within a 3.5m verge.

3.4 Immediately east of the Charmouth road junction, an oblique T-junction connects the A35 with the C87 Berne Lane which runs northwards to Whitchurch Canonicorum.

3.5 This narrow 3.6m wide lane has no footways and rises at a 7% gradient to meet the A35 where there is restricted visibility of 130m eastwards along the existing A35. Bellair House and Bellair Cottage, which are grade II listed buildings, lie on the north side of the existing A35 east of the Berne Lane junction.

3.6 Two ram pumps listed in Dorset County Council's Sites and Monument Record (SMR) and a derelict cottage lie to the south of the road.

3.7 Approximately 250m east of this junction the road reduces in width from 7.3m to 6.95m. The hard shoulders are lost and the verge width on the northern side reduces to 0.5m with a hedge immediately behind it.

3.8 The existing A35 single carriageway climbs steadily eastwards from the Charmouth road junction for 2.6km up an average 4% gradient to Tizard's Knapp, Morcombelake, along the northern slope of Stonebarrow Hill. Newlands Batch, the woodland bordering the southern side of the A35, forms part of the extensive and discontinuous West Dorset Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). On the other side of the road, fields have been identified by the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation (DTNC) as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).

3.9 Most of Stonebarrow Hill lies within the extensive Golden Cap Estate owned by the National Trust.

3.10 The first kilometre of this length of the A35 is generally straight with an average road width of 7.0m. It maintains the 0.5m and 3.0m verge widths, eastbound and westbound respectively, with mature hedges on both sides. A relaxation in the generally restrictive road markings gives an opportunity to overtake for approximately 500m in each direction.

3.11 The second kilometre has a horizontal alignment generally restricting forward visibility. Verges are virtually non-existent. It has an average road width of 7.1m with a white line centre of carriageway. This prohibits overtaking in an eastbound direction but allows overtaking for approximately 400m in a westbound direction.

3.12 Another SNCI field lies to the north of the A35, just east of Berne Farm track, which runs north from the A35 to Berne Lane. The track is a public right of way (Footpath No 56) and appears to incorporate part of an ancient droveway.

3.13 To the south of the A35, Home Bottom Coppice and adjacent fields form another part of the West Dorset Coast SSSI.

3.14 The road is widely visible as a linear feature across the middle slopes of Stonebarrow Hill.

3.15 Along the eastern 0.6km of this section, the road rises with a tight 150m radius right hand bend which leads directly into a 300m radius left hand bend. The road then straightens out for 200m before entering a 300m radius right hand bend at its highest point. Double white lines continue over the whole of this section.

3.16 There is an access to Fulvens Home Farmhouse on the north side of the A35, some 300m west of Tizards Knapp. The fields surrounding Fulvens Home Farmhouse and paddock form part of the Morcombelake SSSI. The other part of this SSSI is situated on the top of Hardown Hill. Traffic on this section of road adjacent to Fulvens Home Farm is clearly visible from many properties on the western flanks of Hardown Hill.

3.17 Over the years, this length of road has experienced subsidence problems, resulting in remedial measures being undertaken. These measures include sheet piling work on the north side of the A35. As the Highways Agency's maintenance agent, Dorset County Council is currently considering the need for further works in the vicinity of Fulvens Home Farm where local subsidence of the trunk road has again recently occurred.

3.18 There are several agricultural accesses on this section of the A35, mostly on the southern side.

3.19 This part of the route description ends at the 40mph speed limit sign for Morcombelake, 20m west of Tizards Knapp junction.

4. WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE TO THE TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL

4.1 Morcombelake lies on the western and southern slopes of Hardown Hill. Within the village there are some 30 properties fronting or having direct access to the main road. These include an inn, restaurant, church, bakery, post office and general stores. Most houses in Morcombelake are on the north side of the A35 whereas the church and most commercial properties are on the south side.

4.2 There is a bus bay outside the Ship Inn on the north side of the road with a further one on the south side, just east of Verriotts Lane. There is also a layby used as a bus stop on the north side of the road opposite St Gabriel's Church, and one used as a bus stop on the south side of the road outside the bakery. There is an additional parking area on the south side of the main road immediately west of Shedbush Lane.

4.3 Morcombelake is subject to a 40mph speed limit over a 1.2km length. From the 40mph speed limit, the A35 continues on a right hand bend of 300m radius and then takes a 125m radius right hand bend into Morcombelake. Through this bend the road narrows to less than 7.0m wide, has no verges and runs between steep tree lined banks.

4.4 At the western end of Morcombelake, the 4.5m wide Tizards Knapp side road joins the A35 on the north side, on a 3% descending gradient through steep tree lined banks with no roadside verges. At its junction with the A35 the available visibility is 21m west and 27m east along the trunk road. There are no verges west of this junction, but a 1.2m wide footway commences here on the northern side of the A35, which widens to 1.5m at the Ship Inn, 50m east, and then continues for 1km through the village, ending at Star Lane.

4.5 On the south side of the A35, a road immediately opposite Tizards Knapp provides one of two accesses to the Ship Knapp side road. This road follows a spur of Chardown Hill which, together with the south-western part of Hardown Hill, forms a visual barrier separating the River Char valley from the valley south of Morcombelake. Ship Knapp runs downhill towards the A35 at a gradient of 3% approaching the junction. Visibility from Ship Knapp on to the A35 is practically blind to the west due to a steep bank. To the east visibility is about 30m. Morcombe Farm, Morcombe Cottage, and Ship Farm lie off Ship Knapp. Ship Knapp connects with three public rights of way: Byway Open to All Traffic No 39, Bridleway No 49, and Footpath No 42.

4.6 From Tizards Knapp, the trunk road proceeds in a south-easterly direction, continuing on a right hand bend of 125m radius as it proceeds through Morcombelake.

4.7 Opposite the Ship Inn the A35 is joined on its southern side by a second road leading from Ship Knapp. This narrow 3.5m wide minor road runs down a steep 11% gradient flattening off at its junction with the A35. There are high boundary hedges on both sides of Ship Knapp with no footways. Visibility from Ship Knapp at the junction is about 20m in either direction. Double white lines continue along the A35 to this junction. From Ship Knapp a 1.5m wide footway commences on the southern side of the A35 and runs for 1km through the village ending at Frodsham's Garage.

4.8 The A35 runs eastward for 50m from the Ship Knapp junction to where Verriotts Lane meets it on the north side. Verriotts Lane, 3.4m wide, has a restricted visibility of 40m eastbound at its junction with the A35. The lane rises steeply away from the junction. Forward visibility along this section of the A35 is variable and in places less than 90m.

4.9 From Ship Knapp, road markings indicate overtaking opportunities in an eastbound direction to just east of Verriotts Lane but only for about 100m. No overtaking is permitted in a westbound direction.

4.10 South of the A35, between Ship Knapp and the top of Chideock Hill, lies a small bowl-shaped valley of small fields, overlooked by the surrounding hills of Chardown Hill, Hardown Hill, Langdon Hill and Golden Cap. The A35 is visible from these hills as it runs across the flank of Hardown Hill.

4.11 The A35 now gradually ascends to a crest on a relatively straight horizontal alignment. On the south side of the A35 a hedged embankment falls away behind a 2m verge which runs at the back of the 1.5m wide footway. A single field (Moor Meadow) below this embankment has been designated part of the West Dorset Coast SSSI.

4.12 Travelling east, the A35 passes through a 250m left hand radius bend and is joined to the north by Gibbs Lane, which is 3.8m wide and drops sharply on a 10% gradient around a right hand bend to its junction with the A35. Visibility from Gibbs Lane in both directions along the A35 is 50m.

4.13 Approximately 120m east of Gibbs Lane, Shedbush Lane joins the A35 from the south. The lane drops away from the carriageway on a 10% gradient. The lane gives vehicular access on to the National Trust estate, and forms part of the National Trust boundary. Visibility from Shedbush Lane on to the A35 is restricted to 30m to the east and 55m to the west.

4.14 From Shedbush Lane the trunk road runs due east on a generally straight alignment for 250m with an average road width of 7.35m. A hazard warning line runs along this section

from just east of Verriotts Lane to Star Lane, at the eastern end of Morcombelake.

4.15 Immediately past Shedbush Lane on the south side of the A35 is St Gabriel's Church, listed grade II. The access to the churchyard is actually on the Shedbush Lane junction.

4.16 Approximately 150m to the east of Shedbush Lane on the south side of A35 is Moore's biscuit factory and shop.

4.17 Just west of the biscuit factory is an access to property on the south side of the A35 and to Wanehouse Farm. This access has poor visibility eastward on to the trunk road.

4.18 Just east of the biscuit factory on the north side of the A35 is Sun Lane, 3.8m wide. Sun Lane descends steeply towards the A35 on a 7.5% gradient and then levels out at the junction where the visibility is good.

4.19 The A35 takes a 200m radius right hand bend after Sun Lane. On the outside of this bend, Carters Lane, which is a narrow road leading to North Chideock, shares a joint access on to the trunk road with Star Lane, 4.5m wide. It is also known as Ryall Road, which is the main link northwards from Morcombelake to neighbouring hamlets. On the inside of the A35 bend is the 17th Century Star Cottage (grade II listed) which severely restricts visibility westbound.

4.20 Climbing at a gradient of 1.8% out of Morcombelake to the top of Chideock Hill, the A35 becomes a dual 7.3m wide carriageway road over a 200m length, with laybys on each side. The verge eastbound reduces from 3.5m to 1.0m before the crest. Westbound there is no formal verge. The eastbound carriageway is hatched down to one lane width, whilst the westbound carriageway is two lanes wide. The 40 mph speed limit sign for Morcombelake is situated 50m to the west of this dual carriageway.

4.21 The eastern end of the dual carriageway defines the end of this section of the route.

5. TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL TO EAST OF CHIDEOCK

5.1 The dual carriageway section is clearly visible from the top of Hardown Hill, and traffic on this short section of the A35 can be seen from much of the valley north of Chideock. Just east of the end of the dual carriageway there is a junction with Muddyford Lane (5m wide) to the south. Muddyford Lane provides access to the National Trust Langdon Hill car park. It also provides access to various outlying properties to the south of Morcombelake. It links, via a byway open to all traffic, with Ship Knapp. Visibility at the junction is adequate.

5.2 The A35 now descends Chideock Hill, about 1.5km long on a steep gradient of 12% (maximum) around a 225m radius left hand bend. This is the main approach to the village from the west. From the dual carriageway section of the A35, the road, as it steepens, changes to a climbing lane section with two lanes in the uphill westbound direction and one lane eastbound with a safety fence on the north side.

5.3 On its approach to Chideock, two escape roads with loose stone arrester beds have recently been provided along the single carriageway section at the approach to the village. One arrester bed is 133m long by 3.5m wide and ends 340m before the cemetery. The second arrester bed is 120m long by 3.4m wide and ends 60m before the cemetery.

5.4 There is a 2.5m wide verge on the northern side of the A35 from the hill crest with a safety fence which runs adjacent to the carriageway. At the location of the first escape road the safety fence gives way to a 1.5m high masonry retaining wall. The escape roads cease at the entrance to Chideock village. Over this section on the southern side of the A35, the verge width varies and a section of gabion walling has been introduced where the cutting slope has slipped towards the A35.

5.5 The A35 narrows down from the 10m climbing lane section to 7.3m on entering Chideock. Chideock is subject to a 30mph speed limit through the village. The 30mph sign is situated some 150m west of the North Road junction, with the speed limit continuing for 850m through the village. The much used village hall is situated on the southern side of the A35. It has no parking facilities.

5.6 Chideock lies within a broad coastal valley between Langdon Hill to the west and Quarry Hill and Eype Down to the east. Views from the existing road are restricted on both sides by the buildings, and are contained within the valley by the hills. The A35 and its traffic is visible from Chideock and the surrounding hills as it climbs the valley slopes eastward and westwards.

5.7 The central part of Chideock, astride the A35, is designated as a conservation area. Listed buildings front on to the A35. The road through Chideock known as Main Street is narrow and winding, rarely exceeding 6.5m in width, and reduces to 6.2m where Main Street crosses the River Winniford. Parts of Main Street are listed in the County Sites and Monuments Record as a probable Roman road. There are no pedestrian crossings in the village and the footways are intermittent and generally narrow. In particular, there is no footway at all on the south side of the road eastward for 250m from the River Winniford bridge.

5.8 At the western end of the village, North Road links the village with its Manor House and neighbouring hamlet of North Chideock. Emerging vehicles have a restricted view of 10m west and 18m east along the A35. There is no footway or verge in North Road at its junction with the A35 and its width is restricted to 4m by the church tower. This is part of St Giles' Church, the only grade I listed building between the Charmouth Bypass and the Bridport Link Road.

5.9 Approximately 45m east of North Road along the A35 is a junction with Duck Street, which links the village southwards to Seatown and the coast. From Duck Street the visibility along the A35 is 15m to the east and 35m to the west.

5.10 Duck Street is the only means of access to the many caravan and camping sites located between the village and the coast.

5.11 The A35 is relatively level and straight in the centre of the village, with the lowest point being at the crossing of the River Winniford, some 120m east of Duck Street. Here there is a bus stop on each side of the road. Immediately beyond the river on the south side of the A35 is a petrol filling station and garage, with a small shop and post office. There is street lighting through the village generally fixed to 4m high telegraph poles at about 35m intervals.

5.12 Many of the properties in the village have direct access on to the A35. There are no laybys over this section of the road and a hazard warning line runs from the end of the climbing lane right through the village.

5.13 This section of the route ends at the westbound 30mph speed limit sign, 120m east of the access to Park Farm buildings.

6. EAST OF CHIDEOCK TO BRIDPORT LINK ROAD

6.1 Leaving Chideock, travelling eastwards, the properties at Broadmead are situated just east of the 30mph speed limit sign. These 18 properties, all on the south side of the A35 road, are set back with a footway in front. There is an area used for parking on the opposite side of the A35. The visibility westwards from the minor junction on the south side just west of Broadmead is restricted to 35m by a wall.

6.2 The A35 now climbs steeply to Quarr Lane on an 8% gradient. There are no footways. This section of the trunk road is narrow and winding, reducing from 7.4m wide at the eastern end of Chideock to an average of 5.5m in width between Chideock and Quarr Lane with little or no overtaking opportunities. There are no verges, and for most of its length

the A35 is bounded by steep banks and hedges. There is an access on the south side of the road to Frogmore Farm.

6.3 At the Quarr Lane junction, the A35 road further narrows to 5.3m. Quarr Lane, a narrow 3.4m wide lane, provides access from the north and at its junction has severely restricted visibility of 19m to the west and 15m to the east along the A35. There is no footway nor verge on the A35 in the vicinity of this junction and none on Quarr Lane.

6.4 Immediately opposite Quarr Lane is Eype Down Road. This junction has virtually no visibility for emerging traffic or traffic turning off the main road. Eype Down Road descends at a 5% gradient to meet the trunk road around a tight right hand bend with a road width of 3.8m. There is no footway nor verge on Eype Down Road. Approximately 24 ha of Eype Down is registered common land, which extends southwards from the south side of the A35.

6.5 From this junction, the A35 descends on a 5.7% gradient to join the western end of the Bridport Link Road at Miles Cross. It is narrow at its western end, where it rarely exceeds 6m in width with no verges. From the London Inn eastward, the road standard improves to 7.3m wide with a footway on the northern side of the A35 and a narrow verge on the south side to Miles Cross. The road is hedged on both sides. There are several properties lining the road, most of which have direct access on to the A35. West House, a grade II listed building, lies on the north side of the trunk road. A lane just west of the London Inn, but on the south side of the A35, gives access to the rear of some properties and to common and other land. There are no laybys over this section.

6.6 The A35 from Chideock to the London Inn has a hazard warning line. Relaxation of the white lines allows overtaking opportunities from the London Inn over a short length (about 200m) towards Miles Cross junction. The section of the A35 between Quarr Lane and Miles Cross is visible from Quarry Hill and Colmers Hill to the north of the road.

6.7 At Miles Cross, the B3162 to Bridport is connected to the A35 by a standard single lane dual carriageway junction constructed as part of the Bridport Link Road. Visibility is good.

6.8 The A35 to the south east of Miles Cross then becomes the Bridport Link Road, which was opened in 1988. This single carriageway road is 7.3m wide with 1m hardened strips contained within 3.5m verges. It immediately runs into a climbing lane section, with two lanes in the uphill eastbound direction and one lane westbound.

PART III - DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE

7. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

7.1 The alignment is referred to in general terms rather than by detailing every individual change in curvature throughout the route length.

7.2 The published scheme comprises a dual two lane carriageway all purpose road, 7.5km in length between terminal roundabouts. It would replace the existing A35 between Charmouth Bypass and Bridport Link Road bypassing the villages of Morcombelake and Chideock. Tie-ins to the existing A35 Charmouth Bypass (350m) and Bridport Link Road (450m) would involve another 800m of roadworks, giving a total scheme length of 8.3km.

7.3 The side slopes required for engineering purposes vary between 1 in 2 and 1 in 4. However, in many places these slopes have been slackened and feathered out at the edges so that the highway fence could be placed close to the back of the verge and the new slopes could be made available for return to agriculture.

7.4 Safety fencing would be provided throughout on the central reserve, on high embankments and at obstructions, such as bridge abutments and piers and culverts. The central reservation safety fencing would be continuous, thus preventing right turn manoeuvres on to or off the new road.

7.5 Existing side roads would be taken either over or under the main carriageway via new bridges. The current widths of the side roads would be maintained and verges provided. There would be no vehicular access on to the new trunk road, except at the proposed roundabouts and for westbound vehicles at Chideock Hill. New field accesses to severed land would be provided from the existing highway network.

7.6 Seven residential properties would require demolition, four of which are currently owned by the Highways Agency. A grade II listed garden house in the grounds of The Lodge, North Road, Chideock, would also need to be demolished, as would a number of farm buildings at Ship Farm. The farm buildings are listed grade II by association.

7.7 Most footpaths would be diverted on to overbridges or underbridges by routes to be located outside the highway fence for safety reasons. Only one stile at the western end of the scheme has been incorporated within the proposed bypass fencing.

7.8 Temporary diversions would be required at Ship Knapp, Shedbush Lane, North Road and Quarr Lane during construction of new bridges which are on the line of existing roads.

7.9 One layby on each side of the road on the Charmouth to Morcombelake section and one on each side of the road north of Chideock would be provided.

7.10 It is proposed to erect anti-dazzle fences on this scheme in two places. A fence would be provided near Newlands roundabout between the proposed dual carriageway and the new link road joining the Charmouth road to the existing A35 east of the roundabout. A fence would also be provided from Quarr Lane to Miles Cross roundabout between the proposed dual carriageway and the link road on its southern side. The existing roadside bank would be left in place and would provide screening between the dual carriageway and West Road, east of the London Inn.

7.11 The description below of the proposed route is divided into four sections: Charmouth Bypass to west of Morcombelake; west of Morcombelake to the top of Chideock Hill; the top of Chideock Hill to east of Chideock; and east of Chideock to the Bridport Link Road.

8. CHARMOUTH BYPASS TO WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE (CHAINAGE 1200 to 3300)

8.1 The proposed scheme at its western end commences with a new four-arm roundabout immediately west of Berne Lane. This roundabout, to be known as Newlands roundabout, would be lit by four 14.5m high lighting columns fitted with hooded luminaires to direct the light downwards and contain spillage.

8.2 The roundabout would link the new route with the C87 Berne Lane, the C87 Charmouth road and the recently completed Charmouth Bypass. An access would be provided off Berne Lane to land just to the south-west of Dolphin River Caravan Park. 300m of Berne Lane (3.6m to 5.0m wide), 200m of the 7.3m wide Charmouth road, and 300m of the existing Charmouth Bypass from the River Char bridge would be realigned to join the new roundabout.

8.3 The roundabout would emphasise the change in road standard from the single carriageway of the Charmouth Bypass to the proposed new dual carriageway road.

8.4 One property, known as 'Valley View', off Berne Lane, which is owned by the Highways Agency, would be demolished.

8.5 The existing gap in the central reserve on the A35 just to the east of the bridge over the River Char would be stopped up.

8.6 The existing alignment of the River Char at this location would be retained by using a slightly steepened embankment incorporating reinforced toes. At the request of the National Rivers Authority a settlement/treatment lagoon would also be provided at this point.

8.7 Some riverside trees subject to the extensive Catherston Leweston tree preservation order would be taken.

8.8 From the roundabout, the published route would run eastwards along the line of the existing A35 past Bellair House (grade II listed building). A new access track to Bellair Cottage and to one flat in Bellair House would be provided as part of the published scheme, replacing the existing parking area adjacent to the A35 which would be taken.

8.9 Mature evergreen and deciduous trees along the southern boundary of Bellair House would be lost; these trees are subject to the extensive tree preservation order referred to above. Planting within the garden could be provided by the Highways Agency by agreements under Section 253 of the Highways Act 1980.

8.10 A derelict farm building on the south side of the A35 at Bellair Farm would be demolished.

8.11 The proposed trunk road route would climb for 2km along the northern flanks of Stonebarrow Hill. It would run parallel to and along the northern side of the existing A35 at an average 4% gradient, on a relatively straight alignment, and at a similar level to the existing A35. It would avoid National Trust land and the West Dorset Coast SSSI to the south of the existing A35.

8.12 East of Bellair, 535m of hedgerow and roadside trees (subject to the extensive tree preservation order) would be taken. A 10m wide linear thicket of local native trees and shrubs would be planted along the northern side of the proposed road.

8.13 Fingers of similar planting down the northern embankments would connect the roadside planting with existing hedgerows. Approximately 1.6 ha of the 1.9 ha site of nature conservation interest (SNCI) at Bafferlands Farm would be taken. Similarly, 2.4 ha of the 3.7 ha SNCI at Berne Farm would be required for the route. As part of the scheme proposals, it is intended that the new slopes would be spread with green hay from the adjacent SSSI to create a herb-rich sward.

8.14 The proposed route over this length is on sidelong ground. The eastbound and westbound carriageways would be constructed at different levels. The eastbound carriageway would generally be 2 metres lower than the westbound

carriageway for 1.3 kilometres between Chainage 1600 and Chainage 2900.

8.15 The slope between the two carriageways would be planted with a narrow belt of local native shrubs.

8.16 Since this is an area where subsidence has occurred on the existing trunk road, the new road embankments over this section would be built under strict control. Surface deposits would be removed and the substrata would be benched to provide a good foundation upon which to build the new embankments. Subsoil drains and stone would be placed at the base of the embankments which would then be built up in layers at a controlled rate.

8.17 At certain locations it may be necessary to strengthen the ground supporting the embankment by means of deep porous (counterfort) drains, shear keys or piles. Surface groundshaping on the north side of the proposed road would be limited to rounding off the edges of the engineering slopes. In order to minimise landtake there would be no additional groundshaping where the new road encroaches on the SNCIs.

8.18 An eastbound and a westbound layby would be provided just to the west of Morcombelake at chainage 2150 and at chainage 2700 respectively.

8.19 The existing A35 would be maintained as a public highway between Newlands roundabout and the westbound layby to provide access to land and property south of the existing A35. This road would be stopped up adjacent to the layby. Vehicular access would be permitted only from the western end, where the existing A35 would be diverted south of Newlands roundabout to join the Charmouth road. Three of the existing accesses on the south side of this length would be stopped up and new ones provided from the diverted section of road. A linear thicket would be planted between the proposed dual carriageway and the retained existing A35.

8.20 Footpath No 56 which currently joins the A35 would be severed at its junction with the new road. A stile would be provided at the new highway fence to allow pedestrians to join the bypass and walk eastwards or westwards along the northern verge. A roadside screen mound is proposed between chainage 2940 and 3200.

8.21 Approaching the crest of the saddle of land lying between Charmouth Hill and Hardown Hill, the route steepens to an 8% gradient and swings southwards severing a 500 metre section of the existing A35.

8.22 At chainage 3250, a slip road would link the bypass to the severed portion of the A35 and provide access to Morcombelake and Chideock for eastbound traffic only. A diverging lane would run into a one way slip road 7m wide and 130m long before rejoining the existing A35.

8.23 From close to this point, 150m west of Tizard's Knapp on the existing A35, an access track 420m long would be constructed through the Morcombelake SSSI. This would provide access to the severed part of Grand View Farm, lying to the north of the bypass. A spur off this track would also provide access to Fulvens Home Farm to replace the existing access from the A35 which would be stopped up.

8.24 Approximately 2.1 ha of the 24.7 ha Morcombelake SSSI would be required to construct the scheme and access track, of which 1.3 ha of new slopes would be spread with green hay to create a new sward and made available for return to agriculture.

8.25 An emergency access by means of a hardened verge would be provided from the Morcombelake slip road to allow emergency services' vehicles only to join the eastbound carriageway of the bypass.

8.26 A turning head would be provided on the existing A35, west of Tizard's Knapp on the south side of the road in order to allow vehicles from the east to turn round. Drivers from Morcombelake wishing to proceed westwards would be directed to the proposed junction at the top of Chideock Hill.

9. WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE TO THE TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL CHAINAGE 3300 TO 4800

9.1 The route continues eastwards through the saddle in cutting (maximum depth 13m) to run under the side road known as Ship Knapp. The alignment here runs through a gap between existing houses on Ship Knapp. A new overbridge would take the side road over the bypass at this point.

9.2 Some outbuildings at Ship Farm, a grade II listed building off Ship Knapp, would be demolished. It is proposed to replace some of these buildings in order to mitigate the effect on the listed building setting.

9.3 A byway open to all traffic from the south, connecting with Ship Knapp, would be diverted to the south of the new Ship Knapp overbridge. Approximately 1.5 ha of semi-improved grassland would be taken. Some 1 ha of new scrub and grassland would be created and managed for habitat value as part of the scheme proposals.

9.4 Emerging from cutting on a downhill 6% gradient, the route traverses the southern flanks of Hardown Hill, alternately on embankment (maximum height 12m) and in cutting (maximum depth 10m) at Shedbush Lane, to run in sidelong ground along the southern edge of Morcombelake, and across St Gabriel's Stream.

9.5 Here the route would run just south of the existing A35 and intrude into the northern edge of the Golden Cap Estate, owned by the National Trust.

9.6 The route results in the loss of an isolated 1.7 ha single field SSSI (Moor Meadow), included as part of the 596 ha West Dorset Coast SSSI. The mature trees along the southern edge of this SSSI field would be retained by benching within the new embankment, in a similar way to that proposed between Morcombelake and Charmouth. This would allow the highway embankment adjacent to the SSSI to be constructed using steep (1 in 2) side slopes. Approximately 1.4 ha of semi-improved grassland would also be taken.

9.7 Storage and water treatment lagoons would be provided west of Shedbush Lane. The lagoon would be maintained as an open water body with appropriate planting providing areas of ecological value.

9.8 Continuing downhill and eastwards in cutting, the route at its lowest point crosses under Shedbush Lane.

9.9 Three Shedbush Lane properties: No 1 Bradpoles, owned by the Highways Agency; No 2 Bradpoles, privately owned; and Torestin, owned by the Highways Agency, would be demolished.

9.10 A new overbridge at this location would maintain access along the lane. A retaining wall, 135m long and a maximum 8.5m high, would be provided at the back of the verge on the northern side of the new road, in order to reduce the spread of the cutting.

9.11 A car park off Shedbush Lane would be taken for the roadworks. This currently serves eight properties.

9.12 Continuing along the southern edge of Morcombelake, east of Shedbush Lane, the route emerges on to embankment (maximum height 10m). Screen mounding and planting would be provided on each side of the new road, and the new slopes would be slackened and restored for agricultural use.

9.13 The route would run on an uphill 4% gradient south of Wanehouse Farm. The farm and its buildings would be severed by the new route from most of its farmland to the south. A farm access track from Wanehouse Farm to the southern end of Shedbush Lane would be severed. Alternative access would be

available using the new Chideock Hill overbridge or the new Shedbush Lane overbridge.

9.14 The route at its highest point re-crosses the existing A35 in cutting (maximum depth 23m) to the east of Morcombelake close to the summit of Chideock Hill.

9.15 The existing A35 (7.3m wide) would be diverted over the bypass via a new overbridge. The road would widen to 7.9m south and west of its existing alignment to rejoin it again part way down the hill into Chideock. This diversion would maintain the existing road link between Morcombelake and Chideock for local traffic. A redundant section of the existing A35 between the bypass and the new length of side road would be broken up and planted.

9.16 A new slip road from the diverted existing A35 would provide access on to the bypass for traffic in a westbound direction only. The slip road would be 6m wide with a 1m hard strip on the nearside contained within a 3m wide verge. A 2m grass verge would be provided on the offside. The slip road would extend some 800m from Chideock Hill on a 4% downhill gradient to connect with the proposed bypass near Shedbush Lane.

9.17 Muddyford Lane, to the south of the existing A35, together with the access to the Langdon Hill National Trust car park, would also be reconnected to the diverted existing A35. This would be widened to 10m in the vicinity of the junctions with the new slip road and Muddyford Lane. It would provide waiting facilities for right turning vehicles in the form of a ghost island junction. It would also improve access arrangements to Muddyford Lane.

9.18 Footpaths Nos 28, 29 and 30 would be severed by the new route and diverted to run beside the dual carriageway and across the new Chideock Hill overbridge. Stiles would be provided from the new sections of footpath to the realigned existing A35.

10. TOP OF CHIDEOCK HILL TO EAST OF CHIDEOCK CHAINAGE 4800 TO 6700

10.1 The route would descend Chideock Hill eastwards on an 8% gradient, alternately on embankment (maximum height 8m) and in cutting (maximum depth 10m).

10.2 Near the top of Chideock Hill, at Chainage 4900, an emergency access would be provided to allow westbound emergency services' vehicles only to leave the new trunk road. It would be surfaced, and gated at both ends, and consist of a 5m wide road with 1m verges and a 20m slip road adjacent to the trunk

road. This access could be used in combination with the similar proposed access west of Morcombelake.

10.3 The route descends to North Road on a series of embankments and cuttings of generally similar slope to the existing ground. Some 0.43 ha of woodland would be taken from the 3.0 ha Newfoundland Coppice, and 0.26 ha from Gate Coppice (1.14 ha). Approximately 4.3 ha of new woodland would be planted.

10.4 The route crosses North Road, a 5m wide lane, at 8.5m above road level, and then crosses the River Winniford, at 11m above ground level. Roadside screen mounding would be provided along the southern side of the new road. Both North Road and the river would be taken under the bypass by new underbridges.

10.5 Some over-mature beech trees, 90m of riverside trees and shrubs, and 250m of hedgerow would be taken.

10.6 One property, 'The Lodge', privately owned, at the junction of Yenhay Lane and North Road would be demolished. The Garden House (grade II listed building) would be taken by the scheme. The structure might be relocated by the owner; if not, it is proposed to rebuild the Garden House in the nearby proposed parkland to be provided as part of the scheme's landscaping measures.

10.7 Two storage and water treatment lagoons would be provided, one west of North Road and one south of Yenhay Lane. The western lagoon would be maintained as an open water body, and both lagoons would be planted and managed to enhance ecological value.

10.8 It is proposed that Footpath No 38, which would be severed in two places, should be diverted to run along the south side of the proposed route between North Road and the top of Chideock Hill. An additional similar connection would be provided between Footpath No 36 and North Road.

10.9 The route alignment crossing North Road runs north of the grade II listed Gate Farm House and south of the grade II listed Chideock Manor, its Roman Catholic church and surrounding grounds and woodland.

10.10 From a low point at the River Winniford the route climbs on a 3% gradient firstly on embankment, just east of the River Winniford (maximum height 8m), and then in cutting to the north of Chideock Castle (maximum depth 8m). It continues southwards and eastwards, skirting the lower southern slopes of Quarry Hill, requiring the demolition of the northern bay of the large barn at Park Farm at chainage 6500. Screen mounding would be provided between Chideock village and the new road.

10.11 An eastbound and a westbound layby would be provided near the Park Farm buildings, at chainage 6300 and chainage 6700 respectively.

10.12 Footpaths Nos 8 and 9, which are the most heavily used along the route, would be severed and would be diverted along each side of the proposed bypass. The footpaths would cross the bypass using the River Winniford underbridge.

10.13 An additional length of footpath is proposed to the north of the River Winniford underbridge to link with Yenhay Lane which in turn connects to Footpath No 1. In addition, pedestrians would be able to travel westwards across the River Winniford by means of a new bridge on the south side of the new road as far as North Road.

11. EAST OF CHIDEOCK TO BRIDPORT LINK ROAD CHAINAGE 6700 TO 8700

11.1 The route continues firstly on low embankment and then in cutting, curving around the foot of Quarry Hill on an uphill gradient (maximum 7%).

11.2 The slopes of the new cutting up Quarry Hill would be of similar gradients to the existing ground. These new slopes would be restored for agricultural use.

11.3 The route passes under the 3.6m wide Quarr Lane in cutting (maximum depth 12m). Quarr Lane would be taken over the new road via a new overbridge. Footpath 10 would be connected to the north end of this bridge. The garage belonging to an adjacent property known as 'Littledown' would be demolished.

11.4 Just to the north of the proposed bridge, an access would be provided off Quarr Lane to fields and to a Wessex Water underground reservoir to the north-west. Due to the steepness of this access, vehicular parking would be retained adjacent to the junction of Quarr Lane and the existing A35.

11.5 The proposed route at Quarr Cross runs between the property 'Littledown' in Quarr Lane and the existing A35 to the south, allowing the latter to be retained as a local route.

11.6 Footpath No 7 would be severed and diverted along the northern boundary of the proposed route to join Quarr Lane.

11.7 Immediately east of Quarr Lane, the route runs on embankment (maximum height 4m). Roadside screen mounding and planting would be provided and the new slopes would be slackened and restored for agricultural use.

11.8 The route would re-cross the existing A35 (West Road) just to the west of the London Inn.

11.9 The proposed route then runs downhill on a 5% gradient parallel to and along the south side of West Road, generally in slight cutting, before joining a new four-arm roundabout at Miles Cross to connect with the Bridport Link Road.

11.10 This roundabout would be lit by four 20m high lighting columns, fitted with hooded luminaires to direct the light downwards and prevent spillage. The roundabout would replace the existing single lane dual carriageway junction.

11.11 Two properties known as 'Woodbury', owned by the Highways Agency, and 'Miles View', privately owned, would be demolished.

11.12 The alignment in this area retains part of the existing A35 (West Road) on the north side of the proposed route.

11.13 West Road would extend westwards from the Miles Cross roundabout as far as the London Inn, where it would be stopped up. A turning bay would be provided at this location, with an access to adjacent farm land, part of Higher Pymore Farm.

11.14 A local link road, 1.2km long, would be constructed on the south side of the bypass and would consist of a new single 7.3m carriageway with 2.5m verges between the severed portion of West road, immediately east of Quarr Lane, and the Miles Cross roundabout.

11.15 Roadside thickets would be planted between the dual carriageway and the parallel side roads.

11.16 A new section of road from the roundabout, 350m long and 7.3m wide with 2.5m verges, would also be provided to connect with the B3162 Foundry Knapp into Bridport.

11.17 The B3162, near the roundabout, would be widened to 10m to provide a ghost island junction for access to the road to Symondsburry and to the 7.3m wide West Road.

11.18 Screen mounding with slackened slopes returnable to agricultural use and roadside thicket planting would be provided between the B3162 and the new dual carriageway on both sides of the new link road, and east of the new roundabout.

11.19 Footpath No 47 would be severed and connected to the local link road on its present alignment using a highway access. Footpath No 46 would be severed and provided with a stile in the fence where it currently crosses the line of the proposed new local link road.

11.20 The existing accesses to Highway Farm, 'Woodlands' and 'Woodhayes' would be severed and connected to the local link road. Field accesses would be provided to land north and south of the new link road between Footpaths Nos 47 and 46.

11.21 Five hundred metres of the existing Bridport Link Road to the south-east of the roundabout would be realigned to tie in with the new roundabout.

11.22 Two hundred metres of the tributary to the River Simene would be diverted on a curving alignment, and 100m of the tributary would be culverted beneath the Bridport Link Road tie-in.

11.23 A damp copse (0.275 ha) near New Street Lane would be taken and New Street Lane would be stopped up just to the south of its current position. Access for pedestrians and equestrians would be provided from New Street Lane on to the new local link road.

11.24 A storage and water treatment lagoon would be provided south-west of the new roundabout. The lagoon would be maintained as an open water body with appropriate planting providing areas of ecological value.

PART IV - THE CASE FOR THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY
MATERIAL POINTS

12. GOVERNMENT POLICY

12.1 The Secretary of State for Transport is responsible for government policy with regard to roads in England. He is the highway authority for the national trunk road network of long distance routes. The function of the network is to enable through traffic to proceed speedily, efficiently and safely.

12.2 The government's objectives underlying trunk road building and improvement are outlined in 'Trunk Roads, England: Into the 1990s', published in February 1990. They are as follows:

- a. to assist economic growth by reducing transport costs;
- b. to improve the environment by removing through traffic from unsuitable roads in towns and villages;
- c. to enhance road safety.

12.3 The White Paper "This Common Inheritance", published in September 1990, states:

"The Government is investing in an extensive trunk road programme, much of which is designed to improve our major inter-urban routes, which are already becoming congested. The programme is intended to reduce congestion, benefit the economy, and help the local environment through bypasses provided to take traffic out of towns. Reducing congestion will help to reduce CO2 emissions by improving fuel economy and efficiency. Trying to control traffic volumes by restricting road building and allowing the growth of congestion would not only harm the economy, but could increase CO2 emissions as fuel-efficiency declined."

12.4 The White Paper, "Sustainable Development, The UK Strategy", published earlier this year, states:

"A number of the United Kingdom's major roads are suffering from congestion at peak times. The Government's road programme is designed to address this. Failure to provide additional road space in the absence of measures to reduce or manage demand could result in increasing congestion, and diversion on to less suitable routes. Less congested traffic moving at moderate speed gives lower emissions than the same volume of traffic travelling the same distance in congested conditions."

12.5 The Government is seeking to reduce road accident casualties in the UK by one third by the year 2000. To contribute to this target an initiative is underway to reduce casualties on motorways and all purpose trunk roads. The construction of new roads is expected to make a major contribution towards meeting this target.

13. THE IMPORTANCE TO DORSET OF THE A35 TRUNK ROAD

13.1 The A35 trunk road performs a vital function in acting as a spine road through the County of Dorset, linking it to southern England and to the south-west peninsula. It also plays an important role in linking the major population centres of the county. Throughout the year, the road carries private, business and commercial traffic. In the summer, in particular, the area also attracts holidaymakers and those taking part in recreational pursuits, both of which contribute significantly to the local economy. This extra activity results in increased flows on the A35 with pronounced peaks at weekends.

14. THE A31/35 IMPROVEMENT PLANS

14.1 With schemes recently completed, or under construction, and the further schemes now programmed, the A31/35 route is being progressively improved over almost its entire length.

14.2 When the bypass schemes included in the programme are completed, all settlements along the A31/A35 Trunk Road in Devon and Dorset will have been bypassed, except for the eastern part of Bridport.

15. THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

15.1 The main centres of population within the vicinity of the proposed bypass are the villages of Morcombelake and Chideock.

15.2 The landform of the area is one of complex relief. High steep sided hills rise abruptly above narrow river valleys running southwards to the sea. The gently undulating Marshwood Vale lies to the north of these hills.

15.3 The entire length of the existing and proposed routes lies within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which covers the whole of West Dorset (except for two small enclaves). The AONB is notable for its rural landscape, its coastline, geology, ecology, prehistoric sites and picturesque towns and villages. Substantial lengths of the existing and proposed routes are also within the West Dorset Heritage Coast. The coastline is considered to be one of the

finest in Britain, with many attractive views over the coast and inland from the network of public footpaths.

15.4 There are two areas of common land in the vicinity of the proposed bypass. One is at Hardown Hill and the other at Eype Down.

15.5 In the western half of the study area, and lying close to the existing trunk road, are two affected sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs). These are known as the Morcombelake SSSI and the West Dorset Coast SSSI.

15.6 The study area includes part of the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate, most of which comprises land declared inalienable.

15.7 Morcombelake, with a population of around 400, lies some 3 kilometres to the east of Charmouth on the slopes of Hardown Hill. It enjoys outstanding views across the surrounding countryside to the coastline and the cliffs of Golden Cap, the highest point on the south coast.

15.8 The village generally lies to the north of the A35. Approximately 30 properties, including an inn, a grade II listed church, a bakery, post office/general stores and petrol filling station/garage, abut the main road and have direct access on to it. With the majority, but not all, of its housing to the north of the main road and most of the village facilities to the south, considerable community severance is caused by the passage of trunk road traffic.

15.9 Chideock, with a population of around 600, is situated about 2 kilometres east of Morcombelake in the River Winniford valley, between Langdon Hill and Quarry Hill. The A35 forms the main street of the village with many residential and commercial properties situated on either side of the trunk road. These properties, together with community facilities, have direct access on to the trunk road.

15.10 The historic centre of the village extends eastwards over the River Winniford along the A35. This older, attractive, central area of Chideock, containing over 50 listed buildings including the grade I St Giles Church, is designated as a conservation area. Situated to the north of the village are the ancient monument earthworks denoting the site of Chideock Castle and the grade II listed Chideock Manor and church.

15.11 More modern residential development has taken place on the fringes of the conservation area, along both the A35 and the two side roads, North Road and Duck Street. The latter leads to the hamlet of Seatown situated on the coast about a kilometre south of Chideock. Camping and caravan sites have been developed in the area to the south of Chideock. In the

summer season the population of the area can more than double with the influx of holidaymakers.

15.12 The presence of the A35 passing through the centre of Chideock causes hazards, noise, pollution and a high degree of severance of the local community. These unpleasant conditions are exacerbated during the summer months by the higher volumes of traffic and are imposed on a greater number of people.

15.13 There is little development along the A35 immediately east of Chideock. However, eastwards from Quarr Lane, situated about 1 km west of Miles Cross, there is sporadic residential development along both sides of the A35. Most of the properties, including the public house, have direct access on to the trunk road.

16. THE NEED FOR THE SCHEME

16.1 The description of the existing A35 route between the Charmouth Bypass and the Bridport Link Road contained in Part II of this report shows that, in addition to the environmental disturbance caused by trunk road traffic passing through Chideock and Morcombelake, the road itself falls well short of the standards considered appropriate for a trunk road.

16.2 It is, therefore, essential to remove through traffic from the existing A35 by providing an alternative high standard route. This would give rise to significant benefits for the trunk road user. It would also benefit the environment of the local communities.

16.3 The pattern of the origins and destinations of the vehicular journeys made on the A35 indicate that there is little potential to encourage traffic to divert via the A36 or A37 to the A303 trunk road, which is the only conceivable high standard east/west alternative route. Assuming that all improvement schemes currently programmed are carried out to the A36, A37 and A303, then an assessment predicts that only up to 7% of existing A35 traffic could eventually be encouraged to transfer to the alternative route. Such a small reduction in the A35 traffic flows, even if it was possible to achieve, would have an insignificant effect in alleviating the current problems.

16.4 Improvements to the existing A35, including bypasses for the two villages, are therefore the only practical way of achieving better conditions for both local residents and through traffic.

16.5 The following benefits would result from the bypass:

- a. the through traffic would be able to flow more freely along the new road;

b. there would be environmental relief for the villages due to the removal of the through traffic. Noise levels, air pollution and community severance would be reduced, resulting in a better quality of life for residents;

c. road accidents would be reduced by the provision of a road designed to current standards; in addition, safety would be enhanced as a result of most local traffic and all pedestrians being separated from through trunk road traffic.

16.6 Thus, the scheme would fully meet the government's objectives for trunk road building.

17. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHEME AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Development

17.1 Having been deleted from an earlier programme, the scheme was introduced into the current trunk road programme in 1985 following a scheme identification study. Consulting engineers were commissioned in late 1985 to examine bypass options. The objectives set by the then Secretary of State for Transport were:

a. to remove trunk road traffic from the villages of Morcombelake and Chideock;

b. to improve the free flow and safety of trunk road traffic.

Public Consultation

17.2 In 1987, following the consultants' investigations, public consultations were conducted.

17.3 Four routes were put forward for consultation and were shown as extending from Berne Farm track (approximately chainage 2500) to West Road, Bridport (approximately chainage 8300). A single carriageway standard of road was envisaged.

17.4 The four routes were:

a. the yellow route which ran eastwards from Berne Farm track, around the south of Morcombelake across Shedbush Lane, and then around the north of Chideock;

b. the red route which followed a similar alignment to the yellow route but ran further to the south around Morcombelake in order to avoid severing Shedbush Lane;

c. the blue route which followed the yellow route to Chideock Hill but then swung southwards to run south of Chideock;

d. the green route which followed the red route alignment to Chideock Hill and then the blue route alignment around the south of Chideock.

17.5 An additional route showing an on-line improvement of the existing road through Morcombelake was also shown on the consultation document. This route was included only as an indication that improvements to the existing road had been considered but rejected due to the resulting poor standard of road, the significant impact on roadside properties and the severance effect on the village.

17.6 An analysis of the replies received in response to this consultation is contained in the Report on Public Consultation (Deposit Document DD 15).

17.7 This shows that at Morcombelake there was support for both the routes south of the village with greater support (75% of local respondents) shown for the red/green route which avoided severing Shedbush Lane and the associated property demolition. The Hardown (Hill) Preservation Society, based at Morcombelake, and with 120 members, considered the most important factors in choosing a route to be: reducing noise and pollution, benefits to village life by the removal of through traffic, and improving pedestrian safety.

17.8 At Chideock far greater support (74% of respondents) was shown for the yellow/red route north of the village. This was primarily because respondents felt that a southern route would sever village links with the sea and intrude into the coastal plain. It was also considered by respondents that a northern route could be blended into the existing landscape more successfully than a southern route.

17.9 There was, however, some support for a southern route (23%) on the grounds that a northern route would sever North Chideock from Chideock and have a considerable detrimental effect on Chideock Manor. This body of opinion also considered that the landscape south of the village would be little affected by the presence of a new road as it had already been degraded by the proliferation of caravan and camping sites which had been established there in recent years.

17.10 Dorset County Council supported the red route which, over its length south of Morcombelake, would avoid the severance of Shedbush Lane. West Dorset District Council supported the yellow route. English Heritage was concerned about the effect of any route on the Ship Knapp area of Morcombelake and on the ancient monument site of Chideock Castle. A preference was expressed for the green route.

17.11 The National Trust considered that the routes south of Morcombelake would seriously damage the landscape of its Golden Cap Estate. The Trust requested that further consideration should be given to the rejected on-line improvement through Morcombelake. This was a view also shared by the Dorset Regional Office of the Nature Conservancy Council, now English Nature, and the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation.

The Preferred Route

17.12 After consideration of all the relevant facts, it was announced in February 1989 that the Secretary of State for Transport had decided that the preferred route should be the yellow route, which passes close to the south side of Morcombelake village and north of Chideock. West Dorset District Council was notified in order that the route could be safeguarded from further development under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988.

17.13 The preferred route was found by the Secretary of State for Transport to be the one which best met the needs of the villages having regard to considerations of effectiveness for traffic, safety, agriculture, the environment, and costs compared with benefits.

17.14 Following the selection of the preferred route, the scheme has continued to be developed taking account of the views expressed by the public. Specialist advice and reports on landscaping, ecology, archaeology and agriculture have been carefully considered. Recommended measures to mitigate the effect of the scheme have been incorporated wherever possible.

Change of Standard

17.15 Following the publication of revised National Road Traffic Forecasts in 1989, which resulted in an increase in the predicted traffic flows on this section of road, a reappraisal of the proposed road standard was undertaken. This reappraisal is summarised in the Scheme Development Report (Deposit Document DD 22) which concluded that a dual carriageway road would best meet the needs of future traffic and would provide the optimum economic investment, even though it would cost more to build.

17.16 It was accepted that a dual carriageway standard road would have a greater effect on the landscape and require more land although not to a significant extent. It would clearly be a safer road than a single carriageway scheme because of the provision of a central reserve with safety fencing. It would also have a greater capacity to accommodate traffic management measures arising from accidents or planned maintenance activities.

17.17 A further factor favouring a dual carriageway solution also became apparent. It was realised that problems would arise if a single carriageway road was provided in the first instance and then, as a result of traffic growth, the road needed to be widened to a dual carriageway at a later date. Apart from the extra construction costs and delays to traffic that would arise, the effects on the maturing landscaping measures would be severe and fresh scars would be inflicted.

17.18 Thus, given the need to carry out road works in this environmentally sensitive area, it was considered prudent to ensure that the road provided should be constructed to a sufficiently high standard to cope with all reasonable eventualities. A dual carriageway road would best meet that requirement.

17.19 In the light of these considerations it was decided that the scheme design should be to a dual carriageway standard and the scheme should be extended in both directions to provide sensible locations for roundabout junctions at each end. A revised scheme brief was issued to implement these changes.

17.20 Subsequently, draft orders based on this design were published.

17.21 The scheme consists of 2 x 7.3m wide carriageways with generally a 4.5m wide central reserve and a 3.5m wide verge. There would be widening of the verges or central reserve where necessary to provide adequate sight lines. Within the verge and central reserve, 1m hardened strips are incorporated adjacent to the carriageways.

17.22 The alignment of the scheme has been designed to stay within normal design parameters. However, due to the severe topography of the area, the close proximity of the route to property and various environmental constraints, a number of departures from standard have been introduced. These are detailed in the Departures Report (Deposit Document DD 24). All the departures from standard have been approved and authorised.

18. OPENING DATE AND DESIGN YEAR

18.1 Prior to and during the opening stages of the inquiries all calculations had been based on an opening year of 1996 and a design year of 2011. Calculations contained in deposit documents (including the Environmental Statement) are based on those dates.

18.2 However, during the course of the inquiries it was felt by the Highways Agency that an opening year of 1998 and a design year of 2013 would be more realistic. This had the effect, inter alia, of increasing opening year and design year traffic flows.

18.3 Highway Agency assessments contained in this report reflect the later opening and design years.

19. HISTORIC AND PREDICTED 24 HOUR AADT TRAFFIC FLOWS

19.1 Traffic surveys were carried out in September 1991.

19.2 At the Miles Cross automatic traffic count (ATC) it was established that the AADT flow was 11,176 vehicles.

19.3 It was assessed from the surveys that the amount of traffic which had no requirement to stop in Morcombelake or Chideock was about 9,400 vehicles or approximately 84% of total flow. The proportion of heavy goods vehicles using the A35 was found to be around 5%, which is less than the typical level for trunk roads.

19.4 Without a bypass it is predicted that, in the revised design year (2013), traffic flows through Morcombelake would be 16,400 (low growth) and 19,800 (high growth). Through Chideock they would be 17,100 (low growth) and 20,400 (high growth).

19.5 With a bypass it is predicted that in the design year (2013) the AADT flows on the section of the bypass west of Morcombelake would be 16,010 (low growth) and 19,140 (high growth). On the Morcombelake section of the bypass the flows would be 15,400 (low growth) and 18,500 (high growth). On the Chideock section of the bypass they would be 14,900 (low growth) and 17,800 (high growth).

19.6 Traffic flows through Morcombelake on the existing A35 would be 1,200 (low growth) and 1,450 (high growth). These figures include some double journeys because of the absence of a western exit. Through Chideock the traffic flows would be 2,200 (low growth) and 2,600 (high growth).

20. ACCIDENTS

20.1 Over the length of the existing A35 which would be bypassed there is a high incidence of road accidents.

20.2 During the five year period 1989 to 1993 the accident rate has been as follows:

West of Morcombelake	0.25	PIA/mvkm
Morcombelake	0.73	"
Chideock Hill	0.18	"
Chideock	0.28	"
Quarry Hill	0.78	"
Overall	0.45	"

20.3 This compares with the national average rate of 0.29 PIA/mvkm and with the rate of 0.20 PIA/mvkm on other lengths of the A35. The predicted rate for the published scheme is 0.10 PIA/mvkm.

20.4 However, in May 1993 a 40 mph speed limit was introduced in Morcombelake. This may have the effect of reducing accidents even though radar speed measurements indicate that, at times of free flow, 62% of eastbound and 72% of westbound traffic is exceeding the speed limit.

20.5 In the absence of three or five years' experience of the effect of the speed limit in Morcombelake, the usual course would be to assume a default rate which in this case would be 0.32 PIA/mvkm. If this was done, it would have the effect of reducing the overall accident rate (vide paragraph 20.2 above) from 0.45 PIA/mvkm to 0.39 PIA/mvkm.

20.6 Using the default rate for Morcombelake, COBA indicates that the proposed bypass would achieve a considerable reduction in accidents and casualties.

20.7 Without a bypass it is predicted that over a 30 year period some 615 (low growth) and 723 (high growth) accidents would occur on the existing A35. This compares with 229 (low growth) and 274 (high growth) accidents on the new and existing roads if the bypass was constructed. This provides a saving of 386 (low growth) and 449 (high growth) accidents, and represents a major benefit of the bypass.

21. COST AND COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

21.1 The estimated cost of the published scheme is £20.79m at third quarter 1992 prices.

21.2 The estimate includes the cost of the main engineering works, accommodation works, landscaping, noise insulation, works by and for the statutory undertakers, property and land acquisition and compensation.

21.3 Approximately £2.5m has been included in the scheme cost for geotechnical (mainly drainage) work.

21.4 The published proposals have been assessed in cost/benefit terms using the COBA 9 programme.

21.5 The COBA analysis updated to November 1993 indicates the net present value (NPV) of the published scheme to be £5.538m (low growth) and £17.308m (high growth). Thus the NPV would be substantial and positive across the full range of forecast traffic growth.

22. LANDTAKE

General

22.1 The scheme as published (but including the modifications sought by the Highways Agency) requires a permanent landtake of 83.2 ha, of which 65.1 ha is agricultural land and 18.1 ha is non-agricultural land.

22.2 Temporary landtake would be 61.75 ha, of which 58.71 ha is agricultural land and 3.04 ha non-agricultural land.

Common Land

22.3 The proposed bypass would require the acquisition of an area of common land to the south of the A35 at Symondsburry known as Eype Down. Although 0.143 ha would be acquired, only 0.013 ha would be permanently taken. The remaining 0.13 ha would be returned to its existing use following regrading work on access tracks and associated cutting slopes.

22.4 An area of 0.232 ha would be provided as exchange land.

22.5 The land which would be given in exchange is not less in area than the area to be taken. It would be equally advantageous to those with specific rights of common and to members of the general public.

22.6 A plan of the common land is at Appendix F.

National Trust Land

22.7 The effect of the published route on National Trust Golden Cap Estate land would be as follows:

- * the size of Golden Cap Estate is approximately 896 ha of which nearly all has been declared inalienable
- * 9.54 ha would be affected during construction
- * 6.48 ha (of the 9.54 ha) would be required permanently

- * 3.06 ha (of the 9.54 ha) would be required only temporarily and would be made available for return to the National Trust
- * 5.52 ha of the 6.48 ha of land permanently required is inalienable and 0.96 ha is not inalienable

22.8 Details of the special parliamentary procedure related to the acquisition of National Trust inalienable land are given at Appendix G.

23. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEME

23.1 A detailed and thorough environmental assessment and appraisal of the scheme has been undertaken.

23.2 As part of the process of assessment, an environmental statement has been prepared and issued as required by EC Directive 85/337, and as applied by section 105A of the Highways Act 1980.

23.3 The environmental statement has been prepared in accordance with Volume 11 (Environmental Assessment) of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. The statement consists of Volumes 1 and 2 and a non-technical summary. (Deposit Documents DD 8 and 9)

23.4 Volume 1 summarises the effects of the published scheme on the environment and identifies the measures taken to reduce adverse effects.

23.5 Volume 2 consists of 10 parts, each dealing in detail with a particular subject area.

23.6 The non-technical summary seeks to highlight the main points contained in Volume 1.

23.7 It should be noted that preparation of the environmental assessment of this scheme began by using and following the Manual of Environmental Appraisal. The subsequent decision to base the assessment on Volume 11 (Environmental Assessment) of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges involved some changes of emphasis and required additional work to be carried out.

23.8 However, as a part of the environmental statement, the appraisal framework format contained in the Manual of Environmental Appraisal has been retained. This is considered useful as it enables a comparison to be made between the effects of the published scheme and those of a 'do minimum' situation where no equivalent scheme would be provided and no major works constructed. An updated appraisal framework is at Document DT 152.

24. BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME FOR MOTORISTS

24.1 Travel along the A35 trunk route between the Charmouth Bypass and the Bridport Link Road would be much improved. There would be traffic relief on the road network in and around Chideock and Morcombelake. This would be to the benefit of both local traffic and through traffic.

24.2 The removal of congestion and the avoidance of delay, resulting from the higher standard of road would reduce driver stress and frustration and would improve road safety.

24.3 Some delays are possible during the two year construction period, mainly at the terminal points of the bypass and at those locations where the new bypass would sever the existing A35.

25. EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

25.1 By removing through traffic from Chideock and Morcombelake, the bypass would improve the general amenity and safety of pedestrians and cyclists who would, in the main, use the superseded A35. The feeling of severance would be drastically reduced by the removal of around 90% of existing and future traffic from the villages.

25.2 Cyclists would be able to avoid all but 2 kilometres of the new trunk road and would travel with improved safety.

25.3 Several footpaths would be affected by the scheme and there would be a loss of amenity on some, due to the proximity of traffic on the bypass. Some of the diversions would extend footpath lengths, but this is considered preferable to the hazards of pedestrians crossing the new road at carriageway level.

26. EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON OCCUPIERS OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

26.1 The bypass proposals would require the acquisition and demolition of seven residential properties along the length of the scheme, four of which are already owned by the Highways Agency.

26.2 Noise levels for those living on the existing A35 would be reduced with some 187 residential properties experiencing noise reduction of between 3dB(A) and 15 dB(A) as a result of traffic transferring to the bypass. By comparison the scheme would bring traffic closer to some properties and would increase noise by between 3dB(A) and 15 dB(A) for 29 properties and greater than 15 dB(A) for a further 18 properties. Eleven properties would qualify for insulation under the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975, as amended by the Noise Insulation

(Amendment) Regulations 1988. A further seven properties would be recommended for insulation against construction noise.

26.3 Forecasts have been made of the contribution that the scheme would make to the overall change in air quality in the area. These show that in the year 2011 (the original design year), with the bypass provided, overall levels of carbon monoxide (CO) and hydrocarbon (HC) in the area would decrease by 29% and 36% respectively. Levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and carbon dioxide (CO2) would increase by 18% and 5% respectively. This is not unexpected as the emission of NOx increases with vehicle speeds and higher speeds can be expected on the bypass. CO2, which is considered to be the least directly harmful of the pollutants, is expected to increase with the additional use of catalytic converters which themselves serve to reduce NOx.

27. EFFECT OF THE SCHEME ON INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES

27.1 No industrial premises are directly physically affected by the scheme, but Frodsham's Garage would lose some land. Five shops, eight hotels/guest houses would experience a 5-10 dB(A) decrease in noise level.

27.2 The 90% reduction in traffic through Chideock would allow easier and safer access to the village shops, the significant camping area to the south of the village and to all other local facilities. The removal of trunk road traffic would have similar beneficial effects in Morcombelake where, in particular, deliveries and visits to the shop and post office, and to Moore's biscuit factory and shop would be made much easier and safer.

28. LANDSCAPE

28.1 The published route, which is wholly within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, would be an intrusive development in landscape terms. Because of this, every effort has been made to reduce the overall impact of the new road on this highly sensitive area.

28.2 Some trees covered by the Catherston Leweston tree preservation order would have to be felled. However, they would be replaced by extensive highway planting.

29. ECOLOGY

29.1 The main areas of ecological interest which would be affected are the species-rich grassland and associated habitat to the west and south of Morcombelake, within and surrounding the West Dorset Coast SSSI and the Morcombelake SSSI. The

nationally scarce corky-fruited water-dropwort is present in several of the semi-improved meadows west of Morcombelake.

29.2 Habitat creation features would be incorporated into the scheme wherever possible in order that the grasslands could develop into land of ecological value. Although none of the woodlands in the route corridor are listed as ancient woodlands, removal of mature trees would be kept to a minimum. The current course and structure of watercourses would be maintained as closely as possible.

29.3 Badger protection measures would be employed. This would be done in consultation with English Nature. The measures would include the provision of underpasses and badger proof fencing and the relocation of badger setts.

29.4 Damage to bat roosts would be avoided wherever possible but where this is inevitable it would be the intention to provide alternative roosts following discussions with English Nature. In general, it would be the aim to recreate habitat features similar to those lost.

29.5 There would be some disturbance of dormice, but this would be minimised.

30. ARCHAEOLOGY

30.1 A series of archaeological assessments has been undertaken during the planning of the scheme. The route has been designed so that it would not affect any scheduled monument or archaeological site of national importance. The design also minimises potential damage to sites of lesser importance.

30.2 The published route would pass close to two scheduled monuments. It would cross the field adjacent to Chideock Castle and run 250m north of a tumulus on Eype Down.

30.3 The published route would cross or pass close to five ancient monuments listed in the County Ancient Monument Record. The most significant of these is the Chideock Deer Park which would be crossed by the published route.

30.4 Where damage to archaeological sites or structures of historic interest would be unavoidable, evaluations have been undertaken and realistic proposals for mitigation have been put forward and would be implemented. The net result is a scheme where a minimal amount of archaeological damage is caused and where a record for future generations would be made and left on the sites which are affected.

31. HERITAGE

31.1 There are many properties of historic note in the area of the published route.

31.2 The character of the important Chideock conservation area would be improved by the removal of much of the through traffic.

31.3 Chideock Castle, which is a scheduled ancient monument, would be close to the published route, but would not be physically affected by the scheme.

31.4 The setting of some 27 listed buildings would be improved by the proposed bypass. The setting of 16 listed buildings would be adversely affected.

31.5 A grade II listed garden house in the grounds of The Lodge, Chideock, would be demolished. It is intended to rebuild it nearby.

31.6 At Ship Farm, Morcombelake, some of the outbuildings (listed by association) would be demolished. However, only modern, much altered or ruinous buildings would be affected. Mitigation measures would include dismantling and providing a new group of buildings in local stone. This, together with a high wall of local stone, would ameliorate the impact on the setting of the listed Ship Farm and would assist in screening views of the road.

31.7 Overall, the provision of the bypass would remove 90% of traffic from both Morcombelake and Chideock and, therefore, away from the vicinity of the majority of listed buildings. This would enable the overall character of the villages to be preserved and would provide future opportunities for enhancement.

32. AGRICULTURE

32.1 Twenty farm holdings would be affected by the scheme to varying degrees: nine at the western end of the scheme, four south of Morcombelake, one large holding north of Chideock and six at the eastern end of the scheme in the Quarr Lane/Miles Cross area.

32.2 Details of the landtake are given in paragraphs 22.1 et seq.

32.3 Where possible within design constraints, the proposed scheme alignment would minimise the impact on holdings caused by severance and land acquisition. It is not expected that overall farming patterns generally would change as a result of the new road. Where possible, embankment slopes would be

'graded out' to enable the land to be returned to agricultural use. This would have the added advantage of reducing the impact of the slopes on the landscape.

32.4 Access would be provided to all areas of farm land, including severed areas. Appropriate accommodation works would be discussed with individual landowners with a view to mitigating the effects of the scheme.

32.5 Details of the impact of the published route on the agricultural interests are contained in Volume 2 of the Environmental Statement (Deposit Document DD 9).

33. MODIFICATIONS TO THE LINE ORDER

33.1 The Highways Agency seeks the modifications to Schedule 1 of the line order shown in Document DT 85.

33.2 The modifications would correct errors made in the description of the distance of the published route and in the precise starting and finishing points. The order plans do not require correction.

33.3 The distance and the starting and finishing points of the published route were given correctly in evidence to the inquiries and are accurately contained in this report.

34. MODIFICATIONS TO THE SIDE ROADS' ORDER

First Modification

34.1 The Highways Agency seeks the modifications to the side roads' order shown in Document DT 86.

34.2 The modifications would affect:

Schedules 1, 2 and 3, and
Plans Nos 1, 2 and 3.

34.3 The modifications to Schedule 1 would correct errors and omissions, and provide a private means of access requested by a landowner.

34.4 The modifications to Schedule 2 would correct errors and would clarify the line of a footpath diversion.

34.5 The modifications to Schedule 3 would correct errors and omissions, would clarify details of an access and provide an additional access.

34.6 The modifications to Plan No 1 would correct the omission of an area, of fence lines, and of an access. They would also reflect design work on landscaping, provide an additional access, and reposition a turning head.

34.7 The modifications to Plan No 2 would replace passing places with a turning head, add fence lines, change the position of a fence line, and clarify the line of an access. They would also reflect further drainage and earthworks design, and would correct a footpath number.

34.8 The modifications to Plan No 3 would provide a new means of access, divide an access, add a fence line, add a new length of highway, reposition Miles Cross roundabout, and include the verge in an area of highway to be stopped up.

Second Modification

34.9 The Highways Agency seeks the modifications to the side roads order shown in Document DT 154:

34.10 The modifications would affect:

Schedule No 1 and Plan No 1.

34.11 The modification to Schedule No 1 would, at the request of an owner, provide an additional means of access, following revisions to the landscaping proposals. The modification to Plan No 1 reflects the above changes to Schedule No 1.

35. MODIFICATIONS TO THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

First Modification

35.1 The Highways Agency seeks the modifications to the compulsory purchase order shown in Document DT 87.

35.2 The modifications would affect the schedule and plans.

35.3 The modifications would:

amend areas, delete plots and add new plots following the abandonment of plans to straighten the River Char, made necessary by the requirements of the National Rivers Authority;

add information recently discovered;

reflect change of address;

reflect change of ownership.

Second Modification

35.4 The Highways Agency seeks the modifications to the compulsory purchase order shown in Document DT 153.

35.5 The modifications would affect the schedule and plans.

35.6 The modifications would:

amend areas, add new plots (within the original CPO area) to reflect landscaping proposals in the vicinity of Bellair Farm;

amend areas in order to reflect a change in a field boundary, and to avoid a vineyard at the request of the owner;

reflect change of highway description from "bridleway" to "byway";

make minor textual amendments.

PART V - THE CASE FOR SUPPORTERS
MATERIAL POINTS

36. SUPPORT FOR THE PUBLISHED ROUTE AND ORDERS

Dorset County Council

36.1 The County Council welcomes the publication of the various orders associated with the bypass, it supports the dual carriageway scheme as proposed by the Highways Agency and it requests its early implementation.

36.2 The second alteration to the Dorset (excluding South-east) Structure Plan, approved in May 1993, includes the scheme.

36.3 The Council is particularly concerned to increase and diversify the range of employment opportunities in the area. This has become especially important with the loss of employment opportunities associated with the defence industry in the Weymouth/Portland area. If new jobs are to be attracted, good transport links with other areas are essential.

36.4 In employment terms, the A35 is of particular importance to the county because, as well as being part of the national road network, the road forms the major east-west link for the southern half of the county, where most of the population reside.

36.5 The proposed scheme also meets the Structure Plan objective of maintaining and improving the environment by removing extraneous traffic from towns and villages.

36.6 The Council is conscious of the importance and sensitivity of the landscape and ecology in the area. It recognises and endorses the extensive landscaping, planting and moulding which would be undertaken.

36.7 In supporting the scheme, the County Council expresses the view that the road surface should be dark coloured. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the use of noise minimising surface materials.

36.8 The Council is concerned to improve road safety. It notes that, during the three year period May 1990 to April 1993, forty seven personal injury accidents were reported on the A35 between Charmouth and Miles Cross. Of these, 16 occurred in Morcombelake, including one fatal and three serious personal injury accidents. In Chideock there were three personal injury accidents during the same period. One was fatal, one was serious and one slight. To the east of Chideock there were six serious and 17 slight personal injury accidents.

West Dorset District Council

36.9 The A35 trunk road carries a considerable and increasing volume of business and commercial traffic, as well as the more seasonal tourist traffic. The implementation of the published scheme would be of economic benefit both to the district and to road users.

36.10 Chideock and Morcombelake are visited each year by many thousands of people. Indeed, the chief source of income and local employment in West Dorset is now tourism. However, high levels of traffic act as a serious disincentive to visitors who take their lives in their hands if they try to stop outside a local hotel or guesthouse.

36.11 Making these villages attractive and safe places in which to stay can only benefit the economy of the area as a whole.

36.12 A very wide range of environmental benefits would be achieved as a result of bypassing the villages.

36.13 The existing road running through Chideock and Morcombelake causes:

- a. physical damage to buildings and the environment as a result of the sheer volume of traffic;
- b. air and noise pollution, dirt and congestion;
- c. severance causing hazards to pedestrians crossing roads e.g. the accident in Morcombelake in 1991 when a villager was killed crossing the road to go to the post office/shop;
- d. accidents caused by steep gradients and the sinuous character of the road;
- e. loss of tourist income because the traffic acts as a disincentive to visitors.

36.14 Recent studies (including one by Coopers and Lybrand) have shown that the area has fared particularly badly in respect of employment.

36.15 Poor road communication and deficiencies in the major highway network were identified in the Coopers and Lybrand study as a major constraint to inward investment and thus to the area's future prosperity.

36.16 Time and time again officers of the Council are asked by firms considering investing in the area about road improvements, and the time it takes to travel from London, Southampton, Bristol or Exeter. Until the road links are improved, the current road system will act as a serious disincentive to investment and employment opportunities in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland. At a recent meeting of local businessmen with Lord Shuttleworth, Chairman of the Rural Development Commission, the inadequacy of the local roads was one of the main subjects of discussion.

36.17 The Council believes that the bypass would provide a real boost to accessibility and demonstrate to the outside world that West Dorset could be a good place to invest.

36.18 It is noted that it has been suggested by objectors that Chideock only should be bypassed leaving the existing trunk road running through Morcombelake. It is considered that this would be impracticable. It would be unacceptable. The effect of taking trunk road traffic direct from a dual carriageway bypass into the speed restricted environment of a village would be disastrous both from a road safety point of view as well as for the physical environment of Morcombelake.

36.19 There is no doubt that the built environment of the villages through which the existing trunk road passes would be immeasurably enhanced by the bypass.

36.20 It is accepted that the scheme would have a considerable impact on the exceptional landscape. However, the carefully considered landscaping proposals would soon blend the new roadway into the landscape in an acceptable manner.

36.21 In urging the acceptance and early construction of the bypass, the Council is satisfied that the proposed mitigation measures would address satisfactorily the environmental and ecological problems which would inevitably arise.

The Local Member of Parliament

36.22 Sir James Spicer MP supports the proposed bypass and asks that the orders be made. Local changes which could be made without too much difficulty, and which would not cause undue delay, could be considered. It is important to get on with the bypass. A bypass of Chideock only would be a mishmash and would not be satisfactory.

Road Transport Organisations

36.23 Organisations representing firms moving passengers and freight wish to emphasise the need for the bypass.

36.24 The present road is inadequate and dangerous. It imposes environmental and economic penalties on the community.

36.25 With the forecast growth of road passenger and freight traffic the situation would deteriorate if a bypass was not provided.

37. SUPPORT FOR THAT PART OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE BYPASSING MORCOMBELAKE

37.1 The present road through Morcombelake is inadequate, noisy and unsafe. The road west of Morcombelake is often under repair due to subsidence and this results in only a single lane being available for both eastbound and westbound traffic.

37.2 The 40 mph speed limit has done little to slow down traffic. Those who do comply with the speed limit are harassed by those drivers who wish to go faster.

37.3 It is a nightmare to cross the road. It is especially difficult and dangerous for children and for the elderly.

38. SUPPORT FOR THAT PART OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE BYPASSING CHIDEOCK

38.1 Supporters, including Chideock Parish Council, feel that there is an urgent need for a Chideock bypass as proposed by the Highways Agency.

38.2 In November 1991, before the announcement of the published route, the Parish Council conducted a confidential ballot of all persons then on the local register of electors. The ballot form posed the question "Do you want a bypass - yes or no". 79% of the electorate voted. Of these, 407 voted "yes" and 16 voted "no".

38.3 The noise, pollution and danger from trunk road traffic passing through the main street of the village make life intolerable for both residents and visitors.

38.4 The noise occurs day and night. The disturbance caused by the bounce of empty heavy goods vehicles travelling fast at night is particularly troublesome.

38.5 The tourist economy of the village is adversely affected by the unwillingness of many people to visit or stay in a village so dominated and overwhelmed by heavy traffic.

38.6 Considerable congestion and delays, and consequent pollution, occur in the village as a result of general congestion. There is a particular problem with eastbound vehicles waiting to turn south into Duck Street or westbound vehicles waiting to turn north into North Road.

38.7 The narrowness of the carriageway, combined with the lack of continuous footways through the village, places pedestrians in great hazard. The steep hills leading into the village, especially the 12% hill from the west, mean that villagers face the ever present threat of runaway lorries. The village experienced just such an accident in August 1991 which caused a death and also the destruction of two cottages and damage to numerous vehicles.

PART VI - THE CASE FOR OBJECTORS AND THE RESPONSE
OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY - MATERIAL POINTS

SECTION 1 - GENERAL OBJECTIONS

39. THE EFFECT OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE ON THE COUNTRYSIDE
AND ON THE NATIONAL TRUST GOLDEN CAP ESTATE

OBJECTION

The Countryside

39.1 The Countryside Commission is the public agency charged with the responsibility of promoting the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the English countryside.

39.2 The Commission, together with many other objectors, is deeply concerned about the impact of the published proposals upon the landscape character of the West Dorset Heritage Coast and the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

39.3 The Commission's policy with regard to major road schemes within areas of outstanding natural beauty is that they should avoid them whenever possible, but where unavoidable the route and its design should be chosen to minimise damage to the environment. Planning Policy Guidance Notes 7 and 13 reflect that requirement. Planning Policy Guidance Note 20 includes the Chideock and Morcombelake area amongst those identified where conservation interests are particularly important.

39.4 In a recent report, the Commission describes the Chideock and Morcombelake area as "a rolling patchwork of fields and hedgerows [which] extend across this varied relief.....Here arable fields give way to pastures in a network of dense hedgerows.....this area is remarkable for its evocative landforms and unspoilt rich visual character. Often valleys are hidden from view and the many hills and woodlands form distinctive, memorable landmarks".

39.5 The Commission takes the view that the area cannot easily accommodate the large-scale intrusion of major trunk road improvements with their attendant noise, linear form and man-made structures.

39.6 It is accepted that alternatives to the published route which are not equally or more damaging are difficult to find around Chideock.

39.7 However, there seems to be scope for further examination of the options around Morcombelake. As stated by the Commission in November 1987, if an on-line solution is not feasible, then the yellow route [since adopted as the published

route] would minimise landscape impact on National Trust land and on the Heritage Coast.

39.8 The Commission would summarise its views by saying that the need to maintain the special environment around Morcombelake outweighs the need to improve the road to the standard proposed. The possibility of alternative solutions, such as on-line improvements to the existing route, should be investigated to arrive at a solution which is more visually acceptable but which respects both the needs of Morcombelake residents and also safety and highway requirements.

The Basis of the National Trust's Objection

39.9 The National Trust is charged by parliament to promote the permanent preservation, for the benefit of the nation, of land and buildings of historic, landscape and nature conservation interest.

39.10 The National Trust, supported by many local residents and visitors, vigorously objects to the published scheme. The objection arises primarily because of the devastatingly adverse effect the scheme would have on the Trust's Golden Cap Estate, which is shown on the scheme plan at Appendix D.

39.11 Thus, the main objection concerns the effect of the scheme on the area south of Morcombelake, referred to in this report as the Morcombelake Bowl. It is in this area that National Trust land would be acquired for the scheme. However, objection is also made to the overall scheme because of the unacceptable effect it would have on the landscape and ecology of the area.

39.12 Most of the National Trust land which would be compulsorily acquired under the draft compulsory purchase order has been declared inalienable. It is, therefore, specially protected under the National Trust Act 1907. If, subsequent to any decision of the Secretary of State for Transport to make the compulsory purchase order, the Trust sustains its objection, then the inalienable land could only be compulsorily acquired through a special parliamentary procedure. In this respect, the Trust reserves its position until it has had an opportunity to consider the inspector's report and the decision of the Secretaries of State. The special parliamentary procedure is outlined at Appendix G.

39.13 The Trust accepts that most of its members and visitors are road users who arrive at the Golden Cap Estate and at other nearby centres or properties by private car. Certainly, the Trust is not anti-roads and does not enter lightly into the act of opposing schemes prepared by the government or its agencies. Indeed, the Trust wishes to use its limited resources in managing its estates for the benefit of present and future generations. However, the importance of the Golden Cap

Estate and the effect which the scheme would have upon it, makes this an exceptional case.

The Golden Cap Estate and the Quality of its Landscape

39.14 The Golden Cap Estate was acquired by the National Trust through the Enterprise Neptune campaign, which is regarded by the Trust as its greatest single project.

39.15 The quality of the landscape is widely acknowledged and is indisputably accepted as comprising countryside of supreme beauty.

39.16 The Landscape Advisory Committee, which visited the area in October 1986 prior to public consultation, reported that "the landscape is of great beauty.....commanding magnificent views along the coast and inland".

39.17 The report went on to describe the landscape as a complicated one of hills, steep sided valleys and sharp changes of contour related to its geomorphology and geology.

39.18 The landscape advisers of the Highways Agency and those advising the Trust concur that the landscape is wholly exceptional.

39.19 The estate gives immense pleasure to local people and to visitors. It is freely accessible, without charge, to the general public. The estate is regarded by the National Trust as a jewel in its crown. It extends to approximately 896 ha. Almost all of the estate comprises land declared inalienable by the Trust.

The Impact on the Estate and on the Landscape

39.20 The western end of the scheme would have a substantial landscape impact on the south-western part of Marshwood Vale and on views from its surrounding hills, including from some National Trust properties. The principal impact on this part of the vale would relate to the provision of a large lit roundabout at the foot of Stonebarrow Hill and a split level carriageway climbing up Ship Knapp. Even with screen planting the road corridor would appear as a permanent scar across the face of the hillside.

39.21 As indicated in more detail in paragraph 22.7 above, 9.54 ha of National Trust land would be affected by the published scheme during construction, of which 6.48 ha would be required permanently.

39.22 In the view of the National Trust and its advisers, the Highway Agency's scheme would have a devastating impact on the landscape of the Morcombelake Bowl to the south of Morcombelake. Two of the smooth saddles which link the hills around the head of the valley would be severely damaged by deep wide cuttings, further emphasised by the provision of overbridges close to existing ground levels. A third cutting, through the broad spur above Shedbush Farm, would exacerbate the sense of destruction. Between these cuttings, high embankments would infill two small tributary valleys. The overall effect would be to transform a corridor of land across one of the most prominent parts of the bowl and the estate.

39.23 The Landscape Advisory Committee, during the October 1986 visit (referred to in paragraph 39.16 above), considered two routes to the south of Morcombelake. Referring, *inter alia*, to those routes, the committee's report (Document DT 12) stated that the routes were unacceptable on landscape and environmental grounds. Each one would do irreparable damage to the West Dorset Heritage Coast and to views of National Trust inalienable land. Although not on the same alignment as the published scheme, the routes considered by the Committee had much in common with the Highway Agency's current proposals.

39.24 All of this contrasts with the existing A35 alignment through Morcombelake. Although the present road is partly visible and audible from the surrounding area, it tends to work with the landscape. It crosses open saddles between the hilltops at grade and follows the line which marks the transition from the more incised and pastoral lower slopes to the steeper, heathy upper slopes of surrounding hills.

39.25 East of Morcombelake the published route would have a severe impact on the landscape of the Winniford Valley, north of Chideock. The most damaging aspect east of Morcombelake would be the deep cuttings to the west of Chideock Hill and those to the east between Chideock Hill and Eype Down. Also very damaging would be the high cut face on the southern side of Quarry Hill.

Impact on the Ecology of the Estate

39.26 The Trust is concerned about the effect of the published proposals on the ecology of the estate. This is particularly the case in respect of Moor Meadow; also, in respect of the impact on the quality of water in St. Gabriel's stream.

39.27 The Trust supports the evidence given on behalf of English Nature and the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation (vide paragraphs 40.1 et seq below) in respect of both the estate and also the wider area affected by the scheme.

Impact on the Estate resulting from the Geology of the Area.

39.28 The Trust is similarly concerned about the stability of the extensive cut faces, particularly at Stonebarrow Hill and Quarry Hill, and about the adequacy of geological investigations.

39.29 It is feared that landslides resulting from the construction of the bypass could cause unexpected, additional devastation to the landscape. In any case, additional engineering work, with attendant disfigurement, could well be found to be necessary as construction proceeded.

39.30 The Trust supports the expert geological evidence given by objectors to the inquiries, as outlined later in this report. It is noted that in its report referred to in paragraphs 39.16 and 39.17 above, the Landscape Advisory Committee recommended that any route south of the existing road should be avoided, particularly at Chardown and Langdon Hill, because of the ground instability where land slipping is developing between the upper greensand and the liassic deposits.

Alternative Routes

39.31 It is not the role or task of the National Trust to design alternative routes for the Highways Agency.

39.32 However, in order to be positive and constructive the Trust does suggest and commend two possible alternative routes.

39.33 The essential principles common to both alternative routes is that they would permit the bypassing of Chideock, they would avoid the very sensitive area to the south of Morcombelake, and they would, for their entire length, be single carriageway rather than dual carriageway.

39.34 The importance of the alternative routes avoiding the area to the south of Morcombelake (i.e. through the Golden Cap Estate) is emphasised. In the Morcombelake Bowl, a single carriageway scheme would be only marginally less damaging than the published dual carriageway scheme. The impact of either would be severe.

39.35 The alternative routes put forward by the Trust have been designated as Objectors' Routes 4 and 5. One route proposes the use of a tunnel. The other proposes on-line improvements through Morcombelake. They are described and considered in Part VII of this report.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

39.36 The imperative need for the bypass and the justification for a dual carriageway scheme have been fully outlined in Part IV of this report. In essence, the scheme is required to relieve the villages from traffic, to provide a safe road and reduce deaths and injuries, and to assist the national and local economies.

39.37 The reasons why a tunnel or on-line solution through Morcombelake are not considered to be appropriate are explained in the Agency's response to Objectors' Routes 4 and 5 (paragraphs 86.6 et seq and 87.5 et seq) below.

39.38 It is acknowledged that the published route would pass through exceptionally sensitive countryside. All of West Dorset (except for two small enclaves) is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty. In the vicinity of the scheme, large areas of land are owned by the National Trust. Much of the land is within the West Dorset Heritage Coast. There are many sites of special scientific interest, sites of nature conservation interest, and wildlife habitats.

39.39 In designing the scheme it has been necessary to balance competing interests and in so doing to minimise the impact of the scheme on the landscape, on the countryside, on wildlife, on National Trust land, on sites of ecological interest, on agriculture, on footpaths, and on villages and homes.

39.40 An example of competing interests is that, as can be seen from the scheme plan at Appendix D, it would have been possible to avoid Moor Meadow and Shedbush Lane by taking the route further into the Golden Cap Estate rather than confining the alignment to the estate's periphery.

39.41 As part of this balancing process and appraisal, a full, thorough and very detailed environmental assessment was undertaken, and an environmental statement prepared. The inquiries' process and the evidence contained in inquiries' documents have extended and added to the assessment.

39.42 The Highways Agency confidently believes that it has adopted an optimum route which achieves a proper balance, and minimises the impact of the scheme upon the environment.

39.43 It is acknowledged that the route would initially, especially during the period of construction, be intrusive. However, the extensive landscaping, planting, ground shaping, moulding and other mitigation measures would ensure that the scheme would be assimilated successfully into the surrounding countryside.

39.44 The Agency has explained to the inquiries in great detail the extent of the mitigation measures. These are mainly contained in Proof of Evidence (with plans) PE 4. The Agency is much concerned that the full extent of the measures should be appreciated. They are exceptional, and represent an appropriate response to the exceptional nature of the countryside.

39.45 The published route avoids National Trust land except to the south of Morcombelake, where it skirts only the very periphery of the Golden Cap Estate.

39.46 Just within the estate, the bypass would run for about 600m close to the existing A35 trunk road, being only some 100m to 200m from it. South of Morcombelake, the bypass would be typically 1.5km from the main coastal footpath, compared with the existing trunk road being approximately 1.7km distant.

39.47 Partly because the physical intrusion of the road into the estate is so restricted, and partly because of the road's design and the mitigation measures, the additional impact of the bypass on the Golden Cap Estate would be limited.

39.48 It is important to understand that the area is not currently one of total tranquillity. Noise from the existing A35 road corridor is intrusive. An objector, in her evidence (Proof of Evidence PE 133), referring to a walk on the estate at St. Gabriel, states that it is already severely affected by traffic noise. She believes that the bypass would make this worse. However, in fact, because much of the bypass would be in cutting or behind planted mounds, and because the traffic would be free flowing, the aural and visual effect of the bypass would be largely contained.

39.49 Similarly, present views from the Golden Cap Estate are not unspoilt. There are views of traffic and of a prominent petrol filling station and garage on the existing A35 at Chideock Hill. There are also views of Morcombelake which were described by the Landscape Advisory Committee as being a "..... limited development, which is of modern and unspectacular design, bordering the road, and which is of course subject to road noise".

39.50 Certainly, the bypass would be seen from certain points within the estate. However, as has already been indicated, the mitigation measures would allow it to be assimilated into the landscape and countryside.

40. ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

OBJECTION

Basis of Objection

40.1 English Nature, the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation, and others object to the published scheme on the grounds of:

- a. the damage it would cause to the ecology of the area, and
- b. the adverse affect it would have on nature conservation.

40.2 The main ecological damage would be caused around Morcombelake and to its west. English Nature does not object to that part of the scheme which would bypass Chideock and extend eastwards to Miles Cross.

40.3 Affected sites of nature conservation interest (SNCIs) and sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) are shown on the scheme plan at Appendix D.

Impact on Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

40.4 Key Site 1a (KS1a). The scheme would cause the loss of the majority of this neutral grassland field (1.64 ha out of 1.9 ha). The field, which would become marginalised, supports a strong population of the nationally scarce corky-fruited water-dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*). The loss of the field would be of regional significance.

40.5 Key Site 1b (KS1b). The scheme would cause the loss of the majority of this exceptionally species-rich neutral grassland field (2.4 ha out of 3.7 ha). It is accepted that the Highways Agency has put forward ideas for translocating the turves. However, without identification of a suitable receptor site and without details of after-management, it is not considered that this proposal can be regarded as effective mitigation or compensation for the loss of most of this valuable field. Because of its importance it is the intention of English Nature to notify this site as an SSSI.

40.6 SNCI below Moor Meadow. This SNCI is not named or shown as a key site. It is a seepage feature and would be at risk from hydrological changes caused by the proposed major earthworks and development which would occur just above the site.

Impact on Sites of Special Scientific Interest

40.7 Key Site 2a (KS2a). The damage to this site would be caused by a 420m long track required for access to neighbouring land. The part of the site affected supports grassland which has a particularly high species diversity. Mitigation measures are unlikely to be successful.

40.8 Key Site 4a (Moor Meadow) (KS4a). Moor Meadow (1.7 ha) is a particularly fine and large example of a type of seepage fen. Such features are rare nationally. It is considered likely that it supports rare or scarce invertebrates. Every seepage fen is different, its vegetation responding to a unique combination of hydrological characteristics. The whole of this natural feature would be lost and could not be re-created. The National Rivers Authority objects to the route on the basis of its effect on Moor Meadow.

General Impact on Grasslands and Invertebrates

40.9 In addition to the SNCIs and SSSIs identified above, there are substantial areas of semi-improved neutral grassland which would be affected by the proposed scheme.

40.10 Concern is felt that the Highways Agency has failed to appreciate the national and local importance of unimproved and semi-improved grassland and associated flushes. The Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation has gathered information on the survival of such habitats outside the SSSI system. It has found that there are now only some 72 additional unimproved grassland sites in the whole of Dorset, amounting to some 307 ha. Most of these are each under 5 ha in extent.

40.11 It is of further concern that there has not been an adequate survey of invertebrates which are likely to be hosted by the grasslands.

40.12 The loss of SNCIs, SSSIs and other grasslands resulting from the scheme would be of added significance because many of the grasslands are sympathetically managed and are in the hands of those concerned to protect and encourage wildlife.

40.13 The loss of hedgerows and of mature trees (many of which are covered by a tree preservation order) is a matter for great concern.

Impact on Mammals (other than Bats)

40.14 Badgers. The most important issue in respect of badgers is the mitigation of the inevitable destruction of their setts. English Nature is generally satisfied with the measures proposed.

40.15 Deer. The effect of the scheme on deer is not likely to pose a significant nature conservation issue. English Nature is satisfied with the mitigation measures proposed.

40.16 Dormice. The destruction of hedgerows would result in the loss and fragmentation of habitat of high value. In view of the status of dormice, as a protected species included in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such adverse impact must be considered to be of national importance.

Impact on Bats

40.17 Lesser horseshoe bats are a rare and endangered species across Europe. They are rare in Britain and their range has undergone considerable contraction. The West Dorset population is now at the edge of the species' range in England and its survival is therefore critical in preventing further contraction of the range.

40.18 It is common ground between the Highways Agency and English Nature that the colony of lesser horseshoe bats in the derelict building at the western end of the scheme, whose summer nursery roost would be destroyed by the published scheme, is of international importance. The roost is one of very few in Dorset and is the largest nursery roost in the county.

40.19 Failure to protect this roost would be in breach of the Habitats and Species Directive and of international agreements entered into by the government, unless a replacement roost with a high chance of success was fully incorporated into the published scheme with a firm and guaranteed undertaking that it could and would be provided.

40.20 The international agreements include:

- a. the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Berne Convention);
- b. the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe (the Bonn Convention).

40.21 In addition to these agreements, the lesser horseshoe bat is covered by EEC Council Directive 92/43 which lists the species as being of community interest and in need of strict protection.

40.22 It is acknowledged that the building which contains the roost is in a state of disrepair but there is no evidence that it is in imminent danger of collapse. Furthermore, repair work to the structure of the building may well be undertaken by the Dorset Bat Group.

40.23 It is also acknowledged that the Highways Agency has expressed a willingness to provide a replacement roost. However, such a roost may not be successful. A further matter of concern is that the loss of grasslands would result in a loss of insects and affect the feeding grounds of the bats.

40.24 The effect of the road on the serotine roost at The Lodge is not likely to have a significant effect on the serotine population in the county.

Hydrography and Hydrology

40.25 The hydrography of the Morcombelake Bowl is sensitive and complex. The published scheme would have an adverse effect on the water flushes and water courses. The St. Gabriel's stream is especially at risk.

40.26 Particularly during construction, but also after opening, it is considered that there is risk of accidental pollution and of catastrophic damage to the fragile ecology of the area. Lagoons are a mitigation measure but would not provide either a complete or a failsafe solution.

Conflict with National Policy

40.27 It has long been the clear and consistent theme of government policy that roads should avoid designated areas of outstanding natural beauty and sites of special scientific interest. In cases where such areas or sites would be affected, as in the case of the published route, the policy emphasises the need for the road to be examined with particular care. This policy is contained in many documents including the White Paper "Policy for Roads in England" published in 1987 and in "Trunk Roads, England - Into the 1990s" published in 1990.

40.28 More recently, published policy documents have given added urgency, weight and emphasis to the above policies. Examples of these are the government's Biodiversity Action Plan and its Strategy for Sustainable Development. It is the view of English Nature that the published scheme would be harmful to biodiversity. It is also English Nature's view that the scheme would cause permanent and irreversible loss of finite resources and, therefore, be in conflict with a strategy of sustainable development.

Conflict with Local Policies

40.29 Similarly, the published scheme is in conflict with local policies.

40.30 Policy C11 of the Structure Plan and policy L.10 of the Deposit Local Plan afford protection to designated sites of nature conservation significance.

40.31 The local authorities' support of the published scheme in no way diminishes the scheme's conflict with the policies referred to above.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

General

40.32 In response to objections concerning the countryside, the Agency has already explained that it considers that there is an imperative need for the bypass, and that its design has involved achieving a balance between competing interests.

40.33 A total of eight sites having a degree of ecological significance would be directly affected by the scheme.

40.34 As can be readily seen from the scheme plan at Appendix D, the area to the south and west of Morcombelake contains large and extensive sites of special scientific interest.

40.35 The design of the scheme has succeeded in avoiding the SSSIs except for a 1.7 ha area (Moor Meadow) of the 596.3 ha Dorset Coast SSSI, and except for an access track crossing the 24.7 ha Morcombelake SSSI. This reflects the care and environmental sensitivity with which the scheme has been designed. The proposed intrusion into the SNCIs to the west of Morcombelake is necessary in order to avoid intruding into the SSSI to the south of the existing A35 trunk road.

40.36 It is accepted that any intrusion is regrettable, but if a satisfactory bypass is to be provided, then some effect on sites of ecological interest is inevitable. In strict accordance with national and local policies, such sites have been avoided if at all possible. Where avoidance would not be possible, potential damage has been minimised and mitigation measures have been carefully designed. This entirely reflects the requirements of government policy, and precisely follows the guidance given in Department of Environment Circular 27/87.

Mitigation Measures

40.37 An integrated approach to mitigation has been undertaken and includes the use of native species of local provenance for planting throughout the corridor. It is intended that the extensive planting of verges and the reinstatement of field boundaries would, in time, replicate the current appearance and ecological characteristics of the area.

40.38 Where communities of particular interest would be lost, they would be translocated to suitable areas and subsequent monitoring and management would be instigated.

40.39 The Agency is aware of the limitations of translocations and of the impossibility of precisely recreating habitats. However, it is considered that some translocation would be worthwhile. Certainly, the Agency would, with the co-operation of English Nature, the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation and the National Trust, wish to pursue this course of action.

40.40 Additionally, there would be opportunities for grassland seeding on embankment slopes. By studying the chemistry and structure of existing meadows, it is intended to replicate, as nearly as possible, existing meadows.

40.41 Whilst accepting that the planting of trees and hedgerows would not be of equal value to those lost, the planting of new trees and hedgerows would be of some value. Where appropriate, hedgerows would be moved and replanted.

40.42 The loss of an area supporting the corky-fruited water-dropwort is highlighted by English Nature. Whilst it is accepted that this plant is nationally scarce, it is emphasised that it is locally common.

40.43 It is also accepted that at Moor Meadow there would be some adverse effect on invertebrates. However, it is unlikely that the diversity of scarce or threatened invertebrates recorded in other Dorset SSSIs would be equalled at Moor Meadow due to its relatively small size and the restricted habitat diversity. Three days spent examining Moor Meadow, together with the running of soldier fly traps, drew to light only two nationally notable and no red data book species.

Water Quality

40.44 During construction of the bypass, effective measures would be taken to protect watercourses and to avoid pollution. In addition, five permanent drainage water treatment lagoons would be provided for flood control and for the purpose of protecting water quality. The lagoons would provide a four-stage treatment process. No such measures exist in respect of the present road.

Dormice

40.45 No route in the area of this corridor could avoid an impact on dormice. Like Devon and Somerset, Dorset is a stronghold for dormice.

40.46 The new road would cause only the limited fragmentation of habitats.

40.47 To minimise even that limited effect, mitigation measures have been developed in consultation with English Nature's mammal specialist.

40.48 For these reasons, the long term success of the population within the Chideock/Morcombelake area would not be seriously threatened. The impact could not be considered to be of national significance.

Bats

40.49 The national and international importance of the lesser horseshoe bat roost in the derelict building at the western end of the scheme is fully acknowledged.

40.50 The roost was discovered by the Highways Agency as part of its environmental assessment. Previously, it had not been recorded. Neither English Nature nor the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation knew of its existence.

40.51 The scheme would require the demolition of the building which houses the roost.

40.52 Since English Nature gave evidence to the inquiries, the Agency's proposals in respect of the roost have been developed. In particular:

- a. An engineering survey of the roost has determined that the building which houses it is even more dangerous, perilous and derelict than previously thought. See photographs at Appendix H.
- b. Under a proposed modification to the orders, the location of the nearby preferred first option for an alternative site for the roost would be compulsorily acquired.
- c. The Highways Agency formally undertakes that if the modifications are made, and if the scheme goes ahead, then a suitable agricultural building would be constructed on the preferred site. This is clearly subject to the roost still being in existence and needing to be replaced.
- d. The feeding grounds adjacent to the roost would be maintained and safeguarded.

40.53 English Nature accepts that the Agency's adviser on bats is internationally pre-eminent in the field. The adviser takes the view that if a replacement roost is built on the preferred site (vide paragraph 40.52 b and c above) then it is highly likely to succeed. The Agency would consult closely with him and with English Nature in designing the roost.

40.54 The Agency believes that the proposed bypass is in the interests of the colony of bats.

40.55 This is principally because of the derelict state of the building and because of the need for sympathetic management. Furthermore, if the scheme does not proceed, there is a danger of other development of the site taking place.

40.56 There is currently a conflict between the landowner who would be willing to incorporate a replacement roost into a new dwelling and the local planning authority which is not agreeable to a dwelling being constructed.

40.57 Furthermore, as an extension of this conflict, the feeding grounds could be at risk. That conflict would not be a factor if the land was compulsorily acquired and managed by the Highways Agency.

41. GEOLOGY

OBJECTION

Basis of Objection

41.1 The published route passes along the north face of Chardown Hill and Stonebarrow where steep landslipped and cambered slopes of lower and middle lias underlie the whole of the route between the western end of the proposed bypass and Morcombelake. As already noted, the Landscape Advisory Committee following its 1986 visit recognised that ground instability, where land slipping is developing between the upper greensand and the liassic deposits, occurs along much of the route. The committee noted that this was particularly the case at Stonebarrow, Chardown Hill, Langdon Hill and Quarry Hill.

41.2 Areas to the west and south of Morcombelake cause particular concern. The existing A35 west of Morcombelake is suffering from extensive subsidence. The area where a roundabout would link the published route with the Charmouth Bypass is extremely fragile and the junction would be built on active mudslide lobes. It is one of the worst of all landslide areas. Indeed, the slopes of Stonebarrow and Chardown Hill should be recognised as belonging to a category of slopes which are known to present some of the most serious risks possible for road construction.

41.3 It is regrettable that the advice and precautions outlined in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 14 have not been followed. The geological effect of the bypass on the neighbouring environment and landscapes has not been properly assessed. Until the problem was raised by objectors, the Highways Agency made no reference at the inquiries to the need for special precautions or to the guidance contained in PPG 14.

41.4 In essence, the concern is that the Highways Agency now proposes to construct across this fragile terrain a heavy structure in the form of a dual carriageway road with deep and wide cuttings and massive embankments. The further concern is that investigations have been inadequate.

41.5 It is accepted that the immediate site investigations and explorations along the roadline have been properly and competently undertaken. However, the site lies within a major landslide complex which is part of extensive instability in the area. Local farmers report that in their fields humps and fissures appear, disappear and move around.

41.6 No evidence of adequate investigation of this wider area has been presented to the inquiries. Elucidation of the cambered and landslipped side of Stonebarrow between Bellair and Morcombelake would be difficult, but it is essential to do this. The existing trial boreholes and soil mechanics analysis are not capable of dealing with this problem.

41.7 There have, over the years, been roads on various alignments along the face of Stonebarrow. The surviving one (the A35 west of Morcombelake) is showing further signs of deterioration, despite extensive repairs, and is unlikely to last much longer if heavy traffic continues to increase in volume.

41.8 Adequate stability analyses of the landslide complexes are essential. These are necessary because engineering measures to stabilise the road would be ineffective if, as may well be happening, the whole slope is moving.

41.9 Without this wider investigation, costs are simply unknown and COBA analyses are largely meaningless. Huge additional costs could be incurred.

41.10 Whilst a proper and complete investigation would still be necessary, the problems outlined above could be mitigated by reducing the scale of the road.

41.11 With a single carriageway scheme, the existing road across Stonebarrow, Chardown and Ships Knapp could be upgraded, properly drained and supported without the need for extensive cuts and fills. A roundabout at the western end of the scheme would not be required. At Quarry Hill there would not be the need for a big cutting and the area of landslide could be largely avoided. All of this would allow the road to tiptoe across the fragile slopes with minimum disturbance.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

41.12 The Highways Agency acknowledges that the objections outlined above have been put forward by eminent and distinguished geologists and geomorphologists.

41.13 The Agency believes that those objectors do not dispute that its own senior adviser is equally eminent, distinguished and authoritative, with wide international experience of large scale project construction in regions and areas of substantial instability.

41.14 The Agency's confidence in the geological and geotechnical soundness of its proposals is reinforced by the fact that its consultants and advisers have successfully constructed contiguous schemes at the western and eastern ends of the proposed bypass. Ground conditions were similar. The geology of the proposed scheme is familiar territory and the engineering requirements are known.

41.15 Detailed site investigations have been undertaken. A nine volume site investigation report and a three volume interpretive report have been prepared as part of the design of the proposed bypass. The Highways Agency's own procedures encompass most of the guidance contained in PPG 14.

41.16 At the inquiries, much has been made of cambering. The Agency's advisers can find no evidence of cambering but are satisfied that even if there is cambering, this would not have a direct effect on the construction or integrity of the published route.

41.17 Expert objector witnesses have complimented the Agency's consultants and advisers on the investigations they have carried out along the route corridor, but have criticised the lack of wider and more extensive investigations of the hillside.

41.18 As the geology of the Dorset coastline is well known, special boreholes were not sunk to check the wider stratigraphy of Stonebarrow Hill. The route corridor is generally in excess of 500m from the top of Stonebarrow and some 250m horizontally from the likely outcrop of Jurassic/Cretaceous unconformity.

41.19 Whilst costly extra site investigations may have further elucidated the geology of Stonebarrow, this is not considered relevant or necessary to the construction of the proposed road. In essence, it is not essential to understand fully what processes occurred in parts of Stonebarrow several hundred metres from the route corridor during the Ice Age more than 10,000 years ago (the Pleistocene).

41.20 The engineering work has been carefully designed to take account of the geotechnical complexities of the area. Details are given in paragraph 8.16 et seq above. Construction work would be carefully monitored to ensure that any unexpected problems would be dealt with effectively as they arise.

41.21 The Agency does not consider that there is any additional or unknown risk to the landscape.

42. THE VILLAGE ECONOMIES

OBJECTION

Importance of Tourism

42.1 The economies of Morcombelake and Chideock are heavily dependent on tourism. Hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfast establishments, restaurants, shops, post offices, garages, petrol filling stations and other enterprises rely on the trade of tourists.

42.2 If the villages are bypassed, almost all passing trade would be lost. Because local residents are unable to generate sufficient trade to keep businesses profitable, the result would be the closure of many retail establishments. The petrol filling stations and the village post offices/shops would be especially vulnerable. This would cause a loss of amenity to residents and to visitors. It would also add to the economic depression of the area and cause an increase in the already high level of unemployment.

42.3 The effect of the published scheme on Morcombelake would be particularly severe. The omission of an exit for westbound traffic (other than by turning round and travelling eastwards) would result in few tourists visiting the village.

Moore's Bakery

42.4 Moore's Bakery, established in 1880, produces on site, and on a substantial scale, biscuits and speciality products. It supplies the retail trade over an extensive area.

42.5 The bakery has its own retail shop in Morcombelake which offers a wide range of comestibles of quality. These are orientated towards the tourist market. The bakery is included in the itinerary of many coach tours. It is the largest employer in the immediate area, having 20 full-time staff. It fits in well with the village community.

42.6 The loss of passing trade would be particularly severe. It is the view of the proprietors that this loss could mean that there was little advantage in retaining the bakery in Morcombelake, and a move to modern premises on an industrial estate could become an attractive option. The omission of a western exit from Morcombelake, referred to above, would mean that westbound coaches would need to turn round and travel eastwards, thus making a visit to the bakery inconvenient and troublesome.

Public Houses

42.7 Owners and tenants of public houses are concerned about the loss of passing trade.

42.8 Three public houses owned by J.C. and R.H. Palmer Ltd would be affected by the published route. Two of these, the George at Chideock and The Ship at Morcombelake, could, with adequate signing and accessibility, respond positively to the effect of the bypass. However, the third public house, the London Inn, Symondsbury, would be located at the end of a long section of no through road. Since this cul-de-sac would comprise predominantly residential housing there would be no amenity signing to direct customers to the premises.

42.9 If the London Inn is to remain viable, it is essential that it be made accessible to pedestrians from the southern part of the village which would be cut in two by the bypass, and to walkers using the network of footpaths in the area. The present proposals do not include this provision.

42.10 J.C. and R.H. Palmer seek a properly signed footpath link between the southern end of Footpaths Nos 7 and 10 and the western end of West Road, Symondsbury, by the London Inn.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

42.11 It is accepted that trade from through traffic could be affected by the bypass. However, with 90% of the traffic removed from the village centres, Morcombelake and Chideock would be more attractive, quieter, less polluted, and safer for pedestrians. Access and parking would be easier.

42.12 The Highways Agency believes that an increase of visitors resulting from the more attractive environment could replace any loss of passing trade. That view is supported by the District Council (vide paragraphs 36.9 et seq above).

42.13 More higher spending overnight visitors seem likely.

42.14 Application could be made for brown tourist signs to be placed on the trunk road.

42.15 Moore's Bakery. The bakery is well established on the tourist trail. Westbound tourists and tour operators may see the low volume of traffic in Morcombelake and the easier parking as more than adequate compensation for any requirement to turn round their vehicles after visiting the bakery.

42.16 The London Inn. The Highways Agency understands the desire of the owners of the London Inn to link Footpaths 7 and 10 with the western end of West Road, Symondsburry. A footpath could be provided within the boundary of the bypass. However, the adjacent landowners and nearby residents have indicated that they would object to the provision of such an access. The Agency's position is that if the published scheme goes ahead, it would consider the matter in more detail in consultation with the local authorities and all those concerned. In any case, footpaths to the south of the bypass would be connected with those to the north via a crossing at the Miles Cross roundabout.

43. PIECEMEAL APPROACH

OBJECTION

43.1 The proposed bypass is part of the much larger Folkestone to Honiton strategic route. It is a component of a South Coast Expressway being built by stealth.

43.2 Individual schemes should not be addressed in isolation. The whole route should be examined so that a comprehensive environmental and economic assessment could be made.

43.3 Indeed, the potential of the entire network of roads should be strategically assessed. The capacity of the A36/A37/A303 to take much of the traffic projected for the proposed Chideock Morcombelake Bypass would then become apparent. This would enable the A35 to be detrunked and for the road through Chideock and Morcombelake to become a scenic route.

43.4 Building new roads attracts yet more vehicles and is a self-defeating exercise. COBA is flawed because, inter alia, it fails to recognise this. The recent, but [at the time of the inquiries] unpublished, report of the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (SACTRA) supports the view that new roads generate traffic.

43.5 Individual schemes have a knock-on effect. Upgrading one section to a higher standard attracts traffic and gives rise to a perceived need to upgrade other sections.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

43.6 It is correct that the bypass would be part of the Folkestone to Honiton trunk road. This description arises from the method used to define the trunk road system. It does not imply that there is any great volume of traffic wishing to travel the entire route or that it would be the recommended route for anyone wishing to do so.

43.7 There is no plan for a South Coast Expressway. No stealth is being employed. It can be seen from the Trunk Roads in England 1994 Review that there is no such grand project.

43.8 The scheme before these inquiries is essentially to meet identified needs in the particular area.

43.9 The A35 is the only trunk road in Dorset. It has a dual role. It is a regionally important trunk road linking Dorset eastwards to southern England and westwards to the south west peninsula. It also acts as the main east/west distributor road for traffic within the county. It is for this second reason that there is no significant potential to divert traffic on to the A303.

43.10 As correctly stated by objectors, the recent SACTRA report has not at the time of the inquiries been published. It is, therefore, not before the inquiries. However, even if it is concluded by SACTRA that some schemes would generate traffic, the Agency believes that that would not apply to the proposed bypass.

44. REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

OBJECTION

44.1 New roads involve massive expenditure. The government has produced no evidence to support its contention that building roads assists economic growth.

44.2 The £20m which would be spent on the published scheme, together with the proposed expenditure on other schemes, should be reallocated to public transport and/or to other public services such as education and health.

44.3 Allocations are distorted because the COBA programme values time saving to users (including those engaged on recreational pursuits), whereas allocations to public transport do not take the time saving of users into account.

44.4 The sea change which has taken place in public concern about the road building programme, and its adverse effect on the environment and on people's lives, should be recognised.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

44.5 The objections raised essentially concern matters of government policy and the allocation of national resources. These are not subjects for the inquiries.

44.6 The bypass would greatly improve the environment of people living in Morcombelake and Chideock.

45. PREDICTED TRAFFIC GROWTH AND ACCIDENT RATES

OBJECTION

45.1 The Highways Agency's justification for a bypass, and certainly its justification for a dual carriageway road, is based on the forecast of traffic growth outlined in paragraphs 19.1 et seq above.

45.2 The predicted growth is unreliable and is challenged on the following grounds:

a. Predictions of present traffic flows made 5, 10, 15 and 20 years previously using NRTF data would have been proved to be inaccurate.

b. The Highways Agency has used 1991 actual traffic counts instead of 1993 counts to calculate design year flows. Because the growth between 1991 and 1993 was less than NRTF forecasts this has had the effect of inflating design year flows. Using outdated 1991 figures has resulted in a 6% over-estimate of design year traffic flows. If the 1993 figures were used then the maximum high growth design year flow predicted on the bypass (vide paragraph 19.5 above) would be reduced from 19,140 to 18,050 AADT.

c. The predicted design year flows do not reflect the disproportionately lower growth in holiday traffic compared with non-holiday traffic which has taken place over a prolonged period. This factor could account for an over-estimate of design year flows by 6.8%.

d. If the bypass was not built and traffic calming measures were introduced, traffic could be diverted from the A35 to the A303 trunk road.

e. Government policy is to reduce traffic growth by increasing the costs of motoring and by other means. Although [at the time of the inquiries] it has not yet been made public, the report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution is likely to support this policy and to make recommendations which seek further to limit traffic growth.

45.3 Without the inflated traffic growth figures used by the Highways Agency, there is no case for a bypass in such a sensitive area.

45.4 The Highways Agency's predicted accident rate for the published scheme of 0.10 PIA/mvkm assumes a level of safety enjoyed on motorways. This assumption is unreasonably optimistic. It fails, inter alia, to take account of the many departures from standard which have been authorised, the foggy and misty climate at Morcombelake, and the hilly nature of the terrain of the proposed bypass. In particular, it should be noted that the planned bypass gradients of 8% would compare with maximum gradients of 4% which are usual on motorways.

45.5 The optimistic accident rate predictions result in projected casualty savings which are greater than could reasonably be expected. These, in turn, inflate the claimed COBA net present value of the scheme.

THE HIGHWAY AGENCY'S RESPONSE

45.6 The Agency does not accept that the predicted design year flows are invalid. Historically, the predicted range shows a reasonable correlation with actual growth.

45.7 1991 actual traffic flows were used as a basis for the inquiries' design year traffic forecasts. It is accepted that because of lower than forecast growth between 1991 and 1993 the use of subsequently available actual 1993 flows would have given a lower design year flow. However, it is considered that because of the recession this was probably an atypical period and it would have been inappropriate at such a late stage to change the basis of traffic flow calculation.

45.8 It has been suggested that predicted design year traffic flows are inflated because the growth of holiday traffic is lower than for general traffic movements in the remainder of the year. The Agency believes this view to be invalid because data suggests that spring and autumn flows have been growing at a higher rate than the overall national road traffic forecast (NRTF).

45.9 Similarly, for the reasons explained in paragraph 16.3 above, it is not considered realistic to expect any significant transfer of traffic to the A303 or to other routes.

45.10 The Agency believes its predicted accident rate of 0.10 PIA/mvkm (vide paragraph 20.3 above) to be realistic.

45.11 All departures from departmental standards have been carefully assessed and approved and authorised.

45.12 All gradients would be within departmental standards. Those which were in excess of 4% would be signed. Drivers would be aware that they were driving in hilly country. The road would have adequate capacity and carry less traffic than motorways.

46. STANDARD OF CARRIAGEWAY

INTRODUCTION

46.1 In the following paragraphs, references to dual carriageways assume a D2AP (2 x 7.3m) standard. References to single carriageways assume a WS2 (10m) standard.

46.2 The factors favouring one or other standard, which are reviewed below, relate to the published route and to all the objectors' alternative routes outlined in Part VII of this report.

OBJECTION

General

46.3 The published route would be built to dual carriageway standard.

46.4 Such a standard is inappropriate and unnecessary. If a bypass is to be constructed it should be built to single carriageway standard.

Environmental Considerations

46.5 In reaching its decision concerning the standard of the road, the Highways Agency gave undue weight to the interests of road users, and took insufficient account of environmental considerations. No public consultation concerning the standard of the road was undertaken.

46.6 A single carriageway road would take less land, have a smaller impact on SSSIs, SNCIs, wildlife, and the landscape in general. Cuttings and structures would be smaller.

46.7 It would not be necessary to have a split level carriageway across the flank of the environmentally sensitive Stonebarrow Hill, to the west of Morcombelake. Furthermore, the illuminated roundabout at Newlands, which would be highly intrusive and be seen over a wide area, including the Marshwood Vale, would not be required.

Cost

46.8 A single carriageway scheme would cost less.

Geotechnical Considerations

46.9 The lower weight and smaller cuttings and structures of a single carriageway scheme would have less impact on the geologically fragile terrain. It would carry less risk of catastrophic failure or of high cost remedial work. The deletion from the scheme of the Newlands roundabout would avoid loading a major structure on to active mudslide lobes.

Pollution and Noise

46.10 A single carriageway would minimise the amount of pollution caused by traffic. Vehicles would flow more freely compared with the existing road, but at less speed than on a dual carriageway road. Less fuel would be used.

46.11 Noise would generally be reduced for residents, and for those enjoying the countryside, by some 1.5 dB(A).

Western Exit and Slip Roads

46.12 The requirement for a western exit at Morcombelake (vide paragraph 51.6 below) could be provided more easily and at less cost than would be the case with a dual carriageway scheme.

46.13 Slip roads would not be required. This would be particularly important in respect of the westbound slip road which would be located immediately to the north of the environmentally sensitive National Trust owned Langdon Hill. If built, the slip road would extend for 800m and be 6m wide with a 1m hard strip.

Consistency

46.14 The recently constructed A35 Charmouth Bypass to the west of the proposed published route, and the A35 Bridport Link Road to the east, are single carriageway roads.

46.15 Indeed, apart from one small planned scheme which is only at pre-public consultation stage, and a few short special overtaking stretches, there are no plans for any part of the A35 between Dorchester and Honiton to be dual carriageway, except the Chideock Morcombelake Bypass.

46.16 Thus, a single carriageway scheme would effectively allow continuation of a consistent standard between Dorchester and Honiton, and avoid the confusion of changing standards when joining the proposed bypass and when leaving it.

Cost Benefit Analysis

46.17 The COBA net present value calculated by the Highways Agency gives a higher net present value for the published scheme than for the alternative single carriageway routes.

46.18 That is in part because of higher speeds and, therefore, quicker journey times achieved on dual carriageway routes. However, the environmental advantages of travelling, say, 10 mph slower on single carriageway routes, outweigh the perceived time saving advantage, and should be taken into account.

46.19 A further reason for the published route's claimed superior COBA net present value relates to accident savings.

46.20 The COBA calculations for the published route and alternative routes assume:

- * single carriageway link only - 0.17 PIA/mvkm
- * dual carriageway link only - 0.10 PIA/mvkm

46.21 The validity of those accident rate assumptions is challenged.

46.22 It is first challenged because the dual carriageway (published route) accident rate of 0.10 PIA/mvkm assumes a motorway standard of safety. However, the published route's numerous departures from standard (vide paragraphs 17.22 and 45.4 above), the mixing of local and through traffic between Newlands and Chideock Hill, and such features as 8% gradients, make this rate unrealistic.

46.23 Secondly, the validity is further challenged because the COBA single carriageway accident rate of 0.17 PIA/mvkm applies to both 7.3m and 10m single carriageway roads. For the following reasons, this gives an unrealistically adverse outcome in respect of objectors' single carriageway (WS2) alternative routes:

a. For almost their entire lengths, the single carriageway objectors' routes (vide Part VII of this report) would have marked out climbing lanes, and this would allow standards of safety closely approaching those of dual carriageway roads.

b. A recent study of the safety performance of single carriageway roads commissioned by the Scottish Office (and led by a steering group which includes the Department of Transport) reached the broad conclusion that:

"the safety record of wide single carriageways is superior to 7.3m wide roads and is closer to that of dual carriageways, particularly if regular alternating opportunities are provided and if priorities are made clear".

c. A survey of all local highway authorities undertaken in 1993 by the County Surveyor's Society revealed that:

"..... despite the problems with accidents involving overtaking manoeuvres, wide single 2 lane carriageways have a good overall safety record with most having as good a record as an average dual carriageway".

Long Term Need for Dual Carriageway Standard

46.24 In its case for the published route, the Highways Agency supports the need for a dual carriageway bypass on the grounds, inter alia, that future upgrading of a single carriageway route would be damaging to a maturing and recovering landscape (vide paragraphs 17.17 et seq above).

46.25 However, the serious likelihood of any future need to upgrade a single carriageway route is questioned.

46.26 The grounds of objection outlined in paragraphs 45.2 et seq above, put forward the substantiated view that the Highways Agency's design year traffic forecasts are exaggerated.

46.27 However, even if, despite evidence to the contrary, the Highways Agency's forecasts are accepted, it is apparent that a WS2 standard bypass, running parallel to the existing detrunked A35 for most of its length, would provide adequate capacity for the foreseeable future. By a large margin, a single carriageway road would not require a departure from departmental standards (vide paragraph 4.3 of Departmental Standard TD 20/85).

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

General

46.28 A dual carriageway standard is proposed for the published route for the following three reasons:

- * it would provide the optimum economic return
- * it would provide the best operational conditions
- * it would avoid the need for future improvement

46.29 The evidence given by objectors in support of a single carriageway route does not undermine or contradict the validity of those vital factors.

Accident Rates

46.30 The conclusions of the study and the survey concerning the safety of single carriageway (WS2) roads (referred to in paragraph 46.23 above) are acknowledged. They are reproduced in more detail as Appendices 1 and 3 to Proof of Evidence PE 62(i).

46.31 However, the Agency is in no doubt that the proposed dual carriageway scheme would be significantly safer than a single carriageway scheme. It is reasonable to assume that the published route would have motorway personal injury accident rates because:

- * there would be slip roads and no intermediate junctions
- * a continuous safety fence would be provided along the central reserve
- * there would be no pedestrian crossing facilities
- * signs would be erected to warn of gradients exceeding 4%
- * all proposed departures from standard have been approved and authorised

46.32 Thus, the published route would contribute to the objectives of reducing accident rates and would also contribute to a substantial economic return.

46.33 In calculating accident rates for single carriageway routes the Agency has used current COBA data.

Journey Times

46.34 A dual carriageway would allow faster journey times than a single carriageway, and that is correctly reflected in the COBA economic analysis.

Countryside and Landscape

46.35 It is accepted that a dual carriageway scheme would have a greater impact on the countryside and landscape than a single carriageway scheme. However, taken overall the difference would not be substantial. The Agency is satisfied that with the mitigation measures proposed, a dual carriageway scheme could be assimilated successfully into the countryside.

Whitchurch Canonorum Footpath No 56

49.8 The Highways Agency has indicated that a stile would be provided on the northern boundary of the bypass to allow access on to the northern verge. A stile should similarly be provided on the southern boundary and there should be a gap in the central reserve safety fence. In this case, exceptionally, an at grade crossing would be acceptable to allow access to the existing A35 road which would be detrunked.

Chideock Footpaths Nos 28 and 29

49.9 The proposed diversion over Chideock Hill bridge would be unsatisfactory and unpleasant to use. An underpass should be provided which could also be used by Wanehouse Farm for agricultural purposes.

Chideock Footpath No 38

49.10 The proposed stopping-up and the extensive diversion along both sides of the trunk road and through the North Road underbridge is unacceptable. A footbridge over the road should be provided on the line of the footpath, or an underpass should be constructed a little further west.

49.11 The published proposals would make Footpath No 36 a cul-de-sac.

49.12 The proposed stopping-up of the section of Footpath No 38 north-west of Gate Coppice is opposed unless the footbridge or underpass referred to above is provided.

Chideock Footpaths Nos 8 and 9

49.13 The long diversions along both sides of the trunk road to the River Winniford underbridge would be unreasonable.

49.14 The only acceptable solution would be the provision of a footbridge at some point approximately mid-way between Footpaths Nos 8 and 9. This is a high priority requirement of both the Ramblers' Association and Chideock Parish Council.

Chideock Footpath No 7

49.15 The stopping up of this footpath should take place sufficiently further west to allow the diversion to take a more direct line to the stile at the eastern end of the diversion. If this is not done, walkers would not keep to the footpath but take a short-cut across the field.

Symondsburry Footpaths Nos 46, 47, 48 and 49

49.16 The effect of the published route on these footpaths must be considered together.

49.17 Footpaths 48 and 49 are, in effect, continuations of Footpaths 46 and 47, albeit with different numbers.

49.18 These four footpaths provide two through routes from the north to the coast (and vice versa) and are the only local footpaths between Symondsbury and the sea. To stop up Footpaths No 46 and 47 on the south side of the new highway without means to cross the proposed bypass to Footpaths Nos 48 and 49 respectively (or vice versa) would be unacceptable. An at grade crossing would be dangerous and a suitable footbridge in a position convenient for users of all four footpaths should be provided.

Construction Period

49.19 It is important that access to footpaths should be maintained during the construction period. New routes should be provided before paths are stopped-up.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

General

49.20 The Agency is satisfied that in all cases where rights of way would be stopped up, a reasonably convenient alternative route would be provided.

49.21 The Highways Agency does not have powers to meet the aspirations of the Ramblers' Association for a wider review of the footpath network. This is a matter for the County Council.

49.22 The published route would result in some adverse visual and aural impact on footpaths. However, in those locations in the vicinity of the existing A35, the new road would result in less impact. Much of the bypass would be in cutting and in all cases the impact of the route on footpaths would be minimised by mitigation measures. These measures would include the construction of mounds, ground shaping, and planting.

49.23 During the construction period every effort would be made to retain access to all footpaths.

49.24 A response to objections concerning individual footpaths is given below.

Whitchurch Canonorum Footpath No 56

49.25 No usage survey was conducted as it was considered that disruption caused by the bypass would be minimal.

49.26 It would not be appropriate for an at grade crossing to be provided, particularly as at this point the eastbound and westbound carriageways would be at different levels. Facilities would be provided for walkers to proceed in either direction on the north side of the eastbound carriageway.

Chideock Footpaths Nos 28 and 29

49.27 A 12 hour survey conducted on Tuesday 18 August 1992 showed eight people using Footpath No 28 and none using Footpath No 29.

49.28 The advice of the District Valuer is that an underpass for Wanehouse Farm could not be justified on agricultural grounds. Consequently, the opportunity to route the footpath diversions through such a structure does not exist. The proposed diversion is reasonably convenient.

Chideock Footpath No 38

49.29 A 12 hour survey conducted on Tuesday 18 August 1992 showed three people using this footpath.

49.30 Pedestrian counts and consultation with local people indicate that the footpath is primarily used as a circular walk, using Footpath No 36 as well. In these circumstances, it is not considered that a footbridge, costing some £300,000 and causing visual intrusion, could be justified.

49.31 The diversions would provide a circular walk with Footpath No 36 and North Road, a circular walk with Footpath No 38 and North Road, and a connection with the footpath network to the south of Morcombelake.

Chideock Footpaths Nos 8 and 9

49.32 A 12 hour survey conducted on Tuesday 18 August 1992 and an 11 hour survey on Saturday 29 August 1992 showed the following usage:

No 8	29 and 14 respectively
No 9	30 and 34 respectively

49.33 It is, therefore, accepted that these footpaths are well used. The diversions would involve walking an additional distance of 460m and 1,250m, respectively.

49.34 However, it is not considered that a footbridge, which would cost some £285,000, could be justified.

49.35 Furthermore, a footbridge would be overlooked from Quarry Hill, Eype Down, Langdon Hill and Hardown Hill. It would be seen as an additional structure in a rural context.

Chideock Footpath No 7

49.36 The diversionary line of Footpath No 7 follows the northern slopes of the extensive cutting along the northern side of the bypass across the southern slope of Quarry Hill. The cutting slope would be regraded to follow the existing hillside slope. The footpath would be diverted to avoid this regraded land.

Symondsburry Footpaths Nos 46, 47, 48 and 49

49.37 A survey conducted on Tuesday 18 August 1992 showed no one using Footpaths Nos 46 and 47. The same result was obtained from a survey conducted on an inclement Saturday morning 22 August 1992. No survey was made of Footpaths Nos 48 and 49.

49.38 In view of the usage and the reasonably convenient diversion proposed, the cost of a £270,000 footbridge could not be justified. A footbridge would have the disadvantage of appearing as an intrusive urban element within a rural context.

50. THE SECTION OF THE BYPASS WEST OF MORCOMBELAKE

OBJECTION

50.1 The proposed Newlands roundabout and the western section of the bypass between the roundabout and Morcombelake would be visually and aurally intrusive to many houses in Charmouth, Catherston Leweston, the Marshwood Vale and Morcombelake.

50.2 The intrusiveness would be exacerbated by the fact that the roundabout would be illuminated at night and 1.3km of the carriageway to the west of Morcombelake would be at split level. Affected residents at Charmouth and Morcombelake particularly object to the fact that they would suffer a linear view along the carriageway.

50.3 It would be entirely adequate to have an on-line improvement of the existing road between the eastern end of the Charmouth Bypass and Morcombelake.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

50.4 The Newlands roundabout would be necessary in order to indicate to drivers the change in road standard from the single carriageway of the Charmouth Bypass to the dual carriageway of the published route.

50.5 Lighting used on the roundabout would be of a kind developed for use in sensitive locations. As indicated in paragraph 8.1 above, four columns would be located around the periphery of the roundabout. The columns would be 14.5m high. Full cut-off high pressure sodium (white) Sistarlar Lanterns would be used. The lights would be shielded so that the cone of light would be directed downwards and the spillage minimised. The same lighting arrangements would be made at the Miles Cross roundabout at the eastern end of the scheme.

50.6 The carriageway between the Newlands roundabout and Morcombelake would be landscaped and planted, but it is accepted that some properties would have a linear view of the road, albeit in many cases a distant one.

50.7 It would not be practicable or adequate to seek to effect an on-line improvement to the existing road between the eastern end of the Charmouth Bypass and Morcombelake. As described in Part II of this report the road is sub-standard and inadequate.

50.8 Furthermore, it is visibly deteriorating despite extensive repairs. Expert geologists, giving evidence as objectors, state that the road is unlikely to last much longer if heavy traffic continues to increase in volume (vide paragraph 41.7 above).

51. THE MORCOMBELAKE SECTION OF THE BYPASS

OBJECTION

51.1 Because of its proximity to the village, the bypass to the south of Morcombelake would be exceptionally intrusive. The residents did not ask for the bypass, many do not want it and would suffer from it both during the period of construction and once it was opened.

51.2 The road would be a scar across the Morcombelake Bowl and would dominate and destroy the view across to Golden Cap. The high speed bypass traffic would cause an unreasonable increase in noise and pollution.

51.3 The bypass would be situated close to St Wites Well which plays an important part in local history and local worship. Noise would prove to be a serious problem. If, despite objections, the bypass was to be built, then measures to attenuate noise at the well are essential.

51.4 Morcombelake has a special micro-climate which gives rise to a high incidence of mist and fog. The proposal to put a dual carriageway road, carrying fast moving traffic, through such an area is dangerous and ill-conceived.

51.5 A diary maintained by a local resident records that, during the four year period 1989 to 1993 (inclusive, but less 1992), visibility was less than 100m on an annual average of 20 days, and less than 500m on 39 days. This high frequency of mist and fog is generally corroborated by local farmers and other residents.

51.6 The village would be left with no western exit, which would mean that residents and visitors wishing to travel westwards would first have to go east to Chideock Hill and then join the bypass route. Visiting vehicles, including coaches, coming from the east and wishing to proceed to the west, would have to turn around in the village, causing danger, pollution and confusion. Assurances by the local bus company that it would continue to serve Morcombelake could in the long term be overturned.

51.7 There is no need for a bypass of Morcombelake. There is no congestion except on a few Saturdays at the height of the holiday season. On-line improvements of the kind proposed by the National Trust (Objectors' Route No 5) would meet foreseeable requirements. A footbridge or underpass could be provided. Such improvements, combined with traffic calming measures, detrunking the road, making it a scenic route, and enforcing the speed limit by the use of cameras, would provide a safe and adequate road. This would be cheap and effective.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

51.8. It has been represented to the inquiries that the bypass of Morcombelake is generally not wanted. However, it is noted that at the public consultation, the Hardown Hill Society (representing some 120 people) gave, in its written response, high priority to the removal of traffic from the village (vide Deposit Document DD 15 (Appendix 4)).

51.9 Traffic growth could well cause those who feel there is at present no need for a bypass to change their minds.

51.10 For the majority of residents of Morcombelake, less noise would be experienced. The removal of traffic from the village and the free flowing nature of traffic on the bypass would greatly reduce vehicular pollution in the village.

51.11 A footbridge or pedestrian underpass would not solve the difficulties and danger of a trunk road passing through the village. It would be an urban structure requiring ramps and would not be used by the many pedestrians who prefer to cross roads at grade.

51.12 St Wites Well is affected by noise from the existing trunk road. If the published scheme was constructed, noise levels at the well would be likely to rise from 53dB(A) to 60dB(A).

51.13 The Agency considers that the most practical and effective way of reducing the impact of the bypass on the well would be to design mitigation measures in its immediate vicinity. The Agency has put forward ideas and would wish to discuss these with the National Trust and local bodies at the detailed design stage of the scheme. The measures could include landscaping and it is considered that considerable enhancement could be achieved.

51.14 The conclusion of the fog study undertaken by the Meteorological Office was that the published route in general would not be more fog prone than the existing route. To the south of Morcombelake, which is the area of most concern, it would be marginally less.

51.15 The Highways Agency is satisfied that in terms of fog effects, there is no reason why the published route should not be constructed. Traffic would be expected to adjust to a speed appropriate to conditions. Driving would be safer overall. Eastbound/westbound traffic would be separated by a central safety barrier. The existing problem, exacerbated at times of fog, of pedestrian and traffic conflict and of local traffic emerging from side roads with substandard visibility splays would be resolved.

51.16 The matter of fog was considered as part of the stage 1 road safety audit (Document DT 62). It was recommended therein that consideration be given to providing fog warning signs. The Agency has undertaken to consider this at the design stage of the scheme.

51.17 There is a clear need to bypass the village of Morcombelake and on-line solutions are not realistic. The Agency gives its detailed reasons in its response to Objectors' Route 5 (vide paragraphs 87.5 et seq).

51.18 The A35 is Dorset's only trunk road. Detrunking the road and seeking to divert traffic to the more northerly A303 through Somerset is not a practical idea. The A303 serves traffic along the London to Exeter corridor whereas the A35 through West Dorset predominantly serves traffic requiring to travel through the county. Extra distances would be involved increasing accidents, pollution and costs. Traffic calming measures which are appropriate to a village would not be appropriate on a road carrying through trunk road traffic.

52. IMPACT ON SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE

OBJECTION

General

52.1 The published route would cut Shedbush Lane, Morcombelake, in two, with the lane being bridged over the bypass. It is emphasised that Shedbush Lane is an integral part of Morcombelake, and the severance means that the published route is a bypass in name only.

52.2 Three properties in Shedbush Lane would be demolished.

52.3 The lane is a haven for wildlife, plants, flowers, birds, bats, badgers, deer and foxes to name but a few. The hedgerows are ancient, and there is reason to believe that they date from the Middle Ages, or even from the Iron Age.

52.4 Nine children live in the lane.

52.5 The threat of the published route is causing great distress to residents.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

52.6 The requirement for the bypass to go across Shedbush Lane is the result of the need to minimise intrusion into the National Trust Golden Cap Estate.

52.7 The bypass would be in cutting and Shedbush Lane would be bridged over at approximately ground level.

52.8 Two of the three houses which would be demolished are owned by the Highways Agency.

53. THE CHIDEOCK SECTION OF THE BYPASS

OBJECTION

General

53.1 Objection is made to the alignment of the published route around Chideock.

53.2 The area to the immediate north of the village is one of history, tranquillity and beauty.

53.3 It is here that the grade II listed Chideock Manor stands. The historic role of its Roman Catholic church adds to the Manor's importance and significance.

53.4 The countryside is unspoilt. It forms part of the protected Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. North of the sympathetically constructed properties of Winniford Close and St. Giles' Close there is no sign of modernity. Wildlife and ecology are largely undisturbed. The whole area has the very qualities which are appreciated by residents and visitors alike.

53.5 It is in this very countryside, with its AONB protection, that the Highways Agency seeks to construct a dual carriageway road on high embankment. As it crosses North Road the bypass would be on an 8.5m embankment. Over the River Winniford the embankment would be 11m high. The elevated road would be so close to the village that the noise of the high speed vehicles would disturb and dominate the life of the community.

53.6 This massive construction would be immediately to the south of Chideock Manor and immediately to the north of the properties on the northern edge of Chideock (including Winniford Close, St. Giles' Close and the grade II listed Gate Farm House).

53.7 The route would pass close by the site of Chideock Castle and actually cut across the archaeologically significant Chideock Deer Park. A religious service is held each year on the site of the castle, and noise from the bypass would make it impossible for this event to continue.

53.8 An important consideration is that the published route would not bypass the village but would sever it. This is the case because Chideock Manor and the hamlet of North Chideock, which are an essential part of the village, would be to the north of the bypass, with the village itself to the south. Thus, the scheme would not achieve one of the essential objectives of the trunk road programme. It would not bypass the village.

53.9 It is well understood by objectors that it is commendable to seek to remove traffic from the centre of the village. Furthermore, even though many who live on the main road knowingly chose to do so, it is clearly desirable to seek to relieve them of the noise and pollution of heavy traffic.

53.10 However, it is not reasonable to transfer the misery of the heavy traffic to those who chose to live on the peaceful northern outskirts of the village.

53.11 Various alternative routes are outlined in Part VII of this report. Those routes which truly bypass Chideock (including North Chideock) should be considered in place of the published route. Certainly, in the interests of residents, the environment, the countryside, ecology, history, and

tourism, the published route should not be constructed on its proposed alignment at Chideock.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

53.12 The gross inadequacy of the existing road leading into and through Chideock is clearly described in Part II of this report. The road is narrow, steep at either end of the village, dangerous, and quite unsuitable for current levels of traffic. The problems arising for those living in the village are graphically described by supporters in Part V of this report. With an increase in traffic, the position would deteriorate.

53.13 A route for the bypass to the north of Chideock was favoured by local residents at the time of the public consultation. Both the Landscape Advisory Committee and the Countryside Commission similarly believe that a northern route would be preferable to one to the south of the village.

53.14 The Highways Agency does not accept that North Chideock is part of the main village of Chideock. In any case both would be linked by the existing North Road which would remain at its present level and would run under the bypass.

53.15 It is accepted that the route would be on high embankment, close to the northern edge of the village, close to Gate Farm House and to Chideock Manor. It would require the demolition of The Lodge.

53.16 The height of the embankment is dictated by the size of the cutting through Chideock Hill and the need to keep the steepness of the route to the west of Chideock to an 8% gradient, in accordance with departmental standards.

53.17 The precise alignment of the route has been chosen to achieve a balance between competing interests and to minimise the impact of the bypass on the sensitive landscape and countryside, on the village, and on the listed and historic Chideock Manor and its associated church.

53.18 Extensive landscaping, mounding, ground shaping and planting would be undertaken to minimise and mitigate the impact of the bypass.

53.19 The Highways Agency is in no doubt that it has chosen the optimum alignment.

53.20 Objectors have put forward various alternative routes including several which would be to the north of North Chideock. These are described, examined, and responded to in Part VII of this report.

SECTION 2 - OBJECTIONS TO THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AND PROPERTY

54. INTRODUCTION

54.1 This section of the report summarises material objections in relation to specific land and property.

54.2 The National Trust objects to the proposed acquisition of land forming part of its Golden Cap Estate. However, because the objection of the Trust encompasses significantly wider issues than its own land and property, the submissions of the Trust have, for convenience, been comprehensively covered in Section 1 above.

54.3 Understandably, many of the concerns expressed by objectors to the compulsory purchase order are detailed matters relating to accommodation works and compensation. If the scheme should proceed, such issues are matters for discussion and negotiation. For that reason they are not reviewed in this report.

54.4 In considering the objections, those made in respect of predominantly agricultural holdings are taken first. They are followed by the remaining objections relating to mainly non-agricultural property and land.

54.5 Plans showing the main agricultural holdings are at Appendix J.

54.6 The outline descriptions of farms and holdings given below are provided by ADAS for the Highways Agency as part of the amended Deposit Document DD 9 Volume 2, Appendix 9. The reference number given in each description relates to the plans at Appendix J.

54.7 Land areas given are approximate.

54.8 Correspondence between objectors and the Highways Agency is contained in the files forming part of Document DT 159.

54.9 Material individual objections are now considered.

AGRICULTURAL PROPERTIES

55. MANOR FARM, CHARMOUTH. (OBJECTION NO 243)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

55.1 Reference No 1. A part owned, part tenanted holding of some 140 ha. Some cereal is grown but the land is mainly down to grass, some of which is let off. There is in addition a small suckler herd and other beef cattle. The owner also runs a holiday camp on 10.1 ha.

OBJECTION

55.2 The construction of the published scheme would result in the:

- * permanent loss of 4.03 ha of land (reduced to 3.43 ha by the proposed modifications to the CPO)
- * temporary loss of 7.95 ha of land
- * disruption and damage to the private water supply and field drainage system
- * need to replace existing accesses and farm track

55.3 The farm has already suffered loss of land as a result of the construction of the Charmouth Bypass. The further loss of land, which would occur if the compulsory purchase order for the published route was made, would affect the viability of the farm and its associated holiday business.

55.4 Experience in respect of the Charmouth Bypass leads to concern about the extreme tardiness of paying compensation, the crushing of drains, the inadequate restoration of land, and the interruption of access during construction.

55.5 The proposed modifications to the orders were introduced by the Highways Agency at short notice and gave inadequate time to respond.

55.6 The location of the proposed Newlands roundabout should be changed so that it would have less impact on the farm. The River Char should be straightened, as originally proposed.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

55.7 The loss of land would cause a reduction in income but the farm would remain viable.

55.8 Compensation is not a matter for these inquiries but the District Valuer understands the need for prompt negotiation and settlement.

55.9 Land, soils and drainage consultants would be used during construction to ensure that high standards and good practice were followed. Land drainage reconnections would be made after restoration of land in order to keep the system intact.

55.10 Access would be maintained during construction.

55.11 As a result of discussions, it is believed that the proposed modifications to the orders now meet the essential requirements of the objector.

55.12 Because of the existing river bridge and side roads, it would not be practicable to change the position of the proposed Newlands roundabout.

55.13 The National Rivers Authority is not agreeable to the straightening of the River Char.

56. VENN FARM, PILSDON - (OBJECTION NO 418)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

56.1 Reference No 2. This is a 91 ha farm of which 76 ha is owned and the remainder rented. Cows, beef cattle and sheep are kept.

OBJECTION

56.2 Objection is made to the loss of 1.02 ha of grassland from the 5.54 ha block of owned land, and the need to regrade 0.82 ha of land for return to agricultural use.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

56.3 The loss of land would result in a reduction of net farm income but would not affect the viability of the farm.

57. BERNSIDE, CHARMOUTH - (OBJECTION NO 21)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

57.1 Reference No 2A. A holding of 2.29 ha of grazing land.

OBJECTION

57.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 0.51 ha of land and to the temporary loss of 0.50 ha.

57.3 The published scheme would result in the loss of pasture land and the destruction of a 200 year old oak tree which is protected by a tree preservation order.

57.4 Three Dexter cows and a horse are kept. The loss of land would mean that only two of the three cows could be retained.

57.5 In order to reach the existing A35 and the bridleways on Stonebarrow it would be necessary when horse riding to cross the bypass. This would be dangerous and unpleasant.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

57.6 It is accepted that, unless replacement land could be found, the small herd of Dexter cows would have to be reduced from three to two.

57.7 The loss of trees, especially those covered by tree preservation orders, would be minimised. There would be extensive planting of replacement trees.

57.8 Access to Stonebarrow when horse-riding would be via the Newlands roundabout, using the cycle track which would be suitable for pedestrian and equine use.

58. BELLAIR FARM, CHARMOUTH - (OBJECTION NO 417)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

58.1 Reference No 3. Bellair Farm is a 6.47 ha smallholding, all down to grass and let between April and September.

OBJECTION

58.2 Objection is made to a further loss of land for road schemes. The modified CPO would result in the permanent loss of 0.68 ha of land and the temporary loss of 0.21 ha.

58.3 Previous road works for the Charmouth Bypass have caused settlement problems to the objector's bungalow. This would result in a poor purchase price if it was acquired by the Highways Agency under a blighting arrangement.

58.4 The objector should be allowed to build a residential bungalow with a bat roost in the general location where the Highways Agency proposes to build a replacement bat roost.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

58.5 Precautions would be taken to avoid any settlement problems arising in respect of the objector's bungalow.

58.6 It is understood that planning permission for a new residential bungalow in the area where the Agency proposes to build a replacement bat roost has been refused by the local planning authority.

59. BEFFERLANDS FARM, CHARMOUTH - (OBJECTION NO 33)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

59.1 Reference No 4. This owner-occupied farm extends to 43.7 ha of land all down to grass. The land is let to neighbours for hay and silage and grazing. The older farm buildings are let as craft workshops.

OBJECTION

59.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 3.62 ha of land, the temporary loss of 1.41 ha of land and the resultant reduction in income.

59.3 The route would have an adverse physical, operational and financial impact on the farm.

59.4 The effect on the sympathetically managed environment would be serious.

59.5 The loss of land would prevent development of a 60 cow dairy herd which is being considered.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

59.6 Most of the farm's land is let out to other farmers. As a result, much income is in the form of rent.

59.7 The loss of land would be a matter of compensation.

59.8 The landtake required for the scheme would not prevent the possibility of establishing the dairy herd envisaged by the objector.

60. BERNE MANOR FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 64)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

60.1 Reference No 5. This is a part owned and part tenanted farm of 74.87 ha. The farm rears beef cattle and has a small dairy herd, a suckler herd and a flock of sheep.

OBJECTION

60.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 3.54 ha of the owner's most productive land and the temporary loss and severance of other similarly high quality land.

60.3 The scheme would be intrusive and would exacerbate the landslipping which already occurs extensively in the area where the road would run across the farm.

60.4 The published route would endanger the farm's water supply.

60.5 The closure of Footpath No 56 and the severance of the rented National Trust land would have a seriously adverse effect on the operation of the farm.

60.6 Traditional methods of farming are used which are in sympathy with the environment. The scheme would adversely affect the carefully nurtured ecology of the farm.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

60.7 The scheme would improve rather than threaten land stability. The farm's water supply would not be endangered and would not be significantly affected.

60.8 It is accepted that access to rented National Trust land to the south of the bypass would have to be via the Newlands roundabout. This would be a matter for compensation. A stock handling unit south of the bypass would reduce the need for animal movement.

60.9 Mitigation measures would minimise visual intrusion. Noise should be no greater than from the existing A35.

61. GRAND VIEW FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 216)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

61.1 Reference No 6. An owner occupied farm of 28.32 ha, trading in cattle and horses. A riding school also operates from the site.

OBJECTION

61.2 The permanent loss of 2.36 ha of land and the demolition of a garage, 2 loose boxes and a stall would make the business unviable.

61.3 The view would be spoilt. There would be no room to replace the septic tank and the lost outbuildings.

61.4 The proposed access arrangements would be inadequate.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

61.5 It is not considered that the scheme would have a significantly adverse effect on the objector's business. Additional travel costs as a result of the new access would be a matter for compensation.

61.6 Tree and shrub planting would mitigate visual intrusion.

61.7 A new foul drainage treatment plant would be provided to the west of the existing one.

61.8 The objector would be compensated for loss of outbuildings and may be able to find alternative sites on his retained land.

62. LAND AT MORCOMBELAKE NORTH OF FULVENS HOME FARM
AND WEST OF TIZARDS KNAPP - (OBJECTION NO 419)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

62.1 Reference No 7. The holding consists of 6.47 ha of grass, cut for hay and let in the winter for sheep grazing. It has recently been designated as an SSSI.

OBJECTION

62.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 0.96 ha of land and the temporary loss of 1.29 ha.

62.3 The proposed track would cut the land in two, causing severance and leaving small pockets of ground which would be of little use. The track should be repositioned to run parallel to the bypass.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

62.4 The access track has been located as close to the southern boundary of the land as possible within the constraints imposed by the steep gradients.

62.5 Although the track would result in severance, the objector would be provided with access across the track so that he and/or his tenants could continue to farm the severed portions of land.

63. BARN CLOSE FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 34)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

63.1 Reference No 8. This owner occupied farm extends to 12.1 ha. It produces Jersey house cows and has a small number of sheep and suckler cows.

OBJECTION

63.2 The loss of over 3 ha of the best farm land including a hay field and all summer grazing would destroy the living made from the farm.

63.3 The two small areas of land which would be returned would be fairly useless unless they were collocated.

63.4 Concern is expressed about the use and maintenance of the access track.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

63.5 The land is required for essential landscaping purposes.

63.6 It would not be feasible to return any additional land.

63.7 The access could be used for any purpose commensurate with land use. It would be within the highway boundary and would be maintained at Highways Agency expense.

64. SHIP FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 223)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

64.1 Reference No 9. This farm consists of 4 ha of land which lies in three blocks. One block includes the house and farm buildings. The other two lie to the north of the existing A35. Additional land is rented and the business is centred around the production of pedigree Hereford bulls.

OBJECTION

64.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 0.32 ha of land, the temporary loss of 0.25 ha, and the demolition of farm buildings. The land would be taken from the block adjacent to the farm house.

64.3 Ship Farm is grade II listed and is of historic importance. The setting of the farm would be ruined by the published scheme.

64.4 Aural and visual intrusion would be extremely severe.

64.5 The vibration caused by earthworks could damage the fabric of the buildings. Construction work would interfere with the water table and cause landslips.

64.6 The loss of buildings and land under the terms of the compulsory purchase order would end farming for all practical purposes. During construction the amount of land available for farming would be negligible.

64.7 The well, which supplies household and farm needs, and the pond, which is ecologically important, would be lost.

64.8 The potential for diversification into the holiday trade would be lost as a result of the demolition of the brick built barn.

64.9 The Ship Knapp bridge would cause difficulties when horse riding from the farm. Concern is felt about the drainage of the bridge and the risk to the farm of flooding.

64.10 Different levels at the farm entrance would make access difficult for farm vehicles and animals.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

64.11 It is accepted that the setting of the farm house would be degraded, even though the bypass would be in cutting.

64.12 The centre line of the new road would be 48m from Ship Farmhouse compared to the 67m distance of present road.

64.13 During construction of the bypass the use of driven piles would be precluded and no vibration problems should arise.

64.14 The Ship Knapp bridge over the bypass would be approximately on the same level as the existing road. The bridge would have bridleway height parapets to make it safe for horse riding. Satisfactory access arrangements would be maintained during construction and subsequently. Drainage arrangements would also be satisfactory.

64.15 The scheme would take 0.32 ha of the farm permanently. The farm is already heavily dependent on off-land and it should be possible to continue farming although some changes to working methods would be required. Reduced traffic on the existing A35 would make access easier to the land at present farmed on the north side of the road.

64.16 An alternative water supply would be provided to replace the lost well.

64.17 Four outbuildings would be demolished. A new group of outbuildings would be provided on the retained part of the farmyard. Details have been discussed with the objectors.

65. FULVENS HOME FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 122)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

65.1 Reference No 10. This is a small holding of 1.49 ha. The owners keep rare breeds of poultry.

OBJECTION

65.2 The smallholding would be reduced to a house and garden with the bypass on a high and steep embankment immediately in front of the house.

65.3 At present, the farm has over 80 rare breeds of poultry and an abundance of wild plants (including more than 2000 orchids) and a great variety of wildlife. All of this would be lost.

65.4 The bypass would cause noise and pollution. With the embankment dominating the house, living there would be intolerable, and the house would be impossible to sell.

65.5 With the loss of such a high proportion of its land the smallholding could not continue in its unique rare breed role.

65.6 The threat of losing everything has caused untold pain and suffering over several years.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

65.7 It is accepted that the published route would have a severe impact on the house and smallholding.

65.8 The bypass would be on an 11m high embankment close to the house. The toe of the 1 in 3 embankment would be approximately 20m from the front of the house, to its south.

65.9 At present the holding has 1.49 ha of land. The permanent landtake would be 0.50 ha. A further 0.74 ha would be needed during construction and restoration, but this could be offered back, enabling the owners to continue keeping poultry.

65.10 During the construction and restoration period of up to three years the holding would be reduced to 0.25 ha of which 0.17 ha would be house and garden.

65.11 A temporary home could possibly be found for the poultry during the construction period.

65.12 The orchids are not a rare kind and are of limited ecological significance.

66. WANEHOUSE FARM, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 3)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

66.1 Reference No 11. This farm, which is part owned and part tenanted, extends to 55.9 ha. The objector farms 19.4 ha in his own right and 36.5 ha as tenant of the National Trust. The land is mainly used for grazing and providing straw for thatching.

OBJECTION

66.2 The published route would take some of the farm's most productive (grade 2) land, including part of an SSSI. The permanent loss would be 10.25 ha of land and the temporary loss would be 5.43 ha.

66.3 The loss and severance of land would make the farm unviable. Virtually all the land not acquired would be severed. An underpass should, at least, be provided.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

66.4 It is considered that the farm would remain viable.

66.5 The provision of an underpass has been considered, but this could not be justified on economic grounds. There are various options for allowing access to the severed land.

66.6 Higher operating costs as a result of the severance would be a matter for compensation.

66.7 Extensive mitigation measures would be taken.

67. ST GABRIELS, SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE
(OBJECTION NO 196)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

67.1 Reference No 12. The occupiers own a 2.55 ha field in addition to their house and large garden.

OBJECTION

67.2 The bypass would cause noise, pollution and visual intrusion.

67.3 The garage would be demolished, and a temporary road would be built through the garden involving the loss of a tree or trees.

67.4 About 1.62 ha of land would be taken and this would result in a loss of income from grazing and hay.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

67.5 The new road would be further away from the house than the existing A35. Except on the south side of the house, there would be less noise and pollution.

67.6 It is acknowledged that there would be disruption during construction.

67.7 The loss of the garage and of income would be a matter for compensation.

68. CHIDEOCK MANOR ESTATE, CHIDEOCK - (OBJECTION NO 35)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

68.1 Reference No 14. This is a large estate extending to some 445 ha of which 289 ha is farmed under contract.

OBJECTION

68.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 24.83 ha of land and the temporary loss of 17.53 ha.

68.3 Chideock Manor is a grade II listed building of special architectural and historical interest.

68.4 Adjacent to the Manor is the also listed Roman Catholic church. It was the first private Roman Catholic church to be constructed since the Reformation and was built on the site of an earlier chapel.

68.5 The proposed bypass is not needed and a much smaller scheme on a less damaging alignment should be considered. Because the scale of the road is unnecessarily large, the landtake from the estate is excessive.

68.6 The proposal would have an adverse impact on the unspoilt countryside which forms part of the estate.

68.7. The published route would cause unacceptable damage to Chideock Castle, to Chideock Manor and its church (including their setting), and to the immediate countryside and landscape.

68.8 The loss of part of Park Farm barn would make the building useless.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

68.9 A dual carriageway scheme is required for the reasons already outlined in this report (vide paragraph 46.28 above).

68.10 The Agency is satisfied that the optimum alignment has been chosen.

68.11 The setting of Chideock Manor and its adjacent church would not be affected by the published route.

68.12 The bypass would avoid Chideock Castle. There would be some loss of a section of a former boundary to the north of the castle. An archaeological record of the area would be made before any work commenced.

68.13 Detailed discussions have been held and progress made in seeking to meet the objector's wishes in respect of matters which would arise from the acquisition of areas of the estate's land.

69. HIGHER PYMORE FARM, PYMORE - (OBJECTION NO 383)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

69.1 Reference No 15. The land affected by the proposed scheme extends to some 13.07 ha lying some 3 miles from the farm. The land is mainly down to grass.

OBJECTION

69.2 The objection concerns the acquisition of land to the east of Quarr Lane and the effect of the bypass on the remaining land. There would be a permanent loss of 2.21 ha and a temporary loss of 2.71 ha.

69.3 Drainage and water supply would be severely affected and large areas would be inaccessible.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

69.4 If affected, land drains would be replaced and private water supplies reconnected. Field accesses would be reinstated.

70. HIGHWAY FARM, SYMONDSBURY - (OBJECTION NO 387)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

70.1 Reference No 16. A total of 38.85 ha of land is farmed, with additional rights of grazing on Eype Down.

OBJECTION

70.2 Approximately 2.24 ha of land would be acquired from the farm. This would include land in exchange for common land. Objection is made to this loss of land.

70.3 Furthermore, the exchange land would not compensate for the loss, on the existing common land, of wild cherry, holly and mountain ash trees.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

70.4 The small area of common land which would be acquired is essential to the scheme. The provision of land in exchange is statutorily required.

70.5 The exchange land has been taken from the extremity of the farm.

70.6 Local planting would include semi-natural vegetation with occasional wild cherry and holly.

71. SYMONDSBURY MANOR ESTATE, SYMONDSBURY (OBJECTION NOS 244/5)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

71.1 Reference 17/18. This is a part owned, part tenanted estate of some 198.3 ha of productive land. The main farm buildings are at Crepe Farm.

OBJECTION/REPRESENTATION

71.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 7.19 ha of land and the temporary loss of 12.08 ha.

71.3 The objectors are concerned about the extent and eventual ownership of land required for landscaping, the reshaping and methods to be adopted, and the facilities for horse riders at the Miles Cross roundabout.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

71.4 The Agency believes that it has been able to give assurances which generally meet the objections and representations which have been made.

71.5 The need and importance of achieving a high standard of land and soil restoration is fully recognised. Work would be supervised and undertaken in accordance with good practice.

71.6 A proposed modification to the compulsory purchase order would delete the spur area, part of plot 91c. Furthermore, a proposed modification to the side roads' order would meet the owners wishes in respect of plots 97 a and 97 b.

71.7 Dedicated joint facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians would be provided at the Miles Cross roundabout.

72. WATTON FARM, WATTON - (OBJECTION NO 424)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

72.1 Reference 19. The farm extends to 9.3 ha. All the farm land is down to grass.

OBJECTION

72.2 Objection is made to the permanent loss of 0.31 ha of land and the temporary loss of 3.14 ha.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

72.3 Owing to the line of the Bridport Link Road the land has no access to it and is uncultivated.

73. LAND OFF NEW STREET, BRIDPORT - (OBJECTION NO 627)

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

73.1 Reference No 20. This land consists of a field of some 1.82 ha purchased recently to establish a vineyard.

OBJECTION

73.2 The permanent loss of 0.13 ha and the temporary loss of 0.55 ha of land would threaten the position of the vines.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

73.3 The proposed modifications to the orders would allow the vines to remain unaffected.

NON-AGRICULTURAL PROPERTIES

74. DOLPHIN RIVER PARK, CHARMOUTH - (OBJECTION NO 410)

OBJECTION

74.1 Objection is made on the grounds that marginal adjustments to the scheme would make it possible for the necessary work to be undertaken without affecting the caravan park.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

74.2 About 100 sq metres of land is required for the realignment of Berne Lane. It is also necessary to have rights to cleanse, widen and deepen an existing ditch. As this is on the boundary of the park it may not be necessary to enter the property.

75. ROSE COTTAGE, SHIP KNAPP, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 137)

OBJECTION

75.1 The compulsory purchase of the vegetable garden, together with the increased noise and the visual intrusion would degrade the setting and amenity of the cottage.

75.2 The construction of the bridge and bypass could cause subsidence and affect the cottage and its summer house.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

75.3 It is accepted that the setting of the cottage would be degraded. Extensive mitigation measures would be taken.

75.4 In the light of ground investigations which have been undertaken, the Agency considers that there would be no risk of subsidence to the property as a result of construction work.

76. ST GABRIEL'S CLOSE, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 86)

OBJECTION

76.1 St Gabriel's Close is located off Shedbush Lane.

76.2 Four of the eight houses in the close are owned by the West Dorset Housing Association. The remainder are privately owned having been acquired under the right to buy scheme.

76.3 The published route would cause the loss of the car park for the eight houses and the loss of part of the rear gardens of Nos 5 to 8.

76.4 The Housing Association does not dispute the strategic importance of the bypass. However, on behalf of its tenants and in the interests of the owners of the other houses in the Close, it objects to the loss of the car park, the loss of gardens, the loss of visual amenity, and to the increased noise and pollution which would arise. A route which ran south of Shedbush Lane would avoid these problems.

76.5 However, if the scheme is to be constructed on the published alignment then it is considered that a higher retaining wall than that currently proposed should be constructed. This should be of sufficient height to avoid the loss of the car park and gardens. Replacement car parking space should be provided.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

76.6 Compensation would be paid for the St Gabriel's Close car park, enabling the Housing Association to provide alternative facilities.

76.7 Great efforts have been made to minimise the impact of the bypass in this sensitive location. A higher retaining wall would detract from these measures and would add to the visual intrusion. It would cost £108,000.

76.8 A route running south of Shedbush Lane would intrude further into the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate.

77. NO 2 BRADPOLES, SHEDBUSH LANE, MORCOMBELAKE (OBJECTION NO 137)

OBJECTION

77.1 The published route would result in the demolition of the property.

77.2 The owner is a widow who suffers from ill-health. The loss of the family home, upon which loving care has been lavished, would cause great distress.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

77.3 A key feature in designing the road has been to minimise the impact of the scheme on the countryside and on property. The published scheme offers the optimum route in this respect. The need to demolish any property is much regretted.

78. FRODSHAM MOTORS, MORCOMBELAKE - (OBJECTION NO 364)

OBJECTION

78.1 The garage and petrol filling station relies on passing trade. The business has been built up over a period of 20 years. It now employs 10 people.

78.2 The bypass and the proposed acquisition of land would lead to the eventual closure of the business.

78.3 It is not accepted that it would be necessary to take such a vast area of frontage from the garage. This would be particularly damaging to the business.

78.4 It would be helpful if the pasture land to the east of the garage could be sloped gradually.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

78.5 The effect of the bypass on local businesses has been covered in Part VI of this report (paragraphs 42.11 et seq).

78.6 The land in front of the garage is required for regrading work to tie-in with the levels of the diverted existing A35. Access to the garage would be provided both during and after construction.

78.7 The pasture land to the east of the garage is required for the construction of the diverted existing A35, which would be bridged over the bypass. It is unlikely that any of this land would be returned after construction.

79. THE LODGE, CHIDEOCK - (OBJECTION NO 246)

OBJECTION

79.1 The published route would require the demolition of The Lodge.

79.2 The Lodge is not an ordinary house. The original 18th century cottage, probably of three rooms on each floor, continued eastward as a cow shed or barn, with a lean-to on the north side. It is shown on a tithe map dated 1803 which was partly copied from a map of 1760. Late in the 19th century, the barn was demolished and a two storey extension of formal Victorian layout was built.

79.3 Over a period of years, minor alterations have been carried out internally and externally and the whole has become a fascinating collection of spaces, details, materials, surfaces, textures, nooks and crannies and colours, all incorporated with loving care.

79.4 In the garden is a gazebo or garden house. This was built in the mid-1930s and is listed. The Highways Agency has indicated its intention to demolish and relocate the building.

79.5 The Lodge is more than a house. It is the home of a widow who has lived there with her family since 1977. It is a home of treasured memories, of peace and tranquillity.

79.6 The owner of The Lodge believes that if a bypass is to be built, then routes to the north of North Chideock should be considered.

79.7 However, if the general alignment of the published route is to be adopted, then an alternative route through the wooded area of Chideock Manor, north of Yenhay Lane, is proposed. It would avoid the demolition of The Lodge. [NB The alternative route has been designated Objectors' Route No 9. It is examined, together with a counter-objection by the owner of Chideock Manor, in paragraphs 91.1 et seq of this report.]

79.8 It is understood that a single carriageway bypass on the alignment of the published route would allow the road to pass immediately in front of The Lodge rather than through it. This would have no merit and be of no advantage.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

79.9 The Agency would regret the demolition of The Lodge.

79.10 However, taking an overall view, and balancing all interests, it is considered that the published route represents the optimum alignment.

79.11 The Agency is satisfied that Objectors' Route No 9 would be more damaging than the published route. The reasons are explained in detail in the response to the route (vide paragraphs 91.6 et seq).

79.12 The Agency agrees (vide paragraph 79.8 above) that there would be no merit or advantage in building the bypass immediately in front of The Lodge.

80. WOODLANDS, WEST ROAD, BRIDPORT. - (OBJECTION NO. 130)

OBJECTION

80.1 The new side road connecting Miles Cross roundabout with the existing A35 would pass within a metre of the house. Living conditions would be intolerable with headlights, fumes, noise and vibration coming from both the side road and the bypass.

80.2 There would be no direct access to fields and footpaths to the north of the bypass, where horses and ponies are kept. Similarly, there would be no access to the public telephone and post box which are located near the London Inn.

80.3 Crossing the bypass by the Miles Cross roundabout would be dangerous and require an unreasonably long walk.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

80.4 There would be little heavy traffic on the side road linking the Miles Cross roundabout with the existing A35. In view of the proximity of the bypass to the house, double glazing would be offered. The Agency is willing to discuss additional tree planting.

80.5 Footpath diversions would be provided.

80.6 Crossing points for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders would be available at the Miles Cross roundabout.

81. DOLTON HOUSE, WEST ROAD, BRIDPORT - (OBJECTION NO 176)

OBJECTION

81.1 Because the new side road between the Miles Cross roundabout and the existing A35 would be so close to the house there would be a substantial loss of land for landscaping purposes. There would be a loss of parking at the top level of the garden and a loss of mature trees.

81.2 The road should be repositioned by approximately 3m.

81.3 Objection is made to plots 83 and 83A being designated as common land.

81.4 Plot 83 is part owned by Dolton House and part by Highway Farm.

81.5 The access track at the side of Dolton House (plot 83A) is part owned by Dolton House for approximately half its length and owned solely for the remainder of its length. Objection is made to this access being removed and replaced by a communal access.

81.6 The well in the garden provides an alternative source of water for the house.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

81.7 It would not be possible to relocate the new side road due to the position of the bypass being so close to it.

81.8 The ownership and description of plots 83 and 83A is based on written information provided by the previous owner. The Agency is satisfied that the common land is correctly described as such.

81.9 The parking area to the rear of Dolton House would remain, but some regrading of the access would be necessary.

81.10 The well would not be affected.

81.11 At the detailed design stage, discussions would be held with a view to minimising inconvenience and reducing the impact of the work.

PART VII - THE CASE FOR OBJECTORS' ALTERNATIVE ROUTES AND
THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY - MATERIAL POINTS

82. INTRODUCTION

82.1 Objectors have put forward a total of 24 alternative routes. They are numbered 1 - 24. There are three versions of Objectors' Route No 5, and two versions of Objectors' Route No 6.

82.2 All except three of the objectors' routes were advertised. The routes which were not advertised (Nos 19, 20 and 21) are essentially variations or combinations of routes which were advertised.

82.3 The route numbering system used at the inquiries and in this report is different to that used in the advertisements.

82.4 A plan and description of each alternative route is given at Appendix K.

82.5 Single carriageway alternative routes assume a 10m width (WS2 standard). Dual carriageway routes assume 2 x 7.3m carriageways (D2AP standard).

82.6 There are counter-objections to all alternative routes. All the routes would require the acquisition of land or property and be built through countryside. Counter-objection is made on those grounds. Where other or more detailed reasons have been given for counter-objection to specific routes, the reasons are outlined under the appropriate heading below.

82.7 This part of the report is essentially concerned with objectors' alternative routes. However, readers may wish to make comparison with the published route. For that purpose, and for convenience, economic, landtake, and accident saving data in respect of the published route have been extracted from paragraphs 20.7 - 22.1 of the report, and are given immediately below:

The Published Route

* COST	£20.8m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£5.5m (low growth) £17.3m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	83.2 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	386 (low growth) 449 (high growth)

82.8 Accident savings given above and below are those estimated to be made over a 30 year period. The accidents are those involving personal injuries.

82.9 As explained in more detail in paragraph 46.28 above, the Highways Agency considers that a dual carriageway scheme rather than a single carriageway scheme is necessary in order to:

- * provide the optimum economic return
- * provide the best operational conditions
- * avoid the need for future upgrading

82.10 That Highways Agency view applies to all single carriageway alternative routes and to avoid repetition is not reiterated under each heading.

83. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 1

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

83.1 This dual carriageway tunnel route would have the following advantages over the published route. It would:

- * be more fuel efficient
- * allow retention of the existing A35 throughout as a local road
- * be sheltered from wind and avoid mist and fog
- * be safer and less noisy by avoiding steep gradients
- * avoid the published route's severe visual and aural intrusion on Morcombelake and Chideock
- * have less adverse impact on the environment and on the sensitive landscape
- * avoid the demolition of property

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

83.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

*	COST	£56.1m
*	COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£15.2m (low growth) -£3.2m (high growth)
*	PERMANENT LANDTAKE	47 ha
*	ACCIDENT SAVINGS	335 (low growth) 388 (high growth)

83.3 Thus, the route would cost more than twice and approaching three times that of the published scheme. It would offer an inferior and negative COBA net present value. It would have similar accident savings and a lower landtake.

83.4 It would avoid impact on the ecology and on the landscape in some sensitive areas e.g. Moor Meadow and the Morcombelake Bowl. However, there would be other areas where the impact caused by the objectors' route would be greater than the published route e.g. the Morcombelake SSSI. Agricultural impacts would be less.

83.5 The cost and the lack of value for money mean that it is highly unlikely that the route would ever find a place in the trunk roads' programme.

84. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 2

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

84.1 This dual carriageway route would have the following advantages over the published scheme. It would:

- * be a genuine bypass of Morcombelake and Chideock and remove the visual and aural impact of the bypass from the villages
- * be safer and less noisy by avoiding steep gradients
- * be more fuel efficient
- * be less environmentally damaging
- * allow retention of the existing A35 throughout as a local road
- * avoid the demolition of property

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

84.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£22.1m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£1.7m (low growth) £12.1m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	91 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	372 (low growth) 432 (high growth)

84.3 Thus, the route would cost more and have a lower net present value than the published route. It would have a greater permanent landtake and save less accidents.

84.4 In order to ensure that gradients did not exceed 4% (as stipulated by the proposer) there would be many large embankments and cuttings.

84.5 The route would have a substantial impact on the Marshwood Vale and on its villages, hamlets and landscape. It would be more damaging to agriculture, but less damaging to known SSSIs.

84.6 It would be more difficult to assimilate into the countryside.

84.7 The overall balance lies clearly in favour of the published route.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

84.8 The South Dorset Friends of the Earth consider that the Marshwood Vale is probably unique in the region with a landscape comprising a patchwork of small fields which has remained virtually unchanged for decades. There should be no question of any alternative route to the north of Morcombelake. Whether through the vale or elsewhere, the need for a dual carriageway is especially questionable both on the grounds of traffic growth and the effect on the landscape.

84.9 The Marshwood Vale Society counter-objects to the route. Marshwood Vale is in the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is unique. It is far removed from any trunk road corridor and it would be quite wrong to introduce a trunk road into this unspoilt landscape. Any major road through the vale would be exceptionally damaging, and would cause noise and pollution in this quiet and tranquil area.

85. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 3

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

85.1 This dual carriageway route would have the following advantages over the published scheme. It would:

- * be well away from the built-up areas of Morcombelake and Chideock
- * be a relatively level route requiring less earthworks and being more suitable for HGVs
- * traverse less environmentally fragile landscape and, by the use of cuttings, avoid major impact on the Marshwood Vale
- * avoid the Winniford Valley
- * enable HGVs to avoid the North Allington area of Bridport
- * provide a new alignment for the A35 which is capable of being extended eastwards from Bridport without the need for extensive demolition of properties

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

85.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£27.1m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£12.9m (low growth) -£5.5m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	Not assessed
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	335 (low growth) 388 (high growth)

85.3 The route is uneconomic and it is highly unlikely that it would secure a place in the trunk roads' programme.

85.4 The route would pass through open countryside in landscape previously untouched by such development. Traffic would not be attracted to this long diversion and would, therefore, provide little, if any, relief to the villages of Morcombelake and Chideock.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

85.5 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 2.

86. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 4

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

86.1 This tunnel route is put forward by the National Trust. It would avoid the Trust's Golden Cap Estate. Being single carriageway, it would be generally less intrusive.

86.2 The route would provide a tunnel under Hardown Hill which would connect with new single carriageway roads to the west and east of Morcombelake.

86.3 The route is feasible. It would enable a bypass to be built which would gain a large measure of public acceptance.

86.4 The route would protect the local environment, ecology and landscape.

86.5 It would be more expensive than the published route but, in view of its benefits, not unreasonably so.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

86.6 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£29.0m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£3.6m (low growth) £4.6m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	37.6 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	298 (low growth) 379 (high growth)

86.7 From the above it can be seen that the alternative route costs substantially more than the published route but achieves a lower net present value. At low growth there would be a negative net present value.

86.8 The published scheme gives a far better estimated saving in accidents.

86.9 It is accepted that the alternative route would relieve Morcombelake of its traffic problems and avoid intrusion into the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate.

86.10 It would avoid the SSSI area known as Moor Meadow. The route would, however, have a greater impact on the Morcombelake SSSI. It would have a similar effect on two SNCIs to the west of Morcombelake but take marginally less SNCI land.

86.11 The route would have significantly less effect on agriculture.

86.12 The cost and net present value of the route make it unlikely that it would find a place in the trunk roads' programme.

87. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 5

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

87.1 This alternative single carriageway route (in three versions) is put forward by the National Trust.

87.2 Except through Morcombelake, where it would be on-line, the route would be similar to Objectors' Route No 4. It would avoid the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate.

87.3 Through Morcombelake, the route would make improvements to side roads and accesses, provide right hand turning facilities, and offer pedestrian crossing facilities.

87.4 With extensive improvements to the road through Morcombelake and the enforcement of the speed limit, the road would be adequate and safe for the foreseeable future.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

87.5 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£19.4m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£0.5m (low growth) £7.6m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	42.4 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	234 (low growth) 271 (high growth)

(The above data relates to version A. Versions B and C would cost £1.1m and £2m less than version A respectively. The net present values, the permanent landtake and the accident savings are similar for all versions)

87.6 Being a single carriageway scheme and part on-line, the route would be cheaper than the the published route. The net present value would be inferior.

87.7 Accident savings would be substantially lower than for the published route.

87.8 West of Morcombelake the alignment would be unsatisfactory. Furthermore, all the existing agricultural and residential accesses on to the trunk road would remain.

87.9 The route would retain the unsatisfactory and dangerous situation in Morcombelake where trunk road traffic, local traffic, parked cars and pedestrians all mix. Most of the existing 27 side roads and accesses, many of which have grossly substandard visibility, would remain. With increasing flows of traffic the situation would deteriorate. Details of the side road visibility splays are given in paragraphs 4.4 - 4.19 above.

87.10 Attempts to reduce the danger of inadequate side road visibility would require the closure or diversion of side roads. Depending on the version of this route, up to 12 properties (including Frodsham Motors) would be demolished.

87.11 The route would not bypass Morcombelake and would not meet the bypass requirements of the trunk roads' programme.

88. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 6

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

88.1 This dual carriageway route is put forward on behalf of some 60 individual objectors who support the bypass proposals in respect of Morcombelake but wish to see a western exit for the village.

88.2 The published proposals would, unreasonably, not provide such an exit.

88.3 The requirement for an exit is explained in paragraph 51.6 of this report.

88.4 This route here being proposed (of which there are two versions) would meet the requirement.

88.5 It would thus overcome an intensely unpopular feature of the published scheme. It would have the added advantages of:

- a. not requiring the construction of the proposed eastbound and westbound slip roads; and
- b. keeping local and through traffic separate for the full length of the scheme.

88.6 The deletion of the westbound slip road would have the effect of reducing the impact of the scheme on the sensitive landscape north of Langdon Hill.

88.7 The separation of local and through traffic would reduce the level of traffic on the bypass and possibly allow the scheme to be constructed to single carriageway standard.

88.8 Thus, compared with the published route, and in contrast to it, the alternative route would:

- * separate local and trunk road traffic
- * reduce transport costs for local traffic
- * encourage tourism by offering an alternative to the bunded and screened bypass
- * assist the local economy

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

88.9 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£22.1m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£4.4m (low growth) £16.0m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	similar to published route
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	383 (low growth) 445 (high growth)

(The above data is in respect of version 6A. That for version 6B is similar except that 6B would take an additional hectare of National Trust inalienable land)

88.10 As indicated above, this route would not require either the eastbound egress slip road or the westbound access slip road which form part of the published scheme. It would allow a narrower cutting at Chideock Hill (by 20m maximum) together with shorter overbridges at Chideock Hill (by 16m) and Shedbush Lane (by 5m).

88.11 West of Morcombelake, the route would require the construction of an additional bridge over the bypass and a connecting road to the severed section of the existing A35.

88.12 The bridge and the connecting road, and its retaining wall, would have an intrusive impact on the landscape. Slightly more land would be taken from the Morcombelake SSSI.

88.13 The Highways Agency accepts that it would be an ideal traffic solution if an access could be provided to the west of Morcombelake, thus enabling a continuous local road between Miles Cross and Newlands. However Objectors' Routes 6A and 6B would cost more than the published route. They would have inferior economic performance and have slightly increased impacts on the ecology and landscape.

89. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 7

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

89.1 Eventually a new section of road will be required from the eastern end of Bridport to Askerswell. Therefore, the published route should be moved inland and extend from the eastern end of the Axminster Bypass to Askerswell.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

89.2 The cost of this single carriageway alternative route would be in the region of £50m.

89.3 As the route is so far from the location of the published scheme, no detailed analysis has been undertaken.

89.4 The road would pass through areas of landscape and agriculture previously untouched by development.

89.5 It is estimated that in the design year the road would have a traffic flow of between 6,090 and 7,280 AADT.

89.6 The high cost and low usage would not make this scheme viable.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

89.7 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 2.

90. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 8

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

90.1 The published route would do irreparable damage to an area which has unique historical and landscape qualities. Insufficient investigation has been made of more northerly alignments.

90.2 It is accepted that this single carriageway alternative route would have an impact on the beautiful and tranquil Upper Winniford Valley. However, in terms of the level of public use and enjoyment, and the value to tourism, there is no comparison between that stretch of the countryside and that of the lower valley.

90.3 Mitigation measures could reduce the impact of the route.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

90.4 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£19.4m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£4.1m (low growth) £2.2m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	79 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	265 (low growth) 304 (high growth)

90.5 The route deviates from an existing road corridor, with its associated modern development, and would cut across unspoilt, rural countryside that is a fine example of traditional English lowland landscape. The route would bring traffic into an hitherto tranquil area and would be more visible for greater lengths from surrounding high ground than the published route. It would have an impact on National Trust properties.

90.6 The only benefit would be that the route would be moved further away from the main settlements being bypassed.

90.7 The route would cost less than the published route, but have lower economic benefits. It is highly unlikely to find a place in the trunk roads' programme.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

90.8 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 2.

91. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 9

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

91.1 Paragraphs 79.1 et seq above explain that:

- a. the published scheme would require the demolition of The Lodge, Chideock, and its listed garden house;
- b. The Lodge is an exceptional house and should not be demolished;
- c. Objectors' Route No 9 would allow the house to remain.

91.2 This alternative dual carriageway route would have other compelling advantages over the published route. In particular, the route would:

- a. be further away from the northern outskirts of the village of Chideock, especially the listed Gate Farm House, St. Giles' Close, and Winniford Close;
- b. largely avoid Gate Coppice;
- c. not destroy the bat roost in the roof of The Lodge;
- d. be acceptable to the owner/occupier of The Lodge and meet the wishes of the many hundreds of people from home and abroad who wish to see the property saved.

91.3 The route would be close to The Lodge. That is a matter for regret. However, it would be at the back of the house, on its blind side. The noise level of 67 dB(A) would also be regrettable but not so great as to make the property uninhabitable. Indeed, the noise level would be below the level at which the house would qualify for an insulation grant.

91.4 The route would go through a wooded area to the south of Chideock Manor. The wooded area which would be lost is of low quality, largely consisting of mature or over-mature trees with a limited life. There would remain ample shrubs and trees to provide screening between the bypass and the Manor.

91.5 Contrary to the submission of the owner of the Manor, the route would not have any significant effect on the setting of the property. To the extent that it may have some effect, this, when balanced against the penalties and the disadvantages of the published route, should be accepted.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

91.6 The cost, net present value, the landtake, and the accident savings would be similar to those of the published route.

91.7 The alignment of the route would be approximately 97m north of the published route. The nearest edge of the eastbound carriageway would be 136m from the southern wall of the Manor.

91.8 The distance between the nearest (westbound) carriageway and the northern wall of The Lodge would be 48m. The distance between the toe of the embankment and the wall would be approximately 15m.

91.9 By the design year (2013) the noise level at The Lodge would be 19 dB(A) above its present level of 48 dB(A).

91.10 Gate Farm House and properties in Winniford Close and St Giles' Close would receive a noise level of 3 - 5 dB(A) lower from the alternative route than from the published route.

91.11 Only serotine bats were identified as roosting in The Lodge. This is a relatively common species of bat in Dorset. Furthermore, the roost appears to support only a small number of bats.

91.12 The loss of the roost would be unlikely to have any effect on the long term survival of the local bat population. That assessment is agreed by the Dorset Bat Group and English Nature.

91.13 English Nature do not object to the section of the published route which would demolish The Lodge.

91.14 The combination of the Manor and its garden, with the church, grounds and woodland belt, provides an integrated and self-contained landscape unit.

91.15 Thus, the woodland boundary of the Manor is an essential part of the main park and gardens. It forms a strong framework for the informal parkland. The large mature oaks could be reasonably expected to survive for another 50 years, to be replaced by younger trees growing amongst them.

91.16 The loss of the woodland would mean that viewed from the south, vehicles on the bypass would be silhouetted

91.17 The Listed Buildings Officer and the Countryside Officer of West Dorset District Council assess the impact of the alternative route on the Manor as follows:

The integrity of this relationship [between the setting and the listed buildings] would be seriously damaged, as the road would be highly visible from the Manor and, equally, the Manor from the road. We believe that the alternative proposal is very damaging in both landscape terms and architecturally to the setting and character of Chideock Manor. We would not support it as an alternative to the published route.

91.18 The essential issue is which is more important: the preservation of The Lodge and its garden house or the setting of the grade II listed Chideock Manor and its historic Roman Catholic church. Guided by independent landscape advice which is endorsed by the local planning authority, the Agency concludes that the published route which would require the demolition of The Lodge is preferable to the alternative route.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

91.19 Objectors' Route No 9 should be rejected for the reasons given above in the Highways Agency's response.

91.20 In assessing competing routes, greater weight should be given to the historic and grade II listed Chideock Manor and its church than to The Lodge which itself is unlisted. Indeed section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 requires that special regard be paid to listed buildings.

91.21 Sympathy must be felt with anyone whose house is to be demolished. However, the present owner's occupation of The Lodge must eventually terminate. Whatever the time scale, her occupation will never be more than transitory, and this has to be compared to the enduring effect of the objectors' route on the setting of the historic Chideock Manor and church. If the alternative route was adopted and constructed, it may well be that potential successors to the present owner of The Lodge would be unwilling to live so close to the bypass.

92. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO. 10

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

92.1 No bypass of Morcombelake is required. All that is necessary is a single carriageway bypass of Chideock.

92.2 Because of the need for a Chideock Bypass to tie in with the existing road to Morcombelake, the bypass should be to the south of Chideock. Such a bypass need not cut off Chideock from the sea.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

92.3 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

*	COST	£5.9m
*	COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£0.7m (low growth) £3.7m (high growth)
*	PERMANENT LANDTAKE	not assessed
*	ACCIDENT SAVINGS	79 (low growth) 94 (high growth)

92.4 The Highways Agency has already made it clear that a scheme which would bypass both Morcombelake and Chideock is required.

92.5 Virtually the whole length of the existing A35 between Newlands and Miles Cross is substandard and inadequate. It is for this reason that a new road is required for the entire length.

92.6 A route to the south of Chideock would have a greater impact on the landscape than the published scheme. It would be contrary to the wishes of the vast majority of local residents.

93. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 11

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

93.1 This alternative dual carriageway tunnel route would overcome the unacceptable cul-de-sac feature of the published route.

93.2 It would also greatly reduce the environmental damage between Langdon Hill and Ship Knapp. Indeed, it would leave the Ship Knapp area almost undamaged.

93.3 It would allow the intrusive slip road at Chideock Hill to be deleted from the published scheme.

93.4 Local traffic would be separated from trunk road traffic for the entire length of the bypass.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

93.5 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£29.2m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£0.8m (low growth) £12.4m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	not assessed but lower than for the published route
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	383 (low growth) 445 (high growth)

93.6 With a substantially higher cost than the published route and a lower net present value, the alternative route could not be justified and would be unlikely to find a place in the trunk roads' programme.

94. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 12

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

94.1 Around the north of Chideock the published route would cross North Road and the River Winniford on high embankment. It would cause visual intrusion and its noise would carry over a wide area.

94.2 This alternative dual carriageway route would lower the vertical alignment to the north and to the immediate east of Chideock by 4.5m. This would substantially reduce the impact of the bypass.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

94.3 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£22.7m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£4.3m (low growth) £16.1m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	86.1 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	386 (low growth) 449 (high growth)

94.4 The route would cross North Road and the River Winniford on an approximately 4.0m and 6.5m high embankment, respectively. This is 4.5m lower than the height proposed for the published route.

94.5 The alternative route would:

- * cost more and have a lower net present value
- * result in a surplus of about 600,000 cu metres of material needing to be taken off site
- * require a minor diversion of North Road
- * require retaining walls, but generally have a similar impact as the published scheme
- * not reduce the visual impact of the road in high level views along its length

94.6 For the above reasons, the Highways Agency does not favour the alternative route.

95. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 13

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

95.1 There is no need for the published route. Its impact on the environment would be out of all proportion to the supposed benefits.

95.2 An alternative, single carriageway route is proposed instead.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

95.3 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£14.0m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£2.0m (low growth) £2.5m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	49.9 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	213 (low growth) 245 (high growth)

95.4 The route would not bypass Morcombelake, and would run to the south of Chideock. The Highways Agency does not favour those features for the reasons explained in response to Objectors' Routes Nos 5 and 10.

96. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 14

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

96.1 This dual carriageway tunnel route would avoid Morcombelake becoming a cul-de-sac and allow easy access from the village to the west. It would have less impact on the landscape. In addition, it would separate local and through traffic for the entire length of the road.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

96.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£26.4m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£2.4m (low growth) £14.0m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	86.3 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	383 (low growth) 449 (high growth)

96.3 The road would increase the width of the highway corridor between the Newlands roundabout and Morcombelake and generally have a greater visual impact than the published route.

96.4 The Highways Agency could not realistically adopt this route. The additional cost of the scheme would far outweigh the benefits of providing a through route for local and visiting traffic.

97. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 15

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

97.1 This single carriageway alternative route would have significant advantages over the published scheme. It would:

- * take less land
- * provide a western exit for Morcombelake
- * allow businesses in Morcombelake to remain viable
- * avoid Shedbush Lane and the St Gabriel's Close car park

- * avoid the demolition of The Lodge and the degradation of Chideock Manor, Chideock Castle, and the environmentally sensitive area north of Chideock

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

97.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

*	COST	£22.06m
*	COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£2.0m (low growth) £5.5m (high growth)
*	PERMANENT LANDTAKE	74.4 ha
*	ACCIDENT SAVINGS	271 (low growth) 315 (high growth)

97.3 Although the route would take traffic further away from Morcombelake, it would encroach further into the National Trust Golden Cap Estate. It would avoid Moor Meadow.

97.4 The route would require the demolition of Fulvens Home Farmhouse (to the west of Morcombelake) but avoid demolishing property in Shedbush Lane.

97.5 It would run to the south of Chideock. The Highways Agency has explained in response to Objectors' Route No 10 why it does not support such an alignment.

97.6 In summary, the route would cost more, have a lower net present value, and not be satisfactory in terms of alignment, standard and the effect on the landscape.

98. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 16

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

98.1 Objectors' Route 16 would provide a single carriageway bypass on the precise alignment of the published route.

98.2 With the exception of the standard of the road, the route would meet the requirements of the Highways Agency.

98.3 The case for a single carriageway road is outlined in paragraphs 46.3 et seq above.

98.4 The standard of the route would have adequate capacity and not require a departure from departmental standards (vide paragraph 4.3 of Departmental Standard TD 20/85).

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

98.5 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£16.68m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£3.3m (low growth) £11.4m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	76.0 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	264 (low growth) 307 (high growth)

98.6 For this route, there are various options for the provision of junctions. In this response, the assumption is made that there would be a roundabout at Miles Cross but not at Newlands, and there would be a major/minor priority junction providing a western exit to the west of Morcombelake.

98.7 It is accepted that the upgrading of the present Newlands junction to a roundabout junction would not be considered necessary for a single carriageway scheme. However, accident rates associated with roundabouts are generally less than with the existing type of Newlands junction.

98.8 The omission of a roundabout at Newlands would considerably reduce the earthworks required and significantly reduce the impact of the scheme.

98.9 The extent of cuttings across the slopes of Stonebarrow Hill would be greatly reduced.

98.10 The route would require the demolition of Fulvens Home Farmhouse to the west of Morcombelake, but require the demolition of only one property at Shedbush Lane. This would compare with the published route not requiring the demolition of Fulvens Home Farmhouse, but requiring the demolition of three properties in Shedbush Lane, two of which are owned by the Agency. The route would possibly allow Ship Farm to retain two additional outbuildings.

98.11 The slip road to the west of Morcombelake and the intrusive slip road at Chideock Hill would not be required. The bridges at Ship Knapp, Shedbush Lane and Chideock Hill could be shorter. Cuttings would be narrower.

98.12 The split level carriageway across Stonebarrow to the west of Morcombelake would not be required.

98.13 The height of the embankment to the north of Chideock could be reduced by 1.5m.

98.14 Less land would be taken from the Moor Meadow SSSI (0.89 ha compared with 1.7 ha) but the effect on the hydrology of the meadow would be almost the same. More land (2.18 ha compared with 2.14 ha) would be taken from the Morcombelake SSSI.

98.15 Marginally less land would be taken from the SNCIs. Newfoundland Coppice and Gate Coppice would be less affected.

98.16 There would be other minor losses and gains but overall the ecological impact of the alternative route and the published route would be similar.

98.17 From Langdon Hill and Chardown Hill the route would be less intrusive. From Golden Cap the intrusiveness would be similar.

98.18 The omission of the Chideock Hill slip road together with the shorter bridges and the reduced width of carriageway would mean that the route would be significantly less intrusive than the published scheme. This would be particularly apparent in views along its length from National Trust properties and public rights of way on Langdon Hill and Chardown Hill.

98.19 The alternative route would remove slightly less existing vegetation. However, it would still be a locally dominant feature south of Morcombelake.

98.20 The Quarry Hill cuttings would be less intrusive in views from the Heritage Coast.

98.21 A dual carriageway would have a greater impact on the area of outstanding natural beauty, but both would be intrusive.

98.22 Being a single carriageway route the noise level would be approximately 1.5 dB(A) less than the published route.

98.23 However, taking an overall view, it is considered that the effect of the alternative route and the published route would be similar.

98.24 It is considered that a dual carriageway is required for the reasons already explained in paragraphs 46.28 above.

98.25 The published route would offer better value for money, greater safety, and avoid the need to upgrade the bypass at some future date. For these reasons it is superior to the alternative route.

99. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 17

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

99.1 This alternative single carriageway route would be less damaging than the published scheme. It would additionally provide better access arrangements for properties located towards the eastern end of the route.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

99.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£15.14m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£2.1m (low growth) £8.8m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	67 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	297 (low growth) 350 (high growth)

99.3 The route is similar, but not identical, to Objectors' Route 16 from Newlands to approximately Quarr Lane. East of Quarr Lane it would be different.

99.4 Objectors' Route 17 would have a junction at approximately chainage 6700 with a new road to connect to the existing A35. The London Inn and properties to its east would be provided with a ghost island junction for access on to the bypass. The route would tie-in with the existing A35 close to West House at approximately chainage 8300. There would be no roundabout at Miles Cross.

99.5 The route would have the general advantages and disadvantages of Objector's Route 16. However, because of the additional junctions, and because of the arrangements at the eastern end of the route, including the absence of a roundabout at Miles Cross, the scheme would be less safe and less satisfactory than either the published route or Objectors' Route 16.

99.6 The route would not provide the comprehensive improvement required.

100. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 18

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

100.1 This route is a single carriageway version of Objectors' Route No 3. The reasons for proposing it are similar.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

100.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£24.3m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	-£20.6m (low growth) -£18.6m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	111.0 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	198 (low growth) 225 (high growth)

100.3 For the reasons given in response to the similar Objectors' Route No 3, the Agency could not support this alternative route. It would be most unlikely to find a place in the trunk roads' programme.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

100.4 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 2.

101. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 19

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

101.1 This single carriageway route would provide a bypass of Chideock, with on-line improvements through Morcombelake.

101.2 At Chideock the route would go north of The Lodge through the wooded area of Chideock Manor, on a similar alignment to Objectors' Route No 9. It would not require the demolition of The Lodge.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

101.3 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£10.8m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£2.8m (low growth) £8.2m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	33.0 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	218 (low growth) 251 (high growth)

101.4 For the reasons explained in response to Objector's Routes Nos 5 and 9, an on-line improvement of the existing A35 through Morcombelake and a route at Chideock immediately to the north of The Lodge are considered unsatisfactory.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

101.5 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 9.

102. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 20

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

102.1 As for Objectors' Route No 6. The route is a single carriageway version of Objectors' Route 6B.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

102.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£18.46m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£1.5m (low growth) £9.2m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	80.6 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	298 (low growth) 344 (high growth)

102.3 This route is essentially a combination of Objectors' Routes Nos 6B and 16. The Highways Agency's response to those routes, therefore, applies.

103. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 21

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

103.1 As for Objectors' Route No 2.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

103.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£18.32m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£0.94m (low growth) £5.87m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	80.1 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	280 (low growth) 322 (high growth)

103.3 This route is essentially a single carriageway version of Objectors' Route No 2. The Agency's response to that route and to the single carriageway elements of other routes applies.

COUNTER-OBJECTION

103.4 The grounds of counter-objection are as for Objectors' Route No 2.

104. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 22

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

104.1 This single carriageway route would have significant advantages over the published scheme. In particular, it would:

- * provide a western exit for Morcombelake
- * be further away from Morcombelake
- * avoid Shedbush Lane
- * do less environmental damage as a result of being single carriageway

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

104.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£17.9m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£1.4m (low growth) £9.0m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	77.3 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	297 (low growth) 343 (high growth)

104.3 The essential differences between this route and the published route are:

- a. a western exit would be provided
- b. the route runs further south of Morcombelake
- c. the route is single carriageway

104.4 It is considered that the route would be unsatisfactory for the reasons given in response to Objectors' Route 15 and in paragraphs 46.28 et seq above.

105. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 23

105.1 This dual carriageway route is very similar to Objectors' Route No 2. The reasons for proposing it are also similar. The response of the Highways Agency is essentially the same.

106. OBJECTORS' ROUTE NO 24

REASONS FOR PROPOSING

106.1 This dual carriageway route would not affect SSSIs and SNCIs to the south and west of Morcombelake.

THE RESPONSE OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY

106.2 Outline economic, landtake, and accident saving details of the route are as follows:

* COST	£11.5m
* COBA NET PRESENT VALUE	£4.9m (low growth) £12.3m (high growth)
* PERMANENT LANDTAKE	51.0 ha
* ACCIDENT SAVINGS	276 (low growth) 320 (high growth)

106.3 This route follows the line of the published route east of Morcombelake. There would be no improvement of the existing road through Morcombelake or to its west.

106.4 The route fails to address the problem of the substandard road through Morcombelake and to its west.

PART VIII - FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS

107. INTRODUCTION

107.1 Having regard to all the foregoing considerations and evidence, I have made a number of findings of fact upon which I base my conclusions. These findings are cross referenced (by paragraph numbers in parenthesis e.g. (1.1)) to the sources in my report.

107.2 I now give my findings and conclusions having taken into careful account all the evidence before me.

107.3 I start by reviewing the characteristics and adequacy of the existing road.

107.4 I then consider the twenty four routes which have been put forward by objectors.

107.5 After that I examine the published route. In doing so, I first review the nature and adequacy of the Highways Agency's environmental assessment of the route. I then address the major issues which have been raised by objectors in respect of the route.

107.6 In examining the published route I will consider in some detail whether the proposed dual carriageway standard is appropriate. In this respect, I find that:

- * public consultation was conducted on the basis of a single carriageway route (48.1 et seq)
- * the dual carriageway standard of the route is the subject of objection (46.3 et seq)
- * fourteen of the twenty four objectors' routes are single carriageway roads (82.1 et seq)

107.7 Having considered the published route, I will seek to summarise my overall findings and conclusions.

107.8 Finally, I will consider the orders, modifications to the orders, and the common land.

108. THE EXISTING ROAD

General

108.1 A detailed description of the existing road is given in Part II of this report. (2.1 - 6.8)

108.2 I find the following facts concerning the A35 road:

- * it is the only trunk road running east-west through the length of Dorset (2.2)
- * it acts as a spine road linking the county with southern England and the south-west peninsula (13.1)
- * it forms the major east-west link for the southern half of the county, where most of the population reside (36.4)

Characteristics of the Road

108.3 From the description, from accompanied site visits and from all the evidence before me I conclude that the main physical characteristics and inadequacies of the existing road are:

The Section West of Morcombelake (3.1 - 3.19)

- * an average width of approximately 7m
- * no hard shoulders
- * inadequate verges or no verges
- * a long 4% gradient with inadequate overtaking opportunities
- * accesses (mainly agricultural) leading directly on to the road
- * substandard horizontal alignments which restrict forward visibility
- * signs of subsidence, deterioration and cracking despite extensive recent repairs

The Morcombelake Section (4.1 - 4.21)

- * a 40 mph speed limit
- * severance of the village, with most residential properties and the public house being on the north side of the road, and the church and most commercial premises being on the south side
- * no footways at the western end of the section, but reasonably adequate footways elsewhere

- * variable road widths and forward visibility
- * at the western end of the section, 300m and 125m radius bends with a width of less than 7m between steep tree lined banks with no verges
- * greater width further east
- * forward visibility in some places below 90m
- * direct access on to the trunk road from approximately 27 side roads and accesses. Many have inadequate visibility splays. Examples of the visibility from side roads (measured 4.5m back from the edge of the major road) are:

Tizards Knapp	21m west	27m east
Ship Knapp (1)	blind west	30m east
Ship Knapp (2)	20m west	20m east
Gibbs Lane	50m west	50m east
Shedbush Lane	55m west	30m east

The Chideock Section (5.1 - 5.13)

- * the road into Chideock from the west descends on a maximum 12% gradient
- * the road width varies between 7.3m and 6.2m
- * a 30 mph speed limit through the village
- * visibility splays from side roads within the village are:

North Road	10m west	18m east
Duck Street	35m west	15m east
- * direct access on to the road from the many properties which tightly line the road
- * intermittent and generally narrow footways
- * severance of the village by the road which is often difficult and hazardous to cross

The Section to the East of Chideock (6.1 - 6.8)

- * from Chideock to Quarr Lane an 8% gradient with few or no overtaking opportunities
- * the road is narrow and winding, with an average width of 5.5m
- * no verges for most of the road's length
- * road bounded by steep banks and hedges
- * except at either end of the section, there are no footways
- * visibility splays from Eype Down Road (opposite Quarr Lane) are virtually nil in both directions
- * visibility splays from Quarr Lane are 19m west and 15m east
- * almost no forward visibility for eastbound traffic turning into Eype Down Road
- * east of Quarr Lane the road descends on a 5.7% gradient to Miles Cross
- * numerous residential and agricultural accesses on to the road

Assessment of Adequacy

108.4 I am in no doubt that all sections of the road are seriously substandard and inadequate.

108.5 In particular, I take the view that the road does not offer pedestrians, motorists or other road users the level of safety or facility which they may reasonably expect. I consider that the situation would deteriorate with increased levels of traffic.

108.6 A matter for special concern is the substantial number of side roads and accesses in both villages which have wholly inadequate visibility splays.

108.7 The combination of parked vehicles, local traffic, through trunk road traffic and pedestrians, is manifestly unsatisfactory.

108.8 I accept the view of objectors that, except at limited peak periods, there is at present rarely significant congestion, in the sense of inadequate road capacity. Traffic does not become solid from one end of the road to the other.

108.9 The main problem for traffic is that due to inadequate forward visibility and the lack of safe overtaking opportunities, vehicles proceed, mainly in platoons, at the speed of the slowest vehicle. Because of the hilly nature of the terrain and the resultant steep gradients, this means that traffic frequently travels at a very slow pace indeed. I have no doubt that the problem creates driver frustration and leads to injudicious overtaking.

108.10 A further significant problem in the tourist season is that vehicles waiting to turn right cause delays until a gap is found in the oncoming traffic.

108.11 I am quite sure that these deficiencies and problems need to be addressed and resolved.

108.12 The Highways Agency puts forward the published route as the optimum alignment and the appropriate solution to the inadequacies of the existing road. Objectors take a different view and differing views. As already indicated, some objectors have taken the positive step of putting forward their own preferred routes.

108.13 I now discuss those routes.

109. OBJECTORS' ROUTES (82.1 - 106.4)

Tunnel Routes

109.1 Objectors' Routes Nos 1, 4, 11 and 14 propose tunnels of varying lengths.

109.2 The estimated costs of these routes would be £56.1m, £29m, £29.2m and £26.4m, respectively. The cost of the published route is estimated to be £20.8m.

109.3 In all cases, the COBA net present values of the tunnel routes are significantly inferior to those of the published route.

109.4 In addition to their capital cost, substantial maintenance costs would be incurred.

109.5 I have no doubt that tunnel routes would be environmentally advantageous, principally in landscape terms. However, care would have to be taken in constructing tunnels in unstable conditions under people's homes.

109.6 I am equally in no doubt that the additional cost of the tunnel routes would far outweigh their benefits.

109.7 In making that judgement, I take into account, inter alia, both the need for the bypass and evidence of the Highways

Agency, which I accept and find reasonable, that the proposed tunnel routes would be unlikely to find a place in the trunk roads' programme. (83.5, 86.12, 93.6 and 96.4)

109.8 I should add that having listened to the arguments for and against tunnel routes, I unequivocally conclude that if such large additional sums were ever available, there would be many better ways of serving the environment, the countryside and the nation than by putting the bypass in tunnel.

Marshwood Vale Routes

109.9 Objectors' Routes Nos 2, 3, 7, 8, 18, 21 and 23 would take the route through Marshwood Vale or its environs.

109.10 I agree with the South Dorset Friends of the Earth and the Marshwood Vale Society (vide paragraphs 84.8 et seq) that it would be wrong to introduce a major trunk road into a peaceful valley in an area of outstanding natural beauty where no road corridor currently exists.

Routes which would not bypass Morcombelake

109.11 Objectors' Routes Nos 5, 10, 13, 19 and 24 would not bypass Morcombelake but continue to run through the village.

109.12 I consider that, because of the existing road's inadequacies, both Morcombelake and Chideock should be bypassed.

109.13 I do not consider that satisfactory and effective on-line improvements of the road through Morcombelake are practicable.

109.14 The road's existing alignment to the west of Morcombelake and through Morcombelake would not meet departmental standards and would not provide a safe road.

109.15 Within Morcombelake, one would be faced with the numerous private and side roads' accesses leading directly on to the trunk road. They have generally substandard visibility splays.

109.16 I am in no doubt that, after all the on-line upheaval of demolitions, diversions of side roads, widenings, and other attempted ameliorating measures, one would be left with a profoundly unsatisfactory road.

109.17 The road would still have to cater for a mixture of pedestrians, parked vehicles, local traffic and through trunk road traffic. That is not a satisfactory arrangement. It is not a safe arrangement. It would not serve any category of road user well. It would be dangerous and cause unnecessary accidents, with their attendant suffering and tragedy.

109.18 Sir James Spicer, the local member of parliament, with commendable succinctness, expresses the view that a Chideock only bypass would be a mishmash (36.22). I subscribe to that view.

Routes to the South of Chideock

109.19 Objectors' Routes 10, 13 and 15 follow an alignment to the south of Chideock.

109.20 Such an alignment would avoid any impact on Chideock Castle and on the sensitive countryside to the north of Chideock. It would overcome the problems of the published route impacting upon Chideock Manor, The Lodge, and other properties on the northern edge of the village.

109.21 However, despite the penalties and disadvantages of the northern alignment, I accept the view which emerged from public consultation, and the view of the Countryside Commission and others that a route to the south of Chideock would be the more damaging alignment. This is principally because such a route to the south of Chideock would be visible over a wide area.

AND IN JURASSIE COAST

109.22 Furthermore, it would be less easily absorbed into the landscape than a route to the north.

109.23 I am satisfied that local residents do not generally favour a bypass between the village and the coastline.

109.24 For all the above reasons, I consider that a route to the north of Chideock has the overall balance of advantage.

Routes on an Alignment to the South of Shedbush Lane

109.25 Objectors' Routes 15 and 22 would run on an alignment south of Shedbush Lane.

109.26 They would, additionally, avoid Moor Meadow.

109.27 I accept that it would be a distinct advantage not to cut through the lane and the meadow.

109.28 However, I consider that the deeper incursion into the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate would outweigh those advantages.

Route with Different Arrangements at the Eastern End

109.29 Objectors' Route 17 provides additional junctions at the eastern end of the scheme, it uses a length of the existing substandard A35, and it omits the Miles Cross roundabout.

109.30 I am satisfied that this arrangement would not provide an attainable and acceptable level of safety.

Routes on a similar alignment to the Published Route

109.31 Objectors' Routes Nos 6, 9, 12, 16, and 20 offer variations to the published route.

109.32 The features which comprise those variations are addressed in my assessment of the published route, to which I now turn.

110. THE PUBLISHED ROUTE

110.1 A detailed description of the dual carriageway published route is given in Part III of this report. (7.1 - 11.24)

110.2 A number of departures from departmental standards have been approved (17.22). With those exceptions, I am satisfied that the bypass would meet current departmental standards. I am further satisfied that the departures have been properly considered and authorised.

110.3 The published route would cost £20.79m at quarter 3 1992 prices and give a COBA net present value (discounted to 1988 prices) of £5.538m (low growth) and £17.308m (high growth) (21.1 et seq). The scheme would provide good value for money.

110.4 I am satisfied that all the land included in the compulsory purchase order as modified (vide paragraphs 35.1 et seq above) is required for the scheme.

110.5 As part of the scheme preparation, the Highways Agency commissioned an environmental assessment, and I now consider its content and adequacy.

111. THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Background

111.1 Readers of this report will be well aware that except for two small enclaves, the whole of West Dorset is within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Furthermore, much of the coastal area is classified as the West Dorset Heritage Coast. (15.3)

111.2 In addition, common land, sites of special scientific interest, sites of nature conservation interest, and various wildlife habitats are located within the corridor of the proposed scheme. (15.4 et seq and 40.1 et seq)

111.3 All these classifications offer a high degree of protection to the countryside through which the published route would be built.

111.4 Indeed, at the inquiries, it was readily accepted by all parties, that because of the protected nature of the countryside, the scheme should, as a matter of government policy, be examined with particular care.

111.5 I can confirm that, during the 70 days which the inquiries sat, those requirements were met in the fullest possible way.

The Assessment and Statement

111.6 A detailed and expert environmental appraisal and assessment was undertaken on behalf of the Highways Agency. The study considered the environment in the widest sense and also the effect of the published route on the environment.

111.7 Subsequently, a comprehensive environmental statement (Deposit Documents DD 8 and 9) was produced. It formed a central part of the inquiries.

111.8 The Highways Agency has confirmed that the statement met the requirements of EC Directive 85/337 as applied by section 105A of the Highways Act 1980 (23.1 et seq). I am satisfied that that is the case.

111.9 The Highways Agency has also confirmed that it has met the requirements imposed upon it to consult with affected and interested organisations and bodies. I confirm that the material views of those organisations and bodies are reflected in this report.

111.10 I now consider the issues raised by objectors concerning the published route.

112. PREDICTED 24 HOUR AADT TRAFFIC FLOWS

112.1 The Highways Agency predicts (19.5) that, on the basis of National Road Traffic Forecasts (NRTF), traffic flows on the bypass in the design year 2013 would be:

*	West of Morcombelake	16,010 (low growth) 19,140 (high growth)
*	Morcombelake Section	15,400 (low growth) 18,500 (high growth)
*	Chideock Section	14,900 (low growth) 17,800 (high growth)

112.2 Objectors have suggested (45.2 et seq) that NRTF predictions should be discounted because of:

- * historical unreliability
- * a disparity between the growth of holiday traffic and non-holiday traffic
- * the potential for diversion of traffic to the A303
- * government policy to reduce traffic growth

112.3 I am satisfied that the NRTF tables provide a reasonable basis for assessing design year traffic flows. I take that view because I believe that the breadth of the band of the low growth/high growth forecast is sufficient to absorb any disparities which arise from the factors which concern objectors.

112.4 I should add that I agree with the Highways Agency that there is only insignificant potential for the diversion of traffic to the A303 (43.9 and 51.18). I do not consider that traffic calming measures in Morcombelake or Chideock, which were sought by some objectors, would substantially affect that issue.

112.5 Furthermore, because of the nature of the road's usage, I do not believe that increases in the cost of motoring, and the measures envisaged in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 13 and subsequent studies, would greatly reduce the level of traffic growth on this rural stretch of road.

112.6 An entirely separate issue raised by objectors is whether, as a basis for the NRTF calculations, the Highways Agency was right to use the 1991 automatic traffic count (ATC) figures rather than the subsequently available 1993, ATC figures.

112.7 Objectors have put forward a reasoned view (Proof of Evidence PE 148 and Document OS 74) that the use of the 1991 figures rather than the 1993 figures has had the effect of increasing the design year flows by 6%. (45.2b).

112.8 Objectors point out that by applying the 1993 base figure, rather than the 1991 figure, to the growth figures the forecast design year flows would be within or close to the 11,000 - 18,000 guideline or starting point for WS2 roads given in Departmental Standard TD 20/85 (Deposit Document DD 41) (19.5 and 45.2b). Whilst the Highways Agency offers an explanation for the use of the out of date figures, it does not dispute that their use increases the design year flows (45.7).

112.9 My own feeling about this is entirely clear. If the Agency had continued throughout the inquiries to use the original design year of 2011, then it would have been acceptable to have used the 1991 ATC figures rather than the subsequently available 1993 figures.

112.10 However, during the course of the inquiries the Agency effectively increased the design year flows by moving the design year from 2011 to 2013. Having done that, I am in no doubt that the then available 1993 figures should have been used. To do otherwise had the effect of double loading the figures.

112.11 I am satisfied that by using the 1993 ATC flows, the high growth design year (2013) forecasts for all sections of the bypass (vide paragraph 112.1 above) would be either within or acceptably close to the AADT starting point of 11,000 - 18,000 vehicles for WS2 roads as given in Departmental Standard TD 20/85. Certainly, there would be no departure from standards (vide paragraph 4.3 of TD 20/85).

112.12 I will briefly return to this issue when I consider the appropriate standard of the carriageway later in this report (vide paragraphs 114.20 et seq).

112.13 In the meantime, I should make it clear that I do not consider that a 6% lower design year traffic flow forecast would lessen the need to address the current problems of the existing road as outlined in paragraph 108.3 et seq above.

113. ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT SAVINGS

113.1 The 1989 to 1993 accident rates are given in paragraphs 20.2 et seq above. They show an overall rate of 0.45 PIA/mvkm.

113.2 If, because of the recently introduced speed limit in Morcombelake, the default rate is used, then the accident rate in the village would reduce from 0.73 PIA/mvkm to 0.32 PIA/mvkm and the overall rate from 0.45 PIA/mvkm to 0.39 PIA/mvkm.

113.3 However, because of the existing road's characteristics (vide paragraphs 108.3 et seq above), I consider that the default rate may suggest a lower accident rate on the existing road than is likely to occur.

113.4 What I believe can be in no doubt is that the existing road does not provide a reasonable level of safety. With traffic growth, the situation can be expected to deteriorate both in Morcombelake and throughout the route unless action is taken.

113.5 In calculating accident savings for the published route and for objectors' routes, the Highways Agency has assumed an accident rate of 0.10 PIA/mvkm for dual carriageway routes (including the published route) and 0.17 PIA/mvkm for single carriageway routes. (46.20)

113.6 That basis of calculation not only affects the merits of routes in terms of saving lives and injuries, but it also affects their economic cost effectiveness and COBA net present value.

113.7 Objectors put forward the view that the 0.10 PIA/mvkm rate used by the Highways Agency for the dual carriageway routes (including the published route) unreasonably assumes a motorway level of safety. (46.22)

113.8 Objectors are also concerned that the 0.17 PIA/mvkm rate used for single carriageway routes is a combined S2 and WS2 rate. It is felt that this is unreasonable because marked out WS2 roads (as proposed for single carriageway objectors' routes) are safer than S2 roads. (46.23)

113.9 My own view is that it is probably reasonable to use the 0.10 PIA/mvkm motorway rate for the published route and other dual carriageway routes.

113.10 I entirely accept that a number of factors such as gradients and departures from standard may compare unfavourably with motorway standards. However, I believe that those factors would be offset by the fact that the published route and other dual carriageway routes would, for the foreseeable future, be lightly used compared with a motorway, and have huge spare capacity.

113.11 Turning to single carriageway routes, I believe that the results of the studies and surveys referred to in evidence support the contention that marked out WS2 roads are safer than S2 roads (46.23). I feel, therefore, that the use of combined rates is likely to understate the accident savings which would be achieved by a WS2 single carriageway route designed to current standards.

113.12 Certainly, I am in no doubt that a dual carriageway route would be safer than a single carriageway route, but I believe that the degree of difference is significantly exaggerated by the 0.10 and 0.17 PIA/mvkm accident ratio used and assumed by the Highways Agency.

114. THE COUNTRYSIDE

The Quality of the Countryside

114.1 Throughout the inquiries it was common ground that the countryside through which the published route would pass is of exceptional value and merit.

114.2 That is not to say that the area is totally unspoilt. The existing A35 is noisy and visible. Morcombelake on the southern slopes of Hardown Hill is described by the Landscape Advisory Committee as a "limited development, which is of modern and unspectacular design, bordering the road, and which is, of course, subject to noise" (39.49). A large and highly visible garage and petrol filling station are at Chideock Hill. To the south of Chideock there are extensive and exposed caravan site developments.

114.3 However, taken overall, the area comprises countryside of rare quality.

114.4 The Highways Agency and its advisers and consultants have well appreciated that fact, and have taken exceptional care in designing the scheme and in preparing landscaping plans.

114.5 Nevertheless, despite the extensive and elaborate mitigation measures, there would inevitably be damage to the countryside and the environment. That must be the case when building any major road through a part of the county consisting of extensive areas of Heritage Coast, AONB, SSSIs, SNCIs, wildlife habitat, and National Trust inalienable land.

The Acceptability of Road Development

114.6 In all these circumstances, one option would be to say that because the countryside is of such unique value there should be no road development in West Dorset.

114.7 However, I believe that that would not be a balanced and rational response to the problem. I consider that, essentially for the reasons explained by the County and District Councils (paragraphs 36.1 et seq), limited development should be permitted, and in this case, that a bypass should be provided. However, the critical requirement is that any new road should be designed to have an acceptable and minimum impact on the countryside.

114.8 I should add that I believe that the Secretaries of State should give special weight to the well argued views of the County and District Councils. This is because the councils:

a. are elected and uniquely represent all age groups and all economic and social strands of the entire local community;

b. have responsibility for, and expertise and an interest in, nearly all the major areas of concern i.e. highways, road safety, police, planning and development, the environment, footpaths, the coast, employment, tourism, and the local economy;

c. in giving evidence are, therefore, in a, perhaps, unique position to take an informed, balanced, objective and representative view.

The Choice of the Published Route

114.9 I am in no doubt and well understand that with so much of environmental value in the study corridor, the Highways Agency's choice of the published route involved a careful balancing act to minimise the impact of the scheme.

114.10 Thus, for example, avoiding an SNCI would take the route through an SSSI; avoiding an SSSI would take the route further into National Trust land; minimising the impact on National Trust land would mean demolishing homes, and so on.

Impact of the Published Route on the Countryside

General

114.11 Focussing, under this heading, exclusively on the countryside, I now assess the impact of the published route, and the acceptability or otherwise of that impact.

114.12 Because in later paragraphs I shall be dealing separately with ecological issues, with the village environments, and with the National Trust inalienable land dimension, I exclude those specific matters for the moment.

The Alignment

114.13 My considered view is that the published route does adopt the optimum and least damaging surface alignment.

114.14 I make that 'surface' qualification because I am in no doubt (see paragraph 109.4 above) that from a visual point of view, tunnel routes would be preferable.

114.15 Having given that endorsement of the published route's alignment, I should explain that I am sure it is right that the bypass should be constructed within the corridor of the existing A35 road.

114.16 Furthermore, because of the quality of the local countryside, I think it is right that intrusion should be minimised by keeping the new road as close as possible to the existing road. That is particularly important to the south of Morcombelake. The published route manifestly meets that criterion.

114.17 However, I think it is important to understand and acknowledge that in protecting the countryside and in keeping the new road tightly aligned to the existing road, one is having a considerably greater impact on homes, especially in Chideock, and a slightly greater impact on ecological sites, than otherwise might be the case.

114.18 I note that the Countryside Commission indicated in 1989 that if the upgrading of the existing A35 through Morcombelake was not feasible they would support the yellow route (Document DT 159). The yellow route in due course became the published route.

114.19 Having considered in countryside terms the alignment of the published route, I now turn to the standard of the road.

Standard of Road

114.20 The Highways Agency accepts that a dual carriageway scheme would have a greater impact on the countryside and landscape than a single carriageway scheme, but in overall terms believes the difference would not be substantial.(46.35)

114.21 I take the view that the difference would be both substantial and significant. In particular, in respect of the countryside, a single carriageway road:

- * would be a smaller scale structure and would appear as a smaller structure
- * would not require a 1.3km long split level carriageway west of Morcombelake, i.e. with a single carriageway the lanes would be at the same grade
- * would take less land
- * landscaping would be easier and more effective
- * cuttings could be narrower
- * bridges would be shorter
- * some embankments could be lower
- * the highly visible and illuminated Newlands roundabout would not be needed

- * with the provision of a western exit for Morcombelake becoming possible, the construction of a slip road in the sensitive area north of Langdon Wood could be deleted from the scheme

114.22 There is no doubt that a significant factor in the Highways Agency's decision to opt for a dual carriageway scheme was the fear of needing, at some time in the future, to upgrade a single carriageway road.

114.23 Clearly, the Highways Agency is right in saying that any such upgrading would have an adverse impact on the maturing and recovering landscape and countryside. I respect that view and I commend the concern for the countryside which underlies it.

114.24 However, I believe that more circumspection is required.

114.25 Building any new road in this area is a big step. Evidence of a compelling nature would be required to justify a dual carriageway standard of road if a smaller scale road would be likely to suffice.

114.26 In particular, it would be necessary to establish with confidence the probability that a new wide single carriageway bypass, running alongside the existing A35 road for most of its length, would have inadequate capacity within the foreseeable future.

114.27 I am quite certain that that probability has not been established.

Now Different

Surface of Road

114.28 I must make it clear in unequivocal terms that no road of any size would blend in with the countryside unless it was surfaced with a dark coloured material.

114.29 Additionally, if materials are available at reasonable cost, which would provide a surface resulting in a diminution of noise, then they should be used in view of the proposed proximity of the bypass to the villages of Morcombelake and Chideock.

Landscaping

114.30 The landscaping proposals for the published route are shown in the plans forming part of Proof of Evidence PE 4. They are impressive.

114.31 I consider the landscaping to be designed to the highest standards. In this respect the bypass would compare well with the best examples in the country. It would contrast with earlier schemes where landscaping was sometimes limited to the cosmetic improvement of a road designed to engineering specifications.

114.32 I am in no doubt that initially even a single carriageway route would be intrusive and unsightly. However, with the careful mounding, land shaping and feathering which is proposed, and with the early grassing and greening of the earthworks, I believe that a single carriageway road would be successfully absorbed into the landscape. The extensive planting which is proposed would subsequently enhance the position.

114.33 Clearly, the landscaping would provide only limited amelioration from those elevated positions which would provide a linear view of the road. It is, perhaps, from those viewpoints that a single carriageway scheme would have most advantage over a dual carriageway road.

114.34 For all the above reasons, I believe that a dark surfaced single carriageway route would be successfully assimilated into the countryside. I am far less confident about a dual carriageway route.

115. NATIONAL TRUST LAND

Background

115.1 The National Trust played a leading and most helpful role in the inquiries' proceedings.

115.2 The Trust objects to the published route on the main grounds of its alignment through part of the Golden Cap Estate. (39.9 et seq)

115.3 The Trust proposed two alternative routes (Objectors' Routes 4 and 5) which would avoid the estate. However, I have already made clear (vide paragraphs 109.1 et seq and 109.11 et seq) that I do not consider those routes practicable or appropriate.

The Trust and Roads

115.4 The Trust's representatives emphasised at the inquiries that it is not anti-roads. It was acknowledged that most of the Trust's many members and visitors were road users who arrived both at the Golden Cap Estate and at other nearby centres or properties by private car. (39.13)

115.15 The scheme would permanently take 6.48 ha from the 896 ha estate. (22.7)

115.16 I am in no doubt that it would be better if the scheme did not intrude into the estate. However, I have to say that I do not share the Trust's somewhat apocalyptic fears concerning the impact on the estate of the published route, built to single carriageway standard. My principal reasons relate to:

- * the peripheral nature of the road
- * the extensive screening of the road by mounds or by being in cutting
- * the high standard of landscaping and extensive planting proposed

115.17 Taking an overall balanced view of all the issues, I consider that the impact on the Golden Cap Estate would be acceptable. Any balanced view must give substantial weight to countryside, environmental and ecological values. However, it must also take account of other issues about which there is now far more information than was available to the National Trust, and those with whom it consulted, when the decision was made to declare the land inalienable. The issues include:

- * high local unemployment and the need for economic investment (as explained by the County and District Councils vide paragraphs 36.1 et seq above)
- * the inadequacies of the existing road
- * traffic growth
- * road safety and the importance of reducing road deaths and injuries
- * the standard of landscaping proposed

116. GEOLOGY

116.1 Geology is a significant issue and I well understand the surprise of objectors that the subject hardly featured in the Highways Agency's initial presentation of its case.

115.5 Indeed, I am in no doubt that the National Trust's commendable activities create a significant amount of private car use in this highly environmentally sensitive area. I believe that private cars are likely to remain the preferred and predominant mode of transport.

Standard of Road

115.6 In addressing the impact of the bypass on the countryside, I have endorsed the Trust's persuasive case and preference for a single carriageway road.

Alignment of Route

115.7 The Trust feels that the alignment and scale of the published route would have a devastating impact on its Golden Cap Estate. Its views and its fears are explained in paragraphs 39.9 et seq above of this report. The Trust, whilst strongly advocating the benefits and advantages of a single carriageway solution elsewhere, does not believe that such a reduction in scale would significantly ameliorate the impact of the road across its own land.

115.8 I have already explained (vide paragraphs 114.21 et seq) why I believe that the published route, constructed to single carriageway standard, could be successfully assimilated into the countryside.

115.9 The Golden Cap Estate is, of course, part of that countryside. However, by virtue of its inalienable status it warrants and justifies special consideration, and I now address that issue.

115.10 I have already emphasised the high quality of the landscape.

115.11 West of Morcombelake, at the expense of two SNCIs, the road would not intrude into the estate.

115.12 East of Morcombelake, the road would be to the north of the estate.

115.13 South of Morcombelake, which is the area of main concern to the Trust, the existing A35 trunk road runs along and just outside the northern edge of the estate.

115.14 In very general terms, the proposed road would be between 100m and 200m south of the existing road, taking it by that distance in and through the periphery of the estate. The road would extend through National Trust land for slightly less than 600m. It would be about 1.5km from Golden Cap, and approximately the same distance from the coastal path. All this can be seen from the scheme plan at Appendix D.

116.2 The matter was raised by objectors and subsequently aired in great depth. Striking features about those who gave evidence for both sides were:

- * their eminence and great expertise
- * their disagreement about almost all the geological issues before the inquiries

116.3 There was agreement that the area is exceptionally unstable and geologically complex, and that in this respect it is internationally renowned. Indeed, as if nature wished to reinforce the point, a massive coastal landslide on the south side of Stonebarrow occurred during the course of the inquiries.

116.4 There was also general agreement that the geotechnical site investigations of the actual route and its immediate corridor had been properly and competently undertaken.

116.5 The areas of disagreement are reviewed in paragraphs 41.1 et seq. Of these, the key issue is whether the site investigations have been conducted over a wide enough area to avoid the danger and pitfall of stabilising the immediate line of the bypass, but doing so within the context of an overall moving slope. There is the added fear that movement could be instigated or exacerbated if cuts and large scale earthworks were imposed upon the slope.

116.6 In short, expert objectors feel that investigations over a much wider area are essential if the bypass is to be confidently and successfully built. Advisers to the Highways Agency feel that such investigations would be academically interesting, but that they are not necessary and would be a costly waste of money.

116.7 There is extensive anecdotal and visual evidence of movement over a wide area of Stonebarrow. I accept the entirely credible evidence of farmers owning land on the north face of Stonebarrow that over quite short periods humps and fissures in their fields appear, disappear and move around. (41.5)

116.8 I am satisfied that detailed tests and explorations have been conducted. I consider that the value of these and of the nine volume site investigation report and the three volume interpretive report should not be underestimated. Certainly, the stratigraphy of the whole of Stonebarrow is not known, but equally certainly boreholes have been sunk and other site investigations have been undertaken beyond the immediate line of the road.

116.9 Furthermore, having built the Charmouth Bypass and the Bridport Link Road, the consultants employed by the Highways Agency are familiar with the problems which they are likely to face.

116.10 I am sure that the dramatically expressed fears of expert objectors will have removed any trace of complacency, if it ever existed, about the task of building a major road structure across the highly unstable face of Stonebarrow and Quarry Hill.

116.11 I do not believe that it would be practicable to build a new road on the line of the existing road, as some objectors felt would be geologically advantageous. My reasons have already been explained, but in short they are that a satisfactory and safe alignment would not be achieved.

116.12 Because of the experience and groundwork of the Highways Agency's consultants, I do not consider that there is any particular threat to the landscape from the possibility of unexpected problems or catastrophes arising.

116.13 I accept the view of expert objectors that the lighter structure of a single carriageway road would, in geotechnical and construction terms, be less testing and demanding than a dual carriageway road.

116.14 I note that approximately £2.5m has been included in the scheme costs to cover geotechnical engineering work (21.3). In view of the uncertainties, and because of the geological complexity of the area, I incline to the view that it would be sensible and prudent to increase the 5% contingency component of the scheme cost.

116.15 Ten percent of the cost of the £2.5m geotechnical engineering work would, perhaps, be an appropriate amount to add to the overall contingency total. Discounted to 1988 prices this would have the effect of reducing the COBA net present value of the published route, but would leave it substantially positive at both low and high growth.

116.16 There is one other safeguard which I believe would be sensible. Just as during the detailed design stage of the scheme, a stage 2 road safety audit would be undertaken, so, I believe, an authoritative, independent geotechnical audit should be made.

116.17 On that basis, and generally for all the reasons I have outlined, I believe that there is no geological or geotechnical reason why the dual carriageway published route should not be authorised and successfully constructed. Clearly, exceptional care in design and construction would be necessary. A single carriageway road would be less demanding.

117. ECOLOGY

General

117.1 Ecology is the single most difficult issue addressed in this report.

117.2 The published route would affect two SSSIs, two SNCIs, and various wildlife habitats and areas of ecological interest.

117.3 In preparing the scheme, the Highways Agency and its consultants have closely consulted English Nature. Indeed, the Agency has been commendably conscientious and diligent in exercising its responsibility to minimise the impact of the proposed road on the ecology of the area.

117.4 As a result of that consultation and of the care which has been exercised, I am satisfied that in ecological terms, as well as in overall environmental terms, the published route follows the optimum alignment.

117.5 However, none of that alters the fact that the road would have a significantly adverse ecological impact.

SNCI and SSSIs (40.4 - 40.8)

117.6 English Nature and others are understandably concerned about the threatened loss of two areas of sympathetically managed neutral grassland fields, both of which are part of SNCIs. One area comprises 1.64 ha of a 1.9 ha SNCI, and the other 2.4 ha of a 3.7 ha SNCI.

117.7 The threat to Moor Meadow (KS4a) is, perhaps, of even greater concern. In terms of area (1.7 ha out of the 596.3 ha Dorset Coast SSSI) the loss of this outer peripheral area is relatively small. However, because of the hydrology of the meadow and its seepage fen characteristics, it is of much greater value than its relative size would suggest.

117.8 I have no doubt that the development of houses on the south face of Hardown Hill did great damage to the hydrology of the area. The proposed road would add to that harm.

117.9 By taking the published route marginally further into the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate it would be possible to avoid Moor Meadow. However, I believe that such a course would not provide an overall balance of advantage.

117.10 The proposed access track across land forming part of the Morcombelake SSSI (KS2a) would be another effect of the scheme. Whilst any intrusion into an SSSI is a matter for deep concern, I believe that the damage caused by a track would be small. I accept that the provision of a western exit at Morcombelake would result in a slightly greater impact on KS2a.

Watercourses

117.11 In view of the fragile ecology of the area it is important to safeguard the various water courses and flushes against pollution from the road. St. Gabriel's stream is of particular concern.

117.12 This has been appreciated by both the Highways Agency and the National Rivers Authority during the design of the scheme.

117.13 The Highways Agency has undertaken to meet the requirements of the National Rivers Authority (or its successors) on a continuing basis. I have a high degree of confidence in the stringent approach of the Authority and I am satisfied with the arrangements proposed.

Bats

117.14 The inquiries spent much time considering the important lesser horseshoe bat roost at the western end of the scheme.

117.15 With the modifications to the compulsory purchase order now proposed (vide paragraphs 35.4 et seq), and the undertakings given by the Highways Agency in paragraph 40.52 above, I believe that satisfactory arrangements have been made. It is important to understand that the modifications to the orders have been proposed and the undertakings have been given since English Nature gave its evidence to the inquiries.

117.16 In view of those undertakings, I think that the Highways Agency is probably right in contending that the proposed road could be to the advantage of the bats.

117.17 I fully appreciate that with the scheme requiring the demolition of the cottage containing the roost, the Agency's contention sounds somewhat implausible. However, because of the precariously derelict nature of the cottage (see the photographs at Appendix H), because of the development aspirations of the landowner, and because of the importance of sympathetic management, the Highways Agency's proposal to provide a purpose built replacement roost may well offer the best opportunity to sustain the colony of bats in the long term.

117.18 I have carefully considered the mainly serotine bat roost in the loft of The Lodge at Chideock. Regrettable as the loss would be, I have concluded that it is not a significant factor in deciding the alignment of the bypass. In this respect, I note that English Nature does not object to that part of the scheme to the east of Morcombelake, and it does not believe that the serotine population would be significantly affected by the loss of the roost. (40.24)

Dormice

117.19 The loss of dormouse habitats would, I believe, be a matter for sadness rather than concern for the species.

117.20 Obviously, even a temporary diminution of the population of this attractive, protected and vulnerable species is a factor to be taken into account and carefully weighed.

117.21 I accept the view of the Highways Agency's consultants that the population would not be threatened, and that in time, with the extensive planting proposed, there would be some recovery.

Other Species and Areas

117.22 I agree with English Nature and the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation that the scheme would, to a greater or lesser extent, affect undesignated areas of grassland and the habitat of a wide spectrum of species. It would certainly not contribute to the strengthening of biodiversity. The extent of this harm and degradation is difficult to quantify. However, I am in no doubt that it adds to the level of concern which must be felt and taken into account.

117.23 Later in this report, in reaching my overall conclusions, I seek to balance the various conflicting considerations of which ecology is one of the most important (vide paragraphs 126.1 et seq).

118. FOOTPATHS

118.1 In considering the footpaths to be stopped up or diverted, it is appropriate to take into account the importance of the network of footpaths linking the coast with the hinterland.

118.2 That is not to say that the inquiries are in a position to review the whole network. That is not within their remit or powers. However, in the Chideock and Morcombelake area, the importance of the network does generally add to the significance of individual footpaths which would be affected.

118.3 My general view is that footpath underpasses or overbridges would not be appropriate for this scheme. I base that view on the balance of usage, intrusiveness and cost.

118.4 On the same basis, I believe that the proposed diversions are reasonably convenient. However, I think this is taken close to the limit in the case of Footpaths Nos 8 and 9. They are both well used footpaths. The diversions, which would run alongside the line of the road, would require footpath users to walk an extra 460m and 1,250m, respectively.(49.33)

118.5 In those circumstances, I have considered whether the two footpaths should, as an exception, be provided with an at grade crossing.

118.6 My view in relation to the proposed dual carriageway scheme is that such a crossing would not be appropriate. The speed of vehicles, the presence of a central reserve safety fence, and the expectations of drivers on dual carriageway roads, cause me to shy away from any pedestrian presence on the bypass.

118.7 However, throughout my conclusions I have been considering a single carriageway version of the published route, and with such a scheme I think that a shared, at grade crossing for users of the two footpaths would be possible and acceptable.

118.8 Traffic would be travelling more slowly than on a dual carriageway, there would be no central reserve safety fence, and for motorists the road would have less of a 'motorway' feel and ambience than a dual carriageway.

118.9 It is a matter of balance. Obviously, necessary safety requirements should be imposed. Equally, walkers should be treated as responsible citizens and should be allowed to exercise reasonable judgement, discretion and choice.

118.10 My considered view is that there should be one shared at grade crossing for the two footpaths. It should be located at approximately a mid-way point where the road would be at a suitable elevation and, most important of all, where visibility for both drivers and walkers would be adequate.

119. VILLAGE ECONOMIES

119.1 There are understandable fears from local traders and residents that the loss of passing trade resulting from a bypass would undermine the viability of the post offices, shops, public houses, petrol filling stations and the other enterprises located in Morcombelake and Chideock.

119.2 I am in no doubt that the bypass would result in pluses and minuses in terms of trade.

119.3 Without the present difficulties of parking and without the unpleasant noise, danger and pollution of through traffic, I believe that the tourism potential of the villages would be improved.

119.4 Particularly in Chideock, there would be the potential for many more day and overnight visitors whose spending on a per capita basis would be far greater than that of people passing through en route to somewhere else.

119.5 It is also possible that local residents would be willing to give greater support to local enterprises if they could walk to their shops in a more pleasant and less hazardous environment.

119.6 Obviously, passing trade from those who did not wish to visit the villages would be lost.

119.7 It is not possible to be dogmatic. However, I incline to the view that a bypass would be favourable in trading terms. Initiatives to adapt to the new situation would be necessary. Trade would rely on visitors rather than on passersby. Certainly, I do not believe that this issue provides a reason to allow the present and increasing weight of traffic to continue to pass through the villages.

119.8 Morcombelake is particularly dependent on Moore's Bakery to attract visitors. With the Golden Cap Estate car parks being outside the village, other reasons for visiting the village are limited.

119.9 At present, visitors to the bakery use a wholly inadequate layby for parking. Because of the pressure of through traffic, innumerable potential shoppers must be deterred from stopping.

119.10 I believe that fears that the bypass would undermine the viability of Moore's Bakery, are not well founded.

119.11 I note the request by the owners of the London Inn for a connecting path between Footpaths Nos 7 and 10 and the western end of West Road (42.10). I also note that a connecting footpath could be provided within the boundary of the bypass, and that the Highways Agency has undertaken to consult with the local authorities about this, if the scheme goes ahead (42.16). I consider that the request is reasonable and should be vigorously pursued.

119.12 Finally, under this heading, I should add that a western exit for Morcombelake would be to the advantage of all the Morcombelake enterprises including the bakery, the petrol filling station, the post office/shop, and the public house. I discuss the provision of a western exit under my next heading.

120. THE MORCOMBELAKE SECTION OF THE BYPASS

General

120.1 I have already indicated that I believe that a bypass of Morcombelake is required and should be provided.

120.2 I have similarly given my assessment in some detail of the impact of a bypass on the commerce of the village and on the countryside south of Morcombelake.

120.3 I accept the view of the Highways Agency that most residents would enjoy benefits from a bypass in terms of noise and pollution. However, I am also conscious that those living to the south of the existing road would generally have greater noise imposed upon them and would suffer some deterioration in their quality of life.

St Wites Well

120.4 Concern has been expressed about the effect of the bypass on St Wites Well. It is at present subject to noise but this would be increased by the proposed bypass.

120.5 There is considerable scope for making the well more attractive for the benefit of both residents and visitors.

120.6 I note that the Highways Agency's envisaged measures to ameliorate the noise would be likely to include some landscaping.

120.7 With the co-operation of the village, the National Trust, and the Highways Agency, the bypass could well become the catalyst for the well to become a centrepiece of greater religious and cultural significance for both residents and visitors.

A Western Exit from the Village

120.8 Objectors' Routes 6, 16, 17, 20 and 22 would provide or allow access to or from the bypass from a point immediately to the west of the village.

120.9 Objectors' Routes 6 and 20 are proposed expressly to provide a western exit from the village. The remaining routes would allow an exit by virtue of being single carriageway roads.

120.10 Without a western exit it would be necessary for the village's westbound vehicles to travel east in order to join the bypass at Chideock Hill.

120.11 I well understand that this would cause irritation to residents and visitors. Furthermore, westbound vehicles (including coaches and buses) coming into Morcombelake from the Bridport direction would have to be turned round.

120.12 I have already indicated that a western exit would be of some assistance to the village economy.

120.13 I share objectors' fears that bus operators may, in the light of experience, review any undertaking to bring westbound buses into the village.

120.14 The published route and a number of the objectors' routes envisage a dual carriageway bypass, and for these a western exit would require a bridge. This would add significantly to the cost of the scheme; it would require more land, and impose a further major structure. On balance, I conclude that these disadvantages would outweigh the benefits of the exit.

120.15 However, with a single carriageway version of the published route it would be possible to have an at grade junction. Such a junction would also have disadvantages, but I believe that these would be more than off-set by benefits.

120.16 An at grade junction would take marginally more land from the Morcombelake SSSI. However, that would be compensated by the deletion of the slip roads. This would be particularly significant in the case of the westbound slip road located in the sensitive area to the north of Langdon Hill.

120.17 The junction would require the demolition of Fulvens Home Farmhouse. However, as explained in more detail in paragraphs 124.12 et seq, I believe that the house would be so badly affected by the published route, with the loss of land and the toe of the 11m embankment being 20m from the front of the house, that this would not be against the interests of the owners.

120.18 A further factor is the important consideration of safety. An at grade junction would be somewhat less safe than slip roads.

120.19 However, I take the view that a junction designed to current standards would provide the required level of safety, especially if:

- * access on to the bypass was minimised by being restricted to westbound vehicles
- * no exit from the bypass was permitted for westbound vehicles

120.20 Furthermore, there would be some safety gain as a result of vehicles (especially coaches and buses) not needing to turn round in the village and then incurring additional mileage.

Fog

120.21 I accept the evidence that the area is subject to fog and/or sea mist (51.4 et seq). Obviously, that is a hazard on the existing substandard road and would be a potential hazard on any new road.

120.22 I note that the problem was addressed in the stage 1 road safety audit and that warning signs would be considered at the design stage (51.16). On the evidence before the inquiries, I consider that illuminated fog warning signs would almost certainly be required.

Shedbush Lane

120.23 The published route would cut across Shedbush Lane. Its residents (including those of St Gabriel's Close) would suffer substantial disadvantage, even though the bypass would be in cutting, with the lane bridged over at approximately its existing level.

120.24 Objectors' Routes 15 and 22 would take the route to the south of Shedbush Lane and have the advantage of taking the bypass further away from all houses in Morcombelake.

120.25 In particular, they would avoid demolishing houses in Shedbush Lane and not require the acquisition of the St Gabriel's Close car park.

120.26 I note that an alignment south of Shedbush Lane was the subject of public consultation. However, it was not adopted as the preferred route, I think rightly, because of its greater impact on the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate.

120.27 My assessment that the published route adopts the optimum alignment takes into account the adverse effect of the bypass on Shedbush Lane.

121. THE CHIDEOCK SECTION OF THE BYPASS

121.1 I have already emphasised the need for Chideock to be bypassed. The urgency of the requirement is not widely disputed.

121.2 I have also already made clear, in response to objectors' routes, that I do not favour an alignment to the south of Chideock or one to the north of North Chideock through Marshwood Vale. See paragraphs 109.10 and 109.19 et seq.

121.3 However, I am conscious that the alignment of the published route would have a considerable impact on properties and the countryside immediately to the north of Chideock. In particular the route would:

- * be on high embankment (8.5m over North Road and 11m over the River Winniford)
- * require the demolition of The Lodge (which I discuss in detail below)
- * be close to Chideock Manor and properties on the northern outskirts of Chideock, including Gate Farm House and homes in Winniford Close and St Giles' Close
- * be close to Chideock Castle
- * have an impact on countryside of high quality

121.4 Much inquiry time was taken in considering the precise alignment of the published route at the point where it would require the demolition of The Lodge including its listed garden house or gazebo.

121.5 The proposed demolition of The Lodge evoked strong protest from many objectors.

121.6 With a view to avoiding demolition, Objectors' Route 9 was proposed by the owner of The Lodge with the support of many others.

121.7 Essentially, the objectors' route would take the alignment of the bypass 97m further north than the line of the published route. The route would run to the north of Yenhay Lane through the southern part of the grounds of the listed Chideock Manor.

121.8 The arguments for and against the objectors' route were fully rehearsed at the inquiries, and they are summarised in paragraphs 91.1 et seq of this report.

121.9 I now give my assessment of the route.

121.10 It would certainly have the merit of greater equity, in the sense that it would take the bypass somewhere between The Lodge and Chideock Manor, rather than avoiding the Manor and demolishing The Lodge.

121.11 The edge of the carriageway would be 48m from the northern wall of The Lodge and 136m from the southern wall of the Manor. (91.7 and 91.8)

121.12 My concern is that the route would have a spoiling impact on both properties.

121.13 Whilst I fully accept that The Lodge faces south and has no significant aspect to the north, I do believe that with a major road so close, the property would be degraded to a point where its present charm, character and family value would be substantially lost.

121.14 Similarly, I believe that the route would severely degrade the Manor and its setting. The evidence before the inquiries and my observations during my accompanied site visit lead me to the inescapable view that the woodland which would remain would not protect the setting of the Manor and its historic and important church. In this respect, I find myself in agreement with the Listed Buildings Officer and the Countryside Officer of West Dorset District Council whose assessment is given in paragraph 91.17 above.

121.15 A contrary factor is that the objectors' route would take the road slightly further from the properties on the northern edge of Chideock. I have particularly in mind Winniford Close, St Giles' Close and Gate Farm House.

121.16 However, my feeling is that with the road on high embankment, the small extra distance would not significantly reduce the nuisance to the residents. In making that judgement, I do not underestimate the extent to which the published route would affect the tranquillity and aspect of the properties.

121.17 Taking account of all the competing and conflicting interests, I have come to the view that it would not be sensible to degrade both The Lodge and Chideock Manor. The listed Chideock Manor with its church is an important part of national and local heritage, and must, I believe, take precedence over The Lodge with its listed gazebo.

121.18 In those circumstances I conclude that the published route:

- a. provides the optimum horizontal alignment around Chideock, despite the adverse impact it would have on properties and the countryside; and
- b. is to be preferred to Objectors' Route No 9.

121.19 I believe that the adverse impact referred to above would be reduced if the height of the embankment was lowered.

121.20 I accept that it would not be practicable to reduce the embankment's size if the published route was built to dual carriageway standard. That is essentially because of the depth and alignment of the Chideock Hill cutting, and the need to keep the gradient within departmental standards.

121.21 However, with a single carriageway scheme there would, within departmental standards, be scope for some reduction in height.

121.22 In order not to create unmanageable problems, the extent of lowering would need to be limited and could not be as extensive as envisaged with Objectors' Route 12.

121.23 The main problems which would arise from lowering the embankment would be:

- * the need to dispose of surplus soil which would not be required for the embankment *Bunds!*
- * the need to lower North Road

121.24 However, provided the reduction in height was restricted to 1.5m (giving an embankment height over North Road of 7.0m) (see paragraph 98.13 above), I believe that these problems could be resolved without undue penalty.

121.25 I feel that the permanent advantage of a lower embankment would more than offset the problem of disposing of limited quantities of soil.

121.26 I believe that in these circumstances North Road should be lowered on its existing horizontal alignment by the construction of a retaining wall and the provision of the necessary drainage. I would not favour any diversion of North Road from its present line because of inevitable, although minor, collateral environmental damage.

121.27 Finally, I would add that I consider the impact of the scheme on those living on the northern edge of Chideock would be significantly reduced with a smaller scale (single carriageway) road built on a lower embankment. This would be complemented by the landscaping and extensive planting proposed.

122. PIECEMEAL APPROACH

122.1 Objection has been made to what is described as a piecemeal approach in considering whether the orders should be made. Objectors feel that all roads are inter-related and that it is misleading to consider one length of road in isolation from the regional network.

122.2 I accept that decisions in respect of one length of road can influence and affect another. Indeed, I think it is right in the case of the Chideock Morcombelake Bypass to take account of the carriageway standard of the lengths of road at either end. I believe it is also right to take account, as has been done, of other roads which might affect the bypass.

122.3 However, because of the nature of the traffic using the A35, and because of the substantial distance of the nearest alternative east-west route (the A303), I do not feel that there is significant potential for traffic to transfer from other roads to the bypass if it were built. For the same reasons there would not be potential for traffic to transfer from the existing section of road to other roads if the bypass were not built. (13.1, 16.3 and 43.9)

122.4 As a separate issue, I have considered whether the bypass would be likely to generate additional road traffic per se. Because of the rural nature of the road, I believe that this would be unlikely except to the extent of the bypass encouraging the economic development and additional employment sought by the local councils.

123. STANDARD OF CARRIAGEWAY

Introduction

123.1 The inquiries heard extensive evidence concerning the appropriate standard of carriageway of the proposed bypass.

123.2 The arguments are comprehensively rehearsed in paragraphs 46.1 et seq and 98.1 et seq of this report.

123.3 The standard of carriageway has necessarily arisen in my conclusions concerning issues such as traffic flows, accidents, the countryside, National Trust land, geology, footpaths, and the effect on villages and their economies.

123.4 Without repeating what has gone before, I now wish to address the issue of the standard of carriageway in its own right. For this purpose, I am assuming a single carriageway (WS2) bypass on the alignment of the published route, which alignment I have already endorsed.

123.5 The route is essentially the one which was advertised by the Highways Agency and subsequently became known as Objectors' Route No 16. See Appendix K. It would be marked out with climbing lanes for its entire length or virtually its entire length. It is fully described in Proof of Evidence PE 206. 1:2500 drawings of the route are at Document DT 96. Of the several detailed options, I am, in this report, referring to the one with no roundabout at Newlands and an at grade junction for Morcombelake to the west of the village.

Public Consultation

123.6 At the time of the public consultation, a single carriageway was envisaged and the question of a dual carriageway scheme did not arise. As a result of that, I believe that the consultation was of very limited value.

123.7 However, the inquiries, which are the subject of this report, sat for 70 days and attracted the fullest public participation. In those circumstances, I am content that any deficiencies in consultation prior to the design of the scheme have been largely made good.

Cost and Value for Money

123.8 The cost of the single carriageway scheme would be £4.11m less than the published route built to dual carriageway standard. However, the Highways Agency calculates that the net present value would be £2.2m (low growth) and £5.9m (high growth) lower than for the published route. (82.7 and 98.5)

123.9 I consider that the lower cost is an important factor in its own right.

123.10 With regard to the net present value, I believe that the difference, between that for the dual carriageway published route and a single carriageway equivalent, is distorted and exaggerated in respect of accidents for the reasons explained in paragraph 46.23 above. Quicker journey times are another factor which economically favours a dual carriageway route. However, higher speeds have the side effect of increased noise and pollution. These are not reflected in the net present value but need to be taken into account.

123.11 Nevertheless, overall, I accept that, in economic terms, a dual carriageway road would on the basis of the COBA calculation give better value for money.

Consistency

123.12 The contiguous end-on roads, which have recently been built, are single carriageway. Indeed, essentially, the entire A35 road between Dorchester and Honiton is single carriageway. I take the view that:

- * there is an advantage in consistency of standard
- * it would seem slightly extraordinary, in an otherwise single carriageway road between Dorchester and Honiton, to construct a length of dual carriageway road through the most sensitive stretch of countryside, including through National Trust inalienable land.

Related Issues

123.13 I have already indicated that I am satisfied that, compared with a dual carriageway route, a single carriageway would:

- * have less visual impact on the countryside
- * be less testing and demanding in geotechnical terms
- * require marginally less land
- * permit a western exit for Morcombelake
- * meet the requirements of Departmental Standard TD 20/85 and be within, or very close to, single carriageway flow design year criteria

General

123.14 For all the above reasons I conclude that the bypass should be built to a single carriageway standard.

123.15 However, there is one other important matter I must address.

123.16 The Highways Agency has made it clear that a key reason for its decision to choose a dual carriageway scheme was concern about the damage which would be done to a maturing landscape if in future years it proved necessary to upgrade a single carriageway route.

123.17 I have indicated that I do not consider the evidence points to the likelihood or probability of such an upgrading being necessary within the foreseeable future, or, even if it did, to such a large scale structure being acceptable.

123.18 However, I must emphasise that this is a defining issue, and if the Secretaries of State should take a different view to that expressed in the previous paragraph, then that would inevitably lead them towards supporting a dual carriageway bypass.

124. EFFECT OF THE PUBLISHED ROUTE ON FARMS

General

124.1 Twenty farms would be affected by the published route which would:

- * require a permanent landtake of 65.1 ha of agricultural land (CPO including modifications)
- * require a temporary landtake of 58.71 ha of agricultural land (CPO including modifications)

(22.1 et seq)

124.2 I am satisfied that all the agricultural land included in the compulsory purchase order would be required for the published route constructed to dual carriageway standard.

124.3 I consider that the core operation of all farms would be adversely affected, each to a greater or lesser extent; they would all suffer inconvenience and commercial disbenefit.

124.4 Obviously, even the distraction of the proposals for this scheme is damaging for those trying to operate a commercial enterprise.

124.5 Many of the objections raised in respect of farms and land relate to accommodation works and I am satisfied with the responses of the Highways Agency given in Part VI of this report.

124.6 Certainly, owners and tenants would rightfully expect adequate arrangements for accommodation works and prompt payment of compensation.

124.7 If the published route was built to single carriageway standard then marginally less land would be required.

124.8 I now consider those farms where the Highways Agency's response to the objection requires comment or where the farm would experience particular problems if the published route was constructed.

Manor Farm, Charmouth

124.9 Manor Farm, having just recovered from the upheaval and loss of land required for the Charmouth Bypass, now faces the prospect of a repeat of the experience.

124.10 During the course of the inquiries, modifications to the orders which would affect the farm were proposed by the Highways Agency. I am aware that the owners felt that they were given inadequate time to consider these.

124.11 However, as a result of discussions held between the owners and the Highways Agency, and as a result of additional modifications proposed to meet the wishes of the owners, I believe that the modifications are now acceptable to them. I am, however, entirely clear that that acceptance is within the context of the strongest possible objection to both the scheme in general and to the compulsory purchase order in particular.

Fulvens Home Farm, Morcombelake

124.12 I do not consider either the short term or long term arrangements proposed or envisaged by the Highways Agency in respect of this smallholding to be reasonable (vide paragraphs 65.7 et seq above).

124.13 The nature of the farm is the rearing and keeping of rare poultry. The land used for this purpose is densely populated by the poultry.

124.14 The toe of the 11m high and steep (1 in 3) embankment which would carry the bypass would be 20m from the front of the house.

124.15 The loss of land in relation to the total is extensive (65.9 and 65.10). The Highways Agency suggests that during the three year construction and landscaping period the poultry could be lodged or located elsewhere. Having visited the farm, I am aware of the close husbandry required and I am quite sure that the lodging idea is neither practicable nor sensible.

124.16 Once the bypass was constructed, the house would be dwarfed, dominated and overwhelmed by the structure.

124.17 I consider that if the scheme is to proceed the only equitable arrangement would be for the Agency to offer to acquire the property and land.

124.18 I note that if the published route was to be constructed to single carriageway standard, with a western exit for Morcombelake provided, then it would be necessary to demolish the farm house.

124.19 As demolition would require acquisition, it would, I believe, from the point of view of the owners, be preferable and more reasonable than the Highways Agency's current proposals.

Ship Farm, Morcombelake

124.20 Ship Farm would suffer considerably from the close proximity of the bypass and the loss of land and buildings.

- * the countryside in the area of the proposed bypass is of exceptionally high quality
- * the design and landscaping of the published route respect and reflect the quality of the countryside
- * the published route built to single or dual carriageway standard would have an adverse effect on both the countryside and the ecology of the area
- * it is desirable to provide a western exit for Morcombelake
- * it is desirable to lower the vertical alignment of the road to the north of Chideock
- * if the road is to be successfully assimilated into the countryside it is essential that the surface is dark coloured

126.3 The published route built to dual carriageway standard would have the following advantages over the route built to single carriageway standard:

- * it would have a higher COBA net present value
- * it would be operationally more efficient
- * it would be safer and offer greater accident savings
- * it would avoid any future need for upgrading

126.4 The published route built to single carriageway standard would have the following advantages over the published route built to dual carriageway standard:

- * it would be consistent in standard with the remainder of the A35 between Dorchester and Honiton
- * it would be cheaper by £4.11m
- * it could be more successfully assimilated into the countryside
- * it would have less visual and aural impact on the villages and on those using the countryside
- * it would take less land

- * it would have marginally lower impact on ecology and on agriculture
- * it would be geotechnically less demanding and less testing
- * it would facilitate the provision of a western exit for Morcombelake and thereby, inter alia, assist the village economy
- * it would facilitate the lowering of the embankment to the north of Chideock
- * it would facilitate the provision of a shared at grade crossing for Footpaths 8 and 9

126.5 I conclude that the published route built to single carriageway standard is the preferred standard because:

- * predicted design year traffic flows do not require a dual carriageway scheme
- * it is not likely or probable that the road would need to be upgraded in the foreseeable future
- * the sensitivity of the environment and the landscape makes it necessary that any route should have an acceptable and minimum impact on its surroundings. The published route built to single carriageway standard would better achieve this
- * taking all the factors into account, the balance of advantage lies with a single carriageway route

126.6 Because of its importance and special protection, I have given particularly careful consideration to the alignment of the route through the northern part of the National Trust's Golden Cap Estate. I have concluded that:

- * the decision of the National Trust to declare the land required for the published route as inalienable could not have taken account of all the information which is now available as a result of the inquiries
- * the information now available covers such matters as landscaping proposals, mitigation measures, accident rates, traffic flows, and the local economy (including the high level of local unemployment and the need for investment)

- * it is that information and those factors which would minimise the impact of the route and which offer compelling reasons for providing a complete bypass
- * in the light of the above information which has now become available, and because of the peripheral nature of the bypass and its distance from the coast, the National Trust would not be reasonable, and would be seen not to be reasonable, in sustaining an objection to the published route built to single carriageway standard
- * the National Trust was entirely reasonable in objecting to the published route built to dual carriageway standard. The Trust would be reasonable and be seen to be reasonable in sustaining that objection

General Summary

126.7 In reaching an overall conclusion it is necessary to balance the diverse and disparate factors which have been so exhaustively rehearsed in this report.

126.8 There have been many persuasive arguments put forward both for and against a bypass in general and for and against the published route in particular.

126.9 The more telling factors which must give cause for concern include:

- * the inevitable degradation of the finite and irreplaceable countryside and landscape
- * ecological damage and injury both to protected species and to the unprotected flora and fauna which have merit and are worthy of consideration and respect in their own right
- * the effect of the proposed bypass on a small but significant number of residents whose property and quality of life would suffer from the proximity of the new road
- * the upheaval and disruption which construction of the road and overall change would have on the local community

126.10 The important factors which favour a bypass include:

- * the need for a safer road, with a reduction in the human cost of deaths and injuries
- * relief from heavy and continuous traffic for those living in the villages, and a consequent significant improvement in the environment of most local residents
- * improved employment prospects and economic benefits resulting from the encouragement of local investment and the development of tourism potential

126.11 As I have made clear in outlining my conclusions, what is required is a scheme which is safe and operationally adequate but which is acceptable and which minimises the impact on people and the environment.

126.12 My overall view is that the provision of the published route built to single carriageway (WS2) standard would meet those criteria and would be in the public interest. Its safety, social, economic, and environmental benefits would outweigh its environmental, landscape, ecological and other disbenefits. This it would achieve by a clear margin.

126.13 Its construction should be authorised and funded.

127. THE ORDERS

General

127.1 Clearly, if the Secretaries of State decide that a bypass should not be provided, or that it should be provided on a different alignment to the published route, then the orders should not be made.

127.2 If they decide that the published route built to dual carriageway standard should be provided, then the line order, the side roads order, the detrunking order and the compulsory purchase order with the modifications sought by the Highways Agency (see below) should be made.

127.3 My views given below concerning the orders, like my recommendations contained in Part IX of this report, are based upon my overall conclusion that a single carriageway (WS2) bypass should be built on the alignment of the published route.

127.4 I must add the rider that the views given below must be subject to specialist legal and other advice on the technical aspects of making and modifying orders.

Line Order

127.5 I consider that the line order, with the modifications described below, should be made. It will be seen that the order and its plan make no reference to the carriageway standard of the road.

Detrunking Order

127.6 I consider that the detrunking order should be made.

Side Roads' Order and Compulsory Purchase Order

127.7 There are, I consider, two main options in respect of the side roads' order and compulsory purchase order.

127.8 The first is to make the orders with the modifications described below. The modifications would reflect Document DT 96 (1:2500 Drawings Nos D44/OR/83, D44/RL/243/A, D44/RL/244 and D44/RL/245).

127.9 The second option is not to make the orders and to prepare new draft orders incorporating the modifications described below. The new orders would reflect the drawings referred to in the previous paragraph.

127.10 The first option would have the merit of avoiding repetition of the statutory procedures which have been so costly and time consuming for both the objectors and the Highways Agency. In this respect, it is relevant to note that relatively few persons would be adversely affected by the modifications. However, the changes to the orders would be extensive, especially in the case of the compulsory purchase order, and the consultations necessary could be untidy and complicated.

127.11 On balance, and subject to the legal and other advice referred to above, I incline towards the second option i.e. not making the orders, especially in respect of the compulsory purchase order. My recommendations will, therefore, reflect that option.

127.12 I am in no doubt that new, replacement orders would need to be the subject of further public inquiries.

127.13 However, provided the line order was made (vide paragraph 127.5 above), such inquiries would exclude issues related to the need for the bypass and the alignment of the road. Certainly, there can be no dispute that both issues have been exhaustively and painstakingly explored by the inquiries already held.

128. MODIFICATIONS

General

128.1 The modifications which it would be appropriate to make to the orders would be dependent on the decision of the Secretaries of State concerning the provision of the bypass.

No Bypass

128.2 If a decision was made not to provide a bypass or to provide a bypass on another alignment then no orders would be made and the question of modifications would not arise.

Dual Carriageway Bypass

128.3 If a decision was made to endorse the published route, built to dual carriageway standard, as proposed by the Highways Agency, then, subject to the proviso which follows, the modifications sought by the Agency (vide paragraphs 33.1 - 35.6 above) should be made.

128.4 The important proviso is related to the fact that certain modifications to the compulsory purchase order involve the acquisition of different land even though the total area is not greater. In those circumstances before making such modifications to the compulsory purchase order I consider that it would be necessary and/or appropriate to consult with affected persons.

Single Carriageway Bypass

Line Order

128.5 If a decision was made to accept the conclusions of this report and endorse the published route built to single carriageway (WS2) standard, then in respect of the line order:

a. the modifications sought by the Highways Agency (vide paragraphs 33.1 - 33.3 above) should be made; and

b. modifications should be made (vide Document DT 96 (Drawings Nos D44/OR/83, D44/RL/243/A, D44/RL/244 and D44/RL/245)) to:

(i) delete the non-emergency slip roads and the Newlands roundabout,

(ii) provide a limited movement at grade junction with ghost islands west of Morcombelake at approximately chainage 3000 (vide paragraph 120.19 above),

(iii) provide tie in arrangements with the eastern end of the Charmouth Bypass, and

(iv) make other changes as required by the drawings.

Side Roads' Order and Compulsory Purchase Order

128.6 If a decision was made to accept the conclusions of this report and endorse the published route built to single carriageway (WS2) standard and to adopt the second option (vide paragraph 127.9 above), then no modifications to the draft side roads' order and draft compulsory purchase order would arise.

128.7 If, however, it was decided to adopt the first option (vide paragraph 127.8 above) then it would be appropriate to modify the draft side roads' order and the draft compulsory purchase order by making:

a. the modifications sought by the Highways Agency (vide 34.1 - 34.11 and 35.1 - 35.6 above) (except those affected by sub-paragraph b below),

b. the modifications necessary to reflect Document DT 96 (Drawings Nos D44/OR/83, D44/RL/243/A, D44/RL/244 and D44/RL/245).

129. CERTIFICATE IN RESPECT OF COMMON LAND

129.1 I am satisfied that the requirement for the common land would be unaffected by whether the published route was built to single or dual carriageway standard.

129.2 The compulsory purchase order would enable the Secretary of State for Transport to acquire 0.143 ha of common land. (22.3 et seq)

129.3 An area of 0.232 ha of non-common land would be acquired and provided in exchange. (22.4)

129.4 A plan of these areas is at Appendix F.

129.5 The Secretary of State for the Environment has given notice of his intention to issue an appropriate certificate in accordance with the provisions of section 19 (1) and (2) of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.

129.6 I am satisfied that:

a. the land which would be given in exchange, and which would become common land, is not less than the area of common land which would be taken,

b. it would be equally advantageous to those with specific rights of common and to members of the general public.

129.7 I am further satisfied that the common land which would be acquired and the land which would be given in exchange meet in full the requirements of section 19(1) (a) and (b) of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.

129.8 I am, therefore, in no doubt that the Secretary of State for the Environment may properly issue the certificate under section 19 (1) of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 of which he has given notice under reference DRA1/1077/761.

129.9 It would be appropriate to issue the certificate at the time of making the compulsory purchase order.

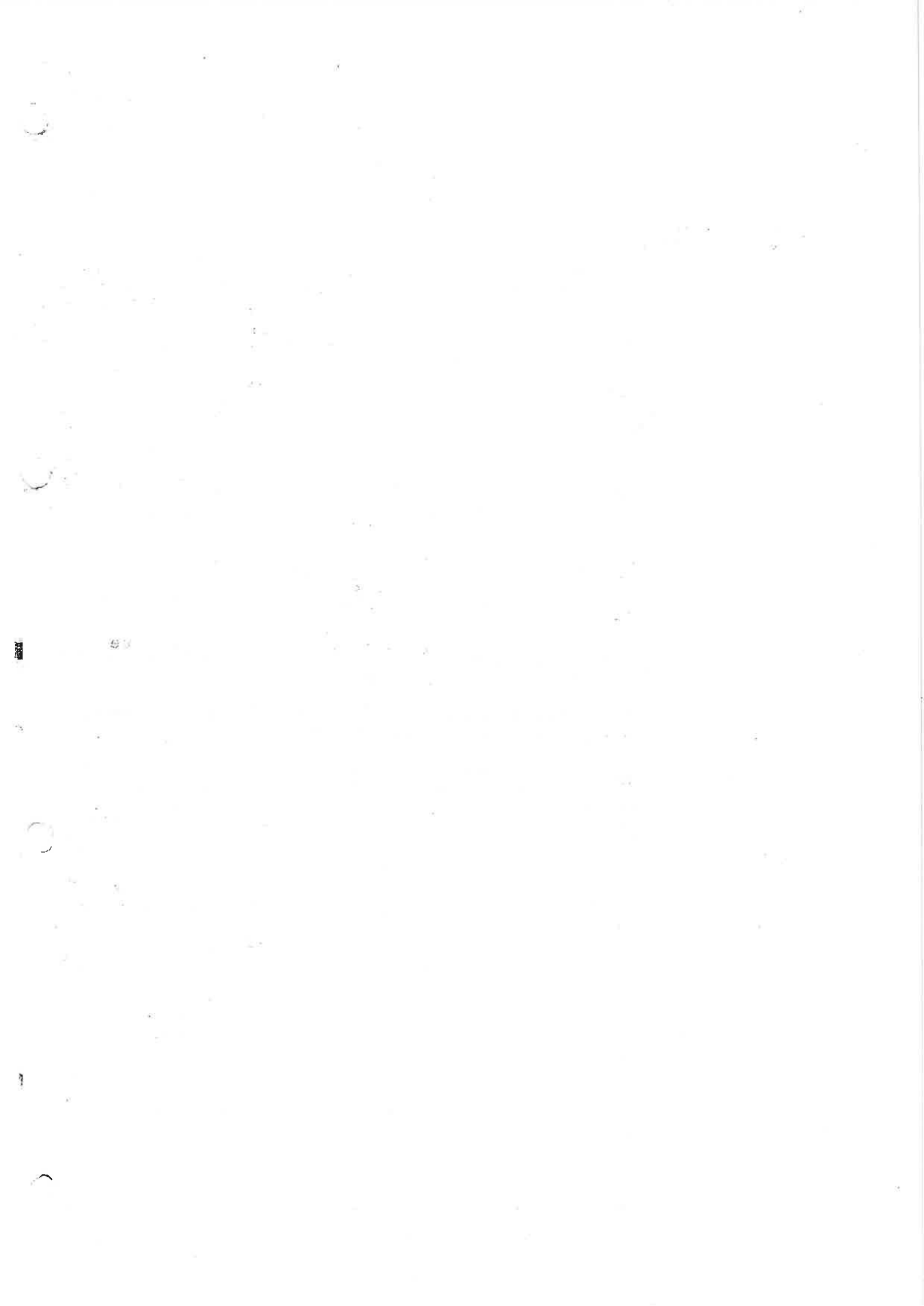
130. APPRECIATION

130.1 Finally, I would like to express my thanks to all who were involved in the inquiries.

130.2 I know that objectors were appreciative of the excellent facilities which the Highways Agency provided.

130.3 The care and lucidity with which supporters and objectors presented their evidence was impressive and reflected not only the prodigious amount of time, personal expense and effort which had been spent in preparation, but also a most creditable concern for the environment and the local area.

130.4 Advocates, officials, consultants, supporters and objectors were all extremely helpful and were unstinting in their willingness to provide the extensive data and information which I requested. My many demands were met with unfailing courtesy. I am exceedingly grateful to all who attended and participated in the inquiries.



PART IX . . . RECOMMENDATIONS

131. LINE ORDER

131.1 I recommend that the undermentioned order be made with the modifications described in paragraph 128.5 of this report:

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass and Slip Roads) Order 199

132. DETRUNKING ORDER

132.1 I recommend that the undermentioned order be made:

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass) (Detrunking) Order 199

133. SIDE ROADS! ORDER AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

133.1 I recommend that the undermentioned orders be not made:

The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass and Slip Roads Side Roads) Order 199


The A35 Trunk Road (Chideock Morcombelake Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order (No SW) 199

133.2 I further recommend that draft replacement orders be prepared and, in due course, published as described in paragraph 127.9 of this report.

134. CERTIFICATE IN RESPECT OF COMMON LAND

134.1 I recommend that the certificate in respect of common land at Eype Down, of which notice was given under reference DRA1/1077/761, be issued concurrently with the making of any replacement compulsory purchase order (vide paragraph 133.2 above).

I have the honour to be
Gentlemen
your obedient servant



JOHN MOORE