



## **REPORT TO PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

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**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State  
for Communities and Local Government**

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17 July 2007

## **PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (SECTION 20)**

### **REPORT OF THE EXAMINATIONS INTO THE MILLBAY AND STONEHOUSE, AND THE DEVONPORT AREA ACTION PLANS**

**Documents Submitted for Examination on 27 October 2006**

**Examination Hearings Held on 30 May 2007 at**

**The Council House, Royal Parade, Plymouth**

## **1. Introduction and Overall Conclusion**

1.1 The requirements of Section 20 (5) of the 2004 Act are:

- Whether the Development Plan Document (DPD) satisfies the requirements of Sections 19 and 24(1) of the Act;
- Whether the DPD is sound.

1.2 This report is a joint report on the two Area Action Plans (AAPs), and contains my assessment of them in terms of the above matters, along with my recommendations and the reasons for them. My report follows the AAPs' order, and under each principal issue I consider and conclude on the issue against the Tests of Soundness as set out in paragraph 4.24 of PPS12. My recommendations to make the AAPs sound are contained in the body of my report. I have also taken into account amended versions of the AAPs that the Council has submitted for my consideration. These contain minor editing changes and layout improvements but do not raise matters of soundness and do not alter the substance of the AAPs. Although they have not been subject to public consultation, I am satisfied those minor changes can be made without prejudice to the statutory process the Council is required to follow in order to adopt the AAPs. None of the changes require that the AAPs be subjected to a further Sustainability Appraisal.

1.3 My overall conclusion is that the AAPs are founded on solid evidence bases, and are sound provided the changes I recommend are made. With these changes, the AAPs will provide good implementation frameworks to allow the City to achieve its Vision. Proposal MS03 in particular will, if implemented, result in an outstanding improvement to the City.

## **2. The Procedural Tests of Soundness**

### **In relation to Tests of Soundness I, II and III**

2.1 The AAPs' are identified in the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), which was adopted in July 2005. I am satisfied that the AAPs have been prepared in accordance with the intended scope and the milestones in that document, and therefore the first Soundness Test has been met. The AAPs have also been prepared in compliance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted in July 2006. There is nothing to suggest that the Council has not fully complied with the consultation requirements of the 2004 Regulations. The second Soundness Test has therefore been met. Each stage of the AAPs' preparation has had a sustainability appraisal, and the submitted Plans have been subject to a satisfactory Strategic Environmental Assessment. The third Test of Soundness has therefore been met.

### **3. The Conformity, Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness Tests of Soundness**

#### **In Relation to Test of Soundness IV:**

- 3.1 Government guidance on what an AAP should include is contained in PPS 12, and in its Companion Guide. Essentially, an AAP should be a spatial plan that draws together the plans and programmes of all relevant bodies and authorities to provide the land use planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is contemplated, with a key feature being the focus on implementation. AAPs should identify the distribution of uses and their inter-relationships, including site specific allocations, and set the timetable for the implementation of proposals.
- 3.2 The Millbay and Stonehouse, and the Devonport AAPs are being produced to promote and guide significant development and change at key waterfront areas where there is already an active regeneration programme. The priority accorded by the Council to these AAPs is an appropriate reflection of the significant change that has occurred and will continue to occur.
- 3.3 I am satisfied that the AAPs are founded on robust and credible evidence bases. These comprise a series of background studies, notably the Community Planning Studies, Area Characterisation Studies and the Sustainable Neighbourhood Assessment. The AAPs define key issues, and contain clearly expressed Visions, which then lead to locally distinctive objectives or development principles to be expressed. These are consistent with the Core Strategy's approach to building a high quality, sustainable City. Proposals and Policies are then formulated to promote and guide development on major sites, and targets are set for the delivery of key components of change. In general terms, the Proposals and Policies acknowledge the plans and programmes of relevant bodies and authorities working in the areas concerned, and contain the most important development control criteria to enable planning applications to be determined.
- 3.4 Much of the AAPs are about providing new housing in the context of regenerating deprived parts of the City. I am satisfied that the AAPs conform to the detailed requirements of PPS3, summarised in paragraph 10. The implementation of the Proposals and Policies will achieve high quality, well designed housing built to a high design and environmental standards; there will be a large supply and a good mix of open market and affordable dwellings; those dwellings will be built close to the City Centre with good access by public transport to employment, community and shopping facilities. Importantly, it is expected that the AAPs will help deliver over 2,000 homes by 2016, all of which will be on previously developed land.
- 3.5 Sections in the AAPs contain Delivery and Implementation Plans that set down for each Proposal and Policy the implementation timescale, the body responsible for delivery, the delivery mechanism, funding, land and phasing issues. The AAPs also contain monitor and manage frameworks, and refer to the important role of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) in measuring the extent of success in delivering the Proposals in the plans. However, both AAPs will be sound if a Housing Trajectory is included, as advised by PPS3. I am satisfied that these do not introduce new information but merely present the information already in the AAPs in a more transparent way.
- 3.6 As for conformity with Regional Planning Guidance 10 (RPG10), the AAPs' Proposals and Policies for significant housing development accord with the RPG's strategy of strengthening the role and status of the Plymouth Principal Urban Area. With regard to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), the AAPs'

Proposals and Policies conform to that document, especially in relation to the need to build sustainable communities linked by a high quality public transport network.

- 3.7 In relation to Government guidance on how climate change should be dealt with in spatial plans, I am satisfied that the AAPs are fundamentally sound in that they essentially promote and guide the redevelopment of land in highly accessible and sustainable locations, supported by a High Quality Public Transport network. However to reflect the draft supplement to PPS1, which was issued after the AAPs were submitted for Examination, I support the Council's efforts to make sure that the AAPs are as compliant as possible with that guidance. Accordingly, I recommend the changes proposed by the Council to include criteria in the relevant Proposals and Policies to require a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy which will demonstrate how progress will be made towards achieving zero carbon development.
- 3.8 An additional general conformity issue that has arisen recently is in respect of EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna. The Council has undertaken Appropriate Assessments, as required by the Directive, of the possible impact of Proposals in the AAPs on Natura 2000 sites. These identified the need for the Proposals and Policies to include mitigation measures. I recommend that the necessary changes, as detailed below, are made.
- 3.9 In summary, I am satisfied that the AAPs are spatial plans that reflect national guidance on this matter. The AAPs are consistent with national planning policy, generally in relation to the content of such plans, and particularly with regard to the priority to be attached to achieving a step change in the supply of housing, built in a sustainable way. The AAPs have regard to other plans and strategies, and in particular they are in conformity with RPG10, the draft RSS and the adopted Core Strategy. In conclusion, Test of Soundness IV is met subject to the changes recommended below.

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| <b>R/1</b> | <b>Include Housing Trajectories in both AAPs</b>  |
| <b>R/2</b> | <p><b>Add to Proposals and Policies MS 01, MS 03 and MS 04; and to Proposals DP 01 and DP 06:</b></p> <p><b>"The preparation of a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy which will demonstrate how progress will be made towards achieving zero carbon development, as defined by Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM excellent standards. Any technical or financial impediments to such progress will need to be identified early by the developer, and they will be taken into account at the planning application stage"</b></p> <p><b>Support this with the text:</b></p> <p><b>"The Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>minimise energy consumption, use of renewables and decentralised/low carbon systems;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>provide an accessible choice of shade and shelter;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>minimise any adverse local environmental conditions;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>minimise any adverse effect on biodiversity and capacity for adaptation;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>provide for sustainable urban drainage and waste systems;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>provide for sustainable transport in line with PPG13.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>The Proposal is intended to encourage the move towards zero carbon development in a phased way. The costs and other</b></p> |

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|            | <b>implications of this response to climate change will emerge during the Plan period and will be taken into account by the Council in determining planning applications”.</b>  |
| <b>R/3</b> | <b>Add to Proposals DP 02 to DP 04:<br/>“Proposals should demonstrate how progress will be made towards achieving zero carbon development as outlined in the emerging “Code for Sustainable Homes” (Level 6), and all non residential buildings should seek to achieve BREEAM excellent standards”.</b>   |
| <b>R/4</b> | <b>Add to Proposals MS 07 and MS 11, DP 05, DP 07 and DP 08:<br/>“Proposals should demonstrate how progress will be made towards achieving zero carbon development as outlined in the emerging “Code for Sustainable Homes” (Level 5 [6 for MS 07])”.</b>   |
| <b>R/5</b> | <b>Add to Policy MS 08, and Proposals DP 09 and DP 13:<br/>“All non residential buildings should seek to achieve BREEAM excellent standards. Any residential development options should seek to achieve zero carbon development”.</b>   |
| <b>R/6</b> | <b>Add to Proposals and Policies MS 02, MS 05, MS 06, MS 09 and MS 10, and Proposals DP 10 to DP 12:<br/>“Development should seek to achieve BREEAM excellent standards”.</b>   |
| <b>R/7</b> | <b>Add to Proposals and Policies MS 01 to MS 07, MS 11 and MS 12; and to Proposals DP 01 to DP 09 and DP13:<br/>“Appropriate contributions will be required towards managing off site recreational impacts within Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC and Tamar Estuaries SPA”.</b><br><br><b>Add paragraphs to both AAPs:<br/>“There will also be a need to mitigate any negative impacts that the regeneration of (Millbay and Stonehouse) (Devonport) might have, particularly on the Natura 2000 sites around Plymouth. The detail of any developer contributions required will be set out in the Planning Obligations SPD”.</b> |

#### **In Relation to Test of Soundness V:**

- 3.10 There is no evidence to suggest that the AAPs are anything other than consistent with, and will help achieve the aims of, the Council's Community Strategy ("Plymouth City Strategy and Action Plan"). This Test of Soundness is therefore met.

#### **In Relation to Test of Soundness VI:**

- 3.11 The AAPs' Proposals seek to implement the principles of the adopted Core Strategy. The AAPs amplify Core Strategy Area Visions, and contain the appropriate level of detail to provide the necessary guidance for the determination of planning applications. This Test of Soundness is therefore met.

**In Relation to Test of Soundness VII:**

3.12 This Test of Soundness is concerned with ensuring that the AAPs' Proposals and Policies represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base. Some of the AAPs' Proposals and Policies reflect committed schemes, for example MS 01 and DP 01, and with most other Proposals and Policies there is no evidence to cause me to question the soundness of the plans. Indeed, there appears to be a large measure of agreement amongst all stakeholders that the AAPs are good plans and will achieve their Visions and Objectives. Consequently, there are only a limited number of issues that require my consideration. Taking Millbay and Stonehouse first and then Devonport, these are as follows:

**Millbay and Stonehouse AAP:**

**Policy MS 02 – The Grain Silo**

3.13 The Grain Silo is a significant landmark in the City generally and the Millbay area in particular. In my view, its current derelict condition is an eyesore, detracting greatly from the important entrance to Plymouth provided by the Continental Ferry terminal. Indeed, the entire surroundings to the Terminal are unprepossessing and unworthy of Plymouth. This entrance to Plymouth compares poorly with comparable facilities at Roscoff and Santander. MS 02 aims to bring the Silo back into a viable use, whilst acknowledging the constraints, especially access. The Policy contains a presumption that the Silo will be retained and converted and does not specify preferred uses. However, I consider that the Policy is too limited in scope and fails to consider the opportunity to achieve significant improvements to the transport infrastructure of the City.

3.14 Draft RSS Policy TR7 states that Local Development Documents should facilitate the growth of ports to provide improved passenger facilities. Core Strategy Policy CS 27 supports strategic infrastructure proposals to enhance Plymouth's connectivity by water as well as by other means. Yet, the AAP is silent on the possibility of improvements at the Ferry Terminal. The potential for such an improvement may exist by encouraging transport related uses to be considered for the Grain Silo, either by conversion or demolition and redevelopment. This could also achieve the much needed environmental improvement. MS 02 needs to be more proactive in this respect to be consistent with the Core Strategy and the draft RSS. I recommend the Policy be changed to achieve this, as detailed below.

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| <b>R/MS1</b> | <p><b>Change MS 02 to read: "The Council will support proposals for the re-use or redevelopment of the Grain Silo for uses that improve the facilities at the Continental Ferry Terminal and/or provide for other uses that are consistent with the regeneration objectives for Millbay. Proposals must achieve a significant improvement in the appearance of the Grain Silo or achieve a high quality design worthy of this important gateway to the City".</b></p> <p><b>Support this with the changed text:</b><br/> <b>Paragraph 5.17: "The Grain Silo is a significant landmark in Plymouth but its derelict state detracts from the entrance to the City provided by the Continental Ferry Terminal, and the Silo is a wasted asset. An innovative and creative approach is needed to reuse or redevelop the Silo, given that there are</b></p> |
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| <p><b>constraints, especially access, security and flood risk”.</b></p> <p><b>Paragraph 5.18: “Core Strategy Policy CS 27 supports improvements to transport infrastructure. The Grain Silo could offer the opportunity to improve passenger facilities at the Ferry Terminal whilst also achieving environmental enhancement at this important gateway to the City. A mixed use scheme incorporating hotel, office, retail and leisure uses may make such an improved facility more viable. Other schemes that are consistent with the regeneration objectives for Millbay will also be considered. Proposals will need to provide for good access by pedestrians, public transport as well as by private car. Flood risk must be assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures included. A pragmatic approach will be taken by the Council to achieve a high quality development”.</b></p> <p><b>Delete paragraphs 5.19, 5.20 and 5.21.</b></p> |
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### **Proposal MS 03 – Land Between Western Approach/Union Street and East Quay/Clyde Quay**

- 3.15 This Proposal aims to create a sustainable new neighbourhood that will incorporate a new boulevard with five to seven storey buildings, linking Millbay with the City Centre. It will be a mixed use community with around 1,300 homes, employment uses, offices, retail units, a hotel, and leisure uses. The Issues and Options stage considered the alternatives for the development in this area. I find that this is a very ambitious and exciting Proposal that will transform an area that is characterised by dereliction. It will open up the waterfront in a new way, and provide homes in a very sustainable and accessible location. The soundness issue raised is whether the Proposal sufficiently allows for a full and proper assessment of the impact of any tall buildings proposed on views of Plymouth Sound from other parts of the City.
- 3.16 There is no doubt that Plymouth’s waterfront location is one of its greatest assets. There are views of Plymouth Sound and the countryside on either side to be enjoyed from many parts of the City, and they contribute to the quality of life of City residents and to the character of various parts of the City and thus local distinctiveness. I saw that those views are not just from private houses and buildings but from parks and other public places. My tour of the Stoke and Devonport areas provided a good appreciation of the significance of such views and confirmed to me the importance of a full appreciation of views in formulating proposals for development on the waterfront.
- 3.17 Government guidance on design in PPS1, paragraph 36, and advice in the document entitled “By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice” (CABE/ODPM), emphasises the importance of ensuring that building design, including scale and height, responds to local context and reinforce local distinctiveness. The adopted Core Strategy, at Policy CS 02, responds to this challenge by stating that new development should be well designed to respect the character, identity and context of Plymouth’s historic townscape and landscape and in particular Plymouth’s unique waterfront, its moorland setting and the settlement pattern. Criterion 2 specifically requires important local and longer distance views to be protected by development proposals. Paragraph 4.20 requires planning applications for tall buildings to be accompanied by a thorough and detailed urban design analysis.

- 3.18 Whilst I do not suggest that the AAP's Proposals should routinely reiterate the Core Strategy provisions, I do consider in this case that there is a justifiable reason to strengthen MS 03, especially as there will be a need to balance the benefits of regeneration with the preservation of local character, including views of City wide importance. This could occur by acknowledging the sensitivity of the townscape in the areas surrounding Millbay and Stonehouse to any tall buildings that may be proposed in waterfront locations. Such an approach is already taken by proposal DP 06 at criterion 19, and there is a need for some consistency of approach in that respect.
- 3.19 Accordingly, I recommend that the AAP be changed by the inclusion of an additional Objective in Chapter 3, by additional supporting text, and by an addition to criterion 3 of MS 03, as detailed below. I am content that the Zone of Opportunity for Tall Buildings, as shown on the Proposals Map, should remain. This is because with the changes recommended below the onus will be quite clearly on those proposing development to demonstrate that the possible impact of tall buildings has been thoroughly examined. It will then be for the City Council to weigh the benefits and costs of such proposals at the planning application stage. To recommend that the Zone of Opportunity be altered at this point in the absence of such information would not be justified.

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| <b>R/MS2</b> | <p><b>Add a new Objective to Chapter 3: "To ensure that any development that takes place in Millbay and Stonehouse is designed to take into account views of Plymouth Sound, which are an important and stunning component of Plymouth's character".</b></p> <p><b>Support this with the additional text:</b></p> <p><b>"The views of Plymouth Sound from the higher parts of the City are an important and dramatic component of Plymouth's character and setting. The regeneration of Plymouth aims to capitalise on its waterfront character, and this means that those parts of the setting to the City that link it to the sea should have an added importance.</b></p> <p><b>By virtue of its low lying sea front location, the Millbay area is visible in views from many of the higher parts of the City. Much of the area, particularly around Millbay Docks, is currently derelict and is not an attractive environment. The AAP aims to dramatically improve that environment and to create a stunning and high quality waterfront. All development proposals, especially those including tall buildings, will need to show from where within the City the development might affect views of the Sound, how the development will have regard to the views, and how it will protect and enhance the setting of the City.</b></p> <p><b>More guidance on the approach to be taken by the Council and developers will be contained in the Design SPD, which will also contain details of the Tall Buildings Study."</b></p> <p><b>Add to criterion 3 of MS 03 by: "Proposals for tall buildings must also demonstrate that any impact on views of Plymouth Sound from the higher parts of the City has been thoroughly examined".</b></p> |
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### **Proposal MS 07 – Millbay Marina**

- 3.20 This Proposal relates to the vacant land next to the Millbay Marina which has been reserved for the completion of a larger scheme. The Proposal reflects a planning permission recently granted for 94 residential units but this permission has not been implemented at the time of writing my report.
- 3.21 This main issue discussed at the Hearings and at my site visit was whether the Proposal should be de-coupled from the planning permission to accommodate other schemes that may come forward for determination. I consider that there is merit in such an approach. Whilst the principle of the form of development promoted by the Proposal seems to have support from all stakeholders, the Proposal should allow scope for different designs and densities, car parking and public access possibilities to be considered by the Council and others with an interest in the outcome. It follows that I do not consider that the current wording of the Proposal is the most appropriate for all circumstances. I recommend that the Proposal be changed, and reference to the planning permission in the supporting text be deleted, in order to make this part of the AAP sound.

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| <b>R/MS3</b> | <p><b>Change Proposal MS 07 to read:</b><br/> <b>“The currently vacant land at Millbay Marina will be developed with at least 90 dwellings. Development proposals must demonstrate that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. A High quality design will be achieved, reflecting the site’s prominent position on the waterside, its seaward entrance to Millbay and its relationship to West Hoe;</b></li> <li><b>2. Public access to the northern side of the pier linked to the wider public realm in Millbay</b></li> <li><b>3. A high quality public realm to encourage public use of this part of Millbay</b></li> <li><b>4. An appropriate contribution to affordable housing within the Millbay and West Hoe area</b></li> <li><b>5. A design solution that mitigates the flood risk that currently exists and is likely to become worse in future years. In particular this should be addressed by avoiding any residential development at ground floor level.</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Delete paragraphs 5.53 to 5.55.</b></p> <p><b>Add supporting text: “This proposal concerns land adjacent to a relatively recent housing development. The land identified by Proposal MS07 is subject to several planning consents. It is important that the design of the proposal reflects the other regeneration work in Millbay and the opportunities it provides to connect with the neighbourhood of West Hoe”.</b></p> |
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### **Policy MS 08 – Union Street**

- 3.22 This Policy aims to reinvigorate Union Street and restore some of its significance and character as an urban street connecting the City Centre with Devonport and the existing and proposed new communities on either side. The evidence base for this Policy charts the rather sad decline of Union Street. However, the opportunity provided by the regeneration proposals for the waterfront areas now requires action to reverse this decline. Essentially, MS 08 seeks a more urban

scale of development fronting the Street to accommodate a mix of uses to add vibrancy to the street scene. The soundness issue that has been raised is whether the requirement for three to five storey buildings along the section of the Street between the Palace Theatre and Stonehouse Bridge will encourage or hinder the redevelopment that is needed.

- 3.23 I am satisfied that there is sufficient evidence, in the form of the Plymouth Sustainable Neighbourhoods Study and the SEA of Preferred Options, to support the objective for more intensive, mixed use development along the Union Street frontage. The requirement for three to five storey buildings is consistent with the architectural legacy in the Street, and with the objective to deliver a quality City, as elaborated in Section 4 of the Core Strategy. Indeed, Policy CS 02 requires development to respect the character and history of the area, and criterion 7 seeks a density of development appropriate to its context. The issue turns on whether the evidence on the viability of such a form of development on one particular site submitted by one stakeholder is sufficient to warrant changing the Proposal to remove or dilute the requirement for three to five storey buildings.
- 3.24 Although a detailed viability assessment of several mixed use development scenarios demonstrates that a requirement for a three to five storey building on 242 Union Street would result in no redevelopment taking place, this is far from a conclusive or persuasive argument to change the Policy, for two reasons. Firstly, the conclusion on viability is based on the vendor's asking price for the site which may or may not be too high but almost certainly does not appear to reflect the changed planning requirements for the site, as expressed in the Core Strategy and the AAP. Secondly, it would be quite wrong to let one viability assessment at one point in time determine the development plan requirements for Union Street until 2021. Such a decision would be short sighted.
- 3.25 I therefore conclude that the limited evidence on viability is insufficient to question the soundness of the Policy in relation to building heights in Union Street. The AAP should not be changed.

### **Devonport AAP:**

#### **Proposal DP 06 – Former Ministry of Defence Mount Wise**

- 3.26 This Proposal is for a high quality mixed use scheme on a site that has significant historic, architectural and aesthetic importance for the City. The Proposal is the latest manifestation of the intention to secure such a redevelopment as expressed in the First Deposit Local Plan 2001. A planning application for the redevelopment of the site has been determined but DP 06 should remain in the AAP to allow for the possibility that other schemes might need to be determined by the Council. The main soundness issue with the Proposal is the dwelling number specified.
- 3.27 I am satisfied that the proposal for a mixed use redevelopment scheme has not changed in essence since 2001. It is important now that the Proposal accords with Government guidance in PPS3 on densities and with the Core Strategy. Also, an increase in dwelling numbers, if it helps to make redevelopment more viable and more likely to be delivered, can be justified. I consider that it would be more consistent with Core Strategy Policies CS 15 and 16, and with the direction of affordable housing policy at local, regional and national levels, if "at least" replaces "in the region of" before the 300 dwellings figure specified. This would reflect the net area of 6.7 hectares that is available for development at Mount Wise once important historic and amenity areas are excluded. Especially important amongst these is the maintenance and enhancement of the "Green Arc", which is the subject of Proposal DP 15. Consequential minor changes and updating of information, as detailed below, are also recommended.

3.28 With these changes the AAP will be sound and thereby provide the appropriate framework for the Council to determine planning applications for specific redevelopment schemes as and when they come forward. Many of the concerns raised at the Examination need to be addressed within this framework and not by overly detailed prescription in the Proposal in the AAP.

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| <b>R/D1</b> | <p><b>Change the second criterion of DP 06 to read: "at least 300 dwellings, of a mix of house types and sizes and of which at least 50 per cent should be houses, at least 90 should be affordable and at least 50 built to Lifetime Homes standard; (in determining the actual number of dwellings to be accommodated on the site, the proposals will need to be tested against all the criteria identified below)".</b></p> <p><b>Change criterion 3 of DP 06 to read: "Development in the context of a Conservation Plan for the site, and having regard to the Devonport Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan".</b></p> <p><b>Add 5.29a to read: "The critical issue concerning this site is not the total amount of development but to ensure that whatever development is proposed respects the character of the site. Hence, the numbers of dwellings that can be accommodated on the site should be tested against all the criteria set out in the Proposal and, if all the criteria can be met, the eventual number may exceed the 300 dwellings specified in the Proposal. The density of development would clearly need to be compatible with the creation of an attractive living environment, as well as being complementary to the quality and characteristics of the site and its surroundings";</b></p> <p><b>Add a criterion to read: "a financial contribution towards the provision of education infrastructure";</b></p> <p><b>Include "in the region of" before 7,500 sq m in the first bullet of DP 06;</b></p> <p><b>Change tables on pages 53 and 54 to reflect updated information on delivery;</b></p> <p><b>Remove the reference to a maintenance contribution on page 57;</b></p> <p><b>Include reference to the demolition of HMS Vivid in paragraph 5.32;</b></p> <p><b>Remove reference to the Vision Diagram being for illustrative purposes;</b></p> <p><b>Amend the Proposals Map to include in the Proposal the small parcel of land immediately south of the words Mount Wise (currently uncoloured).</b></p> |
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3.29 In conclusion I find that the AAPs Proposals and Policies are the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and are

founded on robust and credible evidence bases. Test of Soundness 7 is therefore met subject to the changes recommended above.

**In Relation to Test of Soundness VIII:**

- 3.30 The AAPs contain adequate descriptions of the monitoring framework using the Annual Monitoring Report, and contain housing delivery timescales. I am satisfied that Soundness Test 8 is met.

**In Relation to Test of Soundness IX**

- 3.31 The AAPs promote and provide for a significant degree of change mainly by virtue of the Proposals for residential development. To a certain extent, each of these is independent of the rest, and there is therefore sufficient flexibility in the AAPs in the sense that the Plan does not require implementation of all the Proposals and Policies for success. I am also satisfied that the Proposals and Policies in the AAPs are sufficiently flexibly worded to enable them to provide a robust and consistent framework for considering planning applications. This Test of Soundness is therefore met.

**Overall Conclusion**

- 3.32 I therefore conclude that, with the recommended changes in this report, the AAPs satisfy the requirements of s20 (5) (a) of the 2004 Act and the associated Regulations, **are sound** in the context of s20 (5) (b) of the 2004 Act, and meet the tests of soundness in PPS12 (paragraph 4.24).

*Douglas Machin*

**Inspector**