

12. Issues and Options responses to: City Centre Area Action Plan

Table 12: Summary of responses to the City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options.

Number expressing concern	6
Number expressing support	8
Number of other comments	23
Total	37

12.1. Comments in support of the proposed options

- 12.1.1. There is strong support for the vision for the city centre, but some concern about the development of tall buildings. The need for more 'prestige' retailers is noted – perhaps John Lewis?
- 12.1.2. Support for the retention of smaller, specialist shops. There should be more quality housing, probably apartments, within the city centre to avoid the area looking deserted at night. This would encourage the opening of restaurants in the area. Western Approach needs to be narrowed or improved with tree planting, and more surface level crossings or improve the existing crossings.
- 12.1.3. The Plymouth Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the principle of getting the city centre right.
- 12.1.4. SWRDA supports the regeneration of the city centre – including the identification of opportunities for mixed-use development.
- 12.1.5. Plymouth and South West Co-operative Society broadly supports the vision for the city centre, in particular the run-down areas to the west. Colin Campbell Court would be suitable for a new food store, which would act as a catalyst for regeneration in this area. PSW also supports proposals to improve the railway station in order to increase its focus as a major transport interchange. PSW would support the re-introduction of traffic in the centre outside shopping hours. It also supports the principle of increasing residential use to increase activity outside shopping hours. PSW supports PCC's wish to vacate and redevelop the civic centre site, but believes that PCC should maintain its presence in the city centre.

However, PSW is concerned about the lack of detail given in relation to car parking required on the key opportunity sites 3,4 and 6. In order for the city centre to remain prosperous, adequate levels of car parking must be provided.

- 12.1.6. Plymouth City Centre Company strongly supports the vision for the city centre, but the vision should specifically acknowledge the economic importance of the city centre, as its primary role will continue to be retail. The delivery of the vision is reliant on major investment in transport infrastructure – the car will remain vital to the city centre's health. The concept of a 24-hour city centre is supported, although there should be a

focus on restaurants and cafes rather than drinking establishments. The city centre needs to diversify, but the retail offer needs to continue to improve.

Particular issues to consider include:

- The need for modern retail facilities – larger shop units and covered streets are essential.
- Could be a role for ‘mews style’ streets leading off the main streets to provide central space for independent specialist retailers.
- The continuation of landscaping along Armada Way must be varied to avoid monotony and to soften the architecture.
- Out-dated street furniture and lighting should be replaced.
- More residential accommodation is supported, but this needs to be phased to ensure that accommodation is of a high quality.
- There needs to be high quality short stay car parking to serve all parts of the city centre. The managed reintroduction of the car into the city centre is supported.
- The introduction of a conservation area will frustrate development, but new iconic buildings should be encouraged.
- Colin Campbell Court needs to be redeveloped in line with the Mackay vision.
- The introduction of innovative new uses of public space is supported.
- New office accommodation will help to develop the city centre economy, but the relocation of the civic centre would be a serious economic blow.

12.2. Concerns raised

- 12.2.1. There is concern that people will not shop in the city centre unless more free parking places are provided, lighting is improved, and more wind protection is provided.
- 12.2.2. Greening the ring road will cause traffic problems.
- 12.2.3. There is concern about reintroducing traffic into the city centre outside traffic hours as it could encourage drinking and driving.
- 12.2.4. The encouragement of an ‘evening economy’ may bring more crime and vandalism to the city centre.
- 12.2.5. There is no mention of cycling as a form of transport in the leaflet. This urgently needs to be addressed.
- 12.2.6. There is concern about plans for residential development in the city centre and for high-rise development. The redevelopment of the civic centre would provide an opportunity for new homes, however there is concern that the Mackay Vision has only now been put out for public consultation.
- 12.2.7. Do not destroy the city centre; it is a good example of architecture and planning. Make progress with refurbishing the Civic Centre. Retain good car access so people will still want to visit.
- 12.2.8. The Environment Agency is concerned that new development is carried out on a sustainable basis, and that measures are taken to reduce the risk of pollution, to reduce waste production and water and energy consumption and to plan for and manage development on contaminated land. Development site 3 is in a zone 2 floodplain and appropriate measures need to be taken.

12.3. Other comments

- 12.3.1. Armada Way needs to be conserved.
- 12.3.2. Concerns about crime/community safety issues related to increased night time use of the city centre.
- 12.3.3. Development around the railway station needs to work with the transport strategy.
- 12.3.4. The needs of parents should be considered regarding developments in the public realm.
- 12.3.5. Diversification of retailing should consider the many residents on limited incomes.
- 12.3.6. Changes to the city centre need to include a review of the availability of public open space, and the possibility of increasing it.
- 12.3.7. When considering the relationship with the University, it may be appropriate to include the Plymouth College of Art and Design and Marjohns.
- 12.3.8. Bretonside bus station needs to be included in this Area Action Plan.
- 12.3.9. Royal Parade could be improved like Annecy in France – with no safety island for pedestrians. When light red shows four lanes of traffic stop and pedestrians cross whole road at once. The new pedestrian crossings around the University/Library/Drakes Circus area are very welcome, but the crossings described above with no safety island is a better system.
- 12.3.10. Query about when the Staples building will be demolished.
- 12.3.11. Query about why a two-storey extension has been agreed on the well designed Barclays Building in Princess Square.
- 12.3.12. How far does the Council wish to take Mr Mackay's mini-Manhattan into the city blocks? Has security been considered?
- 12.3.13. Ability to protect older buildings that are not Listed, for example the Mothercare Art Deco frontage.
- 12.3.14. Plans for the future of Drakes Reservoir?
- 12.3.15. Would a large tower, central to the city, be beneficial in attracting visitors?
- 12.3.16. Is there a vision of coffee being served in the vast new area by Dingles?
- 12.3.17. Comment on the provision for new car parks for the new residential developments.
- 12.3.18. Are there plans to continue the style of the newly developed area of Armada Way and remove the existing green areas and winding walkway?
- 12.3.19. Local architects who have local knowledge should be employed. Work in partnership with the University, but do not let them dominate.
- 12.3.20. Encourage the use of more sustainable transport, and reduce the number of spaces in car parks.
- 12.3.21. The views of existing residents need to be considered. They already have problems finding spaces to park near their homes. Any new development should allow at least one car parking space per flat.
- 12.3.22. Support for the creation of a 24-hour economy, but new dwellings need to be soundproof.

- 12.3.23. The Plymouth Conservative Group Forum supports the Mackay Vision in broad terms but has some concerns about:
- The impact of the redevelopment of Colin Campbell Court on the Pannier Market. In particular, any redevelopment must include parking space for the Pannier Market, and must complement it.
 - The 'wind tunnel' effect along Armada Way and the need to shield pedestrians from the elements, perhaps with some covered areas.
 - Any plans to further concrete over Armada Way. It must remain a green space for pedestrians.
 - All new developments must be built to high standards of design.
 - The Civic Centre should remain where it is.
 - Traffic restrictions along North Hill will cause congestion and may be fatal for the vitality of the city centre.
 - Development site 7 should be clarified as to which site is referred to – there needs to be full and open consultation on this.