

Appendix A Planning Policy Review

It is important to recognise that the planning system is currently undergoing significant reform:

- At the strategic level, Structure Plans are being abolished and Regional Planning Guidance being replaced with 'Regional Spatial Strategies';
- Local plans making way for slimmed-down criteria-based 'Local Development Frameworks';
- 'Action Plans' are to be prepared at the neighbourhood level and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Key planning policy documents operating at national, regional, City-wide and local level area summarised below.

National guidance

Existing national guidance of particular relevance is set out in the following Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's):

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 1
General Policy and Principles (DETR, February 1997)

This forms the central plank of the planning system and emphasises the importance of urban regeneration and the reuse of previously developed land in promoting sustainable development. It establishes that economic development and mixed-use schemes should be compatible with sustainability objectives. There is a strong emphasis on high quality design, and indeed it states that "good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process..." This is supported by the publication *By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System* (CABE and DETR, 2000), which is a companion guide to PPG 1, and further reinforced in the *Urban Design Compendium* (English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000).

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 3
Housing (DETR, 2000)

This identifies the need to widen housing opportunity and choice and to maintain the supply of housing. It states that local authorities should "plan to meet the needs of the whole community" in pursuance of objectives to create more sustainable patterns of development. This involves promoting the use of brownfield land, high densities (30-50 dwellings per hectare net is suggested), improved accessibility to community services and public transport. Limits to off-street parking are also advocated.

The guidance notes that economic growth should not be frustrated by poor housing supply - and again there is a heavy emphasis on quality design - a message further reinforced in *By Design: Better Places to Live* (CABE and DETR, 2001), a companion guide to PPG 3

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 4
Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms

This emphasises the need for development to take into account the locational demands of businesses and wider environmental objectives. Encouragement is given to brownfield sites - especially those that minimise the need to travel (particularly by car/lorry).

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 6
Town Centres and Retail

Development promotes development in town centres. The need for compatible mixed uses and high quality of design is promoted. A sequential test is included for appraising the appropriateness of locations for retail, employment, leisure and other key town centre uses. A range of criteria evaluating out of centre developments is provided.

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13
Transport

This establishes the principle of "planning land use and transport together in ways which enable... less need to travel." It seeks to reduce the number of motorised journeys and encourage walking, cycling and public transport - and considers this in relation to the sustainable provision of housing and employment sites. The focus on sustainable transport provision that seeks to lessen the potentially negative impacts of the car is further emphasised in:

- *Places, Streets and Movement* (DETR, 1998); and
- *Paving the Way* (CABE and ODPM, 2002)

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15
Planning and the Historic Environment

This identifies the importance of protecting historic buildings and enhancing conservation areas.

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 16
Archaeology and Planning

This provides guidance on how archaeological remains should be preserved or recorded.

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 17
Sport, Open Space and Recreation

This emphasises the importance of public realm design and management for achieving regeneration and attracting inward investment.

In terms of economic development, the White Paper 'Our Competitive Future' also provides an important reference point in emphasising the importance of planning for 'clusters' or networks of knowledge driven companies.

Regional guidance

Regional Planning Guidance 10 Regional Planning for the South West establishes a broad regional development strategy up to 2016 and beyond and provides an overall spatial framework. The Regional Planning Body for the South West is responsible for its implementation, monitoring and review.

Plymouth is identified as the main urban centre in the west of the region where there is a continuing need to diversify the City's economic base. It advocates the promotion of measures to support and promote investment in the City and the creation of a clear programme to phase in new industries and reduce dependency on the Dockyard. It highlights the need to balance housing provision with economic, social and environmental objectives. Policy SS17 relates to Plymouth and seeks to:

- promote employment investment and economic regeneration - exploiting scenic and historical advantages and capitalising on its location as the gateway to the European Objective 1 Area - by investing in environmental improvements, public transport and major employment growth.
- Encourage investment that supports diversification of the City's economy and strengthening of its role as primary commercial centre for the sub-region.
- Improve links to surrounding areas that benefits wider economic investment.
- Invest in major public transport infrastructure.
- Support development of brownfield land (to higher densities where appropriate) and existing building conversion.

Policy EC:3 calls for a wide choice of employment provision to meet local business needs and new investment. These should include targeted strategic and local sites for business clusters with growth potential, training and links to education. Devonport meets the sustainable development criteria provided, including access by public transport.

Policy HO 6 supports the need to provide a mix of housing types and tenures.

County policy

The Devon Structure Plan establishes the county-wide planning framework. The 'First Review' draft is the most recent up-date and was adopted in February 1999. It plans for the years 1995 - 2011.

The Plan seeks the concentration of development in main centres such as Plymouth, with housing built at the highest density compatible with the local area. Adequate levels of affordable housing should be provided based on an assessment of need. It establishes Plymouth as an 'Area of Economic Activity' and calls for a diversification of employment provision to offset the loss of jobs at Devonport Dockyard. The City's waterfront areas are highlighted for their significant potential.

This plan is currently updated, with the emerging Devon Structure Plan relating to the period 2001 - 2016.

City Council Policy

Devonport Development Framework has been prepared so that it can be corporately adopted by the Council as a key partner in the delivery of many of the project proposals. The links to the key planks of City Council strategy are clear.

Plymouth's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (2002 - 2007), for instance, establishes the basis for action plans to be developed for individual neighbourhoods to co-ordinate policy and action at the local level. It has been developed to enable the City, through Plymouth 2020 Partnership as the Local Strategic Partnership to address deprivation and social exclusion:

"To ensure people living in the most disadvantaged parts of the city benefit from a better quality of life and at least receive a quality of service and opportunity equal to other parts of the city and elsewhere in the country."

Devonport is identified as a priority neighbourhood. It is expected that this will be embraced in the emerging **Plymouth City Strategy**, which is also being prepared to guide the co-ordinated delivery of Council services.

The **City of Plymouth Local Plan** establishes the formal planning policy context and was adopted in 1996. The Plan is currently being reviewed. The most recent First Deposit draft was prepared in December 2001 for the plan period 1995 - 2011. It adopts the Local Development Framework format and once finalised, it is intended that the plan period will extend to 2016.

Objective 1 of the Plan is *"to develop Plymouth as an outstanding Regional Centre for the South West and as an international centre for knowledge and learning, tourism and culture."* Within this context, Devonport is identified as one of the priority "Strategic Opportunity Areas" where residential and commercial led regeneration will be promoted.

A series of thematic policies set out in the plan are relevant in overall terms, but of particular interest are the specific allocations relating to sites within Devonport, thus:

- South Yard / Granby Way (proposal 46), South Yard / Chapel St / Duke St (proposal 47), Pottery Quay (proposal 48), Granby Green / Park Avenue / St Aubyn's Road (proposal 49), MoD Mount Wise (proposal 50), 1a - 8d Mount Street and 1-221 Ker Street (proposal 54) are all identified for differing forms of mixed use development
- Duke Street (proposal 52), James Street / Bennett Street / Mount Street (proposal 53), Ker Street (evens) and Monument Street (1-69) (proposal 55) Duke Street (49-83) (proposal 56) and Duke Street / Curtis Street (proposal 57) are all identified for housing redevelopment.
- Picquet Barracks identified for residential or mixed use (proposal 51)

In addition the Local Plan identifies:

- Brickfields for sports development (proposal 58).
- The South Yard Heritage Area for heritage-based regeneration (proposal 45)

- The following "Greenscape areas" retained as public open space where development on or adjacent to these sites is prevented where this would have a negative impact:

- Devonport Park
- Land off the Devonport Hill / Richmond Walk junction
- Land south of Mount Wise
- Morice Square (car park)
- Granby Way Green
- St Joseph's Primary School playing field
- Land around the southern end of James Street
- Mount Wise gardens
- Mount Wise Primary School playing field
- Cumberland Gardens

- Devonport Conservation Area around George Street for enhancement
- The Devonport Park Conservation Area for boundary review.
- Marlborough Street, Cumberland Street and George Street as "Local Shopping Centres".

It is anticipated that each of the above designations is reviewed in the light of the Devonport Development Framework and augmented with additional project proposals contained in this report.

As part of the Local Plan updating process, a series of Interim Planning Statements (IPS) have been prepared which are of relevance to Devonport, including IPS 3 'Affordable Housing'.

The Local Transport Plan

The Plymouth LTP for 2001-2006 sets out the policies, objectives, strategies and an associated programme of transport works over the next three years.

For the Devonport area, the LTP identifies:

- The need to improve accessibility to employment opportunities
- The poor use made of rail infrastructure and local stations
- Low car ownership levels and the need for quality public transport

It supports transport proposals contained within the Devonport Urban Village Plan. Areas of suggested action are improved access and services to local rail stations and implementation of improved bus priority between Torpoint and the City Centre. A supporting document to the LTP indicates that the potential for an LRT system may be explored which could serve Devonport.

In addition to public transport strategies others of particular relevance to the study area included within the LTP are those for Pedestrians, Cycling and Safer Journeys to School (SJTS).

The Pedestrian and Cycle Strategies identify the importance of audits of all proposals and policies to ensure the needs of cyclists and pedestrians are considered.

The Waterfront Walkway, part of the South West Coastal Path and a footpath linking Central Park to Mount Wise that terminates at the south end of James Street are both shown as part of the network of recreational footpaths in Plymouth.

A strategic cycle network for Plymouth includes a route from the Torpoint Ferry, running through Devonport Park skirting the north east edge of the Brickfields area to Stonehouse Bridge and the city centre.

The LTP stresses the need for demand management through planning (PPG13) - limiting travel demand through considered location of new developments and the provision of access arrangements.

The SJTS strategy seeks to minimise the school run by car - a major element of which is the development of School Travel Plans. These

would be based on an understanding of existing travel behaviour and safety fears and designed to change travel behaviour in favour of sustainable modes.

Transport and Social Inclusion

Of relevance to the LTP is a report issued in June 2003 by the Government's Social Exclusion Unit entitled "Making the Connection: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion". This emphasises how transport problems can act as a significant barrier to social inclusion, limiting access to work, learning, healthcare, foodstores and social activities. It notes that:

- A framework of "Accessibility Planning" will be a key element in the new round of LTP's from 2006 onwards, ensuring accessibility problems are identified and action plans for solving them developed
- National policy changes across a range of government departments to enable improved public transport and better land use planning taking account of accessibility in making decisions, safer streets and improved specialist support to help people get to work, learning, healthcare and food shops.

This is very much in line with the emerging Development Framework for Devonport.

Other local guidance

It is intended that once adopted, Devonport Development Framework will be backed by more detailed design guidance for the whole area, which could take the form of Design Codes, and series of detailed site-specific Development Briefs to provide the basis for detailed planning applications.

These will supersede current design guidance contained in Devonport regeneration: Draft Design Guide publication, prepared in June 2001, and adopted as supplementary planning guidance (SPG). Planning Briefs also currently exist for Pottery Quay and James Street / Bennett Street, adopted as SPG, and should be re-evaluated within the context of the DDF.

Existing planning consents

A series of detailed planning applications / approvals need to be taken into account, namely:

- The mixed tenure housing proposal for Cornwall / Cannon Street soon to be developed by Devon and Cornwall Housing Association.
- Redevelopment of Cumberland Barracks for 24 social rented homes by Sarsen Homes Housing Association and Midas, currently under construction.
- The planning application for the mixed-use redevelopment of Pottery Quay has been submitted by Rock Eagle developers and is pending determination.
- The mixed tenure housing redevelopment scheme for James Street / Bennett Street which it is expected will soon be submitted for planning approval.
- Redevelopment for housing of the New Pier Inn on James Street which has been approved.