

Chapter 12 Development Principle 9: Developing employment opportunities

One of the key purposes of the Development Framework is to help create a thriving, sustainable neighbourhood economy - both to ensure that there are suitable, good quality, well-paid job opportunities available to Devonport residents and to create an area where jobs and businesses can generate the wealth and investment which will support the area into the future, without further public sector intervention. Through the Development Framework, Devonport should become a popular place that will attract and retain people to live and spend locally; attract and retain people with skills to work in local businesses or set-up new enterprises; and attract and retain investment in local businesses, premises, skills and infrastructure.

Key economic development issues identified by local people are:

Economic development issues identified by local people (source: PCM Theme Day)

- Positive options to earn a reasonable income are not available - leading to crime and an underground economy
- Poor job opportunities for young people mean that they leave
- High cost of everyday items for those on limited incomes
- Low wages lead to low self-esteem
- Low aspirations leads to jobs with low security
- Lack of awareness of local business support is having a negative impact on existing and potential employers and start-up businesses
- Poor economic infrastructure and inappropriate variety of businesses
- People do not know enough about Devonport and its businesses
- Lack of access to new business venues
- Little BME representation within business community
- Low level of successful businesses and high level of empty premises reinforce poor perceptions
- Those with higher skills and qualifications move out
- Few good food outlets with affordable prices
- Few culturally specific products for BME community
- Difficult to get on ladder of homeownership when income is spent on rent and other necessities
- Inconsistent access to crèche facilities or wrap around childcare when accessing health and other appointments
- Limited interest of High Street Banks

The DDF supports the Key Outcomes and Objectives that have been identified to tackle these issues, which are:

DRC target

To increase levels of working age residents in economic activity to above the Plymouth average
(DRC Key Outcome 2)

DRC Objectives

- To create alternative supportive employment opportunities through the development of an innovative local social economy and intermediate labour market, start-up grants and easy in/out leases
- Establish the potential for tourism development and transport linkages using sustainable modes of transport including the waterfront
- Enhance and develop better access into and out of Devonport linking key employment growth areas
- Improving access to and opportunities in the mainstream labour market through job links, employment brokerage and community transport
- Support for self-employment and local entrepreneurial activity through support for new employment sites, which attract mobile investment and facilitate local enterprise
- Secure new jobs by creating the conditions which encourage private sector investment in new or expanding businesses and commercial activities
- Improve the contribution of Devonport to the economy of the City as a whole through the development of land and buildings at South Yard, Mount Wise and other significant sites
- Create a sustainable commercial and retail centre by attracting investment in new or refurbished shopping facilities and services within it.
- Community owned businesses and other community facilities

It is also important to note the importance of other DRC Key Outcomes and Objectives - for example, employment objectives will depend significantly on the ability to deliver appropriate training initiatives - and of course the ability of local residents to access good, well-paid employment will be a fundamental driver of regeneration of the area.

Integrating the DDF and employment strategy

The DRC has recently commissioned work on an Employment Strategy for Devonport, which will provide a full strategy and action plan to support the development of the thriving local economy, the initiatives required to help residents into employment (both in Devonport and elsewhere in the City), and to support the growth of local businesses and employment. It will also include measures to maximise the economic opportunities for residents and businesses provided by all the projects to be pursued within the Development Framework, including construction projects, and opportunities to establish new social or community enterprises and co-operatives to serve the area. This Employment Strategy will therefore provide much of the practical detail necessary to translate the economic objectives of the DDF and DRC into reality.

The physical transformation of Devonport which is planned through the DDF will ensure that:

- the overall scheme provides the appropriate structure and location of economic growth for a sustainable neighbourhood economy;
- Sites and premises will be made available which will
 - provide a range of employment opportunities (and access to employment opportunities) for existing and new Devonport residents
 - provide sites and premises to accommodate existing and new Devonport businesses
 - provide sites, premises and business/employment opportunities to support special initiatives, including managed workspace/incubator units and opportunities for social enterprises;
- A range of opportunities can be explored for linking job creation and training with improved lifelong learning facilities.

The new Devonport economy

The new Devonport economy will have a much larger and broader economic base than the present economy which is largely focussed on local shops and services, along with the range of public sector service and administrative functions found in schools, social services, housing, health, etc.. Compared to an existing resident population of over 6,000 people, over 700 new additional jobs (FTEs - full-time equivalent jobs) will be added through the DDF (and potentially more than 1,200 jobs in the longer term if other development opportunities are taken up), to more than match the reduction in unemployment and growth in working population of the area.

The new economy will include growth in each of the existing sectors, particularly through the investment in new education, health and retail facilities, but will also extend employment and business opportunities by providing more retail, leisure, entertainment and tourism facilities drawing trade from Devonport residents who will have a better income, and from residents and visitors from outside the area. In addition, employment opportunities will be found in new office and workspace accommodation which will be provided to meet market demand and opportunity as well as regeneration priorities.

Jobs in healthcare and education

Both the LIFT health centre, which could bring as many as 68 jobs, and the 'extended education' initiative - which could encompass around 160 jobs - will contribute to the broadening of the economic base of the area, though in their early stages they may only contribute a few additional new job opportunities, as much of their initial staffing will come through relocation and/or recruitment of staff with specific skills from elsewhere. Nonetheless, in the longer term these projects are increasingly likely to recruit from Devonport residents; their staff will be more likely to live in the transformed Devonport area; and all staff and the projects themselves will be spending money into the Devonport economy, in shops, cafes, etc..

Jobs in retail and services

Shops and related businesses - such as cafes and pubs - will benefit from the regeneration of the area, as more residents, employees and new visitors to the area, have more money to spend. In the first phases of development it will be important to provide the existing businesses - which have survived many years of decline - with the opportunity to re-establish their businesses and attract new trade. In the longer term, the DDF provides the opportunity for new premises to accommodate new or growing businesses in these sectors, adding new jobs into the area. A total increase of up to 2,500 sqm of retail floorspace is identified, offering the potential of well over 100 jobs in the area (as well the enhanced retail offer to residents and businesses). In relation to Marlborough Street (see Chapter 7.1), the key employment issue is to ensure the continuing viability and vitality of the shops which are essential to local residents. Proposals for the street layout and building plots in the Stores Enclave ensure that there are effective links and good pedestrian routes through Marlborough Street. Through this design and development process, Marlborough Street is to be fully integrated with the Storage Enclave. The health centre placed nearby will provide a source of activity and linkage through to other new uses. It may be beneficial to develop Marlborough House car park to create a continuous frontage.

The proposed new supermarket will result in a new primary shopping core within the area. The function of Marlborough St needs to be reconsidered in the context of this structure. The DRC is clear it wishes to support existing traders and the DDF relies on the continuing vitality of Marlborough Street to provide a good retail service to residents and an attractive environment for the community. A series of initiatives should be considered, including action to convert upper floors to affordable flats, environmental improvements and initiatives to support the viability of local shops. It may be appropriate to consider providing assistance or preferential terms to those shops which are essential to the local community and wish to move to new premises elsewhere in the development programme. The phasing of these special initiatives will need to be carefully considered in relation to development within the Storage Enclave to ensure the maximum potential for shops to thrive due new trading opportunities and increased resident and business spending.

Jobs in other sectors

In addition to the new jobs in health, education, retail and services, employment in Devonport will be extended with at least 85 jobs in offices, over 110 jobs in new managed workspace and live-work accommodation, over 300 jobs in civic buildings/restored historic buildings and new community facilities and projects, and over 150 jobs in visitor-related/heritage projects in the historic dockyard (note : each of these figures, particularly the last, is an early estimate which depends on the detail of specific projects which will be brought forward by implementation of the DDF and other initiatives)

To help stimulate these new sectors of employment, an 'Incubation Centre' or 'Enterprise Centre' is proposed for the Stores Enclave to provide space and support services for start-up businesses. A managed workspace centre similar to "HQ" in Stonehouse could help kick-start investment, with say 1,850 sqm (20,000 sq ft) of flexible units clustered around communal business facilities.

Total job creation

The intended outcome of the DDF is at least 700 new additional jobs in the area, accommodated in the various projects for managed workspace, live-work space, offices, shops, etc.. The exact figure will depend on many detailed project choices and design issues - and the Framework provides the structure and flexibility to accept more employment if there are opportunities to develop. However, this level of new employment, in an area which has over 6,000 residents, would be a major change to the employment prospects for residents and the vitality of the local economy.

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Priority Actions for Applying Principle 9

- *Absorb the outcomes of the Employment Strategy for Devonport currently being prepared into the Final DDF*