



core strategy 2006-2021

plymouth city council
department of development

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Foreword

The Plymouth Core Strategy is central to delivering our vision for Plymouth to be one of Europe's finest and most vibrant waterfront cities over the next 15-20 years. It sets out an ambitious growth agenda set within the context of the need to tackle climate change and deliver high quality sustainable linked communities. It is founded on an unparalleled understanding of the economic, social and environmental issues which are important to the City, as well as a positive attempt to engage communities and address their needs. The result is a Core Strategy focused on delivering true urban renaissance which respects Plymouth's unique natural setting and history.

Plymouth has seen a period of decline, driven by the contraction of manufacturing industry and the reduction in the number of people employed at Devonport Dockyard. That period has now ended, and new businesses are locating across the City. The Core Strategy will direct and positively harness the benefits of this new growth to ensure that real community needs are met. It aims to deliver this through a step change in the quality, intensity and pace of development across the whole City, with significant investment in our City Centre, the waterfront area and the northern and eastern corridors. In the long term, the Core Strategy will help Plymouth's population grow to over 300,000 people.

The Core Strategy sets the agenda for Plymouth's Local Development Framework. An ambitious programme of Area Action Plans and Development Plan Documents will take forward the plan for growth set out in the Core Strategy and set down concrete proposals to realise the vision. The task now is to create the new successful and sustainable Plymouth that this Core Strategy aspires to.

Plymouth City Council has a long and proud tradition of development planning. We were one of the first authorities in the country to adopt a district wide local plan in 1987. We adopted a full review of this in 1996. In 2001 we published our much praised First Deposit Local Plan. In 2006 our pioneering work on the Local Development Framework won the highest award possible in the world of planning, the RTPPI's Silver Jubilee Cup. And now, Plymouth has achieved the first sound and adopted Core Strategy of any city in the land. The foundations are in place for taking our great city forward. Our challenge is to deliver!

Councillor Jean Nelder
Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning Policy
June 2004 – May 2007

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chapter 1

A Plan for Plymouth 2006 - 2021

By 2020 Plymouth will be one of Europe's finest most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone

A Plan for Plymouth 2006-21

Introduction

1.1 Plymouth has a special role in the South West region. It is the second largest city after Bristol. Together, they perform critical and complementary roles at opposite ends of the region. Bristol is at the core of the north of the region, providing connections to the West Midlands, South East and Wales.

Plymouth's role is to 'become the economic hub of the far South-West', meeting the needs of its sub-region, as well as providing links to Europe, by sea and air - contributing to both regional and national prosperity.

1.2 Plymouth's superb natural setting shapes the city's image and plays a major role in its development. Not only do these factors impact on the city's development, but they also make it a very attractive and distinctive location for both residents and visitors alike.

1.3 While the quality of life that the city can offer is second to none, Plymouth does experience the problems common to many major urban areas. It has some significant pockets of deprivation, structural problems with the economy and much of the city's fabric is tired and in need of investment. But the city is changing. There is a new confidence and effective partnership working that is delivering major investments which are transforming the city's skyline.

1.4 Perhaps of all the major urban areas in the region, Plymouth has the greatest scope to continue to accommodate significant change in a sustainable way. Its form is such that substantial development opportunities can be identified within or very well related to the main urban area and its major transport routes.

1.5 The purpose of Plymouth's Local Development Framework (LDF) is to take a long term view which supports Plymouth's transformation into one of Europe's finest waterfront cities, creating a sustainable city for the future where people choose to live because of its vitality and quality of life.

Plymouth's Core Strategy

1.6 This document sets out a spatial planning framework for the long term development of the city, ensuring that investment decisions are not made in isolation, but are properly co-ordinated, with a focus on promoting the principles of sustainable development. It has been prepared taking into account the views of all sections of the community and stakeholders, as well as maintaining consistency with national and regional guidance. It also provides a spatial expression of the city's Community Strategy ("Towards a Sustainable Community Strategy"), as well the city's other key strategies.

1.7 The Core Strategy is a strategic document providing broad guidance on the scale and distribution of development and the provision of supporting infrastructure. It contains 'higher level' policies for delivering the spatial vision, guiding broad patterns of development and constraint. It also contains policies setting out the criteria to be taken into account by the Local Planning Authority in determining proposals for development and the use of land and buildings.

1.8 The Core Strategy will be supported by the following statutory Development Plan Documents (DPDs):

- Area Action Plans, providing a framework for developing areas of major change
- a Sustainable Neighbourhoods (Key Site Allocations) DPD, setting out area /site specific policies /proposals for areas outside the AAPs
- a topic based document providing guidance in relation to Waste management
- a Proposals Map for the city recording all the proposals that have been adopted
- in addition to this, further supporting Supplementary Planning Documents will be prepared to amplify key policies and proposals in these DPDs.

These documents, in combination, make up Plymouth's Local Development Framework and when adopted will, together with the Regional Spatial Strategy, become the Statutory Development Plan for the city.

How to use this document

1.9 The Core Strategy must be read as a whole. All Policies, (with their Strategic Objectives and targets), are interrelated and must be read together to understand their combined effect upon a planning proposal. Unless otherwise stated, they apply across the whole plan area, and are designed to pro-actively encourage development that makes a positive contribution to Plymouth's radical agenda for change.

1.10 The document has been structured to reflect the need for an integrated policy approach in terms of:

- Strategic Objectives, (with targets /indicators /milestones as a basis for measuring progress), which define the Council's intentions, in spatial planning terms, in order to deliver the vision for Plymouth
- Area Visions, which will guide the preparation of Area Action Plans
- Policy statements, which will guide the Council's consideration of development proposals.

Development proposals will be judged firstly in terms of policy compliance, but also for the contribution they make to delivering the plan's strategic objectives and targets.

1.11 The document is illustrated throughout with diagrams. These include a range of policy and illustrative information that are intended to help clarify and inform various aspects of the strategy. These diagrams are included solely for illustrative purposes. However, the key policy elements of Plymouth's spatial strategy are brought together, in diagrammatic format, in the Key Strategy Diagram in Section 2.

The Planning Policy Context.

1.12 The planning system requires that Development Plans are kept up to date, providing certainty for longer term planning and investment decisions. Plymouth's Local Development Framework has to be in line with National policy (taking into account the European context), in general conformity with Regional Guidance (RPG10), consistent with the Devon Structure Plan and take account of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

1.13 European context; Plymouth is fairly remote from the more prosperous European capitals. However, it is located in two regional co-operation areas, (the Atlantic Arc and the North West Europe Area), where the emphasis is on overcoming the disadvantages of a peripheral location through improved access, inter-regional co-operation and better linkages to the 'core capitals'. The influence of Europe is felt directly through a number of funding programmes which the city actively bids for.

1.14 National Context; The emphasis is on turning Britain's towns and cities back into thriving centres of activity. There is also a need for accelerated housing provision to meet existing /anticipated needs, but within the context of developing sustainable communities. Key measures include a focus on sustainable development which makes the most efficient use of land, reduces the need to travel, gives priority to the use of previously developed land, and adopts a 'plan, monitor, manage' approach.

1.15 Regional Context (RPG10) 2001-16; Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) identifies Plymouth as one of 11 Principal Urban Areas (PUA) which offer the best opportunities for accommodating the majority of development in the most sustainable way. Plymouth is also identified as having potential to play a wider strategic role as a major regional service centre providing a focus for economic activity in the far South West. The Devon Structure Plan articulates the spatial housing distribution for RPG10.

1.16 Regional Context (draft RSS) 2006-26; The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, (currently at submission stage), sees Plymouth's role as 'becoming the economic hub of the far South-West'. It provides support for Plymouth's urban renaissance

agenda by making provision, in the wider principal urban area, for higher levels of economic and housing growth - assuming a requirement for some 42,000 jobs and 31,500 dwellings. This level of development is considered important to enable the city to realise its potential and fulfil its regional and sub-regional roles.

The Sustainable Development Context.

1.17 This Core Strategy must also play a positive role in promoting sustainable development, as well as responding to Climate Change in particular. This is far more than a local issue. It is one of global significance.

1.18 The UK's Sustainable Development Strategy – Securing the Future, 2005, has defined the goal of sustainable development as being: **“to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations”.**

1.19 It identifies five principles and four key priorities in promoting sustainable development, namely:

The five principles:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly.

The four priorities:

- Sustainable production and consumption
- Climate change and energy
- Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement
- Sustainable communities.

1.20 This Core Strategy sets sustainable development at the heart of its planning agenda. Its vision is for sustainable growth that delivers a quality city with a sustainable economy and strong and healthy communities within environmental limits. Growth that moves towards carbon neutrality, reducing the city's eco-footprint and helping to respond to the key drivers of climate change (energy

use, waste and transport). Growth that has as its very foundation a series of sustainable linked communities. These concepts are woven throughout the Core Strategy, with key references as follows:

- Strategic Objective 1 places sustainable development at the heart of the Council's growth agenda.
- Strategic Objectives 2 and 3 highlight the key role of building sustainable linked communities – a theme which is reiterated in the policies of this Plan
- Section 11 focuses specifically on environmental objectives and policies.
- Strategic Objectives 12, 13 and 14 set out sustainable approaches to mineral, waste and transport matters.
- Policy CS34 ensures that sustainability and climate change issues will be considered for individual planning applications.
- The Council also intends to pro-actively use Supplementary Planning Documents – in particular the Design SPD and Planning Obligations SPD – to provide further guidance on delivering sustainable communities and tackling climate change.



Provision to be made at Plymouth 2006-21

1.21 The provision being made through the Core Strategy is to accommodate very long term aspirations for sustainable growth, through a quality agenda, creating sufficient critical mass to support the range and quality of services needed.

1.22 This approach relies on the provision of high quality job opportunities and therefore needs to go hand in hand with the city's economic strategy. Plymouth also needs to become the city of choice where people want to live. To achieve this, design excellence will be essential.

1.23 The strategy anticipates a population growth from 246,100 in 2005 to an eventual population of some 300,000 to 350,000. To accommodate both this long-term growth, as well as provide flexibility to manage change in the interim, the strategy sets out a detailed approach to development for the next fifteen years, but also indicates how development could be accommodated in the longer term to 2026 and beyond.

1.24 Achieving this level of growth is seen as a long term iterative process. The strategy assumes that as Plymouth becomes a better place to live it will lead to the retention and attraction of people, which in turn will further support Plymouth's improvement as an achievable cycle. As to when this growth will be achieved, the strategy assumes that, providing certain interventions are successful, the population of the principal urban area could increase to some 300,000 by 2026.

1.25 However, it is also recognised that this level of growth is dependant on a range of factors, for example the state of the national and global economy. In practice, it is accepted that the level of change is likely to be somewhere between the following two ranges. Progress towards achieving the aspirational high end of this range will need to be addressed through a 'plan, monitor, manage' approach. Table 1 sets out what this could mean for the TTWA. Comparable figures are provided for the city at 2001, although it is assumed that the majority of the potential growth will take place at the Plymouth principal urban area.

1.26 In terms of the spatial distribution of this level of change, the priority is to promote sustainable forms of development using the demand for new homes, jobs and services in a way that acts as a positive catalyst for change. Key to this will be directing development to the city centre and waterfront regeneration areas. But alongside this, there is a need to ensure an appropriate range, mix and type of development. This will be achieved by also directing a proportion of the growth to the significant opportunity sites on Plymouth's Eastern and Northern Corridors, as well as the rest of the city. It also needs to be recognised that this level of growth should be delivered in a way that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.

Table 1. - Derivation of potential dwelling numbers from the economic growth ranges for the Plymouth Travel to Work Area (TTWA).

Plymouth TTWA	Plymouth City	TTWA	The growth range that will need to be accommodated in the TTWA by 2021 and beyond					
			2011	2021	2026	2011	2021	2026
Estimates for	2001	2001						
Economic growth			15,240	29,160	35,940	20,200	37,570	46,250
Total population	240,720	342,960	355,600	367,990	375,080	364,640	381,960	393,040
Total households	102,540	144,170	155,970	165,020	172,850	159,930	171,280	181,120

Strategic Objective 1 Delivering Plymouth's Strategic Role

To deliver a vision for Plymouth's strategic role within the South West Region that will:

- 1 Be set firmly within the context of delivering 'Urban Renaissance' and Sustainable Communities, promoting an appropriate form of development that delivers sustainable linked communities by promoting an overall planned pattern of development and constraint that:
 - Works towards carbon neutrality by minimising energy consumption, providing for renewable energy, reducing the need to travel and providing for a range of quality sustainable transport alternatives.
 - Safeguards natural resources through limiting the use of greenfield sites, avoiding harming features of acknowledged importance and seeking new opportunities for enriching the city's biodiversity.
2. Provide the means whereby Plymouth can realise its potential to accommodate higher rates of growth within the plan period and beyond, enabling the city to fulfil its potential as 'the economic hub of the far South-West', contributing to National, Regional and sub-regional prosperity.
3. Make provision for the period 2006-21, by allowing for the longer term higher growth levels of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, in a way that supports the city's urban renaissance agenda.
4. Support the longer term growth of Plymouth, to create a city with over 300,000 people. In recognition of the fact that this aspiration can only realistically be achieved beyond the time period of this plan, the approach will be to:
 - Take a proactive approach to implementation by leading in the creation of appropriate delivery and partnership vehicles to enable a step change in the quality, intensity and pace of development within the city.
 - Use a Plan, Monitor and Manage approach to respond to changes in these anticipated levels of growth.

Key Sources:

- Regional Planning Guidance for the South West 2002-16 GOSW
- Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-26 - The South West Regional Assembly
- Devon Structure Plan 2001-16 - Devon County, Plymouth City and Torbay Councils, Dartmoor National Park
- Plymouth Sustainable Growth Study (2003) - Llewelyn Davies
- A Vision for Plymouth (2004) - MBM Arquitectes and AZ Urban Studio
- Plymouth, South West Devon and South East Cornwall Sustainable Growth Distribution Study (2005) - Baker Associates
- Plymouth City Council Urban Capacity Study 2003 (2004) - Llewelyn Davies.



chapter 2 The City Vision

One of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities,
where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone.

A healthy place to live and work.

A city which creates and shares prosperity.

A safe and strong city.

A location for learning, achievement and leisure.

The City Vision

2.1 The city's vision is set out in "Towards a Sustainable Community Strategy" (March 2006). It is to create:

One of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone

This is Plymouth 2020 Partnership's interim statement for 2006/07, updating the current community strategy for Plymouth. Key objectives to achieving this vision are seen as:

- Improving health and well-being
- Developing a prosperous economy
- Promoting community safety
- Raising educational achievement
- Developing an effective transport system
- Promoting inclusive communities
- Maintaining a clean and sustainable environment
- Stimulating culture and leisure activities.

2.2 The City Vision has been amplified by MBM Arquitectes along with AZ Urban Studio. The MBM Vision for Plymouth is not seen as a fixed blueprint for the future of the city, but rather a review of its strengths and weaknesses, an assessment of direction, a pointer to opportunity, and an invitation to aspire. It promotes a significant step change in the quality, pace and intensity of the city's development.

2.3 Plymouth's LDF provides a comprehensive framework within which the spatial aspects of City's Vision can be delivered.

The Spatial Vision.

2.4 Plymouth aspires to take its rightful place as 'one of Europe's finest'. It has already made progress with significant structural and economic changes designed to match the city's performance to its size and standing. The LDF will take this agenda forward, providing a long term framework for the city's sustainable development, building on its advantages to overcome disadvantage.

2.5 By 2021 Plymouth will 'become the economic hub of the far South-West', fulfilling its role as the leading retail, entertainment, employment, health and learning centre for the far South West. Its global links will be extended. Its role as a major communication centre will be expanded, with improved connections to Europe and the rest of the UK. The city's links with its hinterland will be developed, helping spread the benefits of economic investment. The quality of life in Plymouth will have been dramatically improved, making it the city of choice.

2.6 To achieve this the city must be of a sufficient critical mass to support the level of services needed. This means supporting the city's long term sustainable growth, in a way that provides quality of life and opportunity. The aspiration is that the city will eventually grow to a population of over 300,000.

2.7 In delivering this aspiration the city needs an approach that is supportive of its sub-region, recognising the interdependence between town and country. This means:

- maximising the contribution new development makes to both Plymouth and its sub-region, recognising that this has to be underpinned by economic success
- being mindful of the dilemma that, while increasing the city's facilities and services will increase opportunities for those in other settlements, it also has implications for increased travel, potentially impacting on settlement character and the wider environment.

2.8 A key element of the LDF strategy will be to seize the real opportunities that this level of development offers, to help repair deficiencies in the city's urban fabric, undoing some of the damage of the past, recreating the city's vitality and developing a quality environment in which to live.

2.9 The foundations for the city's transformation are its neighbourhoods. Many of these already provide attractive living environments with good access to local facilities. However, others will need to use the opportunities arising from new development to create strong, inclusive and safe neighbourhoods – helping to reduce the need to travel. Building Sustainable Linked Communities throughout the city is a key element of this plan.

2.10 To successfully deliver this transformation we need to build on Plymouth's significant assets. It has one of the most enviable locations of any city in the world - a superb natural setting, together with a rich historic and cultural identity. These assets must be used wisely to the benefit all. This means - retaining and enhancing the sense of place that is Plymouth; respecting the city's setting with its visible and physical links to Plymouth Sound and estuaries, as well as Dartmoor National Park; ensuring that new development relates to old; ensuring that the potential global environmental consequences of our actions are adequately managed; insisting on design excellence in all matters.

2.11 The priorities for regeneration are the city's waterfront areas. Turning these areas around will be key to Plymouth's urban renaissance. Considerable preparatory work has been undertaken and this has now reached a stage where aspirations can be translated into reality. In addition, the opportunity sites on Plymouth's eastern and northern corridors offer the potential to complement the waterfront regeneration initiatives by ensuring the overall level of change provides a balanced range, mix and type of development.

2.12 Raising the city's economic fortunes is fundamental to delivering this vision. The approach will be based on exploiting Plymouth's substantial competitive advantages, while addressing specific disadvantages. This will mean developing six key growth sectors, as well as encouraging diversification into areas which exploit Plymouth's advantages in knowledge, skills and location. It will also be important to develop the city's role as a service and commercial centre for its extensive catchment area.

2.13 Fundamental to achieving economic change is the need to ensure an appropriate range, mix and quality of employment sites. In meeting the city's

employment land needs, a more flexible approach to employment issues will be adopted - recognising that urban economies are changing and that quality employment is taking place in many ways, (e.g. through mixed use development that supports the rebuilding of the city's neighbourhoods), not just through traditional employment uses. Alongside this, sites for uses with specific requirements will be safeguarded (e.g. marine related industries), and new locations will be identified for inward investors, including the potential relocation of civil service departments from the South East.

2.14 To sustain this growth the city will capitalise on existing strengths in the higher education / research and the development sectors, to support knowledge transfer and skills development in the wider economy. This will include supporting Plymouth University and the Further / Higher Education sector in the city, as well making provision for the highest quality training facilities. The aim is to enable everyone to have a share in our growing prosperity.

2.15 By 2021, Plymouth's City Centre will have strengthened its role as a sub-regional shopping and entertainment centre. Additionally, as part of the process of developing sustainable linked communities, a new and complementary centre, serving the north of Plymouth, will be developed at Derriford; and new centres will also be developed at Devonport, Weston Mill, Millbay and Plymstock in order to address gaps or deficiencies in the retail provision and contribute to the needs of a growing population.

2.16 The City Centre already supports a wide range of shops and its retail role will be strengthened by the new development at Drake Circus. Nevertheless, in order to retain and better fulfil this role, major new investment will be promoted, enhancing its shopping offer as well as introducing a vibrant mix of new uses – including housing, offices, leisure and cultural uses. For the city as a whole, by 2021, in the order of 100,000 – 170,000 sq.m. net new comparison shopping floorspace will have been provided (the equivalent of about four to five new Drake Circus schemes).

2.17 To accommodate the anticipated changes in household formation, as well as population increase, provision will be made for at least the draft RSS allocation of 17,300 dwellings to be built

by 2021, but with the flexibility to accommodate a higher rate of growth if needed. In order to prioritise regeneration, 44% of this provision will be made in the city's waterfront regeneration areas. However, to ensure an appropriate range, mix and type of accommodation some 13% of this provision will be in the city's eastern corridor and 20% in the northern corridor, leaving the remaining 23% for the rest of the city. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent and safe home, at the right price and suitable to their needs, at least 30% of the housing provision will be affordable.

2.18 The increased ability to travel has been one of the most liberating features of the last few decades - but this has come at a cost to the environment. If we are to retain the freedom and flexibility of travel, we will have to alter our approach to the way we live and how we get about. At the local level there is a need to make a fundamental shift in travel patterns. Firstly, reducing the need to travel, and secondly by ensuring that sustainable transport provision is woven into the fabric of all development, in a manner that supports and complements the urban form.

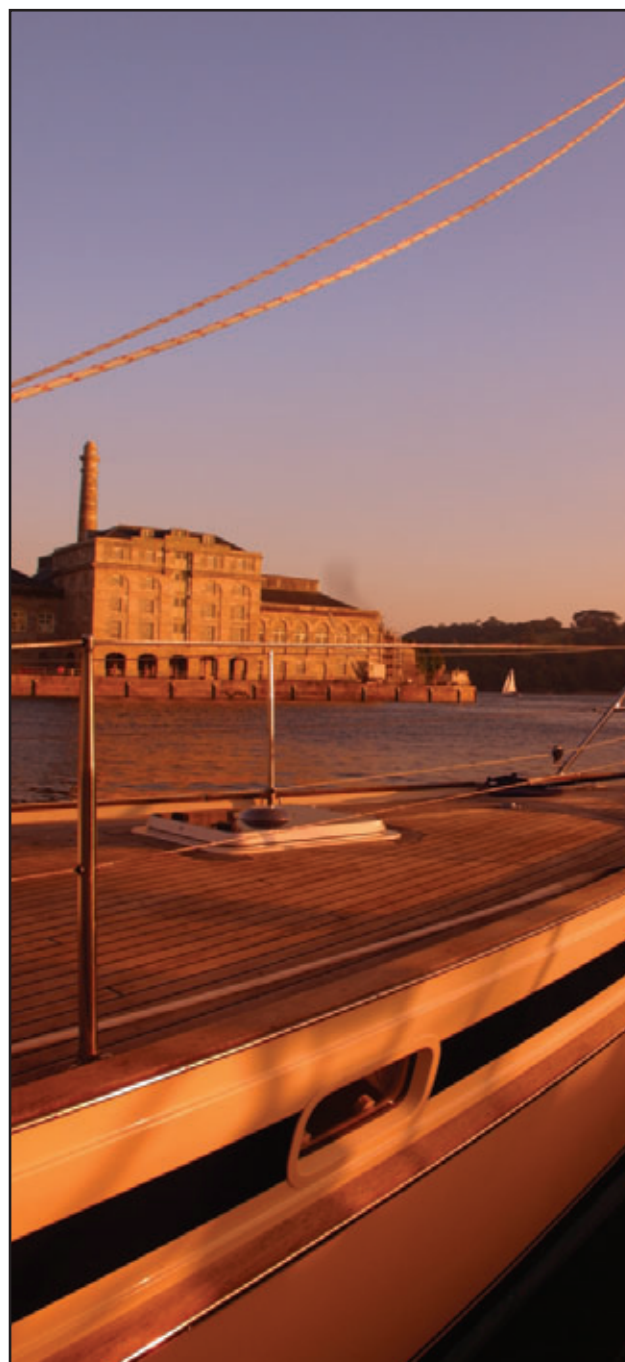
2.19 A new High Quality Public Transport network will be developed to provide a more viable and sustainable solution. By 2021, a fully operational high-quality public transport service will link the new community at Sherford with the City Centre, Langage employment area and northern Plymouth. This High Quality Public Transport network will be progressively extended to serve the Travel to Work Area.

2.20 The reach and quality of the supporting transport networks will also be extended, including integrated local bus services, enhanced strategic cycle routes and improved pedestrian links. This network will be supported by a hierarchy of transport hubs along each route, with key centres served by major transport interchanges and Park and Ride facilities on the main routes. The capacity of the highway network will also be maximised by continuing to employ state-of-the-art network management technology.

2.21 The city's entertainment, culture and leisure roles, will be consolidated through a number of new facilities. A Life Centre will be created within Central Park that will provide an outstanding venue, of regional significance, for sport, recreation and

leisure. New parks will be developed at Saltram and Seaton, and cultural quarters developed in line with the MBM Vision for Plymouth.

2.22 This LDF builds on the MBM vision for Plymouth, but has at its heart the same vision of: **'Lifting spirits, raising expectations, and demanding the best architecture, design and development that will respect and respond imaginatively to the opportunity and potential that is offered by this unique waterside city, and will ensure that within the 20-year term..., Plymouth takes its rightful place among other European cities of equal size'**.



Strategic Objective 2 Delivering the City Vision

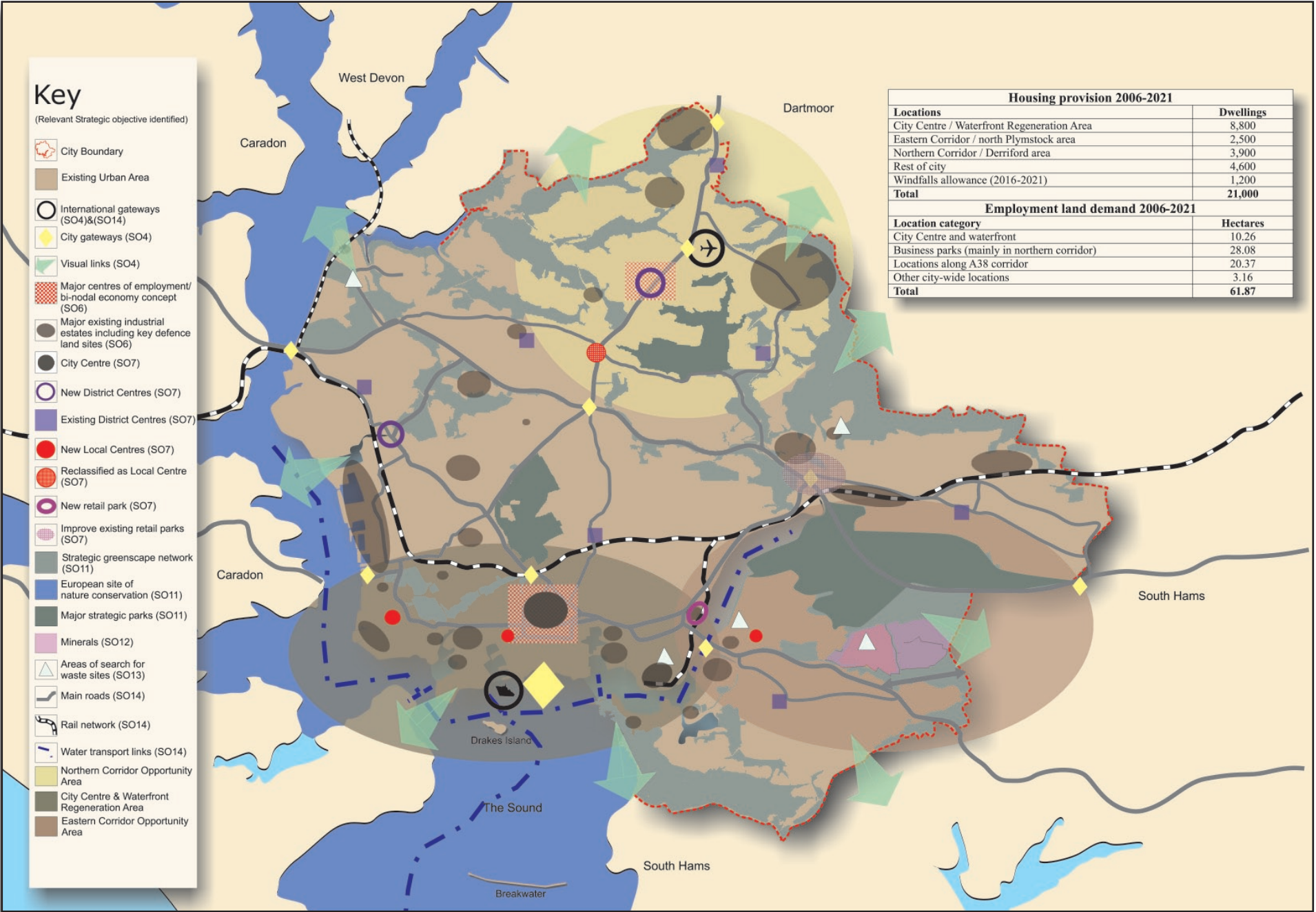
To see Plymouth established by 2021 as a city of truly international quality providing:

1. A city of choice, with a healthy, growing population, which is realising its potential as one of Europe's finest waterfront cities.
2. Quality employment provision – supporting regeneration and diversification, enabling the city to realise its potential as the economic engine room of the far south west, spreading the benefits of investment to all.
3. A city of sustainable linked communities - where people enjoy living, and where the full range of local services and facilities is provided, helping to reduce the need to travel.
4. Exceptional shopping, cultural, education and health care facilities.
5. Sufficient housing to meet people's needs – providing for a range, mix, type, and affordability of housing, in locations where people want to live.
6. Access for all to high quality natural environments and open space.
7. A transformed public transport network.
8. Improved communication links with the rest of the country and Europe.
9. An inclusive city where the gap between the more affluent areas and the city's deprived neighbourhoods are substantially narrowed.

To manage this level of change in an environmentally sustainable way by avoiding / minimising or mitigating development pressure on the city's natural and built environment, its existing utilities and associated infrastructure and areas at risk of flooding.

Key Sources:

- City Strategy and Action Plan, + "Towards a Sustainable Community Strategy"
- A Vision for Plymouth (2004)– MBM Arquitectes and AZ Urban Studio
- Corporate Plan 2006-09 – City Council
- The City Growth Strategy – City Council
- Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy - City Council
- Local Transport Plan - City Council
- School Implementation Plan 2004-14 -City Council
- Housing Strategy 2004-07 -City Council
- Our City's Health -City Council
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy -City Council
- Sports Facilities Strategy – City Council
- Playing Pitch Strategy - City Council
- First Deposit Local Plan 1995-2011 (2001) – City Council
- Community Planning Studies (2000) - City Council





chapter 3

Building Sustainable Linked Communities

Improving health and well-being - to improve health, well-being and social care of local people, reduce inequalities and help people at all stages of their life to enjoy the best possible health.

Promoting inclusive communities - to reduce social inequalities, renew disadvantaged neighbourhoods, protect the vulnerable and ensure access for all members of the community to services and opportunities.

Building Sustainable Linked Communities

Introduction

3.1 Plymouth needs to become the place where people of all ages and circumstances want to live. In order to be successful, it will have to be well designed, become more compact, well integrated, many centred and support a mixture of different uses. It will need to be well connected, facilitate the interaction of people, prioritise walking, cycling and public transport and be adaptable to change.

3.2 To deliver this, we need to start from the city's foundations, its neighbourhoods, and build from the bottom up. Whether the city functions efficiently and harmoniously will mainly be determined by the relationships within and between neighbourhoods.

3.3 To help bring about this change, the Council has been working with the city's communities to understand and develop solutions to their needs. In reviewing Plymouth's 43 neighbourhoods, the Council has undertaken a number of studies, highlighting spatial planning issues and options for creating sustainable linked communities. These Sustainable Neighbourhood Assessments effectively provide an initial 'planning audit' for each of the city's neighbourhoods and will be used alongside other studies (shopping studies, review of employment land etc), together with input from local communities and stakeholder engagement, in informing planning decisions.

3.4 The LDF's task is to use new development opportunities pro-actively to help repair the damage from the past and re-build the city's communities. In so doing the LDF will be implementing the National and Regional agendas for 'Urban Renaissance' and promoting 'Sustainable Communities'. The following sections outline how this will be delivered.

Context

3.5 While many of our neighbourhoods already provide attractive living environments with good access to local facilities, there are a number that do not. Without intervention, there is a real danger that over the next 20 years, our city could be further undermined by a deteriorating physical form, social polarisation, environmental degradation, loss of skills and investment and widespread crime. The very best of the urban experience may be denied to all but a wealthy minority.

3.6 The Council considers that the essential elements of a sustainable linked community relate to:-

- **A sufficient number of people to engender a sense of belonging**, vitality and safety, as well as support the range of services that people need in their daily lives. Research shows that the size of a sustainable community is some 2,000 to 3,000 people, several of which would combine together to make a linked community of some 5,000 to 10,000 people, which in turn would come together to support a district of some 25,000 plus. While the Abercrombie Plan for Plymouth was based on the neighbourhood concept, we need to learn from that plan's failure to create sufficient critical mass to support the viability of local services. Inevitably, some of Plymouth's communities will need to accommodate additional housing development in order to create a better mix, as well as support the level of services they need. While providing additional homes in an area needs to relate to the community's aspirations, this should not be at the expense of the broader social, economic and environmental imperatives.
- **A mix of land uses that works together** providing for activity that avoids dead spaces and times, helping to strengthen social integration and civic life, as well as improving public safety. To achieve this will mean concentrating a range of public facilities and commercial activities in the local and district centres. These centres will need to be mixed working areas with higher density housing. They will need to include the facilities that we all use as part of our daily lives, such as

shops, schools and community facilities. The centre of the community will also be the public transport hub, connecting the community to the rest of the city. Around the centre will be predominantly residential areas, as well as parks and playing fields. Community safety will be an important feature of their design. This will include structuring different uses so they do not conflict, ensuring public places are overlooked providing high levels of surveillance, promoting access and movement without compromising security.

- **Provision for people to meet and interact.** At its best, the sustainable city operates as a network of interconnected places and spaces that help to bring people together. To do this effectively means putting the pedestrian first and ensuring that walking is the preferred option in accessing different facilities within an area. This does not mean taking an ‘anti-car’ stance. However, it does mean reducing unnecessary car journeys by ensuring many daily needs can be met within walking distance, as well as ensuring that public transport becomes the easiest, quickest and most cost effective way of getting around the city.
- **Character and sense of place.** Many parts of Plymouth are steeped in history, containing important buildings providing character and identity and located within superb natural settings. All these elements need to be respected – they are key assets in reshaping our neighbourhoods, making places where people want to live and will continue to want to live in the future.
- **Social inclusion.** Equality and inclusion are goals that lie at the heart of creating sustainable, linked communities, where the needs of all sections of the local population for housing, transport, employment, leisure, safety and accessibility are recognised and provided for. In particular, it is important that the needs of young and older people are recognised but also the needs of race and faith groups, people with a disability and the needs of women and men (for example, the needs of parents/ carers with dependent children).

Approach

3.7 In considering how to apply these aspirations, it is recognised that there can be no single solution. Each community has its own particular characteristics and issues to address. Key to this will be community involvement in shaping the way their area works. It is also recognised that it will be easier to achieve these aspirations in some places than others. However, where major intervention is impractical, small scale interventions, (particularly as development opportunities arise), will mean these areas can be helped to function better as entities in their own right.

3.8 In order to make progress, it is important that each new development opportunity is assessed in terms of how it best contributes to the community it will serve, its location relative to the local centre, as well as the needs of that particular community. These relationships are illustrated conceptually in Diagram 1 which is an extract from the 1999 Urban Task Force report, “Towards an Urban Renaissance”, chaired by Lord Rogers. Strategic Objective 3, its associated target, and Policy CS01 set the context within which development proposals will be considered.



Strategic Objective 3 Delivering Sustainable Linked Communities

To develop sustainable linked communities throughout the city, by:-

1. Ensuring a sufficient size, scale and density, and the right layout to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood for people's day to day lives.
2. Ensuring that new development minimises the use of resources (including land).
3. Ensuring that new development takes place where it can promote the effective and sustainable use of resources (including land and infrastructure).
4. Promoting a thriving mixed use centre for each community.
5. Promoting a well integrated mix of housing types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes to meet identified housing needs.
6. Promoting a fully accessible neighbourhood served by good public transport, walking and cycling and other transport infrastructure both within the community, as well as linking it to adjoining communities and the city as a whole.
7. Providing for a safe, accessible and healthy local environment, and for urban cooling with well designed public and green spaces.
8. Supporting and enhancing the quality of public services and amenity provision to meet the needs of all of the community, including provision of education and training opportunities, health care, community facilities, leisure and recreation.
9. Promoting a positive sense of place and identity for each neighbourhood.

Targets

Progress towards achieving these objectives will be measured against the following targets:

1. All residential parts of the city to have easy access to local shopping and community facilities by 2021 (to be measured through sustainable neighbourhood assessments).

Policy CS01 Development of Sustainable Linked Communities

The Council will improve the sustainability of the individual communities and neighbourhoods in the city through allocating sites for development and considering proposals for development in terms of the extent to which they:

1. Contribute to meeting the needs of the neighbourhood, helping to support a sustainable linked community.
2. Deliver development of an appropriate type, form, scale, mix and density in relation to its location relative to the neighbourhood's centre.
3. Safeguard and capitalise on the local environment, including the need to deliver effective and sustainable use of resources.
4. Contribute to promoting a positive sense of place and identity.
5. Contribute to creating a well connected, accessible, inclusive and safe community.

3.9 This policy is about ensuring that development contributes to making places where people want to live. It defines key elements of a sustainable community, including for example the need for viable and accessible local services, a high quality and safe environment, access to open spaces, a sense of identity, a mix of housing (including affordable housing) which meets local needs and good connections to other areas.

3.10 The LDF aims to build a city of sustainable linked communities, and therefore new development should contribute and not detract from this objective. The policy will be amplified in the Design Supplementary Planning Document. It will also be applied to the consideration of planning applications and provide the framework for the production of Area Action Plans.

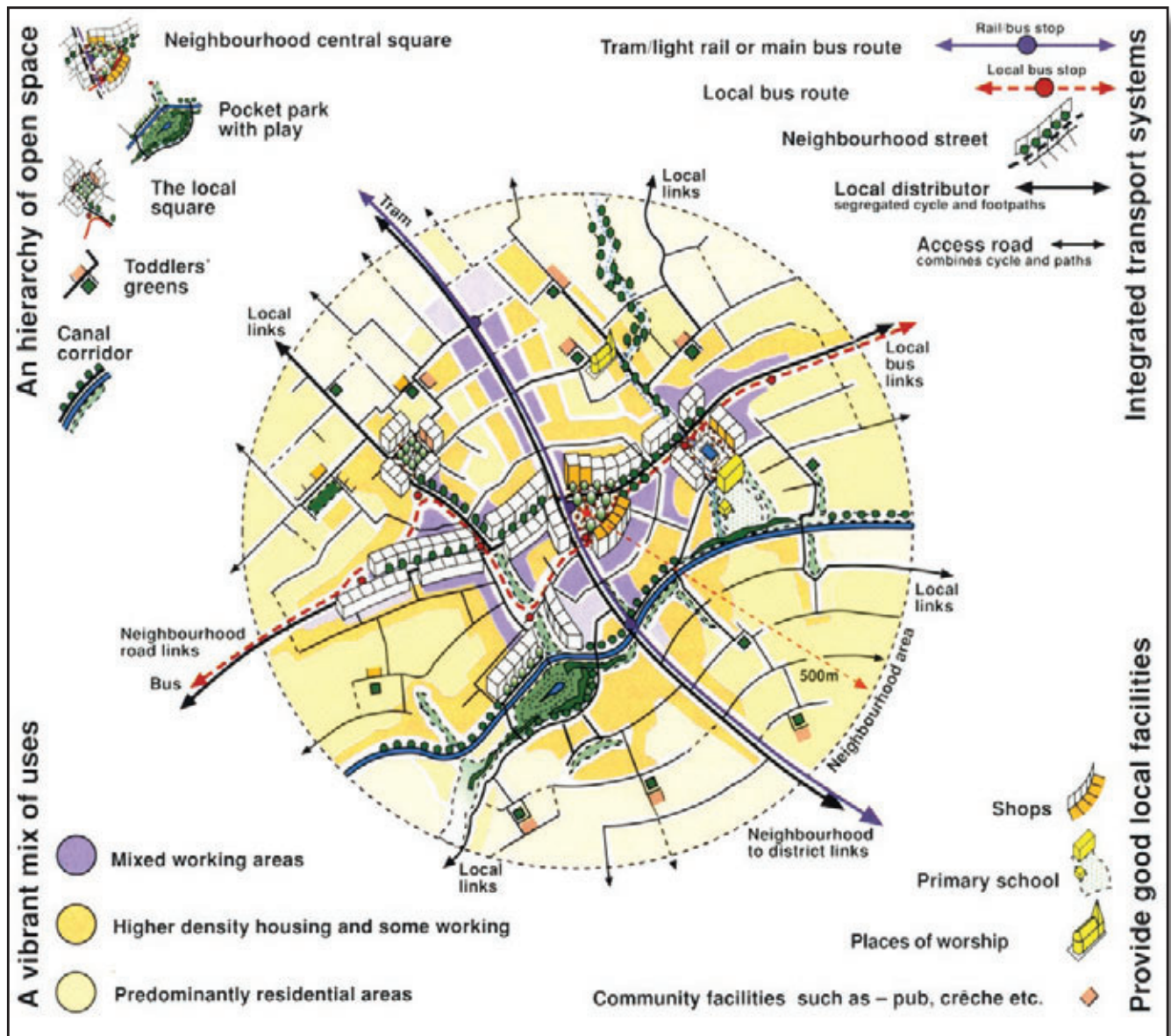


Plymouth's Neighbourhoods

The relationship within and between neighbourhoods determines how the city functions. Development proposals will be assessed in terms of the extent to which they help deliver sustainable linked communities - places where people want to live.

Diagram 1 - Building Sustainable Linked Communities

The key components of a mixed-use, integrated urban neighbourhood



(Illustration provided courtesy of Andrew Wright Associates – Master Planning and Architecture.)

Key Sources:

- Towards an Urban Renaissance – Urban Task Force Final Report
- Plymouth Sustainable Neighbourhoods Studies (2005/06) – LDA Design
- Community Planning Studies (2000) – City Council

