

# Derriford and Seaton

## Context

**5.71** The Derriford and Seaton area is located on Plymouth's northern gateway. It includes sub-regionally important employment sites and destinations including: Plymouth City Airport, the College of St Mark and St John, Derriford and Nuffield hospitals, Tamar Science Park and the Plymouth International Medical and Technology Park (PIMPT). It is located close to, but poorly connected with, a number of residential neighbourhoods including Whiteleigh, Southway, Leigham, Estover and Woolwell. The area has the advantage of being close to Dartmoor, with stunning views and deep wooded valleys.

**5.72** There are a number of issues that need to be addressed in the Derriford and Seaton area. These are:

- Derriford lacks a clear identity and focus, despite being an important gateway approach to the city from the north. The area has evolved incrementally, resulting in a fragmented urban form with no clear centre
- The area has large, isolated, single use areas with significant wasted space
- There is little existing housing at the core of the Derriford area, which gives it a poorly defined sense of community
- Although there are a number of adjoining neighbourhoods, these are mainly low-density, poorly connected and are often separated by major transport infrastructure and topography. As a result, the location is dominated by the car
- The area's assets have not been utilised to help provide a sense of place. For example: The exceptional historic and natural assets of Crownhill Fort and the Bircham Valley are not properly integrated into the urban form. The long distance views to Dartmoor and the coast have not been utilised. The area's green space is fragmented and there is a lack of access to the wider countryside
- There is a significant unfulfilled opportunity to build upon the area's existing sub-regional facilities, with a potential to grow to both serve the wider area of northern Plymouth, as well as play a wider role in the city as part of a bi-polar economy, whilst maintaining consistency with the need to safeguard the city centre's role.

## Approach

**5.73** The Derriford and Seaton area provides unique opportunities for Plymouth to support the wider economy, as well as putting a new heart into northern Plymouth to enable it to develop in a more sustainable way. Key to this will be the establishment of a new community in this part of the city that links to, and complements, the surrounding neighbourhoods.

**5.74** The economic role for Derriford is to promote growth that is complementary to the City Centre, as well as reinforce the existing and new business clusters, particularly the medical sector. This supports the bi-nodal economy concept identified in Plymouth's Local Economic Strategy 2006-2021, and reflected in Sections 6 and 7 of the Core Strategy. A key part of this will include provision of appropriate facilities and infrastructure to attract and support new investment, including the regionally significant health and medical facilities such as the Vanguard Health Project and the Peninsula Dental Health school. The airport also contributes substantially to the economy of the city and the surrounding area and will do so increasingly, as economic and population growth is delivered.

**5.75** The development of Derriford needs to be supported by an urban framework that creates a sense of place. The Council's approach is to promote a new centre at Derriford which will create a focus for the north of Plymouth. The potential exists to develop a broader mix of uses that will help the Derriford area to fulfil its potential as an important sub regional centre, and as a district shopping centre serving the surrounding neighbourhoods and the major employment, health and education facilities. The area is particularly lacking in shops, restaurants, leisure and community facilities and a mix of housing suited to people who work in the area. This sense of place can be further enhanced by ensuring development relates to the area's unique natural environment, views and historic environment, including raising the profile of Crownhill Fort, as well as linking to the area's green spaces and into the wider countryside.

**5.76** In the longer term, it is anticipated that this new retail centre could grow to play a wider role in Plymouth. The Shopping Strategy set out in Section 7 of the Core Strategy identifies Derriford as a

priority secondary location for new investment in the longer term in support of the bi-polar strategy. However, this could only happen if and when it can be demonstrated, through detailed impact assessment, that further development will not undermine the City Centre's regional shopping role and that major economic benefits would result for the city as a whole (see Policies CS06 and CS07).

**5.77** This approach to retail provision at Derriford is driven by a positive need to address deficiencies in the existing shopping provision in the city and to direct some of the long term investment in retail development to a location which will serve the Council's wider sustainability and economic objectives. Such an approach is considered consistent with Government policy, in that it safeguards the City Centre, whilst also designating a new centre for northern Plymouth, (which is an area of significant growth), thereby supporting economic growth and social inclusion. It will also help ensure that in the long term, the network of centres is appropriately balanced.

**5.78** The most appropriate and flexible long term opportunity to develop the new District Centre lies to the west of the A386. This general location:

- Is well related to the identified spatial gap in retail provision, which lies to the north west, and therefore can be most easily accessed through new links to the adjoining neighbourhoods
- Has the greatest potential for active frontage to the A386 – which is important in terms of urban form
- Has the greatest potential to grow in the long term - providing flexibility to deliver the Council's long term vision for Derriford.

**5.79** In addition to the new District Centre, there is also a need to serve the wider development area of Derriford / Seaton through proposals that help create sustainable linked communities, and to support the needs of the existing employment and health uses to the east of the A386. In this respect, the Council's approach is to promote mixed use development that is complementary to its vision for a new District Centre and heart for northern Plymouth.

**5.80** In terms of improving communications within the area and with other parts of the city, a

new link along the Forder Valley may benefit the accessibility of the area and allow the creation of a more attractive and sustainable urban area. There may also be potential for new linkages through the current airport land that will become excess to requirements as a result of development, and for a linkage to the west of PIMTP around the northern edge of Crownhill Fort towards Whitleigh (subject to detailed investigation in relation to safeguarding the scheduled monument and its setting).



## Vision

**5.81** The Council's vision for the Derriford and Seaton Area Action Plan, illustrated conceptually on the vision diagram, is as follows:

### Area Vision 9 - Derriford and Seaton

To create a thriving, sustainable, mixed-use new urban centre at the heart of the north of Plymouth, which is well connected to surrounding communities and to the city's High Quality Public Transport network.

The Council's objectives to deliver this vision are:

1. To develop a diverse mix of commercial and community uses supported by a strong, vibrant new residential community.
2. To play a major supporting role in the sub-region's long term economic and social well-being through the provision of strategically important health, economic, further education and transport infrastructure (including an improved Plymouth airport).
3. To develop a district shopping centre, centred on the west side of the A386, to support the surrounding residential and commercial communities but with potential to grow once it is demonstrated that it will not undermine the development of the City Centre's shopping role.
4. To provide a new high quality 'northern gateway' into the city, with a strong sense of place.
5. To facilitate public transport, cyclist, pedestrian and vehicular access in a sustainable way.
6. To create a strong urban form, utilising distinctive high quality architecture and spaces with sufficient scale, which is easy to understand and assists in orientation.
7. To create a high quality, safe and accessible environment.
8. To create key new transport linkages with surrounding areas, including potential Forder Valley and Whitleigh links.
9. To capitalise on the existing network of green spaces, views and historic environment and enhance the role of these, with greater access and links to wider areas.

**5.82** The AAP will ensure the co-ordinated planning and delivery of development options in a manner, which is both integrated and complementary. There are very significant infrastructure issues, particularly in relation to transport. The AAP will provide a framework to guide developers and decision-makers on the form and content of development and the provision of infrastructure. The emphasis will be on:

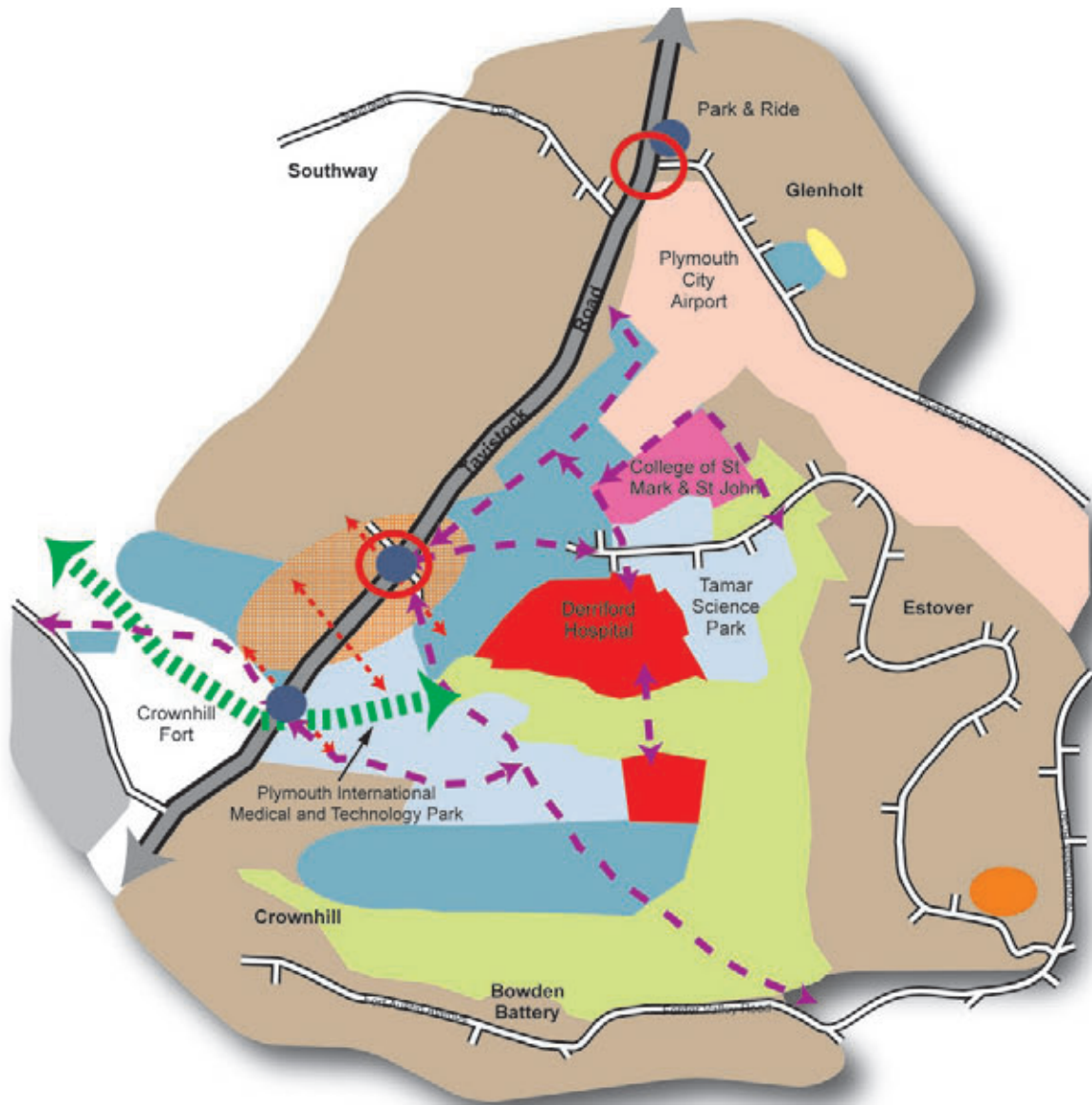
- Using the planning application process to bring about development that supports the vision
- Securing community benefits from Section 106 agreements and other mechanisms. The highest priorities will be given to the provision of all necessary transport infrastructure, community and leisure facilities and to the support of economic development initiatives
- The integration with transport and regional infrastructure programmes to support the vision




- Maximising the use of other public sector funding opportunities to help deliver the vision
- Developing the culture of partnership, so that the key private and public sector partners can work together to achieve a shared vision for the area.

#### Key Sources:

- Plymouth Sustainable Neighbourhood Study (2005/06) – LDA Design
- Plymouth Strategic High Quality Public Transport Network (2006) - W.S. Atkins
- Plymouth City Airport Study (2006) – York Aviation
- Derriford and Southway Area Planning Framework (2005) - Llewelyn Davies
- Plymouth Urban Capacity Study, Llewelyn Davies, 2003, Final report 2004
- Sustainable Growth Study (2003) – Llewelyn Davies
- Community Planning Studies (2000) – City Council

# Derriford and Seaton Vision Diagram



-  New centre for Northern Plymouth, includes shopping, office, leisure, residential, community and other uses
-  Residential led mixed use
-  Employment led mixed use
-  Medical facilities
-  College
-  Airport land including land safeguarded for potential extension to runway
-  High Quality Public Transport Corridor and Gateway Corridor
-  Local centre

-  Community parkland and nature conservation management
-  Existing Urban Area
-  Potential new transport route
-  Create Green link
-  Improve connectivity
-  Transport Interchange (illustrative)
-  City gateway location
-  District centre

## Plymouth Sound and Estuaries

### Context

**5.83** Plymouth's coastal setting is one of its most valuable assets. It is the reason why the city has developed in the way that it has, and is central to its identity as - **one of Europe's finest waterfront cities.**

**5.84** The Port of Plymouth is a complex and dynamic area which encompasses Plymouth Sound, extending up the rivers of the Tamar, Tavy, Lynher and Plym. It is the largest estuarine system in south west England, supporting over a quarter of a million people, a diversity and richness of wildlife, as well as a landscape and heritage recognised through national and international designations such as the European Marine Site (Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area). It is the setting for the city's waterfront regeneration areas and forms the backcloth to many of the views out over the city.

**5.85** The Port of Plymouth is of fundamental importance to the economy of the area, accommodating a wide range of uses and activities including its role as a primary naval port and dockyard, its use by commercial shipping, commercial fishing, tourism, recreation and leisure. These are just some of the spectrum of interests that the waterfront area accommodates.

**5.86** The operational control over the area comes with The Dockyard Port Regulation Act of 1865 which charges the Queen's Harbour Master with protection of the port. However, the Council shares a responsibility for managing this area, along with the other Statutory and bye-law making authorities bordering the Tamar Estuaries. The cross border nature of coastal planning means there is mutual interest to work in partnership, ensuring the sustainable use of Plymouth's coastal assets.

**5.87** The management of this area has evolved over a number of years, and is currently coordinated through the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF), chaired by the Queen's Harbour Master. This body works to a six year management plan which provides a framework for the sustainable management of the Tamar Estuaries and a context to ensure statutory compliance in delivering conservation objectives for the European Marine Site.



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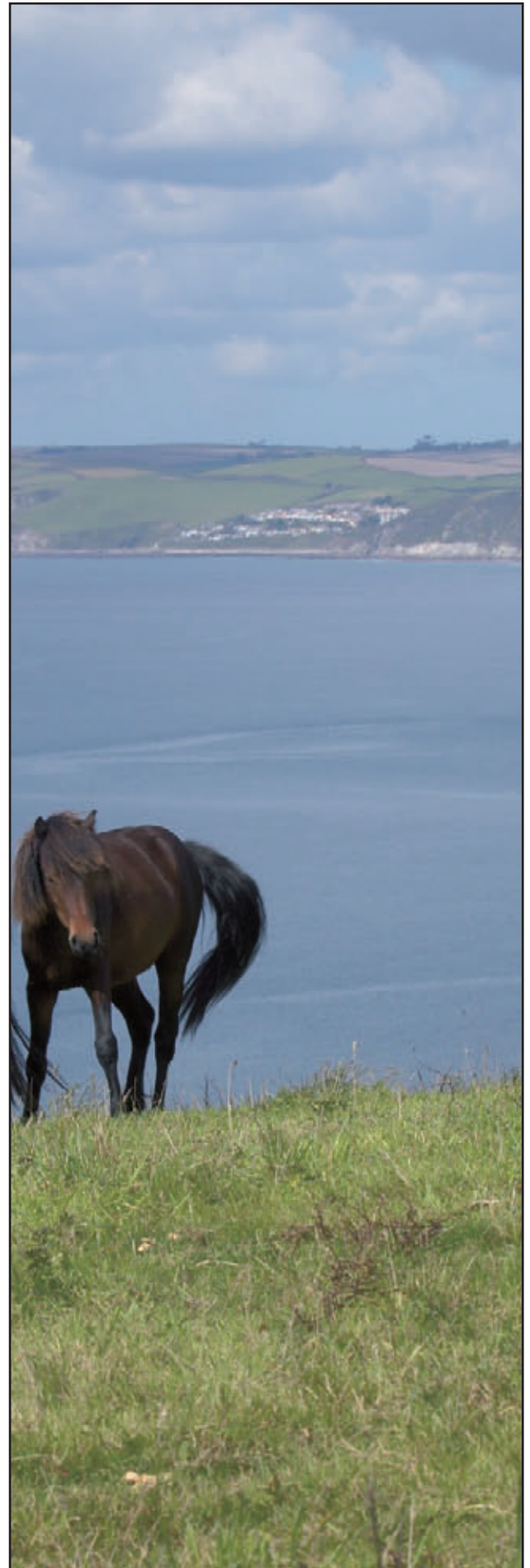
## Approach

**5.88** The challenge in managing these activities is to conserve the area's natural and historic heritage, ensuring growth is delivered in a way that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, as well as encouraging appropriate opportunities, including giving full recognition to the important needs of commerce, defence and leisure interests.

**5.89** Whilst TECF more than adequately address current challenges, there is a need to evolve in response to the forthcoming Marine Bill with its aspirations for a Marine Spatial Planning approach to improve the integrated management of coastal and marine resources. In addition to this, the Habitat Regulations Assessment of Plymouth's Core Strategy highlighted the need to manage the rise in recreational pressure upon the European Marine Site associated with growth in the sub-region.

**5.90** The Core Strategy with its Policies that reflect the values and opportunities of Plymouth's waterfront, recognises the importance of this asset in relation to social, economic, environmental and resource conservation. It provides an integrated planning approach that is intended to balance the need for conserving the integrity of the Port of Plymouth, while allowing for appropriate and necessary development opportunities in support of the city's regeneration initiatives.

**5.91** However, there is a growing need for a broader approach, that crosses boundaries and delivers a 'joined up approach' between authorities, to guide developers and decision makers on the most appropriate form and types of uses /activities that can take place within the Port of Plymouth area - consistent with and in support of its status as a European Marine Site. The long term challenge is to deliver an integrated and sustainable marine spatial strategy, that integrates with the current spatial planning approach of LDFs, to guide future uses in the whole of this area.



## Vision

5.92 The Council's vision for the Port of Plymouth area, illustrated conceptually on the vision diagram, is as follows:

### Area Vision 10 - Plymouth Sound and Estuaries

To conserve and enhance Plymouth's unique coastal and waterfront setting, promoting an integrated management approach to its sustainable development, which:

1. Protects the value and integrity of the Port of Plymouth, recognising its position as a unique asset to the area.
2. Delivers the conservation objectives for the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site.
3. Delivers opportunities for improved water transport linkages along the waterfront.
4. Acknowledges the port's fundamental importance to the economy of the area, and the need to accommodate a wide range of uses /activities, including its role as a primary naval port and dockyard, its use by commercial shipping, commercial fishing, tourism, recreation and leisure.

5.93 In support of this Vision statement the Council will prepare, in conjunction with its TECF partners and the adjoining local authorities, a Coastal Planning SPD which will:

- Amplify the policies in the Core Strategy relating to coastal planning matters, explaining how they can be implemented within the context of ensuring the sustainable development of Plymouth's waterfront
- Address the impacts of additional recreational use in the area. In particular ensuring that development is delivered in a way that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites
- Set out coastal planning application considerations
- Provide guidance on coastal and marine consents and consultation procedures.

5.94 In the longer term, the Council will work with its TECF partners towards developing a Marine Spatial Planning approach for the Port of Plymouth area, which integrates with the current LDF process, providing a comprehensive management approach to the area.

#### Key Sources:

- Port of Plymouth Area Recreation Study 1975 (and subsequent reviews in 1992 and 2001) undertaken by the eight authorities with statutory responsibilities in the Port of Plymouth area, together with the Sports Council
- Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2006-12 - TECF
- Habitat Regulations Assessment of Plymouth's LDF –February 2007

# Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Vision Diagram

