

The Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon Joint Study Area (JSA)

Input to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

1. Context

- 1.1 The Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon JSA is strategically located at the centre of the far SW, straddling the border between Devon and Cornwall. Plymouth lies at the heart of this area. It is a geographically compact city, the second largest in the SW Region after Bristol, providing a home for some 240,000 people, as well as high order services for its extensive catchment areas. The surrounding hinterland is characterised by a number of small market towns set within an extensive rural backdrop.
- 1.2 While the city has had both a prosperous and illustrious past, structural changes in the latter decades led to a period of relative decline. This has only recently started to be addressed in a concerted way.

2. The Focus of Change

- 2.1 Plymouth has a special role as the focus for the far south west of the Region. It is also the 'engine-room' for the surrounding area, providing for economic, social and cultural activities. The city is ideally placed to spread the benefits of investment throughout the far South West, and in so doing contribute to both regional and national prosperity.
- 2.2 While the quality of life that this area can offer is second to none, Plymouth's performance does not match its size and standing. However, things are changing. There is a new confidence and effective partnership working. The fruits of this are being seen in the major investment now happening which is transforming the city's skyline.
- 2.3 Key advantages to the city's renaissance are both its potential to accommodate significant change in a sustainable way, as well as its unrivalled setting - which includes part of the Dartmoor National Park, three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as well as extensive lengths of Heritage Coast. These unique assets also place a great responsibility on the stewardship of this area - ensuring that future development is to the benefit of all, with a close regard to the area's unique heritage.

- 2.4 In essence there are three prerequisites to Plymouth achieving its urban renaissance:
- Firstly there is a need for a sufficient critical mass of population to achieve the step-change in the range and quality of services provided within the city. Without sufficient demand it is simply uneconomic to supply these high order services.
 - Secondly, to both create and retain this critical mass, Plymouth needs to become the city of choice, where people want to live. To achieve this, quality of development will be essential.
 - Thirdly, without high quality job opportunities population growth is unlikely, so the planning strategy needs to go hand in hand with an economic strategy.
- 2.5 Plymouth's renaissance also needs to be matched by a Rural Renaissance of the surrounding market towns and rural settlements – so that they fulfil their own potential and meet their own needs. These relationships also need to be seen as a two way process. The growth of Plymouth will provide much-sought-after facilities and services, into which the rest of the area can tap - but the development of the surrounding settlements is important in terms of meeting the needs of the area as a whole. It will also present challenges, as well as opportunities, beyond the immediate remit of this report.

3. The Vision for the JSA

3.1 The Vision for the area is to achieve the managed transformation of Plymouth, and its closely related settlements.

3.2 By 2026, the strategy will therefore seek to :

- Fulfil the area's economic potential and therefore optimise its contribution to the national and regional economy, and support the economic development of the far South West.
- Transform Plymouth into one of Europe's, finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, with excellent cultural, leisure and sporting facilities and a place where people choose to live, work and play.
- Capitalise on the area's exceptional environment and landscape character, with environmental assets permeating the city and linking urban areas effectively to the coast and countryside, to the benefit of all who live in the area.
- Substantially overcome deprivation, with the benefits of Plymouth's transformation being widely felt throughout the area.
- Have implemented high quality infrastructure (in particular High Quality Public Transport infrastructure) as an integral part of the development of the area.
- Address local housing and employment needs in all of its settlements appropriate to their role and functionality.

4. Strategy

4.1 To deliver the Vision, it will be necessary to implement a series of integrated strategies:

- Promotion of **Economic Growth** in identified key employment sectors (*see the Sustainable Growth Distribution Study (SGDS) report by Baker Associates and the City Growth Strategy attachments A and B - and the emerging Plymouth Economic Strategy*).
- Identification, safeguarding and prioritisation of critical **Employment Land** sites (*see the Employment Land Use Study statement – attachment C*).
- Managed increase in **Urban Concentration** and radically improved **Urban Design** (*see Mackay Vision – attachment D*).
- Successful delivery of the **Sherford new community** as an exemplar of sustainable development in parallel with and complementary to urban renaissance.
- Recognition of the contribution of – and organic needs of – **Surrounding Towns and Rural Areas**.
- Transformation of the transport networks – and in particular **High Quality Public Transport** - serving the JSA (*see draft Sub-Regional Transport Strategy – attachment E*).
- Provision of **Housing** in sufficient variety and quantity to meet the needs of a larger and more diverse population (*see SGDS Report by Baker Associates Chapter 14*).
- Strategic investment in the **Health** services that underpin the quality of life of the population (*see attachment F*).
- Strategic investment in the **Education** system of a potentially younger society (*see attachment G*).
- Upgrading of the sub-regionally important **Cultural** assets and facilities (*see attachment H*).
- Conservation and enhancement of the **Environment** in pursuance of local, regional, national and international policies and objectives with particular reference to the nationally-designated landscapes that surround the city (*see Urban Fringe Study and Greenscape Study – attachments I and J*).

Plymouth

4.2 The principal aim of the strategy for the JSA is the transformation of Plymouth into one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, a City which provides the highest order of educational, cultural, health, retail and leisure services within this part of the Region.

4.3 A key aspect of the strategy is revitalisation of the main urban area of Plymouth itself. It promotes those forms of economic activity that have the most potential and that are most suited to a vibrant city. It provides the offer of a much better Quality of Life, which will reduce outward migration and allow population levels within the city to increase. It will also result in a better balanced social mix.

- 4.4 The strategy will promote the increase in jobs and services and enable the population to grow towards 300,000. This, in turn, will help to create the critical mass required to support the step-change in the services and facilities provided by the city, which can then become a reality for its residents.
- 4.5 Meeting the employment, housing and other requirements of these people will help to mend the fabric of the city, and create better facilities and services for existing and new residents alike.
- 4.6 Strategic development is to be focused within the urban area, together with sustainable extensions to that urban area. Increasing the opportunities for both living and working in the City will help to stem the tendency to commute into the City from the rest of the JSA.

Sherford New Community

- 4.7 The Sherford New Community should be an exemplar of sustainable development and provides an opportunity to meet a significant part of the medium term development needs of the area, complementing the emerging urban renaissance measures within the city itself. The new community should be as self sufficient as possible and provide a range and level of facilities complementary to those available within the city itself.
- 4.8 Development at Sherford will also assist in enabling the full development potential of the eastern sector of the city, within the city boundary, to be brought forward in a co-ordinated and sustainable way and help secure major investment in new public transport infrastructure.

Surrounding Settlements

- 4.9 The strategy also seeks to address the long-standing need to ensure that the other settlements in the JSA are more sustainable and can provide for their own housing and employment needs. In particular, there is a need to enhance the self-sufficiency of Torpoint, Saltash, Liskeard, Tavistock and Ivybridge and all the neighbouring towns in South East Cornwall, West Devon and the South Hams. This will reduce their dependence on Plymouth through appropriate levels of housing and economic development, together with appropriate educational, health and cultural infrastructure. It will be a matter for LDFs to provide for development sufficient to meet local needs, consistent with the aspirations set out in the various Community Strategies for the JSA.
- 4.10 The strategy aims to protect the special environmental quality of the hinterland, acknowledging that this asset is critical to making Plymouth a city of choice for future investment and residency.

5. Key Issues and Opportunities

- 5.1 The regeneration of Plymouth has the potential to be a key driver for the economic and social agenda of the South West of the Region - complementary to the role of Bristol in the North East. One purpose of this RSS must be to realise that potential - for the benefit of the JSA, the Region and the wider UK.
- 5.2 Plymouth is uniquely placed to deliver change and growth in the most sustainable and self-sufficient manner. It has the urban form, the available land and the past underperformance to enable substantial economic growth, housing development and social benefit to take place without damage to its internationally-recognised environmental assets. (The JSA includes sections of the Dartmoor National Park and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – in the South Hams, the Tamar Valley and the Coast of Cornwall).
- 5.3 Partnership working has long been a strong suit in the JSA. Current good examples of this include the planning of the Sherford new community, including a joint Area Action Plan process, the ongoing partnership working of the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Committee (TECF) and the Plymouth Sub-Regional Economic Partnership (PSREP).
- 5.4 With the negative impacts of overheating being felt in other growth areas of the South of England, and the confluence of initiatives and opportunities mentioned above, which support so many current government strategies, there is a unique opportunity for Plymouth to achieve an historic transformation and rejuvenation to the benefit of the whole of the South West Region.
- 5.5 The challenges arising from climate change present challenges to the JSA that will be addressed by the promotion of energy efficiency, waste minimisation and the prudent use of natural resources.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 The experience of Partnership working will enable the JSA to maximise the opportunities that will arise from this element of the RSS. The potential for the production of joint LDFs in the future could also spring from this collaborative work.
- 6.2 The implementation of the Strategy will require:
 - Up to 42,000 new jobs to be created between 2001 and 2026.
 - The safeguarding of sufficient sites of appropriate quality for new economic activity - with a particular provision for those employment sectors with greatest growth potential, as identified in the City Growth Strategy. It is not envisaged that additional significant sites for Employment Land outside of the city (other than those already identified at Langage and Sherford, will be required during the course of this strategy.

- The construction of at least 29,000 (and up to 37,000) additional dwellings between 2001 and 2026 (including existing commitments) to be located in the existing urban area and sustainable urban extensions, of which at least 22,000 (and up to 29,000) will be in Plymouth.

<i>Plymouth</i>	<i>22,000 – 29,000</i>
<i>Sherford (including some cross-boundary development)</i>	<i>4,000 – 5,500</i>
<i>Devon extensions</i>	<i>500</i>
<i>Saltash and Torpoint</i>	<i>1,500</i>

- The provision in all of the JSA settlements of housing, according to their role and functionality.
- The sequential development of a High Quality Public Transport network, initially linking the City Centre with new developments at Sherford, Language, and Derriford - and subsequently expanding those routes throughout the JSA, to provide a viable and attractive alternative to private transport.
- The acquisition and protection of land that can be used for High Quality Public Transport (HQPT) routes to enable the construction of high-quality and easily accessible interchanges on the key corridors, to allow access to this network
- The progressive provision of new and enhanced education, health and cultural facilities and infrastructure (see attachments F, G and H).

7. Financial Implications - Infrastructure Investment Priorities

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 Although the scale of investment in this JSA is unlikely to be on a par with others there are nevertheless a series of financial inputs that will be necessary and these are set out (with very indicative costings where these have been prepared) for the regionally significant social, economic and environmental (including transport) interventions that are required.

7.2 Social

7.2.1 *Educational Infrastructure*

- The delivery of the increased population and jobs within the Plymouth PUA will require the enhancement of existing learning and school facilities and the creation of new schools at both primary and secondary level. In addition the development at Sherford will require significant investment in education facilities and the development of local employment, retail, community and social infrastructure, in phase with population growth.

Cost: £199,000,000 in relation to the investment required in schools within Plymouth.

7.2.2 *Health Infrastructure*

- The delivery of the aspirations for the Plymouth PUA will require increased investment for the provision of general practitioner, acute hospital, maternity, intermediate care, mental and low dependency bed provision.

Cost: £74,700,000

7.2.3 *Cultural Infrastructure*

- The creation of a regionally significant “Life Centre” at Central Park providing an Olympic standard swimming pool, the completion of the Plymouth Argyle stadium, together with linked leisure and commercial facilities.

Cost: £33,500,000

- Provision of a new boulevard link between Millbay and the City Centre and replacement facilities from Plymouth Pavilions to create a new arena and conference facility.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Provision of new Central Library linked to establishment of a cultural quarter around Plymouth University.

Cost: £17,000,000

7.3 Economic

- Establishment of “Plymouth Vision” (a Local Authority led delivery vehicle) with funding for land assembly and site clearance to deliver the accelerated growth within the key areas of change identified in the Plymouth LDF documents.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Creation of a recognised fit for purpose office quarter in Millbay/City Centre to maximise employment growth in the service sector.

Cost: Largely private sector funded but gap funding grant scheme required to link to the development of learning and skills initiatives and the Local Enterprise and Growth Initiative.

- Economic Strategy for Plymouth and City Growth Strategy initiatives to deliver accelerated job creation linked to wider role of the Plymouth PUA.

Cost: Unknown at this stage but work progressing through PCC, GOSW and RDA, which will be finalised in January 2006 with detailed Action Plan for the 6 growth sectors.

- Tamar Science Park Extensions with linked sustainable transport infrastructure and land acquisitions

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Strategic Branding & Marketing of key tourism and investment opportunities through linked marketing campaigns and the development of conference destination opportunities linked to the 6 City Growth Strategy sectors.

Cost: £6,000,000

7.4 Environmental

The following are the key strategic environmental interventions linked to the increased growth contemplated within the Plymouth PUA:

- Enhancement of Central Park linked to the creation of a regional sporting “Life Centre”. This is funded by a number of sources but input would be required to complete the park improvements.

Cost: £3,000,000

- Creation of a Country Park at Saltram.

Cost: Unknown at this stage. Currently subject to study.

- Creation of a Community Park at Sherford.

Cost: Unknown at this stage. Currently subject to study.

- Plymouth Urban Fringe Initiatives. Various proposals seeking to enhance the urban-rural fringe linked to wider management of the area for development.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Creation of a country park at Seaton Valley, linked to major development proposals brought forward in the Plymouth LDF.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

7.5 Waste Infrastructure and Management

The RSS should make clear that there will be a need for the provision of adequate infrastructure within the urban area in the medium-term to manage the waste arising from the Plymouth area.

7.6 Transport Infrastructure

7.6.1 There will be a need for significant investment in transport infrastructure within the existing urban area if the higher growth scenarios are to be realised within the timeframes envisaged. In some cases, given over-engineering of the existing transport network, significant growth can be accommodated with development funding directly meeting the costs of the necessary transport infrastructure to allow development to proceed with strategic timeframes. It is proposed however that key elements of transport infrastructure will need to be prioritised for both the Devon part of the Plymouth PUA and within the city itself within the period 2006 to 2026.

7.6.2 There will also be some, far less significant and relatively minor, infrastructure costs associated with the development needs of the surrounding settlements.

7.6.3 Public Transport

- Provision of a high quality public transport (HQPT) link between the Langage, Sherford and Plymouth City Centre along the Eastern Corridor.

Cost: £100,000,000 - £200,000,000.

- Provision of a transport interchange (including strategic park and ride facilities) on the A38 at Deep Lane, accessible to the proposed HQPT link and road based public transport networks.

Cost: £40,000,000

- Laira Bridge/Eastern Corridor Public Transport Improvements

Cost: £5,000,000

- Improved links between the city and nearby towns including the re-opening of the Drake rail line between Tavistock and Plymouth.

Cost: £15,000,000.

- Northern Corridor HQPT

Cost: £20,000,000

- Eastern Corridor HQPT Extension

Cost: £30,000,000.

- Improved links between the City and Saltash / Torpoint, and along waterfront, including ferry, bridge tolling, water transport and public transport links (with park & ride provision).

Cost: £20,000,000.

7.6.4 Air

- Improvements to Plymouth airport, to enable airport to play key role in transformation of Plymouth and the JSA and optimise contribution to regional economy. Potentially including safety area and runway extensions; new terminal facilities and surface access improvements.

Cost: Unknown at this stage. Airport Master plan is currently under development. This will build upon the findings of the Plymouth Airport Study which will report in November 2005. (The master plan will provide an essential tool to inform the future direction of the airport.

7.6.5 Rail Infrastructure

- Provision of a road and rail freight interchange at Tavistock Junction.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Port Infrastructure - Creation of Cruise Liner facilities at Millbay.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

- Creation of sea freight facilities and rationalisation of land uses.

Cost: Unknown at this stage.

7.6.6 Road Network

- Improvements to the Deep Lane junction on the A38 to access the new community at Sherford and the expanded Langage employment area.

Cost: Covered in early cost identified for Public Transport measures at Deep Lane.

- Links from the new community at Sherford to the A379.

Cost: Unknown at stage.