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Foreword by the Leader of Plymouth City Council

This Local Plan sets out a radical and innovative approach to planning in Plymouth over the next 10 years in order to bring about substantial regeneration within the city. It promotes a positive, project management approach to land-use change within our city so that we can meet our economic, social and environmental needs now and in the future. In particular it seeks to:

- Set out a clear vision and planning strategy for the city to ensure that all developments reflect city-wide objectives.
- Focus regeneration activity in 5 key “Strategic Opportunity Areas” and on a dozen or so “Strategic Opportunity Sites”, linked to regeneration programmes.
- Adopt a sub-regional focus to accommodating housing and employment, recognising the complimentary development requirements elsewhere within the Plymouth sub-region.
- Expand upon existing partnering arrangements and develop new partnerships in order that the objectives of the plan can be met.
- Maintain and strengthen Plymouth’s role as a regional centre.
- Preserve and enhance open spaces within the city.
- Conserve and enhance our built heritage.
- Substantially improve the quality of all new development in the city by explicitly setting out an urban design policy framework.
- Promote innovative ways in which the provision of infrastructure can be delivered and co-ordinated.

In short, the plan seeks to commence in earnest the urban renaissance of Plymouth, responding directly to the Government’s agenda. It is the foundation for stimulating new ideas and creativity and the means by these can be brought to fruition.

The City Council is committed to making Plymouth a place where its citizens can realise their potential and a city of which they can be proud. The City Council will play its part in this, and will look to other key agencies, local businesses, and local people to also play a positive role.

When we published our Community Planning Studies last year I said we valued the views and opinions of local people and businesses. This plan draws heavily on those views and opinions, reflecting the fact that plans are local plans. However we must also think more strategically about the future direction of the city and this plan seeks to do that as well. It must be a positive plan, guiding inward investment decisions and linking with other strategies, especially the Community Strategy and the Corporate Strategy. I encourage everyone to support this plan and to explore ways the plan can be improved after this first period of consultation.

Patrick Nicholson
Leader of Plymouth City Council



1.1 Purpose.

The purpose of the Local Plan is to identify policies and proposals for the use, development and protection of land in Plymouth. It seeks to do this in a way which:

- 1 Provides a framework for considering planning applications (Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise).
- 1 Reflects the strategic planning policies of the Devon County Structure Plan.
- 1 Is consistent with other strategic planning policies and targets, including European, national, regional and sub-regional, recognising the importance of Plymouth in the wider regional and national context.
- 1 Is informed by the Community Planning Studies and consultation with local people, groups and other interested organisations.
- 1 Supports the work of the City Council and Plymouth 2020 Partnership, through its Pathfinder Strategy and Action Plan and other strategies, in improving quality of life for all people in the city.

The Plan is a full review of the Plymouth's current Local Plan which was adopted in 1996 and is based on demographic forecasts and land use requirements covering the period 1991-2001. This "reviewed" Plan comes into line with the Devon Structure Plan which considers the period of 1995-2011.

1.2 Local Plan Review Process.

There have been four key inputs to the production of the Local Plan. These are summarised below:

1. The Adopted Local Plan itself was a major input. The City Council reviewed the effectiveness of this Plan and identified changes that were needed for the new Plan, for example, in the light of new government policies.
2. Extensive consultation with the public, and with agencies has provided a considerable amount of information to assist production of the Plan. The community consultation process started in summer 1998 with an innovative programme known as the "community planning studies". The results of this consultation were reported in 20 ward-based Community Planning Studies in May 2000. The City Council has also consulted major landowners and agents, utilities companies and a variety of public, private, voluntary and community sector agencies as the work on the Plan has been proceeding.
3. Research of some of the key Plan issues. For example, studies have been undertaken on the potential of Plymouth to accommodate new housing development in a sustainable way (Plymouth Urban Capacity Study), the need for further shopping provision during the Plan period (Plymouth Shopping Study), local housing need (South Hams and Plymouth Local Housing Needs Study) and an assessment of the city's greenspaces (Plymouth Greenscape Assessment).

A sustainability appraisal of the draft Planning Strategy informed the production of the Planning Strategy that is included in this Plan. The Strategy was appraised against sustainable development objectives emerging through Plymouth's Local Agenda 21 programme. The Strategy sets the framework for all of the Plan policies and proposals, which themselves have been subject to sustainability appraisal. This sustainability appraisal, an independent verification report and a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan itself is available from the City Council as a separate document.

*See Appendix 2 for
a list of research and
background papers*

1.3 Strategic Planning Context.

Europe.

The European Spatial Development Framework (ESDP) was agreed by Member States of the European Union (EU) in May 1999. It provides a framework for the policies of the EU which have spatial impacts. Examples of such policies include the Trans-European Networks (TENS), relating to European transport, telecommunications and energy networks, and the administration of Structural Funds (such as Objectives 1 and 2), which address economic and social problems in deprived areas of the EU. Plymouth is located on the TENS network and benefits from Objective 2 status.

The ESDP recognises the need for different approaches to planning in Member States reflecting local circumstances, but emphasises the importance of co-operation to ensure economic and social cohesion and reduce regional disparities across the EU. It highlights the following three key spatial planning principles:

- 1 The development of a balanced and polycentric urban pattern of development and a new urban – rural relationship which recognises inter-dependence and fosters partnership.
- 1 Security parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge.
- 1 Sustainable development, including the prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage.

The ESDP is important for Plymouth's Local Plan. It sets guidelines for planning at regional and city level, paying particular attention to the importance of improving quality of life in urban areas, controlling the physical expansion of cities, improving relationships between urban areas and their hinterlands, and other measures to promote more sustainable patterns of development. Furthermore, the Local Plan needs to reflect the principles set out in the ESDP in getting support for future EU assistance.

England.

The Government has produced 25 Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and 15 Minerals Planning Guidance Notes (MPGs). These set out the Government's planning policies which local planning authorities must have regard to in the development of local policies. Post-ESDP Guidance also seeks to apply at a national level the principles of the ESDP.

South West Region.

The Government's planning policy for the South West is set out in Regional Planning Guidance Note 10 (RPG10), which includes too a Regional Transport Strategy. The RPG was issued in September 2001. Set within the context of the ESDP, it sets out a vision for the South West and a broad development strategy for the period to 2016.

A key element of the RPG's vision and strategy is the concentration of growth in Principal Urban Areas (PUAs), such as Plymouth, and the development of an integrated approach to urban and rural areas. This includes for example promoting development of previously-developed land in urban areas to ease pressure for development in the countryside. The RPG also acknowledges the priority need for strong policies to tackle long term and deep seated economic and social problems in the western sub-region, which includes Plymouth, including investment in transport and communications networks to alleviate its remoteness.

RPG10 recognises the important role that Plymouth plays, because of its size and potential for sound economic growth, as a focus for future development in the far south west. However, this role needs to be seen alongside that of developing complementary clusters, in both Devon and Cornwall, to support the overall aim of spreading economic prosperity. The RPG considers that Plymouth's role as the major urban centre in the area, and the focus for the economic and social life of the communities within and around it, should be strengthened. This is seen as being of benefit to the wider area, as well as supporting Cornwall's Objective 1 aims by offering a strategic location for regionally significant development.

The RPG also recognises Plymouth's European status as an Area of Special Need (ASN). ASNs are areas with special economic or social need on the basis of a series of indicators. The RPG specifies that priority should be given to measures for economic restructuring and regeneration in these areas. It also promotes Plymouth as a location for rail freight terminal and transfer facilities.

Plymouth Sub-Region.

RPG10 recognises that the physical capacity of Plymouth to accommodate future growth will be limited, and that there are physical and environmental constraints to development beyond the urban area. Therefore, in order to achieve its overarching aim for the Plymouth area, the RPG requires the local authorities to co-operate through a sub-regional study to identify sustainable patterns of future development. This study is recognised as an important mechanism of both informing and helping to co-ordinate the next review of the Devon and Cornwall Structure Plans.

Devon.

The strategic planning policies for Devon are set out in the Devon County Structure Plan. This was adopted in February 1999 and is currently being reviewed to reflect the revised RPG. The current Structure Plan identifies Plymouth as a Regional Centre to act as a focal point for new development and the provision of services to meet the needs of its hinterland. It sets out employment land and housing requirements which should be met through the Plymouth Local Plan. The Structure Plan, together with the Local Plan constitutes the statutory development plan for Plymouth.

Neighbouring local authorities.

Plymouth's neighbouring local authorities, Cornwall County Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council and Caradon District Council, are also in the process of reviewing their Development Plans. The Local Plans are being reviewed to cover the period 2001-2011, and the Cornwall Structure Plan, to cover the period up to 2016. Key issues in these other plan reviews for Plymouth's Local Plan are set out below.

Cornwall Structure Plan review to 2016. The strategic planning policies for Cornwall are set out in the Cornwall County Structure Plan. This was adopted in December 1997 and is currently being reviewed to reflect the revised RPG. The most significant issues for Plymouth have been defined in the Regional Planning Guidance.

These are:

- 1 A recognition of the need to co-operate with Plymouth in developing its role as a focus for future development in the far South West, while at the same time developing complementary clusters of smaller settlements in Cornwall in support of the overall Regional aim of spreading economic prosperity.
- 1 A recognition that the physical capacity of the city will be limited. Therefore, while there are physical and important environmental constraints beyond the urban area, there is a need to promote and support investment in the city and nearby towns. This should be complimented by improving transport linkages, so as to promote a balanced and sustainable level of development, together with making a housing provision that is consistent with meeting the Regional economic, social and environmental objectives.

District Local Plan reviews to 2011. In relation to the emerging Local Plan reviews of the neighbouring authorities, Plymouth recognises the inter dependence of the whole sub-region. In general terms, the surrounding areas rely on Plymouth as a regional centre for jobs, shopping and other facilities. They also provide a magnificent setting and many recreational facilities on the city's fringes. In considering future development options, the key issue for Plymouth's Local Plan is to ensure that the locations chosen for new development outside the city contribute to meeting the wider sustainability objectives. Within the Plymouth sub-region this primarily means meeting future housing needs in accordance with the approved County Structure Plans, as well as maximising the opportunity for sustainable travel patterns.

Particular issues of relevance to the Plymouth Local Plan in the local plans of the surrounding districts include the following:

West Devon Local Plan Review to 2011 (First Deposit stage, September 2000).

- 1 The provision for 4,100 dwellings to meet the Structure Plan allocation to 2011.
- 1 The concentration of development, within the sub-region, at Tavistock, because of its capability of supporting public transport (especially rail based travel).
- 1 The safeguarding of land at Tavistock for a railway station in connection with the Drake line proposals.

South Hams Local Plan Review to 2011 (Issues Report stage, March 1999).

- 1 Recognition that a further 6,000 dwellings need to be provided in the part of Plymouth's Area of Economic Activity within South Hams, taking account of completions, to meet the Structure Plan allocation to 2011. However, following the completion of the Plymouth Urban Capacity Study, given strategic planning objectives to prioritise development in urban areas, Plymouth's Local Plan provides for some of this requirement within the city's boundaries.
- 1 Confirmation that any new residential development will be appropriately located to maximise the opportunity for sustainable travel.
- 1 That the new community proposals will be sufficiently large, (some 3,500 houses), to support proper provision of infrastructure, including adequate employment land provision, so as to minimise the impact on other settlements.
- 1 That, in line with the Structure Plan allocation, 100 hectares of employment land is needed within Plymouth Area of Economic Activity. While the City Council's preference is for this to be in one large designation, it is also recognised that there is a need for housing and employment to be well related to each other, as well as to transport corridors and public transport.
- 1 That the relationships between the proposed power station and employment land at Langage, as well the relationship to possible urban extension(s) to Plymouth, are being considered.
- 1 That the Plymouth Fringe sites need to be looked at in a co-ordinated way because of the cross border environmental, social and transport issues.

Caradon Local Plan Review to 2011 (Issues Report stage, November 2000).

- 1 Recognition that the review should aim to promote greater self sufficiency in terms of Caradon's employment and service provision.
- 1 The need to give public transport a greater role.
- 1 The retention of the Broadmoor Farm strategic employment site proposal, together with an assessment of the contribution this proposal could make to future patterns of sustainable development within the area.

1.4 Corporate Context.

The City Council and its partners produce a range of strategies and programmes for a variety of purposes.

Plymouth 2020 Partnership's Pathfinder Strategy and Action Plan was published in 1999. The Pathfinder initiative is designed to provide an over-arching framework for the city's key economic, social and environmental initiatives, including the Local Plan, to ensure that they pull in the same direction. Essentially, it provides a management structure for joined-up working across a range of areas, and sets out a common vision and set of targets to work to.

The Community Strategy will be published in 2002. This will be a broad strategy for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the city. It will build upon the Pathfinder initiative by engaging local communities in the process of setting the strategy. The Local Plan and the Community Strategy will need to be complementary and close working will be essential as both develop.

Plymouth's Local Agenda 21 Plan was adopted by the City Council in December 2000. This sets out key sustainability objectives and targets for the city. The Local Plan has been subject to a sustainable development appraisal using the objectives set out in the Local Agenda 21 to ensure that it is contributing to the sustainable development of the city. This appraisal is available as a separate document from the City Council.

The Local Plan is also related to other plans and strategies. It seeks to co-ordinate with the statutory Local Transport Plan, the Housing Strategy and the Economic Strategy for the Plymouth Sub-Region 2001-2004 through the land use strategy, policies and proposals. It also applies the City Council's Corporate Strategy in land use planning terms, and aims to support funding initiatives such as the Single Regeneration Budget and the South West of England Objective 2 Programme.

Linkages between the Local Plan Strategy and other strategies, programmes and plans have been emphasised through cross-references in Part Two of the Local Plan.