

Appendix K

City Centre and University AAP sites newsletter response summary document

City Centre and University Area Action Plan Sites Newsletter Responses

The City Centre and University sites newsletter was not a formal stage of consultation but was part of the Council's commitment to involve people in the preparation process for the Area Action Plan.

The newsletter identified some key sites that the Area Action Plan would be considering. It also identified what the evidence base reports suggested might be appropriate ideas for sites. This information formed part of the Issues and Preferred Options consultation held in November 2008 and this was highlighted again as part of the Council's continuous engagement with the public.

How the Council consulted on the newsletter?

The newsletter was sent out to people via e-mail or via post directly to their door, with responses welcomed by the Council in a variety of forms including by letter or via e-mail. This was an informal consultation so all types of responses were welcomed by the Council.

Planning Aid has also set up a group to help local residents make responses to the newsletter as well as other planning documents produced by the Council. This commenced in June and consists of various residents groups from Stonehouse as well as residents from Morley and Harwell Court.

Who the Council consulted?

The whole of the Council's consultation database was notified of this newsletter. This includes all councillors and statutory consultation bodies. The newsletter was also available from the Civic Centre and all libraries within Plymouth. As well as the consultation database all City Centre businesses and stakeholders were notified of the sites newsletter asking for their responses.

Summary of newsletter responses

- Comment 1 states that there are many constructive comments and suggestions from organisations and the public. It suggests that a voluntary forum is established with the intent that it would assist the Council in the formation of the AAP.
- Comment 2 states that it is difficult to comment on future plans in the light of the current economic climate bearing in mind the uncertain future of the Dockyard. It is essential to retain beautiful old buildings such as the Central Library site with the Armada Centre retained as a retail outlet as Sainsbury's is well used – easily accessible by public transport and also has parking facilities.
- Comment 3 states North Cross is long overdue for a makeover and should in some way become a fitting crown for Armada Way. Given that

the University and the Art College both help drive the local economy it also needs to ensure that both are well-provided for. It would appear that there is a suggestion to move the Police HQ elsewhere and there is still a fair amount of poor quality building behind the Library and Museum. The Cushman and Wakefield proposals are too overpowering; undoubtedly Plymouth needs more inner city housing and jobs but part of the appeal of the City Centre is its very openness and greenness. While most of the buildings in Cornwall Street are less than impressive the open spaces between the buildings are rare in a City Centre and give plenty of option for softening. The general feel of the City Centre should be left in place, and in twenty years time we will have something quite special on our hands, mess with it now and it will be lost forever. The recent proposals for Colin Campbell Court and the Independent Quarter were generally fine; especially the new pedestrian links between Cornwall Street and New George Street, there needs to be better access into Colin Campbell Court.

- Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd is pleased to provide comments on the recently published update on the City Centre and University AAP. They note that in the AAP the Armada Centre is identified as an area where there may be gradual change, suggesting that the area could be redeveloped to provide more office and student accommodation and that the Armada Centre could be replaced by non-retail uses. Whilst in general, the client wishes to support the Council's aims and objectives to regenerate the City Centre where these objectives accord with guidance in PPS6 and the emerging draft of PPS4, there is a genuine concern that the current proposals in regard to the Armada Centre could lead to either the isolation or loss of the main foodstore which serves the City Centre. In particular, if there are aspirations to redevelop the Armada Centre and taking into account the desire to provide further dwellings in the City Centre, there is a clear need to ensure residents and the City Centre are served by a foodstore capable of meeting the needs of a 'weekly shop'. This need is in the main currently provided by the store. The plan should ensure that the existing store is either retained or relocated to an appropriate location.
- The Theatres Trust state the Issues and Preferred Options document described Derry's Cross as the Entertainment Quarter. In this same part of the city the Leisure Quarter was also identified. These areas and others listed and described in the last document do not make an appearance in the newsletter which is confusing. Cultural, leisure and tourism facilities that are likely to attract large numbers of visitors should be clustered within a strategic quarter and have good accessibility to the public transport network. As the two main theatres, the Theatre Royal and the Athenaeum are sited in the South of Derry's Cross area they would have assumed that further leisure and cultural development would be located nearby or at least be attached to these theatres which are to the south of Royal Parade but note that such facilities have been proposed for the Colin Campbell Court area.

- Comment 6 would like to see more indoor meeting space, especially for the disabled.
- Comment 7 believes the pedestrian subway on Royal Parade should be re-instated. The previous principle of segregating pedestrian and traffic was very sound. There should be junction improvements to Charles Cross, Cobourg Street and Mayflower Street with the instalment of underpasses. The toilets on Armada Way also need improving. He agrees that Patrick Abercrombie's vision for Plymouth should be respected. There is a dignity and cohesion about much of the centre, totally lacking in the strange and unsightly architecture around the perimeter.
- Comment 8 states that one improvement which should be seriously considered is an overhead walkway going from the University / library area to the Drake Circus shopping mall.
- Comment 9 is intrigued to note that, although the document talks about vehicular access and the train station being totally overhauled, there is still nothing about Bretonside bus station. Although the footprint of passengers may not be the same as the car and the train, this area still is a portal into Plymouth and thus creates the first impression of the city.
- Comment 10 believes the redevelopment of the railway station would be very welcome as would the addition of a new car park in / near Cornwall Street. Transport into / out of the city centre is still a challenge at times.
- Comment 11 welcomes the rejuvenation of parts of Plymouth, especially the Independent Quarter; it states nothing but good could come of it. However, concern lies with changing the Armada Centre to non-retail use. There aren't many supermarkets in the City Centre, and Sainsbury's is an ideal location for many students and people near the City Centre. It would make life more difficult for all if this Sainsbury's no longer existed.

Key themes raised from consultation responses

The key themes raised from the newsletter consultation were:

- Sainsbury's is a well used retail outlet within the City Centre and there are concerns over changing its use to non-retail
- Support for the re-development of the railway station
- Improved transport links around the City Centre with the re-instatement of underpasses in certain locations

- Improved public realm and access for disabled people
- Concern about the removal of the 'quarters' plan and the location of leisure facilities in Colin Campbell Court
- North Cross could act as an impressive gateway site to Armada Way
- Support for the redevelopment of the Independent Quarter and Colin Campbell Court
- Support for the retention of old buildings within the City Centre
- Additional car parking would be welcomed