(At Plymouth) Area Visions

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Introduction

What is a Growth Area?

In the future we need more houses, places to work and better infrastructure that keeps the city working. Three areas of the city have been identified as key to delivering major growth in housing, employment and associated infrastructure to drive Plymouth’s growth. These three growth areas are:

- 'The City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area'
- 'The Derriford and Northern Corridor Growth Area'
- 'The Eastern Corridor Growth Area'
The City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area

The City Centre and Waterfront has been prioritised as a Growth Area because of its economic and cultural importance and potential for regionally significant change and sustainable growth in jobs and homes.

Fundamental to the image of Plymouth, its vision ‘to become one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities’ – ‘Britain’s Ocean City’, the area is key to Plymouth’s desire to enhance and capitalise on its outstanding setting, environment and heritage.

Strengthening the City Centre as a regional mixed-use shopping destination is an important objective in the plan. The primary location for major comparison shopping and high density living, offices, culture and leisure, the City Centre also benefits from the presence of two major educational institutions, Plymouth University and Plymouth College of Art and is well-placed to support their continued growth.

This area is strategically important in terms of improving Plymouth’s visitor offer, leisure, hotels and tourism. Sutton Harbour, The Hoe, Millbay and Royal William Yard are key waterfront areas identified for recreation and tourism. Opportunities will be sought to enhance this by creating vibrant areas which make full use of their historic features.

The waterfront provides Plymouth’s port function and infrastructure, fishing fleet, deep water berths and land to support marine employment, including marine leisure, naval and defence uses. Plymouth has the largest naval base in Western Europe and the area plays a strategic defence role for UK security. The new Marine Industries Production Campus at South Yard is driving growth of Plymouth’s commercial marine science / technology sector. Protecting and improving access points along the waterfront for marine-related activities is critical.

The waterfront setting and natural beauty makes the area an attractive place to live, work and visit. It is important that this opportunity to drive investment and regeneration inland is capitalised upon to generate community value. There are strategic views of Plymouth Sound and the estuaries from many public places – views that are important to protect and take advantage of - to support access to the waterfront and the delivery of good quality development.

Strategic gateways to the city are located within this area, including the international ferry port, central railway and coach stations. There is a key opportunity for a cruise liner terminal at Millbay.

Safeguarding and enhancing public access to and along the waterfront is important, especially to provide increased opportunity for its enjoyment by visitors and local people alike.
Vision for the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area

By 2034, the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area will have been transformed through major investment and community-led improvements, delivering a vibrant mixed-use regional shopping centre and an attractive destination waterfront - safeguarding and enhancing high value employment, including marine-related employment, offices, education, leisure and cultural facilities, residential neighbourhoods, community infrastructure, with significant improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure, strategic green spaces and the unique historic and natural environment.

New residential-led mixed-use urban villages will be created that integrate successfully with existing communities.

New architecture and urban design in the area is considered to be amongst the highest quality in the UK and international architectural competitions are encouraged for strategically important sites.

Key city gateways and arrival points will be improved, including the City Centre’s railway and coach stations and Millbay’s international ferry-port, which is able to successfully accommodate cruise liners.

Strategic transport routes and their environments will have been enhanced to create attractive streets and a positive first impression of the area. Sustainable transport measures will promote a modal shift away from the car. The routes will be less impacted by air pollution and have a more welcoming character. Pedestrian and cycle access and community cohesion will be improved.

The waterfront will be transformed through improved public access to and along it as well as enhancements to key public spaces and heritage assets.

Water transport improvements will improve access to key locations including Mount Batten, Sutton Harbour, Millbay, Royal William Yard, Devonport and Mount Edgcumbe.

The area provides an attractive cultural and visitor offer, optimising the value of existing destinations such as the National Marine Aquarium, Sutton Harbour and the Theatre Royal, and linking them to new destinations such as the Plymouth History Centre. The ability of the area to host major events is safeguarded and enhanced. New high quality hotels and visitor accommodation has been delivered and activity along the waterfront has been optimised. The Mayflower 2020 celebrations have created a strong legacy both for the visitor economy and for local people, through improved public realm, waterfront access and lasting economic benefits.

Waterfront opportunities are capitalised upon in a way that safeguards and enhances the environmental status of the Plymouth Sound and estuaries, including the European Marine Sites. The area’s carbon footprint has been substantially reduced and it is more resilient to the social, economic and environmental impacts of climate change, including flood risk.
Strategy - What needs to happen to deliver the vision?

The achievement of this vision will require a number of strategic actions to be taken. These include:

1. Priority to be given to delivering the key projects highlighted in the City Centre and Waterfront masterplans.
2. Allocation of key sites in the Joint Local Plan that support the delivery of the vision.
3. Pursuing transport programmes and interventions which prioritise place making and sustainable movement and improve the attractiveness of the City Centre and Waterfront environment and people's ability to get to and through the area.
4. Actively engaging with international, national, regional and local programmes and investors to deliver funding for the Growth Area projects.
5. Preparing, implementing and keeping under close review a ‘Plan for the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area’ which will be a delivery plan and programme for the Growth Area.

A closer look - What does this all mean?

City Centre

The vision is informed by the City Centre issues and opportunities. Many of the issues have been well documented in the City Centre and University AAP (2010) and its evidence base. They are also picked up in the City Centre Development Study (2014). The City Centre Topic Paper (2014) for the Plymouth Plan summarises the issues as follows:

- Footprint – the City Centre's has a similar size footprint to cities like Manchester or Liverpool, without the supporting population or commercial activity.
- Anchor store distribution – major anchor retailers are concentrated around the east, leaving much of the City Centre ‘poorly anchored’.
- Size of shop units – retail requirements have changed since many of the existing units were built in the 1950s and 1960s, and large national retailers seek larger spaces.
- Vacancies – the recession has affected Plymouth City Centre like any other and there are concentrations of vacant units in areas like New George Street West.
- Character – the dominance of low density retail uses with little housing, leisure or office uses, lack of play space and poor environmental quality in places, including at the key gateways of the Railway Station and Western Approach.
- Changing shopping behaviours – online shopping is increasingly changing the way people shop and has slowed the rate of increase of demand for retail space.
- Competition from other centres – the need for Plymouth City Centre to distinguish itself from Exeter, Bristol and Truro.
- Market signals – relatively low rents, particularly in the West End, means that investor confidence is low compared to Bristol, for example.
North Hill

Since the adoption of the Core Strategy (2007), one of the most significant changes in the area is the ongoing consolidation and development of the Plymouth University campus. Years of partnership working with the University resulted in shared objectives which were embedded into the University’s Development Strategy (2006) and the City Centre & University Area Action Plan (2010). This supported the delivery of a high quality education campus including lecture space, library, teaching space, cultural and performing arts uses and specialist facilities such as the Marine Building. Plymouth College of Art has also undertaken significant development on its site, including completing a new landmark crafts building at Charles Street. The vision seeks to support the ongoing enhancement of these institutions and their integration with the History Centre as part of the Cultural Quarter and strengthen their connections to the City Centre and waterfront.

The Student Housing in Local Communities (2011) report identifies a large concentration of student housing along North Hill, with a number of purpose-built student accommodation development built in the vicinity. There have been historic concerns in some local residential communities about ‘town and gown’ issues, the domination of student accommodation on some residential streets, and problems with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and absentee landlords. However, the document assisted in informing the Article 4 Direction within Plymouth, placing some restrictions on HMOs. The Direction, along with the findings in the report initiated an amendment to the Development Guidelines SPD.

Exeter Street

Exeter Street is the main arterial road to the City Centre from the east, but the quality of its environment does not present a good impression of Plymouth and the City Centre. The heights of existing buildings are too low in relation to Exeter Street’s width and their architecture does not reflect the importance of this key route.

Union Street

Most of the area south of Union Street is what remains of Abercrombie’s planned industrial area. The area is still home to many small businesses that provide valuable employment opportunities. Although they are important to the local economy, many of the premises are of poor quality. There is a high level of social deprivation locally. Parts of the area have benefitted from regeneration – e.g. new developments north of the Millbay masterplan, like the award-winning Cargo mixed-use housing development and the striking new Plymouth School of Creative Arts. Inland at George Place there is a new award-winning hostel for homeless people and KARST - an artist-led gallery and workspace that is exhibiting international-level work.

Third-sector and community-led initiatives are now positively shaping the character of the place with organisations like Stonehouse Action creating Union Corner through restoring a derelict Victoria shop unit as a community space and the Millfields Community Economic Development Trust providing new managed work space at their Genesis development at Union Street.
The vision seeks to promote the overall enhancement of Union Street as an important historic and strategic linkage from the City Centre to Devonport, Stonehouse, Millbay and the south west of Plymouth.

Waterfront

There are many competing demands for the use of the waterfront, and it is important to safeguard its valuable marine employment land and deep water berths to allow for the sustainability of growth of this sector.

Whilst the waterfront has become a desirable place to live and socialise, parts of it lack the levels of activity normally expected for a vibrant waterfront city. Even Plymouth’s premier waterfront park, the Hoe, which is very well used during special events and the summer, can be quite deserted during the colder months. Some waterfront areas are very vibrant, such as the medieval Barbican area at Sutton Harbour, with its working fishing fleet, marina, café and bar culture, galleries and antique shops, as well as major tourist attractions such as the Mayflower Steps and National Marine Aquarium. The historic Royal William Yard has also become a vibrant mixed-use waterfront destination.

Public access to the waterfront has improved considerably in the last 20 years (including the enhanced strategic leisure routes such as the South West Coast Path, National Cycle Network and local routes such as the Sutton Harbour Heritage Trail). However, public access to and along the waterfront is fragmented in places, in part due to land uses, gated developments and topography. Access has to be restricted in the dockyard and port areas, for example, and former military developments can present access challenges because of their historic walls. Nevertheless, there are key opportunities to improve public access to and along the waterfront and this is reflected in the vision.

The Plymouth Waterfront Strategic Masterplan and Interventions Strategy (2016) highlights that although the area has well established residential neighbourhoods, including Devonport, which has undergone transformational regeneration, parts of the waterfront in particular have a very low population. The vision responds to this and carries forward updated proposals from the adopted Area Action Plans for new urban villages on brownfield sites at Millbay and Sutton Harbour.

The Plymouth Infrastructure Needs Assessment (2011) identifies a critical need for a boulevard linking the Millbay waterfront to the City Centre. This was first identified within the ‘Mackay’ Vision for Plymouth (2003) and incorporated into the Core Strategy and Millbay & Stonehouse Area Action Plan (2007). The first section of this boulevard has been implemented at Millbay, with an interim finish. The Plymouth Waterfront Strategic Masterplan and Interventions Strategy (2016) has identified the Millbay Boulevard as a priority project along with improvements to Armada Way and connections between the History Centre and Sutton Harbour, to improve public access to the waterfront.

Some gateways to Plymouth’s waterfront are very attractive and memorable. Others – the Millbay ferry port, for example, fall short of creating a positive ‘sense of arrival’ and do not give the best impression of Plymouth or encourage people to stay and explore further. The vision seeks enhanced gateways to the waterfront.
The waterfront area is blessed with an attractive historic and natural environment. However, the quality of the built environment could be improved in some areas. High quality public realm, landscape and open space has been provided and enhanced in key areas such as the Barbican and Royal William Yard. However green space is lacking from some waterfront neighbourhoods.
The Derriford and Northern Corridor Growth Area

The growth potential of Derriford and Plymouth’s northern corridor came particularly to the fore in the early-mid 2000s through a series of strategic studies of the Plymouth sub-region and of the city’s economic opportunity. This led to the Local Economic Strategy, 2006, and the Core Strategy, adopted 2007, identifying the Derriford area as a major plank of the city’s growth strategy, providing a new heart for the north of the city.

The Plymouth Plan continues this approach. Policy 2 of the Plymouth Plan identifies the Derriford and the Northern Corridor as one of three growth areas in which a regionally significant scale of growth in new jobs and new homes will be delivered. The expansion of focus beyond Derriford to incorporate other strategic opportunities along the northern corridor reflects the importance of the corridor as a whole. The wider area includes for example strategically important sites and opportunities such as at Woolwell on the edge of Plymouth and the airport site, which the Council sees as an important element of its approach to strategic connectivity (see Policy 4).

The Growth Area has considerable assets that make it an area of huge potential for supporting the growth and long term prosperity of Plymouth. The area includes several major employment areas that provide high value jobs in the healthcare, medical and advanced engineering fields, as well as the Hospital Campus and The University of St Mark and St John (Marjons). It includes some stunning green space and heritage assets. At its heart is the Derriford area which is second only to the City Centre in terms of public transport accessibility, and offers the opportunity to create a vibrant new heart for the north of Plymouth. It includes significant areas of land that are suitable for development and regeneration, in a location where there is considerable developer interest, as well as the potential to re-establish aviation use for the city.

The challenging topography of the area and its construction during the post-war period has resulted in a number of issues that need to be addressed through how new investment and development is provided for, particularly in the Derriford area. Whilst accessibility along the main A386 corridor is good (including by public transport), the historic incremental, site-by-site development of the area has meant that neighbourhoods, commercial, and other areas are poorly linked to one another. Historically, development has also been designed with little recognition of the area’s natural landscape or historic assets. As a result the area lacks distinctiveness, identity and a clear focus, and is overly reliant on travel by car (contributing to traffic congestion on the A386). Most buildings turn their backs on the steep green valleys leaving them difficult to access, unused and neglected. Surrounding residential neighbourhoods have been constructed at low densities (some as low as 12 dwellings per hectare) and many other uses make inefficient use of land, with large areas of wasted space and surface-level car parking, and some more minor roads appearing to be over engineered. The availability of land, however, offers a significant opportunity to transform the area by introducing new development which generates a new focus and coherence for the area.
The issues that need to be addressed to enable the area’s full potential to be realised include:

1. The need to utilise the area’s economic, social and environmental assets and its development opportunities in an integrated and coordinated way, such that it can effectively serve city-wide and regional roles in terms of its economic activity and health care whilst also providing for neighbourhood and community functions.

2. The need to strategically address the root causes of a vehicular dominated environment, whilst also supporting the strategic transport function that the area performs and reconnecting and integrating neighbourhoods as far as is possible.

3. The need to represent the best of the area’s unique character and qualities, enhance access to, and function of, the wide provision of green space in the area, and in doing so address the negative consequences of separation and difficulty of movement.
Vision - What will the Growth Area be like in 2034?

By 2034, the Derriford and Northern Corridor Growth Area will have been transformed through community-led improvements and major investment, delivering a high value economy, high quality medical and healthcare facilities, new residential neighbourhoods with community infrastructure, and radical improvements to transport infrastructure and management and strategic green spaces.

The Derriford area will be a high quality, distinctive, and vibrant mixed-use heart for the north of Plymouth centred around its regionally significant economic, health care and learning infrastructure and with a new mixed use commercial centre as its focal point. Its population will have been increased through the introduction of high density living (mixed amongst other uses), as well as through the creation of new residential neighbourhoods. The area will provide a strong offer of high value jobs, building on existing strengths to optimise the benefits of Plymouth Science Park, Plymouth International Medical and Technology Park, The University of St Mark & St John (Marjon), the Peninsula Medical School, and Derriford Hospital. It will provide significant recreational and sporting facilities including a new community park. Sustainable travel will be an attractive travel choice into and within the area.

The Derriford area, as a key gateway to the city, has been marked with significant high quality buildings. New development built closer to the street makes the area feel more urban. Parking has been consolidated into multi-storey and shared facilities screened by other uses that enable interaction between building and street users, providing a safer and more engaging experience of the street. The more mixed and intensive use of the area has reduced the need to travel significant distances to meet daily needs, and the area feels more walkable.

Elsewhere along the northern corridor, development within the industrial areas at Belliver/Broadley and Estover will have enabled continued growth in successful employment sectors (including advanced manufacturing, medical and hi-tech industries) for those businesses that require an environment more suited to manufacturing and industrial processes.

New neighbourhoods have been created which are well-integrated with existing neighbourhoods, including through a sustainable urban extension at Woolwell which provides a well-defined urban edge to the north of the city. Communities are better linked to one another and to local facilities, reducing dependence on cars and enabling more trips to be made by public transport, on foot or by bike.
The area’s role in supporting the strategic connectivity of Plymouth has been protected through the safeguarding of land at Plymouth airport, which is now used for general aviation purposes. The rail link between Tavistock and Plymouth has been reopened, relieving pressure on the principal northern corridor transport infrastructure routes, and these routes have been radically improved so that the strategic functions of the A386 and A38 are maintained as growth has taken place. The improvements brought to bus frequency and reliability, safe cycling and walking have enabled many new and existing residents to travel frequently by these means.

The area’s natural environment has been utilised to provide healthy links around the area, with prominent entrance points and improved paths and cycleways through its green valleys. New developments have capitalised on the value of green spaces and provide surveillance. The area’s natural and historic environment is better revealed and celebrated, with continued restoration of Crownhill Fort, and Derriford Community Park subject to high levels of public access for leisure and movement purposes, as well as being a valuable educational resource providing access to nature, an understanding of sustainable land management practices, and food growing.
Strategy - What needs to happen to deliver the vision?

The achievement of this vision will require a number of strategic actions to be taken. These include:

1. Priority to be given to delivering catalyst interventions needed to unlock the wider growth potential of the Growth Area. These include:
   a) The new mixed-use commercial centre (including district centre shopping alongside other main town centres uses) which is well located in relation to the area’s centre of gravity (between Derriford hospital and Plymouth International Medical and Technology Park). A strategic masterplan will guide the delivery of this centre.
   b) Strategic transport improvements, including supporting the safe and efficient operation of the A386 and A38.

2. Careful coordination of the delivery of development throughout the Growth Area in order to ensure that the regeneration opportunities of the Derriford area are realised as early as possible within the plan-period.

3. Allocation of key sites in the Joint Local Plan that support the delivery of the vision.

4. Pursuing transport programmes and interventions, including travel planning, which provide genuine high quality sustainable alternatives to driving and promote changed travel behaviour.

5. Promoting large scale growth which generates the resources needed to be able to deliver high levels of local finance to support infrastructure investment, creating a virtuous cycle of investment.
6. Actively engaging with international, national, regional and local programmes and investors to deliver funding for the Growth Area projects.

7. Preparing, implementing and keeping under close review a ‘Plan for Derriford and the Northern Corridor Growth Area’ which will be a delivery plan and programme for the Growth Area.

A closer look - What does this all mean?

Critical to the vision is the creation of a new heart for the north of Plymouth, drawing together and supporting its disparate residential, commercial, healthcare, education, and other communities, as well as providing a focus for the north with a real sense of place.

Derriford is the ideal location to establish such a heart given that the hospital is the city’s second most accessible location by bus, and the area is already a focus for thriving commercial communities within the Plymouth International Medical and Technology Park (PIMTP) and the Plymouth Science Park. Many of the residential communities that surround the area (including Derriford, Whitleigh, Southway, Widewell, and Glenholt) also have poor access to shops and services, and the area occupies a gateway location when entering the city from the north. Despite these major generators of activity, evidence underpinning this vision identifies this location as a ‘hole’ at the heart of the north of Plymouth. The availability of land at this location offers the opportunity to create this heart in the location best related to surrounding residential, commercial, healthcare and other communities.

A new district centre is seen as a key catalyst for the achievement of this aspiration, incorporated into a wider mixed use commercial centre. Its facilities will need to be sufficient to make it an attractive shopping destination (including main food shopping) but not so attractive that they would compete with (i.e. draw trade away from) the City Centre.

The district centre has been an aspiration since the 2007 Core Strategy, which then provided for delivery of the centre by 2016. Clearly this has not been achieved, this in part being a consequence of significant investor interest in alternative sites and a highly contended planning process. However, the case for delivery of a new district centre remains strong, and it is important now to review how this aspiration can best be brought forward.

Derriford is an area of unique character and opportunity and the provision of the district centre will need to respond to this context. However, to give maximum opportunity for deliverable proposals and creative solutions to come forward, the Council does not wish to be over-prescriptive in determining the format the new centre should take. This vision therefore proposes a mixed use commercial centre (incorporating a district centre) which should:

- Be located at or close to the centre of gravity of the Derriford area, which is Derriford hospital. The key opportunity sites in this respect cover an area from the North West Quadrant, the Derriford Business Park and former Seaton Barracks parade ground. There are other sites on the west of the A386, but these are further from this centre of gravity and the A386 is a considerable barrier to pedestrian movement from this area.
- Contain retail and other ‘Main Town Centre Uses’(1) that serve the residential communities immediately surrounding the Derriford area, as well as those who are already working, studying in or visiting the area, rather than having a city-wide (or larger) catchment which draws people to the centre from a wider area.

- Be designed to sit within and as part of a higher density urban environment, and not like an out-of-centre retail park. Development should be delivered in accordance with a strategic masterplan of the area, which would provide a fix on key infrastructure and promote the creation of a grid of streets which provide flexible development blocks and incorporate quality public spaces at key locations. In this way, the uses that comprise the overall district centre might be spread over a wider area in a vibrant mix with other uses, such as healthcare and community, housing, and B1 office and employment space. Such an approach would have distinct advantages, including achieving good connectivity within the centre and to surrounding areas, creating a vibrant, welcoming location throughout the day and into the evenings, and setting a pattern which enables the centre to be developed in stages.

- Help fill a qualitative gap in food shopping provision (including main food shopping) as supported consistently by retail studies since the Core Strategy was prepared.

- Incorporate other retail and non-retail units provided that they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the viability and vitality of, and investment in, the City Centre (including when assessed cumulatively), and they help create a high quality sense of place.

- Provide good accessibility by bus, walking, and cycling, and an integrated policy on car parking, to minimise its impact on traffic congestion and ensure that it integrates with surrounding communities.

- Become a catalyst for the creation of a wider heart for the north of Plymouth. After the City Centre it should be the preferred location for further new ‘main town centre uses’ such as offices, leisure, and more intensive sport and recreation uses as required by the National Planning Policy Framework’s ‘sequential test’.

The introduction of other uses within and immediately around the mixed use commercial centre to generate high levels of activity (including offices and higher density residential uses as part of a wider mix of housing types) will be important to support the district centre and enable it to serve as a true focus for the north, providing more than shopping facilities.

A strategic masterplan for the commercial centre will be prepared to guide the delivery of the centre and to ensure that key infrastructure needs and place shaping objectives are identified at the outset, so that earlier development is future proofed against the longer term aspiration. The diagram below sets out the emerging framework for this strategic masterplan. This shows how a series of flexible development plots can be created, around a street grid with

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1 Defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as: ‘Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)’
a key fix on a central route with high quality public realm. Whereas the precise developments
to come forward will be substantially market-driven, it is anticipated that each part of the area
will have different characters with:

- The northern area (focused around the North West Quadrant site) responding more to
  is proximity to the hospital, and therefore being more intensely developed with a vibrant
  mix of use, including health, smaller retail units and potentially a food store, food and
  drink uses, community and housing.
- The southern area (focused around the Seaton Barracks parade ground site) responding
  more to the business park uses of PIMTP, incorporating further business park
  development but also allowing for some larger format retail, residential and uses that
  specifically support the business park including food and drink and leisure.
- The eastern area (focused around the TA site, should this become available) where
  residential may be the preferred predominant use given the excellent east facing
  perspective.
- The central area (focused around Derriford Business Park) which provides a longer term
  opportunity for connecting the northern and southern area with a range of ‘town centre’
  type uses mixed with residential.

One of the area’s most strategic assets is the site of Plymouth airport. The airport has not
been operational since 2011 when it was closed on grounds of non-viability. However, the
Council believes that for an asset as unique and strategic as an airport, the long-view needs
to be taken. If the site was developed for alternative uses it would be gone forever, with no prospect of the city having an airport again. Policy 4 of the Plymouth Plan therefore safeguards the site for future general aviation use. This will also mean ensuring that development within the Airport's Public Safety Zone does not prejudice the future re-opening of an airport on the site.

The key strategic residential opportunity to the north is for an urban extension at Woolwell. Development in this location will be expected to deliver the infrastructure and facilities needed to make Woolwell a sustainable linked neighbourhood. In addition to the significant investment in transport infrastructure along the northern corridor that will be needed to improve access and facilitate the development, improved shopping and community facilities, a new primary school, an enlarged and enhanced sports hub, and public access to large areas of open space (linking the Plym Valley to open countryside) are likely to be needed as part of the development. The extent and design of any extension to Woolwell will also need to have careful regard to its impact on Dartmoor National Park, including the need to ensure that it provides a high quality edge to the city to minimise landscape and impacts upon the park and its setting.

The vision recognises the need for new and improved transport infrastructure throughout the corridor to enable the area's growth potential to be realised. The citywide role of the area's major highways, and the need to maintain the safe operation of the A38 is acknowledged, and significant improvements are proposed as set out in Policy 44. A major challenge is to marry the need for these transport improvements with the Council's aspiration to create a high quality place, well connected to local communities and a more walkable environment. This means that solutions to issues of severance caused by major roads will need careful consideration.

The vision sees the area's historic and natural landscape as an asset rather than a constraint such that its green valleys become valued spaces utilised for movement, food production, education and recreational purposes, as well as being managed in a way that optimises their ecological and other environmental benefits. Homes that front onto the Derriford Community Park are already under construction at Seaton Neighbourhood, and future developments should also have a positive relationship with open spaces to provide surveillance over green spaces whilst also taking advantage of the increased financial value that they bring.
The Eastern Corridor Growth Area

The eastern corridor of the city has long been identified as a key location for future growth given the major opportunities that it provides for supporting the long term prosperity of the city and the wider region. Work on the Devon Structure Plan during the 1990s identified the great potential of the Sherford area, and then in the early 2000s further studies and policy development took place, articulating a wider strategy for growth focusing primarily on Langage, Sherford and the North Plymstock areas.

The North Plymstock and Sherford Area Action Plans, adopted in 2007, provided for a new community at Sherford and a mixed-use neighbourhood within the former Plymstock Quarry, now called Saltram Meadow, both of which are now in the process of being constructed. A proposal for a new Countryside Park focused on Saltram is also currently moving forward. As a result, considerable investment has been made in transport and other infrastructure and this will continue to be the case. This is essential not just for the Growth Area itself, but also for the wider growth of the city, given the key role of the A38.

Part One of the Plymouth Plan has continued and developed this established approach. Policy 2 identifies the wider eastern corridor as one of three growth areas in the city in which a regionally significant scale of growth in new jobs and new homes will be delivered. The Growth Area encompasses key strategic opportunities in Plympton and the urban fringe, the Marsh Mills and Forder Valley junctions and development opportunities along Embankment Road. This acknowledges the need in the eastern area and urban fringe of the city for a wider strategic approach to growth and importantly the infrastructure requirements to support growth.

The natural environment will have a particularly important role in this Growth Area in terms of providing for appropriate greenspace in the urban environment, safeguarding its biodiversity and providing high quality informal recreation opportunities. This is important to help ease the potential recreational pressures of a growing city on Dartmoor National Park and other protected landscapes and to accommodate the needs generated by new development and its residents.

The issues that need to be addressed to enable the area’s full potential to be realised include:

1. New neighbourhoods and developments need to be planned and delivered in a way that maintains the overall identity of different neighbourhoods and the key role of the natural environment in defining the Growth Area’s character and function.
2. Growth needs to be matched by investment in the infrastructure needed to meet the requirements of sustainable development, including maintaining effective strategic transport links through the eastern corridor area to support the growth of the city as a whole and its strategic connectivity to the rest of the country.
3. The need to provide a clear and well-designed urban edge to the city, and to improve the quality of the approaches and gateways to the City Centre.
Vision for the Eastern Corridor Growth Area

By 2034 Plymouth's Eastern Corridor will have benefited from high quality and locally distinctive growth which delivers strategic sites within and at the edge of Plymouth as part of the city's network of sustainable linked neighbourhoods. These developments will be well integrated with established neighbourhoods providing a range of homes, job opportunities, services and facilities to meet daily needs and which increase the wider permeability of the area.

Sherford will have grown into a unique sustainable neighbourhood with a distinctive character providing a range of quality homes and job opportunities, recreational and leisure facilities including a new community park, a thriving town centre and local centres meeting people’s day to day needs. Future growth west of Sherford will have retained the distinct character of the wider neighbourhood providing mixed use development and provide green connections to Saltram Countryside Park.

Langage Industrial Estate and Science Park will have continued to grow as a strategic employment destination for the city and sub region, with improved links to Plympton and enhanced connections to the A38 through a new southern access route.

Key gateways sites will have been defined by quality development which enhances the setting and character of the area. Development on the urban fringes will have created a clear and well-designed edge to the city.

A strategic public transport corridor, including a new Park & Ride site near Deep Lane, will be fully functional linking from Langage and Sherford to major destinations, including the City Centre and Derriford. Deep Lane junction will be operating as a key transport gateway to the east of the city accommodating the needs of Sherford, economic growth at Langage and further residential growth to the east of Plympton. A new Park & Ride facility has also been provided on the A379 approach to the city. Safe cycling and walking routes throughout the area have enabled residents to travel frequently and conveniently by these means.

Saltram Countryside Park will provide a green lung of the city, a high quality natural resource for recreation, healthy lifestyles, learning, and biodiversity as well as being an important heritage asset. The Countryside Park provides quality green links for walking and cycling between neighbourhoods, Sherford Community Park and a new green gateway to the Plym Valley at Marsh Mills. This provides an unrivalled green network of recreational and leisure facilities serving the city and its hinterland.

Mineral reserves in the area have been safeguarded to meet current and future needs, and future growth potential to the east of Plymouth beyond the current plan period has been comprehensively planned.
Strategy - What needs to happen to deliver the vision?

The achievement of this vision will require a number of strategic actions to be taken. These include:

1. Delivering strategic transport improvements to improve the management of vehicles and support sustainable transport choices. Priority will be given to:
   a. Delivery of transport programmes and interventions on the strategic corridors from Langage and Sherford into the City Centre and to the Derriford area, focused on delivering an efficient public transport network and infrastructure for increased travel by pedestrians and cyclists.
   b. Enhanced connections from Langage and growth on the eastern edge of Plympton to Deep Lane junction and on into the city.
   c. Improvements to Marsh Mills and Forder Valley junctions which increase capacity to support connections to Derriford and the northern part of the city and increase the free flow of vehicles on to A38 and in to the City Centre.

2. Allocation of key sites in the Joint Local Plan that support the delivery of the vision.

3. Using the opportunities presented by new developments to repair parts of the city which do not work well in terms of their relationship to the wider landscape or the availability of local services and facilities for the existing population.

4. Coordinating the delivery of Saltram Countryside Park and the connecting green network including Sherford Community Park and the Plym Valley as multifunctional greenspaces as a focus for recreation and leisure.

5. Taking a cross border approach to coordinating infrastructure provision alongside planned and future growth in the eastern corridor and the urban fringe to enable substantial long term growth to take place.

6. Actively engaging with international, regional and local programmes and investors to deliver funding for the Growth Area projects.

7. Preparing, implementing and keeping under close review a ‘Plan for the Eastern Corridor Growth Area’ as the delivery plan and programme for the Growth Area.

A closer look - What does this all mean?

For the established neighbourhoods of Plympton and Plymstock, the vision seeks to ensure the continued sustainable growth of these areas. Development will seek to redress existing deficiencies through integrated appropriate smaller scale development into the existing fabric of the areas with growth and investment in services and infrastructure to ensure they continue to remain as sustainable linked neighbourhoods.

Growth in Plympton will include development of the former China Clay Works and growth to the east of Plympton. Redevelopment of the China Clay Works will require a comprehensive approach to the site which delivers a new residential neighbourhood within an enhanced landscaped setting, whilst providing connections for walking and cycling into the surrounding residential area and connections into the Plym Valley.
Residential development on the eastern edge of Plympton will require integration into the existing fabric of the area improving connectivity particularly for pedestrians and cyclists and at the same time be sensitive to the rural setting on the urban fringe. Development will include a new primary school to meet the growing needs in the Plympton area and should also allow for future potential growth in the area.

Further growth in Plymstock will focus on Saltram Meadow which is already under construction. The integration of this new neighbourhood into the community will be critically important to become a functioning part of the wider area providing new homes, a school and community facilities. Further opportunities exist to include Popham Industrial Estate into the Saltram Meadow community improving the entrance and connectivity to the wider area. A new Park and Ride facility in the area around Chittleburn Hill along the A379 serving the rural communities with a sustainable transport opportunity is also planned to reduce vehicle traffic into the city.

Opportunities also exist to promote high quality development to improve the entrance into the city by the redevelopment of key gateway sites to enhance the built form, local environment and sense of place. The area including the former Western National Bus Depot site, Blagdons Boat Yard and surrounding area have significant potential to improve the arrival into the city which better utilises the natural and visual assets this part of the city presents. Wakehams Quarry across Laira Bridge equally provides opportunity to mark the arrival into Plymstock in a more positive way and enhance links into Saltram Meadow. These sites also provide opportunities to improve the pedestrian permeability and connection between the areas, the waterfront and connections to Saltram Countryside Park.

The area’s expansion east through the development of Sherford will deliver a real change to the area. The planning of the new community has been extensive and includes a new town centre, several smaller local centres, schools, leisure, other community infrastructure, employment opportunities and an extensive Community Park providing a strategic recreational resource alongside significant residential development. It is crucial that Sherford delivers a quality new environment and unique character of its own as well as offering a range of transport options for travel into the city and the wider area. The further expansion of Sherford to the west offers scope for more limited growth of the residential element of the neighbourhood adjoining the existing Sherford new community, given the constraints on the site and road network. A more sensitive mix of uses will be provided including formal and informal green space with pedestrian, cycling and green links through from Sherford to Saltram Countryside Park. Any development at the western edge will also be required to be sympathetic to and enhance the setting of the Stag Lodge entrance and wider setting of the Countryside Park through the provision of a green buffer.

Economic growth at Langage is of strategic importance to the city and wider sub region. Future development offers the opportunity to strengthen the role of Langage as attractive destination for new employment and investment. This will require investment in infrastructure in terms of its physical accessibility and connections to the A38 through a new southern access road and improved connection for walking and cycling to Plympton and Sherford.
The success of growth in the eastern corridor is largely dependent on the development and investment in improving connectivity to the City Centre and other key areas of the city. This will be achieved through a range of measures including the development of sustainable transport links, improving public transport services and walking and cycling routes as well as improvements to road infrastructure.

A number of measures will be required to support the planned growth whilst recognising the importance of the continued safe operation of the A38. These improvements are set out in Policy 44 of the Plymouth Plan.

The Growth Area provides a unique opportunity to develop the green infrastructure of the city with the enhancement of Saltram Countryside Park at the heart of this strategy with green connections to Plym Valley and Sherford Community Park. The development of this network will provide recreational benefits for the local area and the wider city and provide a significant benefit to the environmental enhancement and biodiversity of the area as a truly multifunctional network of green spaces.

The preservation of the land north of Hazeldene Quarry will ensure the long term extraction of valuable aggregates can continue to meet the region's needs. Future extractions will provided an enhanced relationship to the surrounding residential area. Future growth of the Hemerdon tungsten mine will be supported but in a way which does not limit the long term future growth of the area and takes a sensitive approach to the visual impact of extraction.