PRELIMINARY APPRAISAL OF THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR CENTRAL PARK AREA ACTION PLAN

Introduction

The SEA/SA takes as its starting point the Vision for Plymouth (set out in the Plymouth City Strategy and Action Plan) which aims to create

One of Europe’s finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone.

A clean and green city that makes the most of its environment and location, in particular its water resources and associated ecology.

A city with a strong economy; built on a culture of creativity and innovation and known for its centres of knowledge and learning.

A multi-cultural city where significant social exclusion no longer exists. A city where all the needs of all its citizens are met by high quality, cost effective services and outstanding levels of community involvement.

These broad aims have been translated into a series of 16 sustainability criteria, which are described in the SEA/SA Scoping report. The following appraisal examines the potential effects of various actions and draft policies for the nominated area/theme against the framework of the SEA/SA objectives.

Having assessed the likely effect of the different actions, policies and themes in the table below, the information is drawn together in a concluding statement.

The preliminary findings of the SEA/SA and analysis of the public response to both the Issues and Options Leaflet and consultation on the SEA/SA will be used to further refine both the draft plan and the SEA/SA.

COMMENTARY

The proposals for the Central Park Area Action Plan appear broadly sustainable although, inevitably, some conflict of interest may arise

- The Issues and options Paper ‘suggests a move away from the incremental planning of fragmented spaces and uses towards a bold and exciting vision of “Destination Central Park” that re-interprets the historic Mawson Plan for the Park in a contemporary way’.

The SEA/SA appraisal strongly supports the suggestion of an integrated approach to design but notes that there could be significant tensions between the concept of a regional centre of sporting and leisure excellence and the Park’s role as a much needed local resource.

Concerns are raised, in particular, by:

- The potential for substantial growth in car borne visitors and increased demand for parking (contrary to aims for the promotion of
public transport) arising from the Life Centre concept with its plans for a stadium, swimming pool, ice rink, multi-sports hall and hotel/conference/exhibition facilities.

- Uncertainty over the level of support likely to be forthcoming for the development of really effective public transport links from the rest of the city.

- Issues of public safety arising from increased levels of use (although the corollary also applies in that increased levels of activity can sometimes reduce crime levels).

- Prospects for securing the required level of investment in the basic infrastructural improvements to the park, as listed under the options, since large scale projects like the Life Centre often absorb most of the available funds, leaving essential repairs and maintenance unattended.

The proposals to safeguard and enhance allotments are strongly in line with the overall commitment to sustainable development and should be given high priority. However, this should not be seen as compensation for ‘any losses resulting from other park enhancement measures’ but as a legitimate goal in its own right.

The concepts outlined in this leaflet are at too general a level to allow a full appraisal to take place and it is strongly recommended that the sketch design for the new vision of the park should be completed and published before the detailed consultation planned in September/October 2005.
### Table X.1. Analysis of Plan proposals, policies actions and themes against the 16 Sustainability Criteria (listed across the columns).

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<td>Create a Life Centre, comprising sport and leisure facilities of regional significance,</td>
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<td>Major transport interchange to include better access to the A386, public transport facilities, safe car parking and secure cycle parking.</td>
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<td>Opportunity for small car park to service local shops at Peverell Corner.</td>
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<td>Commercial leisure facility</td>
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<td>Residential development</td>
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<td>City bus depot and adjacent site – potential for enabling mixed use, mainly residential development (relocation of bus depot to alternative site).</td>
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<td>Create new / improved allotment space to compensate for any losses resulting from other park enhancement measures.</td>
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<td>Improve links between Ford Park Cemetery and Central Park</td>
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<td>Promote public access. Improve connections between the park and surrounding neighbourhoods, including the City Centre.</td>
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<td>Develop and enhance Central Park to provide: – defined, linked character areas, – conservation and enhancement of the historic fabric, – key landmarks, orientation points and views. – high quality, vibrant, social and recreation facilities</td>
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Symbols employed in Table

- ✓ Supports the sustainability objective
- ✓ ✓ Strongly supported the sustainability objective
- 0 Has no impact on the sustainability objective
- X Works against the sustainability objective
- XX Works strongly against the sustainability objective
- ? Has an unknown or uncertain effect on the sustainability objective

Legend For Sustainability Criteria

1. Nature and environment: To safeguard and enhance Plymouth’s green spaces, coast, tidal areas, waterfront, fresh water and intertidal areas and access to them, recognising the different types of contribution that they make to Plymouth’s character.

2. Reduce flood risk: To manage flood risks sustainably, recognising the role of wetlands in reducing flood risks.

3. Biodiversity: To conserve, protect and enhance Plymouth’s aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity.

4. Built environment: To enhance the attractiveness and safety of the built environment by raising the quality of urban design in the city.

5. Historic environment: To protect and enhance sites, areas and buildings and landmarks of archaeological, historic, cultural and/or architectural interest.

6. Land resources: To concentrate development within Plymouth’s built-up area by optimising the use of previously developed land, infrastructure, under used land and vacant properties.

7. Sustainable resource use: To reduce the consumption of non-renewable sources of energy, water and minerals.

8. Waste: To reduce the amount of waste generated in Plymouth and to minimise the environmental effects of waste disposal.

9. Sustainable transport: To reduce traffic congestion and noise, and improve safety, health and air quality by reducing the need to travel, especially by car.

10. Strategic communication links: To maintain and improve the network of communication and transport infrastructure within Plymouth and the links to the sub-region, the South West, Britain and internationally.

11. Economic growth: To promote sustainable economic growth, particularly of key business sectors, and to utilise employment land and premises effectively and efficiently.

12. Education and employment: To enable all residents to share in Plymouth’s growing prosperity by improving access to training, education and job opportunities.

13. Housing: To ensure that all of Plymouth’s residents have access to a good quality living environment and a decent home which is affordable and suitable to their needs.

14. Community health, safety and well-being: To safeguard and improve community health, safety and well-being through protection and enhancement of the city’s green spaces and sport/leisure facilities, and through appropriate design of the built environment.
15. Local and District Centres: To strengthen the role of local and district centres to reduce the amount that people need to travel.

16. Inclusiveness and participation: To take account of the needs of all sectors of the community in the planning and design of new development.

Note: An additional objective on Retailing is being prepared by Plymouth City Council and will be incorporated in the next stage of the appraisal.