PRELIMINARY APPRAISAL OF THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR THE CORE STRATEGY-ENVIRONMENT

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 Core Strategy – Environment appear broadly sustainable although, inevitably, some conflict of interest may arise; some key issues are outlined below:

- Whilst proposals advocating the siting of development on brownfield sites and increasing the density of new development support sustainable development principles, care needs to be taken to ensure that the design and density of development, access to open space and the choice of materials really enhances the quality of life of the respective local communities.

- Proposals to optimise the utilisation of previously used land may conflict with other policies for addressing areas deficient in greenspace and the need to protect and enhance biodiversity; (it should be noted that some
brownfield sites may have become important habitats for particular species).

- Whilst proposals to locate polluting developments away from sensitive locations such as schools and housing is a positive approach, consideration should also be given to ensuring such developments do not impact on amenity and sites of nature conservation importance.

- Care needs to be taken when locating developments to ensure that green travel plans are in place to encourage alternative modes of access to places of work.

- It is important when preparing design principles to ensure that proposals consider sourcing materials locally and use recycled materials where possible. In addition, all proposals should seek to reflect locally distinctive features and should be designed to minimise water and energy consumption, and waste generation, considering renewable energy.

- Proposals associated with renewable energy must consider potential impacts associated with landscape, biodiversity, archaeology as well as a community’s quality of life.
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Focus development on brownfield sites and increase the density of new development where appropriate.  
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Carefully plan permitted development on green space to ensure that there is no unacceptable loss of public access, visual amenity, recreation amenity or biodiversity.  
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Policies need to address areas deficient in green space.  
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Explore opportunities to make more of greenspaces and to increase provision through a review of facilities, maintenance and how they are linked.  
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Undertake a Biodiversity Action Plan to define a strategy to protect and enhance of biodiversity.  
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Establish a set of design principles which will address the most important design issues:  
- Improving city’s identity  
- Create sustainable communities  
- Accessible, legible and well connected city  
- City with high quality buildings, streets and spaces  
- Vibrant city – including day/evening uses.  
[✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [?]  [?]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [✓]  [0]

Create a positive framework for large or small scale renewable energy developments.  
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Developments should be designed for a significant reduction in energy use and to meet their needs from on site renewable sources.  
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Locate development away from flood risks areas and incorporate sustainable drainage pattern.  
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A policy measure to deal with contaminated land and its disposal in a sustainable way.  
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### Plan Policies and Actions (Below)

|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|

#### 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.