

Equality Impact Assessment of North Plymstock Area Action Plan (submitted)

The purpose of this report is to set out the vision, objectives and proposals of the North Plymstock Area Action Plan and to assess these for the likely impact they will have on the six equality groups. Data collected from public consultations is used to inform this analysis and to identify the planning issues of most importance to equality groups. This report concludes that this document will not have any negative impacts on any of the equalities groups and will have many positive impacts. Because no negative impacts are identified there is no need for an Equalities Action Plan.

1. Background

1.1. Context

This document represents the third stage in preparing Plymouth City Council's North Plymstock Area Action Plan. It has been produced for submission to the Government, and builds on earlier issues and options and preferred options documents.

This Area Action Plan forms part of a portfolio of documents called the Local Development Framework (LDF). The central document in the LDF is the Core Strategy which provides a strategic planning framework for the city, guiding development to 2021 and beyond. The Core Strategy sets out Plymouth's spatial vision – to turn Plymouth into 'one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone'. Area Action Plans provide more specific detail on development opportunities within key areas of the city. This North Plymstock Area Action Plan does not repeat the policies contained within the Core Strategy but the two plans should be read together to aid decision-making.

The LDF Core Strategy has been prepared in line with national planning policy and is in general conformity with regional planning guidance (RPG10) and the Devon Structure Plan 2001 – 2016. The Core Strategy adopts the overall vision and aims of the City Strategy and of the Corporate Plan, and will support their implementation. The North Plymstock Area Action is in conformity with the Core Strategy and thus the City Strategy and Corporate Plan.

1.2. Aims and objectives

This document adopts the following vision for North Plymstock:

To create high quality, locally distinctive and sustainable mixed-use neighbourhoods in North Plymstock. The significant development focus in this area will provide major new sustainable infrastructure, particularly a High Quality Public Transport (HQPT) system and facilities to support a high quality of life. Other development opportunities in the area will be coordinated to create successful relationships between different uses,

Mineral reserves in the area will be safeguarded to meet current and future needs. The character of the area will be strongly influenced by significant new recreational opportunities in the form of a countryside park, green space links and sports facilities.

The objectives are to:

1. Create a high quality sustainable new neighbourhood at Plymstock Quarry.
2. Contribute to creating a neighbourhood at Sherford that integrates effectively with the wider Plymouth urban area.
3. Create an integrated sustainable transport network including a High Quality Public Transport (HQPT) system serving new urban areas in the eastern corridor and the A38 Park and Ride, and improve existing services in Plymstock.
4. Deliver a new countryside park which will form a key recreational focus to the city and region.
5. Provide a new high quality 'eastern gateway' into the city, with a strong sense of place and local distinctiveness particularly on key road and water frontages.
6. Safeguard mineral reserves to meet current and future needs of Plymouth and the South West.
7. Safeguard future waste management activities in the area.
8. Safeguard potential post 2016 development options.

The Council will measure the performance of this Area Action Plan against the targets, objectives and related policies set out in this document, and in the Core Strategy. Significant issues will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report process. Monitoring will specifically include:

- Checking that the development targets identified in the Area Action Plan are being met and identifying the actions needed to address any barriers and blockages.
- Monitoring the quality of new developments in North Plymstock and their compliance with the policies and proposals of the Plan.
- Measuring the performance of the Plan against the Plan's Vision and Objectives and assessing whether the Objectives are still appropriate.

Any indicators/targets which are performing badly will be examined to identify causes of poor performance – for example, economic or social circumstances may have changed to make the indicator/target inappropriate. Appropriate action will then be taken to improve performance or to alter the strategy in light of wider changes.

2. Data relating to equalities issues

Basic demographic, social and economic data on North Plymstock's population has been collected to inform the policies and proposals in the Area Action Plan. In addition to a number of public consultations, three

specific consultations have been undertaken to identify the views of the groups subject to this assessment:

Preferred Options consultation

Consultation on the Preferred Options of the Core Strategy and the Area Action Plan for North Plymstock included a consultation with hard to reach groups (in conjunction with the consultation for the Local Transport Plan) in addition to the general public consultation. This was carried out in August/September 2005. Presentations and workshops were held for:

- members of Black and ethnic minorities (contacted through FATA HE) – 4 attended
- disabled (contacted through the Guild of Voluntary Services) – 6 attended
- young people (contacted through the Plymouth Youth Parliament) – 4 attended
- elderly (contacted through old people's organisations) – 9 attended.

Plymouth Pride were contacted but declined the offer of a workshop. They requested copies of the reports instead.

The hard to reach consultation for the preferred options has been written up as a report.

Gender Audit

A Gender Audit of the Local Plan Review was carried out in 2001. The aim was to 'gender proof' the plan in order to ensure that all strategies, policies and proposals openly and actively take into account their effects on the respective situations of women and men, and where necessary use specific policies to promote equality. Preparation of the audit involved focus group discussions with women and men and consultations with planning staff.

The gender audit helped to identify gender issues arising from policies and was used to inform production of the First Deposit Local Plan (December 2001). It also suggested how the plan could be monitored to ensure that it was addressing gender issues in its implementation.

Community Planning Studies

Community Planning Studies were undertaken in 1998 as part of the Local Plan review consultation programme to inform the development of a new planning strategy and policies. These studies involved holding stalls at fetes and fun days; a schools consultation exercise and community planning workshops. They covered the whole city to include over 6,500 residents. Hard to reach groups were contacted as follows:

- Race – contacted through the annual RESPECT Festival and by letter.
- Travellers – group contacted by letter.
- Faith groups – places of worship informed of events; Muslim and Jewish groups contacted by letter.

- Age – old people through the Senior Citizens Forum (presentation and workshop). Young people (at primary and secondary level) through the schools consultation exercise.
- Disability – workshop together with the Plymouth Guild of Voluntary Service.
- Gender – women’s groups contacted by letter.
- Sexual orientation – groups were contacted by letter.

The data collected from this exercise were written up as 21 Community Planning Studies (published in 2000), one for each ward in the city and one general study covering city-wide issues. The issues raised were used to inform the development of the First Deposit Local Plan (December 2001).

2.1. Gaps/inadequacies in the data

The Community Studies and the preferred options hard to reach consultations showed that contact by letter is not necessarily sufficient to engage with equalities groups, especially those that traditionally have had little engagement with the planning process. As a result, no specific consultation was carried out with faith or sexual orientation groups, and many of the hard to reach workshops were poorly attended. Other means of communication will be needed in future in order to build all groups’ capacity to engage. Future consultations will be guided by the Statement of Community Involvement.

2.2. Issues raised by the consultations

The following issues of concern to equalities groups were identified in relation to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy:

- Lack of affordable and special needs housing.
- Difficulty in travelling to work and accessing services.
- Lack of accessible streets and buildings.
- Need for socially inclusive neighbourhoods with a range of facilities and amenities.
- Fear of crime.
- Need for opportunities to learn and to work.

The Community Planning Study for Plymstock Dunstone identified the following equalities issues, many of which are similar to the city-wide ones:

- Need for more leisure facilities for young people.
- Need for more locally based employment opportunities.
- Need to protect open spaces, playing fields and children’s play areas from development and provide more green areas.
- Need for affordable housing, especially for young people as well as sheltered accommodation.
- Need for more sports facilities including a swimming pool.
- Need for safer roads and safe cycling routes.
- Need to protect local shops.
- Need to improve public transport.

3. Key findings

In order to assess whether the Area Action Plan preferred options document addresses these issues, the objectives and the preferred options have been mapped against the issues of most concern to equalities groups, and the results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Objective	Housing needs	Travel	Accessibility	Inclusivity	Safety	Economy
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3		✓	✓	✓		
4		✓	✓	✓		
5						
6						

Preferred Option	Housing needs	Travel	Accessibility	Inclusivity	Safety	Economy
PO1 (Plymstock Quarry)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PO2 (Pomphlett Industrial Estate)	✓					✓
PO3 (Wakehams Quarry)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PO4 (Billacombe Green)			✓	✓		
PO5 (Sherford and Sports Hub)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PO6 (Future development north of Elburton)						
PO7 (High Quality Public Transport)		✓	✓	✓	✓	
PO8 (Improvements to public transport)		✓	✓	✓	✓	
PO9 (Highway infrastructure)		✓	✓	✓	✓	

Preferred Option	Housing needs	Travel	Accessibility	Inclusivity	Safety	Economy
PO10 (National Cycle network)		✓	✓	✓		
PO11 (Countryside Park)		✓	✓	✓		
PO12 (Chelson Meadow)		✓	✓	✓		
PO13 (Hazeldene Quarry)						
PO14 (Chelson Meadow Waste)						
PO15 (Moorcroft Quarry)						

Having examined the Submitted version of the North Plymstock AAP against the results of the consultations, particularly those involving the specific groups, the following general conclusions have been reached:

3.1. Race

It is considered that the North Plymstock Area Action Plan will have a positive impact by promoting equality of opportunity. The North Plymstock Area Action Plan in conformity with the Core Strategy will promote a better quality of life for everyone – including better social inclusion, accessibility and decent homes. In particular, it will improve the quality and mix of housing, reduce the need to travel by car and improve the range and quality of local facilities, services and amenities. The sustainability of North Plymstock as a whole will be improved through the new neighbourhoods at Plymstock Quarry and Sherford, provision of a new countryside park and through improvements to public transport. New employment opportunities will also be provided.

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have no adverse impacts on promoting good race relations or eliminating unlawful discrimination.

3.2. Faith and belief

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have no adverse impacts on faith/belief groups. Worship space has been identified as part of the community facilities in Plymstock Quarry (NP01), and is also part of the wider community facilities proposed as part of Sherford (under Sherford AAP).

3.3. Disability

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have a positive impact on the quality of life of people with a visual impairment or who are physically disabled. The North Plymstock Area Action Plan in conformity with the

Core Strategy will promote better social inclusion, accessibility and decent homes. The Area Action Plan aims to improve the design of streets, buildings and public spaces to improve accessibility for all, and a proportion of new housing will be built to Lifetime Homes standard. The sustainability of North Plymstock as a whole will be improved through the new neighbourhoods at Plymstock Quarry and Sherford, provision of a new countryside park and through improvements to public transport. New employment opportunities will also be provided.

It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts on people with a hearing impairment, a learning disability or a mental health disability.

3.4. Gender

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have positive impacts on the quality of life of both men and women, particularly for men and women who care for dependent children or elderly/disabled people. The sustainability of North Plymstock as a whole will be improved through the new neighbourhoods with local centres at Plymstock Quarry and Sherford, provision of a new countryside park and through improvements to public transport. In particular, a proportion of new homes built will be affordable. New employment opportunities will also be provided.

3.5. Sexual orientation

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have no adverse impacts on any of the sexual orientation groups.

3.6. Age

Young people

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have a positive impact on young people's quality of life. In particular, a proportion of new homes built will be affordable, transport will be made more sustainable, new and improved community and recreational facilities will be provided and the sustainability of North Plymstock as a whole will be improved through the new neighbourhoods at Plymstock Quarry and Sherford and provision of a new countryside park. A new Primary School is also proposed at Plymstock Quarry. Youth facilities will also be provided at both Plymstock Quarry and Sherford.

Older People

It is considered that the Area Action Plan will have a positive impact on older people's quality of life. In particular, a proportion of new homes built will be to Lifetime Homes standard, public transport will be improved, new community facilities will be provided and the sustainability of North Plymstock as a whole will be improved through the new neighbourhoods at Plymstock Quarry and Sherford and provision of a new countryside park.

4. Recommendations

This Equality Impact Assessment has identified that the Area Action Plan for North Plymstock will have positive impacts on the quality of life of race

groups, people with a visual impairment or a physical disability, men and women, young people and older people. It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts on any of the equalities groups, therefore no further actions are required.