Preliminary Appraisal of the Potential Effects of the Issues and Options for Millbay and Stonehouse 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 Millbay/ Stonehouse Area Action Plan appear broadly sustainable although, inevitably, some conflict of interest may arise; some key issues are outlined below:

- Transforming the vacant docks is a positive opportunity to provide employment and revitalise the area, however such proposals need to be carefully handled to ensure that the design is sensitive to industrial heritage, development proposals do not impact on water quality and aquatic habitats and that new employment opportunities generated provide jobs for the local community.

- Achieving sustainable urban communities is a positive approach to future planning. However in recreating and restoring residential areas it is important that housing stock and types meets the needs of a 21st century community and that the design of buildings is sensitive to the surrounding built environment, reflect/retains locally distinctive features and is designed to minimise energy consumption and waste generation.
• The question arises…will the proposals to introduce sensitive design and increase pedestrian and cyclist usage reduce crime, prostitution and increase safety or should additional/alternative solutions be explored?

• It is important when considering the nature of proposals to ensure that materials for construction are sourced locally where possible and the number of vehicular movements is reduced.

• Proposals to create/enhance attractive streetscapes is a positive opportunity to rejuvenate an area, however impacts associated with late opening hours, noise and rowdy behaviour will have to be carefully handled to ensure that the evening economy does not impact unreasonably on the quality of life of adjacent communities.

• Whilst proposals to create a mix of housing types and stock should meet the needs of the local community there are likely to be some practical and economic constraints in achieving the required levels of affordable housing.

• Proposals relating to the creation of a marina and cruise liner berth and terminal will draw in visitors to the area. Consideration should be given as to how visitors will travel into the city centre, whether there is a need for tourist accommodation and what potential impact an increase in visitor numbers may have on the community, local services and shops.

• Proposals relating to the relocation of Plymouth Pavilions facilities to Central Park must be carefully considered. The loss of the leisure entertainment centre could have a negative economic impact on the area.
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>PLAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS (Below)</td>
<td>Transform vacant docks into mixed use development including retail, marine related industries, marina, yachting club and cruise liner with high quality public waterfront spaces</td>
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<td>Create a high quality new street/boulevard between Millbay and City centre which would</td>
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<td>• Generate safe pedestrian and cycle routes</td>
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<td>• Focus of neighbourhood facilities</td>
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<td>Environmental enhancement work to residential areas south of Union Street:</td>
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<td>• Recreation of original block structure</td>
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<td>• Protect existing residential areas</td>
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<td>• Retention of some mixed use</td>
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<td>Enhance Union Street linking Devonport with City Centre through:</td>
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<td>• Consider the relationship of proposals with residential areas to the north</td>
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<td>Union Street- Relocate Plymouth Pavilions facilities to Central Park</td>
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<td>Create a landmark building and public space at the juncture of Millbank link road and Union Street</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
× 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.