

North Plymstock Area Action Plan

Public Examination

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Title:	Whether the AAP should contain more options for the location, timing and delivery of housing.
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Key issues

1. This paper is in response to a number of representations made on the issues of location, timing and delivery of housing. The main housing developments are concentrated at the Plymstock Quarry (and adjoining sites) and Sherford in the AAP. Objections have been raised by Persimmon on the non-allocation of the Wixenford Quarry site, and by Langage Construction on the Stanborough Nursery site. Additional objections have been received from Taylor Woodrow on the need for further information on the delivery of housing over the plan period, by Redtree on the contributions to transport infrastructure (NP02) and by Mr. D Godefroy on NP06.

Detailed Points

Capacity issue for Plymstock Quarry (Persimmon Homes ID: 1946)

2. The plan provides for 'in the region of' 1500 dwellings. This is not a lower or an upper limit but rather identifies the broad magnitude of development that the evidence base suggests the site might deliver. The provisions of the AAP would not prejudice a planning application for a scheme which delivers a larger quantum of development, such as the 1650 suggested by Persimmon. Such a development scheme can be assessed on its own merits at a later date, having regard to the overall policy objectives for the site set out in Proposal NP01. The Council therefore considers that the plan is sound in this respect.

Wixenford Quarry (National Trust ID:0373and Persimmon Homes ID: 1946).

3. Development at Wixenford Quarry has not been proposed in the AAP because the evidence suggests that it is unlikely to be able to be developed in a way that is consistent with the Core Strategy's vision of high quality sustainable linked communities as set out in CS01 and CS02. The site would be poorly integrated with the rest of the development. It would represent an isolated cell of development with difficult access arrangements and a north facing aspect cul de sac with very poor permeability. This would not encourage walking and cycling, but rather favour vehicular movement.
4. It is difficult to see how it would contribute to a coherent urban form, given that there would be a limited choice of street connections, no relationship with the rest of the development at Plymstock Quarry, and limited access to facilities.
5. Persimmon's own Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment for Wixenford Quarry (Figure 5), prepared by Nicholas Pearson Associates, and the accompanying cross sections illustrate the proposed approach in more detail. The one access road to this site is very circuitous in nature, and set in a cutting in places. The sunken

profile with dwellings set in a cutting on a north-facing slope offers very poor amenity for these dwellings, which are both confined and overshadowed. Similarly the proposals show exposed rear gardens against greenspace and this raises issues of security, garden encroachment and tipping of garden waste.

6. The Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment in fact recognises the area's isolation and describes it as 'both secluded and not subject to casual supervision' and that it 'forms a 'dead end' in respect of public access as there is no linkage to the surrounding areas which would be subject to the proposed Plymstock Quarry Redevelopment'. It also recognises 'the fundamental problems of isolation, lack of connectivity, remoteness and enclosed character'. The previous Westbury Homes outline application for Plymstock Quarry did not include development in Wixenford Quarry for this very reason. In contrast it identified this area as open space, and subsequent masterplans developed by Westbury Homes identified the area for 'informal recreation and ecological resource'.
7. Wixenford Quarry falls within the Countryside Park Proposal NP11, together with the northern fields. It is highly visible and accessible from the proposed recreational spine, which is proposed as part of this, at a point where the landscape character will broaden out.
8. Wixenford Quarry also falls within the 'essential setting' to Saltram, and together with the access arrangements and accompanying housing to the site, it is considered that this would increase the visual impact to Saltram. Section 2 (figure 7) and Figure 13c in the recently submitted Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment for Wixenford Quarry highlight the visibility, which is only mitigated when the planting matures. This includes impacts directly from Saltram House and other key locations from within the Estate. The study also recognises the increase in sky glow resulting from these proposals.
9. The Plymouth Eastern Corridor Urban Fringe Study's framework plan clearly shows this area as part of a woodland buffer landscape, to be 'retained as playing an important role in creating the outer setting to the Saltram Estate'. Wixenford adjoins the area identified as the recreational spine, which is conceived 'as a stunning linear landscape of varying width and character emanating from the Plym Estuary'.
10. No sustainability appraisal has been carried out for this proposal. To include this area in the AAP would therefore make the plan unsound.
11. In summary the City Council considers the proposal for development at Wixenford, along with the access to Wixenford as unsound. The Council considers the North Plymstock AAP proposal to be sound, with the inclusion of this area in the Countryside Park proposal NP11, and the greenscape designation.

Stanborough Nursery site (Langage Construction Ltd ID: 2001)

12. The previous greenscape designation was accepted in the planning appeal for this site, which did not accept that the unkempt appearance

affected this decision (24th March 2005). The appeal decision also allowed for future evaluation as part of the LDF process. In some respects the circumstances have changed with proposals for Sherford and safeguarding of other development options around Elburton.

13. In terms of noise issues, Aggregate Industries are concerned about the potential impacts of noise on any residential development, following the development of a High Quality Public Transport route, which may breach the screening bunds and therefore create a direct line of sight between the site and the dump truck haul route/ primary crusher feeding point (letter dated 17th July 2006). The noise assessment carried out by Ian Sharland Limited for Langage Construction Ltd assesses the noise impact of the existing site. It does not however assess the situation with the proposed HQPT route, which is the main concern according to Aggregate Industries. The delivery of the HQPT route remains the highest priority for the North Plymstock AAP in the delivery of strategic developments at Sherford and Plymstock Quarry.
14. This is however a minor site that could be assessed on its own merits in the future. Policy CS18 (Core Strategy, Submitted Version) does set out the circumstances where development in greenscape areas could be acceptable. With the delivery of the HQPT route, the case for protecting this site as greenscape could be significantly altered and thus the Council accepts that there is a reasonable basis for this site being excluded from the greenscape designation. The Council believes that the green corridor identified in the illustrative Land Use & Greenscape Framework of the AAP is still relevant, as there are greenscape designations to the north of the site (the landscape bund) and to the south (former railway cutting and playing fields).
15. In conclusion, the delivery of the HQPT route over the site must remain the priority for this plan. The Council considers that the North Plymstock Area Action Plan is sound, although the Council is prepared to recommend that this site is removed from the greenscape designation. The site would then be assessed on its own merits, as a minor development location, with the evidence to address the outstanding concerns, particularly in terms of noise issues.

Delivery timetable (Taylor Woodrow Developments (SW) Ltd ID: 1947)

16. The Council considers that the plan is sound, however it will prepare a housing delivery table that sets out the delivery of housing over the plan period and, in line with PPS3 paragraph 55, illustrate the expected rate of delivery through housing and previously developed land trajectories. The supply of deliverable sites will be monitored and updated on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report process. This will be published in draft before the hearing session.

Changes to NP02 to reflect transport (Red Tree LLP ID: 1978)

17. Proposal NP02 refers to the provisions of the proposal NP01, and therefore the Council considers it to be sound. The Council is,

however, prepared to recommend amending the proposal NP02 to ensure that this point is more directly expressed.

Objection to NP06, including a lack of a credible evidence base (Mr D. Godefroy OBE ID: 1972)

18. NP06 shows an area of potential future growth north of Elburton, in line with the Plymouth Core Strategy. NP06 makes no firm proposal for development but safeguards the post 2016 development options. To further emphasise the role of NP06 as a safeguarding policy rather than a development proposal, it is recommended that the term proposal is replaced by policy. The policy acknowledges the need to justify and test any proposal for this site at the right time. NP06 also allows for the area to be retained as a green buffer. Consideration of any firm proposals for development can be assessed against an evidence base at that time. The policy provides flexibility to achieve the housing targets, and would in addition achieve a good urban form with a positive relationship to open spaces and deliver facilities for the north of Elburton. It stems from the Core Strategy sustainable communities policies CS01 and CS32 and takes into account a number of background studies including the Eastern Corridor Study, Plymouth Greenscape Assessment and the Sherford Enquiry by Design. This policy has also been tested against the sustainability appraisal for North Plymstock AAP. The Council therefore considers it to be sufficiently robust and sound.

PCC Suggested Adjustments

19. The existing plan is considered by the Council to be sound. However the following minor amendments are suggested to improve the clarity of the plan in relation to the issues raised;

Stanborough Nursery Site - Propose to re-designate the site at Stanborough Nursery from Greenscape to 'white' land, in an overall proposals plan, which will be produced for the whole AAP area.

Housing delivery - Housing delivery table to be prepared prior to the hearing.

Transport contributions - Recommended amending NP02 to add the following paragraph; **5. Proportionate contributions to wider transport works in line with Proposals NP07, NP09, NP10 and Policy NP08.**

NP02 safeguarding policy - NP06 to be amended to **policy** rather than proposal.

Related Documents

- Appeal Decision 24th March 2005, Appeal Ref: APP/N1160/A/04/1160924. Garden Centre and Nursery Site, Haye Road, Plymouth, Devon, PL9 8AT

- Aggregate Industries letter dated 17th July 2006
- Landscape & Visual Impact assessment for Wixenford Quarry, prepared by Nicholas Pearson Associates for Persimmon Homes, February 2007
- Saltram Historic Landscape Survey and Management Plan, November 1999, Nicholas Pearson Associates for the National Trust
- Sustainability Appraisal of the submission draft of the North Plymstock AAP (July 2006)
- Plymouth Eastern Corridor Urban Fringe Study, July 2006, LDA Design
- Sherford Enquiry by Design 2004
- Plymouth Greenscape Assessment