

STATEMENT 04

City Centre & University AAP Public Examination

Document Number:	PCC CC&UAAP 04
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Title:	Should the AAP examine how its policies/proposals relate to areas adjacent to the City Centre, especially the boulevard planned for Millbay, the outstanding recreational value of The Hoe and Plymouth Sound, and historic buildings and street pattern of the Barbican?
Examination Session:	26th January 2010

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Issue to be Examined

1. The Inspector has asked the following question: “Should the AAP examine how its policies/proposals relate to areas adjacent to the City Centre, especially the boulevard planned for Millbay, the outstanding recreational value of The Hoe and Plymouth Sound and historic buildings and street pattern of the Barbican?”
2. The Council believes that the City Centre and University AAP is sound as submitted. It has been prepared in conformity with the Plymouth Core Strategy which sets the overall context within which this supporting Area Action Plan needs to be considered. The Core Strategy envisages the East End, Sutton Harbour, The Hoe, Millbay and Stonehouse, Devonport and the City Centre as being treated as one policy area known as the Waterfront Regeneration Area. However, for practical purposes of production, proposals for each of these areas have been dealt with through separate AAPs. These relationships are made clear both in the Local Development Scheme, as well as in Core Strategy Diagram 3. Chapter 5 of the Core Strategy clearly sets out Area Visions for each part of the Waterfront Regeneration Area, so that their relationships can be appreciated. It is considered that the Core Strategy provides the appropriate context for these strategic relationships to be examined and how the Waterfront Regeneration Area should be understood as a single policy area.
3. The strategy set out in the City Centre AAP, and the policies and proposals which deliver that strategy, already contain a number of references to neighbouring areas. Several contain direct relationships to some of the key areas named in the Inspector’s question, and in fact one of the key principles of the AAP – the ‘concept’ set out in Chapter 3 – is founded on the City Centre’s relationship with the historic Barbican.
4. It should also be noted that the documents that go to make up Plymouth’s Local Development Framework should be read as a whole, and not in isolation. In particular, the City Centre and University AAP should be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy and the other Waterfront AAPs. These documents, in combination, provide an overview, a consideration of the key relationships, and detailed policies and proposals for the adjacent areas.
5. Nevertheless, the Council recognises the importance of the relationship between the City Centre, Sutton Harbour, The Hoe and Millbay and Stonehouse, and considers that clarifications and improvements to the AAP could be made. Some suggested improvements are set out in paragraph 12. These improvements do not affect the Council’s position that the AAP is sound as submitted.

Existing References in the AAP

6. The AAP directly addresses the relationship of the City Centre to surrounding areas in the following paragraphs:
 - In Chapter 3, paragraphs 3.4 to 3.6, the AAP sets out a 'concept' for the future form of the City Centre. This concept shows how the new developments proposed in the AAP integrate with the City Centre's heritage and in fact are part of a continuous journey through Plymouth's history from the historic Barbican through to 21st Century North Cross. This concept is key to understanding how the policies and proposals work together with the existing City Centre character, and with the relationship with the Medieval Barbican to create an invigorating place.
 - Policy CC19 recognises that the area to the south of Royal Parade and East of Armada Way is a key area where the post war City Centre meets and merges into the older areas around Sutton Harbour and the Barbican. This role of the area is further explained in paragraph 11.9 bullet point 4.
 - The AAP recognises the importance of the link to the Hoe in Chapter 5, in the context of the importance of Armada Way. Paragraph 5.13 recognises the role that Armada Way was always intended to play, linking the railway station and North Cross to The Hoe. Paragraph 5.15 goes on to set out that Armada Way should be strengthened as the link from the City Centre to The Hoe and Waterfront. Paragraph 9.10, associated with Proposal CC14, flags up the route from the Railway Station through the City Centre to The Hoe.
 - The links to Millbay and the Millbay Boulevard are set out in paragraph 6.5, where the importance of Western Approach junction to the Millbay Boulevard and to Proposal CC08 is flagged up; in paragraph 6.9 which recognises the role Royal Parade plays linking Millbay, the City Centre and Sutton Harbour; and in Proposal CC08: Colin Campbell Court which recognises the relationship to the Millbay Boulevard in bullet point 5 and to the Toys R Us site in bullet point 7. Strategic Objective 8 clearly sets out the importance of the Leisure and Civic Districts to making links to The Hoe, Millbay and Sutton Harbour.
 - The Proposals Map indicates key links and connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, highlighting the need to develop key sites and linkages along the main activity routes from Millbay to Sutton Harbour.

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Relationship to Other Plans

7. The City Centre and University Area Action Plan has been prepared in conformity with the Plymouth Core Strategy and the rest of the Local Development Framework. When considering how the City Centre relates to adjacent areas of the City, these other documents should be read in conjunction with the AAP.
8. The Core Strategy, in particular, envisages the East End, Sutton Harbour, The Hoe, Millbay and Stonehouse, Devonport and the City Centre being treated as one policy area known as the Waterfront Regeneration Area. This is made clear both in the Council's Local Development Scheme, as well as in Core Strategy Diagram 3. Chapter 5 of the Core Strategy clearly sets out Area Visions for each part of the Waterfront Area, so that their relationships can be appreciated. It is considered that the Core Strategy is the appropriate place for these strategic relationships to be examined.
9. It should be noted that the Council has always envisaged the Waterfront Regeneration Area as being a single policy area where significant change is needed. However, this large and complex area has had to be broken down into more manageable, smaller areas to ensure that the Council had the resources to produce the plans. The six AAPs which make up the Waterfront Regeneration Area should still be understood as a single policy area. If considered in this way, the relationship between the areas becomes clearer. To examine all these inter-relationships in each AAP would clearly lead to repetition, once all the AAPs have been adopted.

Could the AAP be Improved?

10. The Council considers that it has adequately assessed the relationships between the different Waterfront neighbourhoods, and that the City Centre and University AAP does contain the appropriate references to ensure the relationships to adjacent areas can be fully understood. The Council therefore considers that the AAP is sound.
11. It may be, however, that some improvements could be made to clarify these relationships, if the Inspector felt that this would be appropriate. In particular, the AAP could be improved by including in Chapter 3 some text explaining, in a strategic sense, how the Council sees the areas of the City Centre, Sutton Harbour, The Hoe and Millbay and Stonehouse working in the future to create a variety of attractions in the Waterfront Area. If the Inspector wanted to make such an improvement to the AAP, the following text could be used:

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12. Proposed additional text for clarification purposes. New paragraph to be inserted following paragraph 3.3 of the AAP:

"The City Centre and University area is a key part of the Waterfront Regeneration Area, as described in the Core Strategy. This is the part of Plymouth which relates directly to the sea and the coast, and it therefore plays an important role in delivering the City's vision of Plymouth as 'one of Europe's finest waterfront cities'. It contains a number of areas which make up a linked network of places which, together, provide the true heart of Plymouth. These places are:

- The old, medieval waterfront of the Barbican and the newer quayside attractions of Sutton Harbour,
- The dramatic views of the Sound, open space and events space at The Hoe,
- The soon to be developed modern waterfront at Millbay, where there will be new homes, restaurants and shops lining the docks and extending along the new Boulevard to the City Centre,
- The City Centre itself, which is the focus and hub for these areas.

The City Centre attracts visitors to the heart of Plymouth, it showcases the city and it joins the Waterfront areas into one of the most impressive sequence of places in any waterfront city in the country. This AAP deals with the City Centre and University areas only, but it needs to be read within the overall context of the Core Strategy, as well as alongside the AAPs produced for its neighbouring areas of the Waterfront, for the full context to be appreciated. These key links to neighbouring areas are set out in the AAPs policies and explanatory text."

Conclusion

13. The Council considers that the AAP is sound as submitted. The AAP has been prepared in conformity with the Core Strategy, and contains specific references to adjacent areas, in particular:

- Introducing a concept for the AAP based on the relationship between the historic areas around the Barbican and the post war City Centre,
- Recognising the importance of the link to The Hoe along Armada Way,
- Recognising the links to Millbay Boulevard.