

ARMADA WAY JOINT LOCAL PLAN EXTRACTS



Strategic Objective SO3 Delivering growth in Plymouth's City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area

To realise the potential of the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area as a regionally significant growth hub through:

- Establishing and reinforcing the City Centre's role as a regional centre for shopping, employment, leisure, a university centre, a strategic transport hub and a sustainable community in its own right.
- Utilising the City Centre and waterfront's economic assets, including its waterfront infrastructure, to drive economic growth in the area.
- Improving sustainable transport facilities and connections throughout the area, and particularly between the City Centre and the waterfront at Millbay, The Hoe and Sutton Harbour.
- Protecting and making best use of the unique historic environment and landscape of the City Centre and waterfront, in particular Devonport waterfront, Royal William Yard and Devil's Point, The Hoe and The Barbican.
- Capitalising on the potential of the City Centre and waterfront to deliver a world class cultural and visitor offer, with well connected destinations, high quality visitor accommodation, facilities to deliver major events and improved public realm and waterfront access.
- Delivering new residential-led mixed-use developments that integrate successfully with existing communities and enhance community cohesion.
- Improving city gateways, arrival points and key transport routes and delivering high quality architecture and urban design.
- Delivering improved public access to and along the waterfront as well as enhancements to key public spaces and heritage assets.
- Delivering water transport improvements and integration with other transport modes that will improve access to key locations including The Barbican Mount Batten, Sutton Harbour, Millbay, Royal William Yard, Devonport and Mount Edgcumbe.
- Safeguarding and enhancing the environmental status of the Plymouth Sound and estuaries, including the European Marine Sites, and making the City Centre and waterfront communities more resilient to the effects of climate change.

PLY06 Improving Plymouth's city centre

Plymouth City Centre will be renewed and enhanced through a combination of major new developments, proactive management of change and support for community and trader led initiatives. This will deliver a modern, high quality, vibrant, accessible and adaptable centre that reflects its status alongside the waterfront as the showcase of Plymouth. This will be achieved through making sure that development and change:

1. Capitalises on and strengthens the City Centre's role as a regional centre.
2. Respects and celebrates the centre's mid-twentieth century built heritage, including the Beaux Arts grid of the 1943 Abercrombie Plan and the highest and good quality non-designated assets identified in the City Centre Masterplan.
3. Recognises the importance of reinforcing the primacy of Armada Way as the principal thoroughfare from the station to the Hoe. This will be achieved by focusing larger development - building heights of six to eight storeys - on the Armada Way frontage to provide enclosure to the space and to maintain a degree of consistency to these increased building heights to respect the Abercrombie Plan's form and historic context.
4. Supports the intensification and diversification of uses through redevelopment of City Centre blocks, with specific sites identified where tall buildings will be acceptable in principle.

5. Addresses the size and need for a clearer focus of the retail area, through prioritising the prime retail role to the east of Armada Way and through diversification of uses for the centre as a whole.
6. Strengthens the role of the West End as an Independent Quarter, anchored by the City Market, which supports independent traders, niche retail and food shopping to serve the nearby residential communities, and provides for the introduction of alternative higher value business uses, cultural uses, community uses and creative business clusters.
7. Delivers a vibrant mix of uses to diversify the centre including, in addition to retail:
 - i. Regionally significant office uses and the coordination of public sector investment as a catalyst for transformational change.
 - ii. A vibrant destination, with leisure, culture, visitor accommodation and food and drink uses, especially making best use of key assets such as the Armada Way boulevard and piazza, and creating greater synergy with the cultural hubs at Royal Parade, The Hoe and historic waterfront, and North Hill / Tavistock Place.
 - iii. A new residential community, through development and environmental changes which provide high quality urban living environments.
 - iv. Education and community uses, optimising the benefits from the proximity of Plymouth University and Plymouth College of Art, and the potential for a more vibrant mix of uses especially along Armada Way and to its west.
 - v. Student accommodation, but only where it is targeted to support prioritised regeneration opportunities, and delivers new housing and/or office accommodation and ground floor active uses as part of mixed use development.
8. Supports a diverse and active evening and night time economy catering for a wide cross section of the public.
9. Delivers high quality public car parks in strategic locations around the edge of the centre with excellent pedestrian connections to key attractions.
10. Facilitates easier movement in and around the City Centre for all modes of transport, including reconnecting the City Centre with its neighbouring areas - which include Millbay, Sutton Harbour and the Hoe – by high quality walking and cycling links.
11. Supports the delivery of a coordinated programme of investment in the public realm, and delivers structured environmental improvements, creating a safe accessible and attractive environment for the community and visitors alike, and exploring opportunities for weather protected spaces.
12. Delivers proposals that are resilient and respond to the challenges of climate change and protect the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site from pollution, providing where appropriate improvements to flood management infrastructure, surface water drainage systems, and future connection to critical drainage infrastructure and district heat networks relevant to the site.

The City Centre is not only the heart of the city and a place where people live, but is also Plymouth's shop window, the commercial and cultural centre driving the economy and attracting visitors.

The City Centre is underpinned by its role as the primary destination for comparison goods shopping in the sub region. Retailing has been through a period of decline since the economic crisis of 2008, but is now showing signs of recovering. The prime role the centre plays as the destination for non-food shopping trips over a wide geographical area provides a strong basis for investment as can be seen by British Land's acquisition of Drake Circus.

There is a need for the centre to keep adapting and modernising to continue to maintain its key strategic role into the future. The Plymouth City Centre Strategic Masterplan (2016) highlights the opportunity to celebrate the 'Mid Century Modern' heritage of the City Centre. The Abercrombie Plan of 1943 may not have been implemented in full, but it remains as one of the most complete and important examples of post war planning and rebuilding in the country, and it is recommended that this legacy is promoted as a unique selling point of the City Centre.

The Masterplan identifies five priority themes for the City Centre to achieve its potential:

- Intensifying the City Centre: optimising the population, density and diversity, to deliver a vibrant, healthy City Centre and safeguarding and enhancing retail floor space.

- City Centre Living: creating a critical mass of new housing and attractive living environments.
- Re-connecting the City Centre with its neighbours: creating safe, convenient, direct and attractive pedestrian and cycle connections across the ring road.
- Re-animating the Public Realm: creating a hierarchy of high quality public streets and spaces, with an enhanced Armada Way as the top priority.
- The Smart and Adaptable City: building flexibility and adaptability into the City Centre and making best use of smart technology - including for example with traffic management and flexible work and community space.

The Masterplan identifies key opportunity sites and six priority major Interventions capable of delivering landmark projects which can introduce new land uses, change perceptions of the City Centre and act as a catalyst for further regeneration. The projects and interventions have informed the more detailed site allocations in the plan and Policy PLY6¹ sets out the framework within which these initiatives will take place.

Policy PLY37 Strategic infrastructure measures for the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area

The following key strategic infrastructure measures will be provided during the plan period, in addition to proposals identified in other policies of this plan, in order to support the delivery of the strategy for the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area:

1. City Centre public realm and transport improvements to improve circulation and encourage investment, including:

- i. Capacity increases, including bus priority improvements, to the A374, A379 (Exeter Street) and the A386 including North Cross roundabout, Charles Cross, Western Approach, Union Street, St Andrews Cross and Derrys Cross and Drake Circus junction improvements.
- ii. Armada Way public realm; incorporating City Centre Strategic Cycle Network and walking improvements
- iii. Improvements to Royal Parade to ensure a positive sense of arrival and sufficient capacity for buses.

2. Millbay Boulevard and related public realm and transport improvements to enhance the link between the City Centre and waterfront.

3. Improvements to international ferry facilities and a new cruise liner terminal, and associated local road network improvements.

4. Other City Centre and waterfront public realm and transport improvements to support Mayflower 400.

5. New coach station at Mayflower Street.

6. New and improved public car parking in the City Centre.

7. Strategic drainage improvements.

8. City Centre / Waterfront Strategic Cycling and Walking network improvements.

9. Upgrading of flood defences, maritime and harbourside infrastructure including:

- i. Replacement of Sutton Harbour Lock Gate and Bridge.
- ii. Improvements to West Pier.

¹ [JLP - ADOPTED VERSION 2019 \(plymouth.gov.uk\)](http://plymouth.gov.uk)

iii. Completion of flood defences around Millbay.

iv. Monitoring the condition of the breakwaters and other structures within Plymouth Sound and, in case of deterioration, identifying strategies to ensure the current benefits provided at the coast during coastal storms are retained.

10. New primary school in the City Centre area (site still to be identified).

The priority infrastructure interventions needed to support growth in the City Centre and waterfront are set out in Policy PLY37. Transport and public realm improvements, together with infrastructure related to drainage and flood defence are of key importance to this particular Growth Agenda, given its particular characteristics and role.

Ensuring effective circulation around and into the City Centre and improving the parking offer are all essential to enable it to fulfil its potential as a regional centre and for it to diversify its uses and extend its hours of use. Public realm improvements, as demonstrated in other cities, are critical to encouraging further investment in the retail offer and to promote residential, office and other desired forms of development.

Connecting the City Centre to the waterfront has been a long held objective of the city, and these improvements will help to open up the new developments in the Millbay area as well as improving the links between this area and the City Centre. In addition, the ability to berth larger cruise ships will bring additional spending power to benefit city businesses, including those in the City Centre. These and the wider waterfront improvements will enable the city to accommodate and gain maximum benefit from the Mayflower 400 celebrations.

Drainage and flood defence infrastructure is required to address existing known deficiencies as well as to accommodate new development.

Opportunity sites within the City Centre and Waterfront Growth Area:

The following sites are identified as having significant potential for supporting the delivery of the Strategic Outcome and Objective for this Growth Area. They are however not allocated in the plan because there is insufficient evidence at the current time of their deliverability within the plan period.

- The Royal Citadel - identified in November 2016 as surplus for MoD purposes, but too late to be tested for inclusion in the plan. Much work is now needed to identify its appropriate use and it is anticipated that this site will be allocated when the JLP is reviewed in five years.
- Mayflower Street West / Armada Centre - this is seen as a long term opportunity for major redevelopment, which could include a mix of retail, residential, leisure, office and hotel uses.
- Commercial, Elphinstone & Phoenix Wharfs - the site is considered to have potential for mixed use opportunities for water sports, maritime events and leisure and tourism and leisure, including complementary enabling commercial uses. However, given site constraints and legal issues, including the Plymouth City Council Act 1987, there is insufficient certainty about a deliverable proposal to support allocating the site at this time.
- Land to the east of Sutton Road, Coxside - the LPA has had a long standing aspiration to see the area comprehensively developed. The potential exists to deliver a significant mixed use residential community, which will transform the area and also deliver major improvements to the Exeter Street approach to the City Centre. However, there are many land owners involved and at this stage there is no clear delivery strategy in place.

Opportunity sites are not formally allocated in the plan and therefore are not shown on the Policies Map. However, the LPA is supportive in principle of development of these sites if key constraints can be overcome in an acceptable way and a deliverable proposal can be identified. Each of the sites identified has considerable potential to support the achievement of the plan's vision, and so the LPA is hopeful that by the time of the next plan review they may be able to be included as positive allocations.