

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Report: Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Transport, Housing and Related Regeneration

Subject: Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy

Committee: Scrutiny Commission
Executive

Date: 31st October, 2002
19th November, 2002

Ref: 5/SP/TH&RR/MARS/DE

Part: I

Executive Summary: The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to submit recommendations to the Executive Committee following a meeting of the scrutiny panel responsible for reviewing the Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy.

Corporate Strategy: The establishment of Overview and Scrutiny Panels forms part of the corporate strategy for implementation of that part of the modernisation agenda relative to new democratic arrangements.

Financial Implications: The cost of public consultation can be met from existing budgets. The cost associated with the final strategy will be met by the South West Regional Development Agency (S.W.E.R.D.A.) and the City Council through S.R.B. funding.

Recommendations

- (1) the regeneration strategy for the Millbay area be welcomed;
- (2) this report be submitted to the Scrutiny Commission with a recommendation that its findings be submitted to the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWERDA).

REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND RELATED REGENERATION

Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy

1.0 Introduction

The Scrutiny Commission agreed a work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Panels at ‘its’ meeting on 20th June 2002. It was agreed that a number of topics would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Transport, Housing and Related Regeneration – the first of which would be the Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy.

- 1.1 The Panel met on 19th and 26th September 2002, to consider the proposals for the Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy. The Directors of Development and Social and Housing Services, the Head of Economic Development and Urban Regeneration and the Transport and Planning Manager presented details of the strategy and members were given the opportunity to comment and ask questions. Their views and recommendations would subsequently be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 31st October 2002 and the Executive at its meeting on 19th November 2002.

2.0 Panel Structure

Councillors

Councillor Birkenhead, in the Chair.

Councillor Brimacombe, Vice-Chairman (Substituting for Councillor Brookshaw).

Councillors Mrs. Nelder and Wheeler.

Also in attendance: Councillor R. Bellamy (Ward Representative)

Apologies for absence: Councillors Brookshaw Mrs. Ford and Martin Leaves.

Officers In Attendance

Nick Lean	Divisional Manager (Transport)
Paul Brown	Team Leader (Transport)
Nick McMahon	Principal Planner/Project Manager
Carole Hoyle	Democratic Support Officer
Daphne Evans	Democratic Support Officer

N.B. Councillors Birkenhead, Brimacombe, Mrs. Nelder and Wheeler were also in attendance for the meeting of the East End Regeneration Strategy on the 12th and 26th September with the addition of Councillor Mrs. Ford.

3.0 Objectives

To consider key work programmes and issues relating to the Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy as presented by the lead officers, with a view to formulating a report of recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee meeting on 19th November, 2002, subject to approval by the Scrutiny Commission.

4.0 Background papers:

Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy

Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy Draft Report (7th February 2002) Working Draft Report on Representations received and Action to be taken

Draft Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy Report to:

Executive Committee on 12th March 2002

Sutton, St. Peter and Keyham Area Committee on 19th March 2002

5.0 The Detail

Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy

5.1 The Director of Development presented a briefing note (THRR 15 02/03) setting out the background, aims, implications and progress in respect of the Millbay Area Regeneration Strategy, together with a copy of the associated report to the Executive and Sutton, St. Peter and Keyham Area Committees in March 2002 (THRR 16 02/03). The Panel was advised that following a period of public consultation, the Consultants had been asked to complete the final report, having regard to representations received (THRR 17 02/03), and that this would then be considered by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 3rd December, 2002, together with the comments of this Panel.

6.0 Comments

The Panel commented on the report as follows -

Development Issues

- (i) that the proposals for “affordable housing” should be defined and, in order to ensure the retention of strong communities, an element of social housing should be included;
- (ii) the impact of increased housing provision on the number of school places;

- (iii) more flexibility needed to be used in design/landscaping proposals in order to address the genuine concern of local residents and the general public at the loss of light and views. Particularly applies to West Hoe Road Flats and on Bishops Place, and from the sea because of the proposed height of the development;
- (iv) the proposals provided for a mix of housing and commercial development and careful consideration needed to be given to ensure that these were compatible.

Access Issues

- (v) whether there were any opportunities to make the waterfront more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists;
- (vi) the need to ensure that the public had access to the whole area and the impact on the current road network;
- (vii) the need to ensure as far as possible that decisions taken now do not prejudice the operation of the existing and wider strategic transport route network servicing the area, or the implementation of possible future transport proposals and strategic objectives;
- (viii) that Associated British Ports and the Ministry of Defence be encouraged to enter into discussions regarding the future of the grain silo;
- (ix) a link was required between Millbay and the City Centre but the four identified options were all problematic and the preferred option needed to be realistic;
- (x) whether there were any proposals for dredging or filling-in the Inner Basin;
- (xi) whether there would be any impact on the operation of the Lifeboat;
- (xii) since visitor parking would be restricted, whether there were any proposals for Water Taxis;
- (xiii) the need to preserve historic buildings in the area;
- (xiv) the potential problems of providing more housing in an area where there was a high incidence of Nightclubs;
- (xv) the future of the Palace Theatre;
- (xvi) that appropriate play areas are provided within the proposals and that it is the current policy of the City Council with such developments to secure provision for or contributions to community benefits and facilities such as play areas;
- (xvii) that the problems of anti-social behaviour in the area needed to be addressed within the new design context.

7.0 Comments

The Officers responded as follows -

- (a) in regard to (i) above, an appropriate proposal had been included in the Local Plan (Proposal 34) for the Millbay Eastern Dock area and two outline planning applications had been submitted for some 600 homes, 25% of which was intended to be “affordable housing”, which would include an element of social housing and that these percentages accords with the existing Local Plan;
- (b) in regard to (ii) above, this would depend on the type of housing provided and would be subject to negotiation with the Education Authority;
- (c) in regard to (iii) above, the Consultants had recognised the importance of this issue and intended to give more emphasis within the report to appropriate form and massing of development within the local context and that the Officers continue to explore grant regimes which may be available to deliver improvements to the facilities;
- (d) in regard to (v) above, this was an objective although access to Millbay from Pound Street/Admiralty Street on the Peninsula was not currently possible because of the restriction on crossing land owned by the Ministry of Defence and Associated British Ports;
- (e) in regard to (vi) and (vii) above, the Transport and Planning Department would be carrying out a traffic impact assessment, having regard to the major routes into and out of the City and particularly bearing in mind the proposal to run larger ferries from Millbay Docks;
- (f) in regard to (viii) above, Associated British Ports had advised that this was required for operational use and that the grain silo be actively used as a facility but at that same time the building would exist for operational use;
- (g) in regard to (x) above, the City Council’s view was that this was of historic and archaeological interest and needed to be retained;
- (h) in regard to (xi) above, there were no proposals to affect the Lifeboat access;
- (i) in regard to (xii) above, a study had been carried out into the possibility of water transport but the results were still awaited. It was important to ensure that the development did not obstruct any taxi landing stage;
- (j) in regard to (xiii) above, there would be restrictions on development in the areas of historic buildings;
- (k) in regard to (xiv) above, the City Council was minded not to grant approval for any more Nightclubs in this area;

- (l) in regard to (xv) above, discussions had taken place with the current owner but, due to lack of sufficient grant being available, there were no plans to refurbish the Palace Theatre at the moment;
- (m) in regard to (xvii) above, these were matters for the Police.

8.0 Recommendations

- (1) the regeneration strategy for Millbay be welcomed;
- (2) this report be submitted to the Scrutiny Commission with a recommendation that its findings be submitted to the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWERDA).