

WP 5 ACTION 1 PLYMOUTH GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES (v.01)

1. INTRODUCTION

When Plymouth was settled by fishermen in the 11th Century, they inhabited the area now known as the Barbican for its sheltered position – a small natural inlet tucked away from prevailing westerly winds by the raised land of the Hoe. This physical asset of location – the deep, sheltered Sound and the accompanying mouths of the rivers Tamar and Plym, provided the opportunity for the maritime and military-led growth through the following centuries.

The significance of the waterfront in the process of urbanisation fuelled pockets of growth at the points where access to deep water was favourable for ships, slipways, shipbuilding and repairing in adjacent berths, resulting in the tripartite development of Devonport, Stonehouse, and Plymouth. Whilst the three towns were largely independent, and contained their own living, working, and retail areas, the rapid pace of economic growth in the eighteenth century drove expansion inland at such pace that by 1914 the towns were officially agglomerated into one urban area – Plymouth. This unusual process of inward growth and development produced an urban form that physically linked the new heart of the city back to its waterfront origins. Both the connection of the urban form and the localised sustainability of centres are clear in plans showing the pre-war city.¹

The Plymouth Plan (part of Plymouth and South West Devon Plan 2014-2034) identifies areas of decline in the city and the potential for cultural, economic and civic growth through the development of abandoned or disused heritage assets:

‘Plymouth has adopted the branding of Britain’s Ocean City, reflecting the pride that the city takes in its unique maritime heritage and stunning setting, but also the city’s ambition and its confidence in what it has to offer. However, to be known as an international city it is vital that Plymouth realises greater value from its unique assets.

The 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower (‘Mayflower 400’) in 2020 provides the potential for an internationally significant event. It will be a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity to present ‘Britain’s Ocean City’ to the world and can act as a driver for business growth in marine and related industries, the visitor economy, the culture of the city and raising the city’s profile and reputation in the global market place. It also provides an opportunity to engage with the local community, to engender civic pride and to develop legacy projects and significant partner relationships with overseas communities with links to the Mayflower story. These and other unique assets need to be used to Plymouth’s advantage.’

2. SELECTED GOOD PRACTICES

Support was given for proposals to protect and develop existing cultural facilities within the city's three cultural hubs:

- Royal Parade, The Hoe and historic waterfront (to include Royal William Yard, Millbay and The Barbican / Sutton Harbour)
- Devonport (centred around Devonport Guildhall, Market building, and Plymouth Music Zone and Music Hub)

¹ A Vision for Plymouth, MBM Architects with AZ Urban Studio 2003

- North Hill / Tavistock Place (including the area around Plymouth University, College of Art, Museum and proposed History Centre, now known as The Box)

The cultural hubs and the places that connect the hubs were identified as locations where it will be easier for people to occupy temporarily vacant spaces for artistic and cultural ventures.

Two good practice examples have been selected from the three cultural hubs above; they are:

- **The Old Cooperage - Royal William Yard**
- **Devonport Guildhall & Devonport Column**

3. THE OLD COOPERAGE, ROYAL WILLIAM VICTUALLING YARD (OCEAN STUDIOS)

Name:	Ocean Studios
Location:	The Factory Cooperage, Royal William Yard, Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon, UK, PL1 3QQ
UTM Coordinates:	30U 417155 5579496
Historic England List Entry No:	1378536
Transfer from Ministry of Defence:	1992
Current Use:	Arts & craft studios, galleries, bakery and café

Historical Context:

Since at least the thirteenth century, Plymouth has been involved in victualling and supplying fleets and troops including the fleet of sixty ships sent to oppose the Spanish Armada in 1588. A major new dockyard was constructed at Plymouth in the 1690s to counter the threat posed to international trade by the French Atlantic bases. With Britain's main fleet in the western approaches, the Royal Plymouth Victualling Yard and Office in Sutton Harbour expanded considerably. The task of supplying 20,000 men or more, for long periods was immense. In addition, the victualling yard and office at Lambhay also came under pressure and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the numerous storehouses, lofts, cellars, bakery and granary at Lambhay, could not cope with demand.

In 1824 Sir John Rennie was appointed to design and build a new victualling yard at Cremyll Point, East Stonehouse. Work commenced in 1825, (with convicts employed to level the 16 acre site), and was completed in 1831. Buildings included a mill, bakery, brewery, slaughterhouse, cooperage, general stores and officers' accommodation.

Constructed between 1825 and 1831, the Royal William Yard is steeped in history and considered to be one of the most important groups of historic military buildings in Britain and the largest collection of Grade I Listed military buildings in Europe.

Architectural Features²:

Cooperage; converted to ordnance building (1891). Constructed 1826-32 by Sir John Rennie Jnr for the Victualling Board, central yard roofed 1916, fitting shops added 1930s behind the front range. Limestone ashlar and rubble, axial and lateral stacks and slated iron hipped roofs; the central block has a fireproof iron internal frame. Late Georgian style.

² Description from Historic England list entry

PLAN: originally two concentric quadrangles, the central one square for the coopers, the outer one trapezoidal and divided on the N range by a gateway flanked by offices; W section staves seasoning store, E section iron hoop store, the other three ranges were for cask storage. Now connected by 1930s blocks to the N. EXTERIOR: 2-storey; 8:4-window NE range; 6-window NW range, the other outer sides blind; 2-storey cooperage block; 7- and 11-window sides. External walls of outer quadrangle have a granite plinth, banded rustication to the ground floor to a plat band, a cornice and parapet, and rusticated quoins. Principal NE elevation has 2 central pedimented 1-window pavilions, with segmental-arched ground-floor and flat-headed first-floor 12:12-pane sashes, and 3-window inner side ranges as the front; they are linked by a central gateway with massive square piers of rock-faced banded ashlar with square caps and cast-iron lamp bases, and cast-iron gates to the central entrance and flanking wickets with spear-headed rails and acanthus finials. The 1-window outer ends set forward with upper loading bays, with a W entrance containing a metal-framed window. In between, the ground floor has 6 flat-headed casements to the left and 2 to the right; the upper floor is windowless. W elevation has 2-window end sections set forward, the N end has plain surrounds to blind windows, the S end has ground and first-floor segmental headed sashes; a central entrance to the courtyard inserted after 1891 beneath a loading bay, with further loading entrances either side of a projecting block to the S of the entrance, which has a central doorway and 2 inserted windows each side to each end. The external elevation to the rear SE range is blind. The NE side faces on to Drum Alley. The central cooperage block has a coved cornice and is articulated by round-arched 2-storey arcades, linked by an impost band, containing ground-floor metal tripartite windows, now with small-paned timber casements, and first-floor tripartite lunettes. Centre of each elevation has an entrance with double iron doors, with C20 metal stairs on the NE side up to a round-arched entrance. On the S side is a single-storey rubble office block added pre-1909. The inner elevations of the outer quadrangle originally had open ground-floors divided by iron columns to a band, and flat-headed first-floor metal-framed windows with tilting casements; the 17-window NE range is still open on the ground floor, and has first-floor hoist doors with rusticated jambs to the 6th and 12th openings from the S. A double door leads through the back into Drum Alley. The other sides have rubble infill to the ground floor with flat-headed windows; upper floors as the SE side, the 31-window SW range was infilled in 1936, and has loading doors to the 6th and 12th bays from the E, and to the 22-window W range, infilled in 1906, has loading doors in the 7th and 15th bays from the N. 1930s blocks rendered with gabled ends. INTERIOR: contains original fireproof details, the roofs are to the same design as in Melville and the Clarence (qv), with wrought-iron flat ties and king and queen ties, cast-iron L-section diagonal struts, I-section principal rafters, linked by purlins with parabolic flanges, wedged and bolted together; the central block has M roofs to the W and E sides, with the valley supported partly by original slender columns and arched beams. The central block has incomplete fire-proof floors of T-section beams with curved web containing dovetail sockets for iron joists, supporting a flagstone floor. The S side has original lateral stacks, and an 1899 first-floor browning tank. The former courtyard, covered by a 1916 steel roof, has blocked tripartite ground-floor and first-floor lunette windows. The outer ranges have timber floor beams, supported on the NE range by flanged capital brackets from the columns, with stairs in the end outer corners of the NE range and in the SW end of the front range; the N entrance pavilion has a central dogleg stair, and that to the S has a front dogleg stair. HISTORY: Coopering was transferred to the New Cooperage in 1899, and the Naval Ordnance Department took over the Old Cooperage. The original design of the central block was completely fireproof, with metal shutters instead of windows, and had lateral fireplaces and stacks all round. The outer ranges were for cask storage and seasoning. Much survives of the original buildings, in particular the planning of the double quadrangles, and the fireproof construction. The all-metal roofs are rare early examples of fire-proof construction comparable with contemporary fire-proof textile mills. The Yard is one of the most remarkable and complete early

C19 industrial complexes in the country, and a unique English example of Neo-Classical planning of a state manufacturing site. (Sources: Keystone Historic Buildings Consultants: The Royal William Victualling Yard, Stonehouse: 1994: 25-38; The Mariner's Mirror: Coad J: Historic Architecture of HM Naval Base Devonport 1689-1850: London: 1983: 382-390; Coad J: The Royal Dockyards 1690-1850: Aldershot: 1989: 285-290).

Conversion to Artist Studios & Gallery (Ocean Studios):

The Yard was released from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in 1992 and subsequently passed to the Plymouth Development Corporation. When the Corporation closed in 1999, the Yard was passed to The South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) who funded and carried out the extensive c. £60m restoration of the structural fabric of the majority of principal buildings and infrastructure within the yard between 1999 and 2008. During this period, the buildings were re-categorised from Scheduled Monuments to Grade I/II listed buildings. Private sector development partners Urban Splash were engaged to carry out the specialist conversion of the site into a mixed-use development of shops, offices, homes, restaurants, bars, artist studios and galleries.

Ocean Studios offers a space to create for the city of Plymouth, providing affordable studios and workshop facilities for artists to develop their practices in the heart of the historic Royal William Yard.

By creating specialist provision in the form of unique managed workshops, Ocean Studios boosts creative enterprise in the city aiming to engage local people in the arts.

In addition to individual studios, shared spaces and well-equipped workshops, Ocean Studios recently opened Column Bakehouse Stores and additional cafe within the gallery space, helping to increase revenue and social activity.

Ocean Studios includes Royal William Yard's an indoor events space, which is available to hire.

The growing vibrant creative community created by Ocean Studios, has acted as a catalyst to revitalise Plymouth as a cultural destination helping to re-engage the city with the national arts dialogue.

Exhibitions & Events:

As well as hosting studio space for artists and craftspeople, Ocean Studios has a vibrant activities programme with a focus on local artists and makers. Guest curators however include nationally important names and Ocean Studios is one of 5 venues throughout the country to host 'Poetry Pioneers: 35 Years' exhibition (April 2018).

A retrospective of Spoken Word, the exhibition charts the history of UK spoken word over four decades and opens up the Apples and Snakes archive in its birthday year. Featuring guest curators including John Hegley, Benjamin Zephaniah, Inua Ellams, Roger McGough, Hollie McNish and Cerys Matthews who select exhibits with personal resonance, and pick artists that have influenced their work. Poetry Pioneers showcases memorable performances to inspire the poetry of the future.

Artists and resident businesses at Ocean Studios also put on training days and community workshops that include photography, printmaking, arts courses for young people, pottery workshops for all ages and skill levels and a range of other practical arts activities.

In 2017, the Real Ideas Organisation (RIO) took over the management of Ocean Studios. RIO delivers a range of strategic programmes for partners focussed on creativity, culture, and social enterprise across the South West of England and provides a range of services to help other organisations harness the power of social enterprise to realise their ambitions, including consultancy, training and business support.

4. DEVONPORT GUILDHALL & COLUMN

Name:	Devonport Guildhall
Location:	Devonport, Ker Street, Plymouth, Devon, UK, PL1 4EL
UTM Coordinates:	30U 416348 5580319
Historic England List Entry No:	1322009
Reopened:	2010
Current Use:	Community hub, social enterprise offices, art gallery, bakery and café

Name:	Devonport Column
Location:	Devonport, Ker Street, Plymouth, Devon, UK, PL1 4EL
UTM Coordinates:	30U 416335 5580335
Historic England List Entry No:	1322008
Reopened:	2013
Current Use:	Visitor attraction

Historical Context:

In 1690, the Admiralty awarded Robert Waters the contract to build a stone dock on the east bank of the Hamoaze at the mouth of the River Tamar. The town of Plymouth Dock was established in 1700 as a small settlement to house the workers employed on the new Plymouth Yard that was being constructed around the stone dock for the Royal Navy.

The presence of the Royal Navy brought prosperity to the area and by 1733, the population of Plymouth Dock had grown to around 3,000. More jobs and continuing growth meant that by 1801, Plymouth Dock was larger than the two nearby towns of Plymouth and Stonehouse together.

Between 1821 and 1824, to reflect the growing importance of the area and establish a municipal identity, John Foulston, the renowned Regency architect was commissioned to build a cluster of four civic buildings on Ker Street, Plymouth Dock. Three of these buildings, the Guildhall, Column and Oddfellow's Hall, still remain.

When the Guildhall was built the citizens of Plymouth Dock saw this as a key moment to petition King George IV to rename the town. They succeeded, and from 1 January 1824, the area was re-named Devonport. This official recognition of the town was commemorated

with the construction of Devonport Column. Completed in 1827, the Column was a symbol of pride and a place from which to see the surrounding land from every angle.

In 1914 Devonport was amalgamated with the town of Plymouth to make up the County Borough of Plymouth and the area was renamed the City of Plymouth in 1928. Devonport has both a rich architectural and social history, however, the Guildhall and Devonport Column fell into disrepair when the three towns of Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse amalgamated, and municipal functions were transferred to Plymouth.

Architectural Features³:

Guildhall: 1821-22 by John Foulston. Stucco. Rectangular plan plus transepts towards rear; designed to resemble an ancient Greek temple. Single storey; tetrastyle Greek Doric portico with fluted columns on stylobate; entablature with dentils and a stepped parapet surmounted by Britannia. Within the portico are more steps up to a central tapered doorway with eared architrave and a moulded entablature; pair of 5-panel doors. Side walls each with 5 windows and a pedimented transept. Windows nearest front are blind, the others have late C19 paired round-arched traceried lights.

INTERIOR: of main hall has plaster cornice decoration.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: stuccoed and coped courtyard walls at either side are ramped up towards the front and with doorways with pairs of panelled doors at the front end. Part of an important group of civic structures by Foulston, some of the most remarkable of their date in the country. (The Buildings of England: Pevsner N: Devon: London: 1989-: 675).

Column: Commemorative column. 1824 by John Foulston. Granite fluted Greek Doric column surmounted by railed platform with flagpole, the column standing on a panelled plinth set on a high stepped granite ashlar platform approached by steps. To south side is a cast-iron plaque with crown and inscribed: "Devonport, January 1st 1824". This monument commemorates the change of name from Plymouth Dock to Devonport and the Charter of the Borough. Part of an important group of civic structures by Foulston, some of the most remarkable for their date in the country.

Current Use:

The buildings were acquired by Real Ideas Organisation (RIO), in 2007 with a grant of £1.75million from the Government's Community Assets Fund and with help and support from Plymouth City Council (PCC), and the former Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership (DRCP). RIO refurbished the Guildhall and reopened to the public in 2010 as a social enterprise hub and community venue offering a cafe/bakery and events space.

Devonport Guildhall is now home to a number of successful social enterprises and is also the head office for [RIO](#). As well as providing offices for social enterprise, the Guildhall serves the community as a venue for conferences, events, weddings and entertainment.

³ Description from Historic England list entries

In 2013 [RIO](#) opened Column Bakehouse, an artisan bakery, in the Guildhall's former mortuary. During this year they also refurbished and reopened Devonport Column as a visitor attraction.

Devonport Column offers panoramic views of Plymouth's landscape – stretching towards Dartmoor and across the sea. Public access to the Column had been restricted from the 1950s but the column is now open for people to enjoy once again.

As one of the few remaining commemorative columns in the country still open to the public, Devonport Column is a rare heritage site steeped in history and offers one of the best views in Plymouth.

Real Ideas Organisation:

RIO develops and runs creative, innovative and award winning social enterprise ventures, including Ocean Studios, the Column Bakehouse (an artisan community bakery) and the Devonport Guildhall (a creative social enterprise community hub).

This creates jobs and enables heritage and enterprise-led regeneration, in particular for 'disadvantaged' communities in Plymouth and the surrounding area, providing the knowledge and experience to support others to do the same, achieving their own goals through social enterprise.



Devonport Guildhall and Column - *Light Fantastic 2014* - Photo by Dom Moore

