



DEVONPORT

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

JULY 2006

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DEVONPORT CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

INTRODUCTION

Conservation Areas were introduced in 1967. They are '*areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

Conservation Area designation has a number of implications. The principal effect is that special planning permission, known as Conservation Area Consent, is required for the complete or substantial demolition of any unlisted building or structure. There are also a number of other restrictions that do not apply outside Conservation Areas.

The legislation also requires Local Planning Authorities to periodically review their Conservation Areas, and to publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

In response to this, Plymouth City Council is reviewing the existing Conservation Areas within the city, and considering the designation of new areas. Appraisals and management plans are also being prepared, informed by extensive characterisation studies undertaken in 2005/6¹.

This work responds to the provisions of the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (Policy CS03) and to the Area Action Plans, both of which are under preparation. This programme will also meet the requirements of Best Value Performance Indicator 219, which is designed to monitor local authorities' performance in relation to Sections 71 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The primary purpose of this document is to:

- *undertake an appraisal of the new Devonport Conservation Area*
- *consider the future management of the new Conservation Area*

While this document has been carefully prepared, it is possible that some significant elements have been overlooked. Omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is therefore of no value.

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY (Fig 1)

The former Devonport Conservation Area was designated in 1999. It is centred around the former civic, administrative and commercial centre of Devonport, based on Ker Street, Duke Street, Cumberland Street and George Street. It also includes Picquet Barracks, and part of Mount Wise Park. The current review of the Conservation Areas has indicated however that this boundary did not fully reflect the architectural and historic interest and character of Devonport, and in particular, the town's historic links with the Dockyard and the sea, both of which were fundamental to its existence. While it is not proposed to include the historic Dockyard in the revised Conservation Area at this time, the opportunity has been taken to include a substantial area of waterfront land to the south and east of the existing Conservation Area, an opportunity enhanced by the recent release of the former MoD land to the east of Mount Wise Park.

¹ Devonport Characterisation Study & Management Proposals, July 2006

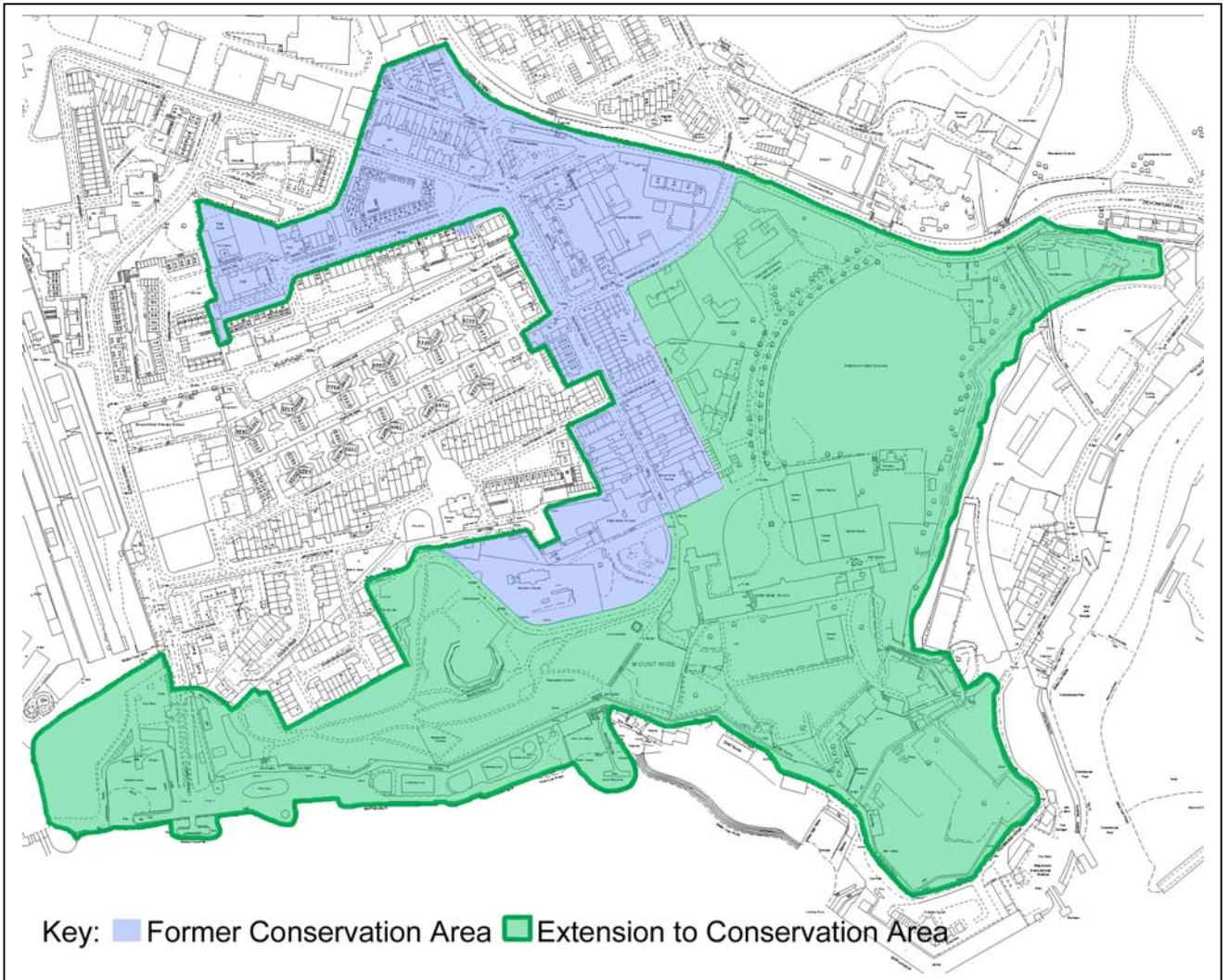


Fig 1. Plan of Conservation Area showing former Conservation Area (blue) and new extension in green

The principal change to the existing Conservation Area boundary is the proposal to include the whole of Mount Wise Park; the former MoD land to the east of the Park; part of Richmond Walk, and Mutton Cove, in an expanded Conservation Area. This recognises the major historic role of Mount Wise in the defence of the Dockyard, the historic importance of Mount Wise Park, and the historic uses of Richmond Walk and Mutton Cove harbour, all intimately linked with the history and development of Devonport.

The proposed new area contains extensive remains of these former uses, including nationally important historic buildings and structures producing an area of distinctive, if mixed, character that fully justifies Conservation Area status. The character areas are explored in more depth below.

These proposals were subject to public consultation in 2006. A number of written responses were received. There were no objections to the principle of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Apart from the manor at 'Keame' (Keyham), and the construction of Sir Thomas Wise's 'proper house for his pleasure' in the early years of the 17th century at what subsequently became known as Mount Wise, there is no evidence of any significant development in the area that was to become Devonport before the start of the construction of the Royal Dockyard in 1690. Indeed the most important thing to understand about the history of Devonport is that there would not have been a Devonport without the Dockyard.

The origins of the civilian town lie to the immediate North of the original Dockyard (the 'South Yard') with the early core around North Corner (now Cornwall Street and Cannon Street) and Fore Street. Donn's map (Fig.2) shows that this core settlement was already moving south by 1765, with Duke Street, leading from the market square towards Stonehouse and Plymouth, in existence by that date.

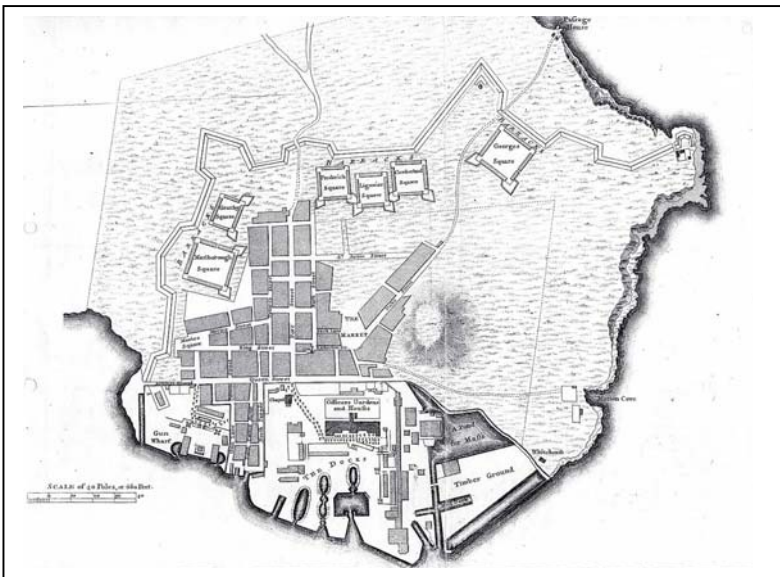


Fig 2. 'A Plan of Stoke Town and Plymouth Dock' by Benjamin Donn, 1765 (Plymouth City Museum) (Note: North to left.)

The ever-increasing pressure for housing for Dockyard workers relentlessly reinforced this movement, so that by 1820 settlement had extended as far as Mount Wise, with the terraces of George Street framing the entrance to the military area. (Fig.3).

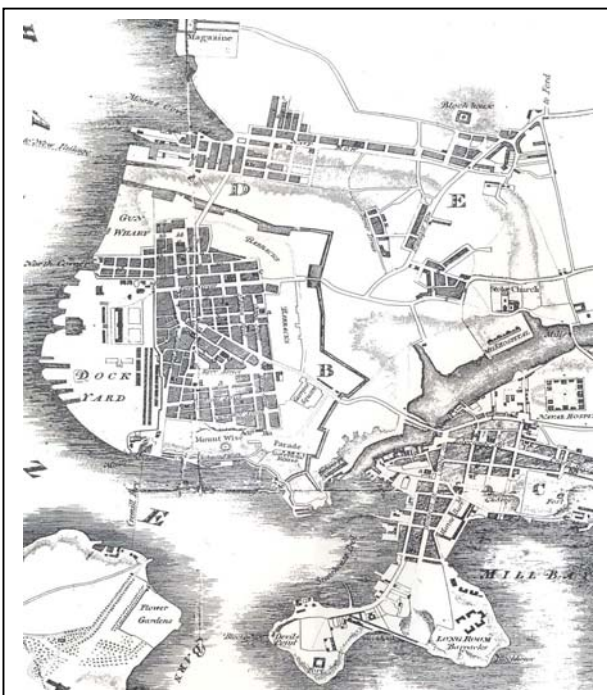


Fig 3. Part of the 'Plan of the Towns & Harbour of Plymouth, Stonehouse, Dock, Morice Town, Stoke and the environs', 1820 by S. Elliott. (Plymouth City Library)

In response to the increasing economic power and civic confidence of the town, John Foulston, Plymouth's most distinguished architect of the early 19th century, was commissioned to plan a new layout for the area around Ker Street. He planned a striking focal square around a neo-Classical Town Hall (the 'Guildhall') with landmark buildings including an 'Egyptian House' (a Classical and Mathematical School), 'Hindoo temple' (Mt Zion Chapel), and commemorative column, designed to celebrate and promote the new town. The area became the civic heart of Devonport. (Fig 4).

Adjoining Ker Street to the north, Cumberland Street and Duke Street developed to provide the commercial and administrative centre leading to the Market Hall and Fore Street (until recently within the post-war Dockyard 'Storage Enclave'). As part of the early Victorian planning, Cumberland Gardens were laid out to provide an area of public open space at the entrance to this new centre.

Destruction during World War II resulted in an extensive post-war rebuilding programme throughout Devonport. Foulston's legacy of his three remaining civic buildings and the adjacent terraces sits in stark contrast to the resultant residential development of the 1950s-70s that surrounds them.



Fig 4 Ker Street as envisioned by Foulston, from his *'The Public Buildings created in the West of England'* (1838) (Plymouth City Library)

Devonport was surrounded and constrained throughout most of its history by extensive defences to north, east and south designed to protect the Dockyard from landward attack (the 'Devonport Lines'). These military areas formed an integral part of Devonport's townscape throughout most of its history. Picquet Barracks, to the east of Cumberland Gardens, is one of the few surviving, largely complete, remains of these military areas, and much of Mount Wise remained in military use until 2006. Mount Wise was particularly important as it controlled the principal sea approach to the Dockyard, and its defensive works eventually ranged across the whole area from Mutton Cove to Devonport Hill. These included Mount Wise Redoubt (1778-9) and its flanking batteries, while the eastern side of the area was incorporated into the increasingly powerful Lines from the mid 18th century.

Mount Wise was used for other than purely defensive purposes however. This included the construction of two imposing residences, one for the Governor of Plymouth, and a second for the Port Admiral. Government House, (now known as Admiralty House), was started in 1789

on a commanding position overlooking the Hamoaze to the east of the Redoubt. To the front (north), the residence overlooked a large open area towards the barracks at George Square, whilst at the rear (seaward), formal gardens were laid out. In 1795 work began on Admiralty House (now Hamoaze House) at the southern end of George Street for the Port Admiral. In the 1930s, the Port Admiral moved to Government House, which was then re-named Admiralty House, and the old Admiralty House was taken over by the Royal Marines and renamed Hamoaze House. In 1807 a landing stage was erected on the foreshore beneath Richmond Walk together with a later boathouse and more formal entrance gate and steps to provide an imposing entrance to Admiralty House from the water.

By the late 19th century, the Dock Lines were becoming increasingly redundant. The George Square barracks were demolished in the 1870s, and the site occupied by the Garrison Cricket Ground. The section of the Lines between Fore Street and Devonport Hill was demolished and infilled by about 1882, and batteries 1 and 2 adjacent to the Redoubt were dismantled. Much of the *glacis* slopes were being used for public recreation from the late 19th century, though the Redoubt remained in military hands well into the 20th century.

A new circular parade ground was laid out in front of Admiralty House. This was enclosed during the 1930s and truncated on its eastern side by the erection of a number of tennis courts. Changing facilities were added on the eastern and northern sides of the public area. The present entrance from Devonport Hill was created during this time running along the west side of the cricket ground to the parade.

HMS Vivid, Maillard House, Hildyard House and Raglan Cottage were constructed during 1938-39 replacing the earlier block of married quarters, which were built over the former 18th century barrack square.

Further development took place during World War II with the construction of the Maritime Headquarters (MHQ) in 1939-41 overlooking the Old Gun Wharf, and a partly subterranean structure built into the ditch cutting across Old Gun Wharf promontory. This was followed by a network of tunnels excavated beneath the gardens of Admiralty House to provide additional facilities, dormitories and shelter. This became known as the Plymouth Underground Extension (PUE) and was accessed within MHQ and from Richmond Walk, Hamoaze House and Blagdons Boat Yard. The PUE was abandoned in the 1950s, but MHQ continued in use and was slightly enlarged during the 1990s. All are now unoccupied and part of the PUE tunnels are sealed.

A number of surface huts had also been built around the site during WWII, and an additional mess built on the north eastern edge of the cricket ground (later a welfare club). Post-war development included additional domestic accommodation (Mount Wise Court, 1960) and administration offices (1967). New fences and a boundary wall were built on the western side of the site in the 1980s and 1990s mainly in response to the threat of terrorist activity.

The MoD site has recently been sold to a private developer and applications for redevelopment are forthcoming.

To the west of the former MoD land, Mount Wise Park was laid out in 1893 when the Borough of Devonport leased the *glacis* slopes of the Redoubt from the War Department, though the Redoubt and battery positions remained in military use. The Scott Memorial commemorating the expedition of Captain Scott to the South Pole in 1912, dominates the eastern half of the Park. The Redoubt was obsolete as a defensive structure by the beginning of the 20th century, although later buildings on the site continued to be used as naval living quarters until the 1990s.

To the northwest of Mount Wise Redoubt, the plan of 1811 shows the 'Royal Laboratory', built for the Board of Ordnance in 1805, for the manufacture of musket cartridges and other

ammunition and explosive devices such as rockets, for the Royal Navy. The complex was converted to barracks by 1834, and remained in military use well into the 20th century. The site is now covered with housing. Little remains apart from the perimeter wall and main entrances.

There is no evidence of any significant development of the waterfront area of Mount Wise prior to the 18th century, though it is likely that the natural harbour of Mutton Cove was used from early times. There were certainly a few buildings at Mutton Cove by the early 18th century, and a thriving community developed from the late 18th century. By 1880 it was described as 'one of the principal landing places of the town' and flourished until World War II with a mix of industrial and fishing-related activity and housing. The Cremyll Ferry ran from the pier between 1750 and 1824.

Development of the remainder of the waterfront was encouraged by the construction of Richmond Walk in the late 18th century. This provided civilian access to the foreshore, though the military were among the first to exploit this facility with the construction of the landing place and subsequent boathouse, later remodelled as the Admiral's Steps. Civilian use of the waterfront included docks, a slipway, bonded stores, and a steam-powered flour mill.

Further intensive development continued along the Mount Wise waterfront throughout the 19th and early 20th century, but the area suffered extensive bombing during World War II, and was subsequently extensively cleared and replaced by gardens and bathing pools. Some industrial and commercial use continued after World War II but the area of Mutton Cove was cleared and converted to a park.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Within the extended Conservation Area there are 42 buildings which appear on the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, with a further 32 buildings identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. (Fig 5). Details of these buildings are provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

While these buildings and structures form an absolutely crucial element of the 'special architectural or historic interest', which justifies the designation of the Devonport Conservation Area, they do not comprise the whole of its 'character'. As English Heritage's guidance makes clear, 'defining character, or special interest, involves more than simply recording the appearance of an area, its individual buildings and other heritage assets, and documenting its historical development. It includes understanding....and assessing the values and significance of the area, both in its parts and as a whole.'² The following sections attempt to define this 'character'.

To help in this process, the Conservation Area has been divided into six sub areas (Fig 6):

Area 1: Duke Street, Cumberland Street, Ker Street and Cumberland Gardens.

Area 2: Picquet Barracks

Area 3: George Street.

Area 4: Mount Wise Park

Area 5: Mutton Cove and Richmond Walk

Area 6: the former MoD Mount Wise

² Guidance on conservation area appraisals, English Heritage, 2006, p.8

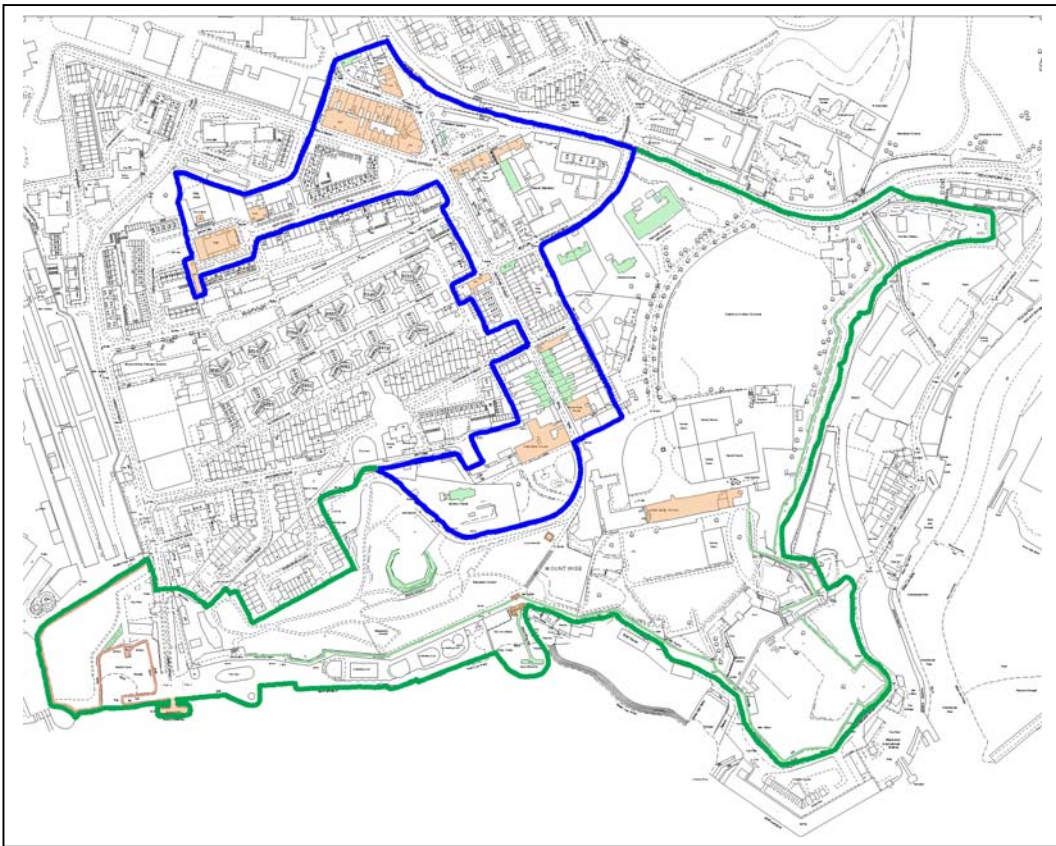


Fig 5. Listed Buildings (orange), and buildings making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area (green)

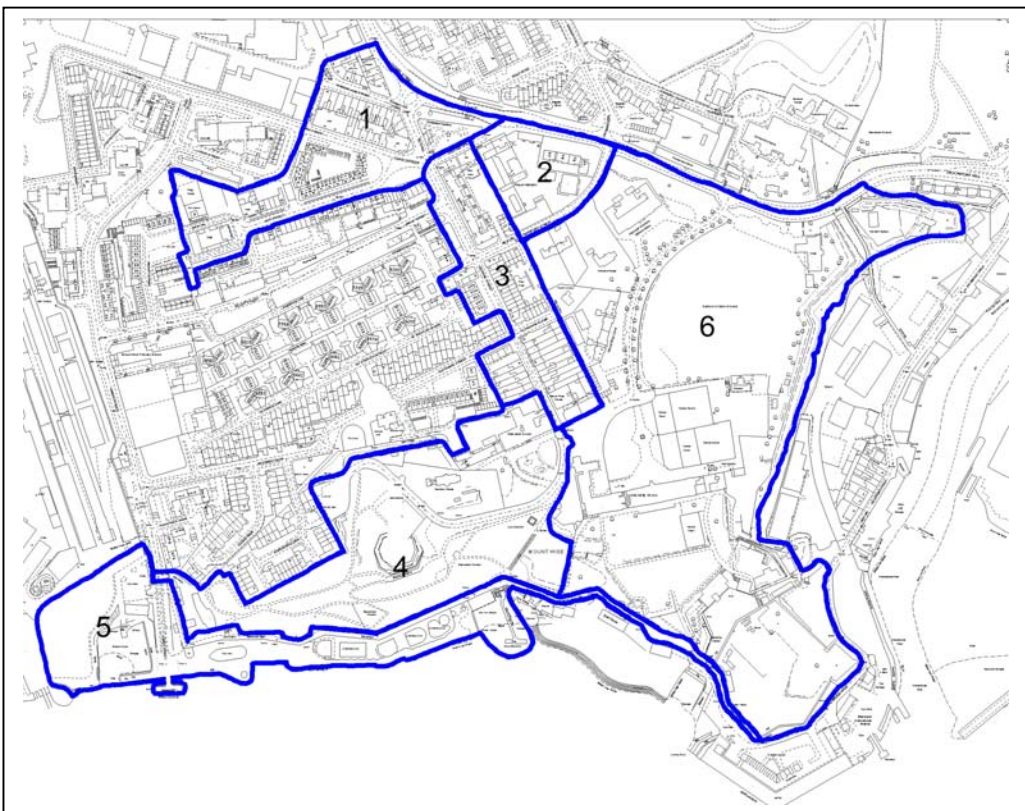


Fig 6. Conservation Area character sub areas

Area 1: Duke Street, Cumberland Street, Ker Street and Cumberland Gardens

Despite the ravages of war and redevelopment, these streets and the buildings within them still retain a flavour of the distinctive character of Devonport at the height of its civic and economic power at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, including John Foulston's remarkable group of civic buildings of 1821-4 in Ker Street. (The Guildhall, Devonport Column and Oddfellows' Hall, all Grade I Listed buildings).

The majority of the buildings fronting these streets are imposing three-storey rendered structures, many with elaborately detailed frontages, ranging in date from the early to late 19th century. Many retain commercial use on their ground floors and residential use above. Despite the ravages of time, war and redevelopment, the intrinsic quality of these streets and buildings is still very evident, and virtually every building on Cumberland Street and Duke Street is listed. Their impressive appearance is largely thanks to a Single Regeneration Budget facelift scheme with support from the South West Regional Development Agency and housing association investment implemented between 1999 and 2002.



Cumberland Gardens, re-landscaped under the Urban Programme (1991) is a key public open space serving as an entrance into the area and makes good use of the small triangle of land formed by the junction of Cumberland Road and George Street. It is an important green area within an otherwise extensive hard urban landscape.

Issues

- *Some buildings, including some of the most significant, are suffering from creeping disrepair and dereliction due to lack of viable economic use.*
- *While some areas of surfacing around the Guildhall and Column were renewed under the Urban Programme (1991) the public realm is of generally poor quality, dominated by vehicle usage and particularly by the poor quality of much of the adjacent modern townscape.*
- *While some areas of historic surfaces survive, as around the Guildhall, most of the original historic surfaces and almost all the historic street furniture have been lost.*
- *The ongoing regeneration of Devonport creates opportunities for imaginative re-use, restoration and upgrading of the area's built environment. The civic square around the Devonport Guildhall warrants particularly imaginative and sensitive treatment.*
- *There are a number of important views within this area which warrant retention, most notably the historic view along Cumberland Street to the former Market Hall Enclave; the view towards the Guildhall from Ker Street; and the entrance to Mount Wise Park along George Street.*

Area 2: Picquet Barracks

In contrast to the civilian area, the buildings of Piquet Barracks on the eastern side of the Conservation Area, present a more utilitarian appearance with their walls of characteristic local limestone and brick, slate roofs, and unembellished details. Many have retained their original doors, windows and roofs, and overall the buildings and site appear in good condition, though there has been some insensitive new build. They serve as a strong reminder of the former intensive military use of this area, and that this was once very much a 'garrison town'. The terrace of married quarters on Theatre Ope is very fine.

Issues

- *These buildings appear to be well maintained and in sympathetic use. This needs to be maintained and encouraged.*
- *These buildings need to be considered for listing or other protection as appropriate.*



Area 3: George Street

While the greater part of George Street is characterised by undistinguished post-war development, the approach to Mount Wise Park at the southern end of the street is defined by two terraces of late Georgian town houses, apparently substantially complete by the 1790s. While they have suffered significantly from the effects of economic decline and unsympathetic alterations, particularly to windows and doors, and the loss of railings, they nevertheless constitute a very important survival of historic residential terraces in Devonport, and still provide a distinctive entrance to Mount Wise Park.



Mount Wise House, an impressive building of 1808-10, distinguished by its strong horizontal banding, very broad 5-window front, and later *porte cochere*, finishes the eastern terrace. It is listed Grade II. Originally two buildings, the interior suffered significantly from alteration and refurbishment in the early 20th century, and more recent underuse.

Issues

- *These buildings need to be considered for listing or other protection as appropriate.*
- *A number of buildings in George Street have been subjected to inappropriate additions and alterations such as the installation of plastic doors and windows, the removal of boundary walls and railings, use of pebbledash and other inappropriate wall finishes, and loss of architectural detail. Cables, conduits and satellite dishes also disfigure many properties.*
- *There has been significant degrading of the public realm, exacerbated by the dominance of the street scene by casual car parking. There is scope for a local public realm enhancement and traffic management scheme to address this.*

Area 4: Mount Wise Park

The overwhelming characteristic of Mount Wise Park is its gloriously open nature with its stunning views over the Sound. It constitutes an important and historic area of public open green space, and reinforces Devonport's historic links to the sea. It also contains a number of important buildings and structures, including the Scott Memorial, the reconstructed redoubt, and Hamoaze House, as well as a number of lesser structures.



Hamoaze House, originally built for the Port Admiral in 1795, is a fine Grade II listed three-storey building of limestone ashlar construction under a hipped slate roof. Its finishes and detailing reflect the status of its original occupant, and it is an imposing landmark structure at the entrance into Mount Wise Park. Seymour House to the west is a large two-storey building of the 1930s, rendered with limestone detailing under a hipped slate roof. There is an interesting curved lead roof to the entrance porch. While not of the same imposing quality as Hamoaze House, it is nevertheless an important part of the historic use and history of this area.

The Park received a substantial Public Parks Initiative grant of £3.8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 1996, which provided significant improvements and enhancements including interpretation.

Issues

- *Mount Wise Park is an important and historic recreational green area, though it is underused, and subject to some vandalism and anti-social behaviour. It nevertheless fulfills its recreational function and is a positive element of the extended Conservation Area.*
- *Hamoaze House and Seymour House are important historic buildings that contribute to the character of Mount Wise Park. The buildings appear to be well maintained, and in sympathetic use. This needs to be encouraged and continued.*

Area 5: Mutton Cove and Richmond Walk

Only that part of Richmond Walk from Mutton Cove to a point opposite the Mayflower Marina is included within the new Conservation Area.

The principal characteristic of this area is also openness, with fine views across the Hamoaze and out to the Sound, though both the Dockyard wall at Mutton Cove and the boundary walls between Richmond Walk and Mount Wise provide well-defined backdrops to both areas.



The overwhelming use of the area is now recreational, as testified by the small boats in the historic harbour, the fishing from Mutton Cove Pier, the green open space between Mutton Cove harbour and the Dockyard Wall, and the readily accessible waterfront walkway of Richmond Walk with the swimming pools and recreational areas below.

This is in strong contrast to the historic use of the area, which between the late 18th century and the Second World War saw Mutton Cove and the waterfront below Richmond Walk develop as a thriving industrial, fishing and residential area. Similarly, the Admiral's Steps and formal gateway into Mount Wise are reminders of the naval and military use of the area.

This is essentially an area of hard landscaping and forms, with extensive use of characteristic Plymouth limestone, only partly softened by the parkland to the immediate north.

This is an important and historic area of public open space.

Issues

- *Mutton Cove has suffered from some inappropriate redevelopment, but retains a distinct sense of history and place. It could benefit from sympathetic enhancement, such as the replacement of the existing surfaces around the historic harbour with more appropriate finishes. This also applies to Richmond Walk.*
- *Mt Wise Park could benefit from enhanced maintenance in places.*
- *The area is subject to some casual vandalism, though it is generally a robust environment that is not easily damaged.*

Area 6: the former MoD Mount Wise

This area was under military control for the best part of 250 years. This history is evident everywhere, and includes extensive defensive remains, a number of administrative and residential buildings, and a large recreational area.

Remains of the defensive use of the site include a section of the 1861-68 Devonport 'Lines' along the eastern edge of the cricket ground, fronted by a deep rock-cut ditch to the rear of Bluff Battery. To the south the 1850s bastion adjacent to the site of the old Gun Wharf, in the grounds of Admiralty House, remains largely intact, and indicates the original southern end of the Lines. To the south the defensive line continues in effect as Richmond Walk, with its defensive battery and runs of mutually defensible walls. These remains to the east and south of the former MoD land and Mount Wise Park are among the best surviving lengths of the Devonport Lines, and recent archaeological investigation has indicated that remains also survive just below the modern surface within the area. The 20th century Maritime Headquarters (MHQ) and Plymouth Underground Extension (PUE) survive largely intact and are an integral part of the history of the defence use of this area.

The area was not only used for purely defensive purposes during its long history however, it also contains a number of administrative and residential properties. The most important of these is Admiralty House, a distinguished Grade II listed building of the late 18th century, comprising a three storey central block with flanking wings. It is built of Plymouth limestone rubble with limestone dressings under dry slate hipped roofs behind moulded stone parapets, with large ashlar end and rear stacks to the central block. The front elevation contains a prominent central stone bowed porch with central doorway and casements to the sides. A number of other residential quarters were also built in the large open area to the north of Admiralty House in the 1930s, and were only demolished shortly before the designation of the new Conservation Area. These included HMS Vivid, a neo-Georgian officers' residence of 1938; Hildyard House, a single residence displaying many characteristic vernacular Arts and Crafts detail, and Maillard House of similar date and type, built as semi-detached married quarters and retaining much of its original plan. While not of comparable architectural and historic quality to Admiralty House, these buildings were integral elements of the history of the site and were considered to contribute positively to the overall character of the area. Other modern administrative blocks to the west of Admiralty House; Mount Wise Court, and the poor quality surfacing of some of the area in front of Admiralty House, however, detracted from the overall quality of these buildings and the wider area.

The Garrison Cricket Ground which dominates the entrance to the area from Devonport Hill, dates from the 1870s. As well as forming the principal element of the open character of this entrance and a mature setting for the buildings around it, including Admiralty House, the cricket ground is also an important historic recreational area.

Despite this intensive use, however, the area remains surprisingly open, and indeed could almost be described as park-like. This is particularly evident from the view from the principal entrance on Devonport Hill which is dominated by the broad open sweep of the Garrison Cricket Ground and its fine avenue of trees finished by the imposing presence of Admiralty House to the rear.



This openness is reinforced at the rear of Admiralty House, which opens out to the sea, relating as much to the open landscape of the adjacent Mount Wise Park, as to the former MoD area itself. Despite this, however, for the moment the area retains a strong sense of enclosure, reinforced by the imposing gate and boundary walls along Devonport Hill, the high perimeter wall to the west, the formidable looking railings alongside Mount Wise Park, and the pronounced former quarry faces overlooking Stonehouse Creek. There have been degrees of public access to and through the site for much of its history, however, and it is expected that the forthcoming redevelopment of the site will increase this.

Issues

- *The recent release of this land by the MoD provides significant opportunities for redevelopment, including opening up the area, increasing public access and use, and improving areas of poor townscape. This will require sensitivity and robust guidance and/or protection to ensure the character of the area is respected. A Conservation Plan has been produced for the site, and Conservation Area designation will also aid this process.*
- *The former military use of the area was an integral part of the history and development of Devonport over more than 250 years. It still contains historic buildings and structures of national importance that reflect this.*
- *The area is a major piece of greenspace and contains areas of significant tree cover and sites of ecological value, especially within the former MoD enclave and within Mount Wise Park.*

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The core of the former Devonport Conservation Area, focused on Cumberland Street, Duke Street, Ker Street, and George Street, included the heart of Devonport's historic civic, administrative and commercial centre. These streets retain many of the best surviving buildings and structures of the town at the height of its economic and civic power, and are fine examples of late Georgian and Victorian architecture and town planning. They include the three remarkable civic structures of the Guildhall, Devonport Column, and Egyptian House on Ker Street, and imposing late Georgian and Victorian commercial and residential properties in Duke Street and Cumberland Street, and late Georgian houses on George Street. Picquet Barracks survives as a reminder of the once extensive presence of the military in Devonport. The townscape includes important views punctuated by landmark buildings in several places, notably the historic view along Cumberland Street to the former Market Hall (within the former South Yard Enclave); the view towards the Guildhall from Ker Street which remains a classic vista; the still distinctive statement that is Devonport Column, and the entrance to Mount Wise Park along George Street. The use of distinctive local materials such as the areas of historic paving around the Guildhall, forming part of its setting, and around the entrance to Ker Street, and south of Cumberland Gardens, and the exposed limestone walls of Picquet Barracks, add to the richness of the townscape, and are important historical references.

The Mount Wise area is equally significant not only because of the importance of its former military and naval use to the history and development of Devonport, but also because of the historic civilian and recreational use of the area, and because it is one of the largest green areas in the town. Above all, it links Devonport directly with the water. It retains a number of significant buildings and structures of landmark quality and architectural merit including Admiralty House, Hamoaze House, Mount Wise redoubt, and the Scott Memorial. These and other buildings and structures in the area are important and robust reminders of the history and character of Devonport as a dockyard and garrison town. Mutton Cove and Richmond Walk are important historic survivals reflecting the civilian use of the area through a long history of commercial, industrial and recreational use. The area remains of major historic and recreational importance with stunning views over the Hamoaze and Sound, all now enhanced with the prospect of significant new development following the release of the former MoD Mount Wise.

DEVONPORT CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

'It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are Conservation Areas' (s.71(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

ISSUES

The Devonport Conservation Area Appraisal has identified a number of issues that impact on the Conservation Area. The most significant are:

- *a number of poorly maintained, unused, and underused buildings, and a number of buildings 'at risk' within the Conservation Area. These include buildings that contribute significantly to the character of part of the Conservation Area*
- *the number of buildings that have been subject to inappropriate changes within the Conservation Area*
- *the poor quality of much of the public realm, which is dominated by cars and traffic management clutter*
- *the poor quality of the modern townscape, and its detrimental effect on part of the Conservation Area*
- *the on-going regeneration opportunities in Devonport and the opportunities this may provide for enhancement of the Conservation Area*
- *the release of the former MoD Mount Wise enclave and the significant change of use that is likely to ensue from this*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The most effective means of managing Conservation Areas to 'preserve and enhance' their special interest is through efficient use of existing legislation and other powers. The Council will seek to pursue this through statutory and other designations, and through robust enforcement where necessary.

Statutory and local designations

The most significant buildings and other structures that are not currently statutorily protected will be considered for appropriate designation. On that basis:

- **Mount Wise Redoubt will be considered for scheduling.**
- **Picquet Barracks will be considered for statutory listing.**
- **Local listing** may be considered for individual buildings that are considered to contribute positively to the Conservation Area, though it is expected that this provision will be used primarily to protect unlisted buildings outside Conservation Areas.

Enforcement

- **The Local Planning Authority will use the full range of powers available to it to protect the built environment where appropriate and necessary, to help ensure that buildings are kept in good repair and not allowed to deteriorate. These may include the use of Building Preservation Notices, Urgent Works Notices, Repairs Notices, Dangerous Structures Notices, Tree Preservation Orders and s.215 Notices. Informal contact, discussion and advice will also be used to encourage owners to undertake repairs and maintenance.**

One of the main threats to the quality of the Devonport Conservation Area is the gradual erosion of its character by cumulative alterations to listed and unlisted buildings. While Listed Building Consent is required for works of alteration affecting the special character and/or appearance of Listed Buildings, unlisted buildings which are single dwelling houses enjoy the benefit of considerable permitted development rights, which allow, for example, minor

extensions, demolitions and replacement doors and windows, without any requirement for planning permission. This means that some buildings have been altered to the detriment of their townscape quality, and important architectural features lost.

Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 allow Local Planning Authorities to make directions withdrawing all or some of the permitted development rights given under the Order. These have been found to be an effective means of controlling the sort of piecemeal alterations that contribute to the overall degeneration of buildings that contribute to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

- **Further consideration will be given in due course to the possible application of Article 4 Directions within specified parts of the Devonport Conservation Area.**

Buildings at Risk (BAR)

The compilation of a register of buildings 'at risk' is considered to be a useful tool to focus attention on neglected historic buildings and monuments and define the scale of the problem. This indicates the level of resources necessary to bring these buildings back into good repair and, where appropriate, beneficial use, and helps prioritise action by English Heritage, local authorities, building preservation trusts, funding bodies, and everyone who can play a part in securing the future of these outstanding and irreplaceable parts of our heritage. The 2005 Plymouth BAR has already enabled the Council to start to deal with some of the buildings in its own management, and it is hoped that this will also be the case for those buildings identified as 'at risk' within the Devonport Conservation Area.

There are 18 buildings or structures within the Conservation Area recorded on the local 'Buildings at Risk' Register. They include:

- 6-8 Cumberland Street (Grade II Listed Buildings)
 - 18-20 Duke Street (Grade II Listed Buildings)
 - George Street public convenience
 - 52, 57 and 75 George Street
 - Mutton Cove harbour walls
 - Mount Wise landing steps and arch, Richmond Walk
 - Crown and Column public house, Ker Street (Grade II Listed Building)
 - Devonport Column, Ker Street (Grade I Listed Building)
 - Devonport Guildhall, Ker Street (Grade I Listed Building)
 - Oddfellows Hall, Ker Street (Grade I Listed Building)
 - 60 (The Kings Arms) (Grade II Listed Building) and 61 Pembroke Street
 - 1-2 Theatre Ope
- **These buildings will be monitored for change on a regular basis. This monitoring will include updating the photographic record and assessment, and allowing for a full survey of the area to be undertaken every 3-5 years. This will allow buildings to be added to or removed from the register as necessary.**
 - **Opportunities for grant assistance towards the repair and restoration of Buildings at Risk, for example under the auspices of the Devonport Community Regeneration Partnership will be considered. Funding from English Heritage for buildings listed as Grade I or II* will also be explored.**

It will also be essential to ensure that owners of properties on the Register are aware of, and understand, the effect their properties can have on the townscape of Devonport, and that attractive townscapes contribute to the economic, as well as the environmental, health of an area. Owners, residents and the general public will have greater pride in maintaining their properties if they understand the qualities and features which make them 'special'.

- **To assist in this, advice and guidance on repairs and restoration will be provided to owners in the form of leaflets and publications, and through the council's website.**

General principles

In exercising its powers within the Devonport Conservation Area the Council will also be mindful of the guidance provided in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15*, English Heritage's '*Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas*' (2006), and the following general principles:

- **Proposals to develop or redevelop sites and convert buildings to new uses will be required to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area, and to contribute positively to the continuing regeneration of Devonport.**
- **The position, scale, massing and materials of new development will be expected to respect the existing character of the Conservation Area.**
- **New development will be expected to be of the highest quality design that respects and enhances the character of the Conservation Area. High quality contemporary architectural design will be encouraged where appropriate, though high quality restoration through replication may be equally desirable.**
- **New transport and parking provision will need to be integrated with the public realm, and will be expected to be limited and respect the character of the Conservation Area. Frontage parking will not normally be acceptable, and neither will blank lifeless frontages. Opportunities will be taken wherever possible to reduce or remove the adverse impact of existing provision.**
- **There should be early urban design and conservation input into all proposals for significant public works within the Conservation Area.**
- **Historic surfaces and street furniture will be retained enhanced and restored where appropriate.**
- **Historic views and vistas will be retained, enhanced, and restored where appropriate.**
- **Advertising and signage proposals that require advertisement consent will be expected to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, size, number, materials, colours and illumination.**

Opportunities

The appraisal has indicated a number of sites and areas within the Conservation Area with potential for specific enhancement or improved management. In exercising its statutory and other responsibilities within the Devonport Conservation Area, the Council will be particularly mindful of the following:

- **Opportunities should be taken as part of the regeneration of Devonport to enhance the setting of Devonport Column and the Guildhall.**
- **Opportunities should be taken as part of the regeneration of Devonport to sustain the mixed use of the Cumberland/Duke Street area, and to reinstate historic connections to the Market Hall and elsewhere within the former 'Storage Enclave'.**
- **Opportunities should be taken to enhance Cumberland Gardens and to consider the planting of street trees elsewhere, especially along Ker Street and George Street.**

- **Opportunities should be taken to implement public realm enhancement at the approach to Mount Wise Park in George Street, with particular attention to the issues of car parking, satellite dish installation, and railings reinstatement.**
- **Opportunities should be taken to preserve and enhance important townscape views, notably the historic view along Cumberland Street to the former Market Hall; the view towards the Guildhall from Ker Street which remains a classic vista, and the entrance to Mount Wise Park along George Street.**
- **Opportunities should be taken as part of the redevelopment of the former MoD Mount Wise to improve access to, and linkages through, this area.**
- **The setting of Admiralty House should be substantially enhanced.**
- **Opportunities should be sought to resurface Richmond Walk and to enhance and restore its boundaries where necessary.**
- **Opportunities should be sought to enhance the historic character and physical environment of Mutton Cove, especially the quay walls, surfaces and outbuildings.**

It is envisaged that most of these opportunities will be addressed through the Development Consents process or through the application of specific grant aid.

Monitoring and review

Changes in the appearance and condition of the Devonport Conservation Area will be monitored regularly.

A review of the Conservation Area character appraisal and management proposals will be undertaken every five years. This may result in a revision or expansion of the existing appraisal, and will include:

- recording changes
- re-assessing the definition of special interest that warrants designation
- identifying any further recommendations and revising the management plan

The input of the Devonport Community Regeneration Partnership and of other stakeholders including local conservation groups in this process, and in the wider management of the historic environment, such as monitoring Buildings at Risk, will be welcomed.

The Council's Historic Environment Champion will take an active role in championing the importance of the City's historic environment. Officers will regularly meet the Historic Environment Champion and these meetings will be used to monitor and review the management proposals.

APPENDIX 1

Listed Buildings within the Devonport Conservation Area

Devonport Guildhall and walls, Ker Street: Grade I
Devonport Column, Ker Street: Grade I
Oddfellows Hall No's 122-124 Ker Street: Grade I
Crown & Column Public House, Ker Street: Grade II
No 2 Old Chapel Public House, Duke Street: Grade II
No's 4-16 (evens), Duke Street: Grade II
No's 18-20 Devonport Library, Duke Street: Grade II
No 6 Cumberland Street: Grade II
No 7 Cumberland Street: Grade II
No's 8-14 (consecutive) Cumberland Street, including the Lord Beresford Public House (No 9): Grade II
No 15 Cumberland Street: Grade II
No's 2, 4, 6 George Street: Grade II
No 57 George Street: Grade II
No 60 Pembroke Street (The Kings Arms Public House): Grade II
No's 41-45 (consecutive) Chapel Street, including the Former Crown Hotel: Grade II
Mount Wise House: Grade II
Hamoaze House and attached forecourt railings: Grade II
No's 1-2 Theatre Ope: Grade II
No 3 The Shakespeare Public House, Theatre Ope: Grade II
No's 4-5 Theatre Ope: Grade II
Mutton Cove Harbour and Pier: Grade II
Landing Steps from Mount Wise: Grade II
Admiralty House (formerly Government House): Grade II
Scott Memorial: Grade II

APPENDIX 2

Buildings considered as making a positive contribution to the Devonport Conservation Area

Picquet Barracks, off Cumberland Road
George Street terraces towards Mount Wise
Seymour House
Garrison Cricket Ground Pavilion
Mount Wise Redoubt and associated defences, Mount Wise
Sheds within Mutton Cove
Mount Wise Pier, Richmond Walk
Boundary Stone, Richmond Walk