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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Devonport Park is a historic public park located between the suburbs of Devonport and Stoke in the City of Plymouth. The park is well-used, but there is a recognised need to improve the conservation and appreciation of its historic features, and the quality of facilities for visitors and local residents. This Conservation Management Plan has been produced to address these issues and forms part of a bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund *Parks for People* initiative.

The plan, commissioned by Plymouth City Council with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, demonstrates both the historic and present importance of the park:

- the park was first laid out on the *glacis* or cleared swathe around the Devonport Lines, the fortified defences of the dockyard dating from 1739;
- as a relatively early (1850s) example of a Victorian public park in the south of England, in response to the national public parks movement;
- as the setting for a number of important and unique Naval, military and civic memorials;
- later improvements to the parkland planting by some of the leading south west nurseries, including Veitch and Sons;
- inclusion on the English Heritage *Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* register as a designed public park of national significance;
- as a high quality and accessible green space for the recreation and enjoyment of the local urban communities;
- strong social and community links, with an active Friends group and strong local interest in restoration of the park;
- as a key asset to encourage the economic regeneration of this most deprived area of Plymouth.

However, Devonport Park is not without its problems:

- visitors sometimes feel insecure or threatened by overgrown shrubberies, vandalism, loitering youths, poor lighting and the lack of parks staff on site;
- there are no basic park facilities, such as toilets;
- the park lacks a central focal point in the form of a café or sheltered meeting space;
- maintenance of the park has declined significantly in the last 15 years;

- there are a number of redundant buildings and other features requiring extensive repair and/or a productive new use;
- the play area is considered inadequate by local users;
- cycle, footpath, and bus access routes are not clearly signed, and some paths are in poor condition;
- the park lacks a clear sense of identity through the loss of boundary railings and subdivision by, and proximity to, busy roads.

The conservation management plan sets out a number of policies and proposals to address these weaknesses, and to improve both the quality and the capacity of Devonport Park for physical access and enjoyment. Physical improvements are shown on the park masterplan but other changes which are proposed include:

- continuing efforts and investment to maintain and develop the present consultation processes and local community involvement in the management of the park;
- partnerships with local volunteers, social and commercial businesses;
- a single park manager or keeper, responsible for all forms of activity within Devonport Park;
- improved interpretation, signage and accessibility, so that the park gives a wider welcome;
- increased involvement with local schools around the park, and through outreach work in schools.

Proposals shown on the masterplan include:

- proposals for the location of a café, toilets, and other facilities
- proposals for a new, replacement play area, securely fenced and visible from the café
- improved sports facilities
- renewal and replacement of park furniture to create a unified visual appearance, based on the historic designs
- improvements to the park lighting
- intense pruning, reshaping and replanting of overgrown shrubberies
- repair and resurfacing of paths in poor condition
- thinning and management of areas of dense trees, to reopen historic views
- repair and restoration of the historic fountains
- reinstatement of the boundary railings and entrance gates
- replanting of avenue trees missing from existing historic avenues

- creation of a large hay meadow area at the western end of the park
- dedicated cycle routes to and across the park

Where practical, the Ordnance Survey map of 1907 forms the guide for physical improvements to the park, as this records the last complete phase of the designed Victorian landscape, supplemented by contemporary views and photographs.

This report also includes, in outline, analysis and proposals which will, during the development stage, need to be worked up as a full management and maintenance plan, detailing how the long term values of the park will be sustained and enhanced through landscape maintenance, holistic administration and community involvement. An outline of the plan is included in sections 4.6, 4.8 and 5.6-5.14.

## **Funding**

The plan also sets out the costings of the proposals including allowances for inflation, fees, and improved maintenance, totalling some £4.8 million over ten years. It is proposed to meet these costs with a major grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery for £3.3 million; partnerships and involvement with the Devonport Regeneration Company and volunteers; and committed funding by Plymouth City Council.

## **Timing**

This document is a final draft of the Conservation Management Plan, produced and revised following a public consultation process, and will be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund, seeking support for the next, the development stage, including detail surveys, archaeology, detail plans, further local consultation and consents. This information would then be submitted to support a full grant for restoration. If successful, this whole process is likely to take about two years before works would start on the ground. The works would be spread over a two to three year programme.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We are pleased to acknowledge the assistance of the staff of the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, the Devon Record Office, the Plymouth Local and Naval Studies Library, the Plymouth City Museum, the Westcountry Studies Library, the RHS Lindley Library, the National Monuments Record, the Merseyside and Liverpool Record Office, Torquay Reference Library, and the Francis Frith Collection.

Considerable contributions have also been received from officers of Plymouth City Council, in particular Chris Coldwell, Nick Maker, Mike Hunter, John Salvatore, Graham Martin, Eilis Scott, Catherine Dilloway and Nick Jones whose commitment, enthusiasm and support for the aims of this study were fundamental to its progress. We are also particularly grateful for the help of Nigel Overton, at Plymouth City Museum, Steve Johnson of Cyber Heritage, Peter Burnett of the Devonport Regeneration Company, Heather Francis of Pluss, members of the Friends of Devonport Park group, Kim Auston of English Heritage, John Clark of the Garden History Society, and Jonathan Saunders of Caroe and Partners.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 The Study Area**

Devonport Park lies on the north-east edge of the historic dockyard of Devonport and is owned and managed by Plymouth City Council. The former park nursery is operated separately by Plymouth Social Services as an adult training centre, and the former Higher Lodge is let on a long lease as a care home for the elderly with access along a park footpath from Fore Street. The whole area, registered as a *Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest* by English Heritage, forms the subject of this study. The park includes a number of sports facilities including tennis courts, football pitches, a bowling green, and a play area.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Report**

The report seeks to summarise the history of the landscape, to assess its current management and use, and to propose ways in which its importance and value for conservation, education and enjoyment can best be recognised, managed and enhanced. Preparation of the report has been funded largely by a Project Planning grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### **1.3 Context of the report and the Parks for People funding application**

Long-term objectives set out in the Devonport Regeneration Company Delivery Plan and the Plymouth City Council Corporate Strategy cite Devonport Park as a versatile focus for the community. Restoration of the park should act as a catalyst to further urban regeneration and renewal as well as improving the quality of life in terms of health and education, bringing residents together through events and activities in the park. A close relationship has been forged between the Devonport Regeneration Company and Plymouth City Council, and their shared vision for the renewal of this deprived area of Plymouth has resulted in the priority and commitment attached to this project.

The project is dependent upon a successful and coordinated partnership between Plymouth City Council, the Devonport Regeneration Company and the local communities, including the Friends of Devonport Park. Children and young people are also seen as a vital key to establishing successful strategies for the park. It is further planned to expand this partnership, and to incorporate wider Plymouth City strategies.



## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Documentary Survey**

Information was gathered from the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, the Devon Record Office, the Westcountry Studies Library, the Plymouth Local and Naval Studies Library, Plymouth City Museum, Merseyside Record Office, the National Monuments Record, the Francis Frith Collection and the Lindley Library of the Royal Horticultural Society; additional information was supplied by the Friends of Devonport Park, Plymouth City Council and individual residents of Plymouth and Devonport. Further written and illustrative evidence was identified from published sources.

Maps, postcard views and photographs, together with written descriptions and records, and Council minutes in particular, have formed the basis of understanding the historic development of Devonport Park, and have guided the restoration and management proposals.

### **2.2 Site Survey**

The site survey was undertaken using the Ordnance Survey second edition, 25” scale of 1907, cross-referenced with other historic illustrations, photographs and a modern topographic survey. The aims of this survey were:

- i. to identify landscape features, including paths, park buildings, boundaries and artefacts; all features were photographed and are included in the Gazetteer of Historic Features (appendix 2);
- ii. to record the location of the principal views, circulation routes and derelict or lost features, such as the sites of structures marked on early plans;
- iii. to establish the sequence of development and the approximate age of the historic landscape features and boundaries;
- iv. to identify the wider historic setting of the park, albeit that our study only focuses on the defined study area.
- v. to identify constraints to, and opportunities for, management and restoration proposals.

This has informed the proposals by guiding the identification and survival of the *last complete phase* of the designed landscape.

### 2.3 Landscape Restoration Philosophy

The conservation of historic parks has to respond to a number of characteristics which differentiate landscapes from buildings or archaeology. Some facets will affect buildings or archaeology, such as biological decay or erosion, but in landscapes these characteristics are dominant.

- i. *Biological growth and decline* of trees, shrubs, grass and flowers means that certain factors are not readily controlled, and can only be controlled by action, that is, active management, whether it be grazing, pruning or mowing. Buildings also require maintenance but, in the landscape, a default of management can have a very rapid effect that alters the entire character of the heritage asset. In Devonport Park, the recent planting of trees into designed open spaces threatens to alter the historically open visual character of parts of the park.
- ii. The *aesthetic design* rationale is dominant, and so designed parks, in particular, have very little scope for productive adaptive re-use without impact on their essential characteristics. It is difficult to imagine appropriate uses, other than the historic uses of quiet recreation, walking, play, events, music, refreshment and green field sport, in the park.
- iii. *Modern perceptions* have tended to view landscapes as natural, implying that they can be appreciated free of charge. In contrast, archaeology has been regarded as either a fixed constraint, or an opportunity for excavation; whereas buildings are useful, capable of re-use, and are known to be expensive to maintain. Preconceived ideas about resource allocation limit what can be achieved in landscapes.
- iv. Most, but not all, landscapes are a *palimpsest*, with several layers of design. Conservation of the *last complete phase* may well be the most appropriate, just as it is widely adopted for buildings. Restoration to a defined early date now tends to be limited to specific circumstances (where resources allow, later phases are of low significance, intervention is unavoidable, early evidence is dependable and recreation is acceptable). Two risks arise, however, from restoration only to the last complete phase: firstly that we could end up conserving mostly late nineteenth century landscapes, being the last significant design phase in many great landscapes. Secondly, that the mix of characters might, through growth and decay, degrade the most

important, earlier design features on a site. At Devonport Park, an open setting to the surviving part of the Devonport Lines is important to the understanding of the earlier, military design.

The conservation and restoration of designed landscapes does not, therefore, fall readily into a predetermined philosophy or approach. Conservation guidelines are useful but, in practice, policies have to respond to:

- an understanding of the historic and the cultural importance of the site;
- identification and conservation of the essential qualities and character of an individual site, be they historic, visual, aesthetic, architectural, horticultural, ecological, cultural or perceptual;
- a diversity of approaches between parks, so that different sites conserve different aspects of designed historic landscapes.

Devonport Park has a clearly defined development which makes the approach to its restoration and management simpler in comparison to the more complex palimpsests found in some parks and gardens. As a public park, it has undergone two major phases of development; its initial laying out in the late 1850s; and the widespread improvements of the 1890s. The latter forms the basis of the last complete phase of its nineteenth century form, albeit with some structures and facilities being added during the twentieth century. Consequently, a balance has to be met between the present-day values, requirements, desires and perceptions, and the fundamental historic character of the park. This historic character included recreational facilities and outdoor entertainments, but was also designed as a less formal public open place for reflection, views and escape from the pressures of urban living.



### 3.0 OUTLINE HISTORY

#### Early History

- 1086 The manor of Stoke Damerel, the site of modern-day Devonport, was granted to Robert de Albamarla by William I and recorded in the Domesday survey with twenty five inhabitants. It then passed through the Courtenay, Kemiell, Branscombe, Britt and Wise families (3).
- 1539 Apart from Keyham Barton, the land east of the Hamoaze, the Point Froward peninsula, was mapped as open ground, probably consisting of agricultural land (figure 2).
- 1643 During the Civil War *Monthouse*, or Mount Wise, was mapped on Point Froward (figure 2). Mount Wise was built by Sir Thomas Wise of Sydenham, also lord of the manor of Stoke Damerel, to replace Wise's previous residence at Keyham Barton (3).
- 1667 Sir Edward Wise sold the manor of Stoke Damerel, which included the *Barton of Mount Wise*, to Sir William *Moris*, or Morice, for £11,000 (76). William Morice was the Governor and Member of Parliament for Plymouth who, through his support for the restoration of Charles II, was knighted in 1661 and made the Principal Secretary of State (73).
- 1690 Sir William Morice died and the manor passed to his son, also William (3).
- 1691 Work on the dockyard began at Point Froward. The site was favoured for its sheltered location and proximity to the very deep and nearly landlocked harbour of the Hamoaze (46).
- 1692 The government set aside £23,406 for completing the *yard at Hamoaze*, and this included enclosing the dockyard with a wall (73).
- 1696 A substantial wall had been completed around the dockyard, along with thirteen officers' houses (46).
- 1718 The admiralty leased an additional four and a half acres off Sir Nicholas Morice on which to establish the Gun Wharf (73).
- 1725 Dock became the *seat of the military as well as the naval government of the port of Plymouth* (76).

- 1736 In Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's *West Prospect of His Majesty's Dockyard near Plymouth* (figure 3), dedicated to Sir William Morice, the area of the dockyard is enclosed with a substantial fence or wall, visible to the left of the view. Immediately beyond the boundary is agricultural land comprising of hedged fields.
- 1739 A large area of agricultural land surrounding the dockyard was purchased by the Admiralty under the *Defence Act 31 Geo: II Cap 39*. The Act was *an act for vesting certain Messuages, Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments, for the better securing of His Majesty's Docks, Ships, and Stores, at Portsmouth, Chatham and Plymouth...* The several pieces and parcels of land, ranging North from the Gun Wharf Wall at Plymouth dock to the Wharf of Joseph Hooper, Shipwright, on the South was bounded and marked out for completing the Fortifications or intended for the security of His Majesty's Dock Yards, Ships and Stores at Plymouth. The report goes on to state how the commissioners and Jury held their first meeting on at the Plymouth Dock, on the 11 Sept 1739, to award the purchased moneys to be paid for the lands belonging to the family of John St Aubyn, with compensations to some tenants, for lands belonging to the church.

The original 1739 plan of the land acquired was copied in 1848 by Samuel B Howlett, Chief Draftsman in the War Office, Whitehall (figure 4). The land that later became Devonport Park then consisted of fourteen hedged fields along with small portions of adjacent fields. *Love Lane* ran along the northern boundary, leading to the Hamoaze and the *Lower Quarry*. Field names indicate the existence of gorse (*Furze*) and claypits to the south east. At the far western end was a carpenter's workshop. Around half the area was owned by Sir John St Aubyn Bart., with the remainder occupied by a variety of other local tenants including John Pritchard, John Spurrell and Timothy Bayley. The plan also shows how the northern boundary was redrawn by the Admiralty after they purchased the land, forming a straight Ordnance edge to the area with little relation to the original field boundaries (16).

- 1749 William Morice died without issue, and the Stoke Damerel estate passed to his sister, Catharine, wife of Sir John St Aubyn of Clownance (3).
- 1755 William Wynne in his *Travels Through Devon* stated that Plymouth Dock; *...was in the memory of some people but a small barton or farm of £50 per annum, but by the present improvements and buildings on it is a large spacious place and produces its owner Sir John St. Aubins at least £3000 a year, good rents and well paid, it was left to him by his uncle the late Sir William Morice, whose father by his influence and understanding with public officers, procured this Dock to be built on his estate...*(23).

- 1756 Work commenced on the Dock Lines in response to the outbreak of the Seven Years War. The Lines were dockyard fortifications, and consisted of an earthwork bastioned rampart fronted by a shallow ditch. The defences extended from New Gun Wharf, east to Granby Bastion and south to Devonport Passage and Mount Wise (10). They were designed by Mr. Smelt, thought to be an engineer in the dockyard (3).
- 1765 Donn's map (figure 5) showed the completed dock defences and barracks, with the glacis as an open area.
- 1779 - Alterations were made to the Devonport Lines in response to threats from French and Spanish fleets. A thousand Cornish miners were employed to assist with the works (3,10).
- 1784-6 The Ordnance Surveyor's drawing (figure 5) depicted the glacis divided by field boundaries, in a more simplified arrangement than recorded in 1739. The glacis was divided into five fenced enclosures, and a substantial fence also ran along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries, presumably to control trespass and grazing stock.
- 1788-9 A new road and gateway were built through the curtain of the earlier Lines to the west of Marlborough Bastion leading to the new ferry crossing to Torpoint (67).
- 1792 A plan by J. King (figure 7) showed *an intended Cut or Aqueduct* running across the eastern half of the glacis to the Granby Bastion, providing the Dock with a water supply sourced from the West Dart. The faint, dotted line suggests that this section was to be piped underground (possibly to a small circular reservoir within the Granby Bastion) (25).
- 1809 Further modifications to the Dock Lines were started including the realignment of the lines west of Marlborough Bastion, a new rampart faced with ashlar, installation of sally ports adjoining some of the bastions, and deepening of the ditch. These works were abandoned in 1816 midway between George's Bastion and Stoke Bastion when the Duke of Wellington declared the Lines to be useless (3,10).

The Ordnance Survey old series map (figure 6) recorded a new road crossing the western end of the glacis, presumably representing New Passage Hill, developed in conjunction with the extension of the dockyard. The *Dock Leat* is plotted crossing the area.

- 1817 A plan illustrates the diversion of Fore Street (figure 7) by reason of certain works and fortifications made and erected by Order of His Majesty's Board of Ordnance (24). The line of the trench was shown running between the glacis and the dock defences, and crossed by a bridge on the *New Road*. Further lines may denote Ordnance field boundaries. A small square structure was recorded in the northeastern corner of the glacis, possibly a guard shelter.
- 1820 Cooke's map of *Plymouth, Stonehouse, Dock, Morice Town, Stoke and the Environs* (figure 8) reveals the initial spread of development to house the expanding population of Dock. Navy Row and what was to become Portland Place and Gloucester Street bordered the glacis to the north, and Tamar Terrace ran along the eastern boundary, overlooking the open ground towards the Granby bastion.
- 1824 Dock was renamed Devonport (1).
- 1827 A further edition of Cooke's map (figure 8) depicts a footpath running from Tamar Terrace, across the northern half of the glacis, and emerging into Portland Place, implying public access. In the same year, Greenwood published his map of Devon (figure 8), which illustrates how the glacis remained open space despite the growing built up area to the north and east. One structure was shown in the glacis, midway along the northern boundary.
- 1828 A view of *Hamoaze from New Passage Hill* illustrated in Carrington's *Plymouth and Devonport Guide* depicts New Passage Hill in the foreground (figure 9) as a landscape of grazed grassland and occasional boulders, crossed by a worn mud path (75).
- 1834 A *Survey of the Parish ... of Stoke Damerel* showed the glacis in detail (figure 10). As mapped in 1827, a small building had been constructed to the north of the glacis, adjacent to the footpath. Of further note is a second *footway*, extending from Tamar Terrace to a gate in the fence along Fore Street. The glacis as a whole is labelled *Brick Field*, perhaps a reference to the earlier existence of clay pits in the area (20).
- 1837 The Municipal Borough of Devonport was incorporated by Royal charter (76).
- 1853 - The Devonport Lines were strengthened south of the Granby Bastion. Stoke

1856 Bastion was replaced by a much larger bastion to the south and George's bastion was remodelled to include a musketry keep and gun casemates (10).

1856 In the minutes of the General Purposes Committee, the issue of trespass on *Ordnance land* was addressed following concerns expressed by the War Department. Five footpaths over the glacis were confirmed as being *unquestionable public rights of way, from Baker's Place along the edge of the Glacis and thence to Parsonage Bridge; Stonehouse Bridge to Parsonage Bridge Tavistock Road, outside northeast barrier; Tavistock Road to south end of Tamar Terrace; Tamar Terrace to Lower Portland Place; Tavistock Road to Milne Place, below Exmouth Terrace*. It was proposed that *swing gates and turnstiles* be inserted to *impress on the minds of inhabitants the necessity of confining themselves to the use of the paths conceded to them*. However, in a letter to the Commanding Royal Engineer at Devonport, the committee stressed the importance of providing the public and the troops with areas for *healthful recreation*, and comparison was made with a public park in Birmingham. The committee stated that it was their duty to provide *an attractive place of resort, which shall be free for all classes*.

The northern section of the glacis was considered to be particularly well suited and it was proposed to form *a handsome entrance, with a lodge of slight construction* which could be easily demolished *for purposes of defence*. Walks were to be *well-constructed and planted appropriately* and it was planned to level *irregularities* the ground making the area more suitable for military reviews. Surplus rental from grazing was to be used towards *forming and beautifying the ground* (21).

1857 The Devonport Corporation requested that the War Department leased the glacis to them:

*In addition to the re-arrangement of the footpaths, the committee would beg earnestly to impress on the Council, the great importance of securing for the public the use of that part of the Glacis, which lies between Tavistock Road and the road from Marlborough Street to Keyham works, for the purpose of healthful recreation... the committee cannot bring themselves to believe that, considering the great increase in the population and the necessary occupation by the War Department of many open places to which the inhabitants have formerly had access, it would be deemed proper to demand other than very moderate terms for the use of this ground so necessary to the inhabitants, indeed the committee have reason to believe that, in the case of Hoe Park at Plymouth, an arrangement was agreed to in which this principle was handsomely admitted to by the Ordnance Department.* (7)

The cost of developing the park was to be met by a £500 government grant to fund urban public parks; the Trustees of St. Aubyn; private benefactors and sponsors; and £250 from Borough rates. The conditions of the War Department were:

- An annual rent of £65 10 shillings
- Ground was to be kept clear during military drills
- Nothing was to happen that would embarrass *military evolutions*
- The troops were to have exclusive use of two cricket grounds
- The troops were to have free use of the park for football
- No roads were to be constructed other than shown and all cutting and levelling of the ground had to be approved

A version of the first edition Ordnance Survey 1/500 map (figure 11), owned by the Plymouth City Museum, shows a detailed survey of *Devonport Public Park*. The information it supplies is confused by a number of later additions and amendments, including the removal of the Granby bastion and the addition of the Admiralty and Ordnance Reservoirs. Three faint lines on the original probably denote fence lines, dividing the park into four areas. Also marked are the two paths from Tamar Terrace, as in 1834, but with a third linking path running northwest to southeast; and a park boundary wall with the town and an entrance through the northern boundary, which includes a lamp post. No building is shown situated adjacent to the northern boundary of the glacis as in 1834, suggesting its demolition by this stage.

- 1858 The General Committee minutes for May declared that the Corporation was bound to *erect a lodge, keep up the park in proper order, and provide a park keeper, who is to be a police constable*. Major General Eden had directed that troops were not to exercise horses on the Glacis so as to *prevent injury to the Paths, Turf and Plantations* (21).

By April, work had begun on laying out the park with authorisation being given for the purchase of a fountain and four *bases* (1). A commemorative date stone was located above the main park entrance, with a further commemorative plaque at the New Passage Hill entrance (40). The lodge and other park structures were designed by Alfred Norman of Plymouth; construction work was undertaken by Messrs Arnold & Son and George Perkins; seeds were supplied by the Plymouth Seed Company. In November the *Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse Herald* reported on the first trees being planted either side of a sixteen-foot wide gravelled walk extending, funds permitting, as far as the head of New Passage Hill. They

also commented that the walk from Tamar Terrace had been re-gravelled; that the entrance had been finished *excepting a few panels which are to be filled in with Minton's tiles, or some similar material*; that the entrance gateways were *being proceeded with* and that, even in an unfinished state, these were considered to have a *very imposing appearance*; and that the *band of the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment will play select pieces of music every Friday afternoon* (44).

- 1859 A statement published in the Council minutes for December showing the *total amount of receipts and payments in respect of the Public Park* provides a useful summary of the initial works on Devonport Park (appendix 4). Alfred Norman was recorded as the superintending architect; George Perkins, the main builder; and Messrs. Arnold and Sons, also involved with construction, were responsible for ordering *Iron Gates and Railings, Iron Vases, Roller and Goods from the Coalbrook Dale Company*. Plants and Trees were supplied by the Plymouth Seed Company, and *Rhododendrons etc.* were ordered from Messrs. Waterer, of Bagshot, Surrey. A *Bath Stone Vase* had also been purchased, along with a *pedestal and fixing* from the Tamar Granite Company. The Bath stone vase was probably the memorial erected to the greatest British commanders of the day: of Francis Drake (d. 1596), John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (d. 1722), William Pitt, Lord Chatham (d. 1778), Horatio Nelson (d. 1805), and Arthur Wellesly, Duke of Wellington (d. 1852). It has been suggested that a common link between these men was that they all defeated the Spanish (40).

A local resident, Thomas Hawker, challenged the legality of paying for the park through the rates in the court. This delayed the construction of the park which continued sporadically over the next thirty years (1).

- 1860 In the *Handbook of Plymouth, Devonport, Stonehouse, etc.*, Henry Besley described Devonport Park as being:

*Formed by public subscription and a grant from the government. Nearly forty acres are here enclosed, laid out with walks and planted with trees and shrubs. Seats are placed about in the most pleasant spots, for the accommodation of the public, who here enjoy occasionally the enlivening strains of one or more military bands. Fine views of the Hamoaze and the northern suburbs are obtained from many parts of the ground* (4).

- 1861 Devonport Park accounts published in the Council minutes record two payments to Mr Pontey for *Trees and Shrubs* (33). Mr Pontey was probably Alexander Pontey, a nurseryman of 21 Cornwall Street, Plymouth (30). Reference was also made to the completion of the *Centre Garden* which included a payment to *Olver, for Rockery* (33).

The Pontey family owned two nurseries in Plymouth, which they advertised regularly in the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, and were highly regarded, visited by John Loudon. Alexander Pontey ran the town nursery and specialised in plants imported from South America and the Cape (47).

- 1863 A fountain commemorating Admiral Sir Charles Napier was erected adjacent to the entrance lodge (1). Sir Charles Napier (1786-1860) was an Admiral in the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), Syrian Campaign (1840) and Crimean War (1854). He fell out with the Admiralty, but remained *The Sailor's Champion* and campaigned for Naval reforms. The memorial was funded by sailors who gave up a day's wages (40).
- 1865 An illustration of Devonport Park included in a handbook of Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse (figure 12) shows a view looking southeast towards Stonehouse and The Sound revealing the context of the park. The Lodge, Napier Fountain, entrance gate and railings, and memorial garden, appear to be complete. Mown grass and wide walks are visible, used by strolling families and couples.
- 1867 The first edition Ordnance Survey 25" map (figure 15) appears to reflect the 1857 survey, without the late 1850s developments. Around the same time Heyden's map of *Plymouth, Devonport, Stonehouse, Stoke, Morice Town, Ford and the Neighbourhood* did show the Council's park improvements (figure 15). A new network of walks had been created that integrated and enhanced the three existing glaciis footpaths. Other additions included the Lodge and Napier fountain, two new entrances reached via steps off New Passage Hill and Lower Stoke Road; a wide surfaced area in front of Tamar Terrace; the suggestion of a further new entrance off the junction of William Street and New Passage Hill; and faint circles around important path junctions presumably denoting areas of planting.
- 1860s There are records of cricket and rugby being played in the park (6).
- 1871 A memorial in the form of a small obelisk was erected near the Napier fountain to commemorate the paying off of the ship, HMS Galatea(40).
- 1872 The bird's eye view of Plymouth published in the *Illustrated London News* (figure 16) shows the extent of planting around major path junctions and entrances, as well as a number of individual trees, including part of an avenue along one of the main walks. The view also gives a sense of the nature of the park boundary with the dock defences, the deep trench that separated the two, as well as the place of the park as a predominant open space within the

ever-growing developed areas of Devonport and Stonehouse. No bandstand is shown near the Lower Lodge suggesting that this was not in place by this date.

1874 The park included *walks, trees, shrubs, arbours, seats etc.* with a *splendid recreation ground and fine promenade, with a beautiful view of the surrounding scenery*. It was also the venue for the annual military review held on the Queen's birthday and was *tastefully laid out flower gardens, in which are fountains and figures, a rockery and other pleasing embellishments* (1).

1876 The *Western Daily Mercury* published an enthusiastic article on Devonport Park. Peter Tavy declared that the Park was *without question one of the best exercise and play-grounds to be found for many miles around*. He describes entering the Park from the *Stoke-road* through *large iron swing gates* with *well-planted and carefully kept gardens on either side*. To the right was a *very picturesque lodge, the residence of the park-keeper, a superannuated member of the police force*. The fountain opposite the Lodge he considered to be *of very good design, consisting of a centre piece and what Tavy quotes as nasty, naughty, naked little boys* blowing up jets of water *generally on Sundays during the summer season*. Around the fountain and in the *neighbouring enclosure* were *some large garden statues standing on pedestals* which included Cupid and an effigy of a young girl holding a wreath.

Tavy considered the Park to be *tastefully planted with half-a-dozen small plantations, and a big one at the top of the hill where the five roads meet*. He also describes a *capital walk under the bastion wall, a good place for a constitutional when the grass is wet* and comments on *numerous seats, one or two of them being the favourite resorts of naval and military pensioners*. The recreational value of the Park was fully appreciated with *hundreds of men and boys* resorting there in summer afternoons and evenings to play cricket. Younger children played on *the side of the hill sloping towards Morice Town* with boys playing hide and seek amongst the *plantations to the detriment of the trees*. Tavy concluded that Devonport Park was *a source of daily pleasure to some hundreds of people* and he hoped that it would be *many years before it was required for other than the present purpose* (39).

1880 R.N. Worth in his *Guide to the Three Towns* enthused about the extensive views from Devonport Park, taking in *Mount Edgcumbe with its fine old mansion, Stonehouse, Devil's Point, Victualling Yard, Drake's Island, Breakwater Hoe, Citadel, Cattedown, Mount Batten, the higher parts of Plymouth, the hills of Dartmoor, Morice Town, Hamoaze, and the hills of Cornwall and Hingston Down* (66).

1882 The section of Devonport Lines between Devonport Road (Fore Street) and Passage Hill (Devonport Hill) was demolished and infilled (10).

1890 The Plymouth, Devonport and South West Junction Railway Company opened a line running from Devonport to Lydford in June. Construction was expensive due to numerous engineering works, including three tunnels, with one running under the eastern half of Devonport Park (22).

In the published accounts for this year, the Devonport Corporation recorded the salaries of the Park Gardener and Park Keeper as £15 and £9 respectively for twelve weeks' work. T. Jenkin and Son were paid for erecting a *Stone Wall and Iron Railings in the Park* (50).

Early 1890s A number of undated photographs (figures 12 and 13) of the Napier Fountain and the Lower Lodge show well kept gardens and a working fountain. Bedding plants were used in the fountain pool wall, substantial planted urns, with mature shrubs and trees, including a monkey-puzzle, and a clipped hedge enclosing the Napier Fountain garden. Also visible is the shallow pitched roof of the Lower Lodge bandstand. The absence of the Technical School clock tower date these images prior to 1897.

1891 The Secretary of State for War agreed to sell the park to the Corporation of Devonport, and the Corporation resolved that an application *be made to the Local Government Board for their sanction to a loan of the sum of £5,200 for the purchase of the freehold of Devonport Park*. Contractors, Messrs. Laphorn & Goad were prepared to *enter into a Contract for the erection of the Works for the sum of £4,550* (50).

1892 Council Minutes record that the Park Committee were presented with a plan and estimate *for laying out proposed new roads and paths in Devonport Park* by Mr Upcher with a recommendation that he be paid £100 for the work. Also this year, Messrs Laphorn and Goad were paid £300 for demolishing the Devonport Lines and the Devonport Water Company were paid for supplying water to the *Park Urinal, Fountain and Lodge* (29).

Mr Upcher was probably Reginald Upcher, a London landscape designer, engaged by the Penzance Corporation in 1889 to produce plans for Morrab Gardens, a private garden which they had recently purchased and intended to convert into a municipal park (37).

The Ordnance Survey second edition 1/500 map (figure 17) provides a detailed plan of the park. The bastions had been demolished, the dock reservoirs constructed and most of the trench infilled. A substantial wall and fence had been erected, keeping members of the public out of the dock reservoirs, the latter cutting across, and diverting, an earlier footpath. Two additions to the park's network of walks were shown, one running northwest to southeast connecting the Portland Place footpath to a main path junction; and the other leading from a

new park entrance in the northeast corner, simplifying an earlier arrangement of two branching paths. A second pair of branching paths, in the northwest corner, had been removed by this stage.

Other additions to the park include the provision of a urinal, a bandstand, a rectangular enclosure adjacent to the eastern park boundary, and further areas of planting around three of the entrances, with particularly extensive planting, enclosed by what was probably a low wall and railings, around the main Lower Lodge entrance. Glasshouses had also been constructed in this area, suggesting a stronger horticultural element to the park. Many of the shrubberies were drawn with a solid line, implying that they were enclosed by fencing or a low hoop-top railing. Lamposts were installed along the major routes, as well as seats along the edge of four shrubberies. Twelve individual stones, possibly former field boundary markers, were also recorded, along with man-hole covers and water valves.

1893 The War Department officially conveyed *a portion of the Glacis of the Devonport Lines, known as the "People's Park", Devonport* to the Mayor Alderman and Burgesses of the County Borough of Devonport. The Sanitary Authority was responsible for the purchase *in pursuance of the powers vested in them by the Public Health Acts and the Open Spaces Acts 1877 to 1890*. It was stated that, *for the time being*, the Sanitary Authority was not to build any structures on the park without written consent from the War Department, and that the Authority was responsible *at all times* for the maintenance of the park as *ornamental grounds and flower beds* (this was taken from a copy of this agreement produced in 1940 for the South West Water Board) (17).

In February, the Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee set out a plan and the estimated costs of park improvements. This provides a useful summary of their intentions for Devonport Park, which included:

- Excavating and making paths of 25 feet, 15 feet and 8 feet widths;
- Constructing entrance steps from William Street to Park;
- Removing and altering the Band Stand;
- Building a *house for the Park Keeper, Lavatory etc.*;
- Shrubs and planting;
- Creating shelters;
- Improving park boundary fences with dwarf wall and railings;
- Forming slopes at New Passage Hill and Portland Place (29).

Council minutes for April recorded a letter of support for the plan from the Devonport Mercantile Association. They listed a number of suggestions and comments which included:

- Widening the steps at the head of Fore Street
- Shifting the oval path to absorb present east-west paths
- That the path from the *corner near the Sheep Pen to the Lodge entrance* was unnecessary
- That reclaiming the path along the *edge of the Trench from opposite the Royal Albert Hospital to Reservoir* was an advantage
- It would be good to set aside a space for children to play (29).

The Park Committee minutes noted a resolution that the *existing Bandstand be utilized as a shelter*. The committee was also recorded as selecting *a site for the erection of the ornamental building (Park Keeper's Lodge etc.) on the western side of the Park*. They also selected a spot in the *middle of the oval* for a bandstand. In July the Park Committee examined ten sets of plans for *a New Park Keeper's Residence and Shelter in Devonport Park* (34).

Accounts in the Council minutes for this year include the payment of 18 shillings to James Bros. And Co. for *Cast Pots and Flower Pots*; the Devonport Gas Company for supplying gas to *Lamp in Park*; Parsons and Oliver for seeds and bulbs; T.J.R. Chalice for trees; and, in April, R. Upcher £100 for *fee for plans* (29). T.J.R. Chalice (1840-1921) was a proprietor of the South Devon Nurseries, Plympton (30).

1894 The Mayor of Devonport, Alderman W Waycott, laid the first sod for the park improvements in March. The architect was Mr S Roberts and the contractor was Mr A. N. Coles. The first tree of these works was planted in the Park in October by the Chairman of the Park Committee, Alderman J May. A procession left Devonport Guildhall led by the Borough Band; Borough Police; the Fire Brigade; the Mercantile Association; the Schools Board; the Local Board Commissioners; Borough Officials and members of the Corporation (3).

The *Park Improvement* accounts in the council minutes for this year included a payment to Sparrow and Co. for *limestone for rockery work*; S. Roberts for preparing quantities for Park Keeper's Shelter; A.N. Coles *on account of contract for erecting Park Keeper's Shelter* and then later, in October, *on account of contract for erecting Park Lodge and Shelter*; T. Jenkin and Son for *contract for foundations for Bandstand*; The Coverack Stone Company for kerbing and channelling; Western Independent for *advertising Tenders for Bandstand*; Willoughby Bros for

*Pattern Iron Railings and Patent Gulleys; James Healy on account of contract for alterations to the Park Gardener's Lodge and Greenhouse; £312 to James Allen and Son for Bandstand.*

In December Robert Veitch and Son, nationally renowned nurserymen from Exeter, were paid £400 for plants and shrubs. In the same month, T.J.R. Chalice was paid for *preparing a plan for planting the Park* (thus questioning Meyer's involvement) (29).

1895 *The Gardener's Chronicle* reported to its readers that Mr Meyer of Exeter, landscape gardener to Messrs. Veitch & Son:

*...has grasped the idea of what a park laid out for the use of the public ought to be; that the walks and other ways should have a purpose, and one of these is to give ready access to every part, without being needlessly circuitous. Plenty of paths in a public place perform other services besides this one – they do much to preserve the verdure and general good appearance of the turf, which for the lack of them would surely suffer.*

*It will be noted that this plan differs from most in having no walk which skirts the boundary the entire length – a good innovation, we think, insomuch as it does not permit of an easy comprehension of the extent of the enclosed area.. Of the intended planting we are unable to form any just estimate, so much depending on the species and varieties of tree and shrub made use of; but we may say that it does not err on the side of excessive planting, and lessening the area of open spaces.*

The short article was accompanied by a plan of *Devonport Park Improvement* (figure 18). Proposed new, sinuous paths were integrated into the pattern of the original network of predominantly straight walks. A lodge and fountain surrounded by a small formal garden were proposed for the highest point in the park, and the new bandstand was located at the centre of a wide oval walk dominating the centre of the path network. Additional informal shrub and tree planting was planned around nearly all the path junctions, with a few isolated shrubberies in open parkland between (8).

Meyer was a German-born rockwork expert who had studied at the Royal Horticultural College, Silesia and was employed by Robert Veitch. By the 1870s, Veitch and Son, with Meyer's expertise, were one of the two leading companies specialising in the design of rock and water gardens (48).

In November *The Gardener's Chronicle* published another enthusiastic account of the *People's Park, Devonport*:

*This beautiful park, acquired a few years ago from the War Office authorities, is now the freehold of the Corporation of Devonport. The total cost was somewhere about £10,000. With characteristic public spirit, the Corporations of Plymouth, Stonehouse and Devonport, have been liberal in laying-out their new possession, nor did they limit the carrying out of the work to local effort; for while the actual laying out was executed by local labour, the plan was furnished by and the supervision of the work entrusted to Messrs. ROBERT VEITCH & SON, nurserymen, Exeter. The park opened on Monday, October 28, by the Mayor of Devonport, Mr J. Bright James, in the presence of a large and influential assemblage of the citizens and borough officials. To commemorate the event a Quercus Ilex was planted by the Mayor, who, borrowing the language of another craft, declared the tree to be “well and truly planted”. A public luncheon followed, at which Lord ST. LEVAN (the Lord of the Manor), General Sir RICHARD HARRISON, Dr. MAY, the Mayor, and other public officials were speakers. The park is a great improvement and attraction, and its excellent situation has been made the most of by the landscape gardener (9).*

The *Park Improvement* accounts in the Council minutes for this year included additional payments for £50 and £180 to Robert Veitch and Son on *further account contract for Plants and Shrubs*; James Julian for erecting *Park wall and railings*; W Truscott for *Park Seats*; D. Sale for *Garden Seat*; *Transfer of costs incurred by the works commenced in setting back wall and railings in front of the Park Lodge*; The Devonport Gas Company for *laying out a gas service to the Bandstand*; S Roberts for *Architects fee on contract*; E.H. Littleton for *Uniform for Park Keeper*; The Devonport Water Company for supplying water to the *Park Lodge, Fountain, New Park’s Lodge, Urinal*; T Jenkin and Son on *account of contract for the erection of the Lodge and Shelter, Urinals and w.c.s in the Park*; Captain Bradley for *Gravel* (29,31).

Council minutes from September noted that the oval path in the park had been declared in a *fit condition* and that the Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee could permit the use of it for *cycling* (29).

The Ordnance Survey second edition 25” map (figure 19) shows a scaled down version of the 1892 1/500 survey, prior to the park improvements.

- 1896 Accounts published in the Council minutes for this year included payments of £2 to Curtis Sandford and Co. and T.F. Curel for plants; J.R. Chalice for shrubs; the Devonport Water Company for water supply to the *Old and New Lodges*; D. Sale for iron seats; W.J. Hocking

for painting *Band Stands*. The minutes also noted a vote of thanks to *Mr and Mrs Bennett for their gift of a handsome Sicilian Marble Fountain to be erected in the Park* (31).

- 1897 F. Moreton and Co. were paid for *Ornamental Hurdles etc.*; Robert Veitch and Son *15 shillings 9 pence* for trees; and G. Trafani *£1. 10 shillings* for *Fern Vases* (31). It was also noted that a sketch was submitted by the Coverack Stone Company showing the proposed erection of the fountain presented by Mr and Mrs Bennett; that a drinking fountain, presented by Mr H Pile, was to be fixed against *the west side of the Park Shelter*; that a proposed gift to the Park of five pairs of golden pheasants and a pheasantry in celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee was to be rejected; that a post in the Milne Place entrance was to be removed and replaced with a lamp; that a memorial tablet commemorating the cutting of the first sod by Alderman Waycott, and the formal opening of the park by Alderman James was to be affixed on the *north exterior wall of the Park Shelter in the blank window beneath the verandah*; that *damage had been done by sheep that were not within the enclosure*; that the railings near the Morice Town portion of the Park had been *wilfully broken*; and that the Park Lodge and Shelter should be insured against fire for *£400 and £800* respectively.

An avenue of sixty trees to commemorate the Jubilee was also proposed this year. Prices for the trees were submitted by Messrs Veitch and Son, Mr William Gray, Mr T.R. Chalice and the Exeter Nursery Company. Mr William Gray's quote of *£9* for 60 Horse Chestnuts was accepted. The Admiralty was consulted about giving up ground on the north side of the Reservoir so the avenue *might be straight* (32).

- 1898 A photograph in the Francis Frith Collection (figure 13) shows the memorial garden with cast iron and wooden slat park benches, a light gravel path surface, the Lower Lodge and an open view of Brickfields and Mount Wise in the distance.
- 1899 Alderman Ryder J.P. was presented with the freedom of the Borough of Devonport by the Town Council. It was in the form of a scroll contained in an ornate metal casket, decorated with enamel miniatures of Devonport. These scenes include a charming view of the Lower Lodge depicting the Napier Fountain, Lower Lodge, and Tamar Terrace (figure 12 and cover).
- 1900 The Park Committee discussed a proposal for *inclosing of all the flower beds and shrubs in the Park with ornamental railings of 2 feet 6 inches in height* (36).

1900-10 A range of postcards and photographs of the park from Higher Lodge, focussing on the bandstand and the fountain (figures 20 and 21) show slight variations in the view and include the erection of a hoop-top fence around the Higher Lodge fountain enclosure; the subsequent planting of a hedge alongside this fence, in a young, semi-mature and mature state; slight variations in the fountain flower bed design including a patriotic red cross at one stage; the addition of planted vases on pedestals amongst the flower beds on the four sides of the fountain; the planting of yuccas in the lawn on four sides of the fountain; and the construction of a fenced, asphalt enclosure around the bandstand. Other features of note include the bushy, evergreen, informal shrubbery planting; a bench around the trunk of a tree at a principal path junction; the old bandstand; possibly grazing sheep dotted in the distance; the Victorian carriage lamps; and, possibly, an information board in the Valentine Series view visible in the shrubbery to the right of the bandstand.

Photographs were also taken of the Lower Lodge after 1901 (the construction date of the Fore Street tramway) (figure 13) when Fore Street and the Park entrance had a granite cobble surface.

1904 The Doris Memorial Gun was unveiled by Admiral Sir E. H. Seymour. It was designed by Harry Hems to commemorate the crew of HMS Doris who had died fighting alongside the army at the Battle of Paardeberg in 1900 (26). The opening was reported and illustrated (figure 22) in two articles in the *Western Daily Mercury*. The gun was considered to be *one of the chief ornamentations of the ground which would add to the value and interest of the park as well as being a trophy of valour*. During the unveiling ceremony a laurel wreath was laid by two inmates of the Orphan Asylum whose fathers had been killed in the Boer War (27). The gun was also illustrated in a Francis Frith postcard, and appears in an area of open lawn, enclosed with a low hoop-top railing.

1904 The Admiralty proposed the erection of *an unclimbable iron fence on land belonging to the Corporation adjoining the Admiralty Devonport Park Reservoir* (figure 23), presumably to reduce trespass into the area around the reservoir. This was an additional fence to the existing line of railings with a length of *chevaux de frise* (13).

1907 The Ordnance Survey second edition 25" map (figure 24) records the many changes to the park as a result of the works proposed in the mid 1890s and illustrated on the Improvement Plan. Apart from a number of isolated shrubberies and detailing around the Higher Park Lodge, the complex network of sinuous paths, the new bandstand, fountain, lodge and the

proposed additional planting had all been implemented by this stage. The old bandstand was plotted as a *shelter*.

- 1908 Requests were noted and approved in the minutes for a Bowling Green. An asphalt enclosure around the bandstand was also recommended, and according to Gerald Barker, laid out for parties and performances in the bandstand, lit by electricity supplied from the Tamar Terrace tramway (35,51).

A view of the park from Higher Lodge looking northwest (figure 21) shows the newly installed Doris Memorial gun with its surrounding planting scheme consisting of a number of a large informal shrubberies, divided by lawn, with the area around the gun enclosed by a hoop-top railing fence. Also revealed is the sheltered seat shown as a substantial roofed structure with the upper half opened up by vertical bars.

- 1909 A plan and estimate was proposed for a shelter near Stopford Place, off Tamar Terrace (36).

- c.1910 A photograph of Higher Lodge (figure 22) shows how the building and its decorative veranda formed the backdrop to the rose garden and fountain. The lodge has decorative ironwork along the pitch of the roof and the veranda appears to be painted in more mixed colours than the current black and white, with a dark balustrade, and light columns.

- 1911 A description in Doidge's Annual concluded that Devonport Park was beautifully situated and that the *pretty Swiss Cottage at the entrance gates made a charming picture*. It went on to state that the *Lodge was surrounded by flower gardens* and that *on the opposite side was a handsome terracotta fountain* (74). The text was accompanied by a sketch of the Lower Lodge entrance showing the fountain in full working order and members of the public entering the park only from the right hand pedestrian gate (figure 13).

- 1914 The townships of Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse merged to form Plymouth City (41).

The Park keeper was assisted by local labourers for *maintenance of order in the daytime* (77).

The Ordnance Survey third edition 25" map showed that few developments had occurred since 1907 (figure 25). A wider enclosure was shown around the bandstand and a lavatory was marked to the rear of Higher Park Lodge. The loss of some trees west of the oval walk may reflect the creation of a new playing field.

- 1921 Boys and girls from the Morice Town Council School were recorded as having open-air lessons in Devonport Park. It was referred to by the Board of Education as a *novel experiment* which was only to be approved if *proper hygienic seating accommodation should be supplied, and there should be an effective movable screen to shelter the scholars from the bad winds*. The matter was referred to the Local Education Authority (19).
- 1923 A War Memorial, designed by Mr C Cheverton and built by Mr J Hunt, was unveiled by Lord Methuen on 14 March (3). The committee responsible for the memorial was led by Lord St Levan who proposed that it would *serve to point out the path of duty to those who come afterwards should they receive a call similar to that which brothers and sisters have so nobly responded* (5). An undated photograph (figure 9) shows the memorial adorned with a large number of wreaths and flowers, either at its opening or at a subsequent Remembrance Sunday.
- 1930 Gerald Barker in his reminiscences of Devonport recalled two tigers escaping from a circus marquee in Brickfields, one of which was reported roaming in Devonport Park (51).

The Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic set into the north boundary of the park was opened by the Mayor and Mayoress (54). The purpose was to monitor children from birth, guide parents, provide vaccinations, and nutritional supplements (5). Council minutes recorded the proposal of an iron fence around the clinic, and that the proposed sale of refreshments *at the Lodge in Devonport Park* was accepted (54).

- 1931 The proposed expenditure on the Park for this year included £30 for plants and flowers, £150 for repairing and tar spraying paths, £250 for illuminations and £40 for *New Swings and Giant Stride* (56).
- 1933 The Ordnance Survey map (figure 26) recorded the additions to the park of the bowling green, war memorial, child welfare centre, putting green and two tennis courts with a small pavilion. Mature planting was shown north of the Admiralty Reservoir and slight alterations had been made to the field boundaries behind the Higher Lodge and in the gardens west of the Lower Lodge, steps at the Fore Street southwest entrance had also been removed.

Throughout the 1930s the ground floor of the Higher Lodge was let to *refreshment caterers* and in 1933 H. Mardon was granted a twelve month tenancy. Also this year, the minutes

recorded a request by the Devonport Mercantile Association requesting the *decoration of ornaments in Devonport Park* and Mr H. Whiddon, the Devonport Park Head Gardener, died after 34 years service (57).

1934 The City Surveyor was asked to submit an estimate for the costs of renovating and redecorating *the Lodge*, and the replacement of sheds with a new storage and mess room (55).

1935 The Park and Recreation Committee minuted proposals to improve *the barren area of Devonport Park*. A month later the committee recommended that £2,400 be used to renovate existing paths and make repairs to the shelter *of that portion of the park*. Plans were also made to convert the old bandstand into a closed shelter (58).

1936 W. Dudley Coles's tender of £91.5s.10d was accepted for the *Erection of Shelter* in Devonport Park and the Lower Park Lodge roof was renewed (59).

1937 In November, plans were submitted and approved for the *west end of Devonport Park* which included additional paths, a shelter and the extension of the children's playground equipment. £2,400 was to be borrowed from the Ministry of Health (62).

Photographs of the Napier fountain and garden (figure 14) show the flower beds planted with tulips, wallflowers and other bedding plants, progression in the railing design from a more ornate pattern around the entrance to simple vertical rails either side, clipped shrubs and trees, and the floodlighting of the fountain with gas lamps on stands.

1938 The Committee reported securing the loan *for the purpose of the layout of the Western end of Devonport Park*, the City Architect submitted a report and estimate *in connection with the provision of a new Bowling Green Pavilion*, the City Surveyor submitted a quotation of £34. 5s from Wicksteed & Co. *for the supply of playground equipment*, and that contracts be extended with W.A. Parker (Workington), Hollamby's Nursery Ltd. and Conway's Ltd. (Halifax) for the supply of fencing, trees and shrubs, and turf respectively (49).

1939 The City of Plymouth Emergency Committee minutes for September proposed the construction of a *Trench Shelter* for 450 people in Devonport Park (18).

- 1940 The Government approved an air raid shelter for 600 people, at a cost of £2,250, referred to as *opposite Milne Place* (18). Devonport Park was a Balloon Barrage Site and the park's refreshment pavilion was used as the personnel office, while the tennis courts were utilised by the A.T.S. In September, a recommendation was made to the Committee *to use Park railings as scrap* (41,63). Roy Pattison, a Devonport Resident, remembers the park being closed to the public, although he was allowed to collect clothes from the servicemen for his mother to wash (77).
- 1941 The Emergency Committee Minutes refer to five *Cleansing Stations* that were under construction in Plymouth including one in Devonport Park (60). These were decontamination units erected in case gas or other toxic weapons were used (5).
- 1942 Glasshouses in the Park Nursery were packed with tomato plants, as part of the war effort (figure 13).
- 1943 The Admiralty and War Department conveyed the Devonport Park reservoir and water mains to the City of Plymouth (12).
- 1944 Gerald Barker recalls that American troops were stationed in the park for *the greater part of the hostilities*, erecting billets (51).
- 1945 The Gas Cleansing Station in Devonport Park was converted for use as a Scabies Clinic (61).
- 1946 An aerial photograph shows Devonport Park littered with war-related activities (figure 26). Small square patches, the sites of huts for the American troops run along the main walks, with larger huts at the centre. A large circular reflective surface on the Putting Green may be a temporary reservoir; the turf marks along the northern boundary plot the air-raid shelter; and the Gas Cleansing Centre is also visible. Other changes included the play area west of Higher Park Lodge, with the consequent rearrangement of paths in this area including the diversion of the Jubilee Avenue; and an extended bowling pavilion.
- 1950 The Doris Gun Memorial was restored by the Ordnance workshops of the RNB (71).

The 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map (figure 28) of the eastern park records an additional shelter at the Stopford Place entrance, relocation of the putting green to the south of the

tennis courts, a drinking fountain near the Higher Lodge, and extensions to the Higher Lodge, including a lavatory block.

- 1955 A *scheme of illumination* included the floodlighting of Devonport Park, Fore Street Gardens, and fairy lighting of the trees along the main avenue from the Fore Street Gardens, the main entrance facing Brickfields and the Devonport Park Fountain (52).

An aerial photograph (figure 29) reveals the loss of both bandstands since 1950. Sections of newly surfaced paths stand out; the Napier and Sicilian Fountain Gardens consist of neatly finished flower beds; New Passage Hill has a revised layout with a new path and shelter; a new piece of play equipment, possibly a paddling pool, has been added to the play area.

- 1956 The Western Independent reported on a proposal to incorporate the disused reservoir adjoining Granby Barracks, but *not as a swimming pool or boating lake*. The Mayor, Alderman H. Damerell, stated that *the future of Devonport Park was very uncertain because of the road which it was proposed to make across the centre of it*. The *Old Moat* was also discussed, as it was considered to be a nuisance, dangerous and full of rubbish. Alderman Damerell stated that it would probably be filled in, as it was no longer used by the Devonport Rifle Club (42).

The Health Committee proposed to demolish the Scabies Clinic and former Gas Cleansing Centre, at an estimated cost of £315 (53).

- 1957 Park Avenue was built, subdividing the park (6). This was a *costly scheme* to redevelop the Albert Road area, and provoked much discontent amongst Devonport inhabitants still living in the substandard conditions of the heavily bombed area (43).

- 1961 It was resolved to convert the Scabies Clinic into changing rooms to serve the park's playing pitches at an estimated cost of £300 (64).

- 1962 The Parks and Recreation Committee proposed to erect a shelter *in Park Avenue, at the junction with Exmouth Road* (65).

- 1964 The Southern railway line underneath Devonport Park was closed (22).

- 1966 The Ordnance Survey map (figure 30) shows the addition of a variety of new structures in the nursery compound.

- 1970 The Ordnance Survey map (figure 31) for the majority of the park, except for the Lower Lodge area, plots the impact of Park Avenue; football grounds, including one on the site of the Admiralty Reservoir; and a miniature cycle track adjacent to the play area.
- 1977 The Ordnance Survey map for the western end of the park (figure 31) shows a widening of the Ferry Road and Park Avenue junction, resulting in the rearrangement of the adjacent footpath, moving the entrance from Park Avenue further to the south.
- 1980s A number of pieces of demolished stonework from City Centre buildings bombed during the war were placed in the park (77).
- 1982 Two sisters aged 11 and 12 sent a petition to the Council asking them to improve the poor condition of Devonport Park (38).
- 1984 Due to a clerical error, the tennis pavilion was demolished instead of the Gas Decontamination Unit (77).
- 1989 Plymouth City Council leased the land, buildings and premises situated at Higher Park Lodge to Higher Park Lodge Limited (69). The last park keeper was removed and the team of ten dedicated gardeners reduced to two. Shortly afterwards the parks service's training centre in the old nursery was transferred to social services, and the lodge vacated (77).
- 1992 A training centre was established to train students with disabilities to work in horticulture, woodwork and retail, through the garden shop. The centre is responsible for conserving part of the National Collection of Camellias (5).

The Ordnance Survey map for the northeast section of the park (figure 32) records the extension to Higher Lodge, the removal of the tennis pavilion, and the rearrangement of the Stopford Place entrance with the removal of the park boundary, breaking up of the boundary shrubbery and the creation of a pedestrianised area closing Exmouth Road to through traffic.

- 1994 A fountain was said to have been restored (68).

- 1995 An article in the Evening Herald included recollections of Devonport Park, and commented on how it was used by the *dockyardies* during their lunch break and how children used to play football on a *cinder pitch* (38).
- 1997 The South and West Devon Health Authority launched a new Healthy Parks Initiative focusing on Devonport Park. An information leaflet was produced summarising the history of the park (38).
- 2000 Lower Lodge was listed as Grade II (40).
- 2001 The Evening Herald reported on a proposal to sell off Devonport Park Lodge, having stood empty for five years and subject to vandalism (38).
- 2002 The Devonport Regeneration Company purchased the right to have first refusal over the use of Lower Lodge, although it remained in the ownership of Plymouth City Council (77).

The Doris Memorial Gun was listed as Grade II(71).

- 2003 *Devonport Development Framework* was prepared for the Devonport Regeneration Company by Matrix Partnership(83).

An examination of the Doris Gun paintwork, commissioned by Plymouth Museum, discovered that the original colour of the gun was a dark grey, but when it became a memorial in 1904, every part of the gun was painted a warm buff/grey as, it is thought, was the low iron railing. Between 1904 and 1950 the gun was painted seven times in various shades of 'stone' colour. As the paint was based on lead white, it suggests that these repainting jobs took place before the Second World War, and therefore took place approximately every five years. In 1950 the ironwork was stripped, primed with chrome yellow, and painted black with a grey undercoat. The gun has since continued to be repainted in black approximately every thirteen years, apart from the third post-war repainting, which was in a dark green. During the last repainting (circa 2002), it appears that the wooden wheels of the gun were replaced (71).

A public consultation exercise sought views on how the community wanted to use Devonport Park; 272 people completed the questionnaire (72).

2003-05 Twenty eight criminal offences were reported as taking place in Devonport Park (77).

2004 The Green Space Strategy for Devonport Park was produced by the Parks Service and the Devonport Regeneration Company. Bailey Partnership updated a 2001 condition survey of the Lower Lodge, and the first Devonport Lodge steering group meeting was held to discuss its development (72).

2005 Parkside Community Technology College use the park pitches for football and rugby, and the paths for cross-country running (68).

## 4.0 ANALYSIS, SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES

The analysis is split into two sections; an analysis of the historic landscape, drawing conclusions from the preceding evidence set out in section 3.0; and a brief analysis of Devonport Park in 2006, with an assessment of its historic significance, and objectives specified for its future management and restoration.

### 4.1 Historic Landscape Analysis

#### i. *Early History*

From 1539 onwards, there is no evidence that the early use of the site of Devonport Park was other than as low grade agricultural land, stoney small fields with gorse, partly tenanted glebe land, but partly owned by the Wise family of Sydenham and, later, Sir William Morice. Sir William may have recognised the strategic potential; it was his great-nephew who eventually benefited when he *procured this Dock to be built on his estate* (23).

#### ii. *Dock Glacis*

The advent of the Seven Years War in 1756 increased the importance of Dock as an Admiralty port, and resulted in the erection of the Devonport Lines, massive stone fortifications and trenches, enclosing the dockyard and defending it from landward attack. The farmland acquired by the Admiralty formed open ground or a *glacis* for these fortifications. The straight Ordnance boundary lines, unrelated to the historic field pattern, continue to define some of the boundaries to Devonport Park to this day.

Portsmouth and Chatham were the other major Admiralty dockyards of the period; Chatham enclosed with a perimeter wall but more for general security than serious defence, as Fort Amherst with its associated 'lines' protected the yard from landward attack. Portsmouth dockyard, being on an island, was in part defended by its natural topography, although additional protection came with the Hilsea Lines, high earth banks and a moat, started in the early 1750s and strengthened in the mid-nineteenth century. The design of the Devonport Lines and glacis were, therefore, a particular response to the siting of Plymouth dockyard; sporadically improved and altered at the outset of various conflicts, they were never actually tested, and were criticised by Wellington, resulting in their abandonment in the mid nineteenth century.

The Dock glacis underwent a number of modifications during its 120 year military life. The perceived military role remained even when a park lodge was proposed in 1856 as this had

to be easily demolished *for purposes of defence*. Meanwhile, the Admiralty and army barracks used the glacis as a training ground for *military evolutions*, drills and sports. Activities such as these probably account for the various minor structures evident on late eighteenth and early nineteenth century maps of the area.

From 1827 onwards footpaths across the glacis were being identified by contemporary cartographers, *footways* most clearly visible in the 1834 survey. This, along with a view of New Passage Hill from 1828, suggest the growing pressure on the increasingly- isolated patch of green space by civilians living in the rapidly expanding towns of Devonport and Stoke. With a population of 38,180 in 1851, Devonport was the second largest town in Devon (79). By 1856, trespass over Ordnance land reached a peak, with the Council reporting five footpaths that were considered to be public rights of way, designated through sheer frequency of use.

iii. *Devonport Public Park – 1857-1890*

The upshot of this public access and population pressure was the request by the Devonport Borough Council for a lease of the northern section of the glacis for public recreation, establishing Devonport Park. With various conditions, and presumably bearing in mind criticism by the Duke of Wellington, the Admiralty and the War Department agreed.

It was not only trespassing and a burgeoning Devonport population, however, that influenced the decision of the Council. The comments recorded in the minutes for 1856 are evidence of the start of a Victorian town planning strategy that was sweeping the country, that of the Public Parks Movement. As Harding and Lambert have pointed out, until the middle of the nineteenth century, pleasure grounds were the domain of the wealthy. The creation of public parks for the masses was a consequence of the phenomenal growth in the population that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. The squalid urban conditions that arose as a consequence of this unplanned growth and the reaction to, in particular, the cholera epidemics of the 1840s led to the beginnings of the Public Health Movement (80). However, concern for the welfare of the poorer members of society was not entirely altruistic; fear of a proletarian revolution and the preservation of property rights were equally potent factors (81).

Official recognition of the need to create public parks dates from a report of the Select Committee on Public Walks in 1833, which advocated public parks because they would provide contact with nature, opportunities for passive recreation and, most importantly,

opportunities for financial investment where they were developed with new housing. Coincidentally, the first of the great municipal parks was created in the same year, when Moor Park was enclosed by the local council at Preston. Another early act of park creation was undertaken by the ubiquitous and indefatigable John Claudius Loudon. In 1835, he laid out a public garden of three acres for the Corporation of Gravesend, a pioneering event in municipal patronage. The way he approached the design is of interest. He set out to transform a dull, flat site by making the ground more uneven, by laying out winding walks whose views continually changed, by concealing the boundary, and above all by planting trees and shrubs whose variety was unequalled outside any botanical garden (82).

In 1840, the Select Committee on the Health of Towns issued a report recommending an Act of Parliament to facilitate improvements to the sanitary conditions to all towns above a certain population. In the same year, John Claudius Loudon designed the Derby Arboretum, a private park which was to be opened to the general public at certain times. In 1842 Prince's Park (Paxton Park) Liverpool, a project undertaken in conjunction with housing development, was commissioned from Joseph Paxton. In 1846 Victoria Park, Bethnal Green, was opened, funded partly by the sale of government property and partly from sales of building plots around the periphery of the park. Also in 1846, an Act of Parliament was passed to purchase land for Battersea Park. From this period onward the number of new parks increased rapidly, at the initiative of private patrons, local authorities and central government. In 1849, for example, Hansard reported that £10000 had been voted for establishing public parks between 1841 and 1849. Dundee, Arbroath, Manchester, Portsmouth and Preston had all made use of this scheme.

The pace of park creation was not everywhere the same. In Bristol, for example, the lack of open space provision led to popular agitation and an anonymous pamphlet of 1871 entitled '*A cry from the poor*' demanded people's parks in poorer areas.

Interestingly, a public park in Birmingham was cited by councillors in Devonport as a comparative example to their proposed public open space. This was presumably the Birmingham Botanical and Horticultural Garden laid out in 1831 and considered by John Loudon to be a *model of a scientific public garden*, but in execution, a *miserable failure*. Although it is unlikely that Devonport was ever proposed to be a botanic garden, a Devonport councillor may have been familiar with Birmingham simply because it was one of the more southerly examples of an urban public park. With the exception of London, most of the major mid-nineteenth century public parks were to be found in the towns and cities

of northern England, and consequently Devonport Park was an early example, if not the first example, of such a park in the south west.

As well as the Public Parks Movement, the creation of Devonport Park must also be seen in the context of mid-nineteenth century Devonport. White describes a fashionable town growing around the dockyard comprised of *fine terraces of neat villas, as well as some large mansions, of more than ordinary character* (76). Meanwhile grand statements of urban design in the neo-classical style had been realised in central Devonport, with work by the architects John Foulston and George Wightwick. The monumental Doric column commemorating the establishment of Devonport suggests the extent of the corporation's pride and ambition. A public park, considered to be at the forefront of contemporary urban design, was presumably seen as an essential addition to this fashionable and busy town with links, through the Navy and trade, to the whole British Empire.

Devonport Park's initial phase of development was a relatively modest affair, despite its forward-thinking beginnings, and this was probably largely due to the continued overriding control and conditions enforced by the War Department. However, what was constructed in the initial years, and the various sporadic additions over the following thirty years, was thoughtfully designed and laid out in line with the approach to the wider town. The *Swiss Cottage*-style architecture of the Lower Lodge, for instance, was typical of early Victorian park and garden design, appropriately aesthetic with Alpine overtones symbolising health and fresh air. Furthermore, the record of purchasing products from the Coalbrookdale Company, exhibitors at the Great Exhibition, shows a desire to acquire top-of-the-range, fashionable park features.

The introduction of park facilities that followed over the next thirty years, such as the urinal, bandstand and seating, the development of the gardens around Lower Lodge, and the popularity of the park suggested in contemporary reports, point towards an increasing sense of civic involvement, enjoyment and, above all, pride in what was termed in 1893 as the *People's Park, Devonport*.

iv. *Devonport Public Park 1890-1940*

With the demolition of large sections of the Devonport Lines, the War Department felt secure enough to sell the portion of glaxis forming Devonport Park to the Borough Council, and it was duly conveyed in 1893. This finally gave the Council free reign to redesign the

park and establish a greater range of public facilities. The scale and character of this reworking is evident from the dating of the various paths (figure 34).

It has been generally accepted that F.W. Meyer was employed to re-design the park, principally because the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, a national gardening magazine, reported on the new park layout in 1895, and attributes its design to Meyer working under Veitch & Son. However, in 1892, when the Park Committee are selecting plans for the new layout, it is another designer, Mr Upcher, who is paid £100 for his work and Meyer is not mentioned. In 1893 the Devonport Mercantile Association commented on the proposed plan for the park, and suggest 'shifting the oval'. This implies that Upcher's design included the oval walk, was that illustrated and wrongly attributed in the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, and that it is his layout design that remains today. Furthermore, it is not Meyer, but a local nurseryman, T.J.R. Chalice, who is paid for a planting plan for the park in 1894.

It now appears that Meyer was not the only designer involved with refurbishing Devonport Park as previously thought. However, regular payments were being made to Veitch & Son and so it is quite possible that their landscape designer had some role to play in the location and arrangement of the plants supplied. It is possible that the *Gardeners' Chronicle* may be recording a planting scheme inspired by Meyer, designed to improve Upcher's layout.

By the late nineteenth century, public parks were increasingly subject to philanthropic gestures made by local wealthy citizens. With Devonport Park, the 1890s improvements saw the donation of various gifts; the Sicilian Fountain by Mr and Mrs Bennett; a drinking fountain presented by Mr H Pile; and the proposed, but unaccepted, gift of a pheasantry in celebration of Victoria's Jubilee. Also comparable to wider trends of public park development, was the increase in recreational facilities. The Bank Holiday Act of 1871, and the increased trend of time off on Saturday afternoons, resulted in an increase in personal leisure time, and consequently organised sports and outdoor activities such as cycling rose in popularity. The oval walk in Devonport Park was declared suitable for cycling in 1895, and by 1933 the park had been provided with a bowling green, tennis courts and putting green.

A further, minor phase of development of Devonport Park took place in the 1930s. 1933 saw the death of the Park's head gardener, H. Whiddon, who had been in service since 1899. The flurry of suggestions for park improvements that followed from 1934 to 1938 are perhaps evidence that Whiddon had resisted change in the past. Additional paths, a shelter

and an extension of the children's play area were all added during this pre-war period, and photographs reveal a formal garden laid out around the Napier Fountain. Interestingly, the Council minutes reveal a move away from local suppliers for the basic requirements of fencing, trees and turf to companies in Workington and Halifax, suggesting an increasingly competitive market for wholesale suppliers in the changing economy of the mid-twentieth century; with transport less of an issue the Council could afford to shop around, presumably to the detriment of local companies. The Devonport Park Italianate shelter is very similar to a number of park shelters erected in Torquay, also in the late 1930s. These were supplied to Torquay Town Council by a local building company, T. Bouttens and Son.

v. *Devonport Park in the Second World War*

The Second World War was to have a severe impact on Devonport, the Plymouth Blitz devastating vast areas of the town and its dockyard in two successive air-raids in April 1941. Devonport Park, like many of the Plymouth parks, played a considerable part in the war effort, housing American troops, air-raid shelters, a Gas Cleansing Centre in case of the anticipated gas bombs, a barrage balloon station, a water-tank, and its park railings were sawn off for scrap. While in use during the war, the park was closed for recreation, but in the desperate times it was still an essential space for the community, and its role is widely remembered by older residents of today's city.

vi. *Post War*

Despite the evidence for a well-maintained, restored Devonport Park after the chaos of the war, there does not seem to be the fervent attention and vision for the park, typical of the pre-war era. The pressure on the Council, now Plymouth City Council, to rebuild Devonport inevitably made public parks a lower priority. The objections to the expense of developing the Albert Road area and laying out Park Avenue reveal some of the tensions between the local communities and the Council.

With the exception of some investment in the 1960s on a new shelter and the conversion of the Scabies Clinic (formerly the Gas Cleansing Centre), there generally seems to have been a slow decline in the expenditure and consequently the condition of Devonport Park since the war, which accelerated markedly after the removal of the last park keeper and eight out of ten gardeners in the late 1980s. Significant elements of the 1890s park have been removed or leased, not to mention the loss of the park railings, crucial to the definition and identity of the park, never replaced after the war. This move away from the original design concept and function of the Victorian park, principally accentuated by

economic factors, but also due to social change in the demands of twentieth century society, has resulted in an open space which has lost some direction, when contrasted to the once grand civic statement of Devonport town planning.

The revived appreciation and recognition of open space and heritage as key to the regeneration of our towns and cities will reverse Devonport Park's decline in fortune. Despite its condition, the park has remained important to the local community, and new funding opportunities offer the chance to revive the historic landscape while providing for the needs of modern-day Devonport. Ironically, the role of the park has come full circle, and councillors are once again seeking an area for *healthful recreation and an attractive place of resort, which will be free for all classes*, just as they were 150 years ago.

## 4.2 Policy and Planning Context

The following is taken from a Rapid Urban Character Study by Alan Baxter and Associates (86) and provides a concise summary of the planning context:

- *Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the South West identifies Plymouth as major commercial centre which serves the surrounding area, and recommends that this role should be strengthened.*
- *The RPG highlights Plymouth's reliance on the naval dockyards as a source of employment and the resulting urban deprivation when job losses have occurred in this sector; it recommends that the city's economic base is diversified to address this issue. Plymouth is an 'assisted area' of 'special need' which means that the restructuring and regeneration of the city should be a priority.*
- *The RPG also highlights the city's scenic and historical advantages, and its location as a regional gateway to Cornwall.*
- *The City of Plymouth Local Plan (1995-2011) First deposit sets the framework for current development control in the City.*
- *Objective 12 (Historic Environment) commits the City 'to protect and enhance, where possible, sites, areas and buildings of archaeological, historical and/or architectural interest. This Objective rightly acknowledges that 'Although Plymouth aspires to be a progressive city, a concept at the heart of the 2020 Vision, this cannot be achieved without respect for the past and a continuing ability to learn from the past. Plymouth's heritage is an asset which needs to be nurtured not just for its own sake and for the enjoyment of local people, but also to promote the image of the city of investors and tourists.*
- *However, the opportunity to translate these aspirations into practical policies has not been taken: The detailed Local Plan Policies concentrate overwhelmingly on the preservation of the individual site or buildings. They do not draw attention to the contribution that they can make to their wider surroundings.*
- *The first Target, the designation of two new conservation areas between 2001 and 2011, is sadly unambitious.*
- *The Devonport Vision Statement concentrates on the need to find new uses for historic buildings, but says nothing about the wider potential of these buildings to act as keystones for the regeneration of blighted areas.*

The report called for a more detailed historic analysis and understanding of Devonport, which this report aims to contribute towards.

Devonport Park includes three listed buildings; the Lower Lodge (Grade II and in poor condition), War Memorial (Grade II), Doris Gun (Grade II). The park as a whole has been entered on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest (Grade II). As such, any planning applications will be subject to consultation with the Garden History Society who *expect that any proposals would not compromise the historic design of the park*. English Heritage have stated that they would expect decisions to *follow from an analysis of the history of the park and how it is used today*.

There are no tree preservation orders, areas identified with particular wildlife interest, nor scheduled ancient monuments, although the surviving parts of the Devonport Lines merit conservation. The park adjoins the Stoke and Milbridge Conservation Area; the area boundary is in the process of being revised and it is proposed that this will include the majority of Devonport Park. The park is detached from the Devonport Conservation Area, with which it has a greater historic, cultural and civic affinity.

The initiative to restore Devonport Park arises directly from the Plymouth City Council Corporate Strategy, *Strategic Choices* and the Devonport Development Framework, with particular reference to the Open Space Network and the Devonport *Green Arc*.

The Devonport Regeneration Company (DRC) is a body led by the local community, and funded by the Government's *New Deal for Communities* initiative. A regeneration programme has been set out in the DRC Delivery Plan *Devonport People's Dreams* (2001) supported by the City Council, English Partnerships, the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and the Government Office for the South West. A Devonport Development Framework (83) (DDF) has been produced to ensure that the Delivery Plan's physical, economic and community initiatives are fully integrated and to establish a basis for project co-ordination, planning decisions, guiding investment decisions and aiding project promotion. The major changes set out in the DDF will follow the *New Deal for Communities* programme and hope to be achieved by 2011, with a long-term deadline of 2016 in line with the overall Plymouth City Local Development Framework.

Devonport Park falls under two identified 'opportunities' in the DDF Audit and Analysis Summary; significant areas of public open space which are hidden assets that can be brought to major public use; and a *Green Arc* of recreational facilities. The *Green Arc* is proposed as a seamless link around Devonport, linking the park, sports facilities in Brickfields and Mount Wise with pedestrian and cycle routes.

The Devonport Park Green Space Strategy<sup>(88)</sup> develops these ideas further and has identified the following key objectives for the development of the park:

- To ensure the development of the park links into wider city strategies and the Devonport Development Framework
- To ensure full social inclusion and create a sense of communal ownership
- To ensure access for all
- To provide a high quality environment that people will want to visit
- To promote the park's heritage and use of the Lodge
- To improve the play area
- To provide a space to freely exercise with good quality sporting facilities

In the wider context, Devonport lies within the Plymouth City Single Regeneration Budget area, accompanied by further initiatives including Neighbourhood Regeneration Areas and the Millbay regeneration initiative, a critical link between the City Centre and Devonport.

### 4.3 Geographic Context

Devonport Park is located between Devonport and Stoke, suburbs of the city of Plymouth, on the higher ground west of the Hamoaze, the estuary of the rivers Tamar, Tavy, and St Germans or Lynher river. At its highest point the Park is 46m above sea-level, gently sloping off to the west and south, with steeper slopes facing north. Devonport lies on an Upper Devonian slate bedrock, resulting in partially clayey, slightly acidic soils.

Population statistics (table 1) reflect the level of local deprivation with three key distinguishing features between the Devonport and Stoke communities: high levels of Council tenancies and low car ownership in Devonport, and a slightly older population in Stoke. Both communities suffer levels of unemployment significantly above the national average (3.4%).

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>Devonport Ward</b>	<b>Stoke Ward</b>	<b>Plymouth average</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>14,287</b>	<b>12,146</b>	<b>240,720</b>
% aged under 20	28	22	25
% aged 20-60	57	57	54
% aged 60 and over	15	21	21
% white ethnic	98	98	98
% unemployed	4.8	3.9	3.2

% 16-74 without car or van	47	33	30
% retired	9.6	11.8	13.9
% looking after home/family	8.3	6	6.4
% permanently sick or disabled	9.2	7	6.6
<b>Households</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>5,784</b>	<b>102,540</b>
% with dependent children	29	25	28
% owner occupied	41	66	64
% rented from the City Council	32	6	16
% rented from Housing Associations	7	4	6 source (3)

#### 4.4 Community Involvement

The first formal and comprehensive public consultation about the park was carried out for the *green space strategy* (88) in 2004 and established the importance of the park to the local communities, with an above average return rate of questionnaires addressing its future. Of the responses from local residents, just over 20% visited the park everyday and a further 26% visited the park two to four times a week. The three principal reasons for visiting were *general recreation*, the *children's play area* and *dog walking*.

Key findings of the consultation were:

- half of respondents only rated the park as *average*;
- half of respondents visited the park at least once a week, over 20% daily;
- the two most popular reasons were *general recreation* (over 50%) and *play area* (35%);
- traditional swings were the most popular type of equipment, but further consultation also selected shared-use moving equipment;
- only 11% used the miniature cycle track;
- while the bowling green was popularly rated good, football, tennis and basketball facilities were regarded as needing improvement;
- the most popular proposed use for the lodge was as a café;

- 60% thought that the old Gas Cleansing Unit should be restored (rather than demolished) and 96% thought the monuments should be restored;
- 90% would like to use the park more often, with 85-95% saying they would respond to better lighting, public toilets, a café and a Park Warden.

While there were many comments supporting a wide range of improvements to the park, some useful and specific comments were received from a sports facilities workshop which identified:

- the need for a central building facility for supervision, refreshments, changing rooms and toilets;
- scope of Parkside College to secure funding for an ATP 5-a-side (football, netball, badminton and tennis) on their grounds for school and community use, to complement the park's facilities;
- the need to provide for young people's physical activities, such as roller-blading;
- a wish to reinstate the putting green and improve opportunities for young people to access the bowling green;
- the need to improve drainage of the football pitches;
- the desire for a jogging track.

The *Make Devonport Park Your Park* open day took place on 4 March 2006. 130 visitors completed a questionnaire on the future of the park. An analysis of the results revealed that:

- 90% of the respondents identified Safety and Security as the biggest issue to be tackled in the restoration project, and that 74% would use the park more regularly if this was improved. Increased staff presence was seen as the most effective way of improving security.
- 80% supported the idea of an events area, and further park open days was also a popular proposal.
- Toilets and a café were considered to be the highest priority for new facilities, followed by changing rooms, a better play area and information displays on the history of the park.
- The vicinity of the bowling green was cited as preferable to the Lower Lodge for the location of park facilities.
- The relocation of the play area was not cited as priority, with most supporting refurbishment of the existing site. However, it has been suggested by the Friends that

the question on this issue was asked in a leading way, and that the results do not reflect the actual prevailing views.

The questionnaire respondents were mainly from Stoke and Devonport, but others came to the Devonport Park open day from various other parts of the city and beyond. The majority of the respondents were of the 55-64 age group, closely followed by 45-54 and 35-44; the least represented age group was 18-24.

Devonport Park is the focus of a Healthy Parks initiative, organised by Plymouth City Council in conjunction with the South and West Devon Health Authority. A leaflet has been produced to encourage exploration of the park, with discovering its heritage as the main theme.

Friends of Devonport Park is open to all park users and plays a major role in the decision-making process for the future of the park. Regular meetings are held with a select committee comprising of Stoke and Devonport residents. The Devonport Regeneration Company is also responsible for ensuring community involvement with any developments.

The Devonport Training Centre based in the nursery area is run by Pluss in conjunction with Plymouth City Council Public Health Department. It specialises in skills for working life, and NVQ level 1 and 2 qualifications in horticulture. Students are taught on and off-site and training includes gardening and woodwork. There can be as many as 24 students on site on any one day (including eight disabled students) and 7 members of staff. Some teaching of students from the College of Higher Education also takes place. The centre is subject to regular vandalism, and has an ineffective CCTV system with poor security lighting. There is a small amount of on-site staff car parking, and a range of buildings including staff offices, student common room, classroom, woodwork room, various stores, glasshouse and a polytunnel.

#### **4.5 Access and Accessibility**

Devonport Park's great popularity conceals the historic purpose of the glacia as a killing ground, yet public appreciation of it is constrained to this day by barriers established in the eighteenth century, and reinforced by modern urban development. Only two minor pedestrian routes cross the route of the Devonport Lines into the park (figure 35), excepting Fore Street and Park Avenue where noise and volume of traffic act as robust

barriers to quiet enjoyment and pedestrians alike. Park Avenue, in particular, separates off the western end of the park creating a quite different visual character, albeit remaining as the most important open space in the park for outward views.

The park is reasonably well served by bus routes, Devonport railway station, and lies adjacent to the National Cycle Network route 27 (figure 35). Pedestrian accessibility from Stoke is good, but constrained from Devonport, and of poor quality due to the heavy traffic on the strategic traffic route along Fore Street and Park Avenue. There are no proposals to downgrade this route. Current proposals in the road safety audit (85) recognise the need to improve the quality of ten road crossings and entrances into the park. However, the Devonport Development Framework also proposes a major new cycle route, with extensive earthworks, in the western area of the park, linked to two new crossings.

Vehicular access into the park, serving Higher Lodge and the training centre shares two of the proposed main pedestrian and cycle routes. There are no public car parks in or adjacent to the park, and only limited on-street parking on Fore Street and in Stoke. The park is, therefore, not suitable for major events which would attract travel by private car.

While the roads and Devonport Lines create perceptual barriers, the partial removal of the park railings in the Second World War also removed a clear signifier about the difference in acceptable social behaviour between the highway and the park. In a public park, purpose and speed should not have priority; parents should have more confidence in the safety of their children; and higher standards of supervision and communal social responsibility apply. A reduction in these social standards, which arises when parks are not defined, creates new perceptual barriers, discouraging many from the enjoyment of the park, reducing it to a through-route or short-cut to work, school or college.

Except for the northern and western parts of the park, paths are gently sloped and serve a variety of desire lines and circuit routes, long identified as a virtue of the park's 1856 design. The upper plateau which gives rise to such fine outward views inevitably yield to steep slopes to the north and east. The path layout generally provides alternative, more gently sloped routes for the northern paths, but the western part of the park retains discouraging steps, busy traffic on Park Avenue, and exposed expanses of short grass which reduce the accessibility of this area.

The park is currently used for sports by Parkside Community Technology College and other local groups, but there is no other organised educational or interpretation activity or events, apart from the walks and tours arranged recently leading up to the current project.

#### **4.6 Landscape Condition, Management, Maintenance and Administration**

Devonport Park is principally run from the main parks depot in Central Park, but also from a minor depot in Brickfields (possibly subject to closure in 2006). Until the end of the 1980s there were ten gardeners dedicated to Devonport Park and a Park Keeper. Staff were trained in the old Nursery site. There are now only two parks officers allocated to the maintenance of the park, who are also responsible for a number of other areas including Block House. The levels and quality of park maintenance and staff presence have therefore declined rapidly over the last fifteen years, having an inevitable detrimental affect on the historic landscape and its features and, as a result, deterring potential users.

The continuing popularity of the park partly reflects the robust nature of the original design, and the hard work of the remaining park staff. Despite this, the site survey has inevitably identified some key weaknesses in the condition of the park:

- the overgrown and weedy condition of shrub borders in particular areas, along Exmouth Road and New Passage Hill;
- the removal of some path junction shrubberies;
- damage, graffiti and lack of maintenance to many key structures and built features, the memorials in particular;
- irregular, and partially formal, specimen tree planting in several parts of the park which impacts upon designed views, vistas and the design character of the different areas of the park landscape;
- damaged and missing railings;
- degraded and uneven path surfaces;
- compacted and poorly draining sports pitches;
- the loss of some key specimen trees and shrubs;
- poor quality bedding displays;
- poor quality play area;
- the visual quality of some areas encouraging further minor vandalism, leading to a spiral of decline.

The parks services are actively considering a return to site-based staffing, but the present administrative reporting structure mitigates against holistic and balanced management of an individual park. The current organisation diagram is as set out in table 2.

Management responsibility for the park rests primarily with the Parks Service, supported by officers from other directorates.

The budget for the maintenance of the park is allocated wholly to the parks services, with access to various core Council services, and currently totals £95773 per annum, broken down as set out in appendix 5.

#### **4.7 Statement of Significance**

The park's inclusion on the English Heritage Register of *Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*, means that it has been identified as having historic significance on a national level as a good surviving example of a Victorian public park, with a wealth of regionally and nationally important monuments. However, it is of especial historic significance to the people of Devonport and Plymouth, a fundamental part of the history of the dockyard, the development of the town of Devonport, and a product of the local community, with monuments reflecting the importance placed on nautical and military history.

There are a number of specific features and aspects of the park that contribute to its historical, social, botanical and aesthetic significance:

- A well documented park, with particular value in the extensive Council minutes charting its development from the 1850s onwards. Cited as an example by Harriet Jordan in her study of 'Public Parks, 1885-1914' (89).
- An important urban green space valued by the local community.
- A bridge between two suburbs of Plymouth city, Devonport and Stoke, and regarded as a key to urban regeneration in a deprived area.
- Upstanding wall sections of the Devonport Lines; mid eighteenth and early nineteenth century fortifications, to Devonport Dockyard, one of the three principal Admiralty ports in England alongside Portsmouth and Chatham.
- The origin of the park as the Glacis; the killing ground, designed to function with the historic Devonport Lines.
- The 1850s development of one of the earlier English public parks, only fifteen years after the first major public park at Birkenhead (1843), and contemporary with the People's Park,

Halifax, and Battersea Park, London (early 1860s), and the earliest purpose-built public park in Plymouth.

- Planting design partly by F W Meyer of Veitch and Son; one of the leading nursery firms of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, of national importance.
- The Doris Gun; one of three surviving Boer War guns in the UK.
- Unusual First World War memorial mentioning the Royal Flying Corps.
- Second World War; site of much activity, with a surviving Gas Cleansing Centre, and air-raid shelters recorded on the Site and Monument Record (77,78).
- The setting for two listed memorials and the listed lodge, all integrated into the park design.
- Location of architectural salvage from buildings bombed during the Second World War, including, it is thought, the Town Hall and Widey Court, famous as the residence of Prince Maurice and King Charles during the Siege of Plymouth in the 1640s.

#### 4.8 Objectives

On the basis of the above analysis, the following objectives for conservation, restoration and management are put forward for consideration:

- i. wherever feasible, to conserve archaeology and surviving historic landscape fabric of earlier landscapes *in situ* including any evidence of the field archaeology related to the Devonport Lines and the Second World War; where this is not feasible, to conserve by recording;
- ii. to conserve and restore the historic character of the park by the active conservation and restoration of the historic landscape, its features and areas, to the *last significant design phase*, based on the best available evidence (Ordnance Survey of 1907, photographs and written records), but subject to avoiding works which would increase the impact of modern development on the historic landscape;
- iii. to conserve and enhance biodiversity primarily through the restoration of the historic landscape rather than by the creation of the new habitats;
- iv. to encourage appreciation, interpretation and intellectual access to the park heritage through publications, interpretation and events at Devonport Park;
- v. to hold, display and interpret copies of key archival evidence for the historic landscape, and improve public appreciation of the designed landscape;
- vi. to seek funding and partnerships towards restoration and management projects consistent with coherent priorities, phasing and a programme of works;
- vii. to seek to retain and enhance protection of Devonport Park through the planning system;

- viii. to maintain and improve access and welcome to the park for people with disabilities, wherever this is practicable;
- ix. to improve the sense of community ownership and responsibility, and reduce anti-social activity in the park;
- x. to improve the economical and environmental sustainability of Devonport Park as a whole and establish a secure financial basis for the coherent management of the park;
- xi. to involve people of all backgrounds and abilities in the improvements and enjoyment of Devonport Park.



## **5.0 GENERAL ISSUES AND PROPOSALS**

### **5.1 Archaeology and Statutory Protection**

#### *Issues*

The Devonport Lines are of great historical significance both to the history of Devonport and the wider context of British military history and dockyard development. At present, the sections of the Lines that survive in Devonport Park do not have any statutory protection as listed structures or scheduled ancient monuments. Similarly, Higher Lodge, the Napier fountain, Sicilian fountain, Galatea monument and Sea captains memorial, all integral features of the nineteenth century park, have no form of statutory protection. A surviving but sealed air raid shelter is recorded on the sites and monuments record.

Below ground archaeology related to the Lines and, perhaps more likely, associated with Second World War structures may come to light with new development in the park. While such sites may be unlikely to warrant statutory protection, the possibility for archaeology needs to be taken into account in planning any significant excavations.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Consult the City Council archaeologist prior to significant earthworks or excavations. Carry out evaluations and investigations of a Second World War air raid shelter and the Gas Cleansing Centre to identify if occasional access or interpretation can be justified.
- ii. Seek to schedule (or list) the surviving parts of the Devonport Lines to protect them from adjacent future development (as with the Hilsea Lines in Portsmouth).
- iii. Consider listing the currently unlisted built features of historical significance to the nineteenth century park, including Higher Lodge.
- iv. Support the extension of the Stoke and Milbridge Conservation Area, or designation of a new area, to ensure proper control over development. Extend the Area boundary to include the entire English Heritage registered landscape.

### **5.2 Park Facilities**

#### *History*

From the earliest records of the park, it was used for *Military Evolutions*, sports, with a Lodge planned on the site of Granby Bastion, but built at the park entrance. By the 1890s there

was a urinal in a shrubbery and a bandstand, replaced later in the decade closer to Higher Lodge, which also served refreshments. By 1933 there was the full range of facilities including tennis courts, putting and bowling greens, and public lavatory. It was only in 1989 that Higher Lodge was leased out, staffing reduced dramatically, and public facilities were removed from the park.

#### *Existing Condition*

Devonport Park currently offers a play area with a rarely used miniature children's cycle track and a range of sports facilities including football pitches, a basketball net, tennis courts, and a bowling green, scattered across the park. These are all, apart from the bowling green, in poor condition and require investment. The provision of a central refreshment outlet, toilets and a meeting space for community-based activities has been identified in public consultations to date as the key facility that the park does not currently provide.

Higher Lodge is a privately run nursing home with 25 bedrooms. It is on a long lease from Plymouth City Council, and could only be recovered through a mutual agreement between the Council and the tenant. It is very popular in Devonport, and has a long waiting list. Devonport Park is a significant part of the attraction of the home for potential clients and their relatives. The current owners intend to run the home until retirement and are just about to invest a substantial sum in restoring the exterior ironwork. They would encourage more integration with the park if security was improved.

The children's play area has been cited as in need of improvement, with provision for a wider age group. Dog walkers entering the park from Durrant Close walk their pets across the eastern end of the play area, despite this being designated as a dog-free zone. Limited youth facilities have also been identified as an issue in the park, and the lack of activity for young people in the park is partly blamed for a decrease in the overall sense of security. A skating facility or kickabout area has been proposed by local residents.

Lower Lodge is currently empty and requires considerable repair. The lessees, Devonport Regeneration Company, would prefer the building to be put into public use, however, their priority in the short term is to prevent further decay and have the building occupied in some way. The Devonport Park Training Centre have said they would be interested in using the lodge as office space, subject to its restoration.

*Proposals*

- i. Brickfields already offers considerable facilities for organised sports, as will Parkside Technology College, who are applying for funding to develop a small multi-sports pitch in the school grounds for both school and community use. Nevertheless, it should prove possible to improve the performance of Devonport Park's existing grass pitches without undue impact on its overall character, as this is consistent with part of the park's history. The tennis court could be refurbished purely for tennis, or as a multisports court.
  
- ii. Create a main park facility which combines the requirements of a refreshment kiosk, meeting space, lavatories and, ideally, changing rooms, in view of the play area, to form a central hub of activity for the park in a viable and sustainable location. Table 3 sets out four options for possible locations for the site of this facility:

While option 4 (Higher Lodge) would have major heritage and viability benefits, consultation with the assets department of Plymouth City Council and the lessees of Higher Lodge Nursing Home has confirmed that total or part conversion of Higher Lodge is not feasible. Option 1 has proved to be less popular with the public consultation feedback to date and Lower Lodge is poorly suited to conversion. The exceedingly high standard of architectural design required for option 3, along with limited site capacity, makes option 3 a less feasible and potentially highly contentious option.

Option 2 is considered by all to be the most acceptable and desirable solution for the park facilities as long as there is no future prospect of re-converting Higher Lodge. A sketch design proposal is included as appendix 7. Development of a much-enlarged new play area, however, would mean relocation of the play area to a highly sensitive site not favoured by the Garden History Society, and therefore unlikely to be given planning permission. For this reason, Option 2, is recommended to redevelop the Bowling Pavilion, but with a considerably improved existing play area, as in options 3 and 4.

- iii. A significant upgrade of the play area and facilities is essential if the park is to meet its regeneration and community potential. Consultation has substantiated objectives for the new play equipment to include accessible equipment; active, shared equipment; traditional swings; toddler play; and some form of skating. While an

intensive skateboard area is probably not appropriate within the park due to impact on residential neighbours, lack of evening supervision and visibility, impact on the registered historic landscape, and its exclusive nature, such a facility could be located in an adjacent part of Brickfields. However, informal roller blading and roller skating may be acceptable on the wide oval walk, particularly for younger children.

Parkside College is proposing to develop a supervised multisports pitch; the question for the park is if there is enough demand and a revenue budget to justify a duplicate or similar pitch on the same footprint at the tennis courts. Devonport Park was awarded funds from the Barclays Spaces for Sports Programme to refurbish the old tennis courts in 2006. Further funds are being applied for in 2007 to develop the use of the courts by the local community. It is recommended that the courts accommodate multisport use including the basketball net, allowing removal of the outdoor gym, criticised by the Garden History Society.

### **5.3 Interpretation and Education**

#### *Issues*

Devonport Park does not currently have any form of permanent interpretation, information boards, park plans or exhibitions. There is a disused timber sign board of distinctive design in the memorial garden, and a historic record of a signboard close to the Bowling Green. Information concerning the park facilities and heritage can be found via a number of internet sites, including the Plymouth City Council website, but this is not specific to Devonport Park. Existing local publications are similarly limited and there is consequently limited formal awareness of the park's history amongst the local community.

Although there are a number of schools and colleges in the immediate vicinity including Parkside Community Technology College the only known use of the park by students involves the playing fields.

Devonport Park Training Centre is based in the historic nursery area and trains horticulture students to NVQ level 1 and 2, often within the Plymouth Work Opportunities programme. The centre is linked to the nearby College of Further Education.

The Friends of Devonport Park have received funding from the Devonport Regeneration Company to support their activities, which includes the production of a regular newsletter,

particularly important to maintain enthusiasm during the Heritage Lottery Fund application process.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Erect simple entrance signs at all entrances to reinforce the identity and boundary of the park.
- ii. At a central location, the proposed café, provide a detailed interpretation panel providing historic information and a space for advertising park events and notices for the Friends of Devonport Park. Provide further robust interpretation at key locations around the park.
- iii. Establish a Friends of Devonport Park website providing up-to-date information, park history, information and contact details for the Friends group, and links to other Devonport and Stoke community websites.
- iv. Engaging local schools in the life and care of the park is of mutual benefit. Park officers could provide this service to a certain extent, but a wider range of activities including the environment, arts, history and science of the park, targeted specifically at curriculum requirements, would require input from a dedicated Plymouth City Council education officer.
- v. The Devonport Park Training Centre provides a good foundation for further training and volunteer programmes linked with the park and the local communities. Some of the training is not specific to the nature of the site and could be delivered elsewhere. There will need to be closer coordination between Parks and Social Services to achieve this. Training should include taster sessions, NVQ level 1 and 2 horticulture, with two apprenticeships linked directly to the park restoration project.
- vi. Devonport Park has potential to become a Plymouth Blitz interpretation site, given the excellent outward views of Plymouth, and using surviving wartime features and the striking recollections of local residents. The latter should be recorded and archived by the Friends of Devonport Park and Plymouth Museum. Links should be sought with any surviving American veterans stationed in Devonport. A comparable project has been initiated by Exeter City Council where footage and recollections of the Blitz have been sourced for a special exhibition and permanent collection at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, but a careful and limited reopening of one air raid shelter, accompanied by audio effects and local recollection, would provide a unique experience for local school students.

## 5.4 Accessibility and Audience Development

### *History*

Paths were surfaced in gravel during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but by 1908 asphalt was introduced creating a hard surfaced area around the Higher Lodge bandstand. £150 was spent tar-spraying the paths in 1931, and it was probably during this period that the patterned drainage tiles were introduced along path edges, replacing earlier stone channels which still exist in places today.

### *Issues*

Existing paths are made up of a number of surfaces, principally tarmac and concrete. The concrete surfaces, many of which are grooved on steep gradients, are generally in good condition. Long sections of some of the paths have become cracked and disturbed by mature tree roots, as well as suffering from potholes, moss growth and subsidence resulting in poor drainage. A simple semi-circular gutter running along some sections of path becomes blocked with leaf litter, and a patterned, textured line of small paving slabs designed to channel water and common to many of the paths in Devonport Park has been poorly covered by resurfacing tarmac in places, leading to poorly-drained path surfaces.

The topography of Devonport Park has particular implications for physical access. The northern slopes and New Passage Hill involve paths with steep gradients and stepped entrances.

Park Avenue and Fore Street are the key access routes into Devonport and are therefore very busy roads. A pedestrian crossing is available at the Ferry Road/Park Avenue junction, but none has been installed at the southern end of Park Avenue, nor is there a fully safe crossing place from Brickfields to the Fore Street entrance of Devonport Park. The pedestrian entrance from Devonport via Granby Street is a popular but contorted choice of two narrow paths around Durrant Close, cutting through the park railings.

To date, the analysis of park users and their activities has been limited to a questionnaire conducted as part of the Devonport Park Green Space Strategy document. However, the precise numbers of visitor entering and leaving the park at various locations is not known. Users of the park overwhelmingly come from Devonport and Stoke. While it is not intended to change this fact, user questionnaires have identified perceptions about safety and security as primary concerns, followed by a need for better public facilities if the park is to meet its full potential.

### *Proposals*

- i. Retain and clean regularly existing intact grooved concrete surfaces on steeply sloping paths. Lift damaged surfaces and replace with a fine asphalt surface.
- ii. Conduct an access audit of proposals during the design development stage to ensure that limitations of the site are addressed wherever feasible in line with English Heritage guidance.
- iii. Reinstall handrail to stepped entrances.
- iv. Provide textured interpretation boards, scented plants and clearly defined path edges for visually impaired visitors.
- v. Pursue options with the Council highways department to offer safer and more inviting entrances to the park for pedestrians in line with the road safety audit. Improve the safety of road crossing points, provide a new crossing to Park Avenue on the historic path alignment.
- vi. Conduct a detailed visitor survey to provide a more accurate picture of the main park users, circulation routes and demand, to aid more informed decision-making for audience development.
- vii. Produce a detailed and monitored Audience Development strategy during the design development stage of the project. Initiatives proposed under this plan include:
  - improved perception of public security through the reinstatement of park railings;
  - dedication of a park keeper and other parks staff to the site, resulting in a permanent presence rather than a larger roving team;
  - improved public facilities and activity within the park, through development of a visible café, and occupation of the lower lodge;
  - improved management of ornamental planting, reducing the shady shrubberies;
  - the reduction and removal of tempting targets for graffiti, and early performance targets for graffiti removal;
  - improved visibility across the park;
  - improved lighting;
  - an intensive range of *Friends* activities and public events;
  - use of the park for schools education.

## 5.5 Site Furniture and Signage

### *History*

By 1894 a number of seats were located alongside shrubberies and at strategic path junctions, and lamps had been erected along principal walks. Further iron seating was installed in the late 1890s, and an ornate iron and wooden slat bench appears in a photograph of 1898. A variety of modern steel and concrete bench and litter-bin designs are found in the park today, generally in poor aesthetic condition.

### *Issue*

Devonport Park has a range of bench, litter bin, lamp-post, bollard and dog-waste bin designs, as well as a variety of railing patterns. This results in a lack of unity in the visual appearance of the park, but also complicates the management of a maintenance regime and detracts from the historic character and significance of the park.

Currently, there is one set of poor quality signposts at the centre of the park directing visitors to the bowling green, tennis courts and play area. There are no signs to indicate the name of the park, main entrances and exits, or any of the other facilities or monuments, nor is any signage to the park from routes through Stoke, Devonport or Brickfields. A speed limit traffic sign is in place along the nursing home entrance drive.

### *Proposals*

- i. Replace existing litter bins with a good quality standard cast metal model, sympathetic with the character of the Victorian park. The two remaining fluted 1930/1950 concrete bins should be salvaged, restored and relocated to the 1930s Italianate Shelter.
- ii. Reinststate robust iron and wooden slat benches, based on the design photographed in the memorial garden in 1898, to the historic locations across the park. The detail design may need to be trialled on site to ensure robustness and maintenance. Benches will, in any case, require a high level of maintenance and repair expenditure.
- iii. Repaint ironwork and paint signage to a single historically accurate colour, probably green, based on professional scratch testing of surviving railings.
- iv. Select a simple, standard street light design for illuminating the main walks which cross the park.
- v. Reduce the visual impact of the CCTV posts by painting and, where possible, attach to existing structures.

- vi. Replace white steel bollards with the original, historic cast iron design found along the drive to Higher Lodge nursing home.

## 5.6 Vandalism and Security

### *History*

As early as 1897, Devonport Park was subject to vandalism with railings being *wilfully broken*. In 1914 *local labourers* were brought in to assist the Park Keeper with *maintenance of order in the daytime*.

### *Issues*

Between June 2003 and June 2005, 28 offences were reported as taking place in Devonport Park. Considering the urban context of the park, this crime statistic is not excessive, but, the perception of many park users and non-users is that the park is unsafe. The Green Space Strategy cited better lighting and a park warden as the two most important factors that would encourage people to use the park more often.

Lighting currently consists of a variety of street lamps. There are two CCTV cameras, which are monitored from a central control room. There are only one or two members of staff working during the day in the park.

While path junctions and other shrubberies are part of the essential design and character of the park, some of these have become overgrown, creating threatening spaces to park users. This issue is heightened by the proximity of the shrubberies to main footpaths.

The presence of youths hanging around the park is also considered to be an issue that decreases the sense of security for park users.

### *Proposals*

- i. Reinststate the park boundary railings as a major historic feature of the park, but also to delineate the boundary of Devonport Park. This latter point has the potential to increase the sense of moving from the street environment into a public park, with different standards of social conduct. Highly visible sections should be reinstated or repaired with the original historic railing design; where obscured by undergrowth and along less visible lengths of the boundary, a less costly, simpler alternative is considered to be acceptable. This strategy reflects some of the early photographic

evidence. Consultation with the police has also welcomed the help that a boundary fence would provide in supervising access into and out of the park.

- ii. Increase staff presence, including a full-time Devonport Park Keeper, with a dedicated parks staff allocated to the site. In the short-term, capital works to restore Devonport Park would increase activity and supervision on the site. An increased park budget to reflect this and other management proposals listed below is included in appendix 5.
- iii. Reduce the perceived risks of the shrubberies by increasing the density of underplanting including prickly species, dramatically pruning back, reshaping and reducing height alongside footpaths, and subsequently intensive maintenance to create a denser mass of lower plants. Reinststate historic low hoop-top fencing to discourage access, and protect vulnerable trees and shrubs from dogs. To control costs, use of the hoop-top railing will be limited to the key risk areas (play area, fountain garden, memorial gardens, and central shrubberies).
- iv. Ensure shelters and benches are visible and well-lit.

## **5.7 Grassland Management**

### *History*

Early records indicate that this area of the park was grazed by sheep from before 1828 until, possibly, as late as 1933 when many of the shrubberies were still fenced off.

### *Issues*

The existing grassland and lawns, with the exception of the bowling green, are managed on a single regime, gang mown on a fortnightly basis in season, supplemented by strimming of edges, banks and corners.

Although the amenity grassland areas are of low ecological value, and management does not accord strictly with the early historic record, it is nevertheless low cost, robust, and appropriate to high levels of public access. Such work can be carried out by increasingly efficient machinery, although close monitoring is needed to ensure that the subtleties of edges and boundaries are followed in a designed landscape.

### *Proposals*

- i. Continue to manage largely as at present, with an increased commitment to underdrainage, spiking, feeding, oversowing and decompaction of sports pitches; and to regularly edge beds and borders by hand.

- ii. Small lawns around the fountains and bedding areas need to be mown intensively with smaller machines.
- iii. Central areas of New Passage Hill, offset two metres from path edges, remain important for outward views, but are less critical for public and events access. It is therefore proposed to recreate a part of the Glacis character by managing the grassland on a more extensive regime, without cutting between April and mid July each year. This will allow some wildflowers to re-establish and bloom, bringing a small part of the Countryside into the City.

## 5.8 Tree and Shrub Management

### *History*

Devoid of trees until the 1850s, small shrubberies were planted by 1867 which included some ornamental species, as well as oak, Turkey oak, Holm oak, Deodar, and Monkey Puzzle. Maritime exposure has always been understood in the park, with commemorative planting of a Holm oak and Meyer's and/or Chalice's use of *Pinus nigra* var. *Cebennensis*, in 1895.

### *Issues*

Since about 1980 there appears to have been quite a dramatic rash of tree planting across the park to infill some open spaces and plant irregular avenues along walks. The impact of this is now being felt with the progressive loss of some views, particularly to the south. While the shelter from exposure may be welcome in a few instances, much of this planting is entirely at odds with the park's historic character and designs.

Many of the existing shrubberies contain evidence of equally distinctive and well-informed shrub planting, primarily of circa 1895-1907. Later planting with Cordyline, heathers, New Zealand flax, ash, Monterey cypress, walnut and Norway maple have weakened that character, but there remains extensive evidence of the earlier plantings: *Aucuba*, yew, *Escallonia*, *Ligustrum lucidum*, *L. ovalifolium*, *Griselinia*, *Mahonia*, holly cultivars, *Euonymus japonicus*, *Olearia macrodonta*, *Pittosporum*, *Laburnum*, *Crataegus x lavalleyi*, *Berberis*, *Philadelphus*, *Cotoneaster*, *Viburnum tinus*, bay, Deodar, Cornish elm, *Prunus 'Pissardii'* and tamarisk. As these plants are a significant element in the historic significance of the park, it is not proposed to substitute native plants.

### *Proposals*

- i. Heavily and progressively thin trees planted since 1970 to infill open spaces and to create irregular avenues along paths where these conflict with the historic record, unless there are overwhelming cultural, wildlife or political reasons for their retention.
- ii. Tree works will need to be preceded by an intensive programme of public consultation, talks and walks, to explain proposals.
- iii. Shrubberies will need to be carefully pruned or coppiced to allow regrowth, and re-planted to include ornamental plants on the historic records from circa 1895.

## **5.9 Sustainability and Biodiversity**

Sustainability is, in essence, about ensuring that activities today do not reduce the choices for future generations. The following initiatives in managing Devonport Park seek to improve sustainability:

- improve the quality of the local environment, reducing the incentive to travel further afield
- increase the use of cycling to access the park, and to cross the park for trips to school or work
- facilitate the use of public transport to visit the park
- recycle park wastes through composting
- minimise waste arising from visitor facilities
- minimise the use of noxiously treated timbers
- encourage the use of local produce
- use hardy plant stock
- minimise the use of inorganic fertilisers and pesticides
- select long-lasting products for hard landscape features
- adopt energy conservation measures
- wherever feasible, new roof drainage will be fed into water storage tanks for reuse, overflowing to soakaways
- provide education and training on sustainability
- protect and enhance biodiversity

Biodiversity is addressed specifically through the grassland management proposals, compliance with the law regarding bird nesting and bat roosts, together with the provision

of nest and roost habitats as part of the new building proposals. Peat is not required for use on the site, and peat-free plant suppliers would be selected. Herbicide use would be carefully managed, and minimised by the extensive use of mulches produced on site.

### **5.10 Skills Training**

Devonport Park offers significant potential for heritage and horticultural skills training, including basic horticultural skills; advanced pruning and other horticultural skills; specialist iron-work restoration and conservation; and monument maintenance and conservation. In particular, the site benefits from the presence of the existing training centre, although at present there are few direct links between the centre and management of the park. Garden and landscape restoration works could be implemented, in part, using a mixture of direct labour, new recruits, trainees, apprentices, and volunteers, working with contractors, supervised by a head Park Keeper and a skilled horticultural technician, capable of providing a full and diverse training for apprentices, with some unmechanised and lower skill tasks for volunteers. Training for horticultural staff and trainees should reach NVQ level 2 or 3, to care for the high quality bedding and shrubberies on the site.

Training expertise will need to be actively sought for in the recruitment and tender processes for staff and contractors.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Develop wide-ranging schemes for training in partnership with the training centre to increase training activity in the park, and ensure that training contributes to the park restoration. In particular, the park should provide for the full range of skill levels, from school taster sessions to NVQ level 3 apprenticeship.

### **5.11 Volunteer Involvement**

The restoration of Devonport Park also offers considerable scope for high levels of volunteer involvement. This has the potential to greatly increase the community's role in the park, and develop a stronger sense of shared ownership and responsibility for its future maintenance. Volunteer involvement could include:

- light pruning, weeding and deadheading
- bulb planting
- periodic litter removal and clearance to address problem areas
- small tree planting and maintenance

- wildlife surveys
- archaeological investigations and recording
- wildflower enhancement work on New Passage Hill
- volunteer stewards for special events days
- hosting the Friends' website
- archival research and oral history recording

Volunteer activity will need to be subject to a code of practice, coordinated by a dedicated officer. Volunteer groups could include public, local community groups, schools, business or other partners, special interest groups, or a mix of these, depending on the task.

From the park open day questionnaire (4 March 2006), 35 respondents said they would be interested in getting involved with the Friends Group, 17 with helping to maintain the park, 12 with running activities, 11 with planting new areas; 5 were interested in organising events.

### **5.12 New Art and Memorials**

There is a clear potential for tension between the wishes of individuals and groups to commemorate an event or a personal loss by planting of trees, or the sponsorship of new art works or plaques, with the objective of conserving a designed, historic public park. While it is desirable that parks should reflect the lives of the local communities, the removal of commemorative trees mistakenly planted, and temporary works of art can be time-consuming, sensitive and expensive. A clear policy should be adopted to avoid future disputes or erosion of the landscape character, based on the following principles:

- A public park is not generally a suitable location for private memorials of the type found in cemeteries or woodland interment sites. The park should be, primarily, a place of active enjoyment for the local community.
- New memorials or artworks should not impact on the existing historic, archaeological, aesthetic or ecological values of the park.
- Sites for new, major significant national memorials may, occasionally, be identified after extensive consultation; these should generally be identified in the restoration plan process, and should add to the park's values, and not distract from existing values.
- Ephemeral activities, environmental or event art may be encouraged provided it relates to the specific nature of the park, and is removed on completion.

- Memorials may be undertaken as a form of sponsorship for the replanting of trees, provision or replacement of benches or other features only where these would, in any case, be required for the conservation and management of the park as a whole. This might include, for example, the replanting of the correct tree species to replace a historic specimen lost previously, or the placement of a bench at a designed viewpoint. Such work should not be guaranteed to be maintained for more than ten years.
- Commemorative plaques attached to such benches should be engraved brass, no larger than 100mm x 50mm, with engraved lettering, painted black. These plaques may be removed after ten years.
- The sponsorship or commemorative cost of features or artworks should include capital costs, maintenance and cleaning costs for ten years, plus removal costs where appropriate.

Devonport Park has very limited capacity for memorial and commemorative tree planting and the historic design of the park should not be compromised. The mature lime trees of the Jubilee Avenue, a feature not part of the original design concept, now block a designed view across Plymouth Sound. At the end of the safe, natural life of those trees, perhaps in a hundred years, it may then be decided not to replace the avenue.

### **5.13 Future Research**

#### *Issue*

Devonport Park's history as a public park has resulted in a large quantity of documentary records. While a major portion has been analysed for the purpose of this report, some work remains, in particular, to assess the complete set of Council minutes for the last 150 years. Furthermore, the significant role of the park for the local community, means that there is a considerable potential for an oral history archive and previously unrecognised private collections of memorabilia.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Further research or archival information should be deposited with the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, and used to inform design development of this project and future revisions of the Conservation Management Plan.
- ii. Volunteer archivists, working under the auspices of the Friends of Devonport Park, should be trained and encouraged to make oral history recordings, and further develop the Devonport Park archives. Initially work should focus on the Second

World War history, as a key part of the park's unrecorded history, with considerable scope for on-site interpretation and education.

#### 5.14 Procurement, Project Management and Programme

The project would continue to be managed by a core project team of Council officers, together with an external consultant landscape architect, reporting to a Council project board. This approach has ensured that several parts of the Council are involved in the details of the project, and that the needs of the Council are fully addressed.

It is envisaged that the bulk of the main hard landscape work would be let as a single, conventional contract following competitive tender, with a separate packages of new building and smaller specialist building and monument conservation works.

Soft landscape works would be carried out on a labour plus material costs basis by the Council's own parks department staff, to ensure a high level of ownership of the work, supported by two horticultural apprenticeships, and volunteer placements where feasible. An experienced head gardener or parks operator would be recruited to manage this process, to become the Park Keeper, supported by an education, volunteer and outreach officer. Additional labour and specialist subcontractors would need to be recruited due to the scale of the landscape planting works.

The following outline programme for the project is proposed:

Submission to the Parks for People programme	September 2006
Stage 1 Award	May 2007
Design Development Stage, including listed building and other consents	July 2007 – January 2008
Stage 2 Award	May 2008
Tender process and working drawings	July 2008 – October 2008
Works on site	December 2008 – December 2009
Increased maintenance commitment	December 2009 – December 2019

During the development stage, the potential for the Devonport Community Land Trust to manage and maintain Devonport Park through a service level agreement with the City Council, will be investigated. The Trust is a not-for-profit company, established by the Devonport Regeneration Company, with shares owned by local people, and which has already been taken over management of Brickfields, adjacent to the park.

## 6.0 AREA-BY-AREA PROPOSALS

The following section outlines restoration, management and development proposals for individual areas of the site, as subdivided on figure 1. Proposals are illustrated in the Devonport Park Masterplan, appendix 7.

### 6.1 Napier Fountain and the Memorial Garden

*Outline history:* Agricultural fields in the early eighteenth century, *Little Barn Park* and *Upper Way Field*; part of the Devonport Lines glacis from 1739. Modified by the rearrangement of Fore Street around 1817.

By 1834 crossed by a footpath, and the land is recorded as part of the Ancient Glebe. Lower Lodge built 1858 with a substantial cast iron and stone gateway. Napier Fountain (1863) and Chatham Memorial (c.1859) erected and the surrounding areas planted on a circular, Victorian *Italianate* theme. By 1892 the formal bedding of the Napier Fountain garden contrasted with the more Picturesque shrubbery planting of the Galatea Monument (1871), enclosed with a low wall, railings, and hedge in late nineteenth century photographs. Memorial Garden, similarly enclosed, with a principal circular path, further surfaced areas around the monument, specimen planting and seats outside the northern boundary.

By 1907, the northern boundaries of the Napier and Memorial gardens were extended with shrubberies; by 1933 some of the large trees were cleared and later photographs show the Napier garden and the area in front of the Galatea monument laid out with curved formal flower beds and mown lawns.

*Condition:* Napier Fountain missing original features and derelict, one urn remains from a late twentieth century restoration; surrounding hard standing resurfaced with modern mock granite sets and supporting three modern concrete planting troughs. The Napier Fountain garden as a whole is fenced off by a mixture of nineteenth century iron post and rail fence and modern hoop-top and straight steel designs; 1950s flower-beds grassed over but retaining mature Cordylines and mixed shrubs. To the rear, an area of mature trees and shrubs include fine Holm oak. The Galatea memorial remains in good condition and surrounded by original iron railings. Salvaged carved stone, possibly from the Town Hall, displayed on the lawn alongside Fore Street.

The Chatham Memorial garden is carefully tended and partly planted with small memorial trees. The Chatham Memorial is largely intact but the surrounding planting and rockery has become overgrown. Nineteenth century gate and post and rail fence at entrance, otherwise enclosed by modern steel railings. Some granite set surface, tarmac surface and wooden slat benches around memorial. Empty timber notice board adjacent entrance.

The original 1858 entrance gatepiers remain, but the gates and park railings are missing.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Restore the Napier Fountain to conservation standards, to working order.  
Reinstate the bowl in storage, and replica spouting cherubs.
- ii. Reinstate seasonal lighting by uplighting of the fountain and garden.
- iii. Reinstate the formal flower beds and gravel paths as close as possible to the historic layout depicted in figure 12; plant with abundant spring bulbs and summer annuals.  
Focus effort on a smaller area then planted in the 1950s, and reinstate the picturesque shrubbery around the Galatea memorial.
- iv. Replace the modern fences around the Napier and Memorial Gardens with an interlaced hoop-top railing, and closely clipped hedge or shrubs.
- v. Thin the Memorial Garden shrubberies, reinstating the 1907 layout of the hardstanding around the Chatham memorial. Remove modern hard paving.  
Remove dead trees (deodar) and replace key specimens that fail.
- vi. Restore and reuse the wooden information board, in this location.
- vii. Halt the use of the park for further personal memorials; keep existing plaques tidy and progressively remove any that are not cared for, or by consent of the families concerned, such as by transfer of plaques to restored benches.
- viii. Restore the railings either side of the entrance to the park to the ornate cast iron pattern evident in early photographs, with matching vehicular and pedestrian entrance gates.
- ix. Reinstate a simple vertical railing design beyond the first section, along the rest of the road frontage, in accordance with the historic records;
- x. Carry out minor conservation repairs to the Galatea and Chatham memorials, including reinstatement of lettering.

## **6.2 Nursery**

*Outline history:* Upper Way field and Clay Pit Field in 1739, part of the open glacia, shown fenced off from Fore Street in 1784 and 1834. Lower Lodge built in 1858, and enclosed

within a small circular garden by late 1860s. Area surrounding the Lodge enclosed by a wall and railings, densely planted with trees and shrubs, and including two glasshouses, cultivation ground and a further building by 1892. Notable arc of trimmed yew and *Araucaria* already in place. *Park Nursery* first used to identify the area in 1895, marked on Ordnance Survey map by 1907 as a larger area of *Nursery*, with three additional horticultural structures, and Lower Lodge extended. Extensive cultivation evident in 1946. Additional horticultural buildings in place by 1966.

*Condition:* Lower Lodge, unoccupied and in need of urgent repair; section of nineteenth century post and rail fence outside the Lower Lodge; hedge opposite the Memorial Garden incorporates hidden sections of estate fencing; range of portacabins, sheds, modern greenhouses and hard-standings form the nursery, now the Devonport Park Training Centre, run in conjunction with Plymouth City Council Public Health department; area of lawn, flower bed and some of the trimmed yews around the Lodge intact; Centre enclosed by hedge from the rest of the park and from Fore Street. Vehicular access via the main park entrance and off the path that runs east of the Memorial Garden, with some car parking outside the site and visible in the park.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Restore the Lodge to conservation standards, to the 1907 form, for use as the park keeper's accommodation, to reinstate its historic role and function, and improve security in the park. The nature of the Lodge is seriously limited in terms of capacity and accessibility, which would limit alternative uses.
- ii. Remove the visually intrusive temporary buildings and car parking along the western and north-western boundary and reinstate this boundary with hoop top railing and shrubberies, to enclose the training centre buildings. In the longer term, seek to replace the ad hoc buildings with new split-level facility providing secure teaching accommodation and storage. The new building should be sustainable, fit-for-purpose, but also of modest cost and robust. Visual impact will be limited by its more central location, planted screening and low, split-level, profile.
- iii. Maintain the garden area to the lodge for informal seating, with the arc of trimmed yews, and make available for plant sales and outdoor seating by the Training Centre and Friends.
- iv. Minimise vehicle access to this area, instructing staff to park off site (on Fore Street), and restore part of the parking area to park.
- v. Improve security for the training centre by the installation of a steel railing fence inside the enclosing shrubbery hedge, with secure gates.

### 6.3 East Park

*Outline history:* Formed from parts of *North and South Warden, Upper Field, Clay Pit, Upper Way and Little Barn Park* fields; a large open space of the Glacis, crossed by the Dock leat by 1809; Devonport Lines and trench running along the western boundary. Crossed by a footpath to Tamar Terrace by 1827 and a second footpath by 1834. Network of parkland walks laid out by the late 1860s with shrubberies at junctions and a stepped entrance in south-west corner. North east corner entrance from Milne Place formed by 1892, and planted with an enclosed shrubbery; Tamar Terrace forecourt removed and park wall erected; Stopford Place entrance simplified and planted, with seats installed along the southern side, presumably with views of the Lower Lodge and beyond to Mount Wise. Octagonal bandstand, Holm oak avenue and line of young limes shown along the eastern boundary also all in place by 1892.

By 1907, the 1895 works are plotted with a new lime tree avenue and the straight paths crossed by curving walks, and with a new entrance in the southeast corner; bandstand converted into a shelter; further planting along Tamar Terrace with additional spur path leading to Acre Place entrance, with solid lines to show fences to protect the putting green and some shrubberies. Railway tunnel alignment plotted. Tennis courts and pavilion, putting green, war memorial and small shelter south of Stopford Place shrubbery plotted 1933. Gas decontamination unit, hut bases and a water tank shown in 1946; two structures south of Stopford Place and the relocated Putting Green to south of the tennis courts, by 1955. Tennis pavilion demolished in 1984; Exmouth Road stopped up with car parking and pedestrianised area by 1992.

*Condition:* East Park characterised by a large number of small and large trees and shrubberies including three tree-lined walks; a heather garden with rockery of recent date; rose beds and mature specimen shrubs around Stopford Place entrance. Tennis court retaining walls and corners intrusive, pavilion demolished, square open shelter erected to the north, originally with seating that has now been removed; nineteenth century perimeter cast iron railings survive along the western boundary with some sections replaced with modern alternative, steel railing. Wall and entrance posts survive along eastern boundary, partly replaced by a low hoop top railing; Gas cleansing centre unoccupied and derelict; visually intrusive electricity connection unit situated close to Acre Place entrance; shelters removed near Stopford Place and foundation slab as a bench platform; fragment of carved

stone located near Fore Street entrance, marked *P&Co established 1798*. Most upstanding walls support graffiti. Several open grass areas extensively planted with young trees.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Thin parkland trees planted recently in this area to restore and retain the open character of the historic designed landscape, and the designed views over Plymouth from the Oval Walk.
- ii. Remove shrubberies planted in open lawn areas since 1966 (none having been planted 1907-1966), except the single high quality heather bed which should be restored.
- iii. Restore historic areas of ornamental planting around the main path junctions; edge the footpaths with a low hoop-top railing fence; grade the planting from low plants nearest paths, and prune to re-establish shape, size and density.
- iv. Remove the base of the Stopford Place park shelter, restore the Stopford Place and Acre Place formal gateway entrances to create a better welcome with clearer path layout, and to exclude parked cars from the gateways. Restore ornamental planting, and the line of the original park boundary.
- v. Remove the modern park shelter north of the tennis courts.
- vi. Upgrade the existing tennis courts and fences and hire out for public use. Chamfer the corners of the tennis court to remove the visually intrusive concrete retaining walls with graffiti.
- vii. Prune back and restore ornamental planting in the north-east corner.
- viii. Reinstate historic parkland railings along the eastern boundary.
- ix. The Gas Cleansing Centre is a magnet for vandalism and graffiti, but is also said to be the best surviving example of its type in the City. Secure by enclosure with steel vertical railings, clean and repair so that it is available for interpretation, park event storage and suitable low key letting (such as for a model railway club).
- x. Reset the 1907 granite step which impedes access at the south-east corner entrance, by regrading the surface to the park path.
- xi. Retain the original bandstand base, and repair masonry as necessary.
- xii. Replace the visually intrusive boulders used to control vehicles in the park by a single automatic barrier at the south-west entrance, so that visitors are controlled by Higher Lodge.
- xiii. Decrease the negative visual impact of the electricity connection unit through the use of anti-graffiti paint, shrub planting, or, preferably, negotiation of removal with Western Power.

## 6.4 Sicilian Fountain Garden

*Outline history:* By 1765, part of Granby Bastion, Devonport Lines. Incorporated into the park after 1882, certainly by 1892. Laid out as an oval garden centred around a fountain and circular pool by 1907, and enclosed by a fence. Photographs of around 1900 confirm the fence to be a low hoop-top railing with an adjacent low hedge, the areas of lawn planted with ornate bedding, and, after 1903, Cordylines and planted, free-standing urns. The fountain consisted of two concentric pools, the smaller decorated with rusticated stonework and four classical statues. The northern façade of the contemporary Higher Lodge, and the bandstand, formed backdrops to the garden.

*Condition:* Fountain derelict and overgrown; later ornate urns survive from a late twentieth century restoration; bowl removed. Perimeter *Escallonia* hedge, around five feet high, encompassed with modern hoop-top railings; early gate post surviving. Flower beds with some roses, grit area around fountain; garden accessible to the public but disheartening.

### *Proposals*

- i. Restore the fountain to working order, to the highest conservation standards, based on the photographic record. Add uplighters.
- ii. Reinstate historic circular and S-shaped flower beds; plant with spring bulbs and exuberant summer annuals as shown in circa 1903.
- iii. Coppice and weed *Escallonia* hedge and reinstate hoop-top railing fence and gates.
- iv. Reinstate the four footpaths emanating from the central fountain, and surface paths with resin-bonded buff grit in accordance with the distinction visible in the photographic record.
- v. Install four benches to encourage quiet public enjoyment.

## 6.5 Play Area and Doris Gun

*Outline History:* By 1765, part of Granby Bastion, Devonport Lines. Bastion and most of the Lines demolished in 1882, the smaller Admiralty reservoir fenced off, the boundary planted and the remaining area levelled, grassed over and walks laid out. A more complex network of paths and shrubberies added in the 1890s, in association with Higher Lodge, the fountain garden and the Jubilee Avenue. Doris gun memorial erected in 1904, surrounding area planted and enclosed with a low fence. Open, hard-surfaced rectangular area to the west of Higher Lodge indicated by 1933, site of *New Swings* and *Giant Stride* mentioned in 1931. Large rectangular play area and miniature cycle track laid out in late 1930s, in place by 1946.

*Condition:* Doris gun intact; separated with play area from main park with hoop-top perimeter fence. Play area equipment popular but of poor visual quality; miniature cycle track survives but rarely used; well-used but poor quality and steeply-ramped, narrow entrance to the park from Durrant Close; some sections of nineteenth century cast iron railings surviving along park boundary. Lime trees at west end seriously pollarded to improve light for Higher Lodge; mature beech to south edge, with roots lifting the concrete cycle track.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Improve and enlarge the play area within the constraints imposed by the historic design, including the Doris gun, boundary beech trees, oval walk, Sicilian fountain and Jubilee Avenue. The design brief should be to provide high quality modern play equipment for toddlers and juniors with a robust safety surface, without the use of large panels of primary colours. Water play is well provided at Mount Wise, with a regional play facility in Central Park. The priority here is to provide for local children. It may be necessary to find an alternative location for the play area if the existing site proves too constrained for significant improvement.
- ii. Reinstate a section of the Jubilee Avenue path to create a western entrance into the play area.
- iii. Restore and reinstate the sections of iron railings along the park boundary; add a formal gateway close to the Durrant Close entrance, and lay out a new path which allows the dog-walker to enter the park without crossing the dog-free zone of the play area.
- iv. Remove the redundant miniature cycle track to improve growing conditions for the boundary trees, and offset the play area from the nearest neighbours.
- v. Carry out conservation work to the Doris gun to the highest standards, reinstating its original 'memorial' colour; replant shrubberies adjacent and reinstate railings to enclose and protect the feature.

## **6.6 Devonport Lines**

*Outline History:* Middle and Upper Middle field until construction of the Marlborough and Granby bastions and the creation of an adjacent trench in the 1750s/60s. Part of a fenced area of the glacis in the 1780s, termination of the Dock leat by 1809. Site of the Admiralty Reservoir by 1857, but a perimeter path and park boundary following the trench initially; by 1892, fenced off from the rest of the park, the fence cutting off a line of trees and an adjacent park footpath from the rest of the park. By 1907, the fence again realigned to allow

for the Jubilee avenue, a second fence erected and rough grass lay between the park and the reservoir. A rifle range established in the western trench by 1933. Reservoir and trench filled in, unfenced and operating as a football pitch by 1970.

*Condition:* Large section of the Lines surviving, forming the edge of a well-used football pitch; subject to graffiti and supporting a high chain-link fence.

*Proposals*

- i. Maintain as a grass football pitch without floodlighting or other visual clutter. Improve the quality of pitch by regular aeration, drainage and turf care.
- ii. Seek protection of the Lines through statutory designation. Carry out a detailed condition survey and carry out repair and maintenance works arising. Seek to retain or improve the ballstop fence as this allows the area to continue in its current use, for which there is demand but no alternative location in the park.
- iii. Provide basic and robust on-site interpretation of the Lines, Sally Port, Bastions and Barracks in the vicinity.

## 6.7 **Oval Walk**

*Outline history:* Farmland in 1739, and later a central part of the Glacis. Path junction and viewpoint by the late 1860s; crossed with two additional straight walks, also meeting at the viewpoint junction and its seats, by 1892. Wide oval walk, kidney-shaped shrubberies and a new bandstand added circa 1892. Bandstand enclosure modified, bowling green, pavilion and First World War memorial added by 1933; bowling pavilion enlarged and wide path laid out south of the bandstand by 1946. Temporary structures erected during the Second World War. Bandstand completely removed by 1966.

*Condition:* Site of bandstand marked with a planted bed; bowling green and modest pavilion in good condition although pavilion lacks changing rooms; basketball net, mini outdoor gym and small football pitches located near bandstand site; isolated kidney shrubberies survive from the 1895 layout. Recent planting of trees around the Oval weakens the original landscape character. War Memorial damaged by vandalism.

*Proposals*

- i. Heavily thin out the trees planted either side of the Oval walk and other paths as loose avenues.
- ii. Restore areas of ornamental planting to the 1895/1907 layout by pruning, thinning and replanting.

- iii. Repair and restore the War Memorial to the highest conservation standards. Provide uplighting, resurface the apron, and reinstate iron railings to discourage misuse.
- iv. Relocate basketball net and outdoor gym activity to an alternative, less intrusive site, outwith the park. Provide for similar use of a multisports site.
- v. Replace and redevelop the Bowling Pavilion site to provide the central park facilities including a small café, public lavatories, and shared use meeting and changing rooms. The design brief should be to avoid interruption of the historic path routes, be set back from the bowling green, retain the specimen pine tree, and allow for separate, public access to the club room, changing room, lavatories and café. The pine tree root area is to be protected by the use of decking, but the enclosing shrubs have to be removed if the café is to enjoy a southern aspect and encourage public use. An architectural sketch scheme is attached as appendix 7.
- vi. Use the site of the bandstand and adjacent hardstanding to provide an open events space with a shallow paved area equivalent to the bandstand stage, and an outdoor power supply.

## 6.8 North Park

*Outline history:* Furze fields before 1739, rough grass and gorse, grazed as part of the Glacis. Crossed by a single *footway* by 1834. Laid out with a series of walks by the late 1860s, meeting at a junction planted with a large shrubbery by 1872. Portland and Milne Place entrances planted with trees and shrubs, and a urinal constructed within the shrubbery by 1892. Additional Lower Milne Place entrance, path junction planting, a new rectangular shelter, the Jubilee Avenue and a three-sided fence (for sport?) added by 1907. Health centre built in 1930; Second World War temporary structures laid out along paths with evidence of extensive subterranean shelters along the Milne Place boundary. Park Avenue constructed in 1957 severing one walk and modifying the termination of others.

*Condition:* Slopes to Milne Place with scattered modern tree planting. Central shrubbery now reduced to open-grown trees. Site of the 1890s rectangular park shelter now a modern concrete and brick construction with graffiti. Some of the 1895 shrubbery plantings and Jubilee Avenue survive; 1930 health clinic still in use, greatly altered entrance with imposing disabled access ramp; northern boundary railing wall in place, railings removed; building platforms from Second World War works evident on north slope; steep concrete-surfaced paths to Portland and Milne Place.

*Proposals*

- i. Retain and thin, over time, young trees on the north slope, as the open character of the historic design is heavily compromised here without important outward views, and extensive changes beyond the park boundary.
- ii. Reinststate boundary hedge and fence around the Health Clinic.
- iii. Restore ornamental planting either side of the lower Milne Place entrance.
- iv. Reinststate the path route which historically linked the northern New Passage Hill entrance with the Oval, and designate as the Torpoint Ferry pedestrian and cycle route as part of the Devonport Regeneration *Green Arc*. Create a new controlled pedestrian crossing across Park Avenue. Zig-zag back to upper Ferry Road entrance to avoid steps.
- v. Prune and restore ornamental planting at junctions west of the oval.
- vi. Remove the relict of the reconstructed park seat as none of the historic fabric survives. Better cast iron 'Carron' shelters remain elsewhere in Plymouth and some of the role of this shelter has been superseded by the Italianate shelter, down hill.
- vii. Maintain existing grass football pitch north of Jubilee Avenue and improve pitch quality.
- viii. Restore railings along the northern boundary with a simpler modern design of the historic railings, as elsewhere in the park.
- ix. Investigate the air raid shelter during the development stage of the project to identify the scope for interpretation, in particular targeted at organised group visits. If feasible, an underground location would be ideal for using oral records and sound effects to interpret the Plymouth Blitz.

## 6.9 **New Passage Hill**

*Outline history:* Mostly *Pritchard's Furze Field* in 1739, glacis and the Marlborough bastion after the erection of the Lines. *New Passage* a new road to the dockyard through the far western end of the glacis, built by 1809. Illustrated in 1828 as rough grass, with a mud path and views of the Hamoaze. Crossed by a triangular network of paths with three entrances to Lower Portland Place, and either end of New Passage Hill road, the most southerly laid out with steps; connecting paths with the rest of the park, by late 1860s. Northwest entrance and connecting path closed off by 1892 and stepped entrance redesigned with a tripartite staircase and planted with trees, reopened by 1907, with new path leading to the Oval Walk planted at junctions and line of shrubs shown along New Passage Hill. Additional new path and shelter in place by 1955; divided from the rest of Devonport Park with the

construction of Park Avenue in 1957, existing walks terminated and rearranged to lead to the Park Avenue/Ferry Road junction. Jubilee Avenue extended and additional mature trees shown by 1970. By 1977, the Park Avenue/Ferry Road junction widened and the previously extended shelter path rearranged to emerge further south along Park Avenue.

*Condition:* The least used area of the park but essential open foreground to views to the west. Italianate shelter subject to vandalism and graffiti, but robust. Damaged but surviving sections of nineteenth century park railings along western boundary, modern hoop-top replacement along most of the Ferry Road boundary. New Passage Hill entrances survive in historic condition although with missing hand-rails and a missing lamp on the southern entrance, marked with a commemorative date plaque for 1858.

#### *Proposals*

- i. Suspend mowing regime to central areas March – mid July, to allow establishment of more species-rich hay-cut grassland with a higher biodiversity value. Continue to regularly mow strips either side of the walks.
- ii. Prune, weed and, where necessary, replant the ornamental shrubbery areas.
- iii. Restore trees missing from the Jubilee avenue extension, along southern boundary.
- iv. Repair shelter and vandalised seating. Maintain with a clean Italianate finish.
- v. Reinstate handrails on the stepped entrances; repair and repaint surviving ironwork.
- vi. Repair and restore boundary railings along New Passage Hill.
- vii. Maintain open views across trading estate car park to allow views to the surviving Devonport Lines wall, south of the park boundary, and consider acquiring a small area of the eastern end of trading estate car park to reveal the surviving corner of the Devonport Lines as a visible marker of the entrance to the historic dockyard.
- viii. Reinstate the severed diagonal path up to the Park Avenue crossing, to link with 6.8iv above.