

Date: 13 June 2025 Our Ref: RFI4289 Tel: 0300 1234 500 Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

By Email Only

Dear

RE: Request for Information - RFI4289

Thank you for your recent email, which was processed under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

You requested the following information:

On 14th March 2023 the Leader of Plymouth City Council approved an "urgent decision" on the felling of trees in Armada Way. The report recommending this decision included a message of support for the wider project from Homes England (dated 19th January 2023).

I write to request disclosure under the EiR of all correspondence and communication between Homes England and PCC on the project. This should include all letters, emails, meeting notes, and reports sent to or received by Homes England in your communications with PCC

Response

We would firstly like to apologise for the long delay in providing this response to you. Our handling of your request has fallen outside the time for compliance as set out in the EIR and below the standards we strive to provide. We also recognise that we have not kept you sufficiently informed as to the progress of your request, we are really sorry about this.

We recognise now that the information you have requested may no longer relevant to you, however we have endeavoured to provide you with a response which follows below.

We can confirm that we do hold the requested information. Please see Annex A below. Please be advised that in addition to the exception outlined below, some information has been redacted as it is out of scope of your request.

Regulation 13 – Personal Data

We have redacted information on the grounds that in constitutes third party personal data and therefore engages Regulation 13 of the EIR.

2nd Floor, The Lumen St James Boulevard, Newcastle Helix Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5BZ 0300 1234 500 @HomesEngland www.gov.uk/homes-england



Date: 13 June 2025 Our Ref: RFI4289 Tel: 0300 1234 500 Email: <u>infogov@homesengland.gov.uk</u>

To disclose personal data, such as names, contact details and email addresses could lead to the identification of third parties and would breach one or more of the data protection principles.

Regulation 13 is an absolute exception which means that we do not need to consider the public interest in disclosure. Once it is established that the information is personal data of a third party and release would breach one or more of the data protection principles, then the exception is engaged.

The full text in the legislation can be found on the following link: <u>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/3391/regulation/13/made</u>

Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the EIR. In accordance with this duty we can advise that Homes England has been involved in the wider regeneration of Plymouth City Centre, contributing to strategic discussions and the overall masterplan. The relationship with Plymouth City Council has subsequently derived from that wider scheme, rather than any specific project on Armada Way.

Right to make Representations

If you are not happy with the information that has been provided or the way in which your request has been handled, you may request a reconsideration of our response (Internal Review). You can make this representation by writing to Homes England via the details below, quoting the reference number at the top of this letter.

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

The Information Governance Team Homes England 2nd Floor The Lumen St James Boulevard Newcastle Helix Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 5BZ

Your request for reconsideration must be made in writing, explain why you wish to appeal, and be received within 40 working days of the date of this response (Reg 11(2)). Failure to meet this criteria may lead to your request being refused.

2nd Floor, The Lumen St James Boulevard, Newcastle Helix Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5BZ 0300 1234 500 @HomesEngland www.gov.uk/homes-england



Date: 13 June 2025 Our Ref: RFI4289 Tel: 0300 1234 500 Email: <u>infogov@homesengland.gov.uk</u>

Upon receipt, your request for reconsideration will be passed to an independent party not involved in your original request. We aim to issue a response within 20 working days.

You may also complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) however, the Information Commissioner does usually expect the internal review procedure to be exhausted in the first instance.

The Information Commissioner's details can be found via the following link https://ico.org.uk/

Please note that the contents of your request and this response are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Homes England may be required to disclose your request and our response accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

The Information Governance Team For Homes England

2nd Floor, The Lumen St James Boulevard, Newcastle Helix Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5BZ 0300 1234 500 @HomesEngland www.gov.uk/homes-england

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Homes England

One Friargate, Coventry, CV1 2GN

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We're the government's housing accelerator. We have the appetite, influence, expertise and resources to drive positive market change. <u>Find out more and help make this happen</u>.



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Hireg. 13

I have now had confirmation the following wording can be used from Homes England. Please use this instead of that provided to us earlier today.

Many thanks

reg. 13

Homes England has stated: "Homes England are keen to see the proposed works completed along Armada Way. The designs are to be commended and will encourage opportunities for residents, workers and tourists to rest, shop, exercise, eat and play. The city centre is in need of regeneration and the works to Armada Way will help attract private sector redevelopment and investment, which in turn will help grow the local and regional economy. Public sector commitment to Plymouth on this scale, with a kilometre long public park, sends a clear and positive message to the market. It is exciting times for Plymouth, as the city centre gears up in its ambition to transform into a thriving multifunctional place, with a mixed use community fit for Plymouth's prosperous future."

OFFICIAL

From: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Sent: 19 January 2023 13:16 To: reg. 13 homesengland.gov.uk>; Communications <<u>Communications@homesengland.gov.uk></u> Subject: Armada Way - Confidential

OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE

reg. 13 & Comms

Importance: High

Please see attached our Member briefing to go out today which includes reference to Homes England and support for our Armada Way project on Pg5. If you could confirm acceptance asap would be very much appreciated. As said, this is a Member briefing, however it is likely to be shared with members of the public who wish to find out more about the progress of the project. Ignore all the red/yellow text, this is for our comms purposes.

If there is opportunity for reg. 13 to add any further support to expand the statement it would be very much

welcomed.

Thanks



Strategic Planning and Infrastructure **Plymouth City Council Ballard House** West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

www.plymouth.gov.uk



OFFICIAL

Thanks^{reg. 13}

The same process applies. Homes England policy is:

- 1. We are provided with wording for the proposed communication so we fully understand the context.
- 2. We provide our additional wording to fit within the communication.
- 3. We are informed where it is to be published.
- 4. We approve the final draft prior to release.

We cannot provide an open letter for an organisation to use for any external communication.

If reg. 13 can get something over to our Comm's email this week, we will provide a quick turnaround.

Many thanks



OFFICIAL From: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Sent: 17 January 2023 19:59 To:reg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk> plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13 plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13 Ceareg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk>; Communications <sreg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk>; reg. 13 <<u>Communications@homesengland.gov.uk</u>> Subject: Re: Armada Way

OFFICIAL

It's not an article we want to use your quote to confirm HE support the armada way project

Get Outlook for Android

From: reg. 13	@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Sent: Tuesday, Janua	ary 17, 2023 5:59:46 PM	
To:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Cc:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>; reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13
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<communications@< td=""><td>homesengland.gov.uk></td><td></td></communications@<>	homesengland.gov.uk>	

Subject: RE: Armada Way

HI reg. 13

Sorry for the delay in coming back. I sent an email to **reg. 13** on our Communications process a couple of weeks ago (attached). We have a strict policy for information that goes externally. We ask that you send us the article you wish us to add to. We can then add bespoke wording fit for purpose. We are not allowed to provide wording in a wider letter that can be used on an adhoc basis, as our Comms Team always require a final sign off.

Please can you send through the wording you will be using and where you want the Homes England statement to fit, then Comm's will come back quickly with appropriate wording you can include from Homes England? I have cc'd Comm's email to make sure we can provide a quick reply.

Many thanks



	OFFICIA	AL.	
From: reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>		
Sent: 14 January 202	23 18:01		
To:reg. 13	@homesengland.gov.uk>		
Cc:reg. 13	plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13	plymouth.gov.uk>; reg. 13	
<reg. 13="" @hor<="" td=""><td>nesengland.gov.uk>;reg. 13</td><td>@plymouth.gov.uk></td><td></td></reg.>	nesengland.gov.uk>;reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Subject: RE: Armada	Way	- Charles Mars	

OFFICIAL

reg. 13 we could really do with a letter of support next week from Homes England that we can publish regarding the importance of investment in public realm and how this will provide an important context not only for your own future investment – under the Place Commission – but also future private sector investment. Is this something you can do for us? I think something along the lines you set out below perhaps slightly fleshed out would be very helpful. If you are prepared to do this can I request that you send this to the Leader (reg. 13) via me if easier) on your headed paper as soon as you can.

Thanks in advance, reg. 13



From: reg. 13	@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Sent: 28 November 2	2022 11:10	
To:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Cerreg. 13	plymouth.gov.uk>; reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13
<reg. 13="" @hon<="" td=""><td>nesengland.gov.uk></td><td></td></reg.>	nesengland.gov.uk>	
Subject: RF: Armada	Way	

reg. 13

Please accept my apology for missing this email. I have been extremely busy and clearly not been on top of my diary. I had totally missed this. Appreciate your diary is extremely busy as well. Please do send a suitable time and we can run through. I am happy to try reg. 13 for an update as well, as we wanted to be sure of the context any wording would be used.

Many thanks

reg. 13

OFFICIAL

From:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Sent: 22 Novembe	r 2022 18:45	
To:reg. 13	@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Cc:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>
Subject: Armada V		1

OFFICIAL

reg. 13 could I speak to you about this please. I am free 0845-0900 tomorrow if you are.

reg. 13

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

_____plymouth.gov.uk www.plymouth.gov.uk From: reg. 13 _____@homesengland.gov.uk> Sent: 22 November 2022 14:09 To: reg. 13 _____@plymouth.gov.uk> Subject: RE: Armada

HI reg. 13

Sorry - just got back. Can I ask - where are you putting the wording?

I am thinking something like this would be helpful...

Homes England are keen to see works completed along Armada Way, with the kilometre long public park offering opportunities for residents, workers and tourists to rest, shop, exercise, eat and play. It is exciting times for Plymouth, as the city centre gears up in it's ambition to transform into a thriving multifunctional mixed use community fit for Plymouth's prosperous future.

If we can know the context of where you want to use it we can tailor accordingly. PLEASE DO NOT USE YET. We just need to understand the context of where it will be used

Many thanks

OFFICIAL

From: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Sent: 21 November 2022 08:25 To: reg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk> Subject: Armada Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi reg. 13

Are you able to provide a short written response in support of Armada Way given HE have been aware of the plans for some time and see them as fundamental to the regeneration of the city centre? Unfortunately, I'll need it asap if possible..

Thanks



@plymouth.gov.uk www.plymouth.gov.uk

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Please forward any requests for information to: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

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Do not use, copy or disclose the information contained in this message or in any attachment.

For information about how we process data and monitor communications please see our Personal Information Charter.

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We believe that affordable, quality homes in well-designed places are key to improving people's lives. We make this happen by using our powers, expertise, land, capital, and influence to bring both investment to communities and to get more quality homes built.

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picture containing text	Description automatic	ally generated		

OFFICIAL



Subject: RE: Armada Way

OFFICIAL

Yes thank you very much reg. 13 for getting this signed off in what was a bit of a last minute rush!

reg. 13

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

@plymouth.gov.uk

From: reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Sent: 19 January 2023 19:59	-	
To: reg. 13 @homes	sengland.gov.uk>	
Cc:reg. 13	<u>ymouth.gov.uk</u> >;reg. 13	<pre>@plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13</pre>
@homesengland.go	v.uk>;reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;
Communications < Communication	ns@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Subject: RE: Armada Way		

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Thanks reg. 13 for your revised version which is appreciated as was turning this round very quickly, reg.

From: reg. 13	@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Sent: 18 January 2023	3 16:36	
To:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Cc:reg. 13	plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13
@home	esengland.gov.uk>;reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;
	mmunications@homosongland.gov.uk>	

Communications <<u>Communications@homesengland.gov.uk</u>> Subject: RE: Armada Way

OFFICIAL

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We cannot provide an open letter for an organisation to use for any external communication.

If reg. 13 can get something over to our Comm's email this week, we will provide a quick turnaround.

Hireg. 13

Sorry for the delay, our internal communications department have confirmed we are not able to provide wording to be used in general statements and requests should be submitted for each specific required case. If you are able to send the wider press statement(s) where you would like Homes England to add comment, they have confirmed they will review these quickly in each individual case. Not what I was expecting on this one, I had assumed it was a bit more flexible. They have also said, if PCC are looking for wording to be added to a website page, again, our comms team would need to see the wording on the page beforehand to enable us to add comments fit for purpose.

I can get a quick turnaround now they have confirmed the position, so if you can send something through we can ask our Comms to add comments.

Many thanks reg. 13

OFFICIAL

From: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Sent: 06 December 2022 14:51 To: reg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk> Subject: RE: West End Masterplan

OFFICIAL

How's that amazing letter of support for AW coming along !? :-D

reg. 13

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

<u>plymouth.gov.uk</u> <u>www.plymouth.gov.uk</u>

Out of Scope

OFFICIAL

 From: reg. 13
 @plymouth.gov.uk>

 Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2023 11:36 AM
 To: reg. 13
 @homesengland.gov.uk>; reg. 13

 To: reg. 13
 @plymouth.gov.uk>; reg. 13
 @homesengland.gov.uk>

 Cc: reg. 13
 @plymouth.gov.uk>; reg. 13
 @plymouth.gov.uk>

 @homesengland.gov.uk>; reg. 13
 @plymouth.gov.uk>
 @plymouth.gov.uk>

 Subject: RE: Armada Way
 Subject: RE: Armada Way
 @plymouth.gov.uk>

OFFICIAL



Following reg. 13 email below, attached is a letter we received from Historic England for info. Is it possible to have something similar addressed as reg. 13 states but if I could be cc'd would be much appreciated.

Thanks



Subject: RE: Armada Way

OFFICIAL

reg. 13 we could really do with a letter of support next week from Homes England that we can publish regarding the importance of investment in public realm and how this will provide an important context not only for your own future investment – under the Place Commission – but also future private sector investment. Is this something you can do for us? I think something along the lines you set out below perhaps slightly fleshed out would be very helpful. If you are prepared to do this can I request that you send this to the Leader (Councillor reg. 13 via me if easier) on your headed paper as soon as you can.

@plymouth.gov.uk>

Thanks in advance, ^{reg. 13}



@homesengland.gov.uk>;reg. 13



Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

reg. 13



From	@homesengland.gov.uk>	
Sent: 28 November 2	2022 11:10	
To:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>	
Cc:reg. 13	@plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13	plymouth.gov.uk>;reg. 13
@hor	nesengland.gov.uk>	

Subject: RE: Armada Way

reg. 13

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OFFICIAL

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reg. 13

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OFFICIAL
reg. 13 could I speak to you about this please. I am free 0845-0900 tomorrow if you are.
Thanks, ^{reg. 13}
reg. 13 Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ
[™] ¹³ E reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk www.plymouth.gov.uk
From: reg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 November 2022 14:09
To: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Subject: RE: Armada
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reg. 13

OFFICIAL

From: reg. 13 @plymouth.gov.uk> Sent: 21 November 2022 08:25 To: reg. 13 @homesengland.gov.uk> Subject: Armada Importance: High

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reg. 13

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Treg. 13 Ereg. 13 www.plymouth.gov.uk

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reg. 13

Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road Plymouth PL1 3BJ Direct Dial: Reg 13

Our ref: PL00351363

13 January 2023

Dear reg. 13

RE: Better Places Plymouth: Armada Way public realm proposals

I write further to your request for advice on proposals for the re-landscaping of Armada Way, following public opposition to proposals to remove some existing trees.

As you know, Historic England and its predecessor organisations have championed the unique qualities of Plymouth's City Centre for many years. No other city in England was re-planned on such a grand scale following the devastation of World War II, and the properties flanking its broad boulevards are some of the best buildings built anywhere in the 1950s.

Plymouth City Council recognises the significance of its City Centre, and recently conferred conservation area status on its core. Through the National High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, Historic England and Plymouth City Council are currently making a joint investment of over £4m to celebrate, enhance and adapt the City Centre's post-war heritage to make it a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time.

Professor Jeremy Gould wrote about the significance of Armada Way in the book *Plymouth: Vision of a modern city*, published by Historic England, which details the design and execution of the new city by Patrick Abercrombie and James Paton-Watson. "Abercrombie erased the whole of the old centre, its streets and most of its buildings and then drew a grand axis through them from the Naval Memorial on the Hoe to the railway station at North Hill. He declared the space a 'vista' for public enjoyment 'to be enriched by the landscape architect's and gardener's art"

In recent years the Armada Way streetscape has become tired and overgrown. The intended grand vista from North Cross to the Royal Naval Memorial is less apparent and the public realm is cluttered and incoherent.

In our previous consultation response to the public realm consultation on the Better Places initiative (letter of 13 May 2018) my colleague David Stuart advised on the proposals for Armada Way, noting "The proposals for Armada Way are particularly



1ST FLOOR FERMENTATION NORTH FINZELS REACH HAWKINS LANE BRISTOL BS1 6JQ Telephone Reg 13 HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.



impressive and we can see how they derive from the original Abercrombie aspirations for this route while attempting to improve upon some less successful aspects of their execution. Care will need to be taken that the significant tracts of hard landscaping will not unwittingly create areas which seem austere as an experience; the space is clearly at a grand scale and it is important that, however subtly, aspects of humanity and intimacy are allowed to feature to encourage people to dwell as well as parade."

We think this previous advice on Armada Way still holds true. We admire the attempt to recapture the grand scale of the original design concept, but care will be needed to ensure it is also an environment in which people are encouraged to linger. Armada Way was built for traffic and pedestrians, but the traffic has long been removed, leaving very broad areas of public realm which require an imaginative response if they are to be animated.

We recognise the value of the existing trees, and the strength of feeling at suggestions for their removal. We note that the plan proposes planting replacement trees, and we hope that a balance can be found between recapturing some of the original scale and grandeur of Armada Way, while addressing environmental and ecological concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Reg 13

Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas Reg 13 @HistoricEngland.org.uk



1ST FLOOR FERMENTATION NORTH FINZELS REACH HAWKINS LANE BRISTOL BS1 6JQ



Telephone Reg 13 HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

CITY CENTRE UPDATE #3

All councillor briefing note January



ARMADA WAY



We have been working on a modified design for the Armada Way regeneration project which is being published later *today or tomorrow*, as promised on our website. add link

This follows a decision by the City Council on 21 November 2022 to pause the Armada Way project to allow concerns regarding the removal of the existing trees to be considered.

A multi-disciplinary design team – comprising planners, engineers, landscape architects, urban designers, an ecologist and a specialist tree consultant looked at the original proposals to see if more of the existing trees could be incorporated within the project, while keeping the overall integrity of the scheme and its wider benefits.

This has been a detailed process of identifying every existing tree against the layout, while working with the demands on the space to make Armada Way as active and accessible as possible and encourage future growth for existing and new businesses alongside new homes as well as the need to provide a design that meets Department of Transport guidance for cycle ways.

The modified scheme now proposes retaining 24 existing trees and now has a total of 150 new semi-mature trees of various native and ornamental species more appropriate to a city centre setting.

Most of the new trees range from between six metres up to eight metres tall at the point they are planted, so they will have an instant impact.

After much discussion, an extra seven existing trees can be retained including four cockspur thorns, two wild cherry trees and a Swedish whitebeam. In addition a further three new trees will be added to the scheme. This brings the total number of trees in Armada Way to 174.

The campaigners asked for as many trees as possible to be kept but the design team had to take into account a number of factors. This includes the creation of a tree-lined avenue through the centre of

Armada Way, restoring our important historical connection to the Hoe, a combined ornamental and sustainable drainage stream in the middle, irrigating new green spaces, and a path and a new cycle route, which is critical to the scheme.

Other design considerations included existing and proposed drainage systems, which will form part of the urban sustainable drainage system, the considerable network of utilities underground, proposed levels to create multi-use, accessible spaces, along with the ease of long-term maintenance.

The design team also considered options suggested by campaign groups for translocation of existing trees. Some 25 existing trees were identified as potentially possible for translocation but this is now not being taken forward as it is not regarded as good arboriculture practice and the relocated trees are unlikely to survive the move.

Hoardings have been erected to meet health and safety requirements as Armada Way is now a construction site and is dangerous to enter. This should also reduce noise levels and unsightly work.

We have a short video <u>https://youtu.be/cZ0oxLjSZQE</u> (needs to be set live) showing a walkthrough of the scheme with new trees at expected size on planting which we hope will give you flavour of how the scheme will look once finished.

Plymouth Live last week published a story about the City Centre Company urging the scheme to go ahead. <u>https://www.plymouthherald.co.uk/news/plymouth-news/businesses-say-controversial-armada-way-8027454</u>

Questions

We are aware that some of you have been asked specific questions by campaigners and we hope the answers below will provide you with some reassurance.

Are there any bats?

We had previously commissioned a Preliminary Ecological Assessment which assessed Armada Way as having low habitat potential for bats. We commissioned a further update to the original PEA which again identified low potential, but recommended a further bat roost assessment.

We then commissioned a further assessment which included a detailed endoscopic inspection of trees to check for direct or indirect evidence of bats. The survey was delayed by bad weather but we have now had confirmation from the independently-commissioned ecologist that there are no signs of bats or bat roost constraints in the trees on Armada Way.

We have also been told they have not identified any other ecological constraints to tree felling and other site work in terms of important habitats or other protected species, i.e. if the tree felling is recommenced with immediate effect there are no ecological impediments to this.

What about the loss of tree canopy?

In the last two years the Council's Tree Planting Programme has resulted in 10,644 trees being planted in the city. This year (2022/2023) the Council will be delivering 30 tree planting schemes. These are funded predominantly through the Trees for Climate Fund. We expected to plant a further 5,763 trees across these various schemes in the coming months. The Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan supports tree planting and other decarbonisation initiatives which over time, as these and the new semi-mature trees in Armada Way mature, increase tree canopy cover in the city.

How does this fit with the Council's own Plan for Trees?

The Plan for Trees is about tree management and making sure the right tree is in the right place, with the right infrastructure and right aftercare to establish and grow well – "Right tree, Right place, Right care"

The current trees have no infrastructure underground to support healthy, long term growth and longevity.

The new trees will have large areas to grow into and be watered through our Sustainable Urban Drainage System and able to gain the nutrients they need to thrive, not struggle growing in cement, brick and post war rubble.

One tree where the hub is now was planted in just 30 cm of poor soil, another was planted near a manhole and its roots had grown all over it. We've had to remove numerous trees, as you can see on Armada Way where there are stumps, because they have failed.

There is nothing fundamentally at odds with the plans for Armada Way with respect the tree management principles or its delivery programme in the Plan for Trees.

What are the plans for maintenance?

The scheme has been designed to be as low maintenance as possible whilst providing the best scheme possible for the city centre. We are currently working with experts on regime and budget requirements for a 30 year maintenance period.

We have provided for enhanced maintenance for two years for all the new soft landscaping, including replacement and replanting, within the scheme budget, as well as for specialists working with our Street Services teams to establish a sustainable maintenance regime after that. We have been working with our Street Services team on how we can ensure the scheme can be maintained within the existing budgets. A key factor of reducing our maintenance liabilities is the replacement of the current surfacing with hard wearing robust surfaces which can better accommodate plant and machinery, including our new Cold Wash machine being brought in shortly.

We also collectively looking at other future maintenance options and opportunities, including possible section 106 funding agreements and other funding mechanisms with future city centre developers, particularly properties fronting ono Armada Way.

Why did you cut trees down at night? Did you have something to hide?

A number of trees were removed ahead of the installation of the knowledge hub. This was before we agreed to the pause.

It was carried out at night by our Principal Contractor because the work took place in the run up to Christmas and we did not want to interfere with shoppers. Given the heavy machinery involved, it is safer for the public and the contractors to have as few people around the site as possible.

Campaigners say the proposed new trees are saplings

Not true, the vast majority of new trees will be at least six to eight metres in height when planted, with some specimens being slightly shorter, but still semi-mature to mature trees. We have said this repeatedly.



PETITION FROM STRAW AND DEBATE AT FULL COUNCIL

The City Council received a petition from STRAW about the Armada Way trees, which will now be debated at the next Full Council meeting on 30 January.

It was received on 6 January and contains around 10,000 signatures, around 5,000 from postcodes within Plymouth's boundaries – two per cent of the city's population.

The petition says:

[•] Plymouth City Council is regenerating Armada Way and beautiful and well-established trees which make the city such

in doing so will be chopping down virtually all the beautiful and well-established trees which make the city such a nice place to be.

If you would rather they change their plans to incorporate a bit more of what we already have rather than bulldozing it flat then get behind our campaign to save the trees! They are more important than a glimpse of a view of the war memorial on the Hoe.

The council say they want more trees, so why not just plant more trees?'

If a petition receives 5,000 signatures it automatically triggers a debate at the next ordinary council meeting. The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting.

The relevant Cabinet Member then proposes a response from the Council and this will be debated by councillors. Councillors in the chamber will vote on Council's response to the petition.

Full Council is not the decision making body in relation to proposals for Armada Way. The debate is most likely to result in a recommendation to another committee of the council or the Cabinet as the decision maker.

The campaigners also submitted a letter with various points of action they required the council to do. As the petition did not include these details, this letter has been discounted and the debate can only be in response to the specifics of the petition which was signed.

MORE SUPPORT

The scheme has been further endorsed by a number of key organisations who have written letters of support.

South West Water's Director of Asset Management Mark Worsfold described the redevelopment 'as a once in a generation opportunity for storm runoff from impermeable areas historically connected directly to the combined sewer network to be separated out and be dealt with in a sustainable way'.

He went on: "The city centre area is the largest single area of paved area connected to the combined sewer in the Plymouth Central catchment and the removal of this flow from combined sewerage through the sustainable drainage elements of the public realm project will have a significant benefit across all of the above measures.

"We therefore fully support the proposals for Armada Way and the many benefits that this project will generate through better storm water runoff management. In our view this urban redevelopment is exemplar in the way surface water management has been incorporated into the design as a core principle. The benefits go far wider than simply creating a more inviting urban environment.

A full version of the letter is available as an appendix at the end of this briefing.

The Environment Agency's Acting Area Director Bruce Newport has also written in support of the scheme particularly in relation to the surface water and urban drainage.

"The scale of the redevelopment plan for Armada Way is welcomed and this helps to support the aims of the Government's National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, by increasing the resilience to climate change by utilising sustainable drainage solutions.

"This project will provide a key part of the new surface water drainage system that will link to other parts of the city centre, such as the current works on New George Street and the future works for the Derry's Cross area. The proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) incorporated into the overall landscaping plan will support the better management of water quality by filtering surface water and storing it during heavy rainfall, which is forecast to increase with climate change. Your proposals will also help support the nature of the local area and allow for better management of periods of drought.

"The environmental outcomes from these works are to support the aim of decreasing surface water flood risks to the Union Street area by providing a new surface water drainage system for the city centre. This in turn will allow surface water to be separated from the existing combined drainage system, which will result in less sewage spills into the sea, which will lead to bathing water quality improvements in Plymouth Sound. These outcomes support the city with its marine park status and the development of a high-quality public realm, that responses to our environmental challenges will enhance the growth of Plymouth as the ocean city."

A full copy of the letter is available in the appendix.

Historic England's Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, Simon Hickman has also welcomed the scheme, remarking that in recent years the Armada Way streetscape has become tired and overgrown.

In his letter he says: "In our previous consultation response to the public realm consultation on the Better Places initiative (letter of 13 May 2018) my colleague David Stuart advised on the proposals for Armada Way, noting "The proposals for Armada Way are particularly impressive and we can see how they derive from the original Abercrombie aspirations for this route while attempting to improve upon some less successful aspects of their execution.

"Care will need to be taken that the significant tracts of hard landscaping will not unwittingly create areas which seem austere as an experience; the space is clearly at a grand scale and it is important that, however subtly, aspects of humanity and intimacy are allowed to feature to encourage people to dwell as well as parade."

We think this previous advice on Armada Way still holds true. We admire the attempt to recapture the grand scale of the original design concept, but care will be needed to ensure it is also an environment in which people are encouraged to linger.

Armada Way was built for traffic and pedestrians, but the traffic has long been removed, leaving very broad areas of public realm which require an imaginative response if they are to be animated.

We recognise the value of the existing trees, and the strength of feeling at suggestions for their removal. We note that the plan proposes planting replacement trees, and we hope that a balance can be found between recapturing some of the original scale and grandeur of Armada Way, while addressing environmental and ecological concerns.

A full copy of the letter is available in the appendix.

Homes England has stated: "Homes England are keen to see works completed along Armada Way, with the kilometre long public park offering opportunities for residents, workers and tourists to rest, shop, exercise, eat and play. It is exciting times for Plymouth, as the city centre gears up in its ambition to transform into a thriving multifunctional mixed use community fit for Plymouth's prosperous future."

Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce have written this week to say they fully support the redevelopment. The CEO Stuart Elford wrote: "The city centre is in dire need of improvement to attract people and trade to the businesses in the area. Years of under-investment has allowed the area to become run-down and completely unsuitable.

"Unfortunately, the current layout has also encouraged anti-social behaviour and vermin, and also discourages people moving along its whole length in a linear way.

"The trees that were planted there are unsuitable for an urban environment and those replacing it should sequester more carbon. The new scheme is far more befitting of a modern city centre that will enhance the visitor experience and encourage consumers back into the centre."

Visitors to the Knowledge Centre

The Knowledge Centre has been open for over a month and has welcomed numerous members of the public and businesses.

The Liaison Officer has visited businesses on Armada Way and have had positive feedback from over 90% of businesses asked so far, with some being unable to comment due to only being able to comment through their media outlet. One business raised some concern. Comments include:

- "Happy for a nice, clean look outside of the business"
- "Georgia has explained the bigger picture, we think the project is exciting and will improve the city"
- "Original concern regarding the trees, however Georgia explained in more detail and now I feel more confident and happy about the project"
- "Customer feedback has been mainly positive especially around the open space and improvements. Only minor negative has been about the trees but overall the project is well handled and exciting"
- "No real concern at the moment, happy with the advice given to us is a counter petition possible?"
- "Upon seeing the plans, we can't wait to see the improvements. The city is dull now. I'm sold on the design!"
- "Will visit the Knowledge Centre soon. Looks / sounds good"
- "Not affected business. Thankful for security. Support the improvements"
- "Happy for regeneration, hoping for more trade. No business effects yet"
- "Want project to go ahead. Regeneration is needed as a city is dull. Trees cause problems including rats. Support overall scheme"
- "Slight concern with the footfall due to hoarding. The regeneration is promising"
- "Hoarding has reduced footfall; hoping work goes ahead soon"
- "Support project happy for works"
- "Supports scheme, welcome the ideas"
- "No concerns and are happy with the works proceeding"

CIVIC SQUARE

Initial works to Civic Square, a Grade II listed Park and Garden, have been developed with Historic England funding and will see the previous 'Bow Tie' paving patterns reintroduced in the south of the square, formed from granite blocks. The planters will also have a makeover with the worn and damaged copings replaced and the planting tidied up. The works will commence in February and will take approximately 10 weeks to complete. The copings around the main pond will also be restored back to the original concrete, removing years of unsightly white paint.

Subject to further funding approvals, there will be further improvements to Civic Square in the Spring to make it more attractive for walkers and cyclists. The road will become a two way cycle way with restricted assess maintained for deliveries only. The cycle way will link with Armada Way proposals to improve cycling provision. These works will involve removing X no existing parking spaces along this part of Armada Way. We have already added X no to Guildhall car park in anticipation of these works and a further x no are planned in Princess Street so there will not be a reduction in parking. In addition we plan to provide new lighting and CCTV to make the area safer.

OFFICIAL

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL







Peninsula House, Rydon Lane, Exeter, EX2 7HR www.southwestwater.co.uk

Date: 20th December 2022

Cllr Richard Bingley Leader of Plymouth City Council Ballard House West Hoe Road PLYMOUTH PLI 3BJ

Dear Cllr Bingley

ARMADA WAY PUBLIC REALM REDEVELOPMENT

I am writing to express support for the above project and in particular the sustainable drainage elements of the design.

Plymouth is served by a predominantly combined sewer network as a legacy of extensive post-war rebuilding of the city, previous crude discharges to the sea and the few natural watercourses in the city. Through the ongoing Integrated Urban Drainage Management (IUDM) collaborative project with Plymouth City Council and the Environment Agency we are continuously looking at opportunities to remove unwanted rainfall runoff from the combined sewer networks. There are many benefits to separating surface water runoff from the foul sewers including;

- Reduced sewer flood risk due to lowering of peak flows,
- Creation of headroom at downstream treatment facilities due to lower flows arriving at treatment works,
- Lower energy and carbon implications due to less flow, less energy requirement for pumping, and reduced chemical use at the treatment plant,
- Opportunity for runoff to be used as a resource rather than a problem,
- Contribute to protection of bathing water quality in Plymouth Sound due to reduced storm overflow discharges.

The redevelopment of Armada Way represents a once in a generation opportunity for storm runoff from impermeable areas historically connected directly to the combined sewer network to be separated out and be dealt with in a sustainable way. The city centre area is the largest single area of paved area connected to the combined sewer in the Plymouth Central catchment and the removal of this flow from combined sewerage through the sustainable drainage elements of the public realm project will have a significant benefit across all of the above measures. We therefore fully support the proposals for Armada Way and the many benefits that this project will generate through better storm water runoff management. In our view this urban redevelopment

is exemplar in the way surface water management has been incorporated into the design as a core principle. The benefits go far wider than simply creating a more inviting urban environment.

We look forward to continuing our partnership working with Plymouth City Council and the Environment Agency on the IUDM project and the future opportunities for similar projects that may be identified through this work.

Yours sincerely,



Director of Asset Management South West Water

сс

creating a better place for people and wildlife



Cllr Richard Bingley and Reg 13

Plymouth City Council

Our Ref: 16651

Date: 23 December 2022

@plymouth.gov.uk

Via email: <u>Richard.Bingley@plymouth.gov.uk</u> and Reg 13

Dear Cllr Richard Bingley and Reg 13

ARMADA WAY PUBLIC REALM REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

I'm writing regarding your proposals for the redevelopment of the public realm area of Armada Way in Plymouth city centre. This has been a long-awaited project and it's excellent that your plans are developing well, and you have a route to delivery. We have been working for over 7 years in partnership with your Council and South West Water to develop methods to better manage surface water and urban drainage across Plymouth as part of our Integrated Urban Drainage Management (IUDM) work.

A key area has been the Millbay catchment, which Armada Way is in as most of the rainwater falling on the urban area is routed into the combined drainage system, being pumped, and treated at Plymouth Central sewerage works. Our joint aim is to create a new surface water drainage system within the Millbay catchment to allow surface water to be separated from the combined drainage system. Your proposals in Armada way are a key part of achieving this.

The scale of the redevelopment plan for Armada Way is welcomed and this helps to support the aims of the Government's National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, by increasing the resilience to climate change by utilising sustainable drainage solutions. This project will provide a key part of the new surface water drainage system that will link to other parts of the city centre, such as the current works on New George Street and the future works for the Derry's Cross area. The proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) incorporated into the overall landscaping plan will support the better management of water quality by filtering surface water and storing it during heavy rainfall, which is forecast to increase with climate change. Your proposals will also help support the nature of the local area and allow for better management of periods of drought.

The environmental outcomes from these works are to support the aim of decreasing surface water flood risks to the Union Street area by providing a new surface water drainage system for the city centre. This in turn will allow surface water to be separated from the existing combined drainage system, which will result in less sewage spills into the sea, which will lead to bathing water quality improvements in Plymouth Sound. These outcomes support the city with its marine park status and the development of a high-quality public realm, that responses to our environmental challenges will enhance the growth of Plymouth as the ocean city. Overall, we are keen to continue to be part of the development of this project and please continue to include us as you progress through the next design phases.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact our Customers and Engagement Team, who will be happy to help you. You can contact the team at <u>DCISenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk</u>.



Reg 13 ACTING AREA DIRECTOR – DEVON, CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY

DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Environment Agency, Manley House, Kestrel Way, Exeter EX2 7LQ



Reg 13	Direct Dial: Reg 13
Plymouth City Council	
Ballard House	Our ref: PL00351363
West Hoe Road	
Plymouth	
PL1 3BJ	13 January 2023



RE: Better Places Plymouth: Armada Way public realm proposals

I write further to your request for advice on proposals for the re-landscaping of Armada Way, following public opposition to proposals to remove some existing trees.

As you know, Historic England and its predecessor organisations have championed the unique qualities of Plymouth's City Centre for many years. No other city in England was replanned on such a grand scale following the devastation of World War II, and the properties flanking its broad boulevards are some of the best buildings built anywhere in the 1950s.

Plymouth City Council recognises the significance of its City Centre, and recently conferred conservation area status on its core. Through the National High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, Historic England and Plymouth City Council are currently making a joint investment of over £4m to celebrate, enhance and adapt the City Centre's post-war heritage to make it a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time.

Professor Jeremy Gould wrote about the significance of Armada Way in the book *Plymouth: Vision of a modern city*, published by Historic England, which details the design and execution of the new city by Patrick Abercrombie and James PatonWatson. "Abercrombie erased the whole of the old centre, its streets and most of its buildings and then drew a grand axis through them from the Naval Memorial on the Hoe to the railway station at North Hill. He declared the space a 'vista' for public enjoyment 'to be enriched by the landscape architect's and gardener's art"

In recent years the Armada Way streetscape has become tired and overgrown. The intended grand vista from North Cross to the Royal Naval Memorial is less apparent and the public realm is cluttered and incoherent.

In our previous consultation response to the public realm consultation on the Better Places initiative (letter of 13 May 2018) my colleague David Stuart advised on the proposals for Armada Way, noting "The proposals for Armada Way are particularly impressive and we can see how they derive from the original Abercrombie aspirations for this route while attempting to improve upon some less successful aspects of their execution. Care will need to be taken that the significant tracts of hard landscaping will not unwittingly create areas which seem austere as an experience; the space is clearly at a grand scale and it is important that, however subtly, aspects of humanity and intimacy are allowed to feature to encourage people to dwell as well as parade."

We think this previous advice on Armada Way still holds true. We admire the attempt to recapture the grand scale of the original design concept, but care will be needed to ensure it is also an environment in which people are encouraged to linger. Armada Way was built for traffic and pedestrians, but the traffic has long been removed, leaving very broad areas of public realm which require an imaginative response if they are to be animated.

We recognise the value of the existing trees, and the strength of feeling at suggestions for their removal. We note that the plan proposes planting replacement trees, and we hope that a balance can be found between recapturing some of the original scale and grandeur of Armada Way, while addressing environmental and ecological concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Reg 13

Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas Reg 13

@HistoricEngland.org.uk



IST FLOOR FERMENTATION NORTH FINZELS REACH HAWKINS LANE BRISTOL BSI 6JQ

TelephoneReg 13



HISTORICENGLAND.ORG.UK

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Out of Scope

OFFICIAL

From: Reg 13 @plymouth.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 March 2023 12:31
To: Reg 13 @plymouth.ac.uk>; Reg 13
Reg 13 @urbansplash.co.uk>; Reg 13 @plymouth.gov.uk>;
Reg 13 @plymouth.gov.uk>; Reg 13
Reg 13 @plymouth.gov.uk>; Reg 13 @plymouthculture.co.uk>;
Reg 13 @theatreroyal.com) Reg 13 @theatreroyal.com>;
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@theatreroyal.com>; Reg 13
Reg 13 @plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk>Reg 13
Reg 13 @homesengland.gov.uk>; Reg 13
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Reg 13 @HistoricEngland.org.uk>Reg 13
Reg 13 @britishland.com>; Reg 13 @plymouth.ac.uk)
Reg 13 @plymouth.ac.uk>
Subject: Notes of last week's meeting

OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE

Hi all

Attached are my notes of last week's meeting.

Please let me know if you have any comments or anything you'd like to discuss at future meetings.





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PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE REGENERATION BOARD



Date:	Monday 13 March 2023	
Time:	14:00 to 15:30	
Location:	Hybrid: Ballard House & Microsoft Teams	

Attendees	Initials	
Reg 13 Plymouth City Council	Reg 13	
Reg 13 Plymouth City Council	1108 ±0	
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13 Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13 Plymouth City Centre Company		
Reg 13 Plymouth City Centre Company		
Reg 13, Plymouth Community Homes		
Reg 13, University of Plymouth		
Reg 13 British Land		
Reg 13 , British Land		
Reg 13 , Plymouth Culture		
Reg 13 , Urban Splash		
Reg 13 , Homes England		
Reg 13, Theatre Royal Plymouth		
Guest presenters:		
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		
Reg 13, Plymouth City Council		



OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE

5	Out of Scope	

Out of Scope