



Devon Gardens Trust
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Katherine Graham
Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
26 West Hoe Road
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

By email: planningconsents@plymouth.gov.uk

April 15th 2026

Dear Ms Graham

26/00424/FUL

Conversion to residential apartments (Class C3), education space including ancillary cafe, salon, spa, office (Class F1a), restaurant (Class Eb), part demolition, alterations to elevations including new cladding, new public realm including external bridge and staircase, changes to parking, and associated works

Civic Centre, Armada Way Plymouth PL1 2A

Thank you for consulting Devon Gardens Trust on the above application which affects Civic Square, Plymouth, an historic designed landscape included on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* at Grade II. The *Register* is a highly selective national heritage designation comprising only some 1,700 sites. Civic Square is included on the *Register* as an example of the work of the internationally-significant landscape architect Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe (1900-96). Civic Square was designed in 1957-62 as part of the civic layout of Plymouth planned in 1956 by the city architect H J W Stirling and based on Patrick Abercrombie and J Paton Watson's post-war plan for Plymouth of 1943. As such, it is a significant example of post-War urban landscape design.

The Gardens Trust, formerly The Garden History Society, is the Statutory Consultee on development affecting all sites included on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. We have discussed these proposals with our colleagues in The Gardens Trust and are aware that they have submitted a response which we commend to your attention.

Devon Gardens Trust was pleased to be invited to participate in a very helpful pre-application presentation given by you and your colleagues. This provided useful background to the proposals as well as a wider context for them. As noted by The Gardens Trust, we as a result of the presentation we concluded that the introduction of a spiral staircase and bridge link in the courtyard was a pragmatic solution for the site, preserving as much of the RPG as possible and particularly the

interaction between the building and the landscape; given the need for the bridge link and the staircase we felt that the treatment was sensitive to the designed landscape.

While agreeing with The Gardens Trust that greater clarity with regard to the significance of the Jellicoe scheme and the impact of the proposals upon it would be desirable as part of the application documentation, not least to enhance public understanding of both the heritage asset and the proposals, Devon Gardens Trust, as a non-statutory consultee, feels that the present proposals represent a positive step forward in bringing both the Civic Centre and its associated designated designed landscape back into a positive beneficial use.

Devon Gardens Trust would be happy to continue to be involved in the further evolution of this scheme.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Lovie
Conservation Officer
Devon Gardens Trust