



The Architecture Centre

Gun Wharf Devonport, Plymouth

Notable design features

- Extensive use of timber and reconstituted stone. Many materials locally sourced
- Demonstrates how a viable street network can be used in a small and difficult site
- Central space provides for a variety of uses, as well as giving a focus to the development.



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The Gun Wharf development involved the complete demolition and rebuilding of a severely blighted 1950s housing estate in Plymouth. This 99 unit development has created a new street network which employs Home Zone principles, giving equal priority to pedestrians and vehicles.

Project description

Gun Wharf was a severely run down council estate in Plymouth, with housing that had deteriorated to a very poor condition. The site is sloping, accessible only from a single road, and is bounded by the high walls of sites belonging to the Ministry of Defence.

Public consultation took place to ensure that the new neighbourhood would reflect what people wanted, in terms of housing provision and public realm.

Twenty four former residents moved back after their homes were completed, setting up a resident's association with owner-occupiers to take over the day-to-day management of the area.

Lacey Hickie Caley devised a masterplan that would provide for an attractive new layout to the neighbourhood, centred on a Georgian-style circus. Cornwall Street, the main route through Gun Wharf, is fronted by housing and provides on-street parking and access to the rest of the neighbourhood. As a Home Zone, the streets are well suited for multiple uses, making the neighbourhood more animated and welcoming than previously.

Mixed tenure housing (35 private sale, 46 housing association, 18 shared ownership) broadens the socio-economic base of the residents, reducing the risks associated with single-tenure arrangements. There is a variety of housing types and styles. Extensive use is made of slate, stone and timber, corresponding with the local vernacular.

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Comment

"I've been there several times and I've seen it establishing itself. It's quite a tough area and then you stumble on this little oasis. It was a keystone for the whole development of the area, it shows commitment to the local area and builds confidence."

Dominic Church, CABE Senior Policy Advisor

[On Gun Wharf HomeZone] 'It's a feeling, not something you can engineer. The feeling of not being threatened by traffic when you walk down the middle of the street. You can't achieve that with a 20mph zone.'

Adrian Trim, Team Manager Sustainable Transport, Plymouth City Council

Essential data

Location
Devonport, Plymouth

Construction period
Completed early 2006

Project team
Architect: Lacey Hickie Caley
Developer: Midas Homes
Planning Authority: Plymouth City Council

Client
Devon & Cornwall Housing Association

Cost
Construction value £15.8m

Awards
CABE Building For Life Gold Award Winner, Best Large Housing Development, National Homebuilder Design Awards (2006)
Winner, Housing Design Awards, medium housebuilder scheme (2007)
"Highly Commended", Abercrombie Architectural Design Awards (2007)
"Runner Up" Street Design Awards (2007)

BREEAM rating
Unknown

Further information

CABE case study:
www.cabe.org.uk/case-studies/gun-wharf

Lacey Hickie Caley (LHC):
www.lhc.new

Midas Homes:
www.midashomes.com

Urban Design Compendium case study
www.urbandesigncompendium.co.uk/gunwharf

This case study was produced by the Architecture Centre. For more information about the centre visit www.architecturecentre.co.uk

