RE-IMAGINING AND RE-ENGINEERING ARMADA WAY CITY CENTRE SUDS ON AN EPIC SCALE

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL



Martin Ivatt
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Introduction by Cllr John Stephens

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport

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Plymouth City Centre: Blitz & Resurgam

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Declining public realm

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… and declining surrounding uses





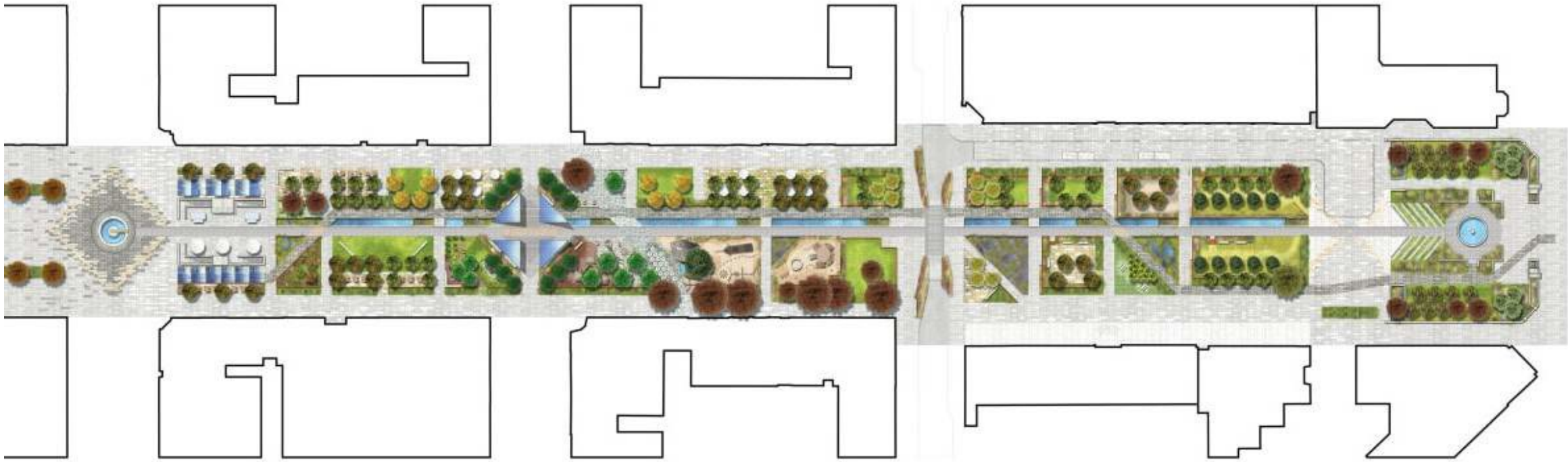
A new strategic role for Armada Way

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A new strategic role for Armada Way

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A new city centre – opening day!

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UK's largest city centre play park

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The size of 5 tournament tennis courts

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A place for people

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Significant new green infrastructure

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Cyclists and pedestrians at its heart

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Cycling expectations and awareness

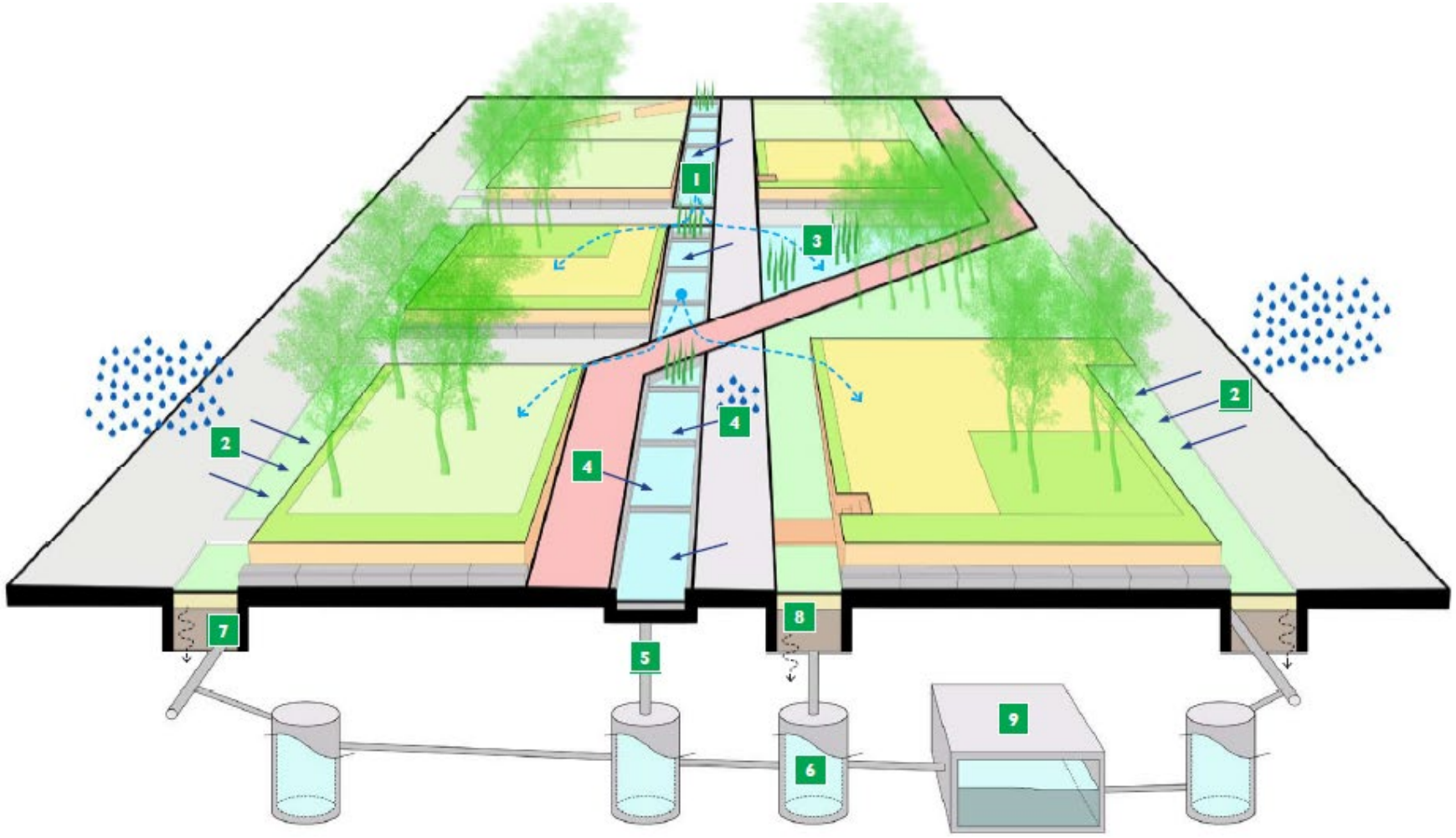





Armada Way
Water Rill & Raingardens

SUDS network overview

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1
The rill relies on gravity to supply and recirculate irrigation water to green areas and trees.

2
Bioswales (vegetated channels) and raingardens take surface water runoff from paths, reducing flows in the existing combined sewer.

3
Rill water is filtered by reed beds, with overflow connection back into rill.

4
Rill takes surface water drainage from central and cycle paths.

5
Rill discharges into new, below ground drainage system and tanks, which allows for water to be recirculated.

6
Bioswales and raingardens connected to tanks which allow for recirculation and extra water storage during extreme rainfall events.

7
Perforated pipe within raingardens will filter silts and contaminants to clean surface water runoff before entering the drainage network.

8
During regular rainfall, rainwater will be held in the rain gardens and seep into the ground, reducing flows into the new system and reducing flood risk.

9
Holding tank – rainwater is pumped from here to the top of the rill. UV filters within tanks provide secondary cleansing of surface water. Any overflow from this tank is directed to downstream sections of the new system if the tank is full.

Significant underground infrastructure

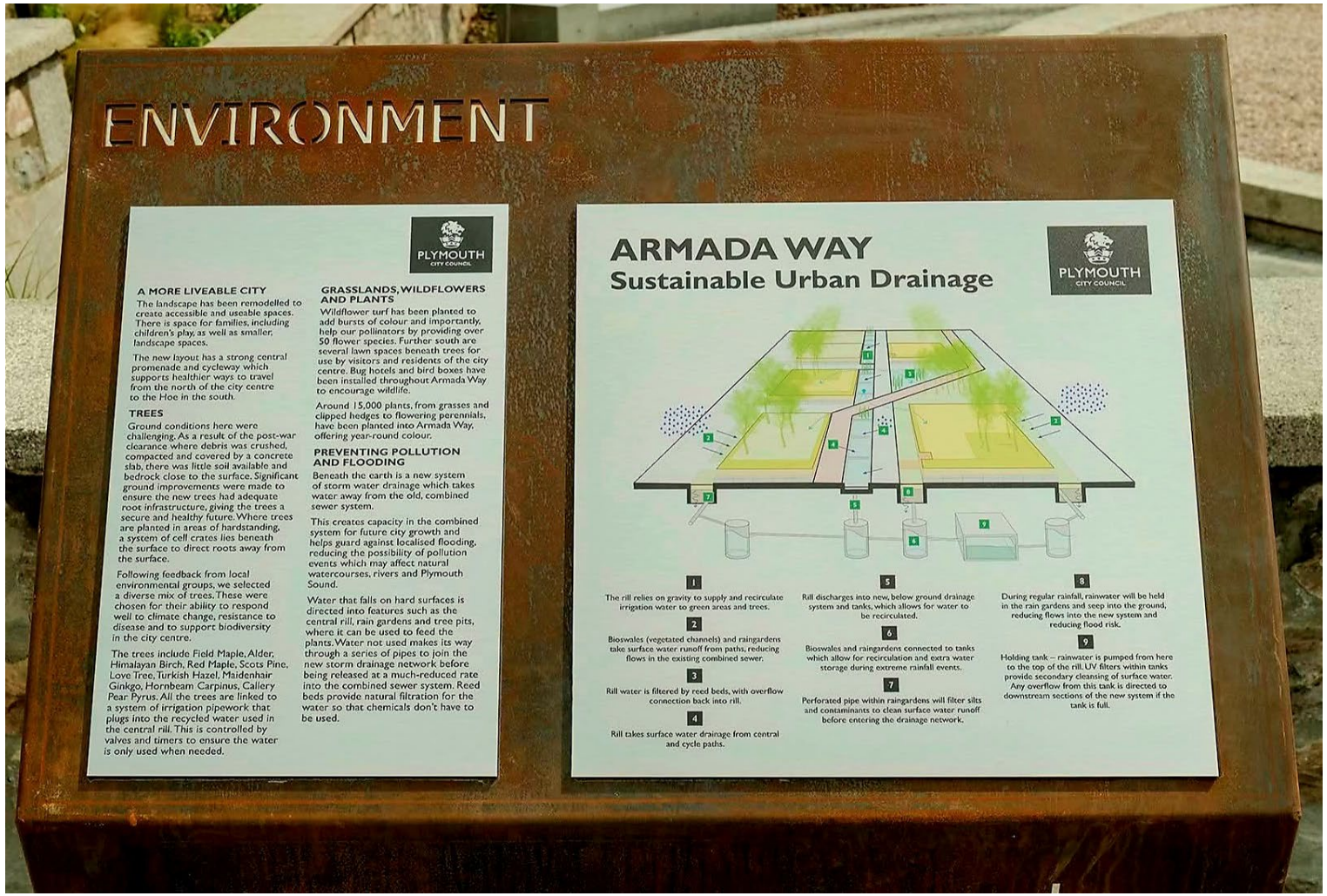
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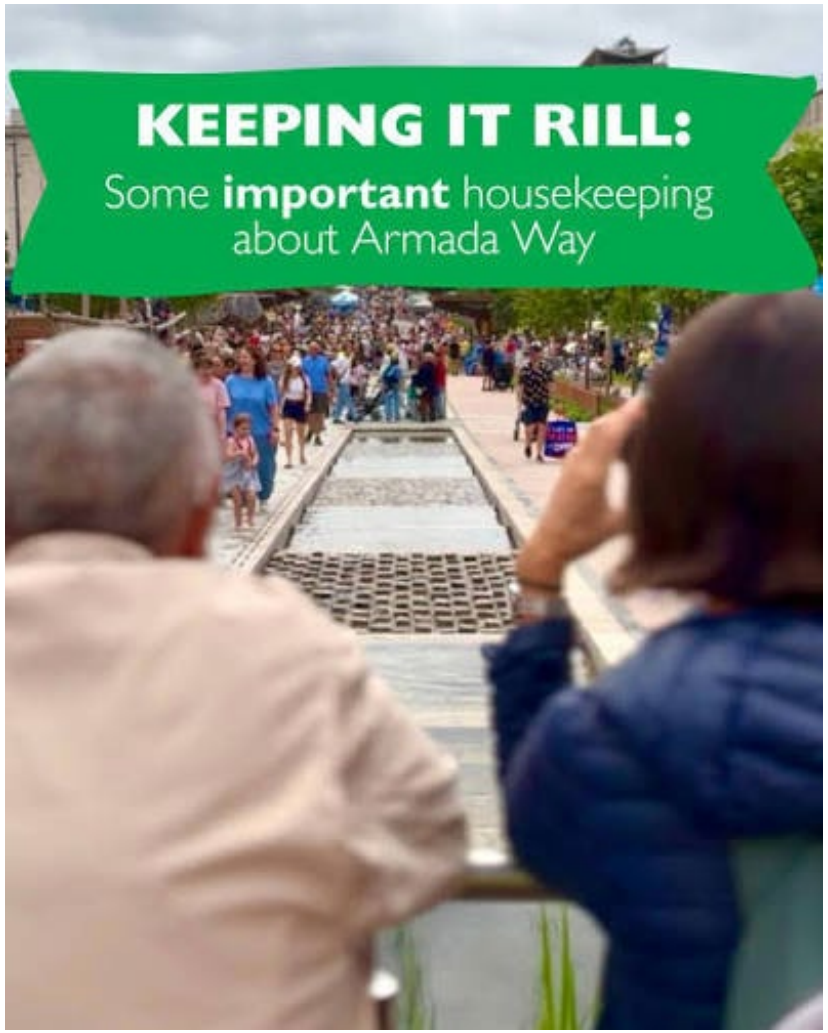




Educating users of the space

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SUDS features – Rain gardens

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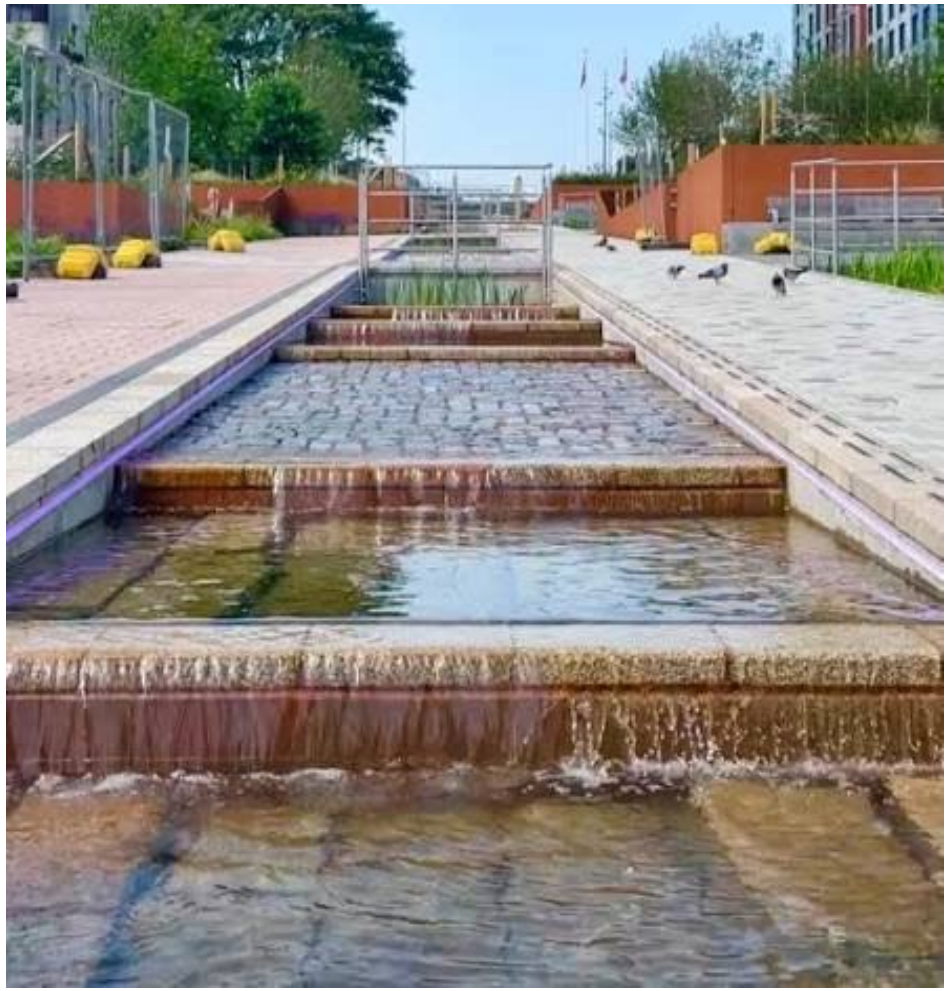






SUDS features - Rill and reed beds

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SUDS features – Rill and reed beds

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SUDS features – Solar canopies

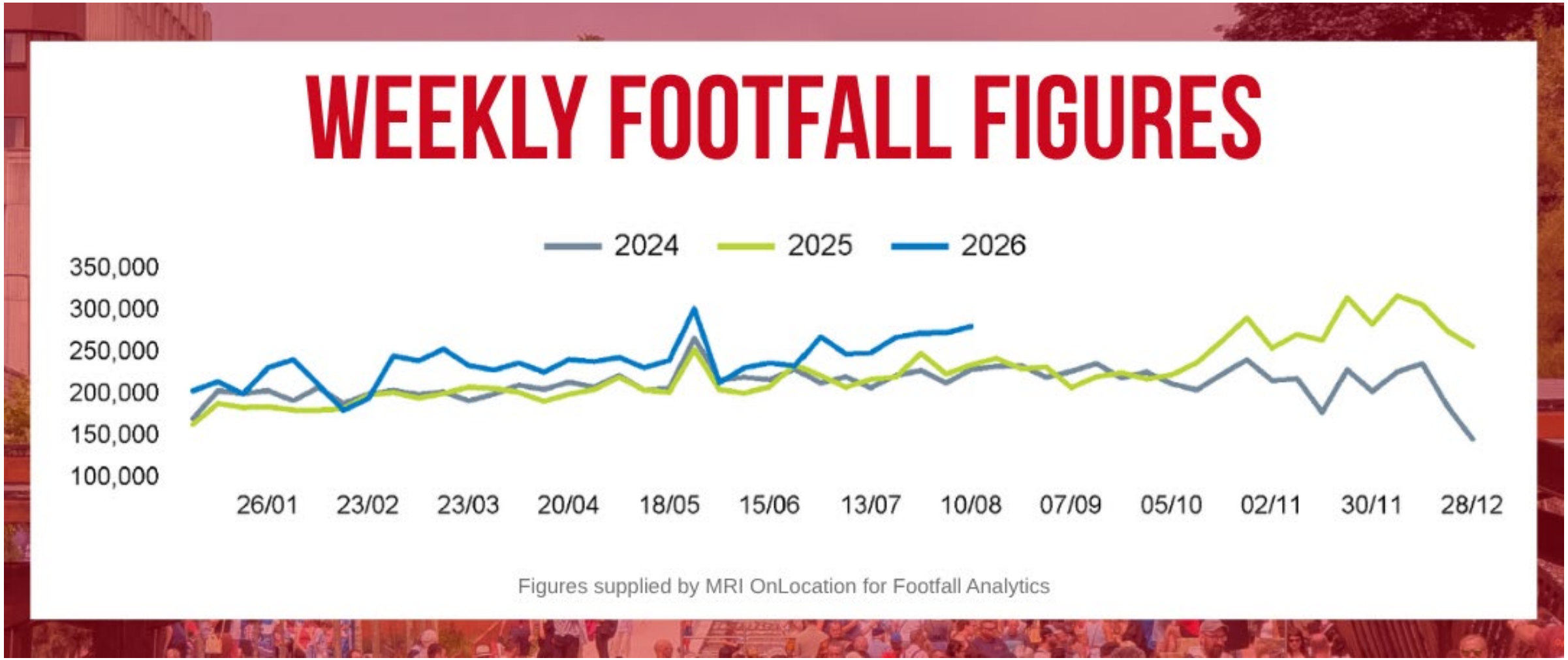






Armada Way : Catalysing Growth

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Armada Way : Catalysing Growth

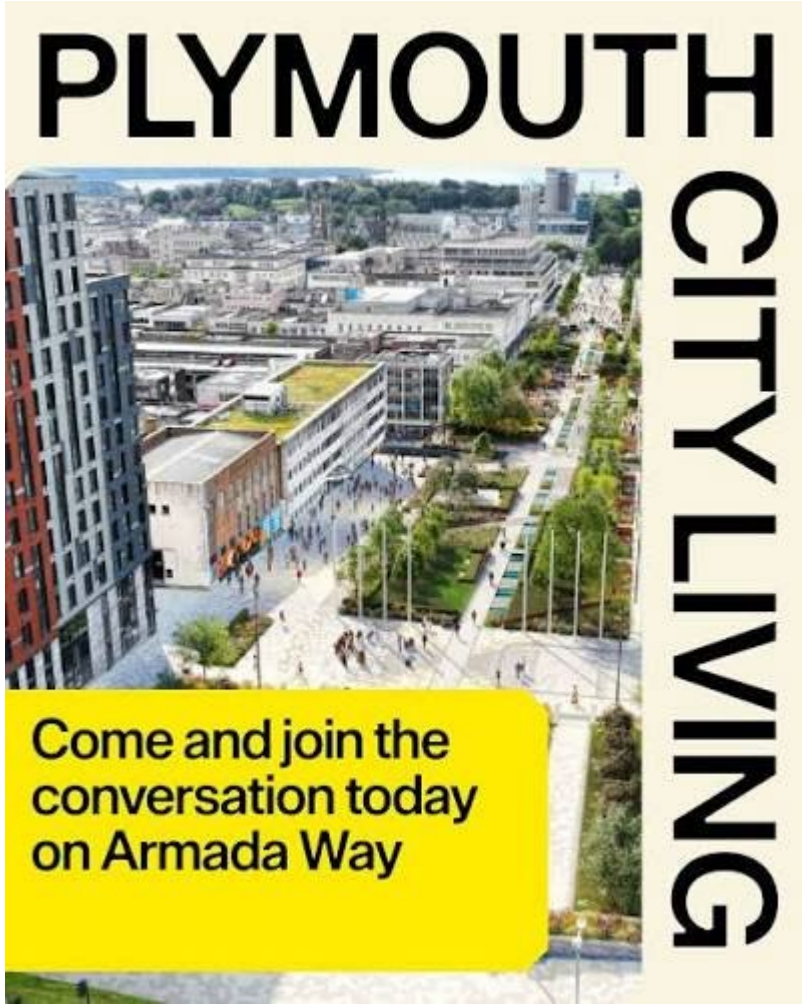
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Armada Way : Catalysing Growth

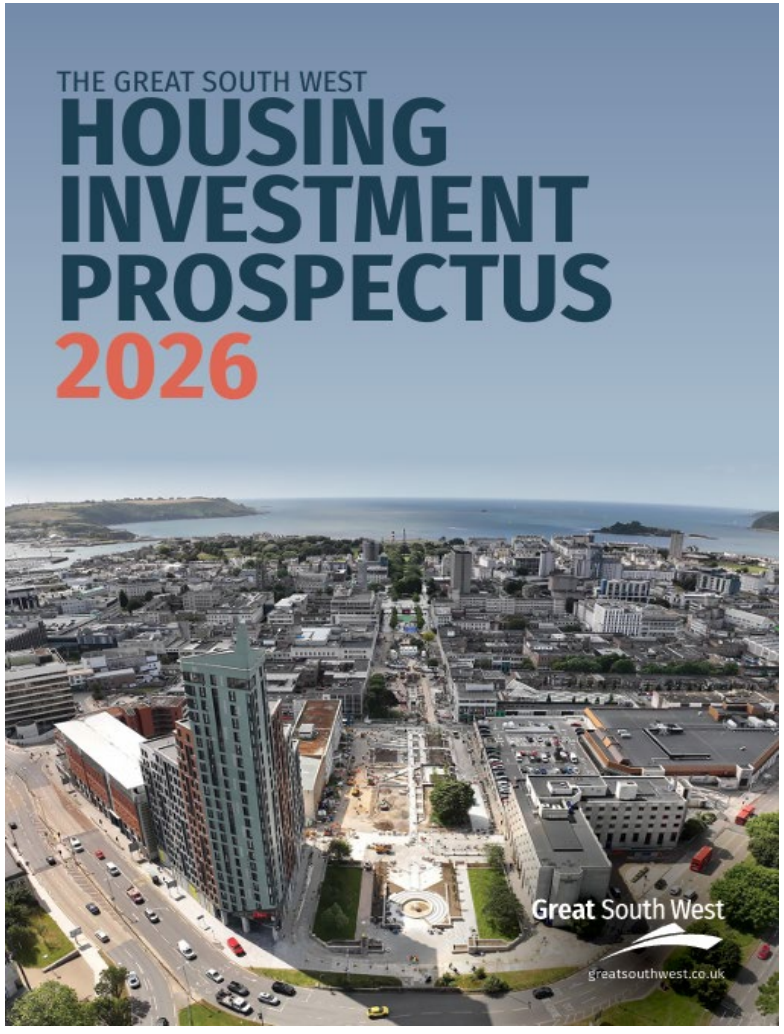
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Armada Way : Catalysing Growth

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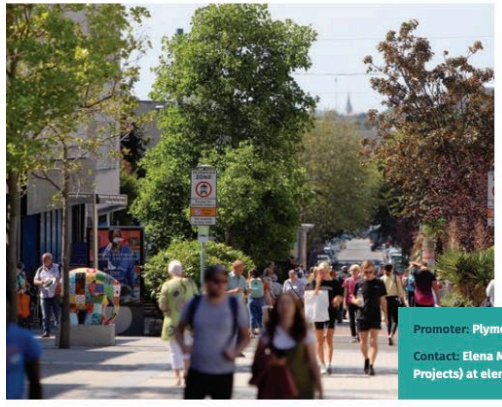
ARMADA NORTH, PLYMOUTH

THE REGENERATION OF ARMADA NORTH REPRESENTS A TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPERS, BREATHING LIFE INTO AN EXISTING MASTERPLAN VISION THAT WILL HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE.

This ambitious project aims to deliver hundreds of new homes, promoting vibrant urban living and driving meaningful, long-term change in the heart of the city.

While formal planning permission is still pending, initial feasibility assessments have already been carried out. These early studies provide a clear outline of the vision, including indicative dwelling numbers and preliminary design concepts, laying the groundwork for the next phase of development.

A number of key priority sites have been identified as catalysts for wider regeneration. The proposed demolition of outdated structures is intended to unlock the full potential of the land, paving the way for high-quality, sustainable development that aligns with the overarching masterplan.



Promoter: Plymouth City Council

Contact: Elena Muncey, Principal Surveyor (Strategic Projects) at elena.muncey@plymouth.gov.uk

THE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY



This site is allocated within the Joint Local Plan (JLP), offering development opportunities that extend beyond the footprint of the existing buildings.



Consideration is being given to the potential use of the car park rear of Mayflower House, exploring how this space can contribute to the delivery of the JLP's strategic objectives and enhance the overall vision for the area.

Complementing these plans are the ongoing improvements to Armada Way, part of a major £50 million regeneration initiative focused on transforming the city's public realm. Situated on the primary corridor leading into the city centre, the Armada North site is strategically located adjacent to this revitalised green link—an ideal setting to deliver a connected, dynamic urban community.

Restoring Plymouth's confidence

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026 PLYMOUTH HERALD

News

'City can be proud' of Armada Way revamp

'COME SUMMER, IT WILL BE A SHINING EXAMPLE OF RENEWAL'

By ALISON STEPHENSON
Local Democracy Reporter, Opinion

PLYMOUTH'S giant flagship project to improve Armada Way has been a long time coming and full of controversy but come the summer I believe it will be one that the city can be rightly proud of.

It may look like a huge building site in the heart of the city and the disruption for businesses has been a lot to bear over the last few years but there is a light at the end of the tunnel and that light is going to shine very brightly indeed.

Armada Way was a critical element of the rebirth of Plymouth after the blitz of World War Two, a wide ceremonial and direct boulevard connecting the railway station to the Hoe, but in recent decades has laid tired and neglected.

As Plymouth enters a new period of optimism with huge investment in defence and new homes, Armada Way is at the forefront again and this much anticipated £30 million scheme to bring it back to life is big, bold and beautiful.

Cities need the wow factor and this could be it for Plymouth, a man-made structure that complements the natural beauty of its coastal location, with water being a huge focus but also nature, so crucial in a built up city which will see thousands of new homes in skyscrapers in the future.

I can imagine children's laughter as they jump about in the dancing jets, open the sluice gates in the rill, climb in the wooden boat and giant dodecahedron and marvel at the wonder of the butterflies and bees on all the wild flowers.

The play area is so extensive it has been separated into several different themed areas and there's seating for the adults there too so they can keep an eye on the little ones.

There's even going to be changing rooms as it will be hard not to get wet with all the water play.

The one kilometre route has so much... green lawns, entertainment spaces include an amphitheatre which local acts are lining up to perform at, cycle paths... already being well used by delivery drivers, shaded canopies to eat your lunch and even undercover areas when it rains...

Power sources in the bollards at the amphitheatre and under the solar canopy ensure that everyone from the loudest bard to the solitary worker are catered for.

But equally it earns its stripes below the surface with a sustainable urban drainage system where massive underground storage tanks fill with rainwater. The water will be recirculated around Armada Way through a rill running the entire length of the proposed scheme and be used to water plants and trees. Excess water is released into the combined sewerage system slowly so potential sewage overflows into the Sound during heavy rainfall are avoided.

This is a 'win, win' in environmental terms.

The piece de resistance in the beauty stakes could well be the thing we have not yet had a glimpse of... the phoenix fountain sculpture, a marble creation replicating the one that was put there after World War Two to mark Plymouth's rebirth. It's currently in the making... watch this space!

The scheme has quality written all over it. Take the paving.... seven centimetres of granite sitting on top of a reinforced concrete base, in the words of the project manager it "should not be going anywhere for a long time".

That means no more breaking up of the surface causing trips hazard.

Hardwearing corten steel has been used for the edges of the green spaces which in a soft orange colour creates a contrast to the stone, in time this will be softened when the hedges grow up.

"Built to last' is how city leaders have described this Herculean project but unlike some public realm schemes in the past, there will be an ongoing maintenance budget to keep it looking pristine.

In a few months time I think Plymouth families will flock to Armada Way and businesses will start to see a revival. More [illegible] restaurants along the edge are the vision and outside cafe culture [illegible] the new planted topiary London Planes.

All the 180 new trees are chosen with the right plant, right place principle and designed to be there generations. We just need a bit patience and we'll [illegible] everything grow.

The sun often [illegible] Plymouth although we haven't seen it for while. Council leaders say Plymouth's time has come and Armada Way could indeed be the catalyst for it all.

> Council leaders say Plymouth's time has come and Armada Way could indeed be the catalyst for it all
> Alison Stephenson

Armada Way is set to impress when it's all unveiled in the summer
PICTURE: ALISON STEPHENSON

Constructing the new [illegible] adjoining the [illegible] area

The topiary London Planes which will grow together in a year or two to form a canopy over one of the many seated areas



Plymouth shopping mall bought by global investor thanks to Armada Way revamp

Council credits £30m regeneration for attracting investor

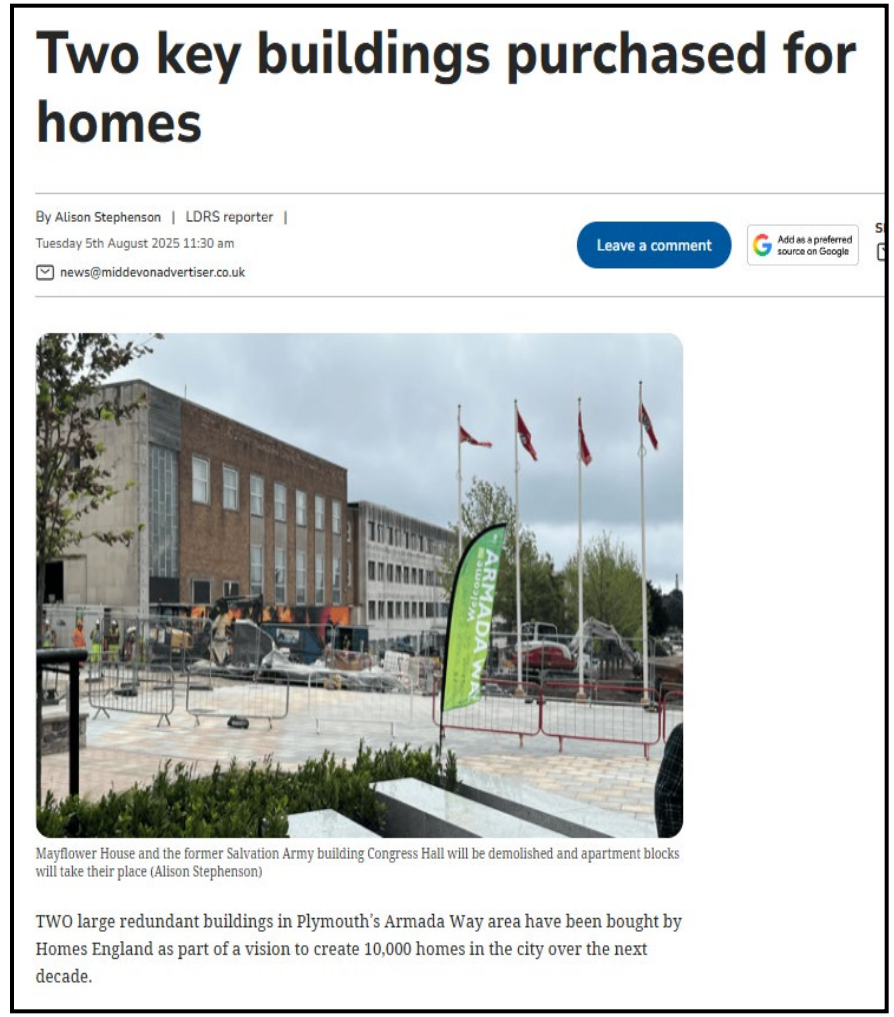
Comments 18

NEWS By William Telford Senior Reporter and Business Specialist
06:00, 05 Jun 2025

View Image

The Armada Centre (Image: File image)

Plymouth's huge Armada Centre mall has been bought by a global investment company with the council saying it was attracted by the £30m Armada Way upgrade. London-headquartered asset management leviathan Schroders has snapped up the 39-year-old building but the price it paid is being kept confidential.



Two key buildings purchased for homes

By Alison Stephenson | LDRS reporter |
Tuesday 5th August 2025 11:30 am
news@middevonadvertiser.co.uk

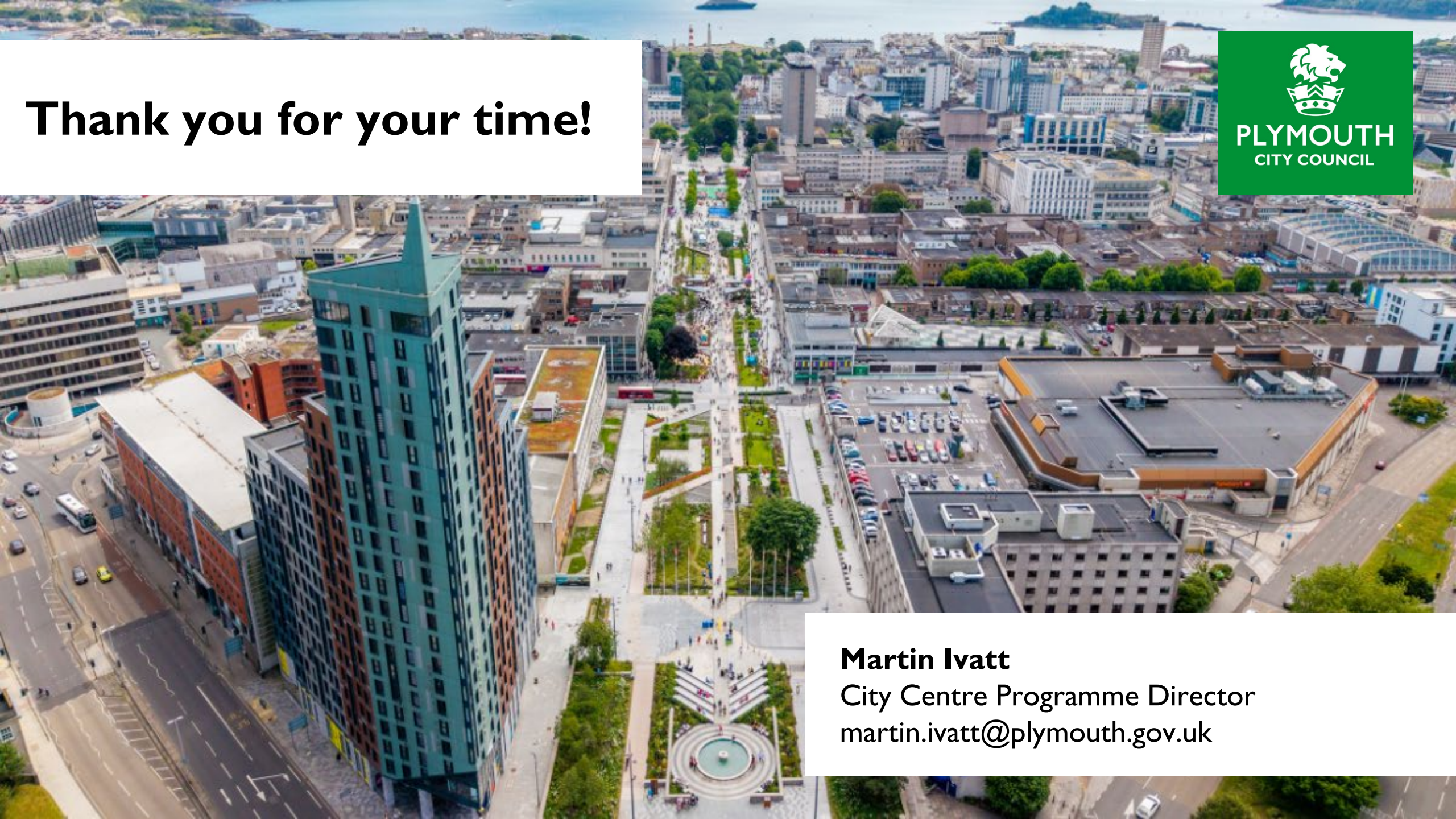
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Mayflower House and the former Salvation Army building Congress Hall will be demolished and apartment blocks will take their place (Alison Stephenson)

TWO large redundant buildings in Plymouth's Armada Way area have been bought by Homes England as part of a vision to create 10,000 homes in the city over the next decade.

Thank you for your time!



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